



COMMUNITY FOREST REPORT 2023

The community forest is a significant asset to the urban environment and trees contribute to a more livable city. These benefits include purifying the water and air, moderating hot summer temperatures, capturing stormwater, reducing energy costs, sequestering carbon, and increasing property values.

La Grande's Community Forestry Program is a collaboration of the City, the Community Landscape & Forestry Commission, community partners and volunteers. The mission of the Community Forestry Program is to preserve and grow our vibrant community forest, and to provide information and education to our citizens regarding all aspects of trees and the urban forest.



Community Landscape & Forestry Commission (CLFC)

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URBAN FOREST RESOURCE SUMMARY

LA GRANDE'S PUBLIC TREES

4433 Street Trees

635 Park Trees

5068 Total Trees

The public tree inventory provides information on the number, diversity and condition of our City trees. This includes the trees in the rights-of-way (r-o-w), parks and public greenspaces. At the beginning of 2023 there were a total of 5068 trees in the inventory.

TREE DIVERSITY

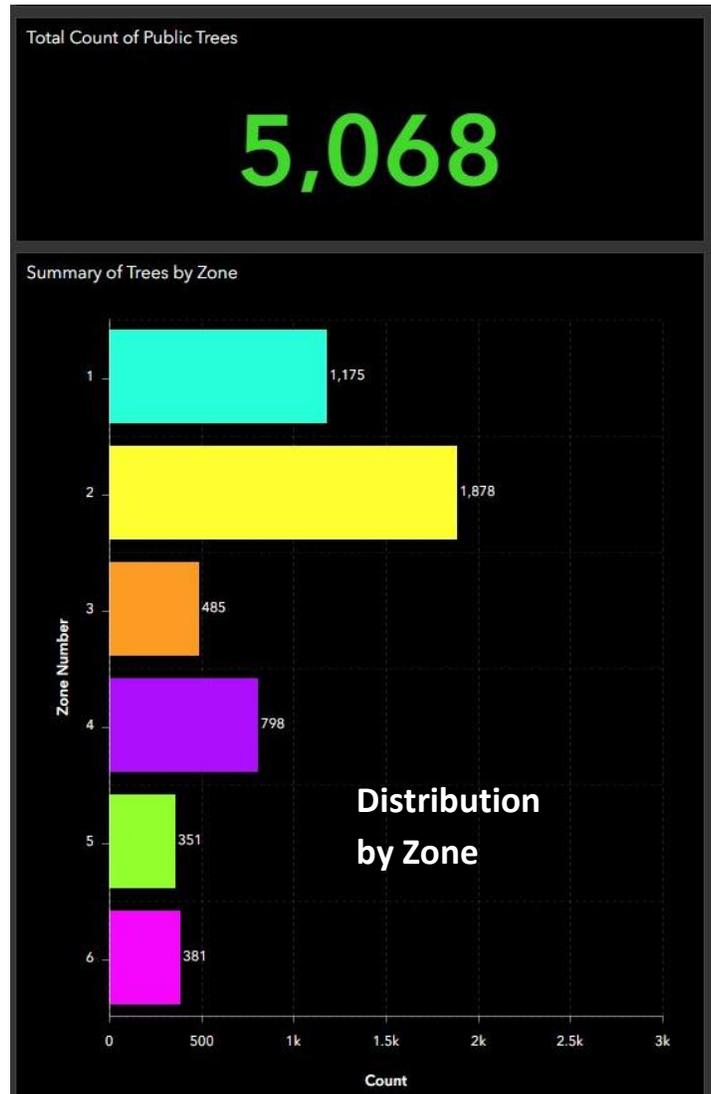
62 Genera

111 Species

80% of trees in 10 Genera

32% are Maples, *Acer*

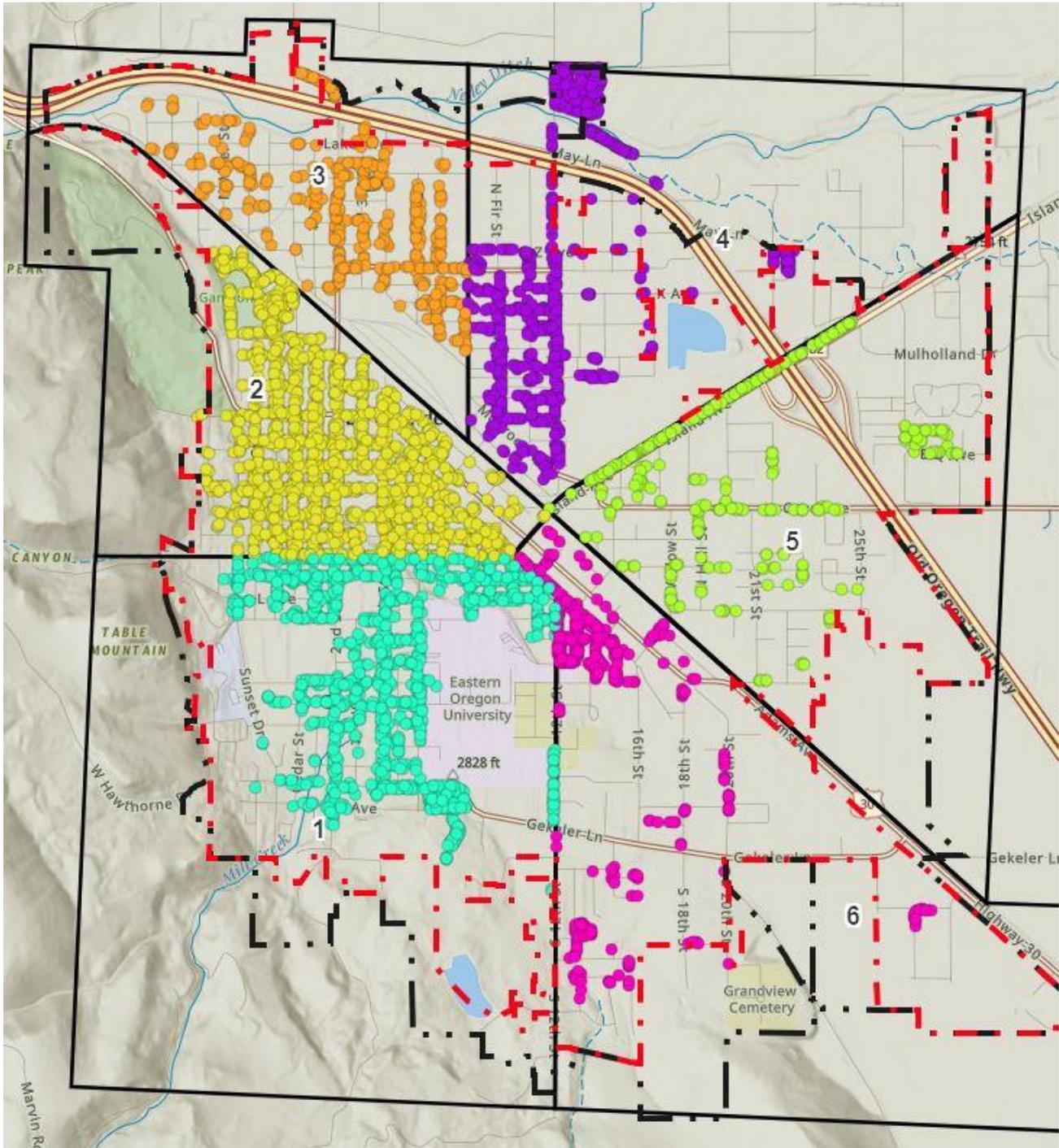
MOST COMMON GENERA	
Maple, <i>Acer</i>	32%
Apple, <i>Malus</i>	12%
Plum, <i>Prunus</i>	10%
Oak, <i>Quercus</i>	5%
Ash, <i>Fraxinus</i>	4%
Black Locust, <i>Robinia</i>	4%
Elm, <i>Ulmus</i>	4%
Linden, <i>Tilia</i>	3%
Spruce, <i>Picea</i>	3%
Pine, <i>Pinus</i>	3%



The standard recommendations for tree diversity are no more than 5% of any one Species and no more than 5% of any one Genus. Our current public tree population is 32% maples so there is work to do on building species diversity.

