

RESILIENT EAST

Climate Action Plan 2026–2031



Acknowledgement of Country

Marni ngadlu tampinhi ngadlu Kurna yartangka inparrinhi.
(We acknowledge that we are on the land of the Kurna people.)

We acknowledge that Resilient East works on the lands of the Kurna people, the Traditional Custodians of the Adelaide Plains. We pay respect to Kurna Elders past, present and emerging, and recognise their enduring connection to Country, including the land, waters, skies and living systems that sustain this region. We acknowledge the deep knowledge, culture and stewardship that have cared for this Country for tens of thousands of years. Continuing to care for Country will be central to addressing climate change and building resilience for future generations.

We also extend our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, past and present.



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Executive Summary

Resilient East brings together eight metropolitan councils, Green Adelaide and the South Australian Government to deliver coordinated climate action across eastern Adelaide.

By working together, partners can achieve outcomes at a scale and impact that is not possible individually.

Our shared vision guides the work we do:

We work together to ensure the eastern region remains a vibrant, desirable, and productive place to live, work and visit, and that our businesses, communities, and environments can respond positively to the challenges and opportunities presented by a changing climate.

Why this Plan is important

Eastern Adelaide is already experiencing a hotter, drier and more extreme climate, and increasing climate variability and severity of extreme weather events will further increase pressure on infrastructure, services, the environment and community wellbeing.

A regional risk assessment identified 24 high-priority risks for the eastern Adelaide region across social, built, natural and economic systems.

Key risks include:

- Extreme heat impacting the health and wellbeing of the community and council workers.
- Increasing damage to infrastructure, assets and natural environments.
- Rising costs, including for asset maintenance, emergency response and insurance.
- Declining condition of ecosystems and green space.
- Disruptions to council service delivery.

This Plan focuses on what councils can directly influence, to help respond to these risks to keep our communities and workers safe, maintain our services and manage long-term costs.



Australian Government

National Emergency Management Agency

This project, Resilient East Climate Action Plan 2026 – 2031, received funding from the Australian Government.

What this Plan delivers

The Plan sets a five-year roadmap for collective action through the delivery of six priority projects.

These projects were identified through a robust process involving strategic foresight and back-casting, risk assessments, multi-criteria analysis and extensive stakeholder engagement including with council staff, council leadership and partners.

Projects are focused on where Resilient East can provide a substantial benefit through regional coordination of climate action.



Working safely in extreme heat

Keeping council outdoor workers safe and productive during extreme heat.



Cool spaces

Activating a regional network of cool spaces to keep our community cool during extreme heatwaves.



Council assets – from risk to resilience

Embedding climate risk into council asset management.



Sustainable active transport networks

Improving the regional connectivity and climate resilience of active transport networks.



Resilient communities

Delivering a community program that strengthens climate action, resilience, connection and energy management.



Greening our region

Map canopy change, identify plantable areas, and trial different tree species and new ways to plant them to improve climate resilience.

01 Resilient East

When our councils work together on climate action, they achieve far greater impact than when acting alone. The Resilient East partnership enables this.

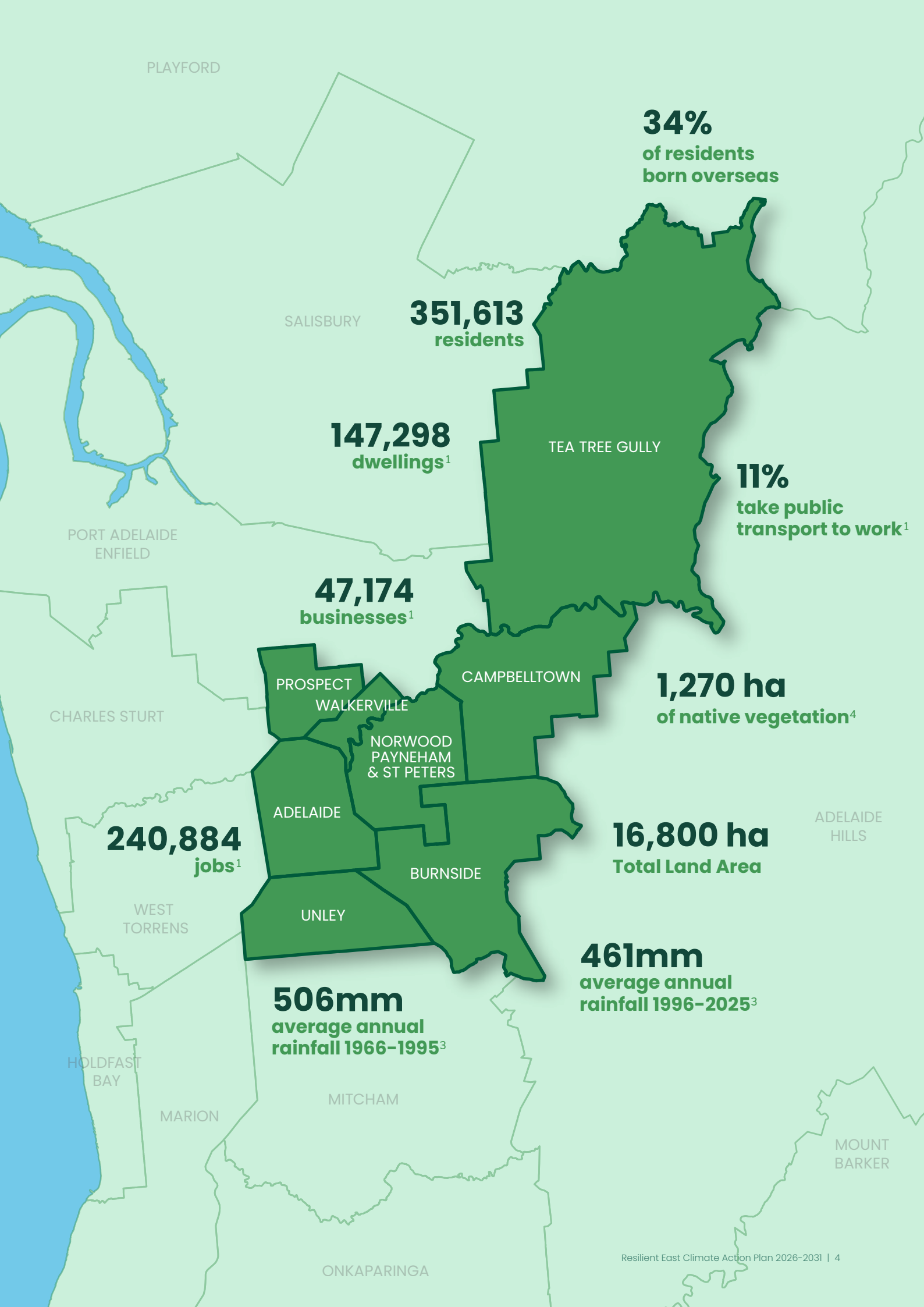
The Resilient East partners include:



