

MOTION

The City of Los Angeles is home to one of the largest urban forests in the nation. According to the *Los Angeles Canopy Cover Assessment* (McPherson, et al. 2006) the City's estimated tree population is in excess of 10 million. Approximately 700,000 of these trees are located in the public rights-of-way and managed by the Bureau of Street Services. The other approximately 9,300,000 are on parcels of land throughout the city, from parks to backyards, and a significant portion are located on private land.

As the *City of Los Angeles's 2018 Biodiversity Report* states "urban biodiversity includes both native and non-native species, including LA's urban forest, which provide many ecosystem services that enhance the City's resilience to climate change." The report notes that the City receives the highest scores possible on a number of biodiversity indicators including percentage of natural areas, and the number of native bird species. However the indicators of proactive enhancement fall short, with a notably low urban tree canopy and limited biodiversity preservation practices, many of which are determined within CEQA and on a project-by-project basis as opposed to a comprehensive or uniform approach aimed at enhancing citywide biodiversity.

Thus, the private tree canopy of the city is an essential component of the City's biodiversity, and often times adversely impacted by isolated decisions made on individual projects. Currently the city of Los Angeles relies on the Protected Tree Ordinance (Ord#177404) which aims to preserve four significant trees native to Southern California: indigenous Oaks, Southern California Black Walnut, Western Sycamore, and California Bay. Unfortunately even these four protected and most rare trees are routinely removed as part of development projects on private property as part of CEQA categorical exemptions. Moreover, this protection does not extend to mature trees which are unprotected indigenous species or non-natives, and protected trees that have been planted as part of a tree planting program.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of City Planning, in coordination with staff assigned to the development of the Wildlife Protection Areas Study (CF 14-0518) and Environmental Policy Unit, report back to Council on ongoing tree and biodiversity planning, strategies and/or efforts at the Department of City Planning and Urban Forestry Division (CF 03-1459-S3) to protect and grow the City's urban canopy, including cost, staffing and budget recommendations for the creation of a division of biologists and/or arboriculturists to consult on management of the private tree population and coordinate efforts with city departments.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of City Planning Department of Building and Safety and Bureau of Street Services, in consultation with any other departments as necessary, report to Council with recommendations for improvements to strengthen and expand the Protected Tree Ordinance and any other relevant tree planting or replacement requirements for individual private development projects with the goal of comprehensively preserving, maintaining and growing the City's private tree population.



I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of City Planning and Bureau of Street Services report to Council with an interpretation of LAMC Article 6 and Article 7, Section 17.05 of Chapter I, to further clarify language, namely Subsection 46.02 (b) 1, ("reasonable" development of a property) to ensure alternate site designs are explored; Subsection 46.02 (c) ("approximate value" and "reasonable probability") to ensure consideration of the full economic and environmental cost of tree removal and replacement; and Subsection 46.01 to ensure protected species that are planted or grown as a part of a tree planting program are not excluded from the Protected Tree Ordinance.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of City Planning, Department of Building and Safety, the Bureau of Street Services, Urban Forestry Division, and any other departments as necessary, report to Council with recommendations for the creation of protocols for tree removals, to include all non-protected mature, healthy trees, regardless of their status as native or non-native (unless considered invasive) such that removal of any mature trees will result in replacement, or mitigation banking aligned with the Conservation Element of the City of Los Angeles General Plan and any other relevant general plan policies and goals to enhance urban biodiversity.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of City Planning and Department of Building and Safety, with the assistance of the Bureau of Street Services and any other departments as necessary, report to Council with recommendations for the enhancement of the notification process for tree removals on private property (CF 14-1634), ensuring the removal and notification process is consistent with the street tree removal and notification process, and that residents on neighboring parcels are fully informed of pending tree removals.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of City Planning and Department of Building and Safety, with the assistance of the Urban Forestry Division, evaluate the placement and timing of tree removals in the permitting process, and report back to Council with recommendations to require approval earlier in permitting review process to ensure that approvals of tree removals are completed prior to final permit approvals for development projects.

CO-PRESENTED BY:

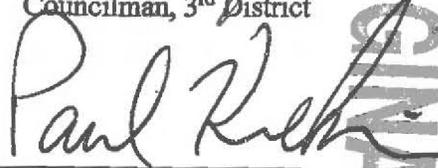

DAVID E. RYU
Councilman, 4th District

CO-PRESENTED BY:


BOB BLUMENFIELD
Councilman, 3rd District

SECONDED BY:




ORIGINAL

OCT 17 2013