

NDFS Community Forestry Tree Inventory & Planning (TIP)* 2020 Statewide Community Tree Plotter Inventory® Project FAQ

** Formerly called Community Threat Assessment Protocol (CTAP)*



Tree Inventory & Planning (TIP) Update for 2020

This document is to provide an update and refresher on managing your community's tree inventory (formerly known as a *CTAP). Communities are now encouraged to manage their tree inventories by using the Tree Plotter Inventory® application. This software has been available to use for free since 2018, and will continue to be free for communities until 2021. At that time, NDFS Community Forestry staff will evaluate moving forward.

How We Got Here

2012: Community Threat Assessment Protocol (CTAP) Project begins, thanks to funding from a Redesign Grant from the US Forest Service.

2017: NDFS & the North Dakota Urban and Community Forestry Association (NDUCFA) receive a Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) competitive grant. This grant features the ND TIP Tool, which enables the NDFS to capture and share community forest inventory information effectively and efficiently by utilizing PlanItGeo's Tree Plotter Inventory® software.

2021: Last year of LSR grant funding.

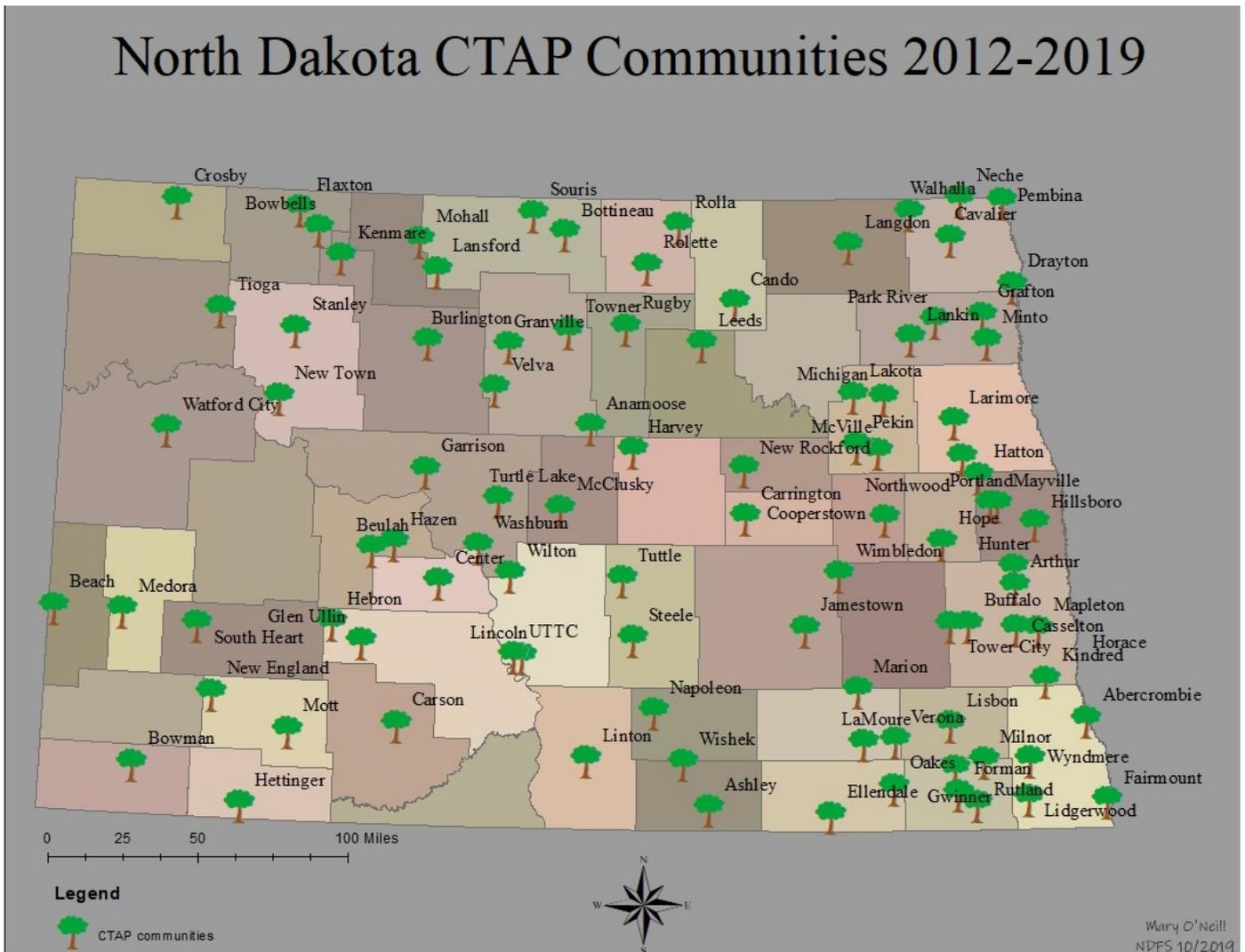
Questions This Document May Help Answer:

- What does your community/group want to do with the data?
- How much training will your city staff need?
- What are the necessary technical resources required?
- Who will manage the data & why is this data important?

