

**LAMC 62.104.1  
Sidewalk Repair Program Street Tree Policy**

All sidewalk repair or construction activities undertaken pursuant to Sidewalk Repair Program, for work eligible for credit under the settlement agreement in the matter of *Mark Willits, et al. v. City of Los Angeles* (United States District Court Case No. CV10-05782), whether eligible for ministerial or discretionary approval, shall be subject to compliance with this Sidewalk Repair Program Street Tree Policy (Policy). All references in this Policy to applicable laws and guidelines shall refer to the current applicable law or guideline in place at the time of the sidewalk repair project approval.

**I. Street Tree Root Pruning**

One of the objectives of root pruning is to ensure that roots are pruned as a means to retain a mature street tree whose roots have already damaged a sidewalk. The City shall adhere to root-pruning standards and guidelines discussed below for street tree species being considered for root pruning or are subject to root pruning for sidewalk repair. Root pruning may be limited to the sidewalk-adjacent side of the planting area where the street tree is planted.

All street tree root pruning shall adhere to City root-pruning standards that comply with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) *Tree Pruning Guidelines*; the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) *Trees, Shrubs, and Other Woody Plants Maintenance Standard Practices* (ANSI A300); and tree care industry best management practices. Prior to root pruning, City arborists and engineers shall make a determination as to whether root pruning will affect the structural integrity and health that may cause a street tree to become unstable and therefore a public safety hazard. If a determination is made that street tree mortality and instability such that a public safety hazard would occur, then the City shall proceed to street tree removal (see Section III).

**II. Street Tree Canopy Pruning**

Canopy pruning may be necessary to comply with accessibility requirements if the street tree canopy obstructs the pedestrian access route. A minimum clearance of 80" is currently, and shall remain, required above all sidewalks per applicable codes, including the Building Code.

All street tree canopy pruning shall be performed in accordance with the following:

1. Certified UFD Street Tree Supervisor: (a) A Certified UFD Street Tree Supervisor shall hold the credential of Certified Arborist by ISA; (b) Street tree canopy pruning shall be performed or as directed by a Certified UFD Street Tree Supervisor; (c) The arborist responsible for the street tree canopy pruning shall hold a valid C61/D49 state contractor's license or the credential of Certified Arborist by ISA; and (d) Local references for the arborist shall be provided upon request.
2. Proper Pruning Cuts: (a) All pruning cuts shall be made in branch tissue just outside the branch bark ridge and collar, without causing injury to the street tree; (b) No flush-cuts

shall be made; (c) No stubs shall be left in the street tree; and (d) Cuts shall have no ripping or tearing of the bark.

3. Proper Canopy Thinning: (a) not more than 25 percent of the street tree's foliage shall be removed; (b) sufficient branch structure should remain in the interior of the street tree; and (c) foliage shall be removed in a manner that leaves the street tree in symmetrical balance.
4. Proper Crown Raising: Street trees shall be maintained to conform to LAMC Section 56.08.
5. Correcting Defects: Remove dead, diseased, damaged, broken or crossing limbs, and perform crown restoration on previously topped or severely pruned street trees.
6. Topping Cuts: No topping cuts shall be made.
7. Inspection: All pre- and post-pruning street tree inspections shall be conducted as directed by a Certified UFD Street Tree Supervisor.
8. Legal Requirements: All street tree canopy pruning shall occur in compliance with applicable provisions of State and Federal law, including the *Migratory Bird Treaty Act* and California Fish and Game Code.

### III. Street Tree Removal Criteria

The UFD Chief Forester is the designated officer for purposes of ensuring sidewalk repair projects comply with this Policy. Prior to approval of a sidewalk repair project requiring the removal of a street tree, each removal shall be evaluated by UFD to determine whether any of the following criteria are met, in accordance with the ANSI A300 Standards. Only those street trees which meet one or more of the following criteria may be removed:

1. The street tree is dead, diseased, or unable to be retained by root pruning due to concern of tree condition and in the interest of public safety (see also Section I above), canopy pruning, and/or the criteria below.
2. The street tree exhibits crown dieback in excess of 50 percent.
3. The street tree exhibits a defoliated crown of 50 percent or greater.
4. The street tree exhibits signs of *Xylella* or other severe pest infestations (e.g., crown dieback, cankers, exudates).

For all sidewalk repair projects requiring the removal of a street tree which meets one or more of the above criteria, repairs shall be made in accordance with the following:

**Street Tree Wells**: Street tree wells shall be enlarged to 4 feet by 6 feet or as needed and roots shall be pruned as necessary, while still maintaining applicable accessibility requirements.

