

working for clean rivers



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CITY OF PORTLAND

working for clean rivers

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Can equity metrics help achieve equity goals?

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prepared for the Urban Ecosystem Research Consortium annual symposium
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Environmental Services | Working for Clean Rivers



Environmental Services Tree Program (ESTP)

- Our work: **outreach**, education, **planting**, establishment pruning, technical support, monitoring
- **Strong reliance on partnerships** with public partners, community groups, property owners, and volunteers
- **Planted over 45,000 trees** with partners in the built environment over the past nine years. Wow!
- **Focus (not exclusive):** low-tree canopy, low-income, racially diverse communities



ESTP Program Overview | How We Plan Our Work

Focus areas

- Stormwater system priority areas
- Low-canopy, low-income (UFAP Goal 3)
- Communities of color (Portland Racial Equity Goals, 2015)

Focus locations

- City rights-of-way (street trees)
- Spaces that will support a large-form tree

Focus species

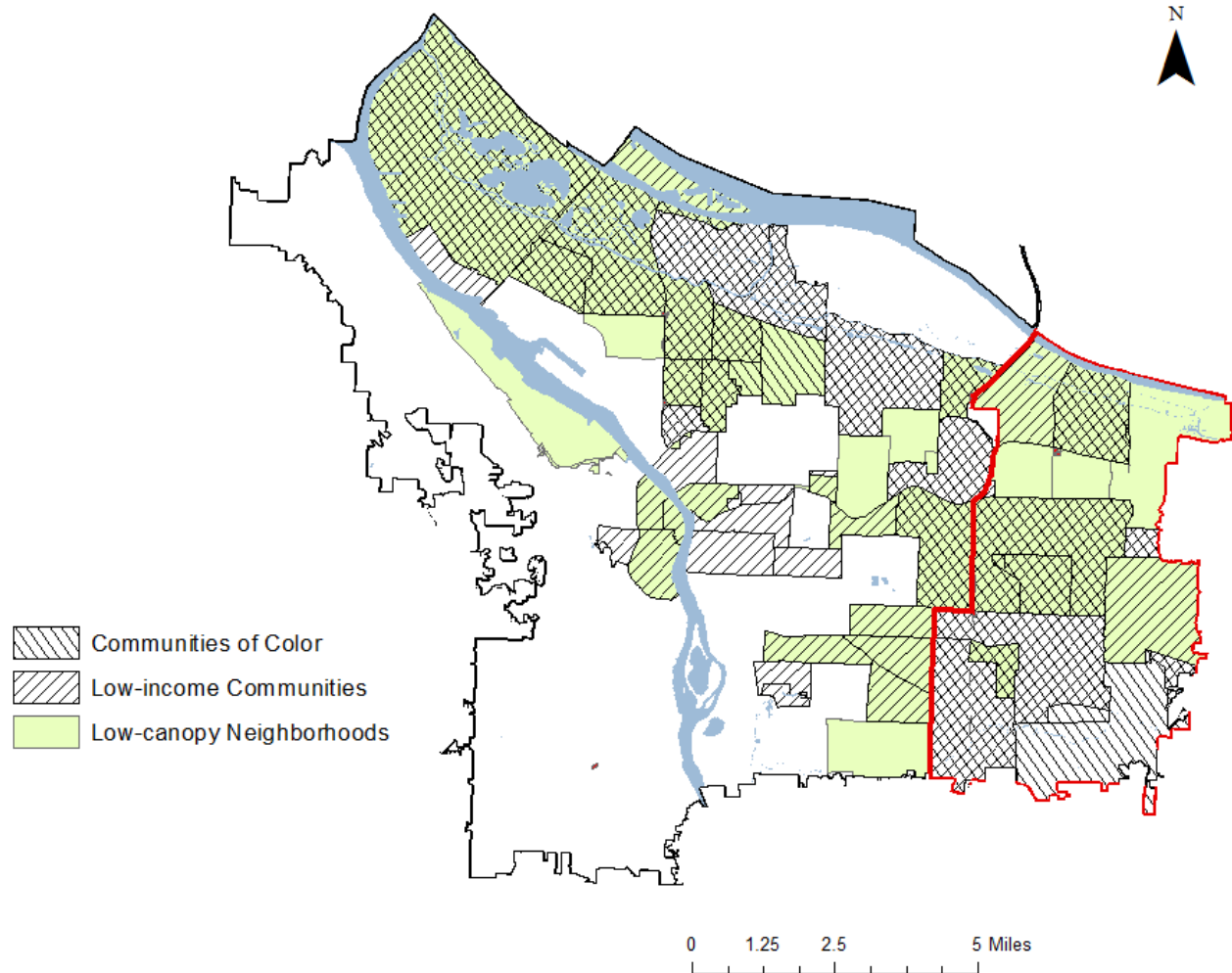
- Large form, native, evergreen, non-nuisance
- Species diversity

