

ITEM 4. STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS – RIPON WAY ROSEBERY – SCOPING REPORT**FILE NO: X007354****SUMMARY**

This report outlines the proposal for streetscape improvements at Ripon Way, Rosebery to plant trees within the roadway, extend footpaths and improve pedestrian safety. These streetscape improvements contribute to the City's *Sustainable Sydney 2030* commitments by:

- planting 27 street trees in new garden bed locations consistent with the City's Greening Sydney Plan objective to increase tree canopy cover by 50 per cent; and
- improving pedestrian safety by narrowing the road to reduce traffic speeds and extending footpaths to reduce crossing distances at intersections.

The 32 properties on Ripon Way each have off-street parking. The proposal will reduce on-street parking from 53 spaces to 40 spaces. Residents of Ripon Way are not eligible for resident parking permits.

Invitations were sent to 34 residents and five businesses to discuss this proposal in person. A consultation session was attended by approximately 20 residents and local business owners. Nine submissions were received, six in support and three opposed. The proposal was developed further and residents and businesses were notified again, with five submissions received, two in support and three against. Those not in support were concerned by the loss of parking.

This opportunity to improve pedestrian safety and increase the tree canopy cover of the area is consistent with the City's Walking Strategy and Action Plan, Street Tree Master Plan and Urban Forest Strategy. Research shows that increasing tree planting in residential neighbourhoods, particularly in areas with low tree canopy cover such as Rosebery, improves air, soil and water quality, improves mental health and well-being, provides a sense of place for residents, and enhances property values. Many of the community responses received during consultation also noted the benefits of trees in improving the amenity and value of Ripon Way.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council approve the scope of the Ripon Way Streetscape Improvements, as described in the subject report and shown in Attachments A and B to the subject report, for progression to design development, documentation and construction procurement.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Tree Planting Concept Image, Ripon Way Tree Blisters, Ripon Way Rosebery

Attachment B: Tree Planting Concept Plan, Ripon Way Rosebery

Attachment C: Financial Implications (Confidential)

(As Attachment C is confidential, it will be circulated separately from the agenda paper and to Councillors and relevant senior staff only)

BACKGROUND

1. In 2011, Council adopted the Street Tree Master Plan which supports the City's target to increase tree canopy cover by 50 per cent across the Local Government Area. The master plan includes a proposal to plant trees within the roadway at Ripon Way at Rosebery.
2. Ripon Way is a residential street terminating with Bannerman Crescent to the East and Dalmeny Avenue to the West. The proposed project scope includes tree planting and/or footpath improvements adjacent to 32 stand-alone residential dwellings on Ripon Way, and one shop front and two residential dwellings on Dalmeny Avenue.
3. Although Rosebery is one of the least developed areas in the Local Government Area, it is also one of the areas with the lowest proportion of tree canopy cover (10 – 15 per cent of land area). Many residents live in stand-alone houses on plots which are relatively large for an urban area, however, very few of these plots are planted with large canopy trees.
4. As most existing footpaths and parks are at capacity for tree planting, finding new locations for additional street trees is required in order for the City to meet its *Sustainable Sydney 2030* commitment to increase tree canopy cover by 50 per cent.

SCOPE OF PROJECT

Tree Planting

5. The proposal (refer Attachments A and B) includes two trees planted in footpath extensions and 25 trees planted in new garden beds offset from the kerb in existing parking areas (In-Road Tree Planting). Subject to availability, the tree species under consideration are *Quercus illex* (Evergreen Oak) and *Angophora costata* (Sydney Red Gum). These have been positioned away from existing large trees and power lines, and to ensure access to all existing driveways is maintained.

Pedestrian Improvements

6. Footpath widening is proposed at the intersections of Ripon Way with Dalmeny Avenue to slow traffic and create a shorter distance for pedestrians to cross. They are proposed within existing 'No Parking' areas and will be investigated as potential rain gardens to improve stormwater quality. The new garden beds planted with trees will also act as traffic calming devices to deter speeding in Ripon Way.

Parking Changes

7. There are approximately 53 on-street parking spaces on Ripon Way and 32 residential dwellings. The proposed new garden beds (to plant trees within the roadway) are expected to reduce on-street parking to approximately 40 spaces and have been positioned so that each address retains at least one nearby parking space.
8. All residential dwellings on Ripon Way also have at least one off-street parking space, with many having space to park multiple vehicles within long driveways and garages. Residents of Ripon Way, Dalmeny Avenue and Bannerman Crescent are ineligible for residential parking permits, as they have off-street parking available.
9. The footpath extension outside the existing shopfront on Dalmeny Avenue is proposed within an existing 'No Parking' area to extend the existing pram ramp.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

