

# Urban Greening Strategy

A resilient and  
liveable Adelaide for all

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION – PARTNER SUMMARY



Government of  
South Australia



An investment in urban greening is an investment in meeting the challenges of climate change, urban infill, biodiversity loss, and community health and wellbeing.

## **Recognition of Kurna Miyurna and Yarta**

We acknowledge and respect the native title holders and Traditional Owners of the Adelaide region – the Kurna People – and pay homage to their ancestors who maintained the natural processes of the land we are on and whose spirits still dwell on Yarta (Country).

Mutual respect and trust will enable us to walk side-by-side and restore Yarta.



# About the strategy

For Adelaide's urban environment to thrive, we need a roadmap for increasing tree canopy, cooling the city and boosting biodiversity.

The strategy aims to bring together state agencies, metropolitan councils, non-government organisations, industry peak bodies, research institutions, Kaurna and the broader community to achieve a greener, more liveable city.

Urban greening includes trees and other greenery located on both public and private land. This strategy seeks to protect these green spaces, enhance them, and take advantage of their benefits to improve community wellbeing and amenity, and to help us adapt to the warming climate.

The strategy sets a long-term shared vision – **'a resilient and liveable Adelaide for all: cooler, leafier and more biodiverse'** and identifies practical actions to turn this vision into reality.

It outlines:

- the extensive **benefits** of urban greening
- the **current landscape**, including the status of tree canopy, tree species diversity, urban heat, remnant vegetation, permeability, and community attitudes
- **megatrends** that are likely to impact urban greening into the future
- **6 priority areas for action** which are drawn from extensive stakeholder consultation and community discussion
- what **urban greening success** could look like for metropolitan Adelaide in 2050.

It also seeks to establish consistent and shared monitoring across Adelaide to increase efficiencies and provide optimal data for tracking urban greening progress. A standalone discussion paper outlines 3 investigation areas for measuring performance.

The strategy is supported by a series of background papers that provide a compelling evidence-base. A separate implementation plan will be developed that will identify the timing, lead organisations and partners for specific actions.

## Collaboration maximises impact

All sectors and public and private landowners across metropolitan Adelaide have an important role to play in greening our city.

The strategy provides a mechanism for government and non-government partners to work together to achieve more by enabling projects that share the load and bridge the gaps between jurisdictions.

By joining forces – having shared priorities, knowledge and resources, and collaborating and delivering complementary activities – we will grow our tree canopy and metropolitan greenery.

# Adelaide's current landscape

State and local government have worked together to utilise LiDAR (a remote sensing technique) and aerial imagery to better understand the state of Adelaide's urban forest, as well as the levels of urban heat and impermeability<sup>1</sup>.

## Tree canopy cover across metropolitan Adelaide has increased

- Tree canopy increased from 14.5% in 2018-2019 to 18.26% in 2022 (for areas measured twice).

## Tree canopy cover is unevenly distributed

- Tree canopy cover across local government areas ranged from 8.1% to 39.8% in 2022.

## Tree species diversity in council parks and streets is considered low in a changing climate

- The top 13 most abundant species make up 50% of all trees.

## Urban heat intensity varies significantly

- Average urban heat intensity is 3.2°C, varying from 1.8°C to 6.0°C across councils.

## Remnant vegetation is scarce and it is important to protect what we have left

- Since European colonisation nearly 90% of native vegetation has been cleared.

## Impermeable surfaces are likely to be increasing in infill areas

- Total percentage of impermeable surfaces across metropolitan Adelaide was 29.1% in 2022.

## Strong community appreciation for urban greening and nature

- A 2019 national survey found that urban greening is important to 85% of people.

<sup>1</sup>. Refer to the full strategy for further details, including references and information about data collection.

## Tree canopy by suburb (2022)

Minimum:

