



# *Urban Forest Program*

City of Los Alamitos

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[www.cityoflosalamitos.org](http://www.cityoflosalamitos.org)

**Adopted April 18, 2022**



My City ♥ My Los Al

# Table of Contents

## **Parkway Tree Master Plan - Exhibit A**

Defining the Jurisdiction of Urban Forest..... Page 3

Tree Maintenance Plan..... Page 4

Established City Tree List..... Page 5

Tree Trimming Standards..... Page 6

Proposed Street Tree Removal Policies..... Pages 6-7

## **Los Alamitos Parkway Tree List Packet - Exhibit B**

Australian Willow..... Page 9

Bradford Pear..... Page 10

Brisbane Box..... Page 11

Chinese Flame..... Page 12

Chinese Fringe..... Page 13

Chinese Pistache..... Page 14

Crape Myrtle..... Page 15

Eastern Redbud..... Page 16

Ginkgo..... Page 17

Gold Medallion..... Page 18

Jacaranda..... Page 19

Japanese Blueberry..... Page 20

Little Gem Southern Magnolia..... Page 21

London Plane..... Page 22

Pink Trumpet..... Page 23

Raywood Ash..... Page 24

Strawberry Tree..... Page 25

Southern Live Oak..... Page 26

Sweet Gum..... Page 27

Sweetshade..... Page 28

Tipu..... Page 29

Tree Care Instructions..... Page 30



# Parkway Tree Master Plan



Adopted April 18, 2022  
City Council Resolution No. 2022-14

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## **Defining the Jurisdiction of Urban Forest**

Urban forest can be defined as the city's tree landmarks as well as other growing vegetation along any tree growing on property owned or controlled by the city, including but not limited to all streets, parkways, public spaces, and all easements granted to the city and/or the public. Determining the jurisdiction between public or private property can at times be ambiguous since these lines are not always clear and visible. For example, the public right-of-way can vary in different areas of the city and the setback requirements differ from residential and commercial or industrial properties. While the City assumes responsibility for trees within the public right-of-way, the private areas or jurisdiction which falls to the resident of a home or business owner may lead to inconsistent maintenance and care due to this inconspicuous boundary.

In order to provide effective management and direct responsibility of urban forest, the following criteria will apply and can assist with clarification.

### **City of Los Alamitos**

**Public Right-of-Way** - This applies to public streets which can be consistently defined as the rear of the sidewalk which backs up to the property line and extends out to the centerline of the street.

**Landscaped Medians** - This applies to all public landscaped street medians along arterials and main accessible streets.

**Parks** - This applies to all existing public parks owned by the City. This would not apply to privately accessible communities which are typically owned by the Home Owner's Associated of that property.

**Public Facilities** - This applies to City owned and operated properties such as City Hall, Community Center, and Parks.

### **Private Jurisdiction**

**Residential** - With the distinct line explained above, residential properties are responsible for the front, back and side of the property line by the individual property owners.

**Business (Commercial or Industrial)** - Similarly, as a resident, property owners of the business properties are responsible for the front, back and side areas, including the parking lot or medians within the property line. Parking along the curb would apply to the City. This also applies to non-profit organizations in the City.

**Schools/Churches** - Similarly, as applied to businesses, the school district is responsible for areas of each school. Churches or congregations are also responsible for their own property lines.

\*County buildings are separate from the City and responsibility falls to Orange County.

## **Tree Maintenance Plan**

The City considers the Urban Forest an important asset in the community and quality of life for its residents. The maintenance of public trees is performed for the health of the tree, enjoyment of the residents, and for the environment. The City receives requests for trimming, removing and replanting for a variety of reasons, often misaligned with unnecessary actions and malpractice causing harm to the tree and impacting the natural look of the City. The following plan will clarify the conditions of which the City will act prudently and make a tactful decision.

### **Goals**

1. Establish clear and specific guidelines for public tree trimming and tree removal practices
2. Plant and maintain the urban forest with trees that will reflect the community character
3. Budget and maintain the urban forest costs effectively
4. Maintain trees to promote the health and life of the trees
5. Create and promote a mixed tree type population to provide an aesthetically pleasing environment and provide a diverse urban forest ecosystem.
6. Provide residents with a variety of options for appropriate planting and replacing

### **Planting**

The City will plant a parkway tree at its expense when the following has occurred:

1. By written request on behalf of the property owner. A professional (Public Works Staff or City contracted expert) will visit the site and make their assessment.
2. Providing the City has authorized the request, the City will plant a tree from an approved list where it is deemed appropriate. One tree per property street frontage shall be planted.

