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STELLENBOSCH MUNICIPALITY

TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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DEFINITION AND ABBREVIATIONS

For the purpose of this policy:

“Adaptation” In human systems, the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities; in natural systems, the process of adjustment to actual climate and its effects; human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects.

“Aftercare” the tree maintenance regime which is implemented once the tree has been planted.

“Arboriculture” the science and practice of cultivation, management, and study of trees, shrubs, vines, and other perennial woody plants which specifically studies how plants grow and respond to cultural practices and to their environment, including the practice of cultural techniques such as selection, planting, training, fertilization, pest and pathogen control, pruning, shaping, and removal.

“Blanking” the replacement planting of trees in gaps where trees have been lost or died.

“Champion trees” Is a list of protected trees in South Africa that are of national conservation value. Extraordinary single trees and groups of trees assigned “champion” status by the national Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE). Champion status is assigned according to trees biological attributes, age or heritage significance and enjoy protected status under section 12 of the National Forests Act 84 of 1998.

“Climate change” A change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere, and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.

“Coppice Shoots” That grow from the base of a tree or from the roots; when it has been severely cut or pruned (to almost ground level). It is a survival mechanism.

“Critical root zone” The zone, in which the majority of a tree’s roots are found located inside the “drip line” of the tree (under the outer edge of the tree canopy)

“Development” In relation to a place, means any process initiated by a person the construction, erection, alteration, demolition or removal of a structure or building;

- a) A process to enhance rights (e.g. rezone, subdivide or consolidate land);
- b) Changes to the existing or natural topography or slopes;
- c) The destruction or removal of indigenous or protected vegetation; or
- d) Submission of a building plan.

“Council” the Council of Stellenbosch Municipality.

“Directorate” the Directorate: Community and Protection Services;

“Director” the Director: Community and Protection Services.

“Department” the Department of Community Services.

“Endemic tree” A tree that is native to a certain region and is not found anywhere else.

“Environment” the surroundings within which humans exist and that are made up of: the land, water and atmosphere of the earth;

- a) Micro-organisms, plant and animal life;
- b) Any part or combination of the interrelationships among and between them; and
- c) The physical, chemical, aesthetic and cultural properties and conditions of the foregoing that influence human health and well-being.

“Exotic tree” Trees introduced to South Africa from other countries.

“Felling” Tree removal.

“Indigent Households” is as determined by the Council’s Indigent Policy as approved by Council from time to time.

“Indigenous species” A tree originating or occurring naturally in a certain geographical area or country. (Compare “endemic tree”.)

“Infested” Means to cause a problem by being present in large numbers, spreading disease or causing damage or danger.

“Lopping” The indiscriminate cutting off lateral tree branches or limbs.

“Mature tree” Any tree whether located on public or private land, that has reached a desired size or age for its intended use, completed its natural development or growth and has a well-developed canopy.

“Municipal trees” any tree which has been planted on Municipal property.

“Municipality” the Stellenbosch Municipality or any other Committee or official of the Municipality acting in terms of a delegated authority.

“Oak City” to the historical character of Stellenbosch Town in relation to its tree species identity.

“Oak trees” all oak species that Stellenbosch municipality plant.

“Planting” the placing of sapling trees or seeds in the ground or container for them to grow.

“Public Open Space and Public Space”

- a) A public road, parking area, square, park, recreation ground, sports ground, sanitary lane, open space, beach, shopping centre on municipal land, unused or vacant municipal land or cemetery which has been provided, reserved or set apart for use by the public; or been dedicated to the public.

“Protected tree” A tree protected in terms of the National Forests Act 84 of 1998.

“Pruning” the horticultural and arboriculture practice involving the selective removal of parts of a plant, such as branches, buds, or roots. The removal of tree parts to control or enhance their performance or function in the landscape, including crown lifting, reduction and cleaning.

“Road reserves” A designated area of land that contains or can contain a public street or public road, including the road and associated verge, which land may or may not be defined by cadastral boundaries.

“Removal of municipal trees” removal of the above ground level portion of a tree including the grinding away of the roots up to 30 cm below ground level. The complete root system will not be removed but may be poisoned if necessary to prevent further re-growth of the tree.

“Root ball” the main base mass of roots of a plant and the soil surrounding them.

“Root barrier” patented chemical and/or mechanical guides that redirects tree roots down and away from hardscapes, preventing costly root damage.

“Streetscapes” a view or scene as streets in a city.

“Tree” A woody perennial plant with an elongated stem, or trunk, supporting branches and leaves in most species, also includes the critical root zone.

“Tree health” All factors (biotic and abiotic) that affect the vigour and productivity of a tree.

