

Open Space Policy



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Responsible Manager	Manager Civil Assets Manager Parks
Other key internal stakeholders	Director Assets & Environment Director Community & Cultural Development Manager Recreation & Leisure Services Manager City Strategy Manager Library Services, Arts & Culture Manager Strategic Assets Team Leader Parks Assets Supervisor Horticulture Supervisor Arboriculture & Biodiversity
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PURPOSE

This policy describes the principles and framework that guides the provision, development and management of open spaces. The Policy seeks to maintain and improve both the natural and built environments for the benefit of the community and the individual and collective health and wellbeing of our residents.

POLICY

Background

This policy guides the provision, development and management of open space and open space assets across the City, to achieve a balanced provision of quality open space that is well used and valued by the community. The policy places a strong emphasis on recreation management, vegetation management, biodiversity, active and passive open space assets, playgrounds quality standards and maintenance service standards

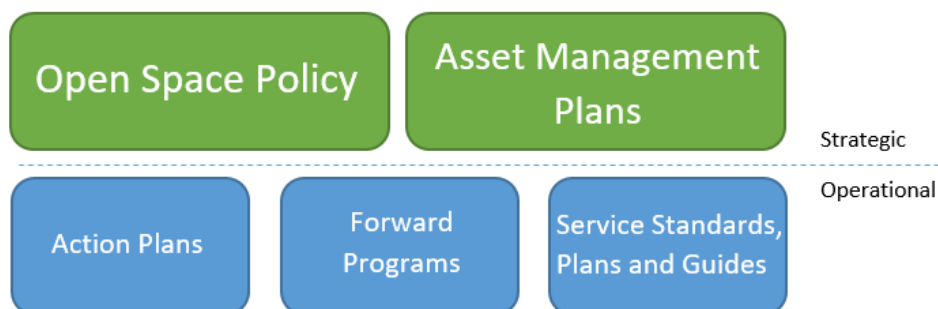
Open Space is integral to the character of the City of Tea Tree Gully and a major contributor to the quality of lifestyle experienced by the community. Open space has substantial social, cultural, environmental and economic value and contributes to the health and wellbeing of all age groups. It supports physical activity, play, relaxation and helps facilitate social interaction opportunities.

The policy will assist Council to implement an integrated management system for all open space assets. This system will ensure that Council manages, maintains, renews, upgrades and creates new open space assets in a consistent and considered manner to meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

Vision

Council will provide inclusive and diverse open spaces that are distributed equitably across the City that enhances the city's character, provide opportunities for active and passive recreation, social interaction and community engagement, and protect and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity.

Open space document framework



The open space document framework provides an outline of the integration of council documents in delivering open space and open space assets.

The Open Space Policy is the fundamental document providing an overarching framework for the provision, development and maintenance of Council's open space. This policy is supported by the Open Space Asset Management Plan (OSAMP) and Open Space Service Standards and forward work programs.

The OSAMP will deliver specific development and management principles of open space assets detailing sustainable financial models that are integrated into council's Long Term Financial Plan.

The Open Space Service Standards detail specific management practices that have been developed to meet the objectives of the Open Space Policy.

Other supporting documents may also be used to provide data, visual aids and other processes to manage and develop open space.

Principles

The following principles guide the provision, development and management of open space:

City character

The City of Tea Tree Gully features both man-made and natural open spaces. Council will maintain and seek to enhance these characteristics within the provision of open space including but not limited to:

- Urban and suburban parks and parklands including natural creek lines,
- Urban and suburban streetscapes
- Tea Tree Gully Historic township
- Modbury Precinct area
- Hills face zone and rural areas
- Natural areas
- Rural areas

Climate adaptation and resilience

Open spaces will be impacted by climate change due to warmer and drier conditions and climate extremes such as heatwaves, bushfire, flooding and other extreme weather events. The severity of the effects of climate change on open space will vary based on a number of factors including:

- the geographical location and surrounding environment e.g. urban, suburban, rural or natural /vegetated areas
- extent of tree canopy cover, extent of automated irrigation and dry exposed surfaces within the open space
- proximity to permanent or ephemeral water and water bodies e.g. lakes, creeks and wetlands

Council will actively manage its open space to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change, by;

- the use of council's recycled water network with other water sensitive urban design features encouraged
- the use of recycled, recyclable and sustainably sourced products and materials;
- the use of drought tolerant native and exotic plant and tree species
- whole of site planning and design including the integration of water sensitive urban design

Connectivity and accessibility

Open space will be provided to optimise community benefit and wellbeing. Spaces should where ever possible be designed to cater for people of all ages and abilities including those with a physical or developmental disability or limited mobility. Open space will also facilitate recreational pursuits, both active and passive such as cycling, running, informal sport, walking, picnics and play.

