

Motion

The City of Los Angeles has a large urban forest with an extensive network of street trees that provide for improved quality of life and aesthetics for our communities. They also serve a very important environmental and ecosystem benefit to our city. Unfortunately, an average of 2,000 street trees are removed annually because they are dead, declining, structurally unsound, storm damaged, and obstructing public infrastructure improvements and maintenance. While many of those situations may be unavoidable, there are also many street trees that are removed due to private development and new construction, and in many cases, with better design and consideration of the street trees, they could be saved.

The City has enacted "Street Tree Policies" that address goals and strategies for utilizing Best Management Practices and sustainable urban forestry principals to protect the trees. The current policies allow for a street tree removal permit from the Bureau of Street Services Urban Forestry Division, for the installation of a driveway, expanding an existing driveway, or installing a new curb cut. The Department of Building and Safety, Bureau of Engineering, Bureau of Street Services Urban Forestry and occasionally the Planning Department are involved in the permitting process for new construction that leads to the removal of a street tree. Better coordination and improvements in the departments' procedures are necessary to limit the numbers of trees removed.

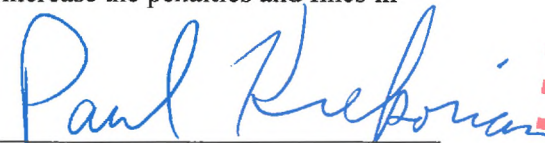
I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the Chief Legislative Analyst to work with the Planning Department, the Department of Building and Safety, Bureau of Street Services Urban Forestry Division, the Department of Transportation, the Bureau of Engineering and any other relevant City departments, to report back in 30 days with recommendations for new policies to take into consideration the location of existing parkway trees prior to approving plans for new garages, driveways, and curb cuts. This policy should require plans to be redesigned to relocate the new curb cuts, if any alternative location is available for vehicular access, including alleyways, which would not require the removal of the parkway trees as a result of new permits.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instruct the Bureau of Street Services Urban Forestry Division, to revise the tree replacement policy for the street trees that must be removed, due to new driveway cuts. The new tree replacement requirement should be a minimum of one new 15 gallon tree (or equivalent fee) per diameter inch of the street tree being removed.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instruct the Chief Legislative Analyst to work with the Bureau of Street Services Urban Forestry Division, the City Attorney and any other relevant City departments, to report back in 30 days with recommendations to increase the penalties and fines in situations that street trees are removed without permits.



PRESENTED BY:



PAUL KERKORIAN
Councilmember, 2nd District

SECONDED BY:



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