Resilient East provides a platform for the partners to work together to progress climate action in the eastern Adelaide region.

Resilient East enables a unified regional approach to climate resilience – one that reflects the unique environmental, social, and economic characteristics of the area. Through knowledge sharing, advocacy, and delivery of iconic projects, the program strengthens local capacity and showcases leadership in climate action and innovation. Green Adelaide is our core funding partner, and we gratefully acknowledge their vital support in making this work possible.

We also partner with others beyond this core group to help scale up action and drive coordinated long-term change. Together with other partners, we can achieve far more than what is possible alone.



Our responsibility to act

Councils are on the frontline when it comes to both experiencing and responding to climate change impacts. While preparing for and responding to climate change is a shared responsibility across all levels of government, business and the community, councils play a vital role because of their strong influence on how people live, move and access services each day.

For councils, climate action is a duty of care: to protect community health and wellbeing, safeguard local economies, reduce future costs and ensure essential services remain resilient.

We need to prepare for a hotter, drier and more unpredictable climate, considering how to build the climate resilience of both the services and assets we provide, and the wider community we support.

Climate change is increasingly considered a major strategic and financial risk for the Resilient East partners. Each Resilient East partner council is already making meaningful progress on climate action individually. By working together, we can streamline efforts and address shared challenges more effectively.

Our evolving response to climate change

Since its inception in 2012, the Resilient East climate partnership has significantly influenced and contributed to the eastern Adelaide region's response to climate change. The partnership started with an adaptation focus, investigating how a changing climate might influence the valued features and aspects of the region and what the partner councils could do to support these features and aspects to adapt to climate-related physical risks. The **2016 Regional Climate Change Adaptation Plan** provided a foundation for coordinated and collaborative adaptation. Greening programs to increase canopy and cool the built environment and water sensitive urban design were promoted and accelerated and are now embedded in council plans.

The **2020–2024 Resilient East Action Plan** also focused on adaptation actions, although by the time this was prepared, many of the partner councils were undertaking emissions inventories and preparing emissions reduction (mitigation) plans.

This **Resilient East Climate Action Plan 2026–2031** has considered both physical and transition climate risks, requiring consideration of adaptation and mitigation responses. Its development has been informed by climate risk assessments and an investigation of emerging climate risk disclosure requirements.

02 About this plan

Purpose of this Plan

The risk assessment undertaken to inform the Plan identified many risks to the community, environment and economy including some that councils have little influence, responsibility or capacity to manage.

The development of the Plan has focused on what councils can influence or lead. As Resilient East partners, it is anticipated that Green Adelaide and the Government of South Australia will participate in many of the priority projects identified in this Plan.

This Plan:

- Describes six priority projects that will be the focus of regional council climate action and investment for the next five years
- Responds to our increasing understanding of climate risk to council operations, the community, the environment and the economy
- Identifies critical enablers required to progress the priority projects.

