



Replacement and Removal of Trees and Shrubs Policy

**Adopted by Council: 14 September 2010
Next Review Date: 30 June 2011
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PURPOSE

This Policy provides guidance and a framework for the replacement and removal of trees and shrubs on the City of Marion's parks, reserves and other operational land (including road verges).

Trees in the urban environment (on public land) are an important asset. The replacement of trees in streets and reserves is an investment by the City of Marion of resources belonging to the community, on behalf of the community. This Policy supports this principle and gives direction on how this will be undertaken.

The Replacement and Removal of Trees and Shrubs Policy is not intended to cover all tree issues as these will be dealt with through the Tree Policy – Streets & Reserves, that is currently under development.

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Marion recognises the value of trees and shrubs and in doing so acknowledge some of the values of these assets being that they:

- Contribute to the amenity and aesthetics of an area and to the well-being of both residents and visitors;
- Provide shade and reduce heat (from hard surfaces and buildings);
- Contribute to reduction of air pollution;
- Provide a source of food and shelter for wildlife;
- Remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and sequester (store) it as carbon;
- Contribute to economic reward.

DEFINITIONS

Arboriculture - The study, cultivation, care and management of trees, particularly in the urban environment.

AS 4373-2007 - The current Australian Standard (AS) which refers to the pruning of amenity trees.

AS/NZS 4360-2004 - The current Australian Standard (AS) which refers to Risk Management.

Community Wellbeing - A community with a high degree of wellbeing enjoys a healthy community life. In a healthy community people enjoy a comfortable standard of living; they feel safe and a sense of belonging, are connected with and supportive of each other, celebrate diversity and difference, and seek to actively participate within the community. This term has been identified as one of the four community themes of the City of Marion Strategic Plan 2006-2020.

Healthy Environment – In a healthy environment interactions between natural assets: land, water, air, biota (all living things), are diverse and yet occur with a stability causing changes to happen over very long periods of time. This term has been identified as one of the four community themes of the City of Marion Strategic Plan 2006-2020.

Risk Management - The systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices to the tasks of identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating and monitoring risk.

Significant Tree – Relevant to the Development Act 1993, a significant tree is defined as any tree with a trunk circumference in excess of 2.0 metres. In addition, trees with multiple trunks, that have trunks with a total circumference of 2.0 metres or more and an average circumference of 625 mm or more are also classed as significant. In each situation the circumference of the trunk(s) is taken at a height of one metre above natural ground level.

Streetscape – Describes the appearance of a street, which is achieved through a combination of road design, surface treatments, street trees, landscaping, architecture, street furniture and artwork. Items situated within private property, which contribute to the appearance of the street are also considered components of the streetscape. For the purpose of this policy an emphasis is placed on the specific contribution to the streetscape made by trees.

Sustainable – Maintaining all elements compatibly within an infrastructure, in safe operating condition, to deliver their facility in the most economical, maintenance-reduced manner, having regard to amenity, for as long as possible within the limits of acceptable wear and tear, technological best practice, and funding provisions.

Tree – A plant having a permanently woody main stem or trunk, ordinarily growing to a considerable height, and usually developing branches at some distance from the ground.

Shrub – A woody plant smaller than a tree and generally divided into separate stems from near ground level.

PRINCIPLES

In relation to the replacement and removal of trees and shrubs, the following guidelines have been developed to support the Council's strategic directions within the City of Marion Strategic Plan 2008-2020 of:

- A Liveable City
- Healthy lifestyles and healthy communities
- Enhanced landscapes, habitats and local biodiversity

Principles of this policy relate to best practice arboriculture systems and procedures and the most relevant Australian Standard being the AS 4373-2007 - the current Australian Standard (AS) which refers to the pruning of amenity trees.

1. Replacement Tree & Shrub Selection and Planting

Objective

To preserve and enhance its environment and amenity, the City of Marion will select plant species and utilise tree management practices that make a sustainable contribution to the City in accordance with the Councils Tree and Open Space & Recreation Strategies.