“Tree management” The protection and maintenance of the existing tree asset base in the city, as well as the planning, planting and maintenance of trees.

“Tree Work Procedures” A document developed to ensure uniform standards for all aspects of tree management on City-owned land.

“Tree management” means the protection and maintenance of the existing tree asset base in the Town, as well as the planning, planting and maintenance of future trees.

“Tree scape” a landscape including many trees or groups of trees.

“Tree trunk” to the stem of the tree.

“Topping” Also ‘heading’, ‘tipping’, ‘hat-racking’, ‘rounding over’, ‘lopping or lobbing’. The indiscriminate cutting of tree branches on the main limb and all lateral branches to the same height.

“Transplanting” The digging out of a tree in one location and replanting it in another.

“Tree risk assessment management system (TRAMS)” A electronic system management system to map trees on a Geographical Information system web that stores information and where information can be collated to update, protect and enhance Tree database system as well as promote and create new green infrastructure assets.

“Urban forest” The sum of all trees growing within an urban area.

“Wayleave” is a formal permit that grants a recipient (person, company, or service provider) the right to perform work within a road reserve or on municipal land, subject to specific conditions. These conditions typically dictate how the work is executed, the safety measures required, and the obligation to restore the land to its original state upon completion.

LEGISLATION

Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act 43 of 1998.

National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act no 10 of 2004.

National Environmental Management Protected Areas Act no 57 of 2003.

National Heritage Resources Act no 25 1999.

National Forests Act 84 of 1998.

National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998.

ABBREVIATIONS

CARA Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act 43 of 1998.

DALRRD Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

DFFE Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment.

DW&S Department of Water and Sanitation.

ERM Environmental Resource Management.

IDP Integrated Development Plan.

FY Financial Year.

HPOZ Heritage Protection Overlay Zone.

NEMBA National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004.

NHRA National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999.

NMT Non-Motorized Transport.

POS Public Open Space.

PSHB Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer.

SP Service Providers.

TRAMS Tree Risk Assessment Management System.

WCO24 Greater Stellenbosch Municipality.

1. Introduction

The Stellenbosch Municipality recognizes the essential role that trees play in enhancing the environmental, social, and cultural fabric of the town and its surrounding settlements.

As key components of the urban landscape, trees provide aesthetic, ecological, historical, and climate-related benefits that are vital to the health and well-being of both residents and the environment.

In an area rich in natural beauty and heritage, trees are integral to preserving the unique character of Stellenbosch and contribute significantly to a sense of place, especially in historic precincts, agricultural fringes, and rural villages.

Trees line the streets of our towns, define streetscapes, public open spaces, and offer shade and shelter in parks, nature reserves - areas, and informal settlements alike.

2. Policy Statement

Stellenbosch Municipality's Tree Management Policy Framework emphasis sustainable development, environmental protection and the creation of quality living.

The aim of the Tree Management Policy is to protect and maintain the trees located on municipal property through accepted tree management (arboricultural) practices and thus promoting a sustainable development approach.

This approach is geared towards making WC024 the greenest municipality in South Africa through Urban Forestry practices which guides investors towards future sustainable development. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that a guideline exists to manage trees within the Stellenbosch Municipality.

3. Objectives and Benefits

The overarching goal of this policy is to promote a healthy, resilient, and diverse urban forest throughout Stellenbosch Municipality.

Herewith are specific objectives which include:

- a) Enhance urban liveability through tree planting, shade provision, and streetscape improvements.
- b) Conserve biodiversity by prioritising indigenous tree species that support local ecosystems.

- c) Mitigate and adapt to climate change through increased canopy cover, carbon sequestration, and reduced urban heat.
- d) Protect heritage and significant trees for their cultural, historical, and ecological value.
- e) Integrate tree planning into urban development and spatial planning processes.
- f) Establish clear roles and responsibilities for municipal departments, private landowners, and other stakeholders.
- g) Provide guidelines for planting, maintenance, and removal of trees on municipal and private land.
- h) Promote education, community involvement, and stewardship of urban trees.

4. Policy Guidelines

- a) Planting, blanking and maintenance of trees in compliance with arboriculture best-practice guidelines.
- b) Ensuring uniform arboricultural procedures and practices.
- c) Encouraging greening of new housing development projects.
- d) Reduction of the carbon footprint through the planting of trees.
- e) Ensuring integrated infrastructure planning with other directorates within Stellenbosch Municipality, to promote tree protection and greening of areas.
- f) Protection and maintenance of all historic trees and champion trees in compliance with applicable legislation.
- g) Promote and facilitate the protection of trees on private properties where possible.
- h) Promote marketing of Stellenbosch as the “Oak City”.
- i) Engage with stakeholders and role-players responsible for planting trees to ensure alignment and integration of tree planting initiatives.
- j) Ensure that private landowners are made aware of, and comply with, their obligations under lease agreements or planning approvals to clear alien vegetation from their properties.

