



BELLEVUE NEIGHBORHOOD TREE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

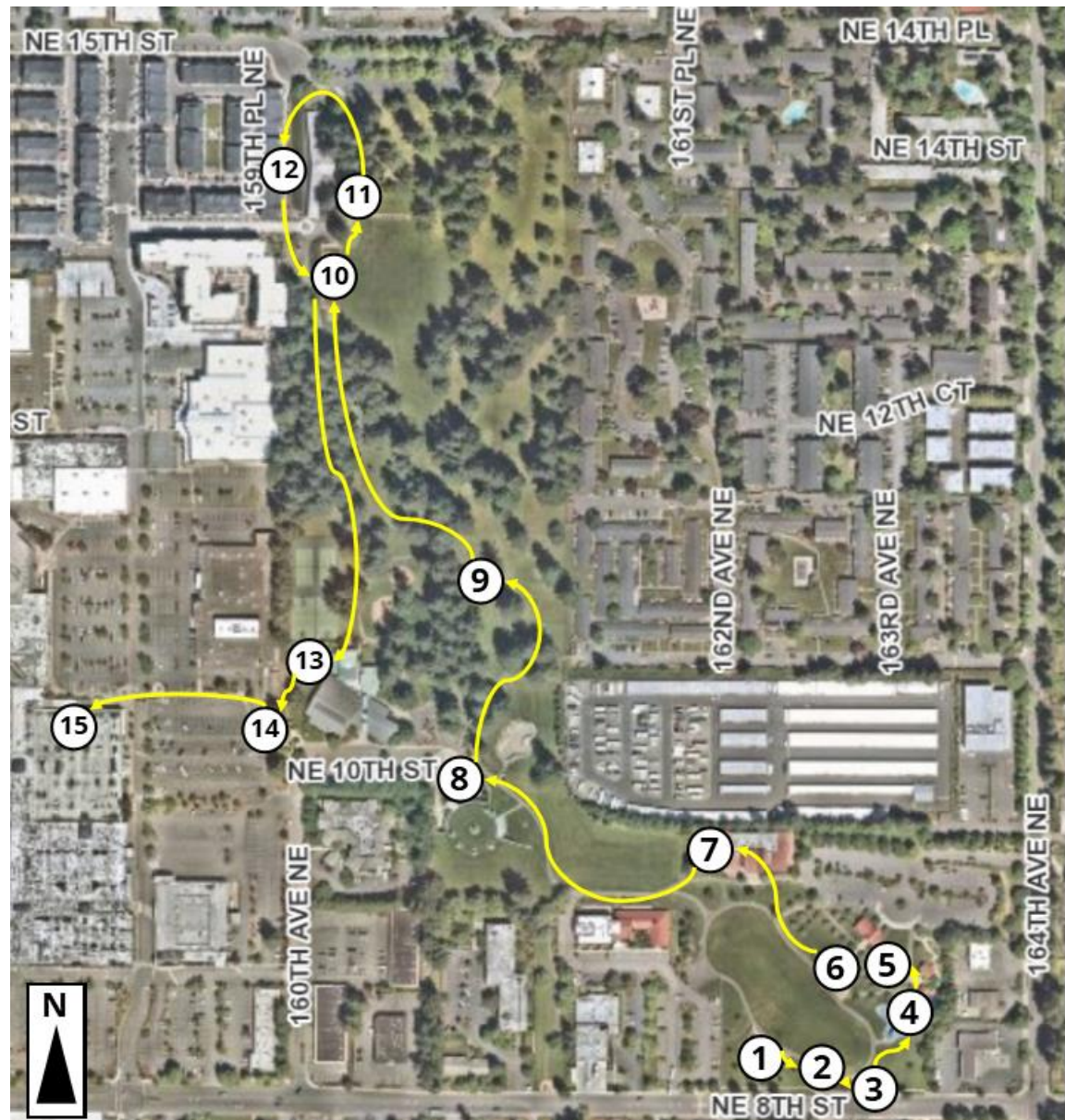
Self-Guided Neighborhood Tree Tour

Created by Marilyn Mayers

Starting point: Picnic shelter at Crossroads Park

Summary/Theme: This tour of Crossroads Park focuses on how trees and landscaping integrate environmental objectives with features welcoming our multi-ethnic and multi-age community. This 34 acre park is designed to foster community and help integrate residents—both old-timers and new—to the NW. It helps educate visitors and resident of Bellevue's most ethnically diverse neighborhood learn about environmental challenges facing our region while they enjoy our "City in a Park".

1.1 mile paved walkway. Parking available at a park lot off NE 8th next to the Fire Station. Another is off 164th Ave NE.





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This tree tour was developed by one of Bellevue's Neighborhood Tree Ambassador volunteers. The goal of the Neighborhood Tree Ambassador program is to help build community support for trees in Bellevue.