No street tree gets planted without the consent of the adjacent property owner, so

outreach focus ≠ planting result



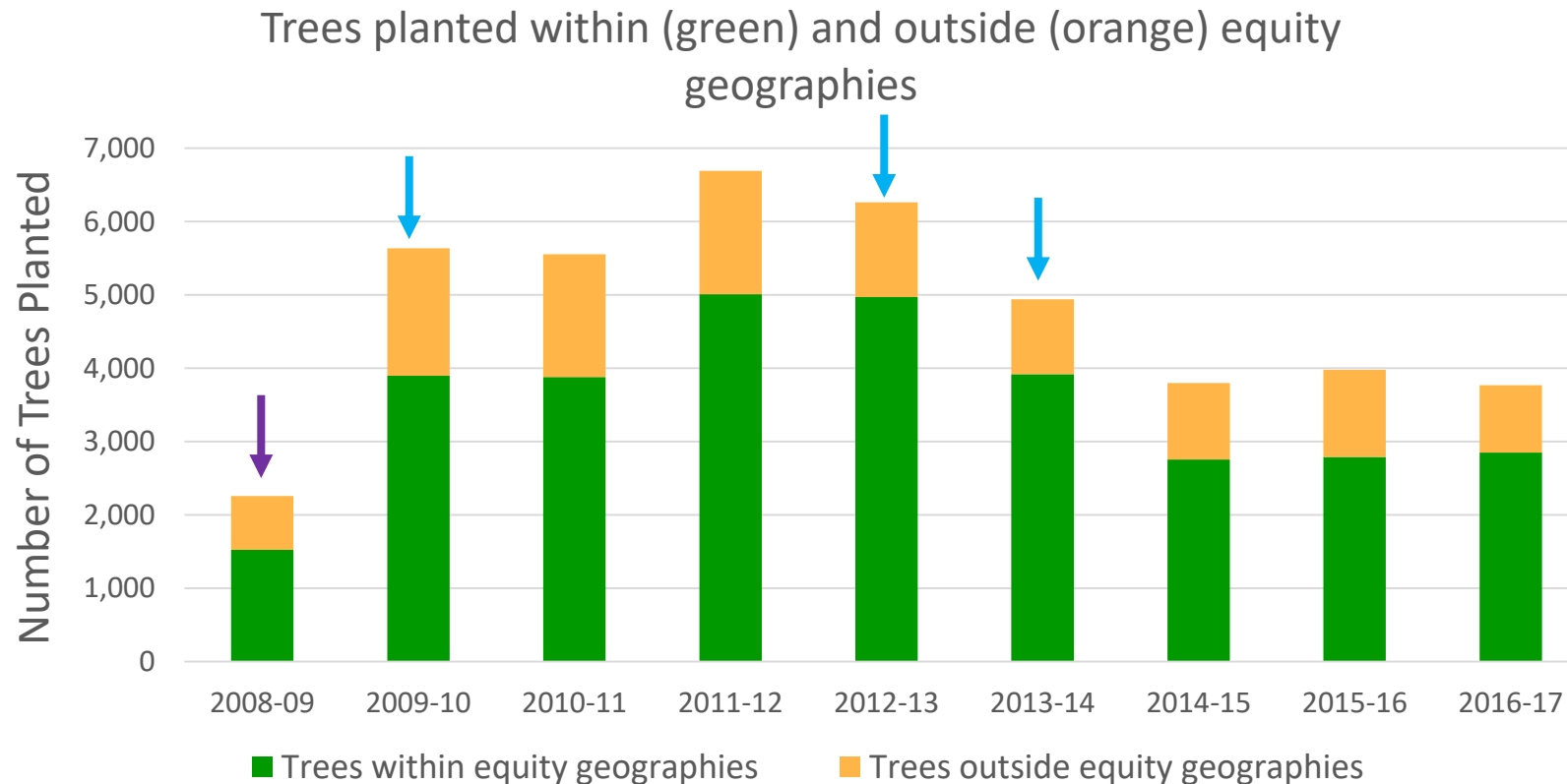
Equity Geographies (Neighborhoods)



