

ENERGY, CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND RIVER COMMITTEE REPORT relative to the development of a healthy soil strategy for the City to support urban agriculture, address carbon sequestration and increase water capture.

Recommendations for Council action:

1. DIRECT the Bureau of Sanitation (BOS), in conjunction with relevant City departments, to develop a healthy soil strategy for the City to support urban agriculture, address carbon sequestration, and increase water capture, and to solicit input on these issues from local universities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and relevant governmental agencies.
2. DIRECT BOS to:
 - a. Work with the Department of Transportation, the Department of Recreation and Parks, StreetsLA, and other relevant departments to report back on opportunities for unpaving underutilized spaces and using them for composting/mulching operations and/or to create healthy soil.
 - b. Work with the Department of Recreation and Parks, StreetsLA, the Library Department, General Services Department, and other relevant departments, and request the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, and the other proprietaries, where relevant, to report back on:
 - i. Opportunities to develop small- and mid-scale compost operations on public lands.
 - ii. Opportunities to reduce chemical and water use in parks through compost and mulch use and other regenerative land and tree management in public green spaces.
 - iii. The current use and any excess availability of mulch from City forestry and landscaping operations across all departments, including proprietaries, and green-bin collection to support healthy soil in the City.
 - iv. Current and future availability of anaerobic digested “cake” that can be used to support healthy soil.
 - v. Opportunities for increased soil carbon and risk mitigation (flooding/drought) by increased water infiltration/holding capacity on managed lands.
 - vi. Opportunities with the Departmental Chief Sustainability Officers to educate new and existing staff and other relevant managers on soil health, regenerative land management, and integrated pest management.
 - c. Report on public/private funding sources, including grants, for projects that will help the City expand its healthy soil efforts.

- d. Work with the Economic and Workforce Development Department, the Office of Climate Emergency Mobilization, and local trade schools, like Los Angeles Trade-Tech, or job development organizations, like LA Conservation Corps or Homeboy Industries, to report back on opportunities for the creation and improvement of local, 'green' employment opportunities linked to healthy soil and compost projects and programs.
- e. Work with the Office of Climate Emergency Mobilization, the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance, and other relevant community organizations on opportunities for public-awareness efforts on the importance of healthy soil and regenerative land management for LA communities.
- f. Report on the inclusion of training for the City's landscaping workers across relevant departments on how to correctly care for native plants, as part of the integrated landscape management training.
- g. Put together an inexpensive online panel discussion of experts in biodiversity and in soil biology to get to the bottom of the issues.

3. INSTRUCT BOS to:

- a. Continue to lead the Healthy Soils Advisory Panel and to create a Healthy Soils Interdepartmental Team to finalize a healthy soil strategy for the City.
- b. Report annually on progress on healthy soil initiatives and pilot projects.

4. DIRECT the Los Angeles Fire Department to report on best practices to protect soil health during necessary brush clearance activities.

5. REQUEST the working group and CEMO to vet the idea of launching an effort similar to Victory Gardens who served as an effective organizing and community-building tool during World War II.

Fiscal Impact Statement: The BOS reports that this is a City-wide program and while BOS can fund some of the work that is directly related to the impact of the departments operations on healthy soils, other funding sources are required for other aspects of the work. Neither the City Administrative Officer nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has completed a financial analysis of this report..

Community Impact Statement:

For:

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council
Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council
South Robertson Neighborhood Council
West Los Angeles Neighborhood Council
Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council

For if Amended:

Wilshire Center-Koreatown Neighborhood Council

(Public Safety Committee waived consideration of the above matter)

Summary:

At its meeting held on June 3, 2021, the Energy, Climate Change, Environmental Justice, and River Committee considered the February 8, 2021 BOS report relative to the development of a healthy soil strategy for the City to support urban agriculture, address carbon sequestration and increase water capture. The report, attached to the file, includes some background on the matter.

After an opportunity for public comment, the Committee recommended to approve the recommendation as amended and reflected above. This matter is now submitted to the Council for consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

ENERGY, CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND RIVER COMMITTEE

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
O'FARRELL:	YES
RIDLEY-THOMAS:	YES
KORETZ:	YES
DE LEON:	YES
KREKORIAN:	YES

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-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-