

Urban Forest Strategy Implementation Plan June 2021



Our urban forest vision

The City of Glen Eira's urban forest will be green, resilient and healthy creating a liveable and sustainable City for current and future generations where trees and vegetation are a core element.

Objectives

The *Implementation Plan* aligns with the *Urban Forest Strategy's* five objectives which are aimed at enabling and inspiring our whole community to better protect and strengthen our natural assets:

1. **Maintain and protect** Glen Eira's public and private land urban forest.
2. **Grow the future urban forest** through designed solutions for trees and innovative green infrastructure on public and private land.
3. **Adapt to climate change** and reduce urban heat impacts through embedding leading practice urban forest management into Council's decision-making, investment and processes.
4. **Engage and collaborate** across sectors with the community, developers and other agencies.
5. **Monitor and evaluate** the progress of the urban forest, including progress towards targets.

Our goals

Achieving tangible increases in tree canopy cover will only be possible through the sum of all *Strategy* actions and the actions of the whole community. Each have unique challenges and opportunities.

On land managed by Council, we will aim to achieve the following by 2040:

- tree canopy cover over roads and streets will increase from 15.6 per cent to 18 per cent;
- tree canopy cover in parklands will increase from 14 per cent to 25 per cent;

- tree canopy cover on Council-owned car parks will be at least 25 per cent; and
- no one species will represent more than 10 per cent of the public urban tree population.

Across the whole municipality, successfully achieving a higher canopy target will be the collective responsibility of the community, Council, State Government and other agencies. The aim is to increase the municipal tree canopy cover from 12.5 per cent to 22 per cent by 2040.

Implementation Plan

#	Actions	Outcome/goal	Priority	Budget source
Maintain and protect				
1	Utilise <i>i-Tree Eco</i> to enable the monitoring and tracking of the urban forest within Glen Eira (maps tree canopy cover, carbon values and species) and to support project planning in parks, streets and urban areas.	Council endorsed an urban forest monitoring system that enables statistical data to be produced tracking the Glen Eira urban forest from canopy cover through carbon sequestration, density of planting, species selection and more.	High	New operational /program is free
2	Incorporate street trees into Council's asset protection program to enable a bond system to be collected to protect public trees during development. This will include an appropriate amenity and structural value for Glen Eira's trees (eg. City of Melbourne method, Stonnington approach and Burnley methods) and seek to formally adopt by Council.	Public tree assets will have a dollar value assigned to them which will create a financial incentive to ensure good tree health, maintenance and protection of trees on or adjacent to development sites for the construction period. Developers will need to pay a bond commensurate with tree value above as part of Council's <i>Asset Protection Program</i> .	High	New operational
3	Review and update the <i>Tree Removal Policy</i> utilising the <i>Urban Forest Strategy</i> as a reference document. This will include a review of the fee to be paid by applicants who request removal of a Council-owned tree due to development (including crossovers) to incorporate amenity and structural value.	An updated <i>Tree Removal Policy</i> . This will ensure that if trees are required to be removed for development purposes, applicants must pay the full amenity value of the lost tree, tree removal costs plus replacement and establishment costs.	High	New operational

4	Develop a proactive maintenance program to improve the health, structure and Useful Life Expectancy of trees of park trees. This should include best practice treatments for trees in parks such as irrigation, mulch, compost, reduction of pesticides and herbicides where possible. Develop a wholistic soil health regime aimed at increasing micro-biological activity within soils to benefit ongoing tree health.	Fully funded rolling tree maintenance program that improves overall park tree health and extends useful life expectancy. Targeting valuable trees with a current low life expectancy.	High	New operational
5	Continue the current vandalised tree signage programme to discourage damage to public trees whilst seeking programmes to discourage wilful damage.	Draw public attention to trees that have been intentionally vandalised through signage and media.	Ongoing	Existing operational
6	Embed <i>Urban Forest Strategy</i> vision, objectives and targets into the <i>Council Plan</i> and any other relevant plans: <i>Environment and Sustainability, Climate Change, Active Transport, Community Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> , etc.	<i>Urban Forest Strategy</i> and its objectives, vision and/or targets are referenced in the <i>Planning Scheme, Council Plan, Community Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Environmental Sustainability Strategy, Open Space Strategy</i> and others.	Ongoing	Existing operational
7	Continue to support Council's annual street and park tree renewal program that ensures trees are replaced when they reach end of life. This program should seek to maximise tree canopy by planting trees that are appropriate to the scale of the street and the planting site to maximise tree health and potential.	When trees reach the end of their useful life and are removed, they are replaced within the next planting season with more appropriate varieties.	Ongoing	Existing capital
8	Formalise a suite of tree technical management guidelines for Glen Eira. This should include best practice management for tree planting, underground soil requirements, species selection, maintenance, pruning, removal, renewal, root management, specifications/guidelines for water sensitive urban design, structural soils, permeable paving, tree pits. This document is an internally facing reference document only to support Council officers and contract specification formulation.	A Glen Eira tree management technical manual.	High	New operational

