CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

Date: July 28, 2023

To: Honorable City Council
c/o City Clerk, Room 395
Los Angeles, California 90012

Attention: PLUM Committee

From: Vincent P. Bertoni, AICP, Director of Planning
Department of City Planning

Rachel Malarich, City Forest Officer
Board of Public Works, Forest Office

Osama Younan, PE, General Manager of Building and Safety
Department of Building and Safety

Keith Mozee, Executive Director and General Manager of Street Services
Bureau of Street Services

Dear Honorable Members:

TREE AND BIODIVERSITY PLANNING AND THE CITY'S URBAN CANOPY AND TREE CANOPY COVERAGE; CF 15-0499-S2

SUMMARY

This report responds to the Council request for the City Forest Officer, the Department of City Planning, the Department of Building and Safety, the Bureau of Street Services, the City Attorney's Office, and the Community Forest Advisory Committee to provide more detail on ongoing efforts and an anticipated work program, timeline and resources needed for the Council to advance the recommendations contained within this report relative to preparing a report with recommendations on ongoing tree and biodiversity planning, strategies and/or efforts to protect and grow the City's urban canopy; provide recommendations to require the placement of trees, and timing of any tree removals, at an earlier phase in the land use/environmental review, and permitting review process, and thereby maximize City efforts to grow tree canopy coverage; and, to prepare and present an Ordinance to effectuate these directives. The Council also instructed the Department of City Planning to propose an equity strategy or plan on how to improve tree canopy in Council Districts with very low tree canopy coverage, to report on security and lighting,

and to report on roots and impacts on sidewalks. This report provides a summary of strategies to accomplish those directives. (Council File #15-0499-S2)

BACKGROUND

The City Council adopted a motion on May 27, 2022 instructing the Department of City Planning (DCP), the Department of Building and Safety (DBS), The Department of Public Works (DPW), Office of Forest Management (OFM) the Bureau of Street Services' (StreetsLA) Urban Forestry Division (UFD), to report back on the Departments' existing and ongoing efforts for tree and biodiversity planning, strategies and/or efforts to protect and grow the City's urban canopy. Specifically, the motion instructed the departments to provide recommendations to require the placement of trees, and timing of any tree removals ideally at an earlier phase in the land use/environmental review and permitting process. The motion also instructed DCP to propose an equity strategy or plan to improve tree canopy in areas with low tree canopy coverage, report back on security and lighting concerns, and to report back on roots and impacts to sidewalks. Lastly, DCP was instructed to prepare and present an ordinance to effectuate these directives.

After further discussion with the City Departments and Council Office staff, this report presents a two-phased approach in order to respond to the full direction of this motion. The first phase described in this report outlines the existing and ongoing efforts for tree and biodiversity planning as well as strategies and efforts to protect and grow the City's urban canopy. It also details the efforts that are underway to achieve next steps for the City's urban canopy enhancement and prosperity. The second phase presented in this report offers recommendations for next steps and the resources necessary to fulfill those recommendations.

DISCUSSION

I. EXISTING POLICY DOCUMENTS GUIDING TREE RETENTION AND PLANTING

The City of Los Angeles has a rich diversity of landscapes within and around its boundaries. For decades, the City has recognized the importance of conserving local natural resources, adopting policies and regulations to further resource protection in its General Plan. Policies in the Framework, Open Space and Conservation Elements, as well as those in various Community Plans, including areas identified as Environmentally Sensitive Areas, articulate the City's recognition and commitment to supporting communities through the City with equitable and robust climate resiliency, biodiversity, beautification, economic, and quality of life benefits associated with a healthy and thriving urban forest.

Mayoral Initiatives

The Green New Deal

The goals of the City of Los Angeles' Green New Deal: Sustainable City Plan, a broad and ambitious directive prepared by the Mayor's Office in 2019 support a healthy and equitable urban forest. The Urban Ecosystems and Resilience Vision contained in this document speaks to the

importance of creating a cooler city with more green space including the increase of the tree canopy in areas of greatest need, creating a more equitable urban forest, and protecting biodiversity and natural areas with the goal of no-net loss of native biodiversity, while preventing displacement in those communities.

The Resiliency Plan
The Mayor's Resiliency Plan provides targets to the City to prepare for the impacts of climate change including the development of urban heat island reduction plans, increased access to green space and open space in underserved areas, and an increase in equitable tree canopy coverage.

General Plan
Framework Element
The General Plan Framework Element is a strategy for long-term growth that sets a citywide context to guide the subsequent amendments of the City's Community Plans, zoning ordinances, and other pertinent programs. The Infrastructure and Public Services Chapter of the Framework Element identifies thirteen infrastructure and public service systems, one of which is identified as the Urban Forest. The Urban Forest is described as providing many significant benefits to the City, and includes trees on both public and privately owned land. The most vulnerable aspect of the Urban Forest are street trees due to the conflicts with other infrastructure systems such as streets and utilities.

Plan For Healthy LA
The Plan for Healthy LA was adopted in 2015 and lays the foundation to create healthier communities for all Angelenos. As an Element of the General Plan, it provides high-level policy vision, along with measurable objectives and implementation programs, to elevate health and environmental justice as a priority for the City's future growth and development. The Vision contained in this plan calls for "ample green and open space, including a robust tree canopy in all neighborhoods and opportunities for urban agriculture." The Action Plan calls for, among other directives, "energy efficiencies, weatherization, proper positioning of trees to shade buildings, alternative energy and solar generation systems, explore the feasibility of building designs that incorporate facile systems to charge electric vehicles, and use of rainwater, storm water, gray water and recycled water."

Healthy Building, Healthy Places
As part of the Healthy Buildings, Healthy Places Program, which launched in 2021, DCP created an initiative for promoting health and wellness in new development projects, while addressing pressing climate needs and social factors through urban design. Building upon the Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles and existing Citywide Design Guidelines in effect today, the Department launched a code amendment to codify these design standards through an update to the Citywide Landscape Ordinance, as described further below.

Housing Element

The recently adopted Housing Element has as one goal a “City in which housing creates healthy, livable, sustainable, and resilient communities that improve the lives of all Angelenos “ and calls for the development and implementation of “environmentally sustainable urban design standards and pedestrian centered improvements in development of a project and within the public and private realm such as shade trees, parkways and comfortable sidewalks.” Improvements such as increased tree canopy can help mitigate the effects of high-heat days, while reducing energy costs and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions.

Community Plan Updates

Community Plans represent the Land Use Element of the General Plan, the City’s main policy document guiding development. Many currently adopted Community Plans contain broad policies recognizing the importance of trees to our City.

