

**COTTAGE GROVE CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 11, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Solesbee called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

ROLL CALL

City Recorder Mindy Roberts called the roll. The following were

PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: Mayor Candace Solesbee, Councilors Alex Dreher, Greg Ervin, Mike Fleck, Dana Merryday, Chalice Savage and Jon Stinnett

PRESENT VIA
GOTOMEETING:

COUNCIL ABSENT:

YOUTH
REPRESENTATIVE:

STAFF PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: Interim City Manager David Clyne, Assistant City Manager Jake Boone, City Recorder Mindy Roberts, Public Works & Development Director Faye Stewart, Finance Director Roberta Likens, Police Chief Cory Chase, Human Resources Manager Mandy Biehler, City Planner Eric Mongan and Assistant City Planner Allison Crow

STAFF PRESENT
VIA GOTOMEETING:

CITY ATTORNEY: Carrie Connelly

MEDIA PRESENT: The Sentinel

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

(a) South Lane Parks & Recreation District Formation Steering Committee

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart introduced presenters from the South Lane Parks & Recreation District Steering Committee.

Darby Valley utilized a slide deck, attached as *Exhibit A*, to provide Council with information about what a South Lane Park and Recreation District (SLP&R) would provide, who the representatives of the steering committee are, and why it is important for the community. He presented the work the steering committee has completed to date and what the next steps are in the process. He requested that Council consider a resolution in support of forming a special purpose Parks & Recreation District and provide financial support for necessary legal assistance.

Council held discussion and asked questions regarding the survey data, the number of signatures needed, the boundaries of the proposed district compared to boundaries designated in a resolution of support, capital plans, proposed buildings and compression that would affect other taxing districts.

Finance Director Roberta Likens shared that the Lane County Tax Assessors indicated there would not be compression for the City of Cottage Grove at the proposed rate of .70 cents/\$1,000.

(b) Food Forest Presentation

Council President Greg Ervin introduced Dan Sloan, Executive Director of Portland Food Forest Initiative.

Dan Sloan utilized a slide deck, attached as *Exhibit B* and shared a video, viewable at https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_m0UPOzul&pp=ygUbbWFydGluIGNyYXdmY3JkIGZvb2QgZm9yZXN0 to provide information and explain concepts and benefits of place making and food forests.

Council asked for further explanation of block-scale food forest.

ITEMS ADDED TO THE AGENDA

Mayor Solesbee presented an item for Council to consider adding to the Agenda as Item 9(c).

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILOR FLECK AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ERVIN TO ADD AGENDA ITEM 9(C), TO SET DATE FOR WORK SESSION TO DISCUSS ISSUES SURROUNDING HOMELESSNESS.

Mayor Solesbee announced the motion with a second and called the vote.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

VOTE	Councilor Dreher	Councilor Ervin	Councilor Fleck	Councilor Merryday	Councilor Savage	Councilor Stinnett	Mayor Solesbee
AYES	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS							
ABSTAIN							

Motion carried.

APPEARANCE OF INTERESTED CITIZENS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Patrick Cartwright, Cottage Grove, Oregon expressed concerns regarding lack of oversight at the Hwy 99 site.

Mike Borke, Cottage Grove, Oregon expressed concern with the direction the City is taking regarding the homeless and requested that Council consider his proposed initiatives.

PUBLIC HEARING

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

- (a) Approval of November 13, 2023 City Council Meeting Minutes
- (b) Approval of November 24, 2023 Agenda Session Minutes
- (c) Approval of November 27, 2023 City Council Joint Work Session

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILOR FLECK AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR SAVAGE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Mayor Solesbee announced the motion with a second and called the vote.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

VOTE	Councilor Dreher	Councilor Ervin	Councilor Fleck	Councilor Merryday	Councilor Savage	Councilor Stinnett	Mayor Solesbee
AYES	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS							
ABSTAIN							

Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES

- (a) Resolution Adopting the Cottage Grove Urban Forest Management Plan

City Planner Eric Mongan presented a resolution to adopt an amended draft Urban Forest Management Plan based on Council recommendations to include language in support of agroforestry.

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILOR ERVIN AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR SAVAGE TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2120.

Council asked to clarify the added language and expressed concern about any liability the City may take by encouraging plant identification and edibility.

City Planner explained how the Community Needs section changed regarding the Community Gardens program and how it can work in partnership and create other avenues to allow those type of spaces.

Mayor Solesbee announced the motion with a second and called the vote.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

VOTE	Councilor Dreher	Councilor Ervin	Councilor Fleck	Councilor Merryday	Councilor Savage	Councilor Stinnett	Mayor Solesbee
AYES	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS							
ABSTAIN							

Resolution No. 2120 adopted.

(b) Resolution Adopting a City of Cottage Grove Dress Code Policy

Human Resources Manager Mandy Biehler presented a resolution that would adopt an updated Dress Code Policy for inclusion in the City of Cottage Grove Personnel Handbook. She mentioned the copy originally provided to Council was inadvertently a draft copy and the final draft eliminates the sentence, “Clothing that reveals the employees under garments” is prohibited attire. She added that supervisory staff has reviewed the Dress Code Policy and that this issue is not relevant or necessary.

Discussion held regarding the decision to eliminate the above-mentioned sentence.

Discussion held regarding the sequential order of the resolution numbers.

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCIL FLECK AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR SAVAGE TO ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. 2122.

Mayor Solesbee announced the motion with a second and called for discussion. Seeing none, she called the vote.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

VOTE	Councilor Dreher	Councilor Ervin	Councilor Fleck	Councilor Merryday	Councilor Savage	Councilor Stinnett	Mayor Solesbee
AYES	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS							
ABSTAIN							

Resolution No. 2122 adopted.

(c) Resolution Amending the City of Cottage Grove Personnel Manual

Interim City Manager David Clyne presented a resolution to Council, which if adopted would amend the City of Cottage Grove Personnel Manual, reflecting payment of a PERS 6% Pickup by the City for non-represented employees. He explained that represented employees currently have PERS Pickup in their contract agreements and it is common to offer the same for non-represented employees. He shared that not having PERS Pickup creates issues for recruiting, retention, pay equity and compression when promoting from represented to non-represented positions. He continued by explaining that the change would be funded by eliminating the stipend created in July of 2020, to offset the Employee Pension Stability Account (EPSA) and from funds included in the budget in anticipation of an impending wage study.

Discussion held regarding future budgetary impacts.

