

Introduction

This guide provides information for selecting street trees. Trees are a vital part of San Diego's infrastructure, contributing energy savings, filtering stormwater runoff and enhancing property values.

This guide encourages choices compatible with the planting locations, minimizing damage to other public improvements and promotes species diversity. Read all notes thoroughly prior to making any selection.

Notes

- Refer to the applicable Master Street Tree Plan for tree selection. Street Tree Plans (if adopted) are located in the Community Plan. Refer to the following link: <http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/profiles/index.shtml>
- In areas of existing development without an approved Street Tree Plan, the street tree selection(s) shall match the existing, permitted, predominate species unless the species is not listed in the Street Tree Selection Guide.
- In areas with contiguous sidewalks (sidewalks that extend all the way to the curb), trees shall be planted a minimum of two (2) feet from the sidewalk.
- Unimproved rights-of-way provide limited opportunities for planting trees. Contact the Urban Forestry Program for more information regarding placement in these areas.
- "Required Canopy Shade Trees" are trees that are required to be planted in the street right of way as part of a Development Permit or Construction Permit. Required trees shall attain a mature height and spread of at least 15 feet.
- Minimum Size Required Canopy Shade tree = 24" Box.
- Minimum Size Non-Required Canopy Shade Tree = 15-gallon container.
- Palm Trees are only allowable where listed in an approved community plan.
- Minimum Size Palm Species = 10' BTH (Brown Trunk Height) or 14' BTH at Bus stop or Red Curb.
- Brown Trunk Height (BTH) is the height of a palm tree as measured from ground level to live fronds or emerging bud.

PARKWAYS BETWEEN 2-FT. AND 4-FT. WIDE OR LARGER

Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Spread	Type*	Water Needs^		Native	Suitable Under Utility Lines	Notes
					Coastal	Inland			
<i>Acacia pendula</i>	Weeping Acacia	25'	15'	E	M	M		Yes	
<i>Acacia stenophylla</i>	Shoestring Acacia	20'-30'	10'-30'	E	L	L		Yes	Identified by SD Regional Asthma Coalition as an allergy producer
<i>Acacia subporosa</i> aka <i>Acacia cognata</i>	Bower Wattle, Rver Wattle	20'-30'	20'-30'	E	L	L			
<i>Albizia julibrissin</i>	Silk Tree, Mimosa	20'-30'	20'	D/F	L	L			
<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Strawberry Tree, Strawberry Madrone	20'-35'	20'-35'	E/F	L	L		Yes	
<i>Archontophoenix cunninghamiana</i>	King Palm	50'-70'	10'-15'	P	M	M			
<i>Bauhinia blakeana</i>	Hong Kong Orchid	20'	20'	D/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Brahea armata</i>	Mexican Blue Palm	20'-50'	12'-25'	P	L	L			
<i>Brahea edulis</i>	Guadalupe Palm	35'	15'	P	L	L			
<i>Callistemon citrinus</i>	Lemon Bottlebrush	20'-25'	25'	E/F	L	L		Yes	Tolerates direct coastal exposure (typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Callistemon salignus</i>	White Bottlebrush	20'-25'	10'-15'	E/F	L	L		Yes	
<i>Cercis canadensis</i> and var. 'Forest Pansy'	Eastern Redbud	25'	20'-25'	D/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Cercis mexicana</i>	Mexican Redbud	20'-30'	20'-25'	D/F	L	M		Yes	
<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>	Western Redbud	25'	15'-20'	D/F	L	L	Yes	Yes	
<i>Chionanthus retusus</i>	Chinese Fringe Tree	20'	10'-15'	D/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Comarostaphylis diversifolia</i> (<i>Arctostaphylos diversifolia</i>)	Summer Holly	20'	15'	E/F	VL	L	Yes	Yes	Tolerates direct coastal exposure (typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	Toyon	25'	20'	E	L	L	Yes	Yes	
<i>Hymenosporum flavum</i>	Sweetshade	20'-35'	15'-20'	E/F	M	M			
<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i> hybrids (disease resistant varieties)	Crape Myrtle	25'	20'	D/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Laurus Nobilis</i>	Grecian Laurel, Sweet Bay	15'-30'	15'-20'	E	L	L			Tolerates direct coastal exposure (typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Livistona decipiens</i>	Ribbon Fan Palm	35'	15'	P	M	M			
<i>Lyonothamnus floribundus</i> and var. 'asprenifolius'	Catalina Ironwood	50'-60'	40'	E/F	L	L	Yes		
<i>Magnolia champaca</i> (<i>Michelia champaca</i>)	Champaca	10'-20'	10'-20'	E/F	M	M		Yes	Tolerates direct coastal exposure (typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Photinia x fraseri</i>	Fraser Photinia	20'	20'	E/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Pittosporum crassifolium</i>	Karo	25'	20'	E/F	M	M		Yes	Tolerates direct coastal exposure (typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Rhaphiolepis</i> 'Majestic Beauty'	Majestic Beauty Indian Hawthorn	20'	12'-15'	E/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Tecoma stans</i>	Yellow Bells	20'	10'-20'	E	L	L		Yes	

