

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
ZONING INFORMATION (ZI) FILE

**HEALTH AND URBAN FOREST EQUITY PRIORITY AREAS
LANDSCAPE AND SITE DESIGN ORDINANCE IMPLEMENTATION**

Council District(s): Citywide

PURPOSE

Urban forestry studies show strong links between lack of access to green spaces and poor public health outcomes, among a host of related negative consequences impacting community livelihood ranging from heat exposure and poor air quality, to food insecurity and reduced ecosystem services. Patterns of tree canopy distribution and loss highlight spatial inequities in communities' access to trees, shade canopy, and green spaces.

Health and Urban Forest Equity Priority Areas are identified using two indices, the CAO's Measure of Access, Disparity, and Equity (MADE) Index¹ and the Office of Forest Management's (OFM) Tree Canopy Equity Index. The MADE Index is a summary measure of the social and physical conditions Los Angelenos experience in their lived environments. It assesses 26 indicators across key city policy areas, including: Community Connection, Economic Stability, Education & Opportunity, Longevity & Vitality, and Safe Environment and uses these indicators to calculate a 'Priority Score' for each census tract. Higher scores indicate that residents experience less access to resources and opportunities and face additional burdens or barriers for success. Lower scores indicate that residents experience more access to resources and opportunities and face fewer burdens or barriers for success.

OFM's equity index refines the Urban Forest Equity Collective²(UFEC) urban forest equity decision-making framework, which was created to prioritize tree planting efforts. OFM's equity index was created for use with policies related to or impacting the urban forest. The Tree Canopy Equity Index considers quantitative factors such as existing canopy cover, impervious surface cover, exposure to urban heat and air pollution, and select socio-demographic indicators. This process assigns a low, medium, high, or very high value to each census tract³ to create a ranked prioritization of areas within the City that are high need for forestry interventions, such as tree preservation or planting.

¹ To find more about the MADE Index methodology, please consult the [Technical Guide](#) and [Spatial Equity Data Tool Documentation](#).

² UFEC is a consortium of forestry experts, Los Angeles City staff, community-based organizations, researchers, and consultants aiming to create holistic strategies to advance urban forest equity in the lowest-canopied neighborhoods.

³ Tracts are ranked based on physical conditions, experience of high environmental exposure, and socio-demographic considerations. Tracts ranked low do not meet the physical conditions criteria. Tracts ranked medium meet the physical conditions criteria of <=25% canopy AND >=50% impervious surface cover, but do not meet the environmental exposure or socio-economic criteria. Tracts ranked high meet both the physical conditions and the environmental exposure criteria of scoring in the upper 50th percentile (compared to other tracts that met prior criteria) for excess ER visits on extreme heat days AND PM 2.5 AND/OR Diesel PM, but do not meet the socio-demographic criteria. Tracts ranked very high meet the physical conditions, environmental exposure, and socio-demographic criteria of scoring in the 50th percentile (compared to other tracts that met prior criteria) for at least four of the following criteria: poverty, adults with education <= high school, non-white and/or Hispanic, non-English language spoken at home, renters, no internet access at home, population density, and formerly redlined. Note: this index has not yet been published publicly at this time, reach out to the City's Office of Forest Management for more information.

The Department of City Planning is selecting areas that are ranked as “high” or “very high” in both the MADE and Tree Canopy Equity indices to address the inequitable distribution of the urban forest through tree canopy expansion efforts and Significant Tree preservation. In conjunction with the best practices put forward by the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance⁴, advancing environmental justice and urban forest equity in the identified priority areas will help address climate needs and health and social factors.

INSTRUCTIONS

All applicants filing a Landscape and Site Design Ordinance administrative (ADM) application with the Department of City Planning, for a new project located on a parcel identified in the ZI area shall be required to meet two (2) additional Designing for Health Standards in the Landscape and Site Design Point System. Additionally, up to five (5) bonus points are available for projects within the ZI boundary if certain standards related to tree canopy preservation or planting and mitigation of climate impacts are selected.