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCIL FLECK AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR SAVAGE TO ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. 2123.

Mayor Solesbee announced the motion with a seconded and called for discussion. Seeing none, she called the vote.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

VOTE	Councilor Dreher	Councilor Ervin	Councilor Fleck	Councilor Merryday	Councilor Savage	Councilor Stinnett	Mayor Solesbee
AYES	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS							
ABSTAIN							

Resolution No. 2123 adopted.

(d) Resolution Extending Workers' Compensation Coverage to Volunteer of the City of Cottage Grove

Finance Director Roberta Likens presented a resolution to Council, which if adopted would add volunteer positions at Middlefield Golf Course Pro-Shop and Maintenance to the list of covered volunteer positions provided to SAIF for workers' compensation.

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCIL FLECK AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ERVIN TO ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. 2124.

Mayor Solesbee announced the motion with a second and called for discussion. Seeing none, she called the vote.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

VOTE	Councilor Dreher	Councilor Ervin	Councilor Fleck	Councilor Merryday	Councilor Savage	Councilor Stinnett	Mayor Solesbee
AYES	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NAYS							
ABSTAIN							

Resolution No. 2124 adopted.

BUSINESS FROM THE CITY COUNCIL

(a) Budget and Audit Committee Recruitments

Finance Director Roberta Likens requested an appointment of three Council members to form a sub-committee in order to review and consider applications received for the Budget and Audit Committees.

Appointed to the sub-committee were Councilor Ervin, Fleck and Savage.

(b) Unhoused Reports

Assistant City Manager Jake Boone presented to Council the 3rd Quarter Homelessness Report and answered questions regarding the data.

Council expressed interest in having further conversations to address homelessness issues and to obtain updated data from Carry It Forward.

Interim City Manager David Clyne indicated that Staff needs clarity and direction from Council on how they would like to proceed with addressing issues surrounding homelessness.

City Attorney Carrie Connelly indicated she could potentially attend the Work Session to provide legal advice in more detail, depending on the date. She continued by providing a brief overview of how current laws are affecting decisions being made regarding homelessness.

Council asked questions regarding zoning and permitted uses of designated camping sites.

City Attorney recommended creating reasonable time, place and manner restrictions that apply to areas designated for camping and not relying on the zoning code for restrictions.

Council clarified the question is related to the number of animals allowed in the designating camping sites.

City Attorney responded that if Council wanted to use what is allowed in the Zoning Code as it relates to a household and determined it to be a reasonable restriction to apply to designating camping sites; it should be included in the Parks Management Plan.

Discussion held about pet restrictions, getting people the help they deserve, holding people accountable for bad behavior, zoning of the designated camping sites, enforcement of City Code and the volume of belongings allowed at the sites.

Police Chief Cory Chase said he has given the Police Department direction to respond to calls for action and take enforcement action in the designated camping sites. He elaborated on the challenges associated with giving exclusion notices.

Discussion held about a homeless encampment discovered in the area of North Regional Park. Public Works and Development Director responded that the encampment is located on Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) property and they have been notified.

(c) Set Date for Work Session to Discuss Issues Surrounding Homelessness

Council discussed holding a Work Session regarding homelessness on a Saturday in February or March to allow newly hired City Manager Mike Sauerwein the opportunity to participate. Council discussed how long the meeting would last, the content of the meeting and if it there would be a facilitator.

Council reached a consensus that the date of February 3, 2024 would be the first choice for holding a homelessness Work Session, providing a facilitator would be available. City Recorder, Mindy Roberts will work to secure a facilitator and send out a polling survey for other dates if needed.

(d) Concerns from Council

Council comments and questions included:

- Expressed appreciation to the Police Department and Police Chief Chase for actions taken to resolve a recent issue and for providing consistent community updates.

- Expressed appreciation to David Clyne for his time, dedication, knowledge and expertise as Interim City Manager.
- Requested to add LIHRPTE and HOLTE to the Issue Tracker.
- Recognized the fifth night of Hanukkah and provided a brief history of the Jewish community in Cottage Grove.
- Provided information from attendance of the Lane Economic Committee and a presentation from Connected Lane County.
- Shared experiences from attendance of the dedication of Peace Village.
- Expressed support of holding the homelessness Work Session and the South Lane Parks & Recreation District.
- Expressed gratitude for the Downtown Christmas events and to the people who dedicated their time to make it a success.
- Expressed interest in applying to have the National League of Cities roadshow make a stop in Cottage Grove.

Public Works & Development Director responded to the request for LIHRPTE and HOLTE to be added to the Issue Tracker. He indicated that the department would be preparing a similar document to keep Council and the community aware of the status of the multitude of projects.

BUSINESS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

(a) Report from City Manager

Interim City Manager David Clyne reminded Council of the City Manager Candidate Meet & Greet being held at the Armory on Thursday, December 14 at 6:30 pm. He invited Council, City Staff and the public to attend and meet the City Manager candidates.

David Clyne extended a thank you to Council for the opportunity to serve as the Interim City Manager and expressed appreciation for the Council, Staff, City Attorney and the community.

BUSINESS FROM CITY ATTORNEY

(a) Report from City Attorney

City Attorney Carrie Connelly explained to Council that she would not be a part of the City Manager Recruitment process; she can be available to attend the Homelessness Work Session, if needed and thanked Council for the opportunity to work with David Clyne

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

None.

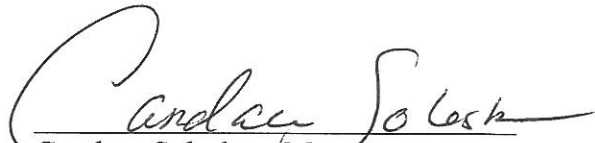
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Solesbee adjourned the regular meeting of the City Council at 8:53 pm.

The next regular City Council Meeting will be held January 8, 2024 at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

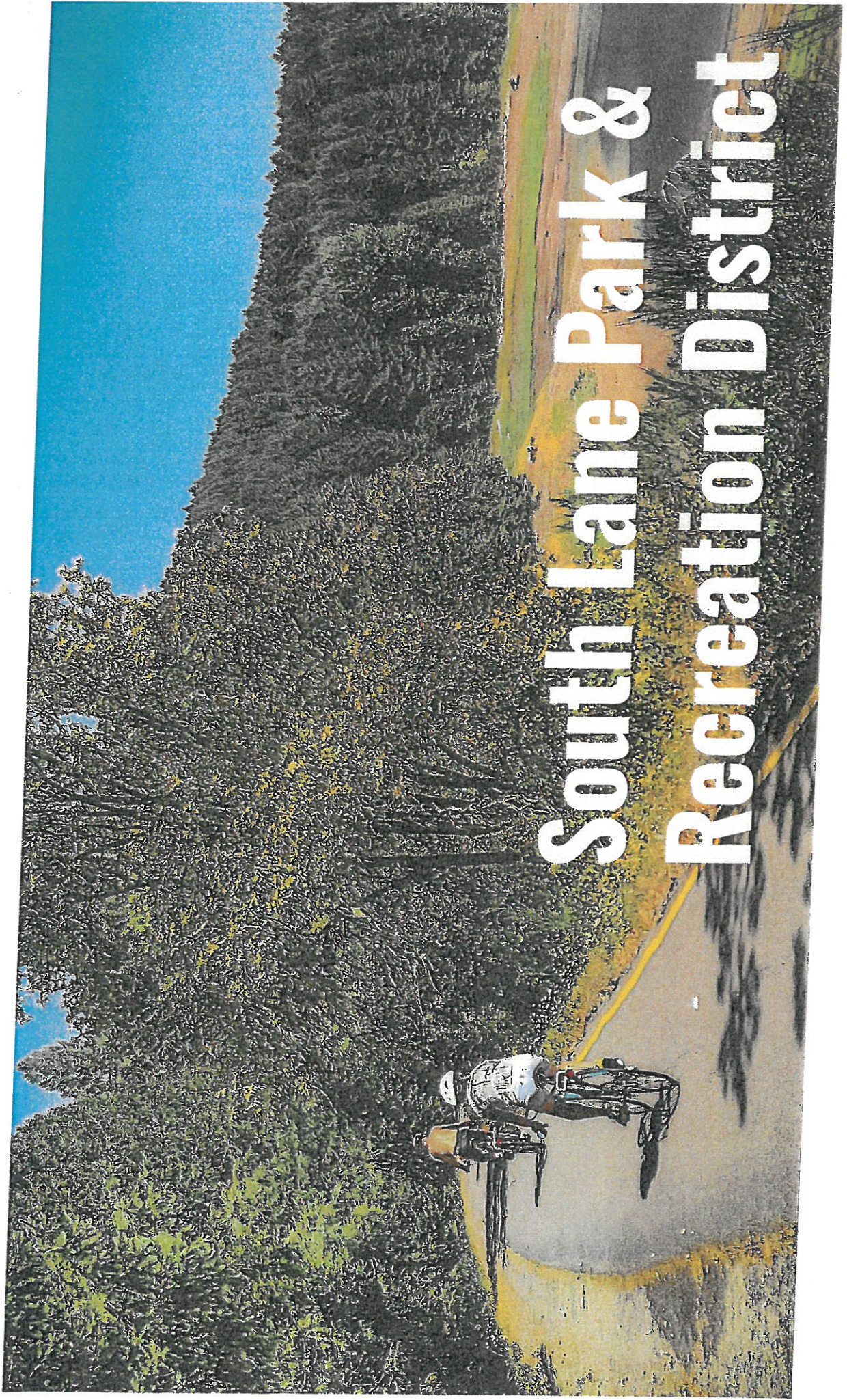


Mindy Roberts, City Recorder



Candace Solesbee, Mayor

Exhibit A



South Lane Park and Recreation District

What: The South Lane Parks & Recreation District — if approved by voters — will be our community's go-to hub for recreation, enrichment, and social programs for citizens of all ages.

Who: Members of the South Lane community formed a steering committee last April to consider going through the process of forming a parks and recreation district in South Lane County.

The SLP&P Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from:

- South Lane School District
- City of Cottage Grove (members of the council and staff)
- Cottage Grove Area Chamber of Commerce
- South Valley Athletics, Senior & Community services
- LCOG (Lane Council of Governments)
- Others who are passionate about community health and recreation

South Lane Park and Recreation District

Why Now:

- For over 50 years, we have had a recognized need for sustainable programs for our youth
- Adult & Senior services is outgrowing their current space, as more and more older adults are looking for activities after being isolated for a few years.
- We currently have services being provided by City of CG, SLSD, SVA and other non-profits. All have issues with funding, space management and coordination.
- We believe a SLP&R gives us the best platform to provide a cohesive answer to these challenges.

South Lane Park and Recreation District

Work done so far:

- Steering committee has met regularly since April where we have worked with our consultant, Bob Keefer, where we created and refined a budget for various funding levels of the parks and recreation district.
- Met with stakeholders to inform them on the benefits of a parks and rec. district
- Garnered support from Commissioner Buch and Lane County Public Health Prevention staff.
- Met with Lane County Elections and charted the path to have this on the November 2024 ballot.
- Commissioned independent survey to gauge community interest and support

South Lane Park and Recreation District

What the survey results told us:

- 57% of respondents support the creation of a parks and recreation district in South Lane County with little education on first revealing of the concept.
- Respondents responded most favorably to services that provide:
 - Low-cost childcare programs for kids from preschool to middle school, including after-school programs and summer programs.
 - Education and wellness programs for adults and seniors that improve physical and mental health and prevent isolation.
- More education and outreach is needed around cost to taxpayer, need and services that will be provided to the greater South Lane community.

South Lane Park and Recreation District

Next Steps:

- Earn the support of the Cottage Grove Mayor & City Council
- Another survey is scheduled to be conducted next month
- Continue to meet with stakeholders to gain their support
- Educate the community on the benefits of a parks and recreation district in South Lane County
- Gather signatures and funding needed to be placed on the November 2024 ballot

Our ask of you tonight:

- In January, consider a resolution in support of forming a special purpose Parks & Recreation District within the boundary of the City as required under ORS 198, and to be placed on the Nov. 5, 2024 ballot.
- Provide financial support for legal assistance necessary to assure that the proposed District is legally formed under Oregon State Law.
- Over the next year, work with stakeholders and the broader community to develop detailed operational plans for the District and address questions from the taxpayers regarding specifics of how the District would function and the benefits it would bring.

Thank you for your time and
consideration!

Portland Food Forest Initiative

Block-Scale Food Forest Presentation



What is Placemaking?

Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that improve urban vitality and promote people's health, happiness, and well-being.