South Los Angeles and Southeast Los Angeles

The South Los Angeles and Southeast Los Angeles Community Plans (adopted in 2017) recognize trees as vital to the quality of life in the urban environment, providing social, environmental, ecological and aesthetic benefits. The Plans include multiple policies and guidelines that call for the provision of street and on-site trees to help filter pollutants from water and air while reducing the heat island effect. Additionally, the Community Plan Implementation Overlays for these plan areas require the planting of shade trees in all new surface parking lots.

The Hollywood Community Plan, recently adopted by City Council, is redesignating more than 300 acres of land in the hillsides from Very Low I Residential and Minimum Residential to Open Space, some of which is owned by the City, the SMMC, and the Laurel Canyon Land Trust. Further, the Southwest and Southeast Valley Community Plans Update teams will be working with the New Zoning Code team to implement development regulations in the hillside, consistent with the land use regulations and policies of the Wildlife Ordinance. The Southwest Valley Community Plans Update project area includes portions of the Santa Monica Mountain range, which runs along the southern boundary of the communities of Encino, Tarzana, and Woodland Hills. The Southeast Valley Community Plans Update project area includes portions of the Santa Monica Mountain Range, which runs along the southern boundary of the communities of Sherman Oaks, Studio City, and Cahuenga Pass. The goals and policies of both the Southwest and Southeast Valley Community Plans would encourage a balanced approach between allowing for appropriate scale and development in the hillsides and the conservation of valuable natural resources to protect the local ecosystem and encourage biodiversity. Areas currently under the jurisdiction and authority of the Mountains, Recreation & Conservation Authority and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy that are currently designated as Very Low I Residential and Minimum Residential would be proposed to be redesignated as Open Space through the Community Plans Update program to acknowledge that these areas should be preserved and conserved as natural resources.

The Updated Community Plans for both the Boyle Heights and Harbor Gateway and Wilmington-Harbor City include numerous policies related to environmental justice including policies that

encourage the planting of canopy trees and dense vegetation near freeways and other sources of air pollution using species proven to remove particulate matter and improve air quality. Furthermore, as future Community Plans continue forward, similar policies that uplift and underscore the need for tree canopy equity, environmental justice and other policies for biodiversity enhancement will continue to be incorporated.

II. CITY REGULATIONS AND PROGRAMS ADDRESSING TREES

A variety of regulations, ordinances and procedures concerning tree removals, replacements, and planting are described below. These regulations address many aspects of tree removal and planting, but there are currently gaps both in regulations and the geographies that are regulated. There are also staffing, funding, and procedural issues that constrain various Departments from fully implementing these regulations.

Protected Trees and Shrubs Ordinance

The Protected Trees and Shrubs Ordinance (PTO) was first adopted in 1980, and amended in 2006 to expand the protected trees to include three additional species, for a total of four tree species. Most recently, it was amended in 2021 to include two shrubs on the list of protected species. The PTO is primarily implemented by StreetsLA/UFD and establishes when and how protected trees and shrubs may be removed and how they must be replaced when removed, regardless of whether building permits or discretionary entitlements are sought. Protected trees and shrubs are most commonly found in Los Angeles's hillside communities, although there are other areas of the City in which they can be found.

To remove a Protected Tree or shrub, a permit is required by the Board of Public Works, who may grant approval or denial of the removal. As part of this process the Board of Public Works (BPW) may also require replacement trees be planted on the property. If a protected tree or shrub is removed without a permit, StreetsLA/UFD may request that DBS withhold future permits and revoke existing permits, pursuant to the provisions of LAMC section 46.06.

Though preservation of individual private property protected trees and shrubs is fundamentally sought, oftentimes the desired preservation cannot be attained despite seeking design alternatives due to a tree or shrub's close proximity to proposed construction. The current provision contained in the PTO, LAMC 46.02(b)1 fails to clearly define the term "reasonable development", which inhibits absolute denial of protected tree removals. In cases where an individual protected tree or shrub must be removed to enable the fulfillment of a building permit, grading permit and/or DCP entitlement, the requirement for a BPW permit and subsequent tree replacement conditions are imposed, protecting the Native tree/shrub as a species in accordance with the PTO.

Oftentimes the removal of protected trees or shrubs is accompanied by new construction. For example, the construction of single-family homes, additions, remodels, new swimming pools, decks, and other site work may require the removal of these resources. In those projects, building permits are sought and through the building permit clearance process, StreetsLA/UFD may have

an opportunity to review and approve the removal of native and protected trees and shrubs. This preliminary tree review for building permit clearances is currently only triggered by project applicants disclosing that their project is removing these resources. There is no mandatory requirement that building plans or grading permit applications submitted to DBS disclose this information. Without this disclosure, projects are not referred to StreetsLA/UFD and therefore, StreetsLA/UFD does not have the opportunity to review these projects. Even when trees are disclosed and projects reviewed by StreetsLA/UFD, neither the project's Protected Tree Report, nor the tree protection plans/guidelines are incorporated as part of the LADBS approved plans. This often leads to encroachment and injury to onsite native protected trees by construction. An additional challenge is that currently StreetsLA/UFD has no authority to assess fines for the illegal removal of protected trees and shrubs.

Solutions include a requirement to disclose the presence of these resources on building plans, and the routing of more projects to StreetsLA/UFD for review and approval. Additionally, Tree Protection plans could be made an integral part of the final LADBS approved plans, ensuring that onsite contractors and subcontractors are cognizant of the existing trees and their respective tree protection zones. Enforcement efforts could be enhanced and fines could be imposed to disincentive the removal of these resources. StreetsLA/UFD would need to prepare a fee study to update current fees and identify appropriate fines for unpermitted tree removals. These solutions would require additional staffing resources and funding in StreetsLA/UFD, as well as changes to The Los Angeles Building Permit Clearance Handbook to revise section 2.B.3. to include StreetsLA/UFD criteria for clearances, application forms and referral procedures in coordination with the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety.

At times, native protected trees are removed and/or cut down without BPW permits before construction, and during construction. When this occurs, the current PTO provisions inhibit the overall ability by responsible Departments (StreetsLA/UFD) to readily uphold and enforce tree protection. Examples of the PTO's shortcomings include, but are not limited to, the Definition of "Removal" (LAMC 46.00) "shall include any act that will cause a protected tree or shrub to die". This definition implicitly enables a native protected tree/shrub to be legally cut down to a stump, so long as the tree does not "die" without the need for a BPW permit. Given the resilient nature of some native tree species, there is a high probability of a stump re-sprouting in the subsequent growing seasons.

When unpermitted tree removals occur as a result of construction within private property, the current process allows for a Certificate of Occupancy (CofO) to be issued by LADBS regardless of any unresolved tree violation. This constitutes a challenge for overall enforcement by StreetsLA/UFD given the finality of such action. Changes in the City's delegated authority over native protected trees would potentially improve tree protection efforts.

