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MOTION

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

City temperatures are expected to increase about 4 degrees Fahrenheit by mid-century due to climate change, according to research conducted by the Professor Alex Hall of the University of California Los Angeles. As a result, there will be more days of excessive heat each year. In the community of Sylmar, for example, there are currently 54 days a year that exceed 95 degrees Fahrenheit. Dr. Hall's research shows that by the year 2041, that number will increase to 96 days a year.

The expected increase in temperature is a concern, not just for the environment, but also for public health. Vulnerable populations suffer from heat-related deaths and illnesses each year. In Los Angeles County, 115 people were hospitalized due to heat in just a five-month period in 2012, according to the California Department of Public Health. Hotter temperatures can also increase the likelihood of brush fires, putting lives and property at risk.

The challenges presented by climate change are not unique to Los Angeles. Other regions are already working to address the negative consequences of a warmer world.

The Australian city of Melbourne has a goal to reduce the city's average temperature 7 degrees Fahrenheit by 2030. In response to a twelve-year drought, officials there increased the urban tree canopy to lower the city's surface temperature, created an open space strategy, and built centralized and distributed stormwater capture projects to water landscapes and trees using captured rain and to keep soil moisture high in urban areas. Such policies promoted livability and improved physical and psychological health in the face of drought and extreme heat.

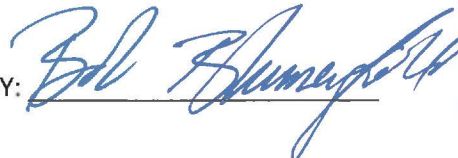
As Los Angeles looks to become a more resilient city, it must mitigate the expected increase in temperature and take steps, like Melbourne, to reduce it. This calls for a coordinated strategy that can most effectively deploy resources in areas of the City where it is most needed.

A targeted campaign to cool the urban core would not only help to address the negative impacts of climate change, but also save lives and improve the quality of life.

I THEREFORE MOVE that Council instruct/request the Chief Legislative Analyst, in conjunction with the Department of Public Works, Department of Water and Power, Department of City Planning, and Department of Recreation and Parks to report in 45 days on the formation of a *Committee on Cooling and Urban Heat Impacts* comprised of relevant City departments, and experts in the field, to undertake the following objectives:

- Establish a cooling target for the City of Los Angeles;
- Identify regions within Los Angeles most vulnerable to excessive heat based on current and expected temperatures as well as deleterious air mass types; and current and historical data on heat-related deaths and illness;
- Recommend strategies for achieving the cooling target in Los Angeles; with a priority on strategies that will benefit communities that are identified as the most vulnerable to excessive heat;
- Develop guidance to protect livability and health, especially in drought situations, and identify public open spaces and corridors needed for cooling, including how to maintain such areas in drought situations.

PRESENTED BY: 
FELIPE FUENTES
Councilmember, 7th District

SECONDED BY: 

ORIGINAL