* D - Deciduous; E - Evergreen; F - Flowering; SD - Semi-Deciduous; P - Palm ^ VL - Very Low; L - Low; M - Medium

PARKWAYS BETWEEN 4-FT. AND 6-FT. WIDE OR LARGER									
Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Spread	Type*	Water Needs^		Native	Suitable Under Utility Lines	Notes
					Coastal	Inland			
<i>Arbutus 'Marina'</i>	Marina Madrone, Marina Strawberry Tree	40'-50'	40'	E/F	L	M			
<i>Bauhinia forficata</i>	White Orchid Tree, Brazilian Butterfly Tree	25'-35'	15'-20'	E/F	M	M			
<i>Brahea brandegii</i>	Hesper Palm, San Jose Hesper Palm	40'-50'	15'	P	M	L			
<i>Butia capitata</i>	Pindo palm	15'-25'	10'-15'	P	L	L		Yes	
<i>Callistemon viminalis</i>	Weeping Bottlebrush	25'	15'	E/F	L	M		Yes	Tolerates direct coastal exposure (Typically 1,000 ft. from shoreline)
<i>Calodendrum capense</i>	Cape Chestnut	40'	25'-40'	D/F	M	M			Tolerates direct coastal exposure (Typically 1,000 ft. from shoreline)
<i>Cassia excelsa</i> aka <i>Cassia fistula</i> aka <i>Senna spectabilis</i>	Crown of Gold, Golden Shower Tree	25'-35'	25'-30'	E	M	M			
<i>Cassia leptophylla</i>	Gold Medallion Tree	25'	20'-25'	D/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Cercidium floridum</i> aka <i>Parkinsonia florida</i>	Blue Palo Verde	35'	30'	D/F	L	L	Yes		
<i>Cercidium microphyllum</i> aka <i>Parkinsonia microphylla</i>	Little Leaf Palo Verde	35'	25'	D/F	VL	L	Yes		
<i>Cercidium x 'Desert Museum' Thornless</i>	Desert Museum Palo Verde	20'	20'	D/F	VL	L	Yes	Yes	
<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	Desert Willow	25'	10'-20'	D/F	VL	L	Yes	Yes	
<i>Chitalpa tashkentensis</i>	Chitalpa	25'-35'	30'	D	L	M		Yes	
<i>Dyopsis decaryi</i>	Triangle Palm	20'	12'-15'	P	M	M			
<i>Eriobotrya deflexa</i>	Bronze Loquat	25'	25'	E	M	M		Yes	
<i>Erythrina crista-galli</i>	Cockspur Coral Tree	20'	20'	D	L	L		Yes	
<i>Erythrina humeana</i>	Natal Coral	25'	25'	D	L	M		Yes	
<i>Eucalyptus torquata</i>	Coral Gum	20'	15'-30'	E	L	M		Yes	
<i>Fraxinus oxycarpa</i> (<i>Fraxinus angustifolia</i> 'Raywood')	Raywood Ash	35'	20'	D	M	M			
<i>Geijera parviflora</i>	Australian Willow	30'	20'	E/F	L	M		Yes	
<i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i>	Jacaranda	50'	35'-60'	D/F	M	M			
<i>Jubaea chilensis</i>	Chilean Wine Palm	65'	25'	P	L	M			
<i>Lophostemon confertus</i> aka <i>Tristania conferta</i>	Brisbane Box	50'	40'	E	M	M			
<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i> 'Little Gem'	Little Gem Magnolia	20'	10'	E/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Melaleuca linariifolia</i>	Flaxleaf Paperbark	35'	35'	E/F	L	L			Tolerates direct coastal exposure (Typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Melaleuca quinquenervia</i>	Cajeput Tree, Paperbark Tree	35'	20'	E/F	L	M			Tolerates direct coastal exposure (Typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Metrosideros excelsa</i>	New Zealand Christmas Tree	35'	35'	E/F	M	M			Tolerates direct coastal exposure (Typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Olneya tesota</i>	Desert Ironwood	35'	30'	E		L	Yes		
<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> 'Medjool'	Medjool Date Palm	65'	20'-25'	P	L	L			Male trees only
<i>Pistacia chinensis</i>	Chinese Pistache	65'	40'	D	M	M			
<i>Pittosporum rhombifolium</i>	Queensland Pittosporum	25'	12'-25'	E	M	M			
<i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i>	Tarata Pittosporum	35'	10'-15'	E/F	M	M			
<i>Podocarpus henkelii</i>	Long Leafed Yellowwood	25'-35'	25'	E	M	M			
<i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i>	Yew Pine	40'-50'	20'	E	M	M			
<i>Prosopis glandulosa</i>	Honey Mesquite	20'- 25'	20'	D	L	L	Yes	Yes	
<i>Prosopis</i> Thornless Hybrids	Chilean Mesquite cultivar	35'	35'	D	L	L			
<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>	Carolina Laurel Cherry	35'	15'-25'	E	M	M			
<i>Prunus ilicifolia</i> and 'Lyonii'	Hollyleaf Cherry	25'	10'-25'	E	L	L	Yes		
<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> 'Chanticleer'	Callery Pear, Flowering Ornamental Pear	50'	15'	D/F	M	M			
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holly Oak	65'	65'	E	L	L			
<i>Rhus lancea</i>	African Sumac	25'	20'-35'	E	L	L		Yes	
<i>Stenocarpus sinuatus</i>	Firewheel Tree	35'	15'	E/F	M	M			
<i>Tabebuia impetiginosa</i> aka <i>Handroanthus impetiginosus</i>	Pink Trumpet Tree	25'	25'	D/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Tilia cordata</i>	Littleleaf linden	30'-50'	15'-30'		M	M			
<i>Tristania laurina</i> aka <i>Tristaniopsis laurina</i>	Water Gum, Elegant Brisbane	25'	15'-25'	E/F	M	M		Yes	
<i>Washingtonia filifera</i>	California Fan Palm	50'-70'	10'-20'		L	M	Yes		

