



## AGENDA

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE

Monday January 12, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

**Staff Liaison**  
Stephen Prée | 510-559-7685  
spree@elcerrito.gov

El Cerrito City Hall  
City Council Chambers  
10890 San Pablo Avenue  
El Cerrito, CA 94530

This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible

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#### 7:00 p.m. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING

- 1. ROLL CALL** – Chair Robin Mitchell, Vice-Chair Randi Jiménez; Members: Akhil Iyer, Robert Hrubes, Jennifer Kaczor, Valerie Mih
- 2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC and INTRODUCTION BY INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN SERVING ON THE ADVISORY BOARD**  
*Remarks are typically limited to three minutes per person and may be on anything within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. Remarks on non-agenda items will be heard first, remarks on agenda items will be heard at the time the item is discussed.*
- 3. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE / CHANGES TO THE MEETING AGENDA/ (10 minutes)**
- 4. CITY COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS - (10 minutes)**  
City Council Liaison Ktsanes and / or City Staff may report on Council policies, priorities, and significant actions taken by the City Council, and / or matters of general interest to the Urban Forest Committee (UFC).
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (5 minutes)** Consider a motion to adopt the minutes of the December 15, 2025, meeting.
- 6. PRESENTATION: ROTARY CLUB CITY TREE PROJECT (Ed Church) (25 minutes)** Hear and discuss presentation, consider possible action items.
- 7. COLLABORATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE - (3 minutes)** Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible action items regarding collaborating with the EQC.
- 8. COLLABORATION WITH THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION- (3 minutes)** Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible action items regarding collaborating with the PRC.

**9. URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES, CALENDAR, AND WORK PLAN:**

Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible actions that correspond with development of the Urban Forest Committee Work Plan and calendar of events.

- A. City Tree Planting Discussion- Review City Tree Care Agreement, relevant City of El Cerrito ordinances and Standard Operating Procedures (*Prée*)
- B. Arbor Week Planning (*Kaczor, Mitchell, all*)
- C. Outreach Flyer Review (*Jiménez*)
- D. UFC Work Plan Implementation Strategy

**10. ITEMS FROM TONIGHT’S MEETING THAT REQUIRE FURTHER ACTION**

*(3 minutes)*

**11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS-** hear committee member suggestions for future UFC meeting items *(3 minutes)*

- Presentation - EL CERRITO HNA DEFENSIBLE SPACE FUEL BREAKS & NATIVE GRASSLAND RESTORATION (*Valerie Meh*)
- Arbor Day Planning (*Kaczor, Mitchell*)
- Review the Arbor Day Foundation’s “Tree Board Handbook”
- UFC Work Plan Implementation Strategy

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Staff Liaison, 510-559-7685. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the members regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at El Cerrito Recycling Center during normal business hours.



**Staff Liaison**  
Stephen Prée | 510-559-7685  
spree@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE**  
**Urban Forest Committee**  
**Monday December 8, 2025 7:00 p.m.**

El Cerrito City Hall  
City Council Chambers  
10890 San Pablo Avenue  
El Cerrito, CA 94530

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**This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible**

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**CONVENE REGULAR MEETING:** Chair *Robin Mitchell* called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

- 1. ROLL CALL:** Present: Chair Robin Mitchell, Vice Chair Randi Jiménez; members: Akhil Iyer, Jennifer Kaczor. Absent: Robert Hrubes. Also present: Members of the Public: Edward Church, Sean O'Conner, Sandra Sprague. Council Liaison William Ktsanas, and Staff Liaison Stephen Prée
- 2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:** *Sean O'Conner* proposed a City Green Teams Earth Day project to remove invasive shrubs in Cerrito Vista Park. *Edward Church* representing the Berkeley Rotary Club shared their idea for a massive public tree planting project spanning several cities along the I-80 corridor. He volunteered to present details in a future UFC meeting.
- 3. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE / CHANGES TO THE MEETING AGENDA:** *Valerie Meh* volunteered to give a presentation during a future UFC meeting regarding native grassland restoration in shaded fuel breaks.
- 4. COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS:** *Council Liaison William Ktsanas* reported that City Council adopted the Safety Element on December 2. *Staff Liaison Prée* reported regarding progress with the State Coastal Conservancy Grant, the Caltrans project to repave San Pablo Ave., the del Norte complete streets project, and the City's landscape and arboriculture contract management.
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** November 10, 2025 - **Motion:** *Mitchell*; **2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Kaczor*; unanimous.
- 6. ADOPTION OF 2026 UFC MEETING CALENDAR:** *Mitchell*; **2<sup>nd</sup>:** *Kaczor*; unanimous
- 7. COLLABORATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE –** *Chair Mitchell* reported that the EQC did not meet.
- 8. COLLABORATION WITH THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION-** *Kaczor* reported that the PRC did not meet.