Open space will be managed and designed to enable direct engagement with the natural environment whilst also protecting areas of: local, environmental and cultural significance, including but not limited to:

- areas of native remnant vegetation
- natural waterways
- areas of high biodiversity and habitat value
- native flora and fauna
- Kaurna sites
- European heritage

All open spaces shall be designed and maintained in accordance with the relevant service standards

Cultural significance

It is recognised that the City of Tea Tree Gully has areas of significance to the Kaurna people, including a number of Aboriginal heritage sites which are protected by the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988*. Wherever possible, the provision of open space and open space assets should embrace and respect Aboriginal heritage sites and culture, whilst also taking the necessary steps to ensure that these sites are valued and protected.

Play

Council recognises the importance of play for the development and wellbeing of the community. Open space will provide provisions for structured and unstructured play in accordance with Council's Playground Guide and in alignment with the relevant Open Space Service Standards

Sport and Recreation

Provision of sport and recreation opportunities are essential for the physical, social and economic health of our community. Sport and recreation facilities typically comprise sporting grounds and amenities often associated with clubroom amenities and infrastructure, as well as recreation and aquatic centres (wet and dry facilities). The majority are located on regional and district open space.

Council's sportsgrounds and recreation sites should be maintained to a premium or high quality standard to ensure safe and sustainable long term community usage. The upgrade of these sites are guided by current and future asset management plans and recreation planning principles.

Consideration of sport and recreation requirements and trends should be included in the provision of open space and open space assets. Engagement with the community and open space users should be undertaken to ensure the needs of the community are provided for.

Biodiversity and Conservation

The City of Tea Tree Gully has significant areas of natural or undeveloped open space, which includes conservation, biodiversity and revegetation sites. Improvements in such areas should focus on the revegetation and restoration of the natural environment..

The City of Tea Tree Gully is committed to protecting and improving biodiversity in open spaces including indigenous flora and fauna and ecological communities that have existed here since before European settlement and will actively work to restore biodiversity to the urban, suburban and rural parts of the City.

To gain full benefit from these areas, adequate conservation and protection is required. Use should be promoted to raise awareness of the value of these areas; however use must also be carefully controlled to ensure the resources are improved and remain available into the future.

Urban Consolidation

The City of Tea Tree Gully developed rapidly over a 40 year period with large scale greenfield developments spreading across the City between 1960s – 90s. Most greenfield land supply has been exhausted and housing supply is now mostly delivered through urban consolidation where existing sites are re-developed with infill housing. This trend will continue with the State's 30 Year Plan identifying a target of 80% of new housing to be delivered in existing urban areas. Council acknowledges that high quality open space provides a number of key benefits in areas undergoing urban consolidation. High quality open space can:

- help attract investment
- Increase the quality and design of the infill housing
- create a more attractive and liveable environment for new residents

- reduce social isolation through providing safe, well designed and well connected areas to walk, run, cycle, sit and play.
- increase social interaction and community well being
- help develop a sense of place

With a reduction in allotment sizes, resulting from increasing housing densities, we are now seeing a shift in the way in which public open space is viewed, valued and utilised by residents living in these higher density areas. The City of Tea Tree Gully is committed to providing high quality and accessible open spaces to all residents, but will consider the impacts of urban consolidation and increased population densities when assessing the provision, design, development and maintenance of open spaces in areas experiencing high levels of urban consolidation.

Use of Service Standards

Open space and open space assets should be provided and maintained in accordance with established service standards.

Through the development and implementation of open space service standards Council will achieve the consistent provision (the amount and type of land provided), development (the range, quality and quantity of assets) and maintenance (the frequency interventions and response times) levels across all open spaces for the benefit of the community and residents over time.

Open space and open space assets should be provided in alignment to best practice standards and guidelines ensuring compliance with any legislative requirements. Where gaps between the provision, development or maintenance of open space are identified, action plans and forward programs will be developed to address any identified gap(s).

Open Space Management Framework

The open space management framework comprises of three elements:

- Open space hierarchy
- Open space classification
- Open space quality standards

The open space framework creates and manages the relationship between the intended catchment area, patronage and maintenance of open space. In the longer term the implementation of the Open Space Management Framework will help to ensure the consistent provision, development and maintenance of open space across the City.

