



Albuquerque Engagement Report

City of Albuquerque Tree Ordinance
Update Project
September 2025



Overview

The City of Albuquerque, in collaboration with PlanIT Geo, conducted extensive engagement campaigns to inform updates to the tree-related ordinances in the City's municipal code. These campaigns gathered perspectives and ideas from City staff and community stakeholders from a wide variety of backgrounds and disciplines.

Through surveys and meetings, participants shared their personal and professional experience with Albuquerque's tree-related ordinances. These insights established a vision of what stakeholders want for Albuquerque's urban forest and informed ordinance updates that will support that vision. This report provides a comprehensive review of all the feedback collected over four months of engagement activities.

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Executive Summary

The feedback from both internal and external stakeholders made it clear that there are ample opportunities to improve on Albuquerque's current tree ordinance. Many respondents praised this project as an important step towards a healthier urban forest and more effective tree-related governance. A handful of key topics were consistently mentioned across all surveys and meetings, including: **clarity and alignment** across all city regulations, **enforcement** that is effective and feasible for City staff, better support for **long-term tree maintenance**, and **incentives** for going beyond minimum requirements. A master list of the most common topics is included below. Different stakeholder groups have a wide variety of ideas and approaches around these topics, which will be explored in detail in the latter sections of this report.

It should be noted that Albuquerque's Planting Palette and tree species selection was one of the most common comments from all stakeholders. While completing an update of the Planting Palette is outside of the scope of this project, feedback on this topic is included below to inform future efforts to update tree species lists.

Clarity and Alignment

- Improving the alignment between the Municipal Code, the IDO, and DPM is essential.
- Need clearer requirements/processes so reviewers enforce codes with greater consistency and avoid shifting tree preferences during permitting.
- Improve clarity on maintenance responsibility, i.e. who maintains street trees, parkway strips, medians, and trees on private/commercial properties.

Enforcement

- Enforcement efforts are not doing enough to encourage accountability and discourage unpermitted pruning/removals, with the recognition that enforcement updates must be supported by additional staff resources and training to be effective.
- Need a better system (low-cost permits) to track removals and ensure proper replacements.
- Develop tree replacement policies and payment into a tree fund.
- Calls for an urban forester / forestry team with greater enforcement power, funding, and transparency.

Maintenance

- Consistent, long-term maintenance of trees was an issue flagged by all stakeholder groups.
- Create stronger emphasis on keeping trees alive to maturity, rather than just planting numbers.
- Establish mechanisms to address sites where trees repeatedly fail, ensuring corrective action.

Irrigation

- Recognition of the tension between the need for trees and Albuquerque's water scarcity.
- Include more explicitly irrigation requirements with "more teeth" to ensure irrigation is maintained.
- Lots of interest in incentives for integrating green infrastructure approaches that naturally support tree survival without traditional irrigation (curb cuts, curb cores, rainwater harvesting).

Incentives

- Projects that exceed minimum tree requirements should be rewarded.
- Preference for incentivizing more planting (via tax credits, fee waivers, etc.) instead of punitive regulations.
- Desire for bigger and simpler financial incentives for public tree planting, irrigation, and maintenance (current rebates seen as confusing or too small).

Tree Planting

- Flexibility
 - Tree spacing flexibility is a current strength of the ordinance.
 - Flexibility to plant in optimal seasons could help improve success.
- Add a soil volume component for healthier planting sites
- Allow for tree grate alternatives
- Limit weed cloth and rock/gravel and encourage mulch and understory vegetation for healthier soils.

Plant Palette / Species Selection

- Environmental conditions vary across Albuquerque, so region-appropriate species lists would be beneficial.
- Tree selections should reflect local availability, survivability, and climate appropriateness.
- Updates to the palette should happen more frequently (e.g. biannually).
- Avoid "wrong trees" (e.g., apple trees in parking lots, water-guzzlers, high-allergy or invasive trees like Tree of Heaven, Bradford pear, Chinese elm).

Equity

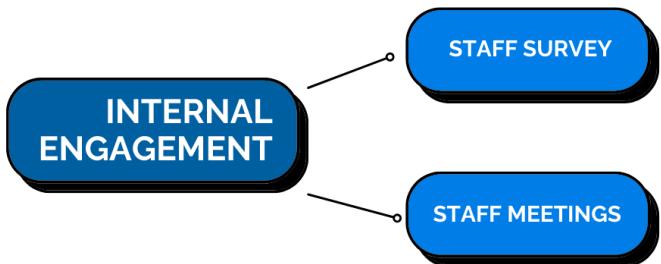
- Prioritize plantings in underserved, low canopy, high heat areas, such as frontline communities, bus stops, and transit corridors (e.g. International District, Westgate)

Public Education

- Provide training for contractors, educate developers, and highlight successful projects to raise overall standards.
- Provide public education for youth, families, and developers on the benefits of trees and native landscaping.
- People want to get involved: tracking trees, planting with neighbors, participating in city-led giveaways, or contributing to caring for public trees.

Internal Engagement

The engagement campaign for this project began by collecting experiences, opinions, and ideas from City staff who interact with or oversee trees in some capacity. A short online survey was sent out, followed by meetings with select staff and departments to dive deeper into the survey questions and brainstorm ideas.



The summaries below highlight the main takeaways from each engagement action. For comprehensive survey results see Appendix A.

City Staff Survey Summary

The first survey of the Tree Ordinance Update project was sent to all city staff with a role in a process (operationally or administratively) that interacts with trees. The 9 question survey collected insights on the strengths, challenges, and opportunities needed to shape effective street tree ordinance updates for Albuquerque. Between May 7th and May 16th, 2025 a total of 20 responses were received from City staff from seven different departments.

The responses coalesced around a few key ideas for tree ordinance improvement:

- **Clarity, consistency, and alignment:** Updates should focus on simplifying language, clearly stating requirements, and ensuring alignment with other regulations, like the IDO and DPM.
- **Enforcement:** There is a need for better enforcement processes to improve accountability for retaining trees and discourage unpermitted pruning/removals.
- **Maintenance:** Updates that address the issue of inconsistent long-term tree maintenance from property owners, such as enhanced irrigation requirements.
- **Incentives:** Projects that exceed minimum tree requirements should be rewarded, along with considering if trees are always necessary on local streets.

Other ordinance updates ideas include updating the approved tree species lists and adding green stormwater infrastructure requirements. When asked what currently works well in the ordinance, respondents focused on the flexibility around planting spacing, the Alternative Landscaping Plan, and requirements to replace dead trees.

Internal Meetings Summary

Several follow-up meetings with city staff were scheduled throughout June and July to dive deeper into the results of the City Staff Survey. This included a large meeting with a range of departments, where participants divided into breakout groups before reporting out on their top ordinance update ideas. Additional meetings were conducted with staff from the Parks and Recreation Department and Sustainability staff. Below is a breakdown of key meeting discussion points:

Tree planting:

- Often trees are planted improperly or at the wrong time. Adding flexibility to plants in optimal seasons would help improve tree success.
- Environmental conditions vary across Albuquerque (valley vs westside), so region-appropriate species lists would be beneficial.
- Prioritize plantings in underserved and high impact areas, such as frontline communities, bus stops, and transit corridors

Tree removal oversight: Need a system (possibly no-fee permits or vendor certification requirements) to track removals and ensure proper replacements.

- Current protected tree definition of 8in diameter may be too large for native species

Enforcement and inspections: Interest in follow-up inspections after planting (1-3 years), with the recognition that this and other enforcement updates must be supported by additional staff resources and training to be effective.

Incentives and recognition: Encourage better practices with developers and homeowners, including incentives, certifications, and/or public recognition for exemplary projects.

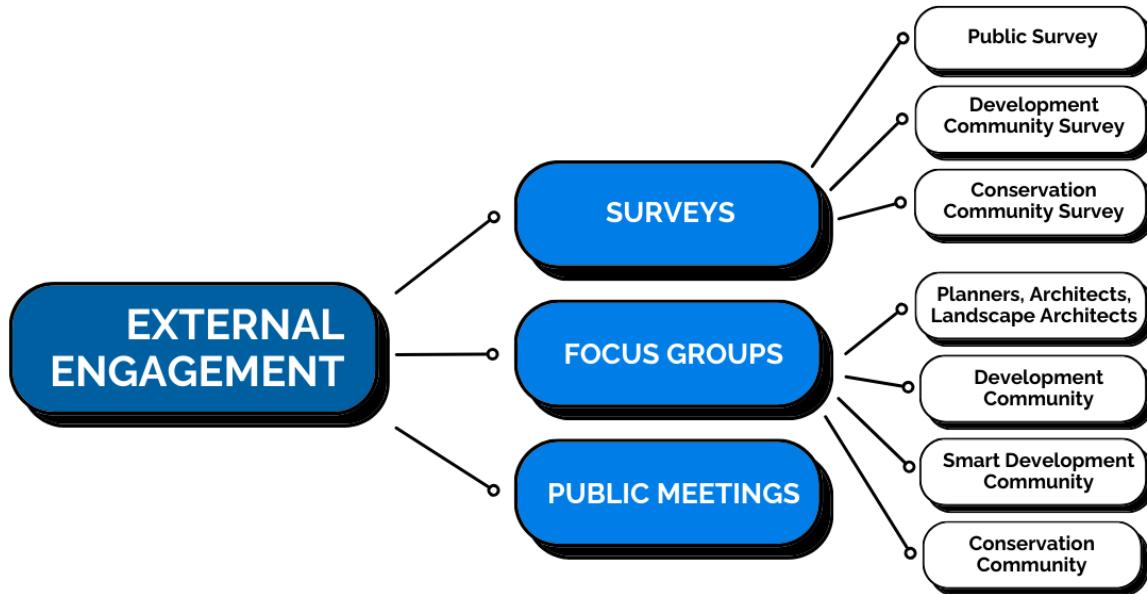
Policy and ordinance alignment: Street tree ordinance must align with the IDO and DPM

Plant palette update: Overhaul plant lists to focus on water needs, urban context, and canopy impact; avoid unsuitable species (e.g., desert willow).

Education and outreach: Provide training for contractors, educate developers, and highlight successful projects to raise overall standards.

Equity: The goals for this project should include prioritizing underserved areas and work to increase canopy in neighborhoods with the lowest tree coverage. Ordinance updates should be aligned with the Albuquerque Climate Action Plan.

External Engagement



The second phase of the engagement campaign focused on gathering input from a range of urban forest stakeholders across the community. The engagement strategies included three online surveys, four virtual or hybrid focus groups, and two virtual public meetings. All told, 400+ survey responses were collected and 75+ attendees shared their perspectives during meetings. The summaries below organize engagement takeaways by stakeholder type: Development Community, Planning & Design Community, Conservation Community, and General Public. For the complete survey results, see Appendices B-D.

Development Community Feedback

Developers play a significant role in shaping the built environment of Albuquerque and extensive first-hand experience working with local regulations. Through an online survey and two focus groups, the project team gathered input on ordinance update opportunities and potential conflicts. These insights are essential to developing ordinance updates that balance development growth and preservation of Albuquerque's trees.

An online survey sent to members of the development community collected 29 responses between May 7th and May 21st. Two one-hour focus groups were held, one with the general development community on July 7th, and another with individuals

in the smart development community on July 15th. The top issues from the surveys and focus groups are summarized below.

Tree planting:

- Tree spacing flexibility was identified as a current strength, but could go farther. Spacing standards could be based on canopy diameter, not on-center distances.
- Add a soil volume component and reduce caliper minimums
- Balance tree requirements with Albuquerque's arid climate and focus on practical, sustainable approaches.
- Exclude drive pads from linear footage to make required trees more practical
- Allow alternatives to tree grates

Enforcement:

- Current ordinance puts heavy responsibility on the City Forester without providing adequate authority or resources to succeed.
- Need clearer requirements/processes so reviewers enforce rules with greater consistency
- Want the ordinance to respect their expertise and avoid overregulation or overly prescriptive design mandates.

Incentives:

- Preference for incentivizing more planting (via tax credits, fee waivers, etc.) instead of punitive regulations.
- Look for ways to incentivize healthy, long-term tree maintenance

Plant palette:

- Tree selections should reflect local availability, survivability, and climate appropriateness.
- Should incorporate specialty lists (e.g., bosque, escarpment).
- Updates to the palette should happen regularly (biannually)

Education and outreach:

- Expand education for ordinance users
- Encourage Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) practices

Alignment: Improve coordination and remove redundancies between ordinances (DPM and IDO). Consider eliminating the street tree ordinances altogether.

Maintenance: Enforce code violations for neglected irrigation and tree health for at least one year, but remove penalties due to outside factors (vandalism)

Planning and Design Community Feedback

The conversation revolves around strengthening irrigation requirements, improving ordinance clarity and enforcement, adapting tree choices to Albuquerque's varied ecologies, supporting nursery stock and diversity planning, and fostering both incentives and public education to elevate the value of trees. Better coordination across departments and external partners is also a recurring theme.

Irrigation:

- Xeriscape conversions and turf removal lead to irrigation being cut, resulting in tree loss.
- Include more explicitly irrigation requirements with “more teeth” to ensure irrigation is maintained.
- Interest in incentives for integrating green infrastructure approaches that naturally support tree survival without traditional irrigation.

Public Education:

- Public education campaigns could help shift attitudes and build appreciation for long-term tree benefits.

Alignment:

- Create a unified ordinance structure to reduce fragmentation across different codes and authorities (City Forester, Parks, DMD, Clean Cities)

Enforcement

- Developers comply at first but later remove or damage trees without consequences.
- Flexibility needed in ordinances for different project types (e.g., infill vs. large sites, multi-family vs. commercial).

Planting Palette

- Recognition that Albuquerque's ecotones differ (valley vs. West Side vs. mid-heights), so a single species list may not fit citywide.
- Concerns about limited nursery stock and availability of diverse species; industry input and longer-term supply planning needed.

