

Have your say

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

30 November 2023 - 18 January 2024

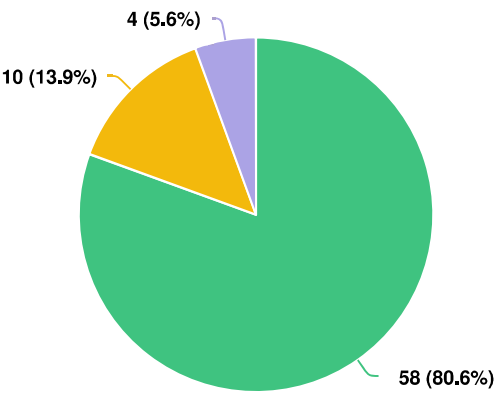
PROJECT NAME:

Street Tree Policy - Proposed Amendment



SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1 | Are you supportive of the proposed amendments to the Street Tree Policy, including selection and planting preferences, intr...



Question options
● Yes ● No ● Unsure

Mandatory Question (72 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q2 Please take a few moments to tell us why/why not.

Screen Name Redacted

11/30/2023 06:25 PM

Fully support the move to adopt and use native species. It is also worth considering the expansion of the one tree per verge policy to allow two trees where there is space and owner approval to plant a second tree.

Screen Name Redacted

11/30/2023 10:09 PM

Tree selection should preference native Perth region trees to provide for increased foraging for native bird life. Using the same logic there should be variety of tree varieties even in each Street and the verge should be a place to grow larger trees like tuart that are hard for landowners to be able to support themselves in increasingly subdivided lots. Using the trees for recreation is a no brainer and a great positive for Vincent.

Screen Name Redacted

12/01/2023 09:29 AM

Fixing lights to trees has become common. Not only are they put up at Christmas but they are left up all year round and consequently become unfit for use and just present as plastic rubbish left around the trunk.

Screen Name Redacted

12/01/2023 11:05 AM

Selection of native trees is important from a water wise point of view with the exception of the tree that drops the small hard round 'gum nut' type outside but cover. They are dangerous for pedestrians ie like marbles on the ground, result in unnecessary raised verges due to rotting on the grass and building up if not raked up, leave a mess on the foot path and verge. I'm not sure if it's a Box Tree or a Snuff Box Tree. City of Vincent and South Perth have them on the verges. Very annoying and dangerous to walk in the hard round nuts

Screen Name Redacted

12/01/2023 11:43 AM

It will be good to see more diversity of trees and more native trees instead of just more jacarandas.

Screen Name Redacted

12/01/2023 12:55 PM

Very happy to have a tree filled environment but care must be taken with selection and placement. Because a tree is a native species it does not mean it is native to our area. Many trees do not do well. Many trees require more space than a 10 metre by 3 metre verge. Many eastern states insurance companies refuse or load insurance premiums if you have a tree greater in height of a second storey within a certain distance from your boundary. Inability as council restriction on the home owner to "touch" verge trees with council not doing regular inspecting and removal of dead timber or low branches

and those encroaching sidewalk. Many sidewalks are completely impeded and you must walk on the road or crouch to transverse. Council should undertake a proactive approach to maintain safe walkways. Many trees have been badly pruned because of the power lines and will never regain their balanced shape. Wrong tree planted in the wrong place. Root invasion into sidewalk paving causing hazard of broken paving and driveway cracking. Council should again undertake a proactive approach to maintain safe injury free pavement. Root invasion on the road by central tree road planting already causing lifting and destroying road base. Who is responsible for ongoing rectification?

Screen Name Redacted

12/02/2023 03:11 PM

It's good, but the preference should be for trees local to the area, not just Australian native.

Screen Name Redacted

12/05/2023 01:31 PM

Native trees need careful selection due to the habit of some with continuous leaf, nuts and branch shedding and some are unsightly. Dangerous and messy. I would prefer fruit trees eg citrus. At least they provide food and look awesome.

Screen Name Redacted

12/05/2023 04:08 PM

New trees should be native, but don't remove existing old trees. Natives trees are great for wildlife, but no point until you finally introduce proper cat laws. Until you do that, you're just feeding native birds to cats.

Screen Name Redacted

12/05/2023 06:47 PM

Happy to have kids playing on the verge. Gives a more community feel.

Screen Name Redacted

12/05/2023 09:30 PM

I support native tree planting

Screen Name Redacted

12/05/2023 11:10 PM

I'm in favour of every verge having a shady tree. Many native trees do not provide shade over the footpaths. It's too hot for many months of the year and Vincent should be promoting people to be active and encourage residence to walk / ride to their local amenities. Verge trees should be shady. Priority should not be given to natives only. Aesthetically streets lined with the same tree look charming and suits the heritage of the area. Mabel street is a great example of shade and lovely trees, attracting many birds too.

Screen Name Redacted

12/06/2023 12:15 AM

Because the City does not actively maintain its current street trees

Screen Name Redacted

12/06/2023 02:12 AM

Jacarandas are beautiful but it's important to favour WA natives.

Screen Name Redacted

12/06/2023 08:45 AM

There are both positives and negatives with the proposed amendments. The council cannot consider a focus on native plants whilst at the same time allowing Camphor trees to flourish which subsequently kill native plants. There are numerous Camphor trees around the streets of Vincent which are killing native plants. The intrusive root systems of these trees makes it further difficult for native plants to thrive. The City of Vincent should consider the Q1 literature surrounding Camphor trees and work with residents to remove the Camphor tree and instead focus on planting native trees.

