

EAST PORTLAND PARKS COALITION MEETING NOTES 3/2/2023

Announcement flyer:

TREES FOR LIFE AND EPDX TREE COVER

Join us with special guest Bruce Nelson, Trees for Life Oregon volunteer. Bruce will discuss the tree cover issues in East Portland, and strategies needed to preserve and improve tree cover in our part of town. Also, spring work parties are around the corner! Tune in for info!

Meeting notes:

Street Trees in EPDX

A small but enthusiastic group greeted Bruce Nelson for his talk about the tree canopy in East Portland. Bruce's PowerPoint presentation showcased his efforts to document the street tree situation along major N-S corridors in East Portland: 82nd Avenue, 102nd Avenue, 122nd Avenue, 148th Avenue and 162nd Avenue. This 2022 survey work superseded a previous City of Portland tree survey done in the mid-2010's.

The presentation began by giving a brief history of changes made to the area after European invaders came and started modifying the oak savannah inhabited by the historic Native American tribes. During the 1800's and 1900's the area was transformed into agricultural land, supplying the European settlements in the Willamette Valley. Roads were laid out in a haphazard N-S and E-W grid. The roads originally were wide enough for horse drawn wagons, and later were widened to accommodate an ever-increasing volume of traffic. This part of the city was annexed in the 1980's or later, and thus did not grow with the same design standards as older sections of the city.

As a consequence of these knee-jerk design efforts, East Portland inherited wide roads with curb tight sidewalks, if any sidewalks at all. Street trees can be found on only 8% to 25% of the tax lots on any of the N-S corridors in the study. Average distance between street trees is 214' on 82nd Avenue, 210' on 102nd Avenue, 243' on 122nd Avenue, 355' on 148th Avenue, and 377' on 162nd Avenue. That's maybe one tree per block!

In addition to problems arising from the lack of enough tree coverage, there are diversity problems in the tree inventory. 82nd Avenue is most problematic in that respect, with 48% of its street trees being ash trees and 36% being flowering pears. Such monoculture was an aesthetic fad during the 1970's and 1980's in order to give the plantings architectural uniformity. However, pests and diseases like the Emerald Ash borer really propagate in this type of environment, so tree canopy diversity is just as important as coverage.

Another problem found in previous street tree plantings is the size of the planters and the use of tree grates. The ginkgo trees planted in tree wells with grates along 102nd will need the grates removed or cut away soon. They also create a tripping hazard by sending up shoots through the gratings.

Another problem, especially in the flowering pears on 82nd Avenue, is sun scald on the tree trunks. These thin-barked trees are limbed high early in their lives and then planted in the harsh paved environment, where the sun reflects off concrete surfaces. All these trees have sun scald on their southwest sides. Ways to mitigate this might be wrapping young trees or painting their trunks with protective paint, don't

limb up tree until later, don't plant thin-barked trees on streets, and possibly to use companion plants to shield the trunks.

The bottom line is that there is a lot of room for improvement in the street tree canopy of East Portland. Too bad there is not also nice big planter strips in which to plant trees along these roads. But there is hope. Portland is doing a pilot project in Brentwood Darlington on Duke Street to remove spaces in the parking lanes of some roads to provide tree planters. These curb bump outs might be a good solution for some of the streets in East Portland. Also, a complete makeover is planned for 82nd Avenue and Bruce thinks that they are planning tree islands in the middle of the road where there isn't room for trees along the sides of the ROW. Also, 162nd Avenue has a humongous ROW in areas that could accommodate walkways and street tree planters in the future.

Bruce mentioned that some municipalities use miniparks to add in greenery. (I can think of some examples of opportunities in Portland for this sort of thing - the Arleta Triangle Square in Brentwood Darlington and the hydroparks of Portland.) We need to be proactive in supporting all these efforts and opportunities in upcoming years to get our tree canopy healthy.

Bruce concluded the meeting with an invitation to plan a tree walk this year in East Portland at our request. We should take him up on that.