Tree Planting

- Debate between encouraging species diversity vs focusing on contextually appropriate dominant species.

Incentives

- Link trees to water quality and infrastructure benefits (e.g., stormwater harvesting areas, drainage integration, reduce parking requirements if additional trees are added near drainage areas)

Additional Considerations

- Need for collaboration with other major landholders and entities (e.g., federal, state, utilities, schools) that greatly affect canopy but are outside city regulations.
- Request a more consistent review process to avoid arbitrary or shifting tree preferences during permitting.

Conservation Community Feedback

A survey was sent out to stakeholders involved with local urban forest or conservation organizations in Albuquerque to gather their perspective on the current tree ordinance. A total of 11 responses were submitted between May 7th and May 21st, 2025. The main takeaways are summarized below. To review the full survey please see Appendix C.

Tree Maintenance

- Ensure correct tree planting, staking, pruning, and maintenance practices to improve survival and growth.
- Require skilled contractors, proper soil volumes, and sufficient irrigation.
- Establish mechanisms to address sites where trees repeatedly fail, ensuring corrective action.
- Create stronger emphasis on keeping trees alive to maturity, rather than just planting numbers.

Tree Planting

- Mandate drought-tolerant, climate-ready, and ideally native species that support pollinators and local ecosystems.
- Improve tree selection criteria during development review and utility conflict resolution so trees are chosen for long-term viability.
- Require soil volume standards
- Limit weed cloth and rock mulch; require organic mulch and understory vegetation for healthier soils.

Enforcement

- Create clearer penalties for non-compliance, including corrective actions beyond fines.

- Develop replacement policies (such as caliper-inch replacement) and payment into a tree fund.
- Ensure protections for historically significant trees like cottonwoods.
- Establish post-installation enforcement to hold agencies, developers, and contractors accountable.

Landscape Design and Development Practices

- Reduce developer tendency to maximize building footprints at the expense of viable landscape space.
- Address utility conflicts, driveway spacing, and drainage that prevent trees from surviving.
- Explore alternatives to tree grates and adopt design standards that reduce conflict between infrastructure and tree growth.

Equity and Community Involvement

- Ensure equitable tree planting and greening in under-served communities (International District, Westgate).
- Provide public education for youth, families, and developers on the benefits of trees and native landscaping.
- Encourage ongoing community involvement in projects and use of tools like TreePlotter.

Irrigation

- Promote water-efficient irrigation aligned with existing city ordinances.
- Require water harvesting and integration of green stormwater infrastructure (curb cuts, rainwater capture, building runoff).

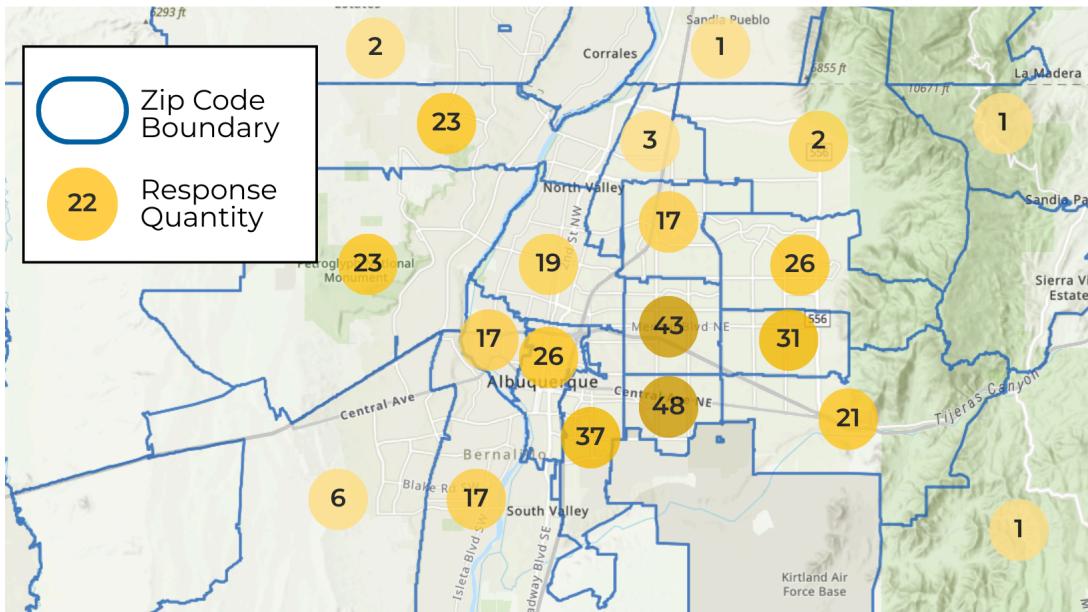
Public Feedback

Anyone who lives, works, or plays within Albuquerque is a stakeholder of the urban forest. Understanding the first-hand experiences and perspectives of residents towards trees is crucial to developing a tree ordinance that accurately reflects community values. The project team launched an online public survey and held two virtual public meetings to gather this valuable feedback.

[**Public Survey Details**](#)

The online survey was shared through the City website, social media, and traditional media coverage and collected 372 responses between July 16th and August 11th, 2025. Demographic questions were included at the end of the survey to assess the backgrounds and distribution of respondents.

- Survey respondents were overwhelmingly from single family homes (88%).
- The age of respondents was roughly even between the categories of 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, and 65-74 years old.
- The racial/ethnic background of respondents was primarily white (72%), followed by hispanic (16%), and prefer not to answer (11%)
- There were English and Spanish versions of the survey available. The English version received 371 responses, while only 1 response was submitted on the Spanish version.
- The map below shows the distribution of responses based on zip code.



Tree Planting

- The top concerns around planting trees among survey respondents were the amount of water required (26%), finding adequate space to plant (20%), and the potential for the tree to interfere with infrastructure (13%).
- Prioritize native, climate-adapted, drought-tolerant species that can withstand Albuquerque's dry climate and climate change.
- Avoid planting "wrong trees" (e.g., apple trees in parking lots, water-guzzlers, high-allergy or invasive trees like Tree of Heaven, Bradford pear, Chinese elm).
- Encourage species diversity rather than relying on the same few varieties.
- Adjust city rules so that native saplings and multi-trunk species are allowed as street trees (instead of only larger nursery-grown caliper trees).

Tree Maintenance

- Concern that newly planted trees are often ignored after planting (not watered/maintained).
- Clear need for responsibility clarity — who maintains street trees, parkway strips, medians, and trees on private/commercial property?
- City crews sometimes harm trees during mowing/trimming; need training and mulching practices.
- Replace and remove dead/diseased/hazardous trees promptly (incentives and education for property owners could help).
- Focus not just on planting new trees but on protecting and sustaining the mature canopy already in place.

Governance, Responsibility, and Enforcement

- Most survey respondents think the overall health and quality of Albuquerque's trees are declining (50%), instead of improving (14%) or staying the same (12%).
- Many residents want the City to take a stronger role in planting, maintaining, and regulating trees instead of leaving the burden to property owners.
- Desire for a strategic, citywide tree plan (with community input) that directs where funding goes.
- Calls for a staff urban forester / forestry team with real enforcement power, funding, and transparency.
- Stronger ordinance enforcement (against neglect, improper tree removal, planting invasive species, utility damage, etc.).
- Concern about tree ordinances being too punitive; prefer education and community-building over just fines.

Irrigation and Climate Constraints

- There is tension between the need for trees (shade, cooling, livability) and Albuquerque's water scarcity.
- Expand policies like rainwater harvesting, curb cuts, and GSI so trees get natural irrigation.

- Concerns over irrigation lines damaged by utilities, high cost of watering mature trees, and need for ongoing water rebates (not just for new trees)
- People want more green infrastructure in development projects: tree-lined streets, shaded sidewalks, green medians instead of rock beds.

Invasive Species

- Concern over invasives like Tree of Heaven, Siberian elm, Chinese elm—which are spreading. Some want immediate eradication, others suggest allowing them until replacements are ready to be planted.
- Need clear city policy on management, replacement, and public education about invasives.

Equity and Community Engagement

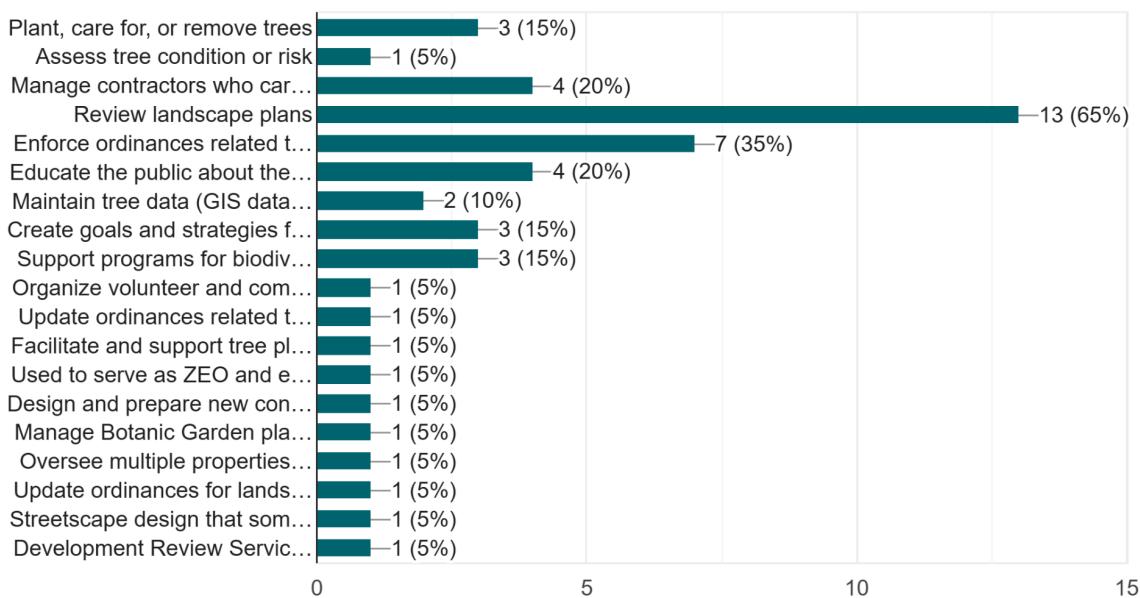
- Desire for bigger and simpler financial incentives for tree planting, irrigation, and maintenance (rebates seen as confusing or too small).
- Concerns that lower-income areas have fewer trees and more asphalt; suggested community orchards/food forests in under-resourced neighborhoods.
- Calls for better education and publicity (tree guides, homeowner info, school programs, PSAs, flyers with utility bills).
- People want to get involved: tracking trees, planting with neighbors, participating in city-led giveaways, or contributing to caring for public trees.

Appendix A

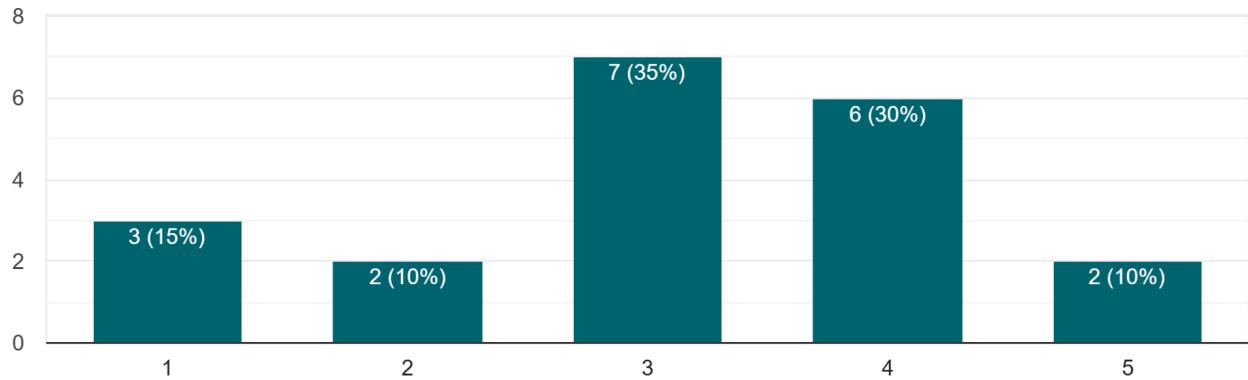
City Staff Survey Results

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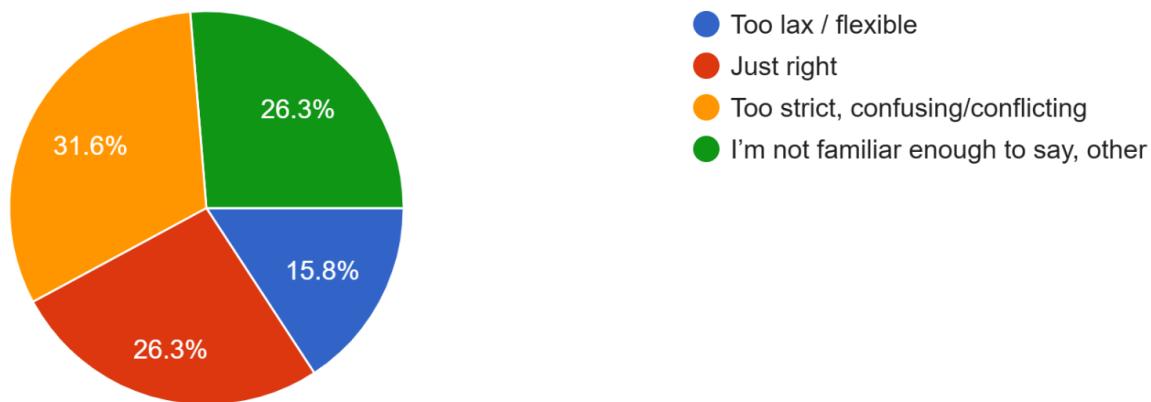
Question 1) What are your current responsibilities and services as they relate to the public and/or private trees in Albuquerque?



