TITLE: Tree Management Policy

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to provide guidance for Mount Barker District Council to meet its urban greening and ecological sustainability goals through the integrated management of trees within the Mount Barker District Council area to achieve a balance between sustainability and risk mitigation in urban and rural forest areas.

2. SCOPE

This policy is applicable to Mount Barker District Council in exercising powers and functions under the various Acts, Regulations and agreements to which it is a party in the State of South Australia. The scope of Council's tree management activities is outlined in Section 5.

3. DEFINITIONS

Urban Forest - is the entire population of trees in an urban / peri urban environment.

Biodiversity - The variety of life forms, the different plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems they form.

Open space - includes all local government land as defined in the Local Government Act 1999.

Tree - for the purpose of this policy, a tree is defined as a woody plant including palms having one or more erect stems or trunks, an elevated crown of foliage and a height of 2.5m or more.

Resource Recovery - is the collecting and re-use of timber and mulch from tree management works.

Risk - is the effect of uncertainty on objectives.

Regulated Tree as defined in the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016

SEB – Significant Environmental Benefit

Significant Tree as defined in the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016

Remnant Tree as defined by the Native Vegetation Act 1993

Veteran Tree - a tree that is most likely remnant, has long served the environment, and has often endured centuries of physical threats and climate fluctuation. Often offering multiple habitats for hollow dependant fauna.

4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Council:
- Endorse the Tree Management Policy.
- Ensure due consideration is given to this policy as part of decision making by council.
- Allocation of budget.

Chief Executive Officer:
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the Council's policies and procedures.
- Ensure appropriate delegations and resources are in place for employees to carry out tree management activities.
- Promote a culture of tree management awareness in Council.

General Managers:
- Promote awareness of this policy and related procedures in planning and operational activities of teams within council.
- Ensure council teams are trained and resourced adequately to implement this policy.

Manager Infrastructure Maintenance and Operations
- Ensure this policy is reviewed and updated regularly.

Staff
- Ensure all aspects of this policy are considered and applied in all planning, operations, and maintenance activities.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

Council commit to the following to effectively manage trees within the Mount Barker District Council area:

5.1 Compliance

5.1.1 Ensure appropriate resourcing is made available to meet its obligations under relevant legislation in regards to tree management, including regular audits of the districts tree assets.

5.1.2 Establish and manage native vegetation offset (SEB and other) areas for council to meet its obligations under the Native Vegetation Act 1991.

5.1.3 Develop and maintain a Tree Management Procedure and Tree Management in Emergencies Procedure, and SEB Guidelines.

5.2 Communication

5.2.1 Communicate early and often and ensure transparency about Council projects and works, which impact the urban forest and open space within the district.

5.2.2 Where there is deemed to be an activity that has a significant impact on the urban forest, Council will follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy to inform or consult the community on the changes.

5.3 Removal and Replacement

5.3.1 Ensure there is a clear procedure for the removal of trees and that all staff and contractors of Council abide by it.

5.3.2 Ensure the process of six (6) for one (1) replacement of removed trees, occurs in line with section 9.4 of the Council's Tree Management Procedure.

5.3.3 All Council projects involving tree removal or significant alterations will ensure that Development Approval and/or Native Vegetation Council approval is sought, where appropriate, prior to removal.

5.4 Species selection and diversity in open space and urban streetscapes

5.4.1 Council will determine appropriate, diverse and balanced species selection for open space and urban streetscapes.

5.4.2 Council will consult the local community where urban streetscapes, open space and parks are being renewed.

5.5 Biodiversity

5.5.1 Develop and maintain programs that increase tree habitat and adequate food sources for native species of fauna endemic to and / or endangered in urban, urban fringe and rural areas.

5.5.2 Maintain programs that preserve, and enhance tree habitat on rural roadsides and in reserves across the district.

5.5.3 Manage veteran trees and understory plantings across the district to ensure longevity and promote greater biodiversity in association with veteran trees.

