



September 9, 2015

Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

c/o: City Clerk  
att'n : John.White@lacity.org

Re: Council File #15-0448, Street Tree Policy

Dear Chairperson Buscaino and members of the Committee,

The Community Forest Advisory Committee (CFAC) shares the concern that new and modified driveway cuts, in particular those associated with mansionization, have a negative impact upon the City infrastructure. The proposed Street Tree Policy in the motion by Kerkorian/Wesson (C.F. # 15-0448) would stop the removal of mature street trees for new driveways. This is admirable, however, additional negative impacts also should be considered.

In addition to the immediate loss of a mature street tree, there is always then a permanent loss of a potential street tree planting site and most likely a permanent loss of an on-street public parking space. Our Committee has independently developed and approved a draft motion that similarly considers new driveway cuts, in particular double-wide driveways and would provide even greater protection of City infrastructure.

The proposed motion developed by CFAC is attached for your consideration. We ask that you review this document and consider incorporating language to provide this greater protection, not just of existing street trees but also of potential street tree planting sites and public on-street parking spaces.

The Committee further recommends that until specific Code changes can be drafted, that a moratorium be imposed for driveway permits for residential neighborhoods. The damage being caused while this issue remains unaddressed is irreversible. Just as mansionization continues unchecked, so has the unnecessary conversion of the city right of way (parkways and roadways) for private driveways.

Preserving existing mature trees is a top priority. Mitigation-tree-plantings are also essential to maintaining a sustainable urban forest. With the launch of the sidewalk repair program the need to preserve potential planting locations for siting replacement trees will be greater than ever.

Sincerely,

*RickMayer, LK*

Rick Mayer

Chair, Community Forest Advisory Committee

*Lynnette Kampe*

Lynnette Kampe

CD 1 Representative, Community Forest Advisory Committee

Enc.: CFAC Driveway Moratorium

Cc: Councilperson Krekorian  
Councilperson Wesson  
CD 15 Deputy Dennis Gleason

**DRAFT MORATORIUM FOR TWO CAR DRIVEWAY APRONS – Approved by CFAC 9/3/15**

An often unrecognized impact of out of scale development in older single family neighborhoods, is that created by providing expanded driveway aprons for garage access. Older houses often have detached garages located at the rear of the property accessed by a side-yard driveway only a few feet wider than the 5-foot minimum standard setback. The driveway apron to the street is only one car width, even for a two car or larger garage. New mansions often incorporate an attached garage on the front of the house further increasing the visual mass of the structure with a double driveway apron, and in some cases also a semi-circular driveway. The City approval of driveway apron widening fails to consider adverse impacts on the city-owned right-of-way and infrastructure.

The first and most visible impact on the infrastructure is the removal of any street tree or native tree that is 'in the way'. The Urban Forestry Division automatically approves a tree removal request when they get a referral from Engineering who has approved a widened driveway. Engineering automatically approves a double driveway apron for any structure that has been approved by Building and Safety. Neither Planning nor Transportation is consulted and the impact continues unabated and unrecognized. With each driveway doubling at least one tree planting site and one on-street parking space is lost to the public permanently.

This issue has been considered by the Community Forest Advisory Committee (CFAC) and need found that the City Council address this issue as part of its consideration of the overall impacts of mansionization. It is suggested that amendment language be added to the mansionization interim control ordinance to address the off-site impacts of front garages and double driveways, as follows:

**Whereas,**

an additional consequence of mansionization is the incorporation of attached double garages on the front of homes and the widening of driveways for these, resulting in the loss of street trees, tree planting spaces, and on-street parking spaces;

**Therefore** it is further moved that,

a moratorium be imposed (and already issued permits be withdrawn) on driveway permits and tree removals in residentially zoned properties, unless excepted by the Board of Public Works consistent with the spirit of this ICO and, that the Community Forest Advisory Committee (CFAC) be instructed to investigate and report back to the planning committee, with the cooperation of the Bureaus of Street Services (Urban Forest Division) and Engineering, Building & Safety, City Planning, and the Department of Transportation, with a discussion of the adverse impacts of double driveways and proposals to mitigate or eliminate the impacts on city infrastructure.