

Media Release

URBAN GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE: A CRITICAL ASSET FOR LIVABLE CITIES

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[AUSTRALIA] – A national push to prioritise Urban Green Infrastructure (UGI) is gaining momentum, with 12 peak industry bodies rallying behind the cause. Together, they represent more than 23,900 professional members and over 500,000 Australian jobs across urban planning, design, engineering, horticulture, arboriculture, parks and leisure, and green infrastructure supply sectors.

At the heart of this effort is the National Urban Green Infrastructure Round Table - a new collaborative initiative dedicated to showcasing the critical role of UGI in building resilient cities that enhance biodiversity, improve public health, and drive economic prosperity. Participating organisations include:



The scale of the opportunity

"Urban Green Infrastructure (UGI) is not just a superficial beauty treatment for our cities - it is critical infrastructure that protects against climate impacts, brings nature into cities, and significantly improves public health," said Gail Hall, President of the Australasian Green Infrastructure Network (AGIN).

Despite its extensive economic and environmental benefits, UGI remains undervalued in urban investment. A recent study in metropolitan Melbourne found that **for every \$1 invested in greening, approximately \$4 in economic benefits are generated** (NGIV, 2024 "Greening the Garden State Report").

The economic potential of green infrastructure is already being realised in Australia's amenity horticulture sector, which produced nearly \$3 billion worth of trees, plants, and turf (Hort innovation, 2025, "Australian

Horticulture Statistics Handbook 2023/24"). This sector underpins the supply of vital green assets that contribute to cooling cities, enhancing biodiversity, and improving mental and physical health of communities.

However, this potential remains largely untapped, with only 0.3% of all urban infrastructure budgets globally currently being allocated to green infrastructure (The World Economic Forum, 2025 "Nature Positive: Financing the Transition in Cities"). These figures highlight an urgent need to increase investment in UGI and embed it into mainstream urban infrastructure spending.

Urban Green Infrastructure as a national priority

"Urban Green Infrastructure is more than just an environmental benefit - it is a critical piece of our cities' infrastructure that delivers measurable climate resilience, biodiversity, and community wellbeing," said David Jenkins, CEO of the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia "Yet, UGI is still often treated as an afterthought. Our cities and regions need to move from 'nice to have' to 'must have' when it comes to green infrastructure."

Despite its benefits, UGI is frequently sidelined in planning and investment decisions, lacking clear accountability for its establishment, management, and long-term health and sustainability.

By uniting their strengths, the member organisations of the Round Table member organisations have released Australia's first industry-supported Position Statement on Urban Green Infrastructure. It outlines six key recommendations to advance UGI across Australia. These include calls for:

- formal asset classification;
- national standards;
- long-term funding;
- workforce capacity building; and
- embedding UGI as a key component of urban infrastructure planning.

There is an urgent need for action

The evidence is clear: Green Infrastructure delivers economic, environmental, and social returns that far outweigh its costs. With climate change and urbanisation placing unprecedented pressure on Australia's cities and their communities, the National Urban Green Infrastructure Round Table is calling for bold and immediate action to mainstream UGI in urban planning, investment and management.

Now is the time to prioritise UGI as a fundamental part of Australia's infrastructure future - before the rapid and continued decline of resilience, sustainability, and liveability in our cities.

[Read the Position Statement](#)

For further information about the Position Statement or the National Urban Green Infrastructure Round Table, please contact the Australasian Green Infrastructure Network via hello@agin.org.au