

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

A G E N D A

**Meeting to be held
Tuesday, 3 November 2015 at 6.30pm
Civic Centre
181 Unley Road Unley**

MEMBERS

Councillor Michael Hewitson – Presiding Member
Mayor Lachlan Clyne – ex officio
Councillor Peter Hughes
Councillor Rob Sangster
Councillor Bob Schnell
Rod Hook
Peter Croft
Gavin Brennan

REPORT TO COUNCIL : 23 November 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that the land we meet on today is the traditional land of the Aboriginal people and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country.

We also acknowledge that the Aboriginal people are the custodians of the Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still important to the living Aboriginal people today.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

MOVED
SECONDED

That the Minutes of the Infrastructure and Capital Projects Committee held on Tuesday 8 September 2015 as printed and circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

APOLOGIES

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

**Meeting to be held
Tuesday, 3 November 2015 at 6.30pm**

A G E N D A

DEPUTATIONS

PRESENTATIONS

ITEM NO		PAGE NO
7	Deferred Item 6 – September 2015 – Review of Committee Terms of Reference	1 – 4
8	Deferred Item 4 – September 2015 – Second Tier Greening	5 – 11
9	Tree Strategy	12 – 14
10	Motion on Notice -	15

PROPOSED ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Environmental Sustainability Strategy – Workshop
Environmental Planning
Open Space Strategy

DECISION REPORT

REPORT TITLE: DEFERRED ITEM 6 - REVIEW OF COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

ITEM NUMBER: 7

DATE OF MEETING: 3 NOVEMBER 2015

AUTHOR: JOHN DEVINE

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: JOHN DEVINE

JOB TITLE: GENERAL MANAGER ASSETS AND ENVIRONMENT

REPRESENTOR/S: Nil

ATTACHMENTS:

1. CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE
2. PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The proposed Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee Terms of Reference has been updated and is attached to the report as Attachment 2.

PURPOSE

To review and endorse the revised Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee Terms of Reference.

RECOMMENDATION

MOVED:
SECONDED:

The Committee recommends to Council that:

1. The report be received.
2. The Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee adopts the revised Terms of Reference (Attachment 2 to Item 6/15).

BACKGROUND

At the 6 May 2015 Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee meeting, the Committee discussed the need to update the current Terms of Reference to include the Committee's environmental responsibilities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement is required on this matter.

DISCUSSION

At the last Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee meeting on 6 May 2015, the Committee raised concerns that the current Terms of Reference did not include the full scope of the Committee's role.

In particular, the Committee requested that Administration update the Terms of Reference to include their environmental responsibilities and to amend the meeting timing from quarterly to bimonthly.

The Terms of Reference have been revised to reflect this process.

ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

Option 1 – The Committee endorse the new Committee Terms of Reference as proposed.

By endorsing the amended Terms of Reference,

Option 2 – The Committee endorse Option 1 with amendments.

This option allows the Committee to endorse the amended Terms of Reference.

Option 3 – The Committee do not endorse the new Terms of Reference

Current Terms of Reference remain.

RECOMMENDED OPTION

Option 1 is the recommended option..

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

CONCLUSION

The Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee is proposing to update the Terms of Reference to include the environmental responsibilities of the Committee. The Committee recommends that Council endorse the Terms of Reference.

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INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. ESTABLISHMENT

- 1.1. The Council has established the Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee (referred to in these Terms of Reference as "the Committee") pursuant to Section 41 of the *Local Government Act 1999* ("the Act").
- 1.2. The Committee may be wound up at any time by resolution of the Council.
- 1.3. This Terms of Reference was adopted by Council on 27 January 2015 (C43/2015) and amended 23 March 2015 (C93/2015).

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. The Committee is established to fulfil the following functions:
 - 2.1.1 to make recommendations to Council on its infrastructure and assets strategy and projects throughout the Council area.
 - 2.1.2 provide advice to Council:
 - (a) on planning and management of Council owned assets and properties. In particular, asset categorisation and associated levels of service across all asset classes.
 - (b) in relation to major projects and capital programs being undertaken by Council.
 - (c) on a range of innovative or new approaches to the delivery of asset related services.
 - (d) in relation to the progress of the capital works program and any changes to the program.
 - (e) in relation to the implications for Council of major projects and initiatives being pursued by State Government and other key stakeholders in the City of Unley.
 - (f) on proposals that will enhance traffic management and road safety within the City of Unley.

(g) in relation to initiatives that will encourage compliance of speed limits within the City of Unley.

2.1.3 to do anything necessary, expedient or incidental to performing or discharging the functions of the Committee as listed herein or to achieving its objectives.

3. **MEMBERSHIP**

3.1. The Committee will comprise up to 8 members as follows:

- (a) Up to 4 independent members appointed by the Council;
- (b) 4 Elected Member(s) nominated by the Council;
- (c) The Mayor *ex officio*.

3.2. The independent members of the Committee should have expertise relevant to the subject matter of the Committee.

3.3. Criteria used to select independent representatives and group representatives will have regard to gender balance, youth and cultural representations and seek to maintain and build upon a group voice that is broadly representative of the community.

3.4. The current members of the Committee are listed at Schedule 1 to these Terms of Reference.

3.5. Subject to clause 1.2 of these Terms of Reference, membership of the Committee is as listed on Schedule 1 *unless* a member resigns or is otherwise incapable of continuing as a member or is removed from office by the Council.

3.6. The Committee may, by a vote supported by at least half plus one of the members of the Committee, make a recommendation to the Council to remove a member of the Committee from office where a member has failed (without the leave of the Committee) to attend three consecutive meetings of the Committee.

3.7. Members of the Committee are eligible for re-appointment at the expiration of their term of office.

3.8. The Committee may be re-established by the Council after each Council periodic election.

3.9. Council will determine the sitting fees for independent members for meetings attended.

3.10. In accordance with Division 2 of Part 4 of Chapter 5 of the "Act", all independent members of this section 41 Committee will be required to complete and submit primary and/or ordinary returns.

4. **PRESIDING MEMBER**

4.1. The Council will appoint the Presiding Member of the Committee.

4.2. The Council authorises the Committee to determine if there will be a Deputy Presiding Member of the Committee and, if so, authorises, the Committee to

make the appointment to that position for a term determined by the Committee.

- 4.3. If the Presiding Member of the Committee is absent from a meeting the Deputy Presiding Member (if such position exists) will preside at that meeting. If there is no position of Deputy Presiding Member, or both the Presiding Member and the Deputy Presiding Member of the Committee are absent from a meeting of the Committee, then a member of the Committee chosen from those present will preside at the meeting until the Presiding Member (or Deputy Presiding Member, if relevant) is present.
- 4.4. The role of the Presiding Member includes:
 - 4.4.1 overseeing and facilitating the conduct of meetings in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1999, the Local Government (Procedures at Meetings) Regulations 2013*.
 - 4.4.2 ensuring all Committee members have an opportunity to participate in discussions in an open and encouraging manner; and
 - 4.4.3 where a matter has been debated significantly and no new information is being discussed to call the meeting to order and ask for the debate to be finalised and the motion to be put.

5. OPERATIONAL MATTERS

- 5.1. The Council has not delegated any of its powers to the Committee. Accordingly, all decisions of the Committee constitute recommendations to the Council.
- 5.2. For the purposes of s41(8) of the Act, the Council's reporting and other accountability requirements are satisfied by the delivery of a copy of the minutes of each meeting of the Committee to each Elected Member of the Council and the inclusion of those minutes in the agenda papers for the next ordinary meeting of the Council.
- 5.3. The Committee shall meet on a quarterly basis unless otherwise required.
- 5.4. If after considering advice from the CEO or delegate, the Presiding Member of the Committee is authorised to cancel the respective Committee meeting, if it is clear that there is no business to transact for that designated meeting. Members are to be advised at least 3 clear days before the scheduled meeting. Advice of the same will also be posted on Council's website.
- 5.5. Notwithstanding paragraph 5.1 above, if the Committee so resolves, it may seek input from other Section 41 Committees of Council to assist the Committee in reaching a position to recommend to Council.
- 5.6. Notwithstanding paragraph 5.1 above, if the Committee so resolves, it may provide input to other Section 41 Committees of Council on relevant subject matter.

6. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

- 6.1. Notice of the meetings of the Committee will be given in accordance with sections 87 and 88 of the Act. Accordingly, notice will be given:-

- 6.1.1 to members of the Committee by email or as otherwise agreed by Committee members at least 3 clear days before the date of the meeting; and
- 6.1.2 to the public as soon as practicable after the time that notice of the meeting is given to members by causing a copy of the notice and agenda to be displayed at the Council's offices and on the Council's website.

7. PUBLIC ACCESS TO MEETINGS

- 7.1. The Committee shall meet at the Offices of the Council located at 181 Unley Road, Unley SA 5061.
- 7.2. Members of the public are able to attend all meetings of the Committee, unless prohibited by resolution of the Committee under the confidentiality provisions of Section 90 of the Act.

8. MEETING PROCEDURE

- 8.1. The Council has resolved to apply Part 2 of the *Local Government (Procedures at Meetings) Regulations 2013* to this Committee.
- 8.2. Insofar as the Act, the Regulations, the Code of Practice – Meeting Procedures or these Terms of Reference do not prescribe the procedure to be observed in relation to the conduct of a meeting of the Committee, the Committee may determine its own procedure.
- 8.3. Subject to clause 8.4 of these Terms of Reference, all decisions of the Committee shall be made on the basis of a majority of the members present.
- 8.4. A quorum is ascertained by dividing the total number of Committee members by two, ignoring any fraction resulting from the division, and adding one.
- 8.5. If the Mayor attends a meeting of the Committee as ex-officio, the Mayor's attendance will be included in the calculation of quorum.
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- 8.11. Any decision of the Committee which does not arise from a recommendation of a Council officer must be supported in the minutes of the meeting by clear reasons for the decision.
- 8.12. The Council will provide a support officer for the purposes of co-ordination and preparation of agendas and reports for and minutes of Committee meetings and as a point of contact for all Committee members.

Responsible Officer: General Manager Assets & Environment

Attendance by: Chief Executive Officer and Executive (as required)

MEMBERSHIP

1. Presiding Member: Cr Michael Hewitson
2. Members of the Committee:

Cr Peter Hughes
Cr John Sangster
Cr Bob Schnell

Independents

Ms Heather Barclay
Mr Gavin Brennan
Mr Peter Croft
Mr Rod Hook
3. Term: 2 years from date of appointment (unless such appointment is revoked by the Council).

Councillors' term; 28 January 2015 until 28 January 2017.

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4. Sitting fees for independent members per meeting attended; \$300.

NAME OF COMMITTEE

A G E N D A

**Meeting to be held
(Date and Time)
Civic Centre
181 Unley Road, Unley SA 5061**

MEMBERS:

Presiding Member
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REPORT TO COUNCIL:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: (Optional)

We acknowledge that the land we meet on today is the traditional land of the Aboriginal people and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country.

We also acknowledge that the Aboriginal people are the custodians of the Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still important to the living Aboriginal people today.

APOLOGIES:

CONFIRMATION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES:

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

DEPUTATIONS:

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

ITEM NO.

PAGE NO:

1.

NEXT MEETING:

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

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2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1.1 The Committee is established to make recommendations to Council on its infrastructure and assets strategy and projects throughout the Council area and provide advice to Council:

2.2.

- (a) on planning and management of Council owned assets and properties. In particular, asset categorisation and associated levels of service across all asset classes.
- (b) in relation to major projects and capital programs being undertaken by Council.
- (c) on a range of innovative or new approaches to the delivery of asset related services.
- (d) in relation to the progress of the capital works program and any changes to the program.
- (e) in relation to the implications for Council of major projects and initiatives being pursued by State Government and other key stakeholders in the City of Unley.
- (f) on proposals that will enhance traffic management and road safety within the City of Unley.
- (g) in relation to initiatives that will encourage compliance of speed limits within the City of Unley.

Deleted: to fulfil the following functions:

Deleted: <#>to make recommendations to Council on its infrastructure and assets strategy and projects throughout the Council area.¶ <#>provide advice to Council:¶

- (h) In relation to ideas, initiatives and programs that enable the Community to become more sustainable through its own practices (such as growing some of their own food, or using water more carefully etc).
- (i) Supporting Council on understanding and planning for climate change, including work relating to the Eastern Region of Councils in particular the Resilient East project.

2.2 The Committee is established to make recommendations to Council on its environmental strategies and projects, and provide advice to Council including:

- (a) Waste management initiatives or matters either associated with a contract, or other opportunities
- (b) Vegetation related matters, and in particular Council tree strategies and initiatives
- (c) Water strategies, and in particular objectives and initiatives related to stormwater capture and reuse
- (d) Energy strategies, objectives and priorities, whether related to buildings, lighting, swimming pool or other Council or community opportunities
- (e) Habitat related programs, initiatives or opportunities
- (f) Assisting the Council with ideas, initiatives and progress that enable the Community to become more sustainable through its own practices (such as growing some of their own food or using water more carefully etc).
- (g) Supporting Council on understanding and planning for climate change, including work relating to the Eastern Region of Councils and in particular the Resilient East project.

