

Urban Tree Planting and Maintenance Policy

Responsible Division Infrastructure and Assets

Responsible Business Unit Parks and Gardens

Responsible Officer Manager Parks and Gardens

Affected Business Units All business units

ECM Document Set ID 4129251

Purpose

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

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy —

City-managed trees means 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).

Pensioner means a person who receives a full pension.

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

Unauthorised pruning means pruning activities conducted by any persons other than authorised City employees or authorised contractors; or pruning undertaken by residents contrary to the City's Tree Pruning Guideline.

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.

Residents can also care for trees on the verge adjacent to their property in accordance with the conditions of this Policy.

Tree Planting

The City will undertake the planting of trees on City-managed land under its annual tree planting program. This program includes new tree planting in areas such as parks, road verges, medians, roundabouts, reserves and natural areas. Residents are also able to order a verge tree for planting in front of their

property. 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. Property owners will be given the opportunity to discuss the species selection and positioning of the tree on the verge. The City will undertake all activities required to establish new trees and provide ongoing maintenance.

New Trees

The City will plant at least one tree on every verge adjacent to a footpath that is located along the key routes to schools identified by the City as part of the Safe Routes to School program. This requirement is not applicable where a tree cannot be physically planted due to site constraints such as road safety requirements, underground services and infrastructure, or if there are any extenuating circumstances determined by the City.

Where a new tree is proposed for a verge that is not a replacement tree and is not located along the key routes to schools identified by the City as part of the Safe Routes to School program, the City will plant the tree unless requested otherwise by the adjacent property owner. Generally, one tree will be planted per verge abutting private property, while properties with larger or corner frontages may receive more.

Replacement Trees

The City will endeavour to plant a new tree for each tree that has been removed from residential verges under this policy on the same verge. Where it is not possible to plant a replacement tree on the same verge, the City will plant the new tree in a suitable location as near as possible to the original location.

Tree Pruning

Pruning may be undertaken to improve the form or health of a tree, and/or to remove or reduce an assessed risk.

Generally, pruning services will be provided by the City to:

- maintain required clearances from power lines, street lights, utilities and other infrastructure.
- maintain appropriate clearances for sightlines, and accessibility for driveways, roads and footpaths.
- maintain visibility of street name signage, directional signage, advanced warning and regulatory traffic signs.
- remove or 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 overhanging influence from private buildings.

Property owners may request pruning of trees abutting their private property. Unless the requested pruning is for the reasons listed above, authorisation of the request will be at the discretion of the Director Works and Infrastructure. If authorisation is given, the property owner requesting the pruning will be required to pay for the pruning costs incurred by the City. Pensioners are exempt from the requirement to pay for the cost of pruning trees abutting their private property.

Residents are authorised to undertake minor pruning of trees located on verge areas abutting their property in accordance with the City's Tree Pruning Guideline for Residents.

Pruning is not undertaken for the following reasons:

- To improve views.
- To discourage the presence of animals or insects.
- Clearance for advertising and business signage.

Tree Removal

Tree removal may only 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. Such removal may be subject to conditions in accordance with those approvals.

Where a tree is removed, the City will plant a replacement tree of a suitable species as practicably close to the location of 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 an infringement notice with a penalty in accordance with the City's Local Laws to those who have been identified responsible for the damage;
- Where the vandalism involves the removal of a tree, or results in the need for tree removal as a consequence of the vandalism, the City will plant a replacement tree plus an additional new tree on the same verge. The City will seek compensation for the cost of removing the existing tree if required, and the cost of arranging provision of two trees and three years' maintenance.
- Write to affected residents in the vicinity of the tree(s) advising of the City's actions in response to the vandalism.

In addition to the above, if the damage or vandalism has occurred as a direct result of development activities without prior approval, the City will 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.

Related Legislation

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1995

Environmental Protections 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

Urban Forest Strategy

Crossovers Policy

City of Bayswater Tree Planting Guideline

City of Bayswater Tree Pruning Guideline for Residents

Document details

Relevant delegations	EF-D04 Notices requiring certain things to be done EF-D08 Reserves under the Control of Local Government		
Risk evaluation	Moderate		
Strategic link	E2 Remain focused on greening the City's suburbs and streetscapes and increasing the tree canopy		
Council adoption	9 April 2019	Resolution	10.5.2.1
Reviewed/modified	7 December 2021	Resolution	10.6.2.9
Reviewed/modified	28 June 2022	Resolution	10.6.1.4
Reviewed/modified	30 April 2024	Resolution	10.1.3
Next review due	April 2027		