City of San Diego, 2008 General Plan
Elements Relating to Urban Forestry and Trees

The City of San Diego's General Plan was adopted by the Council 2008, and serves as the "constitution" for development and the foundation for all land use decisions in the City. Extensive information at http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/genplan/index.shtml#genplan, and full document posted at http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/genplan/pdf/generalplan/fullversion.pdf.

The following elements are relevant to urban forestry and trees:

<u>Conservation Element</u>

A. Climate Change and Sustainable Development

CE-A.11. Implement sustainable landscape design and maintenance.

- d. Strategically plant deciduous shade trees, evergreen trees, and drought tolerant native vegetation, as appropriate, to contribute to sustainable development goals.
- f. Strive to incorporate existing mature trees and native vegetation into site designs.

CE-A.12. Reduce the San Diego Urban Heat Island, through actions such as:

- c. Planting trees and other vegetation, to provide shade and cool air temperatures. In particular, properly position trees to shade buildings, air conditioning units, and parking lots

D. Water Resources Management

CE-D.1. Implement a balance water conservation strategy as an effective way to manage demand

- e. Develop and expand water-efficient landscaping to include urban forestry, urban vegetation, and demonstration projects.

F. Air Quality

CE-F.4. Preserve and plant trees and vegetation that is consistent with habitat and water conservation policies and that absorb carbon dioxide and pollutants.

J. Urban Forestry (sub-policies listed on pages 3 to 5 of this handout)

CE-J.1. Develop, nurture, and protect a sustainable urban/community forest.

CE-J.2. Include community street tree master plans in community plans.

CE-J.3. Develop a citywide urban forest master plan during community plan updates in an effort to create a comprehensive citywide urban forest master plan.

CE-J.4. Continue to require the planting of trees through the development permit process.

CE-J.5. Support public outreach efforts to educate City staff, the business community, and the general public on the environmental and economic benefits of trees.

N. Environmental Education

CE-N.2. Maintain educational programs to sustain public awareness of the importance of resource conservation (e.g., energy, water, open space), the continued existence of long-term resource demand challenges, and specific conservation tactics that are recommended.

Historic Preservation Element

HP-A.5. Designate and preserve significant historical and cultural resources for current and future generations.

   c. Protect and preserve historic sidewalk stamps, street signs, lampposts, street trees and other hardscape and landscape elements that contribute to the historic character of a neighborhood.

Urban Design Element

UD-A.8. Landscape materials and design should enhance structures, create and define public and private spaces, and provide shade, aesthetic appeal, and environmental benefits.

   a. Maximize the planting of new trees, street trees and other plants for their shading, air quality, and livability benefits.

   c. Use landscape to provide unique identities within neighborhoods, villages and other developed areas.

   d. Use landscape to support storm water management goals for filtration, percolation and e control.

   g. Establish or maintain tree-lined residential and commercial streets.

   Neighborhoods and commercial corridors in the City that contain tree-lined streets present a streetscape that creates a distinctive character.

      1. Identify and plant trees that complement and expand on the surrounding street tree fabric.

      2. Unify communities by using street trees to link residential areas.

      3. Locate street trees in a manner that does not obstruct ground illumination from streetlights.

   h. Shade paved areas, especially parking lots.

   k. Reduce barriers to views or light by selecting appropriate tree types, pruning thick hedges, and large overhanging tree canopies.

UD-A.12 Reduce the amount and visual impact of surface parking lots.

   g. Retrofit existing expansive parking lots with street trees, landscape, pedestrian paths, and new building placement.

   i. Use trees and other landscape to provide shade, screening, and filtering of stormwater runoff in parking lots.

UD-C.7. Enhance the public streetscape for greater walkability and neighborhood aesthetics.

   d. Implement pedestrian facilities and amenities in the public right-of-way including wider sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian-scaled lighting and signs, landscape, and street furniture.

UD-D.3. Assure high-quality design in parking areas, which often provide the first impression and identification of a project to a client, employee or resident.

   a. Utilize a combination of trees and shrubs at the edge of parking areas to screen parking lots and structures from the street.

City of San Diego Urban Forest Management Plan
Draft Objectives, September 22, 2014

The Conservation Element of the 2008 General Plan includes CE-J. Urban Forestry, with the overall goal of "Protection and expansion of a sustainable urban forest." There are five policies in that element, and they drive the draft objectives and actions in the Urban Forest Management Plan.

CE-J.1. Develop, nurture, and protect a sustainable urban/community forest. (2008)

    a. Seek resources and take actions needed to plant, care for, and protect trees in the public right-of-way and parks and those of significant importance in our communities.
    b. Plant large canopy shade trees, where appropriate and with consideration of habitat and water conservation goals, in order to maximize environmental benefits.
    c. Seek to retain significant and mature trees.
    d. Provide forest linkages to connect and enhance public parks, plazas, recreation and open space areas.

Draft Objectives:

1. Inventory all public trees and update the tree inventory every seven years.
   a. Establish inventory of public trees.
   b. Record all permits and completed maintenance work in the inventory.
   c. Identify designated and potential heritage trees in the inventory.
   d. Develop an urban tree canopy cover assessment using LIDAR remotely sensed data.

2. Increase canopy cover to optimize public benefits.
   a. Develop a City-wide tree canopy goal.
   b. Establish canopy cover goals for each identified community planning area.
   c. Develop a long-term tree planting program for achieving established canopy goals.
   d. Plant trees that maximize public health benefits, carbon sequestration, energy reduction, water conservation, storm water retention, wildlife habitat, and other benefits.
   e. Encourage the planting of large canopy trees in order to maximize environmental benefits.
   f. Identify potential planting sites on public lands.
   g. Encourage the planting of trees on private properties.

3. Develop a master tree-planting plan that encourages optimal age and species diversity.
   a. Plant a variety of species to create a more resilient urban forest.
   b. Plan for age diversity, pest susceptibility, and species diversity (no more than 10% of any one genus and no more than 2.5% of any one species within a genus).
   c. Review and update, at least every five years, the City's approved Street Tree Selection Guide, based on collaboration and knowledge of local tree care professionals.
   d. Document reasons for removal/additions of a species from the list.

4. Improve tree planting success.
   a. Review and revise tree planting specifications and guidelines.
   b. Check and monitor planting sites for compliance.
   c. Improve tree stock selection and purchase through qualified inspectors that follow city specifications and guidelines.

5. Improve care and maintenance of street trees through a comprehensive management program addressing newly planted trees, mature, and large trees.
   a. Implement best management practices (BMPs) policy for all tree care activities and contract work, following ISA and ANSI standards.
   b. Implement young tree maintenance program that includes watering, structural pruning, stake removal, and six-month inspections for two years.
   c. Prune trees on regular schedule, to maintain tree health, reduce risk of failure, provide clearance and improve aesthetics.
   d. Establish maintenance program for mature and large trees, including regular inspections and minimal pruning.
   e. Identify current and potential pests and diseases.
   f. Ensure that tree care relating to insect and disease problems follow integrated pest management practices (IPM).

6. Develop a tree removal and replacement program to address aging, diseased, poor structure and problem trees.
   a. Use these removals to implement age and species diversity, and street tree master plans (in community plans).
   b. Replace all dead or removed trees on a 2:1 basis.

7. Identify funding sources for planting, care, maintenance, and protection of trees in the public right-of-way, parks, and trees of significant importance.
   a. Adequately fund the Streets Division as the primary maintenance provider of all trees in the public right-of-way.
   b. Secure dedicated funding for tree planting, establishment and maintenance.
   c. Develop and implement a plan to capture all funding opportunities to meet these goals.

8. Review, revise and/or write policies that address green and gray infrastructure conflicts.
   a. Develop a policy regarding tree roots that conflict with water and sewer lines.
   b. Develop a policy regarding tree roots and curb, gutter, and sidewalk damage.
   c. Develop a policy regarding tree canopy conflicts with power lines.
   d. Use emerging technologies in soil science and pavement engineering to reduce hardscape repairs and tree removals.
   e. Implement a tree root management program to address root conflicts.

