



## Press Release

For Immediate Release

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### **Azavea Launches PhillyTreeMap.org, a Web Application to Enable the Public to Collaboratively Map and Inventory Philadelphia's Urban Forest**

**Free registration lets the public add and edit information to the current database of 175,000 trees**

**Philadelphia, PA, April 29, 2011** – [Azavea](#), a geospatial analysis (GIS) software development company announces the launch of PhillyTreeMap ([www.PhilllyTreeMap.org](http://www.PhilllyTreeMap.org)), a wiki-inspired web application that enables the public to collaborate with the project partners – City of Philadelphia [Parks & Recreation](#), the [Pennsylvania Horticultural Society](#) (PHS), and the [Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission](#) – to map, inventory, and preserve the Philadelphia urban forest. PhillyTreeMap was unveiled as part of [Philly Tech Week's Green Tech Showcase](#), today, Arbor Day.

Urban street trees have myriad proven benefits for communities including providing shade, improving air quality, assisting with stormwater runoff, raising property values, decreasing utility bills, and enhancing the look and feel of communities. While tree inventories ensure that municipalities have data to consult when managing the urban forest, creating a complete inventory is a time consuming and resource intensive process. PhillyTreeMap provides an easy-to-use public inventorying platform that encourages the public to contribute to an interactive and dynamic map of the city's tree population. While the initial database load has resulted in over 175,000 trees in the system, public help is needed to ensure the data is both current and complete. With a free registration, users can add trees to the system, edit or add to existing tree records, and upload tree images. All changes are immediately visible in the system, but a group of trained administrators will also review changes and new entries to ensure accuracy. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the City of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation will share the management and monitoring of the system.

The application currently includes existing inventories from the PHS, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, and the Township of Lower Merion. Each tree is associated with a particular location and may include information such as species, diameter, images of the tree, and yearly ecosystem impact metrics. Calculated using iTree,



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an urban forestry analysis and benefits assessment software suite developed by the USDA, these ecological impact numbers provide a clear illustration of the environmental and economic impacts that trees have on Philadelphia neighborhoods.

Azavea built PhillyTreeMap using open source code contributed by the [Urban Forest Map](#) project in San Francisco and plans to collaborate with the group on future urban forestry projects. The development of PhillyTreeMap was supported by a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) award from the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (Grant Number 2010-33610-20937).

PhillyTreeMap will help Philadelphia Parks & Recreation progress toward achieving the 30% tree canopy goal outlined in [Greenworks Philadelphia](#) by providing a tool for engaging citizens around tree planting and stewardship. PhillyTreeMap is also a timely addition to the recently launched [Plant One Million campaign](#), an ambitious multi-state plan by PHS and its partners to increase the number of trees in a thirteen county region in southeastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.

“PhillyTreeMap is an easy-to-use tool that offers new ways for the public to learn about and connect with their local trees. This complements Plant One Million’s efforts to plant, count, and tend trees in the Greater Philadelphia region,” said Amanda Benner, Director, Plant One Million, PHS.

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### **About Azavea**

Azavea is an award-winning geospatial analysis (GIS) software development firm specializing in the creation of location-based web and mobile software as well as geospatial analysis services. Azavea is a [certified B Corporation](#) that applies geographic data and technology to promote the emergence of more [dynamic, vibrant, and sustainable communities](#). Each of Azavea’s projects, products and pro bono engagements showcases this commitment. For more information, visit <http://www.azavea.com>.

If you would like more information about Azavea or to schedule an interview with Robert Cheetham, Azavea CEO and President, please contact Claire Connelly at (215) 701 – 7715 or e-mail [cconnelly@azavea.com](mailto:cconnelly@azavea.com).

### **About City of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation**

Philadelphia Parks & Recreation promotes the wellbeing of the City, its citizens and visitors, by offering beautiful natural landscapes and parks, historically significant resources, high quality recreation centers and athletic programs, along with enriching cultural and environmental programs. Find more at <http://www.phila.gov/recreation/> and <http://www.fairmountpark.org/>.

### **About Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission**

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is dedicated to uniting the region's elected officials, planning professionals and the public with the common vision of making a great region even greater. Shaping the way we live, work and play, DVRPC builds consensus on improving transportation, promoting smart growth, protecting the environment, and enhancing the economy. We serve a diverse region of nine



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counties: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer in New Jersey. DVRPC is the official metropolitan planning organization for the Greater Philadelphia Region - leading the way to a better future. Find more at <http://www.dvrpc.org/>.

### **About Pennsylvania Horticultural Society**

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) is a not-for-profit membership organization founded in 1827. Under the leadership of Drew Becher, PHS provides educational programs, great events, activities and publications for novice gardeners, experienced horticulturists, and flower lovers of all ages. Find more at <http://www.phsonline.org>.

### **About Lower Merion Township**

Lower Merion Township is a first-class place to live, work, attend school, raise a family, and build a business. Lower Merion has placed a priority on managing progress while maintaining the beauty and history of the past. The residents of Lower Merion Township are intelligent and actively engaged in their local government, sharing a common passion to preserve the first-class qualities of their beloved communities. Find more at <http://www.lowermerion.org/>.

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