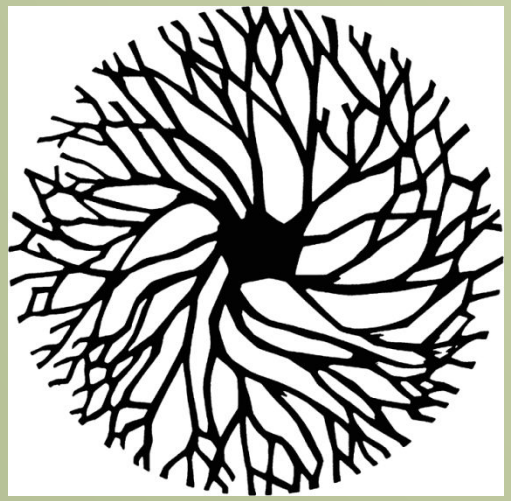
The Providence Neighborhood Planting Program



A Public-Private Partnership for Urban Reforestation & Community Engagement

Mary Elizabeth Sharpe PNPP Street Tree Endowment

- Founded in 1988, by Peggy Sharpe, in honor of her late mother-in-law Mary Elizabeth Sharpe, the first plantings took place in 1989.

- The endowment funds PNPP, and matches the City dollar-for-dollar on the cost of street tree plantings.

- Originally planted an average of 200 trees annually, and PNPP now averages 500 to 550 trees annually, and is responsible for the planting of over 13,000 street trees since its formation.

Mary Elizabeth Sharpe

Elmwood Avenue

Providence's Urban Forest through time:

In 1907, Providence was the site of about 50,000 street trees...

A 1988 street tree inventory showed a population of just over 22,000 trees!

Providence Street Tree Inventories Were Conducted in 2006 and 2017...

PROVIDENCE TREE TALLY 2017

The 2006 Tree Tally showed:

- 24,999 Trees
- 95 Different Species
- For every dollar the city spends on its forestry program, we get $3.33 in benefits. (Currently approximately $3 million dollars in benefits annually!)

Full data from the 2017 Tree Tally is still being processed, but we do know that our street tree count has risen to 27,400!

We're slowly increasing our urban forest, but it's tough out there for street trees!

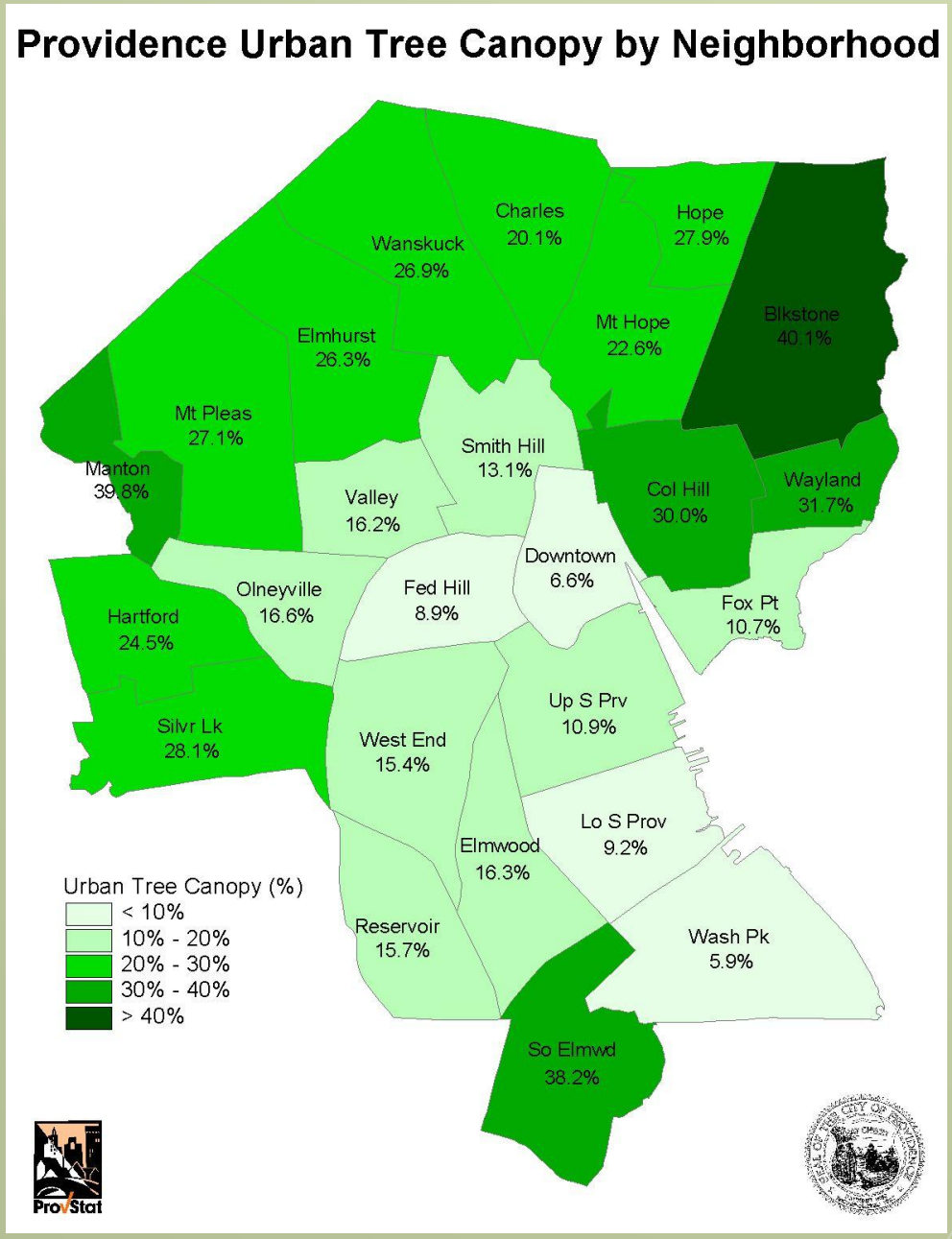
Some of the Challenges That Street Trees Face:

- Aging tree population
- Species monoculture
- Climate change, extreme weather events
- Disease and insect damage
- Sidewalk construction and repair
- Utilities Pruning
- Development
- Vandalism/Theft
- Vehicle Damage

A 2014 Urban Tree Canopy Study helped determine the following target neighborhoods for tree planting:

Elmwood
Smith Hill
Federal Hill
Valley
Olneyville
Washington Park
Reservoir
West End
Upper & Lower
South Providence

Providence overall has 23.9% Tree Cover



How are we Growing & Stewarding the Urban Forest?

- PNPP recently became its own 501(c)3, and is currently embarking on a Strategic Planning process to identify new ways we can work with the City and other stakeholders to increase the city's tree canopy and promote engagement in the Urban Forest. (We'll look to you for input and participation as that process unfolds!)

- Providence Citizen Foresters (PCF) – Pruning & Maintenance of Young Trees

- Tree Leaders—YOU!!! Neighborhood tree leaders are on the front lines; working and speaking up for trees in your neighborhoods and among your fellow citizens. You are KEY advocates for our Urban Forest!

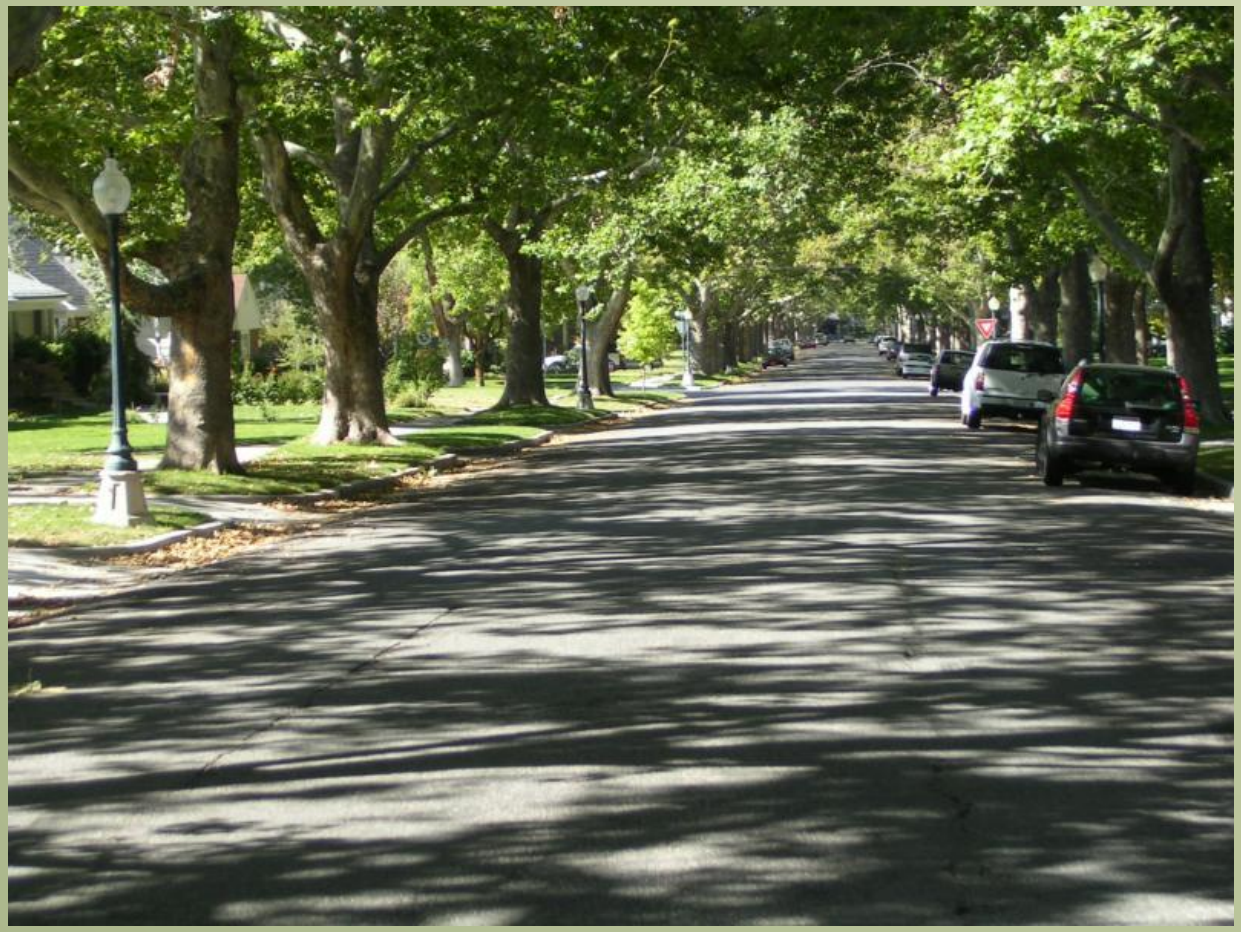
Planting the Trees!

Large Trees vs. Small Trees

- Research shows that a mature shade tree delivers up to 70 times more pollution than a small-stature tree, and improves:
  - Reduction of stormwater runoff
  - Reduction of heating and cooling costs
  - Increased property values
  - Mitigation of CO and CO2

We can't afford ***not*** to plant large trees!

We increase our street tree canopy the most by planting *large* trees~

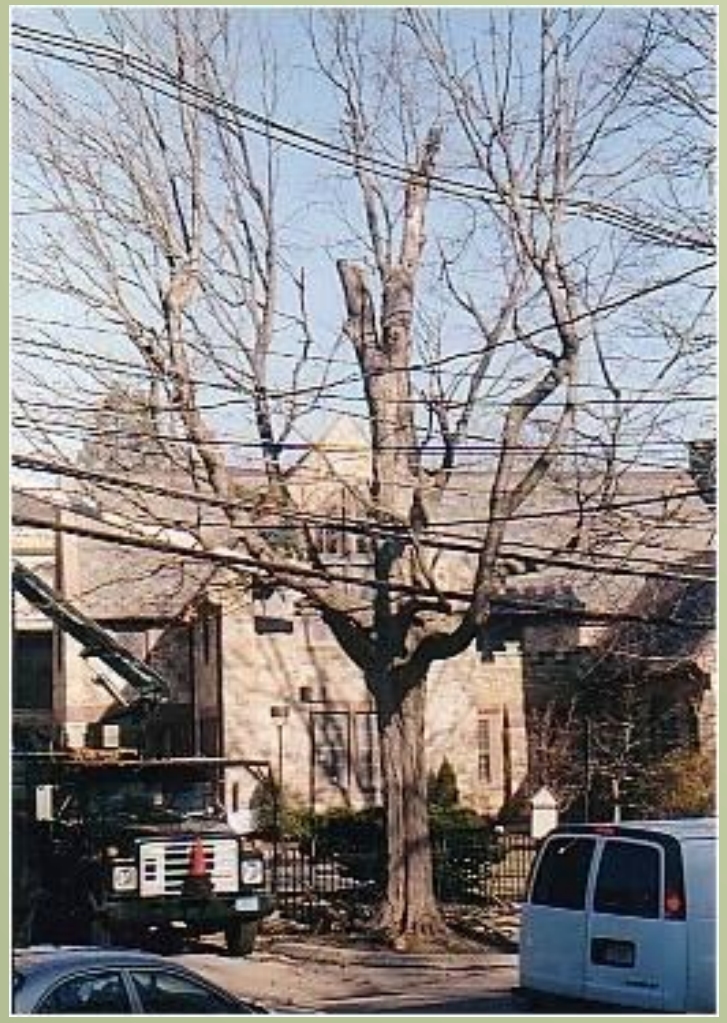


How We Decide Where We Can Plant: The Right Tree in the Right Place!

