

# Urban Forest Policy Strategic Action Plan

V1



<b>Title</b>	<b>Urban Forest Strategic Action Plan</b>
<b>Summary</b>	This strategic action plan is to be read and used in conjunction with the Inner West Council 2025 Urban Forest Policy. This action plan provides a holistic approach to delivering the urban forest policy aims and objectives.
<b>Document Type</b>	Strategic Action Plan
<b>Relevant Strategic Plan Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Direction 1: An ecologically sustainable Inner West</li> <li>• Strategic Direction 2: Liveable, connected neighbourhoods and transport.</li> <li>• Strategic Direction 4: Healthy, resilient and caring communities</li> </ul>
<b>Legislative Reference</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Local Government Act 1993</i></li> <li>• <i>Environmental Planning &amp; Assessment Act 1979</i></li> <li>• <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i></li> <li>• <i>Roads Act 1993</i></li> <li>• <i>Civil Liabilities Act 2002</i></li> <li>• <i>Disability Inclusion Act 2014</i></li> <li>• <i>State Environmental Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021</i></li> <li>• <i>Heritage Act 1977</i></li> </ul>
<b>Related Council Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Code of Conduct</i></li> <li>• <i>Urban Forest Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Inner West Local Environment Plan 2023Marrickville DCP 2011</i></li> <li>• <i>Ashfield DCP 2016</i></li> <li>• <i>Leichardt DCP 2013</i></li> <li>• <i>Biodiversity Strategy 2024</i></li> <li>• <i>Community Strategic Plan 2036</i></li> <li>• <i>Councils Delivery Program and Operational Plan</i></li> <li>• <i>Disability Inclusion Plan 2023-2026</i></li> <li>• <i>Statewide Mutual Best Practice Manual Trees &amp; Tree Roots 2018</i></li> </ul>

# Contents

- 1. Purpose/Overview .....4
- 2. Benefits.....4
- 3. Strategic Action Plan ..... 5
- 4. Version Control – Strategic Action Plan History .....10

## 1. Purpose/Overview

The purpose of this Urban Forest Strategic Action Plan is to deliver on the aims and objectives of the Inner West Urban Forest Policy and improve community engagement regarding private and public trees.

Private tree applications and development are managed through the Inner West Development Control Plan.

Public tree management is an operational function, managed through Council process and procedures. Council cannot defer the decision making to third parties, as legal and legislative requirements must be considered and enacted to maintain a defensible position and maintain legislated insurance cover.

## 2. Benefits

This strategic action plan is to be read and used in conjunction with the Inner West Council 2025 Urban Forest Policy.

This action plan provides a holistic approach to delivering the Inner West Council Urban Forest Policy aims and objectives.

This approach moves away from the historically fixed master planning approach to a dynamic suite of technical documents that are fit for purpose today, but also relevant and adaptive to future challenges.

This strategic action plan has been developed to provide a single, consistent, and integrated approach to managing the urban forest on public land and private land.

This action plan will support the Inner West Blue Green Grid Strategy, Development Control Plan, Biodiversity Strategy and infrastructure programs, to achieve fit for purpose outcomes in all settings.

This plan identifies comprehensive documents and actions, that will provide transparent and consistent process to improve the quality of the tree population, maximise benefits including canopy cover, minimise property damage and allow Council to meet its legal obligations regarding trees and risk.

Canopy targets will continue to be set in the Inner West Council Community Strategic Plan (CSP 2036).

The technical manuals will contain a range of operational process and technical details, to cover all of Councils tree management and planting requirements, integrating with planning, civil design, landscape design and maintenance.

These manuals and processes will be based on best practice contemporary arboriculture and engineering knowledge, however, will be written to ensure community interpretation and engagement.

The current undesirable ratio of mature trees within the public tree population, will result in many of these trees becoming overmature and senesce over the next twenty years.

The strategic action plan documents will integrate tree renewal processes throughout Council, to create a more balanced tree age distribution and improve the overall quality and sustainability of the public tree population over the next twenty years.

A whole of life tree asset management approach is critical in achieving and sustaining these outcomes across multiple generations.

### 3. Strategic Action Plan

The strategic action plan items in the table below will address urban forest management holistically, incorporating planned, systematic, and integrated management processes.

These actions will be completed using existing resources using existing annual budgets.

Director Engineering Infrastructure and Director Planning will have responsibility for delivery of the Strategic Action Plan through the Public Tree Manager and Operations Manager in collaboration with Communication, Risk Management and Strategy Teams.

