

GREENING GREATER BENDIGO

Year 1 report

Greening Greater Bendigo and the accompanying 10-year action plan was endorsed in June 2020. In the 12-months since being adopted, the City has made many notable steps towards creating a greener Greater Bendigo and reaching our target to increase tree cover from 20% to 25% by 2030. Here are some of our achievements.

Tree Planting

The tree planting program has been greatly expanded to ensure that the city meets its tree cover targets. Planting at least 3,000 trees per year ensures that the City is replacing all trees that are lost, fulfilling resident tree planting requests and increasing our overall tree numbers.

We are well on track to reach our target of planting at least 3,000 per year by 2024 and have seen an improvement in the number of trees that have successfully established after the first 2 years.

Planting Year	Total Trees Planted	Establishment Rate
2017	1160	73.5%
2018	1055	76.4%
2019	1161	82.4%
2020	1751	TBD
2021	2532	TBD
2030 target	3000+	95%

2020 Planting Program

2020 Priority Streets (34)

Greening Greater Bendigo is prioritising tree planting in those streets that need shade the most. Streets with few trees and little shade are being prioritised, as too, neighbourhoods with a high number of residents that are particularly vulnerable to hot weather. 34 priority streets planted were planted in 2020. 44 priority streets will be planted over winter 2021.

California Gully

- Wood St
- McGowan St
- Chapple St
- Bright St
- Smalley St
- Manning Ave
- Upper California Gully Rd
- Sandhurst Rd

Eaglehawk

- Campbell St
- Orlando St
- The Heath
- Woodlands Drive

East Bendigo

- Harpin St

Epsom

- Botanical Drive
- Cooba Drive
- Dowker St
- Greenview Circuit

Golden Square

- Allingham St

Kangaroo Flat

- Menzie Crt
- Walsh Crt
- McKenzie St West
- Waugh St
- Morrison St

Maiden Gully

- Lupsom Court

North Bendigo

- Caledonia St
- Moray Cres
- Hoy St
- Sherrard Crt
- Swan St
- Kookaburra Ave

Strathdale

- Mclvor Rd
- Sandstone Rise

White Hills

- Seventh Hill Crt
- Waterview Drive



Natural shade where children play

Adequate shade in areas where children play outdoors not only minimises UV exposure and reduces skin cancer risk later in life, it also makes outdoor spaces more usable in hot weather. A desktop review of all City playspaces, preschools and early years centres found that only 1 in every 5 have sufficient natural shade.

A focus of the 2020 and 2021 tree planting programs is providing natural shade to these spaces. 23 were planted in 2020 and a further 43 will be planted in winter 2021.

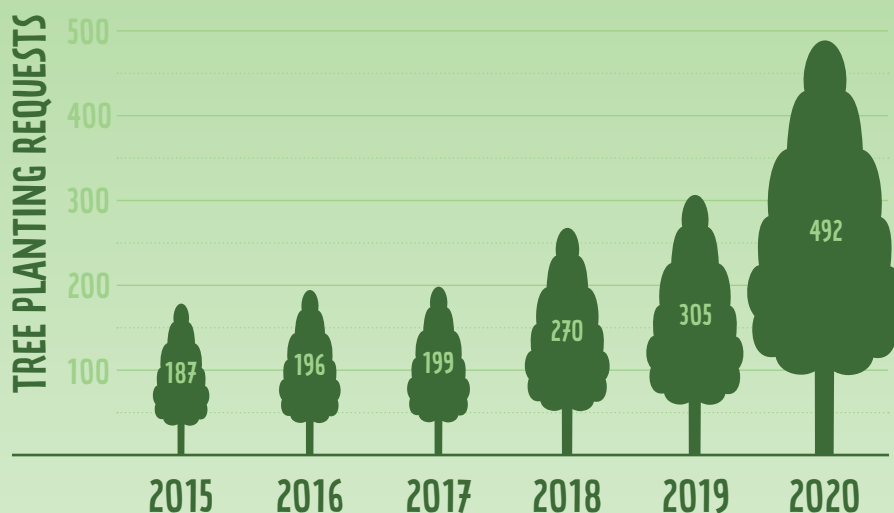
Natural shade is also important along pedestrian and cycle paths and positively impacts active travel, especially during warm weather. 1.7km kilometres of tree planting was carried out along off-road shared trails in 2020.

