



**City of Spokane  
Citizen Advisory Committee to the  
Urban Forestry Tree Committee**

3 p.m. Tuesday, August 1, 2023  
Hybrid in-person and WebEx virtual meeting  
Katie Kosanke - Urban Forester

**Committee Members:**

- X Kris Neely – Chair
- Tim Kohlhauff (Absent)
- X Beth LaBar
- Guy Gifford (Absent – Excused)
- Toni Sharkey (Absent)
- X Catherine Olsen
- Cindy Deffe – (Absent – Excused)
- Joe Zubaly (Absent)
- X Matt Stewart
- X Justyce Brant
- X Ben Kappen

**Parks Staff:**

Katie Kosanke  
Karin Cook  
Sarah Dietrich  
Angel Spell (arrived at 3:12 p.m.)

**Guests:**

Nancy MacKerrow  
Ted Hensold  
John Wallingford  
Paul Lower  
Kelly Thomas  
Kaitlyn Millender

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by committee chair Kris Neely who opened the meeting with introductions.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from January 2023, February 2023, March 2023, and May 2023 were approved.

**Discussion Items:**

1. Ceremonies, Appointments, Announcements

- There is currently one opening on the committee for a downtown representative. Paul Lower with The Downtown Spokane Partnership is interested in the position.
- **Paul Lower Letter of Interest** – Paul Lower with The Downtown Spokane Partnership submitted a letter of interest to be considered for the downtown representative position. Paul was at the meeting and thanked the committee for considering him for the downtown position. Paul said he recently moved from Florida and is the head of the clean and safe operations for The Downtown Spokane Partnership. He is interested in improving the tree canopy downtown and working with UF on an education program. He said some of the challenges for the tree canopy downtown is lack of water and figuring out how to make sure the trees are getting adequate water so they can thrive and issues with tree wells that are restricting some of the trees. He said the DSP manages 80 blocks downtown.

Justyce Brant made a motion to appoint Paul to the downtown representative position. Cadie Olsen seconded the motion. A vote was taken to appoint Paul Lower to the downtown representative position and passed unanimously 6-0.

Paul was asked who supplies the funding for the Downtown Spokane Partnership. Paul advised that it is a partnership with the city and that there is also an assessment done to all the property owners and businesses that operate within that 80-block radius and that funding is used for the services DSP provides.

**Public Comments:** Nancy MacKerrow from The Susie Forest announced the Susie Stephens Trail work has started and there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony in the future. She said the trail will connect the Arboretum to the Fish Lake Trail.

### **Standing Report Items:**

1. Community Assembly – No report.
2. Staff Report - Katie Kosanke provided the staff report.

The Susie Trail project has broken ground and a dedication event is planned. City Cable 5 will also be doing a nice piece on the trail project and the Susie Trail project.

The Design Standard updates are being worked on. As previously noted, our planting distances away from utilities are the most restrictive in the nation, which was done to protect the trees in case the utility lines ever needed to be repaired. The new materials being used now have a long-life span and problems with trees and utilities is rare. With new developments going in and more narrow lots according to our standards there would be no where to put trees. It will take some time for the Design Standards document to be formally changed. In the interim an internal MOU document is being done by Public Works, Planning and Development Services, so trees can be planted as close as 5ft to utilities in these new areas.

The planting detail is also being revised and will have minor changes. This document will also have to be adopted to Engineering. A final revision is almost ready, and that document will probably be brought to the next meeting for review and input.

The Inflation Reduction Act opportunity for a grant opened up and we only had a few days to apply. With support from Angel Spell and the Parks Director we went big and applied for 25 million dollars, which would enable UF to plant many street trees and private trees. Maintenance of existing trees was also included because trees provide benefits for longer when cared for, and care has been a challenge especially in low-income areas. Also, included were removal of dead standing trees that are street side in disadvantage areas as identified on a federal map. Infrastructure, including watering infrastructure is not included in this grant, but there may be some other grants through the state that could assist with watering infrastructure. Some funding was added for establishment and watering period, so it may be possible to include drip irrigation and repairs.

The Urban Forestry vehicle was totaled by an uninsured motorist. UF is looking to rent an electric vehicle from Fleet Services until a new vehicle can be purchased. The staff person involved in the accident has been out for about 5 weeks with minor injuries and is recovering. Other staff members are assisting in covering the critical work for this position.

