

RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL POLICY REGISTER

File No: T.410.00

Policy No: 3.11.4

POLICY:	URBAN TREE REMOVAL
FUNCTION:	Urban Local Roads/Footpaths/ Parks and Gardens
OBJECTIVE:	To establish a guideline for the removal of street trees and establishment of replacement plantings on footpaths, public land and nature strips by private individuals or organisations.
DIRECTORATE:	WORKS

POLICY:

PREAMBLE

Council encourages the retention of trees in streets and reserves as assets that contribute to the aesthetic and amenity values of the community. While recognising that trees can cause some problems and that public safety is a priority, any suggestion of removing trees should be considered in the context of those values and Council's ability to provide resources.

POLICY

1. Upon receipt of any general request for removal of a tree, the applicant will be advised that it is Council policy to only permit removal of a tree if good cause can be shown. In cases where Council determines that the primary cause for removing the tree is not related to structural problems caused by disease or damage. And agrees to allow removal. The applicant will be responsible for the full cost of removal and provision of the replacement tree(s). Payment will be made before Council carries out the work in accordance with Private Works Policies.
2. If an inspection of a tree reveals structural disease or damage (tree or tree roots), that presents undue risk to people or property, Council will accept responsibility for removal or maintenance of that tree. The fact that a tree is large or has large branches for example, will not constitute undue risk.

PROCEDURE

1. All requests for removal of trees on Council controlled land will be forwarded to the Director of Works.
2. The Director Works will arrange for the tree to be inspected and a "Tree Hazard Inspection Form" (see appendix A) to be completed.

3. The Director Works will consider the information provided on the “Tree Hazard Inspection Form” and the recommendation and determine the action to be taken (if the tree is dead dying or dangerous than works at council cost. If tree healthy and removal approved then at applicant cost including replacement tree(s)).
4. The Director Works will arrange for specific inspection of the tree before making any recommendation if the tree is considered to have natural, heritage or cultural significance that may cause public concern.
5. If the tree is deemed to be a significant tree, all necessary steps will be taken to ensure safety however removal will not be undertaken until the public has been notified of Council’s intention (this may include barricading).
6. If a tree is recommended for removal but is deemed to pose no immediate public risk, the tree will be clearly marked with an orange cross at least two weeks prior to removal to allow time for public comment.

Tree Hazard Evaluation Form

Site Address:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> Council	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
Inspector			

Tree Characteristics and Tree Health

Tree #	Species			
DBH:	No. of trunks:		Height:	Spread:
Live crown ration %	<input type="checkbox"/> Young	<input type="checkbox"/> Semi- mature	<input type="checkbox"/> Mature	<input type="checkbox"/> Over mature

Pruning History

<input type="checkbox"/> Crown cleaned	<input type="checkbox"/> Excessively thinned	<input type="checkbox"/> Topped
<input type="checkbox"/> Crown raised	<input type="checkbox"/> Pollarded	<input type="checkbox"/> Crown reduced
<input type="checkbox"/> Cable/braced	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Flush cuts
Multiple pruning events		
Approximate Dates:		

Special value

<input type="checkbox"/> Specimen	<input type="checkbox"/> Heritage/historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/> Unusual
<input type="checkbox"/> Street tree	<input type="checkbox"/> Screen	<input type="checkbox"/> Shade	<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous
<input type="checkbox"/> Protected by Government.			

Foliage colour

<input type="checkbox"/> Normal	<input type="checkbox"/> Necrotic	<input type="checkbox"/> Chlorotic
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Foliage density

<input type="checkbox"/> Normal	<input type="checkbox"/> Sparse
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Leaf size

<input type="checkbox"/> Normal	<input type="checkbox"/> Small
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Annual shoot growth

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor
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Woundwood development

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor
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Growth obstructions

<input type="checkbox"/> Stakes	<input type="checkbox"/> Wire/ties	<input type="checkbox"/> Signs
<input type="checkbox"/> Cables	<input type="checkbox"/> Curb/pavement	<input type="checkbox"/> Guards
Epicormics: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Twig dieback: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Major pests/diseases:		

Site Conditions

Site Character

<input type="checkbox"/> Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Park
<input type="checkbox"/> Open Space	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural	<input type="checkbox"/> Woodland/Forest	