References and Announcements

[Trees For Life \(treesforlifeoregon.org\)](https://treesforlifeoregon.org)

Heritage Trees of Portland [Heritage Trees of Portland | Portland.gov](https://www.portland.gov/heritagetrees)

[Tree Inventory Project | Portland.gov](https://www.portland.gov/treeinventory) Volunteers have mapped, measured, and identified nearly 250,000 trees along Portland's streets and in parks in 2022.

[Youth Conservation Crew \(ages 14-18\) | Portland.gov](https://www.portland.gov/youthconservationcrew) The Youth Conservation Crew (YCC) provides employment opportunities for a diverse population of Portland-area youth. Crews protect, restore, and manage Portland's parks and natural areas while developing job skills and exploring environmental career paths. Apply by April 10 for this summer's jobs. Crews include No Ivy League West, Tree Crew, Trail Crew, Community Gardens Crew, and City Nature East. Pay for new hires starts at \$16/hr. Minimum ages for crews is 14 and for crew leaders is 20.

[Aquatics Training Programs and Employment Opportunities | Portland.gov](https://www.portland.gov/aquatics) Portland Parks & Recreation is looking for team-oriented, enthusiastic and qualified staff to operate our year-round indoor and summer outdoor swimming pools. This is a great opportunity to learn leadership skills and help others stay safe and enjoy being in the pool.

- Lifeguard
- Swim Instructor
- Water Fitness Instructor

Pay starts at \$18.50. Closing date is June 30, 2023. As of October 18, 2021, all City employees must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19. This is required for all positions at the City of Portland. Proof of being fully vaccinated is required by date of hire. You may request an exception, for health or religious reasons, from getting the COVID-19 vaccine at the time a position is offered.

You must be 16 years old to apply. Certification must be current through the duration of employment. Hours may vary and are based on program needs and job classification.

SPARROWHAWK NATIVE PLANTS SALE! At check-out, select to pick-up your plants at one of four April/May pop-up events. The community partners hosting the spring events are Leach Botanical Garden (pickup April 14-15), Friends of Tualatin Hills Nature Park, Friends of Baltimore Woods, and North Clackamas Watersheds Council. Order by March 26, and they do sell out of stuff so order early!
www.sparrowhawknativeplants.com

NORTH POWELLHURST PARK CLEANUP Saturday, March 4, 2023, 9 am - 12 pm. Come volunteer to remove trash and invasive weeds, and help restore this Centennial neighborhood jewel. No experience needed. Gloves and tools will be provided. Meet at park entrance at SE 135th Ave. Wear attire appropriate for pulling weeds and prepare for rain or sunshine! For more information, contact Chris Sanderson at builderbybike@gmail.com.

BLOOMINGTON PARK TREE PLANTING - Saturday, March 11, 2023, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm. Bloomington Park is located at 10131 SE Liebe Street, Portland, OR 97266

JOHN LUBY PARK NO IVY DAY EVENT - Saturday, March 11, 2023; 9am-12pm, John Luby Park, NE 128th Avenue and Brazee Street, Portland 97230. Experience: No experience necessary! Volunteers of all ages welcome. If you have any questions about the event or signing up, please email our site coordinator Kirsten Provenzano at kirsten.provenzano@portlandoregon.gov.

WEED WARRIORS Welcome back to another fun weeding season at Luuwit View Park! The kickoff this year is on Tuesday March 21 at 9:00 am. We will meet at the North parking lot, accessed from NE Shaver Street at 131st Ave., and weed the picnic area. The work party is scheduled for 1 hour, although people are welcome to stay for a bit longer. Kirsten Provenzano of PP&R will sign up participants and supply tools and gloves. Participants may also bring their own supplies. Clothing should be weather dependent and will get dirty. For more information, email Kirsten at Kirsten.Provenzano@portlandoregon.gov.

Next meeting May 4. It will include Free Lunch + Play program and SFFA program information. Look for easy to read schedules posted on those events for Summer 2023 in our Facebook page:

[East Portland Parks Coalition | Portland OR | Facebook](#).