TREE AGE CLASS DIVERSITY: Immature 17% Early Mature 34% Mature 49%

The City is divided into six inventory mapping zones. ArcGIS mapping gives a picture of the overall tree canopy cover. Neighborhoods with low canopy cover can be prioritized for planting projects.



TREE PLANTING

A sustainable tree planting schedule is a vital component of a community forestry program. Through La Grande's established planting program a minimum of 100 shade trees are planted each year in the City rights-of-way, parks and greenspaces.

The Urban Forestry Division coordinates two community tree planting days each year. The spring planting day is held in April in conjunction with Oregon Arbor Month. The fall planting day is held in October, National Neighborwoods month. In 2023 two additional tree planting projects were done with volunteer help. At the Riverside Park trail extension 60 native trees and shrubs were planted to provide trail screening and wildlife habitat. Nine shade trees were planted at the ODOT campus to replace trees that had been removed.



Land Development Code Update

Tree planting is also required in land development within the City. In 2023 this requirement was expanded from commercial and residential developments to include individual home construction.

2023 PUBLIC TREES PLANTED

78 Street Trees in Residential Areas
 46 Parks & Greenspace Trees
 60 Public Trees in New Development

 184 Total Trees

ESTABLISHMENT

Planting a tree is just the first step in growing our community forest. To help ensure new trees become established and survive they are mulched with wood chips to conserve water and each tree gets a welded wire cage to protect it from deer and elk. The Urban Forestry Division monitors new trees for three years and provides supplemental water if needed. At three years after planting the trees are pruned to enhance structure. This formative pruning helps to establish a strong, central trunk with sturdy, well- spaced branches

At this three year mark the trees are surveyed to record condition. 2023 marked a 5% increase in young tree mortality over the past ten years, possibly as a result of the 2021 heat dome that affected our area.



3-YEAR SURVEY OF CITY TREES PLANTED IN 2020

26 Trees Excellent Condition – 26%

61 Trees Good Condition – 60%

4 Trees Fair Condition – 4 %

10 Trees Dead – 10%

101 Total Trees



City Ordinance places the responsibility of maintaining trees in the public rights-of-way with the property owner. Investment in regular tree care pays dividends in tree health and longevity and reduces maintenance costs over time. The Urban Forestry Division coordinates the commercial tree service permit program and maintains a list of tree services licensed to perform tree work in the City.

Street Tree Pruning Program

The City also contracts with a local tree service to provide street tree clearance pruning of mature trees on a 6-year rotation cycle. Proactive pruning to maintain visibility and clearance improves safety and reduces damage to trees and vehicles. In 2023 over 200 trees on 36 city blocks were pruned to provide clearance for street paving.

Powerline Pruning & Tree Removal

The City partners with Oregon Trail Electric Co-Op to directionally prune the trees near powerlines, and remove and replace trees that are in poor condition. In 2023 The removal and replacement agreement was updated to increase OTEC's contribution to purchase replacement street trees from \$100 to \$200.

