

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Atwater Village Neighborhood Council

Name: Torin Dunnavant

Phone Number: [310-717-1831](tel:310-717-1831)

Email: torin@atwatervillage.org

Date of NC Board Action: 09/10/2015

Type of NC Board Action: For if Amended

Impact Information

Date: 09/14/2015

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 14-0163-S3

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Brief Summary: The AVNC is in favor of the motion as long as it is amended to preserve the urban forest, replant at a proper ratio when trees are removed that will quickly restore eco-functionality, and mandate "green infrastructure" be utilized when replacing sidewalks.

Additional Information: Climate change is amplifying our city's needs – not only for urban cooling, but to increase local water supply, improve water quality, and mitigate increased flooding predicted in our future. Now is the time to step back and consider all of the goals and mandates, including urban heat protection, local water supply, stormwater quality, street repair, and flood prevention needs and how they may intersect with work done on sidewalk replacement.



3371 Glendale Blvd.
Unit 105, Los Angeles, CA 90039
Email: Board@AtwaterVillage.org
Phone: 323 230-3406
www.AtwaterVillage.org



AVNC Officers: Co-Chairs: Torin Dunnivant; Courtney Morris • Treasurer: Julia Mewbourne • Secretary: Karen Knapp

Council File 14-0163-S3
Honorable City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA. 90012

The Atwater Village Neighborhood Council submits the following Community Impact Statement in regard to the Sidewalk Repair Policy Motion. The AVNC is in favor of the motion as long as it is amended to preserve the urban forest, replant at a proper ratio when trees are removed that will quickly restore eco-functionality, and mandate “green infrastructure” be utilized when replacing sidewalks.

COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

This Community Impact Statement is based on the action taken at the regularly scheduled Board of Governors meeting on September 10, 2015; the Atwater Village Neighborhood Council has adopted the following motion by a vote of 12 yes, 1 no, 1 abstention, and has directed that this Community Impact Statement be filed with the City Clerk’s office reflecting its position.

We are facing a crucial moment in history, when climate change is amplifying our city’s needs – not only for urban cooling, but to increase local water supply, improve water quality, and mitigate increased flooding predicted in our future. Simultaneously, the city is facing costly mandates to deal with these issues in addition to addressing aging infrastructure, including, but not limited to, sidewalks. Now is the time for the City to step back and consider all of its interrelated goals and mandates, including urban heat protection, local water supply, stormwater quality, street repair, and flood prevention needs and how they may intersect with work done on sidewalk replacement. Given that projects in some of the City’s infrastructure plans impact streets, parkways and sidewalks (including the City’s Stormwater Capture Master Plan and Enhanced Watershed Management Plans) in addition to regular and emergency street repair and maintenance, it behooves the City to coordinate projects and leverage funding streams while still meeting the needs of the settlement. A properly planned and implemented urban tree canopy gives the city an opportunity to manage our water wisely, cost-effectively, and with multiple benefits. Trees provide necessary “green infrastructure” that contributes benefits to the City’s residents including: urban cooling, mitigating air and stormwater pollution, capturing and storing carbon, slowing, storing and filtering stormwater, helping to reduce flooding, and increasing our local water supply. In addition, trees are the only infrastructure that increase in value as they get older. If done properly, the money set aside for this settlement allows an opportunity to leverage other sources of funds and achieve multiple needs -- including those of the settlement -- with one set of actions. Moving forward with this planning process, we urge the city to consider the following while creating this legislation:

1. Create transparent criteria for which trees stay and which are removed;
2. Develop a comprehensive suite of solutions for improving the growing spaces of the trees that are selected to stay, including considerations for stormwater capture/management;
3. Provide a species list reflecting thoughtful choices for the trees replacing those being removed, including size and ratio considerations (i.e., the largest tree appropriate for the space; using the city's approved tree list and parkway size recommendations; species that are climate-appropriate and have a low water-use rating; and insect and disease resist species);
4. Whenever possible and appropriate, mature trees should be saved through the use of adaptations to the growing space and other best practices based on the needs of the location and species;
5. Develop the "fix and release" program such that the tree and infrastructure choices support the best management practices for maximum canopy (including tree maintenance) and stormwater management. This includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Create a clear process to determine who is responsible for the establishment and long-term care of the trees;
 - b. Ensure the preservation of viable trees is the highest priority;
 - c. Create materials and strategies to communicate this with the public and homeowners;
 - d. When replacing sidewalks, install curb cuts connected to treatment wetland swales for all newly planted parkways; plant LID approved parkways plants and remove or upgrade irrigation per LID requirements; allow for ease of design so that curb cuts can be installed without a permit (or for a no-fee permit) and maintained easily;

Major cities around the world are seeking to rapidly increase urban tree canopy cover to protect their citizens from increasing temperatures, which are causing a sharp rise in death amongst vulnerable populations. The City of Los Angeles and its citizens have invested billions of dollars over the last 5 decades in creating an urban tree canopy, consisting in large part of street trees. These trees are doing the urgent work of saving human lives as peak temperatures in Los Angeles rise. It is therefore important to appreciate that it takes decades to establish tree canopy with sufficient density to provide needed health and life protection. Every effort should be made to work strategically to protect canopy cover while replacing sidewalks and those trees which must be sacrificed.

We can't start LA's urban forest over from scratch, but we can begin the process of creating the transition to a healthier, more beneficial urban forest that, in our changing climate, continues working for all of Los Angeles.

Motion by Torin Dunnivant: "I move that the AVNC approve a Community Impact Statement in favor of Council File 14-0163-S3 as long as it is amended to preserve the urban forest, replant at a proper ratio when trees are removed that will quickly restore eco-functionality, and mandate "green infrastructure" be utilized when replacing sidewalks.

Seconded by Reuben Martinez