

PARKWAY TREE MANUAL



City of Whittier
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INTRODUCTION

Mission Statement

The City of Whittier is known for its urban forest. Trees beautify the City and enhance the quality of life for all residents. The National Arbor Day Foundation has recognized our City as a Tree City, USA since 1988 in honor of the care we provide for our trees. The purpose of this Parkway Tree Manual is to provide guidelines for the preservation and protection of the city's urban forest as established in the Ordinance, which will be codified in Whittier Municipal Code, Chapter 12.40.

The following pages document guidelines for the planting, pruning, preservation and removal of all trees on City property and right-of-ways. These specifications are based on National standards for tree care set by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the National Arborist Association (NAA) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The Parkway Tree Manual incorporates input from the City Council, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission (the "Commission"), staff, and City residents, and is a reference for use by City staff, private contractors and citizens when working in and around trees under City jurisdiction.

Definitions

For purposes of the Parkway Tree Manual, the following terms will have the following meanings:

- a. "City" means the City of Whittier, California, a municipal corporation.
- b. "Department" means the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department of the City.
- c. "Director" means the Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services of the City or his designee, i.e., certified arborist, or manager.
- d. "Parkway(s)" means the strip of right-of-way within which the City plants and maintains its urban forest. Normally, it is referred to as the strip of property between the roadway and the sidewalk, or in the absence of a sidewalk, the face of the curb and the property line of which the right-of-way is adjacent to.
- e. "Right-of-Way" means the strip of land over which the public facilities, such as highways, railroads, power lines, etc. are built.

II. TREE CARE GUIDELINES

The City's urban forest is a valuable resource and the care and maintenance of it is very important. Trees in an urban environment suffer from many impacts: air pollution reduces a tree's ability to make food; compacted soils from development of roads and structures interfere with the uptake of nutrients and water; and sidewalks, curbs, streets and buildings limit the space for trees to spread their roots and branches. Tree care such as deep watering, proper pruning and pest control help a tree maintain its health and stability.

These guidelines have been developed to help reduce the impacts on City trees and to provide for effective management of the urban forest. Following these tree pruning, planting and other guidelines will result in an increase in the value of our trees and a decrease in the costs to maintain them.

Cultural Practices

Practices such as deep watering, prevention of damage to bark from weed eaters and mowers, use of mulch or wood chips and proper pruning provide for preventive care for trees. These practices help keep a tree healthy so it can maintain its own natural defense system. Staff will continue to educate residents on these proper practices.

Pest Control

Proper planting, pruning and care of trees are the best ways to prevent pest problems. A tree has a natural ability to withstand a certain amount of insects and disease. When a tree suffers from other impacts which deplete its food making capability and up-take of water and nutrients its natural defenses are weakened.

When insect and/or disease infestation becomes a detriment to the tree, controls are used. The Park Division is required to either have staff with a Pest Control Advisory License or contract with a Pest Control Advisor Licensee from the California Department of Agriculture. Other members of the Tree Division hold Pest Control Applicator Certificates. When pest control is recommended, natural or biological substances are considered first, with chemical pesticides used only when warranted.

Pest control is based on the timing and intensity of the insect infestation. Inspections of trees are made based on the time of year and weather conditions which have favored the development of insect problems in past years. Not all problems are predictable, and some may not be treatable. If there are requests by residents, an inspection is conducted and recommendations are made on the timing and effectiveness of the control.

III. TREE PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

Trees are an essential element of the image and quality of life of the City of Whittier. It is the Department's policy to protect this urban forest and also to provide useable and safe parks, sidewalks, curbs, gutters and other infrastructure features. Hardscape elements such as sidewalks, curbs, gutters and driveways are elements indicative of the City's commitment to maintaining its infrastructure. Over the years, broken and damaged sidewalks, curbs, gutters and driveways must be replaced throughout the City. Trees are often the cause of the damage to the sidewalks, curbs, and gutters, and are often involved when the City must replace these broken and damaged elements. To manage this process and protect existing trees, the following departmental guidelines have been established:

1. Whenever sidewalk, curb, gutter, or driveway replacement occurs within four (4) feet of a tree, the site will be inspected by the Department for tree impact assessment. Root pruning may be performed on any tree that the Director determines can be safely performed without jeopardizing the health of the tree following the guidelines outlined in the Parkway Tree Manual.

All roots greater than two (2) inches in diameter must be cleanly cut to encourage good callus tissue. Cuts will be made with an axe, handsaw or chainsaw.

2. Sidewalk Renovation

Trees that would be seriously impacted by root pruning during sidewalk replacements will be inspected by the Director to determine whether:

- a. The repair work can be deferred and a temporary patch on the sidewalk used to eliminate any hazard until other remedies can be reviewed and implemented.
- b. The tree can be saved by narrowing the sidewalk near the tree, while still leaving sufficient sidewalk width for disabled access. Standard disabled access width is four (4) feet with variances given to thirty-eight (38) inches where absolutely necessary.
- c. The tree can be saved by relocating the sidewalk onto private property and negotiating the appropriate easement (refer page 5, 'Easements')
- d. The tree can be saved by replacing the sidewalk with minimal disruption of the roots (alternatives: temporary sidewalk; ramping the sidewalk grade over the roots; offset or meandering walkway away from tree; other).
- e. To remove the tree and replant with a minimum 15 gallon replacement tree.

