

Name:	Preserving Our Urban Forest		
Type:	Council Policy		
Owner:	Chief Executive Officer		
Responsible Officer:	Director City Growth and Operations		
Approval Date:	1/09/2020	Next Review Date:	1/09/2024
Records Number:	429701	Council Decision:	9/1274

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Demonstrate Council's commitment to the Community Plan and the Environmental Sustainability for Palmerston to be an environmentally friendly, liveable city.
- Establish the City of Palmerston's commitment and future strategic direction for the protection, management and maintenance of its urban forest.
- Address tree management and maintenance issues encountered by the City of Palmerston.

2 PRINCIPLES

The City of Palmerston strongly supports the retention of the urban forest wherever possible. Trees provide many social, economic and environmental benefits. They beautify and soften streetscapes, provide wildlife habitat and play a significant role in determining the urban character of our city. Trees are critical in the maintenance of a healthy urban environment as they reduce the City's heat sink, produce oxygen, trap airborne pollutants, provide shade and absorb carbon dioxide.

3 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
Urban Forest	Trees situated in parks, streets and anywhere in the developed urban area of Palmerston under the care, control, and management of the Council

4 POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Preserving our Urban Forest Policy

The City of Palmerston recognises that trees are a major asset and play an important role in making Palmerston a liveable, attractive, and healthy city. Our trees are growing in a harsh urban environment, which requires specialised care and management.

The City of Palmerston is committed to a high-quality maintenance regime that provides adequate resources for the long-term health of its urban forest.

4.1.1 This policy addresses two key areas:

4.1.1.1 Tree Retention

To maximise the retention of trees the factors where a tree may be considered for removal are:

- It is severely damaged, distressed, diseased or dying and there are no remedies to save the tree.
- It is a safety hazard to the public.

- A tree does not meet Council's guidelines.
- The ongoing remedial works required due to damage by a tree are too costly.
- Council approved its removal as part of a streetscape plan or works program.
- A tree is indicated in a property development plan – to Council's required format and standard – and is approved by Council, provided the developer meets the cost of tree valuation, removal and replacement, or
- It is causing damage to property or public utilities, and the cost of ongoing remedial works becomes uneconomical, i.e. that cost of the perceived ongoing repairs outweighs the value of the tree and there is no reasonable alternative to save the tree. It is interfering with service provision such as power, water, transport, and emergency services.

A tree will not be considered for removal based solely on the following:

- Falling leaves, bark, gum nut or flower debris.
- To provide vistas.
- It is growing over a property, blocking light, shading lawn or a pool.
- It is considered too big or too old.
- Perceived danger that a tree may fall in a storm or has dropped a limb.
- Would like an alternative species of tree.
- Property alterations require a driveway to be relocated.
- Droppings by a bird, bat, possum or other wildlife.
- Insect issue, such as spiders, ants or bees.
- Solar access for solar panels.
- The tree shades the verge or resident's garden, or
- Surface root growth that restricts mowing heights.

Where a tree has been approved for removal, subject to site specific limitations, a replacement tree of a suitable species will be planted within 30 days of removal. Where large scale tree removal is triggered as a result of a significant weather event a program of tree replacement will be prepared and implemented based on budgets and tree availability.

4.1.1.2 Tree Assessment

A request for tree removal will be assessed by Council based on the listed criteria by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Where considered necessary an independent arborist may be engaged to assist in finalising a recommendation to remove a tree.

4.2 Operational implementation

This policy sets the principles and criteria for the preservation of the urban forest; the installation and management of tree assets is an operational function of the Council in accordance with the delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer.

5 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

5.1 City of Palmerston Preferred Tree Species

6 REFERENCES AND RELATED LEGISLATION

6.1 Local Government Act