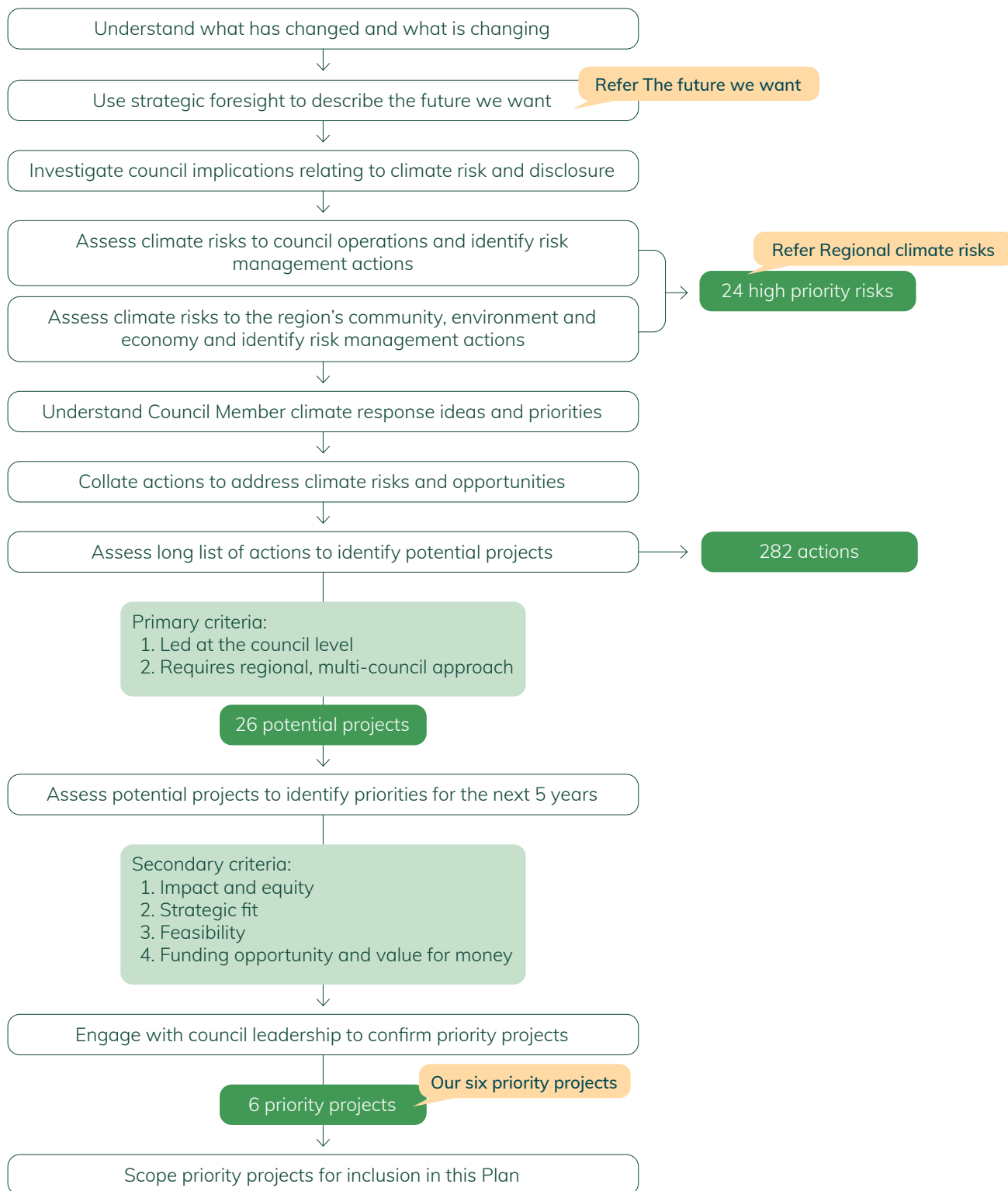
In addition to the six priority projects identified in this Plan, Resilient East will adopt a structured advocacy approach, concentrating on issues where progress will directly support delivery of priority projects, address priority risks or progress Resilient East's vision for the future.

Initial advocacy priorities identified in the risk assessment include regional hazard mapping, increased requirements for climate resilience in the Planning and Design Code and increased funding and support for emergency management. Advocacy efforts will be targeted, coordinated and approved by council leadership, timely and grounded in clear evidence.



Developing this Plan

The development of this Plan was led by the Resilient East Steering Group and was informed by research, engagement, risk assessments and multi-criteria assessments, as illustrated in the figure below.



03 Regional Context

Our changing region

Over the last decade, the region's community, environment and economy have experienced significant changes. Some of these are summarised below:



Community²

- The region's population grew 16% to 351,613 (2013–2024).
- The proportion of the population aged over 60 increased by 4%, while the proportion under 30 declined by 2% (2011–2021).
- Volunteer participation fell 2% to 15% (2011–2021).



Environment³

- Regional (net) Tree canopy cover increased by 2% over the region (2018/19 – 2022).
- The area mapped as native vegetation has not changed from 2014 to 2024. There is a total of 1270ha.



Economy and built environment⁴

- Jobs increased by 21% (2011–2021).
- The proportion of dwellings that are medium or high density increased by 1.2% (2011–2021). The greatest increases were in Walkerville (+11%) and Prospect (+6.7%).

Our future climate

Climate trends projected to 2050 and beyond indicate⁵



Increasing maximum, minimum and average temperatures



Declining rainfall



Hotter and more frequent hot days



More intense heavy rainfall events



Longer and hotter heatwaves



More dangerous fire weather

Links to more detailed climate projections for the region can be found on the Resilient East website.

Statewide climate risks

The *2024 Statewide Climate Change Risk and Opportunity Assessment*⁶ considered both the physical risks of a changing climate including extreme weather events and incremental changes in rainfall and temperature and the transition risks associated with the economic, policy and societal response and changes or transitions toward a low-carbon economy.

The Statewide Risk Assessment identifies eleven high-priority risks for the state that require new or stronger adaptation action within the next five years, over and above that already planned.

Of these eleven risks, the eastern Adelaide region is exposed to nine high-priority risks:

1. Significant loss of biodiversity.
2. Adverse impacts on flood and coastal protection defences such as levee banks, seawalls and beach replenishment (note only inland flooding relevant for the region).
3. Disruption to transport including aviation, ports, roads, rail and public transport.
4. Adverse impacts on water availability, quality, supply, and demand.
5. Insurance becoming unaffordable and/or unavailable.
6. Disruption to supply chains and logistics including transport, supplier production and availability of raw materials.
7. Adverse impacts from extreme weather on employment and financial wellbeing.
8. Increasing impacts on physical and mental health and wellbeing.
9. Reduced capacity of emergency services to prepare, manage and respond.

Regional climate risks

Two climate risk assessments were undertaken to inform the development of this Plan. One risk assessment was undertaken to identify climate risks to the operations of Resilient East councils across all functional areas. A second risk assessment was undertaken to identify climate risks to the eastern Adelaide region across social, built, natural and economic domains.

These risk assessments considered the likelihood, consequence and overall rating of each risk, the complexity of the risk, and current controls in place to mitigate the risk. The approach to the regional risk assessment aligned with the Statewide Risk Assessment, considering both physical and transition risk.

24 high priority risks were identified

Social



- Disrupted delivery and increased demand for health and social welfare services.
- Increased exposure to extreme heat for council workers.
- Forced closure or disruption to council facilities or service delivery.
- Repeated emergencies exhausting council resources.
- Greater demand for emergency services and insufficient capacity to respond.
- Poor warning systems and limited capability delay emergency response and coordination.