2.3 The Committee is established to make recommendations to Council on transport related matters, such as:

- (a) proposals that will enhance traffic management and road safety within the City of Unley.
- (b) Local Area Traffic Management studies and recommendations
- (c) initiatives that will encourage compliance of speed limits within the City of Unley.

2.2.2 to do anything necessary, expedient or incidental to performing or discharging the functions of the Committee as listed herein or to achieving its objectives.

2.2.3

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Responsible Officer: General Manager Assets & Environment

Attendance by: Chief Executive Officer and Executive (as required)

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Cr John Sangster
Cr Bob Schnell

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Mr Gavin Brennan
Mr Peter Croft
Mr Rod Hook
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Committee Members

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APOLOGIES:

CONFIRMATION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES:

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

DEPUTATIONS:

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

ITEM NO.

PAGE NO:

1.

NEXT MEETING:

DECISION REPORT

REPORT TITLE: DEFERRED ITEM 4 – 8 SEPTEMBER 2015 -
SECOND TIER GREENING

ITEM NUMBER: 8

DATE OF MEETING: 3 NOVEMBER 2015

AUTHOR: TREVOR STEIN

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: JOHN DEVINE

JOB TITLE: GENERAL MANAGER ASSET AND
ENVIRONMENT

REPRESENTOR/S: NIL

ATTACHMENTS:

1. SECOND TIER GREENING OF UNLEY
FOR A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT –
RESIDENT’S GUIDE TO A SUSTAINABLE
NATURE STRIP
2. RESIDENT NOTIFICATION LETTER
3. NATURE STRIP PREFERENCE
NOTIFICATION FORM
4. WATERWELL INSTALLATION LETTER
5. SECOND TIER GREENING RESULTS

PURPOSE

To seek the Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee’s direction for the future continuation of the Second Tier Greening environmental program.

RECOMMENDATION

MOVED:
SECONDED:

The Committee recommends to Council that:

1. The report be received.
2. The Second Tier Greening initiative be endorsed and its continuation as part of the Footpath Replacement Program be supported.
3. Administration prepare a new initiative for consideration in the 2016/17 Budget cycle to fund a Second Tier Greening program to compliment the Second Generation Tree Replacement and Planting Program throughout the City and to be included in the Long Term Financial Plan.

BACKGROUND

The City of Unley's urban forest contributes greatly to the City's character and is integral to making Unley a green city. The role of the streetscape is a critical component of the urban forest. Streetscapes, including street trees, play an important role in the aesthetic quality of our City. Furthermore a well presented streetscape can improve amenity value and play an important role in improving environmental outcomes.

Water restrictions have had a significant impact on the long-term survival of the street tree asset within the City. A key to a tree's survival is improving the growing medium near the tree to ensure maximum moisture penetration and retention.

The nature strip is the area between the edge of the footpath carriageway and the kerb of a street.

Varying in design and appearance, the nature strip can reflect the character of the local area and its residents, providing spaces for social interaction and gardens of ornamental and edible plants. Nature strips form an important part of residential streetscapes.

During 2013, the Administration developed a trial initiative which if successful would improve the growing medium around trees and improve the environmental amenity of streets. This trialled Second Tier Greening of Unley for a Sustainable Environment program provides incentives for the community to 'plant up their nature strip' and thereby improve the growing medium near the street tree and ultimately support street tree survival.

A range of developed incentives through fact sheets, start-up plant kits, slow release fertiliser, mulch and storm water retention pits has enabled Council to slowly increase the understory planting of nature strips throughout the City. Through a programmed approach, in conjunction with the Footpath Replacement Program, water impenetrable nature strips are slowly converted to permeable environmentally sustainable 'green' spaces. Community engagement and commitment has been critical in achieving these sustainable benefits.

With the City-wide Footpath Replacement Program nearing completion, the Administration is seeking the Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee's guidance for the future continuation of this environmental initiative.

DISCUSSION

While trees are critical to the amenity and aesthetics of the City, the Council has identified that nature strips can also play an important role in providing an improved growing medium for trees and also generally adding to the amenity and 'green' feel of the City. Nature strips are also seen as a critical element for local government authorities when dealing with the impacts of Climate Change.

Street nature strips account for a surprising amount of land within our City and perform the important tasks of allowing room for public services such as water and power, creating ecological corridors and visually linking a streetscape. They also provide a significant opportunity to capture and return local property stormwater to assist the growth of Council's important street tree asset. All of these factors become critical as Councils seek to deal with the impacts of Climate Change.

In the interests of our future wellbeing, the City of Unley wishes to encourage nature strips that are waterwise, aesthetically pleasing and that reflect our natural environment.

The majority of the City's nature strips comprise of dolomite which provides no ecological benefit. More attractive and usable nature strips can be created with local native plants. Our choice of plants should be waterwise, reduce the need for fertilisers, provide usable habitat for birds and insects and include local native plants. Nature strips can help develop our City's individual character and form a "sense of place".

To encourage and promote the selection of loam for nature strips and the subsequent planting of the nature strip, the Council developed promotional material and incentives for residents and property owners. These initiatives are linked to the Footpath Replacement Program when property owners are offered a choice of loam or dolomite for the nature strip. The trialled Second Tier Greening of Unley for a Sustainable Environment program has included and encompasses the following:

- The production of a Resident Guide Document entitled Your Nature Strip – 'Second Tier Greening of Unley for a Sustainable Environment' which based on a Frequently Asked Question model provides encouragement for residents to choose loam as a replacement material and plant up 'their' nature strip. (Attachment 1 to Item 4/15)
- Loam provided to the nature strip area scalloped to provide a water holding capacity to the nature strip area – water capture in rain events.
- Access to a complimentary 'start-up kit' of up to ten (10) tube stock indigenous grasses and ground cover plants.
- Mulch provided to ensure moisture retention is provided to the nature strip thus assisting ground cover plant and street tree growth.
- A complimentary bucket and small packet of slow release fertiliser to assist soil nutrition and plant growth.
- Revision of all mail out/engagement documentation, including notification letter (Attachment 2 to Item 4/15) and Nature Strip Preference Notification Form (Attachment 3 to Item 4/15) as a means of encouraging property owners and residents to choose loam as a preferred treatment method. The documentation also details the complimentary incentives offered.
- The installation of a waterwell behind the back of the kerb for 2014/15. The waterwell is designed to either capture rain water from the roof of the property or storm water from the watertable (Treenet Product) (Attachment 4 to Item 4/15).

Council commenced a trial of the Second Tier Greening of Unley for a Sustainable Environment Program in 2013/14 as part of the Footpath Replacement Program and to date is receiving positive results. The take up rate from residents and property owners selecting loam as a preferred treatment and Second Tier Greening averaged over 50% for the 2014/15 financial year (Attachment 5 to Item 4/15).

Attachments 1-5

The results are encouraging when it is remembered that responsibility for maintenance of the nature strip area is with the resident. In many respects, Council is handing over the maintenance requirements of land belonging to Council to the resident. This is occurring at a time when it can be argued that people have limited 'spare time'. As such, the results are encouraging and provide a solid argument to continue with the program.

With the footpath replacement program nearing completion and with the overall success of this initiative, Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee direction is sought to determine if it wishes to continue with this program in some form moving forward. By linking this initiative to the footpath replacement program it is a cost effective method to make sustainable changes to the growing median. It is during this process that residents and property owners are offered a choice between loam and dolomite for nature strip treatment. The cost for either treatment option is substantially absorbed within the footpath replacement budget. Any subsequent stand-alone program that takes on this initiative will require budget funding to cover the cost of delivery.

The current cost for delivering this initiative as part of the Footpath Replacement Program per property is:

Loam provided to the nature strip area scalloped to provide a water holding capacity to the nature strip area – water capture in rain events. Excavation \$9.00/square metre and supply loam \$9.50 = total \$18.50/square metre. Average nature strip 20 square metres.	\$370.00 *
Access to a complimentary 'start-up kit' of up to ten (10) tube stock indigenous grasses and ground cover plants.	\$20.00
Mulch provided to ensure moisture retention is provided to the nature strip thus assisting ground cover plant and street tree growth (supply and delivery).	\$50.00
A complimentary bucket and small packet of slow release fertiliser to assist soil nutrition and plant growth.	\$10.00
Total	\$450.00

* This cost is incurred as part of the Footpath Replacement Program and is not linked to the additional incentives outlined.

The cost for delivering this initiative as part of a 'stand-alone' program per property would be:

Loam provided to the nature strip area scalloped to provide a water holding capacity to the nature strip area – water capture in rain events. Average nature strip approximately 20 square metres @ \$32 00 per square metre.	\$640.00
Access to a complimentary 'start-up kit' of up to ten (10) tube stock indigenous grasses and ground cover plants.	\$20.00
Mulch provided to ensure moisture retention is provided to the nature strip thus assisting ground cover plant and street tree growth (supply and delivery).	\$50.00
A complimentary bucket and small packet of slow release fertiliser to assist soil nutrition and plant growth.	\$10.00
Total	\$720.00

In 2018/19 the City-wide Footpath Replacement Program will be completed. An opportunity exists to develop a stand-alone program for this initiative and run it in conjunction to compliment the Second Generation Street Tree Planting throughout the City. The Second Tier Greening Initiative is fundamentally about providing a better growing medium for trees so it would appear to be a logical step to link with tree removal and replacement. It is anticipated that a similar amount of streets would be completed each year as to what currently occurs with the Footpath Replacement Program. As such, it could be assumed that a similar number of properties would take advantage of the initiative.

While the cost to run the current trial initiative is fundamentally absorbed within the Footpath Replacement Program this would not be possible with a stand-alone program. A budget for the program would need to be considered as part of the annual budget deliberations.

Alternatively, Council may wish to consider a stand-alone initiative not linked to any other program. This would be a significant sustainable environmental initiative for the City moving forward. While there would be an initial up front installation cost (average \$720 00/property) to provide loam nature strips there would be significant savings if the property owners are encouraged to take ownership of the maintenance. Detailed criteria would need to be determined to identify priorities and establish a fully-funded program for roll out across the City.

The initial success of the trial and understanding the Footpath Replacement Program has another three years to run, allows Council some time to assess the merits of the initiative and decide the best method for a longer-term roll out of a program.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The key to the success of this initiative is community engagement. Council Administration has developed a communication and engagement package of information to promote this initiative. The detailed package is provided to property owners and residents as part of the rollout for each street impacted by the Footpath Replacement Program.

ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

Option 1 – The Second Tier Greening initiative be endorsed and its continuation as part of the Footpath Replacement Program be supported.

Administration prepare a new initiative for consideration in the 2016/17 Budget cycle to fund a Second Tier Greening program to compliment the Second Generation Tree Replacement and Planting Program throughout the City and to be included in the Long Term Financial Plan.

Pros:

- This option will allow this initiative to continue in its current format and enable Council to gather more data to determine its success.
- The program is having minimal impact on Council resources when measured against the long-term benefits of improving the City's amenity and biodiversity.
- The project encourages positive community/street engagement.
- Involves minimal risk to Council and the community.
- Easily managed by an administrative process and linked to Council's Footpath Replacement Process requiring little adjustment to the current tender process.
- The project demonstrates excellence in environmental sustainability emphasising the concept of 'thinking global and acting local'.

Cons:

- The initiative is reaching a small proportion of the population of the City of Unley ie only a few streets and residents have an opportunity to access the program.
- Will take many years to complete a full circuit of the City.
- Potential for residents to take up the option only to stop future maintenance. Un-kept nature strips would then be the responsibility of Council.

Option 2 – The Committee endorse the trial Second Tier Greening initiative and support its continuation as part of the Footpath Replacement Program.

The 2016/17 Budget consider an initiative to fund a stand-alone City wide Second Tier Greening Project throughout Unley.

Pros:

- The approach would enable an acceleration of the second tier greening of the City and furthermore allow for a potential more equitable spread or uptake across the City.
- The project encourages positive community/street engagement.
- The project demonstrates excellence in environmental sustainability emphasising the concept of 'thinking global and acting local'.

Cons:

- This option would come at considerable cost to the Council budget.

- Potential for residents to take up the option only to stop future maintenance. Un-kept nature strips would then be the responsibility of Council.

RECOMMENDED OPTION

Option 1 is the recommended option.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Second Tier Greening works is supported within the City of Unley 4 Year Plan Greening Objectives and supporting initiatives. Specifically the works are covered within the following strategies:

- Promote and plant indigenous flora species where appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with the community to minimise environmental footprint.
- Identify and implement sustainable energy and resource efficiency initiatives to reduce Council's environmental impact.
- Identify opportunities to increase the amount of useable open space; and
- Manage and maintain open spaces that support environmental initiatives and sustainability.

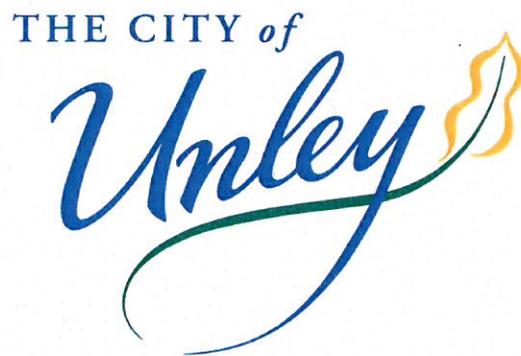
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Integrating of the Second Tier Greening Initiative into the Footpath Replacement Program has had no additionally sought financial implications for Council. Financial expenditure associated with this initiative has been absorbed by each footpath street program renewal. Any decision to expand the initiative will require a budget allocation.

CONCLUSION

The Second Tier Greening of Unley for a Sustainable Environment is seen as a small step toward improving the sustainable environment for our community. It is also seen as an important element in engaging and bringing our community on a worthwhile environmental journey to improve the City's amenity.

Currently this new initiative provides a value for money solution for the community, providing an enhanced streetscape at minimal additional cost, builds community pride/spirit and substantial environmental benefits. The current logical link with the Footpath Replacement Program will soon be closing. A decision is required to determine if the initiative should continue and if so in what form. Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee direction is sought to assist the Administration.



Your Nature Strip

**'Second Tier Greening of Unley
for a Sustainable Environment'**

**Resident's Guide to a
Sustainable Nature Strip**

Background

Nature strips are an iconic feature of the streetscape of all Australian cities and smaller urban areas and can influence the character of a locality. Residents value the nature strip and many householders play a significant role in ongoing maintenance.

Varying in design and appearance, the nature strip can reflect the character of the local area and its residents, providing spaces for social interaction and gardens of ornamental and edible plants. Nature strips form an important part of residential streetscapes.

Defining 'nature strips'

A naturestrip or roadside verge is a piece of public land between the edge of the footpath carriageway and the kerb of a street.

Why nature strips?

Street nature strips account for a surprising amount of land within our City and perform the important tasks of allowing room for public services such as water and power, creating ecological corridors and visually linking a streetscape. They also provide a significant opportunity to capture and return local property stormwater to assist the growth of Council's important street tree asset.

In the interests of our future wellbeing, the City of Unley wishes to encourage Nature Strips that are waterwise, aesthetically pleasing and that reflect our natural environment.

The majority of the City's nature strips comprise of lawn which requires irrigation, fertiliser and mowing, and provide very little ecological benefit. More attractive and usable nature strips can be created with local native plants. Our choice of plants should be waterwise, reduce the need for fertilisers, provide usable habitat for birds and insects and include local native plants. Nature strips can help develop our City's individual character and form a "sense of place".

Functional and attractive streetscapes also have wider community benefits, including increasing feelings of safety and social capital. Research shows that nature strips and front gardens that are attractive and well maintained with a low or no front boundary wall help people feel safer and can even increase walking and cycling.

Why not chose dolomite instead of loam?

Council provide dolomite as an option for nature strips. Dolomite offers a clean, manageable surface for this area between the footpath and kerb. It requires less maintenance by the owner/resident as Council provides a weed spraying and sweeping service to maintain.

While dolomite may suit the property owner from a maintenance perspective –

- it is not the best surface for tree and root growth;
- it's an impenetrable surface when compacted;
- it allows little water absorption and penetration;
- it is considered a non preferred material from an arboriculture perspective when compared to loam or natural soil;
- loam is a more friable surface and provides an environment where the resident can plant under-storey plants and thereby encourage biodiversity in an otherwise 'hard' area; it also provides a more water absorbing surface.

What are the benefits of planted nature strips?

There are substantial environmental benefits in promoting and encouraging residents to chose and maintain planted nature strips.

In comparison with fully paved areas or a combination of paving and dolomite, nature strips offer the following benefits:

- They absorb rainwater and reduce stomwater run-off.
- They compliment the natural settings of the neighbourhood such as street trees and home gardens and allow healthier private and street trees to grow.
- They visually soften the effect of the harder surfaces of road, footpath and driveway paving, fences and buildings.
- They can provide habitat for small fauna.

Who's responsibility is the nature strip?

Street trees and nature strips are the property of the Council. The Council is responsible for enforcing nature strip requirements in the case of hazardous or unsuitable installations, but maintenance of the nature strip is the householders' responsibility. You therefore have the choice of what to do with your nature strip provided it meets the Council's requirements.

Landscaping considerations

- Nature strips designs can be imaginative and add value to your home.
- Choosing waterwise plants reduces the need for watering and saves money.
- Don't be limited in your choice of plants, local native plantings can look unique and stunning planted in a designed format.
- Local native plants require much less fertiliser than introduced plants as they are adapted to our low nutrient conditions. Fertilising once a year with a native fertiliser is sufficient.
- Native plants can be pruned similarly to common landscaping plants to maintain a desired shape and promote new growth.

Types of approved nature strips

Grass or turf nature strips are very commonplace and appear deceptively easy to maintain. This is not necessarily true, as they are not well suited to our hot summer climate, and require a lot of watering, mowing, weeding and fertilising to maintain to a high standard. While turf grass nature strips are allowed, the City of Unley is encouraging residents to move towards more sustainable alternatives.

Sustainability considerations

If you are considering sustainable landscaping take on board the following points for consideration:-

- Plant selection for landscaping works should be guided by Council's principal vegetation theme of waterwise native plants.
- Plants should be low growing to avoid any traffic sighting problems and the heavy maintenance requirements of keeping them at a suitable height.
- Plants should be tough enough to withstand the pressures of occasional pedestrian traffic.
- Plants should be drought tolerant to minimise watering requirements.
- Plants should be able to cover the ground effectively to compete with weeds.
- Plants under established trees need to be tolerant of dry shade.

- Plants must not have prickly leaves or other parts that might harm users of the nature strip.
- Plants listed as noxious or environmental weeds must not be used. This is highly important as seeds from nature strip plants can easily get into the stormwater system and reach our waterways where weeds are difficult to control. These plants have a history of destroying nearby natural vegetation areas making them unsuitable for native animals and birds.
- Modifications to your stormwater outlet to enable watering the verge area.

A list of recommended plant species can be found as an attachment to this document.

A note on mulch

Mulch is any material which is spread over a garden to help keep weeds down, to retain moisture and provide a cool root run for plants.

There are many mulches on the market and large-particled vegetative mulch is preferable, especially that which is made from native species, in that it allows water to penetrate and does not break down as quickly as fine mulch. Mulches that contain peat are not suitable for this purpose as they retain moisture on the surface of the soil, which can promote surface rooting and subsequent reliance on irrigation. Also, some commercial mulches have extra nutrient added, so check that these are suited to your plants' needs.

There is a school of thought that shuns the use of mulch, preferring instead that the plants themselves make their own mulch eventually. In this case, ground covers can be thickly planted instead, to provide a barrier against weeds and to offer a cool root run for all the plants. Ground covers have the benefit of producing flowers and attracting fauna to your garden.

A note on irrigation

In our Waterwise mindset it is most preferable to avoid reticulation altogether. However to establish plants and to maintain them in the best of health some irrigation may be needed. Make sure you design your reticulation to match your plants needs and avoid waste. A nursery or reticulation specialist can give you advice.

Safety and access

Beautification works should maintain clearances and visibility for pedestrian, cycle and vehicular traffic when using, entering or exiting an intersection, driveway or footpath. Any works considered hazardous will be required by Council to be removed or made safe at the cost of the adjoining landowner.

- A minimum width of 1.2 metres is to be retained where possible.
- Vegetation should be maintained below a height of 500mm. The minimum height of 500mm must be reduced if the sight lines of traffic or pedestrians are obstructed. The reduction in height will be sight specific, to remove the obstruction to traffic and pedestrian sight lines.
- Hard landscaping elements, such as rocks, timber (including prominent edging) should be used in such a way as to not become trip hazards or obstacles to pedestrians.
- Adequate areas are to be kept free of plants to allow placement of mobile garbage, recycled and green waste bins, and to allow for car door opening and pedestrian traffic alignment.
- Changes to nature strip levels or retaining walls that might interfere with drainage will not be permitted.
- The type and placement of materials shall be designed in such a manner as to prevent it being displaced or washed onto the road or onto the stormwater gutter in a rain event.

29 October 2015

«Owners_Name»
«Owners_Address_1»
«Owners_Address_2»
«Owners_Address_3»

Dear Sir/Madam

Footpath Reconstruction – Street and Suburb – Both Sides North Side South etc (X Street/Terrace/Road/Avenue to X Street/Terrace/Road/Avenue).

The City of Unley is pleased to advise that footpath reconstruction in Street and Suburb – Both Sides/North Side/South Side etc (X Street/Terrace/Road/Avenue to X Street/Terrace/Road/Avenue) will commence shortly.

The works will be scheduled to occur over the coming weeks and while some inconvenience may occur during this work, Council will endeavour to keep this to a minimum. We ask for your patience and understanding during the construction process.

Council is confident the new footpath works will complement the existing streetscape and provide safer pedestrian access, as well as providing a sustainable asset for our local community.

Prior to commencing the construction works, Council is giving you the opportunity as a resident to make a choice and provide feedback as to how the area in front of your property is treated.

Council encourages residents to *beautify and maintain nature strips with preferred flora consistent with the environment, amenity and heritage of Unley*. The Nature Strip is the section of public land between the edge of the footpath and the kerb of a street. From an environmental perspective Nature Strips planted with lawn or low growing vegetation provide a number of benefits to the community including the reduction in the use of herbicides, contaminants entering the waterways and street beautification.

As part of this initiative residents and property owners that choose loam and plan to 'plant up their nature strip', can access a complimentary 'start-up kit' of up to ten (10) tube stock indigenous grasses and ground cover plants including mulch.

Please read the attached Resident's Guide to a Sustainable Nature Strip before making your choice.

Council requests that you please complete the attached Nature Strip Preference Notification Form and return in the enclosed envelope by Return Notification Date. Alternatively, scan the form with your preference to pobox1@unley.sa.gov.au.

Please Note the following Important Information

- If you select loam it will be your responsibility to **plant, water and maintain** the nature strip area. If lawn or ground cover has already been planted, it will not be removed unless specifically requested.
- If Council does not receive a completed Nature Strip Preference Notification Form by the due date, Dolomite will be installed. Any changes requested after the due date may incur costs to the resident.
- If you require modification to your existing stormwater connection from your property boundary to the kerb, please indicate this on the Nature Strip Preference Notification Form. However, additional stormwater connection/s, will be at your cost and a separate application must be submitted (Authorisation to Alter a Public Road) available from Council's website.

If you have any further enquiries in relation to this project please contact Cynthia Brooks, Administration Officer, Assets and Infrastructure on (08) 8372 5430.

Yours faithfully

Cynthia Brooks
Administration Officer
Assets & Infrastructure

Encl.

Nature Strip Preference Notification Form

FOOTPATH RECONSTRUCTION – Street Name & Suburb

XX Side – (XX Street to XX Avenue)

Please complete this Notification of Nature Strip Preference form and return to Council in the enclosed replied paid envelope by the Return Date to enable this work to be scheduled. Alternatively scan this completed form and email your preferences to pobox1@unley.sa.gov.au

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Address of Property: _____

Contact Telephone No: _____

Email Contact Details: _____

Please indicate your preference for your nature strip:-

- Loam for planting (dished for water retention) Dolomite

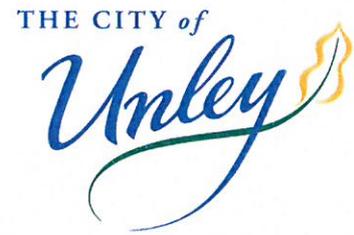
If you have chosen loam for planting as your preferred treatment above, please indicate below if you wish to access a complimentary 'start-up kit' of selected plants and/or Council produced mulch:-

- Start-up Kit:** Residents will be contacted to make arrangements for delivery of the 'start-up kit'. The plants will be delivered between April and July. Residents will be responsible for planting and maintenance of the plants.
- Mulch:** Council supplied mulch for use on the nature strip area is available. Mulch will be installed by Council on the Nature Strip soon after the Loam is installed.

Please indicate any Stormwater Modifications:-

- Reposition Existing Stormwater (No cost incurred)
- Additional Stormwater Installation or upgrade (costs will be incurred)
(Requires submission of an Application to Alter Public Road Form)

Additional Information: _____



Date, 2014

Name
 Address
 SUBURB SA Postcode

Dear Sir/Madam

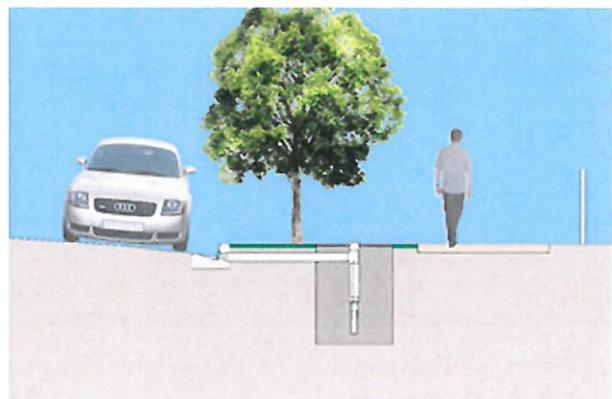
Waterwell Installation Program

Recently the City of Unley completed a footpath replacement program in 'your' street. Through the communication process for this program, you indicated a preference for loam in the nature strip and took up Council's offer for a start-up kit of plants and mulch as part of Council's Second Tier Greening Program.