3. Curb and Gutter Replacement

Trees that would be seriously impacted by root pruning during curb/gutter replacement will be inspected by the Director to determine whether:

- a. The repair work can be deferred—it can be deferred if it does not create drainage problems or otherwise increase street maintenance unnecessarily and is not a hazard.
- b. The tree can be saved by offsetting the curb and gutter into the street at least one (1) foot (but ideally two (2) to six (6) feet), thereby narrowing the street width which, in effect, may cause the elimination of some street parking. Where six or more trees along one side of a block are severely affected, consideration is to be given to offsetting the curb and gutter into the street along the entire block.
- c. The tree can be saved by replacing the curb and gutter with minimal disruption of the roots (alternative: temporary curb and gutter).
- d. To remove the tree and replant with a minimum fifteen (15) gallon replacement tree.

4. Construction Projects on City Property

The following guidelines have been developed to protect trees on City property during construction projects:

- a. Prior to issuance of a Building Permit, the Director must complete the Parkway tree assessment, as recommended by the Director of Public Works and/or Director of Community Development.
- b. Should it be necessary to trench within the area of the construction project, trenches shall be hand dug. No roots larger than two (2) inches shall be cut unless no other alternative is feasible, as approved by the Director. All smaller roots that must be cut shall be saw cut (no trenchers or backhoes) flush with the side of the trench. If at any time twenty-five (25) percent of the area within the root protection zone is being separated from the tree by a trench, the line shall be located by boring or an alternate location for the trench established.

The minimum clearance between an open trench and a street tree shall be one (1) foot, or six (6) inches for each inch of trunk diameter measured at four and a half (4.5) feet above existing grade if this method defines a larger distance. The maximum shall conform to these provisions unless otherwise directed by the Director.

- c. At no time shall any equipment, materials, supplies or fill be allowed within the prescribed root protection zone unless otherwise directed by the Director. The root protection zone is defined as the larger of the drip line of the tree or the distance from the trunk equal to six (6) inches for each inch of trunk diameter measured at four and a half

(4.5) feet above existing grade. It is recognized that failure to abide by these provisions will result in substantial root damage to trees that may not be immediately apparent. The Director will therefore assess damages according to the International Society of Arboriculture standards and bill the responsible party for removal and replacement of said tree.

4. Release Requirements

In order for construction work to begin, which will impact a tree, a release must be issued by the Director. This release shall be based on the condition of the tree and an assessment of the impact of the proposed construction. Mitigating measures necessary to protect the tree must also be stated.

In the event a tree must be removed, a Permit for Removal/Replacement must be obtained from the Department as outlined in this Parkway Tree Manual.

5. Scenic Corridor

The City's General Plan, Section 5 (Environmental Resource Management Element), identifies a plan for scenic corridors. It states that "the scenic qualities of the City may be enhanced by the adoption of a program for positive identification of these resources."

The Plan defines scenic corridor development as the improvement along corridors to bring out their scenic qualities; control of structures, signs and infrastructure along scenic corridors; and identification of the presence of aesthetic resources. It sets standards that apply to these corridors, one of which recommends "control of development which may detract from existing scenic qualities (block views and ridgelines)." The Plan seeks to preserve the qualities of the corridors by recommending design review for any development along designated corridors.

The goal is to "maintain amenities along major roadways which provide beauty, identity, and form to the community and to neighborhoods with the community."

Identified scenic routes include:

- La Cuarta Street from College Avenue to Colima Road
- Beverly Boulevard between Norwalk Boulevard and Pickering Avenue
- Beverly Boulevard from Painter Avenue to the east city border
- Colima Road from Mar Vista Street to the northern most city border

Also identified in the Plan are "entryways" into the City:

- Beverly Boulevard from the 605 Freeway
- Whittier Boulevard from the 605 Freeway

- Gretna at Whittier Boulevard
- Sorenson at Whittier Boulevard
- Washington Boulevard and Santa Fe Springs Road at 5 points
- Painter Avenue at Mulberry Drive
- Colima Road at Lambert Road
- Colima Road southbound at Mar Vista Street
- Whittier Boulevard at Valley Home Avenue

General Plan Exhibit 5-2 showing a map of the routes and entryways is attached (Attachment F).

In keeping with the City's policy to preserve and protect healthy trees the rules contained in the Parkway Tree Manual will be strictly adhered to relative to scenic corridors and entry ways into the city.

(Revised 11/2015)

IV. TREE/HARDSCAPE CONFLICT GUIDELINES

In keeping with the City's policy to preserve and protect healthy trees and to provide for the safety of citizens, the following guidelines have been established for correcting hazardous situations that result from tree roots disturbing hardscape in the public Right-of-Way.

Inspection - When tree roots are suspected of causing hardscape damage, the Director shall inspect the tree and assess the potential of damage to property. The size, species, structure/condition, and external/environmental factors should be considered before a recommendation is made.

1. Size – Trunk size (diameter at breast height-DBH) and height should be noted in relation to the amount of structural roots that should remain to support the tree.
2. Species – The species will be determined by the Parkway Tree Index, using the following criteria, which is approved by City Council as a separate document. The criteria includes: the species characteristics (desirable/undesirable), suitability to site, maturity of tree; etc.
3. Structure and Condition – Inspect the tree for stability; leaning; crown balance. Check trunk for any cavities, signs of decay or insects that may cause instability, such as root rot, borers, or termites. Check the condition of the foliage and note dieback, size and quantity of foliage and note anything that may indicate stress.
4. External or Environmental Factors Check for adequate growing space. Note proximity to overhead utilities, water meters, lines-of-sight for driveways, intersections, traffic signs. Also note damage to private property such as uplifting sidewalks, driveways, or retaining walls, structural damage to a house, etc. Check for the extent of damage to the public hardscape and the potential for future damage.

