

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR EDWARD M. FLYNN



## **CITY OF BOSTON**

**IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY SIX**

### **ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS EXPANDING URBAN TREE CANOPY IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF DISTRICT 2**

**WHEREAS,** Having a healthy and resilient urban tree canopy is important to our environment and quality of life, as trees not only beautify our landscapes, but they also provide filters for pollutants, absorb excess stormwater runoff, provide shades during hot summers, and other environmental and public health benefits; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Residents across the city treasure the trees in their neighborhoods, and view the trees as an integral part of their community, and residents of District 2 have often advocated for more tree plantings in their neighborhoods, especially as it encompasses neighborhoods with low tree coverage, such as Chinatown, Downtown, and South Boston. As of 2019, South Boston only had 8% tree coverage, and a census tract in Chinatown only had 7%, while the city average was 27%; *and*

**WHEREAS,** According to the 2019-2024 Canopy Change Assessment released in March 2026 by The University of Vermont for Boston Parks and Recreation, 27.2% of Boston's land is covered by tree canopy. A majority of these trees are concentrated in the western part of the city in Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury, Roslindale, and Hyde Park. District 2 has a low concentration of tree coverage between 1%-12%. A graph indicated that Central Boston and South Boston have the lowest tree canopy percentage across the city; *and*

**WHEREAS,** There are also increasing concerns about trees ruining the sidewalks with their roots, or when they are torn up by micro bursts from large storms. The City of Boston chooses the trees they plant based on hardiness and the ability to thrive in poor soil with limited water. It is critical that the City considers trees that will not cause the sidewalks to lift and crack, or be completely torn up in the case of a tree falling due to weather conditions; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The City of Boston encourages residents to report sidewalk issues relating to trees on the 3-1-1 app for the coordination of the Urban Forestry Division and the Public Works Department to examine the roots of the trees to address raised sidewalks, but there is no timeline on when the sidewalk will be restored; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

**ORDERED:** That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss expanding urban tree canopy in the neighborhoods of District 2. Representatives from the Parks Department, environmental organizations, as well as other relevant and interested parties shall be invited to attend.

Filed on: June 10, 2026