

Los Angeles Urban Tree Canopy: We Can Improve It. Here's How!

Coalition to Preserve LA

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**Presentation to the Pacific Palisades Community
Council, Oct. 25, 2018**

Who Has the Power? City Hall officials influence policy & budgets, and drive the fate of our urban forest.

- 1. Mayor Eric Garcetti**
- 2. YOUR OWN City Council member**
- 3. City Council Budget Chair Paul Krekorian**
- 4. Garcetti's Sustainability Chief Lauren Faber**
- 5. Garcetti's Chief of Staff Ana Guerrero**
- 6. City Council President Herb Wesson**
- 7. Board of Public Works Pres. Kevin James & Vice Pres. Heather Repenning**
- 8. L.A. Public Works & Gang Reduction Committee
(Councilmembers Nury Martinez, Monica Garcia,
David Ryu, Joe Buscaino, Bob Blumenfield)**
- 9. L.A. Street Services New Director Adel Hagekhalil**
- 10. Urban Forestry Division Manager Tim Tyson**

Before the Recession, Villaraigosa's Board of Public Works and the City Council Worked Together to Save the Canopy

- **Before**, Public Works and the City Council **worked with the public to save big street trees**.
- **Before**, Public Works limited street-tree removals in any one-year period to 20% on any given block, or along any three consecutive residences.
- **Before**, famed researcher Greg McPherson found that **adding 1 million trees to the L.A. canopy would return \$1 billion** in aesthetics, energy cuts, carbon & smog reduction.
- **TODAY's** Board of Public Works is **uninvolved in the U.S. urban tree canopy movement**.
- **TODAY**, developers are off the hook – an entire block of trees can be destroyed. Developers just pay an “in lieu fee” to replace trees with saplings.
- **TODAY**, the size and health of the canopy is unknown. A census to assess all street trees is years overdue. **The Dudek Report will help act as a catalyst** to change City Hall.

Why a Healthy Tree Canopy is Crucial to Los Angeles

10 REASONS TO BE THANKFUL FOR TREES

When you're counting your blessings and listing those things you're grateful for, don't forget to look up.