Department of Building and Safety: Building Permit Clearances

The Department of Building and Safety (DBS) is the agency responsible for the approval of building permits and inspections for development on private property. DBS enforces laws related to the construction, alteration, repair, and demolition of buildings and structures, as well as site

grading activities. The permit process ensures compliance with local and state laws when undertaking any work or construction that requires a building permit, such as the California Building Standards Code (Title 24) and the Los Angeles Zoning Code.

Building Permit Clearances
As part of the DBS Building Permit process, applicants may be required to obtain approvals from other departments prior to issuance of the permit. Through collaboration with other City departments and governmental agencies, the Building Permit Clearance Handbook provides instructions on which clearances are required based on specific criteria such as location, project type, etc. Each individual department determines the criteria of the projects they want sent for approval, and work with DBS to ensure the criteria is clear and can be clearly identified during plan review. For ease of reference, the Building Permit Clearance Handbook also contains Applicability Matrixes, which summarize the clearances for some of the City agencies. Once the plans have been reviewed, DBS issues a Clearance Summary Worksheet to the applicant, who is then responsible for contacting each department for review/approval.

The table below contains some of the relevant clearances related to trees and landscaping.

Agency	**Clearance**	**Criteria**
StreetsLA/UFD	Disturb/Remove Protected Trees	Disturb/Remove Protected Trees in private property, as disclosed by applicant
StreetsLA/UFD	Trees in Parkway	New/alter driveways, curbs, sidewalks, parkways
DCP	Front Yard Landscape 12.21C1(g)	One-family dwelling, two-family dwelling, multiple dwelling or group dwelling, apartment house, hotel, motel, apartment hotel or retirement hotel in the RD, R3, RAS3, R4, RAS4, R5, or C Zones
DCP	Parking Lot Landscape 12.21A6(g) & (h)	When a parking lot has more than 20 vehicles and is used as a: 1) Public parking area in all zones or 2) private parking in zones A, R, A or R in combination with a P Zone.

DCP	Open Space Landscape 12.21G2(a)(3)	New building or a group of buildings containing six or more dwelling units on a lot OR Additions to a building or a group of buildings resulting in a building or a group of buildings containing six or more dwelling units on a lot.

As shown in the above table and discussed in the prior section on the Protected Trees and Shrubs Ordinance, applications for new building permits require that applicants self-declare the presence of protected trees and shrubs in order to be routed to StreetsLA/UFD for a clearance approval. This procedure could be strengthened by mandating project applicants disclose the presence of these resources, thus routing more projects to StreetsLA/UFD for review. StreetsLA/UFD would then have the opportunity to request a tree report prepared by a qualified Tree Expert, and subsequently conduct any necessary investigations to determine the status of protected trees and mitigate loss of trees as warranted.

Wildlife Ordinance

One specific effort to address natural resource conservation, and biodiversity in particular, is the Wildlife Pilot Study and Wildlife Ordinance. The Pilot Study was initiated by Council in 2016 and called for Planning to create a set of land use regulations that would address wildlife habitat and connectivity in the city. Connecting larger, contiguous patches of habitat provides greater ecological value than preserving isolated patches or singular pathways. This broader ecosystem approach not only promotes wildlife habitat and connectivity, but also addresses overall biodiversity. The Draft Wildlife Ordinance, released in Spring 2021, introduced development regulations aimed at protecting and preserving Los Angeles's natural resources, habitats, and ecosystems, particularly those held as private property. Ridgeline protection, originally conceived as a separate ordinance, was folded into the proposed Wildlife Ordinance as ridgelines present the potential to act as corridors for wildlife mobility. At the time of the writing of this report, the Wildlife Ordinance was approved by the City Council PLUM Committee and is undergoing form and legality review with the Office of the City Attorney.

The Wildlife Ordinance builds on and expands the protection of the PTO while working in concert with it. Where the PTO regulates the removal of four tree species and two shrubs, the Wildlife Ordinance significantly expands tree protections and mandates tree plantings to include Native Trees to the Los Angeles region and any Significant Trees which are defined as "Any tree that measures 12 inches or more in diameter at four and one-half feet above the average natural grade at the base of the tree and/or is more than 35 feet in height". It also includes a series of construction protections for existing Significant and Protected Trees or Shrubs, so these resources are not damaged during construction activities. The Wildlife Ordinance also requires the filing of an entitlement application with DCP if tree removals are proposed as part of any project.

It is anticipated that after successful adoption and implementation of the Wildlife Ordinance in the Pilot Study area of a portion of the Santa Monica Mountains, the Ordinance would be expanded to include the remainder of hillside areas, such as those located within study identified Protection Areas for Wildlife (PAWs) / Rim of the Valley. Expansion of this Ordinance will be necessary to further the protection of Significant and Protected Trees and Shrubs, and require the replacement of these resources and the planting of Native Trees for projects. Additional staffing resources within DCP, DBS, and StreetsLA/UFD will be needed to successfully implement the Wildlife Ordinance.

City Planning Entitlements and Overlays

There is a narrow range of discretionary Planning entitlements that, per their respective code sections, allow for conditions of approval requiring the planting of street trees. This includes: Zone Changes, per LAMC Chapter 1, Article 2, Section 12.32; Subdivision and Parcel Maps per LAMC Chapter 1, Article 7; and certain Conditional Use Entitlements per Chapter 1, Article 2, Section 12.24.

Numerous planning overlays implemented by the DCP contain regulations regarding the preservation and planting of trees on private property. These overlays often go beyond citywide regulations and have been developed for geographically unique areas. Many adopted Specific Plans address native and protected trees on private property, including the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan, the San Gabriel / Verdugo Mountains Scenic Specific Plan, and the Mount Washington / Glassell Park Specific Plan which all have regulations addressing native and protected trees on private property.

Many DCP implemented overlays also require the planting of trees in the Public Right-of-Way, including Warner Center 2035, Westwood Village, the Vermont - Western TOD Station Neighborhood Area Plan, Jordan Downs Specific Plan, and the San Pedro CPIO. Some of these Specific Plans and CPIO's also limit the removal of existing public right-of-way trees, such as the San Vicente Scenic Corridor, with final authority to permit tree removal falling under StreetsLA/UFD.

In collaboration with the Department of Public Works, the Department of Transportation, and DCP, a total of 19 Streetscape Plans have been adopted throughout the City, providing a blueprint for streetscape improvements, including street trees, in the public right-of-way. These streetscape plans aim to create pedestrian-friendly environments and generally provide specific direction for the planting of street trees including the spacing requirements, size, and tree species.

DCP is able to review these discretionary projects and those in the special geographic areas, apply CEQA, and condition any potential tree removal, replacement, and planting. But the DCP's purview only extends to these geographic overlay areas, and those projects requiring a discretionary review. There are many projects throughout the City that the DCP does not review and therefore has no role in tree removal or planting.

The current efforts to adopt the Wildlife Ordinance, expand the Hillside Construction Regulations, and adopt the Landscape Ordinance, described below, will expand DCP's role in the review of tree removals and plantings, but will still not extend to all geographies and projects in the City. Additionally, past procedures have not always provided as robust analysis for the removal and planting of trees as necessary.

To address procedural issues, DCP has adopted a suite of process enhancements both to the CEQA process and the entitlement process and will continue to streamline and improve these processes.

CEQA Process Enhancements
In 2018, DCP created the Environmental Policy Unit (EPU) to provide guidance and consistency to its staff on how to comply with evolving environmental rules, laws, and regulations. In 2019, DCP updated the Department's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Thresholds to align with the State's revised CEQA Appendix G environmental checklist questions, including the revised Biological Resources thresholds. As the department's environmental clearinghouse, EPU has been providing City Planning staff with training and developing updated procedures and guidance, including forms, templates, and maps for staff to use when conducting project review. Specifically, to address biological resources, EPU has developed a number of resources for staff and applicants, including a Tree Disclosure Statement, a Tree Report template, Biological Resources Assessment templates and accompanying reporting standards with instructions for applicants and biologists. EPU also actively assists staff in reviewing such submitted reports. Together, these enhancements ensure the proper analysis of biological resources and the application of appropriate project based mitigation measures.

In 2021, the EPU prepared a technical bulletin providing guidance for Trustee Agency notification, including templates to notify applicable agencies, including the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC). The EPU also functions as a liaison between the City and multiple agencies, including CDFW and SMMC, with monthly coordination meetings, and frequently with other agencies with an interest in environmental resources. In these meetings DCP and agency staff review development projects to ensure appropriate analysis and mitigation measures to preserve biological resources such as candidate, threatened, endangered, sensitive, and special status species and communities, including protected trees and shrubs. Ongoing policy update and guidance discussions also occur in these monthly coordination meetings.

The EPU has also been working with DCP's Urban Ecologist to develop data-driven approaches, such as habitat suitability and wildlife connectivity mapping, to help identify important ecological areas and corridors for the Southern California Mountain Lion (currently awaiting listing as a candidate species), Monarch Butterfly, and other listed species within the city. This mapping allows parcels to be scored according to propensity to contain habitat, thus triggering additional biological resource assessment. This assessment then allows planners to provide guidance for the level of biological review necessary for discretionary entitlements, allowing the City to better evaluate the potential impact of development projects. The maps are currently focused on the

hillside and coastal areas, but are expected to be expanded to include additional species and all parcels within the *entire city*.

Much of this work has been done in consultation with the Urban Ecologist, the City Forest Officer, StreetsLA/UFD, and many other City departments and committees. Externally, consultation has been coordinated with CDFW, the National Parks Service, SMMC, Arroyos and Foothills Conservancy, Occidental College, the Mountain Lion Foundation, the Xerces Society, and other external agencies and experts.

Project Review Process Enhancements
In addition to the CEQA process enhancements described above, DCP has also engaged with StreetsLA/UFD, the City Forest Officer, and the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) to improve discretionary entitlement case processes with particular emphasis on the protection and retention of native and protected trees and shrubs as well as trees within the public-right-of-way. DCP is engaged in monthly coordination meetings with a broad cross section of staff from StreetsLA/UFD and BOE to troubleshoot issues regarding potential tree and shrub removals and as a result of these coordination meetings, a new process enhancement is currently underway. As a pilot program, using the newly created Tree Disclosure Statement and Tree Report template described above, DCP coordinates with both StreetsLA/UFD and BOE to front-load the review of any potential removals of native or protected trees or shrubs on private property. The review also includes any potential removal of trees within the public-right-of-way. The review occurs prior to the filing of any project entitlements with the goals to provide applicants with early, upfront information that can inform a project's design, avoiding "late hits" and enabling the retention of as many trees and shrubs as possible, while still permitting the proposed project to be constructed in conformance with all applicable regulations.

Landscape Ordinance Amendment
LAMC Section 12.37, implemented by the Bureau of Engineering, provides requirements for Highway and Collector Street Dedication and Improvements, which are the same for both by-right projects as well as those requiring discretionary review by the Department of City Planning. This code section provides for the City Engineer to acquire dedications and public right-of-way improvements for projects requiring building permits; however, the improvements authorized per this section cannot require the planting of street trees in the public right-of-way. In practice this means that a wide variety of projects - from new commercial construction to multi-family buildings - may be constructed with the requirement to dedicate and fully improve the public right-of-way, but are not required to plant trees in the public right-of-way.

Healthy Buildings, Healthy Places: Landscape and Site Design Standards
To address this gap in 12.37 and ensure the planting of street trees for new development, to expand the requirements for the planting of on-site trees as well as address the many by-right projects that do not require any DCP review or approval, the DCP is working to amend the City's Landscape Ordinance. Launched in 2001, the Healthy Buildings Healthy Places: Landscape and Site Design Standards ordinance will amend the City's Landscape Ordinance (No. 170,978), Los Angeles Municipal Code Sections 12.40-43 previously adopted in May 1996 and amended in April

2005. The proposed amendment to LAMC Sections 12.40-43 will create new Landscape and Site Design objective standards and will utilize a point-based system similar to the existing one, in order to implement healthy building design and climate-adapted site design. The purpose of the amendment is to establish a more efficient and effective implementation process that will take a more holistic approach to site design, climate resilience, landscape and healthy building design best practices.

A central focus of the update to the Landscape Ordinance is creating a high quality public realm that contributes to a healthy built environment. Trees can address pressing urban cooling needs, improve air quality, and provide shade. The code amendment proposes the addition of a new Citywide requirement to expand the existing street tree canopy with each new residential or non-residential development project, involving new construction of five units or more. This provision in the new ordinance will require coordination with the Urban Forestry Division and Bureau of Engineering as it will exceed the current requirements for street improvements under LAMC Section 12.37. Where today only certain projects trigger street improvements, an update to the Landscape Ordinance will ensure that all projects, both discretionary and by-right, will be required to provide adequate street trees and opportunities to fill in missing tree canopy where it exists. In rare cases where street tree placement is determined by the City to be infeasible due to physical constraints, applicants will be granted the ability to pay in-lieu fees pursuant to LAMC Section 62.177. Additionally, the ordinance will include measures to encourage protection of significant, mature trees on private property.