- 1.1 The City of Marion maintains a tree register that defines the appropriate tree and shrub species for planting throughout the City. All plantings will be in accordance with this register.
- 1.2 Streetscape / Reserve Planting will include where practical:
 - the replacement of trees and shrubs where they are missing or have died; and
 - the retention and maintenance of existing healthy and structurally sound street trees.
- 1.3 The City of Marion will consider community requests for tree planting if
 - site constraints do not preclude planting; and
 - streetscape development planting has not been scheduled for that location within the following five years.

- individual trees and shrubs will only be planted where there is community support and ownership for their placement and acceptance of joint maintenance requirements in relation to watering (adopt a tree program).
- 1.4 Prior to planting replacement trees / shrubs, consideration shall be given to the future and time of streetscape and reserve upgrades.
 - 1.5 Replacement trees and shrubs shall be planted during the planting season (May – September).
 - 1.6 A register of trees / shrubs planting requests shall be kept for the ensuing planting season as these requests are received.
 - 1.7 Where a tree is planted by the Council, this shall be recorded on a register and entered into the Council's Asset Management System.
 - 1.8 Replacement trees planted in any given year shall be considered for two years' manual watering subject to internal capacity.
 - 1.9 Tree planting on Community Land will be consistent with the purpose for which the land is held, as detailed in the relevant Community Land Management Plan.
 - 1.10 With avenues of trees, plantings will first occur by replacement of trees and shrubs where they are missing or have died and then the healthy trees be considered for replacement on a case by case basis within two years of the initial avenue planting.

2. Tree Removal

Objective:

To ensure that prior to the removal of a City of Marion tree, all alternatives have been fully explored, legislative requirements fulfilled and that if removal is inevitable, wherever possible suitable replacements are made.

- 2.1 No tree may be removed without authorisation, unless the tree presents an immediate threat to the public or to property of substantial value.
- 2.2 When considering the possible removal of a street tree or shrub, an arborist assessment will take place giving consideration to the health, condition, useful life, level of risk and management options for the tree or shrub.

- 2.3 Any alteration or removal of a Significant or Regulated Tree (as defined by the Development Act 1993) will only be undertaken subject to any required approvals or guidelines contained in legislation, regulation or other statutory power.
- 2.4 Where a City of Marion owned tree is removed, a suitable replacement will be planted unless it is impractical to do so due to the proximity of existing vegetation or other limiting factors such as low survival rate.
- 2.5 Where a City of Marion owned tree is removed, this shall be recorded on a register and entered into the Council's Asset Management System.
- 2.6 Requests for removal of trees growing on property under Council's care, control and management must be made in writing.
- 2.7 Where a request for tree removal is based on allergic reactions to the tree or its pollens, consideration may be given to removing the tree if:
- The request is supported by evidence from a medical specialist, which attributes persistent allergic reaction to a particular species of tree, and
 - The species of tree is uncommon in the very near vicinity of the applicant's residence, and
 - Alternative options for managing the issue have been investigated and determined to be unfeasible.

3. Risk Management – Replacement of Trees and Shrubs

Objective

To maintain the levels of risk associated with City of Marion trees to within acceptable limits, thereby managing the Council's exposure to liability, through the application of sound risk management techniques and policies.

- 3.1 To minimise risk associated with public trees, tree planting processes will be consistent with the document titled Trees: Legislation and Risk Management Guidelines for Local Government (Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme, 2004). Reference is also made to the Australian Standard for Risk Management (AS/NS 4360-2004)

REFERENCES

City of Marion Strategic Plan 2008 - 2020

Community Wellbeing

CW2.1 A liveable city

Lead best practice in sustainable urban design and streetscapes

CW 4.1 Healthy lifestyles and healthy communities

Develop open spaces and recreation facilities that support active communities and healthy environments

Healthy Environment

HE 3.3 Enhanced landscapes, habitats and local biodiversity

Increase the planting of local native plants in Marion's open spaces

City of Marion Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2006 - 2016

Goal 3 Protecting and Enhancing our Local Environments

Other Related References

- Part 1 - City of Marion Street Tree Strategy
- City of Marion Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2006 – 2016
- Healthy Environment Plan 2010
- City of Marion General Environmental Policy
- Local Government Act 1999
- Development Act 1993 and Development Regulations 2008
- Electricity Act 1996
- Natural Resource Management Act 2004

Previous Versions

Nil