

MOTION

BUDGET & FINANCE

The City of Los Angeles is home to one of the largest urban forests in the world, comprised of trees, understory plants, wildland interface trees and plants, and all landscaping on both public and private property. 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.

Street trees represent a significant and indispensable portion of the City's urban forest, and a piece of the public works infrastructure system that is vital to Los Angeles' urban environment. This living infrastructure provides innumerable environmental, ecological, social, economic and aesthetic benefits to the City's four million residents.

The Bureau of Street Services' 2015 *State of the City's Street Trees Report* revealed an unacceptable condition of our street tree population largely due to three primary factors – poor age diversification, tree health and maintenance of our City's street trees. As was indicated in the report, if deferred tree maintenance, increasing pest infestations, drought and lack of programmatic tree replacements continue, the overall condition of our street trees will continue to decline.

In order to properly preserve, maintain and grow the City's street tree population, the Bureau of Street Services should consider establishing a division of tree biologists and/or arboriculturists to inspect, advise, consolidate/coordinate tree maintenance activities among all city departments, and continue to expand the City's urban forest.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Bureau of Street Services, and City Administrative Officer as necessary, report to Council with cost estimates, staff requirements and budget recommendations for the hiring of a Director of Community Forestry and additional staff, consistent with the aforementioned expertise to support the growth, maintenance, health and preservation of the City's urban canopy.

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