

# Permitting a *Neighborhood* Rain, Tree, and Understory Planting in Tucson, AZ

compiled by Brad Lancaster 7-2020

1. Online go to the [PAG Green Infrastructure Prioritization Tool map](https://gismaps.pagnet.org/PAG-GIMap/map.aspx) (<https://gismaps.pagnet.org/PAG-GIMap/map.aspx>) and plug in one of the addresses where you'll be doing the planting work. Then expand the view to include all the areas in your neighborhood where you will be doing the plantings. If the map is not working for you, try viewing it on a different web browser.

2. Then click on/open the Legend (lower left corner of screen). Once the legend is open, click on/choose the boxes for the following layers to be added to the map (figure 1):

- Drainage Pathways – then its Flowline sub-box
- Percent Tree Canopy Cover by Census Block
- Washes

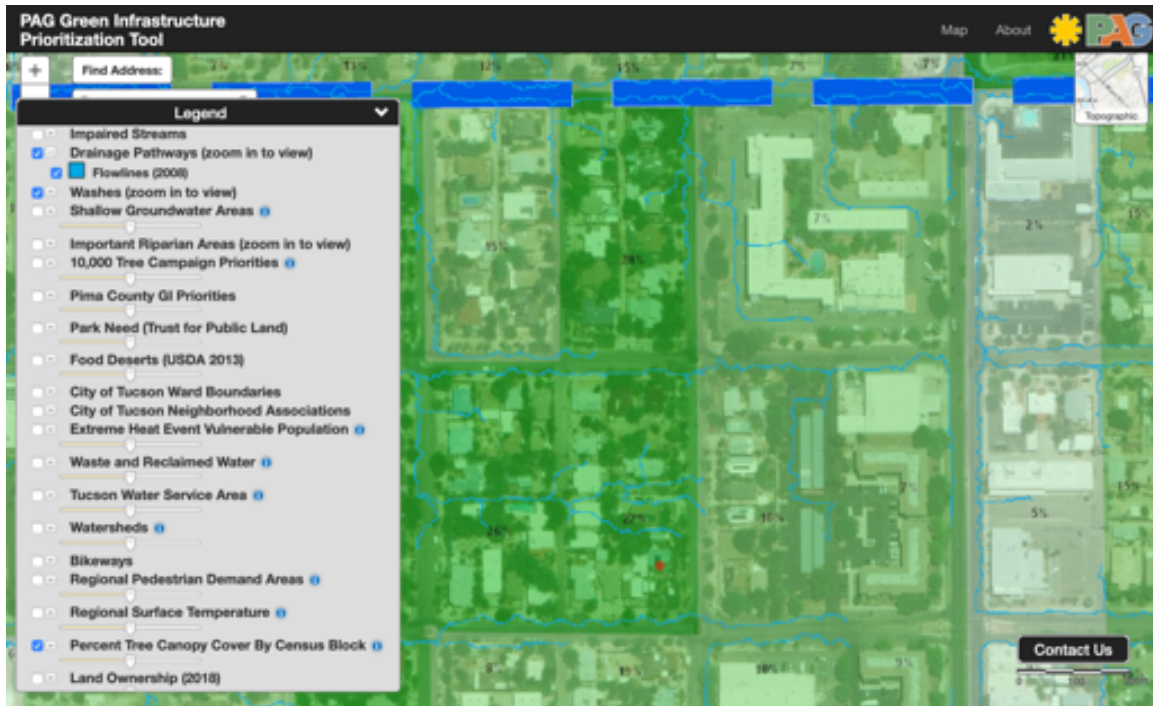


Figure 1.

### 3. Close the Legend, and take a look

I think the resulting image is really cool (figure 2)! Different shades of green plus a percentage number show you how tree canopy covers by block. Shows you where your neighborhood is doing better and worse.

