

REQUEST FOR PERMITTING AND ASSISTANCE TO PLANT TREES ALONG PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

Please see enclosed a plan to plant 200 trees along 2,500 ft of linear space along the Heights Hike and Bike Trail. The plan is comprised of three sections of tree plantings, with various maintenance partners along each of the sections, including neighbors, community leaders, community organizations, business owners, and commercial real estate developers with property along the corridor.

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Submitted to: Urban Forestry
Houston Permitting Center
901 Bagby Street, 1st Floor
Houston, TX 77002

forestryplanreview@houston.tx.gov

Wednesday, July 17, 2024



Project Location

The project location is along the Heights Hike and Bike Trail ~2,500 ft of linear frontage to the popular hike and bike trail. **204 trees total**



West

Boundary: Lawrence St to Waverly St

Length: 800 ft

707 Waverly St
Houston, TX 77007

64 trees

Central

Boundary: Waverly St to Rutland St

Length: 1,050 ft

707 Rutland St
Houston, TX 77007

84 trees

East

Boundary: Rutland St to Yale St

Length: 690 ft

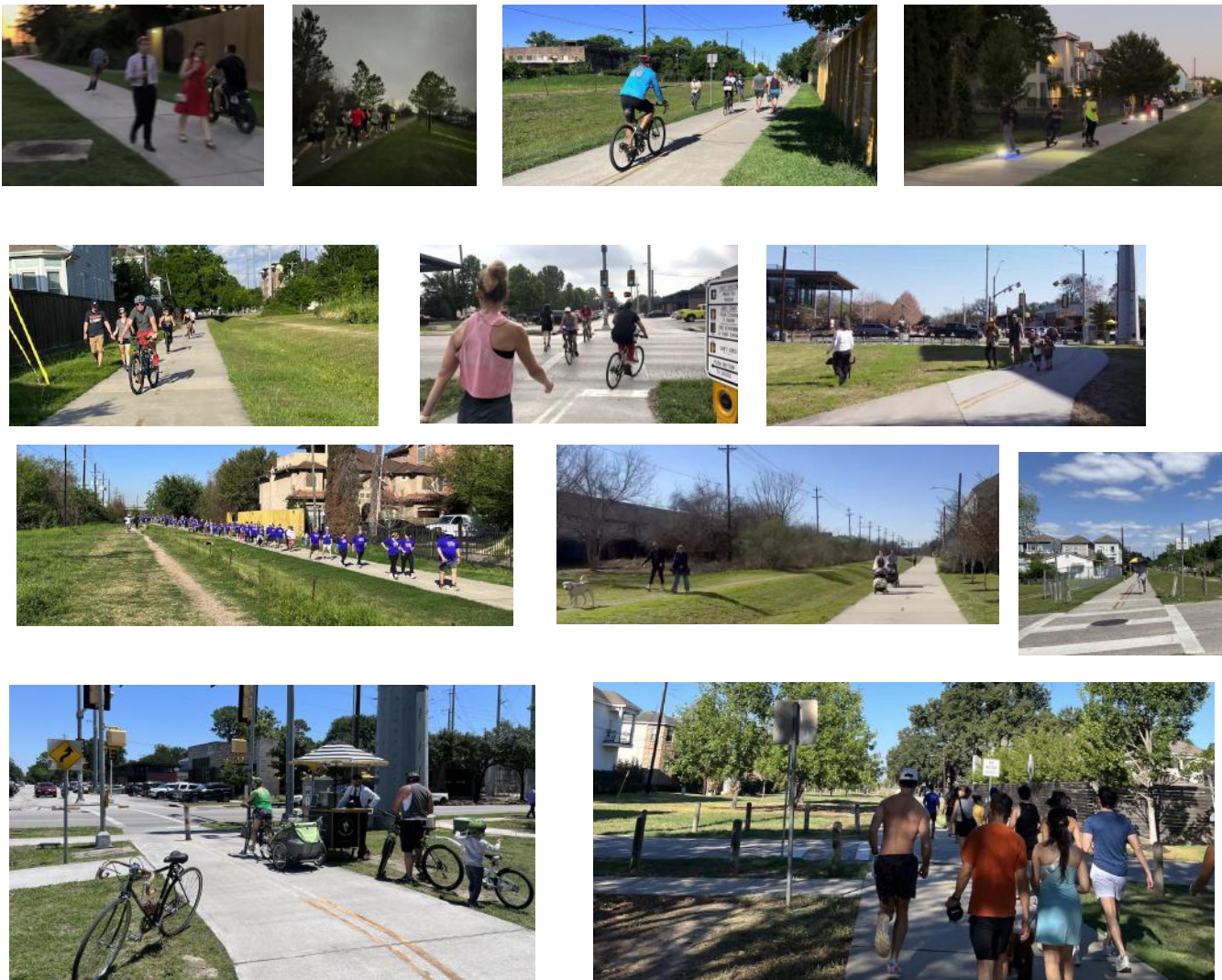
707 Yale St
Houston, TX 77007

55 trees



Current Conditions

The hike and bike trail sits along the right-of-way of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railway. The railway, often abbreviated as MKT, is another name for the trail and one of the mixed-use developments in the area. Affectionately called the "KT" and pronounced "Katy," this is how the small town of Katy, Texas received its name. Consequently, Interstate 10 is known as the Katy Freeway. The City of Houston, in partnership with TxDOT, created this "rails-to-trails" project in 2009. The trail has since become the lifeblood of the neighborhood, catalyzing positive change and seeing an average of 1,200 users each day, with peak usage nearing 10,000 users on busy weekends.



