



Summary of proposed changes to existing Tree Management Policy:

- The revised Tree Management Policy has been simplified to include broad policy objectives only whilst the detail of how these policies will be implemented has been transferred into a new Tree Management Procedure.
- The Procedure specifies that the location of street trees in new subdivisions should be chosen so as to avoid conflict with driveway crossovers – *Procedure, Clause 1.3*.
- Deformity has been added as a potential reason for approving a tree removal request – *Procedure, Clause 3.5*.
- “Community infrastructure” is defined as infrastructure for which Council has primary responsibility for maintenance – *Procedure, Clause 3.7*.
- The Procedure specifies Council’s intention that delegated staff should be able to resolve all tree removal issues (except for those involving extreme nuisance to community infrastructure) without the need to seek arbitration from the chamber – *Procedure, Clause 3.7*.
- Tree Replacement Fees

A tree valuation method has been incorporated into the fee structure for tree removal requests. Tree replacement fees are only charged where a tree on Council land is being removed to facilitate access to private property. Tree removal requests which satisfy the other tree removal criteria in Clause 3.5 of the Procedure do not attract tree replacement fees.

The revised fee structure includes three elements:

1. Tree Removal Fee – this will be charged on a cost recovery basis if the removal is undertaken by Council or at the applicant’s own cost if they arrange removal themselves with Council approval.
2. Tree Replacement Fee – in 2018/19 this fee is \$535 + GST. Council offsets the removal of trees on Council land via an annual tree planting program. This fee contributes toward the cost of planting and maintaining replacement trees and has been benchmarked against similar fees charged by other South Australian councils.
3. Tree Valuation Fee – this fee is only charged where there is a reasonable alternative to tree removal (such as pruning rather than removal) but the applicant nonetheless prefers to proceed with removal. The fee is set at 20% of the lost amenity value of the tree to be removed, based on a valuation method developed by the City of Melbourne. The valuation method is described in detail in the draft Tree Management Procedure.

The purpose of using a tree valuation method is to enable a compromise between facilitating access to private development and the retention of valuable trees. Trees that are large, well formed, part of a larger planting, appropriate to the landscape and well positioned will be of more value than trees which are young, not aesthetically pleasing, unhealthy or poorly located. The Tree Replacement Fee and Tree Valuation Fee will not be charged for the removal of pest trees.