

Landoe, Brian

From: Kelly Peterson <kpeterson@humanesociety.org>
Sent: Sunday, July 21, 2024 11:18 AM
To: Parks - Urban Forestry Commission
Cc: Kelly Peterson; kelly@fencesforfido.org
Subject: Title 11 Amendment Support of Large Tree Fund

Dear City of Portland:

My name is Kelly Peterson. I am a native Oregonian, and I have been in Portland nearly all my life.

I'm writing to support the large tree amendment requiring developers to pay higher mitigation fees for removing trees 20 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH) or greater.

These larger, majestic trees are remarkably connected and communicate with the other trees in an expansive underground network, by supporting the younger trees, and nourishing the soil with food, nutrients, and life. Their canopy is equally critical, to providing shade— sequestering carbon, and sheltering Portland's birds, wildlife, insects, and humans who live under their massive bows.

However, it does still allow builders to clear cut many of these large-formed trees, provided they pay into a fund. While this fund is critical, it shouldn't be at expense of cutting down large-towering trees (including Mother Trees) by builders in one community to provide funding for trees in another community.

We need to do better.

Let's do both: Fund the Large Tree Fund ***and*** preserve the existing large, majestic trees in Portland.

Large trees are superheroes in fighting climate change, cooling our homes by as much as 10 degrees –and this summer once again has certainly proved that climate change is here, and the large trees we cut down today will determine the temperatures of our neighborhood, sidewalks, and streets in the years ahead.

That's why we need to slow down clear cutting of our existing, fully formed trees, driving our big trees out of their rightful place, when there are other ways for new houses to share these lots and spare their needless removal. Ornamental trees (termed replacements) do not do the job of older, majestic trees, often towering nearly 100 feet with enormous mass and carbon offset, getting us to the city's zero emissions objective. In fact, scientists estimate just one Douglas Fir sequesters almost 14 tons of carbon in the first 100 years!

With any existing canopy removed, it takes over 100 years to recreate, and there is no concrete evidence we will ever regain a canopy's values once removed, ever. There is no "replacement". These few remaining large trees—over 100 feet, are at alarmingly low numbers. They will determine the city's future livability, and, when they're gone, they're gone. The tree inventory, conducted in recent years on public land and trees on the right of way showed a disturbing fact: How few big trees are still standing.

For that reason, I am writing to support the large tree amendment ***as well as the*** protection and preservation of our largest urban trees, ensuring our urban canopy is not compromised for short term gain. Our quality of life, our climate, our future depends upon it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kelly Peterson
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