UF is working on many engineering projects which involve pre-construction meetings and creating scopes of work for each project. Notifications are also sent to property owners to advise them of any tree removals.

Steve Nittolo has been assisting with tree work at the Golf Courses. He is also working with staff to form planting plans for all the courses to replant trees that have been lost during storms over the years and from bark beetles. There are also a few additional trees that have died on Down River Disc Golf Course.

UF has had some difficulty hiring seasonal staff this year. If anyone knows of someone that might be a good fit for the UF tree crew let them know we are looking, and they can apply online.

Staff continues to work on a few removals throughout the park system. If the trees don't pose a high risk, some of the removals will be done during the winter, which is typically when most of the removals happen. Routine pruning will be done soon at Friendship Park and a lot of reactive work is being done that includes clearing broken branches, hangers, and clearance issues.

## **Old Business:**

### 1. Downtown Educational Program Update – Katie Kosanke

A sub-committee to address downtown tree issues and an educational program were previously discussed. Anyone interested in being on the sub-committee let Katie know. She will work on setting up a meeting with Paul from the Downtown Spokane Partnership.

## **New Business:**

### 1. **Spokane Tree Planting Plan** – Ted Hensold

Ted Hensold who is a forester that has worked in the Spokane area for 43 years and a volunteer on the sustainability action subcommittee presented information he has been working on to help develop a Master Tree Planting Plan for Spokane. The Master Tree Planting Plan will help guide tree planting programs in the City of Spokane.

Ted explained how he created a GIS layer that included all city streets then added data fields to show overhead powerlines, available planting space and the number of existing trees, which resulted in 17,000 street segments with all of these items populated for both sides of every segment. Those items were then used to determine what class of tree each segment could accommodate. A calculation was then done on how many trees were on each segment and the length of the segment to come up with a density index.

The information will help set priorities on where the need is the greatest and to match trees to available sites. The data can also be used for operational plans and to generate mailing lists. Ted developed planting maps for SpoCanopy plantings in fall of 2022 and 2023. He also produced maps for Spokane Ponderosa this spring to help identify commercial properties for planting this year.

Ted provided information on the percentage of each class of tree that could be accommodated in the street tree planting strips and advised these areas could further be evaluated to see the density index for each area. He shared information on neighborhood ratings which show the average street tree planting strip density and looks at which neighborhoods have the most segments that wouldn't be able to have trees planted in the planting strips due to the planting strip not being wide enough. He indicated some of these areas do currently have trees in the planting strips, but if the trees were to die, they would not be able to be replaced because of lack of space in the planting strips. He presented a heat map that shows the areas that have the highest (black or dark grey) and lowest (light grey or white) density of existing street and park trees, with the highest density being on the South Hill and the lowest density being in North Spokane. He went over a sample atlas draft map, which will help guide tree planting. The map shows streets that have a density rating of less than 10 on either side of the street and what class of tree each area could accommodate. Ted indicated these streets would present a great opportunity to plant trees.

Ted advised he is continuing to work on information for the Master Tree Planting Plan and is hoping to have it completed by next Spring.

It was asked if there is a way to convert the target percent of trees into the number of trees that need to be planted. Katie advised UF is looking at getting an inventory software that has canopy projections that can help determine that number and that would also tie into the GIS information about available planting spots.

## 2. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Expo Event – John Wallingford

John Wallingford shared information regarding the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Expo Event.

He advised there will be 5 pillars of activities that will contribute to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Expo events during a 2-month period from May to July. He is on the Environmental Stewardship Committee, and that committee is looking for ideas on what they could do in association with the Expo Event that could help raise awareness about environmental care in our community.

He shared that he learned about the SpoCanopy tree planting program from The Lands Council and heard the city was interested in accelerating tree planting through the SpoCanopy program. He asked if it would be possible to accelerate the SpoCanopy tree plantings and do plantings during the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Expo Event. Each Expo committee must submit a proposal by the end of August, and he would like to submit a proposal to plant X number (number to be determined) of SpoCanopy trees.

