

# NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION and MAINTENANCE

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**Neighborhood Green Spaces and Beautification**

Right of Ways, Parkways and Alleys  
Problems with Trees  
Sidewalks  
Beautification Projects  
Neighborhood Identification Signs

**Neighborhood Maintenance**

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Graffiti  
Brownfields

## ☐ **Neighborhood Green Spaces and Beautification**

### **Right of Ways, Parkways and Alleys**

#### **What is a right of way?**

A right of way is the width of land consisting of the street pavements, medians and parkways. Most right of ways are designated during final subdivision platting. The amount and location of the right of way depend on the specific roadway and its environment. For example, additional right of way may be required at major intersections and interchanges. Also, telecommunication networks and utilities are requiring more right of way than in the past.

#### **Who is responsible for maintaining the right of way?**

The city is responsible for maintaining the street pavements and medians.

#### **What is a median?**

The strip of land between a divided roadway.

#### **Who is responsible for maintaining the medians?**

Parks and Community Services Department at (817) 871-5754.

#### **What is a parkway?**

A parkway is the strip of land between the street pavement and the property line, usually 10 feet wide. To find out the location of your property line, check the property plat map you received when you purchased your home.

#### **Who is responsible for maintaining alleys?**

Residents maintain the alley behind their property.

#### **Who is responsible for maintaining the parkway?**

The adjacent property owner is responsible for maintaining:

- The grassy strip between the sidewalk and the street
- All trees, grass and bushes between the property line and the curb or street
- The area behind a fence but inside a sidewalk

#### **The city is responsible for abatements of:**

- Any hazardous limb or tree between the property line and curb or street
- Clearing any traffic obstructions

#### **A city tree is blocking my driveway or has damaged my property. Who do I contact to report this?**

If a city tree has caused damage to your property, has blocked access to your property or is a hazard, call Forestry at (817) 871-5738.

#### **Does the city trim or remove street trees in front of my house?**

In an emergency, trees are removed as soon as possible. Forestry only prunes trees for hazardous abatement. They do not thin or prune for aesthetics.

#### **What if I want to have work done to a street tree sooner than the city can get to it?**

In certain cases, a city forester will inspect the tree(s) and write a permit, allowing you to have the tree work done by a qualified company at your expense.

#### **Green Spaces & Beautification**

##### **Median Maintenance**

Parks and Community Services  
Department  
(817) 871-5754

##### **Trees and Shrubs**

(on city property or traffic-impacting)  
Parks and Community  
Services Department  
Forestry Section  
(817) 871-5738  
Monday – Friday  
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

##### **After-Hours Emergencies**

Street Services Department  
(817) 392-8100

**May I have the firewood from the dead tree in the parkway in front of my house?**

Yes. Firewood from street trees as well as park trees is free.

**Why did the Forestry crew remove the top of the dead tree in the parkway and leave a tall tree trunk?**

A special winch truck is required to cut and haul away the heavy tree trunk; the winch truck will be used later to remove the trunk. For more information call (817) 871-5738 or visit Forestry's Web site at [www.fortworthgov.org/pacs/fwpcsd/forestry](http://www.fortworthgov.org/pacs/fwpcsd/forestry).

**Will the city grind out the remaining tree stump after cutting down the tree in front of my house?**

No. A Forestry crew will cut all stumps flush to the ground with a chainsaw. If you like, you may arrange to have the stump removed by a private company at your expense.

**The street trees in front of my home are full of mistletoe. What can be done?**

A Forestry crew prunes dead and hazardous limbs but does not remove mistletoe due to prohibitive cost. You may have the mistletoe removed by a private company at your expense.

**My neighbor has a dangerous tree that could fall onto my property. Who is responsible for cutting it down?**

Trees growing on private property are the responsibility of individual property owners, who are liable for damages caused by their trees.

**Sidewalks**

**Who is responsible for paying to repair sidewalks?**

The adjacent property owner is responsible for the repair of sidewalks. A licensed and bonded contractor must do all sidewalk repairs. For existing residential sidewalks on streets not included in a Street Maintenance Program or Capital Improvement Program, the city may share expenses with the property owner. Priority is given to sidewalks in the worst condition. Payment for the property owner's share of the repair must be received prior to sidewalk replacement. Of course, the property owner may pay the expenses totally, if desired.

