



This program is funded by the State Government



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Water and Environmental Regulation**

# Urban Greening Grant Program

## Funding Guidelines Round Two, May 2024



WALGA

## The story so far:

The WA Local Government Association (WALGA) and the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) are delighted that Round One of the Urban Greening Grants Program closed in January 2024, and saw 12 Local Governments in the Perth and Peel Regions undertake to plant over 9,400 trees and 29,000 understorey species during Winter 2024.

Round One awarded a total of \$591,839 across 12 Local Governments; Bayswater, Belmont, Gosnells, Joondalup, Kalamunda, Murray, Perth, Rockingham, South Perth, Stirling, Swan and Waroona.

These plantings will provide an estimated tree canopy cover increase of 78 ha at maturity.

## Applications are now open for Round Two.

Round Two has \$2.8 million available for planting programs in winter 2025.

Councils are advised applications close 5.00pm Friday, 28 June 2024.

***We acknowledge the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community. We embrace the vast Aboriginal cultural diversity throughout Western Australia, including Boorloo (Perth), on the land of the Whadjuk Nyoongar People, where we are located and we acknowledge and pay respect to Elders past and present. We are committed to fostering respectful partnerships and strengthening relationships with local Aboriginal communities.***

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# Introduction

The Urban Greening Grant Program (the Grant Program) supports 33 Local Governments in the Perth (Boorloo) and Peel (Bindjareb) regions to expand tree canopy and vegetative cover, thus mitigating the impacts of climate change, increasing biodiversity, providing hydrological benefits and improving human health and wellbeing. Funded by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) and delivered collaboratively with WALGA, the program provides a total of \$3.75 million (ex GST) to accelerate planting beyond current annual programs. Round Two has \$2.8 million available to support planting programs in winter 2025.

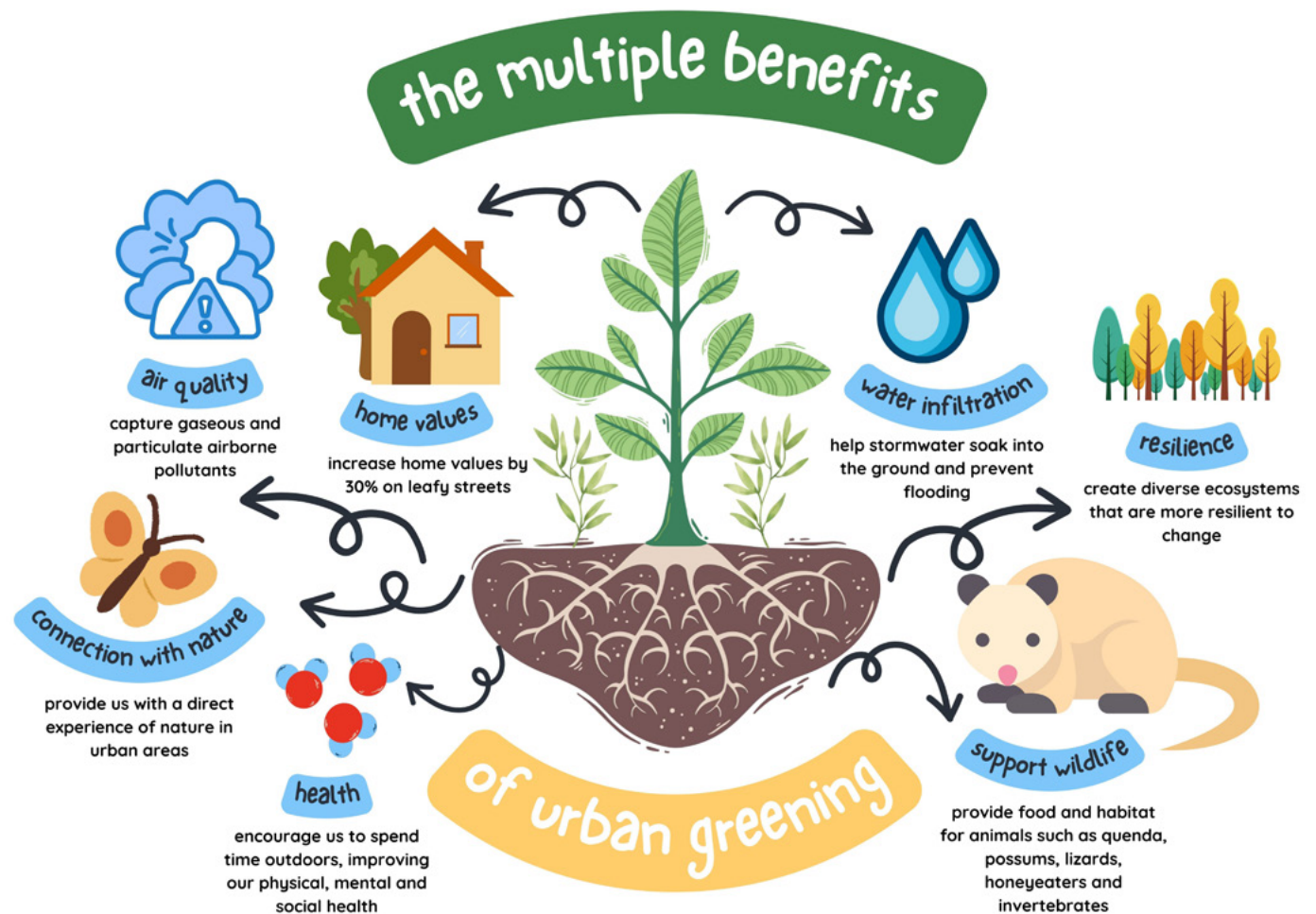
Tree canopy across the Boorloo and Bindjareb regions is declining through infill and greenfield development. There was an overall decline in established vegetation across both regions between 2009 and 2016, with 41% of all Local Governments in WA experiencing a significant loss of tree canopy, and up to 85% of this loss occurring on private land. The loss of urban green space and native vegetation is an important issue for Local Government and the communities they serve.