A further water sensitive urban design initiative that Council is initiating is the installation of a small water holding tank below ground in the nature strip which collects storm water from either the property or from the street water table. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that in the near future Council will be retro fitting a water capturing system in the nature strip at the front of your property to help supply water to both the street tree/s and the understory plants.

Depending on various criteria, Council has determined that either one of two available systems will be installed in the nature strip of your property:

1. **TREENET Inlet System** - Taking water from the gutters and putting it into the subsoil adjacent to street trees is an option currently being adopted by a growing number of Councils, thanks to the availability of the TREENET Inlet System.

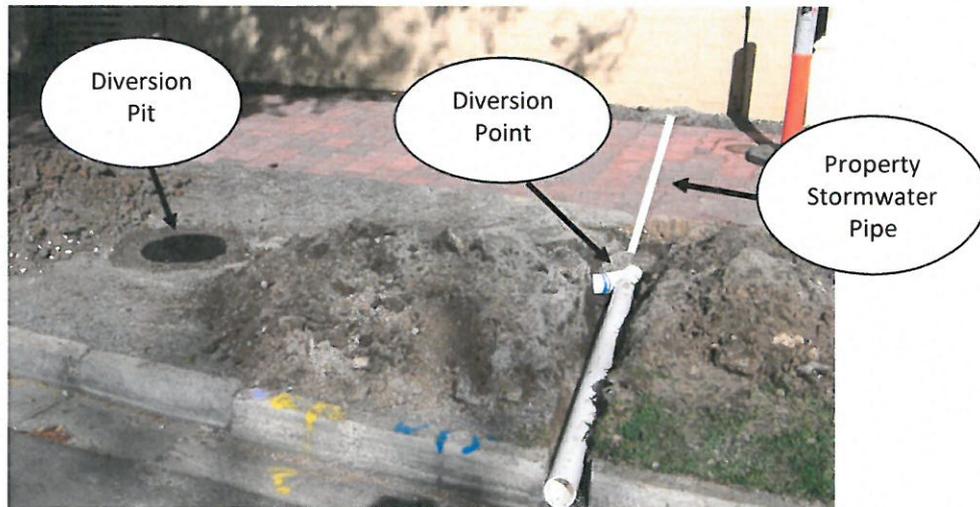


CITY of VILLAGES

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Telephone (08) 8372 5111
 Facsimile (08) 8271 4886
 Email pobox1@unley.sa.gov.au
 Website www.unley.sa.gov.au

2. **Waterwell System** - Designed by Unley Council to capture water from the property stormwater outlet and divert this water to a permeable pit in the nature strip. Once the pit is full the excess stormwater diverts to the street water table. The pit water slowly dissipates into the nature strip sub-soil.



Council believes both these alternative initiatives support Unley Council's continued contribution toward a water sensitive City.

If you require any further information in relation to timing and installation methodology do not hesitate to contact Council's Coordinator, Civil Works and Response (Name) on 8372 5111.

Yours faithfully

Mark Clarke
Manager Operational Services

**Second Tier Nature Strip Greening Program Evaluation - 2014/15 Footpath Replacement Program
Random Street Samples**

Street	Prior To Street Paving						Following Street Paving							
	Total Nature Strip Area (m2)	Total Nature Strip Dolomite Area (m2)	% Dolomite Nature Strip	Total Nature Strip Lawn Area (M2)	% Lawn Nature Strip	Total Nature Strip Planted Area (m2)	% Planted Nature Strip	Total Nature Strip Dolomite Area (m2)	% Nature Strip Dolomite	Total Nature Strip Lawn Area (m2)	% Lawn Nature Strip	Total Nature Strip Planted Area (m2)	% Planted Nature Strip	
Alma Road	934	889	95%	45	5%	0	0%	934	287	31%	70	7%	577	62%
Woodhurst Avenue	252	227	90%	25	10%	0	0%	280	119	42%	55	20%	107	38%
Lynton Avenue	737	591	80%	103	14%	43	6%	750	253	34%	231	31%	265	35%
Cromer Parade	779	644	83%	111	14%	24	3%	793	170	21%	85	11%	538	68%
Totals	2,703	2,351	87%	284	11%	67	2%	2,756	830	30%	440	16%	1,487	54%

Prior to Paving	%	Sq m
'Hard' - Dolomite	87%	2,351
'Soft' - Lawn & Planted	13%	352

Following Paving	%	Sq m
'Hard' - Dolomite	30%	830
'Soft' - Lawn & Planted	70%	1,927

DRAFT DECISION REPORT

REPORT TITLE: TREE STRATEGY
ITEM NUMBER: 9
DATE OF MEETING: 03 NOVEMBER 2015
AUTHOR: TREVOR STEIN
JOB TITLE: SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE SPECIALIST

1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A draft copy of the Tree Strategy was presented to the September 2015 Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee.

Feedback was sought from Committee members and subsequent modifications have been made to the Strategy.

The Tree Strategy is now placed back before the committee for endorsement following which the strategy will be released for community engagement.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee recommends to Council, that:

1. The report be received.
 2. The Council endorse the draft Tree Strategy (Attachment 1 to Item 9/15) for the purpose of community engagement.
 3. On completion of community engagement, a further report be presented to Council to endorse the final Tree Strategy.
-

1. RELEVANT CORE STRATEGIES/POLICIES

The Tree Strategy (Attachment 1 to Item 9/15) is a supporting initiative from the City of Unley 4 Year Plan 2013-2016 A Community of Possibilities. Under the Greening Goal the relevant aim was to:

- 1.1 *Consolidate and optimise existing strategies relating to the City's tree and vegetation stocks, including the planting of indigenous species.*

2. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the Tree Strategy is to provide a framework that will facilitate the regeneration of the Urban Forest in the City of Unley and to provide sustainability for the City moving forward. Furthermore, the purpose is to align a strategy with the overall objectives of the Unley Strategic Plan as described in a series of tiered strategies, in particular the Environmental Sustainable Strategy.

The Tree Strategy is not a static document, and will require regular review to ensure it remains current.

It is proposed that the strategy will provide a framework for making structured, consistent and environmentally sound management decisions for all Council-owned or managed street and open space trees.

Council faces a range of challenges in the strategic management of its tree asset into the future. Specific issues and challenges identified within the strategy include:

- Ageing tree population
- Water and soil moisture
- Climate change
- Urban heat island and extreme heat
- Population increase and urban infill
- Community expectations and resistance to change
- Tree succession planning and programming
- Age friendly city.

In developing the tree strategy, current strategies and policies have been reviewed, and a clear direction sought within an endorsed Tree Strategy framework.

3. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

Option 1 – The Council endorse the draft Tree Strategy (Attachment 1 to Item 9/15) for the purpose of community engagement.

On completion of community engagement, a further report be presented to Council to endorse the final Tree Strategy.

A draft of the Tree Strategy has been previously reviewed by the Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee (September 2015 meeting). Feedback comments from this meeting have been considered and where necessary modifications have been made to the strategy.

The strategy is now placed back before the committee for endorsement to proceed to community engagement.

Option 2 – The draft Tree Strategy is not endorsed for the purpose of community engagement.

Further modifications be undertaken to the strategy with a further report to be presented to the Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee incorporating the changes.

The Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee seek further amendments to the strategy. The strategy to be amended and brought back to the committee for endorsement.

4. RECOMMENDED OPTION

Option One is the recommended option.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Tree Strategy is a supporting initiative from the City of Unley 4 Year Plan 2013-2016 A Community of Possibilities.

6. REPORT CONSULTATION

Detailed consultation has been undertaken with key internal stakeholders during the development of this strategy. Once endorsed it is the intention the draft strategy will be released for community engagement.

7. ATTACHMENTS

- Draft Tree Strategy

8. REPORT AUTHORISERS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
John Devine	General Manager Assets and Environment



Tree Strategy 2015-2018

Regenerating Unley's Urban Forest

TEXT ONLY VERSION (DRAFT)

Contents Page

Foreword			3
Purpose of this strategy		.....	4
The urban forest		.....	4
Unley’s urban forest			5
Strategic context		.....	6
The Unley Context – The demographics of Council’s street trees			6
Street tree numbers and species			6
Useful Life Expectancy (ULE) of the street tree asset			7
Principles		.....	8
	1	Equity across the community	9
	2	Sustainable assets	9
	3	Risk sensitive	9
	4	Strategic consistency	9
	5	Functional and service level	9
	6	Compliant	10
	7	Innovation & improvement focussed	10
Issues and challenges		.....	10
		Ageing tree population	10
		Water & soil moisture	11
		Climate change	12
		Urban heat island & extreme heat	13
		Population increase & urban infill	14
		Community expectations and resistance to change	14
		Tree succession planning and programming	15
		Age friendly city	16
Vision and pathways to regenerating Unley’s tree asset			17
Pathways		.....	18
		Pathway 1 - Street Trees	18
		Pathway 2 - Park Trees	18
		Pathway 3 - Private (Regulated and Significant Trees)	18
Objectives, initiatives indicators & targets			19
		Street Trees objectives and initiatives	19
		Street Tree indicators and targets	21
		Park Trees objectives and initiatives	22
		Park Trees indicators and targets	24
		Private Trees objectives and initiatives	25
		Private Trees indicators and targets	26
References			27

Foreword

The City of Unley recognises the important contribution trees and vegetation make to its community.

Such assets provide environmental benefits by way of supporting flora and fauna, addressing the negative impacts of climate change while creating a living environment that adds character to the streetscape and economic value to properties.

The City of Unley commits significant resources to ensure it has the best possible streetscape and park environments through the effective management of its trees and understory planting whilst encouraging its community to play an important role. The management of the City's trees is an important function of Council and as community expectations and demands continually rise, managing these important assets is becoming increasingly more difficult and complex.

Cities around the world now regard trees as critical urban infrastructure – as important to how a city functions as roads or public transport. Furthermore, trees are seen as particularly vital to the health and wellbeing of communities. The benefits of urban forests span environmental, economic, cultural and political domains. These benefits are interrelated, with each cumulatively feeding into the creation of resilient sustainable urban landscapes.

Given the pressure on governments to plan for greater populations, increased urban density and climate change adaptation, there is a clear opportunity to communicate the importance and benefits of urban forests in creating resilient, sustainable cities that provide healthy and enjoyable places for people to live and work.

This City of Unley Tree Strategy provides the foundation of how Council will continue to enrich and enliven our neighbourhood's character and amenity through the continued management of one of our most valuable assets, now and for future generations. The document sets out an ambitious vision for improving sustainability in Unley. This Tree Strategy is an integral part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy being developed by Council.

The strategy recognises the achievements of previous elected members, administration and field base practitioners who have all played an important part in the establishment of a diverse urban forest. Acknowledging this solid foundation an opportunity exists to build, maintain and enhance this important asset within the City by providing a visionary yet practical approach for future tree managers.

Council will engage the community on this draft strategy, evaluate feedback and then finalise the document prior to implementation. Once the strategy has been finalised it is not intended to further consult with the community on every aspect, rather inform the community as specific initiatives are implemented.

Purpose of this Strategy

To provide a framework that will facilitate the regeneration of the Urban Forest in the City of Unley and provide sustainability for the City moving forward. Furthermore, the purpose is to align a strategy with the overall objectives of the Unley Strategic Plan as described in a series of tiered strategies, in particular the Environmental Sustainable Strategy. This document builds on the significant works already undertaken and currently underway within Unley.

Unley City Council currently has approximately 26,000 Council owned trees within the local government area of 14 square kilometres. Trees constitute an important element of the rich cultural heritage of Unley and are a considerable asset to the community on many levels. They complement the environment, enhance our enjoyment of streets and open spaces by making them more comfortable and pleasant, and just as importantly they provide a wide range of other benefits such as shade and habitat for wildlife.

Conversely, trees constitute a potential risk to the community and to property on a number of levels, ranging from interference with underground or above ground services to risk to property and personal safety through such events as limb drop or lifting of paved walking surfaces. Like other assets, such as buildings, trees require effective and coordinated management to maximise their benefits to the community and the environment and minimise risks, such as damage to property or personal injury.

Council is committed to nurturing, preserving and developing these important community resources.

This Strategy uses a hierarchy of; Objectives, Initiatives, Indicators and Targets. The Strategy seeks to provide an appropriate level of guidance and framework and in some situations recommend developing a more detailed supporting plan or establishing a program to focus efforts.