Question 2) Please rank your familiarity and/or frequency of working with Albuquerque's street tree ordinance (with 1 meaning vaguely familiar and 5 meaning highly familiar):



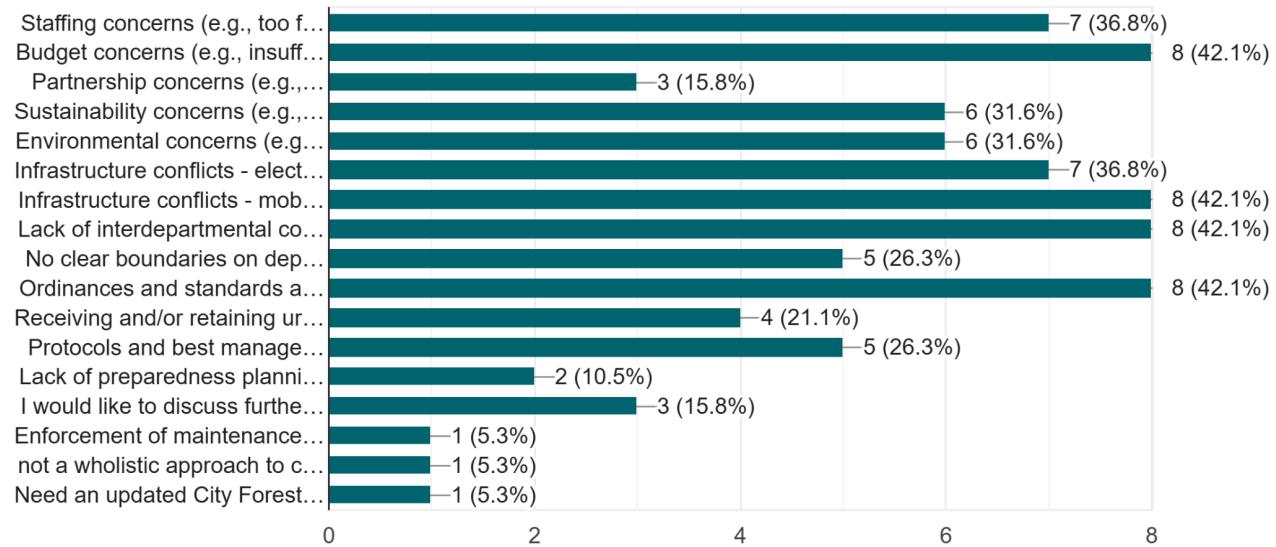
Question 3) In your opinion, the current street tree ordinance is:



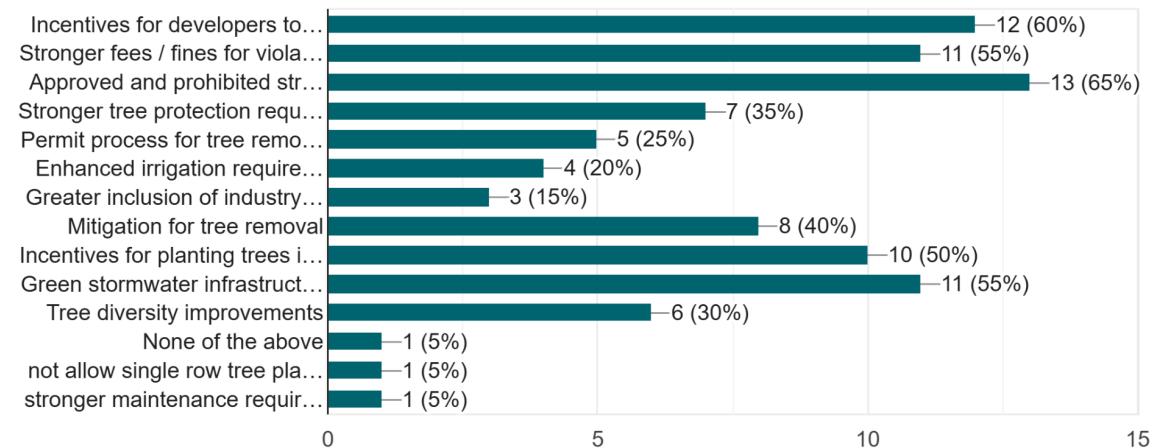
Question 4) What within the current street tree ordinance do you think works well? (write in responses)

- *The requirement as a whole is positive for city development*
- *All new construction along streets should require a percentage of landscaping or street trees.*
- *Requirements for bringing trees up to standards when they fail to pass plant health inspections*
- *Not enough experience with it to comment*
- *Plantings of more than ten trees must use at least two different genera, with roughly equal numbers of each.*
- *Developers like the flexibility of spacing and no requirement for trees on local streets. Different rules for Downtown (where you don't have lots of ROW) and other areas (where you have lots of ROW)*
- *There is flexibility in spacing and allowing more or fewer trees based on size, as well as clustering; specifying street classifications where trees are required is good to ensure major streets have trees; other built in flexibility, which perhaps can be too lenient in some circumstances, may allow necessary adjustments or innovation without adding a lot of additional procedural complexity to development projects.*
- *Requirements of planting*
- *Provides shade along streetscapes*
- *The problem is that you have a requirement that over time creates an issue for long term maintenance. In other words, the trees work for several years then become a problem for the property owners.*
- *The Alternative Landscaping Plan when used for incentivized purposes like hot-air balloon landing sites.*
- *Street trees shown on an approved street tree plan and required to meet the requirements of Â§ 14-16-5-6 shall be maintained alive and healthy.*
Maintenance and trimming of street trees and replacement of dead trees are the responsibility of the owner of the lot abutting or on which the tree is located. - Referencing the specific section in the IDO is great.
- *Seems ok*
- *The provision: "Any street trees required by the city shall be planted within 20 feet of the back of curb of the abutting street." I think it is better for the street trees to be located on the adjacent private property when possible, so that it is clear who provides irrigation and maintenance.*
- *Clarifications on tree placement relative to overhead utilities and roadway features.*
- *Consistent reference and requirements with the DPM*

Question 5) What current issues, challenges, or resource gaps have you experienced as they relate to your work with trees?



Question 6) What updates would you like to see included in the City's street tree ordinance?



Question 7) What are some other ways the current street tree ordinance could be improved? (write in response)

- Strict design standards for proper street tree installation
- I would like to see some more creativity in landscape designs and street tree incorporation. It's one thing to adhere to the minimum standards but I feel that there is not much incentive for developers to create vibrant and beautiful areas or to exceed the minimum requirements.
- At one point in time the City Engineer was extremely concerned with federal requirements in the ROW and felt that the Street Tree ordinance conflicted. I recommend reaching out to him to see if this issue is still of concern.
- The City Forester, a position within Parks and Recreation, as part of their job description is to enforce the City Tree ordinance, however, in reality and in practice the position only deals with and manages trees within City Parks.
- Does it need to be a standalone ordinance? Can it be split between IDO and DPM instead? Having standalone ordinances means that they don't get coordinated well. DPM is easier to revise over time, and the level of detail you allude to above is WAY TOO MUCH for an Ordinance.
- "Pulling some details out of the ordinance and creating detailed technical standards to put into the DPM (referenced in the current ordinance), as well as aligning the goals and requirements between this ordinance and the IDO so that they can be consistently implemented.
- Recently there was some discussion about whether or not trees are required on local streets, which are not called out in the current ordinance (other than major local), while the IDO is somewhat silent in this regard. Some projects have not put them in or installed the equivalent under other regulations while some may install them. Local streets may not always make sense for such tree installation, especially considering low-density residential development does not have any landscaping requirement under the IDO which covers a lot of local streets outside of industrial areas. Should there be better standards for which local streets should have street trees, if any? Based on land use, zoning, or other development context?"
- Accountability to retaining trees. Flexibility in irrigation requirements, I think...
- The city should provide more support with maintaining them.
- in lieu of rock mulch and in addition to tree plantings; prohibit landscape fabric except for natural fiber/biodegradable materials
- Working with the community to determine if the true goal is to have trees on every major street.
- require industrial and heavy commercial businesses to plant trees on their sites
- Add more info about enhanced irrigation requirements
- Simplification of language to clearly state what is required. Street tree requirements for Site Plans more clearly integrated into the IDO; with Street Tree Ordinance language auxiliary. Better enforcement process coordinated

with Code Enforcement. I think it is better for street trees to be located inside the adjacent private property within 20-ft of the curb, so that it is clear who provides irrigation and maintenance, and to provide more soil volume. I do not think street trees in Albuquerque should be located in parking strips adjacent to street curbs due to drought.

- *Incorporate/call onto GSI techniques.*
- *Maintenance requirements for street trees and associated irrigation systems. So many times trees are planted and within a few months they shut off irrigation and do not maintain and let the trees die. Of course this would require additional staffing to monitor, but it's a waste to require street trees if new properties are not keeping them alive nor required to. Perhaps a neighborhood association or community task force to help with reporting?*

Question 8) If you have other questions or considerations regarding Albuquerque's street tree ordinance, please share your thoughts here. (write in response)

- *Not necessarily a complete understanding between IDO and street tree ordinance between P&R and Planning*
- *NEEDS TO BE COORDINATED WITH THE IDO. Extend to all streets. Have a menu of alternatives if ROW isn't available or the project really can't accommodate them. Please don't have a separate list of street trees, but instead indicate appropriate street trees in (an updated) CABQ Official Plant Palette.*
- *Happy to help coordinate future IDO changes once the updated Street Tree Ordinance is further along to get to the consistency referenced above.*
- *The flexibility of neighbor agreements for watering. Having a way to put the onus on NA's if possible.*
- *Think about increasing native grass and native ground cover requirements; regulations for understory pruning*

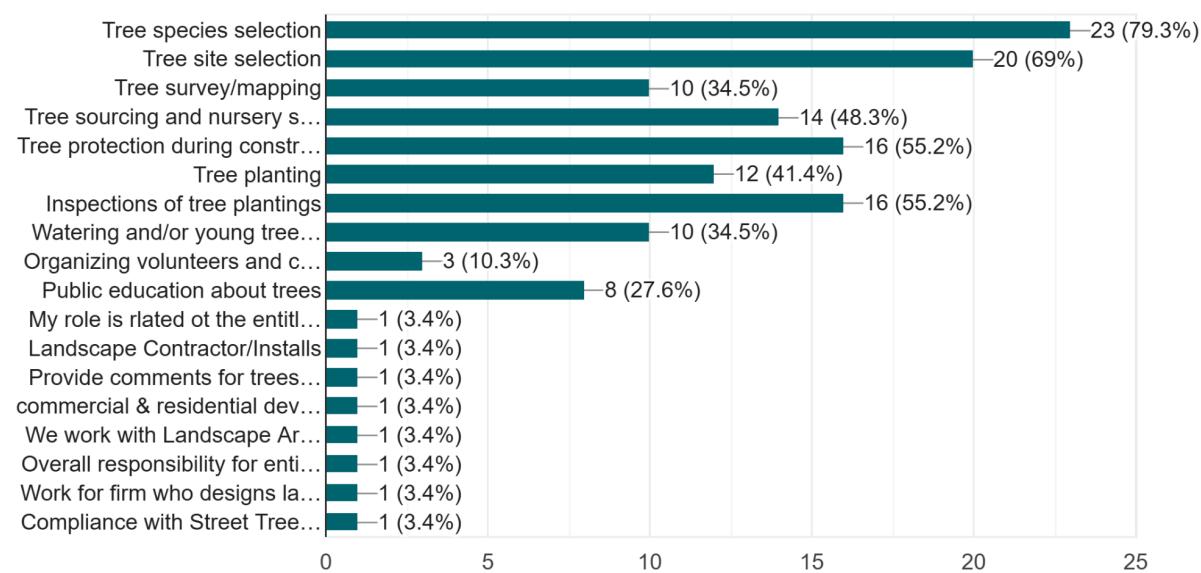
Question 9) Question to assess survey quality.

Appendix B

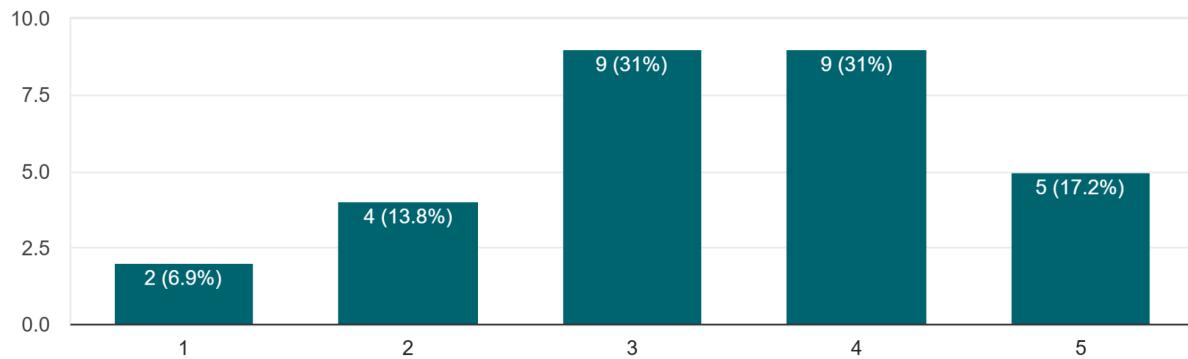
Development Community Survey Results

A survey was sent out to members of the development community in Albuquerque to gather their perspectives on the functioning of the current ordinance and ideas for improvements. A total of 29 responses were submitted between May 7th and May 21st, 2025. The full survey results are shared below:

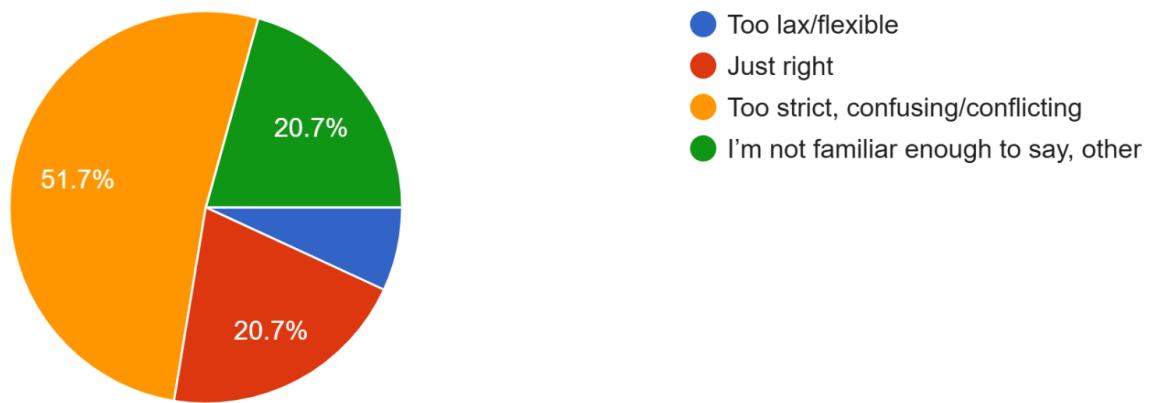
Question 1) Please briefly describe your level of involvement with tree planting during development projects:



Question 2) Please rank your familiarity and/or frequency of working with Albuquerque's street tree ordinance (with 1 meaning vaguely familiar and 5 meaning highly familiar):



Question 3) In your opinion, the current street tree ordinance is:



Question 4) What within the current street tree ordinance do you think works well?

- *It includes more flexibility than the IDO, but the conflicts are problematic.*
- *They are required and that is good!*
- *1 of every 3 street trees may be an accent tree*
- *Specific quantity/size requirements, locations/offsets from back of curb, maintenance/upkeep requirements*
- *That it requires street trees*
- *From my vantage point it is flexible enough to work with*
- *Spacing between trees. Ability to count street trees as landscape on abutting properties (per IDO).*
- *It provides for guidance on plant species well suited for the area*
- *Needs to provide flexibility to address site specific conditions and context sensitive design issues including other IDO small area requirements (eg Coors*
- *The general requirement for new developments to provide street trees*
- *Do not need extra regulations, developers take care of trees naturally and most of the time they plant 4-5 times more trees than were previously on the site.*
- *More trees are being planted*
- *§ 6-6-2-4 REQUIRED STREET TREES is fairly well put together*
- *I think on an individual basis the street tree ordinance works well with planting selection and variety. Specifically, on the sizing of plantings based on spacing availability.*
- *Promotion of the tree canopy to cool the community*
- *I appreciate that the ordinance allows for site-specific conditions that affect spacing. Other ordinances are more rigid and the presence of other elements in a streetscape frequently requires spacing to be adjusted. I also think the description of the setback from the curb allows flexibility in determining tree locations.*
- *The existing STO worked well for so many years. The implementation of the IDO, and its conflicting language and interpretation by City planners is the main issue. The existing STO spaced trees on average 30' OC, and larger trees spaced further, and smaller trees closer. This is far superior to the 25'OC, trees planted like a fence line, or a utility line. This directive results in forcing the landscape architecture community to use only small ornamental trees that basically have no shade value, are short lived and have no cost benefit in the long run. Also, this does not allow large trees that should be planted as street trees to be used. The current street tree ordinance required that trees from the approved plant list were to be used. This was great.*
- *There should be flexibility for site conditions, and context, removal of the conflicts between the STO and the IDO. Additionally, the ordinance was clear enough that subjective comments, and personal opinions did not become relevant in the review process. This practice has hurt Albuquerque, being*

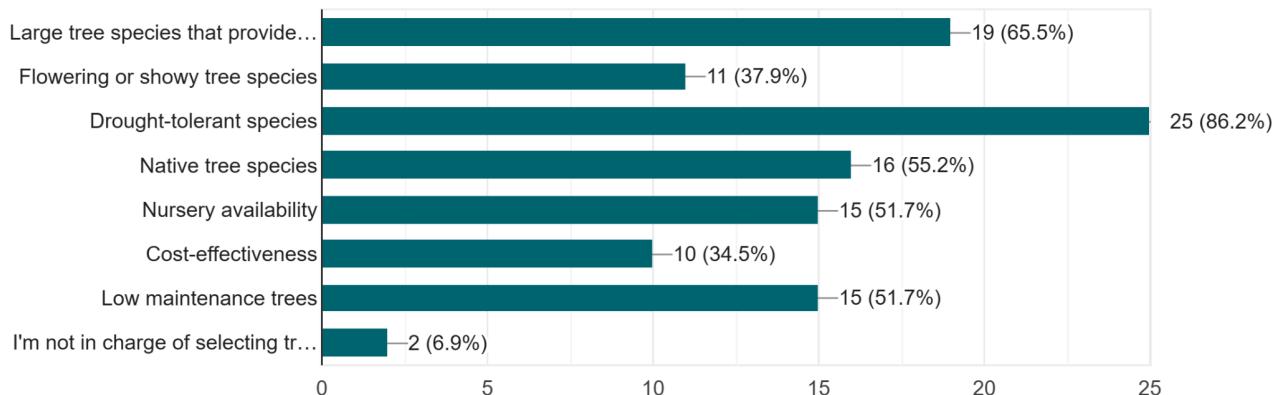
perceived as not business friendly, and difficult to work with. The City of Albuquerque approved plant list should be used as provided for in the current STO. It needs to be updated and used as intended. Input from local nurseries and growers need to be included. The STO should be enforced as intended.

The STO is for major streets, those defined as Collectors and above.

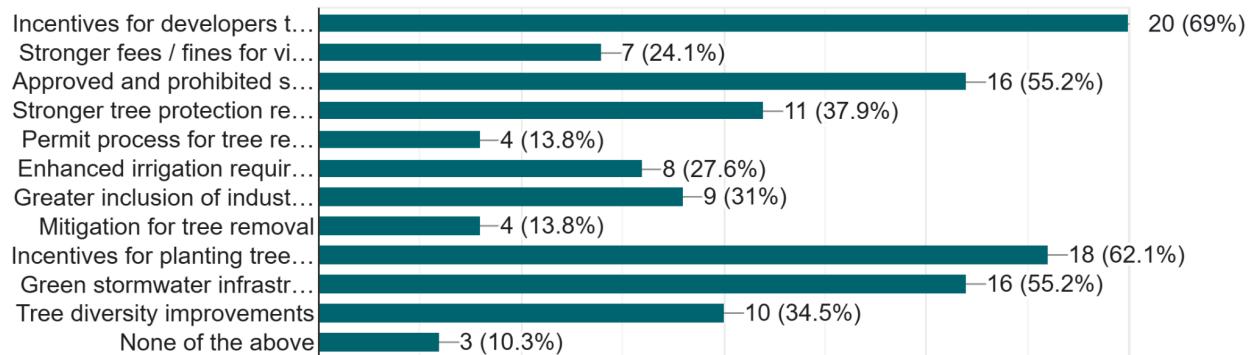
Albuquerque needs to follow other cities as being proactive, probusiness, and stop allowing personal likes and subjective comments to enter the planning process.

- Selection, space for street trees.
- Improving air and aesthetic qualities within the urban setting.
- **IT IS GOOD FOR NEW COMMERCIAL PROJECTS. TOO RESTRICTIVE FOR RESIDENTIAL**
- Tree Selection List
- § 6-6-2-5 STREET TREE POLICIES. This section is at least reasonable.

Question 5) Which of the following characteristics do you prioritize when selecting trees for your development projects?



Question 6) What updates would you like to see included in the City's street tree ordinance?



Additional write in responses for Question 6:

- *Mow strips along curbs for the trees, and move sidewalks if needed*
- *Give City Forester actual authority to enforce current fees and fines. Fines are currently capped by state statute at \$500 and can only be collected if the property sells within 4 years, otherwise they expire (as it was explained to me (past City Forester) by city attorneys).*
- *More incentives to those that follow the rules and keep trees healthy.*
- *Clear allowance for the Landscape Architect to design the streetscape and street trees to cluster trees, and arrange as appropriate for views, utility considerations, adjacent development, screening, etc.*
- *Better coordination with and cross-references to IDO standards*
- *Most of this list enforces the perception of the development community that ABQ is an overregulated City*
- *Removal of requirements and/or allowance of tree grates (per James Urban and many arborist's opposition to the use of tree grates - crusher fines are a simple, affordable, safe, and effective alternative)*
- *If the IDO addresses these requirements more holistically, eliminate the STO and ensure that the IDO is updated to reflect best practices and incentives*
- *Street trees need more soil volume to be successful.*
- *Code enforcement to fine properties that do not maintain irrigation and tree health for at least one year.*
- *No penalties - too many trees are taken out by vandals, homeless or automobiles to penalize an owner*

Question 7) What are some other ways the current street tree ordinance could be improved? (write-in response)

- *Update the Official Albuquerque Plant Palette and Sizing List every other year to increase diversity and potential climate resilience*
- **FOR RESIDENTIAL ADDITION PROJECTS : THE ENTIRE LOT SHOULD NOT HAVE TO BE BROUGHT UP TO CURRENT REQUIREMENTS - ONLY WHEN AND IF THE ADDITION FACES THE STREET AND FOR THAT AREA ALONE. , THE CALIPER OF THE TREES FOR RESIDENTIAL SHOULD BE REDUCED TO 1.5 ". PROVIDE DIRECT REBATES FOR MORE SHADE TREES ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES , REDUCE THE BUILDING PERMIT FEE, ETC. WE HAVE MORE RESIDENTIAL LAND THAN ANYTHING ELSE, WE SHOULD GET MORE SHADE TREES ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES. !**
- *Trees are great for our city and the streetscape, and would be benefited if there were mow strips along curbs, THEN sidewalks protected from the street. ; have a great vision and enact it-!*
- *Require adequate irrigated soil volume. Require CABQ to fund and perform maintenance - most homeowners won't know when/what to do.*
- *Be logical about requirements for street trees spacing. We do live in an arid climate. We should be mindful of water use requirements. New Mexicans are accustomed to walking further than 25' without having to stop in the shade of a tree. Yes, a lot of trees are pretty, but the ordinance is not sustainable. More time, effort and dollars should go toward xeriscape and low water use plantings rather than street trees.*
- *The street tree ordinance does a good job regulating the species selected on each project to make sure that on a development, not just one tree is dominating and there is diversity in 10+ plantings, however this doesn't take into consideration directly adjacent properties. If there are only 6 street trees per lot but all of them choose the same species for their street trees, the biodiversity aspect is limited. It would be nice to see something about directly touching businesses or developments where the tree plantings would be within a certain radius to expand the biodiverse opportunities by somehow regulating the proximity to other street trees already placed. I think having something like that explicitly stated would be beneficial.*
- *I don't see the need to have mayoral involvement in any of this. It seems that authority should be given to the City Forester. I would recommend keeping this away from Parks and out of the political realm.*
- *Too much reliance/variability based on City Forester direction. What if no one is in that position? Requirements should be clear and easy to understand.*
- *Needs to be updated to remove conflicts with the IDO - may require changes to the Ordinance or the IDO, based on user/stakeholder input. Question: If the IDO addresses everything, do we need to have a STO?*
- *"Clarity or a statement on which supersedes the ordinance or the reviewer's interpretation of the IDO, on spacing. The street tree ordinance says*

""Spacing between evenly spaced street trees should be no greater than the diameter of the tree canopy at maturity....""". City reviewers always call out spacing of street trees as 25' on-center, which is incorrect according to the street tree ordinance. This needs to be clarified and I believe the Street Tree Ordinance should take precedence. It's a far superior method to plant based on tree diameter spacing than a standard 25' on-center.

- The IDO and Street Tree Ordinance also conflict on branching height over roadways. There are at least three contradictions between these two documents that I'm aware of.
- The Official Albuquerque Plant Palette and Sizing List needs to be updated. The City needs to be working with local Landscape Professionals, Industry Professionals and Growers/Suppliers of trees to develop a current, more accurate list of trees that are within current commercial availability within our region. The list as it is today has 12 street trees out of a possible 34 street tree options that are not commercially available, another 6 of which are *Fraxinus* (which the City doesn't want us planting anymore), 3 that are not able to fall into the City's required branching height at initial install and/or for most of their lifetime (*Albizia*, *Celtis reticulata*, *Q. fusiformis*). That leaves 13 out of 34 street tree options on the approved list that we have to choose from. The standards need to be relaxed or updated to accommodate a higher variety/diversity of trees, in my opinion.
- Should we even be planting trees in ROW buffer areas along streets? Is this a sound practice? Life expectancy of street trees isn't high, maybe this isn't a reasonable place to expect trees to survive in this climate."
- Emphasize street trees over trees in the center median for CABQ projects in public r.o.w.
- More enforcement on lack of maintenance or tree replacement
- Strike a balance between required quantity of trees with viable planting sites
- Better over site/ inspection of BMPs regarding planting
- Follow up on status of irrigation "
- I mostly work on City projects, not on private development so my familiarity is low. It seems like maintenance over time is an issue, the ordinance is effective on getting trees initially planted.
- None, Delete the IDO, the personal opinions and go back to the original
- Enforcement is an issue.
- I would like to see the discretion of the City Forrester more precisely defined (i.e. following objective, published criteria and based on documented standards applied consistently across similar cases). I would like to see language added that outlines potential exceptions or rationales for variances, such as utility conflicts or accessibility requirements. The street tree ordinance mentions the possibility of appeal at the end, but failing to precisely define those criteria places the design professional at risk.

