The Providence Neighborhood Planting Program

Partnering to plant, steward, & advocate for trees in Providence since 1988!
MARY ELIZABETH SHARPE
PNPP STREET TREE ENDOWMENT

- Peggy Sharpe founded the Mary Elizabeth Sharpe Street Tree Endowment in 1988 in honor of her late mother-in-law, to be a partnership between the City, PNPP, and the residents of Providence. The first plantings took place in 1989.

- The endowment funds PNPP, and matches the City dollar-for-dollar on the cost of all street tree plantings. PNPP and the City Forestry Division collaborate on running the program.

- Together we plant an average of 500-550 trees annually, and for the last 10 years we have prioritized plantings in our lowest canopy neighborhoods. Over 13,500 street trees have been planted since 1989!
A SNAPSHOT OF PROVIDENCE’S URBAN FOREST

Using flyover imagery, we are able to see how much of our city is covered by tree canopy (this includes street trees, park trees, and private trees).

AND we can identify our priority tree planting neighborhoods!

In 2014, Providence’s overall tree cover was 23.9%

An updated Urban Tree Canopy Study is coming soon...
LARGE TREES VS. SMALL TREES

- Research shows that a mature shade tree provides far more ecosystem services than a small-stature tree, and most significantly impacts:
  - Reduction of stormwater runoff
  - Reduction of heating and cooling costs
  - Mitigation of CO and CO2

We can’t afford *not* to plant large trees!
NEIGHBORHOOD STREET TREE PLANTINGS!
PLANTING SEASON TIMELINE: What Happens *Before* Planting Day...

**August - September:** PNPP/Forestry survey and mark each planting site, determine the appropriate pit size, and choose the *Right Tree for the Right Place*. We send tree leaders a draft copy of the surveyed list to review, and answer any questions/make adjustments as needed.

**September - October:** Site lists are given to our contractor. They call each site into Dig Safe before they cut new or expanded tree pits in the sidewalk (when necessary), remove existing compacted dirt, and replace it with new soil! In the meantime we assign the appropriate tree species to each site, and share that finalized list with you the week of your planting.
PLANTINGS & WEATHER:

- We plant trees in rain or shine! *(In the event of SEVERE weather or dangerous conditions, we may postpone plantings. In that case we will notify you by 3pm on the day before your planting)*
TREES LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

**OVERALL:**

- Coordinate with us on the planting sites as well as details about planting day.

- Communicate all relevant info to tree recipients and volunteers, and identify who will be participating on planting day.

- On planting day, help us make sure that everyone is planting trees in a socially distanced COVID-safe way!

- Report to us any trees in the planting that do not survive over the next 1-2 years so we can replace them if appropriate.
THE WEEK OF THE PLANTING...

- Do a *walk-through of your planting area* and make sure everything looks right, according to the list we’ve sent you!

- **Communicate with participants:**
  - Remind them about the planting date, time and meeting spot, and confirm that they are planning to be there.
  - Make sure tree recipients understand everyone should help plant ALL of the trees, not just the ones in front of their own houses.
  - Email the tree planting instructions, video & tree care guide.
  - Email or drop off COVID safety guidelines flyer.

- We’ll send out the final species list the week of your planting, and you can let participants know what tree species they’ll be receiving.
COMMUNICATING COVID SAFETY GUIDELINES TO PARTICIPANTS

Remind planting participants to:

- Maintain appropriate distance from all planters who are not in their household.
- Wear a face mask at all times while planting
- Bring a member of their household to be their pod-planting buddy, if possible!
- Bring their own gardening/work gloves & tools (large shovel, push broom, garden rake) if they have them, to reduce the use of shared tools.
- Bring their own water/snacks if they would like. There will be no shared refreshments this season.