9	<p>Review and update the <i>Vehicle Crossing Permit Standard Conditions</i> to state the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention is a priority for Glen Eira and crossovers may not be permitted where other alternatives exist. • Modification of vehicle crossing should maximise the retention of street trees. • In the event that removal of a tree is allowed, the loss of amenity value and all costs associated with the removal must be included. • The planting of a new tree and its establishment costs will be borne by the Vehicle Crossing Permit applicant. 	<p>Street tree protection is the first priority in making an assessment for new or modified crossovers. When a removal is necessitated, the applicant will cover the full cost of the loss (see amenity value above), tree removal and replacement costs.</p>	High	New operational
10	<p>Ensure the principles of the <i>Urban Forest Strategy</i> are embedded within local policies in the <i>Planning Scheme</i>.</p>	<p>The <i>Glen Eira Planning Policy Framework</i> reflects the <i>Urban Forest Strategy</i> principles.</p>	High	Existing operational
11	<p>Explore opportunities to provide greater direction in the <i>Planning Scheme</i> to support the protection of existing trees and to improve new canopy tree planting on private land.</p>		High	Ongoing
12	<p>In future updates to neighbourhood character statements, reinforce the importance of vegetation as a core element of preferred neighbourhood character.</p>	<p>Updated neighbourhood character statements will directly reference the importance of the urban forest and link the requirements to protect, grow and replace it. This may include the nomination of tree species that reflect the existing urban character.</p>	High	New operational
13	<p>Continue to promote the <i>Classified Tree Register</i> and seek to capture all significant trees within Glen Eira to be included on the register.</p>	<p>A comprehensive list of significant trees to be protected within the <i>Classified Tree Register</i>.</p>	High	New operational

14	Review and analyse the use of the most effective vegetation protection mechanism (eg. significant landscape, environmental significance, vegetation protection and/or heritage overlays) to protect private canopy trees. These trees will have a DBH of 110 centimetres or more or base of trunk is 150 centimetres or more within residential zones, and include overlays to protect areas of biodiverse value as outlined in the <i>Biodiversity Implementation Plan</i> , eg. Yarra Yarra Golf Course, Rippon Lea, Infield of the Caulfield Race Course and Warrigal Road Bentleigh East reservoir.	A planning overlay to protect all canopy trees on private land by requiring a permit to be issued for all major works and removal of trees. This could include commercial and industrial land if relevant.	Medium	New operational
15	Seek to develop a <i>Tree Protection Policy</i> outlining the various mechanisms and processes in place to protect trees.	A <i>Tree Protection Policy</i> brings together all the various forms of tree protection (<i>Planning Scheme</i> and <i>Local Laws</i>) under one policy for simpler public interpretation.	Medium	New operational
16	Ensure adequate resourcing is in place to issue, monitor, audit and enforce tree permits and permit conditions as arising from tree protection. Ensure Council has in place appropriate assessment and enforcement resources for addressing non-compliance events.	Employ an asset protection arborist to assist planning compliance and asset protection staff to advise, assess and ensure that conditions relating to tree retention are enacted and enforced.	High	New operational
17	Record and analyse on an annual basis the number of tree permits issued, number of trees removed, and number of trees retained on private land.	A clear record of tree loss numbers on private residential land, and canopy loss percentage annually.	Ongoing	New operational