The urban forest – putting trees in context

Urban forestry is broadly defined as the management of trees, shrubs and other vegetation in urban areas. It focusses on the 'forest' or larger population of trees rather than individual trees along streets, in parks and open spaces and within commercial, industrial and residential properties. Trees in cities are a major component of the green infrastructure, the natural resources upon which the City relies. Healthy, resilient and liveable towns and cities that can sustain growing populations in 21st century Australia will feature viable and vibrant urban forests.

The City's urban forest consists of all trees and vegetation located throughout the local government area; irrespective of the tree species origin (native, exotic), location (street, park, garden, school) or ownership (public, private, institutional). Urban forestry, as distinct from arboriculture and horticulture, considers the cumulative benefits of an entire tree population across a town or city. Looking holistically at the urban forest and its associated ecosystem services allows for consideration of the broader issues of climate change, urban heat island effects and population growth that can be influenced by and which can affect an urban forest.

The urban forest, measured as a canopy cover percentage of the total land area, is recognised as a primary component of the urban ecosystem. It is one component of a complex built environment that includes roads, car parks, footpaths, underground services, buildings and other structures.

Urban forests mean different things to different people, yet they contribute positively to the way we see our towns and cities and how we use them.

Urban forestry can be described as the science and art of managing trees, forests and natural ecosystems in and around urban communities to maximise the physiological, sociological, economic and aesthetic benefits that trees provide society (Schwab, 2008).

Trees are the largest elements in the urban forest. They are such an important and critical part of our urban fabric and support the basic elements that sustain life: the air we breathe, the water we drink and shelter from the wind in winter and sun in summer. All components of the urban forest allow those living in our towns and cities to connect to the natural landscape. The urban forest can thrive alongside the hard infrastructure associated with urbanisation.

Urban forests play a vital role in the health, social framework and economic sustainability of a city. Trees are working 24 hours a day, every day, improving our environment and quality of life.

The key messages in marketing the Urban Forest to support the goals of this strategy are as follows:

- urban forests provide essential benefits we cannot live without;
- a healthy and safe urban forest doesn't happen by chance – it is the result of proper planning, management, and community investment;
- healthy urban forests can assist with many community problems;
- urban forests and natural areas are connected; good management of one helps the other.

For an urban forest to be sustainable there must be a wide age-distribution of trees to create a continuous cycle of succession. Apart from ensuring that there is a new generation of trees to take the place of trees which must be removed for health or structural reasons, the most expensive stages of a tree's life are in the very early stages and in old age or senescence. Hence a mix of ages is more financially sustainable and assists Council spread the risk.

Having a diverse mix of species – both native and exotic - reduces the risk of loss should one species be susceptible to a new pest or disease. Diversity of tree species also provides benefits for biodiversity, aesthetic reasons, improves resilience and the provision of summer shade and winter sun (Sydney University, 2008).

Unley's urban forest

Trees play an important role in the environmental and aesthetic context within Unley adding social, economic and environmental value to the City. They are a key contributor to why people choose to live and do business in Unley.

Many street boulevards were established by environmental pioneers in the early 1900s. The majestic Plane Trees of Victoria Avenue and Northgate Street in Unley Park owe their existence to the early arborists and City Planners who pre-empted and delivered a vision for the City. Many of the trees existing along the major boulevards of the City date back nearly one hundred years. These early plantings have been complemented by a Council decision in the late 1970s to plant every street that can be planted with street trees.

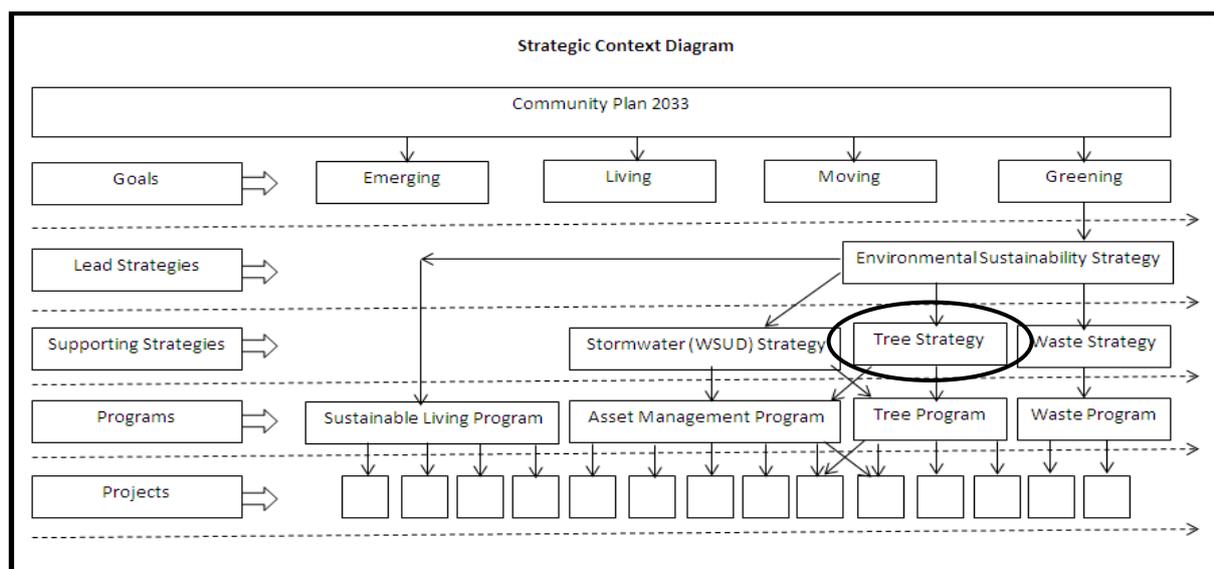
The City's streetscape is supported by numerous natural park and open space trees many of which pre-date European settlement. While Unley is restricted to 3% open space, many large remnant

trees remain to support a diverse urban forest. These park trees are further complemented by private land owner tree plantings many of which also date back to the early 1900s.

The City is fortunate that property sizes within much of Unley are large, enabling trees of a significant size and canopy to have been planted and managed within the private realm. These trees along with those in Council ownership contribute significantly to the aesthetic and environmental ‘feel’ of the City.

Strategic Context

The Tree Strategy will directly support the outcomes of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and the Greening goal in the Community Plan as outlined in the flowchart below.



The Unley Context – The demographics of Council’s street trees

Funding was provided during the 2014/15 financial year for Council to undertake a detailed audit of the street tree asset. The audit involved a street by street assessment of the street trees from a range of pre-determined criteria. The audit was designed to provide reliable up to date data on the street tree population to ensure tree succession planning is based on good current information. Furthermore, the audit provides supporting evidence for the establishment of a programmed approach to succession tree planting throughout the City.

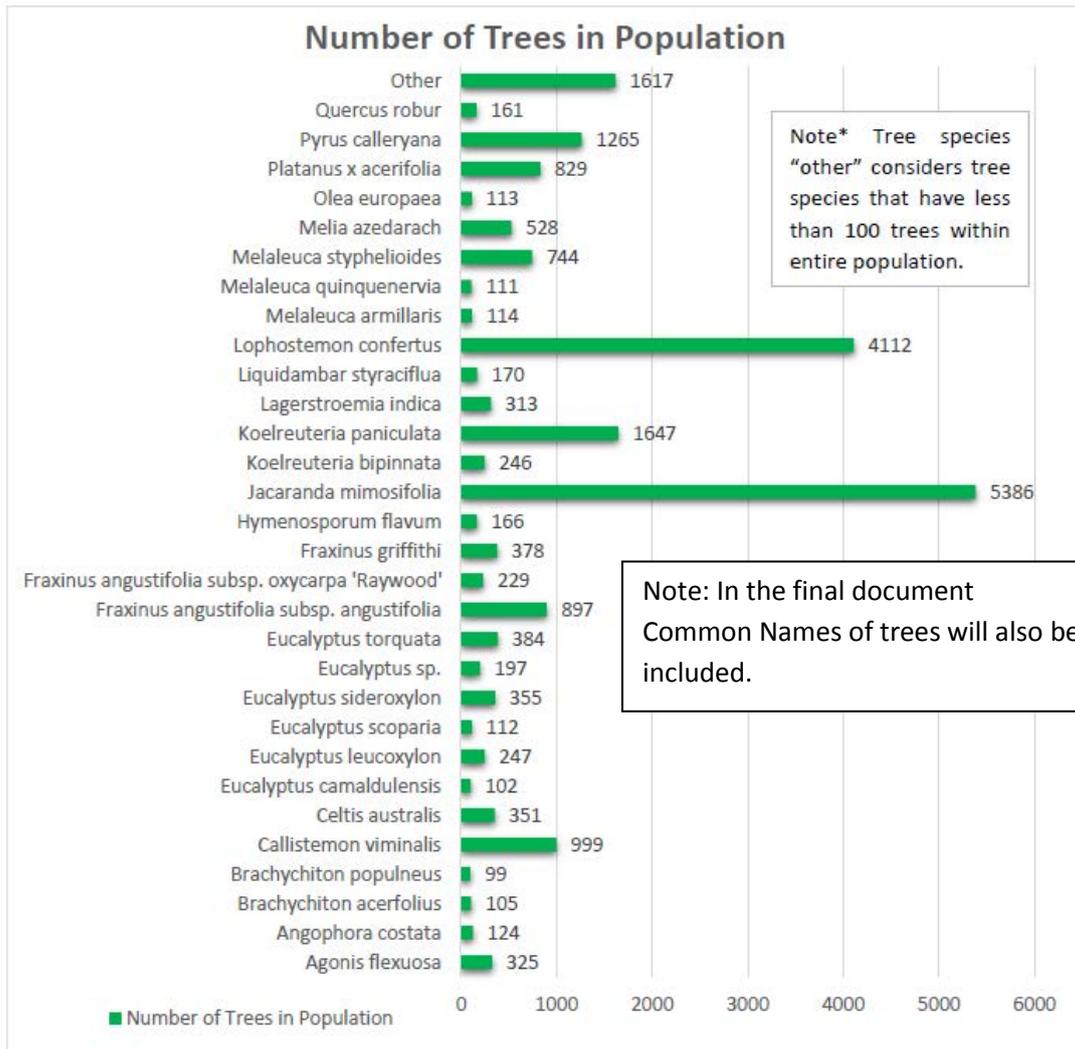
The collection of tree status data, analysis and translation of this data are important measures in proactive tree management and planning.

The primary stage of the audit grouped the tree assets in segments covering between 1 to 15 trees per group. Approximately 2,300 asset groups were detailed within the primary stage data collection of the project.

Street Tree Numbers and Species

The street tree data was collected between December 2014 and June 2015. The data collected indicates that the City of Unley currently manages **22,426** street trees within approximately 450 streets. The detail below from the City Overview Report provides the range of street tree species.

The following graph illustrates the dominant species identified within the city (excluding individual trees of significant or management requirement).



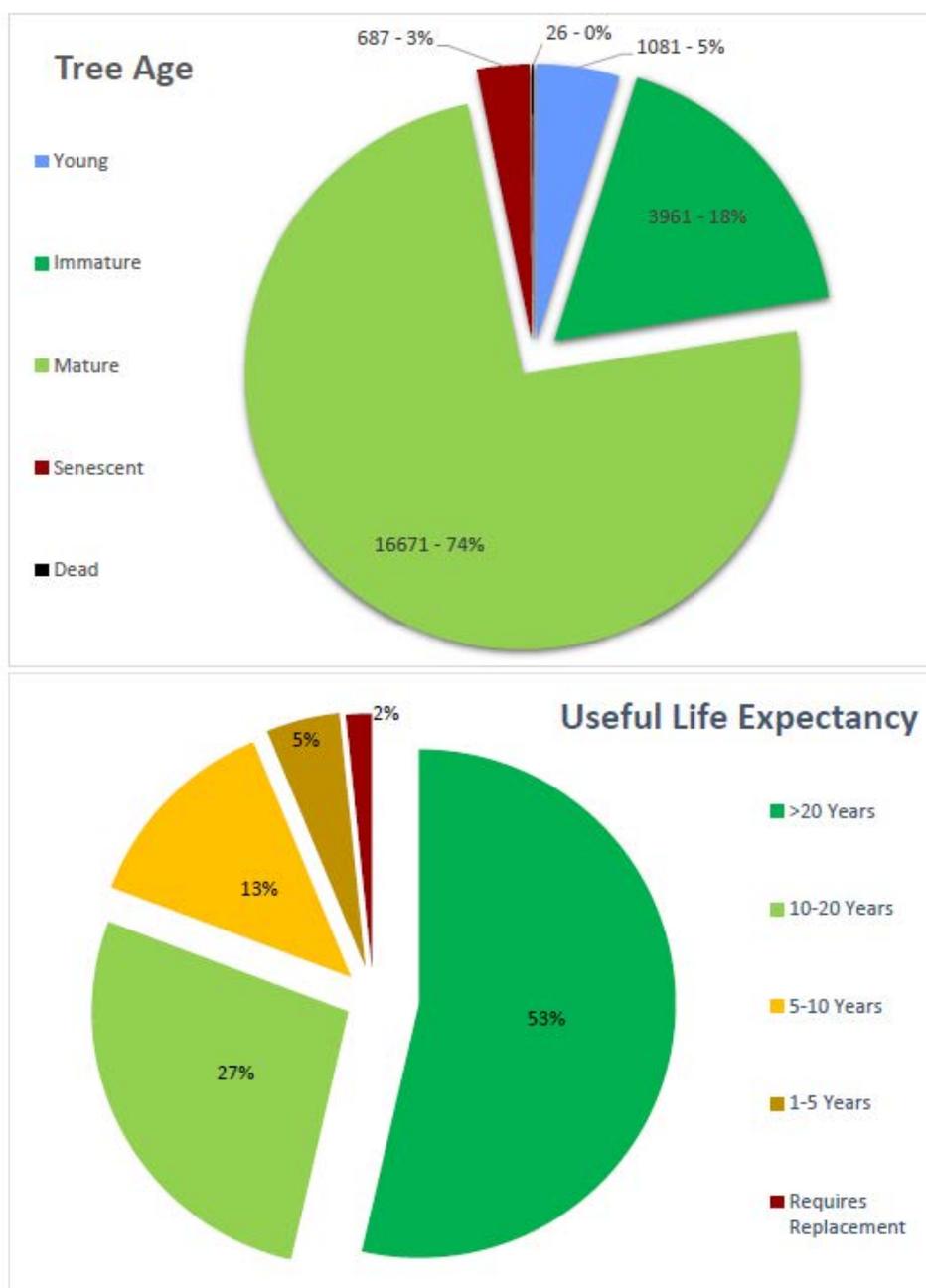
From the above graph it is clear that two species (*Jacaranda mimosifolia* (Jacaranda) and *Lophostemon confertus* (Queensland Box)) represent over 42% of the street tree population.