### **Tree Planting Specifications**

1. Trees planted shall be fifteen (15) gallons in size, minimum height of six (6) feet, single-trunked, and of standard form and root ball.
2. All trees shall be planted in accordance with tree planting methods and standards determined by the Public Works Division to ensure growth and survival of the tree.
3. All trees shall be watered thoroughly the day of planting. Property owners/occupants shall be responsible for subsequent watering – a minimum of two (2) times per week. Property owners/occupants shall be provided with a new tree care door hanger to assist with any questions they may have in regard to caring for the new tree.

4. If it is the desire of the resident to plant a tree that is larger than fifteen (15) gallons, the City will obtain a quote for the purchase of a 15 gallon and 24 or larger gallon tree. The resident will be then required to pay the City the difference in pricing.

### **Established City Tree List**

Per Municipal Code 12.24.050, which was established by the City Council and reviewed by City Manager, residents may inquire and select from the following list of pre-approved trees:

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Botanical Name</b>	<b>Height/Spread</b>	<b>Type</b>
Australian Willow	Geijera parviflora	40/25	Evergreen
Bradford Pear	Pyrus calleryana	40/25	Deciduous
Brisbane Box	Lophostemon confertus	60/40	Evergreen
Chinese Flame	Koelreuteria bipinnate	50/50	Deciduous
Chinese Fringe	Chionanthus retests	20/25	Deciduous
Chinese Pistache	Pistacia chinensis	35/30	Deciduous
Crape Myrtle	Lagerstroemia indica	25/20	Deciduous
Eastern Redbud	Cercis canadensis	25/25	Deciduous
Ginko	Ginko Bilboa	60/35	Deciduous
Gold Medallion	Cassia leptophylla	25/30	Evergreen
Jacaranda	Jacaranda mimosifolia	40/50	Evergreen
Japanese Blueberry	Elaeocarpus decipiens	35/20	Evergreen
Little Gem Southern Magnolia	Magnolia grandiflora	30/20	Evergreen
London Plane	Platanus x acerifolia (HIGH)	60/40	Deciduous
Pink Trumpet	Handroanthus impetiginosus	40/35	Deciduous
Raywood Ash	Fraxinus oxycarpa	50/25	Deciduous
Strawberry Tree	Arbutus undo	40/25	Evergreen
Southern Live Oak	Quercus virginiana	50/50	Evergreen
Sweet Gum	Liquidambar styraciflua	60/30	Deciduous
Sweetshade	Hymenosporum flavum	40/20	Evergreen
Tipu	Tipuana tipu	40/35	Deciduous

\*Further description and illustration of each tree listed may be found on the City's website.

### **Tree Trimming**

Tree trimming involves thinning and raising branches. Thinning out a tree can reduce the height and spread of a tree while retaining its natural shape. Thinning out a tree is the preferred practice rather than topping. Topping adversely affects the structure of the tree and presents additional consequences down the road.

The City prunes the public trees for the following reasons:

- Health maintenance, structural form and safety
- To provide vertical clearances in the public rights-of-way (trees are raised to 9 feet over sidewalks and 16 feet over streets) for pedestrian and vehicular clearance
- To address trees which become larger than is desirable or safe for given site constraints

All trees will be trimmed on a rotational cycle determined by the City except for the following:

- Trees that pose a potential threat or hazard as determined by the City may be pruned as needed
- Certain species of trees, as determined by the City may be trimmed on a more frequent schedule as needed to prevent hazard or potential damage
- The property owner may apply for a tree trimming permit to trim trees within the parkway. A licensed contractor must trim the tree in accordance with City standards and code.

Trees will not be trimmed off cycle due to complaints of leaves, dropped pods, flowers or animals inhabiting the tree and creating natural impact. No property owner/contracted landscaper, other than the City and its approved licensed contractor, is authorized to trim public trees without authorization from the City.