Screen Name Redacted

12/06/2023 04:53 PM

Love the push towards native selections. Permissions for non permanent things seems like a hassle and just one more thing to do.

Screen Name Redacted

12/06/2023 07:53 PM

I fully support the planting of native species as street trees, ones that will provide adequate shade when mature and food/habitat for wildlife. I would like council to go further with compulsory verge tree planting outside residences currently without any to improve green canopy and tackle the real issue of urban heat sinks.

Screen Name Redacted

12/06/2023 09:42 PM

Tree cover is important for shade and animal habitat. Natives are better for native animal species.

Screen Name Redacted

12/07/2023 04:07 AM

Native species will attract native birds, are more drought tolerant and better for waterways than deciduous or introduced species

Screen Name Redacted

12/07/2023 04:28 AM

Native species significantly improve biodiversity, as they provide more food and habitat for native birds and insects, including native bees and butterflies. Our local native birds and insects are not adapted to trees from overseas; so these trees are barren in comparison to natives. Deciduous trees contribute excessive nutrients to receiving wetlands. Their soft leaves decompose readily over a short period. This results in an excessive release of nutrients, causing poor water quality, algal blooms and death and illness of aquatic fauna. Even deciduous trees planted a long way from the nearest wetland can harm our wetlands and waterways via our traditional, piped drainage systems. See Water note 25: The effects and management of deciduous trees on waterways via www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/water-note-25-the-effects-

and-management-of-deciduous-trees-waterways Choosing natives may help increase awareness that Perth is within an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot. Perth is internationally significant because of the huge diversity - with over 8000 species of native plant. It also internationally significant due to continuing loss of remnant vegetation by land clearing. About half of south-west WA's plant species are found nowhere else on earth. The City of Vincent can be a leader, teacher and champion, working towards greater awareness and better urban biodiversity.

Screen Name Redacted

12/08/2023 11:08 PM

I'm OK with the changes - but I have an old tree that drops dangerous nuts all over the pathway - if we don't keep it clean constantly you can slip on them and could really be injured. I have called the council several times and asked for it to be trimmed like the one on the other side of the road. The power line runs through the middle of the tree and only branches near the power line are trimmed whilst the other side is neatly fully trimmed. I pay the same rates I should have the same service - in fact since I renovated in keeping with the character of the house at extensive additional expense - I pay a further 943.00 due to the value of the house. I have been told its the cost as to why my side of the road cannot be fully trimmed. The tree is unwieldy - the amount of nuts on the ground is unsafe - they can get stuck in your shoes and can be all over the inside of the house. If the council will not trim it properly - allow me to when its greens pick up time. I am deeply unsatisfied with how the street looks one side neat and tidy the other side over grown and uneven - please do something about this!

Screen Name Redacted

12/09/2023 01:09 PM

The amendments proposed are vague and don't explain the problems they are seeking to address. I think that the attachments element is OK. I think that the protections, species, purpose, and surrounds requires more thought. Specific situations that should be addressed (in my view): 1. Trees with any type of allergy potential should be excluded from selection. 2. Trees must be selected with consideration for location parameters including: - expected size (including root system) - probability to damage roads, lift paths, interfere with power/public infrastructure/services drop branches. Examples - a. Placing gum trees on a 2-3m wide verge (Chelmsford st) b. Placing Trees under power infrastructure, knowing that they will eventually interfere with power (pick a street). c. Placing Trees near bus stops (eg fitzgerald/chelmsford) causing buses to collide and damage the tree/bus, and obscuring the passengers & drivers view requiring the passenger to hail buses at the last second, and causing secondary traffic hazards. 3. Protections should have reasonable provision for: a. Replacement (Trees can be problematic for many unanticipated reasons), while I'm principle I support /advocate for

protection, it should not be designed as a deterrent and the administrative process should be simple and without expense (outside the activities involved). Council should have provision to assist Large projects like replacing an inappropriately selected Tree. b. Maintenance/pruning provisions should exist and not require administration. Residents should be empowered to maintain Trees with low hanging branches that cross roads and footpaths without constraint. Trees in suburban areas need maintenance, it's inevitable, and the city should not impede (and by extension) carry the burden of minor maintenance. c. Specific complexity for developers just makes what is probably an already necessary step, more costly and ultimately cost end owners or prevent necessary infill development. Just ensure there is a requirement to replace or remedy and make it reasonable, or and form of penalty should have a local area consult, ie, no blanket rule on how to penalise for, what in many situations is an accidental act.

Screen Name Redacted

12/10/2023 05:13 PM

focus on natives is not needed - need best trees regardless of origin - speed of growth, canopy, leaf & bark shedding; water effectiveness

Screen Name Redacted

12/12/2023 06:51 PM

Anything that encourages members of the community to spend time outdoors in nature is a welcome initiative.

Screen Name Redacted

12/15/2023 10:35 AM

Policy amendments look good. I can't see any mention regarding how ratepayers request a tree planting. We have 2 verges where trees have not been planted or have been removed for whatever reason. I'll submit a general request to see if we can have trees planted

Screen Name Redacted

12/17/2023 05:31 AM

I fully support the policy as it is essential street trees are protected and canopy is enhanced to mitigate urban heat and provide resilience to climate change (particularly in light of infill development and loss of trees and gardens in the private space). Preferencing local native trees is supported to improve biodiversity and sense of place. A consideration is how to protect the soil zone around the base of the tree, as compaction and damage to the root zone severely impacts a trees health, longevity, height and canopy size.