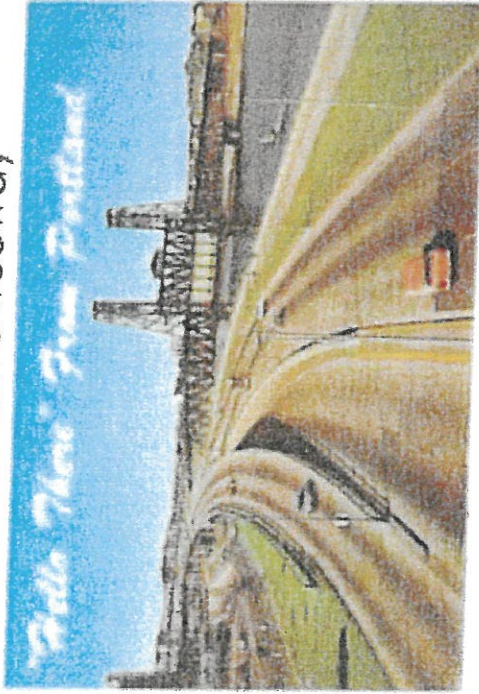
Placemaking creates strong and vibrant urban communities!

Elements include:

- Gathering spaces
- Recreational spaces
- Gardens
- Natural areas
- Play areas
- Pro-social infrastructure
- Public art



Then: Harbor Drive freeway



Now: Tom McCall Waterfront Park



"They closed Harbor Drive, and there wasn't a ripple"
Portland traffic engineer Don Bergstrom, 1974

By the Maine Chapter of the

Placemaking is possible!

Ecological exclusion,
pedestrian exclusion, no
community, no life.

Meeting space, enjoyable
atmosphere, some plants!

What is a Food Forest?

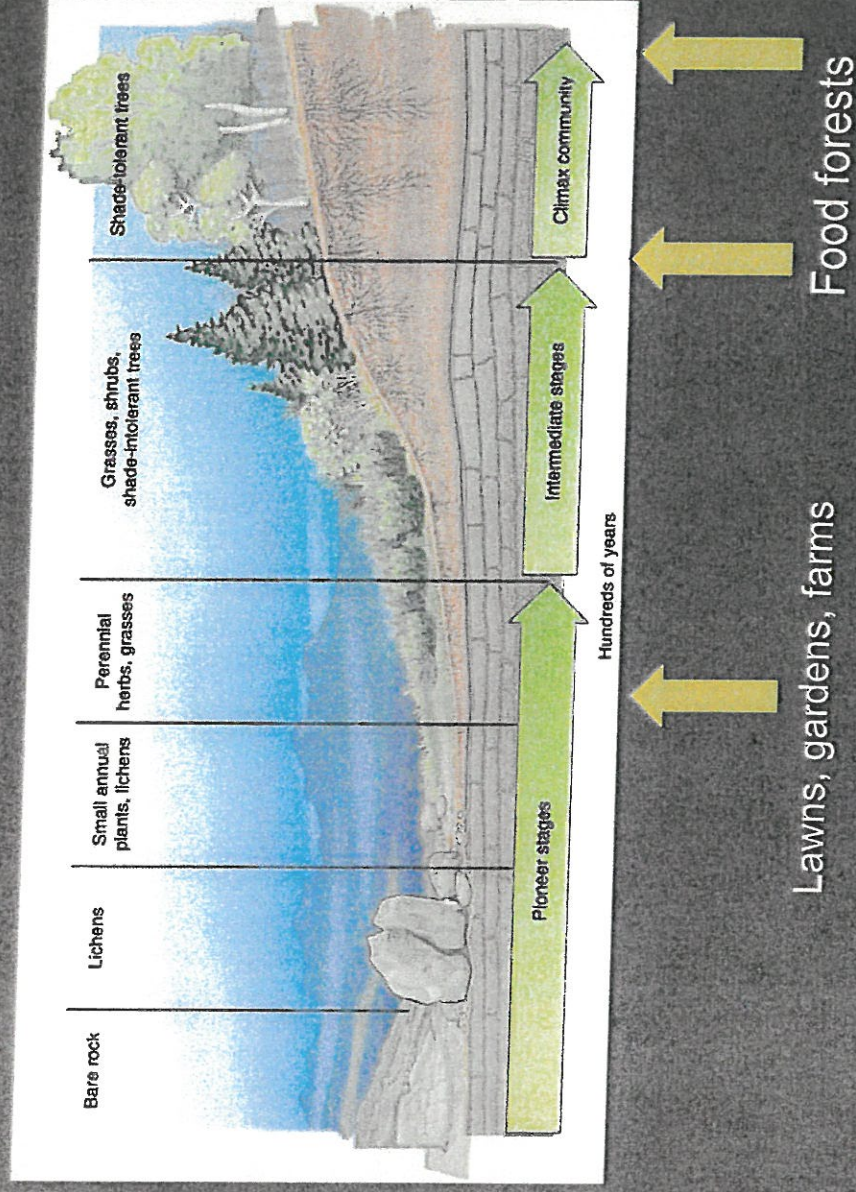
- Proven-model (successfully implemented for thousand of years).
- Ancestral method of land tending
- Human stewarded multi-layered perennial polyculture
- Produces food, medicine, fiber, natural beauty, and supports pollinators
- Builds soil + habitat
sequesters carbon
stores rainwater
strengthens community
- Creates ecological diversity + Climate Resilience





Ecological Succession!

- **Most urban landscapes = Pioneer Stage**
- Examples: Lawn & Veggie Garden
- Pioneer Stage is **expensive to maintain**: requires lots of annual maintenance and inputs (fertilizer, water, etc.)
- **Mature Food Forest 10-20 years = Climax stage**
- After the first few years of establishment the Food Forest takes care of itself
- **requires very little annual maintenance**



Community Gardens: Important, but not a food forest!