## **9. URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES, CALENDAR, AND WORK PLAN UPDATE:**

- A. Arbor Week Planning- (*Kaczor* and *Mitchell*) led a discussion reviewing event ideas, including contacting the library and further planning.
- B. City Tree Planting Fee- (*Jiménez*) Review of draft documents Tree Equity Fund, Adopt a Tree Program. Discussion regarding the challenges of implementing a scholarship program; creating tangible program goals; determine actual costs for City to plant a tree or trees. Further review, study needed; *Mitchell* and *Kaczor* will collaborate and report back.
- C. Outreach Flyer- (*Jiménez*) Reviewed draft flyer, accepted comments including addition of photos of city trees.
- D. Review Arbor Day Foundation’s “Tree Board Handbook” and relevant City of El Cerrito Ordinances (*Prée*) Review of Public Right of Way, discussion regarding annual UF Program operational plan. Future discussion and review of City Tree Care Agreement, Public Tree Ordinance Summary and UF Program Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- E. UFC Budget Discussion – Deferred
- F. UFC Work Plan Implementation Strategy- Deferred

## **10. ITEMS FROM TONIGHT’S MEETING THAT REQUIRE FURTHER ACTION:**

- *Mitchel, Kaczor, Jimenez, Prée* Arbor Week Planning
- *All-* Continue review of the Tree Board Handbook, Council Resolution No. 2017-69, the Public Tree and Shrub Ordinance, and the Public Tree Program Standard Operating Procedures documents.

## **11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS –**

- Presentation Grassland Restoration in Fuel Breaks (*Meh*)
- Presentation Native Plant Landscaping (*Mitchell*)
- Arbor Week Planning & Outreach
- UF Program Fundraising
- “Tree Board Handbook” and El Cerrito Public Tree Ordinance
- UFC Work Plan Implementation

**12. ADJOURNMENT-** *Chair Mitchell* adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular Urban Forest Committee meeting of November 10, 2025, as approved by the Urban Forest Committee.

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Chair Robin Mitchell

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Stephen Prée, Staff Liaison

# City Trees for Shade, Sequestration and Social Equity

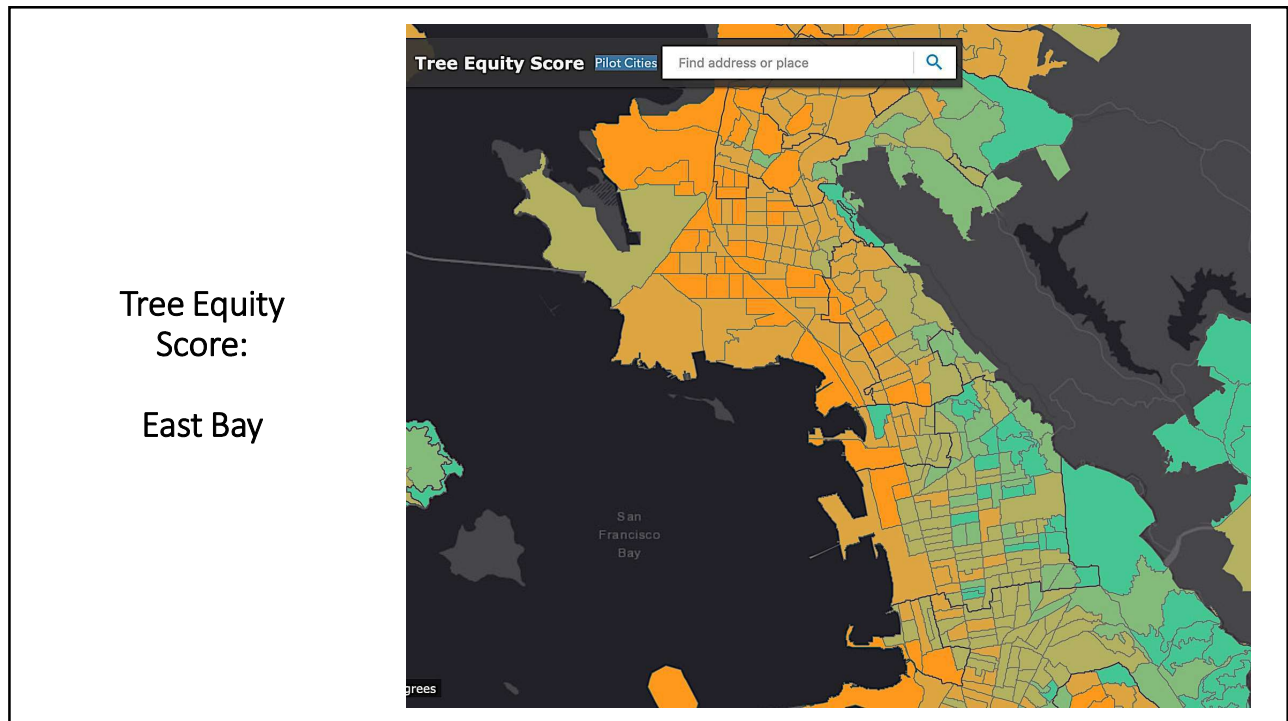
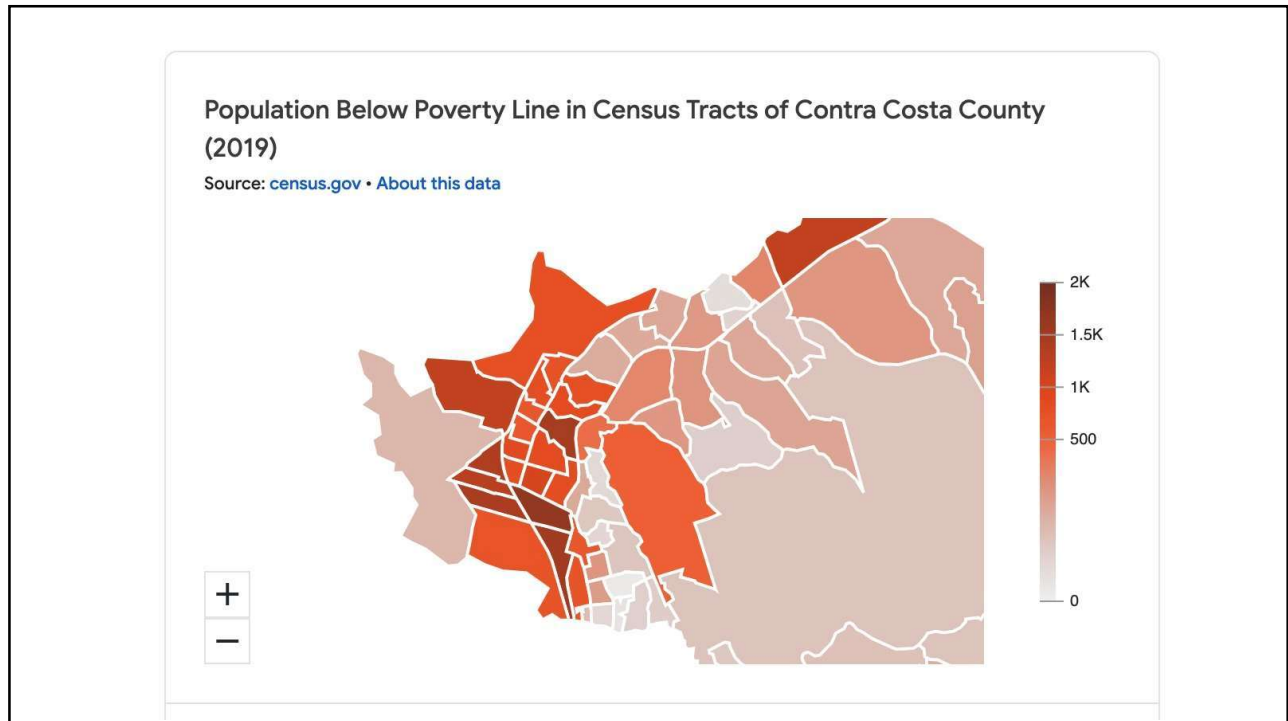
Presentation to El Cerrito  
Urban Forestry Committee

Rotary Club of Berkeley

## Some key points about the opportunity

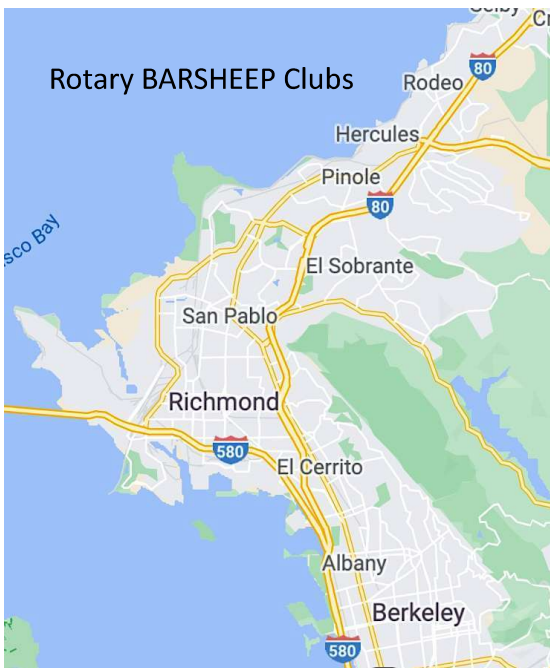