Recommendations –

1. Off-set – If the root flare or trunk is within three (3) feet of the sidewalk and the sidewalk is wider than the four (4) foot minimum, an off-set may be recommended. Root removal may not be necessary with an off-set.
2. Ramping – If the inspection warrants retention of all or the majority of offending roots, a ramp may be considered. The sidewalk grade change caused by a ramp must be a ratio approved by the City Engineer. Also, the proposed ramp should not cause a substantial grade change from the sidewalk to the private property.

Easements – If none of the recommendations listed previously are workable, the following guidelines are recommended to allow for moving the sidewalk onto private property:

City to provide the following services:

1. Grade work (cut or fill) to provide a maximum 3:1 slope adjacent to the new sidewalk.
2. Adjustment of any affected sprinkler systems to accommodate the new sidewalk.
3. Adjustment of private walkways if needed to match new sidewalk.
4. Any other alterations needed such as relocating a fence or retaining wall.
5. Replacement or relocation of shrubs, lighting or any other features.

(Revised 11/2015)

V. ROOT PRUNING SPECIFICATIONS

Selective Root Pruning

This process involves selectively removing the offending roots that have caused actual hardscape damage and must be supervised by the Director. Selective root pruning is performed with an ax, chainsaw or with a stump grinding machine instead of a root cutting machine.

All roots that need to be pruned may be removed or shaved down following the criteria set under “Tree/Hardscape Conflicts Guidelines” (Section IV) in the Parkway Tree Manual.

1. Off-set – If the root flare or trunk is within three (3) feet of the sidewalk and the sidewalk is wider than the four (4) foot minimum, an off-set may be recommended. Root removal may not be necessary with an off-set.
2. Ramping – If the inspection warrants retention of all or the majority of offending roots, a ramp may be considered. The sidewalk grade change caused by a ramp must be a ratio approved by the City Engineer. Also, the proposed ramp should not cause a substantial grade change from the sidewalk to the private property.

The sidewalk area will be defined as extending four inches on either side of the sidewalk and six inches below the top of the new sidewalk. Roots greater than two inches in diameter that must be removed must be pre-approved by the Director. Roots selected for removal will be selected on the basis that they will have the least impact on vigor and stability of the tree. In certain cases partial “root shaving” can be performed without severing the entire root with a stump grinding machine.

3. Guidelines for Recommending Selective Root Pruning

Selective root pruning should be recommended: when a tree trunk or root flare is less than three (3) feet from the sidewalk and/or the size, species or condition of the tree warrants a root cut to be hazardous to the tree; or when there is only one minor offending root to be removed and/or the damage is minimal (i.e. only one panel uplifted, etc.) and the likelihood of future damage is minimal.

(Revised 11/2015)

VI. TREE PRUNING GUIDELINES

All street trees are completely pruned on a periodic basis based on a set pruning cycle. Additional street tree pruning is done on an “as needed” basis. Trees are pruned using the standard Complete Pruning Specifications, set by the ISA.

Specific examples where “as needed” work is authorized include:

1. Pruning tree limbs that interfere with street light illumination.
2. Pruning tree limbs that interfere with buildings or other private or public facilities.
3. Pruning hazardous limbs, such as large dead limbs greater than two (2) inches in diameter, hanging limbs and structurally unsound limbs.
4. Pruning tree limbs that interfere with safe vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
5. Sucker pruning.

“As needed” pruning shall be done by City staff or contracted services.

Tree Pruning Specifications

Any tree work performed on a City tree must be done according to the City’s specifications. There are different criteria for pruning depending on the purpose for the pruning.

1. Complete Prune Specifications are used when circumstances deem the entire tree needs to be fully pruned.
2. Safety Prune Specifications require less pruning and are used when specific, possibly hazardous (dead/dying) limbs need removal to eliminate all safety concerns. Safety pruning may be recommended in some circumstances instead of a complete prune. Safety pruning specifications are used for “as needed” pruning as outlined above and address only safety concerns. Safety pruning includes only the basic requirements and does not include the fine pruning detail work outlined in a complete prune.

All specifications are based on International Society of Arboriculture, National Arborist Association and American National Standards Institute criteria. This guarantees that City of Whittier trees will receive the best possible care.

(Revised 11/2015)

VII. SAFETY PRUNING SPECIFICATIONS

The following specifications are for the use of any permitted pruning of City trees. A permit shall be obtained from the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department prior to any work being performed on City trees.

General Requirements

- a. All waste generated must be properly disposed of.
- b. Assure good traffic control and minimum disruption of the public. "No Parking" signs must be posted twenty-four (24) hours prior to trimming. Signs may be placed on trees with string ties or tape only—no nails or staples of any size may be used.
- c. Assure adequate safety of employees and the public, eighteen (18) inch traffic cones are to be used as well as high rise warning flags for pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic at work site.

Safety Tree Pruning Specifications

Safety tree pruning shall consist of the total removal of those dead and living branches as may threaten the health, strength and attractiveness of trees.

