Street and Reserve Trees Policy

Objectives

To provide a consistent approach to the care, control and management of trees on land vested with or managed by the Town of Bassendean, with a target for the Perth and Peel Region to increase tree canopy cover to 30% by 2040.

The Town aims to ensure continuous progress towards a biodiverse and resilient urban forest, with an interim target to improve tree canopy cover above 2024 levels for roads (>15%) and parks (>25%), based on the State Government's Urban Eye program.

Scope

This Policy applies to trees located on land vested with or managed by the Town, including road reserves, parks and public spaces and other assets. Matters pertaining to trees on private property are addressed under the *Local Planning Policy 13 – Tree Retention and Provision*.

Definitions

Amenity Value:	*monetary value of a tree/s calculated by a suitably qualified Arborist following the Burnley Method (Moore, 1991)*
Canopy Area Potential:	*average canopy area that a tree of that species will attain after twenty years of moderate growth*
Reserve Tree:	*any tree located within Public Open Space and/or land reserved for Parks & Recreation*
Street Tree:	*any tree located within the road reserve*
Tree:	*a woody plant inclusive of its roots, canopy, stems and trunk(s) that is capable of growing taller than 3m in height at maturity*
Verge:	*that part of a thoroughfare between the carriageway and the land which abuts the thoroughfare but does not include any footpath*

Policy statement

The Town recognises the significant benefits of trees to the aesthetic, social and environmental aspects of streetscapes and reserves within the Town.

To achieve the objectives of this Policy, the Town shall fill all street tree planting opportunities so as to have as near a continuous street tree canopy as is practicable in all areas of the Town. Council supports phasing in mandatory planting of trees on verges together with improving public awareness of the benefits of trees.

While the Town seeks to retain trees and optimise canopy, it also recognises that in some cases, tree retention may not be feasible due to the condition or species of tree or impact on adjacent infrastructure. Where tree location may be an issue retention should be prioritised with solutions explored, and removal a last resort.

1. Tree Planting

a) Species selection will be in accordance with the Town's *Street and Reserve Tree Planting List* informed by criteria within this Policy.

b) Tree planting programs will be carried out to improve canopy cover and the environmental values and visual amenity of streetscapes, reserves and parks.

c) Tree planting to achieve a continuous tree canopy will take priority over a residents' objection to accommodate street trees.

d) The Town will, in consultation with the property owner, give consideration to verge and home orientation and existing renewable energy devices installed when determining tree placement.

e) Trees planted by a landowner or resident without the prior approval of the Town may be retained or removed at the discretion of the Town.

2. Street and Reserve Tree Criteria

The Street and Reserve Tree Planting List will be developed for parks and streetscapes (for various verge widths, with / without powerlines), guided by the below criteria to ensure selection of the "Right Tree, Right Place":

a) Specific location (vehicle and pedestrian sight lines, proximity to above and below ground infrastructure – both public and private, solar access and building orientation);

b) Climate resilience and adaptability to local soil type;

c) Water table depth;

d) Tree dimensions and growth habit, including canopy area potential;

e) Susceptibility to pests and diseases, avoiding species identified as host plants for the Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer (with the exception of WA native species);

f) Available soil volume/ verge width;

g) Maintenance requirements and costs;

h) Biodiversity values; and

i) Streetscape amenity.

3. Requests for Street Trees

a) The Town will consider all requests for street trees in relation to the Street Tree Planting Program. Requests for street trees will be prioritised based on the following:

   i) A low number of existing trees in the surrounding streetscape;

   ii) Locations on higher traffic volume roads, public transport routes and verges adjacent to bus stops;

iii) Key pedestrian, cycle and school routes; and

iv) Where underground power, infrastructure or road projects have recently been completed.

b) A property owner may request the planting of additional trees if sufficient space allows.

c) Species selection will be assessed in accordance with the Town's *Street and Reserve Tree Criteria/ Planting List*.

4. Tree Maintenance

a) Pruning or maintenance of trees is only permitted to be undertaken by the Town or by a suitably qualified arborist approved by the Town.

b) Requests for tree maintenance will only be considered favourably in the following circumstances:

i) To provide safe clearance to overhead power lines and streetlights;

ii) To ensure appropriate vehicle and pedestrian sight lines at crossovers and intersections;

iii) To correct structurally unsound growth;

iv) To provide appropriate clearance to roads, crossovers and footpaths; or

v) To mitigate unacceptable risk of harm or damage to infrastructure or reduce safety issues for adjacent properties or the public realm;

c) The Town will not support a request to prune or maintain a tree for the following reasons:

i) The tree obscures or has the potential to obscure access to sunlight;

ii) The tree obscures or has the potential to obscure access to views;

iii) The tree causes allergies or health issues;

iv) The tree causes nuisance by way of leaf, fruit, nut or bark shedding; or

v) The species of tree is not preferred.