2023 TREES PRUNED

670 Street Trees Pruned

72 Park Trees Pruned

742 Total Trees Pruned*

*Does not include line clearance pruning by OTEC

2023 TREES REMOVED

63 Street Trees Removed

(9 OTEC Trees)

5 Park Trees Removed

68 Total Trees Removed

8 COMMERCIAL TREE SERVICES

4 WITH CERTIFIED ARBORISTS

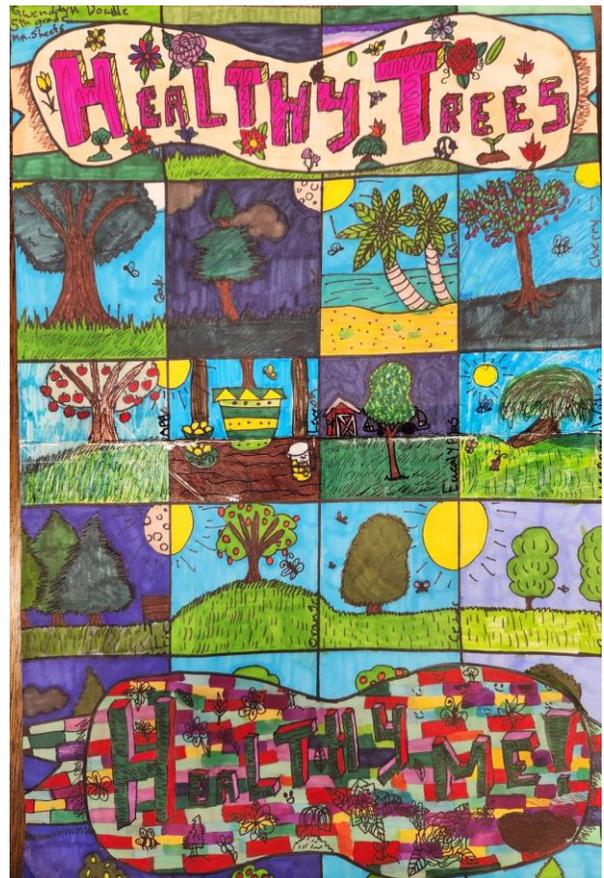


Street Tree Pruning

Ratio of Trees Planted to Trees Removed: 2.7 to 1

Community outreach increases knowledge and understanding of the value of our urban forest, and builds support for our community forestry programs. 2023 programs, projects and events included:

- OSU Master Gardener Tree Care Training
- Arbor Month Poster Contest & Field Day
- Community Forestry Volunteer Awards
- Arbor Month Community Tree Planting Day
- Landscape Beautification Awards
- Eastern Oregon Works Internship
- Mount Emily Recreation Area Field Day
- Nature Rangers Camp
- Growing Community Roots Outdoor School
- Camp Elkanah Outdoor School
- Union Library Tree Tour
- Cook Memorial Library Story Time
- CLFC Tree Pruning Day
- Neighborwoods Community Tree Planting Day
- Riverside Park Greenway Native Tree Planting
- Community Forestry Video
- City Website and Social Media Posts



COMMUNITY RESPONSES

Timely responses to questions and concerns from citizens in the community helps build trust and support for our urban forestry programs. In 2023 the Urban Forestry Division responded to 266 requests for help and information about trees and La Grande's urban forestry programs.

“The Tree City USA program was founded in 1976 to celebrate towns and cities committed to growing their urban canopy. Led by the Arbor Day Foundation, with partners at USDA Forest Service and National Association of State Foresters, it provides the foundational framework necessary for communities to manage and expand their tree cover.” www.arborday.org

LA GRANDE TREE CITY USA 33 YEARS 31 TREE CITY USA GROWTH AWARDS

In 2022 the City of La Grande was recertified as a Tree City USA for the 33RD consecutive year. Since 1990 La Grande has met the four overarching standards for annual Tree City recognition:

- 1. Maintain a tree board or department**
- 2. Have a community tree ordinance**
- 3. Spend at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry**
- 4. Celebrate Arbor Day**



La Grande also has the distinction of receiving 31 consecutive Tree City USA Growth Awards, more awards than any other Oregon city, and second in the nation. The Tree City USA Growth Award is presented to participating Tree City USA communities that demonstrate increased levels of tree care and community engagement.