5. Policy Benefits

- 5.1 Environmental benefits: Trees are integral to the protection, restoration, and enhancement of urban and peri-urban ecosystems. They provide critical ecosystem services that support climate adaptation, ecological sustainability, and long-term environmental resilience.
 - 5.1.1 Climate Resilience: Trees mitigate urban heat island effects and contribute to natural climate regulation through shading and evapotranspiration.
 - 5.1.2 Flood and Erosion Control: Tree root systems stabilise soil, enhance water infiltration, and reduce surface runoff, thereby minimising flood risks and soil erosion.
 - 5.1.3 Air Pollution Control: Tree canopies improve air quality by absorbing pollutants and capturing airborne particulate matter.
 - 5.1.4 Energy Conservation: Strategically placed trees provide shade and cooling, reducing the energy demand for heating and cooling in buildings.
 - 5.1.5 Noise Pollution Control: Vegetation buffers and tree belts help to attenuate and absorb noise from urban activities and transport systems.
 - 5.1.6 Wildlife and Biodiversity: Indigenous and non-indigenous tree species provide habitat, food sources, and ecological connectivity for a wide range of insects, birds, and mammals, thereby supporting urban biodiversity.
- 5.2 Material Benefits: Trees provide a range of tangible resources that contribute to livelihoods, food systems, and cultural practices within urban and peri-urban environments. When integrated into green infrastructure planning, these benefits support both environmental sustainability and community well-being.
 - 5.2.1 Food and Fruit: Urban orchards and fruit-bearing tree species contribute to local food security, enhance nutritional diversity, and promote sustainable, community-based food systems.
 - 5.2.2 Medicinal Value: Trees with traditional medicinal properties can be incorporated into urban greening initiatives, particularly within community gardens and culturally significant spaces, supporting indigenous knowledge systems and holistic well-being.

- 5.3 Amenity Benefits: Trees play a vital role in improving quality of life by enhancing environmental comfort, visual character, and the social value of urban and peri-urban spaces, thereby supporting healthier and more liveable communities.
- 5.3.1 Recreation: Trees provide shade and cooling, enhancing the usability of streets, parks, sports fields, nature reserves, and other public spaces for recreation and outdoor activities.
- 5.3.2 Aesthetics: Trees enrich the visual quality and character of urban landscapes, contributing to attractive streetscapes, campuses, and residential environments.
- 5.3.3 Education: Urban trees support environmental education through school greening initiatives and opportunities for biodiversity awareness and learning.
- 5.3.4 Health and Well-being: Access to green spaces with tree cover is associated with reduced stress, improved mental health, and overall well-being.
- 5.3.5 Cultural and Religious Significance: Trees hold cultural, spiritual, and heritage value, often serving as sites for traditional practices, sacred rituals, and community identity.
- 5.4 Economic Benefits: Urban trees contribute to both direct and indirect economic value by enhancing ecosystem services, supporting local economies, and functioning as long-term green infrastructure assets within urban and peri-urban environments.
- 5.4.1 Tourism: Tree-lined streets, green corridors, and well-maintained public spaces enhance the attractiveness of Stellenbosch as a walkable, scenic, and heritage-rich destination, supporting the local tourism economy.
- 5.4.2 Property Value Enhancement: The presence of mature trees and well-vegetated streetscapes increases property desirability, attracting buyers and tenants while contributing to higher property values.
- 5.4.3 Asset Value and Infrastructure: Trees are living infrastructure assets that provide measurable economic value over time. Their effective management requires planned investment in maintenance, monitoring, and protection to sustain their long-term benefits.

6. Tree Planting

- 6.1 The municipality will facilitate the planting of trees at its sole discretion, in alignment with the approved Tree Planting Programme.
- 6.2 Requests for tree planting shall be processed subject to the completion and submission of a Tree Planting Commitment Form by the applicant, as set out in Annexure 3.
- 6.3 Individual residents requesting the planting of trees must submit a completed Tree Planting Commitment Form (Annexure 3), in which they agree to undertake the maintenance and care of the tree in its entirety.
- 6.4 Tree donations and sponsorships from private individuals, organisations, or entities will be accepted subject to the conclusion of formal written agreement between the donor/sponsor and the municipality.
- 6.5 The Municipality reserves the right to donate trees to educational institutions, recognised community greening initiatives and registered conservancies as part of the Municipality's greening objectives.
- 6.6 Members of the public who engage in unauthorised tree planting on Municipal land will be requested to complete a Tree Planting Commitment Form. The municipality reserves the right to remove any unauthorised plantings at its discretion.
- 6.7 The municipality may at its discretion instruct individuals responsible for unauthorised tree plantings to remove such trees at their own cost. Non-compliance may result in further administrative or legal action as deemed necessary.
- 6.8 Planting requests shall be considered and actioned primarily during the months of April, May, June, September and October.