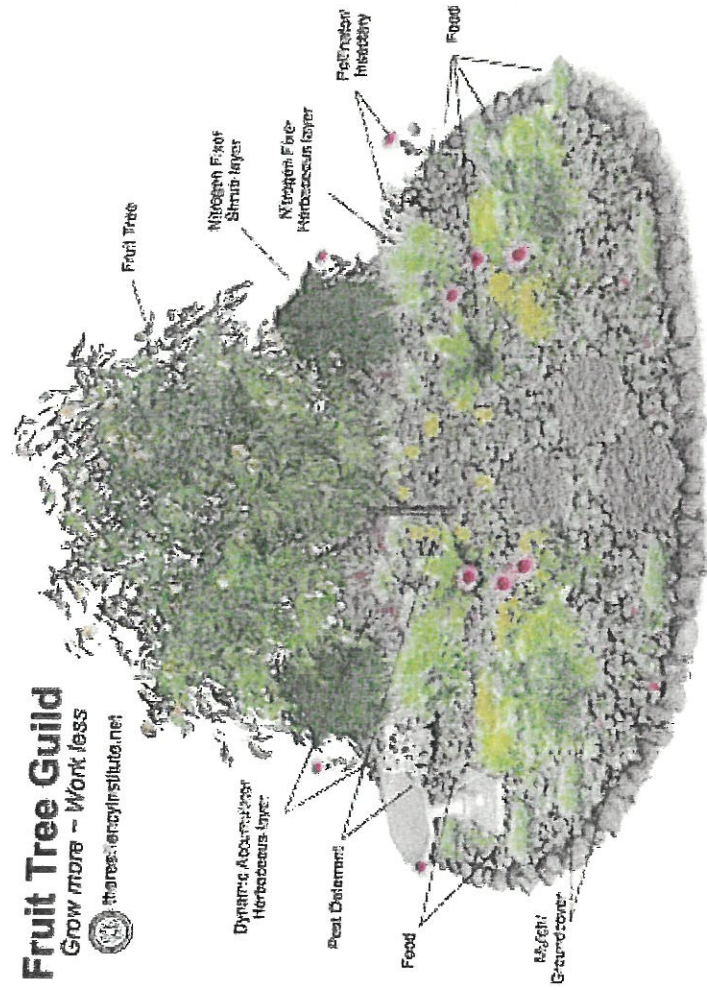
- Focus on annuals, not perennials
- Encourages individualism, not collaboration.
- More concentrated in affluent communities limiting diversified access.
- Requires ongoing labor, water, fertilizer.
- Outcomes inconsistent / big learning curve

Fruit & Nut Tree Guild: The basic component of an urban food forest

Fruit Tree Guild

Grow more - Work less

threes.org/institute.net



Maximize photosynthesis

All plants provide ecosystem services to others = Strength

All layers produce: food, fiber, fuel, medicine, &/or habitat.

Canopy layer - semi-dwarf fruit tree, smaller nut tree

Subcanopy layer - fig, goumi berry

Shrub layer- currant, blueberry

Herbaceous layer - veggies, comfrey, herbs, pollinator flowers

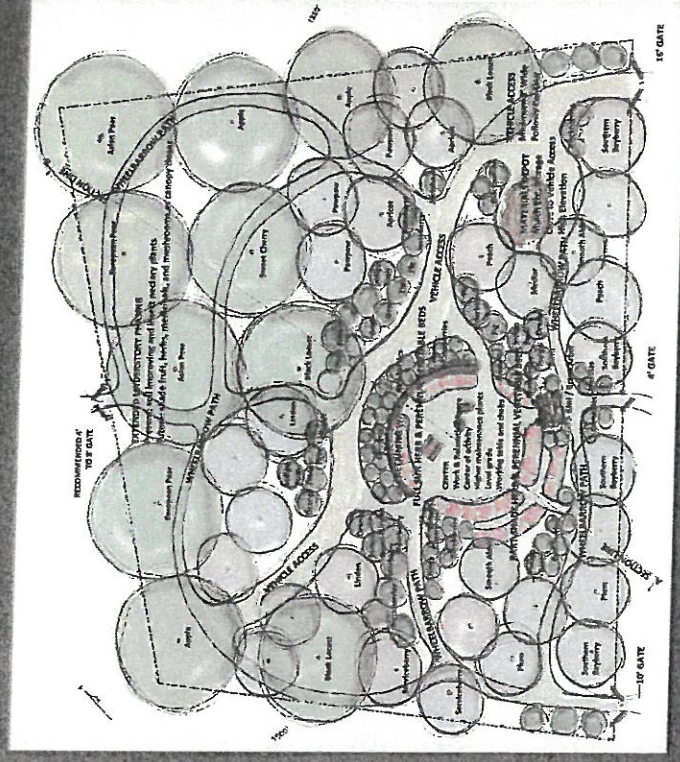
Groundcover layer - strawberries, sweet potato

Root layer- garlic, potato

Vining layer- grape, passionflower, kiwi

Mycelial layer- winecap mushrooms

Vs. Forest Garden



**Best suited for community building
and enduring public spaces.
Encourages pro-social behaviour.**

Syntropic Agroforestry: Tree rows maximizes production.



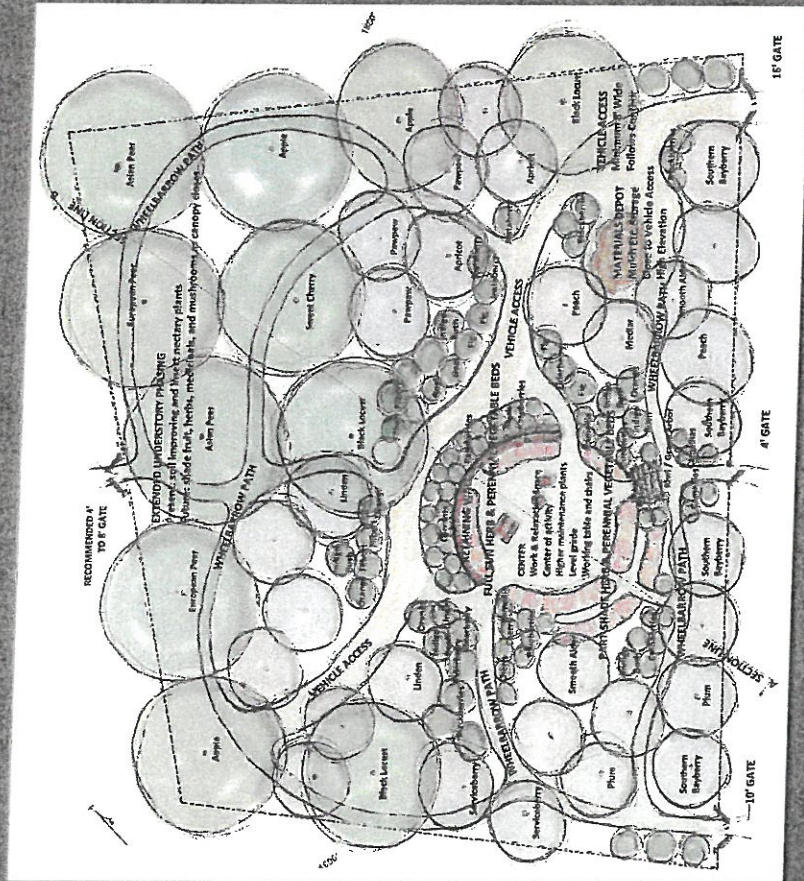
Linear tree guilds in 5' wide rows oriented North to South, spaced ~15' apart on center, polyculture veggie rows in the aisles.

