



Portland Urban Forest Plan **Community Advisory Committee Meeting 2 Summary**

DATE: Wednesday, March 6, 2024

TIME: 6:00 to 8:00pm

LOCATION: Portland Community College, Southeast Campus 2305 SE 82nd Ave,
Portland, OR 97216

ATTENDANCE: 16 CAC members and 6 Project Staff

Abstract

The purpose of CAC Meeting #2 was to collectively understand equity and how it relates to trees in Portland, and start defining the vision, goals, and priorities for the Portland Urban Forest Plan. The 2-hour meeting included a presentation covering how we are defining equity, canopy cover and distribution in Portland, and challenges we face with tree preservation, planting, and maintenance.

Meeting 2 Outcomes

- CAC members understood what equity is and how it relates to urban forestry.
- The project team heard from CAC members about what an equitable urban forest means to CAC members.

Administration

1120 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 858
Portland, Oregon 97204
503-823-PLAY (7529) | Fax 503-823-6007

PORTLANDPARKS.ORG
Commissioner Dan Ryan



Director Adena Long

Sustaining a healthy park and recreation system to make Portland a great place to live, work, and play.

- The CAC members evaluated example tree management goals and identified gaps and other priorities.

Discussion Summary

1. Tree Equity

After reviewing the concept of tree equity and the City's assessment of tree canopy cover and distribution across Portland, CAC members broke into small groups and were asked to reflect on the following questions:

- 1. Is there a place or neighborhood in Portland that you think has the right amount of trees? Why? Somewhere you enjoy the benefits of the trees like shade and beauty?*
- 2. Are there places in Portland where it is important to have trees?*
- 3. What are the biggest reasons that prevent you or your neighbors from wanting to keep or plant trees?*
- 4. What does tree equity mean to you?*

Below are highlights of the discussion:

- **Spatial Distribution**
 - Existing designated natural areas and Portland parks are great for their shade, beauty, and environmental benefits.
 - Certain neighborhoods and cities with extensive tree coverage, particularly those with tree-lined streets, have positive impacts on the urban environment overall. These impacts include cooler temperatures and slower driving speeds.
 - Tree planting should occur around schools, public spaces, transit corridors, bus stops, new housing projects, and bike corridors.
- **Tree Planting Challenges**
 - Homeowners lack funding, policy support, and government assistance for tree planting and maintenance.

- Maintaining and watering trees is expensive for homeowners. Leaf pickup is time-consuming, and not everyone is capable of doing it.
- More education is needed on tree planting, maintenance (especially for nuisance species), tree care, and the benefits of trees.
- There is a fear of trees and property damage.
- Renters don't have control over trees around their residence.
- There can be a lack of space for trees on both private and public property.
- Trees can reduce visibility and surveillance on the street, which concerns businesses who are worried about loitering.
- There is tension between trees and infrastructure.
- Some planting strips are too small, and action needs to be taken to make room for planting in the Right-of-Way, *"PWB, PBOT, UF need to work together to find space in the right-of-way."*
- **Tree Equity**
 - The City needs to take responsibility for trees to support residents.
 - Prioritizing low-canopy areas for planting is important for equitable outcomes.
 - Everyone deserves access to the services and benefits of trees: *"Regardless of where you live, who you are, a renter/owner, etc. the health, safety (physical and mental), wellness should be accessible to everyone"*.
 - Tree planting and maintenance offers key opportunities for green workforce development.

2. Goals

CAC members were presented an example list of tree management goals and asked to provide feedback to the following prompts:

1. Which of these example goals resonate with you? What is missing?
2. What other values or guiding principles should we reflect in our vision and goals for the future?

Below are highlights of the discussion:

- Gentrification and Displacement
 - There is a risk of green gentrification. The City should be thinking about that.
 - Decision makers need to put the interests of residents and neighborhoods first and have buy-in.
- Political Context
 - There is a lack of political support for tree initiatives.
 - More support and integration is needed between bureaus, City leadership, and stakeholders.
 - Trees need to be seen as essential infrastructure, and given the same priority as housing and transportation.
- Next Steps
 - Setting specific canopy goals for different areas is important.
 - There should be specific attention given to marginalized groups and low-canopy neighborhoods.
 - The City needs to prioritize specific, implementable goals and have an ongoing process that focuses on accountability to make sure there is progress towards goals.
 - There need to be tree management goals that explicitly address anti-racism.

Meeting Design and Engagement Accountability Measures

- The meeting was held in person, with an option to join remotely and designed to prioritize bringing people together and two-way communication rather than just sharing information.
- CAC members who attended virtually were accompanied by a virtual facilitator, as a measure to provide a comparable experience to those who attended in-person.
- Project staff worked to accommodate CAC members' schedules and accessibility needs and provided communication leading up to and in follow up of the meeting.
- Qualitative and quantitative data were collected and equally valued as inputs into the project's process.

