

Following the Great Recession, nearly two decades ago, the City significantly scaled back funding and staffing resources to many of its Public Works Bureaus and the Department of Transportation. These cuts have never been fully restored, decreasing capacity to perform core services and causing visible impacts to the public right of way. Essential services such as tree trimming, sidewalk and pothole repairs, storm system work, streetlight maintenance, and traffic and parking management now operate on timelines years behind industry standards or best practices set by the City.

To put this into perspective, a full citywide tree-trimming cycle under the Bureau of Street Services takes nearly 17 years, over three times longer than the industry standard of 5 years. Similarly, the Bureau of Street Lighting currently takes about 1 year to repair a street light, compared to 2 days when they were properly resourced.

While budget cuts were made for short term savings, these decisions have had long term impacts including the steady degradation of the City's public right-of-way, increased liabilities, service delivery delays, unsafe conditions and public hazards for residents, all while costs are continuing to rise for the City. The current funding to execute basic services through the Public Works Bureaus and Department of Transportation is insufficient to keep up with the daily wear and tear of public right-of-way infrastructure, resulting in a growing backlog of work and repairs.

Because of those cuts, the City now spends tens of millions annually on legal settlements for injuries tied to broken sidewalks, unstable hillsides, fallen trees, and unrepaired streetlights, which could be used to perform preventive maintenance. The current cycle is unsustainable and deferred care leads to costly emergencies that cause residents to bear the consequences of unsafe and deteriorating infrastructure.

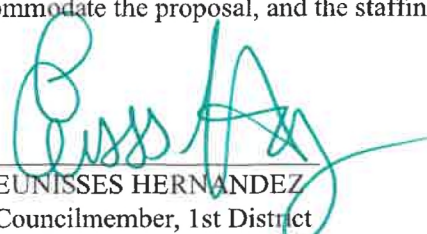
Given the broad scope of services that are not properly staffed or funded to perform work at the level residents expect and deserve, the City should perform a comprehensive analysis of the resource needs to bring core programs that maintain and repair our public right-of-way infrastructure, including but not limited to bike lanes, curb cuts, sidewalks, street trees, storm drains, street trees, and streetlights, to industry standards or best practices set by the City.

**I THEREFORE MOVE** that the Council INSTRUCT the Bureau of Street Services, Bureau of Street Lighting, Bureau of Sanitation, Bureau of Engineering, Bureau of Contract Administration, and the Department of Transportation, with the assistance of the City Administrative Officer and any other relevant department, to report back in 60 days on the following:

- Identify industry standards or where more effective, other standards and best practices, for the repair, replacement, and maintenance levels/cycles and timely inspection of the public right-of-way infrastructure including but not limited to bike lanes, curb cuts, sidewalks, street trees, storm drains, street trees, and streetlights;
- Establish standards and best practices to guide the City's funding and resource allocation;
- Determine staffing levels, equipment costs and materials, fleet capacity needed to reach these standards;
- Outline any additional costs or resources required to achieve best practices as defined by the Bureaus or Department;
- Develop a phased approach, in one year increments, to meet best practices established by the City in five years, and identify resources and annual budget allocations necessary for each phase; and
- Provide recommendations for ongoing updates or reassessments, such as options for applying formula based increases on a year-over-year basis.

**I FURTHER MOVE** that the Council INSTRUCT the Department of General Services to report back within 60 days of the submission of the above outlined reports with information on fleet maintenance, repair, and storage needs of the proposed phases by the Bureaus and Departments. The report should include the amount of real estate available for fleet storage, real estate needed to accommodate the proposal, and the staffing and equipment needed to maintain the fleet and yards.

PRESENTED BY:

  
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Councilmember, 1st District

SECONDED BY:



  
SEP 30 2025

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