

Our vision

The overarching vision for street tree planting on the Sunshine Coast is *to protect, enhance and sustain the Sunshine Coast Council region's existing and future street tree network through better selection, placement and care of street trees.*

Guiding principles

The eight principles developed to guide street tree planting on the Sunshine Coast are to:

Ensure locally responsive species selection and placement that reflects or complements existing character and design intent.

Plant large canopy trees and groups of trees to build canopy wherever space permits and conflict potential is low for provision of ecosystem services.

Ensure adequate space is reserved and created for future street trees (specifically engineered for tree planting if necessary).

Shade and cool major pedestrian routes and urban hot spots with higher street tree densities.

Create attractive and coherent streetscapes. Plant large canopy feature/anchor trees in strategic locations. Infill and extend avenues along major thoroughfares and town lead-ins to enhance the subtropical look and feel of the region.

Reduce conflict potential through better tree selection and placement of street trees and ongoing partnerships with the community and stakeholders.

Sustain the existing extent of canopy cover across the region through continued planting of offset trees, and building population resilience through diversification of species and succession plantings. Increase health and longevity of street trees through appropriate selection, planting and care of new trees.

Partner with the local community and corporate sector to help establish and care for new trees.



Principle 1

Ensure locally responsive species selection and placement that reflects or complements existing character and design intent.

Strategic outcomes

Character

- Regional character is enhanced through use of key signature species in high profile locations.
- Local character is respected through the use of precinct based street tree planting strategies reflecting the individuality of local places in the Sunshine Coast's 'community of communities'. See Part B: *Street Tree Strategies*.
- Avenue plantings are considerate of established local streetscape character and contribute to streetscape continuity (unless existing trees are performing poorly).
- Where no planting theme exists, streets may be suitable for the introduction of mixed native, subtropical planting arrangements or the introduction of exotic feature trees to reduce the dominance of over-used species, enhance population resilience and increase visual amenity.
- Feature tree selection and placement complements and reflects the natural and/or cultural landscape, existing views and natural land form.
- Natural character of bushland blends into surrounding streetscapes where appropriate.
- Where natural character planting themes are used the original regional ecosystem forms the base for plant selection where practicable.
- Planting nodes with a natural character design intent aim to enhance the ecological function of the site where appropriate.

Design intent and landscape function

- Street tree selection and placement reflects the purpose of the planting (shade provision, cooling, place making), and the conditions of the planting site.

- Street tree plantings integrate with the built form and the natural character of the area and reflect the design intent of structured landscapes.
- In urban areas, plantings are consistent with building styles and considerate of solar and pedestrian access requirements.
- Street tree layout is respectful of community safety, ongoing visibility of signs and commercial entities, existing views and vistas.
- New lighting and solar panel installations are considerate of existing and future street tree locations.
- For further guidance on street tree layout see Part B: *Technical and positioning guidelines*.

Scale and buffers

- Scale of plantings reflects use, design intent, and function of trees (shade and cooling for example).
- Landscape buffers are used to provide distinction and separation between incompatible land use areas. Plantings are of an appropriate scale where used as buffers. Plantings are of appropriate widths when framing or complementing views.
- Where trees are to provide landscape screening, tree selection ensures a minimum of 30% of the building elevation is screened when the planting reaches mature dimensions.
- Where planting spaces are not sufficient to support the establishment of large-growing trees, palm species (*Livistona*, *Archontophoenix* for example) are used to provide vertical scale to soften built up areas.

For further guidance on species selection see *Species selection guidelines*.

Principle 2

Plant large trees or groups of trees to build canopy wherever space permits and conflict potential is low.

