



Openlands and TreePlotter Streamline Planting Events Across Chicago

Turning Real-Time Data into Smarter, Greener Outcomes

Planting Trees, Building Community

[Openlands](#) is a long-time leader in urban forestry and environmental advocacy in the Chicago region. Through hands-on community programs like TreeKeepers, they've helped grow Chicago's urban canopy one tree and one neighbor at a time. However, coordinating large-scale planting days with multiple crews and hundreds of volunteers? That's a challenge, especially when trying to track what's been planted, watered, and tagged across dozens of neighborhoods in real time.

The Challenge

With so many moving pieces (team leaders, volunteer groups, planting zones), staying on top of planting progress wasn't easy. Staff needed a way to:

- Track which trees had been fully planted, mulched, watered, and tagged
- Distinguish work completed by Openlands staff vs. volunteers
- See progress across multiple neighborhoods at a glance

Without a centralized system, planting days risked delays, miscommunications, and duplicated effort.

The Solution: A Smarter Way to Track Tree Status

Openlands turned to TreePlotter™ INVENTORY and built a custom "Planting Status" field directly into the application.

Now, when a tree is planted, its status gets updated and a symbol on the map turns purple — a simple but powerful visual cue. As zone captains and team leaders check off each task, the map updates in real time. The planting coordinator can immediately see:

- Which areas are ahead or behind schedule
- Where to send extra support
- How many trees are still in progress

Real-World Results

This setup has transformed how Openlands runs its planting events:

-  Faster, more efficient coordination between teams
-  Better communication with volunteers
-  Real-time visibility into every planting zone
-  Confidence that each tree gets full follow-through, not just planted, but cared for

What used to be a logistical headache is now a streamlined system with data at the core.



Progress in Hand, Efficiency Unleashed

"The ability to track real time progress for a very spread-out project from the palm of your hand has been a major efficiency boost for our project leaders. Whereas before, we would have to constantly drive around and hunt down the different groups to track progress, we can now focus on partner engagement or addressing specific issues because we can tell the overall situation just by checking TreePlotter."

-Tom Ebeling, Senior Forestry Program Manager, Openlands



Want to See it in Action?

Check out how TreePlotter supports organizations like Openlands in making tree planting more strategic, transparent, and community-driven. [Explore TreePlotter™ INVENTORY now!](#)