The most productive and intensive use of space.

Closed-loop system Incorporates biomass producers for mulch and fertility.

Year 1-3 produces veggies and berries while later-stage succession trees and shrubs mature and bear after 2-8 years.

Forest Garden: Maximum Habitat, Maximum Community



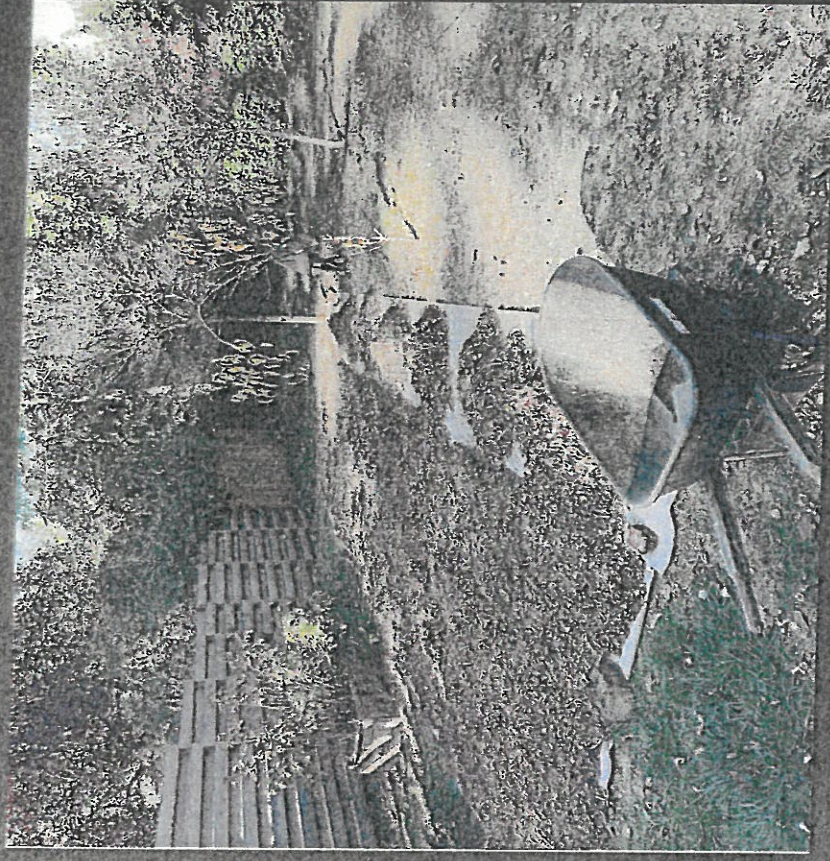
- fruit and nut tree (circular) guilds
- meandering pathways
- gathering spaces
- pro-social design elements
- annual veggies
- produces more habitat than syntropic agroforestry systems.
- Best suited for **community building** and enduring public spaces.
- Encourages **pro-social behaviour** and **better mental health.**

A place for community to gather and celebrate our connection to nature and each other.

Portland Food Forest Initiative Cully Demonstration site



October 2022



November 2022

- Syntropic design, trees planted 13' apart with 3' veggie rows in aisles.
- Rapid growth in unimproved backyard soil.
- Very few weeds can break through paper and wood chips.
- **Low-labor, much insect, bird and fungal life.**



April 2023



July 2023

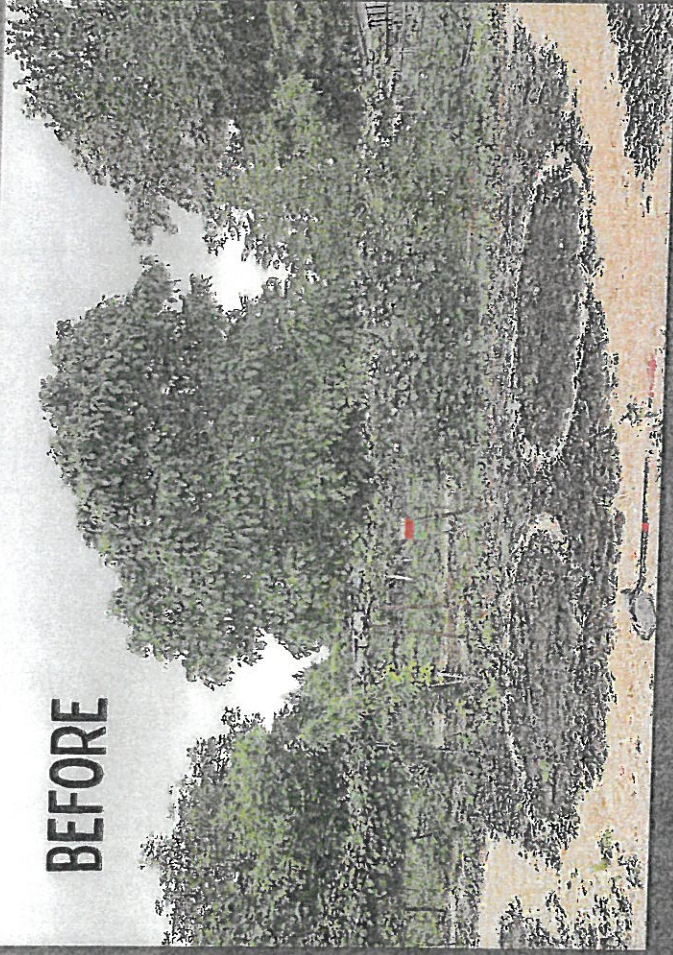
Rhythm Seed Farm - Cully, NE Portland, OR