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PARKWAYS BETWEEN 6-FT. AND 10-FT. WIDE OR LARGER									
Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Spread	Type*	Water Needs^		Native	Suitable Under Utility Lines	Notes
					Coastal	Inland			
<i>Afroparpus gracilior</i> aka <i>Afroparpus falcatus</i> and <i>Podocarpus gracilior</i>	Fern Pine, African Fern Pine	50'-65'	50'-60'	E	M	M			Tolerates direct coastal exposure (Typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Agonis flexuosa</i>	Peppermint Tree	25'-35'	15'-30'	E	L	L		Yes	
<i>Angophora costata</i> aka <i>Angophora cordifolia</i>	Gum Myrtle, Rose Gum	50'	None listed	E	L	M			
<i>Arbutus Menziesii</i>	Madrone	40' +	40'+		L	L			
<i>Brachychiton acerifolius</i>	Flame tree	65'	30'	D/F	L	M			
<i>Brachychiton discolor</i>	Queensland Lacebark, Pink Flame Tree	40'-65'	30'	SD/F	L	M			
<i>Brachychiton populneus</i>	Australian Bottle tree	30'-50'	30'	D	L	L			
<i>Cupaniopsis anacardioides</i>	Carrotwood	40'	30'	E	M	M			Tolerates direct coastal exposure (typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Cupressus arizonica</i> var <i>glabra</i>	Smooth Arizona Cypress	35'	20'	E	VL	VL			
<i>Cupressus forbesii</i> (<i>Hesperocyparis forbesii</i>)	Tecate Cypress	25'	20'	E	VL	VL	Yes		
<i>Eucalyptus ficifolia</i> aka <i>Corymbia ficifolia</i>	Red-Flowering Gum	35'	15'-60'	E	L	M			
<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i>	White Ironbark	30'-90'	18'-60'	E	L	L			
<i>Eucalyptus polyanthemus</i>	Silver Dollar Gum	65'	15'-45'	E	L	L			
<i>Ilex altaclarensis</i> 'Wilsonii' (<i>Ilex</i> 'Wilsonii')	Wilson Holly	25'	15'-25'	E				Yes	
<i>Koelreuteria bipinnata</i>	Chinese Lantern	35'	35'	D/F	M	M			
<i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i>	Chinese Flame Tree	35'	15'-25'	D/F	L	L			
<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>	Glossy Privet	35'-50'	35'	E	L	M			
<i>Livistona australis</i>	Australian Cabbage Palm, Australian Fan Palm	40'-50'	15'	P	M	M			
<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i> 'Samuel Sommer'	Samuel Sommer Southern Magnolia	50'	30'	E	M	M			
<i>Olea europaea</i> fruitless	Olive "fruitless" Fruitless varieties only	35'	60'	E	L	L			Tolerates direct coastal exposure (Typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Pinus canariensis</i>	Canary Island Pine	50'-80'	20'-35'	E	L	M			
<i>Pinus eldarica</i> aka <i>Pinus brutia</i>	Afghan Pine, Mondell Pine	65'	15'-25'	E	VL	L			
<i>Pinus pinea</i>	Italian Stone Pine	40'-80'	40'-60'	E	L	L			Tolerates direct coastal exposure (Typically 1000' from shoreline)
<i>Platanus acerifolia</i> 'Bloodgood'	London Plane	65'	30'-40'	D	M	M			
<i>Platanus mexicana</i>	Mexican Sycamore	65'	40'	D	M	M			
<i>Platanus racemosa</i>	California Sycamore	30'-80'	20'-50'	D	M	M	Yes		
<i>Quercus suber</i>	Cork Oak	70'	70'	E	L	L			
<i>Spathodea campanulata</i>	African Tulip Tree	50'	30'	D/F	M	/			
<i>Tabebuia chrysostricha</i> aka <i>Handroanthus chrysostrichus</i>	Golden Trumpet Tree	25'	25'	D	M	M		Yes	
<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i> 'Sempervirens' and 'Drake'	Chinese Elm	65'	70'	E	M	L			
<i>Zelkova serrata</i>	Sawleaf Zelkova	65'	40'	D	L	M			