Useful Life Expectancy (ULE) of the Street Tree Asset

An analysis of the age of the street tree asset and the Useful Life Expectancy (ULE) becomes critical in assisting the succession planning process. The data collected and taken from the audit below indicates that 53% of the street tree asset has a ULE greater than twenty years. Conversely this indicates that 47% of the trees have a ULE less than twenty years. A tree's ULE is determined using several factors observed during the tree assessment including the tree's age, health and structural condition as well as its aesthetic and environmental contribution to the local area.

It should also be noted that while 74% (16,671) of the tree population within the City is mature, over half of the population has a ULE that exceeds twenty years with 20% (4,485) of the tree asset expected to require replacement within the coming five to ten years. The data reveals that 7% or 1,570 trees will require replacement within the next five years.

The age range of the tree population is moderately distributed and ranges between young and senescent. The following graphs show the number of trees within each of the age ranges collected as well as the remaining Useful Life Expectancy estimated for these trees.



Principles

The development of this Strategy is underpinned by principles which are reflected through the vision, pathways objectives, initiatives, indicators and targets.

Trees within Unley are seen as an asset and managed in a manner consistent with other Council owned assets. The City of Unley has developed a set of guiding principles to ensure assets throughout Unley are developed and managed in a responsible, systematic manner to meet the needs of the community:

1. Equity across the community

A balanced approach is taken ensuring that residents across the community have equal opportunities for required services.

- Council recognises that trees are an integral part of the environment add aesthetic quality to life across the City, and will be treated as an asset.
- Street tree plantings or removal will be based on a holistic City wide themed approach promoting the orderly planning of each area.
- Design landscapes to reflect the cultural integrity, identity and character of Unley and its neighbourhoods.

2. Sustainable Assets

Assets are designed & maintained in a manner cognizant of a triple bottom line outcome (financial; environmental; social) & utilising a life cycle approach.

- Council has a responsibility for the planning, establishment, maintenance and removal of all trees located within the City's streetscapes and open space (parks, reserves, streets, medians and nature strips).
- Trees are considered to be community assets that contribute to the wellbeing of the community and to the natural environment.
- Council recognises and values the significance of trees within the urban setting in that they create functional and aesthetic streetscapes, provide natural habitat and natural shade.
- Council will ensure a diversity of tree species and ages to maximise resilience against pest and diseases and weather extremes.

3. Risk Sensitive

Asset based decisions are made in a manner where risks are identified, understood and managed (WHS; Environ; Public Safety; Community).

- Tree assessments are undertaken within a risk framework consistent with the industry standards and demonstrate reasonable care.
- Council is committed to protecting and maintaining trees within the municipality whilst meeting its obligation to provide a safe environment.
- Council should aim to preserve and protect the City's Regulated trees both on Council owned and private land in line with the legislative controls outlined in the *Development Act 1993*.

4. Strategic consistency

Assets related to services are planned & maintained within an integrated planning framework

- The Tree Strategy complements other relevant strategies eg Environmental Sustainability Strategy, to ensure an integrated approach across Council.
- The on-ground delivery of the Tree Strategy through programs and projects will be planned and maintained through annual business planning.

5. Functional and service level

Assets are designed & maintained to ensure they are fit for purpose, meeting the agreed level of service.

- Council commits to enhancing existing biodiversity sites and establishing new biodiversity sites through tree management and additional local provenance tree plantings.
- Trees will be selected and maintained in a manner consistent with the desired/targeted service level for each specific site.

6. Compliant

Assets are designed and maintained to meet compliance requirements at a minimum.

- All new street tree plantings are required to be compliant with relevant legislative requirements.
- Accessibility and walkability are key functions of the age friendly City streetscape and it is incumbent on Council to ensure that wherever possible a balance is reached whereby streets, parks and other public land is accessible to all.
- Property owners within Unley have a responsibility to manage trees within the boundary of their properties.

7. Innovation & improvement focussed

Alternative methods of providing services/assets are regularly examined & improvements considered, to ensure “best value” options are applied.

- Trees will be managed in a manner that recognises and finds a careful balance between the historical character of Unley’s inner-city urban environment and new expressions of social, environmental and aesthetic values in streetscape renewal programs.
- Council commits to promote the use of innovative techniques for water sensitive urban design to support tree growing solutions in streets and Council owned open space.
- Continue to support an urban forest that can tolerate and continue to thrive in climatic extremes.
- Continue to identify opportunities to plant trees within our City/streets to enhance streetscapes.

Issues and Challenges

Ageing tree population

Many of Unley’s trees including those in streets and parks are well over 50 years old (74% of street trees are mature) and reaching the end of their useful life.

The City of Unley manages the population of ageing trees through regular assessments to determine which trees need to be treated or removed, and by planning when, how and with what trees they will be replaced. Managing ageing trees requires careful consideration. Urban tree renewal is not simply a question of replacing dying trees, but is also one of identifying the most resilient and appropriate replacement plan and engaging in a meaningful dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders and community members.

Unley’s key challenges in terms of ageing trees are:

- An ageing tree population requires increasing resources to manage and sustain. Over time, the environmental value of urban trees diminishes and they become hazardous to people using the city’s public spaces. A high proportion of over-mature trees carries an element of public risk (and cost) and must be managed accordingly.
- Uniform, symmetrical avenues create wonderful vistas along our avenues and main streets, and in Unley these are largely synonymous with broad-canopied deciduous trees such as cedars and planes. To achieve these aesthetics, it is desirable to plant identically aged trees that will maintain the visual consistency of the avenues. However, this can pose challenges for the community when confronted with large numbers of trees requiring replacement at the same time.

While community engagement is important in managing an ageing tree population, particularly in relation to tree removals, there are times when Council will be required to make decisions against the wishes of some of the local community. When arboricultural assessment identifies unacceptable risk concerns with trees, the Council's decision to remove them will over-ride the community's wish for the trees to be retained.

As an example, during 2015, approximately forty trees were removed and replaced in Heywood Park. While community engagement was critical, the identified risk associated with many of the trees meant that the decision of Council to remove over-rode the concerns of some residents. Feedback from the community now that the work has been completed, has been very positive.

Water & soil moisture

Water is the primary element needed for vegetation growth. The recent extended drought and water restrictions severely damaged the health of Unley's urban forest, resulting in an increase in tree mortality. The most recent useful life expectancy mapping that has been undertaken shows that about 74% of our trees are mature and potentially could reach the end of their useful lives within a similar period. Much of this is due to long term effects of low water availability.

Mature trees help to ameliorate the urban heat island effect both through shading of urban surfaces and atmospheric cooling through evapotranspiration. Maximising the potential for vegetation to cool the city through evapotranspiration is another important reason to maintain soil moisture.

Adequate available soil moisture is critical for healthy vegetation. Extended years of drought have left soil moisture levels morbidly low, affecting tree health throughout the municipality. In particular, trees in traditionally irrigated landscapes were affected by a combination of low rainfall and decreased irrigation due to watering restrictions.

While recent seasonal rains have been valuable, soil moisture remains depleted and this poses an ongoing threat to tree health. A number of active and passive approaches are currently undertaken to replenish soil moisture and ensure it is maintained at levels to provide healthy growth. Changes to irrigation practices, mulching, waterwell installation, soil injection, water barrier and tanker watering have preserved the health of many trees. Tree health monitoring and measurement of soil moisture provide strategic guidance to direct resources and will be vital in ensuring the health of the future forest.

With expected long-term low water futures and a desired move away from reliance on costly potable water, alternative water sources are needed to ensure healthy vegetation growth. The capture and reuse of stormwater is an important way to decrease reliance on potable water, particularly given the great quantity of stormwater flowing along creeks through Unley. The city that has traditionally shed water needs to capture, store and reuse it. However, this presents challenges as well as opportunities. In particular storing stormwater for reuse in dry periods is challenging in densely-built urban areas, but can be supported by wetlands, underground tanks and water sensitive urban design.

The City of Unley is committed to a journey towards becoming a water sensitive city. In doing so, it will create a more liveable, resilient and sustainable city for future generations. The implementation of Water Sensitive Design (WSUD) techniques integrated into traditional work programs is one such approach which will contribute to achieving this outcome.

The development of integrated WSUD strategies into Council works programs is one way to focus on delivering urban greening, enhanced streetscapes and mitigated urban heat load for future

generations. The concept of liveability within the urban environment in the context of this strategy seeks to improve micro climate benefits which will stem from enhanced tree health and shade across the city.

While larger scale water sensitive urban design opportunities may not always exist in a highly urbanised Council like Unley, there are always smaller scale micro initiatives that can be trialled and implemented. The reduction of footpath widths to provide wider nature strips, tree stormwater inlet and waterwell installations and Second Tier Greening of nature strips are just a few initiatives trialled and pursued to support water retention within the City. Creativity in water retention and re-use need to be continually researched, explored and trialled to ensure water availability to support tree growth.

These initiatives enable the better retention of soil moisture and ultimately facilitate a broader palette of tree species which can be planted in the street tree network.

Climate change

The Australian Government's most recent report on climate change, the Critical Decade, states unequivocally that it is 'beyond doubt' that climate change is occurring. The primary cause of the observed warming and associated changes since the mid-20th century – human emissions of greenhouse gases – is also known with a high level of confidence.

Whilst the effects of climate change are just becoming discernible, they will become increasingly prominent. The effects over coming decades will include warmer average temperatures, heat waves, more extreme storm events and lower average annual rainfall. We have already observed the damage caused by extreme heat and floods in Australia in recent years, and it is likely that these events will become more prevalent.

The risks to cities of more severe weather conditions will increase, bringing with them high economic, social and environmental costs. Specifically in relation to trees, the impacts of climate change will include:

- The susceptibility of vegetation to **increasing and emerging pests and diseases** will challenge the urban forest's ability to withstand and recover from these outbreaks. Recent observations in NSW pine plantations have found that drought-stressed trees are suffering increased incidence of attack from insect stem borers, bark beetles and fungi. Changes in climate can affect pests' life cycles. Warmer summers can increase insects' development rate and reproductive potential, while warmer winters can increase over-winter survival. Many pests and diseases may have extended geographical ranges as warmer temperatures affect flight behaviour and vector spread. Introduced pests may also find conditions more favourable for population growth. Forests not previously at risk could become vulnerable as pests and disease ranges change.
- Extreme weather events directly affect vegetation health, generally leading to a reduction in canopy cover and overall decline. Heat extremes can lead to foliage and trunk scorch and canopy desiccation. Storms can shred foliage, break branches and uproot trees.
- Lower rainfall will result in increasing frequency of tree death in many species and overall forest health decline in response to frequent and severe drought.
- Inundation can lead to soil erosion, salinity, tree instability, tree mortality and damage to infrastructure. In southern Australia, more frequent extremes of wet and dry periods may increase the incidence of the root rot pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. Trees weakened by this disease have a reduced capacity to survive drought.

In the Unley context, it is increasingly important to research and develop appropriate tree palette species, both native and exotic, for use in streets and parks that will adapt to climate change moving forward. Increasing the diversity of species used will assist Council adapt and maintain a healthy, environmentally sustainable and resilient tree population.