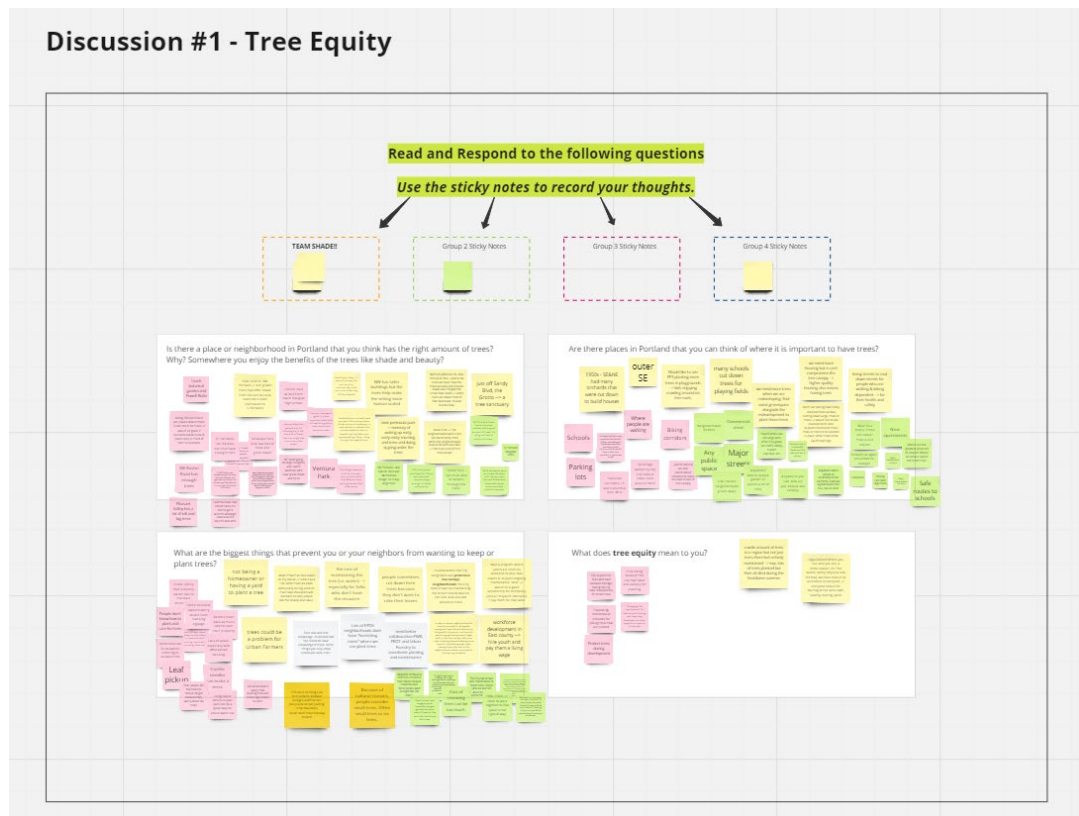


Figure 1. Image of whiteboard tool used to document notes during discussion about tree equity.

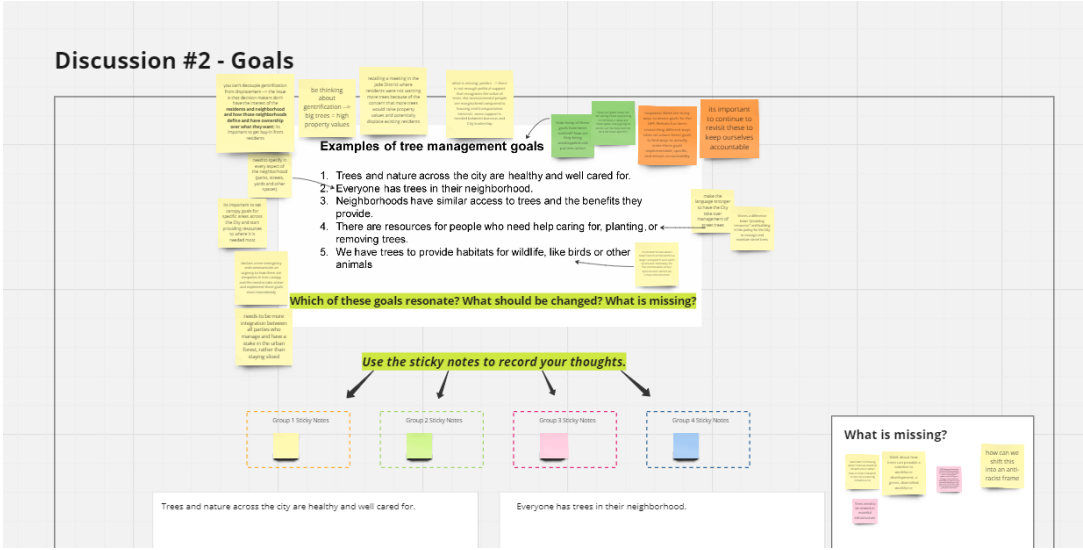


Figure 2. Image of whiteboard tool used to document notes during discussion about tree management goals.