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Charles St. improvement means replacing old trees

By Julie Bykowicz

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This week and next, tall, seemingly healthy trees along the west side of Charles Street between Madison Street and Mount Royal Avenue are being reduced to wood chips. But passers-by - several of whom visibly recoiled at the carnage yesterday - needn't worry: The city's forestry department has determined that these Bradford pear trees, planted in the 1960s and 70s, are reaching the end of their short life spans.

The trees are being removed as part of an \$11 million Charles Street sidewalk and street improvement project. American elms, red maples and Japanese zelkovas will be planted in place of the pear trees, whose brittle branches can snap in storms and whose flowers, while lovely, smell less than floral.

The Charles Street sidewalks between Mount Vernon and North Avenue also are being repaved with red bricks as part of the improvement project, which city officials say should be completed by May.

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