



Arbor Day Tree Planting in Southside Park on April 30

"TreeSmart Santa Fe" Putting Down Roots Ceremonial Launch of Citywide Tree Canopy Program

APRIL 21, 2021: To launch the TreeSmart Santa Fe program, the City will sponsor a tree-planting on Arbor Day, Friday, April 30, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Rancho del Sol Park on the South Side of Santa Fe. Members of the public will join Mayor Webber and members of the City Council to help plant the first groves in the long-term effort to increase the shade canopy throughout the city. (Everyone will be masked and and maintain physical distance.)

TreeSmart Santa Fe is not just about planting more trees. It's about planting the right tree, in the right place, with the right resources, at the right time. Using data and an equity lens in project planning, we can leverage trees to cool our city, conserve energy and water, and enhance the quality of life in Santa Fe.

"There's no better way to celebrate Arbor Day than to plant a tree and begin our TreeSmart Santa Fe program," says Mayor Webber. "Trees mean so much to our community—beauty, shade, and neighborhood livability. It's only right that we're planting our first TreeSmart tree on our Southside."

Councilors Carol Romero-Wirth, Jamie Cassutt-Sanchez, Signe Lindell, Chris Rivera, and Renee Villarreal introduced the TreeSmart Resolution that was recently adopted by the Governing Body. Read it [here](#).

"An important reason to undertake this initiative is to reduce the heat-island effect in our neighborhoods, particularly on the Southside," Councilor Romero-Wirth says. "This public-private partnership will enable us to plant more trees on City-owned land, and we are also encouraging people to plant appropriately chosen trees on private property—from backyards to commercial parking lots. Sustainability in drought conditions is a core concept of the program. For instance, creating rain-gardens that collect water will support the growth of trees.

"The success of this program will depend entirely on a robust public-private partnership," Councilor Romero-Wirth continues. "The community can donate to a fund at the Santa Fe Community Foundation and to the Santa Fe Watershed Association."

In addition to those organizations, participating groups include the Municipal Tree Board, Bee City USA, Boys & Girls Club, Wildland Fire Group, and Keep Santa Fe Beautiful. A donor established a fund at the Community Foundation with a seed grant of \$30,000. The City plans to expend \$60,000 for TreeSmart Santa Fe in the proposed FY22 budget now under consideration in the City Council.

This collaboration between private partners and an inter-departmental team from the City's Parks, Water Conservation, and Environmental Services Divisions intends to put tree-inventory data into effective use with the long-term goals of: promoting equity between parts of town; protecting people from the wind; creating shade and cooling neighborhoods in summer and buffering them from the cold in winter; and combating the effects of climate change.

"I'm glad we're doing the first planting on the Southside, which needs more trees because it's hotter than the foothills," said Councilor Abeyta, the Chief Professional Officer of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Fe/Del Norte. "The Boys and Girls Club is getting involved for a lot of reasons. For one thing, a lot of these kids understand that if they plant trees today, they'll get to enjoy them for years to come. Maybe some day they'll come back with their kids and grandkids and with a big smile say, 'Hey, guess what? I planted that tree.'"

Three chinkapin oaks and one Rocky Mountain juniper will round out the first grove to be planted, but scores more will be planted in various locations by the end to 2022. "Fall is the best time to plant a tree, so we will have many more trees going in then," said Acting Parks Department Director Melissa McDonald, the operational manager of the program. "But springtime—before it gets too hot—is almost as good, so the Arbor Day event is right on time."

In support of the initiative, the City launched the website [TreeSmart Santa Fe](#) as an ongoing source of information; details about the Arbor Day event will also be posted there. Residents can use the site to participate by joining and/or donating to partner organizations.

Event: TreeSmart Santa Fe Planting and Launch

Where: Rancho del Sol Park, 6068 Monte Azul Place

When: Friday, April 30, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m

Who: Members of the public and the media are invited to join Mayor Webber and members of the City Council

Information: [TreeSmart Santa Fe](#)

Note: COVID-safe masking and distancing protocols will be observed.

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