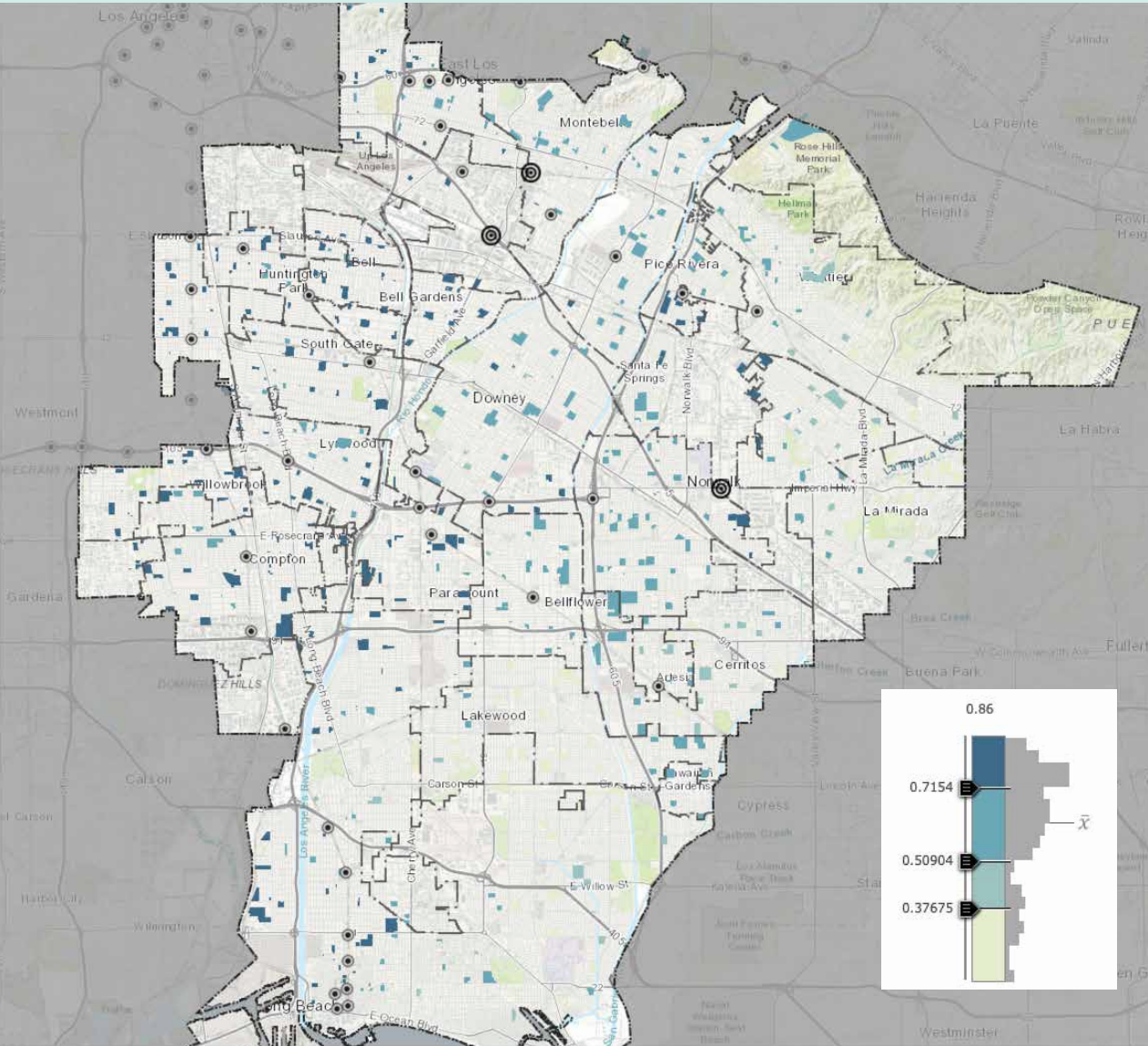# Gateway Cities & Rivers Urban Greening
# Methodology

## Greenscapes Development Methodology // Site Prioritization

**Greenscape Development Methodology**

Greenscapes are defined as potential urban greening opportunities by parcel or groupings of parcels, other polygons, or linear segments. There are 11 greenscape typologies that have been defined, and each is based on a multitude of factors ranging from land use and waterway adjacency, to park and amenity proximity, to current and planned mobility factors. After defining the intent of each Greenscape, the team developed a methodology to unearth layers of information in ArcGIS. Information was collected by mining open source geospatial data as well as customizing detailed research and inputting point and polygonal features into the ArcGIS environment. In tandem with GIS development, our research team culled through current planning information including each city's General Plan (with emphasis on Land Use and Mobility Elements), all relevant Specific Plans, Station Area Plans, development plans, and plans for identified waterway projects. This information was synthesized to give context to each city's potential for building a regional greening network within the Gateway Cities and Rivers Study Area. Ultimately, a human-identified rationale for project sites are critical to prioritizing greenscape opportunities. The prioritized sites can be thought of as a shortlist for community members and agencies to weigh in on and implement as funding becomes available, and as specified per community input.

