



## Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Assessment Summary

*The Triple Bottom Line Assessment is required to be published in accordance with Part 4, section 23 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Act 2016*

### 20/141 – Urban Forest Strategy

#### Summary of impacts:

- This Cabinet submission seeks agreement to release a draft Urban Forest Strategy for consultation. This will have a positive impact on the community as they will have an opportunity to have their say on ACT tree policy.
- A key action of the Strategy is to support the Living Infrastructure Plan target to increase canopy coverage from 21 per cent to 30 per cent by 2045.
- A well-maintained urban forest will provide benefits to ACT residents including improved physical and mental health outcomes, lower air pollution, increased urban amenity and reduced costs of heating and cooling of houses.
- The ACT urban forest is aging and many of the current trees will come to the end of their lives in the next few decades. A significant amount of work will be required to remove trees which become unsafe as they age and replant new trees. An increased budget will be required in future to facilitate this work.
- The increased costs will likely be repaid over time through the benefits the urban forest provides.
- The Urban Forest Strategy will focus on renewing the urban forest with increased biodiversity with no one species to account for more than 10 per cent of the total population. It also aims to increase the extent of urban forest with high biodiversity values by 20 per cent.

#### Level of impact

Level of impact	Positive	Negative	Neutral
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Social		
Level of impact	Impact	Summary
Positive	Health (Community and mental health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A well-maintained urban forest contributes to the ongoing physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of all Canberrans.</li><li>• Improving the amenity of our parks and open spaces provides more opportunities for residents to connect to nature while living in urban environments and participate in outdoor recreation and exercise.</li><li>• The cooling effect creates more liveable homes and urban areas that help insulate against heat stress.</li></ul>
Neutral	Access to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Strategy is not likely to have an impact on access to services.</li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased canopy coverage will improve the amenity value of many community outdoor spaces and facilities. It will provide shade and shelter making these services more attractive and usable throughout the year.</li> </ul>
Positive	Housing and Affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the urban canopy will provide benefit equitably for all residents including those in affordable and social housing.</li> <li>An increased urban forest around residential areas can lower heating and cooling costs and improve the amenity of an area.</li> </ul>
Positive	Access to social inclusion/participation and community activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducting a consultation on the Strategy will increase social inclusion as it will give the community an opportunity to have their say on this important issue.</li> <li>District Plans for each urban area will be developed in consultation with residents/community members to articulate the preferred character type of each area.</li> <li>Improved amenity of community areas provides places for people to foster community connections, and on-going equity of access to the benefits of attractive outdoor community space.</li> <li>Green spaces especially play an important role in the integration of minority groups and can assist in the adaptation of immigrants into their host country.</li> </ul>
Neutral	Human rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Urban Forest Strategy calls for reviewing of all tree policies and statutory controls which includes reviewing the <i>Tree Protection Act 2005</i>. The human rights aspects of this review are discussed in a separate submission.</li> </ul>
Positive	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategy calls for collaboration with Traditional Custodians and for investigation of avenues and strategies that will support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to be enabled in urban forest management procurement for services.</li> <li>The strategy will support the protection of culturally significant trees.</li> </ul>

Economic		
Level of impact	Impact	Summary
Neutral	ACT Government Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategy will provide a basis for a business case for an annual tree renewal and tree planting budget.</li> <li>The Strategy will provide a basis for a business case for an increased tree maintenance budget.</li> <li>Canberra's urban forest on public land is worth an estimated \$1.1 billion.</li> <li>The urban forest is estimated to provide \$27.2 million worth of ecosystem services every year such as air pollution reduction, shade, energy saving benefits and stormwater interception.</li> </ul>
Neutral	Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategy is not expected to have a significant impact on productivity.</li> </ul>

Positive	Cost of living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban trees have economic value, for example increasing tree cover by 10% has been shown to save annual heating and cooling costs by an estimated \$50 to \$90 per dwelling</li> </ul>
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Environmental		
Level of impact	Impact	Summary
Positive	Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the tree canopy creates more shelter and habitat for flora and fauna, facilitating conservation.</li> <li>The Strategy seeks to increase species diversity through ensuring that no one species will represent more than 10 per cent of the public tree population.</li> <li>The Strategy seeks to increase the extent of the urban forest with high biodiversity values by 20 per cent.</li> </ul>
Positive	Landscape changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategy reinforces the Living Infrastructure Plan target to increase canopy coverage to 30% within the urban footprint. This will be a positive material alteration of the urban landscape.</li> <li>New plantings will factor in landscape connectivity and resilience, with consideration for creating foraging corridors.</li> </ul>
Neutral	Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategy does not change the current protections for trees that are protected for heritage reasons.</li> </ul>
Positive	Environmental Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The urban forest contributes to the quality of the local environment through air pollution reduction, shade and cooling, energy saving benefits and stormwater interception. The Strategy will support increase canopy coverage which will improve the environment.</li> </ul>
Positive	Climate Change mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategy facilitates delivery of key elements of the Climate Change Strategy and Living Infrastructure Plan which are designed to help the city mitigate climate change impacts.</li> <li>Planting large shade trees sequesters carbon and reduces summer air-conditioning requirements.</li> </ul>
Positive	Climate Change adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The urban forest is central in helping cool our city to mitigate the impact of climate change. Canopy cover mitigates this effect by providing shading that creating a more liveable city and protects people, landscape and property from heat stress.</li> <li>The Strategy prioritises tree planting in suburbs where localised heating is more pronounced.</li> <li>Under the Strategy, District Plans will be developed in consultation with residents/community members associated with each area to ensure localised planning.</li> </ul>
Positive	Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protecting the urban forest supports water systems and reduces stormwater runoff. By increasing the urban forest canopy coverage, water quality flowing into our waterways will be cleaner with less sediment and less pressure placed on our stormwater assets.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the urban forest will require some water consumption to establish newly planted trees, however most of this will be from non-potable sources</li> </ul>
Positive	Urban Heat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trees are a critical mitigation for the urban heat island effect which can see temperature differences of over 10°C between areas on a hot day. Shade from canopy coverage prevents heat being absorbed into hard surfaces such as pavements, roads and buildings which hold and radiate heat long after sunset, preventing heating of the urban environment.</li> </ul>
Positive	Visual quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Strategy protects the established urban landscape and strengthens the value of Canberra's unique landscape setting that creates its 'garden city' and 'bush capital' qualities, in line with the strategic direction of the Territory Plan.</li> <li>Trees create an attractive and inviting urban environment for homes, streets and shared spaces.</li> </ul>