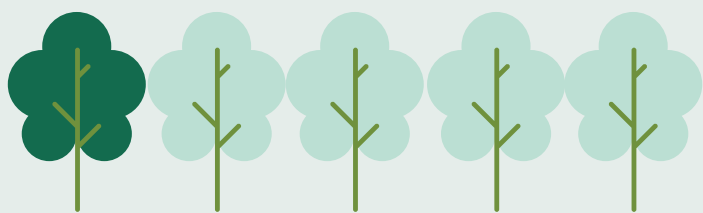


LOS ANGELES URBAN FOREST EQUITY

This infographic is based on two reports published by Dr. Vivek Shandas and CAPA Strategies, with support from Cindy Chen, Stoss Landscape Urbanism, TreePeople, City Plants, California Climate Action Corps, the Los Angeles Urban Forest Equity Collective. **Special thanks to our funders, Accelerate Resilience Los Angeles and the U.S. Forest Service via the Los Angeles Center for Urban Natural Resources Sustainability.**



20% OF TREE CANOPY
in the City of Los Angeles is located in
FOUR NEIGHBORHOODS¹



BENEFITS OF TREES

include cooling shade, clean air, and saving money on electricity bills.²



Image credit: American Forests

When trees aren't distributed evenly, neither are their benefits.



THE CITY OF L.A. AIMS TO INCREASE URBAN TREE CANOPY BY

50%

IN AREAS WITH GREATEST NEED BY 2028



Neighborhoods with the fewest trees also tend to have the least space for new trees.



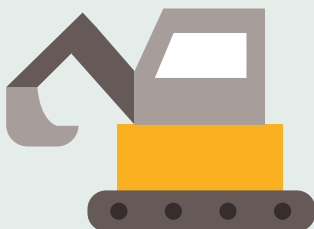
Caring for new trees takes time and money.

HOW CAN WE EQUITABLY EXPAND L.A.'S TREE CANOPY?



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

for an equitable urban forest from both individuals and local community-based organizations.



FUNDING

for major infrastructure changes to plant in areas with limited space and fewer trees.



HOLISTIC PLANNING

that promotes tree planting, establishment, preservation, and maintenance. Planning efforts should include updates to city codes and involve active participation and input from the communities targeted for tree planting.



MORE THAN JUST TREES

should be included in an equity-based tree program. An equitable urban forest should center neighborhoods' needs, like affordable housing, living-wage jobs, and pedestrian infrastructure.

¹ Galvin, Mike, et al. *TreePeople, 20*, pp. 1–9, Los Angeles County Tree Canopy Assessment
² Vibrant Cities Lab, available at <https://www.vibrantcitieslab.com/>

BUILDING A COMMON LANGUAGE FOR URBAN FOREST EQUITY

THREE TIERS OF URBAN FOREST EQUITY



How are these tiers useful?

This tiered approach model provides a common language to describe how easily new trees can be planted at a site. This helps decision-makers prioritize planting given current resources, policies, and infrastructure.



Tier 1: Available

No site modification needed. ***Tree canopy goals can be achieved by planting in existing vacant locations, e.g. vacant parkways and street medians.***