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PARKWAYS 10-FT. WIDE OR LARGER									
Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Spread	Type*	Water Needs^		Native	Suitable Under Utility Lines	Notes
					Coastal	Inland			
<i>Eucalyptus citriodora</i> aka <i>Corymbia citriodora</i>	Lemon-Scented Gum	80'-160'	50'-100'	E	L	M			
<i>Pinus torreyana</i>	Torrey Pine	65'	30'-50'	E	L	M	Yes		
<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Coast Live Oak	65'	65'+	E	VL	L	Yes		
<i>Quercus engelmannii</i>	Engelmann Oak, Mesa Oak	50'-65'	90'+	D	VL	L	Yes		
<i>Quercus virginiana</i>	Southern Live Oak	50'	75'+	E	M	M			
<i>Sapium sebiferum</i> (<i>Triadica sebifera</i>)	Chinese Tallow Tree	35'	25'-35'	D	M	M			
<i>Tipuana tipu</i>	Tipu Tree	50'	30'-55'	D/F	L	M			

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Do I need a permit to plant a tree?

A. All street tree plantings that aren't being installed in conjunction with a construction permit require a "No Fee Street Tree Permit" prior to planting. Refer to the following link:

<http://www.sandiego.gov/ced/pdf/streettreepermitapplication.pdf>

Q. My neighborhood has a Master Street Tree Plan. Does this affect my choice?

A. Tree species must be consistent with the approved Street Tree Plan or other applicable documents. Refer to the community plan for more information.

Q. Palm tree or shade tree – Does it matter?

A. For new development, the Land Development Code: Landscape Regulations specify that palm trees may only be used when identified in the applicable community plan. When palm trees are used, they are required at a higher quantity than shade trees. Choosing the right species and location of a tree affects its long term success and the benefits provided. In general, canopy shade trees are more preferred than palm trees; however if space is limited or special circumstances exist, palm trees are better than no tree.

Q. What about native trees?

A. The City of San Diego encourages the use of native trees and highly recommends them for areas where growing space and soil type are conducive to healthy native tree development.

Q. How can I find out what a tree will look like before I select it?

A. You can go to SelecTree (<https://selectree.calpoly.edu/>) for an online guide complete with photos or you can visit your local nursery to take a firsthand look at the trees and get planting tips.

Q. What if I want to select a tree that is not on the list?

A. You may select a tree that is not on the list, with written approval from the City. Email tsw_freetrees@sandiego.gov with your proposed selection.

Q. Who decides what trees go into the Street Tree Selection Guide?

A. Tree selection criteria is developed by the City with input from the Community Forest Advisory Board.

Q. Was the Street Tree Selection Guide revised?

A. Yes. The Community Forest Advisory Board, a group of local tree care professionals, landscape architects, and planners, reviewed and revised the Street Tree Selection Guide to identify additional species and remove those less suitable for street tree planting. Unsuitable species were identified as having serious pest problems, invasive with the potential to spread to natural areas, drop a lot of edible or inedible fruit, and/or have structural weaknesses, such as limbs breaking off. Trees that are considered highly invasive (spreading onto adjacent land and/or displacing native species) were not included, although some suitable listed species could be moderately invasive under certain conditions.