

# Urban Insights

better choices for healthier cities, one pixel at a time

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# Thank you!



TEXAS TECH  
UNIVERSITY.

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*Professor of Environmental Science, Texas Tech University*



METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
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*Master of City Planning (MCP), MIT  
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# IMAGINE



# Urban Insights

## *Problem*



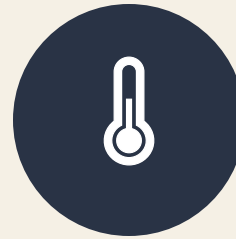
Worst Drought in  
California in 1200 years!

## *Solution*



Land Cover\*  
Detection &  
Classification  
Insights

## *Use Cases*



Impact on  
Microclimate and  
Correlation with  
Median Household

## *Deliverables*



Research Paper,  
API & Website

\*land cover indicates the physical land type such as water, grass, trees, impervious surfaces, soil and turf

# Welcome to Urban Insights

Better choices for healthier cities... One pixel at a time!

[Read More](#)

ABOUT

## OUR MISSION



# Contents

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# Data Sets

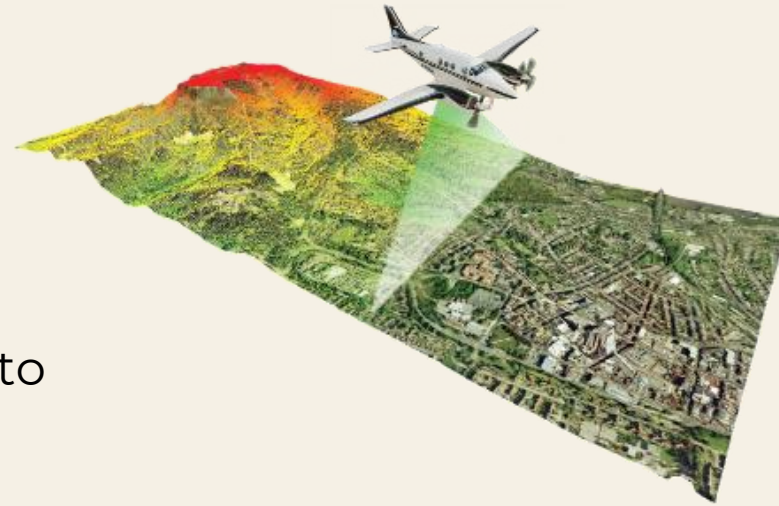
## 1. NAIP

Extract Aerial Images Containing 4 Channels:

- **Red**
- **Green**
- **Blue**
- **Near-Infrared**

Apply transformations to  
extract insights, e.g.:

