



Council Lead Policy

POLICY TITLE: VEGETATION AND TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY 2014

Minute Ref: M14/86.1

Date of Adoption: 1.12.14

Statement

This Policy should be read in the context of the Vegetation Management Strategy for Tauranga – 'Growing Tauranga Green'.

The Policy applies to all vegetation and trees on council owned or administered land. The Policy does not apply to vegetation and trees on privately owned land.

1. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- To actively strike a balance between the public benefit and amenity of high quality vegetation and the potential negative impact on the individual.
- To recognise the visual amenity, character and natural features of the city and to provide a sense of scale to complement built form through vegetation and planting.
- To recognise the importance of high quality vegetation that contributes towards the sustainable development of our environment.
- To create and enhance wildlife habitats and ecological values that contributes to the bio-diversity of the city's environment, including bee friendly trees/vegetation.
- To support juvenile trees to reach a maturity that is relevant for their specific location.
- To generally protect the city's mature tree asset.
- To reflect and promote awareness of current and future environmental qualities, issues and benefits.
- To promote understanding and appreciation of Tauranga's vegetation and to ensure public involvement in the planning and design of the city's vegetation.

2. PRINCIPLES

- Vegetation can provide and enhance identity, landscape values and visual amenity.
- The community's wellbeing is influenced by the vegetative landscape and the benefit it provides.
- Council supports the established arboricultural standards for pruning to enable trees to grow true to form.

- Vegetation on council owned or administered land is considered a long term asset requiring active management to ensure effective enhancement of the amenity, ecology and environment of the city.
- Creatively planned and managed vegetation can enhance the wellbeing of people and the environment of the city including edible planting.
- The value of existing trees and vegetation contributes to the identity of the city.
- Incorporating vegetation into public space is important to mitigate the effects of urban intensification.
- Staff will work with residents to ensure appropriate outcomes are achieved.
- Species selection and a high standard of arboricultural processes will be applied to ensure the benefits of well managed vegetation are realised.
- Vegetation should reflect their environmental space.

3. DEFINITIONS

Amenity and amenity value is the natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence and cultural and recreational attributes.

Council is Tauranga City Council.

Environment has the same meaning as defined in the Resource Management Act 1991.

Identified threat where a Tauranga City Council employed qualified Arborist has identified a defect in the tree that presents an imminent risk of failure that cannot be remedied.

Notable Trees has the same meaning as defined in the operative Tauranga City Plan.

Public land or spaces is land that is owned or administered by the Council and includes land administered by Council on behalf of the Crown.

Tauranga City Council Qualified Arborist is a person employed by Council who by possession of a recognised arboriculture degree, diploma or certificate and experience, is familiar with the equipment and hazards involved in arboriculture operations and who has demonstrated the ability to perform the tasks involved.

Tolerance Zone is the zone or area around overhead services into which a tree cannot encroach. Tolerances zones vary for different overhead services.

Tree Means a woody plant with the potential to reach at least 6 metres in height with usually no more than 6 stems and a combined aggregate stem diameter of, or exceeding, 95mm measured at 1.4 metres above ground. **Tree Framework** is the existing and planned Tauranga City Council tree asset.

Vegetation includes any species of grass, plant, tree or shrub, any group of exotic or indigenous trees or shrubs, any native bush and wetland plants.

Vegetative landscape is the overall mix of private and publicly owned vegetation that form the distinctive landscape identity of an area.

4. BACKGROUND

Tauranga City Council is responsible for the management of all trees and vegetation on council owned or administered land. The Vegetation and Tree Management Policy ('The Policy') relates to all vegetation and trees on council owned or administered land. This includes (but is not limited to) parks, reserves and the berms on roads and urban streets.

The Policy is consistent with “Growing Tauranga Green”, Tauranga City Council’s vegetation management strategy. This strategy enables staff to make consistent decisions regarding the management of the city’s vegetation.

The policy focuses on Council’s role, but the intention is also to encourage others to take a positive approach to the management of the city’s trees and vegetation.