Currently a few hundred trees are being planted through the program each year and he thought many more may be able to be planted as a part of the Expo Event. He asked if it would be possible to plant 10,000 trees (100 trees a day, 6 days a week for the 9 weeks of the Expo Event).

It may be possible to look at scaling up the SpoCanopy plantings with resources such as individual

and industry partner contributions, funds from federal grant, using the GIS mapping provided by Ted and looking at utilizing volunteers to assist with plantings.

Katie advised a sub-committee could be formed to discuss the possibility further and that could possibly use the Expo 50 Event as a springboard. There is lots of interest in planting more trees and lots of logistics and details that would have to be worked out, as well as how to sustain the additional trees.

**Other Program Ideas:** None.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:13 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 3 p.m. September 5, 2023.



July 28, 2023

Jason Conley  
Director of Parks and Recreation  
City of Spokane  
808 West Spokane Falls Blvd.  
Spokane, WA 99201

Dear Mr. Conley,

This letter is to let you know of my interest in joining the UFCAC as a representative of Downtown Spokane. I have recently joined the Downtown Spokane Partnership as VP of Clean and Safe Operations. In working here in the downtown area, I have noticed that the tree canopy in some areas is in poor condition. I believe that having a healthy tree canopy in the downtown area is important part of having a healthy and vibrant downtown community. Here at the DSP we are very interested in how we can work together to improve the downtown trees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Lower", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Paul Lower  
VP Clean and Safe Operations  
Downtown Spokane Partnership