- a. Prevent branch and foliage interference with requirements of safe public passage. Over street clearance shall be kept to a minimum of thirteen and a half (13.5) feet from top of curb. Exceptions are allowed for young trees which would be irreparably damaged by such pruning action.
- b. Remove all dead and dying branches and branch stubs that are one half (1/2) inch diameter or larger.
- c. Remove all broken or loose branches.
- d. Remove any live branches which interfere with the trees structural strength and healthful development of the tree which will include the following:
 1. Limbs of weak structure or that are otherwise hazardous.
 2. Selective removal of limbs obstructing buildings or other structures or traffic signs. Generally, limbs closer than five (5) feet to a building or other structure should be removed unless doing so would severely damage the structure of the tree.
- e. Clear trees of sprout or sucker growth to a minimum height of eight (8) feet above ground level. Exceptions are allowed for young trees which would be irreparably damaged by such pruning action.

Unacceptable Pruning

The following procedures, or others that will result in tree decline, are not allowed:

- a. Severe cutting back of all growing tips, usually referred to as “topping,” “pollarding” or “hat racking”.
- b. Flush cutting where a cut is made even with the surface of the trunk or limb, removing the branch collar and branch bark ridge.
- c. Stub cutting where branch removal results in the base of branch removed protruding more than approximately one-quarter (1/4) inch beyond the zone of branch collar and branch bark ridge.
- d. Removal of healthy main leader, for reasons other than power line clearance.

Certified Arborist - Any City-contracted tree company shall employ a full-time, permanent Certified Arborist, as accredited by the International Society of Arboriculture. This person is responsible for ensuring that the contractor’s crews are performing work according to City specifications. It is also recommended that all residents use a firm that employs a Certified Arborist for any tree work.

Contractor Qualifications – All contractors are required to have a state contractor’s license and provide workers’ compensation insurance with statutory limits, comprehensive automobile liability insurance and comprehensive general liability insurance in compliance with City specifications as outlined in the Tree Removal Guidelines and the Trimming/Removal Permit. Contractor must provide all services in compliance with City specifications. Specifications are written based on the policies outlined in these guidelines. Property owners utilizing contracted tree workers must demonstrate proof of proper licensing/insurance prior to issuance of Trimming/Removal Permit.

Additional Specifications

- a. All persons performing tree work on City trees should be trained according to tree care standards accepted by the International Society of Arboriculture.
- b. All persons performing tree work on City trees in or around primary electrical lines must be trained to do so according to the “Electrical Safety Orders” of the state of California, including all amendments and revisions.
- c. When tree pruning cuts are made to a side limb, such remaining limb must possess a basal thickness of at least one-third (1/3) of the diameter of the wound so affected. Such cuts shall be considered proper only when such remaining limb is vigorous enough to maintain adequate foliage to produce wood growth capable of callusing the pruning cut so affected within a reasonable amount of time.
- d. All final tree pruning cuts shall be made in such a manner so as to favor the earliest possible covering of the wound by natural callus growth.

Excessively deep flush cuts, which produce large wounds or weaken the tree at the cut, shall not be made. The branch collar should not be removed.

- e. Tree limbs shall be removed and controlled in such a manner as to cause no damage to other parts of the tree, or to other plants, property or infrastructure.
- f. All tools used on a tree known to contain an infectious tree disease shall be properly disinfected with bleach or alcohol immediately before and after completing work on such tree. All major pest problems and infectious conditions shall be promptly reported to the Director.
- g. All cutting tools and saws used in tree pruning shall be kept sharpened to result in final cuts with a nonabrasive wood surface and secure bark remaining intact. All trees six (6) inches in diameter or less shall be pruned with hand tools only. Chain saws will not be permitted on any trees six (6) inches or less. This is to prevent any unnecessary abrasions or cambial tissue that may predispose a tree to insect and/or disease problems.
- h. Whenever pruning cuts are to be made, while removing limbs too large to hold securely in one hand during the cutting operation, the limbs shall be cut off first, one (1) to two (2) feet beyond the intended final cut. Then, the final cut shall be made in a manner to prevent unnecessary tearing back of the bark and wood. Such cutting back shall not include the removal of any live, healthy limbs in excess of six (6) inches without prior Director approval.
- i. All tree work done to City trees must comply with current ANSI standards and ISA "Best Management Practices."
- j. Any extraneous metal, wire, rubber or other material interfering with tree growth shall be removed.
- k. Any defective or weakened trees shall be reported to the City for evaluation.
- l. The use of climbing spurs or spike shoes in the act of pruning trees is prohibited, excepting palms that are more than fifty (50) feet in height, which should only be spiked out of an aerial lift truck.
- m. Beneficial animal or bird nests or nesting cavities shall be preserved and protected whenever feasible, unless doing so would create a hazard.

Public Safety and Cooperation – All tree work shall be conducted in a manner as to cause the least possible interference with or annoyance to others. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic shall be allowed to pass through the work areas only under conditions of safety and with as little inconvenience and delay as possible. Unless the work area is totally barricaded or otherwise kept safe, at least one worker shall serve to coordinate safe operations on the ground at all times when work operations are in progress.

- a. Whenever larger tree sections are being cut in a tree top which may endanger persons or property, such sections shall be secured by ropes and lowered safely to the ground in a controlled manner.
- b. All fire hydrants, meter vaults, water and gas shut-off valves and similar facilities must remain accessible during the course of work. Clear

passage and least amount of inconvenience to public traffic ways, businesses and residences shall be maintained.

- c. Noise levels resulting from tree work operations must be kept to a minimum at all times. All operation of tree work equipment shall be done between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and be completely cleaned up no later than 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. There will be NO work done on weekends or holidays unless prior approval given by Director.
- d. All tree work done to City trees must comply with all tree pruning related safety requirements as stated in the current ANSI Z133 safety standards.

