



Friends of the Urban Forest
ANNUAL IMPACT
REPORT

**JULY 2021 —
JUNE 2022**



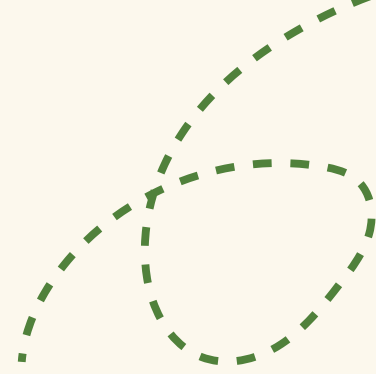


CONTENTS

- Page 3:** Letter from our Executive Director
- Page 4:** Transforming our City's Landscape
- Page 5:** Transforming Neighborhoods
- Page 6:** The Transformation Process
- Page 8:** Transforming Blocks
- Page 9:** Transforming Relationships
- Page 10:** Transforming Our Future
- Page 12:** Transform With Us! Contact Us



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Since becoming the Executive Director of Friends of the Urban Forest, I've been inspired by the abundance of passion our employees, board members, donors, volunteers, and partners bring to this work. I'm so grateful to everyone who advances our mission.

Our work has deepened my understanding of the impacts of climate change in San Francisco's neighborhoods. We already see hotter and drier conditions, and science tells us that trend will continue to accelerate. Research also shows that historically neglected neighborhoods experience worse conditions. If we're serious about taking action to blunt the impact of the climate crisis, we must focus on building resiliency throughout the city, especially in the neighborhoods that need it most.

Our plan for the year ahead is to closely align our work with the principles of environmental equity and climate justice. What will this work look like? We'll deepen our commitment to planting trees and gardens in neighborhoods that have low canopy coverage. We'll build connections with communities across our City to better support their needs. We'll grow the network of individuals, families, and businesses stepping up to plant and care for San Francisco's urban forest.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of my job is attending our community planting events. This model is a powerful example of how partnering with neighbors and community members makes beautiful things grow and thrive. From the Richmond to the Bayview, and from the Mission to the Sunset, I've been inspired by talking with our volunteers and hearing words of gratitude from neighbors who have stopped by to check out what we're up to.

— **Brian Wiedenmeier**, *Executive Director*



TRANSFORMING OUR CITY'S LANDSCAPE



Friends of the Urban Forest has been planting trees and gardens and transforming the City's landscape for over four decades. In that time, our staff and volunteers have **grown over 60,000 street trees** — almost half of San Francisco's street tree canopy — and **replaced over 123,000 square feet of concrete with sidewalk gardens at 2,000 properties that have over 30,000 plants.**



Since this land wasn't previously forested, we have a unique set of challenges determining how we plant and grow trees. We have sandy soil, rocky hills, wind, fog, and low rainfall, to name a few. Trees in San Francisco are not equitably distributed, and areas with low to no canopy are the same areas that have been historically overlooked due to racism.



With four decades of experience planting trees on sidewalks, we are uniquely positioned to partner with communities to plant new trees to address this environmental injustice. Our greatest joy comes from seeing neighborhoods and blocks transform as young trees flourish and grow into mature trees, bringing environmental, social, and health benefits to residents.

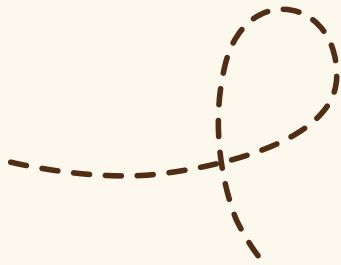
TRANSFORMING NEIGHBORHOODS

From planning to planting

Our process, from planning to planting, which takes three to four months, prioritizes an equity-based planting model. A lot of planning, coordination, and outreach goes into the process before we start digging. On a typical community planting day, we plant between 30 and 45 trees with the help of volunteers.

Our work doesn't stop there. We care for our trees for three years to ensure they are well-established in their new surroundings. We water 500 allocated trees weekly, and the city waters the rest.

