

14-0163

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MOTION

While the City of Los Angeles is grappling with a difficult economic environment, it is also seeking viable solutions to the long term problem of sidewalk maintenance and repair. With an estimated 10,750 miles of sidewalks, and a mature urban forest, there are substantial challenges in the development and implementation of a citywide sidewalk repair program. Bureau of Street Services (BSS) has previously estimated that 40% of the system or 4,620 miles is in disrepair, with a majority of the disrepair caused by tree roots.

The City Attorney has opined that sidewalk repair is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner (L.A.M.C. 62.104 and The 1911 Act). However, in 1973, the City stopped assessing property owners for sidewalk repairs caused by certain tree root damage and fixed many of the sidewalks at the City's expense. This dichotomy has resulted in confusion and sidewalk repair inaction.

Given the tremendous need for repairs, the City should pursue a citywide sidewalk repair program where damaged sidewalks are once again open and accessible to all its residents and visitors. The City's prior 50/50 program, when offered, has been a proven success. In 2004-2005, the 50/50 program was introduced and funding was also provided through 2008-2009. All work was performed by BSS staff. Under this program, BSS would survey participating sidewalks, provide a cost estimate to repair the sidewalk and the property owner would pay BSS 50% of the quoted estimate.

Using the cost sharing incentive system, the City should begin by crafting a sidewalk repair program for commercial properties, along transit and pedestrian corridors, that provide a pathway to critical destinations within the City. This cost sharing approach could be used as an incentive for commercial property sidewalk repairs, and would better target City resources as an initial phase of a citywide sidewalk repair program. The repair of sidewalks citywide constitutes the dedication of considerable public resources. A cost sharing program would be a way to stretch limited resources further.

BSS should be instructed to prepare a proposed sidewalk preservation plan that initially focuses on the repair of damaged sidewalks adjacent to commercial properties and transit routes, which reflects a cost-sharing approach to sidewalk repair.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Public Works Department, Bureau of Street Services, with the assistance and cooperation the of Bureau of Engineering, the City Administrative Officer, the Chief Legislative Analyst and City Attorney, be instructed to prepare and present a citywide pilot sidewalk repair program for commercial properties, similar to the City's successful 50/50 program, focusing on major commercial and pedestrian corridors, transit routes and transit hubs, where the adjacent property owner would ultimately pay 75% of estimated sidewalk repair costs as provided by BSS.

I FURTHER MOVE that BSS be instructed to report on developing a time incentive system starting with a 50% subsidy that then lowers to 25% and that a no cost permit be established for this incentive program.

PRESENTED BY:

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SECONDED BY:

Joe Bruner

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