

POLICY			
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>STREETSCAPE MANAGEMENT – VERGE LANDSCAPE TREATMENTS</b>	<b>CODE:</b>	<b>ET.529</b>
<b>PURPOSE or OBJECTIVE:</b>	To encourage the establishment and maintenance of street verges to create an environmentally friendly, attractive and safe streetscapes for the City		
<b>REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:</b>	Local Government Act 1995 s 2.7.(2)(b) City of Canning Local Government Property and Public Places Local Law 2020 Part 4 Division 3		

POLICY STATEMENT
<p><b>The intent of this policy is to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Encourage the establishment of verge gardens that are waterwise and improve biodiversity with the use of suitable locally native plants;</b></li> <li><b>2. Provide guidance to owners and occupants about the landscaping and maintenance of verges generally; and</b></li> <li><b>3. Ensure that landscaped street verges are safe for pedestrians and road users.</b></li> </ol>

## 1. Scope

This Policy applies to verges adjacent to private property and to any person, or corporate body that is currently maintaining or is considering establishing or altering a landscape treatment to the verge, adjacent to a residential, commercial or industrial property.

## 2. Definitions

<i>Acceptable Materials</i>	Hard surface materials that may be used on part only of the verge, as set out in the policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited area of unit pavers of brick, concrete or reconstituted limestone.</li> <li>Limited area of resin or bitumen stabilised gravel or similar bound gravel finish.</li> </ul>
<i>Crossover</i>	A portion of the verge which is set aside for vehicular access from the road carriageway to the adjacent property.
<i>Unacceptable Materials</i>	Materials that may not be used on the verge include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artificial turf / synthetic grass</li> <li>Crushed brick</li> <li>Unbound crushed limestone</li> <li>Loose, unbound gravel, blue-metal, pea gravel, stones</li> <li>Loose rubber mulch</li> </ul>
<i>Verge</i>	The land in the road reserve between a property boundary and the road kerb or carriageway.
<i>Waterwise Treatments</i>	Verge treatments which are designed to minimise water consumption by methods including selecting plants which are drought tolerant, not using automatic sprinkler irrigation and the use of mulch to conserve soil moisture.

### **3. Functions of street verges**

- (1) The key functions of street verges are:
  - a) To contain utility services including water, power, gas and telecommunications.
  - b) To provide for safe pedestrian access, whether or not there is a sealed footpath.
  - c) To provide adequate unpaved space for street trees.
  - d) To absorb rainwater and reduce stormwater runoff.
  - e) To provide habitat links along streets and between parks and conservation areas.
  - f) To improve the appearance of the streetscape.
- (2) Verge landscape treatments need to take account of and support these functions.
- (3) People who install, alter or maintain a verge landscape treatment should note that the City and utility service providers may require access to the verge and may need to excavate services in the verge.

### **4. Verge landscaping - general**

- (1) Property owners, occupiers and residents are encouraged to landscape and maintain the verges adjoining their properties to improve the environmental value and the appearance of the streetscape.
- (2) Occupiers and residents who are not the property owner are advised to obtain the support of the property owner prior to installing or altering any verge landscape treatment.
- (3) The verge surface needs to be installed and maintained flush with the crossover, footpath and kerb.
- (4) The level of the verge needs to align flush with the level of neighbouring verges.
- (5) Structures including steps, retaining walls, rocks, ponds, fountains and the like are not permitted on the verge.

### **5. Verge landscaping – planting**

While planting natural grass is an acceptable verge landscape treatment, the use of waterwise and locally native plants is encouraged. Planted verge landscape treatments need to be installed and maintained to:

- (1) Protect the root system of any street tree by maintaining the existing soil level and avoiding cutting or digging up any tree roots.
- (2) Ensure safe pedestrian access at all times by maintaining plants clear of footpaths or, where there is no footpath, maintaining a clear, stable area within 1.5m of the road kerb.
- (3) Only use low-growing plants that are not poisonous, thorny, prickly, spiky or recognised weed species.
- (4) Maintain plants at or below 700mm in height for safe vehicle sightlines.
- (5) Provide clear access to underground service pit lids and bus stops.

### **6. Verge landscaping with Waterwise and locally native plants**

The City will offer support to persons who intend to install or improve waterwise verge gardens, particularly those using locally native plants. Support may include items such as guidelines, technical advice, subsidies and rebates. Details of the support provided will be available on the City's website and will be promoted to the community.