$$\text{NDVI} = \frac{\text{NIR} - \text{Red}}{\text{NIR} + \text{Red}}$$



## 2. CENSUS

## 3. Land Surface Temperature Data



$0 < \text{NDVI} < 0.33$



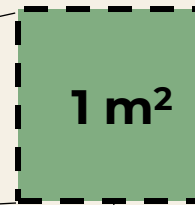
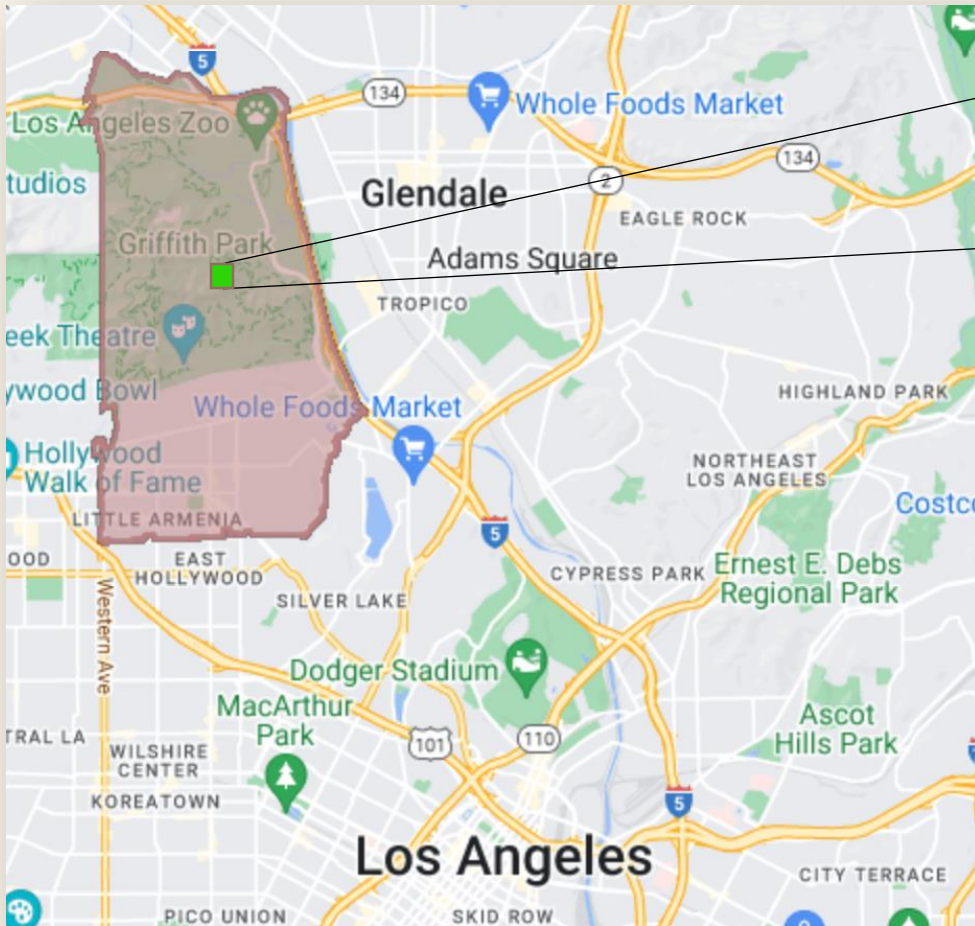
$0.33 < \text{NDVI} < 1$

\***NAIP**: National Agriculture Imagery Program

\***NDVI**: Normalized Difference Vegetation Index

# Implementation

Google Earth Engine 



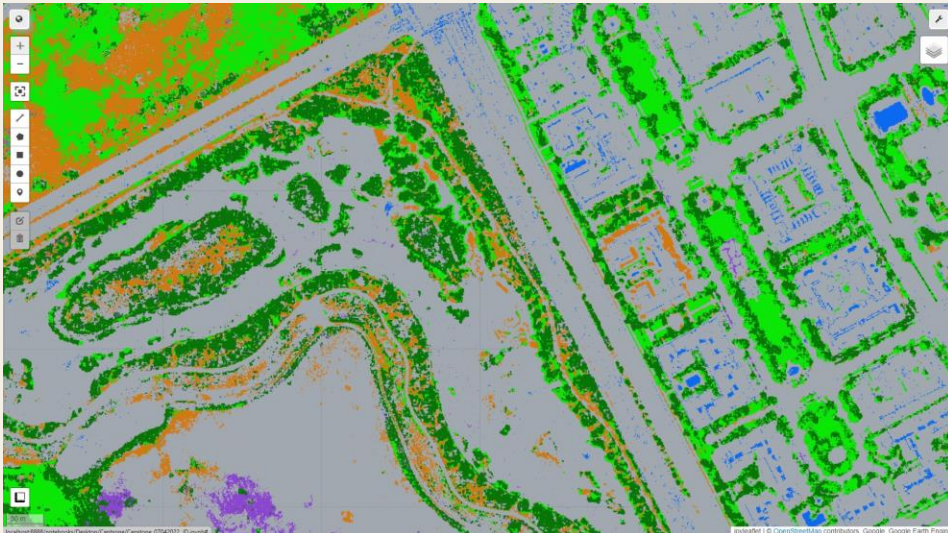
**CLASS** = GRASS

**FEATURES** = [  
R,  
G,  
B,  
NIR,  
NDVI,  
NIR\_Entropy,  
NIR\_Contrast,  
NIR\_Gearys  
]

1 m<sup>2</sup> : 1 square meter



# GEE Baseline Model



- 80/20 split on pixels → 80/20 split on polygons
- GEE\* provided ML toolkit (Random Forest)
- Macro  $F_1$