Strategic outcomes

Large trees for large spaces

- Large maturing trees are planted in spaces where existing conflict potential is low and impact potential is high (see *Figures 7 and 8* for examples).
- In new residential land developments, deep planting environments that can accommodate large growing trees are preserved wherever possible and used as feature tree locations.
- Trees are planted to build canopy in public open space areas that intersect with streetscapes (see *Figure 8*). Positioning of new plantings should not compromise the potential for passive surveillance of play areas.
- Large canopy trees are planted in council controlled lease areas as appropriate (i.e. service compounds) or in appropriate locations along state controlled sections of the road network under special maintenance agreements.
- Foreshore landscapes (at street interfaces) are enhanced through the addition of large trees to existing stands (where there is no potential for loss of water views).
- Existing guard railed sites are used to establish large growing trees in centre medians and adjacent to high speed roads where 'frangible' trees are otherwise required.
- For large growing species lists see *Signature and Natural Character palettes* in Part B: *Street Tree Strategies*. See also the *Sunshine Coast Open Space Landscape Infrastructure Manual (Embellishments - Planting - Landscape - Index)*.



Figures 7 (above), 8 (top right) and 9 (bottom right): Artists impressions of sites where large trees or groups of trees can be planted to build canopy where conflict potential is low.

Ensure adequate space is reserved and created for future street trees.

Strategic outcomes

Entry statements

- Embed 'tree sensitive' design into all developments, including spaces for feature trees in new residential developments.
- Engineered tree planting sites are constructed to accommodate new trees in streetscape upgrades and new urban residential developments where insufficient space for large trees exists.
- Pathway alignment protects existing trees and/or retains adequate space for the establishment of future trees. Specialised dowel joints and other sensitive design treatments are incorporated where appropriate to allow for large trees to be planted.
- Storm water management/biofiltration systems integrate street trees wherever possible.
- Design of new infrastructure accommodates existing or future trees.

- Major boulevard verges and medians are constructed according to best horticultural practice to support large canopy trees.
- Guard rail is incorporated into locations where set-backs and clearances cannot be achieved otherwise and a critical need for tree benefits has been identified.
- Alternative sites are made available to accommodate trees where trees cannot be incorporated into standard verge spaces. Similarly, where tree retention or planting options have been exhausted in favour of infrastructure, alternative sites (across the road, in the median or nearby nodes) are secured for the ongoing provision of street tree benefits.

For more information see *Species selection guidelines*.



Figure 10: Artists impression of enhancing and extending existing avenues of street trees along major thoroughfares.

Principle 4

Shade and cool major pedestrian routes and urban 'hot spots' with higher planting densities to provide unbroken shade cover.

Strategic outcomes

Shade and cooling

- Prioritise trees to deliver shade and cooling to key pedestrian networks (see *Figure 11*).
- Species are selected and positioned so as to achieve maximum shade and cooling benefits in urban hot spots.
- Plantings are placed at 6m centres to maximise the potential for uninterrupted shade.
- New street tree plantings to the south side of footpaths on east-west orientated streets, and west side of footpaths on north-south orientated streets are given planting priority.
- Plantings aim to shade walls and outdoor areas from the western sun, reduce shading potential on the north side of properties; and aim to provide maximum solar radiation to existing solar collectors for the middle 6 hours of the day.
- Reduced overnight cooling in built-up areas is taken into consideration before creating streets with continuous canopy.
- Street trees along major pedestrian travel paths leading to amenity and bushland reserves, community and sports facilities, schools, aged care facilities and shopping precincts are planted at 6m centres to provide unbroken shade.



Figure 11: Artists impression of trees providing shade and cooling to key pedestrian networks.

Create landmark and gateway plantings and attractive and coherent streetscapes. Infill and extend avenues of street trees along major thoroughfares.

Strategic outcomes

Avenues

- All regional and local gateways are signified by multi-layered/subtropical landscape treatments (with large crowned/broad-leaved/dense canopy species as key features, see *Species selection guidelines: Local rainforest trees* for further information).
- Key cultural and commercial sites are highlighted with character or signature plantings. Existing feature and significant street trees are surveyed and added to protection overlays.
- Community facilities are enhanced with the planting of large growing trees in appropriate spaces.
- Council's nursery purpose grows feature trees according to signature palettes devised for local street tree planting strategies.
- Existing avenue plantings on major thoroughfares are enhanced and extended.
- Existing themes are respected (see *Figure 10*).
- Avenues plantings reflect formal species composition and layouts.
- Species diversity is enhanced with a change in species where natural or intuitive section breaks occur (see *Figure 12*).
- Where infrastructure inhibits planting of large trees on both sides of the road, compact species are planted to one side of the road, larger growing trees to the other.
- Blister plantings are used where infrastructure inhibits planting of continuous avenues.
- Layouts and selection of trees that will ultimately develop overarching canopies considers the requirement for night time cooling in areas of high urban intensity.