Trees are an important part of our community because they provide significant health and environmental benefits. Trees:



- Remove pollutants from the air and water
- Reduce stress and improve focus
- Lower air temperature
- Pull greenhouse gases from the atmosphere
- Reduce flooding and erosion caused by rain

Bellevue has a goal to achieve a 40% tree canopy across the entire city. As of 2017, we are at 37%. Around two-thirds of Bellevue's existing tree canopy is in residential areas. By preserving and planting trees in residential areas, Bellevue's community members can make a big difference in helping to reach the 40% tree canopy goal.



For more information about trees in Bellevue or the Neighborhood Tree Ambassador program, please visit BellevueWA.gov/trees.




If you have questions or would like to share feedback about this tour, please email trees@bellevuewa.gov.



Stop #	Landmark	Discussion	Photo
1	Picnic Shelter #3	<p>Before you begin your tour, consider what are some of the things you expect and want to see in an urban park? What do you think is the main purpose of having public parks? What could be the reasons the city has built and maintained this park in the way that it has? What do the trees and landscaping reflect about the values and objectives of the city?</p>	
1	Western red cedar	<p>You can find a number of newly planted Western red cedar such as these around the park. They are native to the Pacific NW and often grow where you will also find Douglas fir and western hemlock.</p> <p>You can tell a Western red cedar by the foliage which forms flat sprays with scale-like leaves. The bark is fibrous and fissured. Red cedars can grow up to 200 feet tall. It is hard to find old Western red cedar trees today though you can still find some that are over 1,000 years old in western Washington and further north in British Columbia.</p> <p>The Coast Salish people used the bark of the tree to make baskets, hats and clothing. The wood was used for the long houses and canoes used for fishing, hunting whale and for trade and ceremonial purposes. Weavers would make a cut in the bark and then pull the bark up in great long strips. The strips are soaked in water and pounded and then sliced into strips suitable for weaving.</p>	


2	Red alder	<p>Now walk along the circular promenade easterly in the direction of the Water Park. Note the red alder to your right on the way. Red alders grow 30-80 feet tall. They fix nitrogen in the soil which keeps soils healthy.</p>	
3	California lilac	<p>Note also the California lilac to your right on NE 8th.</p> <p>Their deep blue flowers which blossom in spring and early summer draw and sustain native bees. They are drought tolerant. As the name denotes, they are native to California. They are fragrant and are not toxic to animals or humans. The bush can grow up to about 6-9 feet high and spreads out quite a bit—8-12 feet.</p>	
4	Water Spray Playground	<p>One objective of this park is to bring together people of diverse cultures and backgrounds as they engage in water play. The playground features are intended for all ages and is wheel-chair accessible.</p> <p>Having this Orca brings attention to issues facing the health of our pods and of marine life generally. It helps educate children and newcomers about environmental issues specific to the Pacific NW. The waterways of the NW provide critical habitat for salmon and help maintain the health of our forests. Along with development, many of these waterways have been severely compromised.</p> <p>By planting trees, and swales, the city is able to control runoff and prevent flooding and gouging of streambeds which diminish the viability of traditional salmon runs.</p>	





4	Katsura trees	<p>The Water park includes rain gardens, pervious pavements, rain recycling and lush planting. The water from the features is recycled for the gardens surrounding the waterpark. Along the edge of the Water Park are some katsura trees which are native to Japan and China.</p>	
5	Dogwood	<p>Follow the circular path through these planted Dogwood trees planted to provide shade, color and lead you on around to the park's International Plaza.</p> <p>The flowering dogwood is native to northern Mexico and eastern U.S. The name dogwood is thought to come from a colonial description of the tree's fruit as being edible but not fit for a dog. They begin flowering around 2-3 years of age and live to about 80 years.</p>	



6	Flags and Japanese maple	In keeping with the International theme of the park, flanking the stage are two Japanese maple trees in containers. How many flags can you identify?	
7	Youth Eastside Services	As you proceed west along the path, you will pass Youth Eastside Services to your right. The landscaping around YES includes broadleaf trees such as oak and maple as well as native evergreen shrubbery.	
7	Kinnikinnik	Kinnikinnik is a native ground-cover which has white or pink flowers around April/May and red fall fruit. It grows about 6-12 inches tall. The berries persist into winter and have been a valuable food source for animals and people historically. Branches root where they touch the soil. Kinnikinnik provides nectar for butterflies and hummingbirds. The berries are eaten by birds, bears, foxes and coyotes. Deer eat the twigs. Local native people ate the berries and used leaves mixed with tobacco for smudging and used the leaves and berries in medicinal teas. It is native to the west coast from northern California all the way to Alaska.	