### **Tree Trimming Standards**

The following standards will be performed by City and/or licensed contractor:

1. Tree pruning shall include the removal of all dead, broken, diseased, insect infested limbs and stubs larger than one-half inch in diameter throughout the tree. The tree shall be thinned out by the removal of a minimum of 30 percent of the internal side limbs.
2. Tree limbs shall be shortened which extend beyond the natural perimeter of an otherwise symmetrical form.
3. Limbs shall be pruned to lighten the end weight where such overburdening appears likely to cause breakage of limbs two inches or more in diameter.
4. All trees which vines are growing shall have said vines moved. Vine tendrils shall be removed in a manner which shall not harm or causing scarring of low branches and tree trunks.
5. All pruning cuts shall be made without leaving a stub. Pruning cuts shall be made in a manner that favors the earliest possible covering of the wound and shall not weaken the tree.
6. The use of climbing spurs or spike shoes shall not be permitted.
7. The pruning of all street trees shall provide adequate clearance as determined by the City for mast arm, utility line, sign, traffic signals and similar appurtenances.

### **Proposed Street Tree Removal Policies**

The City will remove parkway trees under the following conditions after an assessment by City staff and/or licensed contractor:

1. The tree is determined to be a hazard including danger of falling or large limbs dropping.
2. The tree is dead or diseased as determined by a qualified and licensed expert.
3. The tree has caused recurring damage to public curbs, gutters, or sidewalks and root pruning will not reasonably prevent further damage.

4. The tree has damaged private property, including retaining walls, block ways, foundations, driveways, water/sewage line, and root pruning will not reasonably prevent further damage.

The City will **not** remove parkway trees for the following reasons:

1. The tree drops leaves, pods, flowers, etc.
2. The trees inhabit animals in its natural state such as birds, squirrels, and non-invasive insects.
3. Tree roots are coming to the surface in the front yard or parkway.
4. Tree roots have damaged private plants, paving, or concrete constructed in the parkway.
5. Tree roots prevent other landscape to grow in the parkway.
6. The tree is not determined a hazard or life threatening.

No property owner/contracted landscaper, other than the City and its approved licensed contractor, is authorized to remove public trees without authorization from the City. Tree removal constitutes stump and root removal in a manner acceptable by the City. A replacement tree, chosen by the property owner when applicable, shall be replanted in its place by the City. If the City discovers an unauthorized tree planting not in conformance with this policy, the City will determine if the tree meets the criteria for removal including imminent hazard at the property owner's expense.

If the property owner wishes to remove a parkway tree and it does not fall within the guidelines described above, the property owner, with approval from the City, may remove the tree at their own expense. The property owner and/or their contracted landscaper are liable for all damages to the adjacent sidewalk, curb, gutter, and street if any damages occur during the removal of the tree. The property owner **must** replace the tree with a chosen tree that is on the established tree list. Once this is done, the property owner may remove the existing tree. The City will then purchase the tree (15 gallon) and replant it in the parkway.

In order to contribute to the City's overarching goal to preserve and maintain its urban forest, private property owners are encouraged to similarly maintain and protect trees on their property.

Please contact the Development Services Department at (562) 431-3538 if you have any questions or visit the City's website at [www.cityoflosalamitos.org](http://www.cityoflosalamitos.org)





