

CP48 - Urban Forest

Policy Objective

To detail the City of Belmont's commitment to preserving and enhancing the growth of the urban forest.

Policy Detail

1. Tree Planting

- a) The City shall implement the key objectives of the Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2030.
- b) The City shall develop and implement an annual tree planting programme with the view to increase tree numbers and canopy cover within streetscapes and City managed lands.
- c) Tree selection will be location dependent and appropriate for the environmental context and in accordance with the objectives of the Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2030.
- d) Where an objection to the planting of a verge tree is received from an adjacent property owner, the City will engage with the property owner to explain the benefits of verge tree planting. However, if the objection cannot be resolved through this consultation, the City will not proceed with the planting at that location.
- e) The City shall maintain an inventory of City street trees as per a recognised arboricultural methodology or standard, including but not limited to information pertaining to:
 - i) individual amenity value (in Australian Dollars) as calculated by a qualified Arborist using the Helliwell System or other recognised form of amenity value calculation,
 - ii) arboricultural and physical attributes such as lifecycle, tree structure, tree health, useful life expectancy and canopy cover, and
 - iii) the number, location and species of street trees removed and planted annually.

2. Tree Retention and Protection

- a) All trees within City managed lands and areas under the City's control will be protected and managed as per this policy.
- b) Regarding City trees, the City's preference, in order of priority, is:
 - i) avoid impact: through appropriate design or construction methodologies, or
 - ii) minimise impact: the City will require that the risk to the tree is minimised
- c) Where works, including development, are likely to have a significant impact on a City Tree, the applicant shall:

- i) have tree protection methods in place as recommended within AS 4970-2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites and to the satisfaction of the City,
 - ii) where works are undertaken within a Tree Protection Zone, an Arborist Method Statement will be required, and
 - iii) Demonstrate that tree protection methods have been put in place prior to commencement and for the duration of works.
- d) Where design options or construction methodologies result in unavoidable tree loss, the City shall require tree removal and replacement as per Clause 5, City Trees and Developments - Offset and Cost Recovery.

3. Tree Pruning

- a) Pruning of City trees will be undertaken in compliance with AS 4373-2007 - Pruning of Amenity Trees and will only be considered to:
 - i) promote and increase canopy cover,
 - ii) support or extend the tree's useful life expectancy,
 - iii) mitigate an unacceptable risk of harm or damage to infrastructure, property or safety,
 - iv) where the maintenance is to comply with legislation, or
 - v) where the pruning is approved by the City's Arborist and is performed as per AS 4373-2007 Pruning of Amenity Trees.
- b) The City will not prune City Trees:
 - i) for aesthetic purposes,
 - ii) to maintain or create viewscales,
 - iii) to reduce shading of solar panels outdoor areas, pools, gardens, lawns or any other surface, or
 - iv) to reduce leaf litter, nut drop or for any other nuisance factors.
- c) The Chief Executive Officer may authorise pruning of a City Tree for additional reasons under exceptional circumstances, following consideration of a request received in writing.

4. Tree Removal and Replacement

- 4.1. Removal of a City Tree will only be considered where the tree:
- a) is dead, dying, diseased or is structurally unsound,
 - b) was planted without authorisation from the City or is self-sown and is deemed an inappropriate tree,
 - c) presents an unacceptable risk of harm:
 - i) to human life, or

- ii) to nearby infrastructure (and is supported by a Quantified Tree Risk Assessment methodology by a qualified Arborist),
 - d) is required to be removed through the approval of a crossover or development application,
 - e) presents an unacceptable liability or legal risk to the City if retained,
 - f) is strategically removed and replaced to achieve a net increase in canopy cover,
 - g) directly contributes to or results in ongoing detrimental health impacts that are confirmed by a medical specialist as being attributed solely to that particular tree and alternative options for managing the issue are not feasible, or
 - h) is strategically removed and replaced to facilitate a City Project that provides a broader community benefit.
- 4.2. The Chief Executive Officer may authorise removal of a City Tree for additional reasons under exceptional circumstances, following consideration of a request received in writing.
- 4.3. Replacement tree planting shall occur at the site of removal and/ or at the closest suitable location. Tree planting is to be undertaken in accordance with this policy and the City shall determine the species of replacement trees dependent on the locality.

5. City Trees and Developments - Offset and Cost Recovery

- a) If a City Tree has been approved for removal, the City shall require pre-payment for:
 - i) works to be undertaken by the City (i.e. tree removal and stump grinding), and
 - ii) the provision of replacement trees to be planted by the City, or
 - iii) with agreement with the developer, the amenity value of the tree to be removed.
- b) Where a City Tree is removed, replacement planting shall be undertaken at a ratio of 1:3 (removed: replaced).
- c) Where a City Tree is removed, pruned or is damaged without authorisation on City managed land, the City, at its discretion may:
 - i) take action under Regulation 5(1) of the *Local Government (Uniform Local Provisions) Regulations 1996 (WA)* or other applicable legislation (including the issue of infringement notices),
 - ii) recover costs associated with the removal (if applicable) and replacement tree/s as per the City's Schedule of Fees and Charges,
 - iii) recover costs equivalent to the Amenity Value of the tree, and
 - iv) undertake replacement planting as per this Policy.

Reference/Associated Documents

Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2030

Environment and Sustainability Strategy

Reference to Internal Procedure

Application for Street Tree Assessment through Development Application, Building Permit or Crossover Application

Processing Infrastructure Services Clearance and Crossover Assessments

Dealing with Street Tree Roots Causing a Disturbance or Damage to Infrastructure

Definitions

'amenity value' means monetary value representing the visual amenity provided by individual trees as calculated by a qualified Arborist using an internationally accepted arboricultural method.

'canopy cover' means broad crown of a tree/s providing shade and cover.

'City tree' means tree with the entirety or majority of its trunk located within lands owned, vested or managed by the City.

'street tree' means tree located within a road reserve.

'streetscapes' means the appearance or view of a street/ road reserve.

'tree' means a woody plant inclusive of its roots, canopy, stems and trunk(s) that is capable of growing taller than 4m in height at maturity.

'urban forest' means the sum of all trees and vegetation within the urban environment.

'useful life expectancy' means the number of years the tree is expected to continue to mature and provide canopy prior to going into decline.

This Policy is supported by:		
Policy No:	CP48	
Strategic Community Plan:	Key Performance Area: People Outcome: 1. A safe, healthy community. Outcome: 2. A strong sense of pride, belonging and creativity. Key Performance Area: Planet Outcome: 4. Healthy and sustainable ecosystems. Outcome: 5. Climate resilience. Key Performance Area: Place Outcome: 7. Attractive and welcoming places. Key Performance Area: Performance Outcome: 10. Effective leadership, governance and financial management. Outcome: 11. A happy, well informed and engaged community.	
Register of Delegations:	n/a	
Service Area:	Infrastructure Services	
Policy Owner:	Manager Parks, Leisure and Environment	
Policy Stakeholder:	Coordinator Parks	
Amendment Status:		
Date of Amendment	Status of Amendment	Minute Item Reference
16/04/19	New Policy	12.5
10/12/19	Review – Minor	12.8
23/02/21	Review – Minor	12.7
24/05/22	Review – Minor	12.7
22/08/23	Review – None	12.10
26/05/26	Review - Moderate	12.7