Screen Name Redacted

12/17/2023 08:21 PM

I personally know a number of people who prune their street trees and do a MUCH better job than the ridiculous tree loppers hired by the City. In those cases, these good folks should not be penalised for keeping their verge tree healthy and happy. I guess they can't be fined, since your policy only states potential payment for damages,

and there is no damage. How do you deal with that kind of situation?
Also, some folks plant (and maintain) useful trees like olive, fig, etc. These offer benefit to all neighbours. This use case is also not mentioned. Finally, the proposed penalty will do absolutely nothing to discourage developers, builders, contractors and tradies from damaging verge trees. Maybe try a fine like \$5,000 plus \$1,000 for every year of the age of the tree? Or more depending on the size of the development. And none of this having-to-catch-them-in-the-act rubbish. That never happens. Make the developer responsible for the state of verge trees in front of their development from the moment they apply for planning approval or, even better, the moment they own the block (just like any other resident).

Screen Name Redacted
12/17/2023 10:56 PM

Particularly like the policy of planting native trees and making sure developers take care to protect trees already planted on verges when doing construction.

Screen Name Redacted
1/02/2024 09:05 AM

I think it is important to active our streets. And to monitor plants selection.

Screen Name Redacted
1/02/2024 09:14 AM

Enjoy swings etc on verge for community feel / enhancement

Screen Name Redacted
1/02/2024 09:41 AM

Love the swings on the verges. Creates a community with kids playing out the front of houses

Screen Name Redacted
1/02/2024 09:41 AM

A verge can become an extension of the home owners garden by enhancing an under utilised space. I would like to see more endemic species planted and a replacement program of the infamous Queensland Box Tree.

Screen Name Redacted
1/02/2024 09:46 AM

The Council can't dictate tree requirements when they refuse to properly maintain the trees. You can't have it both ways. The tree at front of my house constantly drops FULL BRANCHES and hangs over my property. I have asked the Council to properly prune but you refuse to.

Screen Name Redacted
1/02/2024 10:04 AM

It makes the streets more vibrant and fun, and brings community into the shared areas.

Screen Name Redacted

Jacarandas should be an option to be in keeping with lots of other

1/02/2024 10:22 AM

trees in the City.

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 11:04 AM

I love that my suburb is filled with trees, and the verge swings and ladders are great for local children

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 11:08 AM

I fully support the proposed amendments to the Street Tree policy. The proposed changes continue the City's sensible approach to managing street trees and citizen stewardship of their verges. The abundance of adopted verges and play equipment on street trees is one of the great features of living in Vincent - it supports social interaction between neighbours and also helps slow traffic through the actual or perceived presence of children on the street. More local government's should be following Vincent's lead in this space. Keep up the great work!

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 12:38 PM

It's great to see kids playing on the tree attachments, makes the neighbourhood feel very welcoming and family friendly. I also feel these attachments help people meet more local neighbours and is good for the community!

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 01:39 PM

We need to do more to protect trees and reintroduce natives

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 02:05 PM

Keeps the streets nice and family friendly

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 02:14 PM

It is important to maintain a green streetscape. Areas devoid of trees retain too much heat and appear barren

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 02:18 PM

It's really important to maintain and improve the trees in our area. And it's great that families have the freedom to use their street trees for their kids

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 02:30 PM

Preference for native trees is a must

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 03:27 PM

We love a street with swings in their trees. What a great use of them to promote community spirit. Not everyone had a mature tree in their backyard so this is great.

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 03:27 PM

I said yes to question 1. hesitantly as no list of preferred species was in the Street Tree Policy. Definite lack of detail - not transparent public consultation. I would like to have seen a commitment to a target number of trees planted in the winter season. I would like to have seen a database of identified planting locations even if it were 1 per dwelling, 1 per rateable premises I find the Street Tree Policy lacking in any real detail of a 'forward plan' thus lacking in substance of meaning. Are medium strips included?

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 04:18 PM

This is very important - "Introduction of street tree protection requirements for developers and landowners carrying out works on or next to the verge area" Our neighbour recently added a second story extension by "Nexus Homes" and the damage caused to the very healthy verge tree during the process was sad to see. In saying that I have observed other developers protect verge trees by installing plastic cages around the trees etc to protect them It would be greta if this clause was included to make these developers accountable for their actions eg fines

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 06:51 PM

Support trees being retained as long as it's not used as an excuse to increase housing density. Less keen about permission being required for play equipment to be attached

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 06:51 PM

Native trees create the perfect avenue for the spread of fire in our suburbs. Stop finding more ways to hinder development, owners choices and get back to Council core responsibilities being roads, rubbish and rates (reduction)

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 07:09 PM

I love being able to have a swing on the verge bottlebrush. My kids are too big for it these days, but our footpath friends all know their kids are welcome to use it ☺ in my opinion it's another way to build a spirit of community. I'd love even more native trees as verge trees (no box trees or (evil) Robinias please!! ☹)

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 09:22 PM

We have a young child and enjoy having a swing on our verge.

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 10:45 PM

Happy with natives, happy with swings etc. BUT all none native species should be allowed to be removed and changed to natives OR fruit trees, Olives, oranges, berries figs etc. If builders kill or damage trees and this includes, Western Power, Gas, Water Corp and NBN then remove and replace with natives or fruit trees.

Screen Name Redacted

1/02/2024 10:57 PM

Street tree attachments add to the charm of the area.

Screen Name Redacted

1/03/2024 09:18 PM

I think swings on verges encourage children to go outside and play. I prefer native trees because they support local wildlife, provided they also have a big enough canopy.

Screen Name Redacted

1/04/2024 02:38 AM

I love that tree houses and swings are on our street verges. It says as a community we honour and respect childhood. I would like to see consistency in street trees as it is more aesthetically pleasing than different varieties in a street.

Screen Name Redacted

1/04/2024 09:05 PM

Playing out in your local neighbourhood is a vital step in children developing a relationship and therefore care of their natural environment and neighbourhoods. It's an important factor in developing independent mobility. Any incidental opportunities that allow for unstructured play around neighbourhood streets encourages this and more. For more information refer to the 1000 streets project by Play Australia and the City of Vincent's own Play street (Rae street) pilot project.

Screen Name Redacted

1/06/2024 04:47 PM

Street trees are not only beautiful, they provide habitat for birds and insects, provide shade and offset some of the carbon in our atmosphere. The more native street streets, the better!

Screen Name Redacted

1/07/2024 03:59 PM

Better for wildlife, water conservation, waterways including river because of deciduous, show pride in being Oz rather than foreign locality

Screen Name Redacted

1/08/2024 06:14 PM

Along with removal of overground power, a focus on improving canopy coverage will greatly improve the streetscape of the city.

Screen Name Redacted

1/11/2024 08:11 AM

Important to our urban ecology that we have species native to our local area that can withstand our climate and are food sources to local wildlife/insects. Tree canopy needs to increase to help keep our suburbs cool.

Screen Name Redacted

1/11/2024 08:23 AM

I would like to see a greener suburb but with more consistent planting that enhance the suburb rather than what seems a scatter gun approach to tree selection. In some cases i would like the council to

invest in replanting in different street to gain more consistency.

Screen Name Redacted

1/11/2024 10:27 AM

We need to preserve existing coverage and expand coverage of trees particularly in hot spots (eg Brisbane St between Stirling and Pier). The shift to natives is good but if smaller trees, closer planting is required to get the benefit. Canopy provides cooling which make streets more attractive for playing, walking and cycling.

Screen Name Redacted

1/11/2024 11:55 AM

I like trees! But, I think the council should take more care in what is planted, you say natives, like Queensland Box!! When selecting you should make sure the leaf drop is at a minimum. I live in a street that FLOODS and the drains are blocked and not maintained enough, there are Box trees and many natives in the nearby park, the leaf drop is a huge problem and the maintenance that goes with trees is not enough, thus impacting on homes nearby when drainage is inadequate.

Screen Name Redacted

1/11/2024 01:35 PM

agree with the 75% requirement for native trees.

Screen Name Redacted

1/12/2024 07:30 AM

I mostly agree with all of amendment, however in some circumstances when planting in parks to replace old trees etc I think some non native that grow quickly and provide a much wider canopy should be considered aswell as native trees. Trees that match up to growing conditions in our climate. A lot of native trees do not have that wonderful wide spreading canopy.

Screen Name Redacted

1/12/2024 09:54 AM

I fully support the selection of native trees for streets. In addition I would like to see the incentivisation for planting out of paved verges, fines or disincentives for removing or damaging street trees and a more sympathetic approach to tree pruning.

Screen Name Redacted

1/14/2024 01:47 PM

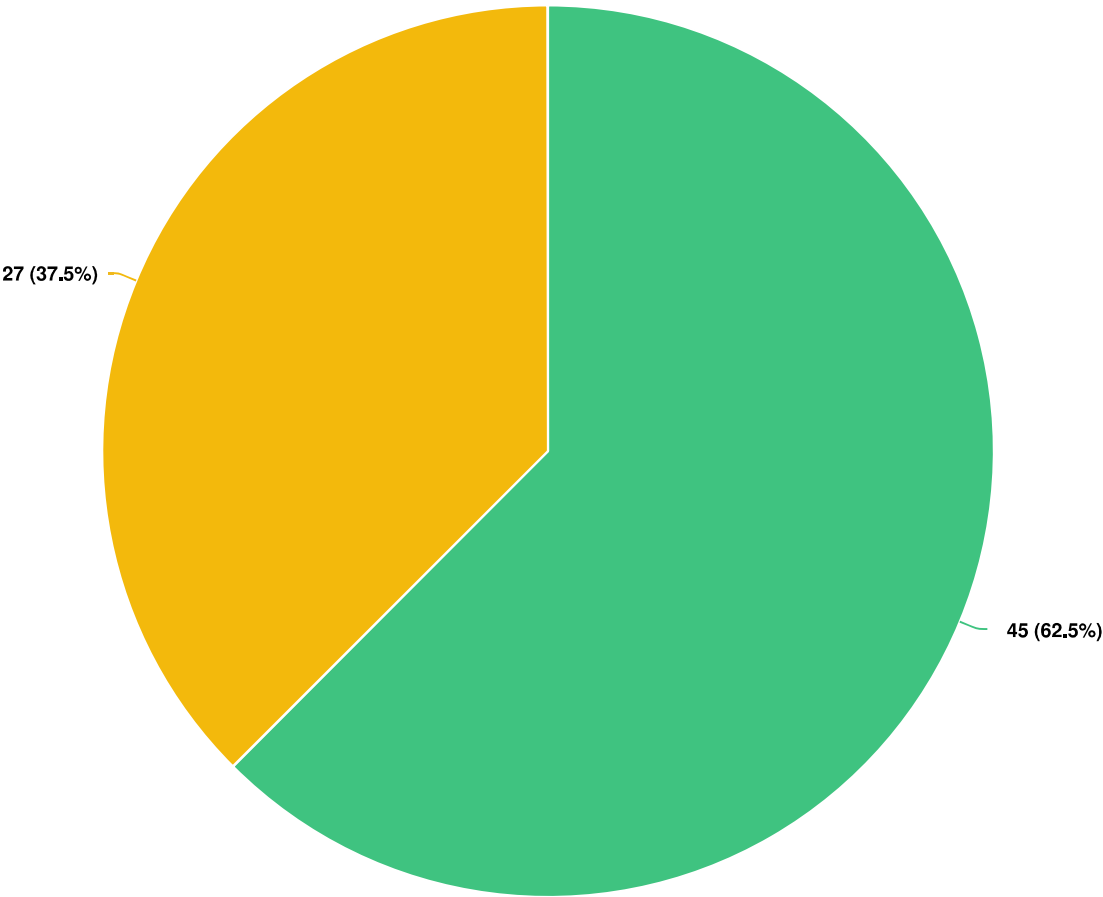
Preference for planting native trees: I think non-native species of trees have much to offer and should be considered for street trees: Shade in summer is often much denser and more cooling for introduced species; and deciduous ones the let light in in winter and this means houses and gardens are then less dingy. Some introduced species of trees seem to be doing well in the Perth climate. Some are also beautiful - a street full of flowering Jacarandas is very attractive and give the street a character which appeals to people. Some of the narrow streets might benefit from smaller trees also the big trees block out the view to sky from the house. If it is native trees, please consider the beautiful flowering species such as the red and pink

