

**From:** [Dave Miller](#)  
**To:** [Community Development Email](#)  
**Subject:** Urban Tree Program Comment  
**Date:** Sunday, June 03, 2018 11:54:11 PM

---

I saw the 6/1/2018 facebook post about a proposed urban tree program, and I wanted to submit a comment since I won't be able to attend the public hearing on June 19. My name is Dave Miller and I live at 3509 NW 3rd Ave in Camas.

I haven't seen the details of what is being proposed, but in general I am very supportive of an urban tree program. I am also pleased to read that you are learning from what has been successful in other cities.

It would be great if your program included consideration for the following:

1. Educating residents about non-native invasive plants which threaten our trees, namely English Ivy. Most people don't know that ivy will eventually pull down most trees due to the weight of the vines. I have cut ivy off trees in our neighborhood, including one vine that was 8 inches in diameter (I saved a chunk of it if you'd like to see it). Also people don't know that when they allow ivy to climb and flower/fruit, they are spreading ivy to all of their neighbors and the whole area, via birds who eat the ivy berries. I have seen a dramatic increase in ivy seedlings in my yard in the last 5 years. I never found even a single ivy seedling in the 23 years prior to that. So something has changed recently.
2. Funding for ivy removal from existing trees in the City's open spaces. The City is currently spreading ivy via birds as I described above. By "removal" I don't mean complete eradication, I mean just cut it off the trees every 5-10 years so that it is not flowering and fruiting. This is quite easy to do, you just have to make a cut in the vines on the trees, and ensure that the ivy's cambium layers are no longer touching. The portion in the tree will die and eventually break down and fall off. Of course to prevent it from climbing the tree again, you would need to kill the entire plant (i.e. the part on the ground), which typically requires herbicide. But you will also need to regularly check for new seedlings. As I mentioned, if ivy is allowed to grow unchecked, it will eventually pull down the tree it is on.
3. Focus on native trees, especially trees which can handle weather extremes and hotter/drier summers which are becoming more frequent due to climate change. A notable example is Oregon White Oak (*Quercus garryana*). I do understand that a *Quercus garryana* would not be happy in an 18" parking strip, so something else would be appropriate there. But for properties which have the space, perhaps you could give a special honor to anyone who plants/preserves a *Quercus garryana* or similar tree that is native to the Camas area.
4. Speaking of special honors, I would give your highest honor to anyone who creates a "living snag" wildlife tree on their property (including the City, on its property). A living snag is created by removing the top 1/2 or 1/3 of a tree by either girdling it at that height, or cutting it leaving a jagged top, with some living branches below the

girdle/cut. What this does is create a path for disease to enter the core of the tree, and triggering a slow decline of the tree. This mimics what happens naturally in the forest, and provides roosting and breeding space for birds, bats, and all kinds of creatures for many years. A tree which is girdled near the ground will also provide good habitat, but since the tree is completely dead, it will fall in just a few years. A living snag can remain standing for 20-40 years. Obviously you wouldn't want to do this if the tree could fall on a structure or road. See "Creating Snags from Live Trees" here: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/living/snags/> I have done this to several trees in my yard and it is working well.

As you might guess I have cut a lot of ivy off trees as a volunteer for the county (Lacamas Park), the USFWS (Steigerwald and Pierce NWRs), the Port (Washougal Waterfront Trail), and the City of Vancouver (Ellen Davis Trail/Burnt Bridge Creek). So I have a lot of practice and tips I would be happy to share.

Regards,

Dave Miller