

Are some trees more significant than others?

Yes. While the City values all trees, some street trees, park trees and even private trees can be deemed trees of special significance. Private trees must be nominated by the resident and all trees must meet certain criteria before they are given a Tree Preservation Order.

Past and present issues of tree planting

Approximately 70 years ago, an extensive tree planting program was undertaken in the City. The foresight of the City planners has provided us with beautiful streetscapes such as the Jacaranda lined Strickland Street, the Peppermint avenues on Onslow Street and the Box trees along Henning Crescent. Unfortunately, some species in other streets are proving to be unsuitable for various reasons and the City now has to make some hard decisions on how best to manage these trees.

The Street Tree Management Plan provides guidance on how to best manage the removal and replacement of trees. The City emphasises that trees are only removed for reasons of poor health, dangerous condition or in some circumstances, when they conflict with building development or infrastructure.



What is the City's commitment to street trees?

Street trees are an investment in our environmental and municipal future and take many years to achieve their full potential. In order to ensure that future generations enjoy the same beautiful, tree lined avenues we do, the City must carefully plan and manage new street tree plantings. The Street Tree Management Plan sets out this direction.

In the past, residents were able to request any type of street tree from the City's approved street tree list. While this allowed residents to select a tree which they felt suited their particular home landscape, it often resulted in disjointed streetscapes, lacking a design theme.

In order to establish and maintain themed avenue plantings, the City has developed a series of 'Precinct Plans' which guide the selection of trees. Each street now has one or two dedicated species. The Precinct Plans are contained within the Street Tree Management Plan, which is available at the Libraries and on the City's web page.

Green Plan

Street trees of local native species like the WA Peppermint (*Agonis flexuosa*), Jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*) and Blackbutt (*Eucalyptus tottiana*), are used in the Precinct Plans which work together with the City's Green Plan to create fauna corridors linking areas of natural bushland and waterways.

The Green Plan was developed to provide a system for protecting, linking, and enhancing public and private green spaces and biological resources in the City.

City of
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Caring for our Street Trees

How can I request a new street tree?

Residents can request a street tree at any time from the City. The Precinct Plans determine which tree species will be planted in your street. City staff determine the appropriate alignment and spacing for each new street tree. The alignment is important to minimise potential interruption of above and below ground services such as power, water and telecommunications.

Each year the City plants approximately 1500 new street trees. Planting is done in winter to take advantage of rain and cooler weather. The City waters each new tree for the first two or three summers and will provide supplementary water to trees that appear to be suffering. The City also fertilises, prunes and generally takes care of the young street trees to give them the best start possible.

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The City of South Perth is committed to sustainable development and the care of our street trees plays an important role in the environmental health of the city.

This brochure aims to answer your questions about street trees, which strictly speaking, is any tree growing on the road reserve or verge.

Why are street trees so important?

In a global sense, our street trees contribute oxygen to the environment and help offset our production of greenhouse gases. Locally - trees cool the air, protect us from damaging ultraviolet rays and hot and cold winds. Trees filter the atmosphere, reduce stormwater run-off, and improve the visual and physical experience of where we live.

Without trees, streets can be exposed and uninviting. Street trees provide visual relief from the predominant use of hard materials in our local landscapes such as asphalt, brick paving and concrete.



Who looks after street trees?

Street trees are part of our assets and the City is responsible for the planting, removal and all street tree maintenance. The City utilises both qualified contractors and its own trained staff to undertake maintenance.

The City needs to make sure:

- Trees enhance the streetscape
- Pedestrians can walk safely and comfortably under trees
- Signs are clear, vehicles have access to properties
- Trees are kept away from powerlines
- Light from street lights reaches the ground

Street trees are not necessarily pruned because of leaf, berry, fruit or nut drop, or to enhance or preserve views. Pruning of branches overhanging property or fencelines are assessed on an individual basis.

A professional approach to tree maintenance has also been established by the City, including a computer database program that records tree details and the tree's pruning history.

Who maintains the street verge?

The City is responsible for all street trees, however lawns and gardens on verges are the responsibility of the land-owner. The City encourages residents to take pride in their verges, in order to enhance the aesthetic value of their properties.

What if a street tree causes problems?

Suburbs and people can create a harsh environment for trees. Powerlines, roads, vehicles, lack of water and our values all affect the growth and shape of street trees.

Sometimes street trees can be wrongly perceived as a nuisance due to shading, interruption of views and litter drop.



The City has minimised problems through better planning and selection of suitable varieties. Some species are no longer planted, like the Queensland box tree, but are still considered desirable and will be retained.

Trees occasionally cause problems to essential services and property or pose a safety risk to people. When a tree causes problems the City will investigate all options and decide the best way to manage the risk. Whenever possible the tree will be treated to alleviate the problem, but sometimes as a last resort the tree must be removed.

Please inform the City if a street tree is causing concern. Our officers will then inspect the tree and determine whether it is appropriate to carry out any maintenance.

What if trees become a threat to powerlines?

The City has established an arrangement with Western Power where the City is informed of trees causing a risk to power supplies. The City then carries out the necessary professional tree pruning.

To minimise the amount of tree pruning in the future, the City is pursuing further underground power projects for the rest of the local area.

Will I get in trouble if I prune a street tree?

Yes. Tree pruning is not a simple task and the effects of incorrect pruning can severely disfigure a tree. In many cases, improper pruning creates more problems than it solves. If trees are incorrectly pruned, regrowth can be vigorous and/or weakly attached and within a short time may exceed the original growth.

For safety reasons relating to residents and trees, residents are not permitted to prune, remove or otherwise interfere with street trees. Fines can be issued and if a street tree needs to receive remedial pruning or to be removed and replaced as a result of residents' actions, he/she may be charged for any work required, as well as the amenity value of the lost tree. This may, in some circumstances, involve thousands of dollars.

Can I have a tree removed for a new crossover (driveway)?

Generally not. Crossovers should remain at least 3m from a street tree to enable healthy root and branch growth. Staff will inspect trees and make a final determination when plans conflict with a street tree. Costs will be charged if a tree requires pruning or removal.

When building, all construction materials must stay at least 1m from a street tree. Signs and materials are not to be nailed or attached to trees.

Where there is no tree on a verge adjacent to any new construction, the City will organise for one to be planted upon completion of the building.

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