

## Tree Policy

<b>Policy Type: Council Policy</b> <b>Policy Owner: Manager Natural Areas and Parks</b>	<b>Policy No. CP- 029</b> <b>Last Review Date: 21 November 2017</b>
--	--

### Policy Objectives

To provide guidance and direction in the management of all the City's trees.

### Policy Scope

This policy sets out the process and conditions by which trees are pruned, removed and planted within the City. This policy applies to all trees located on land vested in the City of Melville (public open space), in line with the Urban Forest and Green Spaces Policy.

### Definitions / Abbreviations Used In Policy

No definitions or abbreviations used in Policy.

### Policy Statement

#### 1. General:

All trees are assets of the City that contribute to the well-being of the community and to the natural environment. The City recognises and values the significance of trees within the urban setting for the many social, economic and environmental benefits they provide. The City is committed to protecting, maintaining and increasing its tree population whilst meeting its obligation to provide a safe environment for the community.

The City is responsible for planting, establishing, maintaining and removing all trees within the streetscape or park/reserve on City-managed land. The City will actively protect existing trees, promote the planting of trees and reserves the right to plant street trees on Council verges adjacent to properties where no street trees currently exist.

#### 2. Tree Planting:

The City is responsible for planting all trees within the streetscape or park/reserve. In keeping with good horticultural practices the City undertakes a seasonal tree planting program, ordering up to 12 months in advance to ensure good stock availability.



When planting a tree the City will:

- nominate the species.
- consider the mature species size and shape suitability for the site.
- plant a pot size suitable for the site. Where practicable plant tree species endemic to the area when planting adjacent to natural areas.
- choose a location that considers the
  - safety for both pedestrian and vehicles, including restriction to sight lines or impact on road safety,
  - impact on utilities or underground services.
  - impact on adjacent infrastructure.
- provide post installation care including watering and maintenance until established as determined by the City.
- for street trees the City will position the tree in line with any existing street tree alignment and centrally between property boundaries where practicable.

### **2.1 Unauthorised Tree Planting**

When an unauthorised planting is identified the City shall determine whether the planting will be retained or removed. Unauthorised tree planting shall be defined as a tree planted within the streetscape or park/reserve without the City's approval

### **3. Tree Pruning, Maintenance and/or Removal:**

The City is responsible for all pruning, maintenance and removal works on all street and park/reserve trees, this includes trees adjacent to developments. All work shall be undertaken by City staff or the City's Contractor; unauthorised work shall be considered vandalism by the City and may result in prosecution.

Pruning is undertaken by the City, as deemed necessary to:

- to clear the canopy or branches from interference with overhead services and/or poles;
- remove overhanging branches considered hazardous to traffic, pedestrian, buildings or structures;
- remove low branches considered hazardous to pedestrians or traffic, or impeding statutory signage;
- remove dead, dying, pest infested or diseased branches or abnormal growth;
- define form, structure or framework of the tree, conducting preventative maintenance; and
- be in accordance with AS 4373 Pruning of Amenity Trees, or as specified by the City.

At the City's discretion a tree will be considered for removal in the following circumstances:

- the tree is an unauthorised planting;
- the tree is dead or in decline;
- the tree is irreparably damaged or structurally unsound;
- the tree has been or will be affected by infrastructure works and cannot be retained;
- the tree has been deemed to be a hazard to persons or property, as assessed by the City;



- the tree is deemed, by the City, to be inappropriate for that location;
- if the street tree impedes development on the adjacent lot and all possible design options have been exhausted by the City; and
- the Mayor and the Ward Councillors, with agreement from the Director Technical Services, agree that the tree is inappropriate.

The City shall investigate and respond to all requests for pruning and/or removal of a tree. However the following do not provide sufficient or justifiable reasons:

- the tree is disliked
- the tree is considered to be the wrong species, shape or size
- the tree is perceived to cause health problems
- the tree is perceived as a safety concern
- the tree attracts unwanted fauna
- the tree causes nuisance by producing natural debris like leaf fall, bark, nuts, flower, or fruit etc.
- the tree obstructs, partially or fully, views (other than vehicular./pedestrian sightlines)
- the tree shades other features like gardens, lawns, vegetable patches, solar panels, solar hot water systems, satellite dishes etc.
- the tree restricts access, or is an inconvenience, during development or works.

Where a tree is required to be removed, by the City, a replacement tree will be planted in the next planting season.

