

# **Parkfairfax Tree Protection Policy and Maintenance Standards**

**Approved 10/21/2009**

**The trees of Parkfairfax are one of the largest and most valuable components of the landscape. They are a shared asset of the community and its collective unit owners. Trees moderate climate by cleaning the air, buffering noise, serving as wind breaks, and providing shade for buildings, walks, and parking areas. Furthermore trees enhance the environment by screening undesirable sites, framing pleasing views, and helping define outdoor spaces and contributing to their function. Trees can also detract from the living environment at times by blocking signs and lights, encroaching on buildings and parking spaces, impeding vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and creating litter by dropping limbs and fruit. Poorly managed trees can also lead to power outages, property damage, bodily injury, and even loss of life.**

**Trees increase economic stability. The scope and condition of a community's trees and, collectively, its urban forest, is usually the first impression a community projects to its visitors.**

**The Parkfairfax Unit Owners Association recognizes the value trees represent to the property and its residents, and their duty to protect and maintain the asset.**

**It is the goal of the Association to have a management program that will enable the community to maximize the benefits of its trees while minimizing the negative aspects and the liability these trees can represent. It is a further goal to provide a systematic maintenance regime for all of the community's trees.**

**It is the policy of the Parkfairfax Condominium Association to protect and maintain the Community's Trees in accordance with the standards and provisions set forth herein below.**

Tree pruning at Parkfairfax will be done so that the natural appearance and health of trees is maintained whenever possible while also taking into consideration the effect that the trees have on building maintenance and safety. Trees are a very valuable asset to our community. Their value must

be balanced with effective building maintenance and human safety while carrying out a responsible and effective tree maintenance program.

Proper selection and placement of new trees will also affect tree and building maintenance. There are certain species to avoid altogether. Consideration of the proximity to buildings, parking areas, and sidewalks varies depending on the species of tree selected. Undesirable volunteer trees should be removed in all cases.

With the exception of tree removals, decisions concerning the maintenance of trees will be made by the Landscape Maintenance Director working with the General Manager and the Building Maintenance Director. The Landscape Maintenance Director is the acknowledged technical authority with respect to issues associated with maintaining the health, safety and character of trees.

Unit Owner requests for tree removal will include the input of the Landscape and Woodlands Committees as appropriate and set forth in “Procedures and Requirements for Tree Removal Requests”, with final approval by the Board of Directors, except as otherwise provided for in that document.

Limbs overhanging buildings will be maintained at a standard of 6 to 8 feet above the roof. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, no more than 25% of foliage will be removed in a single pruning. Residents in the immediate area will be notified in advance of planned, non-emergency, tree removals. All tree pruning will be done in accordance with American National Standards Institute practices and/or National Arborist Association standards.

### **Building Clearance**

Pruning trees to clear roofs of buildings should be done on a regular basis. All branches extending over buildings which are less than eight feet from any point on a roof should be removed. In some cases, branches as close as six feet from a roof may be left if removing them could adversely affect the health, safety or appearance of the tree, or if removal is not practical. Building clearance will include the removal of all dead or diseased branches extending over buildings regardless of their height above the roof. For

routine building clearance, notices will not be distributed to unit owners but will be provided in the monthly newsletter for interested residents.

### **Thinning and Limbing-up**

Thinning of trees may be done to reduce the likelihood of wind damage, to improve the health of a tree and, in a few cases, to increase the amount of sunlight filtering through to the ground. It should rarely be done if the only benefit is increased sunlight. Limbing-up (removal of lower branches) may be done to clear streets, parking areas, sidewalks, and patios. To a limited extent, it may also be done to provide more sunlight and to improve sight lines.

### **Deadwood pruning**

Trees develop deadwood as a normal process of their growth, and due to stress and disease. In general, trees need to have deadwood removed every two to five years depending on the species and health of the tree. More frequent pruning may be needed on some trees for safety reasons.

### **Cabling**

During routine inspections trees which need to be cabled will be identified. Cabling reduces wind damage to trees with multiple leaders and can reduce the likelihood of damage to buildings.

### **Tree Removal**

Procedures for the removal of trees are covered in the document **“Procedures and Requirements for Tree Removal Requests”**. In general, the Landscape Maintenance Director can have trees removed at his discretion if they are dead, diseased, hazardous or too close to a building. When a unit owner requests the removal of a tree that does not meet these criteria, both the Landscape Maintenance Director and either the Landscape Committee or the Woodlands Committee (as appropriate) will advise the Board of Directors as to whether or not the request should be approved. The Board will make the final decision.

Trees that die in the woodlands will be left standing unless doing so will create a hazardous situation. Trees that fall or are cut down in the woodlands will remain in place unless they are blocking a trail. If practical, measures will be taken to avoid damage to other woodland plants when cutting down trees in woodland areas.

### **Tree Planting**

The Landscape Maintenance Director will decide on species selection and placement of newly planted trees consistent with the long term goals of both the tree succession program and building maintenance. In the past, trees have sometimes been planted without taking into consideration their mature size. Trees vary considerably by species (and cultivars within species) in their growth habits. Both the mature height and spread of a tree variety should be taken into consideration when determining a planting location in relation to buildings.

The following tree species are undesirable in most situations for Parkfairfax and should rarely be planted.

- Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*)
- Box Elder (*Acer negundo*)
- Lombardy poplar (*Populus Nigra*)
- Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*)
- Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*)

The following non-native tree species are very invasive and damaging to native woodlands and should never be planted anywhere at Parkfairfax. Their seeds can easily disperse to the woodlands if planted anywhere nearby.

- Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
- Bradford Pear (*Pyrus calleryana* ‘Bradford’)
- Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)
- Mimosa or Silk tree (*Albizia julibrissin*)
- Non-native mulberries (White Mulberry – *Morus alba*; Paper Mulberry – *Broussonetia papyrifera*)
- Princess Tree or Royal paulownia (*Paulownia tomentosa*)
- Sawtooth Oak (*Quercus acutissima*)
- Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*)
- White poplar (*Populus alba*)
- Chinese tallow tree” (*Triadica sebifera*)

Requests by Unit Owners to purchase and plant trees within the Limited Common Element associated with their Unit must receive approval from both the Landscape Maintenance Director and the Covenants Committee.

### **Inspections**

The Landscape Maintenance Director will do inspections throughout the year to determine general pruning and tree maintenance needs. Routine deadwood pruning, removals, cabling and building clearance will be done based on these inspections.

In December and May of each year, comprehensive inspections will be done to determine building clearance needs for all buildings. At least five landscape and building maintenance employees will be trained by the Landscape Maintenance Director to inspect buildings for trees that require pruning for building clearance. The information they gather will be used by the Landscape Maintenance Director, in consultation with the General Manager and the Building Maintenance Director, to include high priority and other buildings which have suffered water damage in the past to develop pruning lists for annual pruning activities. Comprehensive inspections will pay particular attention to problem trees affecting buildings including those buildings identified in the most recent contractor or maintenance reports.