

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM32.14	ACTION			Ward: All
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No More Weeds and Tree Coffins Across our Public Right of Way - by Councillor Lily Cheng, seconded by Councillor Josh Matlow

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Lily Cheng, seconded by Councillor Josh Matlow, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and the Executive Director, Development Review to include, as part of the fourth quarter 2025 report back to the Executive Committee requested in Item 2025.EX22.3, the following:
 - a. recommendations on changes to the development approvals process to ensure there is clear understanding on the part of developers, future property owners, and condominium boards about any applicable responsibility for the maintenance of public realm elements located in the public right-of-way.
2. City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services and the Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry to include, as part of the fourth quarter 2025 report back to the Executive Committee requested in Item 2025.EX22.3, the following:
 - a. an overview of existing design requirements for public realm elements, such as planters, that enhance sustainability, including irrigation or other features that ensure long-term viability of plantings.
3. City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services and the Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry, in consultation with the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and all relevant City Divisions to report back in second quarter of 2026 on the following:
 - a. an exploration of what tools, funding, by-laws, aesthetic standards and enforcement mechanisms exist or are needed to ensure the long-term maintenance and beauty of planters in the public right-of-way and bring greater clarity to the different roles and responsibilities of the City, Business Improvement Areas, condominium corporations, commercial tenants and property owners.

Summary

The public realm is an essential part of creating vibrant, welcoming, and sustainable communities. Planters, landscaping, and other streetscape features in the public right-of-way help enhance the pedestrian experience, promote environmental sustainability, and add beauty to our neighbourhoods.

Currently, there is a lack of clarity around who is responsible for maintaining these features when they are located on public property but adjacent to private developments. Without clear policies, some of these elements fall into neglect, undermining both their appearance and their environmental value.

With better design standards, clear maintenance responsibilities, and stronger by-laws, we can ensure that these public realm elements contribute positively to our streetscapes for the long term.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM32.14