18	Develop and implement a strategic and ongoing educational campaign with Glen Eira residents about why it is important to protect trees, especially those on private land, and where most tree loss has occurred to date. Utilise case studies of developers who have retained significant trees, provide urban forest metrics, such as: canopy cover change, environmental <i>i-Tree Eco</i> values, etc. to bolster the importance of individual private trees within the broader urban forest. Align with release of <i>Urban Forest Strategy</i> , call for nominations to <i>Classified Tree Register</i> , promotion of <i>Neighbourhood Sustainable Garden Program</i> , tree planting days, <i>Nature Next Door Citizen Science Program</i> , etc.	A communications campaign seeking to raise awareness, celebrate the wins and communicate Council's progress in protecting the private urban forest.	High	New operational
19	Continue to enforce the 12-month requirement to retain trees on land prior to planning application to minimise the practice of moon scaping sites by developers before planning permits are sought. Ensure adequate resources are in place to audit properties and enforce non-compliance where possible.	A reduction in the number of moonscaped blocks.	Ongoing	New operational
Grow the urban forest				
20	Continue to, and expand on the Identification of planting sites within Glen Eira to enable increased tree planting across the City (streets, parks, public space). Reset all vacant planting sites within the asset management system and then complete an audit of the City, including areas where traditionally trees would not have been planted, eg. hard paved areas in commercial zones, roundabouts, kerb outstands and medians recording all sites that are appropriate for tree planting.	Known number and location of vacant street, park and public space tree planting sites presented as a spatial dataset and recorded within the asset management database.	Ongoing	New operational
21	Seek to diversify species in streetscapes and maximise canopy in areas that allow for larger canopies. Consider transitioning the <i>Street Tree Planting Plan</i> towards a City of Melbourne style precinct-based plan incorporating other outcomes, eg. water sensitive urban design, active transport, biodiversity, heat and flood mitigation.	Diversify the planting program to deliver on maximising the increase in street tree canopy cover targets.	Ongoing	Existing operational and capital

22	Develop a park tree planting and renewal program in line with identified opportunity sites in line with the key objectives as set within the <i>Open Space Strategy</i> and individual park masterplans. Seek to maximise canopy outcomes where possible.	A park tree planting program that delivers on park tree canopy target and the development of master plans for each park.	Ongoing	New capital
23	Ensure every tree is planted with adequate soil volumes and nutrients, access to water, adequate space for canopy and appropriate root covering, eg. mulch, grass, permeable paving. Seek to reduce synthetic inputs onto trees. Develop a suite of designs to guide engineers and landscapers in providing adequate root space for canopy trees in hard surface and constrained sites.	Each tree planted as per best practice.	Ongoing	New capital
24	Include understory plantings in parks where possible to improve biodiversity. As a priority the following parks have the opportunity to strengthen native vegetation patches through more plantings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caulfield Park • Packer Park • Mallanbool Reserve • Boyd Park •Include understory planting where possible in all public landscaping and kerb outstands in commercial strips	Increase the amount of understory planted in public spaces.	High	New capital
25	Integrate tree canopy cover objectives into design and planning of capital works projects, including active transport projects. Ensure that adequate soil volumes and canopy space is allowed for to ensure successful tree establishment and growth.	All capital works projects are contributing to the tree canopy cover targets, sustainability and/or urban greening outcomes.	Ongoing	Existing operational
26	Integrate tree canopy cover objectives into design and planning of asset renewal programs including road renewals, <i>Local Area Traffic Management Planning (LATM)</i> , school zone projects and vacant nature strip sites.	All relevant asset renewal projects are contributing towards the tree canopy cover targets.	ongoing	New operational

27	Support local structure planning, underpinned by place making objectives, to improve liveability outcomes through urban greening, planting canopy trees, stormwater filtration, active transport and the creation of activated pedestrian friendly spaces.	Local structure planning and urban street designs contribute to tree canopy and urban greening outcomes.	Medium	New operational
28	Seek to establish a future urban forest fund that collects fees/bonds from tree pruning and removals to invest in innovative solutions for future trees, eg. City of Melbourne.	Non contested revenue stream that ensures fees collected for tree removals is spent on tree planting, growing and maintaining the urban forest.	Ongoing	New operational
29	Trial and explore the use of green infrastructure such as green walls, roofs and facades, water sensitive urban design, permeable paving, strata cells etc. for municipal installations and new developments. Refer to the <i>Growing Green Guide</i> for support.	Capital works consider using green infrastructure as part of asset works. <i>Planning Scheme</i> amendment to incorporate a green per cent in all developments.	Ongoing	New capital
30	Continue to investigate and trial the use of water-sensitive urban design, such as raingardens and tree pits as a sustainable water source for trees and other vegetation.	Water-sensitive urban design treatments will be trialled and installed to improve growing conditions for street and park trees.	Ongoing	Existing capital
31	Continue to include appropriate conditions on planning permits that ensure the protection of the existing retained trees from pre-construction and to ensure ongoing care to establish and maintain newly planted trees post-construction.	Permit conditions requiring existing retained vegetation and newly planted trees to be protected.	High	Existing operational
32	Create a set of guidelines that demonstrates deep soil area is required to sustain small/medium and large canopy trees. Better define what size canopy trees can be utilised on an individual site basis. Include a list of suitable species in each category that are proven to thrive in a warmer and drier climate.	Easy to use guidelines the clearly show volumes required for healthy tree growth as well as identifying the space required for canopy formation.	High	New operational
33	Review current resources and procedures for auditing and enforcing permit conditions related to trees and landscape plans to ensure that all landscapes adhere to approved plans, including deep soil requirements, the issuing of fines for non-compliance and update in line with outcomes required.	All landscape plans for new developments, including trees protected and planted will be audited. Any non-compliance will be remediated or fined and remediated.	Ongoing	New operational

