



A Greener North

The Northern Councils Alliance (NCA) is a regional network of the seven municipalities located in Melbourne's geographic north.

Consisting of Banyule City Council, City of Darebin, Hume City Council, Merri-bek City Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, and City of Whittlesea, the NCA advocates for and delivers projects that positively contribute to the economic, social, health and wellbeing of our residents and businesses.

The 'A Greener North' initiative sees NCA members working in partnership to progress urban greening throughout the region. Our consolidated approach ensures stronger greening outcomes are delivered directly to over 20 per cent of Melbourne's population. Urban greening helps our community become resilient to climate change, in particular during heatwaves.

The Councils of Melbourne's north are committed to achieving at least the 27 per cent canopy cover target by 2050 as set within the *Northern Metropolitan Framework Plan*.

All councils within Melbourne's north, except Nillumbik, are signatories to the *Living Melbourne* strategy.

A Greener North is aligning our actions to the *Living Melbourne* strategy, as we believe immediate on-ground action is required to advance the urban forest and meet the interim target.

- *Healthy people*

Protect and increase access to nature, green space and canopy cover, to reduce heat exposure, and improve mental and physical wellbeing

- *Abundant nature*


Protect and extend habitat connectivity and corridors to enhance biodiversity

- *Natural infrastructure*


Protect and increase vegetation on public and private land, in order to cool urban areas, retain water in the soils, reduce flood risk and increase water and air quality.




Our priority greening action for immediate on-ground outcomes

Living Melbourne action	Action code	NCA greening action	Funding required
 <p>Protect and restore species habitat, and improve connectivity</p> <p>Protect and restore habitats, and increase ecological connectivity of all types between streetscapes, conservation reserves, riparian and coastal areas, open spaces and other green infrastructure across metropolitan Melbourne</p>	1.1	Invest in on-ground biodiversity actions along the northern waterway corridors including the Plenty River and the Merri, Diamond, Edgars and Darebin Creeks and their tributaries.	\$10 million per year for four years
	1.2	Deliver an incentive program in Hume, Mitchell and Whittlesea that proactively engages with landholders to implement on-ground biodiversity actions in all future conservation reserves identified under the Melbourne Strategic Assessment and other highly significant corridors within the 'logical inclusions' areas.	\$1.5 million per year for four years
	1.3	Create a consolidated regional dataset to identify priorities for urban greening that benefits biodiversity and create a business case for costing the delivery of these projects in the north.	\$100,000 one-off project funding
	1.4	Create a consolidated dataset of Council owned and managed conservation reserves across Councils to identify habitat corridors and links across municipal boundaries.	\$100,000 one-off project funding




Living Melbourne action	Action code	NCA greening action	Funding required
 <p data-bbox="212 770 363 819">Set targets and track progress</p> <p data-bbox="126 891 437 1294">Set urban canopy and understory targets for each metropolitan region, and decide on a clear and consistent method for long-term monitoring and evaluation of the quality and extent of the urban forest</p>	2.1	Develop and maintain an accessible dataset for urban canopy with a tracking system useful for compliance and enforcement. This means a data frequency target of less one month.	\$200,000 one-off project funding
	2.2	Develop an artificial intelligence tool that can assist stakeholders to identify easy sites for urban greening enhancement at an individual tree scale.	\$300,000 one-off project funding
	2.3	Fund DELWP to establish a measure of permeability across the regions, with the aim of implementing a permeability target for public and private land.	N/A




Living Melbourne action	Action code	NCA greening action	Funding required
 <p>Strengthen planning and development standards and relevant guidelines to increase the greening of the private realm</p>	3.1	Implement an amendment to the planning scheme to provide statutory protection for trees on private land within the urban areas of Melbourne’s north.	\$200,000 one-off project funding
	3.2	Introduce the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environments (CASBE) Elevating Environmental Sustainable Development Policy into the planning scheme.	N/A
	3.3	Advocate for improvements to the National Construction Code to ensure that all houses in Melbourne are built and designed with the understanding that nature strips will contain large canopy trees into the future.	N/A
	3.4	Provide each council with \$50,000 per year to support private realm urban greening programs (such as Gardens for Wildlife and My Smart Gardens) for the community.	\$350,000 per year for four years




