

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(12) Nay(0) Abstain(0) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 06/05/2018

Type of NC Board Action: For if Amended

Impact Information

Date: 06/26/2018

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 16-0461

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: Please see attached Community Impact Statement.

**EAGLE ROCK  
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

**Executive Committee**

Lisa Kable Blanchard, President  
Becky Newman, Vice President  
Bridget Byrnes Hirsch, Treasurer  
Pat Niessen, Communications  
Matt Hemingway, Secretary  
David Greene, Immediate Past President

**CITY OF  
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**COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

June 26, 2018

Los Angeles City Council  
200 N. Spring St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear City Council Members:

On June 5, 2018, a Brown Act noticed public meeting was held with a quorum of 12 board members present and that by a vote of 12 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstentions, the Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council (ERNC) adopted the following Community Impact Statement concerning Council File 16-0461, Tree Replacement In-Lieu Fee Ordinance:

The ERNC supports monitoring the Tree Replacement In-Lieu Fee Ordinance that was passed by the City Council on May 15, 2018 in a 13-1 vote. In addition, the ERNC also supports the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance's (NCSA) recommendations in connection with the Tree Replacement In-Lieu Fee Ordinance:

**OUR URBAN TREE CANOPY IS ALREADY AT A REDUCED LEVEL COMPARED WITH OTHER CITIES:** Due to the drought, poor tree maintenance, pest infestation, Los Angeles' urban tree canopy has suffered huge losses. Therefore, we cannot afford to lose more trees, especially healthy, mature trees that have survived the onslaught of drought and pest infestations.

**DEVELOPERS PAYING AN IN-LIEU FEE MAY PRECLUDE ACTUALLY PLANTING TREES IN THOSE AREAS:** The Ordinance states that if a developer deems it necessary to remove trees from a property in order to build, they may do so after the Public Works Dept. and City Council determine the necessity for removal of the tree(s). The developer then pays an in-lieu fee of \$2,612.00 per tree to plant and maintain a replacement tree in some other location. The residential developer in-lieu fee is \$267.00. Once trees are removed from these locations, there is a possibility that the areas from which mature trees are removed will no longer have trees planted in the vicinity. The subsequent loss of trees will reduce shade, cooling, and create a heat-island effect. The City Council and Public Works Committee need to monitor these requests for tree removal closely.

A CITY-WIDE TREE INVENTORY IS NECESSARY BUT WAS NOT BUDGETED THIS YEAR: Most cities that build and maintain their urban tree canopy have a city-wide tree inventory. Los Angeles does not. It is imperative that the City budget for Urban Forestry's tree inventory as a long-term tree monitoring system to determine what kind of tree is planted, its location, and a maintenance schedule for each new tree planted. Without a tree inventory, it is impossible to determine how many trees need watering and maintenance, and this lack of tracking information will result in the loss of any new tree that has been planted in accordance with this Ordinance. It is also important to monitor existing mature trees to maintain their health.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPER FEES SHOULD NOT BE REDUCED: Based on a study commissioned by the Board of Public Works, the City states the cost to plant and water a replacement tree is \$2,612.00. However, the City decided to allow residential developers who build as many as four dwelling units on a property to reduce the fee to \$267.00 per tree, which pencils out to a \$2,345.00 developer subsidy per tree. Unfortunately, there is no information about how many fees will be gifted, but the City reported 830 replacement trees during the nine months from June 2015 to February 2016. With 830 replacement trees comes a \$1,946,350.00 subsidy to developers. Subsidizing residential developers to cut down trees and giving them a discount to do it is not a policy that is going to discourage tree removal.

THE ERNC SUPPORTS THE CITY COUNCIL'S RECOMMENDATION TO IMPOSE A SIX-MONTH SUNSET CLAUSE: Urban Forestry needs to provide a progress report six months after instituting the In-Lieu Fee Ordinance (effective date, July 5, 2018). The ERNC has concerns about Urban Forestry reporting back on their progress in a timely fashion. Thus, in the event that Urban Forestry does not report back on the progress of implementing the In-Lieu Fee Ordinance, the ERNC requests that the Ordinance expire at the conclusion of six months.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this important issue.

Respectfully,

The Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council

Cc: Office of Councilmember Jose Huizar  
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Jane Demian