- Maximizing available space
- Think long term to avoid future conflicts:
  - *Utilities*
  - *Vehicle and pedestrian traffic & signage*
  - *Potential construction projects*
- Aesthetics
- Species Diversity

(The final decision on tree species & location lies in the hands of the City Forester...)

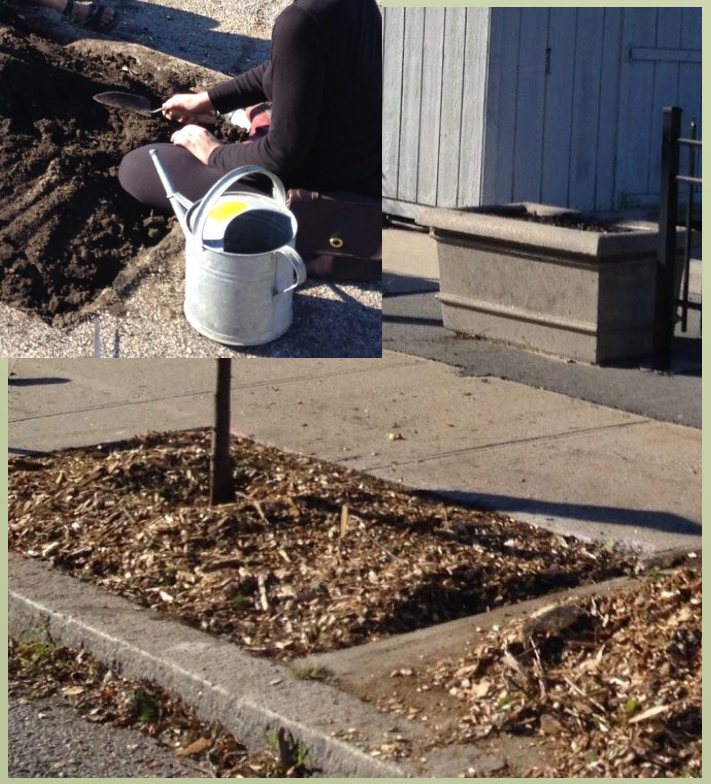
Underground Utilities (Sewer, Water, Electrical…)



Crown Space & Overhead Wires

“T” Marks the Tree Spot

Tree Pit Preparation



Typical Tree Well

Neighborhood Tree Leader Responsibilities

Go Over Site Specifics:

•Walk through your planting route and compare the "T" markings on the curb to the revised planting site list that we have distributed to you.

•Let us know as soon as possible if you see discrepancies that don't make sense to you. We will clarify before the contractor begins work cutting the sidewalk.

•Check in with residents and volunteers (especially the "wafflers!") and make sure everyone is still on board.

Notify your neighbors of the planting date, time, & meeting spot. ***Make sure that they*:**

- Understand they are there to help plant ALL of the trees, not just the ones in front of their house!
- Know that the sidewalk may be cut to prep for the the trees.
- Are able to physically plant with us or participate in some other way during the planting.
- Will bring tools, wear sturdy clothes, shoes and gloves on planting day.
- Understand that they will need to water once a week, weed regularly and mulch yearly!

Other Responsibilities:

- Secure a back-up organizer for tree planting day in case an emergency comes up and you are not able to be there.
- Make sure you have enough people participating on planting day who can do physical/heavy work.
- Provide refreshments on planting day--this keeps everyone happy! (This is a great task for a participant who might not be able to help as much with the physical planting..)

Planting Day!

- Gather everyone at the arranged meeting place for the planting demonstration. Participants should plan to arrive promptly at the assigned planting start time.

- After the demonstration, everyone will break into small groups and begin to plant the trees

- Make sure you have enough tools!

Tools

Each planting group should have:

- 1 pair of bypass pruners to cut broken branches
- 1 pair of scissors or a knife to cut twine
- 2 or 3 shovels
- 1 old narrow saw
- 2 Push Brooms/Brooms

(Mark all tools with tape and magic marker, most shovels are identical!)

Dig out the holes in the tree pits before we arrive!

2 x 2 ft wide and 1 ft deep!

Be prepared, the trees may arrive early or late!