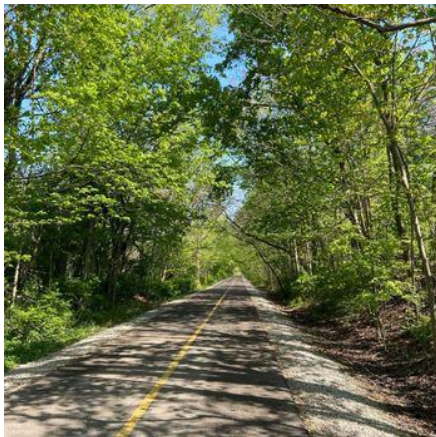
One significant issue is the lack of shade, which deters use during hot summer middays. Consequently, trail use in the summer is concentrated in the early mornings and late evenings. To address this, we aim to reforest the trail with native species, creating a green corridor that provides respite from the concrete jungle, fosters strong community ties, and blurs the lines between park, recreation, transportation, and economic development.

Inspirational Canopies

These projects have achieved full canopy shading, which we aim to replicate. The importance of reforestation: and the speed with which tree canopies can transform spaces:



Houston Heights Detention Pond



Monon Trail
Carmel, IN



American Tobacco Trail
Durham, NC



Spring Creek Greenway
Spring, TX

Precedents close to Home:

Other sections along Nicholson also enjoy long rows of canopy, primarily from property owners' initiatives. Our group planted 26 trees along the 700 block of Nicholson and has experience in tree care, including pruning, mulching, and staking.

Along the same trail, the section between Shepherd and Durham (about 500 ft) has a significant number of trees planted, creating a canopy that brings shade, an ecosystem, and beautification.



Nicholson St & 13th St



MKT Trail & White Oak Bayou



MKT Trail & Durham

Tree Planting Strategy

In the picture on the right-hand side, taken from Google Street View in 2014, you can see young baby trees supported by stakes along a 500 ft section of the Heights Hike and Bike Trail between Shepherd and Durham. These trees, planted around 2014, have now matured into a beautiful and comfortable canopy, transforming the trail into a shaded, inviting corridor.