Both the planting of new trees and retention of existing trees is necessary to address the ongoing loss of tree canopy and vegetative cover. Local Governments play a critical role in growing urban forests and increasing community awareness and involvement. Many have adopted urban forest and greening strategies that guide annual planting programs, and are implementing Local Planning Policies for Tree Retention, significant tree registers and tree bonds. The State Government has finalised the Medium Density Residential Housing Code, is reviewing Liveable Neighbourhoods and developing a Perth and Peel Urban Greening Strategy, all of which will increase provisions for new trees and the retention of existing trees. The Grant Program contributes to commitments outlined in the State Government's [Climate Adaptation Strategy \(2023\)](#) and [Native Vegetation Policy for WA \(2022\)](#).



# Benefits of Urban Greening

Western Australia is experiencing the impacts of climate change, including more frequent and severe droughts, heatwaves, high-risk bushfire weather, extreme rainfall events and rising sea levels. The climate of the Boorloo and Bindjareb regions is projected to be hotter and drier. Planting trees and increasing native vegetative cover in urban areas are key climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. The right tree in the right place provides multiple benefits, including reducing the urban heat island effect, contributing to stormwater infiltration, providing food and habitat for local wildlife and improving our physical and mental health.



## Objectives

The objectives of the Grant Program are to support urban greening projects that:

- Accelerate the establishment of tree canopy and vegetative cover in the Boorloo and Bindjareb regions;
- Reduce the impacts of the urban heat island effect;
- Provide positive outcomes for urban biodiversity;
- Create ecological nature links that connect bushland areas;
- Improve human health and well-being;
- Improve urban hydrological functions; and
- Improve social and visual amenity of neighbourhoods.

## Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for funding, applicants will need to meet the following criteria:

- Be a Local Government as recognised under the *Local Government Act 1995*;
- Be located within the Boorloo and Bindjareb regions, as defined by the Metropolitan and Peel Region Schemes (refer to [Appendix 1](#));
- Demonstrate Council and community support for increased urban tree canopy cover through a Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, Urban Forest Strategy or similar;
- Demonstrate the project is additional to scheduled planting works for the 2024/25 financial year;
- Undertake planting programs that are not required under statutory or legislative planning frameworks e.g. clearing permit, offsets, vegetation conservation notices or equivalent; and
- Undertake planting programs on secure tenure land.



# Program Design

Round One of the Grant Program awarded \$591,839.32 to 12 Local Governments in February 2024 to plant approximately 9,400 trees and 290,000 understorey species in winter 2024. Round Two of the Grant Program has \$2.8 million available for tree and understorey planting programs to be completed in winter 2025. There will be no further funding rounds under the current program.

The Grant Program is designed to accelerate the delivery of urban canopy and vegetative cover in the Boorloo and Bindjareb regions. The Grant Program will fund new initiatives or bring forward the planting of trees scheduled for future financial years (2025/26 and beyond).

Round One successful grant recipients are eligible to apply for funding under Round Two.

The Grant Program is competitive, and funding will be awarded to Local Governments that best demonstrate how their planting project(s) meet the multiple objectives of the program. Funding applications can include multiple projects and/or sites. There is no guarantee that a project will be funded and offers may be made to partially fund projects.

Where possible, understorey species should be planted together with trees to help create functional ecosystems. It is noted that understorey planting may not be possible in certain contexts e.g. street tree planting on residential verges. Projects that request funding for understorey species only will not be approved for funding.

As a guide, Local Governments can apply for between \$50,000 (ex GST) and \$300,000 (ex GST). Applications outside of this range will be considered on merit.

Applicants are required to provide a minimum 50% contribution (cash and/or in kind) towards projects.

## Approved use of funds

Funds are provided for the purchase of tree stock and understorey species, and supplementary services or items to support the installation, establishment and growth of planted trees. Local Governments may apply funding for the following supplementary services or items to support planting projects, to the value of 50% of the total funding request:

- Structural soil cells;
- Soil improver;
- Fertiliser;
- Mulch;
- Tree stakes;
- Tree guards;
- Tree ties;
- Soil wetting agent;
- Deep root watering bowls (e.g. greenwells);
- Site preparation to remove non-growth mediums (e.g. turf or bitumen);
- Earthworks for installation of tree pits or structural soil cells;
- Traffic management or temporary fencing; and
- Contracted planting labour

## Non-Approved use of funds

The following activities are not eligible for funding under the Grant Program, but may be included as cash or in-kind contributions by applicants:

- Purchase of seeds for planting;
- Funding of staff positions;
- Urban Forest Strategy development;
- Permanent irrigation systems;
- Truck watering programs;
- Tree planting equipment; and
- Underground service location.

## Desirable projects

The Grant Program seeks to support urban greening projects that:

- Deliver multiple benefits and demonstrate connectivity between the program's criteria, with project design informed by cross-department expertise;
- Enhance urban greening of:
  - areas of high community use, such as central business districts, commercial and industrial areas, carparks, bus stops, pedestrian and cycling routes that link to key facilities, community hubs (e.g. libraries and community facilities) and parks and reserves.
  - new or legacy development estates where there is little planted or retained vegetation in streetscapes or public open space.
  - parks and reserves that provide the primary areas of green space amongst surrounding low canopy residential areas.
  - areas with social inequity or populations with high vulnerability to the impacts of extreme heat.
- Prioritise the use of Western Australia (WA) native species and create or extend ecological linkages with areas of remnant vegetation both within the Local Government area and across boundaries;
- Demonstrate suitable site preparation for planting and consider long-term access to water to ensure maximum vegetation growth and resilience to a drying climate;
- Include partnerships with Aboriginal groups, State Government, expert organisations and schools; and
- Engage with local communities to provide education opportunities, build ownership and create a sense of place.

Examples of desirable projects that provide multiple benefits are provided in [Appendix 2](#).