Have everyone gather at the demonstration site when we arrive

After the demonstration, we will all plant the trees together…

Break your planting volunteers up into groups of 3 - 4, and make sure each group has the necessary tools

How To Plant A Tree:

Cut the twine that's around the branches…

Cut away top roots & dirt to expose the root flare

Exposing the Root Flare...

Example of *Graft Union* and *Superficial Roots*

Measuring the Root Ball

Measuring the depth of the hole

Tamp soil down in the hole before planting

Lift the tree by the root ball and the trunk

Position the tree in the middle of the well

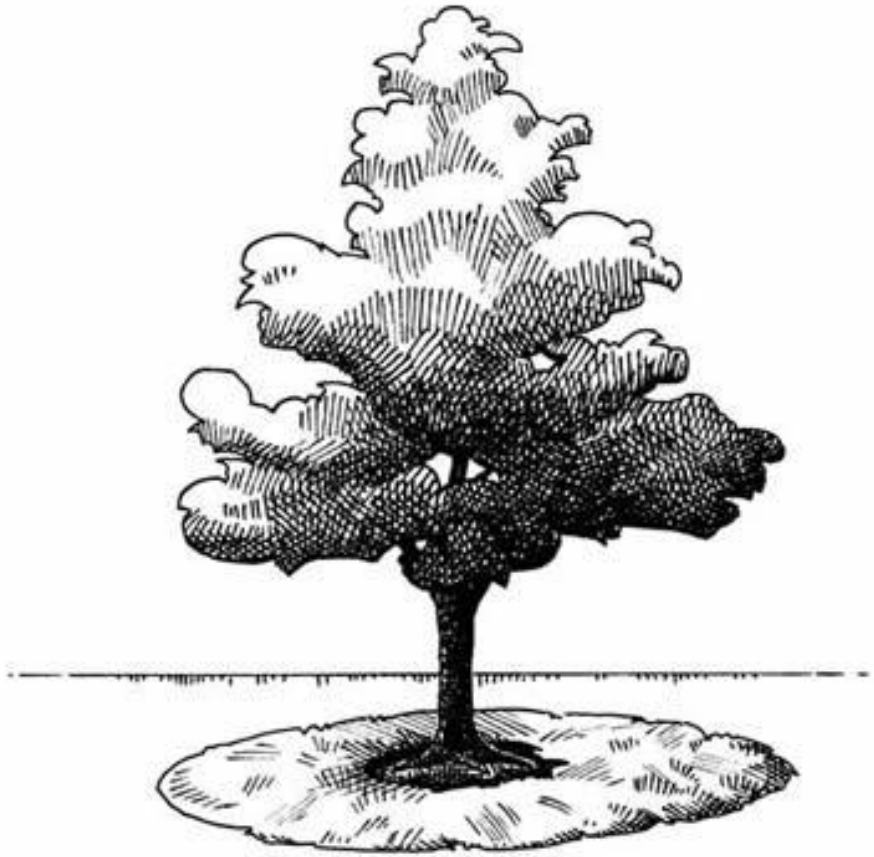
Make adjustments to the depth if needed

Get it straight!

Stamp loose soil around the root ball as it is added back in

Now, mulch the tree!

BAD



GOOD!!

Then water…and keep watering! 10 to 20 gallons (2-4 of these buckets) each week, from planting day to Halloween!

ENGINE
FD

You may choose to protect your new trees with wooden bollards, fencing or other protection…

Take photos throughout the day!

Have a Porch, Yard (or Block) Party afterwards!

Long term after care:

- Continue watering
- Replace mulch when ground thaws
- Weed tree wells
- Call Forestry Division (680-7254) for pruning, or use PVD 311
- Monitor the health of the trees you plant, report any problems to us

YOU & YOUR NEIGHBORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ONGOING CARE OF YOUR STREET TREES!

REMEMBER…

- Scoop out holes for trees before we arrive
- Wait for us to arrive and demonstrate
- Everyone should participate in the whole planting!
- Each group needs tools (including cleanup tools)
- Everyone should wear sturdy shoes & gloves
- Have hoses and watering gear ready
- Refreshments help!

Continue to be advocates for the urban forest & for more street trees in our city!

THANK YOU!!!

City Tree People:

- Cassie Tharinger, PNPP Director: (401) 368-5380
  ctharinger@pnpp.org
- Doug Still, City Forester: (401) 680-7254
  dstill@providenceri.gov

PROVIDENCE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANTING PROGRAM

PROVIDENCE PARKS + RECREATION play · relax · explore