Tier 2: Moderate

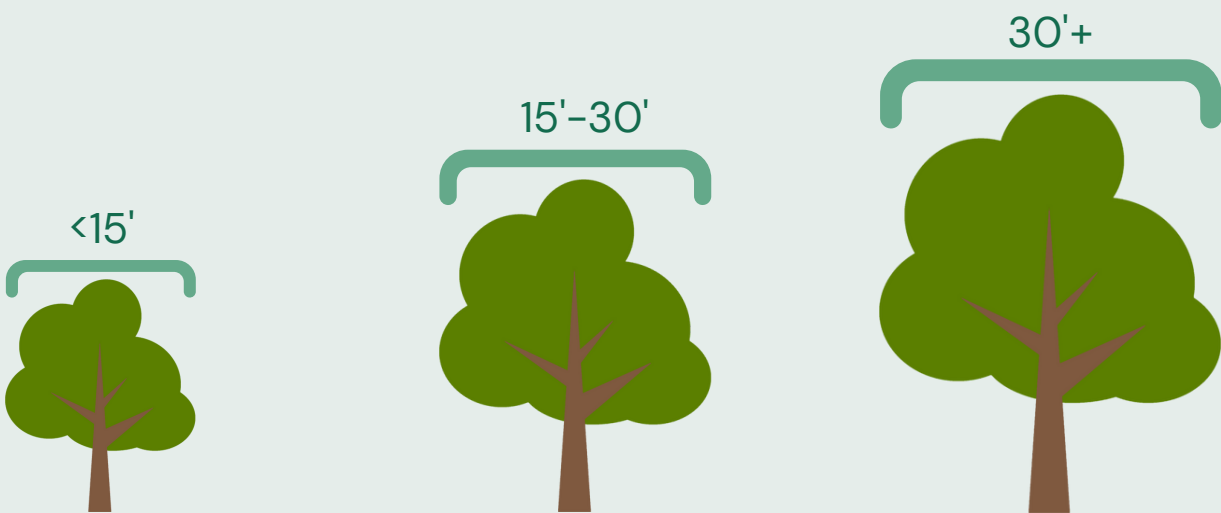
Minimal site modifications needed. ***Tree canopy goals can be achieved with additional financial resources and site modifications, e.g. creating new concrete cuts.***



Tier 3: Hard

Drastic site modifications needed. Significant tree canopy increase cannot be achieved with existing infrastructure, and ***policy modifications are needed to reach canopy equity goals, e.g. roads must be redesigned to accommodate more street trees.***

L.A. NEEDS MORE LARGE TREES



SMALL TREES

MEDIUM TREES

LARGE TREES

Large trees provide more benefits (e.g. shade, energy savings, stormwater management) than small or medium trees, even after accounting for their higher maintenance costs.³

However, ***many places in L.A. cannot accommodate large trees*** being planted due to limited aboveground and belowground space.

Simply planting more large trees is not enough for L.A. to reach tree canopy equity goals. ***Mature trees should be preserved*** as much as possible.



Research also shows that the ***urban tree canopy cover is declining nationally***. This means that there is less shade in our cities today than there was five years ago, which is especially problematic for places that had little to no shade to begin with.⁴

³ U.S. Forest Service Center for Urban Forest Research, "The Large Tree Argument," available at https://www.fs.fed.us/psw/topics/urban_forestry/products/cufr_511_large_tree_argument.pdf

⁴ Nowak, David and Eric Greenfield (2018), "Declining urban and community tree cover in the United States," Urban Forestry and Urban Greening, 32, pp. 32–55.

HOW DOES THE L.A. URBAN FOREST EQUITY GUIDEBOOK INFORM FUTURE TREE EQUITY PLANNING?

