

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

COUNCIL MEETING 20 AUGUST 2025



Public Question Time

Question from Paul Hickey:

Trees were put up on the nature strips, but we were not consulted about these. I maintain 100 meters of nature strip and the trees have made this job a lot harder. If the Council would like to put trees in, they should take care of the maintenance of the nature strips. Why were these trees planted without engaging residents first?

Response:

Council's community engagement typically occurs at the strategic level during policy development rather than for individual planting projects. The tree planting you have observed aligns with several key strategic documents that guide Council's urban greening initiatives:

The Urban Forest Strategy was informed by three rounds of engagement in 2023, including:

- *A Mayor's Roundtable with key stakeholders representing local environmental groups, business, older people, young people, and cultural heritage in May 2023.*
- *Community conversations on the draft Vision and Principles.*
- *Comprehensive community feedback periods.*

Routine tree planting as part of Council's ongoing urban forest maintenance falls under existing strategic approvals. Community consultation will occur on individual projects within Council's Action Plans and when wholesale changes are being proposed as they progress to design and construction phases.

The [Urban Forest Strategy 2024 to 2040 - City of Port Phillip](#) guides the development and management of trees and green spaces in the City of Port Phillip, addressing challenges including climate change, population growth, and space limitations. Council endorsed a Vision and Shared Principles for the Urban Forest in 2040 in November 2023, which sets out what Council wants the urban forest to be like and how Council should make important decisions about its care.

The Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32 sets the vision and blueprint for the future of public spaces in the City of Port Phillip and includes specific actions for urban greening. The Strategy commits to the greening of the City to help mitigate climate change impacts and improve the streets, with priorities including:

- *Prioritising street tree-planting to improve amenity and increase urban cooling during summer.*
- *Protecting and planting long-lived trees in existing and new public spaces and streetscapes to assist with carbon capture and shade.*

Council recognises your concern about the increased maintenance burden. While nature strips remain the responsibility of adjacent property owners under current policies, Council acknowledges that new tree plantings do create additional considerations for maintenance routines. Council is committed to supporting the community in caring for these valuable urban forest assets.