**Greenscapes Mapped in the Underlying Base Layers**

Below are the 11 Greenscape Typologies that have been mapped for the Study Area.  Note that only Priority Greenscape Opportunity Sites are visible in the city maps in the initial mapping state.  However, by toggling on the layers in the upper right corner of the maps, you will be able to see all potential greenscape sites.
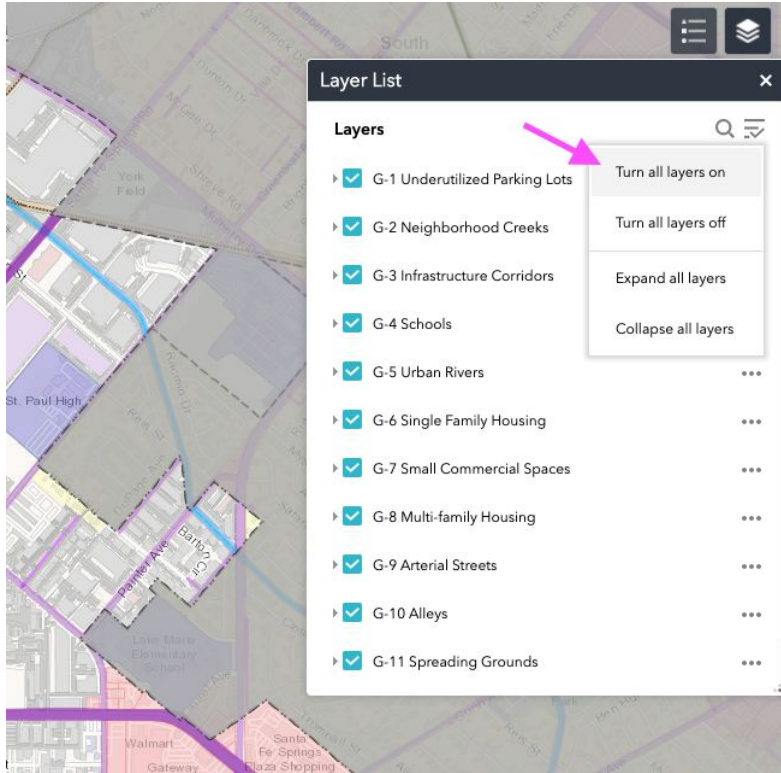
**G-1 UNDERUTILIZED PARKING LOTS**

Intention

To transform portions of underutilized parking lots to shaded, tree-lined permeable urban plazas to create new recreational options for park-poor communities.

Site Selection

While parking lots are ubiquitous in the Gateway Cities area, the focus is meant to be exclusively on industrial and government-owned properties where parking spaces are not at a premium. As such, from a dataset of parking lots from Los Angeles County from 2014 (the latest data), only those in a parcel that is industrial or publicly owned (but not a school or park) were selected.

**G-2 NEIGHBORHOOD CREEKS**

Intention

To bring active transportation options, improved access, and health benefits to communities that could easily walk or bike to a number of destinations within a short distance to a residential community, but are often impeded by infrastructural barriers such as channelized creeks that bifurcate natural connections.

Site Selection

Neighborhood Creeks are classified as subregional and local creeks. Upper Compton Creek and the smaller tributaries off the larger channelized creeks and rivers in the study area are included.

**G-3 INFRASTRUCTURE CORRIDORS**

Intention
To activate underutilized land situated along rail lines and electrical corridors by creating open space programming for neighboring communities. To transform these spaces into community gardens, pop-up programming, and bike paths. To provide supporting amenities such as benches, drinking fountains, bike stations and equestrian hitching posts, as appropriate.

Site Selection
Parcels with overhead public utility lines that are vacant, or are underutilized; parcels with railroad corridors that are vacant or active with additional right-of-way to provide for urban greening.

**G-4 SCHOOLS**
**Greener Environments for Learning**
Intention
To reduce the heat island effect at K-12 learning environments which more often than not, have an abundance of impervious paving surfaces in both playgrounds and parking lots. Cool and permeable pavements and opportunities for creating gardens would also provide health and education benefits.

Site Selection
Public and private K-12 schools.  Sites 2-acres and more that have low permeability were prioritized.