#### **4. Tree Structures/ Ornaments:**

No structural or hanging apparatus shall be attached /secured to any City tree. The City will request the property owner to remove these or they will be removed by the City, seeking compensation for works carried out as required.

#### **5. Trees and Developments:**

All developments where City trees are present will be formally assessed by the City prior to the commencement of any works and will include a suitable advice note and/or condition in any approval. The City will determine the fair value of the tree as part of this assessment.

The Developer and/or Owner are responsible for assessing site conditions during the design phase of development and all trees shall be noted on all plans and documentation.

In the event a tree is authorised for removal as part of a development application, (including planning, building, demolition and crossover application), the following will occur:

- The City will require the Owner or Developer to pay for all costs associated to these works, prior to any work commencing.
- The Contractor/Owner will request the City to arrange for the removal, at the contractor/owners cost.
- The City will also require the applicant to fund the full cost of two replacement trees and maintenance of those two trees for the first two years.
- Replacement trees shall be of a species selected by the City, and shall be planted by the City the following planting season.



- A minimum of one street tree shall be planted on the verge adjacent to the development. Where a second tree is required it shall be planted at the same location. If there is insufficient space, the second tree will be placed elsewhere at the City's discretion.

During all development works, including demolition, and construction, the developer/owner is responsible for the protection of all trees on City managed land. All street trees that are not approved to be removed, shall be retained and protected at the contractor/owners cost. Protection includes;

- The installation of a Tree Protection zone (TPZ) to cover a minimum area of 2 meter Diameter from the edge of the tree trunk. The final size may be increased as determined by the City, dependant on the size of the tree, but shall not obstruct footpaths or roads unless approved alternative routes are in place.
- Nothing is to be attached to or lent up against the tree during any period during the development and chemical or other material shall not be placed or dumped to cause harm to the tree.
- Limit compaction and/or digging within the root zone of the tree where possible/practicable.
- Additional watering as required, or determined by the City, to be supplied by the contractor/owner to sustain the tree during the development. Where the owner/contractor is unable to supply additional water as required, the City may, by request, assist. At a minimum this will be required if an existing reticulation system has been turned off for the duration of the development, changing the trees environment, the development runs over an extended period of time , multiple years, or during the summer period.

If pruning (roots or branches) is required, a written request shall be submitted by the contractor/owner. This will be assessed by the City and if deemed acceptable the works will be carried out by the City, at the contractor/owners cost.

All trees, being retained, shall be monitored by the City over the entirety of the development and should the tree be adversely affected by the development the City will seek compensation. Where more than one property frontage is created, due to sub division, then a minimum of one street tree shall be planted per frontage, where practicable.

For all development applications where no street tree exists, the applicant will fund the purchase of one street tree to be planted on the adjacent verge and associated maintenance costs for the first two years after installation.

Should any variation to the above be required, written approval will be requested from the City, prior to any approvals being granted or works being commenced.

If the street tree is not protected in accordance with planning approval conditions and/or advice notes and it is damaged or dies during development, the City will shall recover all costs associated with any pruning or the removal and replacement of the street tree, including the fair value assessment costs from the applicant owner. If a tree is removed under this clause, two replacement trees will be planted by the City

## 6. Vandalism

The City encourages the reporting of vandalism towards the City's trees and all reports will be investigated and responded to appropriately.

If an individual is proven to have vandalised a City tree in any way the City of Melville Activities in Thoroughfares, Public Places and Trading Local Law 2014 Part 9 – Enforcement will be applied.

### References that may be applicable to this Policy

Legislative Requirements:	The Local Government Act 1995 Thoroughfare and Public Places Local Law
Procedures, Process Maps, Work Instructions:	N/A
Other Plans, Frameworks, Documents Applicable to Policy:	Open Space Strategy Urban Forest and Green Spaces Policy Verge Treatment Policy
Delegated Authority No:	N/A

### ORIGIN/AUTHORITY

### Item No.

#### Reviews

Ordinary Meeting of Council	15/03/2010	T10/3115
Ordinary Meeting of Council	21/05/2013	T13/3385
Ordinary Meeting of Council	10/12/2013	T13/3441
Ordinary Meeting of Council	17/11/2015	T15/3673
Ordinary Meeting of Council	19/04/2016	16.3
Ordinary Meeting of Council	21/11/2017	T17/3769