

# WHY THIS MATTERS

Heat is already shaping daily life in North Queensland. Homes stay hot through the night, playgrounds are often too exposed to use, and many streets don't have safe shaded walking routes. At the same time, energy costs are rising as people try to stay cool.

A 2025 Townsville [microclimate study](#) found that CBD streets reached heat stress thresholds early in the day, with conditions becoming increasingly unsafe for pedestrians. The study also highlighted how dense urban areas trap heat and reduce the city's ability to cool down at night.

Shade is not just about comfort - it is about health, safety, and resilience.

These findings show what heat is doing at a city scale and they reflect what **we've been hearing in the community:**

- **“There's nowhere shady to walk or wait.”**
- **“Playgrounds are too hot for kids.”**
- **“Some suburbs feel much hotter than others.”**

People are also noticing broader patterns:

Trees being removed faster than they are replaced, new developments with little shade or ventilation, and ongoing loss of habitat and green space. **We're designing heat into our cities.**



**But as awareness grows, so does the conversation about what can be done differently. More people are calling for cooler, greener and more climate-responsive communities.**

Hundreds of people across Queensland have already taken action on heat-through conversations, [sharing lived experience in workshops](#), and supporting stronger planning approaches.

This includes support for a [parliamentary petition](#) by Queensland's conservation councils calling for heat to be better recognised in planning and urban design (May 2026).

Now we're taking the next step locally with our campaign!



## **The benefits**

This is not about planting trees everywhere without thought. It's about the right type of greening in the right places, planning around infrastructure, and designing cities for people, climate, and nature.

Well-planned urban greening can:

- reduce heat and energy use
- lower the risk of heat stress
- improve biodiversity and habitat connectivity
- reduce stormwater runoff
- support walking and cycling

- strengthen community wellbeing and connection

It's a smarter, long-term approach to cooling our cities.

## We know this works

Other Australian cities are already planning for heat through comprehensive greening strategies.

Cities like [Darwin](#), [Alice Springs](#), [Brisbane](#), [Sydney](#) and others have developed strategies that map where greening is needed most, set canopy targets, and align with long-term climate resilience goals.

North Queensland can do the same.

