

# Tree Management Policy

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<b>Approval date:</b>	21 July 2025
<b>Policy owner:</b>	Manager Parks and Reserves
<b>Next review:</b>	September 2029

Street trees enhance the amenity of the streetscape, provide shade in parks and habitat, for fauna. They can help to ameliorate the environment and contribute to the reduction in the urban heat island effect.

When planting street trees, Council takes the following into consideration:

- Increase the percentage tree canopy cover of the urban area over time
- Maintain the integrity of streetscapes and parks throughout the urban area with ongoing best management practices and appropriate species selections (both native and exotic species are selected that are suitable to growing in Wagga Wagga)
- safe access to properties and safe use of the street
- Minimise impacts on utilities and services

Tree management is about balancing the various risks against the benefits that trees provide, to ensure the best outcome for the community.

## Purpose

The objective of this policy is:

- to enhance and beautify the streetscapes and parks for the community, while providing amenity for the city.
- improve the quality and quantity of City of Wagga Wagga's canopy cover
- recognise and protect trees considered significant due to heritage, cultural, social and ecological criteria
- increase awareness and educate the community, developers and Council staff on the value of trees in the urban landscape

## Scope

This policy applies to all public trees planted and managed by Council throughout the Wagga Wagga Local Government area.

## Policy Provisions

### Responsibilities

The Supervisor Tree Planning and Management is the role responsible for the management of all public trees reporting to the Manager Parks and Reserves.

## **Approval Arrangements**

The selection and establishment of all new trees is determined by Council's Supervisor Tree Planning and Management in accordance with the street tree strategy and urban cooling strategy.

Management and Maintenance of any Council trees will be determined on a risk and works required basis in accordance with Council's Street tree Audit.

## **Review procedures**

This policy is to be reviewed every four years with the term of Council.

## **PART 2: POLICY CONTENT**

### **Street Tree Provisions**

Trees are provided by Council through its annual winter planting program where a request for a street tree maybe lodged with Council's Customer Service for review and determination by Council's Tree Planning & Management Supervisor.

The number of trees permitted on the verge is one tree per residential property; however up to three trees may be permitted on corner blocks, and more than one may also be permitted on the verge of a large commercial or industrial property.

To minimise maintenance requirements, species selection will be determined prior to planting under power lines.

A person shall not prune, remove or plant a tree in the road reserve or nature strip without the written consent of Council.

### **Tree Planting Program**

Council plants new and replacement trees citywide with a focus on new trees for new subdivisions as part of the development process, and replacement trees once they reach the end of their useful life, with reference to the Council's Street Tree Audit.

Council plants new or replacement trees annually as part of the strategic planting program for main roads and high-profile streets with reference to the Wagga Wagga Street Tree Strategy and Master Plan. All stock sourced complies with A.S 2303:2018 – Tree stock for landscape use.

### **Tree Planting as Part of Subdivision Works and Development Applications**

Council undertakes the planting of all the new street trees in subdivisions and applicable Development Applications, unless bonded by a developer for a two (2) year period. A fee per tree including a two (2) year maintenance period will be charged according to the Fees and Charges document adopted by Council each year. All trees are planted in the winter months after receipt of the Developers contributions payment.

### **Tree Management and Maintenance**

Wagga Wagga City Council currently manages over 70,000 street trees across the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area (LGA). This number increases each year, with up to 1000 new trees being planted annually.

Public trees are the responsibility of Council and the overall management of street trees, including the selection, planting, maintenance, removal and risk management are carried out by the Parks Operations Division.

Public trees are uniquely identified in Council's Street Tree Audit and this Audit is updated accordingly every 3-5 years for major parks and city precincts or when major works are undertaken on individual trees. The relevant State Government agency (currently Essential Energy) is responsible for undertaking the pruning of street trees in the vicinity of overhead power lines in consultation with Council, however all other pruning is undertaken by Council.

The Parks Operations Division is to be consulted prior to any works occurring in the vicinity of any street tree, including all infrastructure works.

### **Street Tree Pruning**

Street tree pruning is determined by customer requests, by suburb area maintenance demands or in an emergency situation. Street tree pruning is determined on a street by street need basis, tree species and tree habit. Street tree pruning will be carried out by Council staff, or by Council preferred contractors.

### **Street Tree Removal**

Council will consider removing a street tree where:

- the tree is dead
- the tree is in a state of decline to the point that survival is unlikely
- the tree is causing significant damage to infrastructure or services, as well as presenting an unacceptable level of risk to surrounding infrastructure
- if retention of the tree is not possible due to an approved development
- the tree is identified by a suitably qualified person as representing a significant safety hazard.

All requests for the removal of street trees will be assessed by Council in accordance with Council's independent Street Tree Audit and Australian Standards to maximise the possibility of retaining the tree. Tree removal is considered as a final option in street tree management.

### **Consultation**

Council will consult with affected stakeholders during the planning stages of specific streetscape replanting programs. Notification will be provided to the adjoining resident/stakeholders in cases where a tree is required to be removed and replaced, unless in an emergency situation.

### **Legislative Context**

- Wagga Wagga Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2010
- Wagga Wagga Development Control Plan (DCP) 2010
- Local Government Act 1993
- Roads Act 1993

## Related Documents

- Development Control Plan (DCP) Section 5
- Wagga Wagga Street Tree Audit
- Wagga Wagga Street Tree Strategy and Master Plan 2011 (Due for review)
- Operational Procedures for the Management of Trees on Public Land (draft)
- Activities on Road Reserve Policy (POL 008)
- NSW Code of Practice for Plumbing and Drainage 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2006 - Part A page 13
- Landscaping of Nature Strips – Guidelines and Applications – page 11
- Urban Tree Management Plan - (Draft to go to Council)
- Urban Cooling Strategy (2022-2052)

## Definitions

A street tree is any tree planted and managed by Council on the road reserve or nature strip in the defined planting easement throughout the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area.

## Revision History

Revision number	Council resolution	Council meeting date
1	Res No: 18/058	26 February 2018
2	Res No: 22/354	17 October 2022
3	Revision approved under General Managers delegated authority.	24 June 2025
4	Res No: 25/215	21 July 2025