Approximately 40 trees (20 per side) were planted using stakes and straps, supported by a PVC piping watering system. This successful reforestation effort serves as a valuable case study for our project, where we aim to replicate this success by starting with a ratio of 0.08 trees per foot of trail.



Location: 500 ft section of the trail between Shepherd & Durham

Tree Count: Approximately 40 trees (20 trees per side)

Planting Date: Around 2014

Current Condition: After 10 years, these trees provide a comfortable canopy.

Planting Method: Trees were planted with stakes and straps, supported by a PVC piping watering system.

Even though we aspire to create a fully forested corridor similar to the trails mentioned above, we will start with a ratio of 0.08 trees per foot of trail. This value was defined based on the following case study:

$$\frac{40 \text{ trees}}{500 \text{ ft of trail}} = 0.08 \text{ trees/ft of trail}$$

Tree Selection

Trees were selected from the City of Houston Right-of-Way Street Trees list to optimize for ecological diversity, ensuring a mix of small and large species, trees that display vibrant fall colors, and those with flowering buds and diverse hues. Additionally, selections included species proven hardy in our neighborhood.



American Sycamore
Platanus occidentalis



American Sweetgum
Liquidambar styraciflua



Loblolly Pine
Pinus taeda



Bald Cypress
Taxodium distichum



Green Ash
Fraxinus pennsylvanica



White Oak
Quercus alba