## Non-approved species

Species selection will avoid using species that are known biosecurity risks, or susceptible to key pests and diseases. These include:

- Species listed as **Weeds of National Significance**;
- Species declared under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act) on the **Western Australian Organism List (WAOL)** or otherwise known to be invasive; and
- Species that are susceptible to current declared pests or diseases under the BAM Act, for instance host plants of the **Polyphagous Shot-hole Borer** (with the exception of Western Australian native species).



# Required Documentation

Applicants are required to provide the following attachments in support of their application:

- ✓ A map of the project area overlaid with the Urban Heat Index and percentage urban canopy cover;
- ✓ A map that provides context on the land use and green spaces surrounding the project area;
- ✓ A Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, Urban Forest Strategy or similar demonstrating support for urban greening initiatives;
- ✓ A Local Biodiversity Strategy, Wildlife Plan, Ecological Linkage plan or similar demonstrating support for biodiversity enhancement;
- ✓ A works program that demonstrates the project is additional to scheduled planting for the 2024/25 financial year;
- ✓ A detailed project budget, project plan and risk assessment strategy; and
- ✓ Written quotation(s) from suppliers for funded items.

The map of the project area should delineate the area where planting will occur but does not need to include the location of each individual tree or understorey species.

Polygons can be used to indicate planting areas, and applicants should provide the total number of trees and understorey species to be installed in each area.



# Assessment Criteria

Applications must address the following five criteria. Mandatory deliverables are highlighted in bold text, while the non-mandatory deliverables will gain applicants additional points for each criteria.

Criteria	Value	Deliverables
1. <b>High urban heat and low canopy area</b>	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target high urban heat risk areas (<math>\geq 5^{\circ}\text{C}</math> UHI)</b></li> <li>• <b>Target low canopy areas (<math>\leq 10\%</math> existing canopy cover)</b></li> </ul>
2. <b>High community use and need</b>	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target a location that is highly used by the local and/or broader community or has a high proportion of vulnerable groups</b></li> <li>• Target a socio-economic disadvantaged area</li> </ul>
3. <b>Biodiversity benefits</b>	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Use local provenance WA native species where possible</b></li> <li>• Use species that provide a food source and shelter for wildlife, including endangered Black Cockatoos</li> <li>• Support the development of ecological linkages</li> </ul>
4. <b>Access to water</b>	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Utilise waterwise tree species</b></li> <li>• Select sites supported by long-term access to water sources through water sensitive urban design elements</li> </ul>
5. <b>Value for money and circular economy</b>	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Incorporate trees into existing maintenance programs (watering, pruning, safety audits)</b></li> <li>• Develop partnerships with stakeholders and engage with local communities</li> <li>• Demonstrate value for money</li> <li>• Reuse or recycle plastic pots and seek plastic free alternatives for all items</li> <li>• Deliver events that are single-use plastic free.</li> </ul>

# Guidance and Tools

## Assessment Criteria 1 – High urban heat and low canopy area

The Grant Program prioritises projects in areas where Urban Heat Index is  $\geq 5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and there is  $\leq 10\%$  existing canopy cover, together with little understorey vegetation. Planting in areas with a UHI of  $3\text{-}5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and/or  $\geq 10\%$  existing canopy cover will be considered where there is demonstrated need e.g. to negate surrounding loss of green space due to development pressure.

The UHI mapping does not extend to the Bindjareb (Peel) region. Applicants in this region should provide an aerial image with a description of prevailing surfaces in the project area.

The UHI mapping can be affected by the cooling influence of waterbodies and air-conditioning systems of large buildings, such as those in commercial and industrial areas. In these instances, the evaluation panel will refer to evidence that the project area has low urban canopy cover.

### Tools

- WALGA has developed a **spatial data viewer** for the Grant Program with the 2019 Urban Heat Index mapping (CSIRO) and 2020 Urban Forest Parcels (DPLH).

## Assessment Criteria 2 – High community use and need

Projects should seek to green areas of social inequity to help alleviate the negative health outcomes and higher cost of living pressures experienced disproportionately in these communities.