7. Tree Species Selection

- 7.1 Tree species selection within Stellenbosch Municipality shall be guided by an evaluation of local terrain, topography, climatic conditions, and indigenous flora. Selections will be drawn from the Municipality's approved List of Recommended Trees (Annexure 1), ensuring alignment with policy guidelines. Consideration will be given to the available planting space and the expected mature size of trees to prevent conflicts with infrastructure and to promote sustainable urban greening.
- 7.2 Species selected should complement the existing treescape and support the preservation of Stellenbosch's identity as the 'Oak City.' Wherever possible, planting shall prioritize oak species and other trees that

reinforce this heritage and maintain the municipality's unique landscape character.

- 7.3 While oak species are prioritized to maintain Stellenbosch's 'Oak City' heritage, the selection of non-oak species is encouraged to promote biodiversity, ecological resilience, and adaptability to varying site conditions. Non-oak species shall be chosen based on their compatibility with the local environment, growth characteristics, and contribution to the overall health and diversity of the municipal treescape.

8. General Guidelines for Tree Planting

- 8.1 Trees shall be planted along sidewalks and within road reserves as specified in the Municipal Tree Planting Programme. Preference must be given to locally indigenous species, selected in accordance with site-specific environmental conditions and infrastructure constraints.
- a) A minimum spacing of 5 metres between trees shall be maintained within road reserves, unless otherwise specified.
 - b) Root management measures, including the installation of root control barriers, shall be implemented where necessary to prevent damage to underground services, sidewalks, and other hardened surfaces.
 - c) Trees identified by the Municipality as dead, diseased, or hazardous shall be removed and replaced in accordance with approved standards.
- 8.2 Planting on Municipal Land: Private planting is not permitted on municipal or leased land without prior approval with the relevant Director/Manager of the municipality.
- 8.3 Reporting of Tree-Related Damage: Existing trees that were planted on municipal land that caused damage to private property must be reported to the municipality.
- 8.4 Infrastructure and Wayleave Requirements: Tree planting shall be subject to wayleave approvals to ensure compatibility with existing and planned infrastructure. Wayleave determinations shall guide whether a site is suitable for planting.
- 8.5 Tree planting shall be prohibited in the following circumstances:
- 8.5.1 Close to a driveway or road intersection where it is likely to impair sight lines of motorists, cyclist or pedestrians.

- 8.5.2 Where the presence of trees would obstruct or impair the visibility of traffic control devices, including traffic signs, signals, and directional signage, in a manner that could compromise road safety or driver awareness.
- 8.5.3 Where pedestrian pathways are obstructed in a manner that forces pedestrians to walk in the roadway or renders the path inaccessible to wheelchair users, persons with mobility impairments, or individuals using pushcarts or similar mobility aids.
- 8.5.4 Where trees may encroach on service infrastructure such as gas, electricity and telecommunication lines, water and sanitation services, except where root barrier has been installed.
- 8.5.5 Tree planting shall not occur in areas where the necessary wayleave approvals have not been obtained, especially where tree growth may interfere with existing municipal services, including but not limited to electricity infrastructure, street lighting, water supply, sewerage systems, and telecommunications (Telkom) lines.
- 8.5.6 Tree planting shall be prohibited within a radius of five (5) metres from intersections, existing driveways, electricity lamp poles, and directly beneath overhead power lines to ensure safety, accessibility, and unobstructed infrastructure operation.
- 8.5.7 Trees with large root systems will not be planted within the 2m radius of a pathway which may potentially cause damage to infrastructure.
- 8.5.8 It is prohibited to plant any invasive trees in terms of applicable legislation.
- 8.5.9 Where planting compromises the protection of the municipality's supply mains which is stipulated in the Electricity Services by Laws Section 25.
- 8.5.10 No person shall construct, erect, or permit the construction, erection, or building, structure, or other object, nor plant any trees, in such a position or manner which may interfere with, obstruct, or endanger municipal supply mains.
- 8.5.11 Excavate, open or remove the ground above, next to, under or near any part of the supply mains.

