

## Street Trees

<b>Status</b>	Council
<b>Responsible Division</b>	Technical Services
<b>Objective</b>	To define Council's approach to the provision and management of street trees within the City of Nedlands.

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### POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this Policy are:

- To Provide guidance for the management, protection and preservation of City trees;
- To increase the City's total urban canopy cover as per the Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2035;
- To enhance the amenity of the City's streetscapes, parks and reserves through the planting of new trees; and
- To define the circumstances under which the City's tree may be removed or pruned.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with LPP 3.1: Landscaping Plans.

### POLICY STATEMENT

To ensure the City of Nedlands (The City);

- Recognises the significance of trees within the urban setting in terms of creating functional and aesthetic streetscapes and reserves, and has the responsibility for the planning, establishment, care, control and maintenance of all City trees; and
- Will plan for urban enhancement through the retention of suitable trees within road reserves and public reserves.

### SCOPE

The Policy applies to all trees that are owned or managed by the City of Nedlands, such trees shall be referred to as City trees. A City tree includes any tree which has a majority greater than 50% of its trunk growing from Council managed land.

Residents/owners, builders, developers, contractors, service providers, representatives and event organisers are all expected to comply with this policy.

## BACKGROUND

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework for the continual development of high-quality streetscapes that require minimal resource input, thereby increasing environmental values. The Policy will assist the City of Nedlands in moving toward a greener city by increasing tree numbers and ultimately canopy coverage.

The Policy recognises that in the constantly changing/developing urban environment, street tree planting can be in competition with pedestrian, parking and infrastructure needs. The Policy seeks to balance these conflicting demands through appropriate tree species selection, planting location and maintenance practices. There are a range of additional City documents, including Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2035, Nature Strip Development Policy, Street Trees Procedure, Street Tree Management Plan, that complement this Policy, and together these documents promote an integrated approach to streetscape planning and management.

The Policy promotes biodiversity values across the City by increasing the range of tree species recommended for planting. Both native and non-endemic species will be encouraged. This practice, coupled with an increase in street tree numbers, will potentially increase wildlife habitat and increase solar passive benefits throughout the streetscapes.

To improve environmental and economic sustainability, trees will be planted that are suited to the growing conditions. This will be achieved by selecting trees that will be adaptable to local conditions and through implementing best practice installation methods.

The Policy advocates the protection of historical single and street tree avenues, along with those that have a significant environmental impact within the streetscape.

The City considers some inconvenience arising from street trees as a necessary consequence of living in an urban environment where trees deliver significant community benefits. Director of Technical Services or the Manager of Parks and Environment will only consider an issue with management of a street tree when the proprietor and the City cannot agree and the issue concerns safety and well-being, significant inconvenience and the tree is listed on the Significant Street Tree Register.

Whilst there is a commitment to fund and achieve the vision outlined in this Policy, the City recognises its delivery will be dependent on available funding in any given financial year.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Planning for Trees

The City will retain trees as part of any streetscape in its planning process. Existing trees, where appropriate, shall be retained within the streetscape. A variety of suitable species are to be selected from the City's Approved Street Tree Species List.

### Tree Planting

The City shall undertake tree planting on nature strips, as part of its annual Winter Street Tree Planting Program. The cultivation of a diverse and resilient street tree population will be based on findings and recommendations from the Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2035.

Requests from residents/occupants will also be considered annually as part of the program. The following serve only as guidelines for all street tree plantings. Variations under exceptional circumstances shall be at the discretion of the City.

- Ensure a minimum of one (1) tree is planted in the verge adjacent to each residential property;
- Address gaps in streetscapes;
- Plant based on setbacks as per site specific restrictions.
- Trees to be planted at two point seven (2.7) metres from the private property line or at such alignment as approved under the Utility Provider's Code of Practice: UPSC-WA-Code-of-Practice-R2.3-FINAL-20230201.pdf
- Street Trees to be planted at no less than five (5) metre centres. (Spacing's to be dependent upon species type and specific locations);
- Plantings near road intersections and crossovers will be subject to pedestrian and motorist safety assessment by the City;
- Plantings will be based on the City's Approved Street Tree Species List, and be in accordance with the City's Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2035.
- The tree planting locations must be free from other conflicts such as lighting, service pits, other services, and infrastructure etc

The City has also developed and implemented the Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2035 in which the following principles apply:

1. The City will maintain and make available a diverse schedule of approved street tree species, assessed as being suitable for the district, from which residents can select street trees.
2. The City will inform adjoining property owners that a suitable tree or trees will be planted on the adjoining nature strip, however the City may mandate restrictions on selection to comply with the Statement of this policy.

