

Background

IPRO 350 is a continuing Entrepreneurial Project dealing with the problem of urban wood and its underutilization. Previous groups have explored utilizing much urban trees much the same as forest trees. Since then, the current IPRO has collaborated with the Wood Utilization Team(WUT), a team of wood industry experts, and three Chicago municipalities to conduct feasibility studies to ascertain potential future areas for expanded utilization of urban wood within the communities.



Objective(s)

- Finding and developing outlets for under utilized urban wood.
- Deal primarily with ash trees being cut down due to Emerald Ash Borer(EAB) infection.
- Work with the Illinois Wood Utilization Team(WUT) and the municipalities of Evanston, Oak Park, and Wilmette
- Identify all the current uses for this wood, as well as investigate ways to promote its usage in higher end products.
- Locate companies/individuals willing to utilize urban wood.
- Submit feasibility study covering all aspects of urban wood.



Contacts

Since the existing and potential users of urban wood were identified, the potential users were surveyed to see the feasibility of adapting urban wood into their programs.



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY-ILLINOIS

Interested in urban wood as it applies to sustainable home initiatives. Non-Direct Use



US FOREST SERVICE PRODUCTS LAB

Interested in urban wood for its product development of 3Def fiberboard.



NILES NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

Interested in utilizing urban wood in their theatre production classes.



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Interested in urban wood for use in their for profit furniture making component.



HORIGAN URBAN FOREST PRODUCTS INC.

Interested in seeing more urban wood utilized. Currently uses urban wood in their business.

OTHER CONTACTS

Salvage One, Grassroots Energy Inc, Provisio East, US Forest Service Products Lab, Moraine Valley Community College.

*More contacts available in report.

What Can Urban Wood Used For?

Urban wood can be turned into as many products as is possible with conventional forest wood. Some of the following are primary examples:

Low Value

Unrefined/Raw Wood



Processed/Raw Wood Products



Processed/Refined Wood Products



GREATEST OBSTACLE

Further utilization of urban wood has been met with skepticism by businesses and individuals. However, with increased awareness of the quality of urban wood, and its uses, these same skeptics are beginning to come round



What Is Urban Wood?

Urban wood is any tree in an urban or suburban neighborhood, which can be turned into wood products for use by consumers. This wood can be found in free-standing trees, to wood products thrown out, such as excess construction wood material.

Parties Involved With Urban Wood

Existing and potential user of urban wood include:

Private Sector

SawMills
Furniture Shops
Contractors
Retail Chains

Public Sector

Universities
High Schools
Department of Corrections

Non-Profit Sector

Sustainability Initiatives (LEED)
Habitat for Humanity



Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION A

Municipalities - Contractors.

Utilization by adapting existing contracts to include higher use clause.

RECOMMENDATION B

Municipalities - Small Business-Non-Profit.

Utilization by small scale sawmills, furniture makers, contractors etc..

RECOMMENDATION C

Municipalities - Large Scale Businesses.

Utilization by biomass processing energy companies for electricity/heat generation.

CONCLUSION

- There is a significant stock of urban trees cut every year that can be utilized.
- Businesses are already in the market utilizing urban wood.
- Supply management is necessary to promote urban wood.
- Regulations are paving the way for increased use of urban wood.
- There must be collaboration among parallel projects attempting to utilize urban wood.

Potential for utilization of urban trees exists, the next steps will be to link urban stocks with the free market.

SPECIAL THANKS:

Wood Utilization Team
Municipalities of Evanston, Oak Park, & Wilmette
Guest Entrepreneur: Cate Brady
IPRO Faculty & Staff

IPRO 350

ENVIRONMENTAL AND URBAN WOOD RECLAMATION



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