

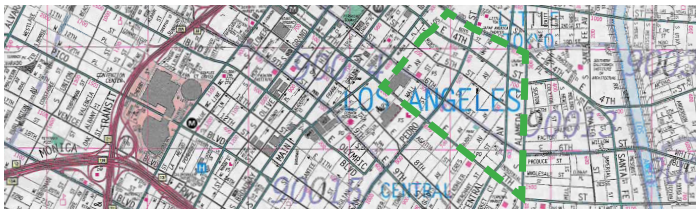
Ten Steps to Starting a Tree Planting Project

Step 1 Identify the Project Area

Find at least ten empty tree wells along a corridor.

For the support of any tree planting non-profit such as the LA Conservation Corps, TreePeople or Northeast Trees, you have to plant at least 10 trees.

“Corridor projects” – located along major transportation routes – are receiving a lot of support right now and can be the most effective and efficient use of tree planting funds and resources. These projects may also be eligible for additional funding, resources and support making your project easier.



Step 3 Create Local Partnerships

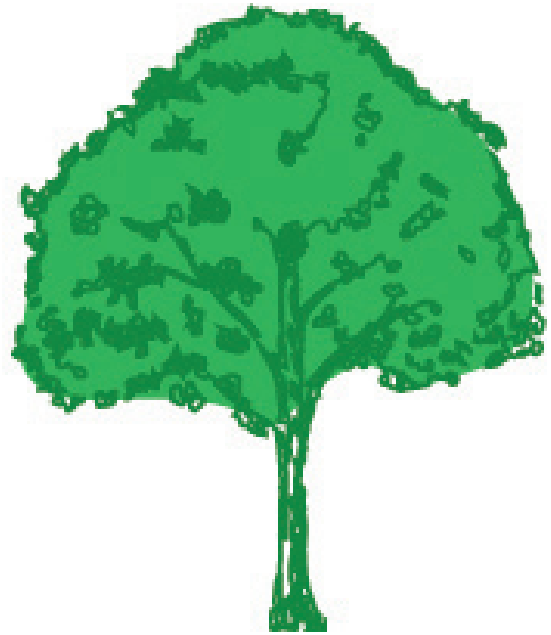
Get the support of stakeholders to meet your goals.

Meet with your local Neighborhood Council, Business Improvement District, City Council Office, County Supervisor, State Assembly and Senate District, etc. Many of these organizations and politicians have some funding available for trees and they might be thrilled to support you. It can't hurt to ask!

Reach out to any non-profits, local businesses and property owners in the project area. It is best to meet with as many people as possible to seek support, input and buy-in from the community where you will be planting. Some will have money, others will have volunteers, and some may even have supplies and expertise in tree planting. By going out and creating awareness about your project, you can generate excitement, participation, and resources needed for a successful community-driven tree planting project.



This Guide is intended to help you start your own neighborhood tree planting project. Let us know if we can help by emailing us at sustainability@dlanc.com or come to a meeting! For more information or to get involved, go to downtownsustainability.com



Step 2 Seek Community Input

Many hands make light work! Tell your neighbors.

Create a poster, press release, and email to share with your neighbors to help get the support you need for a successful project. Check out templates for these things on our website: downtownsustainability.com

Every project should include a community outreach event – the format is open ended but it helps to increase participation in the project and the DLANC Sustainability Committee can help you with this.



Step 4 Find Maintenance Funding

Source maintenance options for your trees to grow.

Most trees require about 3-5 years of care to become “established” and self-sufficient. When seeking funding, it is always better to start early - you never know how much you will receive. Aim high and work out the details as the project develops. The DLANC Sustainability Committee has been successful in identifying small amounts of incremental financing from many agencies and small grant providers. This lessens the burden on one particular organization and increases buy-in from the larger community. Also look for funding through in-kind donations: volunteers hours, materials (including water for the trees!), outreach, and maintenance.



Sustainability Committee



Step 6 Work with a Tree Non-Profit

Maximize efficiency by working with the tree experts.

The Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC) is the primary tree planting partner in Downtown Los Angeles and will work with you closely to ensure your project is a success. Stay in contact with LACC throughout the process as they are a valuable resource in addressing any questions, concerns, or ideas about the project. They are professional tree planters and really know what's best!

Depending on how you fund the project, you may need to process payments from DLANC, write grant applications and other paperwork, or find a private donor to write a check. Maintenance is a critical part of the project and the DLANC Sustainability Committee encourages you to consider this the most important part of the project.



LA CONSERVATION CORPS

Step 8 Recruit Volunteers

Service organizations and work volunteer events are a great place to start.

DLANC and other community organizations are great places to recruit volunteers. Look to the people with whom you interact daily in Downtown LA including who you work with, your neighbors at home, etc. If you are planting trees outside of your regular live/work/play area, involve the stakeholders of that community.



Step 10 Organize Tree Maintenance

Ensuring your trees grow helps make a successful tree planting project.

If you cannot find all the required funding (estimate about \$5 per tree, 2 times a month for 3-5 years), organize a tree maintenance volunteer group. The easiest solution is to find the money and give it to your non-profit partner to provide on-going maintenance but you can either supplement or replace this funding with a volunteer effort.

Step 5 Host a Tree Survey Event

Count empty tree wells with your neighbors.

Once you have identified the project area, you will have to conduct a survey of the area to determine where you can plant trees immediately (e.g. open tree wells, asphalted tree wells, medians, and parkways) as well as future tree opportunities (e.g. the concrete will have to be cut). The Tree Survey will provide information about the potential location and will be helpful when getting the required permits to plant.

Survey training can happen the same day as the actual survey day but it is best to do one prior to the survey day. Practice makes perfect! Rehearse a survey with volunteers to be sure everyone is comfortable with the process. Give your volunteers survey tools (clip boards, pens, survey forms) and outreach tools to share with anyone who asks about what's happening. Don't worry about accuracy - community involvement is your first priority and your non-profit partner will verify all survey information before they apply for permits from the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Street Services.

Step 7 Set the Planting Date

Get ready to roll up your sleeves and have some fun.

At this point in the project, you will be coordinating with your non-profit partner daily. Planting day events can be part of larger community events like Park[ing] Day LA or the Wells Fargo Day of Kindness. Prepare some general outreach for the public, media, and invite local elected officials to kick-off the event. Many agencies might not have money for tree maintenance but can provide you with food and water for your volunteers.



Step 9 Planting Day

Assign tasks and get people of all abilities and ages involved.

Most of the work will be conducted by your non-profit partner on the day of the event. Designate a captain to coordinate with volunteers when they arrive and ensure they sign a liability waiver. Divide volunteers into teams of 3-4 people and conduct a quick tree planting demonstration (lead by LACC employee).

You should provide water and snacks for volunteers on the planting day but sunscreen and gloves are nice to have too. Planting day is a great opportunity for an outreach or media event - invite your local sponsors.