

# Tree Canopy Committee Report



# Origin of the Tree Canopy Committee

- 2012 Davey Resource Group Study showed deficiencies in tree canopy
- LFUCG Tree Board + Urban Forest Initiative concerned
- November 2015- Vice Mayor Steve Kay appointed Tree Canopy Committee
- Monthly meetings since December 2015



# Tree Canopy Committee Members

## **Council Members**

- Jake Gibbs (Chair)
- James Brown
- Susan Lamb (Chair of Calculations Subcommittee)

## **LFUCG Reps**

- Kristan Curry, Environmental Planner
- John Saylor, Program Manager, Natural Resource Operations
- Angela Poe, Program Manager, Public Information and Engagement

## **UK Representatives**

- Dr. Mary Arthur, Professor of Forest Ecology, UK Department of Forestry
- Dr. Lynne Rieske-Kinney, Professor of Forest Entomology, UK Department of Forestry
- Nic Williamson, Director of UK Tracy Farmer Institute's Urban Forest Initiative

# Committee Members

## **Community Tree Experts**

- Sara Hesley, Town Branch Tree Experts (Vice Chair)
- Bridget Abernathy, Bluegrass Greensource and Chair of Tree Board (Chair of PR/Outreach Subcommittee)
- Ann Bowe, former Chair of Tree Board, Landscape Designer
- Dave Leonard, Consulting Arborist
- Dan Stever, Klausing Group

## **Community Members**

- Harry Clarke, America in Bloom
- Greg Doyle, Retired Business Owner
- Jeff Hart, Retired Director of Albuquerque Parks Dept. (Chair of Structure Subcommittee)
- Phil Holoubek, Developer
- Sherry Maddock, 4<sup>th</sup> Street Farm

# Economic and Environmental Benefits of Trees



- Carbon Sequestration and Reduced Heat Island Effect
- Reduces Stormwater Runoff
- Reduces Soil Erosion
- Improves Water and Soil Quality
- Improves Air Quality
- Improves Energy Efficiency
- Increases Property Values
- Slower Traffic Patterns
- Shopper Retention
- Green Jobs

# Public Health and Community Benefits



- Decreased Asthma and Obesity
- Higher Worker Productivity
- Higher Attention Spans and Lower Rates of ADD in Children
- Lower Anxiety and Stress Levels
- Faster Recovery Rates in Hospital
- Reduced Noise Pollution
- Improved Driver Safety

# Why We Need Trees: Community Benefits

- Improved Quality of Life
- Aesthetic Values
- Neighborhood Connectivity
- Privacy
- Safety
- Decreased Crime
- Decreased Vandalism and Littering
- Wildlife Habitat



# Davey Resource Group Report 2012

- Lexington has < 25% urban canopy coverage
- 40% tree canopy is the national recommendation
- Wide range of canopy coverage by Council District: 18% to 32%
- 82% of land identified as potential for additional tree planting is *privately owned*