For more information, call Transportation & Public Works at (817) 392-6592 or go to [www.fortworthgov.org/TPW](http://www.fortworthgov.org/TPW).

**Will the city install new sidewalks in my neighborhood?**

The Safe Pathways Program installs new sidewalks in qualifying neighborhoods. To report a street that would be a good candidate for a new sidewalk, please notify Transportation & Public Works of the location. City staff will investigate the site and evaluate it according to criteria that includes the number of pedestrians at peak hours, classification of the street, proximity to pedestrian-generating facilities, and the length of the prospective new sidewalk. Eligibility for sidewalk installation will be based on greatest need. If funding is not available at the time, the site will be placed on a list for future funding.

For more information, call Transportation & Public Works at (817) 392-6592.

**Beautification Projects**

**My neighborhood wants to adopt a park. How do we get started?**

Contact the Parks and Community Services Department at (817) 871-5754. Parks can be adopted by signing an Adopt-a-Park Agreement, which is a formal agreement spelling out what improvements can be made and what services can be performed. It also spells out the responsibilities of all the parties involved. Typically agreements are open-ended, but after expiration of the agreement, improvements that are above the service level of the Parks Department will be removed to prevent the improvements from falling into disrepair.

**My neighborhood wants to plant free trees on the parkway (city property) in my neighborhood. What do we need to do?**

The Neighborhood Tree Planting Program is for Fort Worth neighborhoods that have at least 25 participating addresses that are willing to plant and water trees in the area between the sidewalk and curb. The city provides free 5-gallon trees, delivers them, helps host a tree-planting event and provides tree planting and care information. There are several species from which to select. For more information call the Forestry Section at (817) 871-5739 or visit [www.fortworthgov.org/pacs/fwpacsd/forestry](http://www.fortworthgov.org/pacs/fwpacsd/forestry).

**I would like trees planted at my local city park, median, library, etc. What do I need to do?**

The Tree Grant Program provides trees that are 3-inch caliper balled and wrapped in burlap. These trees are free and are available for planting in medians, parks, libraries and other city property. Trees are only available during the dormant season. Because demand for these trees always exceeds supply, free trees are awarded on a priority basis. For more information contact the Forestry Section at (817) 871-5739.

**What kinds of projects are given priority for free trees via the Tree Grant Program?**

- Trees to be planted by a neighborhood group instead of city staff
- Trees that will be hand-watered by a neighborhood group instead of city staff
- Trees that will be irrigated instead of hand-watered
- Projects where water for irrigation is paid for by a neighborhood group instead of by the city

**How do we get started?**

Contact the Forestry Section of the Parks and Community Services Department:  
4200 South Freeway, Suite 2200  
Fort Worth, TX 76115  
(817) 871-5738

**I would like to participate in a long-term volunteer program with Forestry. Who do I contact?**

The Citizen Forester program provides specialized training in a classroom and field setting. The program presents a wonderful opportunity for individuals to become skilled at planting, pruning and maintaining trees. For more information call Forestry at (817) 871-5739.

**Does the city provide any other free landscaping materials?**

Yes. City residents may get free compost and mulch year-round at:

Rolling Hills Park  
in parking lot on west side of the soccer fields  
2525 Joe B. Rushing Road  
Fort Worth, TX 76119

Be sure to bring sturdy bags or other containers, shovels and work gloves because you will be loading the compost or mulch yourself. If you are using a pickup or trailer, remember to cover your load.