Urban heat island & extreme heat

The urban heat island effect is common worldwide as cities become warmer than nearby suburban and regional areas, particularly at night. After a hot day, parts of the city can be four to seven degrees hotter than surrounding rural areas. This phenomenon occurs all year round, but it becomes a problem during hot weather.

In periods of prolonged heat, the urban heat island effect increases pressure on the city. It exacerbates heat stress, particularly for vulnerable people such as the elderly, the very young, and those with pre-existing medical conditions. Heat waves already kill more Australians than any other natural disasters and have led to many deaths in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney and Perth over the past 50 years. Victoria's Chief Health Officer found that the heat wave preceding the 2009 Black Saturday fires contributed to an increase above normal of 374 deaths in inner Melbourne – almost double those who died as a result of the fires. People living in high-density areas are at greater risk during heat events as a result of the urban heat island effect (Reference: City of Melbourne Urban Forest Strategy).

This heat also contributes to the decline of certain tree species. Extreme heat, particularly if combined with low soil moisture, causes the foliage and even the bark of some trees to scorch, which can lead to tree decline.

The urban heat island effect has three main causes:

- **Impervious hard surfaces:** Buildings and pavements are typically impervious and have high heat absorption capabilities. Asphalt and concrete trap and store heat from the sun, while solar radiation is reflected off building surfaces along street canyons, causing greater absorption of solar energy and a reduction in the reflective power of these surfaces.
- **Human activity:** Motorised transport is a major contributor to increased greenhouse gas emissions. In hot weather, the use of air conditioners increases, generating more waste heat.
- **Low vegetation coverage:** With less vegetation, cities receive less natural cooling from shade and evapotranspiration. Urban forests have proven to be one of the most effective methods for mitigating heat retention in urban areas, particularly central business districts. However, there are several challenges we face in tackling the urban heat island, including:
 - The current urban heat island effect will be exacerbated by predicted climate changes.
 - The existing tree canopy cumulatively covers 26.1% of Unley's public streets and park areas. This leaves a large proportion of Unley's streets and parks without natural shade.
 - It can take 20 years for a tree to grow to a size that will effectively assist in mitigating the urban heat island effect.
 - Vegetation cover must be primarily composed of species that are able to survive and remain healthy under hotter conditions.
 - Mitigating the urban heat island effect may require increased water use during dry periods to maintain tree health and maximise evapotranspiration.

The use of Green Infrastructure, including trees, increases the resilience of Unley to climate change. Street trees, green corridors and well designed parks contribute towards a reduction in the urban heat island by providing shaded places that are also safe, sustainable and attractive.

Population increase & urban infill

As well as having ecological value, old trees or established vegetation add character and heritage value to an area. Unfortunately, they are often casualties of infill housing construction. Loss of individual trees, particularly along boundaries, can reduce the privacy of existing houses, and the amenity value and character of a City. Over a broader area, the effects of the loss can accumulate, as important parts of the area's ecology are lost, and wildlife corridors dislocated, affecting birdlife and seed distribution.

Increased development densities often result in greater site coverage by buildings and pavements, resulting in:

- Reductions in the extent of vegetation on private land, especially large canopy trees.
- Reduction of permeable ground surfaces that allow for the infiltration of rainwater into the soil.
- Increased shading of streets by buildings, potentially to the extent that tree growth suffers due to the lack of sunlight.
- Increased pressure on public spaces to accommodate more uses – whether for recreation in parks or for traffic and parking in streets – which can result in direct competition with plantings for space as well as making more demanding growth conditions due to more extensive hard or compacted surfaces.

Canopy trees need room to grow and the competition for the physical space to grow mature trees (above and below ground) is rapidly increasing.

In servicing the population density increase, the urban forest has been gradually reduced as the existing trees make way for development or other land usage. In many instances, the opportunity to replace the trees and open spaces has been lost forever. Private property allotment sizes vary throughout Unley, but, most residential allotments are becoming increasingly smaller and the commercial sites have maximised their built form to extend to property boundaries. Trees are competing with off-street parking, rear studio apartments and swimming pools and in some instances, the desire for 'maintenance free' yards.

Community expectations and resistance to change

The City of Unley has a wide and varied population of residents, living in apartments, terrace houses, small and large lot suburban housing. All of these residents have a different perspective and interaction with trees and the urban forest. The community as a whole also includes business owners and employees who may visit and engage with the City and its trees every day. As such, the City encompasses many people with an extremely diverse range of interests and attitudes toward trees. These are often influenced by an equally diverse range of factors such as age, income, education, cultural background and exposure to natural environments. At the extreme there is often the irrational fear of trees, even though statistically there is far greater chance of being killed by lightning than dying due to a tree failure.

Appropriate maintenance and pruning can often alleviate concerns, and appropriate repair or redesign of infrastructure can also be undertaken with little impact to the tree and the tree can continue its valuable contribution for many decades to come.

It is also important that people recognise and are informed about the need for change. Trees are living organisms and as such will grow, mature and eventually die. As trees age they will require maintenance and then eventually require removal and replacement. In a natural ecosystem this happens gradually and with little fanfare or impact on people. In an urban environment an aging or hazardous tree cannot usually be left until it completely falls apart.

Tree removal can be traumatic and emotional. Often trees have been there for many decades prior and people have grown up with them and become attached to their presence, their size and their aesthetic appeal. The trees may also represent associations and links to past events and historical places. For these and many other reasons, some parts of the community often have expectations of trees being retained for very long periods and beyond their useful life expectancy. They may even entertain retaining a tree no matter what the costs. There will come a time, however, when the benefit of keeping an individual tree is far outweighed by the hazard to life or property and the monetary cost of maintaining it. As with all forests it will need to be replaced with the next generation, as painful as this may be. When managing and establishing an urban forest the needs of the many may often have to outweigh the needs of the few.

Tree succession planning and programming

A significant challenge faced by Council is the fact that many boulevard and specimen trees are reaching the end of their natural life. Coupled with the effects of drought, increasing intensity of heat during summer, and water restrictions, this decline has been accelerated and in many cases is irreversible. The opportunity now exists to transform our street tree asset into a healthy, diverse, resilient and well-designed forest that will enable our City to adapt to a changing climate, mitigate urban heat island effects and provide protection and wellbeing to the community.

Tree succession planting is applied on a whole-of-street basis. By its nature, it involves the process of tree removal. It is in practice a difficult task to accurately judge the life expectancy of any individual tree when making a decision to remove it. The first principle must always be that if the tree cannot be maintained to an acceptable level of risk or amenity then it should be removed. Criteria for tree removal, as part of succession planning, must therefore be clear and consistent, so that all parties affected by the strategy are well informed. The information supporting priorities for succession renewal planting should also be based on sound arboricultural knowledge.

A significant target from this Tree Strategy will be the creation of a Street Tree Succession Strategy. The purpose of the Succession Strategy will be to provide a street tree succession renewal framework that will facilitate the regeneration of the Urban Forest in the City of Unley and provide sustainability for the City moving forward. The Succession Strategy is also aimed at ensuring that Unley continues to have tree lined streets that will provide solid, sustainable environmental foundations for the future communities of Unley while retaining the aesthetic qualities of our streetscapes.

Age friendly city

Ageing is a cause for celebration in the City of Unley - our people are living longer and healthier. The City of Unley has a key role to play in helping our community to get the most out of their lives. We need to ensure that our City is accessible for everyone, promotes health and wellbeing and provides opportunities for connection, inclusion and contribution. We want our people to live fulfilled lives throughout their lifetime and never feel like they need to leave the City of Unley.

The above summary quotation from the current City of Unley Age Friendly Strategy provides streetscape design challenges for the future. The city promotes that within the municipality, every street that can be planted with street trees has and will continue to be planted. Our community wants and indeed expects tree-lined streets with a height and canopy that provides shade and scope to an otherwise harsh streetscape.

As an urbanised inner City municipality many of the streets are narrow from property boundary to kerb. Trees require space to grow, mature and survive. Within limited space they often come into conflict with the street hard infrastructure. They potentially impact on the accessible width of a footpath carriageway and regularly lift the pavement as they mature. This provides challenges as we strive to reach the goal of creating an environment that is pleasant, safe and accessible through age friendly pathways.

A balanced approach will be required in reaching the age friendly goals with the community potentially being asked to accept a modified streetscape with smaller less intrusive trees or more innovative solutions are explored such as narrowing roadways to provide more space for trees.

Vision and Pathways to Regenerating Unley's Tree Asset

The City of Unley's urban forest contributes greatly to the City's character and is integral to making Unley a green city.

A thriving urban forest can provide cleaner air, filtered stormwater and lower city temperatures.

Trees create important habitat for birds, insects and reptiles and make beautiful city streets. Streets filled with trees and landscaping can also have psychological benefits in reducing stress and providing spaces for relaxation and contact with nature.

The longevity of trees can span decades and even centuries. These trees may persist as monuments to human intervention or management of the landscape longer than the labours of any other human endeavour. They are part of our heritage, and are a living link between the present generation and those which have preceded and those which will follow.

The City of Unley recognises the economic, social and environmental value of trees and is committed to maintaining and enhancing trees across the City of Unley in parks, reserves, open space and streets to 'green' the City, contribute to a liveable City, strengthen habitat and biodiversity. Trees are a valued asset and contribute strongly toward the Urban Forest and Green Infrastructure of the City.

The City of Unley's tree vision is to create **a resilient, healthy and diverse urban forest that will provide solid, sustainable environmental foundations for the future communities of Unley.**

Pathways

The control and management of trees within the City of Unley urban environment can be classified within 3 key pathways:

Pathway 1 - Street Trees

Street trees in the City of Unley have an important function and role to improve the microclimate and liveability of the City, and contribute to its diverse inner urban, heritage, environmental and social character. This will be achieved by improving the design, management and sustainable maintenance of new and existing streetscapes which recognise the layers of natural and constructed history of Unley. An increased range of tree species will be used to reflect changes in the local neighbourhood character, the City's open space character and to improve biodiversity.

Pathway 2 - Park Trees

As the urban population grows and private green space becomes less available, public open space increases in social and community value. The City of Unley has significantly less open space than most local government authorities within metropolitan Adelaide. Furthermore, within this open space are significant parcels of remnant vegetation including trees which pre-date European settlement. There is a responsibility that this remnant and other important trees within the city are managed and enhanced for today and future generations.

Pathway 3 - Private Trees (Regulated and Significant)

It is well recognised that many of the largest and most significant trees within the City are located within the boundaries of private properties.

Growing and maintaining large canopy trees is a worthwhile investment and a cornerstone of today's movement toward sustainable communities. The City of Unley contains numerous remarkable trees; trees with historic, cultural, social, aesthetic and botanic value. Many are at threat from development, urban infill, pests and diseases, pollution and other factors.

Trees take many years to grow. As we already have an established urban forest, it makes sense that the City should implement strategies and actions to retain trees that are healthy and in good condition. Specifically Regulated Trees are usually the larger trees within the City and have been found to be more valuable (providing between 4 to 8 times the benefit) than small trees (Portland, 2004). Therefore, the City recognises it needs to promote the maintenance and protection of these assets.

Pathway 1 - Street Trees

Objective: Encourage attractive, healthy and appropriate street trees for the benefit of the community which contribute to the:

- **liveability and wellbeing of our City**
- **environment and sustainability both now and in the future.**

Initiatives:

1 Selection and Location

1.1 Ensure tree species selection and associated guidelines are in line with site specific locations taking into account:

- age friendly requirements;
- transport functions;
- open space needs;
- utilities and service provisions;
- food security considerations; and
- Environmental Sustainable Strategy outcomes.

1.2 Develop a palette of species suitable for street tree planting which considers varying infrastructure location situations, service requirements and takes into account the impact of pedestrian egress and Climate Change.

1.3 Proactively support Council resource sharing initiatives to propagate, develop and establish new street tree species. Actively support trial planting opportunities.

2 Planting and Establishment

2.1 Develop and implement site establishment protocols and guidelines to ensure the long term viability of trees selected in streets.

2.2 Develop formative pruning guidelines and programs for early establishment of trees to maximise canopy potential.

2.3 Develop site preparation guidelines to ensure sustainable planting conditions for new trees ensuring maximum canopy potential, including below ground spaces and water infiltration. Examine the suitability of incorporating waterwell installations within replacement planting programs.

2.4 Develop and maintain sustainable tree planting programs and schedules to ensure new sapling trees are provided with the best development potential.

2.5 Develop and ensure watering programs and schedules meet new tree requirements during establishment phase.2.6 Research and consider contemporary trials to determine the value and impact of growth fertilisers, water retention initiatives and other environmental sustainable treatments.

3 Maintenance

3.1 City of Unley adopt a proactive approach to managing the risks in existing street trees.

3.2 Undertake tree maintenance to meet site specific expectations in line with Australian Standards.

- 3.3 Ensure City of Unley tree maintenance staff are capable of delivering in line with competency and capacity standards.
- 3.4 Ensure tree maintenance contractors engaged by Council are capable of delivering in line with competency and capacity standards.
- 3.5 Council will encourage the development of staff skills in arboriculture and recruit suitably qualified staff.