# **Los Alamitos Parkway Tree List**



# AUSTRALIAN WILLOW

*Geijera parviflora*



**Foliage:**  
**Evergreen**



**Small, White  
Flowers  
Spring to Fall**

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 40 feet  
WIDTH: 25 feet**



# BRADFORD PEAR

*Pyrus calleryana*



Small, White Flowers  
Spring to Summer



Foliage:  
Deciduous

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 40 feet  
WIDTH: 25 feet**

# BRISBANE BOX

*Lophostemon confertus*



**Small, White Flowers  
Spring to Summer**



**Foliage:  
Evergreen**

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 60 feet  
WIDTH: 40 feet**

# CHINESE FLAME

*Koelreuteria bipinnata*



Foliage:  
Deciduous



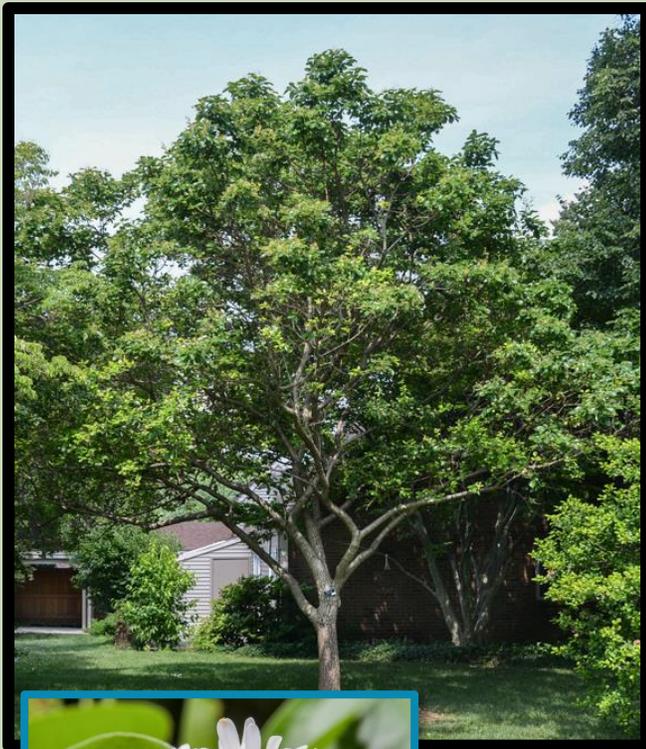
Small Yellow Flowers  
to Rose Seed Capsules  
Summer to Fall



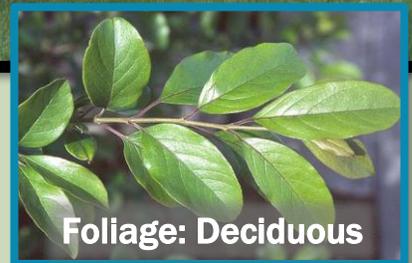
**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 50 feet  
WIDTH: 50 feet**

# CHINESE FRINGE

*Chionanthus retusus*



Fragrant White Flowers  
Summer to Fall



Foliage: Deciduous

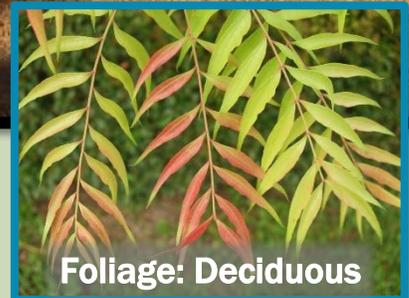
**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 20 feet  
WIDTH: 25 feet**

# CHINESE PISTACHE

*Pistacia chinensis*



Small Inconspicuous Flowers  
to Red Berry Clusters  
Spring to Fall



Foliage: Deciduous

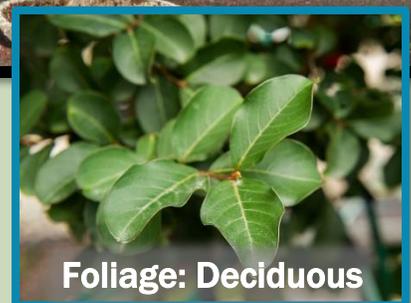
**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 35 feet  
WIDTH: 30 feet**

