



CITY OF BURNABY

BOULEVARD TREATMENT AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

Version 1.0 2023 November

BACKGROUND

Boulevards are the areas that border the front, sides and/or back of private properties that are between the property line and a City curb or the edge of a City paved surface. Boulevards are located in the front of a property, on the side of a property (i.e. for corner lots or for a property beside other City right of ways), and at the back of a property if there is a back lane. Boulevards are an important part of the streetscape that the community relies on for health, social and environmental benefits, for stormwater management, and for safe walking & rolling access.

The purpose of boulevards is to have:

- Green space in the street for environmental, health, and aesthetic reasons;
- Areas for planting of street trees by the City;
- Permeable area in the streetscape to provide stormwater management function;
- Corridor for sidewalks or other types of pathways (or is reserved for future sidewalks or other types of pathways) for public access, and driveways to homes and businesses;
- Space for City and third-party above-ground infrastructure including street lights, signage, fire hydrants, bus stops and shelters, power poles, transformers, mailboxes, public art, etc., and;
- Space for City and third-party underground infrastructure such as water/sanitary/storm mains and services, hydro and gas lines and services, water meters, inspection chambers, communications, street light conduits, etc.

Even though boulevards are public space, adjacent property owners have certain rights and need to share the maintenance responsibilities with the City. The City will provide up to a certain level of service, which includes maintenance of street trees, snow & ice removal for high traffic areas, management of sidewalk condition, and upkeep of all other City infrastructure. Adjacent property owners should fulfill their responsibilities following this policy.

POLICY

BACKGROUND

This policy outlines the City's standards for boulevard use and boulevard treatment, as well as responsibilities of the adjacent property owners.

Requirements and restrictions within this policy were developed to align with City and regional bylaws, policies and initiatives, including the Street and Traffic Bylaw, Pesticide Use Control Bylaw, Burnaby's Social Sustainability Strategy, Burnaby's Environmental Sustainability Strategy, Climate Action Framework, Burnaby Watercourse Bylaw, Metro Vancouver's Drinking Water Conservation Plan, etc.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

- This policy applies to all areas in the City, except for areas with written executed maintenance agreements with the City, or areas where different boulevard standards have been specified by the City in other City publications:
- Deviations from or modifications to this Policy are at the discretion of the City Engineer. Proposals for alternate standards shall be submitted to the City and approved in writing by the City Engineer prior to construction;

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROPERTY OWNERS

Property owners are responsible for the following:

- Ensure that all boulevards are kept in a tidy and safe condition, meeting boulevard maintenance requirements described in this policy;
- Ensure that all boulevards meet boulevard treatment requirements described in this policy;
- Keep sidewalks, pathways, and driveways clear of any obstructions or tripping hazards, and hazards that may be posed by adjacent installations (e.g. fences or plantings);
- Keep clear of sightlines for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians at crosswalks, roads, lanes, and driveways;
- Keep areas at least one meter clear around fire hydrants, utility appurtenances (both City owned and foreign utility-owned), lamp standards, and signs;

- Maintain and replace as necessary all connector walkways, stairs, ramps, and handrails leading to the property;

BOULEVARD RESTORATION

- Boulevards contain public utilities that will require periodic repairs and replacement. When this work is completed, the boulevard will be restored with treatment meeting City street standards (typically topsoil and grass), which is not necessarily the pre-construction condition;
- The property owner would be responsible for salvaging any materials and restoring any alternate treatment after work is completed by the contractor (City or third parties) at the property owner's cost;
- City and third parties with construction work in boulevards will reinstate boulevards to the City standard, which is typically grass with street trees. The adjacent property owner may replace the boulevard with alternative permitted treatment after the warranty period of the City or third party contract expires, typically one year after construction;

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

LANDSCAPING

- Maintain grass or clovers at a maximum height of 150mm;
- Minimize noxious weeds and invasive species as much as possible. Every property owner or occupier should clear the adjoining boulevard of noxious weeds in accordance to the B.C. Weed Control Act and regionally defined invasive species;
- No person should apply a pesticide on boulevards, except as otherwise permitted under the Burnaby Pesticide Use Control Bylaw;
- Follow the City's watering restrictions for irrigating the boulevards;
- Keep and/or contain rocks and/or bark mulch in the boulevard area;
- Manage erosion of materials;