- *Including the drive pads as part of the linear footage used to calculate quantities of street trees has made it difficult to provide the correct amount of trees without squeezing trees together.*
- *"The plant palette list is helpful, but isn't specific about street tree recommendations. Plant palettes can be a little tricky, they should allow for adaptation as the market and climate change. Identifying species that are not allowed is helpful, but I caution against having rigid approved species. That requires more frequent revision of the list. Regarding irrigation requirements, this could also change with environmental considerations, so I'm not in favor of rigid standards. But, greater clarity of the expectation of irrigation would help designers know better how to approach irrigation. It would also help designers explain to clients what is required. I applaud the City for inclusion of GSI into more projects and would love to see those practices increase in applicability.*
- *The only time we've really had a challenge meeting the ordinance is on a couple of public safety projects where street trees could have been used as ladders allowing access to secure lots. We discussed this situation with permitting and were allowed to use multi-trunk trees instead of single trunk trees at 2"" caliper.*
- *This is not related to street trees, but the biggest conflict we see during permitting is between Solid Waste required access to dumpsters which often negates planting trees in parking lot islands. "*
- *trees in-between the back of curb and sidewalk or pathways should be required and should be enforced. The tree canopy will help with the heat coming off the asphalt trails or streets*
- *More flexibility related to the other and unique situations, utility easements, view protection requirements, etc.*
- *Eliminate the tree ordinance. More ordinances are not helpful. Developers produce the products for consumers that the consumers want. If that includes trees, it should be at the consumer discretion.*
- *Add soil well requirements, like Silva Cells. Make Official Albuquerque Plant Palette and Sizing List more user friendly.*
- *Provide more education for those utilizing the ordinance.*
- *Code enforcement and violations for not maintaining tree health and irrigation systems for at minimum one year.*
- *Be removed.*

Question 8) What are some other ways the current street tree ordinance could be improved? (write-in response)

- *I'd like the ordinance to also address "succession planting" so a site's trees age out in a broader time frame.*
- *Mow strips / landscaping with living plants along curbs*
- *As a past City Forester, I still have residual heartache over the ordinance. It places a large responsibility on that position but the structure of City government does not support the performance of those duties. The lack of resources and any authority makes it impossible to administer as the ordinance reads. I am certainly available for further conversation.*
- *We hear it a lot. Commercial developers/owners do not want to be in the landscape business.*
- *Trees need to be selected from local vendors...Trees of Corrales or Plant World. Tree selections need to be based on local availability and survivability.*
- *Maintaining the plant list and having all of the City Forester input located in one place. There is the primary plant list that addresses water use, but it seems like that list is not current or the City Forester makes changes without republishing the list. Also, it seems like there are additional specialty area lists e.g. the bosque and escarpment come to mind. These lists need to be incorporated into the overall plant list.*
- *"I've been told by City reviewers that we can't plant similar species next to one another on a site, which I've not been able to find in any ordinance. We've been told to discontinue using trees that perform very well in this climate (Allee Elm) as a preventative measure to avoid overuse. We've been directed by City reviewers that we should use specific trees in place of ones we've designed into a site (Pink Pom Poms Redbud, which by the way isn't on the approved plant list).*
- *It's my opinion that a reviewer's job is to flag items that are outside/in violation of the code, not to dictate specific design of a site. My coworkers, the Landscape Community and I work very hard to provide diversity and a healthy variety of plants on a site and if I'm working within the confines of the IDO and Street Tree Ordinance, then there shouldn't be anything that gets flagged and sent back as part of that review process. If it's not in the code and the City wants it in there, then the code needs to be updated and rewritten. Additional items can't be added to the code or enforced at the whim of the City or the reviewer."*
- *I am concerned about climate appropriateness of the trees we plant, long term maintenance, and more GSI*
- *Leave the design to professionally registered Landscape Architects that have met the minimum requirements for registration and stop overregulating, dictating design, mandating personal choices. Leave it to the registered professionals.*

- *I would like to see granted variances and/or exceptions and their rationale be documented, made appealable, and provided to the public as a record.*
- *"I generally find the ordinance to be clear and easy to follow. Other City's ordinances (in particular Santa Fe) can be really rigid and don't recognize site-specific conditions. I appreciate that the ordinance provides guidance, but also allows professional decision making. I'm a little leery of ordinances that don't anticipate changing conditions or are too vague and allow for reviewers or permitting agents to make up their own rules. Again, see Santa Fe's ordinance as an example of an ordinance that is both too restrictive and too vague at the same time. It results in unintended consequences that are not rational or sound.*
- *I would be happy to participate more with this effort. Thanks for including industry professionals.*
- *It would be much better, for the developers to plant more and for the community to get more if it were an incentivization not a penalization/regulation. You get "x" tax credit or impact fee credit or permit fee waived, etc. the more trees you plant, or something like that...*

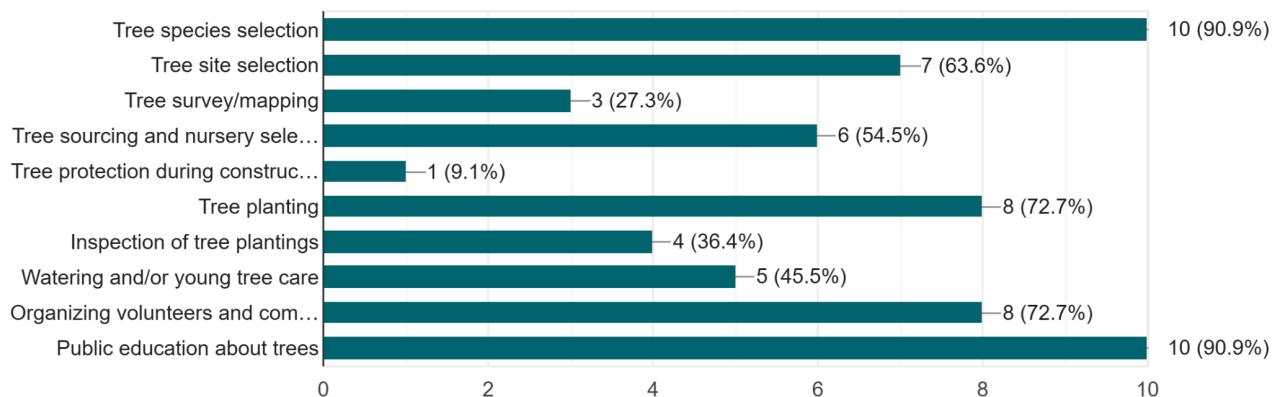
Question 9) Question to assess survey quality.

Appendix C

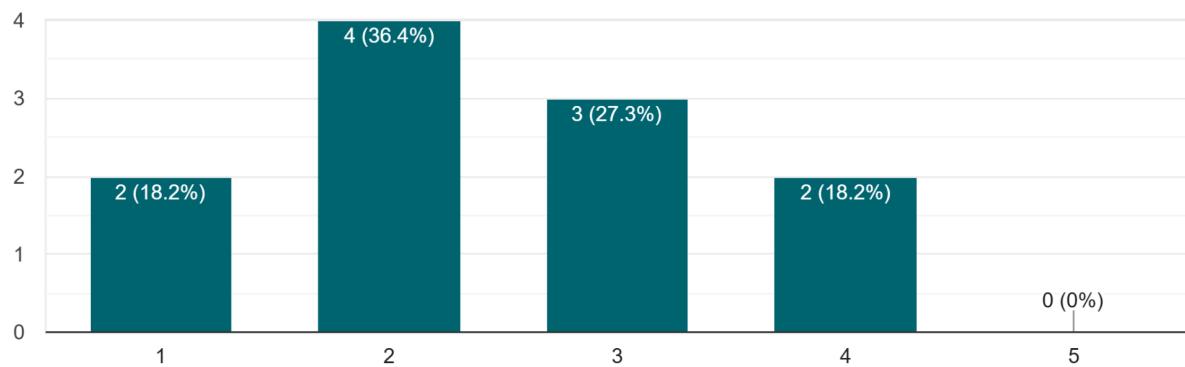
Conservation Community Survey Results

A survey was sent out to stakeholders involved with local urban forest or conservation organizations in Albuquerque to gather their perspectives on the functioning of the current ordinance and ideas for improvements. A total of 11 responses were submitted between May 7th and May 21st, 2025. The full survey results are shared below:

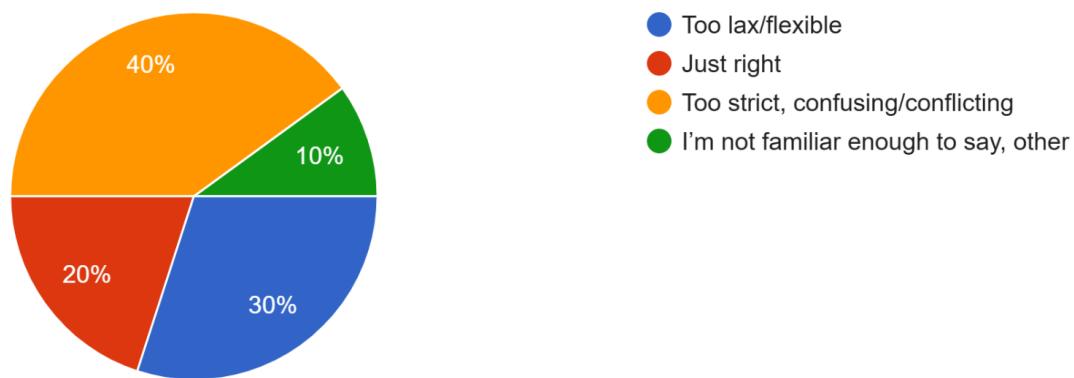
Question 1) Please briefly describe your level of involvement with tree planting during development projects:



Question 2) Please rank your familiarity and/or frequency of working with Albuquerque's street tree ordinance (with 1 meaning vaguely familiar and 5 meaning highly familiar):



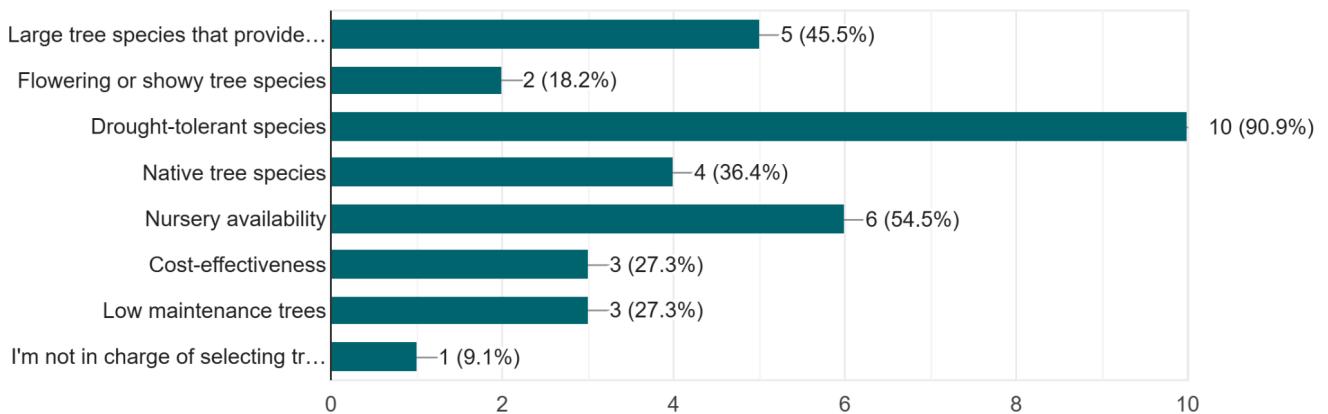
Question 3) In your opinion, the current street tree ordinance is:



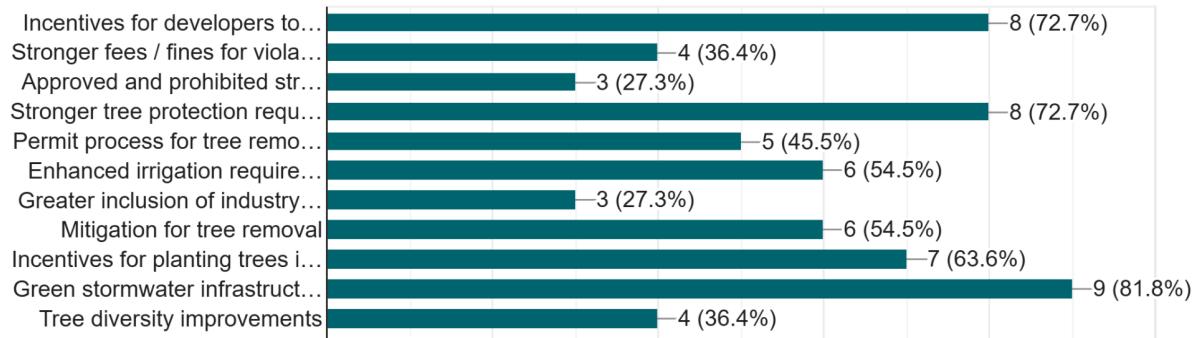
Question 4) What within the current street tree ordinance do you think works well?

- *It seems to cover all of the major aspects of a tree ordinance and is fairly straightforward and easy to understand.*
- *Ensuring that new construction includes the new planting of trees.*
- *I like that it includes considerations for adequate soil volume, selecting proper trees, and mentions diverse species diversity. It is fairly easy to understand the text of the ordinance.*
- *Section 6-6-2-4 and 6-6-2-5 clearly describe how trees should be planted around overhead electrical utilities lines. This is very important for public safety. I also appreciate that a permit is required to remove or plant trees in public spaces and that the city must replace street trees they've killed/removed during projects. This ensures that our urban canopy remains intact.*
- *I do think it's important to get people to plant and maintain trees*
- *I really like the requirement to plant trees with building additions and paving parking lots. It's a great opportunity to implement GSI.*
- *requiring trees*
- *Requirements for new buildings.*

Question 5) Which of the following characteristics do you prioritize when selecting trees for your development projects?