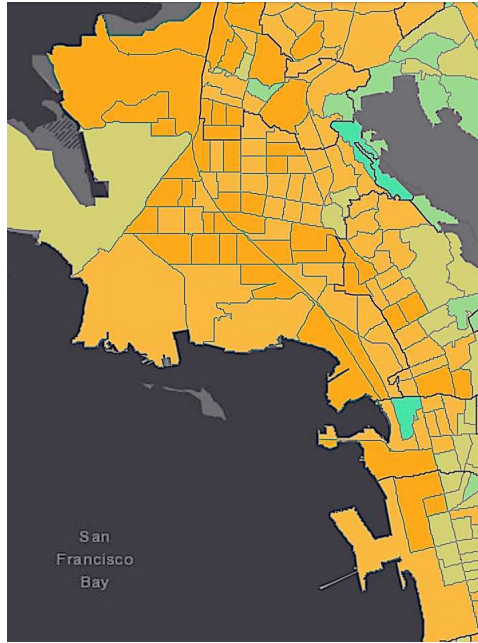
- Trees begin to sequester carbon as soon as they have leaves
- Studies quantify the amount of GHG reduction by urban tree planting
- There is extensive documentation of local need in low income neighborhoods
- There is private funding available
- Successful tree establishment takes about 3 years for planting, watering and care
- We all have roles in growing trees where we live!