Living Melbourne action	Action code	NCA greening action	Funding required
 <p data-bbox="151 728 352 779">Collaborate across sectors and regions</p> <p data-bbox="124 864 411 1440">Encourage collaboration between sectors and regions, to protect and expand the urban forest by strengthening existing regional partnerships, and establishing new ones, and by accelerating greening efforts on private land</p>	4.1	Fund an executive officer and program support officer for A Greener North to help progress the collaboration between Councils, water authorities, private and public stakeholders in the region.	\$300,000 per year for four years
	4.2	Set up an independent working group to provide funding and technical support to update both engineering manuals and setback design specification for infrastructure – to value trees as a primary design driver of street form.	N/A
	4.3	Support the adoption of a northern Councils’ valuation tool for trees, so that the value of trees is adequately captured and any removal is appropriately compensated for in terms of loss to assets and amenity.	\$100,000 one-off project funding
	4.4	Review and amend regulations for electricity cable placement/services to remove conflict with urban forest plantings (in established areas). Provide policy support to enable Councils to modify existing electric lines in residential areas to improve opportunities for canopy trees.	\$200,000 one-off project funding



Living Melbourne action	Action code	NCA greening action	Funding required
 <p data-bbox="172 842 392 920">Build a toolkit of resources to underpin implementation</p> <p data-bbox="124 976 440 1339">Equip practitioners to protect and enhance the urban forest by building on existing resources and creating a shared toolkit to facilitate implementation of best practices</p>	5.1	<p data-bbox="587 528 1315 607">Create a communications campaign about the value of trees for the community.</p> <p data-bbox="587 636 1278 752">Deliver community education campaigns about the value of the trees for the whole north, together with targeted advocacy and training and development.</p>	<p data-bbox="1337 551 1469 584">\$200,000</p> <p data-bbox="1353 618 1453 734">per year for four years</p>
	5.2	<p data-bbox="587 824 1273 940">Review the regulatory guidelines that impact urban canopy, including financial mechanisms for illegal or unlawful removal of Council owned trees.</p>	<p data-bbox="1337 797 1469 831">\$200,000</p> <p data-bbox="1353 864 1453 981">one-off project funding</p>
	5.3	<p data-bbox="587 1021 1315 1178">Create a consolidated regional dataset for priorities for urban greening that benefits heat island effect and create a business case for costing the delivery of these projects in Melbourne's north.</p>	<p data-bbox="1337 1010 1469 1043">\$100,000</p> <p data-bbox="1353 1077 1453 1193">one-off project funding</p>
	5.4	<p data-bbox="587 1245 1286 1368">Create a powerful GIS tool to identify urban greening opportunities to more efficiently plan Council tree planting projects.</p>	<p data-bbox="1337 1223 1469 1256">\$200,000</p> <p data-bbox="1353 1290 1453 1406">one-off project funding</p>



<i>Living Melbourne</i> action	Action code	NCA greening action	Funding required
 <p>Fund the protection and enhancement of the urban forest</p> <p>Establish a set of funding and financing options to suit different types of urban forest action</p>	6.1	Create Canopy Justice Plans for the areas of high heat vulnerability to deliver trees and water in the north, including a costing structure that addresses the significant financial barriers to modifying infrastructure to support these greening activities.	\$700,000 per year for four years
	6.2	Incentivise training of workers for the future arboricultural industry.	\$250,000 per year for four years
	6.3	Secure long-term financing to realise the <i>Living Melbourne</i> vision for Melbourne’s north.	N/A
	6.4	Support the delivery of street trees in high priority areas aligned with Canopy Justice Plans.	\$10million per year for four years

Note: If full funding pitch of \$25 million per year for four years is received, future projects totalling \$1.7 million to be allocated is years 2, 3 and 4.



Proposed partners

Traditional Owners

Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
Taungurung Land and Waters Council

Community groups

Landcare
Friends of groups
Service clubs

Government/Statutory Authorities

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Department of Health
Department of Transport/VicRoads
Energy Safety Victoria
VicTrack
Parks Victoria

Higher education institutions

RMIT University
La Trobe University
Melbourne Polytechnic
Kangan Institute
University of Melbourne
Swinburne University of Technology
GOTAFE

Water/Catchment Management Authorities

Melbourne Water (including Port Phillip Westernport CMA)
Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (Mitchell)
North Central Catchment Management Authority (Mitchell)
Coliban Water (Mitchell)
Greater Western Water (Hume)
Yarra Valley Water
Goulburn Valley Water



Existing regional collaborations

Darebin Creek Management Committee

Merri Creek Management Committee

Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action

Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment