

2025

Strategic Plan(t)ing

Discussing Regional Urban Forestry Initiatives

Presenters:

Tree San Diego
City of San Diego
County of San Diego
San Diego Regional Urban Forestry Council



Agenda

Welcome & Introductions

State of Urban Forestry in San Diego County

Urban Forestry in Action

Greenprint Toolkit

Stakeholder Survey

Call to Action: Get Involved

Q&A





Welcome & Introductions

Elektra Fike-Data

Executive Director, Tree San Diego

Brian Widener

City Forester, City of San Diego

Magen Shaw

Urban Forestry Coordinator, County of San Diego
Officer, San Diego Regional Urban Forestry Council

COMMUNITY POLL

QUESTION: Which of these planting priorities most aligns with your urban greening goals?

- A) Increasing canopy & expanding access to green space
- B) Carbon sequestration & climate adaptation
- C) Beautification & property value increase
- D) Habitat restoration & increasing biodiversity
- E) Mitigating urban heat

State of Urban Forestry in SD County

- Effects of climate change are widely felt
- Urban greening is being studied as solution
- Funding in flux, but new channels are opening
- Shifting focus to local efforts & impacts



What is changing?



Local Investment

Shifts in investment have begun to prioritize environmental safeguarding at a local level.



Plans & Policy

Putting the needs of community at the forefront of decision-making, providing exceptional service.



Collaborative Strategy

Large agencies & local municipalities are working more with communities & boots-on-the-ground organizations to deliver on commitments, build programs & mobilize for UF strategy.



Report Findings

Seven categorical challenges identified: Location, Workforce, Maintenance, Irrigation, Data, Sourcing



Complexities of “Red Tape”

Navigating logistical complications, new laws policies, & bureaucratic challenges can slow down urban forestry programs.



Funding Changes

Traditional funding sources & pipelines are changing, resulting in a greater need to embrace flexibility (for both funders & organizations).

Challenges

In 2022, Tree San Diego reached out to a network of partners, funders, & community leaders to collect an initial list of challenges faced by the industry. Solutions to said challenges quickly followed.



COMMUNITY POLL

QUESTION: What is the biggest challenge you or your organization faces in tree planting efforts?

- A) Lack of funding
- B) Limited community engagement/volunteer participation
- C) Access to suitable planting sites
- D) Long-term tree maintenance (includes irrigation challenges)
- E) Species sourcing & stock quality



Urban Forestry in Action

Tree San Diego

City of San Diego

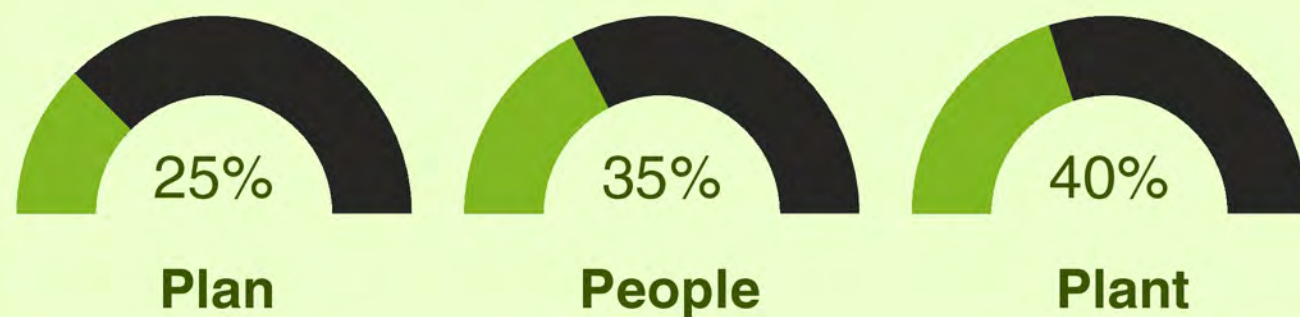
County of San Diego



Tree San Diego (5013c nonprofit)

Plan & Plant Project

- Three-pillared approach to holistic urban greening (people, plan, plant)
- Build Regional Urban Forestry Master Plan
- 1,500 trees planted in underserved neighborhoods & areas experiencing urban heat or low canopy
- Develop & expand Treejectory paid training program to 300 candidates (40 hours of UF instruction, conference access, drone training, & expert Q&A)



Leafing Our Legacy

- Distributing more than 1,000 trees to residents per year; no strings attached.
- Mapped throughout the county with eco-benefits reported “live”
- Partnering with NGOs, cities, corporations & state agencies





City of San Diego

Trees for Communities Program

- Increase the urban tree canopy cover & improve the quality of life for residents with more trees.
- Create new planting spaces & widen others for a healthy community forest.

