

# NO TRANSPARENCY FOR TREE REMOVALS

A report on the state of our urban canopy by Angelenos for Trees.

City policy on tree removals in Los Angeles is muddled and skewed to favor developers. **The city does not release data on how many tree removals it has approved**, so request forms are the only source of public tree removal data. Between 2018 and 2020, Los Angeles UFD received requests to remove

**2849** trees.

**390** of these trees were from a **“PROTECTED SPECIES,”** and the rest were street trees.

*The city does not require request forms for the removal of unprotected private property trees or park trees, making it impossible to fully quantify urban canopy losses.*



**2499** replacement trees.

These removals would amount to losses of around

**\$466,547**

in eco benefits each year.\*

Replacement trees are saplings, meaning that these plantings would yield just **\$154,788** in yearly eco benefits.\*

That amounts to

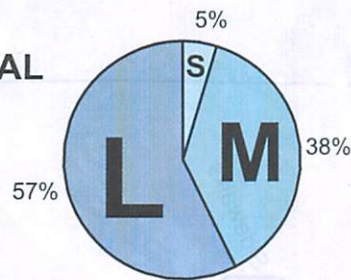
**\$312,083**

in losses each year.

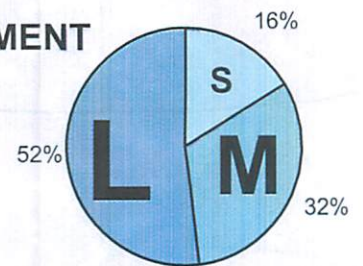
Los Angeles should be working toward a goal of **40-60% tree canopy cover**. Right now, we are **below 20%**, according to TreePeople. At our current replacement rate, **we are not even equipped to maintain this percentage**.

In addition to replacing mature trees with saplings, many removers propose replacement tree species that are smaller at **maturity** than trees they are meant to replace.

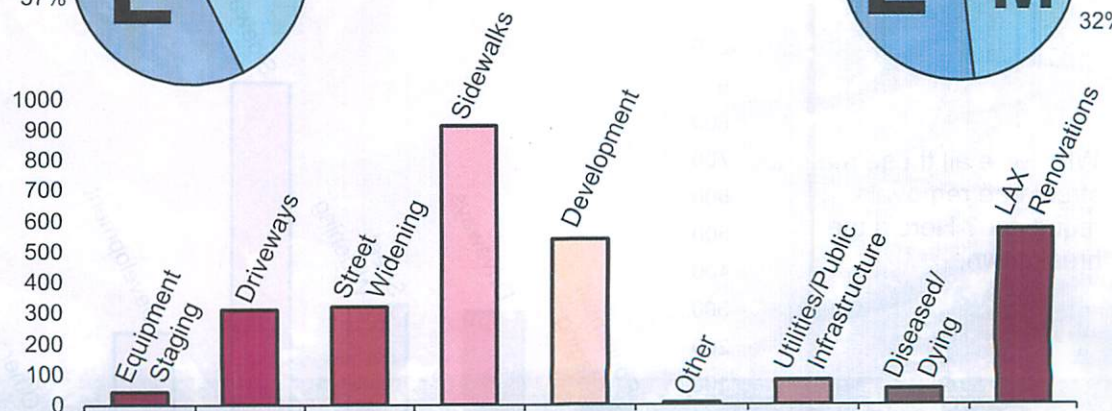
## PROPOSED REMOVAL SPECIES SIZES



## PROPOSED REPLACEMENT SPECIES SIZES



Why were all these mature tree removals requested? Here's the breakdown:



\*According to an estimate obtained from LA Parks TreeKeeper software.



# KILLING STREET TREES, BUILDING URBAN DESERTS

A report by Angelenos for Trees.

As Los Angeles grapples with increasing heat, city policies are allowing the urban street tree canopy to shrink rapidly, resulting in an alarming lack of shade and green space on our public sidewalks. Each year, Los Angeles is becoming **less habitable** due to its failure to protect mature trees from the pressures of development. The city allows illegal street tree removals, **refuses to invest in our urban forest**, and does not provide transparent information regarding the number of removals they have approved.

Between 2018 and 2020, Los Angeles UFD received requests to remove

# 2468

unprotected street trees.

Most of our urban tree canopy is comprised of “unprotected trees,” as only a few tree species have a “protected” designation. Unprotected trees on private or park property can be removed **without oversight**, so we have no way of fully quantifying our urban canopy losses.

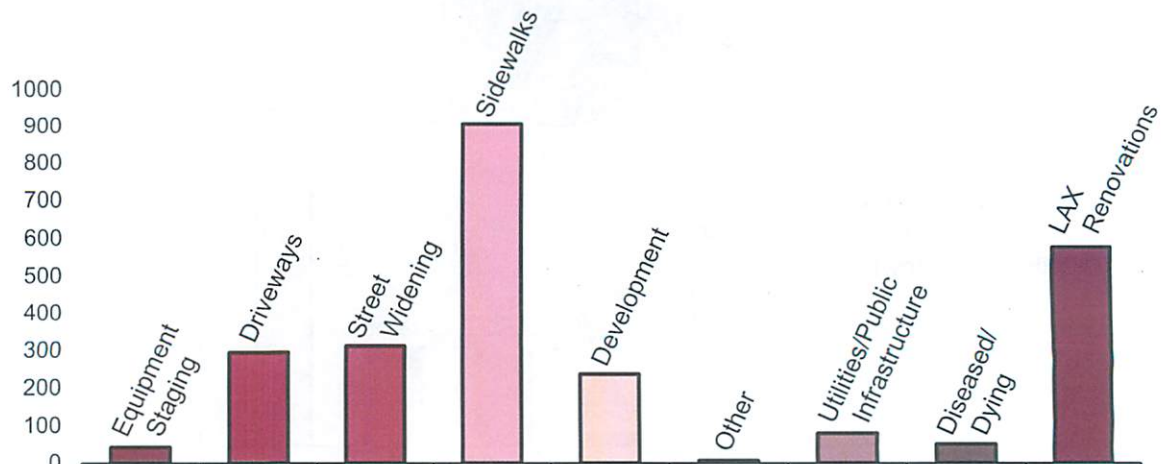
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## 40-60% tree canopy cover.

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At our current replacement rate, we are not even equipped to maintain this percentage.

Why were all these mature street tree removals requested? Here's the breakdown:



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# ARE PROTECTED TREES REALLY PROTECTED?

A report by Angelenos for Trees.

Los Angeles is a rich biodiversity hotspot. But city policies have enabled the destruction of thousands of woodland ecosystems by allowing, and even encouraging, developers to remove an **unknown number** of protected trees **without consequences**. In 2019, the city approved a request to remove over **100 oak trees** at a Universal Studios site. In total, between the years of **2018-2020**, the city received requests to remove:

170

Coast, Mesa, and Valley  
Oak trees,

45

California Sycamores, and

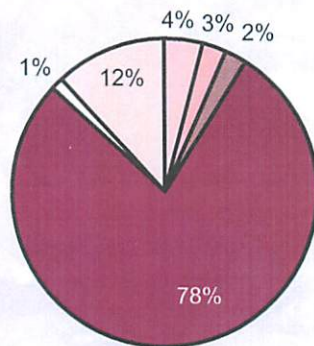
175

Southern California  
Black Walnuts.

These tree species are native to California and "protected" under City Ordinance 177404, meaning that the city must approve removals of these tree species from private property and parks, as well as streets. **However, the city refuses to be transparent about whether they have approved most of these requests.**

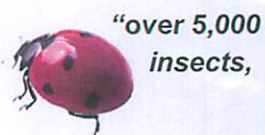
Here are the reasons requestors gave for removing these trees:

**78%** of protected tree removals were requested for development projects.



- Driveway
- Street Widening
- Sidewalk
- Development
- Utilities/Public Infrastructure
- Diseased/Dying

When developers remove protected trees, they are destroying sections of our native urban forest. Native trees are often clustered together in stands, groves, and woodlands, which provide exponentially greater eco benefits than independent trees. According to the Los Angeles County Oak Woodlands Habitat Conservation Strategic Alliance, our oak trees support



In addition to all of this, requestors consistently fail to replace protected trees with the correct species. While there were requests to remove **175** Southern California Black Walnut trees, which are rare in addition to being protected, only **59** black walnuts were proposed to replace them.