

Urban Trees Policy

Responsible Division Works and Infrastructure

Responsible Business Unit/s Parks and Gardens

Responsible Officer Manager Parks and Gardens

Affected Business Unit/s All Business Units

Document Ref 4129251

PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance on how trees will be maintained and cared for on City-managed land.

POLICY STATEMENT

General

All trees irrespective of who planted them and which have at least 50% of their base located within City managed land will be maintained and cared for by the City.

Tree Planting

The City will undertake the planting of trees on City-managed land under its annual tree planting program which includes requests from residents. The City will determine the species and select the location of the tree in consideration of site conditions, infrastructure, utility services, sight lines and other constraints. Generally, one tree will be planted per property, while properties with larger or corner frontages may receive more. The City will undertake all activities required to establish new trees and provide ongoing maintenance, with the prior approval of the property owner.

Tree Pruning

Pruning may be undertaken to improve the form of a tree, reduce an assessed risk, or improve stability.

All pruning will be in accordance with the Australian Standard for Pruning of Amenity Trees (AS 4371 – 2007).

Generally, pruning services are provided to:

- maintain required clearances from power lines, utilities and other infrastructure.
- maintain appropriate clearances for sightlines, and accessibility for road and footpath users.
- reduce risk of harm.
- remove or reduce hazardous dead wood.
- correct structural defects in natural growth or form (remedial pruning).
- re-establish tree after damage (restoration pruning).
- optimise form and branch structure in a juvenile tree (formative pruning).

- clear significant overhanging influence from private buildings.

Pruning is not undertaken for the following reasons:

- To improve views.
- To reduce tree size or height.
- Personal health concerns.
- To discourage the presence of animals or insects.
- Clearance for advertising signage.
- Overshadowing of buildings, property and/or solar panels, unless it can be proved it is impacting the performance of the solar panels.

The City may determine occasions where specialist pruning that falls outside these criteria is required to maintain the health of a tree.

Tree Removal

Tree removal may be undertaken when:

- a tree is dead.
- an unacceptable level of risk exists within the tree's structure that remedial techniques cannot rectify.
- the tree is suffering from a disease where remedial techniques will not prevent further spread of the disease, and the removal will be of benefit to other trees around it.
- the tree is causing significant damage to infrastructure, and modification to the infrastructure or tree is impractical, and suitable documented evidence to support this is provided by a qualified professional.
- there is an imminent safety risk to people, property and/or infrastructure.
- the removal is approved under a crossover approval granted by the City. Such removal may be subject to conditions of the crossover approval granted in accordance with the City's crossovers policy.
- the removal is approved under a subdivision approval granted by the Western Australian Planning Commission or development approval granted by the City. Such removal may be subject to conditions in accordance with those approvals.

Tree removal is not undertaken for the following reasons:

- Tree species, form, size, shape or location is not the personal preference of the resident.
- The tree is considered an inconvenience for proposed or current construction works.
- The tree is interfering with views.
- Overshadowing of buildings, property and/or solar panels.
- The tree drops natural debris such as leaves, flowers, fruit and bark.

Where a tree is removed, the City will endeavour to plant a replacement tree of a suitable species as practicably close to the removed tree as part of its annual tree planting program.

Where a tree is approved for removal for a subdivision, development and/or for works undertaken for a utility provider or other authority, then the City will seek compensation for the amenity (Helliwell) valuation of the tree, plus the cost of removing the existing tree, if Council is required to remove it.

Tree Vandalism

Where vandalism of trees occurs, the City after an investigation, may authorise the following actions:

- Issuing of infringement notice with a penalty.
- Where the tree is less than 2m tall and/or fewer than four trees are vandalised, the City will install a tree vandalism sign of 0.6m x 1.2m for a period of 2 years.
- Where the tree is greater than 2m tall and/or more than three trees are vandalised, the City will install a tree vandalism sign of 3m x 3m for a period of 2 years.
- Painting of dead trees in bright colour to highlight their demise.
- Write to affected residents in the vicinity of the tree(s) advising of the City's actions in response to the vandalism.

A sign can be removed prior to the two-year period if a resident or group of residents applies to the City to replace the vandalised trees (of a similar size and species) at a 2:1 ratio at their own cost.

In addition to the above, if the damage or vandalism has occurred as a direct result of development activities without prior approval, the City may seek from the person or company responsible compensation for the amenity (Helliwell) valuation of the tree, plus the cost of removing the existing tree if required, and the cost of arranging provision of a replacement tree(s) and three years' maintenance if required.

Definitions

City-managed trees – Trees located in road reserves, reserves and on land vested in, or otherwise managed by the City, and includes Grass Trees (*Xanthorrhoea* species) and Zamia Palms (*Macrozamia* species).

Tree vandalism – Subjecting a tree to intentional harm, including unauthorised pruning, poisoning, removal, and physical or chemical damage.

Unauthorised pruning - Pruning activities conducted by any persons other than authorised City employees or authorised contractors.

Related Legislation

- *Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1995*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1986*
- *Thoroughfares Local Law 2020*
- *Section 444 of Criminal Code WA*
- Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety - Guidelines for the management of vegetation near power lines.

Related Documentation

- *Trees on Private Land and Street Verges Policy*
- *Private Trees Policy*
- *Crossovers Policy*

- *Australian Standard for Amenity Pruning (AS 4373-2007)*
- *City of Bayswater Tree Planting Guideline*

Relevant Delegations	EF-D04 Notices requiring certain things to be done EF-D08 Reserves under the Control of Local Government
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Risk Evaluation

Council Adoption	9 April 2019
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Review/Modified	7 December 2021
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