TREES SHADE
AND COOL



TREES
REDUCE STRESS

TREES IMPROVE
THE SOIL



TREES
REDUCE VIOLENCE



TREES
CLEAN
THE AIR



TREES INCREASE
PROPERTY VALUE

TREES ENHANCE
THE VIEW



TREES BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

TREES REDUCE
NOISE POLLUTION



TREES SUPPORT
WILDLIFE

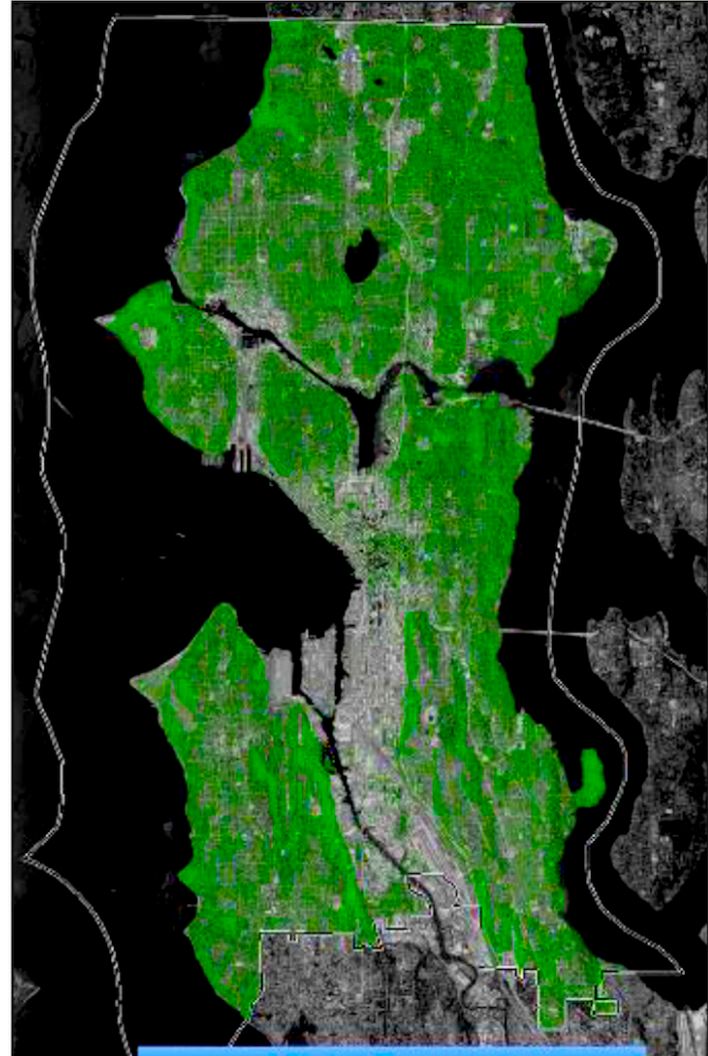
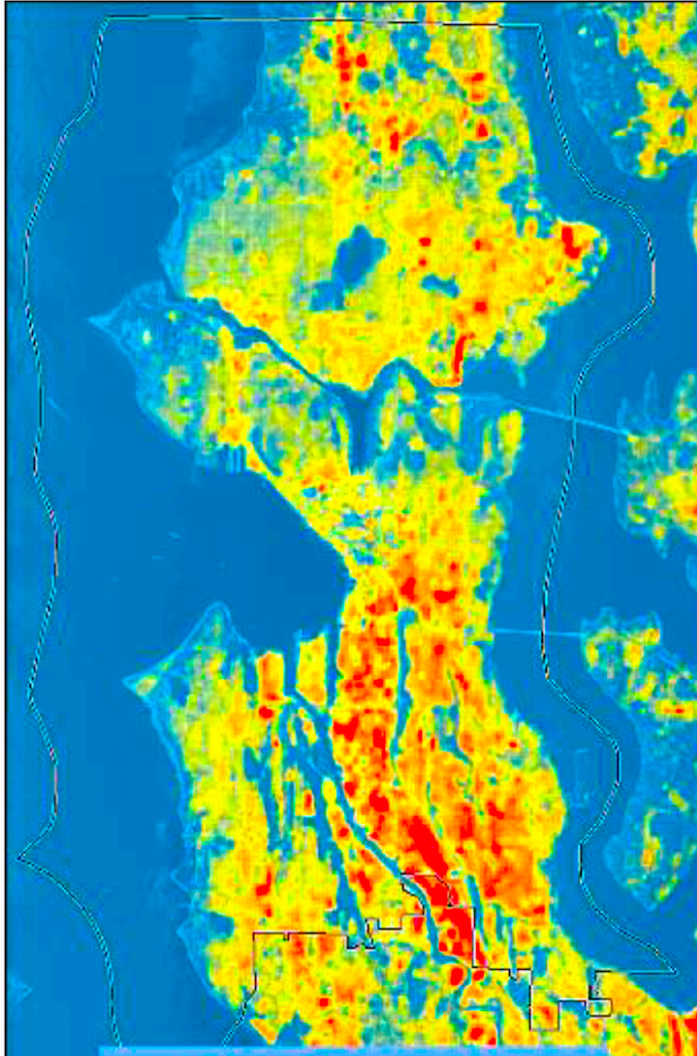


Cities Save their Canopies in Response to a Catalyst

- **Dallas:** Studies of Dallas' "heat-island" effect in 2015 stunned local media and prompted non-profits and leading citizens to pressure City Hall for change. Dallas in 2015 employed only 1 urban forester and a few arborists. Now, it has a growing budget & canopy.
- **San Francisco:** Activists complained in 2015 to a Civil Grand Jury that the city made residents keep its street trees alive. A searing Jury report slammed S.F. Elected leaders responded with Prop. E on the 2016 ballot, asking voters if 1% of the City Budget should be diverted to trees. A **huge** 79% of voters said **YES. (L.A. spends ¾ of 1% on trees, 75% less than S.F. or Seattle.)**

**Climate change & the “heat-island effect” – man-made, killer heat
are the biggest reason to improve our Tree Canopy**

Tree canopy and heat island effect



What is Lacking In City Hall's "Green Infrastructure" Preservation of Street Trees?

BEST PRACTICES IN OTHER CITIES

San Francisco and many cities ban "topping" because *topping kills the tree*.

Santa Monica *all but bans* developers from destroying street trees. "*We might allow it 3 times a year.*" – Matt Wells, Urban Forest Administrator.

Pasadena protects *13* species from destruction.

Seattle requires that all replacement trees be species that grow *bigger at maturity* than each destroyed street tree.

Santa Monica requires *5, 10 or even 20 replacement trees* per destroyed street tree, based on trunk thickness of the taken tree.

BACKWARD PRACTICES IN L.A.

Los Angeles fails to halt "topping" by its *paid city tree-trimming contractors*.

Los Angeles routinely lets developers destroy mature street trees, even for *temporary equipment staging or driveway widening*.

L.A. protects only *4* species from destruction.

L.A. chooses small, decorative trees to replace shade trees, and approves poor species like magnolia, which die in 10 years.

L.A. requires *only a 2-to-1 replacement ratio* for a destroyed, mature street tree.

Exert
Pressure
Here

