

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, trees in Austin's streetscape are an integral element of a shared public infrastructure, provide significant benefits to community health, and fulfill the Imagine Austin vision of a compact and connected city; and

WHEREAS, studies across the United States conclude there is a relationship between street tree size/longevity and adequacy of soil volume/quality; and

WHEREAS, the City has developed minimum standards that incorporate tree planting specifications; and

WHEREAS, underground and overhead infrastructure may conflict with tree canopy and rooting space but relocating existing infrastructure can add significant costs to streetscape projects; and

WHEREAS, the Urban Forestry Board passed a resolution on September 18, 2013 asking that the City Manager review current soil volume and quality specifications with the goal of increased longevity of street trees; and

WHEREAS, cities across the country including Charlotte, North Carolina, and Grand Rapids, Michigan, among others, have successfully incorporated greater root volumes in their downtown plantings; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to:

- (1) assess the adequacy of soil volume, soil quality, and root environment in existing streetscape tree plantings, taking into account underground and overhead infrastructure;
- (2) review city regulations, programs, and specifications used in streetscape tree planting projects regarding soil volume, soil quality, species characteristics, and root environment; and
- (3) identify opportunities for changes in city regulations, programs, and specifications to improve the growing conditions of street trees, minimize cost impacts to streetscape projects, and reduce future costs for replacement trees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall provide the results of this assessment and recommendations for changes to the City Council not later May 7, 2014.

ADOPTED: _____, 2013 **ATTEST:** _____
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk