

## Notice of Motion on reporting on tree removals

The purpose of this motion is to establish regular reporting by Council on tree removals across Canada Bay LGA.

### Background

Council has committed to increasing tree canopy across the LGA from 18% to at least 25% by 2040 (ref 1). Increased tree canopy will play a critical role in improving the health and quality of life of the city through creating better urban amenity, improving air quality, supporting biodiversity, and other benefits. Trees will also absorb carbon and help reduce the impact of climate change. Research has shown that trees in the urban landscape also significantly improve property values.



Council has committed to a substantial tree planting program of 1,500 new trees every year on public land toward its target. However, the majority of trees in the LGA are on private land. In particular a substantial number of large, mature trees existing on private land are vulnerable to clearing due to ongoing building development.

Currently, there is no clear overview of the level of removal of trees, and how it compares with the number of trees being planted. Tracking of new plantings and removal of trees will play a critical role in building a clear set of data about the urban forest across Canada Bay LGA, in order to maximise its growth toward a future target. Reporting will follow the approach in the City of Canada Bay Development Control Plan, which focuses its regulation on trees with a height of 4 metres or greater.

Tree data will be collected from three main areas. Firstly, trees that are permitted to be removed as part of a development application. Secondly, trees that are permitted to be removed as part of a tree preservation order. And thirdly, information about trees which have been illegally destroyed. Unfortunately, council does not yet have a systematic process of identifying illegally destroyed trees, and generally most of this information arises from resident complaints. As part of Councils Urban Canopy Strategy, canopy mapping every 3-5 years will act as a further indicator to track canopy cover within the area.

The data will highlight issues in the avoidable clearing of trees, especially mature trees, and enable improved approaches in preserving important trees. Future reports will likely be able to provide additional information regarding species of trees.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes that Council has committed to increasing tree canopy across the LGA from 18% to at least 25% by 2040.
2. Notes that Council aims to plant 1,500 new trees on public land every year as part of its Urban Canopy Program.
3. Introduces a regular, ongoing report to Council on trees known to have been removed from public and private land across the Canada Bay LGA with reports at least half-yearly, beginning in July 2021. This report should also highlight any public planting which has occurred within that period.

### References/ Links

1. Urban Tree Canopy Strategy, City of Canada Bay Council, 2019.