flowering gums.

Optional question (66 response(s), 6 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q3 Would you like to be kept updated on this Policy?



Question options

- ☒ Yes ☐ No

Mandatory Question (72 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Mary Gray OAM, Environmental Scientist
43 Commonwealth Ave North Perth WA 6006
celiagray@bigpond.com
phone 9444 5647

Comments with suggested changes are made on some parts of the Street Tree Policy as below.
Please note that I formerly worked for the State Government in the field of catchment management in the Swan region (which includes City of Vincent area). I also support the work and advice of the Claise Brook Catchment Group. I am also an Honorary Life Member of the Wildflower Society of WA Inc., and of the Urban Bushland Council of WA Inc.

PRELIMINARY

In the **Introduction** it would be good to add to the 'enhanced community well-being', the human health values of local native trees, as well as the benefit to local native wildlife such as local native birds and insects. Also add that an increased tree canopy will increase carbon sequestration and is a positive action against climate change.

In the **Objective** it would be good to add *'and to provide habitat and linkages for wildlife such as local native birds and native reptiles and insects'*.

POLICY

1. Street Tree Planting

(v) Under **Tree species selection**, the second dot point should be amended to:

'WA local native species should be required for new planting across City owned or managed land'. Here the word 'local' means tree species that are native to the specific landforms as shown in the table on pages 82 – 83 of the excellent book **'Growing Locals'** by Robert Powell & Jane Emberson, 1996. Notably this book was published by the WA Naturalists' Club (Inc.), with support from the Water & Rivers Commission of Western Australia. Note also chapter 1: Why Grow Local Plants?

(v) The meaning of the last dot point is not clear. Does this include the risk of future extreme weather events?

Under (v), add another dot point: ***'Avoid tree species which are known to cause human health problems including hay fever and allergies'***. A prime example is the London Plane Tree which should not be planted, and in some streets should be removed. Angove St outside the café strip is an example.

2. Unauthorised or Unsuitable Street Tree Planting

A third point should be added:

(iii) 'Deciduous trees are unsuitable and should not be planted. Deciduous trees cause catchment management issues from annual leaf drop with nutrient export to drains and water ways resulting in eutrophication of wetlands, which may later cause algal blooms, some of which can be toxic. Wetlands in Vincent are already suffering high nutrient levels.'

This is a very important issue for Vincent, and is reason alone for no planting of deciduous tree species. It is also reason for replacing recently planted exotic deciduous trees – such as Chinese Tallow in Scarborough Beach Road North Perth.

3. Street Tree Pruning

To significantly increase street tree canopy, there is a need for the City of Vincent to accelerate its proposed underground power program, so that street trees can grow and spread more. Some trees that have suffered from years of top pruning (especially if deciduous or semi-deciduous) may best be replaced by local native trees and they would not need to be top pruned. Some local native trees such as Marri and Tuart are fast growing. Underground power also removes the risk of falling power lines in strong wind and storm events – which are now an increased risk with climate change.

Tuarts should not be under pruned, especially when young, as branching near the ground is their natural form, and this is a natural adaptation to withstand strong winds. Also re-sprouting growth is more likely to break in extreme windy weather events. An example of a fabulous large Tuart that was not under-pruned is adjacent to (and partly overhangs) the Aspects shop in Kings Park.

So-called '*remedial pruning to form the shape of trees, encourage new growth...*' should be removed as it can be an issue of more branch breaks in extreme weather.

The last dot point, '*Property line prune (upon adjoining property resident request) to remove any canopy overhanging into private property.*' - should be removed.