Specific Responsibilities Listed in table below.

Director Planning – Items 1, 2, 9 and 11

Director Engineering Infrastructure– Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10

	Action	Description	Delivery
1	Development Control Plan Private Trees Technical Manual	<p>Develop a Best Practice technical manual: <i>Private Land Tree Assessment and Management Guidelines</i>, for private land.</p> <p>The manual will provide clear guidelines and promote design solutions that maximise opportunities for tree retention and tree planting, within permitted development density and zoning.</p>	August 2025
2	Planning	<p>Investigate and establish development contributions within Councils Fees and Charges for unavoidable public tree removal by development.</p> <p>New trees will be identified, and viable space secured in all planning approvals, with Council to undertake public tree planting post development.</p>	October 2025
3	Tree Asset Management Program	<p>A programmed asset management approach for Council managed trees, will be implemented in line with built infrastructure asset programs.</p> <p>Supporting information systems will be developed or upgraded, including those relating to asset inventory, inspection, requests, maintenance scheduling and asset accounting.</p>	October 2025
4	Public Tree Management Technical Manual	<p>Develop a Best Practice technical manual: <i>Public Land Tree Assessment and Management Guidelines</i> for trees on Council Managed Land.</p> <p>The manual will incorporate technical and operational processes relating to public trees, assessment, planning, design, and tree planting.</p>	August 2025

5	Street Tree Selection Manual	<p>Develop an Inner West Council <i>Street Tree Selection Manual</i>.</p> <p>The manual will undertake a holistic spatial assessment of planting sites, to ensure maximum return and urban forest benefits through '<i>Right Tree Right Place</i>' approach and community engagement.</p>	October 2025
6	Standard Drawings	<p>Develop and cost a suite of tree planting designs to inform the planting program, civil and landscape design, and all public domain planting.</p> <p>Investigate new technologies and review past practice to develop value for money solutions and increase urban forest outcomes.</p>	September 2025
7	Integration	<p>Greater integration will be achieved between internal divisions and sections responsible for /or affecting tree and vegetation assets.</p> <p>This will be promoted by standardised technical manuals and process, staff training programs, skills sharing, and holistic program and design integration.</p>	Ongoing
8	Reporting	<p>Indicators of the extent, condition, functionality, and value of urban forest will be monitored and reported as part of the Council's.</p> <p>State of the environment reporting program.</p> <p>Councils Community Strategic (CSP), Delivery Program and Operational Plan reporting.</p> <p>Annual urban forest monitoring report to Council.</p>	Annual & Ongoing

9	<b>Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program &amp; Operational Plan</b>	<p>Objectives, principles, and major projects relating to urban forest will be reflected in the Inner West CSP, Delivery Program and Operational Plan on a continuing basis.</p> <p>This will require co-ordination across all land (public and private) to establish priorities and overall directions for, how and where Urban Forest programs should be undertaken, and to ensure that they contribute towards consistent objectives</p>	Ongoing
10	<b>Plans of Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for deriving urban forest benefits from community land will be identified and plans of management revised where appropriate.</li> <li>• This will facilitate implementation of greening programs by ensuring legal consistency with applicable plans of management.</li> </ul>	July 2027
11	<b>Community Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships will be developed with the community to encourage and assist private individuals, landholders, and community groups, to participate in the planting of trees on private, institutional, and Council managed land.</li> </ul>	June 2026 ongoing



12	Information, education, and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and publish an Urban Forest Background Paper.</li> <li>• Measures will be undertaken to increase public knowledge of the urban forest, Council policy and processes, practical application, and legal requirements of managing trees on private and public land.</li> <li>• Research projects will be supported that improve knowledge of Inner Wests urban forest.</li> <li>• Develop plain language materials informing residents about options, processes, and response times relating to pruning and removal of trees. To be letterboxed to all households and provided at Council Service Centers, customer service stalls and the Inner West Sustainability Hub.</li> </ul>	March 2026 ongoing
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## 4. Version Control – Strategic Action Plan History

This Strategic Action Plan will be enacted as adopted by Council. No review is required.

Governance use only:

Document	Urban Forest Strategic Action Plan	<i>Uncontrolled Copy When Printed</i>	
Custodian	Director Engineering	Version #	Version 1
Approved By	General Manager	ECM Document #	40646958
Next Review Date	As required by any update in relevant legislations.		