Damage to Public or Private Property – Should any structure or property be damaged during permitted or contracted tree operations, the persons conducting the work shall immediately notify the proper owners or authorities. Repairs to property damaged by the responsible party shall be made within forty-eight (48) hours, except utility lines which shall be repaired the same working day. Repairs on private property shall be made in accordance with the appropriate building code under permits issued by the City. Any damage caused by the permitted or contracted persons shall be repaired or restored by them at their expense to a condition similar or equal to that existing before such damage or injury, or they shall repair such damage in a manner acceptable to the City. Special attention is drawn to sprinkler systems in City Parkways and the need to avoid damage or repair damage as soon as possible.

No permitted or City-contracted tree worker shall perform work upon private property without the consent of the property owner.

Site Cleanup – Cleanup of branches, limbs, logs or any other debris resulting from any tree operations shall be promptly and properly accomplished. The work area shall be kept safe at all times until all operations are completed. Under no circumstances shall the accumulation of brush, limbs, logs or other debris be allowed in such a manner as to result in a hazard to the public. All debris from tree operations shall be cleaned up each day before the work crew leaves the site unless permission is given by the City to do otherwise. All lawn areas shall be raked, all streets and sidewalks shall be swept, and all brush, branches, or other debris shall be removed from the site.

(Revised 11/2015)

VIII. COMPLETE PRUNING SPECIFICATIONS

The following specifications are for the use of any permitted pruning of City trees. A permit shall be obtained from the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department prior to any work being performed on City trees.

General Requirements

- a. Assure proper traffic control per Work Area Traffic Control Handbook (WATCH) standards and that a minimum disruption to the public occurs. "No Parking" signs must be posted twenty-four (24) hours prior to trimming. Signs may be placed on trees with string or tape only -_no nails of any size may be used.
- b. Assure proper safety of employees and the public. Eighteen (18) inch traffic cones are to be used as well as high rise warning flags for pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic at work site.
- c. All waste generated must be properly disposed of.

Complete Tree Pruning Specifications

Complete tree pruning shall consist of the total removal of those dead and living branches as may threaten the health, strength and structural integrity of trees per ISA standards.

- a. Prevent branch and foliage interference with requirements of safe public passage. Over street clearance shall be kept to a minimum of thirteen and a half (13.5) feet from top of curb. Exceptions are allowed for young trees which would be irreparably damaged by such pruning action.
- b. Remove all dead and dying branches and branch stubs that are one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) inch diameter or larger.
- c. Remove all broken or loose branches.
- d. Remove any live branches which interfere with the trees structural strength and healthful development of the tree which will include the following:
 1. Branches which rub and abrade a more important branch.
 2. Branches of weak structure which are not important to the framework of the tree.
 3. Branches which, if allowed to grow, would wedge apart the junction of more important branches.
 4. Branches forming multiple leaders in a single leader type tree.
 5. Branches near the end of a limb which will produce more weight or offer more resistance to wind than the limbs are likely to support.
 6. Undesirable sucker and sprout growth paying specific attention not to nick or damage the sprout "burl."
 7. Selective removal of one or more developing leaders where multiple branch growth exists near the end of broken or stubbed limbs.

8. Selective removal of limbs obstructing buildings or other structures or traffic signs. Generally, limbs closer than five (5) feet to a building or other structure should be removed unless doing so would severely damage a tree.
- e. Cut back ends of branches and reduce weight where excessive overburden appears likely to result in breakage of supporting limbs.
- f. Clear trees of sprout or sucker growth to a minimum height of eight (8) feet above ground level. Exceptions are allowed for young trees which would be irreparably damaged by such pruning action.
- g. Obtain a balanced appearance when viewed from the opposite side of the street immediately opposite the tree, unless authorized by the Director to do otherwise.
- h. Remove all vines/ivy entwined in trees and on tree trunks. Vine tendrils shall be removed without injury to said trees.

Unacceptable Pruning

The following procedures, or others that will result in tree decline, are not allowed:

- a. Severe cutting back of all growing tips, usually referred to as “topping,” “pollarding” or “hat racking.”
- b. Flush cutting where a cut is made even with the surface of the trunk or limb, removing the branch collar and branch bark ridge.
- c. Stub cutting where branch removal results in the base of branch removed protruding more than approximately one-fourth (¼) beyond the zone of branch collar and branch bark ridge.
- d. Removal of healthy main leader, for reasons other than power line clearance.

Certified Arborist – Any City contracted tree company shall employ a full-time, permanent Certified Arborist, as accredited by the International Society of Arboriculture. This person is responsible for ensuring that the contractor’s crews are performing work according to City specifications. It is also recommended that any resident uses a firm that employs a Certified Arborist for any tree work.

Contractor Qualifications – All contractors are required to have a state contractor’s license and provide workers’ compensation insurance with statutory limits, comprehensive automobile liability insurance and comprehensive general liability insurance in compliance with City specifications as outlined in the Tree Removal Guidelines and the Trimming/Removal Permit.

Contractors must provide all services in compliance with City specifications. Specifications are written based on the policies outlined in these guidelines. Property owners utilizing contracted tree workers must demonstrate proof of proper licensing/insurance prior to issuance of Trimming/Removal Permit.