Question 6) What updates would you like to see included in the City's street tree ordinance?



Additional write in responses for Question 6:

- *A stronger push for climate-ready species that are ideally native (studies show native species are better for pollinators)*
- *Increased soil volume requirements, Wood chip mulch, means of enforcing the ordinance post installation*
- *A caliper-inch replacement policy (removing a 20" diameter tree requires planting trees totaling 20" in combined caliper)*
- *Payment into a tree fund, special protections for historically significant trees such as cottonwoods*
- *Clearer penalties for non-compliance that include corrective action and not just fines, clearer guidelines for compensation when trees are damaged,*
- *Water harvesting requirements, curb cut specifications, clear irrigation standards with soil sensors and/or maintenance plans, and an organic mulch over rock mulch requirement.*
- *I don't know exactly what this would look like, but more long-term emphasis on tree care and maintenance, ensuring planted trees stay alive.*
- *Consideration for utility conflicts adjacent to streets that prohibit planting the quantity/size mandated*
- *Equity for tree and native greenscaping in private and public spaces especially in most impacted communities like International District and Westgate*

Question 7) What are some other ways the current street tree ordinance could be improved? (write-in response)

- *Emphasizing long-term care and ensuring trees are planted correctly from the start.*
- *Additional ideas: a caliper-inch replacement policy (removing a 20" diameter tree requires planting trees totaling 20" in combined caliper), payment into a tree fund, special protections for historically significant trees such as cottonwoods, clearer penalties for non-compliance that include corrective action and not just fines, clearer guidelines for compensation when trees are damaged, water harvesting requirements, curb cut specifications, clear irrigation standards with soil sensors and/or maintenance plans, and an organic mulch over rock mulch requirement.*
- *I like the list of improvements you provided a lot. I think some of the most important pieces to improve are those that help ensure tree health and longevity so that they can actually reach maturity and provide maximum benefit to the community. If at a certain site young trees keep dying and are continually replaced by new young trees, I'd hope that the ordinance offers a way to ensure that the proper assessments are done and corrections in tree care are made to solve the problem. The ordinance should help ensure that trees are watered enough and have enough soil. Most importantly, mechanisms to ensure that skilled contractors are hired and that trees are planted and pruned properly - no topping and lion tailing. I would really like to see green stormwater infrastructure start to be integrated with street trees as a standard practice and added into the ordinance in a way that has some teeth to it so that it's not an easy opt out, though of course it won't be appropriate for every project. GSI requirements could also include harvesting water off the building, not just the street, if applicable. We should also be limiting the use of weed cloth/filter fabric when possible as this impedes infiltration of water into the soil to reach tree roots. Use of rock mulch should be minimized as this can cause heat stress for trees - use organic mulch around the tree roots as much as possible. Yes, organic mulch will need to be replenished on a regular basis as it breaks down and that should be required as well if possible. I'm not a mulch expert, but I've been hearing that shredded mulch has been shown to knit together to form a sort of matrix so that it doesn't blow away or wash away easily, or float on water, and 3-4 inches of organic mulch can be effective at keeping weeds from growing. Removal of mature trees should be prohibited as much as possible. I would also like to see this ordinance expanded to include requirements for understory plantings in new development (Shrubs, grasses etc) which also contribute to the benefits of a healthy urban forest.*
- *Tree selection criteria should be more rigorous. Any tree being planted should be drought-tolerant and climate ready. Trees should ideally be native to have the strongest benefit for native pollinators and birds. The ordinance should*

include water conservation requirements, especially for trees that require irrigation. Water-efficient irrigation systems should be required and this would align with the city's Water Conservation Landscaping and Water Waste Ordinance, promoting efficient water use. Guidelines for the use of green stormwater infrastructure should also be included to encourage rainwater harvesting, decrease polluted runoff reaching the river, and recharge the groundwater.

- *Tree requirements are usually compromised by utility conflicts, spacing at driveways, and drainage requirements - I see trees planted in scenarios where they are unlikely to survive because they are trying to meet the number / spacing requirement. It feels wasteful*
- *Sec 6-6-2-4 (2) is fantastic. Consider adding language to take advantage of passive rainwater harvesting opportunities.*
- *Sec 6-6-2-4 (5) and Sec. 6-6-2-5 (A)(1) - I don't see soil volumes in the DPM. This would be very helpful.*
- *Sec. 6-6-2-5 (B)(1)(a) - The 2' offset is good for shade, but sets up potential conflict between branches and pedestrians - a little worrisome given how few landscapers prune correctly.*
- *Sec. 6-6-2-5 (B)(1)(c)(2) - Have alternatives to grates been explored? Perhaps the urban forester's approval of size and design of tree grates mitigates conflict between trunks and grates, but other options would be preferable. James Urban recommends rough cobblestones, and resin-bound aggregate.*
- *Sec. 6-6-2-5(B)(2) - This is word for word the same as what's in 6-6-2-4(A)(6). Does it have to be in both places?*
- *Increased soil volume requirements, Wood chip mulch, means of enforcing the ordinance post installation, requirements for who can do the work*
- *We need more education for youth and families about the benefits of trees and native greenscaping. And more education including about the ordinance.*

Question 8) What are some other ways the current street tree ordinance could be improved? (write-in response)

- *I'm curious about staking requirements. It seems that many new trees are being staked unnecessarily, and the stakes remain in place for too long. Is there a way to address this?*
- *Our organization is looking forward to continued discussions about these challenges and working together to discover solutions.*
- *Sarah Hurteau and I, at SIG-NAL, would be happy to have a call to talk about GSI supported street trees and the other topics I mentioned about.*
- *Developers put too much emphasis on maximizing their vertical construction at the expense of creating actually useful landscape spaces or spaces where plants will survive due to conflicts with utilities, large drainage ponds, and too*

much hardscape. Educating on property value enhancement through landscaping might help, some.

- *With regards to 5, I don't select species, but do critique selection in my capacity in development review.*
- *We have applied for several grants for tree planting in the Don't want to see fines for most impacted communities but do want to see enforcement for tree removal and safety, especially best practices for police, Transit and other agencies not removing trees at bus stops or where unsheltered people gather. I loved learning about the new Tree Plotter and projects in the ID and Westgate. How can we get more involved?*

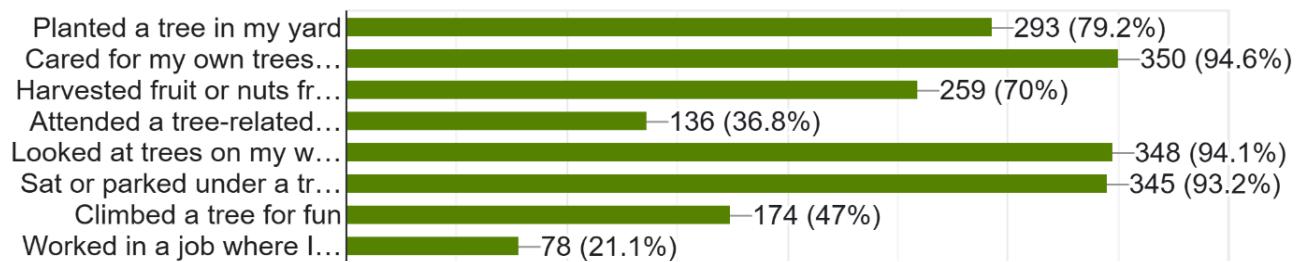
Question 9) Question to assess survey ease of use.

Appendix D

Public Survey Results

A public survey, open to all members of the Albuquerque community, was shared on the City website and promoted through social media and traditional media coverage. The survey included 10 questions to understand residents' perspectives and desires for their urban forest and 4 demographic questions. A total of 372 responses were submitted between July 16th and August 11th, 2025. 371 of the responses were on the English survey version, and 1 response was submitted on the Spanish survey version. The full survey results are shared below:

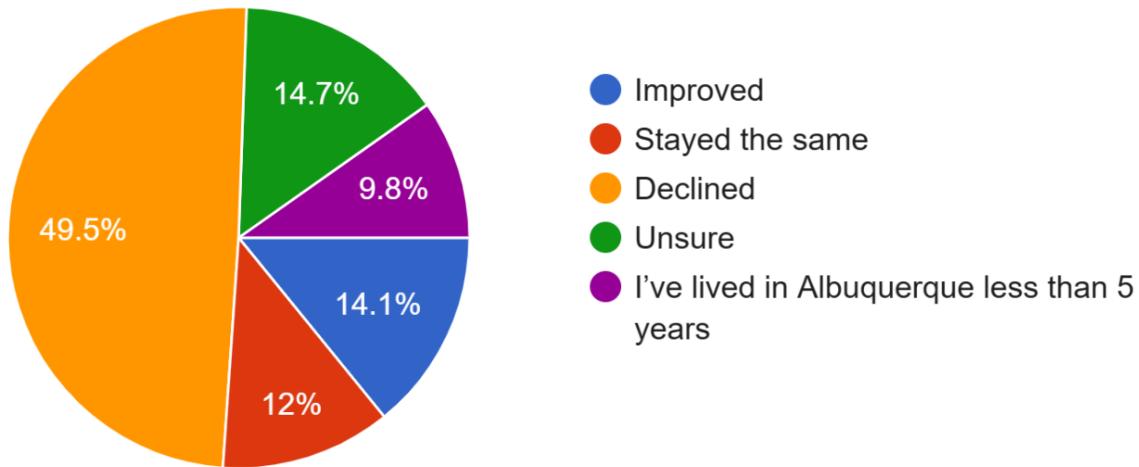
Question 1) What is your experience with trees on both public (trees along streets and parks) and private property (trees in yards and parking lots)? (Select all that apply)



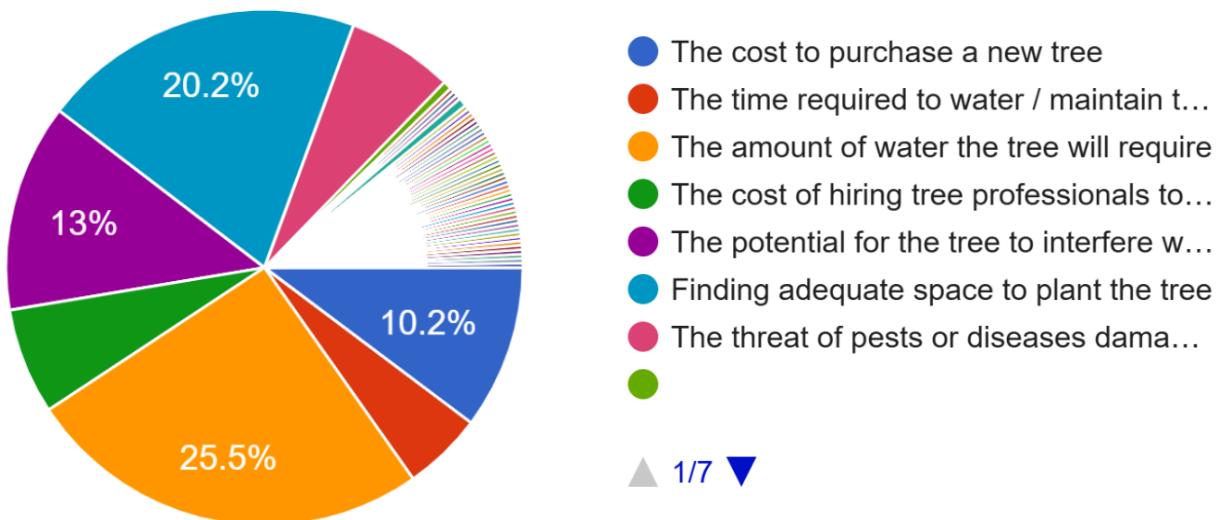
A selection of write in responses from Question 1:

- *Landscape designer, landscaper, arborist*
- *Tree NM organizer, participant*
- *BioPark volunteers and visitors*
- *City planner*
- *Studied trees in school*
- *Disc golf player on treed courses*

Question 2) 2) Do you think the overall health and quality of Albuquerque's trees has improved, stayed the same, or declined in the last 5 - 10 years?



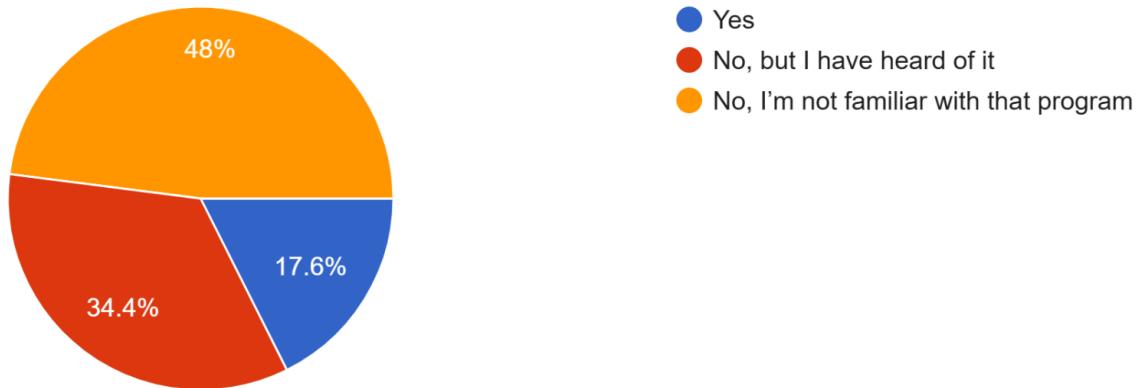
Question 3) If you have planted a tree or thought about planting a tree around your home, which of the following were the top concerns, barriers, or considerations?