Open Space Hierarchy

The open space hierarchy describes the intended catchment area for each open space.

Hierarchy	Catchment
Regional	Open space that has the potential to benefit or draw people from within a 10 kilometre catchment, with the capacity to support longer visits and visitors arriving by vehicle.
District	Open space that has the potential to benefit or draw people from within a 2-5 km catchment.
Neighbourhood	Open space that primarily benefits or attracts people from within a 1-2 km catchment.
Local	Open Space that benefits or is used by people from within a 500m catchment.

Open Space Classification

Open space classification describes the function and purpose of an open space.

All open space is to be classified into one of seven open space categories.

Category	Function and purpose
Amenity Area	<p>Amenity areas are primarily areas of planting with a focus on improving the visual appeal and functionality of a space. These areas may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • traffic control devices including median strips, round-a-bouts and pedestrian refuges • carparks including garden beds and kerb and gutter • areas of isolated roadside landscaping including median strips, verges and nature strips • landscaped areas around community buildings • high amenity streetscapes e.g. main roads throughout the Modbury Precinct Areas and Montague Road and the Clover Crest shopping area. <p>Tree screens are not considered amenity areas</p>
Cultural and heritage area	Cultural and heritage areas include areas of: cultural significance to the local Kaurna people, historic value and formalised cemeteries and memorial sites. Sites or items may or may not be formally listed in Development Plans or Heritage Registers.

<p>Natural area</p>	<p>Areas of undeveloped land that are retained and maintained in a natural state and with an emphasis on protecting the natural environment and supporting biodiversity, conservation or revegetation.</p> <p><i>An example of a natural area is the escarpment areas along the western edge of the Golden Grove development area and undeveloped creek lines throughout the City.</i></p> <p>Natural areas generally provide the opportunity for low impact recreational activities such as walking, running and cycling and utilise fire or unmaintained tracks for access and have little to no other amenities provided.</p>
<p>Park</p>	<p>Formalised areas of public open space which primarily provide a space for structured and unstructured recreation, play, physical activity and social interaction.</p> <p>To ensure consistency in the quality and services provided co-located assets such as car parks, amenity areas, tree screens and walkways may be included in a park.</p>
<p>Sports area</p>	<p>Sports areas include sports fields, ovals, courts and centres which provide a setting for formal and organised sporting activity and are areas of land which are generally subject to either long term leases or formal hire arrangements with a sports club or group.</p>
<p>Tree screen</p>	<p>Tree screens are extended areas of planted garden beds and are generally located between privately owned properties and arterial and collector and distributor roads.</p> <p>The primary purpose of these areas is to provide a visual barrier between the road and adjoining areas and properties.</p> <p>Tree screens also provide the opportunity for significant areas of urban and suburban tree and shrub planting, the increasing urban and suburban biodiversity, creation of ecological corridors and reduce the effects of the urban heat island.</p> <p>Tree screens are generally established by the developer and may include entry statements, traffic control devices and pedestrian refuges at intersections</p>
<p>Walkway</p>	<p>Walkways are areas of open space where the primary function is a pedestrian connection between two areas of public space.</p> <p>Walkways are generally considered to be narrow strip of land between privately owned properties which contain only a footpath and provides users with direct link between neighbouring roads and streets.</p> <p>In some circumstances walkways may include areas of turf, planting, gardens, lighting and seating.</p>

Open Space Quality Standards

Open space quality standards provide a standard for the provision of services based on use. This includes the standardisation of asset provision, quality, design and maintenance. Generally the higher the utilisation of a space the greater the provision of services will be. The definition of use will vary across the open space categories. Not all quality standards may be applied to each open space category.

Open space quality standards are assigned to an open space classification to determine the provision, development and maintenance requirements of the site.

Quality Standard	Description
Premium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional open space with highest levels of utilisation • May support a regional playground as per the playground guide • Highest level of asset provision • Use of highest quality materials and bespoke design • Highest maintenance standard
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of utilisation • May support a neighbourhood or district playgrounds per the playground guide • High level of asset provision • Use of quality materials with bespoke design • High maintenance standards
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate levels of utilisation • May support a local or neighbourhood playground as per the playground guide • Moderate level of asset provision • Use of robust materials with basic design • Moderate maintenance standards delivering good standards
Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of utilisation • May support a local playground as per the playground guide • Lowest level of asset provision • Use of robust materials with minimal design • Lowest acceptable maintenance standard

Open Space Hierarchy and Quality Standards

The matrix below details the best practice approaches for the delivery of Open Space Hierarchy against Open Space Quality Standards. Exceptions to this matrix must be internally consulted with all stakeholders to ensure the approach is quantified.