34	Review the relevance and suitability of adopting City of Melbourne's Green Factor Tool for assessing development applications for their contribution to installing green infrastructure and tree canopy cover.	Guide for new developments to install new green sites.	Ongoing	New operational
35	Seek to utilise the <i>Growing Green Guide</i> as an accessible tool for both Council and developers to trial the installation of green infrastructure.	Realisation of new green infrastructure.	Ongoing	Existing operational
36	Review the suitability of trialling and then adopting Council Alliance of Sustainable Built Environment's <i>Sustainable Subdivisions Framework</i> (applicable to all subdivisions from three to 60 plus lots).	Better development outcomes.	Medium	New operational
37	Seek to trial/adopt Co-operative Research Centre's Water Sensitive Cities design for infill developments		Medium	New operational
Adapt to climate change and reduce urban heat				
38	Support the inclusion of an environmentally sustainable design policy into the <i>Glen Eira Planning Scheme</i> as part of an amendment.	Greener and more sustainable developments.	Medium	New operational
39	Continue to engage with the community, local landowners/occupiers and owners/renters to plant and grow vegetation including trees within their property, with a priority for indigenous plantings where possible, eg. through the <i>Neighbourhood Sustainable Garden Program</i> .	A range of programs that seek to support and incentivise planting vegetation on private property.	Ongoing	Existing operational
40	Review Council's current <i>Street Tree Planting Palette</i> by investigating the individual environmental constraints of streets within the municipality, remove species from the list that are currently not performing well and recommend replacement plantings that are best suited to the local conditions whilst diversifying the palette to mitigate the effects of climate change.	A diverse climate-suited palette of preferred tree species that reflects planting plot size and the scale of the locale.	High	Existing operational

41	Trial new species in streetscapes and monitor their ability to thrive in our soils and climate utilise information available through Council's industry alliances to help aid with diverse species selection.	Data and research informing tree species selection.	High	New capital
42	Support the development of catchment wide water mapping to inform a Council integrated <i>Water Management Plan</i> or <i>Water Sensitive Urban Design Plan</i> . This should seek to prioritise the areas and types of water catchment projects that will ultimately reduce stormwater flows, reduce water pollution loads and seek to capture water back into the landscape.	Clear evidence and strategy for implementing stormwater capture projects in Glen Eira.	High	New operational
43	Develop an irrigation plan and schedule to bring supplementary watering to high value landscapes and trees, particularly parks and parcels of open space.	Irrigated landscapes to improve resilience.	High	Existing capital
44	Trial larger, landscape scale passive stormwater infiltration methods into parks and streets.	Trial of a passive stormwater infiltration system in a park and street.	Medium	New capital
45	Seek to increase tree canopy cover in areas where pedestrian exposure to heat is high as part of park and street tree planting programs.	Increase tree shade in areas of need.	Ongoing	Existing capital
46	Consider the creation of biodiversity corridors, using vegetation planted in streets and public space to link larger natural areas, eg. areas of remnant vegetation, Boyd Park, Sky Rail park, Ester Creek trail, and Allnutt Park, and look at habitat creation initiatives such as species-specific nesting hollows and native bee homes.	Establishment of vegetated biodiversity corridors.	High	New capital
47	Convert disused/underutilised public land into open space and vegetation where possible.	Reduce the amount of hard surfaces by converting into vegetated public open space.	Ongoing	New capital
48	Review materials for footpath and roadway upgrades and update to include the trialling of pervious paving and other suitable surfaces that assist in allowing passive stormwater filtration.	Innovative materials are being trialled for supporting tree and root growth.	Ongoing	Existing operational and capital