See *Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014, Part 9: Development codes, 9.4.2 Landscape Code* for further guidance.



Figure 12: Artists impressions of increasing street tree diversity through changes in species where natural or intuitive section breaks occur.



Principle 6

Reduce conflict potential through better tree selection and placement of trees as well as ongoing partnerships with the local community, local businesses and external service providers.

Strategic outcomes

Street tree and infrastructure compatibility

- Compact street trees are used to shade and provide amenity to local residential streets and constrained spaces (see *Species selection guidelines*).
- The placement of street tree plantings considers existing infrastructure networks, future transport corridors and priority development areas, existing street and commercial signs and existing solar collectors.
- Partnerships between council and service providers are maintained and enhanced to ensure integrity of landscape design intent and the provision of essential services.

- Unless a formal, site specific arrangement is entered into, trees incompatible with formative or hedge type pruning are not planted below existing overhead electrical infrastructure. Underground or overhead bundled electricity cable is favoured.
- Identified existing public view points and vistas are retained with respect to the placement of new trees.

For further species selection guidance see *Species selection guidelines*. See also *Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014, Part 9: Development codes, 9.4.2 Landscape Code*. For further information on council's standard tree protection requirements see the *Sunshine Coast Council Open Space Landscape Infrastructure Manual*.



Principle 7

Sustain the existing extent of canopy cover across the region. Build resilience and enhance diversity in the region's street tree network through species diversification and ongoing succession planting. Enhance street tree vigour and longevity through extension and intensification of maintenance programs.

Strategic outcomes

Sustainability

- The protection and retention of existing trees takes precedence over tree removal and replacement in programs of streetscape renewal. Tree retention rates are increased.
- The quality and quantity of the region's urban forest is enhanced with a diversity of species used and diversity of ages of trees as an outcome of proactive tree planting.
- Every tree removed is replaced at a minimum ratio of one for one to achieve a 'no net loss'.
- All new and replacement street tree planting is recorded to enhance maintenance scheduling, monitoring and recognition in council's asset register.
- Detailed succession planning is undertaken for aging roadside foreshore trees.
- Under-utilised locally native and native tree species and non-invasive exotic species are used as feature trees in appropriate urban settings to both increase population diversity and provide contrast to existing standard palettes. Trial sites are set up to explore the potential of under-utilised rainforest species as street trees.
- Quality tree stock and increased maintenance frequencies ensure longer lived and more sustainable street tree populations.
- Tree population health studies are undertaken to establish population life expectancy and prioritise succession trees.
- Landscape buffers are created with street tree plantings to protect the existing edge of bushland and recreational parkland.

Principle 8

Engage and partner with the community and corporate sector to determine future tree locations and help establish new trees.

Strategic outcomes

Tremendous Tree Care Partnerships

- Tree planting in residential areas is undertaken in close consultation with local residents.
- Local street and feature tree planting plans for high priority locations are developed with local communities and businesses.
- Street tree planting programs are prioritised in local streets where residents elect to help care for trees as they establish.
- Planting programs where local businesses elect to support and partner with council in the delivery of tree planting initiatives in commercial precincts are given priority.
- Community values and priorities influence tree species selection and placement in local streets.
- Street tree placement in local streets is consistent with an affected property owner's desire for natural light (see *Figure 13*).
- A higher proportion of trees significantly contributing to the Sunshine Coast urban forest grow on private land.



Figure 13: Artists impressions of street tree planting in residential streets.