After three years, Public Works takes over via StreetTreeSF, the voter-approved initiative to maintain mature street trees and repair tree-related sidewalk damage.



LET'S GROW SOME TREES!

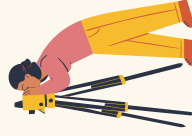
Anatomy of Our Tree Planting Process

4-6 months before



WHERE WILL WE PLANT

We use an **equity-based planting model** that prioritizes low-canopy, environmentally burdened neighborhoods. We select blocks where trees will be most impactful and where our partners want them.



bit.ly/3h1BP5H
This map shows the neighborhoods we currently plant in.

12 weeks before



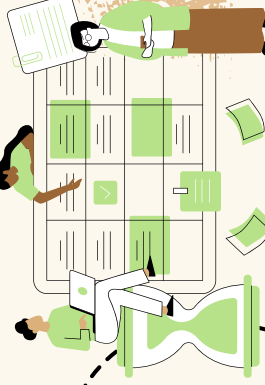
WHEN WILL WE PLANT

Once neighborhoods are selected, we survey blocks and select a date. We start collecting data on planting sites and adjacent property addresses.

HOW WE PLANT

OUTREACH

We begin outreach (letters, emails) to let residents know we will be planting in their block. Residents can request a tree or defer to a future date.



Our planting managers & coordinators manage the process and organize all the back-end stuff.

4-6 weeks before



UTILITY CHECK

We mark a 24 sq ft outline around a planting site. Utility companies then mark the locations of their underground facilities. **If they're too close to the planting spot, we will not be able to plant the tree** - it's not safe.



SPECIES SELECTION

Not every tree can thrive in every location. The tree species are selected based on site-specific factors, microclimate, and the cultural and aesthetic preferences of the resident.

2-3 weeks before

1 week before



SITE PREP

When the sites are finalized, we:

- Get the **concrete cut and removed**;
- Bring in the **auger** (imagine a giant drill) if the soil is rocky or clay-like;
- Apply **compost** before or on planting day.



PLANTING DAY!

We plant **30 to 45 trees** on our Community Planting Day with the help of volunteers. We water every tree the day they're planted.



Total Cost: \$2,500



YOUNG TREE CARE

Our work is not done! Our Tree Care team makes **annual visits** to the trees we plant for **THREE years**. They check their health, prune, and make structural adjustments to ensure the tree is establishing well.





1,460

**TREES
PLANTED**

TRANSFORMING BLOCKS



2,447

**VOLUNTEER
HOURS**



658

**VOLUNTEER
PARTICIPANTS**

1,049

**TREE CARE
VISITS**

25,000

**WATERING
VISITS**

**SIDEWALK
GARDENS**



101

**NEW GARDENS
INSTALLED**



7,381

**SQ FT OF
CONCRETE
REMOVED**



1,847

**TOTAL PLANTS
PLANTED**



TRANSFORMING RELATIONSHIPS

Engaging with people who live in neighborhoods where we plant, and working in partnership with them, are central parts of our process. Our **Community Engagement** team builds and maintains relationships with community-based organizations and does direct outreach to residents.

After two years of suspending volunteer participation in plantings, we started welcoming volunteers back in April of this year.



28

COMMUNITY
PARTNERS



2,981

LETTERS
MAILED

TRANSFORMING OUR FUTURE

Our **Green Teens** program is one of the few paid training programs in urban forestry for high school-aged youth in San Francisco.



2,260

**GREEN TEEN
HOURS**



268

**# OF TREES
CARED FOR**



335

**# OF TREES
PLANTED**

By learning introductory arborist skills on how to plant and care for trees, they get the opportunity to build their professional skills and strengthen their relationships with the community and the environment. The youth in this program are diverse — the majority are youth of color — and come from the neighborhoods in which we plant. By building their professional and leadership skills, we're cultivating a future generation of environmental stewards and community leaders.







CONTACT US!



Direct: 415-561-6890

Fax: 415-561-6899



Email: marketing@fuf.net

Website: www.friendsoftheurbanforest.org

Presidio of San Francisco | 1007 General Kennedy Ave, Ste 1, San Francisco, CA 94129