Note: Any work to a tree or any work within the drip line of a tree that is protected as a Notable or Heritage Tree or is part of a Significant Group of Trees is managed under the Tauranga City Plan. Tauranga City Council is responsible for the minor pruning and emergency pruning/removal of protected trees/groups.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

5.1 Vegetation Planning

Creative approaches to planning and managing vegetation will be applied to ensure the city’s amenity values and identity is enhanced as Tauranga grows and development intensifies.

Council will seek to protect and enhance vegetative landscape that is of botanic, cultural, historical or landscape significance.

Planting in public spaces by members of the community will require prior approval from appropriate Council staff.

5.2 Vegetation Consultation, Education and Advice

Council will support community education programmes and work with other agencies to promote greater understanding and management of planned vegetation.

Council will provide advice, and work with other agencies to advise on how private land, and publicly owned land, can be planted to enhance and extend public planting through education and encouragement of land owners.

5.3 Vegetation Management

Council will ensure the ongoing viability of the city’s vegetation through:

- Ecology – by enhancing and protecting the habitat for people and wildlife, recognising and ensuring biodiversity.
- Community Education and Involvement - by community activities, enhancing community spirit and civic pride, provision of information.
- Planning - by species selection, operational specifications, future needs, socio-economic benefits and cultural significance.
- Effectiveness – by pruning, planting, watering or other management practices, and in certain circumstances protecting and removing vegetation.

5.4 Replacement Priority

Council will conserve and sustain Tauranga City’s Tree Framework by supporting programmed replacement planting schemes in accordance with the following replacement priority:

- High maintenance planting (e.g. trees and shrubs under utility lines) to low maintenance planting.

Replacement planting will be undertaken in accordance with the following;

- Ensuring planting is maintained in a manner consistent with the principles of “Growing Tauranga Green”, the Street Tree Planting Guide and applicable Reserve Management Plans and the overall concept and original design intentions, especially with trees of historic significance.
- Ensuring planting is designed for low maintenance while also providing colour and aesthetic appeal.

5.5 Conservation of Trees in Public Spaces

Significant trees and tree groups including street and park trees are conserved by appropriate means to safeguard neighbourhood character. In some cases it will be appropriate to recognise such trees using the terms of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture ‘Notable and Historic Trees Scheme’ (1977). In other cases, protection may be afforded through the Schedules in the City Plan relating to the Notable Tree Register and the Significant Groups of Trees Register. The highest priority for conservation of trees will be older trees and those more critical to the City’s Tree Framework e.g. those on major traffic routes.

New trees planted on Council land will be carefully selected and grown ‘true to form’.

Council will encourage public/business participation in tree and native re-vegetative planting projects.

5.6 Removal of Trees on Council owned or administered land

5.6.1 Trees on Council owned or administered land can be removed if the trees are considered by a Tauranga City Council Qualified Arborist to meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. The tree is an identified threat to:
 - public or individual health; or
 - public or individual safety; or
 - public property, or
 - private property.

Where a tree is requested to be removed for public or individual health reasons, Council will take into account the trees species in question and any qualifying supporting medical documentation specific to the individual requesting the removal.

Council will also take into account;

- The Annual Pollen Calendar (attached as Appendix A); and
- The Ogren Plant Allergy Scale

2. The tree is interfering with infrastructure services or within the tolerance zones for overhead services;
3. The tree is likely to be in a diseased or dying condition which cannot be improved by treatment;
4. (a) Continued pruning is detrimental to the ongoing health of the tree; or

- (b) The ongoing health of the tree itself or trees in the direct vicinity is affected e.g. overcrowded berms; or
- (c) The tree is deemed to be an inappropriate size or species for the location.

In the case where trees are located on land that Council administers on behalf of the Crown, removal may be subject to Crown approval

- 5.6.2 (a) Where Council receives a request to remove a tree on Council owned or administered land that does not fall within the criteria specified in clause 5.6.1 of the Policy, the Chief Executive may approve or decline the request. In exercising discretion under this clause, the Chief Executive will consult with a Tauranga City Council Qualified Arborist and any other expert, and may impose conditions, including the payment of a fee.
- (b) Any person granted approval to remove a tree under this clause will generally be required to fund the removal of the tree and replacement planting.