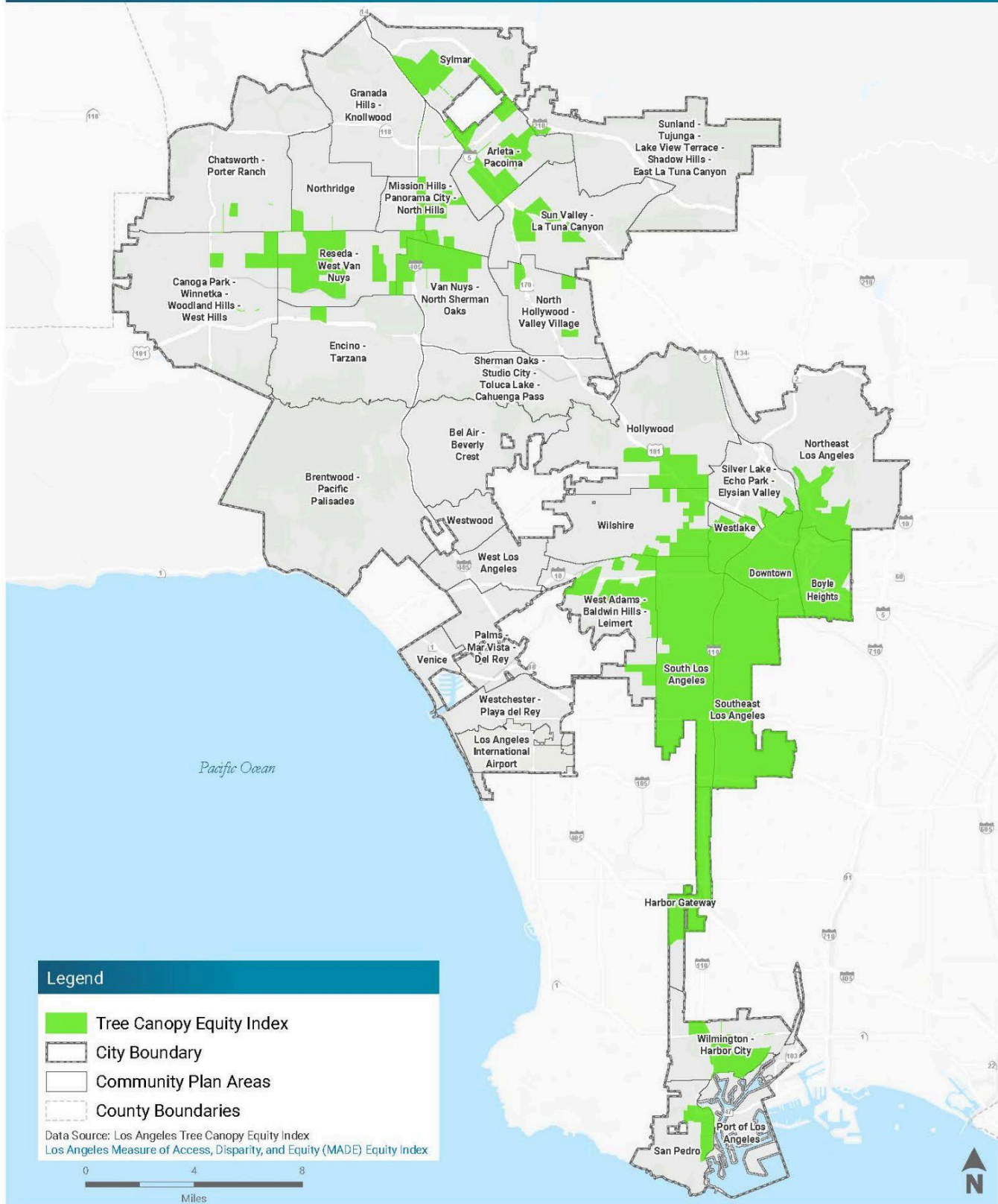
Attached is a citywide map of Health and Urban Forest Equity Priority Areas in the City of Los Angeles. Department of City Planning (DCP) staff should use this citywide map in determining if a project is clearly within a priority area. Affected parcels within the ZI area will be identified in ZIMAS, however this map is to be referenced on an interim basis.

⁴ Landscape and Site Design Ordinance

Health and Urban Forest Equity Priority Areas

Landscape and Site Design Ordinance

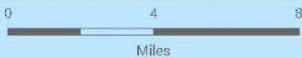
DRAFT



Legend

- Tree Canopy Equity Index
- City Boundary
- Community Plan Areas
- County Boundaries

Data Source: Los Angeles Tree Canopy Equity Index
Los Angeles Measure of Access, Disparity, and Equity (MADE) Equity Index



Source(s): Los Angeles Department of City Planning

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