The adoption of the Landscape Ordinance amendment will expand the requirement for street tree planting in conjunction with new development, and will incentivize the protection of significant, mature trees on private property for new by-right and discretionary projects. It will be critical to this effort that there is a coordinated effort with DCP, StreetsLA/UFD, BOE and DBS to ensure this ordinance is implemented. Additionally, StreetsLA/UFD will need to be properly staffed to assist with the review of street trees and tree protection policies under this ordinance so that implementation is successful.

Street Tree Removals, Replacements, Planting, and Maintenance
Los Angeles Municipal Code Chapter 6, Article 2, Section 62.161 through 62.178
The Board of Public Works (BPW), as implemented by the Bureau of Street Services (StreetsLA), Urban Forestry Division (UFD), has the authority over the planting, maintenance, and care of trees in the City's public rights-of-way. Requests for any removal of trees in the public right-of-way require a permit from StreetsLA/UFD, and are considered after all feasible alternatives for tree preservation have been explored. Pursuant to LAMC Sections 62.161 thru 62.178, a permit is required for the removal or planting of any street tree. If a request to remove a tree is granted/approved, applicants are required to replace the removed tree(s) at a 2:1 ratio with a minimal 24-inch box size tree(s) of a species determined by StreetsLA/UFD.

Tree pruning, trimming, cutting, and maintenance are under the responsibility of StreetsLA/UFD and are governed by LAMC Sections LAMC 62.161 through 62.178. Large trees are less likely to cause impacts to streets and sidewalks, street lights, and other infrastructure in the public right-

of-way if they are regularly inspected for defects and pruned, as needed, for healthy structure, including maintaining required clearances for streets and sidewalks. StreetsLA/UFD is currently funded for trimming and maintaining trees once every 20 years as part of a targeted program for areas in the City that have significant issues with tree maintenance. However, additional funding is needed for more frequent trimming and maintenance that would benefit the health of trees as well as public right-of-way improvements such as sidewalks and street lights. Regular inspection and pruning on a cycle closer to the tree care industry best management practice of 5-7 years would allow for improved tree health and longevity. Frequent inspection, and pruning when necessary, allows potential risk to be addressed early which lowers potential liability as well as prevents tree loss from tree failure that could have been avoided by early action. Regular inspection and pruning cycles allows urban forest professionals within StreetsLA/UFD to typically prune less, which is better for the overall health and longevity of the City's tree assets.

Additional staffing resources would enable StreetsLA/UFD to more frequently inspect and maintain street trees, improving overall tree health.

Lighting and Sidewalk Repair

Security and Lighting

The installation and maintenance of street lights is implemented by the Bureau of Street Lights. When planting or issuing permits for the planting of new street trees, StreetsLA/UFD carefully considers the selected tree species' potential size at maturity and uses that, combined with the Spacing Guidelines, to determine the locations of new trees. This includes a consideration of potential conflicts with the illumination provided at the pedestrian level from street lights. The current spacing guidelines ask for a twenty (20) foot clearance from street lights, though sometimes the spacing is slightly closer when a small tree species that is not anticipated to block the street light at maturity is being planted. Trees planted previously and/or trees currently planted illegally by residents may not follow these spacing guidelines.

While community concerns around lighting and safety are taken very seriously, research shows that areas with trees and urban greening have lower levels of fear, less violent behavior, fewer crimes reported[1], as well as fewer instances of vandalism or graffiti[2].

Streetlights-as-a-Service (SaaS) Pilot Program

The Bureau of Street Lighting (BSL) is proposing to install Smart Corridors as part of the SaaS pilot program, CF-22-0954. This pilot program will use new sensor technology to allow BSL, and the City as a whole, to evolve its municipal services deployment, providing real-time information to help with policy and resource decisions that can have considerable impact on communities. BSL plans to pilot two Smart Corridors, which will enable a suite of sensors, cameras, communications, and lighting technologies for the purposes of:

[1] Kuo, F.E., & W.C. Sullivan. 2001. "Environment & Crime in the Inner City: Does Vegetation Reduce Crime?" *Environment & Behavior* 22, 3:343-367

[2] Stamen, T. 1993. Graffiti Deterrent Proposed by Horticulturist [Press Release]. University of California Riverside

- Showcasing the future of service delivery to internal and external audiences;
- Augmenting specific, previously implemented projects; and,
- Creating a baseline of technologies that departments, and even entities outside of the City, can choose to utilize.

BSL states that the Smart Corridors pilot locations will be near the Los Angeles State Historic Park along Spring Street and near the University of Southern California (USC) campus along Jefferson Boulevard. These pilot locations were identified based on their various levels of traffic and movement, but are not adjacent to residences to avoid potential privacy concerns. The measure of success for the SaaS project will be determined through the adoption of the technology around the City. BSL believes that if multiple departments across the City use the technology, BSL can better quantify the level of success. BSL anticipates working with the Department of Transportation and Bureau of Street Services to identify ways the Smart Corridors sensor and tracking technology could be used, such as to revolutionize street sweeping communication by replacing the traditional tools for communication such as signs and mobile applications.

Roots and Impacts on Sidewalks
In accordance with the Los Angeles Municipal Code, the property owner is responsible for maintaining the adjacent sidewalk, curb, parkway, and driveway approach. The property owner may request a permit to trim tree roots to allow for the repair of the sidewalk if the tree can be left in a safe condition, which may also require pruning of the tree canopy to minimize wind resistance. The work is performed by the property owner at their expense. If the tree roots can not be safely pruned, the property owner may request a tree removal permit to remove the tree at their own expense and may be required to plant replacement trees.

When issuing permits for the planting of new street trees, StreetsLA/UFD evaluates site conditions and selects trees that will be able to grow in the often restricted and challenging conditions in the public right-of-way. This includes selecting trees that are not known to have high root damage potential and are an appropriate size for the planting space.

As some of the species previously planted in the public right-of-way have been known to cause sidewalk uplift and yet may also present tremendous shade value and environmental protections to the surrounding communities, StreetsLA/UFD carefully evaluates mature trees adjacent to public right-of-way or development projects. When considering existing mature trees for tree preservation or removal, StreetsLA/UFD's evaluation includes, but is not limited to: overall site conditions, tree health and benefits, and infrastructure conflicts. This also includes a consideration of the tree or tree species' ability to withstand root pruning, including both the impact to the tree's health and stability as well as the potential for future, repeated, damage to the sidewalk. If a tree must be removed, property owners must replace the tree at a 2:1 ratio with a minimum 24-inch box size tree(s) of a species determined by StreetsLA/UFD.

Staffing levels in StreetsLA/UFD is a challenge that affects the timely evaluation and inspection of trees, tree roots and their impact to sidewalks. Additional staffing would enable StreetsLA/UFD

to more frequently address potential negative impacts of tree routes on sidewalks, potentially preventing or slowing sidewalk damage and ensuring tree health.