Ready, Set, Grow Project

- Plant & protect thousands of trees, while engaging local residents through community meetings & partnerships.
- Empower community to care for & improve their neighborhoods through tree stewardship programs.



County of San Diego

Equity Driven Tree Planting Program (EDTPP)

- EDTPP Equity Working Group
- County Tree Equity Study
- Private Property Tree Planting Initiative
- Education & Empowerment of Community Members

Native Landscape Program

- NLP Technical Working Group
- Educational Materials and Resources
- Requirements for County Facilities
- Demonstration Gardens at County Facilities
- School Demonstration Gardens & Education
- Incentives for Unincorporated Area
- Native Landscape Professional Certification



San Diego Regional Urban Forestry Council

Tree Drinks

- Helps protect local Urban Forests
- Hold meetings and events to engage residents
 - **Tree Drinks:** June 13, 5:30–7:30 pm
 - Near Downtown SD, Location TBD,
<https://SDTreeDrinks.eventbrite.com>





Tangible Investment

Goals & Targets

Service Areas

Mapping & Tracking

Communities

Infrastructure

Funding Streams

Plans & Policies

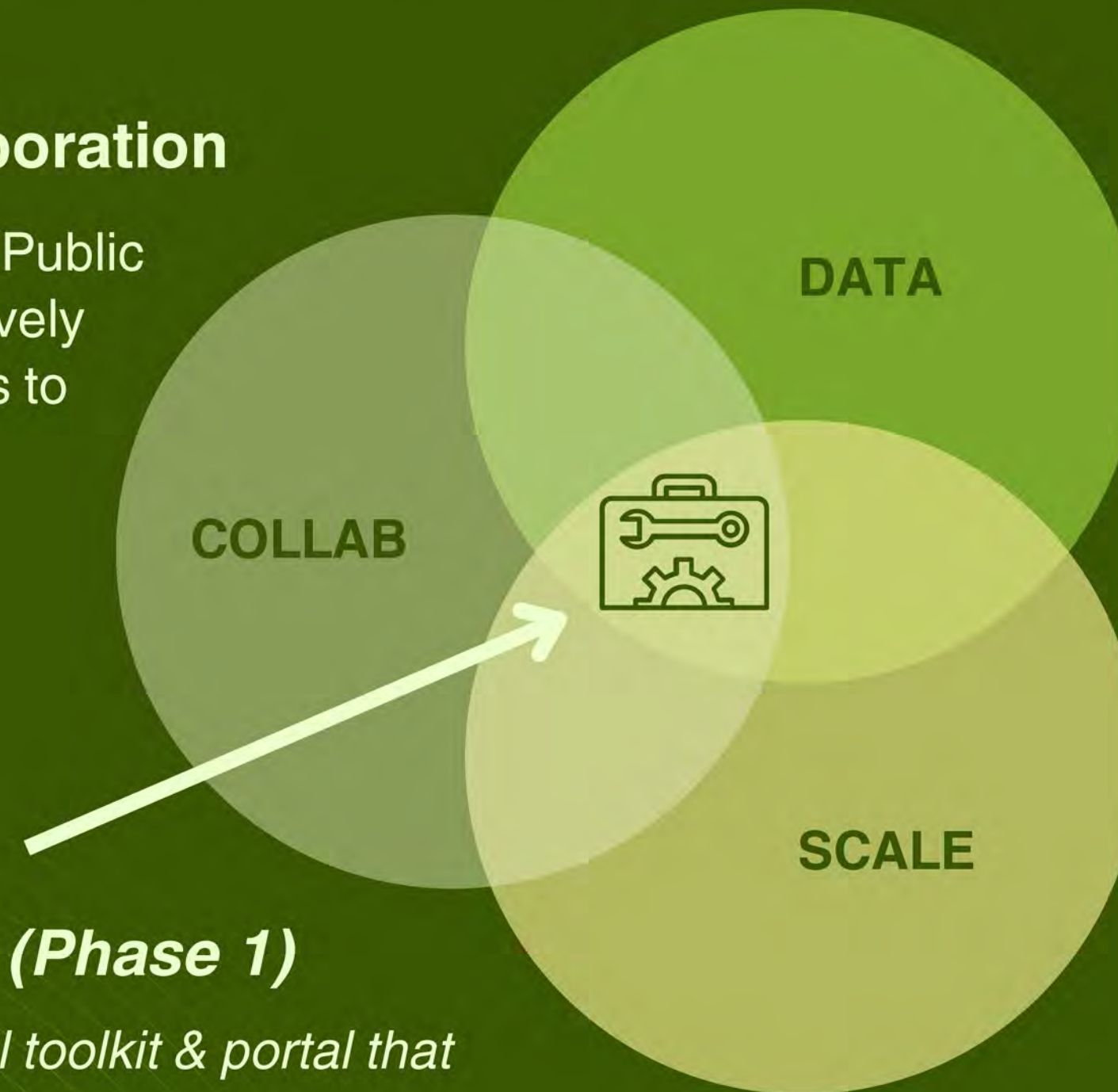
Greenprint Toolkit

Strategy 1: Collaboration

Nonprofit, For Profit, & Public entities working inclusively on projects & programs to increase impact(s)

Greenprint Toolkit (Phase 1)

Piloting a robust & useful toolkit & portal that allows project managers & community members alike to review project feasibility with ISA-certified arborists.



Strategy 2: Data as a Driver

Using GIS, LiDar, MSI, benefit calculations to back funding proposals, drive policy change, & re-evaluate existing urban greening targets

Strategy 3: Scale

Building scalable planting models through a toolkit that vets urban forestry plans & programs



Greenprint Toolkit: What's Next?

Phase 1



Development

Building a system and checklist for project visionaries to analyze & explore tree-planting project & event management.

Phase 2



Feedback