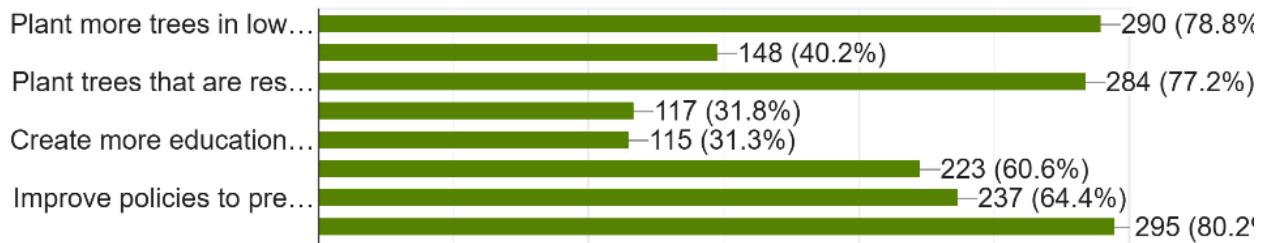
A selection of write in responses for Question 3::

- *Climate resilience*
- *No concerns*
- *Summer heat*
- *Renting / Apartment living*
- *Cost of water to maintain a tree*
- *Picking a tree that will grow and thrive*
- *Fines from water regulators*
- *Picking a proper location*
- *The physical act of planting the tree*
- *Impossible to dig a hole large enough in yard*
- *Finding native trees to plant*
- *Meeting HOA requirements*
- *Professional intervention that is expensive*

Question 4) Have you ever taken advantage of ABCWUA (Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority) TREEBATE program?



Question 5) What do you think the City of Albuquerque should prioritize to improve public trees?

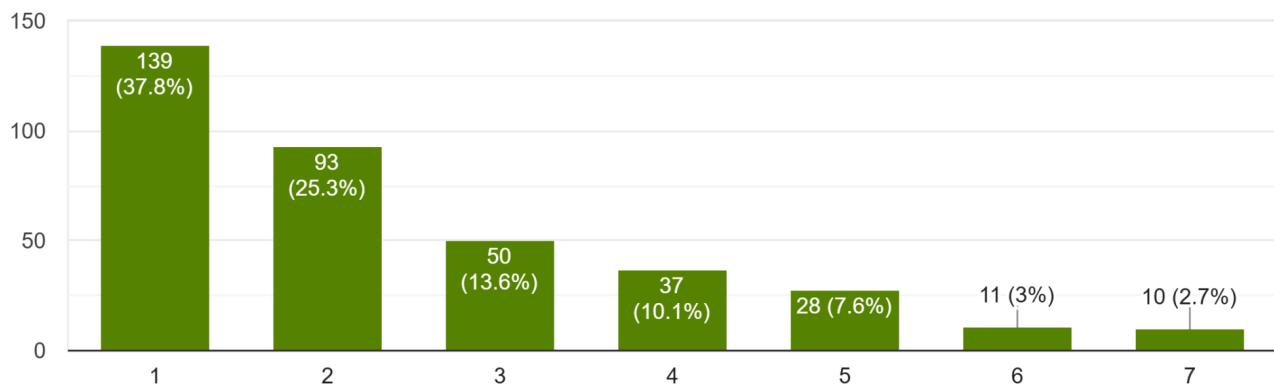


A selection of write in responses for Question 5:

- Please assess the *Tree of Heaven* trees taking over ABQ. They are everywhere and are invasive to our yards when left unmanaged by the city as public spaces.
- Keep going with the rebate program, give away baby tree sprouts, host educational webinars. Encourage neighborhoods to plant trees on city and county property that is vacant
- Use a carrot/stick approach to encourage individuals to plant trees (example TREEBATE program + yearly penalty if feet of sidewalk / # of trees > 10)
- I don't feel that the decline of city trees is related to the CABQ employees who do the work, I think it is all budget related, not enough funds to water, care for existing trees and plant more
- Stop using gravel as primary landscaping material
- Prioritize actions in low canopy/high heat areas
- Create affordable agrihoods and healing centers with trees
- Prioritize native trees and drought-tolerant species that can survive without irrigation.
- Do not mulch with rock/gravel
- Add more trees around bike/walking paths
- Enforce the code about neighbor trees encroaching on another's yard
- Prioritize native tree species. Drought tolerant species that are non-native do not benefit pollinators and wildlife as much as native trees.
- Succession of trees in the parks, neighborhoods and parking-lots to replenish the canopy that is reaching the end of its life span.
- Public recreational activities that need trees. Disc Golf + trees muah!! ABQ Disc golf
- Plant native species
- Get rid of all rock mulch around trees and replace with tree mulch.
- Ensure trees are planted correctly (almost all are too deep)
- Ensure trees are adequately irrigated
- Enhance our Rio Grande bosque by establishing young cottonwoods to replace aging trees

- *I'd hope that any urban forestry program would be more integrated than the approach used in the past - with responsibility for maintaining trees split between Park and Solid Waste Management. Improve design process for new planting - size street trees appropriately (Nob Hill is an example of what not to do), mulch appropriately with something other than large gravel, perform regular water audits of irrigation systems in parks and street side plantings*
- Remove large dead trees/ replace trees
- Lower the cost of water to maintain them
- I don't like how the city is quick to take trees down.
- Use rainwater harvesting/GSI to enhance our tree canopy
- Discourage planting of invasive trees like siberian elms and queen/tree of heaven trees

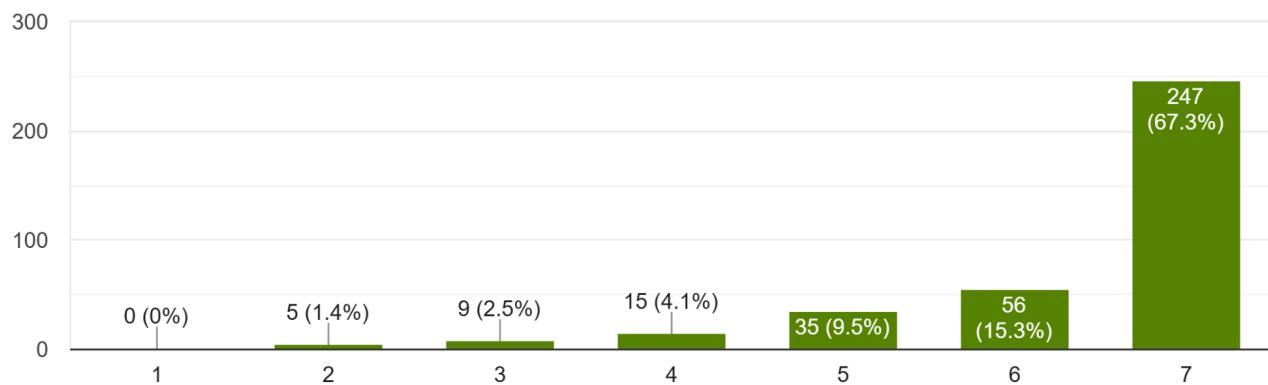
Question 6) How would you rate your awareness and understanding of Albuquerque's current tree ordinance?



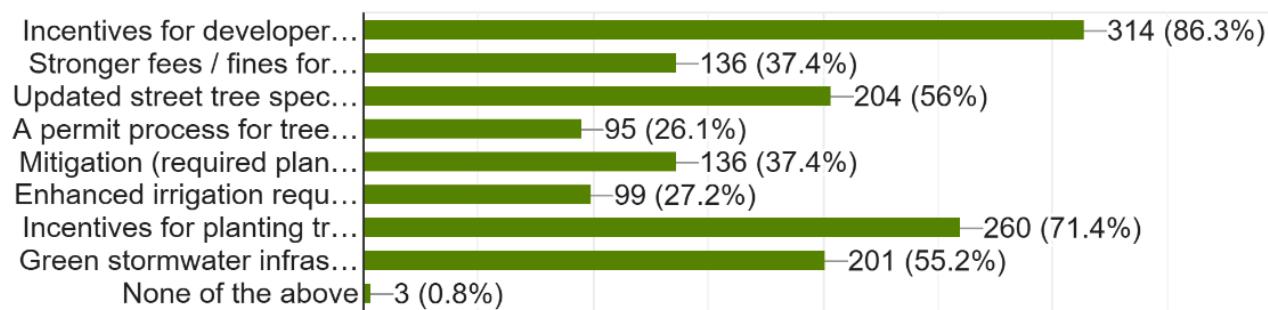
Question 7) In your opinion, the current tree code is:



Question 8) When property owners remove street trees, how important do you think it is to plant new trees?



Question 9) What updates would you like to see included in an updated tree ordinance?



A selection of write in responses for Question 9:

- *Restrictions on invasive species*
- *No government interference*
- *Passive rainwater harvesting for trees*
- *Include native grass understory*
- *Curb cut / curb coring support for green stormwater infrastructure*
- *Tree coverage requirements for multifamily housing*
- *Penalties and prosecution of businesses that damage and kill trees*
- *Incentives for wood mulch conversion*
- *Get rid of species restrictions, as long as they are not invasive*
- *School/city partnerships*
- *Parking area incentives based on canopy coverage*

- Increased requirements for adequate open soil around trees, and appropriate design of watering systems
- Line items to fund permanent and seasonal staff, publicly available grants, encouraging all types of plants (not just trees) to build a more resilient urban ecosystem
- Allowing for more recreational activities that need trees. We can also help maintain these areas - ABQ Disc Golf
- Incentives for planting native species
- Increase permeable pavement requirements
- Protect older trees on both private and public property by subsidizing arborist to prune dead limbs while saving the life of these senior trees
- Some of these on the list may or may not be helpful and could work against helping or even negate other incentive measures.
- Proper pruning. I see lots of trees in Albuquerque that have been topped, where the canopy is cut back to just a few feet. It looks ugly and is unhealthy for the tree.
- Major emphasis on planting edible trees that don't need additional irrigation. We need to be looking forward to 100 years, not 10.
- I see a ton of herbicide damage, especially in HOAs and subdivisions. Maybe there is a different ordinance or educational opportunity for those organizations.
- GSI should be a top priority!
- More allowed low-water-use tree varieties, minimum required # of trees per foot of sidewalk, more trees required for each off-street parking space, can share trees with immediate neighbors
- Planting trees in little boxes in parking lots doesn't do anything but bring the tree stress. Require parking lots be built with covered solar instead.
- Plant tree species that can thrive with 8" of rain per year after the initial couple of years with more care. Also species that feed and support other than humans.

Question 10) Do you have any other questions or considerations in regard to Albuquerque's urban forest or the City's tree ordinance?

- What is the possible logic for planting a tree in a small round hole in a huge parking lot??
- Limit sidewalks and asphalt around tree dripline
- It would be good to also plant xeric bushes etc with the trees to create a better habitat for many creatures.
- I would like the city to take a more active role in planting and maintaining street trees. Can the burden be shifted to the city? This is a health and pedestrian safety issue. Trees protect pedestrians.

- *Installing more traffic calming measures using plants. Add more medians to some neighborhoods and fill them with trees. Or instead of just filling medians with rocks use a mix of racks and trees? The heat island effect is real!*
- *The biggest heartbreak was the removal of many, many trees on Central for the ART project. That shouldn't have been allowed.*
- *Dead tree removal and replacement needs incentives and education for property owners--fire hazards, safety/damage concerns, climate mitigation & aesthetics. Does the insurance industry help fund projects? Stop planting trees next to asphalt lots! Insane to plant apple trees in Uptown parking lots. Incentivize concrete or permeable lot surfaces instead of asphalt?*
- *My understanding is CABQ currently has lots of funds for tree planting - when will a strategic plan for where/when be developed WITH community, then implemented?*
- *What is in place to manage the invasive species?*
- *Am I allowed to plant trees anywhere regardless of my relation to where the tree would be growing? Can I plant trees illegally if I care for them and when no one is looking? Can I illegally propagate trees and other native varieties to plant in places that need green space? Can I feed the prairie dogs, roadrunners, pigeons and squirrels or is that "frowned upon"?*
- *I believe that the tree bait program is fantastic and businesses and homeowners alike should be able to benefit from this several times over. Likewise, I seriously believe that homeowners and businesses should be encouraged to adopt rainwater harvesting systems.*
- *I heard that the city requires new business construction to devote 15 percent of the property to landscaping and I really think that's helping. I see the trees at new building sites and it really makes a difference in how the area looks. If you look at businesses built before the ordinance, it just looks like an ocean of hot asphalt.*
- *Focus on supporting mature canopy over planting new trees that never grow to maturity*
- *Trees on Menaul's median east of San Pedro are dying! They have been beautiful, but in the last year, they have a disease or aren't getting enough water! Maintain and protect the trees we have!*
- *need a clear delineation on who is responsible for planting and maintenance of street trees, parkway strips, buffers, streetside GSI, medians. More incentives for tree care.*
- *Suggestion: Change the requirements for street tree calipers. The current requirement is 2", but this is quite large and potentially expensive.*
- *For some species, it makes sense to plant them in the ground when they are younger.*
- *A lot of native trees are multi-trunked (which are thinner), or may not have a trunk with a 2" caliper unless they are in-ground and well-established. Plus,*

many drought-tolerant species don't thrive in pots for years, meaning they will not get big enough in a pot to be eligible to be a street tree.