5.6 Protection

5.6.1 Work with developers and project managers to:
   a) Prioritise the retention of established trees in new developments.
   b) Where practical, identify and implement engineering solutions to protect root zones of significant, veteran and regulated trees in projects and new developments.
   c) Establish practical streetscapes with appropriate species selection.
   d) Avoid damage to vegetative matter, root zones and understory areas of trees during project implementation.
   e) Encourage the development of programs and incentives that increase tree canopy cover in urban areas.

5.6.2 Support programs that:
   a) Protect significant, veteran and regulated trees in the district.
   b) Promote quality younger age class trees.
   c) Protect areas of remnant vegetation with little disturbance.
   d) Help new plantings establish to full maturity

5.7 Risk Management and Record Keeping

5.7.1 Develop systems to map and monitor shade and canopy cover within urban environments to help mitigate the effects of a changing climate on townships and urban centres.

5.7.2 Keep a record of community requests relating to trees and respond according to Council's customer charter.

5.7.3 Implement proactive tree inspection and maintenance programs to lower tree related risks to the community.

5.7.4 Develop and maintain a comprehensive database of trees on Council land and keep records relating to any changes.

5.8 Resource Recovery

5.8.1 Ensure the highest value resource recovery from tree removals to minimise wastage and provide, where possible, re-purposing that supports ongoing social, environmental and recreational benefit to our community.

6. TRAINING / EDUCATION

Council will provide training on an as required basis to employees and volunteers to fulfil their requirements under this Policy.

7. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed:
- every three years; or
- earlier in the event of changes to legislation or related Policies and Procedures or ;
- if deemed necessary by the Manager of Maintenance and Operations or their delegate.

8. ACCESS TO THE POLICY

The Policy is available for public inspection at the Customer Service Centre, at the Local Government Centre, 6 Dutton Road, Mount Barker, South Australia and on the Council's website www.mountbarker.sa.gov.au

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on this Policy, please contact:
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INTERNAL GOVERNANCE:			
Author	Chris Lawry	Urban Forest Officer	20/07/2021
Responsible General Manager:	Phil Burton	General Manager Infrastructure	22/07/2021
Reviewed by CEO	Andrew Stuart		26/07/2021
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APPROVED BY (DOCUMENT OWNER):	Council		
	OM20210802.07 item 12.5		[02/08/2021]
APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS:	- Local Government Act 1999, - Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 - Native Vegetation Act 1991 - Highways Act 1926 - Road Traffic Act 1961 - Heritage Places Act 1997 - Electricity Act 1996 - Landscape SA Act 2019 - Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005 (and associated regulations) - Risk Management Policy - Biodiversity Strategy - Environmental Strategy 2018-2023 - Tree Management Procedure - Tree Management in Emergencies Procedure - Landscape Standards and Guideline for New Developments - Guidelines for Landscaping Associated with Construction of Heysen Boulevard - SEB Guideline		
MOUNT BARKER 2035 – DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN REFERENCE:	NE 4.0, 4.2, 4.3 CW 1.1, 2.5, 3.3, 4.3, 4.5 ES 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.1,4.2,4.3,4.4 EP 1.2, 1.3, 2.5		
REVIEW CYCLE	As this is a new policy, a review will be undertaken within 12 months but no later than August 2022 Review within 12 months of new Council term It is recognised that from time to time circumstances my change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name or a State or Federal Department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council (if statutory) or the Chief Executive Officer (if administrative).		

NEXT REVIEW DATE	December 2025		
DOCUMENT HISTORY:	This Policy Supersedes the Urban Forest Policy DOC/16/123297		
DOCUMENT VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR (PERSON TO WHOM CHANGES ARE TO BE RECOMMENDED)	NATURE OF CHANGE
VERSION 1.0	02/08/2021	Chris Lawry	Initial policy development
VERSION 2.0	31/10/2022	Chris Lawry	12 month review – minor administrative change
VERSION 3.0			
DOCUMENT LOCATION:	Council website 17 August 2021 Available for inspection, downloading or printing from our website www.mountbarker.sa.gov.au		
	This Policy is available for inspection, during business hours at: Mount Barker District Council, Level 1, 6 Dutton Road, Mount Barker		