CE-J.2. *Include community street tree master plans in community plans.*
   a. Prioritize community streets for tree planting;
   b. Identify the types of trees proposed for those priority streets by species (with acceptable alternatives) or by design form;
   c. Integrate known protected trees to glossary trees and inventory other trees that may be eligible to be designated as a protected tree.

Draft Objectives:

1. Review street tree plans and urban forest elements to optimize benefits to the community.
2. Prioritize community areas for public tree planting programs.
   a. Identify primary and secondary streets for developing and implementing the urban forest elements in the approved community master plans.
   b. Prioritize streets for tree planting, based on need for improvement, number of vacant planting sites, existing species, their condition and species of trees designated in the approved community plan.
3. Integrate known protected trees and inventory other trees that might be eligible to be designated as a protected tree in each community.

CE-J.3. Develop a citywide urban forest master plan comprised of the community plan street tree master plans.

Draft Objectives:

1. Provide resources to implement the Urban Forest Management Plan.

CE-J.4. Continue to require the planting of trees through the development permit process.
   a. Consider tree planting as mitigation for air pollution emissions, stormwater runoff, and other environmental impacts as appropriate.

Draft Objectives:

1. Continue to enforce existing requirements for street tree planting.
2. Increase enforcement of the City's policies and regulations related to the urban forest.
3. Encourage developers to incorporate existing trees into building and site designs when redeveloping sites.
4. Re-assess non-fee Permit Process for planting, trimming, removing and replacing trees in public rights-of-way.

CE-J.5. Support public outreach efforts to educate city staff, the business community, and the public on the environmental and economic benefits of trees.

Draft Objectives:

1. Partner with local non-profits and other community organizations.
2. Educate the public on street tree selection, proper tree care, pruning, and pests/diseases.
3. Establish a community education outreach program and materials to increase public awareness about the value of trees and their benefits to public health and well-being.
   a. Identify potential economic benefits from planting trees and share this information with elected officials, business and community leaders.
   b. Assess current and future educational outreach programs that promote the benefits of the urban forest.

City of San Diego Urban Forest Management Plan
Feedback from Community Meetings, May to September, 2014

Presentations about urban trees and the Urban Forest Management Plan were given to 40 community planning groups, business improvement districts, and other community groups from May to September. Each attendee was invited to provide input on community forestry benefits and issues in their community. The following table summarizes the responses to four of the questions, from 487 attendees at the presentations, and 168 who completed the online survey, for a total of 655 respondents.

Question 1: What are the three (3) most important benefits of trees?

	% total
a. Clean the air by absorbing pollutants	49%
b. Create more pleasant neighborhoods and business districts	53%
c. Increase property values	11%
d. Provide food and shelter for wildlife	26%
e. Reduce greenhouse gases, summer temperatures and address climate change	45%
f. Shade buildings and lower energy bills	28%
g. Shade streets for walking and parks for playing	35%
h. Stabilize soil and reduce storm water runoff	24%
i. Other	2%

Question 2 = In your neighborhood, are there are too many or too few public trees?

Too few trees	68%
Too many trees	2%
Enough trees	24%

Question 4: What are your top two (2) concerns relating to tree planting and care?

a. Sidewalks and pavement cracking	53%
b. Leaves and fruit dropping/ongoing maintenance	29%
c. Tree roots and underground pipe problems (similar to A-sidewalks-pavement)	28%
d. Blocking traffic, sidewalks, signs, and/or street lights	16%
e. Creating safety problems from trees and limbs falling	9%
f. Attracting bugs and other pests	3%
g. Trees cost too much money	5%
Other: Watering and water costs	6%
Other: Maintenance, trimming, and pruning	3%
Other: Fire hazards	2%
Other (not identified)	12%

Question 5: What are you willing to do to ensure San Diego's trees are maintained and protected for future generations? (check all that apply)

a. Support new legislation or rules about planting and tree protection	52%
b. Plant new trees on my property when trees die or need to be removed	54%
c. Increase the City's budget for tree planting and maintenance	49%
d. Volunteer to plant and maintain trees on public property	34%
e. Support a 1% fee or tax, dedicated to tree care and maintenance	28%
f. Other (none)	10%