Built



- Interruptions to communications infrastructure.
- Increased damage to and destruction of council assets.
- Increased damage to built heritage assets.
- Declining condition and increased maintenance of green infrastructure.

Natural



- Disruption to terrestrial biodiversity and ecological processes.
- Declining surface and groundwater recharge and increased extraction.
- Reduced water availability for aquatic ecosystems and irrigation.
- Reduced condition of vegetation, urban trees and grassed areas.
- Increased damage to council managed natural environments and open space.
- Tree canopy loss and limb drop
- Reduced soil health and structure.

Economic



- Increased government liability associated with climate-related decision making.
- Rising insurance premiums for council and community assets.
- Disruption and cancellation of events and activities.
- More frequent disruptions and supply chain interruptions.
- Increased business failures and reduced regional economic output.
- Reduced condition and attractiveness of main street environments.
- Increased business operating costs from increased energy and water demand.

As part of the development of this Plan, requirements for climate risk disclosure were investigated. Mandatory climate disclosure reporting is not currently required for local government in South Australia. However, expectations are increasing that councils will ultimately be required to report or at least align with a reporting standard.

The future we want

Climate change is a global problem, but we know that significant local action is needed to prepare for the challenges ahead, build regional resilience and contribute to global emissions reduction efforts. By developing a shared vision of the future we want, we can more easily inspire and mobilise support for the work we need to do locally.

Through a facilitated workshop, Resilient East council partners and stakeholders used a strategic foresight approach to develop a shared vision for the future of what they want and what they want to avoid.

The delivery of this Plan will only go some of the way to achieving the future we want. The six priority projects identified in this Plan will help to address priority climate risks to this vision where collective council action has the greatest impact. However, achieving the future we want will also involve actions led by other agencies, organisations and communities, collectively helping us to work towards these outcomes.



Open and Green Spaces

- A healthy and resilient urban forest with a growing canopy
- Integrated water and biodiversity sensitive urban design
- Cool, green refuges for people and wildlife

Health, Wellbeing and Safety

- A community that is mentally and physically healthy
- A community that is prepared and knows how to stay safe and well
- Robust and well-funded emergency management and healthcare systems



Community Engagement and Participation

- A community that is engaged, educated and action-oriented
- A community that is climate literate and a steward of our shared environment
- A community that participates in its own decision making

Community Connection and Inclusion

- Climate-ready housing and public spaces
- Strong, two-way communication between residents and decision makers
- Communities that care for each other





Infrastructure and Built Environment

- Innovation in building design, energy management, transport and infrastructure
- An active circular economy
- Green, liveable and climate-resilient urban spaces

Governance

- Strong partnerships across public and private organisations
- Visible and trusted governance
- Strong, active leadership on climate action



Habitat and Biodiversity

- Biodiversity is valued, protected and integrated into urban life
- Resilient native species and ecosystems
- Cultural guidance from First Nations peoples

Economic Activity and Vibrancy

- Diverse and accessible spaces and places that support safe events and activities across seasons
- Thriving regional businesses prepared for a changing climate and low-emissions future



Water

- Diverse and fit for purpose water sources
- Water recycling and stormwater capture
- Nature-based water treatment solutions

04 Our six priority projects

The six priority projects that will be the focus of regional council climate action and investment for the next five years are described in this section.



**Working safely
in extreme heat**



**Cool
spaces**



**Council assets
– from risk to
resilience**



**Sustainable
active transport
networks**



**Resilient
communities**



**Greening our
region**

The priority projects will help address the following high-priority risks:

- Disrupted delivery and increased demand for health and social welfare services.
- Increased exposure to extreme heat for council workers.
- Forced closure or disruption to council facilities or service delivery.
- Greater demand for emergency services and insufficient capacity to respond.
- Increased damage to and destruction of council assets.
- Reduced condition and increased maintenance of green infrastructure.
- Reduced condition of vegetation, urban trees and grassed areas.
- Increased damage to council managed natural environments and open space.
- Tree canopy loss and limb drop.
- Increased government liability associated with climate-related decision making.
- Rising insurance premiums for council and community assets.
- Reduced condition and attractiveness of main street environments.

Investment and delivery approach

The projects in this Plan are designed for delivery as a staged, scalable program across participating councils, combining in kind effort, targeted internal investment, and external funding. Early phases prioritise low cost, in kind delivery and pilot activities, enabling councils to begin implementation immediately while building evidence, refining scope, and demonstrating value.

This approach allows Resilient East to progressively develop funding ready project proposals and attract co investment from State and Commonwealth programs.

Indicative resourcing and funding estimates have been developed for each project phase, representing the total regional investment required rather than individual council contributions. Projects that are delivery ready can commence immediately, while others will progress through a short scoping phase prior to implementation.

This staged model ensures the Plan remains practical, flexible, and deliverable, while positioning the region to scale priority projects as funding and partnerships are secured.

The benefits of working together

The benefits our regional collaboration deliver include:

- Shared expertise, data, equipment and other resources between councils
- Reduced duplication of effort
- Cost savings through economies of scale and joint procurement
- Amplified advocacy and influence with state and federal governments
- Accelerated innovation by sharing successful pilots and lessons learned
- Strengthened funding applications and attracting external investment
- Aligned policies and standards for more consistent regional outcomes
- Improved regional resilience through coordinated adaptation
- Region-scale change beyond the capacity of individual organisations.

Project One – Working safely in extreme heat



Project need

Outdoor workers are essential to the function of our councils. Outdoor council workers maintain our green and open spaces, build and fix our roads, council buildings and water infrastructure, collect our waste, and run our outdoor events and activities. Other council workers operate in non-air-conditioned indoor spaces such as depots, sheds and vehicles. These spaces can be even hotter than the outdoors but are similarly central to council operations.