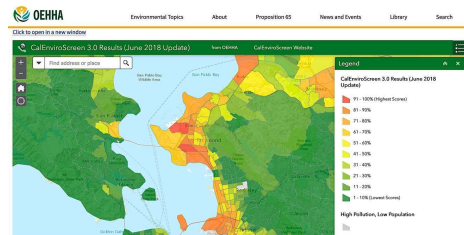


Tree Equity  
Score:

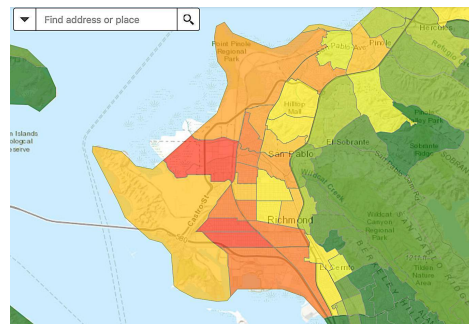
opportunities  
for San Pablo  
Avenue  
corridor

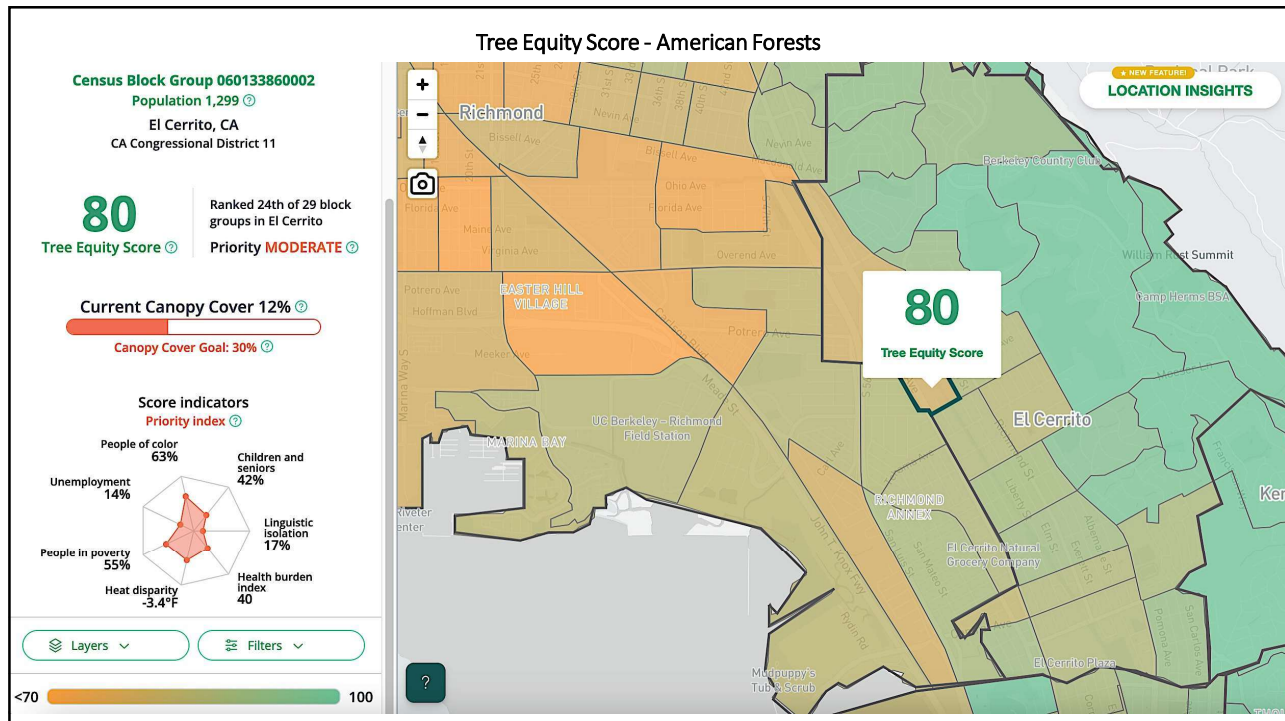
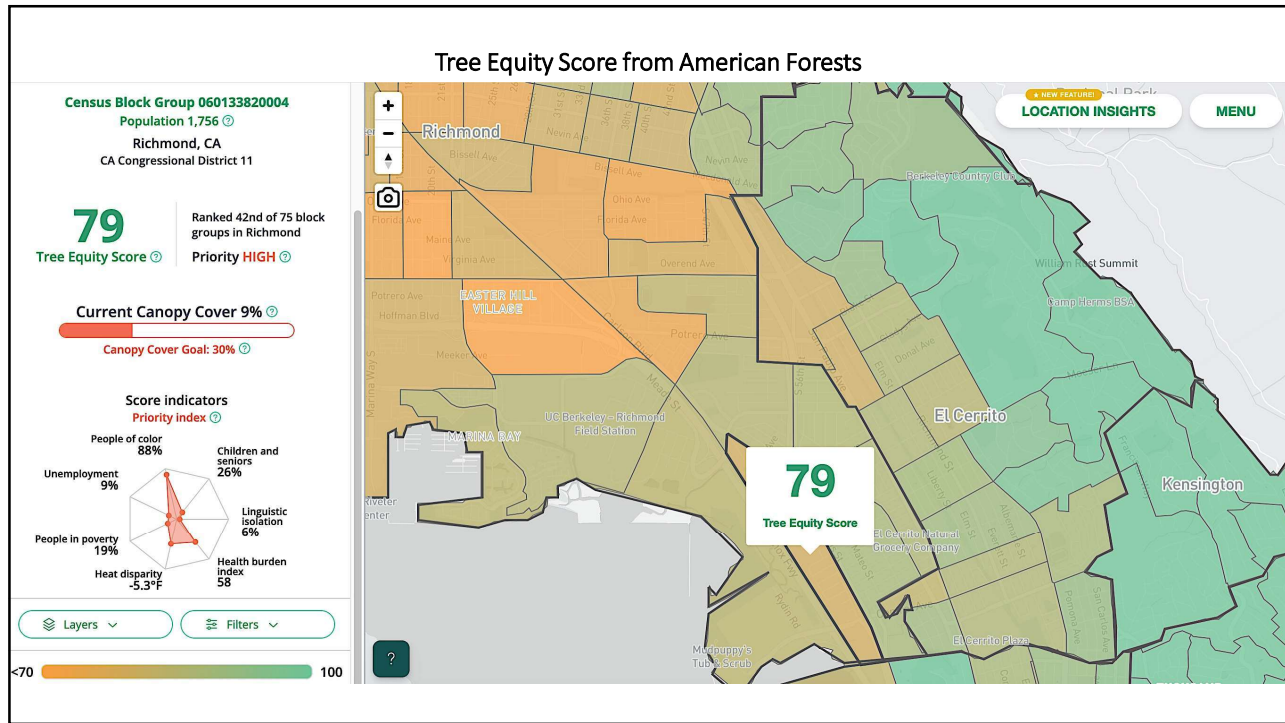


Urban Street Trees Project - Appendix  
CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Results Bay Area, June, 2018, with color key  
Reds and Oranges are Most Impacted



I-880 Cities highlighted





## El Cerrito Urban Forest Management Plan 2007

Home › Your Government › City Departments › Public Works › Trees › Urban Forest Management Plan

Tree Planting

Prohibited Trees

Tree Inventory

Urban Forest Management Plan

"View Obstruction by Trees" Ordinance

"Tree and Shrub" Ordinance

Public Tree Planting, Pruning, and Removal Procedures

### URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

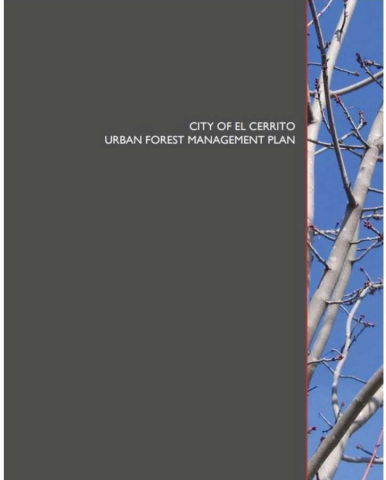
On May 7, 2007, the El Cerrito City Council adopted the [El Cerrito Urban Forest Management Plan](#), which aims to:


1. Establish and maintain a citywide commitment to a healthy, growing urban forest in the City of El Cerrito.
2. Integrate the principles of the Urban Forest Management Plan into subsequent documents required by or in support of the City of El Cerrito General Plan.
3. Provide consistent funding for urban forestry efforts that reflects the importance of the urban forest to the public.
4. Provide excellent professional maintenance for the City's urban forest.