Additional Specifications

- a. All persons performing tree work on City trees should be trained according to tree care standards accepted by the International Society of Arboriculture.
- b. All persons performing tree work on City trees in or around primary electrical lines must be trained to do so according to the “Electrical Safety Orders” of the state of California, including all amendments and revisions.
- c. When tree pruning cuts are made to a side limb, such remaining limb must possess a basal thickness of at least one-third (1/3) of the diameter of the wound so affected. Such cuts shall be considered proper only when such remaining limb is vigorous enough to maintain adequate foliage to produce wood growth capable of callusing the pruning cut so affected within a reasonable amount of time.
- d. All final tree pruning cuts shall be made in such a manner so as to favor the earliest possible covering of the wound by natural callus growth. Excessively deep flush cuts which produce large wounds or weaken the tree at the cut shall not be made. The branch collar should not be removed.
- e. Tree limbs shall be removed and controlled in such a manner as to cause no damage to other parts of the tree, or to other plants or property.
- f. All tools used on a tree known to contain an infectious tree disease shall be properly disinfected immediately before and after completing work on such tree. All major pest problems shall be promptly reported to the Director.
- g. All cutting tools and saws used in tree pruning shall be kept sharpened to result in final cuts with a nonabrasive wood surface and secure bark remaining intact. All trees six (6) inches in diameter or less shall be pruned with hand tools only. Chain saws will not be permitted on any trees six (6) inches or less. This is to prevent any unnecessary abrasions or cambial tissue that may predispose a tree to insect and/or disease problems.
- h. Whenever pruning cuts are to be made, while removing limbs too large to hold securely in one hand during the cutting operation, the limbs shall be cut off first, one (1) to two (2) feet beyond the intended final cut. Then the final cut shall be made in a manner to prevent unnecessary tearing back of the bark and wood. Such cutting back shall not include the removal of any live, healthy limbs in excess of six (6) inches without prior City approval.
- i. All tree work done to City trees must comply with current ANSI standards and ISA “Best Management Practices.”
- j. Any extraneous metal, wire, rubber or other material interfering with tree growth shall be removed.
- k. Any defective or weakened trees shall be reported to the Director.
- l. The use of climbing spurs or spike shoes in the act of pruning trees is prohibited, excepting palms that are more than fifty feet in height, which should only be spiked from out of an aerial lift truck.

- m. Beneficial animal or bird nests or nesting cavities shall be preserved and protected whenever feasible, unless doing so would create a hazard.

Public Safety and Cooperation – All tree work shall be conducted in a manner as to cause the least possible interference with or annoyance to others. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic shall be allowed to pass through the work areas only under conditions of safety and with as little inconvenience and delay as possible. Unless the work area is totally barricaded or otherwise kept safe, at least one worker shall serve to coordinate safe operations on the ground at all times when work operations are in progress.

- a. Whenever larger tree sections are being cut in a tree top which may endanger persons or property, such sections shall be secured by ropes and lowered safely to the ground in a controlled manner.
- b. All fire hydrants, meter vaults, water and gas shut-off valves and similar facilities must remain accessible during the course of work. Clear passage and least amount of inconvenience to public traffic ways, businesses and residences shall be maintained.
- c. Noise levels, resulting from tree work operations must be kept to a minimum at all times. All operation of tree work equipment shall be done between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and be completely cleaned up no later than 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. There will be NO work done on weekends or holidays unless prior approval is given by Director.
- d. All tree work done to City trees must comply with all tree pruning related safety requirements as stated in the current ANSI Z133 safety standards.

Damage to Public or Private Property – Should any structure or property be damaged during permitted or contracted tree operations, the persons conducting the work shall immediately notify the proper owners or authorities. Repairs to property damaged by the responsible party shall be made within forty-eight (48) hours, except utility lines which shall be repaired the same working day. Repairs on private property shall be made in accordance with the appropriate building code under permits issued by the City. Any damage caused by the permitted or contracted persons shall be repaired or restored by them at their expense to a condition similar or equal to that existing before such damage or injury, or they shall repair such damage in a manner acceptable to the City. Special attention is drawn to sprinkler systems in City Parkways and the need to avoid damage or repair damage as soon as possible.

No permitted or City contracted tree worker shall perform work upon private property without the consent of the property owner.

Site Cleanup – Cleanup of branches, limbs, logs or any other debris resulting from any tree operations shall be promptly and properly accomplished. The work area shall be kept safe at all times until all operations are completed. Under no circumstances shall the accumulation of brush, limbs, logs or other debris be allowed in such a manner as to result

in a hazard to the public. All debris from tree operations shall be cleaned up each day before the work crew leaves the site unless permission is given by the City to do otherwise. All lawn areas shall be raked, all streets and sidewalks shall be swept and all brush, branches, or other debris shall be removed from the site.

(Revised 11/2015)

IX. TREE REMOVAL GUIDELINES

It is the City's policy to preserve and protect healthy trees that provide valuable benefits to our environment and the quality of life of the City of Whittier. Tree removal requests are therefore only granted if the request is reasonable and is in the City's best interest as determined by the Director or his/her representative. To better determine when the City may remove a tree the following guidelines have been developed.

Hazardous Trees/Roots – Trees and roots that are declared a hazard to public safety by virtue of being a high risk factor (i.e. falling or large limb breaking, exposed root systems, etc.) or have a potential damage and/or injury shall be removed.