Projects should seek to green areas where communities are at highest risk from the impact of extreme temperatures, with prolonged exposure during heat waves having impacts such as heat stroke and exacerbation of various respiratory, cerebral and cardiovascular diseases.

### Tools

- The **Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Australia** provides a rating tool on the relative disadvantage of suburbs in the Perth and Peel regions.
- The Department of Health has developed a **Perth metropolitan heatwave impact map**, which identifies the relative risk of Local Government areas to heatwaves.



### Assessment Criteria 3 – Biodiversity benefits

Local Governments should demonstrate how their project contributes to local biodiversity, as supported by a Local Biodiversity Strategy, Wildlife Plan, Ecological Linkage plan or similar.

Where possible, projects should use local provenance WA native species that are associated with the soil complex of the area. Plantings designed according to the local context help recreate original vegetation complexes and the natural progression of plant communities across the landscape. Plant selection should prioritise those that provide food sources for fauna that deliver important ecological functions, such as digging mammals and pollinators. Where a non-WA origin or exotic species is proposed as the fit-for-purpose species for a particular context, justification should be provided.

Projects should seek to plant a diverse range of species to create resilient urban forests. Monoculture streetscape plantings are to be avoided.

Natural areas in the Perth and Peel region can be isolated due to high urban density. Projects should seek to improve connectivity of remaining natural areas by creating or extending ecological linkages both within the Local Government area and across boundaries (with other Local Governments or land managers).

Local Governments with Keep Carnaby's Flying projects in place should consider species selection and planting locations to improve outcomes for endangered black cockatoos. To prevent black cockatoo strike by vehicles, all Local Government's planting black cockatoo foraging or roost species should plant with set-backs of between 3-10m from road edges, depending on speed limits. Infill planting of nature reserves and reserves impacted by fire, as well as planting near permanent water sources, are identified as key actions supporting Black Cockatoo recovery.

Local Governments are encouraged to incorporate innovate urban forestry methods in greening projects. For example, Miyawaki forests are designed as compressed forests for small areas. Ideal for urban environments, these forests have high density at three to five plants per square meter, with a species palette that mirrors the local system. The forests create habitat quickly, providing accelerated biodiversity, urban heat reduction and carbon sequestration benefits compared with traditional planting methods.



#### Tools

- NatureLink Perth and Trillion Trees provide a **list of tree species** that improve biodiversity outcomes.
- The South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL) provide **plant guides** for Perth coastal, central and scarp soil types.
- WALGA has developed a **spatial data viewer** for the Grant Program that identifies **Perth's regional ecological linkages** (WALGA, 2004).
- NatureLink Perth has developed a **NatureLink mapping tool** that identifies nature-friendly pathways joining two (or more) protected natural areas, providing the least risk to species moving across the landscape.
- Murdoch University has a list of the **15 priority Black Cockatoo food species** for the Perth and Peel regions, and advice on planting **set-back distances** from roads.

## Assessment Criteria 4 – Access to water

Local Governments are encouraged to design projects that are underpinned by water sensitive urban design to ensure maximum plant growth and resilience in a drying climate. Low cost, easy to implement solutions include planting in areas with access to shallow groundwater, creating cut kerbs (where road design and levels permit) and installing rain gardens.



### Tools

- The Water Corporation's **Waterwise tree list: Selecting the right tree** - Water Corporation provides a guide to assist with selecting tree species based on their water rating.
- DWER offer further guidance **Water Sensitive Urban Design** practices to support planting projects.

## Assessment Criteria 5 – Value for money and circular economy

Local Governments should demonstrate value for money through consideration of cost-efficient planting locations and materials. Smaller tree stock ( $\leq 35L$ ) and understory plants (tubestock) are preferred due to better establishment rates, however larger tree stock will be considered where justified. It is recommended that plants are purchased from NIASA accredited nurseries.

