The issue(s):

* Climate change compounds stressors like the heat island effect, pest outbreaks, and drought.
* Ecosystem services and resilience depend on a healthy diverse urban forest.
* Well informed street tree species selection is crucial to improve the diversity and functionality of the urban forest.

Key findings:

* Professionals prioritize tolerance of urban stressors over other major selection criteria.
* Though ecosystem services are rated as second most important, professionals lack the information necessary to apply these concepts to tangible tree selection decisions.

Discussion:

* A higher percentage of trees encouraged by public horticulture professionals are “rare” in the urban forest. (*p=0.003*)

Research questions:

* Which selection criteria do tree planting professionals prioritize, and which tree species do professionals associate with valued characteristics?
* Furthermore, what knowledge gaps exist between relevant professional groups?

Methods:

* Semi-structured interviews in the Philadelphia area as part of an in-depth case study.
* An online survey of professionals in the USA and Canada.

Additional information available on new potentially good urban trees is limited. Professionals are risk-averse and avoid planting unproven trees. Public gardens and other collaborations may have a role in searching for and evaluating potential urban trees, as well as sharing applicable information on these new or rare species.