

ENHANCING NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY BY CREATING A SAFE PATHWAY

KNOW THE RIGHT OF WAY, CLEAR THE RIGHT OF WAY

To protect public health and safety, it is important to keep streets, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and other public areas free of overgrown vegetation. Green spaces transform the city and provide many benefits that influence the health and well-being of our community. Property owners, both public and private, need to be conscious about managing vegetation on their property to address visibility and safety concerns.

It is important to meet the standards below and keep the following areas free of obstructions:

Sidewalks

For a clear pathway, keep tree limbs and vegetation trimmed back from the edge of the sidewalk and at least **8 feet above sidewalks.**

Streets/Alleys

Keep tree limbs and vegetation trimmed back from the edge of the street or alley and at least **14 feet above streets, bicycle lanes and alleys.**

Effective ways to enhance neighborhood safety:

- Trim trees and vegetation to increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Maintain care and health of the trees on your property. Well-maintained trees provide shade, improve air quality and keep Austin looking beautiful!
- Dial 3-1-1 to request care for trees in the public right of way.

KNOW THE RULES

Property Owner Responsibility

Property owners are responsible for the care and maintenance of trees, plants and grass on private property. Overgrown trees and plants can pose a threat when they block the path or view of traffic signs, signals, fire hydrants, vehicles and people. Prune trees and trim or remove any vegetation that blocks the pathway of sidewalks, streets, alleys, bicycle lanes and trails. Keep in mind, the strip of land between the street and sidewalk is public property but the maintenance of vegetation (*with the exception of trees*) is the property owners' responsibility. Trees in the public right of way are maintained by the City of Austin.

City Responsibility

The public right of way includes streets, sidewalks and alleys. This land is public property and is owned by the City of Austin. It typically extends 10 feet back from the edge of a street, but can vary across the City. While property owners are responsible for mowing the grass and maintaining vegetation that grows in the public right of way, the trees that grow in this area belong to the City and are maintained by trained crews. If a tree growing in the public right of way is in need of maintenance, dial 3-1-1 to report the tree.

Promoting a safe, clean, visible, walkable, rideable and healthy community.



CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PLACES

Whether by foot or by wheels, let's keep public pathways clear of obstructions and available for everyone's use.



KNOW THE RULES

- Keep pathway cleared to at least **8 feet above sidewalks** and **14 feet above streets, bicycle lanes and alleys**. Trim vegetation back from the edge of the sidewalk and street.
- It is a **violation of City Code** to allow trees and other vegetation to overgrow or obstruct the public right of way. The City of Austin identifies overgrown vegetation and trees as an accessibility barrier for people with disabilities, making it noncompliant with the *Americans with Disabilities Act*.
- **In accordance with City Code**, do not prune or remove trees growing in the public right of way. Dial 3-1-1 to notify the City about right of way trees.

BIG PICTURE

- **Did you know?** We could **double the amount of usable sidewalks** if residents trimmed the low-hanging branches and overgrown vegetation blocking sidewalks, streets and bicycle lanes.
- **Keep in mind**, if the path is blocked, people will often go around and into the street, making for an unsafe environment.
- **Trees provide many benefits to our community**. Be sure you care for them properly! Visit treesaregood.org on how to keep your trees healthy and happy.

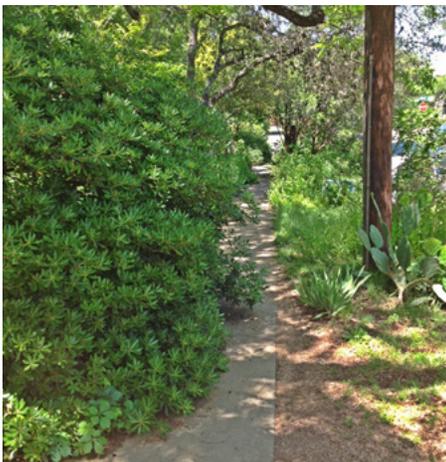
QUESTIONS?

- Visit austintexas.gov/trees to learn more about Austin's tree preservation code. Some trees require an approved **Tree Ordinance Review Application** prior to pruning or removal.
- **Questions about Oak Wilt?** Visit texasoakwilt.org for tips on how to prevent this infectious tree disease from happening in Austin neighborhoods.

REPORT AN ISSUE

Dial 3-1-1 to report concerns about trees, tall grass and weeds more than 12 inches in height and all other vegetation blocking the public right-of-way.

BEFORE | Overgrown Vegetation



AFTER | Cleared Pathway



MORE QUESTIONS?

Go to austintexas.gov/cleartherow

Learn about tree care, pruning guidelines, oak wilt prevention, code enforcement, urban forestry, and the public right-of-way.



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