

Priority Issues, January, 2019

Portland Urban Forestry Commission

Portland is undergoing rapid growth and development. We believe that development can occur while retaining the urban forest canopy of large trees, for which our City is known and which is responsible, in large part, for Portland's high level of livability.

As we strive to achieve the City's goal of increased housing density, we must do so in a way that creates and maintains an equitable distribution of the urban forest canopy across neighborhoods of all income levels and demographics.

Several comprehensive development plans are underway: Residential Infill Project, Better Housing By Design, Streets 2035. All will have an enormous impact on the urban forest for a generation.

Urban trees have multiple benefits to health and well-being of its residents, provide wildlife habitat, act as an effective buffer against heat from solar radiation, increase property values, help municipalities meet their mandated clear air targets. Specific health and well-being benefits include reduced air pollution especially with regards to the chemicals emitted by traffic; shade, reduced cardio-pulmonary disease rates, faster healing times for patients who are near trees, lower heart rates and blood pressure, more relaxed brain wave patterns.

From these premises, we have arrived at the following policy priorities for 2019:

1. Maintain an equity focus in the distribution of Portland's urban forest canopy
 - Through the Street Tree Task Force, arrive at an alternative funding mechanism to plant and maintain street trees
 - Retain large form trees in areas undergoing development
 - Increase the percentage of forest canopy in neighborhoods where low income families live.

2. Create a limit on impervious surfaces to retain space for large form trees
 - Recommend policies to be used in development situations to prevent the permanent exclusion of large form trees by impervious surfaces.

3. Title 11 amendments
 - ??Brian to distribute list of PP&R's priority proposed changes
 - Large tree amendment (expires in 2019) re: mitigation inch-for-inch vs. fixed \$ amount