**Green Spaces and Beautification**

**Sidewalk Repair**

Transportation & Public Works  
(817) 392-6592

**Free Trees/Tree Planting**

Parks and Community Services Department  
Forestry Division  
4200 South Freeway, Suite 2200  
Fort Worth, TX 76115  
(817) 871-5738

**Free Compost and Mulch**

Parks and Community Services Department  
Rolling Hills Park  
2525 Joe B. Rushing Road  
Fort Worth, TX 76119  
(817) 871-5738

**Big Tree Registry**

Forestry Section  
Parks and Community Services  
4200 South Freeway, Suite 2200  
Fort Worth, TX 76115  
(817) 871-5738

**I would be willing to participate in the city’s “Don’t Bag It” mowing method for lawn clippings, but I do not know much about it. What does this method involve?**

This method encourages residents not to bag grass clippings and to instead leave them on the lawn. The cuttings quickly break down, fertilizing the soil naturally and reducing or eliminating the need for chemical fertilizers. The cuttings also hold in moisture, reducing the need to water. Just as important, residents who practice the “Don’t Bag It” method save money on paper yard bags and reduce the volume of grass clippings sent to landfills. Call Environmental Management at (817) 392-3279 for additional information.

**I received a bill for weed cutting. What is covered by this cost?**

The city maintains private lots that are overgrown with grass either by the requests from residents or by observation. A contractor who is on the city’s vendor list will be called to cut the lot. The cost is passed onto the citizen and a lien may be placed on the property. If you would like to dispute the bill, contact Code Compliance at (817) 392-6567. The bill for weeds, board-up, demolition or garbage lien can be paid at the Revenue Collection Office on the Lower Level of City Hall.

**My group is interested in tree planting projects or working at a tree farm. Who should we contact?**

The Volunteer Forestry program provides opportunities where volunteers can participate in a variety of projects such as nursery operations, general tree maintenance and planting street trees in neighborhoods. For information, call Forestry at (817) 871-5729.

**What is the Keep America Beautiful Program?**

Through its Keep Fort Worth Beautiful affiliate, the city coordinates volunteers from businesses, neighborhood associations and other organizations to conduct ongoing cleanup and beautification projects and provides technical and promotional assistance throughout the year.

The major Keep Fort Worth Beautiful project is the annual citywide cleanup called the Cowtown Great American Cleanup, held in the spring. Volunteers collect tons of trash, litter and debris from public property each year.

**How can I get involved with the Keep Fort Worth Beautiful project?**

Numerous opportunities are available:

- Bring your neighborhood or civic group to clean up a city park, neighborhood, right of way, school ground, workplace or any other area around town
- Take household chemical waste to the Environmental Collection Center
- Clean up your private property and take the debris to a designated drop-off station
- Plant a liberty flower garden as a living tribute to our country

To find out more about Cowtown Great American Cleanup and other year-round cleanups, call Environmental Management at (817) 392-5151 or visit [www.fortworthgov.org/dem](http://www.fortworthgov.org/dem)

**Green Spaces & Beautification (cont.)**

**Adopt-a-Park Program**

Parks and Community Services  
Department  
(817) 871-5754

**Yard Trimmings Disposal**

Environmental Management Department  
(817) 392-3279

**Keep Fort Worth Beautiful Program**

Environmental Management Department  
(817) 392-5151

**Volunteer Opportunities –  
Neighborhood Beautification**

Sample possibilities:

- \* Adopt a park
  - \* Plant trees
  - \* Cowtown Great American Cleanup
  - \* Rolling Hills Tree Farm Volunteering
  - \* Volunteer Forester Opportunities
  - \* Citizen Forester Opportunities
- Contact Parks and Community Service  
Department Forestry Section at  
(817) 871-5729

**City Speakers/Classes**

The Forestry Section provides speakers on tree-related topics to educators, garden clubs, neighborhood associations and other groups. To find out more about these programs, call (817) 871-5738.

### **What is the Fort Worth Big Tree Registry?**

It is a way to recognize and honor large trees in our community. The registry is a listing of the largest trees of each species within the City of Fort Worth. The Texas Forest Service keeps a register of the Big Trees in Texas.

### **How does a tree earn a Big Tree designation?**

To nominate a tree, obtain an application by calling (817) 871-5729 or visit [www.fortworthgov.org/pacs](http://www.fortworthgov.org/pacs). Complete the form and mail it to:

Forestry Section  
Parks and Community Services  
Big Tree Registry for Fort Worth  
4200 South Freeway, Suite 2200  
Fort Worth, TX 76115

The owner and/or nominee of a designated Big Tree receives a certificate. Also, a photograph of the Big Tree is displayed in selected city offices.