Where a gap exists in either the provision of open space to adequately provide for community needs and/or with the development level (quality standard) of the open space (i.e appropriate levels of amenity, features, maintenance, access to community, assets or infrastructure), council will program and prioritise correction of such gaps over time in consideration of council's other financial and community priorities as set out in annual business plans and capital programs.

		Open Space Quality Standards			
		Premium	High	Moderate	Basic
Open Space Hierarchy	Regional	●	-	-	-
	District	-	●	●	-
	Neighbourhood	-	●	●	-
	Local	-	-	●	●

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Legislation

There is no legislative requirement for council to have a policy relating to the provision, development, maintenance or management of Open Space.

The following legislation applies to this Policy:

[Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988](#)

The Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988 provides for the protection and preservation of the Aboriginal heritage. Consideration of this act must be undertaken when working on or near an Aboriginal Site, as defined by the act, to ensure protection and preservation of Aboriginal heritage.

[Development Act 1993](#)

An Act to provide for planning and regulate development in the State; to regulate the use and management of land and buildings, and the design and construction of buildings; to make provision for the maintenance and conservation of land and buildings where appropriate; and for other purposes.

Any open space contributions made through this act must take into consideration the Open Space Policy for the provision, development and maintenance of open space.

[Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016](#)

An Act to provide for matters that are relevant to the use, development and management of land and buildings, including by providing a planning system to regulate development within the State, rules with respect to the design, construction and use of buildings, and other initiatives to facilitate the development of infrastructure, facilities and environments that will benefit the community

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)

Consideration of this act must be taken for the provision, development and maintenance of Open Space.

The objects of this Act are:

- a) to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability in the areas of:
 - i. work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sport; and
 - ii. the provision of goods, facilities, services and land; and
 - iii. existing laws; and

- iv. the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs; and
- b) to ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and
- c) to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

Environment Protection Act 1993

An Act to provide for the protection of the environment; to establish the Environment Protection Authority and define its functions and powers; and for other purposes. Consideration of this act should be undertaken for the provision, development or management of open space.

Local Government Act 1999

Consideration of the Local Government Act 1999 should be undertaken in the provision, development and management of open space. Specifically, Chapter 11 – Land of the act provides requirements for the management of local government land and roads.

Native Title (South Australia) Act 1994

Consideration of the Native Title (South Australia) Act 1994 should be undertaken in the provision, development and management of open space.

Other references

Other reference documents exist for the provision, development and management of open space. Council and external documents should be considered, as detailed.

Council's documents including:

- Open Space Asset Management Plan
- Strategic Plan 2025 (effective from July 2020)
- Community Land Management Plans
- Leases and Licences to Sporting and Community Organisations Policy
- Community Engagement Public Consultation Policy
- Public Toilets Policy
- Resilient East - Regional Climate Change Adaptation Plan
- Tree Management Policy
- Boundary Fence Management Policy
- Playground Guide
- Public Art Policy
- Disposal of Land and Assets and Acquisition of Land Policy
- Land Division and Open Space Contribution Policy
- Modbury Precinct Activation Policy
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024
- Modbury Heights Precinct Plan
- Tea Tree Gully Township Precinct Plan

External documents including:

- Department for Environment and Heritage Plans:
 - State Natural Resources Management Plan (2012-2017)
 - Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Plan (2014-2015 to 2023-2024) and Metropolitan Adelaide Subregion Priorities
 - No Species Loss – A Nature Conservation Strategy for South Australia (2007-2017)
- South Australia's Strategic Plan
- Infrastructure SA – 20 year State Infrastructure Strategy
- 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide
- Office for Recreation and Sport (SA) Strategic Plan
- Building Code of Australia 2016
- River Torrens Linear Park Strategic Integrated Asset Management Plan – 2017
- Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Bushfire Management Area Plan – July, 2016
- Relevant Australian & International Standards

- Australian Government National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy
- World Health Organisation – Urban green spaces and health – A review of evidence

STRATEGIC PLAN/POLICY

Strategic Plan

The following strategic objectives in Council’s Strategic Plan 2025 are the most relevant to this report:

Objective	Comments
Community	
<i>People feel a sense of belonging, inclusion and connection with the City and the community</i>	Developing places and spaces that are accessible, safe, are reflective our community’s needs and which they have been offered the opportunity to provide input on develops a sense ownership and community and a connection to place as the community can see their feedback and needs reflected in the landscape.
<i>People can have a say in decisions that affect them and the key decisions of the Council</i>	Community engagement and communication plays a key role in development and management of highly valued open spaces. Direct engagement with the community is required to ensure major developments are supported by community and are reflective of their needs.
Environment	
<i>Environmentally valuable places and sites that are flourishing and well cared for</i>	The open space policy is very clear on its intention to protect and enhance the natural environment as well as developing the value of these places through promotion and carefully considered and managed access.
<i>We are resilient to climate change and equipped to manage the impact of extreme weather events</i>	The effects of climate change on all open space is a key consideration of this policy. New developments must be design to withstand these effects and existing and established spaces must be maintained and managed to build resilience to cope the forecasted effects also.

<i>Our tree canopy is increasing</i>	Trees play a key role in the cooling of our environment. Increasing tree canopy cover is a key aim when developing parks, tree screens and streetscape. Tree planting in location such as these increases the usability of a space whilst also providing a tangible environmental benefits. Tree planting locations must however be considered and not be to the detriment of the current or potential future use open spaces for recreational use.
Economy	
<i>Modbury Precinct is revitalised as the city's key activity</i>	The upgrade of and continual investment in open space asset and the increase in the maintenance service levels provided looks to contribute to the ongoing revitalisation of the precinct.
Places	
<i>Streets, paths, open spaces and parks are appealing, safe and accessible</i>	The open space policy is clear in its intention to ensure all open spaces remain or are developed to increase public safety and accessibility.
<i>Neighbourhoods are easy to move around and are well connected with pedestrian and cycle paths that offer an alternative to cars</i>	Connectivity between and through open space is imperative to maximise use and opportunity for active recreation of which the wellbeing benefits are well documented.
<i>Buildings and places are energy efficient, well designed and display a uniqueness of character and identity</i>	All open spaces are to be managed, maintained and developed to be functional, modern and inclusive spaces that have strong and well considered design characteristics.
<i>Infrastructure and community facilities are fit for purpose, constructed using sustainable practices and well maintained</i>	Through the implementation of open space service standard Council will ensure that all developments are fit for purpose and all assets are well maintained.
Leadership	
<i>Planning considers current and future community needs</i>	Management of open space must be continually reviewed to ensure the level of provision, development and maintenance meets the current needs of the community but also into the future.

<i>Decision making is informed, based on evidence and is consistent</i>	All decision effecting the management of public open space should be informed through council policy, asset management plan, the review of service standards and rigorous and thorough investigations, community need (both current and future), and community support determined through community engagement.
<i>Major strategic decisions are made after considering the views of the community</i>	

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy the following definitions apply:

Active open space

Land that is set aside for the primary purpose of formal outdoor sports.

Greenfield

Undeveloped or non-productive land that have yet to have urban development.

Natural environments

Land, water, biodiversity or flora and fauna that preserves the characteristics of the natural landscapes native to the area.

Open space

Land that is set aside for public recreation, parklands or similar purposes including active and passive open spaces.

Passive open space

Land that is set aside for parks, gardens, linear corridors, conservation bushlands, natural reserves, public squares and community gardens that are made available for passive recreation, play and unstructured physical activity.

Place making

A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Place making capitalises on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being.

Play space

A place that is designated primarily for play and may include structured or unstructured play elements including nature play.

Structured play

A site with a set of rules with specific play objectives. This can include organised sports such as soccer, football, tag and or other structured activities.

Unstructured play

A site with no formalised play objectives. This can include playing with loose parts, informal games, running around playgrounds, nature play and other forms of unstructured activities.

Urban consolidation

The process of increasing the density of housing in established residential areas.

Whole of site

A coordinated approach to renew, upgrade or install all relevant site related Council assets.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This Policy will be implemented by the Chief Executive Officer or relevant portfolio director and managed in accordance with Council's scheme of delegations.

ACCESSIBILITY

This Policy and Council's Fees and Charges Register are available to be downloaded free of charge from Council's website: www.cttg.sa.gov.au

Hard copies, for a fee, can be provided in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges Register at Council's Civic Centre at 571 Montague Road, Modbury SA 5092.