Hazardous Condition Removal – If a tree causes a serious visibility hazard (i.e. a corner tree that blocks the visibility of a stop sign/light), it may be removed. Removal will be considered if the pruning to correct the hazard would seriously disfigure the tree or where the continuing cost of repeated pruning would outweigh the value of the tree. Other examples where a hazardous condition may warrant removal are:

- a. Hardscape damage – if hardscape repairs cannot feasibly be completed without severe root/tree damage.
- b. Facility damage or maintenance.
 1. If a tree is causing serious structural damage to a building and the condition cannot be corrected without removing the tree.
 2. If a tree is causing extensive damage to private facilities and cannot be corrected without removing the tree.

Diseased/Insect Infested Trees – Trees that are diseased and that possess dead or damaged foliage, branches, roots or trunk tissue may be determined to be a hazard and require immediate removal. Trees diseased that are declared a serious threat to other trees nearby may be removed if removal is the best pest control option. An example would be a tree infected with Dutch Elm disease. Any tree that has been declared “dead” by the City's Certified Arborist may be removed without public posting.

Emergency Removals – Healthy trees may be removed immediately if an emergency exists and tree removal is the best option available. An example would be to gain access in an emergency situation created by an earthquake or to allow repair of a broken water main located directly under the tree trunk or to remove a tree split by a storm or other incident where the tree cannot be feasibly restored to a safe condition.

Permits – Trees may be removed to allow construction through the City's permit process if all mitigation measures have been exhausted and/or deemed impractical, the tree may be removed pending a written evaluation by a certified arborist stating that the tree must be removed in order to proceed with the project. If the tree(s) is removed solely to accommodate a

construction project, the full appraised value per ISA standards must be paid prior to removal and the tree(s) shall be replaced. The contractor will also be responsible for costs related to the removal and replanting of the tree. Removals related to City construction projects shall be handled on a case-by-case basis and will require a permit.

Contractor Qualifications – All contractors are required to have a state contractor’s license and provide workers’ compensation insurance with statutory limits, comprehensive automobile liability insurance and comprehensive general liability insurance in compliance with City specifications as outlined in the Tree Removal Guidelines and the Trimming/Removal Permit.

Notification of Removal – The City will simultaneously give a thirty (30)-day written notice to the owner(s), occupant(s), or agent(s) and to the immediate neighbors of the affected property via standard mail of the intention to remove a healthy or diseased Parkway tree, and post a notice upon the affected tree upon which the described condition exists. If possible, trees that are deemed dead or hazardous may be removed following a ten (10)-day posting. Trees that are deemed to be an imminent hazard, i.e. due to storm damage, traffic collision, etc., may be removed immediately without prior posting. Hazardous tree and emergency removals are not subject to the appeal process.

Reasons That Are Not Valid For Removal

1. Debris including leaves and messy fruit
2. Debris clogging rain gutters
3. Roots clogging sewers (unless all options have been exhausted)
4. Hardscape (see Hazardous Condition Removal)

Before a tree is considered for removal, the Director will not only consider all of the above criteria, but will also conduct an inspection of each tree. Refer to the checklist used to evaluate each tree.

(Revised 11/2015)

X. STREET TREE PLANTING

The Parkway Tree Index - Masterplan was developed and approved by City Council to guide future planning for tree planting in the Parkways throughout the City of Whittier, taking into consideration site tolerance, soil types, locally indigenous species, mature height/width, overhead utility lines and a number of other criteria.

If a resident desires a street tree planted, unless there are special circumstances preventing a tree from being planted, i.e. lack of space, underground utilities, etc., the City will plant the tree versus the resident depending on the availability of funds. Residents wanting larger trees planted will be required to pay the added costs. If funds are not available, a city resident may choose to purchase an approved tree with city staff planting the tree on the resident's behalf. The City has the authority, per Municipal Code 12.40.030 (Planting), to direct the property owner to remove any tree that has been planted without permission.

(Revised 11/2015)

XI. PERMITS AND PENALTIES

TRIMMING/REMOVAL PERMITS:

All trimming, removals and/or replacements of public trees or shrubs are subject to all conditions outlined in the Parkway Tree Manual. Failure to comply with the Parkway Tree Manual as well as the requirements stipulated on the Permit will result in fines equal to the required permit fees plus penalties.

Basic requirements (Refer to the Permit for complete instructions):

- a. Permit fee of \$70 must be paid prior to commencement of work.
- b. Required \$500 deposit or Performance Bond equal to 10% of the project cost must be on file with the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department prior to commencing work.
- c. All required insurance certificates must be on file prior to commencement of work per city insurance standards.
- d. All work must be done by a qualified licensed contractor.
- e. All work must be done in a professional and safe manner with due regard for public convenience, adhering to the WATCH standards.
- f. Work site must be cleared of all debris.

PENALTIES

As authorized by Whittier Municipal Code Section 12.40.110, the penalties specified herein shall apply to all cutting, trimming, pruning, planting, removing, injuring or interfering with any tree, shrub or plant upon any street, park, alley or public place of the City.

For any City-owned tree that is cut down, damaged, including severe trimming, or dies as a result of the actions of any person, or his or her agent, not in compliance with this Manual or Chapter 12.40 of the Whittier Municipal Code, including actions taken prior to the approval of required permits, the following remedies may be required:

- a. Payment of the replacement value of the tree, shrub or plant as established by the ISA in the following manner:
 1. Palms – The value of the Palm based on vertical footage of clear or brown trunk.
 2. Trees – Trunks two (2) to eight (8) inches in diameter: the value of the tree, based on cost of like-sized container tree plus equipment and labor.
 3. Trees – Trunks nine (9) inches or greater in diameter: the value based on square inches of trunk cross section.
 4. Shrubs – The value of the shrub based on cost of like-sized shrub from a local nursery plus the cost to plant the shrub, which shall be half the price of the shrub replacement cost.

b. Payment of a penalty as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------|
| 1. 1st Offense | \$100 |
| 2. 2nd Offense | \$300 |
| 3. 3rd Offense | \$500 |
| 4. Subsequent Offenses | \$500 |

- c. The remedies hereunder are cumulative and in addition to any other remedies available under law. The imposition of one penalty or the exercise of one right or remedy by the City shall not be a waiver as to any other rights and remedies available to the City.

