


communities that demonstrate higher levels of tree care and community engagement. Major milestones, innovative forestry practices, and public engagement combine to build progressive urban forestry programs that this award recognizes. The City can earn this Growth Award every year alongside our Tree City USA recognition, demonstrating that our community is committed to caring for our trees and reinforces a long-standing reputation that Laguna is an area leader in environmental stewardship. Congratulations, Laguna Beach!

One of the ways the Tree City USA and the Growth Awards are earned is through refining public policy and planting trees in public space. The City's [Tree Removal and Planting Policy for Public Trees](#) was recently updated and adopted by City Council to better outline the planting process, define the process of planting a public tree in a new location, and gives nearby residents more of a voice in this process and the species selection. In the last 12 months, the City has planted 34 public trees, with 10 of these being planted in new locations, and nearly half (15) are a California native tree species. Planting trees in new locations is crucial to expanding canopy coverage and maximizing the health and infrastructure benefits that the urban forest provides.

I am often asked which is the better choice: planting larger or smaller sized trees? This is regarding the size of the tree at the time of planting, not its ultimate mature size. And it really depends on the tree-owner's threshold for cost, maintenance, and time. Tree roots grow at similar rates, regardless of age and size. Larger trees take longer to establish after planting and have lower rates of establishment than smaller trees. It takes more time to re-establish the root volume lost during the transplanting process. However, they do provide a robust and immediate impact. Smaller trees will establish more quickly, and have higher rates of establishment, but can lack to immediate visual impact on a landscape. So, the question comes down to whether you want that "WOW!" factor, but are willing to plant a replacement tree, or do you mind waiting for the smaller tree to grow into its space? No matter your preference, the **most important factor** after planting a new tree is *consistent* watering. Avoid over or under watering a newly planted tree by using a watering bag. Fill the 15 gal. reservoir 1-2 times per week, and the bag slowly releases the water over 6-8 hours.





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Through *LAGUNA ROOTS*, I will give periodic updates on Laguna's urban forestry program. Until then, feel free to contact me directly with any questions. You can also use [AskLaguna!](#) to submit a request for City services, including any tree related inquiries!