Note: Wherever possible, when a tree is removed it will be replaced. The replacement will be a species appropriate to the location. Staff will work with adjoining properties on the positioning of the tree outside their property.

Where trees are located on public land that is leased by the Council to another party and there is an inconsistency between this Policy and the provisions of the Lease, or any Plan or Agreement relating to Vegetation or Tree Management on that land during the term of the Lease, the provisions of the Lease or any such Plan or Agreement will prevail.

5.7 Pruning of Trees on Council owned or administered land

Council does not allow individuals to prune on Council owned or administered land. Regarding the process for pruning trees, Council will provide public information and education on pruning policies.

In the case where trees are located on land that Council administers on behalf of the Crown, pruning may be subject to Crown approval.

Council will ensure trees are pruned to alleviate hazards e.g. electrical conductors, public footpaths, carriageways, emergency situations. These hazards can be urgent or non-urgent.

Council will prune for shade and light purposes at the request of a resident where, in the opinion of a Tauranga City Council Qualified Arborist, pruning will be consistent with good arboricultural processes and being consistent with the general intent of the Principles of this policy set out in Section 2.

Council may prune for view purposes at the request of a resident where, in the opinion of a Tauranga City Council employed Qualified Arborist, pruning will be consistent with good arboricultural processes and the general intent of the Principles of this policy set out in Section 2.

Where, as a result there is a private benefit, such as for views, shade and/or light, the requester(s) will generally be required to fund the full costs of the pruning.

Where trees are located on public land that is leased by the Council to another party and there is an inconsistency between this Policy and the provisions of the Lease, or any Plan or Agreement relating to Vegetation or Tree Management on that land during the term of the Lease, the provisions of the Lease or any such Plan or Agreement will prevail.

5.8 Assistance with Removal of Debris from Notable Trees or Trees on Council owned or administered land

Where assistance is requested by a resident living at a property that is affected by falling debris (leaves, seeds and twigs) from Notable trees or trees on Council owned or administered land, the following application criteria will apply:

- The applicant is physically and financially (as measured by receipt of Rates Rebate under Rates Rebate Scheme) unable to maintain the property which is being affected by debris from a Notable tree or a tree located on public land; or
- Where there are exceptional circumstances

Assistance will only be available to premises used solely for residential purposes.

5.9 Appeal

Any person or entity has the right to appeal any decision made under section 5.6 to 5.8 directly to the elected council, for determination either by formal resolution at a council meeting or by informal council direction to the Chief Executive.

6. RELEVANT DELEGATIONS

The implementation of this Policy is delegated to the Chief Executive and/or his/her sub-delegate.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Appendix B sets out when and how TCC communicates with the public on tree removal issues. Council will either:

- a. Inform
- b. Inform and consult

When communicating on general tree matters the process will be informative.

When communicating regarding petitions the process is consultative.

8. REFERENCES AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Growing Tauranga Green – Tauranga City Vegetation Management Strategy 2006

Great City / Great Design - Tauranga City Council Urban Design Strategy 2008

Resource Management Act 1991

Reserves Act 1977

Tauranga City Plan 2013

Growing Healthy Communities: Food Security Toolkit for Local Government (Toi Te Ora - Public Health Service, Bay of Plenty District Health Board, 2013)