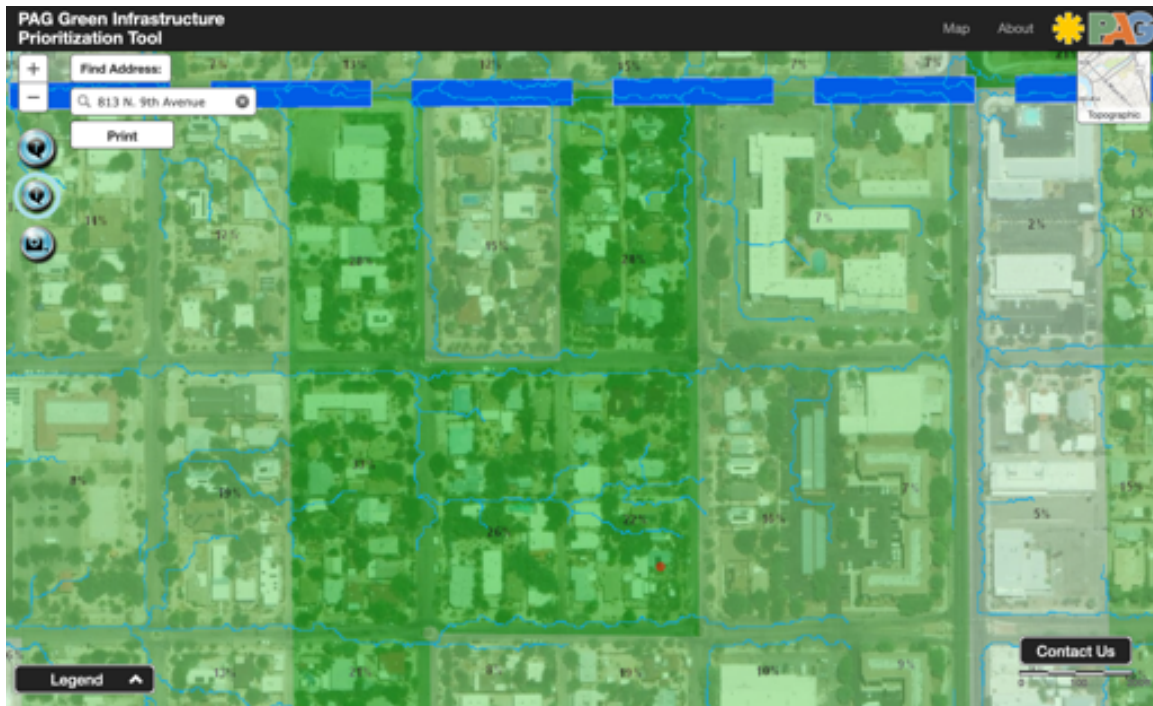


Figure 2

The **red dot** on the map above shows my place.

According to the map, in 2020 the **tree canopy** on my block is 22% (a huge improvement over what it used to be, but we can still do a whole lot better). Compare that to adjoining blocks. You can see where the neighborhood is doing better and worse in terms of canopy. And you can monitor change over time by taking screen shots of the map every year.

**Light blue lines** show main paths of stormwater flow, but these may differ from reality – so it is best to confirm flow paths by observing real flow during rainstorms. Best to focus installation of street-side water-harvesting basins with curb cuts/cores where they will receive runoff to help irrigate the plantings. If all the water flows away from your planting area—perhaps to the middle, or other side of the street—then there is no point in cutting the curb as there won't be any runoff from the street to flow into your basin.

**Darker blue dashed line** signifies a bigger water way—in this case the West University Wash.

**4. Take a screen shot of the map that includes all the areas in your neighborhood where you will be doing the plantings.**

On my Mac computer I do this by pressing the Command, Shift, and “4” keys simultaneously. A plus symbol then appears on my screen. With my mouse or trackpad, I move the plus symbol to the perimeter of the area I want to capture in the screenshot. I then click and hold, a rectangle appears which I can expand or shrink as I move my cursor. When I release the click on my mouse or trackpad, the screen shot is taken.

**5. Print your screen shot, and draw a polygon shape that connects all your planting sites (the lines going along streets or alleys). With an “X” mark each planting site (figure 3). Write the address of all the sites on the page—preferably numerically and by street.**

By connecting all the planting sites in a neighborhood this way, you can very often get all the addresses under one permit, which saves a lot of money since you then divide the one permit cost among all the sites, rather than each site having its own permit.

If working in two different neighborhoods for a planting get one permit per neighborhood. (You may also have to do this if working in two distant areas on opposite ends of a large neighborhood).