# Tree Canopy Concerns: Tree Mortality and Decline

## Emerald Ash Borer

- 10% of Lexington's tree canopy is ash

## Oak Decline

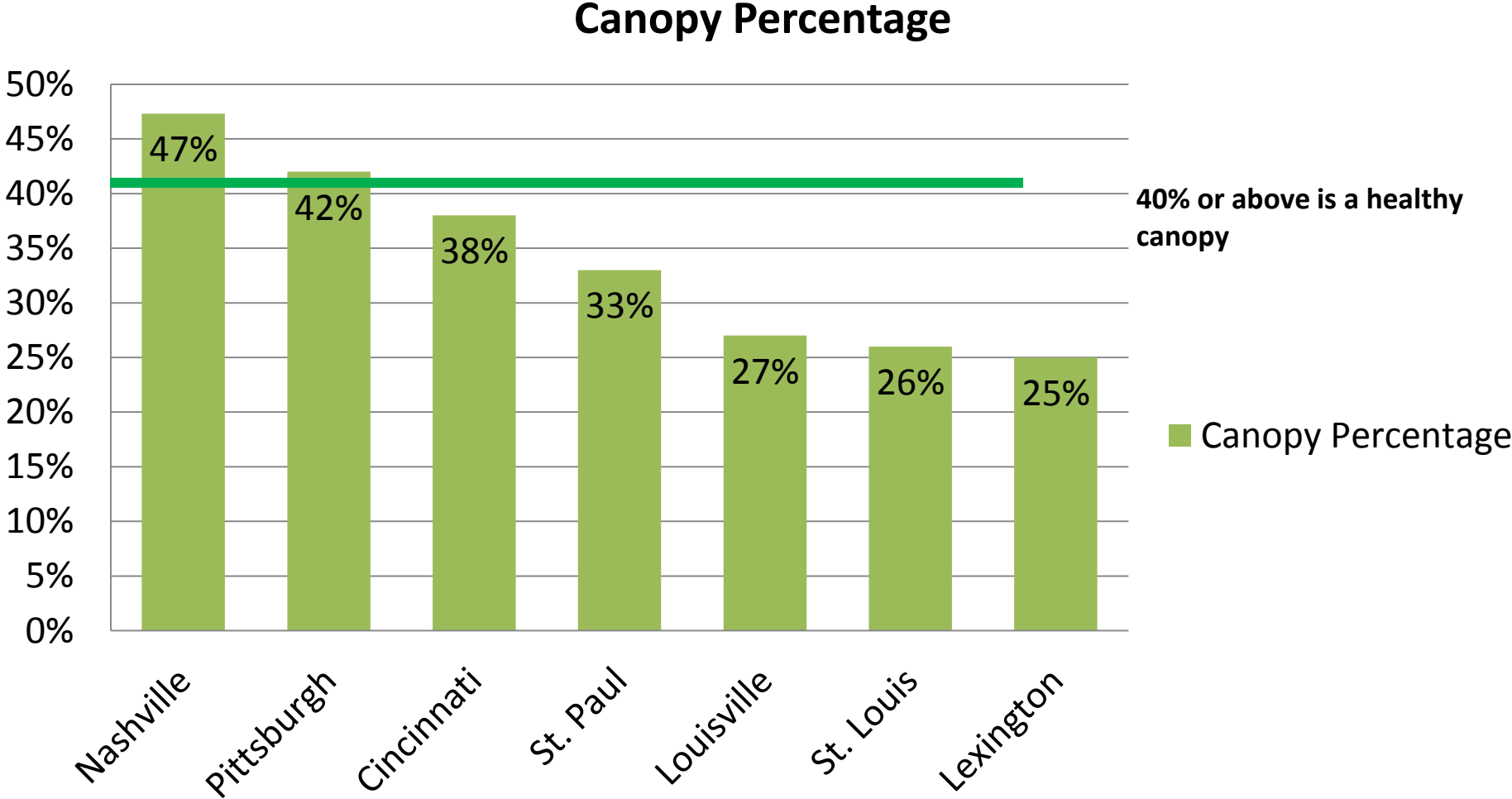
- Large pin oaks

## Other Factors

- Species selection, planting, maintenance

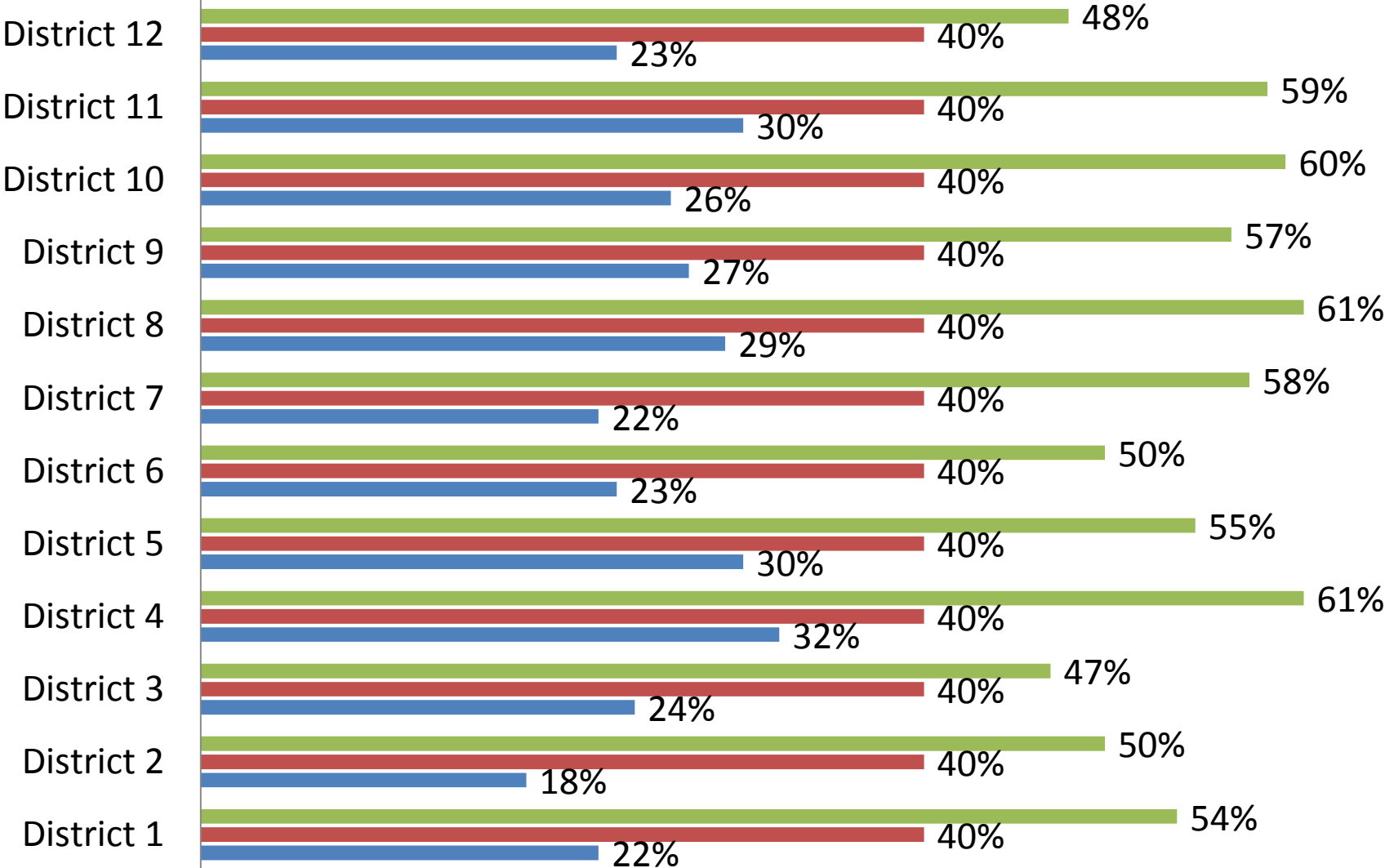


# How Other Cities Compare to Lexington



# Canopy Cover by District

■ Maximum Possible Canopy ■ Canopy Goal ■ Percent Canopy



# Tree Canopy Committee Created 3 Subcommittees

- **Structure:** What sort of organization was best suited to the task of improving the canopy?
- **Calculations:** How many trees we need and at approximately what cost?
- **Outreach/Partnerships:** How to connect to the community?

Research Support: Craig Bencz

# Structure Subcommittee

## **Non-profit Organization**

- A new nonprofit devoted to planting trees on private property
- The most effective way to increase the tree canopy



# Calculations Subcommittee

- Number of Trees to Maintain 2012 Canopy = 60,747 by 2018
- Number of Trees (on top of maintenance number) to Increase Canopy by 1 percent = 77,371 after 2018
- Lexington spends about **11 cents per capita** on tree canopy
- Louisville = 74 cents
- Covington = 83 cents



# Outreach/Partnerships Subcommittee

- Developed relationships with other environmental organizations
- Laying the groundwork for 4 types of private property:
  - Owner-occupied Homes
  - Residential Rental
  - Commercial
  - Industrial



# Where We Are Now

- Meet monthly as the Tree Canopy Committee -preparing to hand off the work to the new nonprofit, Trees Lexington!
- Registered as a nonprofit with the Kentucky Secretary of State
- Will apply for Federal 501(c)(3) status
- Blue Grass Community Foundation serves as fiscal agent
- Select Board of Directors and develop 5 subcommittees by early 2017
- Website in progress





# Trees Lexington!

## **Vision Statement**

Lexington's enhanced tree canopy will be our legacy to future generations. With a healthy tree canopy our city will be an increasingly attractive and distinctive community, with a strong sense of civic pride, and improved quality of life, economically, socially and environmentally.

## **Mission Statement**

Trees Lexington! is a nonprofit organization that encourages, engages, educates and assists community members in the planting and care of trees to create a healthy and sustainable tree canopy in Lexington, KY.



# Next Steps

- Establish Board of Directors
- Begin multi-level fundraising
- Hire Executive Director
- Year 1-5 goals and activities
- Implement two tree planting pilot projects- Fall 2017



# Questions?

