

Designing for Climate, Shade, and Health through Trees along East Portland's North-South Corridors:

Investing in Improved Streets for Underserved Residents Requires Building in Canopy Space from the Start

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Recommendations

Rethink where to find space for trees:

- Use curb bump-outs to expand available rooting space for trees in the right-of-way space. These eliminate a parking space but would provide more space to grow healthy trees. The recently adopted Pedestrian Design Guide allows this option.
- Explore partial sidewalk removal to allow for longer than 9' by 4' wide tree wells. The more rooting space readily available for trees, the more likely trees can be healthy and reach a larger size. Many portions of these transit avenues could accommodate this, as they include long stretches that have curb-tight sidewalks and don't allow street parking.
- Reduce traffic lanes in certain stretches of these avenues to provide more space for trees.
- Consider using space on streets perpendicular to 82nd, 102nd, 122nd, 148th and 162nd as possible public tree placement sites.
- Provide incentives for businesses to install and care for street trees and to have space for tree planting along the private property portion adjacent to the publicly owned frontage zone.
- For residential properties along these streets where curb-tight sidewalks prevent tree planting, subsidize planting and tree care at the front of the private property abutting the public right-of-way. Planting here can accommodate trees large enough at maturity to provide benefits to residents, pedestrians, and vehicular traffic while also providing broader community environmental benefits.
- Have the City purchase lots along these main streets for pocket parks, where healthy, large-form trees can grow.



*This bus stop on 122nd has plenty of room for a bump-out with a street tree.
Photo by Bruce Nelson.*

Plan and set goals:

- Develop specific canopy goals for these streets with specific benchmarks and how they will be measured.
- Develop a goal for how many large-form (taller than 50 feet), medium-form (25-50 feet), and small-form trees are desired on a given street and how those numbers can be attained.
- Develop a tree succession plan for 82nd Avenue, which has a large number of similarly sized flowering pears that will likely decline at about the same time.
- Incorporate into the 82nd Avenue and 122nd Avenue master plans policies that include tree planting and tree maintenance in the right-of-way space. Information for property developers pertaining to mandatory tree requirements that increase tree canopy quality and quantity must help shape the scope of future development of the commercial and residential streets.
- Work with Tri-Met to help develop standards for trees in the right-of-way in close proximity to bus stops. Offering shade can encourage more residents to take public transit, which aligns with decreased carbon emissions.
- Have Urban Forestry develop and implement a street tree maintenance plan for all sizes of street trees. This includes community provision of planting and structural pruning of young trees and professional arborist work on trees over 6" diameter at breast height or over 15' tall.
- Have Urban Forestry coordinate tree planting selections along each street to promote diversity in tree family, genus, and species, possibly following the 20-10-5 guideline (no more than 20% of the trees in any one family, no more than 10% of trees in the same genus, and no more than 5% of the same species.)
- Require a site checkoff by appropriate city staff to ensure that all current tree planting requirements have been met.

Engage the community:

- Develop neighborhood volunteer groups or community-funded groups to provide structural pruning of young street trees to enhance longer term tree health. This also encourages workforce development, community engagement with the environment, and community building.
- Involve the community in renaming these north-south avenues as a way to give public recognition to selected community cultural/social/political icons to enhance cultural pride and identity.
- Actively engage with community members to generate and act on ideas for how to increase tree canopy.