TIER 1 PLANTING PROJECTIONS

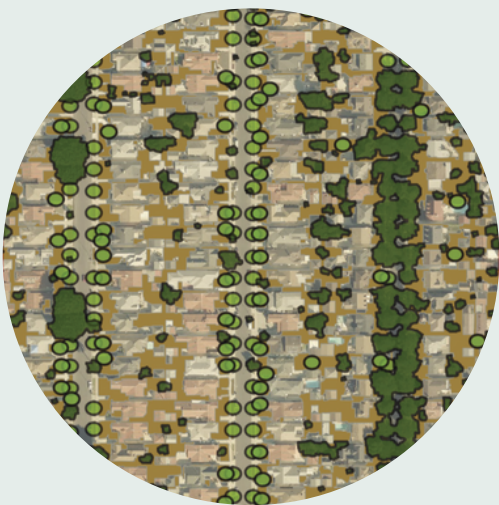


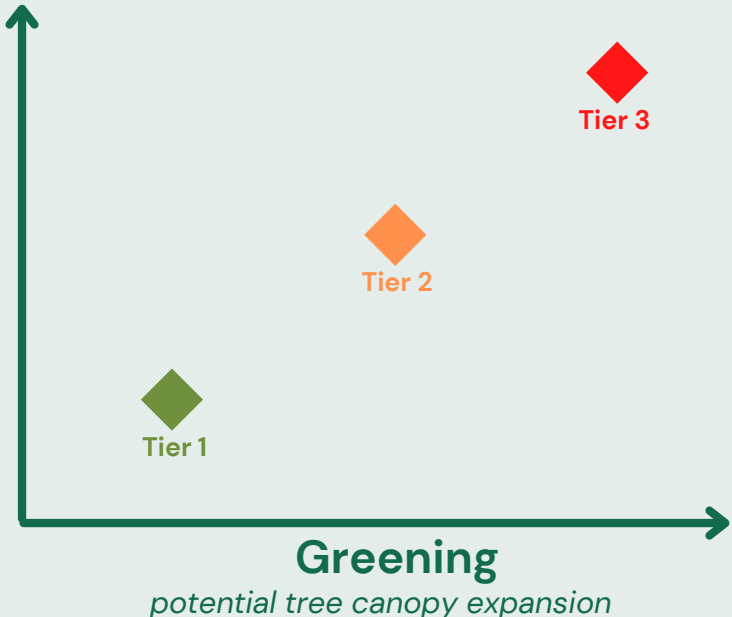
Image credit: Cindy Chen

This research study found that in all but one council district, **planting small trees in Tier 1 locations does not enable L.A. to achieve tree canopy goals.**

In this image from the study, light green areas indicate possible additional tree canopy with planting small trees in only Tier 1 locations, while dark green areas indicate existing tree canopy.

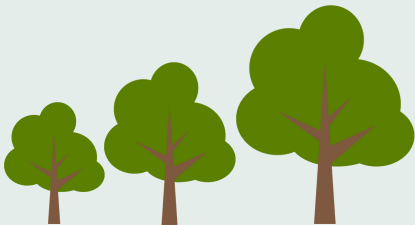
TRADEOFFS WITH TIER 2 AND TIER 3

Effort/Investment
*installation, maintenance,
implementation time*



Each of these tree canopy investments must be weighed against their individual challenges and trade-offs in a **discussion among city experts, the community, and urban foresters.**

NEXT STEPS FOR URBAN FOREST EQUITY RESEARCH



Based on new site condition data from L.A.'s street tree inventory, **explore the impact of planting a variety of tree sizes** on expanding urban tree canopy.



Consider how **private property plantings and open space acquisition** can contribute to meeting the City's tree canopy goals.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN YOU TAKE TO HELP GROW AN EQUITABLE URBAN FOREST IN LOS ANGELES?



LEARN MORE ABOUT L.A. URBAN FOREST EQUITY

- "Los Angeles Urban Forest Equity Assessment Report." Available at <https://www.tinyurl.com/urbanforestequity1>
- "Los Angeles Urban Forest Equity Streets Guidebook." Available at <https://www.tinyurl.com/urbanforestequity>
- Google Environmental Insights Explorer – Tree Canopy Labs. Available at <https://insights.sustainability.google/labs/treecanopy>
- Los Angeles County Tree Viewer. Available at <https://tinyurl.com/treeviewer>



PLANT AND CARE FOR MORE TREES

City Plants offers free yard and street trees to residents of the City of Los Angeles! Learn more at <https://www.cityplants.org/>



LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO ENCOURAGE TREE PLANTING, PRESERVATION, AND MAINTENANCE



SHARE WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIAL WHY URBAN FOREST EQUITY IS IMPORTANT TO YOU

Infographic created by Kimberly Guo, 2021 California Climate Action Corps Fellow with City Plants