The purpose of the plan is to build an extensive, healthy forest that provides the city with social, environmental and economic benefits.

- **Social benefits** include creating a sense of place, providing connections to the natural world, creating memorable nodes and entry points as well as facilitating a sense of community for a shared purpose and community building.
- **Environmental benefits** include mitigating impacts of the heat island effect, reducing airborne pollutants and sequestering carbon dioxide.
- **Economic benefits** include an increase in property values, in some cases up to 10%, attraction of business and shoppers and contribution to the financial standing of the city.

**CLICK THE IMAGE BELOW TO VIEW THE COMPLETE UFMP**





**Staff Liaison**  
 Stephen Prée | 510-559-7685  
 spree@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us  
 Public Works Department

### BIENNIAL WORK PLAN FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026-2026/2027 URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE

Chair: Robin Mitchell; Vice-Chair: Randi Jiménez; Members: Robert Hrubes, Jennifer Kaczor, Yan Linhart, Akhil Iyer

4. Explore opportunities for financial support from city organizations (such as the <a href="#">El Cerrito Rotary Club</a> ) and businesses, including members of <a href="#">EC Chamber of Commerce</a>	<i>UFC, not staff time</i>	6-12 months
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## What does Berkeley Rotary bring For the larger BARSHEEP area?

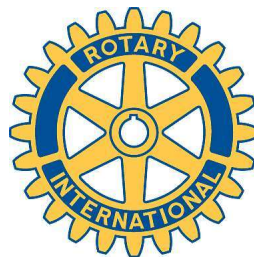
- Connections/convening/even-handed brokering
- grant writing
- Research
- Organizing
- UC Rotaractors
- history of success and endurance (e.g. dictionaries, kite fest, mentoring, scholarships, grantmaking...) Since 1916
- some manual activity capacity

## What roles can El Cerrito UFC play In El Cerrito and the larger area?

- Decide what approaches are best for your communities
- Generate continued interest and advocacy in your communities and with elected officials
- Act as the coordination focus for other partners
- Help plant and grow trees
- ?

## Some private funding possibilities

- Ecosystem Marketplace
- Sylvera Carbon Offsets
- The Nature Conservancy
- Patagonia
- Google carbon credits
- info at World Resource Institute
- CO2 Foundation
- Arbor Day Urban Trees



# Public Tree and Shrub Ordinance

The City of El Cerrito has responsibility and authority over all trees and shrubs in public places (e.g., medians, planting strips, parks, etc.), including:

- Street Trees: Trees located in the “planting strip” adjacent to sidewalks
- Public Trees and Shrubs: Trees and shrubs located in parks, medians, and natural areas

The City is not responsible for trees planted on private property.

Trees that are planted in the planting strip in front of residences (“street trees”) are maintained by both the city and the adjacent property owner, as follows:

