HSC-3: Street Trees

By intercepting rainfall, trees can provide several aesthetic and stormwater benefits including peak flow control, increased infiltration and ET, and runoff temperature reduction. The volume of precipitation intercepted by the canopy reduces the treatment volume required for downstream treatment BMPs. Shading reduces the heat island effect as well as the temperature of adjacent impervious surfaces, over which stormwater flows, and thus reduces the heat transferred to downstream receiving waters. Tree roots also strengthen the soil structure and provide infiltrative pathways, simultaneously reducing erosion potential and enhancing infiltration.

Also known as:

- *Canopy interception*

Street trees
Source: Geosyntec Consultants

Feasibility Screening Considerations

- Not applicable

Opportunity Criteria

- Street trees can be incorporated in green streets designs along sidewalks, streets, parking lots, or driveways.
- Street trees can be used in combination with bioretention systems along medians or in traffic calming bays.
- There must be sufficient space available to accommodate both the tree canopy and root system.

OC-Specific Design Criteria and Considerations

☐ Mature tree canopy, height, and root system should not interfere with subsurface utilities, suspended powerlines, buildings and foundations, or other existing or planned structures. Required setbacks should be adhered to.

☐ Depending on space constarints, a 20 to 30 foot diameter canopy (at maturity) is recommended for stormwater mitigation.

☐ Native, drought-tolerant species should be selected in order to minimize irrigation requirements and improve the long-term viability of trees.

☐ Trees should not impede pedstrian or vehicle sight lines.

☐ Planting locations should receive adequate sunlight and wind protection; other environmental factors should be considered prior to planting.

☐ Frequency and degree of vegetation management and maintenance should be considered with respect to owner capabilities (e.g., staffing, funding, etc.).

☐ Soils should be preserved in their natural condition (if appropriate for planting) or restored via soil amendments to meet minimum criteria described in MISC-2: Amended Soils. If necessary, a landscape architect or plant biologist should be consulted.

☐ A street tree selection guide, such as that specific to the City of Los Angeles, may need to be consulted to select species appropriate for the site design constraints (e.g., parkway size, tree height, canopy spread, etc.)

☐ Infiltration should not cause geotechnical hazards related to adjacent structures (buildings,

roadways, sidewalks, utilities, etc.)

Calculating HSC Retention Volume

- The retention volume provided by streets trees via canopy interception is dependent on the tree species, time of the year, and maturity.
- To compute the retention depth, the expected impervious area covered by the full tree canopy after 4 years of growth must be computed (IA_{HSC}). The maximum retention depth credit for canopy interception (d_{HSC}) is 0.05 inches over the area covered by the canopy at 4 years of growth.

Configuration for Use in a Treatment Train

- As a HSC, street trees would serve as the first step in a treatment train by reducing the treatment volume and flow rate of a downstream treatment BMP.

Additional References for Design Guidance

- California Stormwater BMP Handbook.
  http://www.cabmphandbooks.com/Documents/Development/Section_3.pdf
- City of Los Angeles, Street Tree Division - Street Tree Selection Guide.
  http://bss.lacity.org/UrbanForestryDivision/StreetTreeSelectionGuide.htm
- Portland Stormwater Management Manual.
  http://www.portlandonline.com/bes/index.cfm?c=35122&a=55791
- San Diego County – Low Impact Development Fact Sheets.
  http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/docs/LID-Appendices.pdf