10. The City is responding to previous requests from Ripon Way residents to plant more trees on the street, to increase local amenity, and to provide shade. The City developed a proposal to install trees within existing parking areas on Ripon Way and outside shop fronts on Dalmeny Avenue and sent invitations to 34 residents and five businesses to discuss this proposal in person. A consultation session was held on Saturday 8 April 2017 at the intersection of Dalmeny Avenue and Ripon Way and was attended by approximately 20 residents and local business owners. Feedback was collected at this session and queries were addressed by City staff in attendance.
11. During this session the City received nine submissions, including six highly supportive responses and three opposing the proposal. Submissions supportive of the proposal commented on the benefits trees may provide to property values by enhancing the amenity of the street, and also the environmental benefits by providing shade. Residents also reported a high incidence of speeding vehicles, due to the wide width of the street and the wide intersection with Dalmeny Avenue. Objections to the proposal noted concerns with parking loss, access to driveways and leaf litter.
12. At this session residents also requested footpath upgrades and the installation of parking restrictions to deter long-term parking by commuters from outside of the area. As Ripon Way residents are ineligible for residential parking permits, parking restrictions would restrict parking by residents and is not supported. The footpath condition has been assessed by the City's engineers who have noted that it does not currently require replacement.
13. City staff further developed the proposal, taking into consideration community feedback for tree planting at Ripon Way, to nominate the positions for new trees and kerb extensions. A letter was distributed to nearby residents and businesses to seek feedback on the concept design. Information was also provided on the City's 'Green Streets' page on the 'Sydney Your Say' website.
14. The City received a further five responses in regard to the concept design, all relating to the positioning of the trees. Two responses were in favour of the design, and three responses objected to the design. Objections to the proposal expressed concerns regarding the loss of parking and likely access constraints arising from the proposed installation of garden beds outside the shop fronts located at the intersection of Ripon Way and Dalmeny Avenue. Responses in favour of the proposal noted the increased amenity to the street that would be provided by an increase in tree planting. Following this second round of consultation, the proposed garden beds outside of the Dalmeny Avenue shop fronts have been omitted in response to feedback.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

15. *Sustainable Sydney 2030* is a vision for the sustainable development of the City to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the City, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This proposal is aligned with the following *Sustainable Sydney 2030* strategic directions and objectives:

- (a) Direction 2 - A Leading Environmental Performer – the proposal creates opportunity for increasing tree canopy cover by planting 27 street trees in new garden bed locations, consistent with the City's 2030 commitment to increase tree canopy cover by 50 per cent;
- (b) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling – this proposal will increase the amenity of the street with shade trees to encourage walking and cycling in Rosebery. The proposal will also provide wider footpaths and shorter crossing distances at intersections to improve pedestrian safety. The new garden beds and footpath extensions will also narrow the road width to slow traffic speeds; and
- (c) Objectives under these directions include developing a network of safe, linked pedestrian routes integrated with green spaces throughout the city and inner suburbs, giving greater priority to 'green' and pedestrian infrastructure over car parking. This work also promotes green travel routes to major workplaces and venues in the city. The area around Ripon Way is well serviced by bus routes.

Street Tree Master Plan

- 16. The planting is consistent with the Street Tree Master Plan (adopted by Council in 2011), which includes the planting of *Angophora costata* (Sydney Red Gum) and *Quercus Ilex* (Evergreen Oak) trees at Ripon Way.

Greening Sydney Plan

- 17. The new garden bed areas are consistent with the strategy to 'green our streets' by replacing unused concrete surfaces with planting and permeable surfaces. These areas also contribute towards reducing the 'heat island' effect of the City and can reduce stormwater run-off.
- 18. The Greening Sydney Plan also identifies benefits an increase in tree canopy cover can provide in residential neighbourhoods such as increasing property values, improving resident satisfaction and creating a 'sense of place' within a particular neighbourhood or street.

Organisational Impact

- 19. The project will create additional assets, such as kerbs, drainage, garden beds and pavements that will require ongoing maintenance.

Risks

- 20. Risks associated with the proposal have been considered through the concept design and consultation phase. These include safety (in particular road safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists), environmental impacts and economic impacts, as well as community concerns.
- 21. An independent Road Safety Audit will be carried out on the developed design to further identify and assess any risks associated with the proposal.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

- 22. There are sufficient funds allocated for this project within the 2017/18 Capital Works Budget for the In Road Tree Planting Program. Details are provided in Confidential Attachment C.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

23. *NSW Roads Act 1993* for road related approvals.
24. *Local Government Act 1993* for construction procurement.
25. The works will not require planning approval under the Infrastructure SEPP of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979*.
26. Attachment C contains confidential commercial information of the City which, if disclosed, would confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
27. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise Council's ability to negotiate fairly and commercially to achieve the best outcome for its ratepayers.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

28. Construction is scheduled to commence towards the end of the 2017 calendar year with a forecast duration of three to four months.

OPTIONS

29. The 'do nothing' approach would not respond to the City's *Sustainable Sydney 2030* commitments to increase tree canopy cover in an area with a very low percentage of tree canopy cover.
30. Endorsing the proposed streetscape improvements would be consistent with Council's adopted policies and would also respond to the majority of submissions received from residents, which were in favour of the proposal.

FUTURE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

31. Community members and organisations who made submissions will be notified on the resolution of Council and the scope approved by Council.
32. Notification letters will be sent to property owners and businesses advising them of the final design and construction program prior to construction.
33. During construction, there will be close liaison between property owners, businesses, City staff and the contractors to minimise disruption to residences and trade in the area.

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