**1.35%**

Parafield

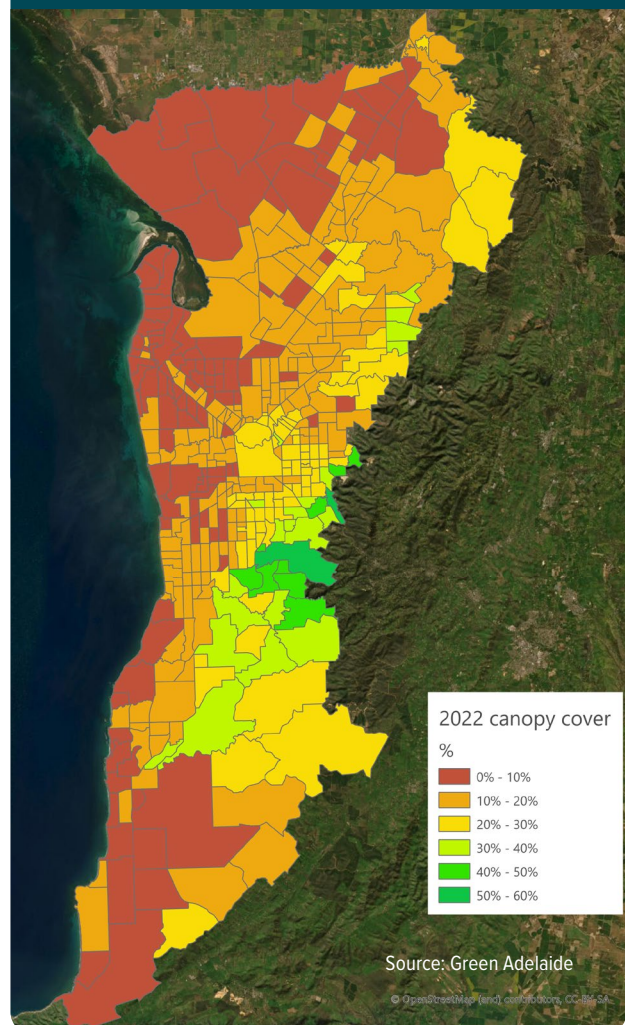
Maximum:

**56.4%**

Belair

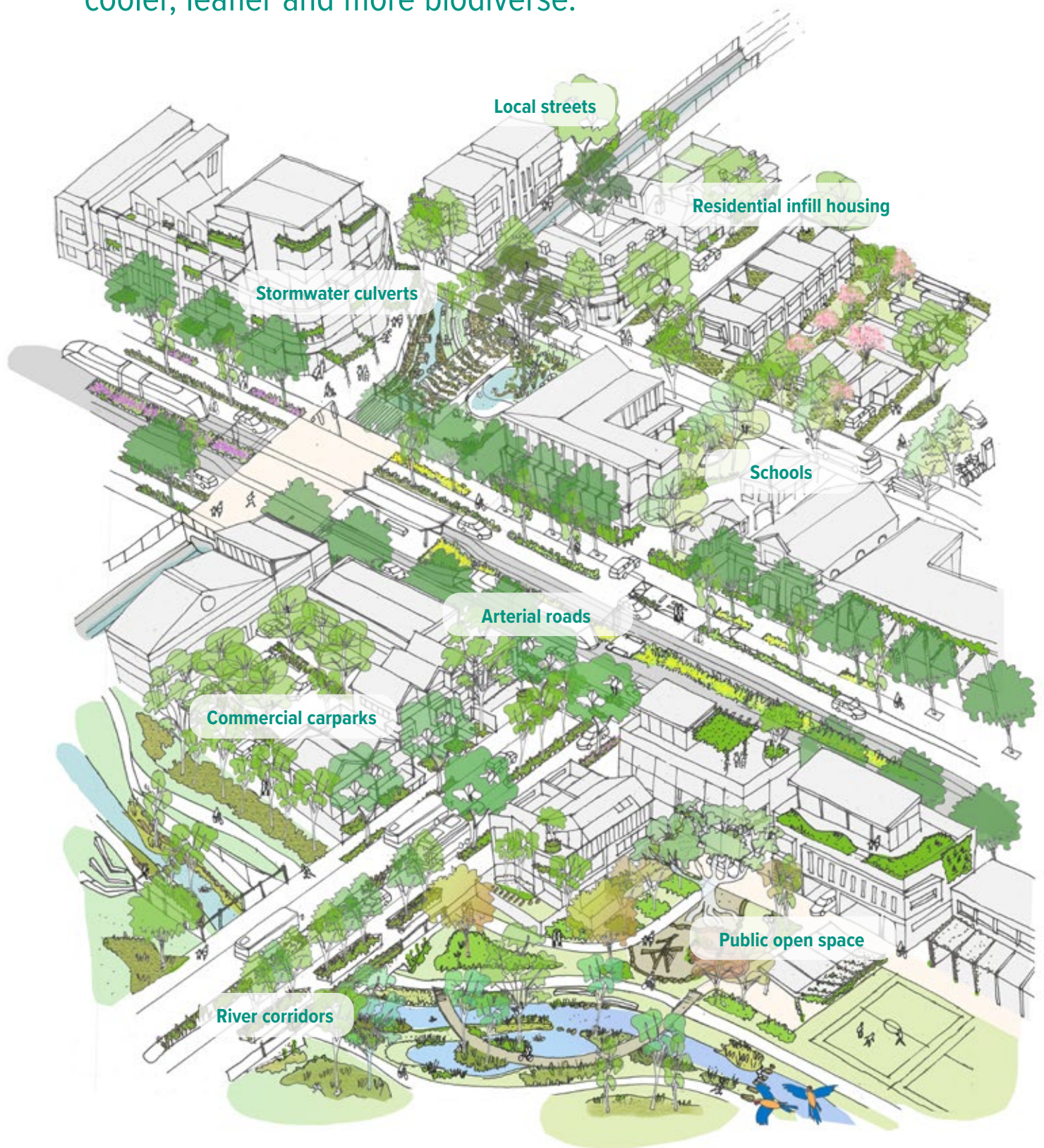
Total canopy cover  
across the region:

**16.7%**



# Our vision for a greener future

A resilient and liveable Adelaide for all:  
cooler, leafier and more biodiverse.



