**A Quick Guide to Keeping Big Trees in Your Neighborhood**

**1 – Talk to your neighbors:** If you learn that in your neighborhood is considering selling their property, inquire as to their plans. Developers will not be shy on this account. If it seems likely that the property will be acquired by a developer, make clear to the owners your concerns re: preserving particular trees. Learn what regulations, if any, are applicable. If you discover that the tree(s) in question are unprotected, seek out a responsible party willing to purchase the property and preserve the existing trees. This can be difficult, but not impossible, especially if the seller is sympathetic to your concerns. In some cases they may be willing to wait while you search.

**Resources:**

* [**https://www.portlandmaps.com**](https://www.portlandmaps.com) - This is an excellent resource where you can learn if/when property has changed hands and whether permits have been taken out for tree removal.
* Calling a planner or Urban Forestry can help answer questions as well: [**https://www.portlandoregon.gov/trees/60121**](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/trees/60121)
* Vivek Shandas's canopy analytics online application can help pinpoint large trees and whether they are exempt due to proximity to existing structures: [**https://climatecope.research.pdx.edu/canopyanalytics/**](https://climatecope.research.pdx.edu/canopyanalytics/)

**2 - Approach the Developer.** If a developer does end up purchasing the property, you may still be able to negotiate a favorable outcome for the trees. Approach the developer with respect and understand what leverage, if any, you have. Some questions:

* Does the developer want to continue to do projects in the neighborhood? How important is it to them to come out looking like a "good developer."
* Who has a relationship with developer? Who would be better at establishing a relationship with him or her?
* Who can rally the neighbors to save the tree and providing a public voice opposing removal? These are probably not the same people but both are likely important to helping save the tree.

**3 – Organize.** Negotiations with the developer may be helped if you organize to publicize the plight of the tree(s) in question. It’s possible that a public campaign will sway the developer, or encourage funding for a buyout, but you should also regard it as an attempt to protect other trees from a similar fate in the future.

* **Press contacts.** You will need to write and call members of local media, TV, print, online. Create a press release with info, but write personal emails and call journalists as well. Pitch your story – explain why this is something people will find interesting
* **Social media**. Shoot video and pictures of the trees, post them with a description of the situation and a “call to action” on facebook, twitter, instagram and NextDoor. Start a facebook group. Gather phone numbers and email addresses via a public google doc. Assign a team to send out and post an alert when a call to action is needed.
* **Contact city officials.** City council members and the mayor’s office will respond to large scale write/call-in campaigns. Post the contact info of the officials in place to influence the outcome and encourage folks to get in touch. You can also encourage supporters to contact the developer and the tree service company with whom they work, though this can yield mixed results. Combative language will not save trees, as a general rule.