# CRAPE MYRTLE

*Lagerstroemia indica*



**Brightly Colored White, Pink, or Red Flowers  
Summer to Fall**



**Foliage: Deciduous**

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 25 feet  
WIDTH: 20 feet**

# EASTERN REDBUD

*Cercis canadensis*



Foliage: Deciduous



Magenta Flower Clusters  
Spring to Summer



**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 25 feet  
WIDTH: 25 feet**

# GINKGO

*inkgo biloba*



**Foliage: Deciduous**

**Golden Leaves  
in Fall**



**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 60 feet  
WIDTH: 35 feet**

# GOLD MEDALLION

*Cassia leptophylla*



Yellow Flower Clusters  
Spring to Summer

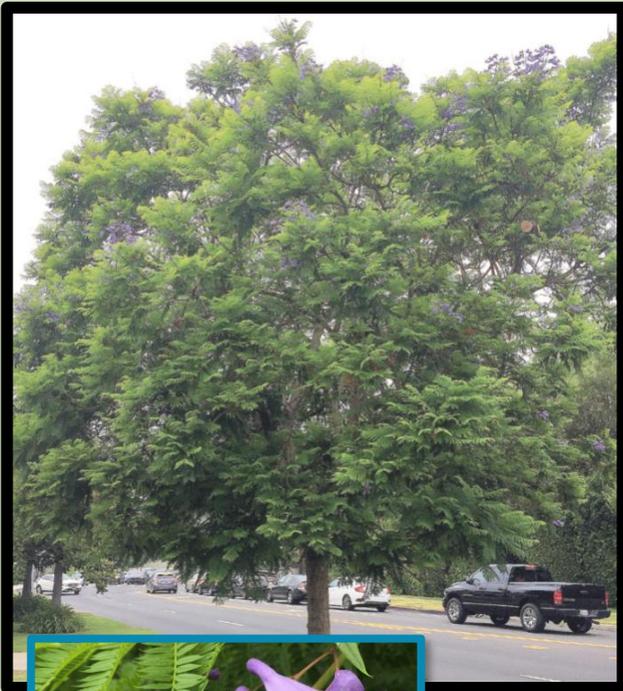


Foliage:  
Evergreen

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 25 feet  
WIDTH: 30 feet**

# JACARANDA

*Jacaranda mimosifolia*



**Trumpet Purple Flowers  
Spring to Summer**



**Foliage:  
Evergreen**

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 40 feet  
WIDTH: 50 feet**

# JAPANESE BLUEBERRY

*Elaeocarpus decipiens*



Foliage:  
Evergreen

Small Flower Clusters to  
Small Blueberry-like Fruit  
Spring to Fall

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 35 feet  
WIDTH: 20 feet**



# LITTLE GEM SOUTHERN MAGNOLIA

*Magnolia grandiflora*



**Foliage:**  
Evergreen