5. Tree Removal

a) The removal of a tree is not permitted without the prior approval of the Town.

b) Tree removal shall only be carried out by the Town, or a suitably qualified arborist approved by the Town.

c) Requests to remove trees will only be considered where the tree/s are:

i) Dead, having less than 10% photosynthetic material or live tissue present in the canopy mass with no potential to recover;

ii) Diseased and unlikely to respond to treatment;

iii) A public safety and/or liability risk determined by a recognised Tree Risk Assessment;

iv) A species declared as a noxious weed by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development or required to be removed under a Quarantine Area Notice;

v) Determined by the Town to be of no ecological, amenity or community value, or strategically removed and replaced to enhance canopy;

vi) Causing damage to property and infrastructure where all alternatives to removal have been explored and cannot be implemented; or

vii) Required to be removed to enable development of an adjacent lot or installation of a new crossover, where all other design options have been exhausted.

d) Tree removal approved by the Town due to development shall be charged based on the Town's Annual Fees and Charges (which may include recovery of the Amenity Value), including replacement planting at a minimum ratio:

Age of tree	**Minimum replacement planting ratio**
Juvenile (Planted within the last 3 years)	1 (removed): 2 (replaced)
Planted 3 + years ago or mature/ established	1 (removed): 3 (replaced)

e) The Town will not support a request to remove a tree for any of the reasons stated under Clause 4. c).

f) The removal of dead trees or their retention for habitat will be based on consideration of risk, ecological benefits, location, amenity and canopy opportunity. In streetscapes, removal of dead trees will occur prior to the next Winter planting season, subject to available budget.

6. Protection of Trees

a) Any person who carries out works on the verge or likely to impact the verge shall ensure the following is carried out to protect any affected trees for the duration of the works:

i) Where requested by the Town, provide a report from a suitably qualified arborist approved by the Town to guide the management practices during the development;

ii) No street trees are to be pruned, or damaged, and vehicles must not park within the dripline / under the canopy of any trees;

iii) Provide free standing open mesh fencing to form the tree protection zone which is a minimum of 2m from the base of the tree. The support shoes must not present a trip hazard to pedestrians and must be rotated parallel with the fence or be positioned behind the fence or be fully contained

within the tree protection zone. The structure must be appropriately braced and regularly checked to ensure it has not moved out of the correct alignment;

iv) The establishment of a Tree Protection Zone in accordance with AS 4970-2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites around all street trees within or adjacent to the worksite. The Tree Protection Zone should not be less than 2m or greater than 15m from the base of the tree;

v) No excavation work is to be undertaken within the drip line / under the tree canopy unless approved by the Town;

vi) Building materials or debris shall not to be placed or stored under the tree canopy;

vii) The use of appropriate sized machinery is to occur so that contact with the upper canopy of a tree does not occur at any time; and

viii) In the event that existing irrigation on the verge is to be removed or stopped, a supplementary watering program may need to be implemented pending advice from a suitably qualified arborist approved by the Town and reticulation reinstated at completion.

7. Unauthorised Activity

a) The Town will investigate the actions taken by any person who interferes with, removes, prunes, or damages a tree without authorisation, and may, at the CEO's discretion:

i) Take action under Regulation 5(1) of the *Local Government (Uniform Local Provisions) Regulations 1996* or other applicable legislation (including the issue of infringement notices or prosecution);

ii) Recover costs associated with the removal (if applicable) and replacement tree/s as per the Town's Schedule of Fees and Charges;

iii) Recover costs equivalent to the Amenity Value of the tree, including percentage of value lost as a result of the vandalism;

iv) Undertake replacement planting at a minimum of ratio of:

Age of tree	**Minimum replacement planting ratio**
Juvenile (Planted within the last 3 years)	1 (removed): 2 (replaced)
Planted 3 + years ago or mature/ established	1 (removed): 3 (replaced)

; and

v) Install signage in the location of the vandalised tree, for a potential duration of 2 years.

Document responsibilities:			
Owner:	Executive Manager Sustainability and Environment	**Owner Business Unit:**	Sustainability and Environment
Inception date:	June 2022 (Ref: OCM-13/6/22)	**Decision maker:**	Council
Review date:	Biennial Last reviewed OCM-26/05/2026	**Repeal and replace:**	N/A
Compliance requirements:			
Legislation	***Local Government Act 1995***		