The City is responsible for

- Pruning public trees
- Repair of sidewalk damage from the street tree’s roots

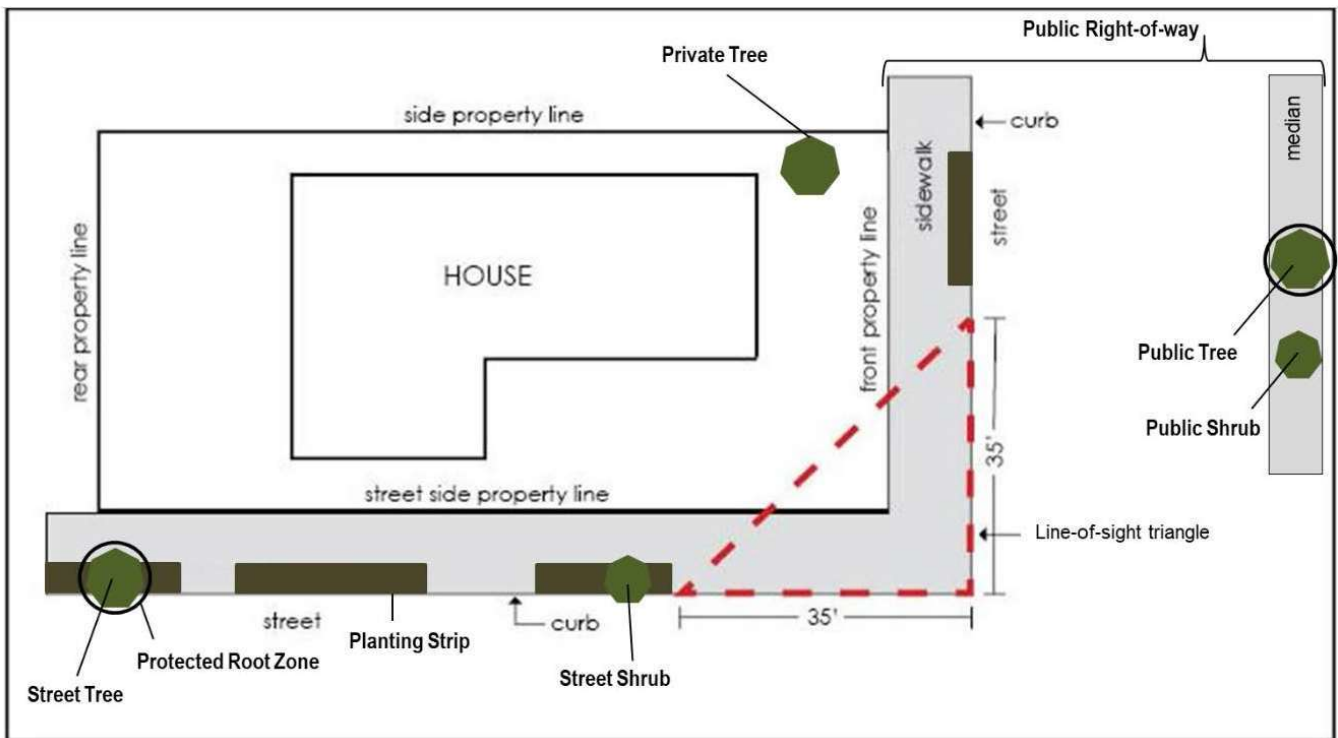
The property owner is responsible for

- Watering (especially in the first 3 years of the tree being planted)
- Removing fallen leaves, branches, and fruit debris

Property owners **CANNOT**

- Cut, prune, or remove street trees (without a permit)
- **Plant street trees without a City permit** (see other side)
- Apply chemicals or fertilizers

*Did you know the City of El Cerrito has achieved Tree City USA designation since 2019?*



## Have a question about Street Trees in El Cerrito?

Contact the City Arborist, Stephen Prée, at (510) 559-7685 or [spree@elcerrito.gov](mailto:spree@elcerrito.gov).

# Public Tree and Shrub Ordinance

## Tree Planting

The City coordinates a Street Tree planting program to help support community members in growing the Urban Forest. Planting permits are required to ensure that street trees are sited in a way that limits potential damage to street and sidewalk paving and to water, sewer, or electrical utilities, long into the future.

Planting a street tree in any parking or planting strip, for instance in front of a residence, requires a permit and can be completed through either of the following options:

1. Community members can request that the City plant, stake, and mulch a 15-gallon tree and supply a watering bag, for a fee, during the annual tree planting program
2. Or, with an approved permit and lower fee, the resident/business can purchase and plant up to 3 City-approved trees. This option requires a City inspection of the tree planting site, tree species approval, adherence to the City's tree planting standard detail, and a City inspection. Note, the species may be selected from the [City Tree List](#) but are site specific.

Both options require completion of a City Tree Care Agreement and an encroachment permit, both available on the City's website.

- a. [Encroachment Permit](#)
- b. [Tree Care Agreement](#) which stipulates that the property owners shall:
  - i. Water the trees and keep the root crown free of weeds
  - ii. Inform the City Public Works Department if any problem or issues relate to the new street tree or the watering bag
  - iii. Agree to replace the tree if it dies due to lack of adequate water or care by the property owner

Contact the Public Works Maintenance desk if you want to plant a street tree or have questions at [maintenance@elcerrito.gov](mailto:maintenance@elcerrito.gov) or (510) 215-4369. Find more information about planting street trees in El Cerrito online at <https://www.elcerrito.gov/1719/Public-Tree-Requirements>.





**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
City Hall Permit Counter  
10890 San Pablo Avenue  
(510) 215-4382

## **TREE CARE AGREEMENT**

Completed forms and fees may be submitted by mail or in person at the location listed above.  
(Business hours: Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)

### **TREES TO BE PLANTED IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY**

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_, owner(s) of the real property at the address described below in El Cerrito, California, do hereby agree to care for the new street tree(s) installed by the City in the public right-of-way adjacent to my/our property for the next three (3) years.

I/We shall water the tree(s), keep the root crown free of weeds and refrain from pruning as instructed by the City Arborist and this Tree Care Agreement (see reverse). I/We also agree to inform the City Public Works Department (510-215-4369 [maintenance@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:maintenance@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us)) immediately of any problems or issues relating to the new street tree or watering bag. I/We also agree arrange replacement of the tree(s) by the City, at our expense, if they/it die(s) due to lack of adequate water and/or care on my/our part within the three (3) year establishment period.