8	Bellevue Youth Theater and skate bowl	<p>Continue down the path past the Bellevue Youth Theater to your left. The BYT is a LEED certified building.</p> <p>To your right is a skatebowl opposite the theater. You will notice several large rhododendron and madrone plantings around the path.</p>	
9	Golf course and Douglas firs	<p>This marks a transition to more native plants. They include salal, rhododendrons, juniper, cypress.</p> <p>Follow the path, keeping to the right of the Community Center. Go slightly up the hill and follow the path as it swings to the left along the golf course.</p> <p>As you proceed along the loop, you will pass a playground area for young children including swings, rocking horses and climbing structure. The path now leads you through a beautiful grove of established native Douglas fir trees.</p> <p>A single Douglas fir can sequester 14 tons of carbon in its first 100 years. Older trees store more carbon since they have lived longer than younger trees. Younger trees however absorb carbon dioxide at a faster rate because they produce food more quickly than older trees. How many tons of carbon dioxide do you think this grove has sequestered in the past 100 years?</p> <p>Most of this area was logged in the 19th century so this is at least second growth.</p>	


9	Sequoia	<p>Some sequoia and shrubbery have been added in recent years when the douglas fir were thinned some years ago. Can you locate the few sequoia and western red cedar planted in the grove?</p> <p>In 2019, the City of Bellevue committed to planting 1,000 Sequoia saplings as part of an effort to increase our tree canopy from the current 37% (in 2017) to 40%. Volunteers have planted hundreds of trees in several Bellevue City parks. Sequoia are not native to Washington but they are fast growing, pest-resistant and drought-tolerant. Bellevue Parks department has begun planting more sequoia as a method of making our forests more resilient in the face of climate change.</p>	
10	Community gardens and senior housing	<p>Enjoy your northerly walk along the path through the Douglas fir grove. On your left you will see a newly opened Senior Housing complex for low-income seniors as well as luxury condos.</p> <p>Coupled with this development has been an effort to enhance the landscape by incorporating plants and trees some of which are native to the NW and some that are not.</p>	

10	Salal	<p>Here you will find plantings of salal. It has pale white-pink bell flowers. The berries are a dull black which are edible. Deer love salal thickets. They hide there and eat the leaves. Local native groups used salal both as a food and medicine to treat skin, gastrointestinal problems and coughs. Salal grows throughout the Pacific NW and can grow as tall as 10 feet.</p>		
10	Oregon grape	<p>Oregon grape is a natural antifungal. It has been used for stomach upsets and to treat infection. It can be applied to the skin for psoriasis and as a disinfectant. The berries can be toxic to dogs and people but the birds love them.</p>		
10	Sword fern	<p>You will find Western sword fern throughout Pacific NW forests from California to Alaska. They grow best in shade but can grow in full sun as well. It can grow to 5 feet tall. The preferred habitat is the understory of coniferous woodlands. Coast Salish peoples have used this plant as a pain reliever. If applied directly to the area where pain and inflammation occur, it can reduce pain. If you rub the spores on the underside of the sword fern you can counteract the rash from stinging nettles.</p> <p>In spring, when other food is unavailable, Salish communities roast, peel and eat the fern's rhizomes. (Rhizomes are the stem below ground that sends out roots and shoots.)</p>		

11	Putting green	Go past the Community gardens and the entrance to the Putting green on your right and circle around the Golfing Station and head in the direction back towards the Bellevue Youth Theater.	
12	Luxury condos and public art	<p>On your right is new landscaping featuring deciduous trees which separates the new luxury condos from the park itself.</p> <p>The public sculpture and staircase you pass were included as part of the design connecting the growing city and park, again emphasizing the international flavor of the neighborhood.</p>	 
13	Crossroads Community Center	<p>Now return back towards Crossroads Community Center. How many Western Red Cedar trees can you spot on the way back?</p> <p>Crossroads Community Center has luxurious landscaping in both back and front. Walk around the building to view the lush surrounding gardens. Plantings include evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs. Its solar panels generate electricity to power the building.</p>	

13	Mugo pine	<p>What shrubs, flowers and trees to you recognize around the Center? Do you know where the trees, shrubs and flowers around your home and neighborhood originate?</p> <p>Mugo pine is a low-lying tree native to the high mountains of central Europe. There it grows close to the ground in mounds against cold winds. Different cultivars grow from three fee to 12 feet tall.</p> <p>Can you identify the red alder, maple and katsura trees situated around the building?</p>	
14	Path to Crossroads Mall	<p>To the left of the front entrance to the Center you will find a zigzagging wheelchair accessible path down to Crossroads mall.</p> <p>Lining the path are various hostas that grow well in the Northwest. Hostas originate from Asia—China, Japan, Korea and the Russian Far East.</p>	

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14	Madrone	<p>The Pacific madrone tree on the path is native to Washington. The madrone tree grows in a climate with mild, wet winters and dry summers. It grows all the way from British Columbia down to southern California. They can live up to 200 years once established. It sheds bark in summer and early fall. They provide edible berries for birds, racoon, bear and deer.</p>		
15	Crossroads Mall	<p>From this path you can go directly to Crossroads mall. You can dine at the Food Court which offers food from China, Russia, Thailand, the Middle East, India, Japan, Korea and beyond. There's a Japanese bakery as well as a French bakery, and a Starbucks, and QFC.</p> <p>If you come here on a Tuesday during the summer, you can pick up something from the popular Crossroads Farmers Market. It's open from noon to 6:00 pm on Tuesdays.</p>	