

Best Practices: San Francisco

- “[T]raffic calming circles **should be landscaped with trees or plantings. Shrubs and grasses should be planted up to 3 feet tall and trees should be appropriately pruned...** In traffic calming circles with a diameter of less than 15 feet, **one tree should be planted in the center.** On a traffic calming circle with a diameter greater than 15 feet, **more than 1 tree** should be planted and should be equally spaced around the circle.”



Sources: [SFBetterStreets](#): A guide to making street improvements in San Francisco (City and County of San Francisco 2015); [SF Green Connections Plan](#) (City and County of San Francisco 201X)

Best Practices: Palo Alto

- Palo Alto recognizes the value of traffic circles for reducing collisions and **offer[ing] opportunities for added landscaping and tree planting**. They note that the 2012 Transportation Plan “**calls for greater use of traffic circles, particularly along bicycle boulevards.**”

CITY OF PALO ALTO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2030

TRANSPORTATION

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VISION: Palo Alto will build and maintain a sustainable network of safe, accessible and efficient transportation and parking solutions for all users and modes, while protecting and enhancing the quality of life in Palo Alto. Programs will include alternative and innovate transportation processes, and the adverse impacts of automobile traffic on the environment in general and residential streets in particular will be reduced. Streets will be safe, attractive and designed to enhance the quality and aesthetics of Palo Alto neighborhoods. Palo Alto recognizes the regional nature of its transportation system, and will be a leader in seeking regional transportation solutions, prioritizing Caltrain service improvements and railroad grade separations.



Best Practices: Seattle, WA

*“The City of Seattle has been installing traffic circles since the early 1970s. We have installed trees in most of those traffic circles. **We do not have any constraints as to size for removing trees.** We do limb up the trees when they get larger to allow for fire trucks or other large vehicles to maneuver under them.”*

-Transportation Planner

Seattle Department of Transportation

- 1,200+ circles
- Add 5 each year
- Most have a tree
- **No maximum trunk diameter**



Seattle Circles



Sent by Seattle DOT as example of a circle

Seattle Circles



Seattle Circles



Seattle Circles



Best Practices: Portland, OR

*“Trees...are required to be a minimum diameter... Approved trees larger in diameter than the minimum are permitted, and **I am not aware of any specific limit on the ultimate size of trees.**”*

- Traffic Engineer, PE, Portland Bureau Transportation

- **Safety** - “Trees placed in Traffic Circles break uninterrupted views of long straight street sections and help to focus driver attention on their local surroundings.”
- **Signage** – “Usually have STOP control on one of the intersection streets.”
- Required **minimum** trunk size and **no maximum diameter**



Portland



Portland



Portland



Google

Best Practices: Summary of City Policies

	City	Circle Trees?	Notes
1.	Arlington, VA	✓	Desired max speed at entry is 15 mph.
2.	Boulder, CO	✓	15 mph posted in circle.
3.	Austin, TX	✓	Focus on native vegetation & trees.
4.	Columbus, OH	✓	Half of recommended plantings are trees.
5.	Missoula, MT	✓	Robust Adopt-a-Circle program.
6.	Pasadena, CA	✓	No YIELD control. STOPS at each corner.
7.	Portland, OR	✓	New trees must meet <i>minimum</i> trunk size.
8.	San Francisco, CA	✓	Multiple trees allowed.
9.	Seattle, WA	✓	1,200+ circles, most with trees
10.	Tucson, AZ	✓	200+ circles. Neighbors decide STOP or YIELD.
11.	Vancouver, Canada	✓	Robust “Green Streets” program.

Berkeley Context

LeConte Neighborhood Association Newsletter March 2000

Dawn Redwoods in Traffic Circles

The Parks Department has planted large specimens of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* in the new roundabouts on Ellsworth Street at Stuart and at Parker Streets. These deciduous "Redwoods" have an interesting history as they were only discovered growing in China in the early 1940s. Because of their fine textured colorful leaves and rough bark they became very popular and were planted all around the world. Several large 50-year-old trees can now