I/We hereby authorize THE CITY EL CERRITO and its employees/agents to, have the exclusive right to plant, trim, prune, remove, or otherwise control said tree(s) as official street trees pursuant to Chapter 13.28 of the El Cerrito Municipal Code.

Tree Species (to be completed by City) \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ **El Cerrito , CA 94530**

Property Owner (Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature  
Property Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Concrete removal square feet \_\_\_\_\_ Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_:  
Stephen Prée, City Arborist #WE- 8663A

**Fees**(to be completed by City):

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **per tree** (planted, staked and mulched including water bag)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **per 16 square feet of concrete removal by City**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL**

# **TREE CARE INSTRUCTIONS**

**Watering** — You (the Property Owner/Signatory) are responsible for watering the tree during the 3-year establishment period. It is critical to the health and success of the tree that you follow the instructions herein.

- **How**

- 1) On the top side of the provided watering bag, locate the fill- hole behind the product label tag.
- 2) Using a normal garden hose with tap water, rainwater, or grey water under pressure, insert the hose end into the fill- hole and fill the bag until it will hold no more water-this will take several minutes; it is okay to overflow. Infrequent, deep watering is most effective.

- **When**

- 1) **For the first 2 weeks, fill the watering bag every 3-4 days, then fill the watering bag one time per week (every 7 days) for the first month** (please mark your calendar), ***unless we are receiving extended rain.***
- 2) From April 1 to October 1 fill the watering bag **once every 14-28 days** (depending on rainfall). No water should be required from October through March with normal rainfall.
- 3) **WATERING TOO FREQUENTLY WILL HARM THE TREE.** *Please do not water more frequently than listed above unless instructed by the city arborist.* If you think the tree requires more water or have questions PLEASE CONTACT THE CITY ARBORIST ([spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us) or 510-559-7685).

**Weeding & mulching**— Keeping weeds and other plants away from the tree roots is very important for tree root development. Maintain a weed and plant free area at least two (2) feet from the tree trunk (or a 4' diameter area) around the base of the tree using wood chip mulch. Keep mulch 4 inches away from the tree trunk. Wood chips are available to residents for free from the City mulch pile near the Cerrito Vista Park tennis court on Avis Drive.

**Pruning- PLEASE DO NOT PRUNE THE STREET TREE(S).**

Training young trees for structure and form requires specialized arboricultural knowledge and techniques. The pruning that trees receive now will shape their future. Please contact the City Arborist for more information ([spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us) or 510-559-7685).

**Fertilizing- PLEASE DO NOT FERTILIZE THE STREET TREE(S).**

These young trees should have all the nutrients they need in the native soil and mulch. If the tree exhibits yellowing leaves or other peculiarities, please contact the City Arborist ([spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us) or 510-559-7685).

# Arbor week planning outline - draft

March 7 – 14, 2026

## **Planned activities:**

*What support is needed to finalize plans and by when?*

- Tree planting
  - Welcome by ? (Stephen, city council member, Robin?)
  - Any other educational opportunities, like pruning or [city trees info](#)?
  - Refreshments?
  - Materials to bring
- Library activity
- City Council meeting Arbor Week proclamation?

## **Publicity plan**

### **Pieces to produce:**

With descriptions, dates/times/locations

- Short social media post
- Longer announcement for Green Happenings

Social media accounts to share to with #CaliforniaArborWeek:

- Thelittlehill
- Cityofelcerrito
- Where else?

Other:

- March Green Happenings
- Next door
- Where else?

### **Groups to invite and share event info with (and ask for relevant activities to promote)**

- Trail Trekkers
- Garden Club
- Park & Rec commission
- EQC
- Who else?



# JOIN THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE

*Your voice can shape  
our city's trees and  
green spaces. Join us  
and help El Cerrito*

## *thrive!* WHY JOIN?

- ❖ Shape the future of El Cerrito's trees and green spaces
- ❖ Work with neighbors who care about sustainability
- ❖ Help make our city healthier, safer, and more beautiful

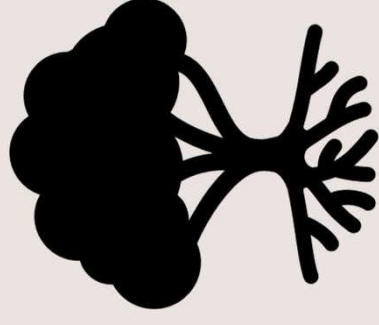
## WHAT WE DO

- ✓ Advocate for and support the planting and management of the City's public trees
- ✓ Coordinate Arbor Week & UFC community events
- ✓ Promote education on tree safety, selection, and maintenance



## COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION

- Two hours each month for one monthly meeting
- Optional volunteering on sub-committees, at tree plantings & activities
- No experience needed — just a love of trees!



Visit our  
website:  
[https://tinyurl.  
com/ElCerrito  
UFC](https://tinyurl.com/ElCerritoUFC)