



News Release

For Immediate Release: October 19, 2020

Durham Begins Planting 1,500 New Street Trees

Seven-Year Project Now Underway to Plant 7,500 New Trees Throughout the Bull City

DURHAM, N.C. – Residents living in Braggtown and Southside will soon experience the environmental and economic benefits of new street trees thanks to a [seven-year planting project](#) to increase the urban forest in historically underserved and low-tree canopy neighborhoods as well as to replace unhealthy street trees.

With plantings scheduled to begin in early November 2020 and lasting through March 2021 for the third year of this project, the Braggtown/Weaver neighborhood including streets surrounding Lakeview Park and Red Maple Park as well as the Southside/College View neighborhood including streets surrounding Hillside Park, James E. Shepard Magnet Middle School, and North Carolina Central University will receive hundreds of new street trees in the City of Durham's right-of-way.

The Braggtown/Weaver neighborhood will be the first to have new street trees this planting season followed by the Southside/College View neighborhood later this planting season. Additional neighborhoods to receive new street trees in the coming two years as part of this multi-year project include Old East Durham, Walltown, Lyon Park, Old West Durham, Stratford Lakes, and Downtown.

According to Director Jina Propst with the City's General Services Department, the amount of trees to be planted along with the eight neighborhoods to receive the bulk of the new streets are based on a 2017 Tree Canopy Assessment and a 2018 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Study. "Our tree assessment recommended that we plant 1,500 street trees per year in order to grow our street tree canopy. The EPA study then identified eight neighborhood groups through the U.S. Census that could benefit the most from street trees through lower energy bills for residents, increased walkability because of shade provided during our hot summers, reduced noise pollution, stormwater filtration, and improved air quality," said Propst. "Therefore, a minimum of 85% of the 1,500 street trees we plan to plant each year will be going into these identified neighborhood groups with the hope of increasing environmental equity while also increasing a healthy urban forest. The remaining 15% of tree plantings will then be prioritized based upon the replacement of unhealthy street trees as well as resident requests."

According to Propst, the majority of street tree plantings will be completed by staff in the General Services Department's Urban Forestry Division. A few volunteer tree planting events will also be held by the City's non-profit partner, [Keep Durham Beautiful](#). The trees selected for planting are a variety of Oak, Elm, Maple, and Redbud among other species. Most trees planted are 1 inch in diameter and no taller than 7-8 feet.

Approximately two weeks before a tree planting occurs, the City will leave informational door hangers on nearby residences to inform them of the upcoming tree installations. Additionally, there will be flag-and-paint markings indicating the approximate locations of the new trees in the rights-of-way. All planting locations will be inspected for underground utilities prior to planting, and most tree planting projects take a few hours to a few days to complete with minimal impacts to the street during installation. Since these newly planted trees will be in the right-of-way, the City will plant, prune, stake, and maintain the trees. While there is no resident obligation to assist, it would be helpful if residents could also water the trees nearest to their properties during the hot summer months.

“We’re working hard to increase our urban forest and bring the many environmental and economic benefits of street trees to our low-tree canopy neighborhoods,” Propst said. “Trees provide many valuable benefits to our residents. They shade our streets during the summer, clean our air and water, provide wildlife habitat, improve our mental wellbeing, and much more. For these reasons, it’s important that we maintain a healthy urban forest through an effective tree planting program ensures that our urban forest remains vigorous for our present and future residents to enjoy.”

For more information, including how to support the City’s tree planting program as well as how to request a new street tree, visit the [project webpage](#) or contact Urban Forestry Supervisor Daniel Hickey with the City’s General Services Department Urban Forestry Division at (919) 560-4197, ext. 35219 or by [email](#).

About the City of Durham General Services Department

The [General Services Department](#) builds and maintains City properties to make Durham a great place for people to live, work, and play. Guided by the City’s [Strategic Plan](#), the department’s core functions include the acquisition and sale of properties, design and management of new construction and renovation projects, building maintenance, landscaping and urban forestry services, cemeteries management, sustainability and energy management, and supporting the nonprofit [Keep Durham Beautiful](#).

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