Councils have a duty of care to workers' health and safety. Addressing the increasing risk of extreme heat will help to keep council workers safe, improve continuity of council services, and reduce costs associated with standing down or restricting outdoor workers. This will be especially important as we experience longer, hotter and more frequent heatwaves and hot days.

The risks addressed by this project are common across the state, and the outcomes will be of value to all South Australian councils.

What we will do

We will develop a regional, evidence-based approach to council work in extreme heat that improves staff safety and wellbeing, supports service continuity, and can be adapted by individual councils. We will consider workers who work outside or in other non-air-conditioned spaces, as well as cascading risks associated with bushfire and air quality.

The project will have two phases:

1. Policies and procedures: Review current employment agreements, work, health and safety policies, operational practices and thresholds for council workers to ensure they are fit-for-purpose for future climate conditions. Engage with employee unions. Prepare leading practice minimum standards that all Resilient East councils would benefit from adhering to in a changing climate, as well as resources to support implementation. Seek input from relevant partners to test and refine these standards.
2. Equipment and practices: Assess and trial emerging technologies, personal protective equipment (PPE), and other work practice innovations with councils, suppliers and research partners to identify practical solutions for safer and more flexible outdoor work in a hotter climate.

Outputs

- Review of employment agreements, human resources, work health safety and inclement weather policies and procedures.
- Regional engagement including with employee unions to confirm key challenges and opportunities.
- Regional extreme heat framework and minimum standards adaptable by councils.
- Evidence base for future enterprise bargaining and policy reform.
- Engagement with partners to test policy and procedure review and outputs.
- PPE, technology trials, and innovation research and catalogue.
- Recommendations report including council case studies and lessons learned.

Delivery

The table below provides a summary of the indicative project timeline and estimated costs.

Working safely in extreme heat	Timeframe	Anticipated costs		
		FTE	Internal funding	Reliance on external funding
Phase 1 – Policies and procedures	9 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 2 – Equipment and practices	12 months	0.5 FTE	Low	Medium

Internal funding

Low – \$50,000 to \$100,000 | Medium – \$100,000 to \$500,000 | High – over \$500,000

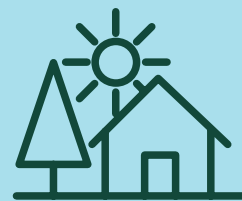
Reliance on external funding:

Low – project can proceed without external funding

Medium – project can be scaled with external funding

High – project cannot proceed without external funding

Project Two – Cool spaces



Project need

Heatwaves have claimed more lives in Australia than any other natural hazard⁷. Heatwaves can impact on health and wellbeing through heat exhaustion, heat stroke, heat rash, dehydration, lack of sleep, inability to exercise and social isolation. Heat can also exacerbate existing physical and mental health issues.

In the coming years, it is likely we will experience longer, hotter and more frequent heatwaves as a result of climate change. The increasing costs of electricity and overall cost of living further exacerbate this impact as more people struggle to afford to operate air conditioning, if they have it at all.

A ‘cool space’ is an indoor airconditioned space that has been designated as a site to provide respite to the community during extreme heat. They are intended to reduce the risks of heatwaves to vulnerable people, especially those who do not use or have access to air conditioning.

Providing and promoting cool spaces to the community is one of the best ways councils can support their communities to stay safe and healthy throughout heatwaves.

Many of the Resilient East councils experience increased use of their libraries and other air-conditioned community spaces during heatwaves⁸. Formally preparing for and responding to this demand both manages liability for council and better supports the community to stay healthy and safe during these events.

What we will do

We will establish a Cool Spaces for Summer Network for the eastern Adelaide region.

The project will have three phases:

1. Scoping and establishment: Review potential cool spaces in each council area, agree on regional standards for cool spaces and adapt the Campbelltown City Council’s award-winning program⁹ and toolkit to individual councils. Investigate an agreed regional cool space activation trigger. Develop a regional communications platform and map to share availability of cool spaces across the region during extreme heatwaves and messaging on staying healthy in the heat.
2. Delivery: Support all Resilient East councils to provide at least one designated cool space for the community during extreme heatwave events and operate in line with agreed standards.
3. Investigate partnership delivery: In the longer term, investigate opportunities for partnerships with other public and private agencies and organisations to expand the scope of the program.

Outputs

- Regional review of potential cool spaces in each council area.
- Gap analysis for facilities identified – what is required to make it an identified Cool Space
- Minimum of one designated cool space delivered in every Resilient East council area during trigger events. Regionally agreed cool spaces activation trigger and agreed cool space minimum standards.
- Campbelltown City Council cool space resources adjusted as needed to meet individual council requirements (besides trigger and regional minimum standards).
- Regional cool spaces map and directory both online and in hard copy.
- Regional communications materials promoted by Resilient East which can be used by councils as needed.
- Investigation into partnerships with other public and private agencies and organisations to support collaboration towards program expansion
- External funding application to support project delivery.

Delivery

The table below provides a summary of the indicative project timeline and estimated costs.

Cool spaces	Timeframe	Anticipated costs		
		FTE	Internal funding	Reliance on external funding
Phase 1 – Scoping and establishment	6 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 2 – Delivery	6 months & ongoing	2 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 3 – Investigate partnership delivery	6 months	0.2 FTE	Low	Low

Internal funding

Low – \$50,000 to \$100,000 | Medium – \$100,000 to \$500,000 | High – over \$500,000

Reliance on external funding:

Low – project can proceed without external funding

Medium – project can be scaled with external funding

High – project cannot proceed without external funding

Project Three – Council assets – from risk to resilience



Project need

Councils allocate more of their budgets to the maintenance, operation and renewal of infrastructure assets than to any other area. Councils are responsible for managing thousands of assets in the eastern region, from roads, stormwater systems, council buildings and libraries to parks, swimming pools and street trees that are collectively worth billions of dollars. These assets underpin our community's way of life.

Climate change is intensifying existing risks to the condition and performance of council assets, while also introducing new and emerging risks. Flooding, storms, rising temperatures, bushfires and prolonged dry spells can damage or destroy assets.

Proactive, climate informed asset planning is required to understand and respond to these risks. We need to know how climate change will impact asset maintenance, replacement and long-term financial planning requirements. Given the long timescales involved in asset management, we need to drive the delivery of more climate-resilient assets now that will continue to serve our communities in the long term. This will help our councils to:

- Protect asset performance and extend asset lifespans.
- Allocate additional funding for maintenance to maintain service delivery.
- Direct investment to the priority assets and areas where upgrades are needed to adapt to climate risk.
- Ensure council asset management systems, processes, budgets and funding models are adjusted to account for these new pressures and can be built to withstand shocks and stressors.
- Enhance community safety and disaster resilience.
- Meet the rapidly evolving expectations of key stakeholders such as investors, insurers, credit rating agencies and communities for councils to respond to these risks.

What we will do

Deliver a project to support the Resilient East councils to understand how climate change will alter asset provision and management requirements and assist them to embed associated risks into the way assets are funded, managed and renewed to enhance resilience. Further engagement with Resilient East councils and partners is necessary before commencing this project to confirm where a regional approach will be of the greatest benefit.

The project is likely to have two key phases:

1. **Scoping:** Identify where Resilient East can deliver the greatest value in embedding climate risk into council asset management. Undertake a desktop review to collate and analyse existing research and programs on climate risk in asset management to identify lessons learnt and knowledge gaps. Deliver robust engagement with the Resilient East councils and partners (asset managers, environmental staff, Council Members, executives, other climate partnerships etc.) to understand current approaches and ways these can be applied and improved.

2. Project delivery: Based on the findings of the engagement and desktop review, develop practical solutions that help councils to consistently embed climate resilience into asset management systems and investment processes, so that managing climate risk becomes business-as-usual. Ensure this project directly responds to the needs of the region and supports change management.

The project may focus on one asset type to begin with as a trial. The climate risks to this asset class will then be assessed, followed by developing an approach for each council to embed consideration of these risks into their management of that asset class through their Asset Management Plan. This approach can then be refined before being applied to other asset classes. Support staff capacity building and cultural change to successfully embed the regional project outcomes into individual council asset management approaches.

Outputs

- Desktop review to understand existing research and programs.
- Regional stakeholder engagement to identify key challenges and confirm project focus.
- This may include a risk database, risk assessment approach, recommendations report, checklists, staff capacity building programs, financial modelling, case studies, spatial mapping tools etc.
- Advocacy input with other climate partnerships for state government to provide regularly updated climate hazard data to councils to assess climate risk to assets.

Delivery

The table below provides a summary of the indicative project timeline and estimated costs.

Council assets – from risk to resilience	Timeframe	Anticipated costs		
		FTE	Internal funding	Reliance on external funding
Phase 1 – Scoping	12 months	2 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 2 – Delivery	18 months	3 FTE	Medium	Medium

Internal funding

Low – \$50,000 to \$100,000 | Medium – \$100,000 to \$500,000 | High – over \$500,000

Reliance on external funding:

Low – project can proceed without external funding

Medium – project can be scaled with external funding

High – project cannot proceed without external funding

Project Four – Sustainable active transport networks



Project need

Road transport is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the Resilient East region¹⁰. Increasing community uptake of active transport (primarily walking and cycling) is a highly effective way to reduce emissions as well as reduce travel costs for residents.

Across the Resilient East region, one of the most effective ways to support this outcome is by improving regional connectivity between active transport routes. While most councils have individual transport plans, creating a mechanism to link these plans will significantly enhance their collective impact.

It is critical that our active transport infrastructure can withstand a changing climate and continue to provide an attractive transport option in a hotter future. Infrastructure condition will be challenged by hotter temperatures, prolonged dry periods and increased heavy rainfall events. Adopting climate-ready design standards relating to shading, resilient surfaces and rest and water points will help to address these risks. This will help our active transport corridors provide accessible, low cost transport options that reduce risk exposure during climate extremes.

By providing more convenient, connected, safe, affordable and accessible transport choices, our community will be better enabled to choose active transport well into the future. This will support a wide range of co-benefits including lower cost of living, enhanced health, wellbeing and community connection, reduced pressure on road infrastructure and parking, increased amenity and improved overall liveability in our region.

What we will do

We will improve regional connectivity and climate resilience of regional active transport corridors to increase community use of active transport in the short and long term.

The project will have two phases:

1. Investigate connectivity: Undertake an audit and spatial mapping to identify three to five key regional active transport corridors where focused action to improve connectivity is likely to result in substantial regional benefit for eastern Adelaide and beyond. Align this where possible with existing climate resilience features such as established shading. Work with councils to improve connectivity along these corridors.
2. Climate resilience: Research and prepare a climate-ready design standard for active transport including aspects such as shading, surfaces, greening, WSUD, rest points, crossing points and end-of-trip facilities. Deliver pilots of climate-ready design features that prove usage and safety in heat before seeking to scale with South Australian Government investment. Seek to maximise co-benefits for health, liveability, amenity, biodiversity and stormwater management.

Outputs/deliverables

- Audit of current active transport infrastructure connectivity, transport plans and climate resilience of existing infrastructure.
- Regional, cross-council corridor spatial mapping that highlights existing or potential connections between existing infrastructure and integrated movement strategies, cycling plans and walking strategies and use this to identify three to five priority locations to enhance connectivity.
- Business case for investment to improve connectivity in identified priority regional active transport corridors.
- Communications materials to promote cross regional corridors.
- Brief desktop review on approaches to increasing climate resilience in active transport infrastructure.
- Optimised design standards to address transition and physical climate risks to active transport.
- Pilots of priority and emerging climate-ready design features for active transport infrastructure.