## Classes Classified by the Model

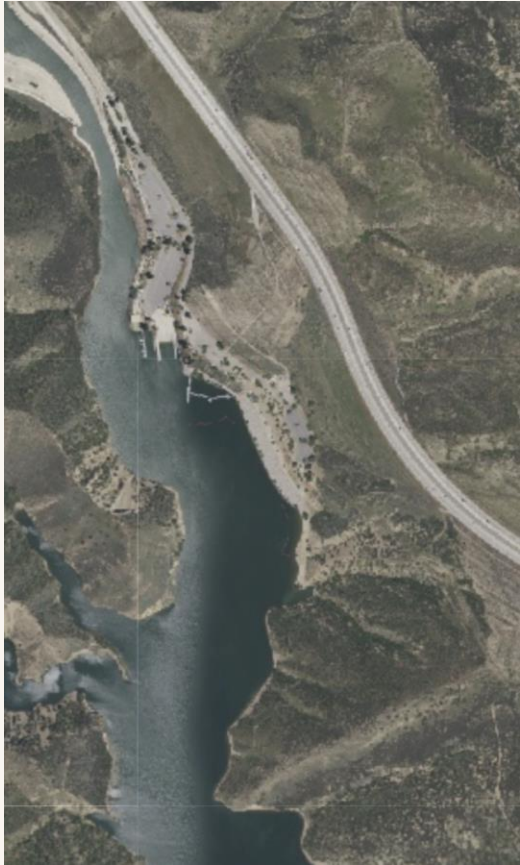
- Water
- Trees
- Grass
- Turf
- Impervious
- Soil