**Sidewalk Ramping:** In public rights-of-way where continuous planting strips (parkways) exist with street trees, the reconstructed sidewalk may be placed on top of the root plate (ramped). Ramping requires enough linear space on each side of the highest point of the ramp to allow for a slope of no more than 5% and cross-slopes of 2%. Utilization of ramping may void the sidewalk warranty.

**Sidewalk Minimizing:** In public rights-of-way where continuous planting strips (parkways) exist with street trees, sidewalks may be reduced in width to allow more root growth area and root pruning, as necessary, if the remaining sidewalk width will still comply with applicable ADA accessibility requirements.

**Meandering Sidewalk:** In some locations, it may be possible to meander the sidewalk repair project around an existing street tree to allow additional room for root growth; however, if meandering requires an additional sidewalk dedication or easement, this would be beyond the scope of this Policy.

**Private Property Trees:** Private Property trees are required to be maintained by the property owner. No root pruning or removal of private property trees causing damage to the sidewalk shall occur as a part of sidewalk repair activities.

#### IV. Street Tree Planting Specifications

The following replacement ratios shall apply for street tree removals. For purposes of determining the applicable replacement ratio, Year 1 shall be regarded as commencing on July 1, 2017 and lasting through June 30, 2018.

Year	Replacement to Removal Ratio
1-10	2:1
11-21	3:1
22-30	2:1

#### Considerations for Street Tree Selection and Planting Location

**Site Climate:** Climate and soil types shall be considered for purposes of determining the most appropriate replacement street tree species for a specific location.

**Right Tree, Right Place:** Species selection shall consider size of growing space (parkway/tree well) size and uniformity along blocks and street segments. In general, street tree species selection at a given location shall be determined by the predominant street tree species on a block.

**Site Selection:** The specific location for the planting of a replacement street tree shall be determined by a Certified UFD Street Tree Supervisor. The following areas shall be considered for street tree planting, in order of priority:

1. The location of the removed street tree;
2. Either side of the same street/block;
3. The immediate street to the north, south, east, or west of the removed street tree location;
4. The neighborhood/community in which street tree removal(s) occurred (within 0.25 mile); and
5. Historically low-canopy areas or areas with a high index rating of “heat island” or in areas of the City with poor air quality as determined by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, or the California EPA.

**Street Tree Selection Guide:** The current guide lists 150 street tree species that may be considered for planting in the City.

**Street Tree Planting Standards:** Street trees shall be planted according to the specifications put forth in BOE Standard Plan(s) S-450-3, S-455-2, and S-456-2.

**Street Tree Size:** The standard street tree stock replacement size is a 24-inch box.

**Street Tree Root Control Barriers (RCB):** RCBs are required to be installed on street tree plantings per Standard Plan S-456-2.

## V. Public Notification Criteria

For individual projects involving the proposed removal of two or fewer street trees, a 7-day notice shall be posted on the street tree to be removed. An informational notice shall be given to the respective City Council Office where the street tree to be removed resides, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE), and Community Forest Advisory Committee (CFAC). The informational notice shall include the date and reason for the removal, location and species of the planted or replanted street tree(s), location and species of the replacement street tree to be planted, and a contact name with associated phone number and email.

For individual projects involving the proposed removal of three or more street trees, a 30-day notice shall be posted on the street tree to be removed. An informational notice shall also be given to the respective City Council Office where the street tree to be removed resides, DONE, and CFAC. The informational notice shall include the date and reason for the removal, location and species of the street tree(s), and a contact name with associated phone number and email. The address and project name involved in the proposed removal of street trees shall also be placed on the Bureau of Street Services Street Tree Removal Notification System.

## VI. Street Tree Maintenance and Monitoring Requirements

**Site Protection:** Any person in charge of repair, alteration, or removal of any sidewalk or ancillary structure in any street, sidewalk, parkway, alley, or other public right-of-way shall protect any street tree, shrub, or plant in the vicinity of such repair work with sufficient guards or protectors as to prevent injury to said street tree, shrub, or plant arising out of or by reason of said repair alteration or removal.

**Waste Disposal:** All green waste generated by the repair of sidewalks or retention, removal, and replacement of street tree(s) as part of the Sidewalk Repair Program shall remain separated from other waste to ensure its ability to be composted, mulched or disposed of in accordance with title 14 of the California Code of Regulations governing compost quality.

**Monitoring:** For the first three years of planting, replacement street trees shall be maintained and monitored for growth under the direction of UFD through visual inspections at the time when street trees are manually watered 33 times per year for three years. Young street trees that do not survive in the first 3 years must be replaced at a 1:1 ratio. The young street trees must be able to withstand slight to moderate drought or other stress.

Approved by the Board of Public Works: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by the City Council: \_\_\_\_\_