Southern Magnolia
Magnolia grandiflora



Eastern Redbud
Cercis canadensis



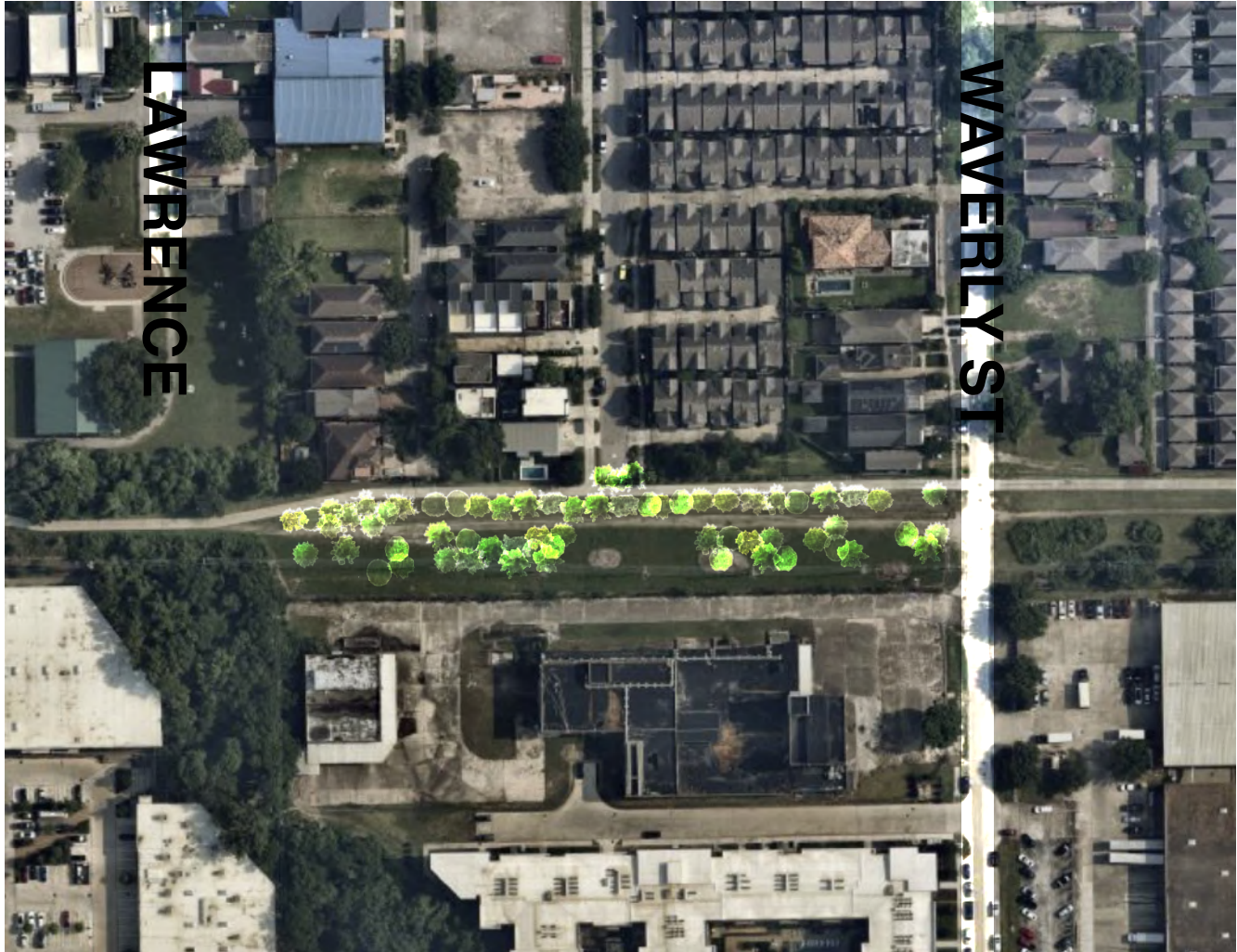
Roughleaf Dogwood
Cornus drummondii



Red Buckeye
Crataegus spathulata



Possumhaw
Ilex decidua



West

Boundary: Lawrence St
to Waverly St

Length: 800 ft

707 Waverly St
Houston, TX 77007

64 trees



Current Conditions: looking East



Central

Boundary: Waverly St
to Rutland St

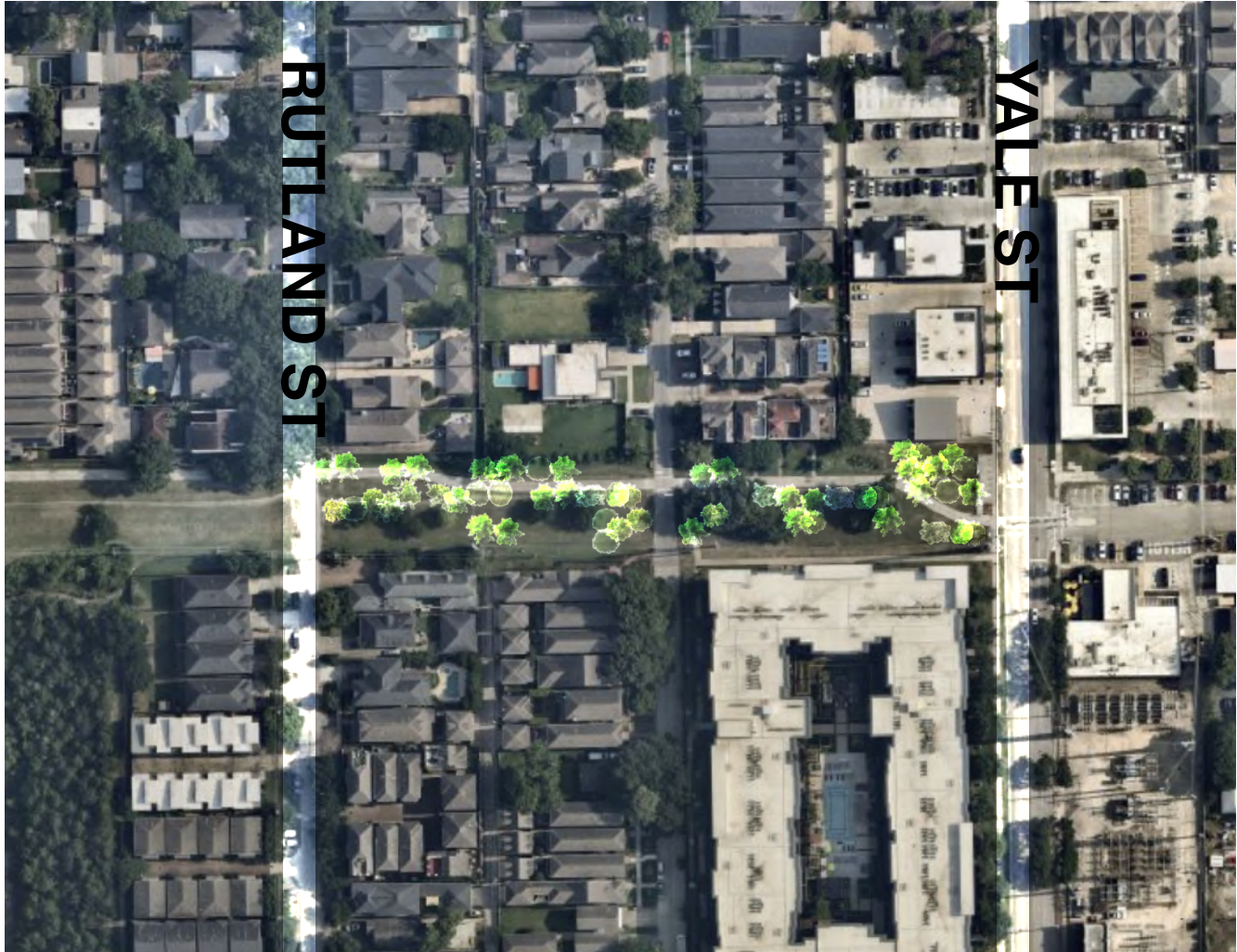
Length: 1,050 ft

707 Rutland St
Houston, TX 77007

84 trees



Current Conditions: looking East



East

Boundary: Rutland St
to Yale St

Length: 690 ft

707 Yale St
Houston, TX 77007

55 trees



Current Conditions: looking West

Objective

Plant 200 trees along 2,500 feet of linear space along the Heights Hike and Bike Trail.

Resources

1. **Trees:** We plan to plant a variety of trees, selected from the City of Houston Right-of-Way Street Trees list, ensuring suitability for the local climate, ease of maintenance, and ecological diversity. We will source the trees from our partners at Livelihood, Trees for Houston, and Apache
2. **Soil:** The trees will be planted in nutrient-rich, well-draining soil to ensure their growth and survival. Trees for Houston has provided mulch and stakes and straps in the past and we will welcome their assistance again
3. **Tools:** Digging tools such as shovels, spades, and rakes will be needed to prepare the ground for planting and to ensure proper watering and maintenance of the trees. We will borrow tools from our partners at Livelihood and Trees for Houston as well as from the Tool Bank.
4. **Water:** A reliable source of water is essential for the survival of the newly planted trees. For the West section, Radom Capital will provide water, Central will be provided by the Deal Company, and for the East Section will be provided by Rebecca Lankford and Asana Partners

Project Activities

1. **Before Planting:**
 - Fundraising and Community Outreach: Engage the community and secure the necessary resources. The location along the Heights Hike and Bike Trail has been selected for the planting.
2. **During Planting:**
 - Tree Planting Event: Volunteers and community members will come together to plant the trees and create a green corridor. This event will foster community spirit and involvement.
3. **After Planting:**
 - Ongoing Maintenance: Regular watering, pruning, and care will be organized to ensure the health and growth of the trees. Additionally, we will hold annual community events to celebrate the progress and benefits of the project.

Vision

This tree planting project is an opportunity for the community to come together and take action to improve our neighborhood. By enhancing the Heights Hike and Bike Trail with a diverse array of trees, we aim to create a green corridor that offers shade, beauty, and ecological benefits. This project will serve as a lasting symbol of our commitment to environmental sustainability and community unity.