(These guidelines will all be on a flyer that we will send to you to pass out to participants in advance of the planting!)
PNPP WILL PROVIDE AT EACH PLANTING:

- Backup Gloves & Tools
- Backup Masks
- Hand Sanitizer
- Check-in Sheets/Pens (for contact tracing)
- Printed out planting & tree care guides
- PNPP Tree tags
- Disinfectant Spray (for shared tools)
TOOLS

The most important tools are shovels and rakes, however each planting group (3-4 people per group) should ideally have:

- 2 or 3 shovels
- 1 pair of small bypass pruners
- 1 small hand saw (a cheap drywall saw works great!)
- 1 push broom/broom
- 1 metal rake

PNPP will provide tools, but we won’t have enough of everything for large plantings (15+ trees)---If that’s you and you’re worried about having enough tools on planting day, let us know! Most tools look identical; it’s a good idea to suggest that folks bringing their own tools mark them with tape or permanent marker so they don’t get lost!
ON PLANTING DAY!

- Gather everyone at the arranged meeting place for the planting demonstration.
  - The Forestry crew will be dropping of the trees and mulch at each planting site before the start of your planting. **Participants should NOT begin planting trees until AFTER the demo, even if the trees have arrived!**
  - *This season, if we have more than 10 tree people participating, we will split up and do 2 or 3 planting demonstrations at the same time, to ensure safe distancing is possible!*
• After the demonstration, we will break into small groups and begin to plant the trees
  ○ To ensure safe and effective planting for larger plantings (15 or more trees), it will be important to plan and assign planting groups and sites in advance.

  Tree Leaders with larger plantings: we will work with each of you come up with a plan for your planting!

• The PNPP / Forestry team will be circulating during the planting to help out where needed
Participants *may* begin digging a hole in each pit ahead of time...

...but don’t dig too much! Holes should be 2 x 2 ft wide and 1 ft deep, in the center of the tree pit!
We’ll kick things off with the *Tree Planting Demonstration*...
The MOST important thing to remember when planting a tree is that we must plant it at the right depth!

To do this we will...
...cut away top roots &
dirt to expose
the **root flare**.

The **root flare** is where the trunk begins to widen and the first major roots begin:
The base of the root flare should be at the same level as the soil.

In order to find the right position, we must...
Measure the Root Ball...

... and measure the depth of the hole to make sure it is the same depth as the root ball!
After the tree is planted, mulch it!
The Forestry crew will leave a pile of mulch beside each tree pit.

Spread the mulch in the shape of a DONUT! (No volcanos!)
Then water…and keep watering!
Starting immediately following the planting, young trees need 10 to 20 gallons (2-4 of these buckets) each week, from planting day until about Halloween!
After the ground thaws the following spring, resume watering 10-20 gallons per week, through the summer!
A few final tips for Tree Leaders...
Take photos throughout the day!
(or assign this task to someone!)
Let participants know that they are welcome to protect their new trees with wooden bollards, fencing or other protection...
...or plant flowers around the new trees!
REMEMBER TREE RECIPIENTS OF THE
ONGOING AFTER CARE:

- Continue watering the trees 10-20 gallons per week
- Replace mulch when ground thaws in the spring
- Weed tree wells → weeds can rob young trees of water and nutrients!
- Call Forestry Division (680-7254) for pruning concerns, or use PVD 311
- Monitor the health of the new trees (let participants know they can get in touch with you or PNPP/Forestry if there is a problem with their tree)

YOU & YOUR NEIGHBORS ARE KEY TO THESE STREET TREES LIVING LONG & HEALTHY LONG LIVES!
SOME MORE WAYS TO SUPPORT TREES IN OUR CITY

• Become a Providence Community Tree Keeper (more info at www.pnpp.org/pvdtreekeepers)

• Talk to the businesses, workplaces, institutions and community groups you engage with about the benefits of trees!

• Spread the word about PNPP, and encourage interested friends and neighbors to submit neighborhood planting applications--particularly in lower-canopy parts of the city

• Let your elected officials know that you a healthy & equitable urban forest in Providence is important to you!
THANK YOU!!!
STAY IN TOUCH!

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