(Revised 11/2015)

XII. APPEAL PROCESS

Resident Request For Removal

- a. Property owner requests tree removal
 1. Staff determines tree does not meet removal guidelines.
 2. Process ends – No appeal option.

- b. Property owner requests tree removal
 1. Staff determines the tree does meet removal guidelines.
 2. Tree is posted with notice of removal (30-day posting) per Tree Removal Guidelines (Section IX); resident and immediate neighbors are notified via standard mail.
 3. No response from public within 30 days (“Posting Period”) – tree is removed.

- c. Property owner requests tree removal
 1. Staff determines the tree does meet removal guidelines.
 2. Tree is posted with notice of removal (30-day posting) per Tree Removal Guidelines; resident and immediate neighbors are notified via standard mail.
 3. Tree removal is appealed – the appeal process is enacted.

City Posts For Hazardous or Emergency Removal

1. No appeal option.

Appeal Process

Persons wishing to appeal any designated tree posted for removal shall petition to the Department in writing (see attached Appeal Form). Hazardous tree and emergency removals are not subject to the appeal process.

- a. Appeal Criteria
 1. Appellant must reside within the City of Whittier.
 2. Appeal must be filed within the thirty (30)-day Posting Period.

- b. Hearing Procedure
 1. Appeal Form is available from the Department.
 2. Appeal hearing will be included on the first available Park, Recreation and Community Services Commission Agenda.
 3. Resident, appellant and neighbors will be notified via standard mail.
 4. After conducting the appeal hearing, the Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council, which will be placed on the first available City Council Agenda as a consent item for its final determination of the appeal.
 5. If the appellant is dissatisfied with the recommendation of the Commission, it may file an objection to the Commission recommendation and the matter will be placed on the City Council

- Agenda as a business item. The objection must be filed within ten (10) days of the date the Commission reached its decision. The Objection Form is available from the Department.
6. Resident and appellant will be notified via standard mail of the City Council's decision.

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XIII. BIRD AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 was implemented for the protection of migratory birds. The MBTA makes it unlawful to take, possess, buy, purchase or barter any migratory bird listed in 50 C.F.R. Part 10 including feathers, or other parts, nests, eggs or products except as allowed by implementing regulations (50 C.F.R. Part 21). In addition, Sections 3503.5, 3505 and 3800 of the California Fish and Game Code prohibit taking, possessing or destroying birds, their nests or eggs. Disturbances that cause nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort (e.g. killing or abandonment of eggs or young) may be considered taking and are potentially punishable by fines and/or imprisonment. The Endangered Species Act also protects listed animals. Avoiding violation of the taking provision generally requires that the project-related disturbances of active nests and territories be reduced or eliminated during the nesting cycle. A typical bird nesting cycle can begin in spring and end in early summer. The City of Whittier will make every attempt to protect all birds (including migratory birds), animals and nests within trees.

Wildlife habitat protection and inspection prior to pruning is our goal. Listed below are steps to be followed:

Mandatory Wildlife Inspection Prior to Pruning

- a. Before commencing work, a visual inspection of the entire tree will be performed. Crews will check for any sign of birds nesting within the tree and for other wildlife nearby. The most common type of bird nests are cup nest, platform nest and cavity nest. Platform nests are reused by certain species such as hawks, owls, herons, egrets, etc. No platform nests will be removed at any time.
- b. Should there be any sign of bird nesting or other wildlife within or near a tree, a tree crew member will further check to see if it is active or inactive.
- c. If the nest is inactive, the crew will prune the tree around the nest location without disturbing its shelter and protection from weather elements and potential predators. The crew member will notify the Tree Supervisor about the existing nest.
- d. If the nest is active, the Tree Supervisor will attempt to prune the tree around the nest, provided the proper buffer zone can be maintained and depending upon the bird nest and bird species: (fifty) 50 feet for cup nests (song birds) and five-hundred (500) feet for platform nests without disturbing its shelter and protection from weather elements and potential predators. If this cannot be done, the Tree Supervisor will notify his supervisor and a Department of Fish and Game inspector. A request for further direction will be made to the inspector.

When Finding a Bird or Nest

- a. If a young bird that has been displaced from its nest and appears to be healthy, tree crew member will carefully place the bird back in its nest.
- b. If the entire nest has fallen, the crew will try to place it back where it came from. If the crew member cannot reach the nest, the bird will be left where it was found so that its mother can take care of it. If the bird is in an unsafe location (or on the street or sidewalk), it will be placed in a safer location, close enough so that its mother can still find it.
- c. If a bird is found that is in need of assistance, it can be placed in a clean cardboard box lined with either clean towels or paper towels. Air holes will be placed before the bird is placed inside.
- d. There will be no attempt to feed the bird or force it to drink.
- e. A customer service representative from the Department of Fish and Game will be contacted to find the nearest wildlife rehabilitation facility or a representative from Fish and Game will respond as soon as possible.

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