**G-5 URBAN RIVERS**
**Reconnecting Communities to River Greenways**
Intention
To transform "back of house" zones along the major urban rivers into "front doors". To increase the amount of "eyes on the street" as it relates to river trail usages, including adding trail heads and building awareness of the urban rivers as spaces to bike and walk and creating attractive looking adjacent parcels. To encourage best management practices as they relate to traditionally back door spaces along river frontages.

Site Selection
Parcels adjacent to the major urban rivers including the Lower Compton Creek, Lower Los Angeles River, San Gabriel River, Rio Hondo and Coyote Creek. Includes vacant land, and land

zoned as industrial, commercial, mixed-use residential commercial, excluding housing except for Mobile Home Communities which are included. As the river plans evolve, so too will the policy that designates land uses adjacent to the urban rivers. Projects were prioritized based on a "distance shed", which means, giving priority to segments of the rivers that require walking a further distance to an existing trailhead. Ideally, community members would have access to the river trails about every ¼ mile.

## G-6 SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING

### Bringing Nature Back, One Home at a Time

Intention

To dramatically reduce turf lawn areas and replace with low water needs native plantings, shade trees, permeable pathways and driveways that infiltrate stormwater and help create a thriving eco-friendly landscape full of birds, butterflies, and natural beauty.

Site Selection

Single family residential properties that are not in areas of high need. While most greenscapes are proposed to build equity and increase park area for disadvantaged communities, the conversion of grass yards to xeriscaped lawns is most realistic for development by residential home owners who are not seeking grant funding. Sites with household incomes of $100K and above were prioritized.

## G-7 SMALL COMMERCIAL SPACES

### The New Community Hub

Intention

To redesign parking lot edges to manage stormwater runoff from commercial buildings and parking lots while also improving the streetscape experience at the sidewalk. To encourage walking between shopping experiences and encourage the use of transit to shopping by creating comfortable and well-lit bus shelters and parkway shade trees, and cooling with bioswales. To support the informal vending economy by carving out space for pop-up vendors.

Site Selection

Commercial strip-malls and storefront commercial districts and downtown ground-floor retail and services. Sites were prioritized for areas with high bus ridership and urban heat islands.

## G-8 MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

### Built for People

Intention

To reduce turf lawn areas and replace with low water needs native plantings, shade trees and

permeable pathways. Shared driveways with decorative pavers can infiltrate stormwater and become informal gathering places for residents.

Site Selection

Parcels zoned for Multi-family residential including R2 (duplexes).  Households without access to a vehicle were given priority.

**G-9 ARTERIAL STREETS**

**Green Streets, Cool Streets, Complete Streets, and Living Streets**

Intention

To redefine expansive roadways into desirable places for people to bike or walk by building complete streets projects and, where possible, increasing the amount of continuous protected bike lanes. On non-bicycle friendly streets, provide opportunities for Greenways to Rivers Arterial Stormwater System (GRASS) implementation.

Site Selection

Arterial Streets as defined by their classification as Primary or Secondary routes. Complete Streets and Bicycle Streets as designated by relevant Transportation & Mobility Elements or Bicycle Master Plans are overlaid and sometimes included as separate segments on streets that are not Primary or Secondary. Relevant attribute data like existing active transportation planning is incorporated into Arterial Streets.

GRASS projects have been identified for Smart Corridors identified by the Gateway Cities Council of Governments. These streets are used primarily for goods movement and have the potential to incorporate parkways that infiltrate stormwater.

**G-10 ALLEYS**

**From Grey Alleys to Green Alleys**

Intention

To transform an underutilized network of residential alleys into an attractive and functional neighborhood amenity for residences. To facilitate social cohesion, sense of ownership and community stewardship. To facilitate surface permeability and store water for recycled uses. To improve the safety of alleys as places to walk and play.

Site Selection

Alleys that are continuous from street to street and are opportune alternatives to slow down vehicular traffic and provide safe and calm places to walk to schools, parks and shopping. Driveways and private roads are not included.

**G-11 SPREADING GROUNDS**

**Hidden Potential**

<u>Intention</u>

To redefine a spreading basin into an inviting landscape. Maximize available space for recreational trails, overlooks and pocket parks, making the land more accessible.

<u>Site Selection</u>

There are four spreading grounds in the Gateway Cities and Rivers Study Area. Some of the spreading grounds already have implemented park amenities and xeriscaped trails. Opportune sites are the high ground areas for trails and overlooks that connect to existing trail heads, schools, parks and communities that have "eyes on the street".

**Site Prioritization Methodology**

In order to prioritize the greenscape opportunity sites, a comprehensive screening layer was created, and geographically divided into census tracts, folding in the following data:

- **Los Angeles Countywide Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment** This screen not only includes an overall "score" by community (basically municipalities and some smaller divisions), but also details the number of park acres per community and rates park need as the following on a five-point scale: Very High (5), High (4), Moderate (3), Low (2), and Very Low (1), and zero (0).
- **CalEnviroScreen 3.0** Indicators for CalEnviroScreen include measures of Pollution Burden (this includes exposures to pollutants and environmental effects), and Population Characteristics (includes sensitive populations such as high asthma rates, cardiovascular disease and low birth-weight infants; as well as socioeconomic factors such as poverty, unemployment and linguistic isolation).

