

TREE REMOVAL POLICY

Adopted 2/11/03

INTRODUCTION

The streets of the City of Fort Thomas are shaded with thousands of trees. These trees provide cooling in the summer, clean our air by capturing floating particles, buffer noise, reduce greenhouse gases, and add to the quality of life in the community. Planting, pruning, maintenance and removal of trees in public rights-of-way is the responsibility of the City.

Citizens may request tree maintenance and/or removal by contacting the City. Upon receipt of the request, the tree in question will be evaluated by the Tree Commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Notice will be sent to the applicant and abutting property owners announcing this meeting.

The applicant will be notified of the findings from the inspection, the course of action taken by the Tree Commission, and when implementation will occur. In some circumstances, the applicant may be asked to contribute toward the cost of tree replacement as a possible condition of a tree removal requested, per the discretion of the Tree Commission.

***It should be noted that per the City of Fort Thomas Tree Ordinance, it is unlawful to cut, prune, break, injure, alter or remove any city tree or its roots without the prior written permission of the City of Fort Thomas.**

PROCEDURES

A city tree may be removed by majority vote of the Tree Commission under one or more of the following criteria only:

1. Hazardous Tree: identified as having a defect or fault that may cause injury or property damage if not removed, including:
 - a. Dead or in advanced stage of decline
 - b. Structurally unsound – severe bifurcation (split) with high chance of failure within the next 5 years, excessive borer activity, excessive deadwood or decay, heavily leaning, etc.
 - c. Diseased, damaged or in otherwise poor health with little prospect of recovery, including being unsightly or dangerous
 - d. Exposed roots having a high potential as a public hazard [provided no remedial action is possible]
 - e. Causing major damage to existing public or private infrastructure [where the problem cannot be overcome by an engineering solution]
 - f. Potential for tree or its roots to be irreparably damaged or otherwise made hazardous by a scheduled public construction project where the project cannot be reasonably re-routed away from the tree
 - g. Creating a dangerous hazard to the public because tree is leaning over roads/paths and/or blocking sight lines [where the problem cannot be corrected by pruning or an engineering solution]

2. Inappropriately Located Tree: identified simply as the “wrong tree in the wrong place”, including:
 - a. Tall tree species growing beneath overhead utility lines [where pruning of the tree cannot produce an aesthetically or structurally suitable result]
 - b. Tree planted in too narrow of a tree lawn or other unsuitable area which does not present a conducive environment for the tree to flourish
 - c. Undesirable tree species planted as an infill on an existing avenue
 - d. Tree that is known to cause major damage to public/private infrastructure and is planted within close proximity to such assets
 - e. Tree species that do not conform to the Tree Commission’s recommended street tree planting list and are deemed by the Commission as non-contributing to the streetscape, tree canopy or overall amenity of the area
 - f. Tree that is less than 15 feet in height, is loose in the ground and clearly not performing

3. The presence of special or extenuating conditions or circumstances, at the sole judgment and discretion of the Tree Commission.