TREES

- All trees within the boulevard should be planted, maintained, and/or removed by the City, unless otherwise with written permission from the City;
- Keep all privately owned trees and brushes from impeding the City boulevard;
- No person shall dig up, remove, cut down, prune or otherwise damage a street tree unless permitted or directed to do so by the City in writing. Property owners or occupiers should prune privately owned trees bordering the property so that any branches above a lane are a minimum height of 4.5 meters and any branches above sidewalks and multi-use pathways are a minimum height of 2.5 m;

DITCHES AND SWALES

- Do not obstruct flows of ditches and swales;
- All ditch enclosures and changes to swales must be approved by the City;
- Property owners are responsible for cutting of grass above the spring line of the ditch or swale as much as possible;

INVASIVE PLANTS, LAWN PESTS AND WILDLIFE

- Care should be taken by residents to prevent and treat invasive plants, wildlife and lawn pests. Follow instructions provided by the City;
- Care should be taken by residents to prevent and treat impact of European Chafer Beetle. European Chafer Beetle is an invasive insect pest that causes damage to lawns. Preventative measures can be taken, including nematode application, use of *Baccillus thuringiensis galleriae* (Btg) bio-insecticide product, higher mowing (6-9cm) or using an alternate ground cover;

LITTER, LEAVES AND SNOW & ICE REMOVAL

- Every owner or occupier must remove any litter from any boulevard, stormwater management features, sidewalk, multi-use pathway and bicycle pathway bordering the property by the end of the day;

- Any litter and leaves on sidewalks must be removed by the owner or occupier within 48 hours of collecting. Litter and leaves shall not be moved onto roadways or adjacent properties;
- Snow and ice removal should follow the [Burnaby's Street and Traffic Bylaw](#). A minimum width of 1.2m shall be cleared to allow passage.

BOULEVARD TREATMENT

- All surfaces outside of road pavement, walkways and driveways should be pervious, which means that they can absorb rainfall;
- Boulevard treatments that are permitted given the outlined conditions are listed under Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Permitted boulevard treatments

Permitted Treatments	Details and Conditions
Grass and clover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common grass blends, or low maintenance grass and clover blends as noted on Appendix A;
Rocks and bark mulch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size of rocks, pebbles or aggregate must be 25mm (1 inch) or less in diameter; • Should be maintained flush to the ground; • Should be contained and not spill onto the sidewalk, pathways, or the road; • Should be installed with filter fabric underneath to deter weed growth; • Aggregate used for designated street parking areas on interim standard roads shall be compacted road base material only;
Softscape - Shrubs and/or small plants up to 0.6m high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual, biennial and perennial plants and vegetables, as well as small shrubs, are permitted; • 0.6m is the maximum height at all times (i.e. planted and mature height of plant); • Can be placed in the front and/or back boulevards;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be placed 0.3m away from edge of pavement or back of the curb, and 0.3m away from the sidewalk; • Should be placed at least 1.0m away from hydrants, light poles, signs or other vertical infrastructure; • Should not be planted within the drip line of trees;
Planter boxes including plantings up to total height of 0.6m high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be placed in the back boulevards only (i.e. between sidewalk and property line); • Should be placed 0.3m away from edge of pavement or back of the curb, and 0.3m away from the sidewalk; • 0.6m is the maximum height at all times (i.e. planted and mature height of plant); • In-ground planter boxes only and no raised planter boxes; • Should be placed at least 1.0m away from hydrants, light poles, signs, trees or other vertical infrastructure; • Should not cover to bury utility manholes or boxes; • Should not be installed within the drip line of trees;
Stepping stones or connector walkways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be flush with the ground; • Maximum width for a connector walkway to single-family residential property should be 2.0m; • Connector walkways may be asphalt, concrete, or pavers, and designed to allow proper drainage;
Stormwater management facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater management facilities in the City boulevards must be installed with written approval from the City;
Asphalt, concrete, paving stones or gravel driveways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driveways may be installed as approved by the City;

- Boulevard treatments that are not permitted (restricted) are listed under Table 2 below:

Table 2 – Restricted boulevard treatments

Restricted Boulevard Treatments	Details and Examples
Impervious surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asphalt pavement; • Concrete;
Artificial turf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City does not permit artificial turf in boulevards since it is not a permeable surface treatment and it is typically made of synthetic materials;
Trees and hedges not planted by the City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All trees within the City boulevards must be planted by the City;
Shrubs, hedges or small plantings with or without planter boxes with total height of over 0.6m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taller plantings should be kept inside the property line; • Should be placed at least 1.0m away from hydrants, light poles, signs, trees, other vertical infrastructure or utility boxes;
Invasive plants, poisonous plants and illegal plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples include Japanese knotweed, bamboo, poison ivy, opium poppy, cannabis plants, etc;
Structures (above and underground)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaining walls; • Bridges; • Staircases; • Gazebos; • Gates and railings; • Fences; • Decorative objects such as statues, bird baths, fountains, bird feeders, etc.
Irrigation Systems*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigation systems should be kept on private property; • Where an irrigation system is permitted through an Encroachment Agreement, the system must be a drip irrigation system;

Other Installations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large rocks or boulders; • Private lighting; • Planters (not permitted in front boulevards); • Any sharp or hazardous objects; • Art installations;
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*In special cases, exceptions may be granted through written agreement such as the Encroachment Agreement with the City.

BOULEVARD USE

- The boulevard space, including sidewalks and pathways within the boulevard, should be kept free and clear for public access at all times;
- No one should install, place or construct any obstacles that may cause a tripping hazard or impede passage on the boulevards. This includes periods of demolition or construction on private property, unless there is written approval from the City;
- Any use of the boulevard aside from transportation or landscaping purposes shall require a Standard Street Works Permit from the City;
- No property owner or occupier should interfere with access to, bury, expose or damage any City or third-party infrastructure located on, in or adjacent to the boulevard;
- Any restricted treatment is on City property or that extends past the property line on the City side is considered as an encroachment. For example, a retaining wall with any of its parts occupying land outside of the property line is an encroachment. A private retaining wall shall be installed at its entirety within property lines;

ENCROACHMENT AGREEMENT

- Deviation from these standards may be proposed to the City in written format. Proposals must demonstrate that all other possible options have been explored and provide reasons that they are not feasible. Only special cases may be accepted through Encroachment Agreements with the City;
- For proposed works, an Encroachment Agreement must be executed prior to construction or installation;
- Structures installed on boulevards through an Encroachment Agreement must meet the following requirements:

- Design and construction of retaining walls should follow Engineers and Geoscientists BC's Professional Practice Guidelines on the Design of Retaining Walls and other City specifications;
 - City of Burnaby Engineering Design Criteria Manual for handrail requirements;
- In special cases only, the City may permit irrigation systems to be installed on boulevards through an Encroachment Agreement. In such cases, the following conditions must be met:
 - The system is a drip irrigation system, and;
 - The system is system draws water from the water system on the private property;
- In special cases only, the City may permit installation of artificial turf on boulevards through an Encroachment Agreement. In such cases, the following conditions must be met:
 - Installation in the back boulevards only, and;
- Under the Encroachment Agreement, the property owner is responsible for maintenance and replacement of all encroaching features.

END OF DOCUMENT

Appendix A

Low Maintenance Grass and Clover Blends

Botanical Name	Common Name
Arabis Species	Rock Cress
Cerastium Tomentosum	Snow-in-Summer
Fragraria Chiloensis	Coastal Strawberry
Laurentia Fluvialis	Blue Star Creeper
Lithodora Diffusa	Grace Ward
Phlox Subulata	Creeping Phlox
Sedum Acre 'Aureum'	Golden Stonecrop
Sedum Spurium	Two-Row Stonecrop
Thymus Pseudolanuginosus	Wooly Thyme
Gaultheria Procumbens	Wintergreen
Festuca Arundinacea	Tall Fescue
Trifolium Repens L. Var. Pirouette	Micro Clover
Arenaria Balearica	Corsican Sandwort
Tolmea Menziesii	Piggy-Back Plant
Leptinella Squalida	Brass Buttons
Polytrichum Commune	Common Hair Cap Moss
Trifolium Repens	White Clover
Dicranum Scoparium	Broom Moss
Mentha Requinii	Corsican Mint