For this Urban Greening Vision Plan, each potential greenscape is scored from a scale of 0-100. All sites have some level of potential and benefit to the community, but for the purpose of seeking funding and spending sweat equity, a score of 0 reflects the lowest priority and a score of 100 reflects the highest priority. The highlighted opportunity sites selected for this project reflect the highest priority greenscapes. If you are interested in seeing all underlying potential greenscape opportunities, toggle on the layers in the upper right corner of the interactive city maps.

| | Greenscapes | Sites | Selection |
|---|---|---|---|
| G-1 | Underutilized Parking Lots | 9 | selections include multiple sites (so small that it was easier to agglomerate) |
| G-2 | Neighborhood Creeks | 28 | includes top ranked sites |
| G-3 | Infrastructure Corridors | 60 | includes top 25 ranked sites |
| G-4 | Schools | 75 | all sites are top ranking 2-acres+, Elementary + Middle Schools |
| G-5 | Urban Rivers | 62 | includes 27 sites with score of 66+ and over qtr mile travel shed |
| G-6 | Single Family Housing | 29 | top ranking high income ($100K+) census tracts |
| G-7 | Small Commercial Spaces | 36 | some are summarized by corridor rather than parcel |
| G-8 | Multi-Family Housing | 23 | includes top ranked sites |
| G-9 | Arterial Streets | 130 | hand-picked based on transportation plans (Metro, COG, Mobility Elements, Bicycle MPlans) |
| G-10 | Alleys | 34 | scores range from 71+ |
| G-11 | Spreading Grounds | 6 | breaks down sites into upper/lower, east/west banks |
| | **Total Sites Identified** | **492** | |

# 200428 WCA GG Opportunities Tally

| | City Profiles | Total Sites | Most Prominent Priority Greenscapes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Artesia | 5 | Infra, SCS |
| 2 | Bell | 24 | Infra, Schools, SCS, Arterials, Alleys |
| 3 | Bellflower | 23 | Infra, Schools, Urban Rivers, SCS, MFH |
| 4 | Bell Gardens | 12 | Infra, Schools, Urban Rivers, SCS, MFH |
| 5 | Cerritos/Uninc. Cerritos | 16 | Infra, Urban Rivers, SFH, Arterials |
| 6 | Commerce | 10 | Urban Rivers, Arterials, Alleys |
| 7 | Compton/Uninc. Compton | 41 | Neighborhood Creeks, Infra, Schools, Urban Rivers, MFH, Arterials, Alleys |
| 8 | Cudahy | 12 | Infra, Schools, MFH, UPlots |
| 9 | Downey | 21 | UPlots, Infra, Schools, Urban Rivers, SCS, Arterials |
| 10 | Hawaiian Gardens | 6 | Neighborhood Creeks, Urban Rivers, SCS, Arterials |
| 11 | Huntington Park | 22 | Infra, Schools, SCS, MFH, Arterials, Alleys |
| 12 | La Habra Heights/Uninc. La Habra Heights | 4 | Neighborhood Creeks, Arterials |
| 13 | La Mirada | 9 | Neighborhood Creeks, SCS, Arterials |
| 14 | Lakewood/Uninc. Lakewood | 9 | Neighborhood Creeks, Arterials |
| 15 | Long Beach | 129 | Neighborhood Creeks, Infra, Schools, Urban Rivers, SFH, MFH, Arterials, Alleys, Spreading Grounds |
| 16 | Lynwood | 9 | Arterials, Alleys |
| 17 | Maywood | 13 | Schools, SCS, Arterials |
| 18 | Montebello | 12 | Schools, SCS, Arterials |
| 19 | Norwalk | 11 | Schools, SCS, Arterials |
| 20 | Paramount | 18 | Infra, Urban Rivers, Arterials |
| 21 | Pico Rivera | 13 | Schools, Urban Rivers, Arterials, Spreading Grounds |
| 22 | Santa Fe Springs | 7 | Schools, Arterials |
| 23 | Signal Hill | 3 | Infra, Arterials |
| 24 | South Gate | 29 | Infra, Schools, Urban Rivers, Arterials, Alleys |
| 25 | Vernon/Uninc. Vernon | 13 | Infra, Urban Rivers, Arterials |
| 26 | Whittier | 21 | SFH, SCS, Arterials |
| | | | |
| | **Opportunity Sites Identified** | **492** | |