

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, Nov. 7, 2025

# Mayor Todd Gloria and Local Students Plant Trees for Kate Sessions Day

## TREES PLANTED IN OAK PARK AS PART OF THE CITY'S READY, SET, GROW SAN DIEGO PROGRAM

SAN DIEGO – In honor of Kate Sessions Day, today Mayor Todd Gloria, Councilmember Henry Foster III, City staff and local students from Oak Park Elementary School helped plant 30 trees in Oak Park Neighborhood Park. This community event acknowledges the significant contributions of Kate Sessions to our urban forest.

**"Kate Sessions shows us how one person's vision can shape an entire city,"** said Mayor Todd Gloria. **"Through our 'Ready, Set, Grow San Diego' program, we're carrying her vision forward – planting trees where they're needed most to cool down neighborhoods, improve air quality, and make communities like Oak Park healthier and more beautiful for generations to come."**

Kate Sessions was a botanist, horticulturalist and landscape architect who lived and worked in San Diego in the early 20th century. She was known as the "Mother of Balboa Park" and introduced hundreds of trees to the San Diego region, including the popular Jacaranda tree. Her legacy is celebrated on Kate Sessions Day every year around Nov. 8, which was her birthday.

**"When we plant trees, we're investing in our community. Every tree we put in the ground helps clean our air and cool our neighborhoods,"** said Councilmember Henry Foster III. **"The trees planted today in Oak Park, will make Oak Park a healthier place for families to grow. It's about coming together as neighbors to care for the place we call home and to keep building a stronger District 4 – together."**

This event is part of Ready, Set, Grow San Diego, a project of the City of San Diego's Urban Forestry Program, which was awarded a \$10 million grant from the Forest Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, for a five-year tree planting program. The City of San Diego was joined by partner Tree San Diego, also a recipient of a USDA grant, that will benefit the City with regional urban forestry planning and urban forestry workforce development.

San Diego's [Climate Action Plan](#) sets an ambitious target of planting 100,000 new trees by 2035 and this federal funding will help the City make significant progress toward reaching this milestone. The USDA

grant was among \$1 billion in funding to be distributed to cities across the nation and intended to be used to plant and maintain trees, and to help combat extreme heat and climate change.

One hundred percent of the funds will go toward investing in historically underserved communities to increase the urban canopy and educate residents on the benefits of trees. This grant funding will help plant and care for over 5,000 new trees and protect more than 600 existing ones across San Diego.

**“Trees transform neighborhoods. They cool our streets, clean our air and connect our communities,”** said Brian Widener, City Forester. **“We are committed to growing and protecting our urban forest that will benefit generations to come.”**

Oak Park is the latest community to receive trees under Ready, Set, Grow San Diego, which has already planted trees in Otay Mesa-Nestor, Bay Terraces, Paradise Hills, Linda Vista, Encanto and City Heights. Including today’s event, more than 2,200 trees have been planted in these neighborhoods through the project.

Locations that receive new trees are selected through a combination of census track data and community input. The City’s certified arborists select which tree species to plant from an approved list and the Transportation Department will both water and maintain the trees for the first three years. For more information about the City’s Urban Forestry program and planting initiatives, visit [sandiego.gov/trees](https://sandiego.gov/trees).



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