

STREET TREE POLICY

Guidelines and Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Management of the City's street trees is an extensive and complicated operation. Council's Street Tree Policy provides the overarching principles for the City's management of its street tree inventory. To assist in maintaining and enhancing canopy, the below guidelines have been developed to ensure both new and existing street trees can be managed effectively and efficiently for the benefit of current and future residents.

STREET TREE REQUESTS

All requests for street tree planting, maintenance or inspection should be made in writing to mail@vincent.wa.gov.au or via the City's website [Trees » City of Vincent](#)

STREET TREE PLANTING

The City shall undertake tree planting on streets as part of its scheduled street tree planting program in accordance with the objectives and actions outlined in Council's adopted Greening Plan. Tree planting will usually occur May to September each year (subject to weather and prevailing conditions).

Resident requests for new or additional street will also be considered with planting to be carried out as part of the City's scheduled planting program.

For scheduling purposes, resident requests should be made prior to September each year to enable inclusion in the following planting season.

Street Tree Placement

Street trees shall be planted:

- To provide continuity of canopy coverage with a minimum of one tree per property verge.
- At no less than 5 metre centres (spacings to be dependent upon species type and specific locations).
- To ensure unobstructed sight lines and the safe passage of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

Variations under exceptional circumstances shall be at the discretion of the Manager Parks.

Street Tree Selection

Street tree species shall be selected to:

- Provide maximum canopy coverage. Where feasible, larger growing species will be preferred due to their increased contribution to canopy coverage.
- Achieve an annual target of 75% new planting across City owned or managed land being native tree species.

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- Enhance streetscape species diversity to improve the resilience of the urban forest against current and future threats including climate change and pest and diseases.
- Provide continuity of existing streetscape maintenance requirements.
- Selected species to be suitable for location and surrounding infrastructure.

Street tree species selection shall be determined by the City with specific species requests from residents considered in accordance with the Street Tree Policy and these guidelines.

Street Tree Planting

When planting street trees, the following process will be undertaken:

- Seasonal weather conditions and forecasts will be assessed to maximise planting success.
- Sites to be visually inspected by City staff to ensure suitability of location and selected species.
- For streetscape planting projects, resident will be notified via Information Bulletin a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to tree planting.
- All suitable sites are to be planted ensuring continuity of canopy. In general, a minimum one (1) tree per standard residential property (10m frontage), where practicable.
- Trees to be double staked, tied and heavily mulched around base into a bowl.
- The City shall undertake the watering of all new street trees, as and when required, until the trees are established. Ongoing watering shall be undertaken where feasible, subject to weather conditions.
- Residents/occupants are encouraged to water the adjacent street tree during the establishment period and during summer if required.

Unauthorised Or Inappropriate Street Tree Planting

Where an unauthorised street tree planting is identified, the City shall determine whether the planting can be retained and whether it conforms to the City's planting guidelines and species choice.

Where the planting is of a recent origin and the tree is an appropriate species and suitable for transplanting, but on the wrong alignment or spacing, the City shall appropriately relocate the tree after the resident has been notified.

Where the planting is of a recent origin but is an inappropriate species, the resident shall be given the option of relocating the tree onto private property prior to the City considering its removal and replacement.

Where the inappropriate planting is more established, and unsuitable for transplanting, the tree will be removed by the City after the resident has been notified of the City's intent.

STREET TREE PRUNING AND MAINTENANCE

The City is responsible for the pruning and ongoing maintenance of all street trees. The City's scheduled street tree pruning program usually occurs June – December each year.

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Tree pruning shall be undertaken in accordance with the Street Tree Policy to address one or more of the following requirements:

- Clear the canopy from interference with overhead powerlines in accordance with Western Power [Guidelines for the Management of Vegetation Near Powerlines](#)
- Clear the canopy from other essential services, nearby infrastructure (such as buildings or structures) and remove any low growing branches considered hazardous to pedestrians, cyclists or motorists.
- Remedial prune to form the tree shape, encourage new growth and remove dead, dying or diseased branches that are determined by the City to be hazardous.
- Prune the tree back to the property line. Note that this is only carried out upon request for the adjacent landowner/occupier.

Ongoing street tree maintenance in respect to watering and pest and disease management will be undertaken with an assessment of priorities, risk and Arborist assessment where required.

Street Tree Pruning – Residential Requests

Residents may contact the City to request specific pruning of a street tree. All requests will be registered and if required, inspected by a Parks Officer, or City contractor.

Specific requests for tree pruning will be carried out as part of the scheduled Street Tree Pruning Program unless deemed hazardous by the City, in which case, works will be programmed as soon as practical to remove the hazard.

Pruning requests will be assessed in accordance with the Street Tree Policy. Instances where requests for tree pruning will typically **not be approved** by the City include:

- Reducing the height of trees not located under powerlines.
- Reducing the height or crown thinning of trees to improve light penetration or reduce shading to properties.
- Reducing the canopy of trees to reduce leaf/fruit drop.
- Pruning trees back further than the property line.
- Pruning of trees to improve visibility of advertising (e.g. billboards)
- Pruning of trees to maintain or restore views from property.

Property Line Pruning

All requests for property line pruning must be made in writing before the end of July to be actioned in the following pruning season – typically June-December each year.

Requests must be made on an annual or as required basis. Property line pruning will not take place without a written request made in time for the upcoming season.

Where possible, trees are to be pruned back to the boundary line of the property and no further. In some instances, it may not be possible to clear all overhanging branches/vegetation owing to the size or shape of the tree. In such instances, trees will be pruned back as close as practicable to the property line whilst ensuring the tree canopy remains balanced and structural integrity of the tree is uncompromised.

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Tree Pruning Disposal

Wherever possible, the green waste generated from tree pruning activities within the City shall be chipped/mulched.

Mulch generated from pruning activities shall be used for various parks projects or stockpiled at a City community mulch pile.

Mulch at a community mulch pile is provided free to the community and generally accessible at all times. Residents are required to load and transport their own mulch and the quality and quantity of the mulch will vary due to variety and condition of trees pruned.

Only the City or its contractors are permitted to deposit mulch at a community mulch pile, or on land controlled or managed by the City of Vincent.

STREET TREE REMOVAL

All requests for tree removal are to be made in writing, and will be considered the Manager Parks in accordance with the Street Tree Policy and assessment of the following criteria:

- Safety/health/condition tree
- Value of the tree in streetscape/landscape
- Potential for significant damage to persons or property
- History of requests and associated actions

Where practicable, adjacent residents will be provided notice in writing of the intention and reasons for impending tree removal.

If practicable, the City will plant a replacement tree of a suitable species as close as possible to the location of a removed tree. Replacement tree planting works will be undertaken as part of the City's scheduled tree planting program.

Street tree removal requests and their outcome will be included in a quarterly register presented in the Council Information Bulletin.

Circumstances Where Street Trees Will Not Be Removed

The City considers the following reasons not acceptable for the removal of street trees:

- the tree obscures or potentially obscures views (other than traffic/pedestrian sight lines).
- the tree variety is disliked.
- the tree variety causes nuisance by way of leaf, fruit and/or bark shedding, animal/bird/insect habitat or similar.
- the tree causes allergy and/or health problems.
- the tree is in the way of a non-essential crossover or verge paving option.
- the tree shades private gardens/solar panels

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Unauthorised Interference, Removal, Pruning or Damage to a Street Tree

In accordance with the Street Tree Policy, it is an offence to unlawfully damage a street tree.

In instances where a tree has been unlawfully damaged, the City may display vandalised tree signage adjacent to such tree, to notify the public of the cause of damage.

STREET TREES PROTECTION ADJACENT TO DEVELOPMENTS

Any person undertaking works on a verge or works that are likely to impact the verge must ensure that street tree protection measures are carried out in accordance with the Street Tree Policy.

Street Trees Adjacent to Crossovers

The retention of street trees will take precedent over any landowner intent or desire to remove a street tree to accommodate a new or revised crossover. The City will require all options and efforts to be exhausted to ensure new or revised crossovers protect and preserve street trees.

The following shall apply to street trees adjacent to developments:

- In instances where tree retention is not feasible and removal has been approved by the City, the owner/developer of the adjacent property is required to pay (prior to removal) for a replacement tree to the City's requirements.
- New or revised crossovers shall be located a minimum of 1.0 metre from a street tree. Reduction to 0.5 metre may be considered, depending on availability of alternatives, tree species and location, sight lines and traffic safety.
- Where a person unlawfully damages a street tree by way of unauthorised pruning, removal, interference or damage, the City may by Notice require that person to pay the cost of repairing the damage or replacing the street tree within a specified timeframe.

STREET TREE ATTACHMENTS

An owner or occupier of land which abuts a verge may install a permissible street tree attachment on a street tree located on the verge directly in front of their property. Permissible street tree attachment include:

- Swings and rope ladders
- Platform / structure (e.g. tree house)
- Decoration and lighting

The City has developed the following guidelines to support residents in maximising the use of the verge by permitting safe, useful, recreational attachments to street trees.

- Street tree attachments must be setback from and provide clear access to any infrastructure or services located on the verge.
- All materials used as part of the installation are to be kept in good condition.
- All ropes or attachments around tree branches should be fitted as to prevent strangulation

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and eventual decline in the tree's health and vigour.

- Street tree attachments are to be fitted to tree branches of safe and suitable dimensions.
- Platforms/Structures are not permitted in street trees located under power lines.
- Street tree attachments must be constructed of durable material, securely installed and so that scheduled pruning requirements can be undertaken where required.
- Street Tree Attachments must provide a minimum 0.5 metre setback from the face of the kerb.
- Only solar lighting is permitted to be attached to street trees.
- Street Tree Attachments shall not swing or protrude into and must not be able to swing or protrude into the space immediately above any road carriageway or path for pedestrians or cyclists.
- Residents must ensure that the tree remains healthy and attachments are well maintained.
- Residents must ensure any tools and materials are removed from the verge after the works are completed.

The below considerations have been developed to assist residents with installing street tree attachments:

- It is recommended that residents discuss the proposal with neighbours to identify any potential issues that may arise as a result of installing the street tree attachments.
- The City will not accept liability for any loss, injury, damage or impact caused to persons or property as a result of a resident's private installation of a street tree attachment.
- The City will not accept liability for any loss, damage or removal that occurs to street tree attachments as part of the City's ongoing street tree maintenance program.
- The City reserves the right to remove a street tree attachment at any time.
- When installing Street Tree Attachments to trees in proximity to Western Power infrastructure, it is recommended to contact Western Power on 13 10 87 or enquiry@westernpower.com.au to determine appropriate clearances.

Any other attachment maybe considered permissible at the discretion of the City subject to a visual inspection of the tree by City staff or qualified arborist and the trees health and structural integrity is not compromised.

PSHB AND OTHER PESTS AND DISEASES

The City recognises the importance of street tree selection to increase canopy and streetscape diversity to ensure resilience against pests, diseases and other environmental threats.

The City of Vincent is working with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's (DPIRD) to help stop the spread of the invasive pest, Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer (PSHB). PSHB is a serious biosecurity matter across the Perth metropolitan area.

The primary source of information on PSHB is the [DPIRD website](#).