3. The City will plant trees in available planting space on nature strips where appropriate, considerations to op-out will not be allowed.
4. The City will choose suitable street tree species recommended from the Approved Tree Species List, selected from the Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2035.
5. The City will bear the cost to supply and plant street trees of bag sizes up to 45 litres. Property owners who request the City to plant larger trees shall pay the difference in cost, in respect of the specified maximum size, to supply and plant the trees.
6. Property owners are to be encouraged to water all street trees during and after establishment.
7. All new developments that do not have a street tree on the nature strip shall be subject to having street trees planted on completion of the development, or in the next available planting season where practicable.
8. Any tree that is damaged or declines in health during construction, remedial works or tree replacement shall be at the cost of the developer.
9. An installation of paving or synthetic turf, whether authorised or not, shall not affect the requirement for all nature strips to have street trees. Refer Nature Strip Improvement Guidelines.
10. A resident shall not be permitted to install synthetic turf under the drip line of street trees. Refer Nature Strip Improvement Guidelines.
11. Succession planting will be in conjunction with planned tree replacement as per the Urban Forest Strategy 2025-2035.
12. When new trees are planted on the south side of an east/west street, consideration is to be given to ensure residents are consulted about their winter solar access requirements.

### **Unauthorised or Inappropriate Street Tree Planting**

An unauthorised street tree planting shall constitute any one of the following:

- A tree planted without written approval of the City; or
- A tree planted of an inappropriate species for verge planting or under powerlines; or
- A tree planted out of alignment in relation to the City's Street tree planting specifications.

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 specifications and approved Street Tree Species List.

## Pruning

In relation to street tree pruning Council's primary objectives are to:

1. Promote tree health, structural integrity and form;
2. Maintain statutory clearances for the various infrastructure located in the road reserve;
3. Maximise the benefits delivered by street trees; and
4. Support public safety and minimise the risk of damage to property and injury to people.

In the interests of public safety, of the health of street trees and of managing the City's exposure to liability the following requirements and tree management standards apply to the pruning of street trees:

- a. All pruning of street trees will be in accordance with Australian Standard AS 4373-2007 *Pruning of Amenity Trees* or as otherwise instructed by a suitably competent and qualified arborist approved by the City.
- b. All pruning of street trees requires City approval and pruning is only to be undertaken by persons authorised by the City of Nedlands. The City will apply penalties to any person found to have carried out unauthorised pruning of a street tree.
- c. If a resident requests pruning of a street tree abutting their property, and in the opinion of the CEO the pruning is not associated with matters of safety or tree health, the ratepayer shall bear 100% of the cost to prune the tree if approved.

## Removal

Street trees will not be authorised to be removed unless one or more of the following circumstances applies:

1. The tree is dead, diseased, damaged or in terminal decline, and no further remedial techniques are appropriate. However, where a tree exhibits signs of pest infestation or disease, the City's preferred approach is to apply appropriate treatments and monitor the tree's condition, rather than proceed with immediate removal. The tree poses an unmanageable hazard and endangers persons or property and pruning or other techniques cannot effectively remedy that hazard.

2. To facilitate private development where, following consultation between the City and the developer, no practicable design alternative exists which allows retention of the tree. The City will not approve designs that propose removal of street trees listed on the register of Significant Street Trees and Council will not accept objections to refusal of designs resulting in removal of a significant street tree.
3. Where a development is approved that necessitates the removal of a City tree, the developer shall bear 100% of the cost for the City to remove and replace the tree. The replacement trees will be a minimum of 100L as per LPP3, and
  - a. the developer must plant a minimum of two (2) suitable replacement trees from the Approved Street Tree Species List to a minimum of 100L;
  - b. where several frontages are created due to subdivision, then a minimum of one tree shall be planted on each frontage; and
  - c. replacement trees shall be a species that aligns with the City's Approved Street Tree List.
4. To facilitate a Council approved works program (i.e. road works, drainage, utilities etc.).
5. Council may consider requests for removal and replacement of a street tree that is considered unsuitable for nature strips based on:
  - it being of a species having an association with an elevated risk of establishing as an environmental weed;
  - a tree posing unacceptable risk due to a history of significant branch failures; and
  - each request being considered individually.
6. Removal and replacement of street trees shall not occur, and penalties will be imposed for any damage, modification or removal of street trees without the City's authorisation.
7. All resident requests/proposals for street tree removal, irrespective of the reasons, shall be lodged in formal correspondence with the City.

The City will not approve requests for street tree removals that rely solely on the following reasons:

- The tree obscures or potentially obscures views (other than traffic/pedestrian sight lines);
- The tree variety causes nuisance by way of leaf, fruit and/or bark shedding or the like;
- The tree causes allergies;

- Reduction or eradication of shading to gardens, lawns, pools, solar panels or dwellings;
- Requests for the planting of alternative species based on individual preference or a desire to re-landscape;
- The tree is in the way of a non-essential crossover or verge paving option; or
- Installation of an area for parking a vehicle on the nature strip.

In the interests of public safety, removal is only to be undertaken by personnel authorised by the City of Nedlands.

## **Preservation**

It is Council's objective to ensure development and building activity considers and accommodates established street trees to the extent practicable. The following requirements apply:

1. The City shall develop and maintain a register of Significant Street Trees.
2. All development applications shall indicate the location of street trees on adjoining nature strips on surveys and site plans.
3. Prior to planning approval Council requires consultation between the City and developers in order that plans are adjusted to accommodate established street trees. Council prioritises tree retention on nature strips adjoining development sites and will only consider removal when no other practicable design alternative exists.

Where a new or altered crossover or driveway is proposed such that it will require the removal of a street tree or be located within 2.0 metre of an existing street tree, the City shall also assess the tree to determine whether a street verge tree is likely to be adversely affected as a result of the proposed development or whether the street tree can be removed.

If the street tree removal is not approved, the City shall advise the applicant, in writing, that retention of the street tree is required and that the development access be redesigned. If removal of the street tree is approved, the officer shall advise the applicant that the street tree will be removed by the City at the applicant's expense and two (2) replacement trees to a minimum of 100L are to be planted by the City, at the applicant's expense.

Crossovers shall be located a minimum of 2 metre from a street tree.

The City utilises the Helliwell system to assign a monetary value to trees. This internationally recognised method assesses a tree's financial amenity value based on several factors, including life expectancy, size, rarity, landscape significance, and the presence of surrounding vegetation.

## **Unauthorised Interference, Removal, Pruning or Damage to City Trees**

Section 6.1 of the City's Public Places and Local Government Property Local Law 2016 prohibits the damage or removal of a street tree, or part of a tree without a licence. In cases where there is reasonable proof of unauthorised interference, removal, pruning or damage to a City tree, the remedies provided for in the Public Places and Local Government Property Local Law may be applied.

### **Tree Protection at Adjacent Development Sites**

City trees need to be protected at development sites to preserve the amenity of streetscapes and neighbourhoods.

The City recommend watering of street trees during development works. Penalties will occur if a street tree is damaged or declined during the course of development works.

Recommended watering regime:

Any damage to verge trees must be reported immediately to the City of Nedlands and assessed by a qualified arborist.

Watering regime:

Trees must be watered twice weekly during demolition works, unless adequate rainfall occurs.

Deep watering to the root zone (minimum 40–50 litres per tree).

Watering should be completed outside peak heat hours (early morning or late afternoon).

If access to irrigation is disrupted, temporary hand watering or non-potable water delivery must be arranged.

### **Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) Requirements at Development Sites**

For all demolition and construction works the developer/owner is responsible for the protection of all City trees that are to be retained on City managed land adjacent to the property by adhering to the following guidelines:

- A fence must be installed to create a Tree Protection Zone at the cost of the applicant;
- The type of fencing must be in line with the Australian Standard for Protection of Trees on Development Sites;
- At minimum, the TPZ will cover two metres by two metres around the trunk – any lesser exceptions must first be approved by the City; and

- The TPZ should not obstruct roads or footpaths unless approved alternatives are in place.