This illustration indicates some of the many opportunities to achieve our vision within metropolitan Adelaide.

# Snapshot of priority areas for action:

to drive practical urban greening action across metropolitan Adelaide



## Cooler and greener infill development

Infill housing makes up a significant proportion of new housing in metropolitan Adelaide. It can be challenging to balance the benefits of more housing options close to shops and services with keeping our neighbourhoods cool and leafy. An integrated package of initiatives will be undertaken to drive cooler, greener and more biodiverse places to live.

### Summary of actions

- Strengthen tree protection legislation.
- Introduce user-friendly tools and other capacity-building measures to make exceeding minimum standards easy and attractive.
- Identify cost-effective solutions to remove barriers and incentivise positive action.



## Government leading by example

Expanding urban tree canopy in public spaces will become even more important for supporting sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods because more people have small, or no, front and back gardens. State and local government have important roles to play to identify and showcase innovative solutions to achieve greening outcomes while balancing challenges with infrastructure and other constraints.

### Summary of actions

- Showcase best-practice green and blue infrastructure along active transport corridors and in major land releases, schools and other government land.
- Find practical solutions to challenges such as infrastructure conflicts and maintenance.
- Recognise the true value of trees in government systems and policy.



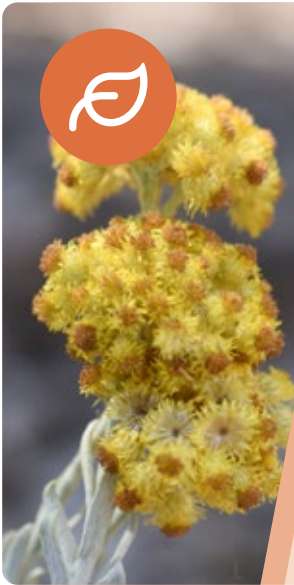
## Building nature back in

Cities are increasingly recognised for their important role in supporting biodiversity. The concept of Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design (BSUD) aims to create built environments that make a positive, on-site contribution to biodiversity while meeting other urban greening or development outcomes. Biodiverse greening enhances health and wellbeing, increases habitat for native wildlife and connects people with nature – right on their doorsteps.

### Summary of actions

- Investigate how to encourage biodiverse plantings through levers such as legislation and policy.
- Build community and government understanding of BSUD principles, expertise and use.
- Identify and protect areas of valued native vegetation and critical habitat.

Refer to the full strategy (pages 27 to 51) for further details about the 6 priority areas.



## Future-proofing our urban forest

Climate change is already impacting the sustainability of metropolitan Adelaide's urban forest, which is largely comprised of a small number of plant families with varying tolerances to the projected warming and drying. It will be important to increase the diversity of our urban forest to improve climate resilience, as well as ensure adequate water is available to support sustainable growth.

### Summary of actions

- Increase knowledge and availability of locally endemic and climate-resilient plant species.
- Undertake research to improve the resilience and health of the urban forest.
- Build capacity in understanding and delivery of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) to ensure it becomes 'business as usual'.



## Improving greening equity

Research demonstrates that if a person has trees and other vegetation within view of their home, place of work or school, it benefits their mental health and productivity. Not all residents in Adelaide have equitable access to urban green spaces and, in turn, the benefits they provide. It is vital to identify how to best prioritise urban greening investment where it is needed most.

### Summary of actions

- Develop a spatial prioritisation tool to support evidence-based decision making.
- Identify the greening potential ('plantable verge spaces') across metropolitan Adelaide.
- Undertake regional-level, open space planning to identify potential locations for new or improved green open space.



## Scaling up impact by working together

The need for urban greening action is strong and growing within the community. There is an opportunity for this work to be better coordinated and facilitated at a metropolitan-scale to enable the growing momentum to be translated into collective impact. It is also important to develop effective partnership models with Kaurna people to help heal our landscape.

### Summary of actions

- Design a cross-sector collaboration process to facilitate better coordination, efficiencies and knowledge-sharing.
- Develop a joint research pipeline to fill knowledge gaps.
- Work with Kaurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation (KYAC) to identify opportunities for partnerships with Kaurna.

# Get involved

We want to hear from you on what you think is important for the future greening of Adelaide. Read the full draft strategy and get involved by visiting the YourSAy website.

Public consultation is open for 8 weeks from 30 April to 28 June 2024.



**Have your say by scanning the QR code or by visiting <https://yoursay.sa.gov.au/urban-greening-strategy>**

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