- 8.5.12 Damage, endanger, remove or destroy, or do any act likely to damage, endanger or destroy any part of the supply mains; or
- 8.5.13 Make any unauthorised connection to any part of the supply mains or divert or cause to be diverted any electricity there from.
- 8.5.14 The owner or occupier must limit the height of trees or length of projecting branches in the proximity of overhead lines or provide a means of protection which in the opinion of the municipality will adequately prevent trees from interfering with the conductors should a tree or branch fall or be cut down.
- 8.5.15 Should the owner fail to observe this provision the municipality may, after prior written notification, or at any time in an emergency, order the owner to cut or prune the trees or other vegetation in such a manner as to comply with this provision.
- 8.5.16 The Municipality may, subject to obtaining an order of court, demolish, alter or otherwise deal with any building, structure or other object constructed, erected or laid in contravention with the Electrical Services By-law.
- 8.5.17 The Municipality may in the case of an emergency or disaster remove anything damaging, obstructing or endangering or likely to damage, obstruct, endanger or destroy any part of the electrical distribution system.

9. Universal Access and Integrated Tree Planting Approach

Tree planting shall be planned and implemented as part of an integrated urban design approach that supports both environmental objectives and universal accessibility. Trees are encouraged in the urban environment, provided that their placement, species selection, and management do not compromise safe, continuous, and inclusive movement for all users.

- 9.1 Pedestrian Accessibility: Trees shall be positioned and managed to ensure that pedestrian pathways remain clear, continuous, and fully accessible. Accessible routes must be maintained for all users, including persons with disabilities, wheelchair users, and individuals using prams or mobility aids.

9.2 Integrated Pathway Design and Clearance: Tree placement shall form part of coordinated streetscape and sidewalk design, ensuring that minimum clear widths and safe passing spaces are maintained in accordance with universal access principles. Trees should be incorporated into designated planting zones where available, such as verge strips or landscaped buffers, to avoid obstruction of pedestrian movement.

9.3 Root Management and Surface Integrity: Tree species selection, planting techniques, and infrastructure design shall prevent root-related damage to pedestrian surfaces. Where necessary, root barriers, structural soils, or engineered planting systems shall be used to ensure long-term surface stability and safe, even walking conditions. Tree with an aggressive root structure must be avoided as it may cause damage to municipal services and infrastructure.

9.4 Visibility, Safety, and Wayfinding: Trees shall be planted in a manner that preserves clear sightlines for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Planting design must avoid obstruction of intersections, crossings, signage, lighting, and other wayfinding elements essential for safe and accessible movement.

10. Reporting of Incidents

All tree-related incidents reported to the Municipality will be processed as follows:

- a) Tree related incidents will be logged into the Tree Incident Register.
- b) Municipal response time to emergency tree-related incidence will take place within 24 hours.
- c) Tree-related incidents that are reclassified as routine operational matters or service complaints may be addressed within 15 to 45 working days following the completion of the inspection, subject to operational priorities, risk assessment, and available resources.

11. Insurance Claim for Municipal Trees

All insurance claims relating to municipal trees shall be handled in accordance with the procedure set out below:

- a) Inspection of Incident Site: A Municipal official shall conduct an on-site inspection at the location where the incident occurred.
- b) Incident Reporting: The Municipal official shall complete an incident report following the inspection and submit it to the relevant

section for further processing and handling in accordance with applicable municipal procedures.

12. Tree Replacement Procedure

Tree replacement (blanking) shall be undertaken where trees are removed due to being diseased, dying, dead, or otherwise deemed hazardous. Replacement shall be carried out using suitable tree species that are appropriate to the site conditions, urban design objectives, and applicable municipal guidelines. A formal replacement procedure shall apply to both oak and non-oak tree species to ensure consistency, ecological suitability, infrastructure consideration and long-term sustainability of the urban forest.

The following factors will be considered:

- a) Tree Blanking: Tree blanking shall only be undertaken under defined and approved circumstances to ensure that removals are justified, controlled, and aligned with municipal management objectives.
- b) Planned Municipal Programme: Blanking may be undertaken where it forms part of an approved municipal tree management, renewal, or planting programme.
- c) Dead or Declining Trees: Blanking shall apply where a tree is confirmed dead or where more than 75% of the tree is dead, diseased, or in irreversible decline and cannot reasonably recover.
- d) Irreversible Damage: Blanking may be undertaken where trees have sustained damage beyond recovery due to human activity, whether accidental or deliberate, including vandalism or physical destruction.

13. Tree Maintenance

Stellenbosch Municipality recognises all trees as valuable assets within the urban environment. Accordingly, all requests for tree removal must be carefully considered by the responsible Department. Pruning or tree felling on municipal property shall only be undertaken when duly authorised in accordance with the relevant municipal procedures and approval processes

- a) No person(s) may prune or remove a tree planted on municipal property without prior authority.
- b) Requests for pruning and removal of trees must be directed to the municipality.