Gather feedback from stakeholders & revise strategies to streamline the implementation process.

Phase 3



Pilot

Test toolkit to vet community-submitted project; creating implementation & execution plan.

COMMUNITY POLL

QUESTION: How would you like to see municipalities, NGOs, and state agencies focus urban greening efforts?

- A) Increase collaboration to make greater impacts
- B) Invest in long-term tree care & maintenance of existing urban forests
- C) Provide more data (inventories, eco-benefits, funding uses)
- D) Update environmental policies (e.g. more protections for natural assets)
- E) Build scaled tree-planting plans & projects

Stakeholder Survey*

How does tree equity play a role in your urban greening plans or projects?

Who do you see as the most critical partner for expanding tree planting in San Diego?

What type of support would most help your tree planting efforts?

Which climate-related factor is most impacting your planting strategy?

**To be found on the Greenprint Toolkit Portal*



Stakeholder Survey: Tell us about...

Watering, Care,
Maintenance,
Planning



Species, Stock,
Materials



Mapping, Data,
Inventories



Capacity,
Workforce,
Training,
Accessibility

Funding,
Policy, Event
Management,
Collaborations

Call to Action: Get Involved

Tree San Diego invites stakeholders of any sector, community group, municipality, funding channel, & business to stay active in urban greening conversation.

Submit the Survey

Watch for follow-up email with the survey link & Greenprint portal information.

Join the UF Network

Find your local urban forestry advisory board, advocacy group, or membership program.

Take the Training

Seek out opportunities to learn more about tree stewardship training & train-the-trainer or workforce development courses.

Collaborate Locally

Find synergy with local entities already working toward the cause & build plans & projects using scalable/replicable tools.





Q&A

Please drop your questions
in the chat box.

Thank you!



Thank You!



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