\*Google Earth Engine



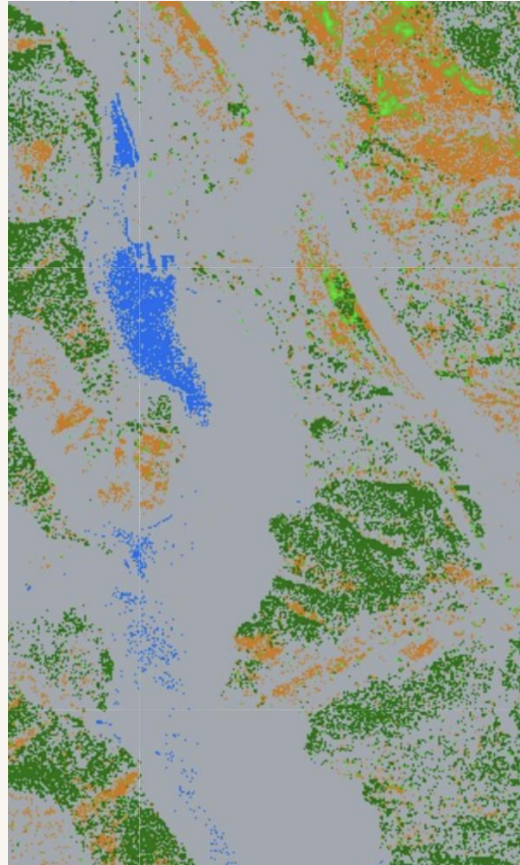
# Model Iterations

Satellite Image



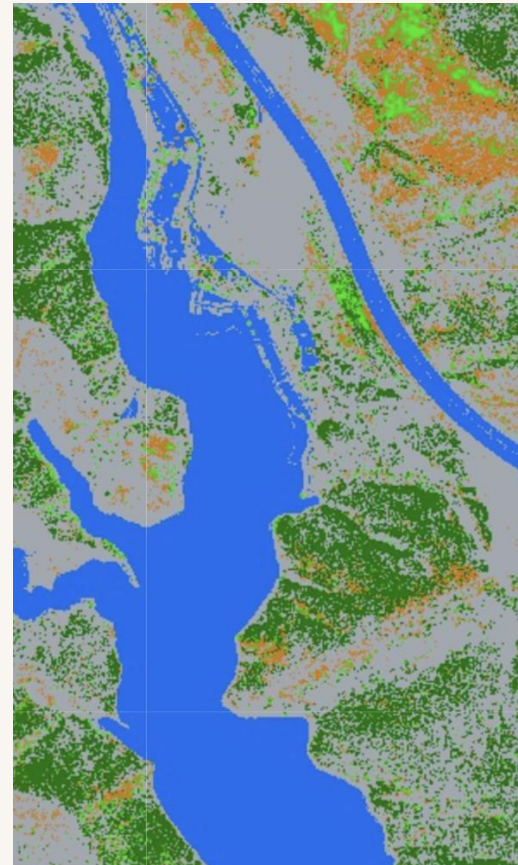
NAIP Image

Neural Net V1



Biased towards  
impervious

Neural Net V2



Biased towards water

Neural Net Ensemble

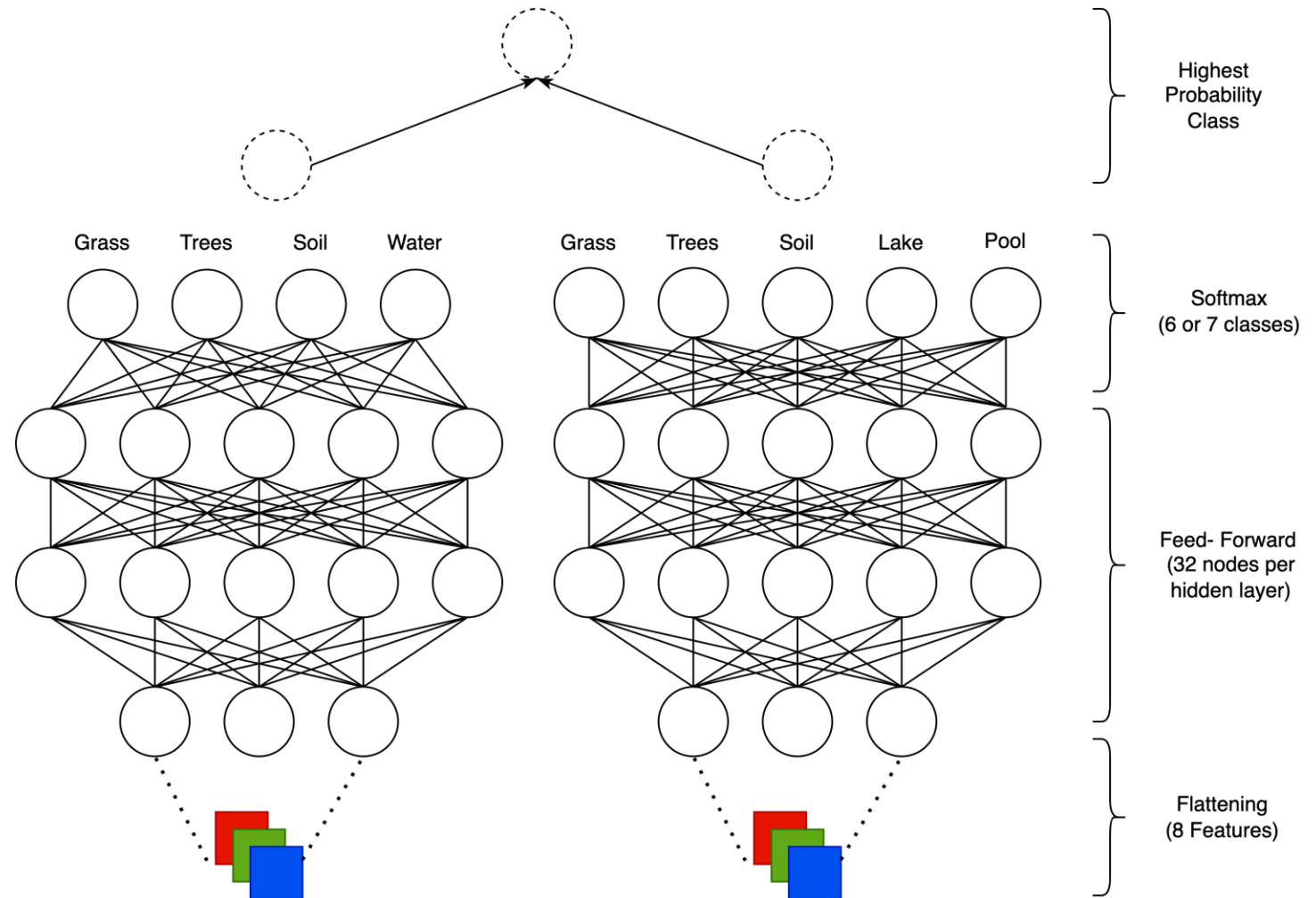


Max probability class  
from both models

# Neural Network Ensemble Model

## Hyperparameters

Layers	3
Nodes	32
Dropout	0.05
Learning Rate (Adam)	0.01
Activation	ReLU
Batch Size	120





# Model Performance Comparison

F <sub>1</sub> Score	Baseline (RF)	Neural Net V1	Neural Net V2	Ensemble
grass	0.88	0.88	0.89	0.90
trees	0.85	0.80	0.86	0.85
turf	0.84	0.94	0.91	0.93
soil	0.92	0.92	0.94	0.94
impervious	0.86	0.87	0.89	0.89
natural water	---	---	0.77	---
pool water	---	---	0.99	---
all water	0.67	0.84	---	0.99
Macro F <sub>1</sub> Average	0.84	0.88	0.89	0.92