## **Neighborhood Identification Signs**

### **What are Neighborhood Identification signs?**

In 1997, the Fort Worth City Council approved a policy to permit neighborhood associations registered with the City of Fort Worth to install identification signs to identify their community. Signs are installed at locations with existing street name signs. In order to provide uniformity and consistency in materials and workmanship, all signs are fabricated and installed by the Transportation and Public Works Department at the neighborhood's expense.

### **How do I get Neighborhood Identification signs installed in my neighborhood?**

Contact the TPW Traffic Services Division at (817) 392-8100. For more details visit: [www.fortworthgov.org/TPW](http://www.fortworthgov.org/TPW).

## **Neighborhood Maintenance**

### **Common Neighborhood Concerns**

#### **What is the city's role in keeping my neighborhood attractive?**

The city's Code Compliance Department is charged with helping to keep your neighborhood attractive, clean and safe. The department has the authority to enforce city ordinances related to housing, problem animals and unsightly areas in your neighborhood such as trash or graffiti and other problems. Some of the most common problems are listed below:

- Poorly maintained homes
- Vacant and open buildings
- Junk vehicles, such as a car, truck, motorcycle or other motorized equipment that are self propelled, inoperable, visible from a public right of way and have at least one of the following:
  - A missing or expired license
  - A missing or expired Inspection Certificate
  - Are wrecked, dismantled, partially dismantled, discarded
  - Have remained inoperable for more than 20 consecutive days

- Garbage not contained properly
- Items stored on a porch
- Grass and weeds over 12 inches high
- Damaged fence facing the street
- Improperly installed barbed wire fence
- Insufficient barrier for a private swimming pool
- Stagnant pools of water
- Illegal dumping
- Carts visible from front of street

**What can I do if a city ordinance, relating to neighborhood beautification and maintenance, is being violated?**

1. File a complaint.
  - Online at [www.fortworthgov.org/codecompliance](http://www.fortworthgov.org/codecompliance).
  - By phone at (817) 329-1234 or contact your local Code officer. See the Code District map located at the end of this chapter.

If filing a complaint by phone, please provide as much of the following information as possible:

- Specific location of the problem.

Examples:

Vacant lot on the west side of 715 Texas Street  
 Vacant lot on southeast corner of Texas Street and Macon Street

NOT: On the corner of Texas and Macon

- Detailed description of the problem
  - Date the problem was observed
  - You may remain anonymous or give your name, address and daytime phone number
2. City staff investigates the complaint and, if appropriate, issues a citation.
  3. The property owner is given a fixed time limit to correct the problem. If the problem is not corrected, the city resolves the problem and sends a bill to the owner. If the bill is not paid, the city puts a lien on the property.

**What is the Code Rangers program?**

The Code Rangers program is a neighborhood involvement initiative that recruits and trains volunteers to identify and report code violations to the Code Compliance Department.

Once a report is received, Code Compliance sends a courtesy notice to the property where the violation occurred. Property owners or residents then have 10 days to voluntarily correct the violation. After 10 days, volunteer Code Rangers re-inspect the property to see if the violation still exists.

If it has been corrected and the complaint is closed, property owners receive a thank you note. If the violation remains, Code Rangers report findings to the city's Code Compliance Department, and an official case is opened.

**Neighborhood Maintenance**

**To report:**

- \* Substandard homes
- \* Vacant and open buildings
- \* Vehicles parked on grass
- \* Junk vehicles
- \* Hazardous piles of garbage and debris
- \* Garbage not in container
- \* Items stored on porch
- \* Weeds/grass over 12 inches tall
- \* Broken fences adjacent to thoroughfares
- \* Insufficient private pool barrier
- \* Stagnant pools of water
- \* Illegal dumping