Deep mulch abundance - Lawn to booming pollinator habitat

May 2022

August 2022

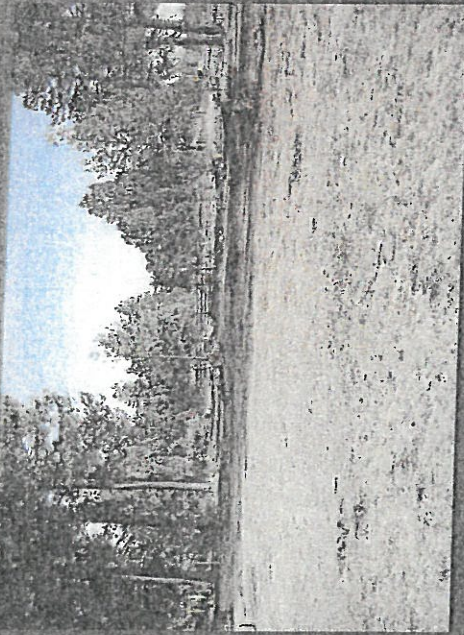
BEFORE



AFTER



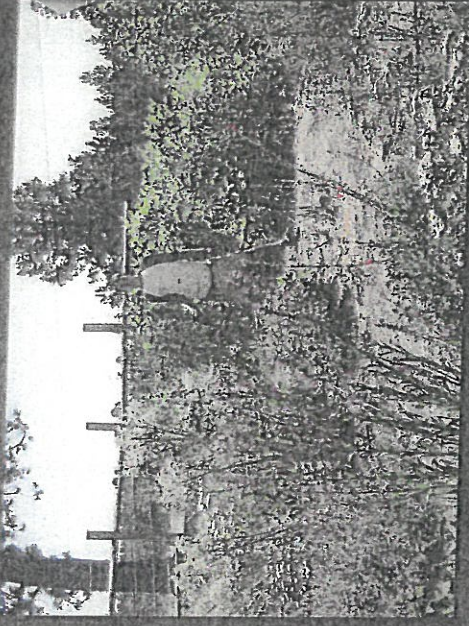
2008



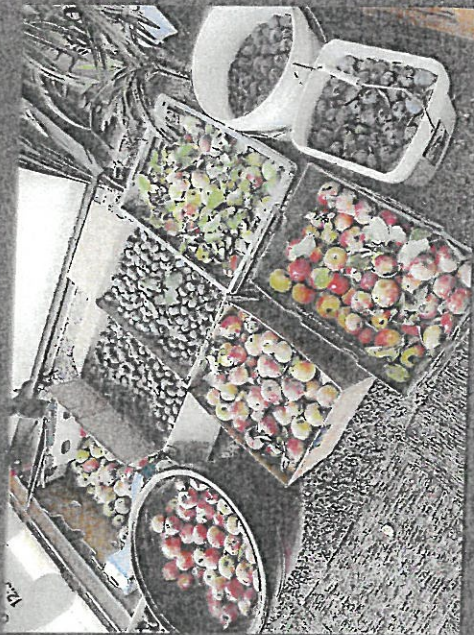
2014



2014



2020



2023



Nativity Food Forest
Bend, OR

Very harsh, cold/dry
environment.

Poor soil

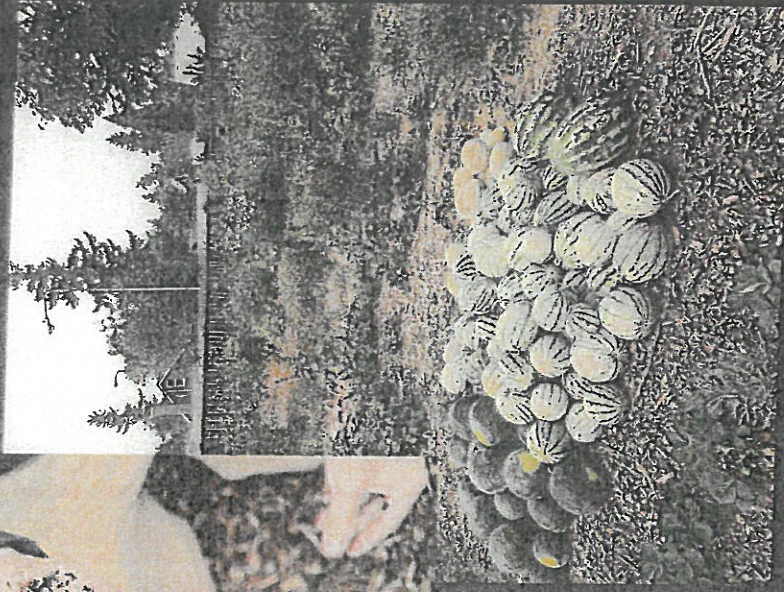
Deep Mulch: The foundation of a temperate food forest.

Wood chips solve most garden headaches!

Benefits of fresh arborist (Ramial) woodchips:

- Redirects local waste stream
- Suppresses 95% of weeds
- Builds soil organic matter rapidly
- Per 1% OM Increase per acre, stores 16,000 gallons H₂O and Fixes 10 tons of carbon from atmosphere into soil.
- Reduces/Eliminates the need to water during summer drought
- Supports growth of all trees, shrubs, veggies, etc.
- Creates habitat for soil microorganisms, mushrooms, etc.

God's Garden (NE 55th and Going) went from 4% OM on an abandoned urban lot in 2014 and their soil is now at 26% OM or higher. They have the capacity to store 176,000 gallons h₂O annually on their 1/2 acre and they've fixed 220 tons of CO₂ into the earth and produced over 10,000lbs of food since 2014...all for 0 dollars, and they don't use any water from our reservoirs.



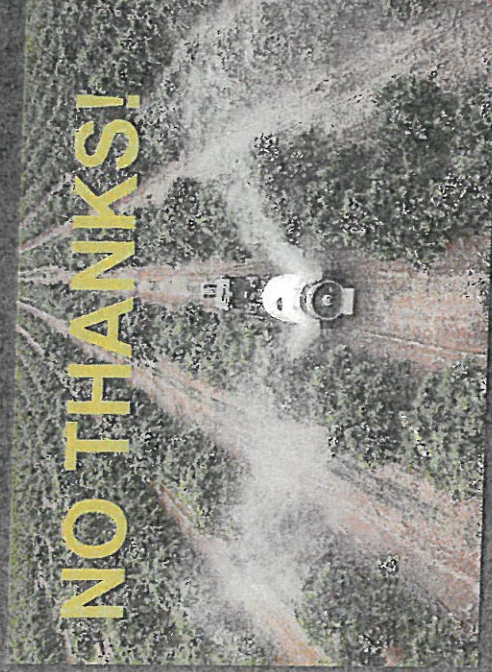
MONOCULTURES:

- Traditional monocultures of orchard trees need life support.
- innate susceptibility and poor ecological practices
- Rely on petroleum
- Rely on pesticides, fungicides, herbicides
- Drain rivers and aquifers
- When it rains, it floods



Bare soil

Single
Species



NO THANKS!