# A Data-based approach to develop a Master Tree Planting Plan for Spokane

Ted Hensold

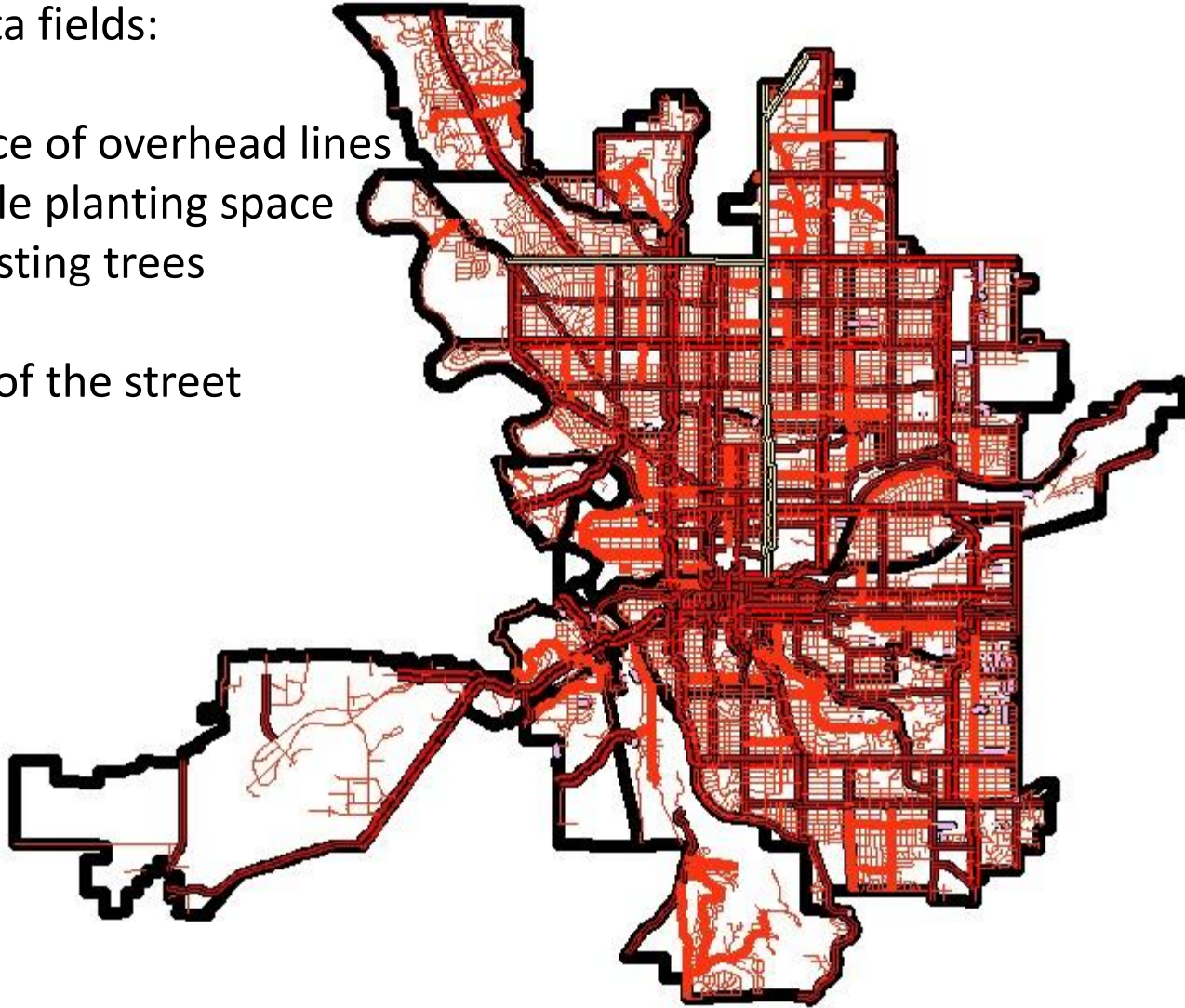
SAS – Natural Environment working group

# GIS Layer based on City Streets

Added data fields:

- Presence of overhead lines
- Available planting space
- # of existing trees

Each side of the street





Every street segment (both sides) was further classified as to:

– The Tree Class it could accommodate

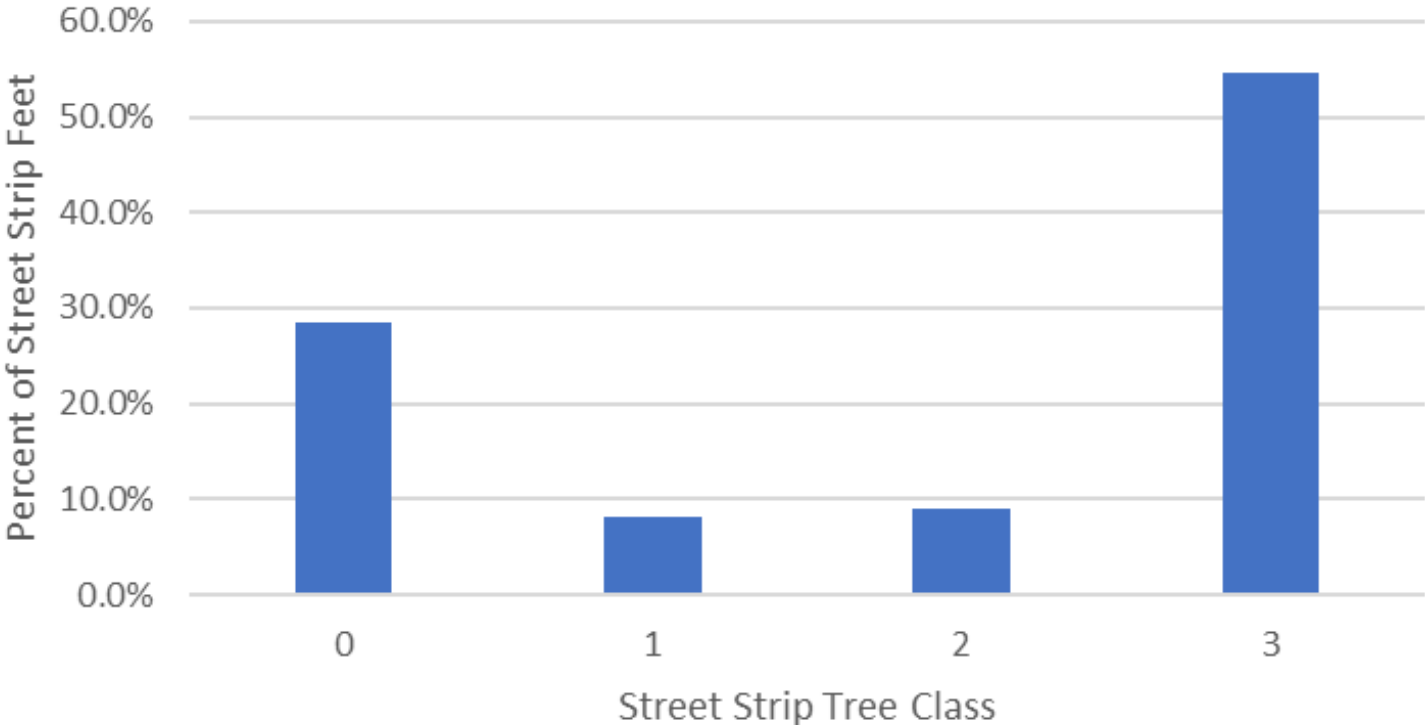
- Class 0 = No plantable space (less than 5 ft. width)
- Class 1 = At least 5' of planting space + presence of overhead power lines
- Class 2 = 5 to 8 ft of planting space
- Class 3 = 9 feet or more of planting space