Property Law Act 2007

Annual Pollen Calendar



	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
TREES												
Wattle (Acacia)										■	■	■
Macrocarpa (Cupressus)	■	■	■	■	■	■					■	■
Pinus radiata	■										■	■
Other Pinus species	■	■	■	■								
Hazelnut (Corylus)											■	■
Gorse (Ulex)	■	■	■				■	■	■	■	■	■
Willow (Salix)	■	■										
Alder (Alnus)												■
Poplar (Populus)	■	■										■
Oak (Quercus)	■	■	■									
Native Beech (Nothofagus)	■	■	■	■								
Coprosma species	■	■	■	■								
Elm (Ulmus)	■	■									■	■
Maples, Sycamore (Acer)	■	■	■									
Birch (Betula)		■	■									
Plane (Platanus)		■	■									
Walnut (Juglans)		■	■									
Mulberry (Morus)		■	■									
Native Podocarps, eg. Rimu			■	■	■							
Eucalyptus/Manuka			■	■	■							
Native Milkwoods			■	■	■							
Pohutukawa/Rata (Metrosideros)				■	■	■	■					
WEEDS												
Plantain (Plantago)			■	■	■	■	■					
Privet (Ligustrum)				■	■	■	■	■				
Nettles (Urtica)		■	■	■	■							
Dock, Sorrel (Rumex)			■	■	■	■	■					
Chenopod Weeds, eg. fathen				■	■	■	■					
GRASSES												
Cocksfoot (Dactylis)			■	■	■							
Yorkshire Fog (Holcus)		■	■	■	■							
Ryegrass (Lolium)			■	■	■	■						
Tall Fescue (Festuca)			■	■	■	■						
Prairie Grass (Bromus)			■	■	■							
Dogstail (Cynosurus)				■	■	■						
Crested Dogstail (Cynosurus)				■	■	■						
Browntop (Agrostus)				■	■	■						
Timothy (Phleum)				■	■	■						
Meadow Foxtail (Alopecurus)	■	■	■	■	■							■
Sweet Vernal (Anthoxanum)			■	■	■							
OTHER												
Fungal Spores	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG

Produced by David W Fountain PhD, Honorary Research Associate, Institute of Molecular BioSciences, Massey University on behalf of Allergy New Zealand.

Communication & Engagement Process 2014

Approach

The tables below set out when and how TCC communicates with the public on tree removal issues.

As a guide;

- When communicating on general tree matters the process will usually be informative.
- When communicating regarding petitions the process is consultative.

The tree size criteria in the tables below recognise that more visible trees will create greater public interest but does not take into account the association that the public may have with a particular tree/s, nor does it fully take into account the environmental and aesthetic benefits of a tree.

The inclusion of the criteria of multiple trees recognises that the loss of a number of small trees may have a greater effect than the loss of one larger tree.

The inclusion of the Historic/Heritage criteria recognises that trees can have value to the community.

General Tree Matters

Tree size/value	General (in accordance with policy)	
<10m	50m	Sent advisory card
10-20m	50m	Sent advisory card
>20m	100m	Sent advisory card
Multiple trees	100m	Sent advisory letter
Historic/Heritage	100m	Sent advisory letter

Advisory card/letter content:

- What
- Why
- When
- How to enquire

In cases where the tree is particularly large or prominent the advisory card delivery area will be extended. There is no set limit to the extent of the advisory card delivery area. The Tauranga City Council employed Qualified Arborist will decide upon the extent of the advisory card delivery area.

In cases where the planned works are likely to cause public interest or enquiries a mail out to affected residents is carried out by Tauranga City Council staff. Due to the nature of the activity, the extent of the mail out is determined on a case by case basis. By way of

example, for the Wairakei Re-vegetation Enhancement works a mail out was sent to the residents who live adjacent to the work site to let them know that works were planned.

Petitions

Tree size/value	Petition	
<10m	50m	Sent consultation letter
10-20m	100m	Sent consultation letter
>20m	200m	Sen consultation letter + Our City Views article
Multiple trees	200m	Sent consultation letter + Our City Views article
Historic/Heritage	200m	Sent consultation letter + Our City views article

When a petition is received, Council will send a response to the petitioners containing the following information;

- Body of petition
- Location of tree/s
- Policy
- Implication
- Options to be presented in report to Council or a Committee of Council
- How to respond
- Date of Council or Committee of Council meeting/hearing

When a petition is received regarding trees, Council will contact the lead petitioner to see if their issues can be resolved without the issue having to go before council.

If the issue can be resolved the works will be programmed and reported to the relevant Committee.

If the issue cannot be resolved the petitioners will be informed of Council's process for presenting petitions to Council and a report will be presented to the next relevant Committee, together with the petition.