



COMMUNITY FOREST ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, November 12, 2025

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Valencia Park/Malcolm X Branch Library

5148 Market St, San Diego, CA 92114

Members in Attendance: Leon Cassel (Horticulturist), Chris Tiffany (Landscape Architect), Ami Young (Artist), Jim Smith (D1), Morgan Justice-Black (D2), Wes Janssen (D4), Alyssa Way (D6) Michael Ackerman (D7), Branden Wolner (Non-Profit), Terrell Rackley (D9)

Staff Liaison: Brian Widener, Olivia Mabee

Item 1: Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Item 2: Roll Call

- **Members Not in Attendance:** Frank Buncom IV (D8)

Item 3: Announcements and Updates:

- Frank Buncom IV is stepping down from board. Morgan Justice-Black will serve as acting chair.
- Branden Wolner from Tree San Diego is filling the non-profit seat.
- Speaker cards will be required in the future.
- Future City budget shortfalls will most likely affect the Urban Forestry Program and its contracts for periodic tree maintenance.

Item 4: Approval of Minutes:

- September 2025 meeting minutes approved, passed unanimously.

Item 5: City Staff Report:

- Annabel Rossi presented results of tree inspection for the June 2022 planting.
 - Results showed success rates of 72% in City Heights (3 years), 84% in Bay Terraces (2 years), and 92% in Allied Gardens (3 years), with key challenges related to site conditions and nursery stock, no notable

trends in mortality or species, and a recommendation to improve contractor oversight and homeowner communication.

- Brian Widener is looking to update tree codes and policies.
 - A subcommittee including Michael Ackerman, Chris Tiffany, Branden Wolner, and Terrell Rackley will be formed, with Chris Tiffany scheduling the meeting.
- Kate Sessions Day had a good turnout.
- Erich Kast, Parks & Recreation horticulturist, gave department updates regarding tree pruning, and efforts to educate other departments on the value of trees to protect existing ones.
- Public comment on staff reports:
 - Emma Smith discussed how tree observations in urban areas differ from those in natural settings. She highlighted opportunities for workforce development in the field of tree care.
 - Anne Fege has proposed the establishment of a subcommittee dedicated to code development. She commended Annabel's report and recommended the continuation of public outreach efforts.
 - Tanisha-Jean Martin of the Climate Advisory Board has invited Urban Forestry staff to attend the committee meeting and utilize the public engagement guide.

Item 6: Discussion

- The board positions for D8, D3, and D5 are currently unoccupied. The larger seats are fully occupied.

Item 7: Proposed Agenda Items for Future Meeting

- None.

Item 8: Non-Agenda Public Comment

- Craig Jones advocated community engagement and requested more information on the Ready Set Grow timing. This item was added to the December agenda.
- Ian Navapanich reported on Kate Sessions Commitment location analysis of Ready, Set, Grow San Diego trees planted in 2025.
- Zoe Woodhouse emphasized that community engagement for tree support makes a significant difference.
- Anisah Enciso suggested that school collaboration presents an opportunity for tree stewardship.

- Tanisha-Jean Martin suggested partnerships with CBOs for outreach and more community support.

Item 8: **Adjournment**

- The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.