

Recommended Levels of Service - Park Lands and Open Space

Tuesday, 21 November 2023
Infrastructure and Public Works Committee

Strategic Alignment - Dynamic City Culture

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Public

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Adelaide (CoA) is the custodian of assets which provide the community with services that are essential to their quality of life. Asset Management is a key business function for all councils to manage their infrastructure portfolio responsibly and effectively. We coordinate infrastructure-related objectives through our Asset Management Plans, per legislation Section 122 of the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*.

The Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan will forecast the cost and timing of maintenance and renewal requirements to ensure we manage our assets to the agreed level of service, while managing any associated risks. It is critical to note that asset renewal funding on its own limits the ability to increase the quality of our existing assets. Upgrade funding is often required in conjunction with renewal funding to ensure our assets provide services in line with community expectations and our strategic objectives. While our Asset Management Plans will not identify financial forecasts associated with upgrade/new projects, integrated planning will ensure required renewal scheduling is aligned (where feasible) with key upgrade/new initiatives associated with our Strategic Plan objectives or Council Decisions. Such opportunities will be workshopped with Council on an annual basis through the Business Plan and Budget process.

This report presents the recommended asset management strategies and levels of service for the City of Adelaide's Park Lands and Open Space portfolio and has been informed by a community consultation process. A recommended asset management strategy is presented for each Park Lands and Open Space asset category, which will inform the development and updates to the Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan and associated re-forecasting of the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

The recommended levels of service allow for the continued provision of safe and well-maintained park lands and open space, providing services in line with community expectations to ensure we manage our assets in a financially sustainable manner over the short, medium, and long term. It is anticipated that additional upgrade/new funding will be required in conjunction with renewal funding, to ensure our Park Lands and open space assets meet the growing needs of our community. Such upgrade/new initiatives will be guided by the Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy, Community Land Management Plans, and other relevant Master Plans.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 28 November 2023 for consideration

THAT THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL
THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the results of the community consultation undertaken in November 2021 to benchmark current user satisfaction for Park Lands and Open Space assets.
2. Approves the development of the Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan based on the planning principles and recommended management strategies as set out in Item 7.2 on the Agenda for the meeting of the Infrastructure and Public Works Committee held on 21 November 2023.

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2020-2024 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Dynamic City Culture The approval of the planning principles and recommended asset management strategies presented within this report will inform the development and updates to the Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan and re-forecast the LTFP. These Strategic Management plans support the delivery of our strategic objectives, ensuring we continue to create a beautiful, diverse city that celebrates its natural, cultural, and built heritage.
Policy	Asset Management Policy Strategic Asset Management Plan Public Communication and Consultation Policy
Consultation	In November 2021, an engagement process was undertaken with city residents and visitors to better understand and measure levels of satisfaction of users who utilise the services provided by our Park Lands and Open Space infrastructure. The results are presented within this report and inform the recommended levels of services/asset management strategies.
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	The review and update of Asset Management Plans, including levels of service, is required every four years or within two years of a general Council election pursuant to section 122 of the <i>Local Government Act 1999 (SA)</i> .
Opportunities	The review of Park Lands and Open Space asset levels of service provide an opportunity to ensure Park Lands and Open Space assets are meeting the community's current and future requirements.
23/24 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 24/25 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Future lifecycle management of our Park Lands and Open Space portfolio, including operation, maintenance and renewal of assets will be presented and discussed in detail within the Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan.
23/24 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Future lifecycle management of Park Lands and Open Space portfolio, including operation, maintenance and renewal of assets will be presented and discussed in detail within the Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan.
Other Funding Sources	Once Asset Management Plans and the re-forecast Long Term Financial Plan are endorsed by Council, external funding opportunities will be explored to offset costs, bring forward works, or provide for additional enhancements.

DISCUSSION

1. The purpose of this report is to present the recommended asset management strategies and levels of service for the City of Adelaide's (CoA) Park Lands and Open Space portfolio, which has been informed by a community engagement process undertaken in November 2021.

Background

2. Our Park Lands and Open Space assets are essential to the health and wellbeing of our community and natural environment. This asset portfolio is valued at approximately \$43 million, which include landscaped areas, trees, irrigation systems, playgrounds, sports fields and water features.
3. With Council's strategic objectives to create a beautiful and diverse city that is welcoming, inclusive and accessible to all, it is critical to ensure that our Park Lands and Open Space asset portfolio continues to be appropriately managed, ensuring we provide appropriate services and benefits for both current and future generations.
4. We are currently reviewing our Asset Management Plan for Park Lands and Open Space, which is legislated in the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*. A level of service review is one of the first steps in this process.
5. An overview into the concepts of 'Levels of Service' was presented to Council through a Business Plan and Budget Workshop on 24 January 2023, as well as to the Infrastructure and Public Works Committee on 18 July 2023.