Delivery

The table below provides a summary of the indicative project timeline and estimated costs.

Sustainable active transport networks	Timeframe	Anticipated costs		
		FTE	Internal funding	Reliance on external funding
Phase 1 - Investigate connectivity	9 months	0.5 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 2 - Climate resilience	12 months	1 FTE	Medium	Medium

Internal funding

Low – \$50,000 to \$100,000 | Medium – \$100,000 to \$500,000 | High – over \$500,000

Reliance on external funding:

Low – project can proceed without external funding

Medium – project can be scaled with external funding

High – project cannot proceed without external funding

Project Five – Resilient communities



Project need

Rising living costs are already placing pressure on our community. Climate change will intensify this through hotter temperatures and longer heatwaves increasing energy demand for cooling, and more frequent severe storms requiring more home maintenance. Across South Australia, insurance premiums are rising due to more frequent extreme weather, increasing construction costs and increasing global reinsurance costs.

Community connection is central to resilience. This project will include activities that strengthen connections while promoting climate resilience and sustainability. The project has a deliberate focus on reaching people who would not typically participate in environmental action and aims to normalise climate action across both adaptation and mitigation.

Supporting our community requires an approach that combines household energy efficiency with practical climate resilience and community connection. Energy efficiency, solar uptake and electrification can deliver immediate cost-of-living relief and improved thermal comfort, but they do not fully protect households during crises. Residents also need support to navigate extreme events safely, protect their health and support their neighbours. This is particularly important for renters, strata residents and first-home buyers, who often have lower disposable incomes, face structural or legal barriers to modifying their homes, and are more vulnerable to natural hazards. While the project will prioritise these groups, it will generate resources and knowledge that can be applied across the region.

What we will do

We will design and deliver a regional community climate resilience program that empowers individual and collective climate adaptation and mitigation action, strengthens community connection and supports vulnerable residents to manage household energy use.

The project will have two streams:

1. Climate resilience: Providing practical education and support for a range of community adaptation and mitigation measures, that may include greening, waste management, heatwave survival, smoke mitigation, storm readiness and navigating insurance or tenancy rights following disasters.
2. Energy smart home improvements: Supporting low cost, high impact upgrades such as draught-proofing, thermal window coverings, solar access and electrification. The program will prioritise renters, first-home buyers, and strata housing by addressing specific systemic barriers like landlord approvals, strata bylaws and upfront capital limits.

Both streams will be coordinated at a regional level by Resilient East, and delivered at a smaller street or neighbourhood scale to normalise action, build local trust, and foster neighbour to neighbour connection and support networks.

This project will have four phases:

1. Scoping: Review proven community-based models
2. Establish partnerships: Establish partnerships with local councils, delivery partners, community organisations, emergency services, community housing providers and existing renewable energy and resilience programs.
3. Plan and deliver community resilience program: Work with partners and community groups to co-design and deliver resilience activities targeted to community needs.
4. Plan and deliver community energy smart home improvement program: Co-design and deliver a regionally tailored program for eastern Adelaide.

Outputs/deliverables

- Desktop review and targeted engagement on existing programs and best practice behaviour change models.
- Tailored communication materials detailing the costs, benefits and options for renewable energy generation, energy efficiency and resilience improvements.
- Target-group resources (e.g., pre-purchase climate risk guides for first-home buyers, tenant modification guides).

Local case studies

- Local peer to peer learning opportunities and neighbourhood emergency network frameworks.
- Potential financial incentive program.

Delivery

The table below provides a summary of the indicative project timeline and estimated costs.

Resilient communities	Timeframe	Anticipated costs		
		FTE	Internal funding	Reliance on external funding
Phase 1 – Scoping	6 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 2 – Establish partnerships	6 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 3 – Plan and deliver community resilience program	6 months & ongoing	2 FTE	Medium	Medium
Phase 4 – Plan and deliver community energy smart home improvement program	6 months & ongoing	1 FTE	Medium	Medium

Internal funding

Low – \$50,000 to \$100,000 | Medium – \$100,000 to \$500,000 | High – over \$500,000

Reliance on external funding:

Low – project can proceed without external funding

Medium – project can be scaled with external funding

High – project cannot proceed without external funding



Project Six – Greening our region

Project need

We know greening benefits our communities enormously. Trees and green spaces reduce urban heat, store carbon, enhance health and wellbeing, increase amenity, improve water management, support biodiversity, increase property values and improve air quality. They are central to our sense of place, identity and community in eastern Adelaide.

Climate change presents new and increasing risks to our green spaces and canopy cover. Reduced rainfall, hotter temperatures and more dangerous fire weather, droughts and heavy rainfall events cause damage to our trees. A changing climate can also increase the prevalence of pests and diseases. Given the long lifetimes of our green assets, planning for future climatic conditions now is central to supporting their long-term climate resilience.

Finding space to plant more trees is increasingly difficult for councils. Our urban landscapes are contested, with roads, parking, driveways, footpaths, electricity and stormwater infrastructure and lighting limiting the availability of above ground and below ground space suitable for tree planting. These constraints are intensifying as urban density increases to deliver more housing for our growing population.

By improving our approaches to planting trees in challenging spaces, we can also achieve significant medium and long term cost savings. Investing in the right species and methods upfront helps trees establish properly and thrive for decades, reducing damage to footpaths and the need for frequent replacement and maintenance.

We need to build our knowledge to make informed investments to support our tree canopies to grow and thrive under these changing and challenging conditions.

What we will do

We will undertake spatial mapping and modelling to understand how our canopy will change in the future and identify plantable spaces in the Resilient East region. We will deliver planting trials using novel approaches to planting trees in challenging spaces and trialling climate-resilient tree species.

