

## Attachment "L"

The current Landscape Ordinance for the City of Los Angeles is obsolete - it was last updated in 1996. With this new proposed Landscape and Site Design Ordinance, the City sets out to provide a set of codes that will create a healthier and more biodiverse living environment for all communities throughout Los Angeles by ensuring that new projects provide spaces for nature, and by making streets and sidewalks more walkable.

There is pressure in our city to build new housing and to do so in a manner that reduces discretionary reviews and processing times. Unfortunately, we have seen that without environmental reviews, buildings are being built without setbacks and without green spaces. The challenge for Planning was to develop specific standards that will ensure sustainability without the usual lengthy reviews. We believe they have worked diligently to meet this challenge.

At the same time, the State housing laws now require cities to use fixed and measurable guidelines. In response, the City designed a flexible, objective, point system. We are pleased to see that this point system is easy to understand. It awards points for nine different design areas and we are especially pleased to see that points are actually "subtracted" for the removal of trees. This proposed Landscape and Site Design Ordinance offers a truly comprehensive set of guidelines in approaching all elements of a healthy biodiverse environment. For example, it also awards points to builders who opt to use bird-safe glass or use landscape lights at night in a manner that is wildlife friendly.

The LANCSA (Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance) is submitting a letter with amendments to the second draft of the ordinance; its recommendations were carefully crafted by the Trees Committee which includes landscape professionals. These amendments, for the most part, are meant to clarify certain details of the guidelines to ensure that the right trees are planted, that they are planted properly, and that they have the best chance of surviving. Furthermore, the intention is to prevent any misinterpretations of the guidelines and to close any possible loopholes. For these reasons, we recommend that these amendments be considered seriously by the City and that they be incorporated into the final draft of the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance. (The only portion of the letter that we would like to exclude is the last line in the second paragraph "We have measured 30 degrees-cooler readings under tree shade versus the reading at the adjacent unshaded sidewalk on a hot July day".)

### CONCLUSION

The City's Tree Canopy is in decline and we cannot afford to waste any more time in passing an updated Landscape Ordinance. We urge the City to move as quickly as possible to codify the proposed Landscape and Site Design Ordinance, and we recommend incorporating the amendments recommended by the NCSA Tree Committee.