Strategic Context

6. The Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan will forecast the cost and timing of maintenance and renewal requirements to ensure we manage our assets to the agreed level of service, while managing any associated risks.
7. The primary objective of asset renewal is to intervene at the optimal time to minimise whole of life asset costs (increased capital costs, growing maintenance costs) and asset risk, to ensure services continue to be provided in line with our community's expectations.
8. Asset renewal funding on its own limits the ability to raise the quality of our existing assets. Upgrade funding is often required in conjunction with renewal funding to ensure our assets provide services in line with community expectations and our strategic objectives.
9. While the Asset Management Plan will not identify financial forecasts associated with upgrade/new projects, it will ensure required renewal scheduling is aligned (where applicable) with key upgrade/new initiatives associated with our Strategic Plan objectives or Council Decisions through integrated planning. Such opportunities will be workshopped with Council on an annual basis through the Business Plan and Budget process.
10. This report discusses the recommended levels of service for our existing assets. The adopted levels of service will be used to guide the asset renewal planning within the Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan and inform required updates for the LTFP.

Community Engagement

11. A community engagement process was undertaken in November 2021 with City residents and visitors to better understand and measure levels of customer satisfaction from those who utilise the services provided by our Park Lands and Open Space assets.
12. The insights from the survey are intended to be used to identify where current levels of service are not meeting the community's expectations. This will enable recommendations to be made to Council regarding future resourcing requirements for specific services and activities.
13. The engagement process was primarily undertaken through questionnaire surveys (113 total respondents), where information was collected online using the 'YourSay' platform (61 respondents), as well as through on street intercepts at various locations across the city (52 respondents). Additional information and feedback relating to CoA's assets was also collected through the 2021 Resident Survey (318 comments) and engagement with the Disability Access and Inclusion Panel (44 comments).

14. The overall feedback generally confirmed appropriate levels of customer satisfaction for all Park Lands and Open Space assets, with the exception of the quantity and provision of trees and landscaped assets on city streets.
15. A comprehensive summary of the community engagement is presented in Link 1 view [here](#).

Renewal Intervention Levels

16. Our Park Lands and Open Space assets are renewed and replaced through a combination of operational programs and capital renewal programs, to ensure financial expenditure complies with the Australian Accounting Standards.
17. Green assets, which include trees, turf, garden beds and landscaped areas, are not classified as capital assets, resulting in the replacement of these assets being managed through operational budgets.
18. Infrastructure assets, which include irrigation systems, playgrounds, sports fields and water features are classified as capital assets, resulting in the replacement of these assets being managed through capital renewal budgets.
19. Renewal intervention levels have been established considering feedback from community engagement, risk management principles, engineering assessments and the objective of minimising whole of life costs.
20. Condition based renewal intervention levels aim to minimise the number of assets that deteriorate into a poor condition and prohibit assets reaching a very poor condition. Assets can generally be cost effectively maintained and provide appropriate levels of service up to a fair condition, however assets in poor and very poor condition have higher risk profiles and maintenance treatments are generally not economical. This strategy ensures we can continue to provide services in line with the community's expectations, appropriately manage risk and optimise whole-of-life costs. A summary of this approach is presented in Link 2 view [here](#).

Summary & Next Steps

21. The recommended levels of service allow for the continued provision of safe and well-maintained Park Lands and Open Space assets, providing services in line with community expectations and ensuring we manage our assets in a financially sustainable manner over the short, medium and long term.
22. Ongoing operations and maintenance requirements of our assets will continue to be reviewed on a year-by-year basis and incorporated into future revisions of the Asset Management Plan.
23. Pending Council endorsement of the recommendations within this report, the next steps will involve integrating the planning principles and recommended management strategies into the Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan.
24. A draft Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan will be submitted to Council in March 2024, requiring approval to progress into the final stage of community consultation (6-week period, scheduled from April 2024).
25. This will be followed by a final report to Council in June 2024 for consideration and adoption of the Park Lands and Open Space Asset Management Plan.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 – Community Engagement Summary

Link 2 – Renewal Intervention Levels

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

- END OF REPORT -