Engage and collaborate

49	Develop a suite of communications tools for everyday use in the urban forest program, eg. postcards, infographics, case studies, online information that reflect urban forest targets, vision and objectives.	Clear communications with the community about the importance of the urban forest.	High	New operational
50	Use local media to celebrate wins for the urban forest, eg. trees saved in large projects, newly planted trees, etc.	Celebrate the wins through the media.	Ongoing	Existing operational
51	Ensure urban planners have access to key information from the <i>Strategy</i> and guidelines to pass on to developers to show how they can contribute to reduced tree canopy loss on private land.	Urban planners are supported with appropriate tools and information.	Ongoing	Existing operational
52	Ensure Council's Parks and Open Space Team has the opportunity to input urban forest and open space objectives into capital works, structure planning and asset renewal planning. Reduce loss of vegetation and mitigate the heat island effect.	Capital works and infrastructure renewal consider urban forest and open space outcomes.	Ongoing	Existing operational
53	Establish key internal champions to help communicate and advocate for improved urban forest outcomes within and outside of Council.	Key internal champions.	Ongoing	Existing operational
54	Establish a community Urban Forestry/Climate and Sustainability/Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee. Committee to assist in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping Council accountable to the <i>Urban Forest Strategy</i>; • developing ideas for Council to implement that will encourage private landholders to protect existing trees and plant new ones on their private properties; • championing the urban forest within the community; and • undertaking or facilitating citizen science projects. 	Community Urban Forest Advisory Committee	High	Existing operational

55	Partner and collaborate with other landholders to encourage tree protection and tree planting outcomes on their land, eg. Caulfield Racecourse, Rippon Lea Estate, Monash University, South East Water, VicRoads, Department of Education, VicTrack, Department of Transport and Private schools.	Other major landholders contributing to tree canopy cover targets.	Ongoing	Existing operational
56	Partner and collaborate with the community to run community planting programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community tree planting days at community facilities (non Council-owned land); • support school gardens; • support schools tree planting — free tree giveaways or community planting days; and • community grants program for schools to plant trees to improve health and wellbeing and adapt to climate change, eg. <i>Shadeways School Program</i>. 	Trees planted on non Council-owned land.	Ongoing	Existing capital
57	Continue to advocate through <i>Living Melbourne</i> for a collaboration with State Government to replicate the data capture of vegetation cover for Melbourne every five years.	State Government commit to procuring regular vegetation cover mapping.	Ongoing	Existing operational
58	As per the <i>Biodiversity in Glen Eira Report 2018</i> , and the <i>Neighbourhood Sustainable Gardening Program</i> , encourage landowners to plant native tree and vegetation species in their yards and on nature strips to improve local urban biodiversity.	Programs that assist private landholders to plant vegetation on their land.	Ongoing	Existing operational
59	Continue to deliver the <i>Nature Next Door Citizen Science Program</i> to undertake surveys of significant trees and native fauna.	<i>Citizen Science Program</i> that enhances the evidence base for the urban forest.	Medium	Existing operational
60	Continue to support and partner with relevant organisations, such as Treenet, Arboriculture Australia, CAV, VYIO and Nature Conservatory that support research and education around increasing Australia's urban forest.	Benefit from the knowledge bank that these organisations offer.	Ongoing	Existing operational

Monitor and evaluate

61	<p>Report on the following each year through an annual <i>Urban Forest Audit Report</i>. Also include in Council's sustainability and corporate reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees removed (public and private) • Trees planted (public and private) • Amount of understory planting in parks and kerb outstands • Species diversity • ULE diversity 	Evidence as to the actual loss and gain of trees in the landscape on an annual basis.	Ongoing	Existing operational
62	Monitor performance of tree species every five years and use information to update preferred species palette.	Evidence to support changes to the street tree species selection list.	Ongoing	Existing operational
63	Measure progress towards canopy cover targets every five years. Tree canopy cover data will be updated and reported against the baseline as it is made available through State Government.	Recorded tree canopy cover every five years.	Ongoing	Existing operational
64	Continue to engage independent condition surveys of Council's street tree population every two years and record this data within Council's asset management data base.	An updated, independently audited tree database.	Ongoing	Existing operational
65	Continue to engage independent condition surveys of Council park trees every three to two years in line with street trees. Incorporate this into a park tree health program with defined maintenance actions also recorded for all trees.	An updated, independently audited tree database.	High	New operational
66	Check progress against actions every five years: 2025, 2030, 2035 and 2040.	Evaluation of progress towards urban forest actions.	Every five years	Existing operational