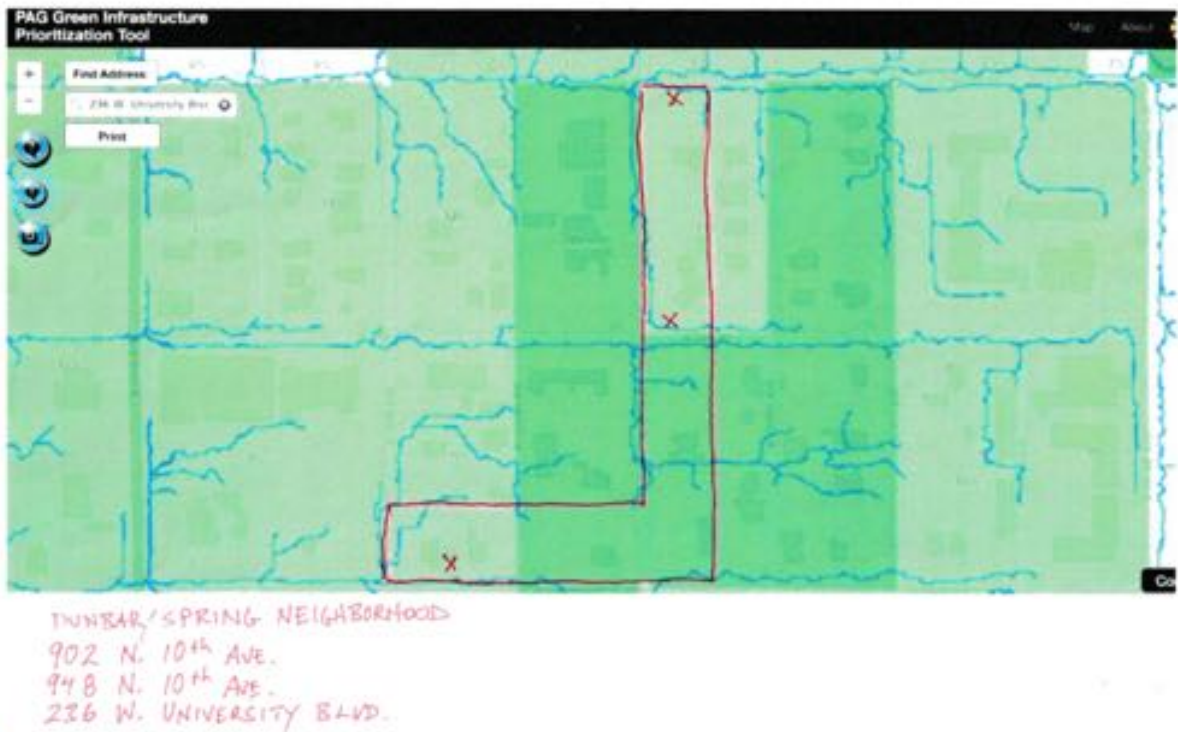


Figure 3.

**6. Print out a list of all the addresses (ideally ordered numerically, and by street) where you'll be doing the plantings, along with the contact info for each adjoining property owner(s), a description of the work that will be done and a list of the vegetation to be planted at each site, and the [blue stake number](#) for each site (blue stake is a free service that marks the locations of your underground utility lines).**

[See example List of Planting Sites & Work here](#)

**7. Get the [maintenance agreement](#) filled out and signed for every site**

**8. Download and fill out a current permit form**

[https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/transportation/ROW\\_Application\\_2018\\_Rev112018.pdf](https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/transportation/ROW_Application_2018_Rev112018.pdf)

If using contractors, you'll need their contact info and contractor license number for the permit form.

**9. Go to the City of Tucson Transportation Department administration counter (with all documents above) to file, and pay for, your permit.**

5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Development Services building, 201 N. Stone Ave, north wing.

*Note 1: permit turnaround is supposed to only take 3 days, but it can take up to 10 work days for the city to issue a permit after receiving your paperwork and payment, so make sure you schedule your permit application and your on-the-ground work accordingly!*

*Note 2: Depending on how the City classifies the streets where you'll be working, you may need to get a Barricade Plan from a local barricade rental company. The City will tell you if you need this or not based on your plantings' locations.*

See a Barricade Plan example on page 7 of the [Example Permit for Neighborhood Planting](#)

*A barricade plan should only be needed on higher traffic streets, not a typical residential neighborhood street.*

*If the City says you need a barricade plan on a neighborhood street, ask them to*

*explain why. If they insist you need one, get it then come back again to submit the permit.*

*Note 3: It can take up to 4-5 days to get a barricade plan from a barricade company. So schedule accordingly.*

**10. Once you receive your permit, the work can begin.**