First Things First...Where Can I Find My Community's Inventory?

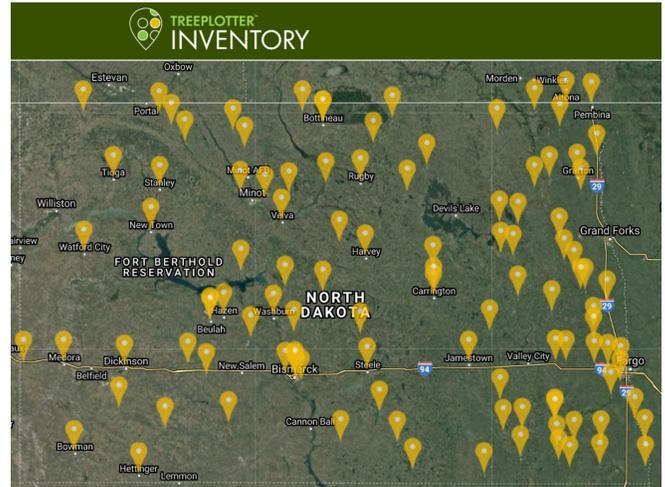
To find your community's inventory, please visit: <https://ndcitytrees.org/NorthDakota/>

- Click 'Explore Cities'
- In the Legend on the right, scroll to find your community.
- If you have a login and password already, you have full access to your community and can log in.
- If you don't, please visit <https://nducfa.org/nd-tip-tool/> to view a one-hour webinar. Once you receive your log in and password, you will have full access to your community's inventory.



What is the ND TIP Tool?

The North Dakota Tree Inventory & Planning Tool (ND TIP Tool) is part of Tree Plotter Inventory software offered by PlanIT Geo. North Dakota communities that have had a tree inventory completed are encouraged to use this Tool to manage their community tree canopy.



Why should my city inventory and map it's trees?

A tree inventory is an excellent tool for managing your community forest. Knowing what you have and where it is located is the first step in proper community forestry management. By having a tree inventory, you will be better prepared to handle management and funding decisions about tree care. Tree Plotter Inventory software allows users to map and capture information such as:

- Tree Species
- Tree DBH (Diameter at Breast Height)
- Location (Boulevard, Park, etc.)
- Condition (Good, Fair, Poor, Very Poor)

Why should my city participate?

Not only will your data help you make decisions in your community, it will also be part of a statewide tree database collection that will calculate things such as:

- Ecosystem Benefits, such as energy and stormwater runoff savings
- Percentages of the “Top 10” most common species planted
- The average condition and age class of mapped trees in North Dakota communities

Additionally, NDFS Community Forestry staff can assist communities with management options as well as potential community forestry grant projects.

How do I know what trees to inventory?

Publicly owned trees, such as those in boulevards, right-of-ways, on school grounds, or in a park can be included in your inventory. NDFS Community Forestry staff completed the initial inventory, so most of your public trees should already be inventoried. However, these inventories need to be managed so the information is up-to-date and current.

What type of information will we be able to collect?

What is great about this tool is that it can be used by people who have limited knowledge of trees, or by trained professionals. Users DO NOT have to fill all of the data fields for each tree. This is your community's inventory– fill out as much or as little information that you're comfortable with. However, NDFS Community Forestry staff recommends you complete and/or update at least these four fields:

The screenshot shows a web form titled "TREE DETAILS - 32956". At the top left are "DELETE" and "CLOSE" buttons. Below them is a note: "* All changes are saved automatically." There are five tabs: "TREE", "LOCATION", "MANAGEMENT", "RISK ASSESSMENT", and "HISTORY". The "TREE" tab is active. The form contains the following fields:

Primary ID	32,956
Status	Alive (dropdown menu) <input type="checkbox"/> Archived
Common Name	Ash, green (dropdown menu)
Latin Name	Fraxinus pennsylvanica (dropdown menu)
Genus	Fraxinus (dropdown menu)
Cultivar	(dropdown menu)
DBH	18
Tree Height (Estimated)	(text input field)
Condition	<input type="radio"/> Dead/Dying – 0% <input type="radio"/> Fair – 70% <input checked="" type="radio"/> Good – 80% <input type="radio"/> Poor – 50% <input type="radio"/> Very Poor – 30%

DBH = diameter at breast height. Measure the tree with a tape measure. Take that number and divide by Pi (3.14).