- c) Pruning or removal of trees on private property is not the responsibility of the municipality, but guidance will be given when required.
- d) A tree on a boundary line will only be considered for pruning and felling if 50% or more of the main stem is located on municipal property.
- e) Where a member of the public plants trees that are unsuitable for the area or which interfere with any municipal service, the tree will be removed by the municipality after notifying the member of public.
- f) The Municipality reserves the right to recover the costs associated with the removal of such trees in accordance with the Tree Evaluation System (Table 1). This system provides an objective and defensible method for determining the value of trees.
- g) Where any maintenance of a tree requires the closure of a sidewalk or road lane, an application for the closure of the sidewalk or road lane must be submitted to the Directorate: Infrastructure Services. Closure of the sidewalk or road lane can only occur once approval from the Infrastructure Services Directorate has been obtained and all the conditions for the closure are met.

14. Pruning and Removal of Trees

14.1 The pruning or removal of trees may be considered in the following instances:

- a) Interference with radio, television, internet, DSTV reception and solar panels.
- b) Less than 75% dead or dying.
- c) Aesthetic purposes, i.e. when it is seen as an eyesore to the surrounding environment.
- d) Shedding leaves, fruits, flowers, seeds, or any other plant material.
- e) Specified as the cause of allergies.
- f) Causing excessive shade.
- g) To improve visibility where branches obstruct views within the urban environment, provided that pruning does not interfere with or reduce the visibility of traffic signs, signals, or other road safety infrastructure.
- h) Obscuring private advertising boards (other than public signage).

- i) Causing nuisance in respect of swimming pools.
 - j) Hampering the growth of other plants.
 - k) Attraction of insects or birds (including bats) because of its flowers and our fruit.
 - l) Where a property owner undertakes renovations, existing trees shall not be removed to accommodate or facilitate the renovation works, except where specifically authorised by the Municipality in accordance with applicable policies and procedures.
- 14.2 The following factors shall be considered before pruning or felling of trees:
- a) Public - staff, property and contractor's safety.
 - b) Legal factors.
- 14.3 Generally, trees are only pruned or felled for sound arboriculture reasons such as:
- a) Trees causing damage to infrastructure.
 - b) Trees causing a safety risk to pedestrians and other road users, for example obstructing pedestrian and a vehicular movement or impeding traffic sight lines and driver sight distances.
 - c) Trees that are beyond recovery.
 - d) Trees causing a traffic, electrical or health hazard.
 - e) Trees that interfere with essential services where no other suitable alternatives can be found.
 - f) Tree removal request for building and development such as new vehicle entrances, subjected to the presentation of approved building plans, where no other alternative can be found.
 - g) New developments subjected to building approvals.
 - h) The applicant will be held liable for the cost of removal as well as for the aesthetic loss to the environment. The cost will be based on the Tree Evaluation System for valuing a tree as set out in paragraph 14.2 and Table 1.

14.4 Pruning and felling of trees infested with Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer (PSHB):

- a) Trees positively identified with the PSHB by the municipality will be assessed to determine the appropriate action.
- b) Pruning or felling of infested trees will be determined by the rate of infestation.
- c) Pruning and felling of infested trees will be done by using safe and professional practices to minimise spread of the beetle.
- d) Care is taken to keep all cut material together as to stop the spread of the PSHB.
- e) Transportation of infested biomass must be exercised by covering the infested material with plastic sheeting.
- f) The remaining stump is tightly sealed with plastic sheet.

15. Champion Tree Status and Heritage and Protection of Trees under Heritage Western Cape

Champion Trees is granted a special protected status under the National Forests Act of 1998. These trees are recognized for their exceptional size, age, or cultural significance, often representing the largest or most remarkable specimens of their species within a region.

Under this legislation, no Champion Tree may be cut down, disturbed, damaged, or removed without first obtaining a license from the relevant Provincial Department responsible for forestry and environmental management. This strict protection helps to conserve these important natural landmarks and ensures their preservation for future generations.

Furthermore, any maintenance or management activities involving Champion Trees such as pruning, treatment, or other interventions require an approved permit from the DFFE. This regulatory oversight guarantees that all work on Champion Trees is carried out responsibly, in a manner that prioritizes the health and longevity of the tree while complying with legal requirements.