Tree Planting Grant Funding and Partnerships

The ordinances and regulations described above address the retention and care of existing trees and the planting of new trees in conjunction with development projects. Another avenue the City utilizes to plant trees is applying for various grants to fund the planting of trees, heavily focusing on trees in the public rights-of-way in the City's most vulnerable communities where they are most needed and beneficial.

In addition to any funding allocated during the City budget process, both City departments and non-profit partners apply for and manage grants for urban forestry and urban greening projects that are available through state, federal, and foundation sources. The most common granting agencies that provide additional resources to Los Angeles' urban forestry are California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention's (CAL FIRE) Urban and Community Forestry grant program, California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Urban Greening and Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) programs, and the Strategic Growth Council's Transformative Climate Communities grant program.

These grants have provided significant resources for tree planting and varying levels of funding for tree establishment care. CAL FIRE grants provide the most robust funding for tree establishment care (up to five years, if included in initial proposal and budget), while CNRA grants typically only provide up to two years of establishment care, which is challenging for the projects in Los Angeles. The City Forest Officer and Urban Forestry Division leadership recommend providing five years of establishment care, particularly in hotter, inland areas. This ensures project success and long term benefits to communities. While some tree planting is done with support from the adjacent homeowner providing watering while the tree is young, it is preferred to provide dedicated watering and establishment care (restaking, application of mulch, etc.) in high need communities and heavily trafficked public corridors. The limited funding and time frame for watering allowed within the CNRA grants has made them less attractive for the City and local partners, but they represent significant available funding. The City could consider allocating funding and staff authorities to the Urban Forestry Division or Recreation and Parks Forestry for the staff needed to cover the gap from the CNRA grants in order to support grant applications for these State level funds. Not only would this allow for better overall projects, but could also be used as match funds, making those proposals more competitive.

LA Sanitation and the Environment has applied for and received funding for large tree planting projects that also provide concrete cuts, creating new tree planting locations in some of the City's lowest canopied areas. This work has been done in conjunction with StreetsLA/UFD providing staff match and project support and leveraging the Department of Water and Power's Energy Efficiency Free Trees program, also known as the City Plants program.

While grant requirements and funding sources vary, most of the grants from these State sources require or show preference for projects that are serving California's most vulnerable communities.

This includes the many urban forestry grants that have come through funding made available through proceeds from the state's Cap-And-Trade Program, authorized by Assembly Bill 32 (Nunez, 2006). Senate Bill 535 (De Leon, 2012) established the initial requirements for funding levels to disadvantaged communities (DACs), which was further refined in Assembly Bill 1550 (Gomez, 2016) to establish the current funding levels for DACs and the new categorization of low income communities (LICs). Maps of these priority areas can be found at: https://webmaps.arb.ca.gov/PriorityPopulations/.

Partnerships

To help establish and maintain healthy trees, the City partners with external organizations to educate residents and property owners about the health and economic benefits of trees. These organizations offer resources to assist with tree species selection, tree planting, maintenance, and appropriate water use. Education efforts highlight available City resources such as free shade trees offered through City Plants, which both plants and gives away approximately 20,000 trees per year through funding provided by LADWP and implemented with City Plant's partners Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC), Koreatown Youth and Community Center (KYCC), Northeast Trees, Los Angeles Beautification Team and TreePeople.

Despite the significance of these grant programs, gaps exist in the funding for planting and maintenance of trees. Additional funding and staff positions to StreetsLA/UFD and/or Recreation and parks could assist in bridging existing gaps in these programs, and leveraging additional funds with more competitive proposals.

III. TREE CANOPY EQUITY

In acknowledgement of the need to support communities throughout the City with equitable and robust climate resiliency, biodiversity, beautification, economic and quality of life benefits associated with a healthy and thriving urban forest, the need for establishing regulations for the protection, preservation, planting, pruning, maintenance, and thoughtful removal of trees within the City has been identified. This report has initiated the dialogue among the relevant City Departments and agencies to collaborate on a holistic approach to regulating trees in the City. The goals of tree canopy equity align with other City efforts related to equity, sustainability, climate resilience and biodiversity. This collaborative effort is part of the approach presented in this report.

As described in this report, the City has authority to regulate trees as identified in the Protected Trees and Shrubs Ordinance, and regulate the removal of street trees and planting of trees on private property and the public right-of-way through existing ordinances, CEQA review and discretionary DCP entitlements. The City also regularly utilizes grants to achieve tree planting in the public rights of way in underserved communities.

DCP Environmental Justice Policy Program

The DCP will soon be launching the Environmental Justice Policy Program, whose goals are to further advance environmental justice and address the disproportionate impact of environmental

burdens on Los Angeles's environmental justice communities. The program's work will include a comprehensive effort to centralize and strengthen environmental justice policies in the City's General Plan. DCP anticipates beginning this work with an update to the Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles as described above, an update to the Air Quality Element, and targeted updates to the Open Space Element. The General Plan Update will also include the creation of a new Environmental Justice Element or the addition of an environmental justice chapter in the Health Element.

Office of Forest Management (OFM) Projects

The City Forest Officer has been tasked with addressing tree canopy equity, including working toward the GND goal to "increase tree canopy in areas of greatest need by at least 50% by 2028" and in developing an implementation strategy to achieve that goal (Executive Directive 25, Garcetti series). To this end, the current work in the OFM is focused on tree preservation, tree canopy equity, strategic planning and implementation, and development of the City's first Urban Forest Management Plan.

Tree preservation is critical, not just because there are challenges with the current regulations, but also because tree canopy equity will not be achieved just by planting new trees. Existing healthy, mature trees must be maintained and preserved as they represent the largest existing canopy and important opportunities for canopy expansion, which is why resources for regular tree maintenance and strong preservation policies are critical to tree canopy equity.

Data shows that tree canopy equity goals may not be achieved in some neighborhoods if trees are planted only in current available locations. These goals require the City to consider strategic investments in alternative designs to accommodate the types of trees that are needed to protect the public from urban heat and poor air quality. OFM is working with two research projects and one pilot program to help understand where these investments may be needed and to explore, in collaboration with residents in high need, low canopied communities, and what types of interventions would be most in-line with community identified needs. The City needs to prioritize making space for large canopy tree species. Improving site conditions to allow for large canopy tree species has the added benefit of also increasing the number of locations where the City may plant native trees that provide critical habitat and enhance biodiversity. Many of the trees native to Los Angeles require larger planting locations than are typically available in the public right of way.