I am available to further clarify and discuss these issues with officers of the City of Vincent. I may be contacted as above.

Sally Lake

51 Chatsworth Rd, Highgate

Please find below my comments on the draft Street Tree Policy.

The policy proposes a target of 75% of new planting to be Australian native species.

The policy objective only refers to "maximise canopy coverage".

Species selection can have significant environmental impacts, particularly relating to water consumption and stormwater pollution. Given that street trees are generally located on streets, it is highly likely that they can impact stormwater quality, water which ends up in local wetlands, lakes and ultimately the Swan River.

Exotic deciduous trees impact negatively on water quality because they tend to lose their leaves all at once, placing a sudden heavy burden on natural systems to absorb/break down the leaf matter. In addition, native fauna (insects, microbes etc) are not adapted to chew/break down soft leaves of exotic vegetation. This causes sudden increases nutrients in stormwater and receiving water bodies which can cause algal blooms.

While I support the intent to have a high target for using Australian species for new plantings, I consider that all new plantings should be Australian species, unless there is a strong reason such as maintaining a heritage streetscape to use an exotic species.

Clause 1. (v) second bullet point – amend 75% to 95%, assuming that will allow enough lee-way for a relatively small number of exotic species to be planted where there are valid reasons to do so.

I also consider “reducing negative environmental impacts relating to species selection” should be added to Objectives.

Not within this policy, but relevant, I am concerned about the ongoing use of the Tree Selection Tool, particularly in relation to selecting species for street trees. As explained above, exotic species are a significant threat to the health of waterways, yet the Tree Selection Tool starts with a binary decision, exotic or native? If exotic is selected, all results are exotic, despite them being fundamentally unsuitable. This tool should be reevaluated as I consider it is not fit for purpose.

Thankyou for the opportunity to comment.

Joe and Anne Courtney
62 Palmerston St Perth

Dear Vincent

We write to provide feedback on the proposed street tree policy <https://imagine.vincent.wa.gov.au/street-tree-policy-amendment>

The policy is an improvement on the previous version to increase native plantings to 75% however we suggest it can be improved for the following reasons:

1. Tree species selection should also take into account other environmental impacts not just canopy cover especially the requirements to support bird and animal life and water requirements. The advice for Perth gardens to be water wise and bird and bee friendly is well established and we are surprised these considerations are not included in the policy. Some current tree plantings are exotics from tropical regions that require more water than local species.
2. The definition of Australian native species should be either supplemented or replaced by reference to indigenous trees to our area. Trees of the Perth coastal plain has evolved to suit our climate and provide habitat for our wildlife and hence are more appropriate than trees from elsewhere. Providing fod for cockatoos for example should be a priority. The Marri tree is one such tree though honkey nuts present a tripping hazard on paths - though this aspect is not included in the policy either. We suggest a target of 50% local to the area natives but this is quite arbitrary and ideally even higher.
3. For transparency it would be good if Vincent provided an online service like South Perth does Intramaps to show trees. This can also be used to indicate priority areas for canopy and show residents changes from year to year demonstrating changes to canopy.

<https://cosp.spatial.t1cloud.com/spatial/IntraMaps/?project=Public&module=Trees%20%26%20Environment&configId=29b80b8c-2c27-4a14-8f10-678c7947f7be&startToken=754a1dea-ca85-42b7-9a97-f34c2c6b5ae0>

Again, thanking you for this initiative and hoping for more trees in Vincent!

Andrew Main
North Perth
Resident and ratepayer since 1994

Introduction

The importance of street trees is briefly described in this section.

I request that the City consider including a statement about the importance of street trees as a food source for native bird species. This is becoming increasingly important due to the continued destruction of bushland on the urban fringes of the Perth metropolitan area, which has resulted in reductions in food sources for Native bird species, particularly the Carnaby cockatoo. It is noticeable that in recent years these cockatoos are spending more time in areas such as the City Of Vincent. For example, I recall that even 5 years ago, that the cockatoos would come into our area in March to feast on the food found in various trees. Most would be gone by the middle of the year. However, the situation, at present, is that they seem to be in the area all year round and are roosting here. In the past, they would fly away in the late afternoon to roost in other locations.

I also ask that the City consider including in this section, the importance of trees that provide all year shade. Perth is getting hotter, and the UV is generally at a very high level throughout most of the year. Jacarandas are one of the most common street trees the City uses. However, this species loses its leaves in July/August and as such, does not provide decent shade in the later months of each calendar year. This is at a time when shade is imperative.

I ask that the City consider including a statement that trees that are appropriate for the climate of, and water availability in, Perth should be key criteria for tree selection. In addition, trees that are relatively fast growing - and will provide shade sooner than later - should be a key guiding factor when determining what the suitability of a species.

Policy provisions

1 Street tree planting.

Subsection (I) states that the city is responsible for the planting of all street trees, however, in Section 2 "Unauthorised or unsuitable street tree planting" it is stated that the city may retain a tree that is planted without its approval. This seems to be contradictory, but notwithstanding this, should there not be a clause in section 1, subsection (I), that clearly states that a landowner or resident is to seek approval from the city before planting any tree?

Subsection (II) states that suitable, planting locations will be determined by the city. I draw your attention to the city's greening strategy, which has a map identifying tree planting locations for each street in the City and the priority. What is the relationship between that document, and this policy? Furthermore, will the City advise council and the public about where the city is planning to plant trees prior to a final decision being made?