Heritage Trees hold a special protected status under the Heritage Western Cape Framework. These trees are recognized for their significant cultural, historical, and environmental value and are safeguarded accordingly. The protection is typically granted based on the following criteria:

- 15.1 Age: Trees that have reached a notable age and have become important natural landmarks due to their longevity and contribution to the landscape.
- 15.2 Location within the Historical Core Overlay Zone: Trees situated within designated historical core areas, as defined by the relevant planning and zoning regulations, are afforded additional protection. These overlay zones are established to preserve the heritage character of certain areas, and trees within these zones contribute to the historical fabric and aesthetic value of the environment.
- 15.3 The Heritage Western Cape legislation mandates that such trees must be preserved, and any actions that could potentially harm, alter, or remove these trees are subject to stringent controls and require formal authorization. This ensures that the trees' historical and ecological integrity is maintained for future generations. As a result, development, landscaping, or planning initiatives in areas with Heritage Trees must take into careful consideration the protection guidelines and legal requirements and engage with relevant heritage authorities before proceeding.
- 15.4 This ensures that the tree historical and ecological integrity is maintained for future generation. As a result, development, landscaping, or planting initiatives in areas with Heritage Trees must take into careful consideration the protection guidelines and legal requirements and engage with relevant heritage authorities before proceeding.

16. Damage to Trees using the Tree Evaluation System

- 16.1 The Tree Evaluation System is used to ensure that trees are assessed in a consistent, transparent, and objective manner within the municipal Provide a recognised method for determining the monetary value of trees in cases of accidental damage, destruction, or where removal is requested, ensuring accountability and appropriate compensation. Trees are living infrastructure assets that provide significant environmental, social, and economic benefits, and therefore require a structured approach to their valuation and management.
- 16.2 This system is applied to Standardise the assessment of tree value using fixed, defensible criteria, ensuring that decisions regarding removal, retention, and planting are based on objective evaluation rather than subjective judgement.
- 16.3 Support planners, engineers, and developers in incorporating trees into project planning with the same level of accuracy and consistency applied to other infrastructure and environmental components.

16.4 Strengthen urban forest management by ensuring that trees are recognised and treated as valuable municipal assets contributing to ecological sustainability, climate resilience, and public amenity

16.5 When damage to trees is observed, the municipality has the right to act against the responsible party. This will be in the form of the following:

- a) Monetary claim for the damages incurred.
- b) Replacement value of the asset as set out in Table 1.

16.5.1 The Tree Evaluation System (Table 1) will be used as a guideline to ascertain the value of a tree. Seven factors are considered when calculating the aesthetic value of a tree, with each evaluation factor having four possible values. The assigned value of each factor is multiplied by the other and the accumulative product is multiplied by the inflation rate to provide an overall estimated monetary value of the tree, i.e. factor a x b x c x d x e x f x g = total x inflation rate = R total. This formula is based on the British Tree Council formula, which is accepted worldwide by authorities.

Table 1: Tree Evaluation System

		Evaluation Factor Score			
Factors		1	2	3	4
i	Size of tree - girth, height, width and trunk size	Small 0-4 meters	Medium 4-8 meters	Large 8-16 meters	Very large 16 meters+
ii	Useful life expectancy	10-20 yrs.	20-40 yrs.	40-100 yrs.	100 yrs.+
iii	Importance of position in landscape (location and function, cultural and historical value)	Little	Some	Considerable	Great
iv	Presence of other trees, surrounds and aesthetics	Many 10 or more	Some 4-10	Few 1-4	None
v	Relation to the setting, location, foliage, cover and aesthetics	Barely Suitable	Fairly suitable	Very suitable	Especially suitable

vi	Form, shape, size, height, weight and look of tree	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
vii	Special factors - botanical value of species, growth rate, flowers, indigenous or exotic, evergreen or deciduous	None	One	Two	Three or more

16.5.2 The objective of the Tree Evaluation System is:

- a) To provide an objective way of examining a tree by means of fixed criteria to assess a trees value in its environmental context. Such a method has wide application and affects management considerations, e.g. removal and planting.
- b) To provide arboriculture and other practitioners with a system for assessing a monetary Market Value when trees are accidentally mutilated or destroyed or when removal is requested.
- c) To provide planners and developers with a means of including trees in their estimates with the same precision, objectivity and consistency that they apply to other aspects of landscape and engineering works.

17. Insurance Claim for Municipal Trees

All insurance claims will be dealt with in the following manner:

- a) Inspections will be conducted by Municipal official where incident occurred.
- b) Incident report will be completed and submitted by Municipal official to the relevant section for further handling.

