



Guidelines - Council Tree Removal and Replanting for Private Development

Council regularly receives requests for removal of Council trees that do not meet the objectives for removal as outlined in Frankston's Urban Forest Policy. The most common non-arboricultural reason for removal is to facilitate access to property. Such removals are strongly discouraged unless the applicant can demonstrate that all reasonable alternatives have been thoroughly investigated and proven to be unfeasible.

Where removal is considered for non-arboricultural reasons, it is appropriate that the applicant bears the associated costs. Requiring payment on a user-pays basis ensures that individuals seeking removal for private benefit contribute to the cost of removal and compensatory planting, and reflects the loss of amenity, environmental, and community value provided by the tree. The requirement to pay a fee may also encourage applicants to more fully consider alternative solutions.

Council's fees are set annually and include:

- The cost of tree removal; and
- The cost of replacement planting to offset the loss of urban canopy.

Higher fees apply for trees located within the FMAC (Frankston Municipality Activity Centre). These fees reflect both the increased costs associated with complex traffic management requirements and constrained site access, and the higher cost and difficulty of successfully establishing replacement trees in highly urbanised environments.

Replacement planting ratios are proportional to the size and type of the tree removed. Due to the higher ecological value of indigenous trees, the removal of self-sown indigenous trees attracts a higher replacement requirement (refer to Table 1).

Replacement planting costs include:

- Supply of advanced trees
- Planting and staking
- Maintenance for a period of two (2) years (including watering, formative pruning, and removal of stakes and guards)

Where practicable, replacement trees will be planted as close as possible to the original tree location.

Table 1. Re-planting ratios for removal of Council trees for private development

Size of tree	Standard council tree	Indigenous self-sown tree
Small <5 metres high & <150mm DSH*	2	4
Medium <10 metres high & <300mm DSH	4	8
Large >10 metres high or >300mm DSH	8	16

*DSH = Diameter at Standard Height (trunk diameter at 1.4 meters above ground level)

Council also receives requests for removal based on issues such as allergies. In limited circumstances, where there is no arboricultural basis for removal but the trees has minimal impact on the surrounding area, removal may be considered. These requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and, where supported, will be subject to full cost recovery.

The following are not considered valid reasons for tree removal under these Guidelines:

- Leaf, fruit, flower or twig drop (these are normal tree functions)
- Inability to grow grass or other vegetation beneath a tree
- Minor shading impacts, including impacts to private solar infrastructure

Removal to accommodate newly installed solar panels is discouraged. Solar design should seek to minimise shading without requiring pruning or removal of existing trees. Trees provide significant community benefits, including urban cooling, shade, and contribution to overall canopy cover.

Application requirements

Approval for tree removal will only be considered where:

- A completed application form has been submitted;
- Supporting documentation has been provided, including a site plan showing proposed works, existing structures, Council trees, and affected assets; and
- A comprehensive assessment of all reasonable alternatives to removal has been undertaken, including documentation of feasibility, costs, and impacts.

Council will refuse applications where:

- The tree is in good health and structure; and
- Reasonable alternatives exist to achieve the applicant's objectives.
- Council will consider the ecological, amenity, cultural, and landscape significance of a tree when assessing removal requests.

All applications are assessed on their individual merits, and approval is at the absolute discretion of Council.

If approval for removal of the tree is granted, the applicant will be notified in writing, including the appropriate fee to be paid (see table below). Upon receipt of the appropriate fee, Council will arrange removal of the tree within ten (10) working days of payment.

All approved tree removals, pruning and replanting will be undertaken by Council or its authorised contractors. Works will not be scheduled until full payment has been received.

Unauthorised removal, damage, or pruning of Council trees may result in penalties and recovery of associated costs in accordance with relevant legislation and Council policies.

Table 2. Fees for removal of Council trees for private development

Size of tree	Standard council tree Fee (GST Inc.)	Indigenous self- sown council tree Fee* (GST Inc.)	FMAC tree Fee* (GST Inc.)
Small <5 metres high & <150mm DSH*	\$1442.00	\$2370.00	\$3,655.00
Medium <10 metres high & <300mm DSH	\$2884.00	\$4635.00	\$8,305.00
Large >10 metres high or >300mm DSH	\$5,150.00	\$8650.00	\$12,340.00
Pruning or Replanting only	\$460.00	\$460.00	\$3,500.00 (replanting)
Application Fee	\$225 Street tree removal or \$87 for Replanting/Pruning only		

* Diameter at standard height (trunk diameter measured 1.4m from ground level).

+ Fee is increased where tree is a self-sown, indigenous species or located within the FMAC area.

Where site conditions or project requirements result in costs that exceed standard scheduled fees, Council reserves the right to determine pricing on a case-by-case basis. This may apply in circumstances involving complex traffic management, constrained access, or other factors that significantly increase removal or replacement costs.

Frankston City Council
 30 Davey Street
 PO Box 490
 Frankston 3199
 P. 1300 322 322
 E. info@frankston.vic.gov.au
 W. frankston.vic.gov.au