# Correlation with Median Household Income

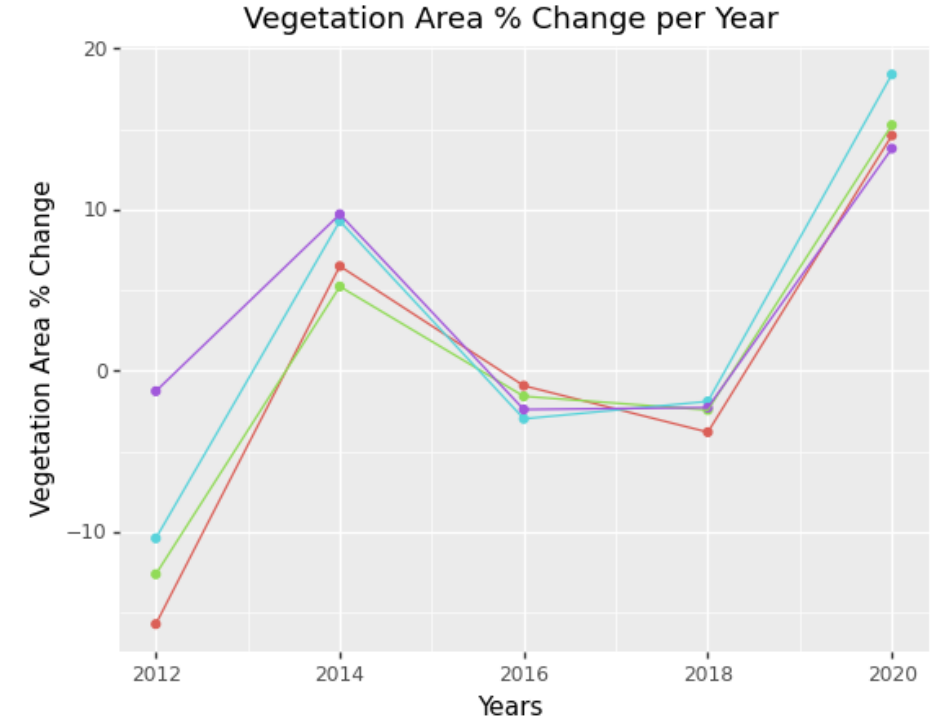
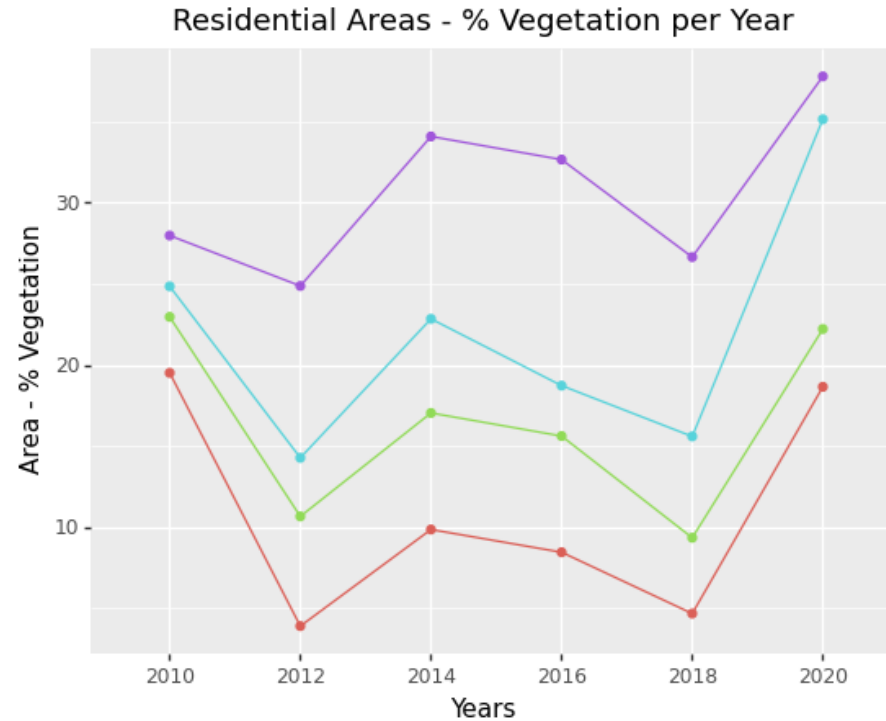


2.97%

Area Increase for every  
10K USD in Median  
Household Income

0.5%

Rate of Change Positive  
Increase for every 30K USD  
in Median House Income



## Income Group

- Less than 47K
- Less than 63K
- Less than 83K
- More than 83K

# Impact on Microclimate



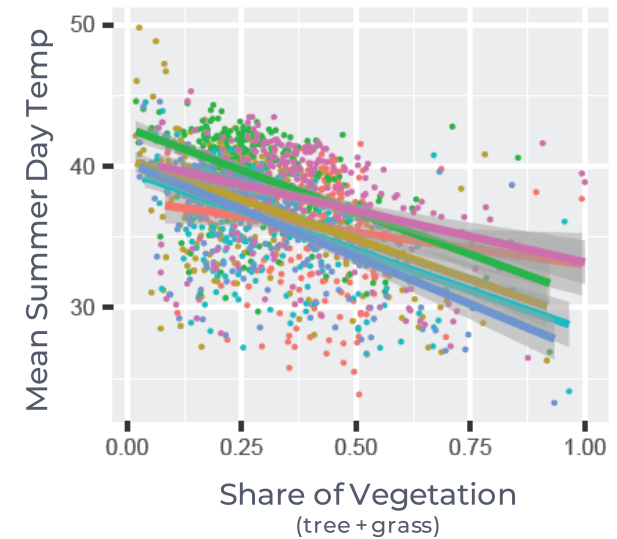
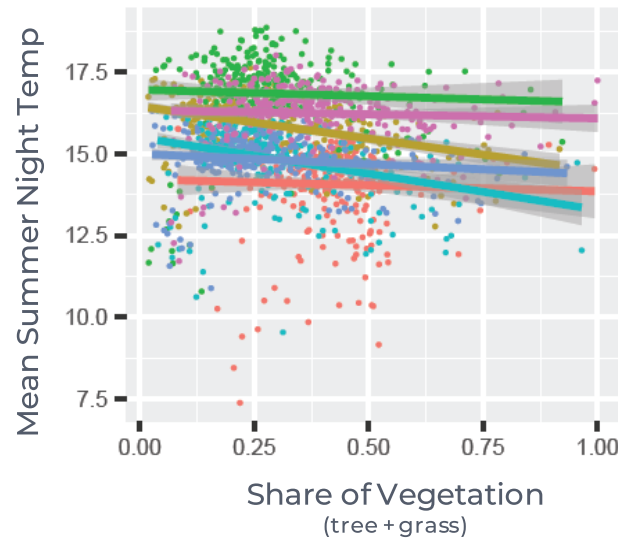
-2.25° C