Additional information to collect:

The more information you gather about your community's trees, the better idea you'll have on managing these trees. Below are some additional fields of information that will help you with tree management:

Observations	Clear <input type="checkbox"/> Canker <input type="checkbox"/> Cavity Decay <input type="checkbox"/> Crown Dieback <input type="checkbox"/> Frost Cracks <input type="checkbox"/> Girdling Roots <input type="checkbox"/> Grate/Guard <input type="checkbox"/> Hardscape Damage <input type="checkbox"/> Improperly Installed <input type="checkbox"/> Improperly Mulched <input type="checkbox"/> Improperly Pruned <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Damage <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial Tree <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrient Deficiency <input type="checkbox"/> Pests <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Drainage <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Location <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Root System <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Remove Hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Serious Decline <input type="checkbox"/> Topped <input type="checkbox"/> Vines
Tree Comments	<input type="text"/>
Stock Type	<input type="text"/>
City Managed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> True
Tree Number	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Photos	<small>To select multiple, hold down the shift or ctrl key and select.</small> <input type="button" value="Choose Files"/> No file chosen
Land Use	<input type="radio"/> Industrial/ Large Commercial <input type="radio"/> Multi Family <input type="radio"/> Park/ Vacant/ Other <input type="radio"/> Single Family <input type="radio"/> Small Commercial
Location on Site	<input type="radio"/> Front <input type="radio"/> Left <input type="radio"/> Park <input type="radio"/> Rear <input type="radio"/> Right
Planting Site Width	<input type="radio"/> Class I (small) - 1-5ft <input type="radio"/> Class II (medium) - 6-10ft <input type="radio"/> Class III (large) - 11ft+
Cutout Size	<input type="text"/>
Park Name	<input type="text"/>

Observations: capture common occurrences such as crown dieback, poor pruning and topped trees

Tree Comments: capture helpful information here, such as trees planted as part of a grant project or Arbor Day celebration (ex: 2020 Arbor Day)

Photos: extremely helpful for future comparison

Land Use: capture additional helpful location information

Planting Site Width: extremely helpful for boulevard trees and in regards to 'right tree, right place' (ex: you don't want to plant a large stature tree in a small boulevard space)

What else does this Tool capture?

One can also view “eco benefits” provided by each individual tree and/or your community’s entire community forest. The Tool can also generate reports, graphs, and maps.

Who should manage our community’s inventory?

City staff, Tree Board member(s), Park Board member(s)- really anyone in your community that has an interest in trees (students, master gardeners, etc.).

What type of technology do we need to maintain our inventory?

While in the field, a tablet such as an iPad or Surface, but smart phones also work well. In the office, the cloud-based platform can be accessed through desktop and/or laptop computers.

What does cloud-based mean?

It means that the platform is accessible from just about anywhere. You can simply go out to the field and begin working if you have a username and password for the TIP Tool.

What if none of our city staff or volunteers know nothing about trees and tree ID?

As your initial inventory was completed by NDFS Community Forestry staff, you will be able to easily learn about the most common trees in your community by studying and updating your existing inventory.

Is there training for our city’s staff and/or volunteers?

NDFS and NDUCFA have offered training sessions via webinar and some onsite visits. NDUCFA recorded the webinars and they are readily available to view here: <https://nducfa.org/nd-tip-tool/> (Scroll down to ‘Help Using the ND TIP Tool.’) There is also a TIP Tool User’s Guide available via PDF.

Can our community use volunteers to update our inventory?

Yes. We recommend volunteers be at least high-school age. NDFS and NDUCFA are also working with NDSU Extension Master Gardeners to assist us with updating communities near their respective residences.

Can our city hire a consultant to inventory our trees?

Yes. If your community is willing to contract with a consultant to collect tree data it is free to do so at its own expense.

What do we need to “report” to NDFS and NDUCFA?

For grant reporting purposes, NDFS needs to show how much time participating groups and communities are spending using this software. This helps us “match” the grant dollars that were awarded for this project. NDFS and NDUCFA has asked communities to simply report their time spent using the TIP Tool every month.

Will this software help my city develop management plans?

Yes. The software has also helped a handful of communities submit successful community forestry grant projects.

What happens after the grant funding/grant period has finished?

Where can I find more information?

The Tree Plotter Support page has great information, including FAQ: <https://support.treeplotter.com/>

You may also contact NDFS Community Forestry staff with any questions or concerns that you may have:

Gerri Makay, Community Forestry Manager

gerri.makay@ndsu.edu

Mary O’Neill, Community Forestry Specialist

mary.oneill@ndsu.edu

Beth Hill, Community Forestry Specialist

beth.hill@ndsu.edu

<https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/ndfs/programs-and-services/community-forestry>

