



Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2021-2022 **ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Asked by Nicole Lawder MLA on 8 November 2022: Mr Daniel Iglesias took on notice the following question(s):

Reference: Hansard uncorrected proof transcript 8 November 2022 Page 107.

In relation to:

MS LAWDER: Yes. Thanks. I know I have had a few bits of correspondence about people unhappy about having a tree planted on the front nature strip. How many, as a percentage, have engaged with the directorate about being unhappy with either the type of tree, the location or not wanting a tree at all? Are we talking half a per cent, 5 per cent, what sort of ratio?

Mr Iglesias: To get that exact ratio I would have to take that question on notice, but it would be very, very small in relation to the total number of engagements.

MS LAWDER: And if you could perhaps identify what the issue is: is it the location, the type of tree, or having a tree at all?

Mr Iglesias: It is all of those. So in some instances, there may be a particular anxiety around the aspect that that tree would block, whether it be solar access or it might be a particular view. There may be anxiety around how that tree might be in a storm, and each of these instances, our first response is to engage and to have that conversation.

It is known that trees in the urban environment actually have a net benefit to protecting property during storms. That has been shown in a number of scientific studies and we can have that discussion. Sometimes we can bring people around, other times we cannot and in those instances we just will not plant.

MS LAWDER: Did you get what you needed on notice?

Mr Iglesias: As to the number, the percentage, yes.

CHRIS STEEL MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

To facilitate its street tree planting program, the Urban Treescapes Team engage extensively through a range of communication channels to ensure that residents have information and choice when it comes to plantings identified on the verge adjacent to their property. Where required, residents can engage directly with the team to obtain more information or influence the final arrangements of a proposed planting.

Out of a total 3,282 residents who were to receive a street tree during the spring 2022 program, 149 or approximately 4.5%, refused the planting of a tree on the verge adjacent to their household. Reasons for refusal vary and include competing uses of verge space, fear of damage to infrastructure and private landscaping. Of the resident refusals, 23 (15.4%) were assigned native Eucalyptus or Callistemon species with the remaining 126 (84.6%) refusing exotic deciduous species.

The addresses of resident refusals were spread across Canberra in the following percentages (2.6% Central, 21.4% Gungahlin, 28.8% North, 18.8% South and 28.2% Tuggeranong).

A further 11 (0.3%) residents engaged with the Urban Treescapes Team and were happy to receive a different species of tree. Of this cohort, two were assigned exotic species and preferred a native, one was assigned a native and preferred an exotic, and the remaining eight were assigned exotics but wanted different exotic species.

There were a significant number of residents that engaged with the Urban Treescapes Team and after discussions or slight modifications, including the location of the tree, were happy to proceed with receiving the assigned tree. Data on these residents is not available.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services

Signature:



Date:

18/11/22

By the Minister for Transport and City Services, Chris Steel MLA