Grass areas are on average cooler than impervious

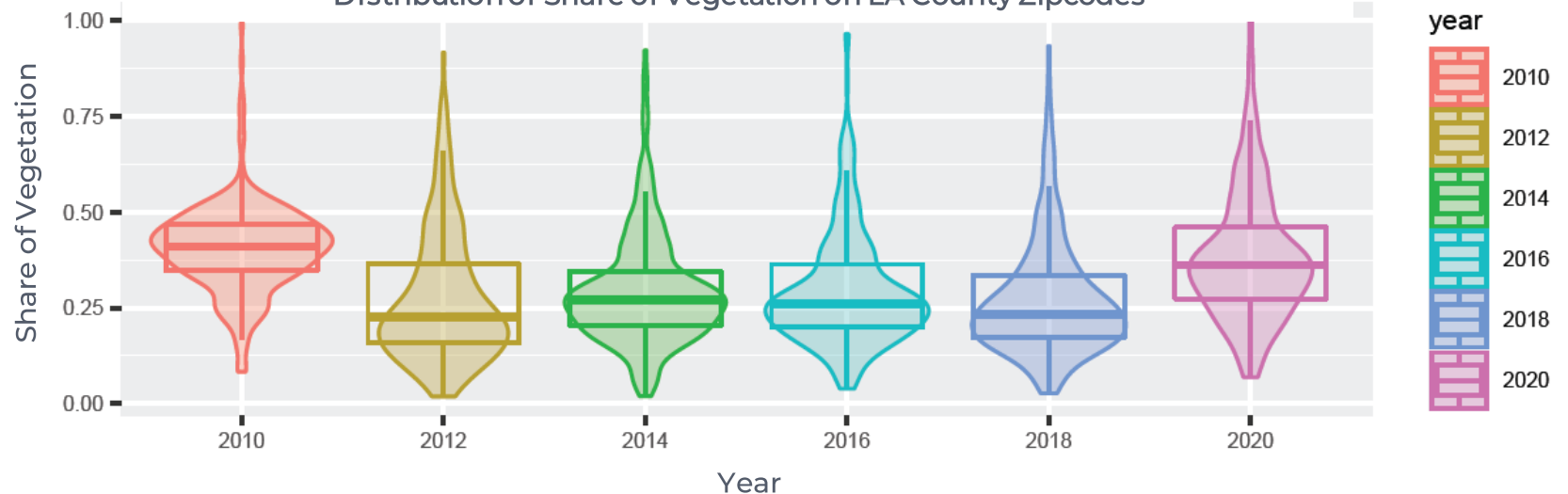
-2.16° C

Tree areas are on average cooler than impervious

Mean Temp vs Share of Vegetation on LA County Zipcodes



Distribution of Share of Vegetation on LA County Zipcodes





# Layered Architecture

## Input



## Modeling



## Integration



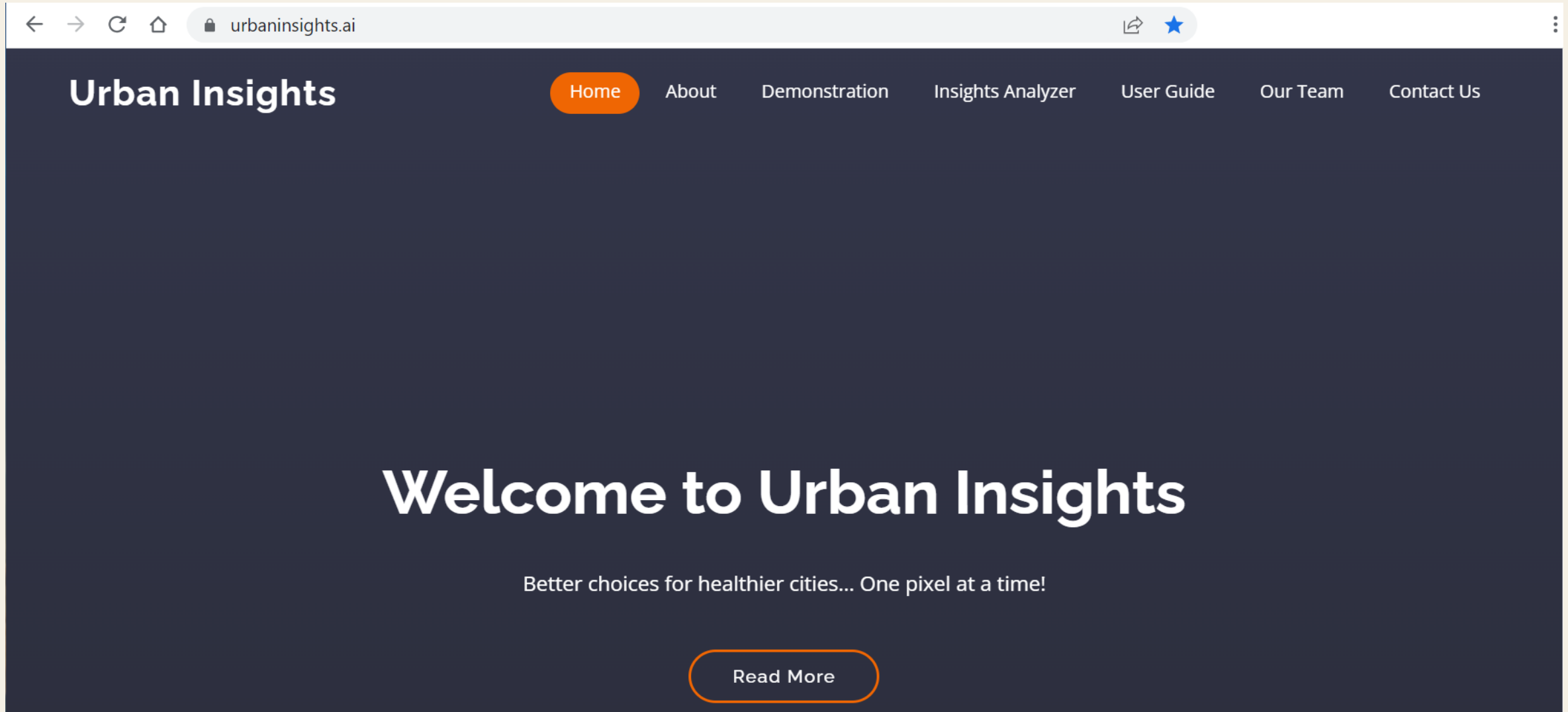
## Output



[urbaninsights.ai](https://urbaninsights.ai)



# Live Demonstration



# Summary



Worst climate crisis  
of generations



Urban Insights  
provides eco-friendly  
insights



Policy makers can  
use this to design  
incentives to curb  
outdoor residential  
water usage



Urban planners  
can use this to  
plan and  
redevelop cities





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# Thank you!

~ from team Urban Insights



[urbaninsights.ai](https://urbaninsights.ai)



<https://bit.ly/3SCnZoB>



GitHub

<https://github.com/urbaninsights>