4 Removal of Trees

- 4.1 Develop and implement a Second Generation Tree Strategy and program which prioritises streets for tree renewal, is based on sound sustainability principles, is funded and is aligned to the Unley Community Plan. (The 2014/15 street tree audit identified that there are 16,671 mature street trees in the City. This figure represents 74% of the total number of trees.) From an asset management perspective this raises a concern that many of the mature trees could reach the end of their useful life expectancy and require replacement at a similar period in time.
- 4.2 Remove individual trees as requested or identified ensuring appropriate Visual Tree Assessment and approval processes are followed.
- 4.3 Ensure weed species trees are not planted and where necessary are removed from inappropriate locations.

5 Replacement

- 5.1 Ensure that a diverse and sustainable range of species is utilised through street tree planting and replacement across the City. The 2014/15 street tree audit identified that two species of tree (*Jacaranda mimosifolia* – 5,386 and *Lophostemon confertus-Queensland Box* – 4,112) constituted 42.4% (9,498 of 22,426) of Council's street tree asset. A reliance on a dominant species leaves the City vulnerable to pest and disease and potential loss of the street tree asset.
- 5.2 Develop and implement plant procurement specifications in line with Second Generation and individual tree replanting requirements.
- 5.3 Develop and implement protocols for nursery stock selection in line with relevant Australian Standards.
- 5.4 Explore opportunities to develop supplier relationships and pre-order processes and standards in advance.

6 Resident Related

- 6.1 Council will consult and engage the community and affected landowners (in line with Council's Community Engagement Process) where large scale plantings, street tree renewals and tree removal works are to occur. Council will appropriately inform and involve the community in tree management through community engagement and encouraging the community to be involved in adopting and supporting tree planting and follow up watering.
- 6.2 Establish clear protocols and guidelines in relation to the Local Government Act (Section 221) as they relate to trees.

Street Trees

Indicators and Targets:

- Indicator 1** An annual tree succession program which identifies streets for renewal based on identified criteria and funded at sustainable levels.
- Target 1** **City of Unley Street Tree Succession Strategy developed in Year 1 (2015).**
- Indicator 2** Through street tree succession planning, the City of Unley will have a mixed age class distribution of street trees across the City.
- Target 2** **A street tree renewal target of 2,000 trees planted over the next 5 years (2015-19).**
- Indicator 3** Work toward a long-term goal to increase the species diversity of street trees within the City. The City move toward a more healthy, environmentally sustainable, resilient tree population.
- Target 3** **A street tree diversity reduction from 42.4% to 40.5% (415 trees) of tree species *Jacaranda mimosifolia* (Jacaranda) and *Lophostemon confertus* (Queensland Box) over the next 5 years (2015-19).**
- Indicator 4** Newly planted trees are maintained to ensure their short and long-term survival.
- Target 4** **Annual survival and health achievement target of 90% in first 12 months of the tree's life.**
- Indicator 5** The percentage of maintenance program pruning will meet the tree Level of Service requirements to ensure the long-term sustainability of the street tree asset.
- Target 5** **95% of trees meeting Level of Service requirements in annual condition assessment.**

Pathway 2 - Park Trees

Objective: Ensure park and open space trees are resilient, safe, healthy, sustainable, diverse and positively contribute to:

- the health and wellbeing of our City
- supporting Unley as a liveable City.

Initiatives:

1 Selection and Location

- 1.1 Ensure tree species selection and guidelines are in line with park and open space site specific situations taking into account:
- age friendly needs;
 - open space strategy requirements;
 - shade and shelter requirements;
 - environmental sustainable considerations;
 - existing infrastructure, including current and proposed use;
 - long term viability, maintenance and risk considerations;
 - food security considerations; and
 - impact on recreational use by park users.
- 1.2 Develop a diverse palette of species suitable for park and open space tree planting that considers:
- environmental contribution;
 - varying infrastructure location situations;
 - Climate Change;
 - seasonal change requirements ie deciduous/evergreen;
 - size and scale;
 - adherence to CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles;
 - heritage and memorial considerations; and
 - food security opportunities.

2 Planting and Establishment

- 2.1 Develop and implement site establishment protocols and guidelines to ensure the long term viability of trees selected in parks.
- 2.2 Develop formative pruning guidelines and programs to guarantee the viable early establishment of trees to ensure the 'best chance' to maximise canopy potential.
- 2.3 Develop site preparation guidelines to ensure sustainable planting conditions for new trees ensuring maximum canopy potential, including below ground spaces and water infiltration.
- 2.4 Develop and maintain sustainable tree planting programs and schedules to ensure new sapling trees are provided with the best development potential.
- 2.5 Develop and ensure watering programs and schedules meet new tree requirements during establishment phase. Where possible utilise recycled water options including those available through the Managed Aquifer Recharge network.
- 2.6 Research and consider contemporary trials to determine the value and impact of growth fertilisers, water retention initiatives and other environmental sustainable treatments.

3 Maintenance

- 3.1 Council adopt a proactive approach to managing the risks in existing park and open space trees.
- 3.2 Develop auditing and maintenance condition assessment protocols to reduce risk and ensure Unley's parks provide a safe experience for park users.
- 3.3 Undertake tree maintenance to meet site specific expectations in line with Australian Standards.
- 3.4 Ensure City of Unley tree maintenance staff are capable of delivering in line with competency and capacity standards.
- 3.5 Ensure tree maintenance contractors engaged by Council are capable of delivering in line with competency and capacity standards.
- 3.6 Council will encourage the development of staff skills in arboriculture and recruit suitably qualified staff.

4 Removal of Trees

- 4.1 Develop park tree removal protocols that consider and balance:
 - habitat retention;
 - nature play;
 - tree aesthetics;
 - veteran tree management;
 - risk and safety to park users;
 - inappropriate and/or weed species;
 - potential damage to park infrastructure; and
 - park development needs.
- 4.2 Remove individual trees as requested or identified ensuring appropriate Visual Tree Assessment and approval processes are followed.

5 Replacement

- 5.1 Develop and implement plant procurement specifications in line with Second Generation and individual tree replanting requirements.
- 5.2 Develop and implement protocols for nursery stock selection in line with relevant Australian Standards.
- 5.3 Explore opportunities to develop supplier relationships and pre-order processes and standards in advance.

6 Resident Related

- 6.1 Council will consult and engage the community and affected landowners (in line with Council's Community Engagement Process) where large scale plantings, park tree renewals and tree removal works are to take place. Council will appropriately inform and involve the community in tree management through community engagement and encouraging the community to be involved in adopting and supporting tree planting.
- 6.2 Council will consider removal of resident planted trees in parks which do not conform to an approved park management plan or are deemed an inappropriate species.

Park Trees

Indicators and Targets

- Indicator 1** Through park and open space tree succession planning, the City of Unley will have a mixed age class distribution of trees with the potential to reach Regulated size across the City.
- Target 1** **Renewal target of 250 trees with the potential to reach Regulated size upon maturity over the next 5 years (2015-19) within Council's parks, reserves and open space.**
- Indicator 2** Supporting Council's vision of encouraging food security throughout the City by ensuring, a selection of fruit and nut trees are available for selection and planting in Unley's parks where appropriate.
- Target 2** **Renewal target to plant 100 fruit and nut trees over the next 5 years (2015-19) within Council's parks, reserves and open space.**
- Indicator 3** Newly planted trees as part of park and open space succession planting are maintained to ensure their short and long-term survival.
- Target 3** **Annual survival and health achievement target of 90% in first 12 months of the tree's life.**
- Indicator 4** Work toward a long-term goal to increase the species diversity of park trees within the City.
- Target 4** **Move towards a park and open space tree composition of no more than 5% of one tree species, nor more than 10% of one genus and no more than 20% of any one family (matches City of Melbourne target).**

Pathway 3 - Private (Regulated and Significant Trees)

Objective: Ensure private Regulated and Significant trees within the municipality are protected in line with *The Development Act 1993* in balance with Council's commitment to encourage sensitive and sustainable development.

Initiatives:

1 Facilitator

- 1.1 Examine opportunities through a review of Unley Council's Development Plan to retain Regulated and Significant trees within private properties.
- 1.2 Council will provide incentives for the community to become engaged in the planting and ownership of trees within private properties to adapt to the impacts of Urban Infill and assist in preserving the Urban Forest.
- 1.3 Review, update and maintain Unley's Council's Significant Tree list (included within Council's Development Plan).
- 1.4 Develop a palette of trees appropriate for planting within construction sites to assist developers and new property owners maintain Unley's urban forest. Examine the possibility of trialling trees identified within the palette to act as a source for developers and the wider Unley community.
- 1.5 Investigate the feasibility of auditing and/or mapping Council's listed Significant and remnant trees. Potential for data to be stored as a GIS layer for Council and community reference.

2 Development Protection

- 2.1 Develop and establish clear procedural protocols for dealing with Development Applications which include Regulated and Significant trees within a development site to assist with the delivery of Council's Environmental Sustainable Strategy.
- 2.2 Develop and establish clear procedural protocols for dealing with Development Applications involving the removal of Regulated and Significant trees.
- 2.3 Define relevant tree policy protocols within Council's Development Plan (Objectives 60 & 61) to ensure Council is optimising its ability to protect and retain Significant and Regulated trees.
- 2.4 Develop a pro-forma or set of questions to assist and guide developers in addressing relevant Development Plan tree environmental criteria to enable Council administration to make informed assessment decisions.

3 Monitoring/Compliance

- 3.1 Develop and establish clear procedural protection protocols for monitoring and ensuring compliance for Development Applications that include Regulated and Significant trees within a development site.

Private Trees Indicators and Targets

- Indicator 1** With an aim to retain more Regulated and Significant trees on private property throughout the City, establish clear, consistent, rigorous and agreed policy interpretations of objectives and principles of development control within Council's Development Plan.
- Target 1** **Review and establish agreed Development Plan policy and objective interpretations in Year 1 of this strategy.**
- Indicator 2** Encourage and support the planting of appropriate trees on development sites to ensure the long-term sustainability of the urban forest.
- Target 2** **In the life of this strategy develop a 'Places and Spaces Tree Palette Guide' to be made available and promoted to developers and property owners within developed sites.**

References

- City of Burnside:** Tree Management Strategy – Our Next Generation: Burnside’s Urban Forest
- City of Melbourne:** Urban Forest Strategy – Making a Great City Greener – 2012 – 2032
- University of Technology Sydney:** Institute for Sustainable Futures – Benchmarking Australia’s Urban Tree Canopy
- City of Marion:** Tree Management Policy
- Morton A.:** Urban Tree Management Principles – Speakers’ Paper – The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects 2005 Tree Management Forum
- Burwood Council:** Street Tree Management Strategy
- City of Yarra:** Yarra Environment Strategy
- National Urban Forest Alliance:** July 2014 – Australian Partnership Plan 2014-2020
- City of Unley:** Age Friendly Strategy
- City of Darebin:** GreenStreets Streetscape Strategy – 2012-2020
- Curtin University:** Cool Communities: Urban Trees, Climate and Health
- Ecological Associates:** Independent Inquiry Into Management of Trees on Public Land
- City of Sydney:** Urban Forest Strategy

ITEM 10
MOTION OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN – OPEN AND GREEN SPACES

Councillor Hewitson has given notice of intention to move the following motion at the Infrastructure and Sustainability Committee meeting to be held on Tuesday 3 November 2015.

BACKGROUND

Council has actively pursued a greening approach to the City over many years for both environmental and aesthetic reasons. However, allotment sizes are getting smaller presenting the inevitable challenge of getting sufficient return for investment in a property while still retaining a level of open space and “greening”. A good percentage of the City’s trees, whether in our streets or private property, are now at an age where they are impacting on properties or reaching the end of their useful lives, and need to be replaced, causing a loss in canopy cover as large trees are removed and possibly replaced with smaller plantings. Currently Council’s goal is to at least maintain the current levels of tree shade and permeability across the City as key elements in keeping Unley liveable. Research underlines the importance of trees acting as evaporative coolers across the city on hot summer days lowering the temperature if we maintain our existing cover by 3 degrees Celsius. The draft Tree Strategy supports this in some detail.

To achieve the above objectives all owners of property will need to play a part. Consequently, how Council can influence, penalise or incentivise developers or private land holders to consider green and permeable spaces in any developments must be considered.

In response to the above I am putting forward the following Notice of Motion

Keeping Unley Cool and Green

That to help achieve our strategic aims of maintaining the current level of tree shade and permeability across the City that Council ask staff to prepare a report on exploring the costs, benefits and mechanisms to encourage developments which seek to provide sufficient open and green spaces. This will include the following:

- the use of price mechanisms such as special rates open to Council.
- the merits of a Green Fund or other means by which funds collected can be used to maintain the overall extent of green cover, particularly in relation to the new Planning, Development and Infrastructure Bill.
- the impacts of any mechanism on low-income members of the community.

New developments would include two for ones, extensions covering more than 50% of the site and removing trees, as well as high rise developments.