

OPEN SPACE FUND POLICY

Policy Type:	Council
Responsible Department:	Business Support & Improvement
Responsible Officer:	Manager Finance and Procurement
Related Policies Procedures and reference documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Living City Open Space Strategy • Community Land Management Plan • Treasury Management Policy • Strategic Property Committee Terms of Reference • Strategic Property Management – Acquisition and Disposal Policy
Community Plan Link	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Civic Leadership <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 We have strong leadership and governance
Date Adopted	28 August 2023
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Next review date	28 August 2025
Reference/Version Number	Version 1
ECM Doc set I.D.	8921703

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1. The City of Unley has limited usable open green space. Currently, our usable open green space is less than 8m² per individual when compared to the recommended minimum of 9m² per individual by the World Health Organisation. If the usable open green space does not increase, it is expected this will become worse as the population of the City increases due to urban infill.
- 1.2. Open spaces are important public places where people can relax, exercise, play and enjoy the natural environment.¹ Research indicates that open spaces are important for the overall health and wellbeing of people.
- 1.3. Green open spaces help communities build resilience to the impact of climate change.

¹ NSW State Government definition of open space, Park for People Report

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This Policy supports the creation of an Open Space Fund for the purpose of purchasing property within the City of Unley to convert into usable open green space.
- 2.2. This Policy applies to the procurement of properties ranging from 0.04 hectares to 0.4 hectares ideally where walking distance from household is greater than 700 metres and can accommodate a variety of activities, such as recreation sporting and natural features conservation.
- 2.3. The Policy enables the extra cost of existing services (resulting from an increase in population) to be met while providing a mechanism for providing additional open space to meet the needs of a growing population.

3. POLICY PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

3.1. The objective is to:

- 3.1.1. ensure that a percentage of the increase in rates revenue from new developments and capital improvements (Growth) to existing properties as confirmed by the Valuer General in June each year is allocated to the Open Space Fund; and
- 3.1.2. guide the type of property to be acquired to increase the amount of usable open space across the Council area; and
- 3.1.3. assist the Strategic Property Committee and staff in the identification and prioritisation of properties to be considered by Council.

3.2. The purpose is to:

- 3.2.1. Provide a mechanism for increasing the amount of usable open green space for community use across the Council area; and
- 3.2.2. prioritise local areas where access to open space is greater than 700m for residential properties; and
- 3.2.3. not to be at the expense of Council's responsibility to maintain its agreed current level of service including the maintenance of existing and future infrastructure; and
- 3.2.4. not compromise long term financial sustainability.

4. DEFINITIONS

Growth	The increase in general rates income from new developments and capital improvements
Valuer General	Is the State's independent authority on property valuations and oversees all significant government property valuations and council rating valuations.
Fund	Open Space Fund
Neighbourhood public open spaces	These are larger spaces which serve the recreational and social needs of a community. Their areas range from 0.04 to 0.4 hectares and can ideally be accessed within 400m walking distances from households. They can accommodate a variety of activities, such as recreation, sporting and natural features conservation. ²
District public open spaces	These are larger spaces are mainly designed to provide for organised formal sport. They include substantial recreation areas and some nature spaces. They serve several neighbourhoods with players and visitors traveling from surrounding districts. The size of the spaces range from 0.4 and 10 hectares and are designed to serve populations within 800m or 10 minute walking distance. ²
Community Land	Community land is defined in the Local Government Act 1999 (the Act) as, 'All local government land (except roads) that is owned by a council or is under the council's care, control and management'.
Rating Period	The period of time that the annual declaration of rates is applied. Generally, it aligns with the financial year, July through June.
Property	A parcel of land and everything that is permanently attached to the land and has a land use code that aligns to a differential rating category endorsed by Council.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1. This Policy will be administered on behalf of Council by the Finance and Procurement team.
- 5.2. Decision making in relation to the application of this Policy will rest with Council.

² United Nations Habitat draft report (2018)

6. POLICY STATEMENT

6.1. CREATION OF THE OPEN SPACE FUND

- 6.1.1. The account recording and accumulating this under this Policy shall be designated as the Open Space Fund.
- 6.1.2. The Open Space Fund is for the purchase of property to increase the amount of usable open green space within the City of Unley for the community.
- 6.1.3. Any purchase of property will not automatically be classified as Community Land.

6.2. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OPEN SPACE FUND

- 6.2.1. For each rating period, 35 percent of the revenue above 0.5% from the increase in rates revenue from new developments and capital improvements (Growth) to existing properties as confirmed by the Valuer General in June each year will be allocated to the Open Space Fund.
- 6.2.2. The allocation described in 6.1.1 will be accumulative each year.
- 6.2.3. During the development of the Annual Business Plan and Budget, Council may decide to pause the allocation of Growth to the Open Space Fund for unexpected operating expenditure for a period of no more than two years.
- 6.2.4. Council at any time can determine the fund to cease and any remaining funds be returned to accumulated surplus.

6.3. APPLICATION OF THE FUND

- 6.3.1. The fund is for the purchase of usable green open space where a property satisfies at least one of the following:
 - 6.3.1.1. Will enable the creation of open space at least 0.04 hectares (or 400 sqm) in size and will provide access to nearby residents that currently do not have access to usable green open space within 700m³.
 - 6.3.1.2. Will increase an existing Neighbourhood or District usable green open space that already exists within the City.
- 6.3.2. The property must be converted into usable green open space within three years of an area at least 0.04 hectares (or 400 sqm) in size being created..

6.4. COMMUNITY LAND

- 6.4.1. Any purchase of property under this Policy must be assessed as to whether it will not be classified as Community Land and the recommendation to procure to Council must list this separately as a condition.

7. POLICY DELEGATIONS AND LEGISLATION

7.1. Not applicable

8. ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES

The officers listed below have a primary role in applying the policy:

- General Manager Business Support and Improvement
- General Manager City Development
- Manager Finance and Procurement
- Coordinator Rates and Debtors

9. AVAILABILITY OF POLICY

9.1. The Policy can be downloaded, free of charge, from Council's website:
www.unley.sa.gov.au.

9.2. A printed copy may be purchased on request at:

The Civic Centre,
181 Unley Road, Unley SA 5061.

10. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Ref/Version No.	Comment
28/8/23	1	New policy