Landscape Type

<input type="checkbox"/> Parkway	<input type="checkbox"/> Raised bed	<input type="checkbox"/> Container	<input type="checkbox"/> Mound
<input type="checkbox"/> Lawn	<input type="checkbox"/> Shrub boarder	<input type="checkbox"/> Wind break	

Irrigation

<input type="checkbox"/> Non	<input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate
<input type="checkbox"/> Excessive	<input type="checkbox"/> Trunk wetted	

Recent Site Disturbance

<input type="checkbox"/> Construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Soil Disturbance	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade change
<input type="checkbox"/> Line clearing	<input type="checkbox"/> Site cleaning	

% Dripline Paved

<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 25%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-50%	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-75%	<input type="checkbox"/> 75-100%
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Pavement lifted

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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% Dripline w/fill soil

<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 25%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-50%	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-75%	<input type="checkbox"/> 75-100%
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% Dripline grade lowered

<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 25%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-50%	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-75%	<input type="checkbox"/> 75-100%
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Soil problems

<input type="checkbox"/> Drainage	<input type="checkbox"/> Shallow	<input type="checkbox"/> Compacted	<input type="checkbox"/> Droughty	<input type="checkbox"/> Saline
<input type="checkbox"/> Acidic	<input type="checkbox"/> Small volume	<input type="checkbox"/> Disease centre		<input type="checkbox"/> Alkaline
History of fail	Clay	Expansive	Slope °	Aspect

Obstructions

Lights	Signs	Line of sight	View
Traffic	Overhead lines	u/ground service	Adjacent veg

Exposure to wind

<input type="checkbox"/> Single tree	<input type="checkbox"/> Below canopy	<input type="checkbox"/> Above canopy
<input type="checkbox"/> Recently exposed	<input type="checkbox"/> Windward edge	<input type="checkbox"/> Prone to windthrow
Prevailing wind direction:		

Target

Use under tree

<input type="checkbox"/> Building	<input type="checkbox"/> Parking	<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic
<input type="checkbox"/> Pedestrian	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape
<input type="checkbox"/> Hardscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Small features	<input type="checkbox"/> Power lines
Can target be moved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Can use be restricted?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Occupancy

<input type="checkbox"/> Occasional use	<input type="checkbox"/> Intermittent use	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent use	<input type="checkbox"/> Constant use
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Tree Defects

Root Defects

Suspected root rot?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No		
Mushroom/bracket present?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No		
Exposed roots:	<input type="checkbox"/> Severe	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Nil
Undermined	<input type="checkbox"/> Severe	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Nil
Root pruned: (distance from trunk in metres)				
Root affected area:	%	When?		
Buttress wounded?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No		
Restricted root area	<input type="checkbox"/> Severe	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Potential for failure	<input type="checkbox"/> Severe	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	

Lean

Lean ° from vertical	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural	<input type="checkbox"/> Unnatural	<input type="checkbox"/> Self corrected
Soil heaving	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Decay in plane of lean:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Roots broken:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Soil cracking:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Compound factors:			
Lean severity	<input type="checkbox"/> Severe	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low

Crown Defects

Indicate presence of individual defects and rate their severity (s=severe, m=medium, l=low)			
Defect	Rootcrown	Trunk	Branches
Included bark			
Cracks/splits			
Hangers			
Deadwood - % - persistent			
Wounds			
Decay			
Cavity			
Mushrooms/bracket			
Kino/resin			
Deadwood / stubs			
Borers			
Termites			
Previous failure			
Epicormic growth			
Previously lopped			

Hazard Rating

Tree part most likely to fall:				
Inspection period:		<input type="checkbox"/> Annual	<input type="checkbox"/> Biannual	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
Failure potential:	1 low	2 medium	3 high	4 severe
Size of part:	1. (<15cm)	2. (15-45 cm)	3 (45-75 cm)	4 (> 75cm)
Target rating:	1. occasional	2 intermittent use	3 frequent use	4 constant use

HAZARD RATING = FAILURE POTENTIAL + SIZE OF PART + TARGET RATING

Hazard Abatement

<input type="checkbox"/> Remove the defective part	<input type="checkbox"/> Isolate hazard (fence off)	<input type="checkbox"/> Move target
<input type="checkbox"/> Remove tree	<input type="checkbox"/> Do nothing	<input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up in _____ months