POLYCULTURES:

- Promote natural pest management through ecological diversity
- Naturally balanced ecosystem that is not susceptible to pests and disease
- Diversity=Resilience
- Woodchip mulch prevents soil-born pathogens from infecting plants.



Concerns: Pest and Disease



Food forests inherently incorporate IPM and are organic.

- Food forests do not exacerbate rodent pest issues.
- Proactively mitigating waste
- Chop and drop
- Rodent-resistant compost using cinder block bays

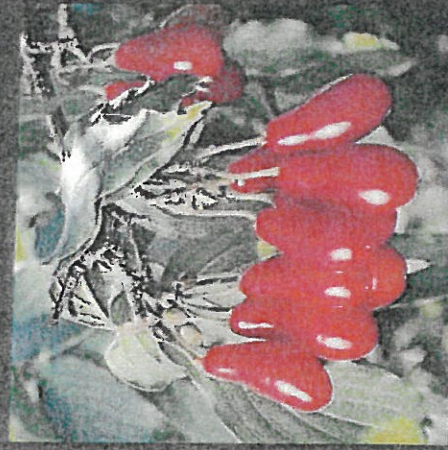
Low pest and disease-susceptible trees and shrubs for zone 8 (that are delicious and nutrient dense):

TREES

pawpaw
cornelian cherry
mulberry
hazelnut
english walnut
chestnut
quince
olive

SHRUBS

currant
medlar
fig
gooseberry
thornless blackberry
strawberry
seaberry
hardy kiwi
blueberry
hazelnut
goumi
autumn olive
aronia
elderberry
honeysuckle
jujube
loquat



Sustained Abundance

A \$10 apple/hazel/fig/walnut tree can live for decades or even hundreds of years, bearing tens of thousands of dollars worth of produce. Incredible **ROI!**

Economically and ecologically, this is the **most sustainable method of producing food.**

For 1 Acre

Year 1-4: 750 lbs food annually

Year 5-10: 2,000 lbs food annually

Year 10-100: 5,000 lbs food annually



NUTS: passive food security

Nut trees are long-lived producers of carbs, fats, and protein, the latter two of which are extremely difficult to come by in traditional gardens.

Once established, nut trees such as

Hazelhut = medium fat, medium protein

Walnut = high fat, high protein

Chestnut = high carb (like grains)

produce reliable crops of important high-value food items **without human intervention.**



Annual Maintenance

Planting (annuals) - veggie/flower starts or seeds

Harvest - coordinated harvest parties or individual community members foraging/snacking

Clean-up - collection of "waste" to be redistributed or composted

Pruning - maintenance of tree shape and size for easy harvest

Mulching - fallen leaves and wood chips spread across the whole food forest, sourced for free from local arborists



Educational Opportunities

- Permaculture and environmental education
- Pruning and Plant Care
- Youth engagement - Getting kids out in the to natural world, away from screens.
- Workforce Development
- Youth who volunteer develop a sense of agency, ecological literacy, and ongoing responsibility for the food forest lasting decades.



Community Engagement:

The block-scale food forest necessitates community involvement

Development of place-based relationship

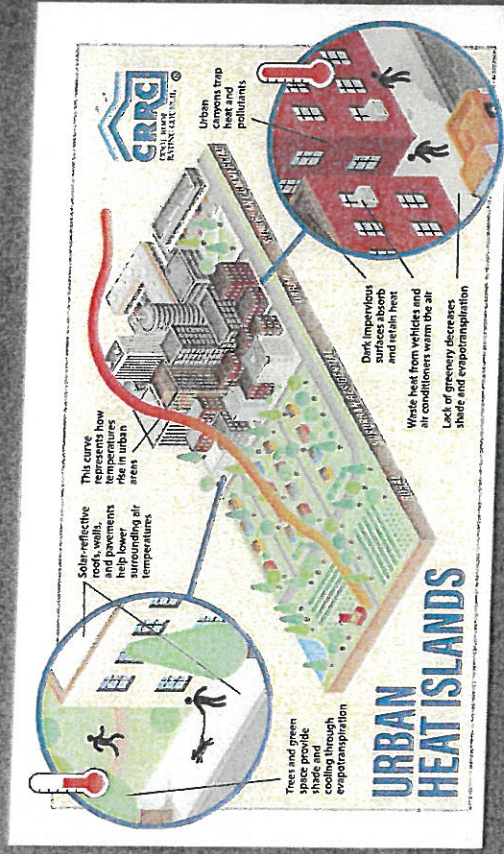
Designed meeting/gathering spaces

- knowledge sharing and mentorship
- human connection
- celebration!



Environmental Justice & Equity: Redlining & Racist housing policies

- Heat islands
- Food deserts
- industrial pollution
- endless concrete are the norm in lower-income, high-diversity urban communities.
- Low or no access to nutrient dense organic food or nature immersion spaces in these neighborhoods.
- A large-scale food forest is an oasis for all
- A food forest is a community resource that serves all people equally



Mental Health Benefits of Nature Immersion

- Anxiety and stress reduction.
- Increased creativity, productivity and attention.
- Improved happiness and life satisfaction, Decreased depression.
- Enhanced memory retention, reduced effects of dementia.
- Reduction of PTSD.
- Increased self-esteem.



Active community-oriented participation in tending green spaces is even more impactful. Hands in the soil, not on phones.

Violence Reduction

Underlying causes of urban violence:

- Scarcity and inequity
- Reduced through abundance and accessibility.
- Communities whose greenspaces and public areas are actively interacted with by the community have a proven **reduction in violence, in some demographics up to 30%.**
- Adolescents and young adults who participate in a holistic, meaningful activity outside of school are **more likely to graduate high school and embark on successful paths in their futures.**



Benefits: Community, Ecosystem, Food Security!

- Creates pollinator habitat, supports native species and biodiversity
- Is a safe space for children to play and interact with the wonder of nature.
- Builds neighbors and relationships, creates trust and long-term community resiliency.
- Addresses coming challenges of climate change and food scarcity
- Is an opportunity for Cottage Grove to become a pioneer in urban block-scale food forest creation. Others from around the nation will look to this model for inspiration.
- Food forests are living gifts we can give to future generations. The best time to plant a tree...