Subsection (III) is strongly supported. In my dealings with the City, I have been repeatedly advised that trees will not be planted when adjoining property owners/tenants object.

Subsection (V), as stated in my proposed additions to the introduction section, elements, such as bird food sources, all year shade provision, suitability for the climatic conditions, and fast growing should be included in this section to reflect this.

Regarding the target of 75% of new planting to be native species, it is noted that this is for all council managed land. What is the target for new street tree planting to be native species? Why isn't a target incorporated into this policy?

In my view, 100% of new plantings should be native species.

Section 2, Unauthorised or unsuitable street tree planting.

As mentioned above, it should be quite clear that street trees are only to be planted by the city, and that approval is to be sought prior to this taking place.

Section 5, Street tree protection

I strongly support this section, and I'm grateful that the city has included it. In addition to the measures proposed, I have observed many street trees, even those protected from building works, have suffered or died, from the fact that there is no watering during the period where the works are undertaken. As such, I request that the City consider including a clause in this section that requires the builder or owner, to ensure the tree is adequately watered during the period of works. If the builder/owner does not agree to this requirement, then the city should consider including such trees on their tree watering schedule.

I also believe the city should consider including a clause here that states that new development applications, and in particular, the location of crossovers are positioned and/or minimised so as to protect existing trees and maximise permeable surfaces rather than paved surfaces. In addition, this clause should also require that adequate space for new trees to be planted, if required, once the development works have concluded, so that there will be the potential for adequate tree (and shade) coverage on the verge.

Dudley Maier

I believe that the Draft Policy needs modification. For ease of processing, I will address the issues in the same order as shown in the policy, rather than in order of importance. I am particularly concerned with the inadequately justified change from having consistency along streets, to an 'anything goes' approach which allows people to plant what they like (within reason) thus impacting what planners might describe as the rhythm of the street..

PURPOSE

I think that the purpose of this, and every policy, is somewhat the same in that the policy is developed to ensure a clear understanding of the City's objectives, actions and responses so that the community and staff are clear as to how the objectives of the policy will be delivered, and to ensure consistency of outcomes.

The purpose, as written, is just a variation on the 'objective' and adds nothing to the document.

Suggested change:

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity to both staff and the community, and to ensure consistency of outcomes, when the City selects, maintains and protects our street trees.

OBJECTIVE

The provision of street trees is more than just providing canopy coverage. Street trees provide more than just shade and shelter. They have the potential to provide habitat and to significantly add to the aesthetic appeal of our neighbourhoods. They also have the potential to create or add to a sense of place. Sadly, they also have the potential to adversely impact on people's health, as well as the health of the environment.

Despite token efforts to encourage the increase in the number of trees on private properties, the reality is that our street trees will have to do the heavy lifting if we want to increase canopy coverage and provide habitat and travel corridors for animals. The City only has control of trees in our streets and parks, so these are the only areas where the community

as a whole can ensure that we get the desired outcomes. The approach must be based on the premise that *"the City will do the right thing in the public domain and individuals can do what they like on their property"*, rather than *"it's up to individuals if they want the right thing done"*.

'Canopy' is just one potential benefit from street trees. The provision of habitat for our native birds, insects etc is also important, particularly as less trees are found on private properties. It therefore makes sense to rely on native trees – hence Council's request that at least 75% of plantings are Australian natives. The selection of Australian natives should also be mindful of potential climate changes. For example, the Queensland Box was the favoured tree many years ago, however they come from an environment that gets a lot more rain

than we do and have subsequently suffered in our drying climate.

Street trees also improve the aesthetic appeal of our streets. We need trees that look good as well as provide shade/protection. They have the potential to provide a sense of place.

It should also be recognised that the selection of the wrong species can adversely impact on people's health and on the environment. Several years ago, I experienced an attack with asthma-like symptoms. After a series of tests it was determined that I had become allergic to the Japanese/Chinese Elm that was growing next door. The tree was removed. I also worked with a colleague who had to go for a meeting in Royal Street, East Perth – a street lined with London Planes (a tree recognised by the WHO as causing health issues). While the meeting only lasted less than an hour, she had a significant reaction to the trees as they were in flower at the time. I also know people who have allergic reactions to Callistemons. This must be recognised in the selection of trees.

It is also widely recognised that deciduous trees adjacent to our street drains has the potential to negatively impact on the health of the Swan River.

Suggested change:

OBJECTIVES

To provide guidance for the selection and maintenance of street trees in order to:

- *Maximise canopy coverage*
- *Provide habitat and travel corridors for native animals (birds, insects etc)*
- *Provide a selection of trees that are more likely to succeed in our drying climate*
- *Maintain or improve the aesthetic value of our streets and provide a sense of place*

- *Ensure selected tree species do not adversely affect the health of community members or the natural environment*

Clause 1 (iii) – continuity of canopy

This clause is a welcome inclusion (despite the typo). For too long we've had gaps in our street trees because individual property owners have objected, or even threatened to kill trees. This is about community good rather than individual preferences. The continuity of coverage is important for aesthetic reasons as well as sun/rain protection.

For this reason, it should extend beyond just canopy coverage - it should include species selection and spacing. We should strive for visual consistency rather than individual owner's often misplaced preferences. This is probably best addressed in 1 (v).

Clause 1 (v) – species selection

I think that street tree selection is worthy of its own section (i.e. number it as Clause 2 and renumber the rest).