Local Governments should outline their site preparation methods to ameliorate any soil compaction or sub-surface impediments and improve the water holding capacity of the soil. Details on the frequency and duration of watering to support plant establishment and growth, and ongoing maintenance, are required.

Projects should be developed with cross-department expertise to ensure more holistic and considered outcomes. Local Governments are encouraged to partner with Aboriginal groups and expert external organisations during project development and facilitate local ownership and a sense of place through community engagement, consultation and participation in planting days and ongoing site care.

The State Government is committed to transitioning WA to a circular economy, which means moving to a material efficiency approach where products, components and materials are kept at their highest utility and value for as long as possible. Local Governments should seek to use non-plastic alternatives, or reuse or recycle items such as tree pots, stakes, guards, ties, greenwells and irrigation systems.

The State Government is implementing the **WA Plan for Plastics**, which encourages the use of reusable items and to avoid single-use products. Successful grant applicants will be required to ensure that any community planting events are single-use plastic free, with a preference for food and drinks to be provided using reusable containers and bottles.

## Tree Planting Requirements

Trees must be planted in accordance with the [Utility Providers Code of Practice for Western Australia](#), which states that trees must be planted 2.7m from the property boundary line and a minimum of 0.5m from water assets. Please refer to the [Technical Guidelines for safely working near Water Corporation assets](#), and Western Power's [Clearance Zones](#) for safe distances between trees and overhead powerlines, which are typically 2.5m to the side and 2m below powerlines.

Dial Before You Dig checks are to be undertaken prior to planting to determine the location of underground assets to avoid damage.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

At the completion of the project, Local Governments are required to submit ArcGIS shape files with the mapping coordinates of the final tree planting locations and species, and polygons of understorey planting locations and species.

Successful grant recipients will also be required to provide WALGA with information, upon request, on the survival and condition of planted trees two years post establishment.

## How to Apply

Local Governments can participate in the Urban Greening Grant Program by completing an application through the [SmartyGrants platform](#). The Grant Guidelines and an Excel Template for the detailed budget, project plan and risk assessment are available on WALGA's [website](#).

Applications close at 5.00pm on Friday, 28 June 2024.

WALGA's Planning and Building team are available to assist applicants on interpretation of these guidelines and the assessment process and provide feedback on the assessment outcome. For more information, please email [Melanie Davies](#), Urban Forest Facilitator, or call (08) 9213 2065.

# Timeframes

Application Period and Grant Assessments		
Applications open	Local Governments notified	Tuesday, 14 May 2024
Information session	Eligible Local Governments invited to join an online information session	Tuesday, 21 May 2024
Applications close		5pm Friday, 28 June 2024
Successful applicants notified	Local Governments advised on outcome of application	Friday, 19 July 2024
Agreements signed	Grant agreements signed and returned	Thursday, 9 August 2024
2024/2025 Planting Projects		
First payment made	First instalment paid upon invoice	Friday, 30 August 2024
First project report due	Local Governments to provide progress report as per grant agreement	Friday, 22 November 2024
Planting activities commence		Wednesday, 1 May 2025
Second progress report due	Local Governments to provide progress report as per grant agreement	Friday, 30 May 2025
Final payment made	Subject to progress report approval	Friday, 13 June 2025
Final report due	Local Governments submit final report on project outcomes and expenditure	Tuesday, 30 September 2025

# Important Information for Applicants

## Acknowledgement

All funded projects must acknowledge the funding provided by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (with provided logos and branding), delivered via WALGA.

## Promotion

Successful applicants are encouraged to promote local greening projects and support offered to local residents whilst undertaking media related to the Grant Program.

## Assessment Process

Each application will be assessed by an Evaluation Panel, comprised of representatives from WALGA and the State Government. The assessment will be based on the information contained in the submitted application and supporting documentation.





## References

<sup>i</sup>Amati M, Boruff B, Caccetta P, Devereux D, Kaspar J, Phelan K., 2017, *Where should all the trees go? Investigating the impact of tree canopy cover on socio-economic status and wellbeing in LGAs*. Sydney (NSW): Hort Innovation.