- Low-canopy: <25% tree canopy cover in residential areas (Metro 2014 1 m LiDAR)
- Low-income: proportion of households earning $\leq 80\%$ MFI is greater than the citywide average (41%)(ACS 2009-2013)
- Communities of Color: proportion of population who identified as “not white alone” is greater than the citywide average (27.6%)(ACS 2009-13)
- East Portland—184 trees (2004-2008)



Trees Planted (2008-2017)

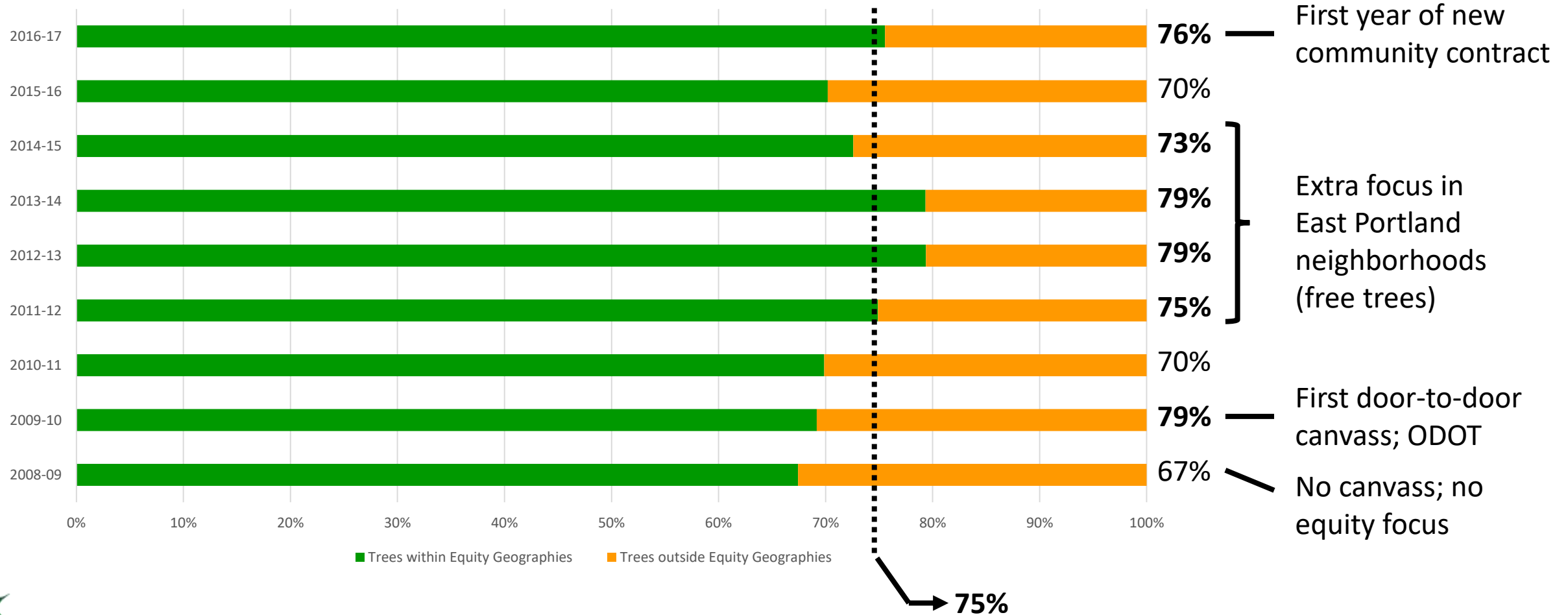


- # trees planted/year ranges from ~2,200-6,700
- Average 75% within equity geographies
 - Year 1 (67%)
 - Years 2, 5, 6 (79%)



Trees Planted (2008-2017)

Trees planted within (green) and outside (orange) equity geographies



Expected vs. Achieved | 2016-17 Outreach and Planting

- **76%** of available street tree planting spaces* are in equity geographies
- **85%** of customers signed up through the canvass live in equity geographies
- **76%** of trees planted in equity geographies

*primarily east of Willamette River



Can Equity Metrics Help Achieve Equity Goals?

- **Yes!** Only 2/3 of trees planted where most needed without equity focus
- Focus on equity geographies necessary but insufficient—other tools/strategies get more Portlanders involved



Contract Tools

- Minimum 75% service delivery in equity geographies
- Resources for community benefit organizations (~\$275K/5 years)



Community Partnerships (a few examples)—modest but mighty

- Jade Greening Coalition (7-fold increase in signups with APANO)
- Confluence AmeriCorps, PPT, and ELAs