Tree Canopy Equity Projects

Urban Forest Equity Collective (UFEC, initially known as the "Tree Canopy Equity Visiting Scholar" project)

UFEC, a project led by the City's nonprofit partner City Plants, began working with the City Forest Officer in July 2020. The project team includes a large number of partners, including research, consulting and nonprofit organizations, and a landscape architecture firm. The first Phase of the project developed two reports, "Los Angeles Urban Forest Equity Assessment" and "Los Angeles Urban Forest Equity Streets Guidebook." These highlighted the challenges in the urban

environment, described the impacts of redlining on the local urban forest, and introduced the Tiered methodology for describing planting opportunities.

Phase 1 project reports and infographic can be found on the City Plants website: https://www.cityplants.org/urban-forest-equity-collective/.

The second Phase of their work (currently in progress) has included development of a decision-support tool to strategically narrow down geographic priorities. This tool includes a multi-step process and utilizes criteria in the following areas:

1. Physical and Economic Need
2. Environmental Exposure
3. Socio-Demographic Need

Following the use of data in the above categories, they looked at Feasibility and Community Readiness indicators to determine two pilot neighborhoods to do enhanced community engagement and develop community implementation plans. In those neighborhoods, they have begun using the USC street prioritization criteria (detailed below), as feasible, to aid in prioritizing the streets to discuss with community members.

For the pilot neighborhoods, they have conducted geo-spatial analysis of potential planting locations on public and private property and the impact on the neighborhood's overall tree canopy level if all of those locations were planted, giving the City feedback on whether or not a 50% increase in these high need areas is feasible with current conditions.

The project also has been considering how various City policy documents (i.e. Mobility Plan, BOE Standard Plans, and other guidelines) may impact what unique urban forestry interventions may be possible if there is not space for sufficient canopy within the existing conditions in the neighborhood. The final report for the UFEC Phase 2 project is anticipated to be released before the end of 2023.

University of Southern California, Urban Trees Initiative

OFM has worked closely with USC's Urban Trees Initiative (USC) since August of 2020. The project team includes City staff, USC experts and students in spatial sciences, landscape architecture, air quality monitoring, as well as the University Relations staff. Through the partnership, USC has evaluated, conducted community engagement, and provided design scenarios for the neighborhoods of Lincoln Heights, El Sereno, Ramona Gardens, University Park, Boyle Heights and City Terrace (not City of LA, unincorporated LA County). Their Phase 1 report and links to their Phase 2 Story Maps can be found on the project website (https://publicexchange.usc.edu/urban-trees-initiative/). Phase 2 Story Maps utilized the Tiered methodology for planting opportunities that was developed by UFEC. This project has begun a Phase 3, which includes more in-depth study about the air quality performance of different tree species. Most information about air quality benefits of tree species is available in studies for trees on the East Coast or in Europe, not specific to the trees used in Los Angeles.

One of the key deliverables of their project was a data and community-informed process for prioritizing streets for early or advanced urban forestry interventions. This tool for selecting streets to prioritize will be a part of the implementation strategy for tree canopy equity, and has already begun to be utilized in the UFEC pilot neighborhoods. The street prioritization includes equity criteria, utilities and parkway constraints analysis, transit corridors and routes to schools (the transit corridors and routes to schools analysis are only available in a limited area at this time).

Tree Ambassadors Program

Both of the research projects have included community engagement, however it is critical to develop additional capacity and strategies to reach residents. Through funding received from the Department of Water and Power and several other entities, City Plants and their partners, Koreatown Youth and Community Center (KYCC), Climate Resolve, the California Climate Action Corps, and TreePeople, has developed the Tree Ambassador-Promotor Forestal Program. There have been two co-horts of Tree Ambassadors trained in this program, which is designed to train and support local community members from low-canopy and heat vulnerable communities in urban forestry and directly compensate them to organize around tree planting and care in their own neighborhoods.

Additional information on the program, partners, and funders is available on the City Plants website: https://www.cityplants.org/tree-ambassador/.

The OFM is continuing to advise all these projects, and will be using the findings to develop the strategic approach for addressing tree canopy equity Citywide. These partnerships have allowed the City to move forward in understanding and addressing tree canopy equity at a much faster pace than would have been possible with current staffing resources. Currently, OFM is working with other City departments to develop pathways for implementation in the pilot areas and understand challenges that will need to be addressed in order to develop the Citywide approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

After having the opportunity to dialogue among City Departments to respond to this motion from City Council, the following recommendations are suggested for next steps and to implement the two-phased approach initially described in this report.

Recommendation 1: Expand Process Enhancements: StreetsLA/UFD, BOE, DCP and DBS

There is opportunity for more transparency within the project and permit review process between departments. Specifically, the mandatory disclosure of on-site and public right-of-way trees for all projects, both by-right and discretionary, through the DBS permitting process, would improve this transparency and significantly improve tree preservation, non-removal and enforcement opportunities. To provide additional direction to applicants DBS with collaboration from StreetsLA/UFD is reviewing if an information bulletin may be published along with updates to the public works StreetsLA/UFD clearance section within the Building Permit Clearance Handbook. This would consist of administrative processes and permit review adjustments between DCP, BOE, StreetsLA/UFD and DBS for coordination.

Additionally, there is opportunity to strengthen StreetsLA/UFD's processes for tree removal permits when a building permit is not involved. This would involve administrative process adjustments within StreetsLA/UFD.

When projects seek entitlements for discretionary approvals with DCP, there are opportunities to improve DCP's processes and procedures, including:

- Expansion of the DCP Pilot program for StreetsLA/UFD early review of tree removals when part of a DCP entitlement application;
- Continue to enhance CEQA review of tree removals to ensure the timely and accurate review of tree reports and tree protection plans through new forms, instructions, and staff training;
- Continue to engage in cross departmental coordination and consultation with Departments engaged in tree preservation, removals, and planting.

Recommendation 2: Amend the City's Landscape Ordinance with funding for full implementation: StreetsLA, BOE, DCP and DBS

The adoption of the Landscape Ordinance amendment will expand the requirement for street tree planting in conjunction with new development, and will incentivize the protection of significant, mature trees on private property for new by-right and discretionary projects. Once adopted it will

be critical to this effort that there is a coordinated effort with DCP, StreetsLA/UFD, BOE and DBS to ensure this ordinance is implemented. Additionally, StreetsLA/UFD will need to be properly staffed and funded to assist with the review of street trees and tree protection policies under this ordinance so that implementation is successful.

Recommendation 3: Complete the Updated Urban Forest Fee Study: StreetsLA
In Los Angeles, StreetsLA/UFD is responsible for managing more than 700,000 trees along 6,500 miles of public roads. When property owners and developers seek permits for construction projects, StreetsLA/UFD often becomes involved if existing trees would be affected by the project. Before the City issues permits, StreetsLA/UFD typically has to assess the impact on trees and approve the developer's plans going forward.