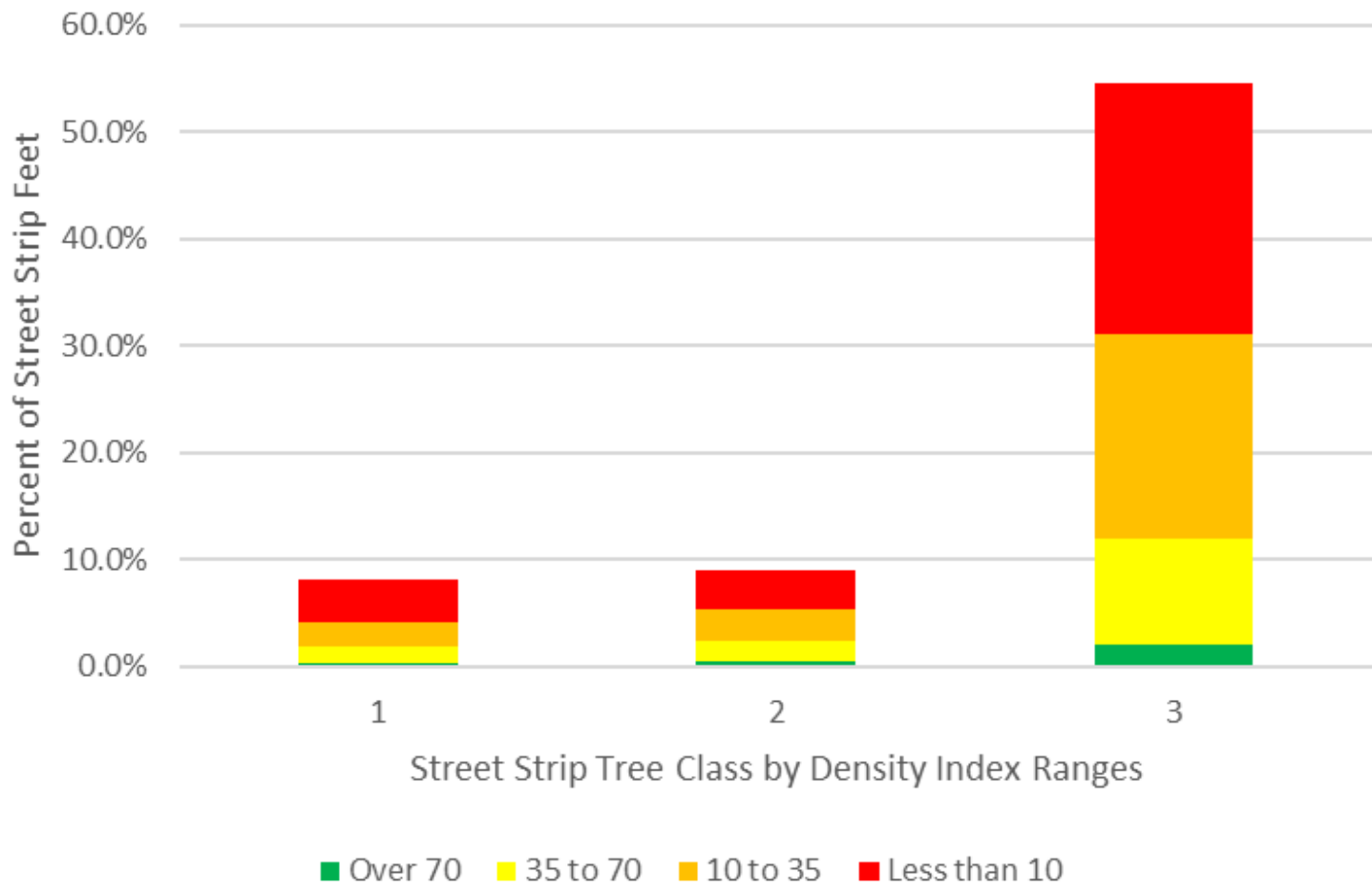
– A density index: indicates how fully planted out a street strip is