2020 Kindergarten Planting (13)

- Annie Galvin Child Care Centre
- Bendigo PreSchool
- Eaglehawk Preschool
- Epsom Preschool
- Helen Jessen Child Care Centre
- Helm Street Preschool
- Kangaroo Flat Preschool
- Kennington Preschool
- Long Gully Preschool
- Neangar Preschool
- North Bendigo Preschool
- South Bendigo Preschool
- Spring Gully Preschool

2020 Playspace Planting (10)

- Epsom Village Green
- Yellowgum Drive
- Greenview Circuit
- Botanical Drive
- Gallway Drive
- Rose Street
- Long Gully Splash Park and Fitness Station
- Olympic Parade
- Cooina Park
- Howell Crescent



Customer requests for street trees

One way of determining positive community sentiment for the Greening Greater Bendigo program is to monitor the number of requests for new trees. We are aiming to increase this number over time. There has been a noticeable increase in community requests for tree planting since community engagement for Greening Greater Bendigo commenced in 2018 and the strategy being adopted in 2020.

Lily Street

Works were completed in March 2021 to construct new tree pits and plant 14 new trees in Lily Street, Bendigo between Rowan and McKenzie streets.

This follows the removal of several large gum trees over the past few years that were structurally unsound and compromised from pruning for powerline clearance.

The new tree pits are located further out from under overhead wires, minimising future pruning requirements and maximising shade cover over the street. They're also designed to enhance the streetscape and match in with the historic stone kerb and channel. Tree species have been chosen to retain the existing character of Lily Street.

WSUD tree pits

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) tree pits are specially designed to divert stormwater runoff that would otherwise flow directly into stormwater drains into the growing space for trees. Not only do these systems provide passive irrigation for trees, they clean the stormwater before it flows into nearby waterways.

The Engineering, Works and Parks and Open Space units have been working together to construct new WSUD tree pits in several city locations as part of asset renewal projects in the past 12-months including Garsed Street, Lyttleton Terrace and Wills Street.

Protection of Significant Trees

A priority action of Greening Greater Bendigo is to protect significant trees (Action 4.2). Two reports were commissioned in 2020-21 to begin this process.

The Issues and Discussion Paper was submitted in August 2020 and included a review of the existing tree protections available to Greater Bendigo as well as current statutory measures employed by other Victorian Councils to protect significant trees. This paper also included a gap analysis following interviews with key Council officers.

The final report submitted in January 2021 provides recommendations for statutory controls and other supporting measures to protect significant trees in Greater Bendigo. It includes advice on defining a 'significant' tree, the processes that should be followed to adopt and implement statutory controls and discusses opportunities, incentives and limitations in ensuring such trees are protected.

The key recommendation from the study is to introduce an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) to protect significant trees via a Planning Scheme Amendment. The consultant has recommended the National Trust criteria to define a significant tree be adopted with some modifications, and a has provided statements of significance, permit requirements and exemptions.

An operational budget has been secured to continue this important piece of work over the next 3 years.



In-house tree planting crew

To help plant 3,000 new trees per year and maintain them during their first few years, a new in-house Greening Greater Bendigo team has been established within the Parks and Open Space unit. The new structure and program will not only see the City triple its tree planting efforts, it will enable all new trees to receive the care they need to successfully establish and contribute to the Greater Bendigo landscapes for many decades to come. Considerable savings and long-term benefits are anticipated from this arrangement.

The new recruits have received training in best-practice tree establishment techniques, and it is hoped that this will foster stewardship, excellence and community good-will towards the Greening Greater Bendigo program and achieve the 95% establishment rate ahead of schedule.

Leading Hand Daniel Carr, Claudia Bell, Jay Macartney, Tom Watson-Short joined the team in late-April - just in time for the 2021 tree planting program. Kim Anwyl was successfully recruited the Tree Establishment Officer in November 2020 and is providing fantastic support to the new team. This year the team will plant 2,600 trees across the urban area, many of which have also been grown in the City's nursery.

City Nursery

Part of the proposal to bring the City's tree planting operations in-house was to ramp up the production of trees at the City's McKenzie Street nursery. Again, there are considerable saving from using our existing facilities and staff resources and it is estimated that we can grow a tree at half the cost of buying them from the market. The majority of advanced tree suppliers in Victoria are located on or south of the ranges where there is a very different climate to Bendigo. Growing trees ourselves ensures that the stock we grow is climate matched, sourced locally and suited to Bendigo's drying and warming climate giving our trees the best start possible.

Savings from tree purchases will go directly back into the Greening Greater Bendigo program and supporting nursery resources as the program expands. The aim is grow 1,500 trees per year by 2024.

Some of our City-grown trees were on display in the Conservatory during March, showcasing the quality trees our talented nursery staff produced for the 2021 tree planting program.



Left: The first tree of the 2021 program is planted by the new team in Ross Park. **Right:** Tree Establishment Officer demonstrates how planting techniques can impact tree structure and health.



Above: Greening Great Bendigo presence at the Sustainability Festival in March at the Garden for the Future. **Below:** The next generation of Bendigo's trees growing at the City's nursery.