StreetsLA/UFD charges fees for some, but not all, services related to handling these approvals. The current fee schedule is more than 25 years old. It no longer reflects the true financial cost incurred by StreetsLA/UFD during these approvals. It also fails to reflect the environmental and wellbeing costs of removing trees, and the fee structure doesn't incentivize developers to prioritize tree preservation early in their project design process.

StreetsLA/UFD cannot, however, unilaterally increase its fees. Changes in current fees and the addition of new fees either need to be justified by the Los Angeles Municipal Code, or changes to the Municipal Code need to be proposed to update the fee schedule.

The City of Los Angeles will partner with FUSE Corps to evaluate and update StreetsLA/UFD's schedule of fees to capture the true value of both StreetsLA/UFD's work and trees to the City. The FUSE Executive Fellow will assess the actual cost of services StreetsLA/UFD provides and the value that trees bring to the City. The project, which is expected to commence in Spring 2024, aims to provide StreetsLA/UFD the capacity to support a thriving urban forest that improves the health and wellbeing of city residents.

This work will include the following:

- For existing fees, determine the true cost, in terms of staff time and expenses, that the City of Los Angeles incurs when StreetsLA/UFD reviews plans, conducts tree assessments on site, and interacts with public stakeholders and other city staff during permitting processes.
- In collaboration with StreetsLA/UFD managers, consider additional services that StreetsLA/UFD provides but does not charge fees for and calculate the actual costs of those services.
- Consider services currently not provided by StreetsLA/UFD but necessary to perform review and assessment of plans and site inspections and calculate costs for those services (such as expedited fees, initial and final inspection fees, weekend and holiday inspections, board report fees).
- Evaluate the true cost of tree removal, including health, climate, economic and quality of life effects on Los Angeles residents.

- Evaluate assessment of monetary penalties (fines) for violations of unpermitted tree removal and/or improper pruning that may cause a tree(s) to fail or die. The fines must be severe enough to discourage anyone from the thought of removing or severely pruning a tree(s). Currently, the LAMC does not allow StreetsLA/UFD to assess any monetary fine for tree violations.

Recommendation 4: Adopt the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP): City Forest Officer
In 2018, the City's partner, City Plants, received funding from CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to develop a Needs Assessment for the City of Los Angeles, as the first step toward the development of the City's Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP). City Plants hired a consultant firm and facilitated a ten month process with key City staff and stakeholders to develop what is now referred to as the "First Steps" Report. The final report, available on the City Plants website, included six priority recommendations, several of which the City has taken significant action on:

#2. Hire an Urban Forestry Coordinator
The City Forest Officer position created and funded by the Mayor and Council. The position was filled in August 2019.

#3B. Complete an Urban Forestry Financing Plan
City Plants received funding, subsequent to the completion of the "First Steps," from CAL FIRE and USFS to complete the Urban Forestry Financing Study. This report details the funding levels needed to achieve industry best practices for the City's trees over their life cycle and explores the possible funding mechanisms the City could pursue to reach those funding levels. The final draft is currently under review by the CAO.

#4A. Complete comprehensive Tree Inventory
City Council allocated $2 million to StreetsLA for the street component of the inventory in 2019. The Street Tree inventory is estimated 85% complete and is expected to be completed by the end of calendar year 2023. Recreation and Parks Forestry Division applied for and received a CAL FIRE grant for the Park Tree Inventory in 2018. The Park Tree Inventory was completed in March 2021. Both inventories can be seen on the public facing site: https://losangelesca.treekeepersoftware.com/.

#4B. Implement tree management software
The Recreation and Parks Forestry Division had already acquired and utilized the TreeKeeper software since 2008. In January 2020, StreetsLA/UFD was added to their system and began using the software as inventory data was being gathered by field arborists.

#6. Develop and implement an Urban Forest Management Plan
In November 2019, the City Forest Officer submitted a proposal for a CAL FIRE grant for the Urban Forest Management Plan. That grant award was approved by Council in June 2020 (CF 20-0716) and the contract was executed in August 2020. Due to staffing

limitations, the project was significantly delayed but is anticipated to be completed by 2025. Public outreach for the UFMP is being done in collaboration with LA County. Neighborhood workshops and a survey for the project is in development and anticipated to launch in Fall 2023.

Based on the robust "First Step," and subsequent work done by the City Forest Officer, including policy analysis, feedback received from elected officials, staff, industry professionals, the Community Forest Advisory Committee, and other key stakeholders, there is a very clear sense of the data gaps and policy needs that the UFMP will address. The UFMP will provide a clear vision of the future forest, provide a roadmap of how to reach the City's urban forestry goals, and will include recommendations on management activities, protocols, policies, ordinances, and municipal code sections that need revision or updating to better align with industry best practices and the City's goals regarding citywide biodiversity, sustainability, climate resilience and tree canopy equity regulations.

Recommendation 5: Prepare and Draft New Citywide Biodiversity and Tree Canopy Equity Regulations: DCP, OFM, StreetsLA/UFD, DBS, City Attorney's Office, CFAC
In addition to the numerous efforts described in this report, there are opportunities to more comprehensively address biodiversity and tree canopy equity at a citywide level. This can be accomplished by identifying and implementing new citywide regulations to address the removal and replacement of larger or significant trees on both private property and in the public right-of-way, with a focus on equity, sustainability, climate resilience and biodiversity. As described above, the UFMP and Tree Canopy Equity projects are underway by OFM and will address tree canopy equity. Additionally, the DCP Environmental Justice Unit will begin work to update the Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles, the Air Quality Element, and make targeted updates to the Open Space Element. Work accomplished via the UFMP, the Tree Canopy Equity projects implemented by OFM, and new policy programs anticipated to be conducted by the DCP Environmental Justice Unit can assess these opportunities for future strengthening of biodiversity and tree canopy equity efforts within the City.

CONCLUSION

The Los Angeles City Council has requested that the City Forest Officer and StreetsLA/UFD, DCP, DBS, the City Attorney's Office, and CFAC to provide more detail on ongoing efforts and an anticipated work program, timeline and resources needed for the Council to advance the recommendations contained within this report relative to on ongoing tree and biodiversity planning, strategies and/or efforts to protect and grow the City's urban canopy; provide recommendations to require the placement of trees, and timing of any tree removals, at an earlier phase in the land use/environmental review, and permitting review process, and thereby maximize City efforts to grow tree canopy coverage; and, to prepare and present an Ordinance to effectuate these directives. It is recommended that the City consider the future resource needs that will be identified in the UFMP and Urban Forest Financing Study to promote citywide biodiversity and tree canopy equity. These resources would ultimately allow for the City to

advance its goals for tree canopy equity, biodiversity and climate change resilience in areas of the City that contain the greatest needs for protection and abundance.

For additional information, please contact Blake Lamb, Principal City Planner, at (818) 374-9914, or Blake.Lamb@lacity.org.

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