For narrow nature strips, the City permits three-sided tree protection enclosures, with the longer side left open toward the road. For narrow nature strips where the 2m is not available, the tree protection zone will be assessed on an individual basis.

## **Development Applications**

Should an existing street verge tree be damaged / vandalised as a result of development works, the applicant.builder shall reimburse the City for any remedial works required. Extent/Cost of this work shall be determined by the City. If a street tree is wilfully damaged, the City will install a sign informing residents unlawful damage has occurred.

- All effort should be taken during the design phase to preserve a street tree in its current form. Any tree works required and approved related to a DA should be at the expense of the applicant.
- The applicant will be charged \$147.8 per hour for City time inspecting or working on a DA.
- Regarding DA's and larger developments, an external arborist is to inspect and report on the condition of the street trees before and upon completion of construction. Any recommendations from the report are to be implemented during the construction phase and to be at the expense of the applicant.
- If any tree works are required post construction this will be at the expense of the applicant. Larger developments should have an arborist report completed and submitted as part of the DA at the expense of the development.
- Any person(s), where identified, associated with the unauthorised removal or damage of a street tree may be prosecuted by the City. The City shall provide a mechanism to encourage community members to report unauthorised removal or damage of street trees. Significant measures, including the placement of signage, may be implemented as a deterrent against future unauthorised removal or damage of street trees.

## **Bank Guarantees**

A bank guarantee will be required as a condition of approval for activities that may pose a risk to street trees, including but not limited to development works, construction activities, infrastructure installations, or any other works carried out within the tree protection zone. This financial security ensures that any damage to street trees is adequately covered and that appropriate remediation can be undertaken.

Prior to the commencement of any development, the City requires a Bank Guarantee to safeguard existing street trees. The guarantee amount is set at \$2,000 for trees with a Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) of less than 100mm, and \$4,000 for trees with a DBH of 101mm or greater.

Prior to any development or construction works adjacent to a verge, the Helliwell Method will be applied to assess the financial value of any existing street tree. Should the health of the verge tree deteriorate to the point where removal is necessary, the assessed value may be recovered from the developer responsible for the impact.

## Public Awareness

Council will promote the importance of the City's street tree assets and the benefits they deliver. Regular communication including information about planting, streetscape improvement and maintenance activities, will be published by City's Communication Team.

## Tree Health and Public Safety

In the interest of street tree health, public safety and potential liability issues, structures such as, but not limited to, swings, cubby houses, ladders etc. are not permitted to be constructed in street trees.

## DEFINITIONS

DEFINITIONS: Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only.	
Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)	This is the recognised method for measuring the diameter of the trunk of a tree. The measurement is taken at 1.4 metres from the ground level. Refer to Australian Standard 4970- 2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites for more detailed information.
Helliwell Method	This is a recognised system that allows for a monetary value to be placed on the visual amenity provided by an individual tree asset.
Tree	<p>This is defined as a woody perennial plant generally having a single stem or trunk which will grow to a height of approximately 4 metres or more.</p> <p>A City tree is any tree which has a majority of its trunk growing from Council managed land.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Street Tree is a tree that is located within the road reserve.</li><li>• Reserve Tree is a tree that is located within a park, reserve or natural area.</li></ul> <p>This is an area above and below ground that is set aside for protection of trees roots, trunk and crown in order to provide for</p>



Tree Protection Zone (TPZ)	the viability and stability of a tree that is to be retained at a development site.
Urban Forest	This is a population of trees and other plants growing within an urban setting for the purpose of improving the liveability of that urban setting whilst providing social, economic and environmental benefits to the community as a whole.
Vandalism	This means the unlawful destruction, damage or injury to City owned tree assets which can include, but not limited to, poisoning, pruning, causing malicious damage to, removal and/or ringbarking.
The City	The City of Nedlands

## Related Documentation

Strategic Community Plan  
Corporate Business Plan  
Urban Forest Strategy 2023-2035  
Nature Strip Development Policy  
Street Trees Procedure  
Street Tree Management Plan

## Related Local Law / Legislation

*Local Government Act 1995*  
*Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984*  
*Energy Operators (Powers) Act 1976*  
Thoroughfares Local Law

## Related Delegation

Nil.

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## Review History

19 November 2025 (Report TS28.01.26)  
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