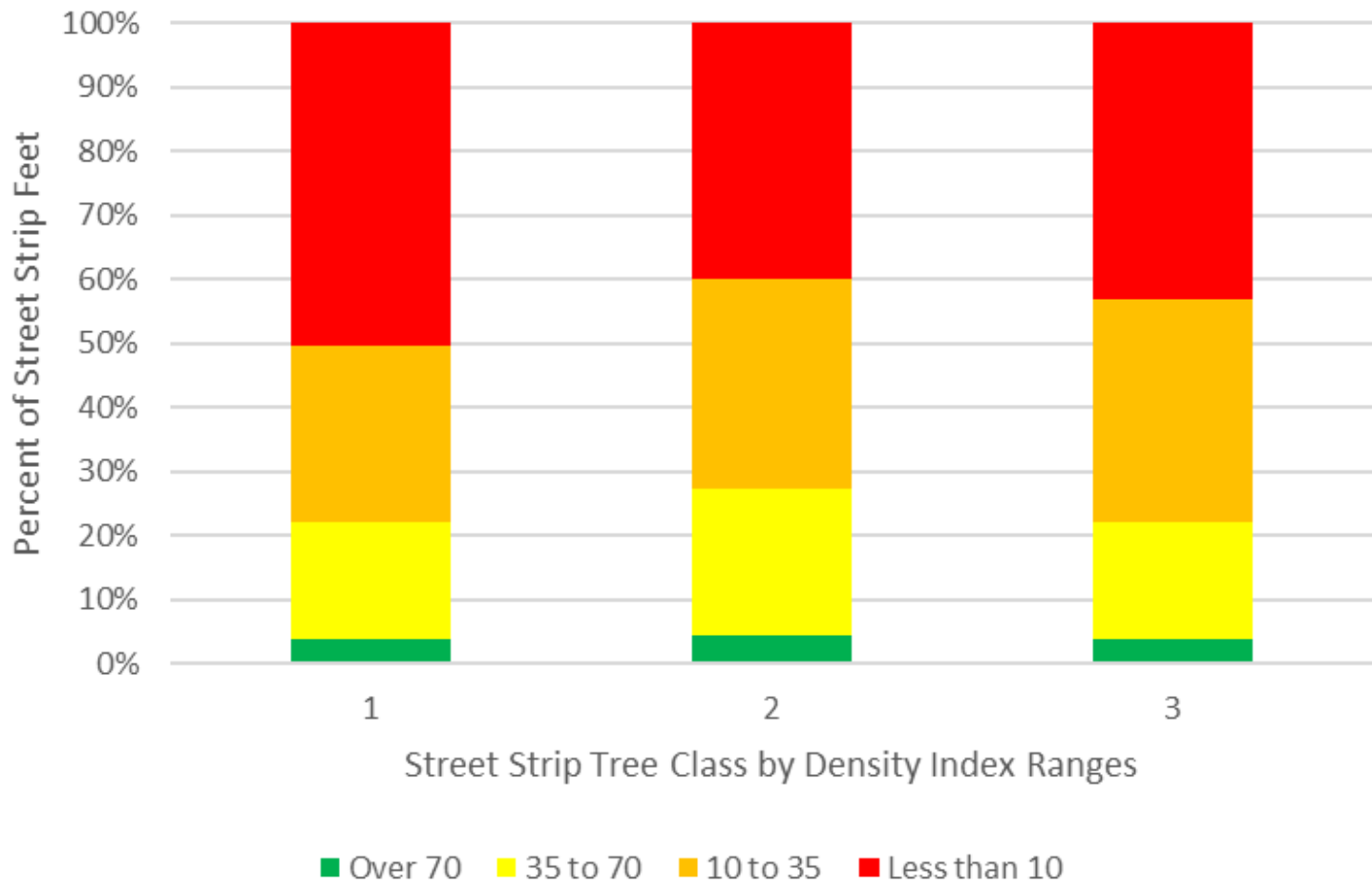
# What can we do with this?

- Develop master tree planting plan which sets priorities based on where the needs are greatest
- Match trees to the available sites
- Operational plans
  - Produced planting maps for Spocanopy plantings in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023
  - Produced maps for Spokane Ponderosa to target commercial properties for planting this year

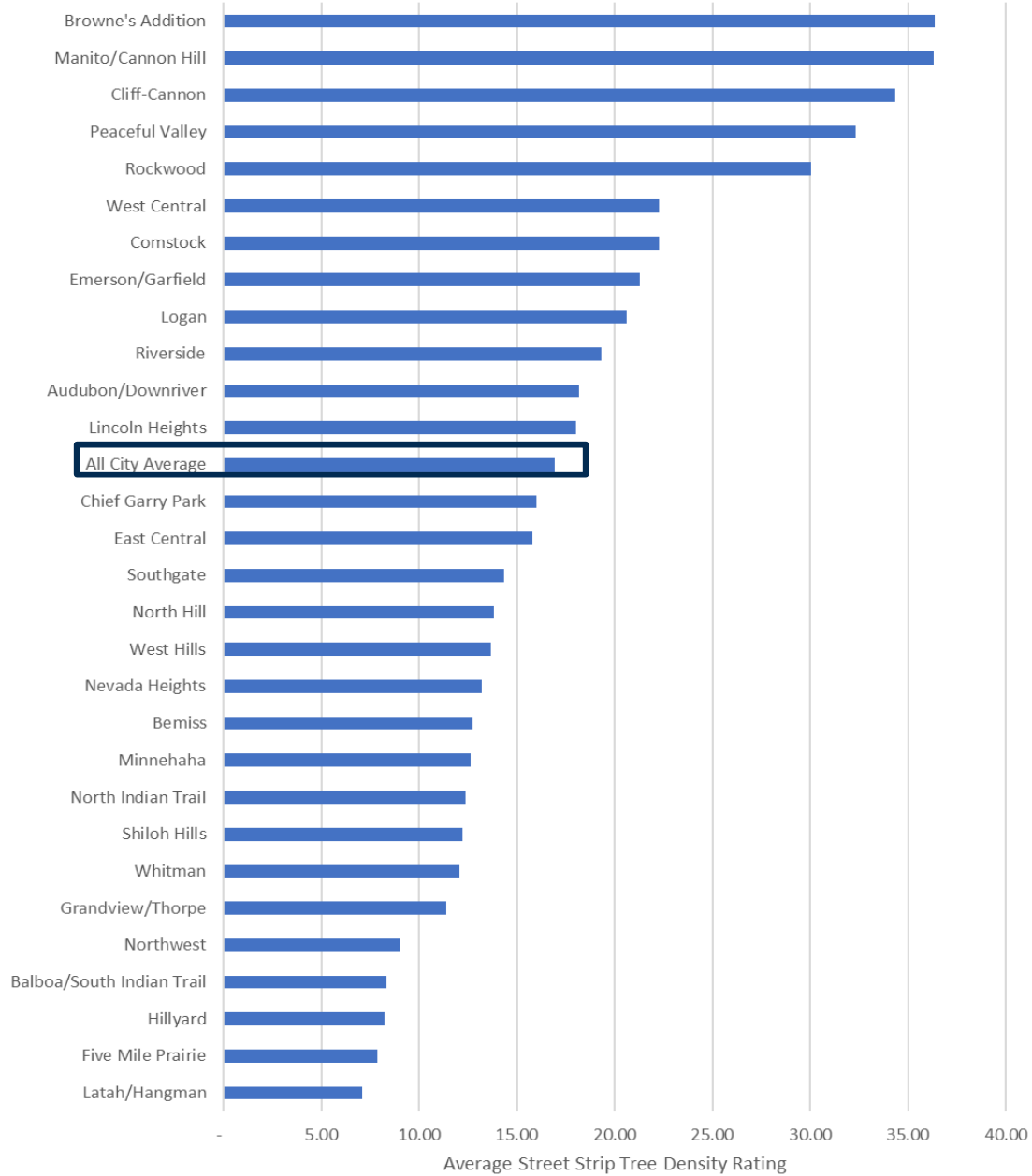
# Tree Class



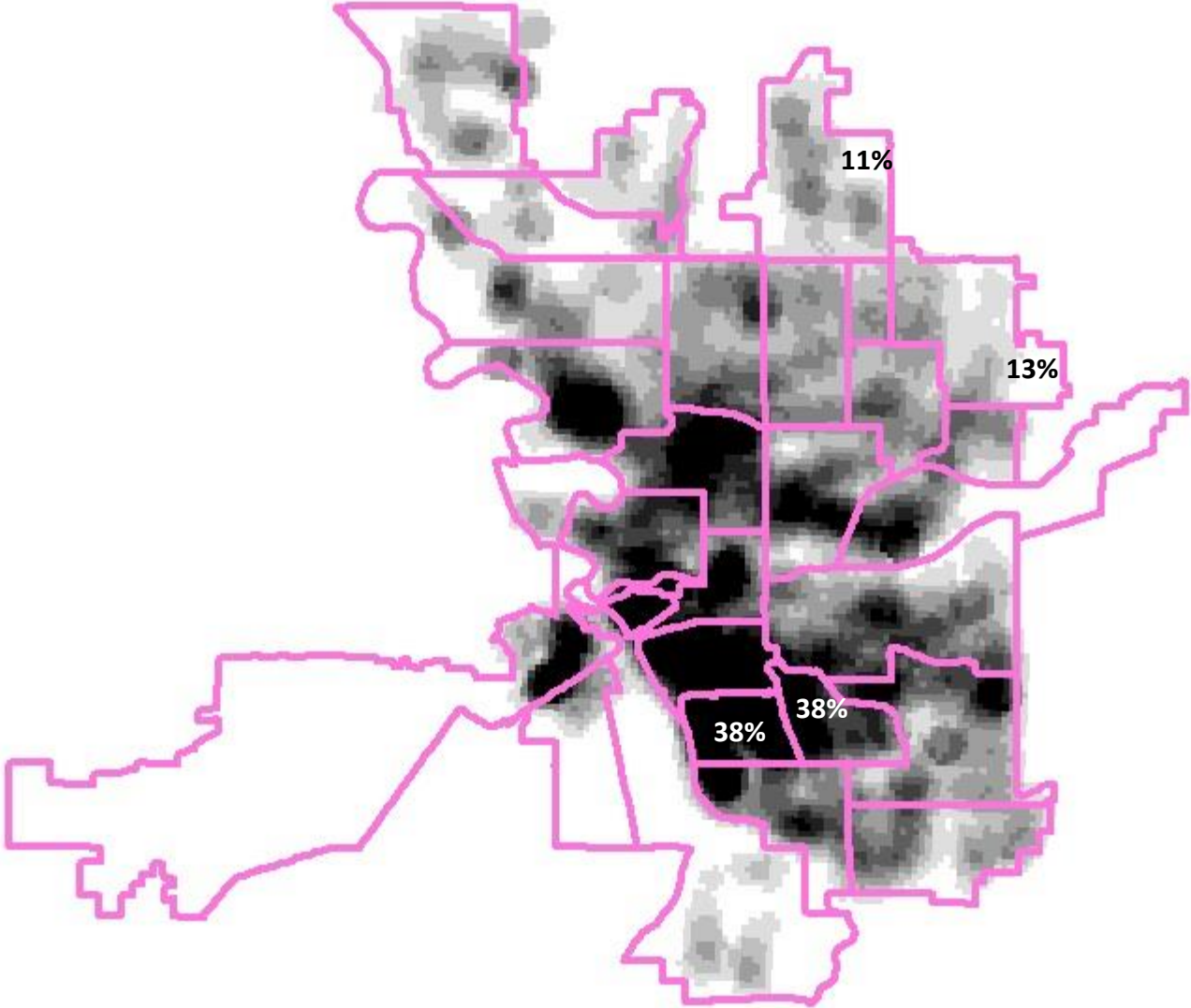




# Neighborhood Ratings



# Density of existing street & park trees





# West Central, Density index < 10, either side of street