- *I think the street tree requirement should be re-evaluated so native and locally adapted trees have more of a chance to be in the tree palette.*
- *I am so grateful that the city just announced that curb cuts/cores are now allowed in planting strips. I hope this can soon be expanded for areas with sidewalks right up against the street. Many planting strips are too small for trees, so an expanded curb cut policy could help more trees get watered by the rain.*
- *It would be AMAZINGLY helpful for the city to have a consistent on-staff urban forester or urban forestry staff. Funding for this could come from taxation with additional funds from fees/fines from violating code requirements (or potentially other areas).*
- *Why aren't there ongoing water rebates/benefits beyond the first rebate for planting trees? It's not like the trees don't require water beyond the first season after planting.*
- *Glad ABQ is thinking of this. We are losing lots of trees. If you really observe on a neighborhood walk, you can see it. I think the downtown area, Nob Hill & even Uptown suffer because they were not planned with tree canopies. They are always areas that are too hot. I hope the city can do more education around trees, water use, and better planning. Lots of potential shopping areas & community spaces are losing people traffic because of too much asphalt & not enough trees. It's a very challenging issue & water usage (obviously)plays a big part. A complex problem. Thanks for this survey.*
- *It's not working. There are too many places in Albuquerque that don't have any trees but have plenty of space for them. Incentives need to be adjusted until we reach the level of trees desired.*
- *We are in a dire situation with our access to water, or lack thereof. We MUST consider water usage and access as a major factor when making choices about Abq's urban forest. Trees are vital and we need them, but we have to think about the long term impact on water consumption as well. We absolutely should NOT allow trees that are water guzzlers in our desert urban forest. It is very important that we prioritize native trees that can handle this climate and are climate change resistant.*
- *The tree rebate program is too difficult to understand/take part in - I had trees planted by NM Trees with rebate information and just gave up trying to figure out for trees I bought from a nursery.*
- *After taking care of newly planted trees..... I've seen, first hand, new saplings planted, then ignored.... not watered..... Of course they die! That is a waste of resources, not to mention wrong for these important assets to be lost.*
- *I would like to see greater diversity of trees planted in parks, such as indigenous trees.*
- *Plant food producing trees in public areas. Winrock has some but they are fenced and all the fruit goes to waste.*

- *I want to plant trees in the front of my house near the street but I don't know how to check to see if you can do that, I see it in some places but have trouble finding out more information*
- *I heard that sometimes utility companies will hit irrigation lines during work and then when the irrigation turns off it lets a bunch of plants die. I'd think it'd be worth investigating this and also making sure anyone digging needs to make sure they work around or replace irrigation lines.*
- *Our city has a huge infestation of the invasive species known as the Tree of Heaven. I live in the NE heights and the neighborhoods are overrun by these trees, both in public and residential spaces. We need a solution to eradicate this invasive species and replace them with native plants and trees*
- *So many dead trees to see on private property as you drive around. Many seem to have stopped watering trees because of the cost of water. People need help removing trees that died and maintaining living trees. Bigger, better financial incentives from the city and the county would help.*
- *I believe developers have been required to plant trees on commercial property but it is apparent that there is no requirement or monitoring of maintenance of the trees.*
- *Encourage architecture and landscape concepts to work together in this harsh climate. Reduce hardscape and provide strategic shaded areas, primarily for pedestrians and residents.*
- *Remove the ban on Mulberry and other types of trees*
- *Who is responsible for removing or pruning dead or dying trees before they become hazardous to people and buildings?*
- *PUBLICITY!!!*
- *Many trees in parks and medians in ridgecrest are girded by city mower crews using trimmers. Train crews as appropriate or mulch around trees so grass doesn't grow next to trunk*
- *I'd love to see more fruit-bearing trees in public spaces, like edible food forests, and anyone is allowed to take fruit for free. I'd also like to see more investment in general greenery for the purposes of reducing heat and increasing building insulation with wall greenery.*
- *not yet*
- *I find sourcing a diversity of species is sometimes challenging and would be curious if there is a way the city can influence that.*
- *Allow invasive (noxious) trees to remain unless UNLESS an approved tree will be planted in its place... at least nearby. Some invasive species serve a purpose such as erosion control, habitat for birds and other wildlife. But phase them out over time, replacing them with approved trees. Thanks!*
- *Our subdivision doesn't abide by our HOA, especially my next door neighbor.*
- *I would like to encourage more bare soil areas as 70% of our native bee species are ground nesters*
- *No, I think the eight (8) items identified above are fantastic! I especially think 'enhanced irrigation requirements' and 'GSI requirements' are critical.*

- Please make it easier, not more complex and overwhelming, for individuals and groups to plant trees. Expand allowable sizes and species. Allow for native saplings to be planted out in public right of ways to decrease transplant shock for trees like a Velvet mesquite which may grow a 150ft tap root and not appreciate living in a pot for 3-5 years before being planted out. Make the tree planting process easier, and less restrictive. Support native plant/tree give away programs, have the city forestry program host propagation workshops and seed and sapling give aways. Teach school children more about the importance of trees and how to care for them. More education for the public on street tree ordinances - especially in the ID we see property owners coppicing trees to stop unhoused folks from resting under them. Which exacerbates the urban heat island effect for us all.
- I often wonder what a particular tree is that's planted in the median and along the street. If there were some sort of guide to what trees were planted and where, it would be helpful.
- More should be done for businesses and private owners to ensure trees are not overgrown at corners and adversely affecting safe driving at turns and intersections.
- What about the damage being done to public trees by the public and unhoused displaced people?
- not at this time
- Please regulate landscapers to eliminate landscape fabrics made from plastics AND reduce hardscape (rocks) that trap ground heat; EDUCATE landscapers and nurseries and homeowners to REWILD for pollinators (billboards, backyard refuge ambassadors, increase tree stewards, add into APS curriculum, after-school programs for tree steward youth & teens).
- Your options for addressing tree removal were all negative - permit process, required planting or fee, stronger fees/fines for code violations. Perhaps there should be emphasis on education and supplying replacements like Tree NM does.
- Restrictions on the amount of rocks/boulders that are added to landscaping; no water features permitted in new landscapes; encouraging nurseries to sell only trees on the climate ready list; educating the public via PSA's, interviews on radio/TV about the importance of trees, planting and caring for them AND the reckless use of herbicides that kills trees; requiring landlords to remove dead, dying trees, especially if they are a hazard; ordinances on the use of synthetic ground cover; collaborating with schools to have a citywide poster contest for Arbor Day and providing resources to teach about the importance of trees; enforce current ordinances, especially those prohibiting parking cars in yards which can damage tree roots and compact soil.
- Trees and greenery help reduce temperatures. Planting trees improves biodiversity across the city.
- How to receive more information about trees
- Program to remove invasive trees, such as Tree of Heaven or Siberian Elm.

- Are there rules for deciding to cut down trees in your yard and replacing them? Are there rules for what species? What about the thinning of trees in the Bosque?
- I would like to know more about the existing tree ordinance.
- Code Enforcement needs to do their job to enforce any type of ordinance. Good luck with that.
- In the neighborhood to the north of Jackson middle school, we have an absolute infestation of trees of heaven. We would love for them to be removed and replaced by non invasive trees. Trees of Heaven are pests that are choking out our natural environment. These trees are almost impossible to get rid of on your own and spread like wildfire. Also please plant trees and other vegetation on the bike paths in the area. Especially the section of bike path east of the Juan Tabo and Indian School intersection. It is brutal to walk or bike that area in weather over 80 degrees, which is a good chunk of the year. These additions would help people utilize the paths and promote more outdoor use. Thank you.
- Plant more trees please!
- How can we invite communities to join efforts to count and track trees?
- Albuquerque's parks and rec department needs to care more for the trees in the parks
- consider asking neighbors to help maintain watering trees for biz owners who are not watering the plants/trees
- Plant the trees as soon as possible.
- I'd like to see the city require some plantings for ROW on road projects and for new developments. So many commercial facilities particularly in my neighborhood just take out any tree and leave batten parking lots. Incentives for developers I hope would increase plantings even just for shrubs or other natives. Phoenix has done a great job even in such a hot climate of bringing in more tree cover.
- More education on invasive tree species like the tree of heaven to help reign in its range.
- What I know of the city's tree ordinance is about high allergy trees. Can that list remain in the new ordinance and/or be updated? Also, can we get rid of Bradford pears? They smell terrible and there are much better options that we can replace them with.
- Approve recreational activities that like trees. We can help. ABQ Disc Golf
- More resources to do more urban forestry. We need to reduce heat island effects
- How can we stop pnm from just going around cutting residential trees without permission and doing a terrible job as well. My trees have been here a lot longer than the electric lines. How do I stop pnm from cutting my trees because the electrical lines are in the way of my trees growing? And when they do cut my trees without my permission, they do a lousy job leaving my trees cut on one side. this needs to stop.

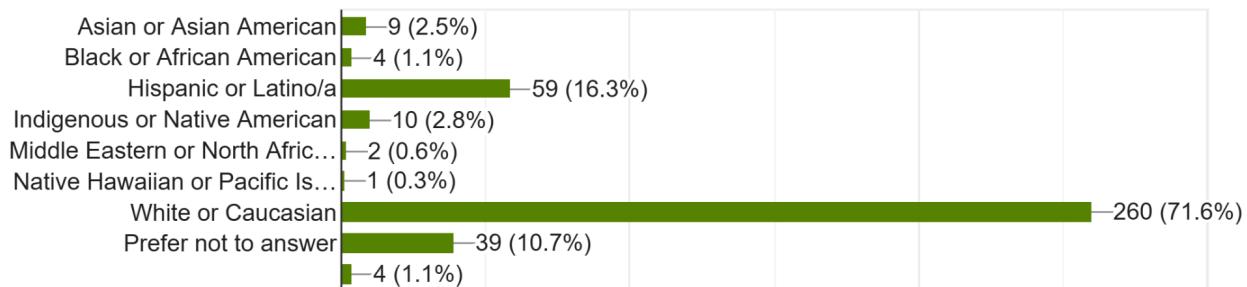
- *I think it's a shame when neighbors cut down trees just because they don't want to care for them.*
- *I suggest the ordinance should address overuse of weed cloth and rocks around established and new tree*
- *too much emphasis on planting without regard to adequate soil volume or adequate irrigation*
- *tree pruning is ridiculously expensive. A meaningful rebate would be an appreciated item*
- *very concerned about the health of trees in the Bosque, with continued drought conditions causing river to dry up*
- *It would be positive if the city mailed flyers describing tree rights/incentives and suggestions to homes after new owners move in or perhaps at the beginning of Spring with a utility bill.*
- *A community orchard in an under-resourced and higher heat neighborhood, for example in an empty lot the city takes via eminent domain. They did it for highways, do it for shade and food!*
- *Per Doug Tallemy's books, we need to invest in locally native species to protect our ecosystems. I'd like to see far fewer foreign/non-native ornamental trees and far more native species around town.*
- *Landlords often don't care about the trees on their property (if they are absentee or cheap). Also, I've watched trees die on vacant properties -- a loss for the entire block.*
- *Where there are requirements to plant trees, are there also requirements to maintain them?*
- *Root rot in Tewa park*
- *Chinese elm trees and their seeds populate more and more trees in places that trees shouldn't be. Then the seeds are so invasive in the spring, piling up in yards, gutters, along sidewalks in yards.*
- *Who is going to finance and maintain this urban forest?*
- *Stop planting the Callery or Bradford Pear trees.*
- *What control and/or influence does the City have over the Rio Grande bosque and trees that border MRGCD acequias? How can wildfire risk be mitigated without reducing our tree canopy? How can the BioPark play an expanded role in educating the public about our urban forest?*
- *While easier to conceptualize with the bosque, there are many trees around ABQ that are approaching effective lifespan. Let's start thinking about "canopy 2.0", or the next tree. while we can establish under shade and beneficial conditions.*
- *Albuquerque desperately needs more canopy trees, especially with climate change driving our temperatures further and further up. Please, help us!*
- *I would like to see native species of trees considered for the initiative. No more trees like the Bradford pear. I think new infrastructure or updates to existing infrastructure should include considerations to restoring street tree coverage that has been systematically removed over the last few decades.*

- *Urban forestry needs more staff and "teeth" to enforce any requirements. Legal Dept should not hamper their attempts at enforcement*
- *I wasn't even aware one existed. How is it found?*
- *How can we stop trees from being hit by root active herbicides like imazapyr, 2-4D, and dicamba?*
- *How do we ensure that invasive species are not planted? How can we have invasive species, such as the Siberian Elm removed? How can we incentivize people to plant the "right" kind of trees for our climate?*
- *Is there a differentiation between shade trees, and more decorative types that provide little shade?*
- *There are still lots of existing mature trees but the cost of water to maintain them is prohibitive. Reduce the cost of water per tree on each property perhaps*

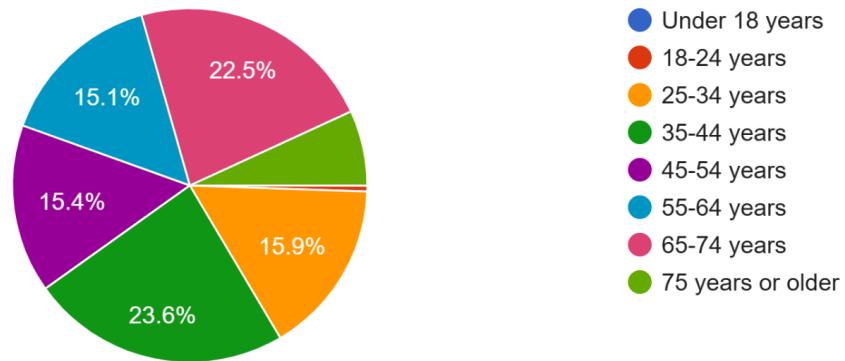
Question 11) Which best describes the building you live in?



Question 12) Most people think of themselves as belonging to a particular ethnic or racial group. I identify myself as:



Question 13) Which category includes your age?



Question 14) What is your home zip code?