The project will have four phases, some of which will occur concurrently:

1. Scoping: Undertake targeted engagement to compile learnings from the substantial existing information on the challenges of greening in contested urban environments.
2. Spatial analysis: Use tree data, land use and cover, urban heat and social vulnerability to identify priority areas with potential for tree planting.
3. Tree canopy modelling: With assumptions about planting in available space, species condition and growth, planting rates, survivability and land use change, model potential future canopy under different scenarios.
4. Planting and trials: Undertake tree planting in priority areas identified through the spatial analysis of plantable spaces.

Outputs

- Spatial analysis that identifies plantable spaces and ground truthing of priority planting locations.
- Tree canopy growth modelling and species selection to inform future planting programs.
- Tree trials in priority locations with focus on novel tree planting methods in challenging locations and climate-resilient species.
- Resources/case studies to share findings including recommendations report, design documentation, maintenance requirements, costs, case studies, articulation of co-benefits etc.

Delivery

The table below provides a summary of the indicative project timeline and estimated costs.

Greening our region	Timeframe	Anticipated costs		
		FTE	Internal funding	Reliance on external funding
Phase 1 – scoping	6 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 2 – spatial analysis	9 months	1 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 3 – tree canopy modelling	9 months	1 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 4 – planting and trials	24 months & ongoing	2 FTE	Medium	Medium

Internal funding

Low – \$50,000 to \$100,000 | Medium – \$100,000 to \$500,000 | High – over \$500,000

Reliance on external funding:

Low – project can proceed without external funding

Medium – project can be scaled with external funding

High – project cannot proceed without external funding

05 Implementing this plan



A summary of the six projects, timeframes and anticipated costs is provided in the table below.

Project	Timeframe	Anticipated costs		
		FTE	Internal funding	Reliance on external funding
Project 1 Working safely in extreme heat				
Phase 1 – Policies and procedures	9 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 2 – Equipment and practices	12 months	0.5 FTE	Low	Medium
Project 2 Cool spaces				
Phase 1 – Scoping and establishment	6 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 2 – Delivery	6 months & ongoing	2 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 3 – Investigate partnership delivery	6 months	0.2 FTE	Low	Low
Project 3 Council assets – from risk to resilience				
Phase 1 – Scoping	12 months	2 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 2 – Delivery	18 months	3 FTE	Medium	Medium
Project 4 Sustainable active transport networks				
Phase 1 - Investigate connectivity	9 months	0.5 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 2 – Climate resilience	12 months	1 FTE	Medium	Medium
Project 5 Resilient communities				
Phase 1 – Scoping	6 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 2 – Establish partnerships	6 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 3 - Plan and deliver community resilience program	6 months & ongoing	2 FTE	Medium	Medium
Phase 4 – Plan and deliver community energy smart home improvement program	6 months & ongoing	1 FTE	Medium	Medium
Project 6 Greening our region				
Phase 1 – Scoping	6 months	1 FTE	Low	Low
Phase 2 – spatial analysis	9 months	1 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 3 – tree canopy modelling	9 months	1 FTE	Low	Medium
Phase 4 – planting and trials	24 months & ongoing	2 FTE	Medium	Medium

Internal funding
 Low – \$50,000 to \$100,000
 Medium – \$100,000 to \$500,000
 High – over \$500,000

Reliance on external funding:
 Low – project can proceed without external funding
 Medium – project can be scaled with external funding
 High – project cannot proceed without external funding

Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and review

Monitoring and evaluation shows what is working, what is not, and why. It helps us to adjust projects, improve outcomes, use resources more effectively and identify risks and opportunities early.

A brief monitoring and evaluation plan will be created for each project to support data collection and data use. This will measure progress against the outputs/deliverables and measures of success for each project.

An annual evaluation of the Regional Climate Action Plan will be undertaken to measure progress made and identify changes to ensure it is providing an effective framework for action. Resilient East will prepare and publicly share this information in a brief Annual Report. This will summarise projects delivered, lessons learned, governance arrangement updates and financials. Other reporting will be prepared as needed to meet funding requirements.

Partnering and collaboration

Climate change is a whole-of-system problem that cuts across sectors, regions and jurisdictions, and requires coordinated, long-term responses. No single organisation or level of government has the mandate, resources or reach to drive the scale of change required. Partnerships are what make progress possible.

Resilient East seeks to partner where possible with other councils, regional climate partnerships, government agencies, NGOs, community groups, individuals and the private sector to strengthen the delivery of our and other's actions.

Green Adelaide is our key funding partner and we appreciate the support they provide to facilitate climate action in our region.

We work with partners in a number of ways:

- Funding: Resilient East seeks funding from funding partners.
- Project support: Resilient East seeks partners to support and strengthen the actions identified in this Plan.
- Project delivery: Resilient East can support the delivery of partners' actions where they align to our priority areas.
- Engagement: Resilient East engages with key stakeholders and knowledge holders to test and refine project scope and outputs.
- Advocacy: Resilient East works together with others on joint advocacy submissions.
- Knowledge sharing: Resilient East welcomes the opportunity to share project findings with others, and similarly learn from our peers.
- Elevate: Resilient East shares the successes, resources and events of others through our networks to build awareness, capacity and connections.

06 Together we can achieve more

Resilient East invites any interested councils, agencies or organisations to collaborate with us on ambitious climate action that delivers lasting value for our communities and region.

Our partnership offers a unique opportunity to invest in coordinated, region wide solutions with clear impact and the scale to make a meaningful difference.

By working together, we can drive projects that strengthen resilience, reduce emissions, and unlock shared benefits for our region and beyond.

Our partnership delivers more. Join us.

Contact:

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RESILIENT EAST

Climate Action Plan 2026–2031