

FRIENDS OF TREES

Friends of Trees brings people in the Portland-Vancouver and Eugene-Springfield metro areas together to plant and care for city trees and green spaces. Its Neighborhood Trees program offers homeowners low-cost, high-quality street and yard trees and organizes weekend planting events where neighbors plant trees together to improve their community. Its Green Space Initiative program brings people together to restore green spaces in parks and along public rights-of-way. By training volunteer leaders to guide weekend volunteers, the nonprofit inspires citizens to be stewards of their own community.

Founded in 1989 by Richard Seidman, Friends of Trees has planted more than 420,000 trees and shrubs since 1989, increasing tree cover in the Portland-Vancouver metro area while tree canopy has decreased in most urban areas. This fall Friends of Trees also established an office in Eugene, Oregon.

During the last planting season, Friends of Trees' Neighborhood Trees program planted 4,545 street and yard trees, more than during any previous planting season and a 24% increase over the year before. Friends of Trees' Green Space Initiative also planted more trees and native plants than during any other season: in excess of 24,000 trees and native plants—an increase of 70% over the previous season.

The current October-April planting season is the second year of Friends of Trees' whimsical Plant It Portland! campaign in partnership with the city of Portland. The campaign aims to turn the city's "grey" to "green" by planting thousands of street trees in East Portland neighborhoods. This year's campaign includes billboards that playfully mimic a recent Portland Timbers billboard campaign featuring diehard fans. In the Plant It Portland! billboards, fans heft saplings and tools on their shoulders instead of axes. The campaign focuses on four good things that grow on trees: conservation, community, health, and money.

The current planting season also marks the third of a multi-year partnership with the Oregon Department of Transportation, Metro Regional Government, and a dozen other agencies, foundations, businesses, and neighborhood groups to plant trees along the 16.5-mile Multi-Use Path. The path parallels I-205 and borders low-income, culturally diverse neighborhoods. It is used by pedestrians, cyclists, and transit travelers.

Friends of Trees is committed to growing healthy communities by bringing people together to improve their neighborhoods. Friends of Trees is also committed to a vision of tree-lined streets for all who live in the Portland-Vancouver and Eugene-Springfield areas.

"I love Friends of Trees," said one tree purchaser and volunteer, "Thank you for helping me meet more of my neighbors."

"When we plant trees," said the late Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Wangari Maathai, "we plant the seeds of peace and seeds of hope. We also secure the future for our children."