**Large White Flowers**  
Spring to Fall

**FULL GROWN**  
**HEIGHT: 30 feet**  
**WIDTH: 20 feet**



# LONDON PLANE

*Platanus x acerifolia (HIGH)*



**Spherical Flower Clusters  
Spring to Summer**



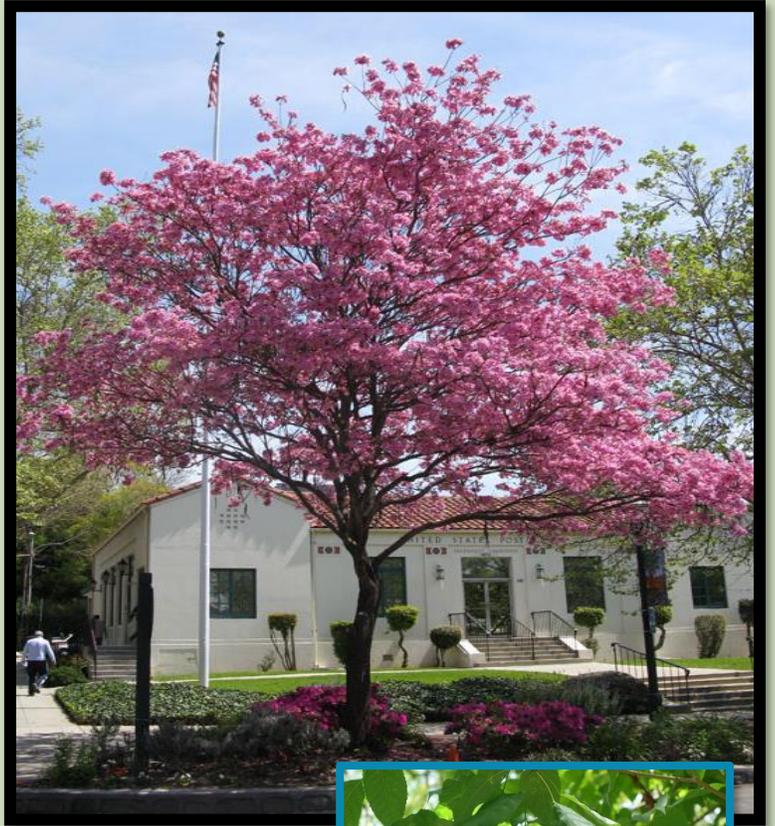
**Foliage: Deciduous**

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 60 feet  
WIDTH: 40 feet**



# PINK TRUMPET

*Handroanthus impetiginosus*



**Tubular Pink Flowers**  
Summer to Fall



**Foliage: Deciduous**

**FULL GROWN**  
**HEIGHT: 40 feet**  
**WIDTH: 35 feet**

# RAYWOOD ASH

*Fraxinus oxycarpa*



**Deep Red Leaves  
Summer to Fall**

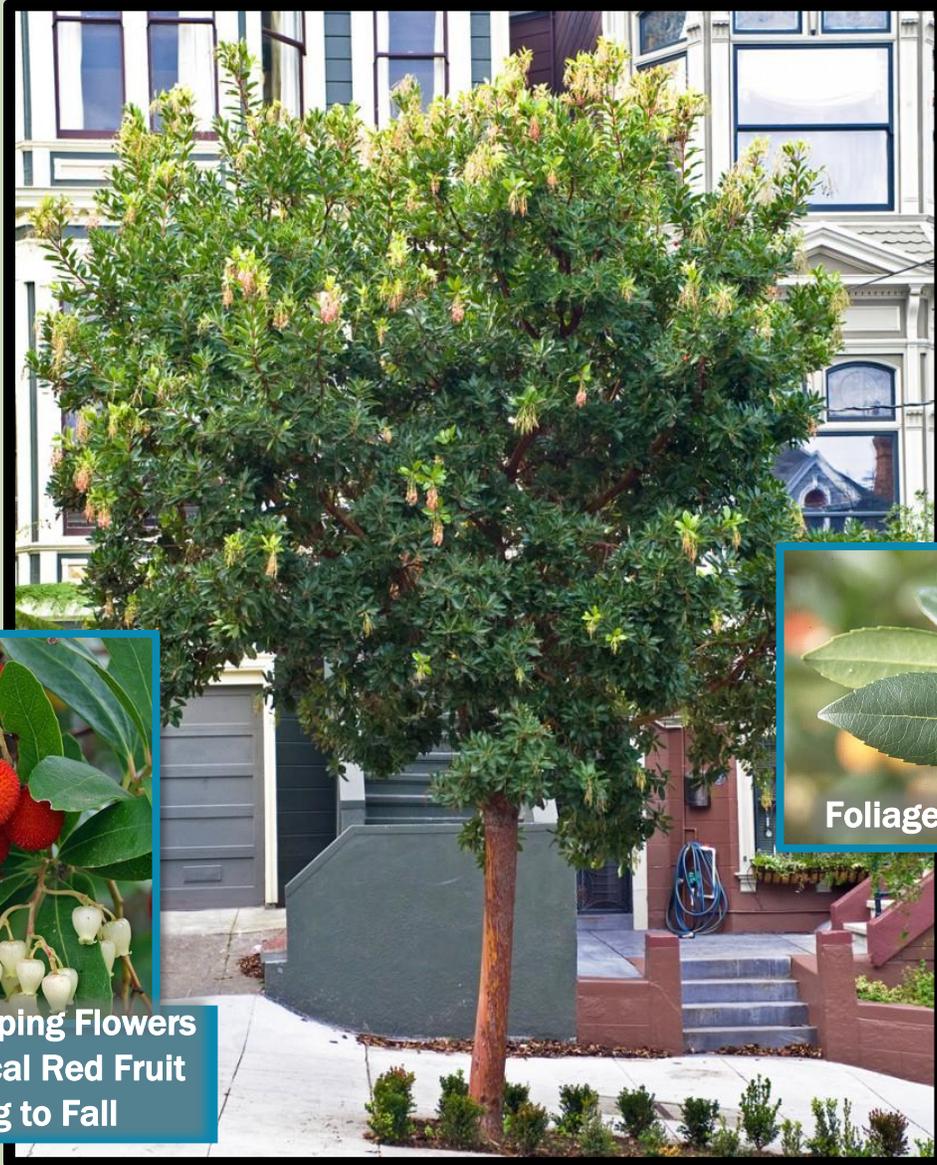


**Foliage: Deciduous**

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 50 feet  
WIDTH: 25 feet**

# STRAWBERRY TREE

*Arbutus unedo*



**Pink, Drooping Flowers  
to Spherical Red Fruit  
Spring to Fall**



**Foliage: Evergreen**

**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 40 feet  
WIDTH: 25 feet**

# SOUTHERN LIVE OAK

*Quercus virginiana*



**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 50 feet  
WIDTH: 50 feet**



# SWEET GUM

*Liquidambar styraciflua*



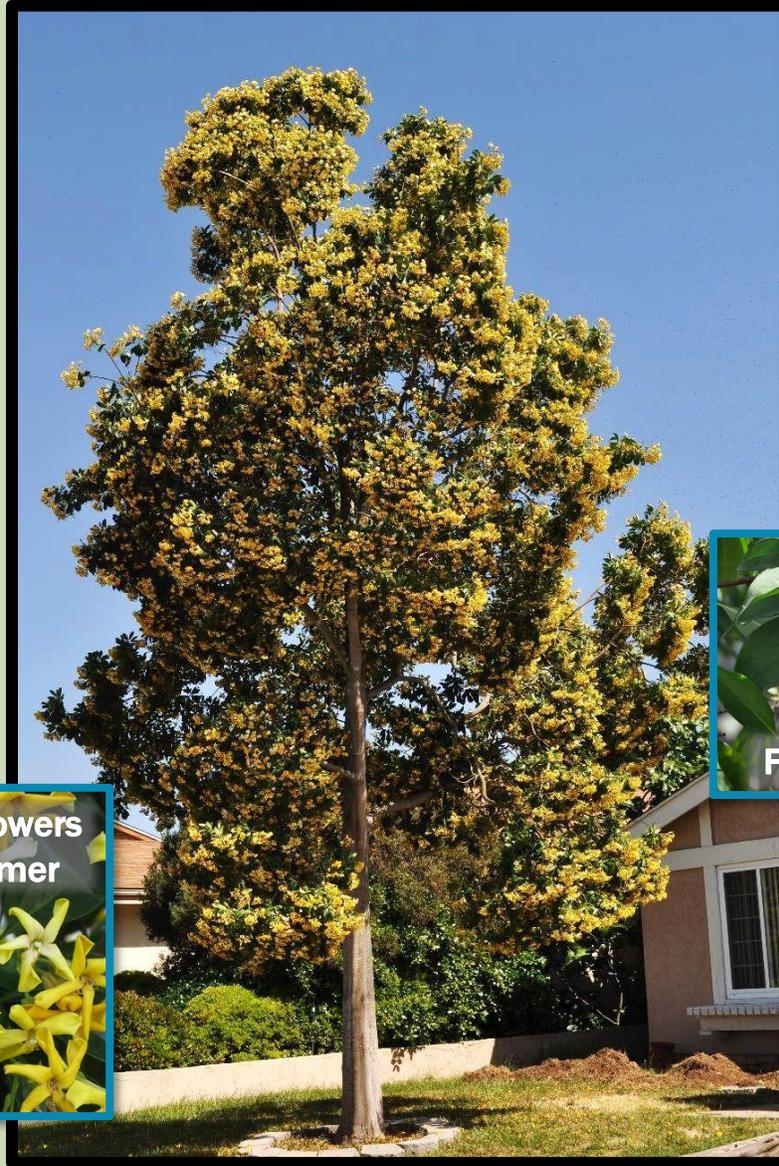
**Color Changing Leaves  
with Round Seed Pods  
Summer to Fall**



**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 60 feet  
WIDTH: 30 feet**

# SWEETSHADE

*Hymenosporum flavum*



**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 40 feet  
WIDTH: 20 feet**

# TIPU

*Tipuana tipu*



**Clusters of Yellow Flowers  
Spring to Summer**



**FULL GROWN  
HEIGHT: 40 feet  
WIDTH: 35 feet**

**Thank you for taking the time to consider which tree is best for your parkway.**

**Once you've made your tree selection, please call (562) 431-3538 or email [RCarmody@cityoflosalamitos.org](mailto:RCarmody@cityoflosalamitos.org) with your choice and address.**

To ensure you have a healthy and thriving tree, water regularly!

How do you know if your tree needs to be watered? Check! Use a screwdriver or other tool and gently push it 6-8 inches into the ground. If the soil is dry and crumbly, it is time to water again. Every tree is different, but generally young trees will need to be watered 1-3 times a week (depending on the weather), and mature trees will need to be watered 1-2 times a week. When watering your tree, think low and slow. Water at ground level to avoid losing water to evaporation. Use a watering tool with a slow, steady flow to make sure water soaks into the ground. The goal is to get the water to the roots, which are typically 12-18 inches below the ground. For best water absorption limit your watering times to before 9am and after 6pm.

