

invest from the ground up


Want to Invest in Your Community and Your Home?

Great neighborhoods are made up of more than nice houses and good schools. Great neighborhoods have a certain character, rooted in the tree-lined streets, parks and other green spaces that provide lifelong memories and help make where we live feel like home.

Trees and green spaces give us more than a sense of nostalgia; they provide a range of values we can measure. They have been proven to cool our cities and towns, clean the air we breathe, slow down cars on our streets and make our communities safer places. They can also increase the value of our homes and local businesses by creating the kind of neighborhoods where people thrive and want to live.

That's why we're focused on what happens to the trees and green spaces in California's communities. For them to grow and provide our neighborhoods the character and benefits that we all want, we all need to invest in their care and upkeep.

InvestFromTheGroundUp.org

 Visit our website to learn more about these benefits and how you can help us to Invest from the Ground Up!



"Trees are good for taxpayers and good for the environment. They reduce city costs by managing stormwater runoff and filtering out of pollutants while also increasing neighborhood property values."

—Scott Barnett, President, California Taxpayers Advocate

Did You Know That Trees...

Increase the value of your home

Researchers with the USDA Forest Service found that simply having trees on your street can increase property values by an average of \$8,870. And what about your own yard? "[L]andscaping, especially with trees, can increase property values as much as 20 percent," according to research by Management Information Services/ICMA. But it's not just your own yard that makes your home more desirable—nearly one out of five buyers considered paying more for a home near a park or playground, according to a survey by the National Association of Realtors.

Save you money on your energy bills

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, "The net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to 10 room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day." The American Public Power Association found that, "Landscaping can reduce air conditioning costs by up to 50 percent, by shading the windows and walls of a home." One properly cared for tree can save you nearly 12 percent annually on your energy bills if it grows for 15 years, according to the Center for Urban Forest Research.


Improve Your Health

Trees not only reduce pollution in the air and water, they also help you heal faster. According to research by Dr. Roger Ulrich, a Professor at Texas A&M University, people who stayed in hospital rooms with a view of trees had "shorter lengths of stay" and "developed fewer minor complications following surgery." Other studies have shown that access to nature reduces mental fatigue and symptoms in children with ADHD. Conversely, being disconnected from trees and nature can cause mood disorders, depression, and anxiety.





invest from the ground up

What Benefits Do Trees and Green Spaces Provide?

 **Improve Neighborhood Appeal** – In urban areas, trees soften harsh building lines and break up large stretches of pavement while reducing the heat from buildings and concrete. This more pleasant environment in turn attracts more businesses, shoppers and homeowners. Trees, parks, green medians and other green spaces also help to:

- Slow down traffic by signifying: *“This is a street, not a freeway”*
- Provide privacy and more comfortable settings
- Increase property values and lower energy bills
- Create a sound buffer and reduce noise pollution

 **Save Millions in Environmental Benefits** – Trees provide services that we would otherwise have to pay for. They help to clean our air and water, prevent flooding, reduce our energy use, and help fight climate change. The urban forest throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, for example, is estimated to provide nearly \$500 million annually in environmental benefits.

 **Create Jobs** – From the skilled work of certified arborists (who plant, prune and treat trees) to entry-level jobs in nurseries and landscaping companies, urban forestry employs more than 60,000 Californians.

 **Add Nearly \$4 Billion to California’s Bottom Line** – From the manufacturing of products to the goods sold in nurseries to the salaries of workers, altogether urban forestry added nearly \$4 billion to the state’s GDP in 2009.



What Do We Have to Lose?

Lack of, or improper, care and upkeep of our trees and green spaces will slowly destroy the beauty and character of where we live, shop and play. Places we cherish will become places to avoid and bring down the value of our homes and businesses.

All the benefits we have gained from trees after generations of growth—cleaner air, a cooler city and slower cars on our streets—will be lost if they die from an untreated disease. And imagine the threats—including lawsuits—as neglected trees and their branches begin to fall and damage property or even injure residents.

That’s why it’s so important for us, and our state and local governments, to invest in these places and the people who care for them. And it’s an investment that continues to pay for itself over time—it helps make our communities special and safe, while providing us a wide range of financial, health and other benefits.



California Urban Forests Council strongly believes that California should **Invest From the Ground Up**. Our vision is that California’s communities are cleaner, healthier and more prosperous through collaborative action and investments in urban forests and urban greening. For more information visit: www.caufc.org.

California Urban Forests Council is an equal opportunity provider.

This publication made possible through grants from CAL FIRE and the USDA Forest Service.