<sup>ii</sup>Waste Authority, 2018, *Waste avoidance and resource recovery strategy 2030: WA's Waste Strategy*. Government of Western Australia.



## APPENDIX 1: Eligible Local Governments within the Boorloo and Bindjareb Regions

City of Armadale	Town of Mosman Park
Town of Bassendean	Shire of Mundaring
City of Bayswater	Shire of Murray
City of Belmont	City of Nedlands
Town of Cambridge	Shire of Peppermint Grove
City of Canning	City of Perth
Town of Claremont	City of Rockingham
City of Cockburn	Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale
Town of Cottesloe	City of South Perth
Town of East Fremantle	City of Stirling
City of Fremantle	City of Subiaco
City of Gosnells	City of Swan
City of Joondalup	Town of Victoria Park
City of Kalamunda	City of Vincent
City of Kwinana	City of Wanneroo
City of Mandurah	Shire of Waroona
City of Melville	

## APPENDIX 2: Examples of desirable projects

### CASE STUDY: Bassendean Green Trail

The Town of Bassendean, Department of Transport and Main Roads WA collaborated to develop the Bassendean Green Trail pilot project. The project involved the construction of a Principal Shared Path next to the Success Hill Train Station. The aim was to provide a cooler walking and cycling experience and additional habitat for wildlife by increasing natural landscaping and shade. The community was involved in concept design, with strong support for native planting along the active transport route. Local residents and students from La Salle College participated in planting days, with over 6,000 plants installed.

The project resulted in increased community ownership of the project, and improved natural habitat, local ecology and climate resilience. It contributed to place identity and local distinctiveness. Due to the increased amenity and shade, people have reported that they are more likely to use active modes of travel.

*“It’s impacted me and my family because it’s where we walk and it’s made it such a nicer place. It’s impacted the kids that actually took part in it with pride and their interest and joining them as a group. It’s a win, win, win, win.”*

*School Interview Participant*



Case study credit: The Department of Transport

## CASE STUDY: Black Cockatoo-friendly urban greening

Local Governments recognise that Black Cockatoos need more food to halt their decline, and planting food plants during urban greening projects presents an important opportunity to contribute to conservation efforts. [Keep Carnaby's Flying – Ngoolarks Forever](#) project is a Lotterywest supported collaboration between Murdoch University, Local Government and community partners to prioritise planting locations, based on flock tracking and monitoring data.

Each participating Local Government has a Black Cockatoo Conservation Action Plan to inform habitat retention and urban greening. Planting new food trees is important in reserves and around parks and ovals, especially near roosts. In 2023, 21,000 seedlings (mostly banksia and hakea) were planted for Carnaby's cockatoos, and 200 marri and jarrah saplings were planted to support all black cockatoo species (Baudin's cockatoos feed almost solely on marri). [Cockitrough bird waterers](#) were installed near roosts, to protect birds from heat stress.

Planting days were coordinated by Local Governments in conjunction with project partners, including Perth NRM, SERCUL, Peel Harvey Catchment Council, Landcare SJ, Winjan Aboriginal Corporation and the Urban Bushland Council. Community participants included local Friends groups, Rotary clubs, corporate volunteers and Aboriginal rangers.

Black Cockatoo-friendly urban greening delivers multiple benefits for no extra cost. Black Cockatoos are 'umbrella species', so planting their food trees is beneficial for other urban wildlife and flora, including birds, bees and other pollinators. Planting of cockatoo food trees contributes to urban canopy, keeping communities cool, and creating gardens and public open spaces brimming with native flora and wildlife for people to enjoy.

Birdlife Australia can assist with advice on Black Cockatoo friendly plantings and the location of roost sites in each Local Government, contact [Merryn Pryor](#), WA Black Cockatoo Coordinator.



Case study credit: Murdoch University;  
Photo Credits (clockwise from top left): Landcare SJ, Rick Dawson, Molly Spaulding and Karen Riley.