The 2023 Tree City USA Certification and Growth Award recognition will be announced by the Arbor Day Foundation in January, 2024.

2023 GROWTH AWARD ACTIVITIES

- Urban Forestry Internship**
- Grow La Grande! Events**
- Young Tree Training**
- Ordinance Enforcement**

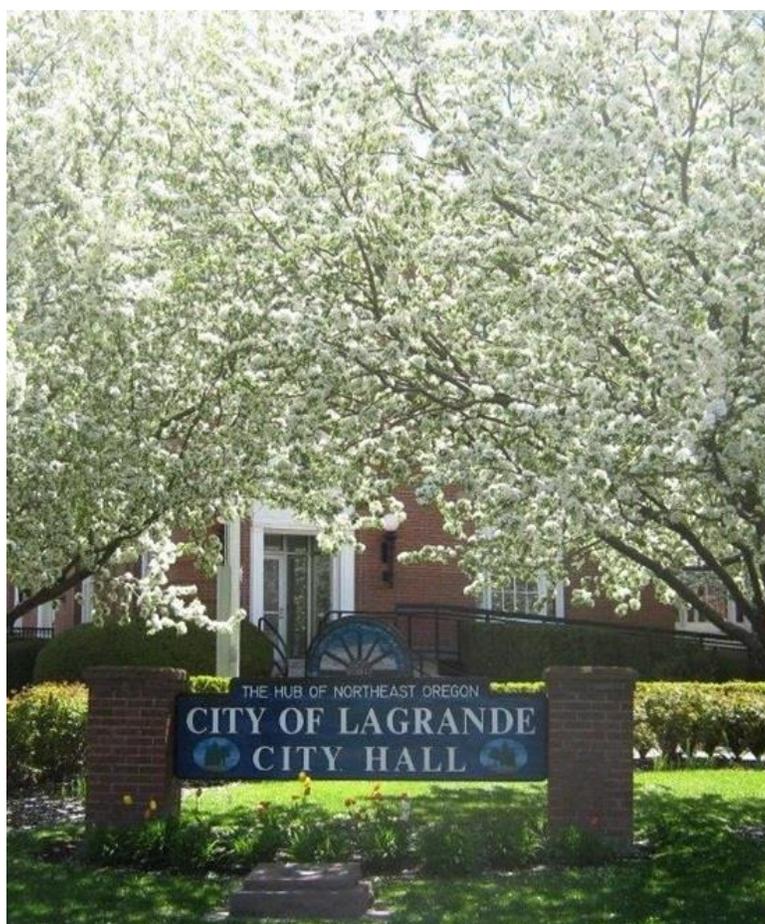
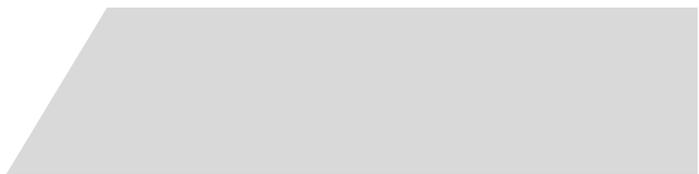
VOLUNTEERS

The members of the **Community Landscape and Forestry Commission** volunteer their time and energy to guide La Grande's urban forest policy and assist with the community forestry programs. The five members of the commission are appointed by the La Grande City Council and serve a three year term. Applications to serve on the commission are available on the City website. www.cityoflagrande.org/commissions

The **Grow La Grande!** volunteers plant trees in the City right-of-way and other public spaces. Volunteers also help with mulching, watering and pruning young trees. *Grow La Grande!* volunteers include service groups, schools, youth groups, master gardeners, businesses, and individuals interested in growing our urban forest. To join the *Grow La Grande!* Volunteers send an email to trees@cityoflagrande.org or call 541-663-1952.



195 Hours Volunteered in 2023
\$5565 in Volunteer Value



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