Annexure 1

RECOMMENDED MUNICIPAL TREES FOR STELLENBOSCH MUNICIPALITY

SCIENTIFIC TREE NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Celtis Africana</i>	White Stinkwood
<i>Combretum erythrophyllum</i>	River Bushwillow
<i>Curtisia dentata</i>	Assegai
<i>Ekebergia capensis</i>	Cape Ash
<i>Harpephyllum caffrum</i>	Wild Plum
<i>Ilex mitis</i>	Cape Holy
<i>Kiggelaria africana</i>	Wild Peach
<i>Metrosideros angustifolius</i>	Lance-Leaf Myrtle
<i>Podocarpus latifolius</i>	Broad-Leaved Yellowwood
<i>Podocarpus henkelii</i>	Henkel's Yellowwood
<i>Podocarpus elongatus</i>	Breede River Yellowwood
<i>Quercus cirris</i>	Turkish Oak
<i>Quercus nigra</i>	Water Oak
<i>Quercus palustris</i>	Pin Oak
<i>Rhus pendulina</i>	White Karee
<i>Sideroxylon inerme</i>	White Milkwood
<i>Widdringtonia cedarbergensis</i>	Clanwilliam Cedar
<i>Nuxia floribunda</i>	Forest Elder
<i>Olea europaea Africana</i>	Wild Olive
<i>Afrocarpus falcatus</i>	Outeniqua Yellow Wood
<i>Harpephyllum caffrum</i>	Wilf Plum
<i>Ilex mitis</i>	Cape Holly
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob
<i>Quercus cerris</i>	Turkish Oak
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holm Oak
<i>Quercus suber</i>	Cork Oak
<i>Quercus canariensis</i>	Algerian Oak
<i>Searsia lancea</i>	Karee
<i>Schinus molle</i>	Pepper Tree
<i>Populus simonei</i>	Chinese Poplar And Simon's Poplar

<i>Araucoria heterophylla</i>	Norfolk Island Pine
<i>Dombeya rotundifolia</i>	Wild Pear
<i>Syzygium cordatum</i>	Water Berry
<i>Syzygium guineense</i>	Waterberry, Waterpear, Or Woodland
<i>Erythrina caffra</i>	Coastal Coral Tree
<i>Erythrina lysistemon</i>	Lucky Bean Tree
<i>Combretum Krausii</i>	Forest Bushwillow
<i>Widdingtonia nodiflora</i>	Mountain Cypress
<i>Salise mucsondta</i>	Red Mangrove
<i>Ocotea bullata</i>	Stinkwood Or Black Stinkwood
<i>Ginko biloba</i>	Ginko Biloba
<i>Pittosporum viridiflorum</i>	Cheesewood
<i>Apodytes dimidiata</i>	White Pear
<i>Pappea capensis</i>	Jacket Plum
<i>Heteropyuis natalensis</i>	Lavender Tree
<i>Olinia vertosa</i>	Hard Pear
<i>Olea Capensis</i>	Black Ironwood
<i>Dais cotinifolia</i>	Pompom Tree
<i>Rapanea melanophloeas</i>	Cape Beech
<i>Euclea natalensis</i>	Natal Guarri
<i>Buddleja Saligna</i>	False Olive
<i>Vepris lancedata</i>	White Ironwood
<i>Rothmannia capensis</i>	Wild Gardenia
<i>Caldendron capensis</i>	Cape Chestnut
<i>Halleria Lucida</i>	Tree Fuchsia
<i>Kigelia africana</i>	Sausage Tree
<i>Taerchonanthus camphor</i>	Camphor Bush
<i>Acer buergerianum</i>	Trident Maple
<i>Aruacaria bidwillii</i>	Bunya Pine
<i>Carya illinoensis</i>	Pecan Tree
<i>Cedrus deodora</i>	Deodar Cedar
<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	Bald Cypress

Annexure 2



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APPLICATION FORM FOR THE FELLING OF TREES

This form must be completed and relevant additional information attached before an application will be evaluated and considered.

Reference Number					
Date of Application					
Name and Surname					
Physical Address of Tree					
Email Address of Applicant					
Telephone Number					
Tree Location	Park		Pavement		
	POS		River		
Reason for Removal of Tree (s)	Description	Please tick	Comment		
	Dead				
	Dangerous				
	Diseased				
	Other- please motivate:				
Name Tree Species					
Details of Tree Replacement Plan					
Pictures attached					

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Date of site visit		
Name municipal representative who undertook inspection		
Designation of Municipal representative		
Description of Request by Municipal Official		
Sufficient evidence	Yes	
	Emails	
	Pictures	
	Other Supporting Documents	
Recommendation by Superintendent: Urban Forestry	Approved	
	Motivation for decision:	
	Conditions of Approval:	
Supported by Manager: Environmental Management	Approved/ Rejected	
Senior Manager: Community Services	Approved/ Rejected	

END