### **7. Irrigation on verges**

To minimise unnecessary water use, property owners and occupiers are encouraged not to install or operate automatic irrigation systems. However, irrigation is permitted on verges provided that:

- (1) All pipework and fittings are laid beneath ground level. Pipework is to be laid between 300mm and 150mm below the ground surface.

- (2) No pipework is laid within two metres of an existing street tree.
- (3) If sprinklers are used, they are fully retractable.
- (4) If sprinklers are used, they are installed and adjusted so that they do not cast water on the road, footpath or adjoining crossovers.
- (5) The irrigation controller and any valves are installed within private property.
- (6) Irrigation connected to the public water supply is installed to comply with Water Corporation requirements.
- (7) Irrigation is operated in accordance with the Water Corporation's watering day and time allocations.

#### **8. Verge landscaping approval – acceptable materials - hard surfaces**

- (1) Prior written approval from the City is required for verge landscaping that includes the use of any acceptable hard surface material, including concrete, bricks, pavers, bound stabilised gravel, kerbing, stepping stones or similar.
- (2) If the applicant is not the property owner, the applicant is required to obtain the owner's written support before lodging the application.
- (3) The maximum allowable paved area using an acceptable material is 33% **including** any footpath or crossover.
- (4) Applicants are required to submit a sketch plan to scale of the verge indicating the proposed paved area and the proposed treatment for the balance of the verge. The sketch plan should indicate the locations of existing street trees, footpaths, crossovers and utility service pits.
- (5) Areas paved with an acceptable material must have a non-slip surface.
- (6) Areas paved with an acceptable material must be finished so that they provide a visual contrast to the adjacent road, crossover and footpath surfaces.
- (7) Kerbing and areas paved with an acceptable material must be installed flush with the surrounding surfaces.
- (8) No paving will be approved within 2m of the trunk of an existing tree.
- (9) Prior written approval is not required for the installation of natural lawn, organic mulch, in-ground irrigation or verge gardens provided the verge landscape treatment conforms to Parts 4, 5, 6 and 7 regarding verge landscaping, planting and irrigation.
- (10) Approval will not be granted for the use of unacceptable materials including artificial turf or synthetic grass, loose gravel, stones or crushed brick.
- (11) Approval will not be granted for structures such as retaining walls or raised edges.

#### **9. Verge landscaping and street trees**

The City is responsible for the planting, pruning and maintenance of all street trees.

- (1) Where there is an existing street tree, persons installing, altering or maintaining verge treatments:
  - a) Need to make sure that the tree, including its roots, is not damaged by the verge treatment.
  - b) Should note that the City's contractors may require access on the verge to prune the tree.
- (2) Where there is no existing street tree, persons installing, altering or maintaining verge treatments:
  - a) Should note that a street tree will be planted by the City in future and that this may require adjustment to the verge landscape treatment.
  - b) Are encouraged to request a street tree for the verge.

#### **10. Non-conforming verge treatments**

- (1) The modification of non-conforming verge landscape treatments is the responsibility of the adjoining property owner.
- (2) If the City contacts the adjoining property owner regarding a non-conforming verge landscape treatment and no action is taken, the City may:
  - a) Take action to make safe a non-conforming verge landscape treatment that is hazardous to pedestrians and road users, and may seek to recover the costs from the adjoining property owner.
  - b) Remove part or all of the verge landscape treatment to protect or improve the growing conditions for an existing street tree, and may seek to recover the costs from the adjoining property owner.
  - c) Remove part or all of the verge landscape treatment to enable the planting and maintenance of a new street tree.

#### GOVERNANCE REFERENCES

<b>Statutory Compliance</b>	<i>Local Government Act 1995 s 2.7.(2)(b)</i> <i>City of Canning Local Government Property and Public Places Local Law 2020 Part 4 Division 3</i>
<b>Process Links</b>	<i>(List name of associated documents, eg. procedures, guidelines, application forms, etc with TRIM reference</i>

#### POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Program responsible		Officer Title	
Environment and Infrastructure		Manager Parks and Environment	
Version	Decision Reference	Meeting type and date	Delegation No. (or N/A)
1	24 July 2007	OCM – CM-121-07	N/A
2	19 May 2009	OCM – CM-007-09 – Revised policy adopted – wording	N/A
3	19 July 2016	OCM - IE-038-16 (Q16/465) – Revised policy adopted	N/A
4	13 December 2022	OCM - EN-032-22 (Q22/1723) - Revised policy	N/A