I think that the policy must clearly address the issue of consistency of species along a street. The policy does not address this and in fact surreptitiously gives approval for removing this requirement by allowing residents to plant a street tree of their own choosing (Clause 2 (i)).

I think the fundamental rule of thumb should be that plantings should be the same species as the existing chosen species with one exception – where a decision has been made to replace that species in a street (e.g. they aren't coping with the change in climate or have proved to be unsuitable).

I also think that the statement of trying to achieve an annual target of 75% Australian natives is too vague – a property owner could always argue that their 'foreign' choice is OK because the 75% will be made up in a later planting somewhere else. It is tokenistic at best.

This then leads to the issue of what species to select if a street-wide change is deemed appropriate. I think that this is where the sentiment around '75% new plantings' comes into play. It could be expressed by saying that where a progressive street-wide change is deemed appropriate it will be by a suitable native species. This is better than an arbitrary target of 75%.

The current clause also vaguely mentions 'streetscape species diversity' in a way that could suggest that there would be a diversity of species in a single street. The species diversity should be on a street-by-street basis rather than a tree-by-tree basis.

Suggested change:

2. Street Tree Selection (and renumber the rest)

- (i) *Where a tree needs to be removed it will be replaced with the predominant existing species in the street unless the City has previously made a decision to progressively replace all the trees in the street (e.g. they have come to the end of their natural life, are not coping with climate change, or have proved to be otherwise unsuitable).*

- (ii) *Where a decision is made to progressively replace the species in a street a preference will be given to using an Australian native species at a spacing that will provide a contiguous canopy when mature.*
- (iii) *Where a decision has been made to replace the species, the replacements will be made as old trees need to be removed, or at a faster rate if sufficient funds are available.*
- (iv) *The selection of a replacement species will also address the need to ensure the minimising the potential of accepted allergic reactions by members of the community, and will avoid any potential threats to the river or waterways.*

Clause 2 – Unauthorised/Unsuitable planting

I do not support the intention of this clause as it stands. I think it is a massive change in philosophy and is giving the green light to anybody who wants to have a different tree to simply poison the existing tree and plant something new. I have seen this in my street, and I have seen the staff turn a blind eye because they want to avoid conflict, or because they do not have a sufficient policy framework to back them up.

Clause 2 (i) says that a 'suitable variety' may be retained without defining or giving what that means. I think that the only 'suitable variety' that should be accepted without prior approval is the existing predominant species. Even then I have my concerns. It is a community asset, and we should maintain community control and responsibility, and ensure that only healthy specimens are planted – we don't want people wasting (future) community resources because they selected a poor specimen of doubtful provenance.

In fact, I do not think we should accept the concept of individuals planting trees without prior approval. Again, we want to ensure only healthy specimens. If the intention is to allow people to fill gaps before the City has the funds to fill that gap then the obvious solution is to allow for residents to pay the City, at cost, to fill the gap.

Clause 2 (ii) then goes on to say that certain tree species may be deemed unsuitable and that an arborist will be engaged to provide a report. Because this immediately follows the clause that says people can plant their own choice it tends to imply that this relates to

'resident-planted' trees. It almost sounds as if somebody may plant an unsuitable tree; the City finds out; and the City has to pay an arborist to show why it is not suitable. This is arse- about. If they want to spend money planting the tree, they should pay the City to do it properly.

Because I do not support the planting of 'rogue' trees I think there is no need to retain clause 2 (ii). The issue of individual specimens that have proven to be unsuitable is covered in Clause 4 – Street Tree removal.

Suggested wording:

2. Unauthorised or Unsuitable Street Tree Planting

A street tree planted without the City's prior approval will only be retained if it is the same species as the predominant species in that street and is deemed to be a healthy specimen. In all other cases the tree will be removed.

Clause 3 – Street tree pruning

It needs to make it clear that it is an offence to prune a street tree. While it is mentioned in Clause 6 (i) it should be included here in case someone thinks that 'pruning' is different to 'unlawful damage'.

Suggested wording:

3 (i) The City retains sole responsibility for the pruning of street trees. Unauthorised pruning is an offence under Part 9 of the City of Vincent Local Government Property Local Law 2021.

Clause 5 – Street tree protection

I do not think that tree protection goes far enough. The clause says that no excavation may be carried out under the drip line, yet allows heavy machinery and materials storage to be located there, as long as it is 2 metres from the base of the tree. The two metres is an arbitrary choice and is overreach in the case of a street tree that is relatively young, or where a footpath or kerb is closer than 2 metres.

Suggested wording for 5 (ii) dot point 3.

A free standing mesh fence must be erected to protect each street tree. The structure must be appropriately braced and regularly checked to ensure it is not creating any hazards or impeding pedestrian access. No building materials are to be placed or stored within this area. The fence may be at the footpath or kerb line, and no closer than the tree drip line in all other cases.

Clause 6 (ii) Unauthorised interference

I do not support the 'optional' suggestion about requiring payment to repair any damage caused by unauthorised pruning. The word 'may' should be replaced with 'will' – remember, this is just about recovering costs for repairing or replacing a street tree, not a fine for doing something wrong.

Clause 7 – attachments

To cater for properties on corner blocks the wording should be changed from 'in front of' to 'immediately adjacent to' in clause 7 (i)

Also, clause 3 (iii) must make it clear that permission must be obtained for 'non-standard' attachments prior to installation.

Suggested wording:

(iii) permission to attach anything other than that specified in clause 7 (ii) requires prior approval from the City, and may be given approval at the discretion of the City.