**Contact:**

Code Compliance  
 715 Texas St.  
 Fort Worth, TX 76102  
 (817) 392-1234

**Satellite Paint Bank**

920 Woodward Ave.  
 Fort Worth, TX 76107  
 (817) 212-2700

**Graffiti Abatement**

(817) 212-2700

**Billboard Rules**

Development Department  
 (817) 392-7851

**Sign Permits**

Development Department  
 (817) 392-2222

**Brownfields**

Environmental Management Department  
 (817) 392-6088

New rangers patrol their neighborhoods at their leisure, watching for the following five to 10 specific code violations:

- Out of cycle bulky waste
- Contaminated bulky waste
- Trash carts
- Garbage overflowing
- Garbage stored outside of a cart
- Accumulation of garbage and debris
- Broken fences
- Front yard parking
- Garage sales without permits
- Outdoor storage of broken or discarded items

Potential fines, depending on the violation, could run from \$200 to \$2,000.

Rangers also observe and report other code violations, but only the five to 10 specific violations mentioned above are part of the courtesy letter process.

The goal of the program is to increase voluntary compliance without involving Code Enforcement Officers, allowing officers to spend extra time on more detailed code enforcement cases like zoning and high grass and weeds.

For more information about the Code Rangers program, call 817-392-6573.

### **What is illegal dumping?**

Have you ever thrown your household garbage onto a vacant lot, along the road, in a retail dumpster or a ditch? If you answered “yes” to this question, you have dumped your garbage illegally.

### **Where can I dispose of my garbage?**

Residential curbside service provided by the city, City of Fort Worth’s Drop-Off Stations or a legally authorized landfill.

### **Who do I call to report illegal dumping?**

Code Compliance at (817) 392-1234

### **In addition to filing a complaint, are there other ways I can help prevent illegal dumping?**

Yes, you can require contractors you employ to produce receipts from local landfills before you pay for their services. This assures that debris is being hauled to a proper disposal site.

## **Graffiti**

### **Why should I care about graffiti?**

Not only is graffiti unattractive, it lowers property values and encourages other types of neighborhood crime. By removing graffiti promptly, residents can send a message to the people responsible for graffiti. Property owners can also be fined if graffiti is not removed within 14 days.

### **How do I report graffiti?**

Phone any of the following city services:

- Graffiti Abatement Program – (817) 212-2700
- Police – (817) 335-4222
- Code Compliance – (817) 392-1234

### **How can I remove graffiti from my property?**

Property owners are required to remove graffiti within 14 days. If you need assistance, call one of these numbers:

- Graffiti Abatement Program – (817) 212-2700
- Parks and Community Services – (817) 871-5741

### **What is the Graffiti Abatement Program?**

This program provides three basic services:

- Owners or residents of vandalized property may receive up to five gallons of free paint every three months to eliminate graffiti on their property from the Paint Bank.
- The Graffiti Patrol paints over graffiti, sandblasts and paints murals to help control graffiti on public property.
- A contractor paints over graffiti by painting to match or pressure washing/sandblasting on private or commercial property. This free program requires written permission to abate the graffiti from the property owner or renter.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities – Neighborhood Maintenance**

Sample possibilities:

- \* Satellite Paint Bank
- \* Graffiti Abatement Program

See the Contact Box at the beginning of the chapter for appropriate phone number.

### **How do I get free paint to cover graffiti?**

If your property has been vandalized, go to the Satellite Paint Bank located near downtown at 920 Woodward Ave. The Paint Bank is open Monday - Friday from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Please call (817) 212-2700 ahead of time and make an appointment.

To get free paint, bring:

- Pictures of the graffiti
- A photo ID
- Proof of ownership or residency at the property such as a recent water bill or tax statement

### **Who is eligible to receive free paint to cover graffiti?**

Free paint is available for residences, as well as commercial properties.

### **How can I help?**

You may volunteer to help at the Satellite Paint Bank or the Graffiti Patrol. Call the Graffiti Volunteer Coordinator at (817) 212-2700 or the Parks and Community Services Volunteer Coordinator at (817) 871-5778 for information.

## **Brownfields**

### **What are “brownfields?”**

Brownfields are defined as “real property, of which the expansion, redevelopment or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant.”

### **How can I find out more about brownfields?**

If your neighborhood association, church, PTA or other organization would be interested in a presentation about brownfields, contact Environmental Management at (817) 392-6088.