

Trees Q&A

The Bunker Hill Housing Redevelopment will seek to preserve as many trees as possible throughout the course of the redevelopment.

Q: How many trees are on site today?

A. 340 trees

Q: How many of the existing trees are in poor condition or dead? How many trees are in good or fair condition?

A. 98 of the existing trees are in poor or dead condition and are not viable for preservation. 242 trees are in good or fair condition and are viable for preservation.

Q: How many trees are being preserved?

A. We currently expect that we will be able to preserve 89 trees across the site. This is 37% of the 242 good/fair condition trees.

Q: How many trees are being preserved in Phase 1?

A. Phase 1 preserves 9 out of 29 good/fair condition trees (31%).

Q: How many trees are being planted in Phase 1?

A. In phase 1, we will plant 57 new trees around Building F and 32 new trees around Building M.

Q: How many trees will be planted over the course of the project?

A. Over 500 trees will be planted during the 8-10 year development window, nearly doubling the number of individual trees on-site and replacing the total removed DBH after 5-10 years of growth.

Q: Are you planting saplings to replace the trees that are removed?

A. No. New street trees will be planted at 3" caliper. A 3" caliper shade tree will vary in size based on species, but is typically in the 14'-16' height range (American Standard for Nursery Stock ANSI Z60.1-2004). Within the new public open spaces, larger 6" caliper trees (>20' height) will be added as space allows.

Q: Why will the caliper be 3"? Can it be larger?

A. 3" caliper trees are the largest size recommended by Bartlett Tree Experts for street tree installation. Younger trees are generally more resilient to the stresses associated with transplantation and planting. These include: changes in light conditions (from a nursery to urban context), changes in soil conditions, and exposure to road salts.

This resiliency allows younger trees to recover more quickly from "transplantation shock" resulting in healthier, larger urban street trees. Often trees planted at 3" caliper exceed the heights of trees planted at 5" within a few seasons.

Q: Are you eliminating the tree canopy on site?

- A. No. The addition of over 500 new trees will increase the overall tree canopy on site over time and will create a strong street tree canopy presence that does not currently exist.

Q: What measures are you taking to combat heat island and shade reduction effects?

- A. There will be new shade on streets and sidewalks with a gradual canopy transition. Cool roofs and large, landscaped open spaces will also reduce heat island effects.

Q: Will local air quality be worse because of this redevelopment?

- A. No. There will be an 85% reduction in pollutant emissions from fossil fuel burning on site. Air quality will be better as a result of the redevelopment.

Q: How will the redevelopment affect resiliency and flooding on site?

- A. The site and open spaces will be built to retain 1.5MM gallons of stormwater per storm event. New buildings will also have raised grades for flood protection. The site will be better protected against flooding after redevelopment and therefore, more resilient.

Q: Why can't you preserve all of the trees in good and fair condition?

- A. Demolition of the existing buildings alone requires extensive tree removal and the even distribution of trees across the site precludes design "around trees."

Q: When will we know if you will be able to preserve additional trees?

- A. More advanced design is required for detailed analysis of additional preservation opportunities. Each phase will be subject to continuing BPDA design review, which will enable ongoing public input.

Q: Why can't you transplant / plant large trees on site?

- A. Large trees transplanted from controlled nursery environments or rural/forest edge conditions have a lower probability of success within a dense urban environment. These types of trees would also require large unobstructed planting zones to accommodate very large root balls (one foot per caliper inch means a 12" tree needs 12' diameter clear) and room to grow. Street tree wells and open areas with significant below-grade infrastructure such as utilities and stormwater retention structures/tanks are unlikely to accommodate large root balls. Planting smaller, younger trees in an urban setting enables adaptation and sets trees up for success in their new home. The larger open spaces may be able to accommodate trees of substantial scale.