

# Partnership Opportunities

Strategic Alignment - Enabling Priorities

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The Committee - Pre-Council  
Discussion Forum

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report responds to a request by Council in November 2020 for information and advice about Partnership Opportunities with South Australian Councils.

It details the City of Adelaide's current partnerships, potential partnership opportunities, work underway to integrate the identification of opportunities into Council's planning, and a model to guide future partnership decisions with local government in South Australia.

The City of Adelaide has a strong working history with surrounding Councils and the wider local government sector. From formal participation in initiatives such as the Brown Hill and Keswick Creeks Stormwater Board, the now defunct Council Solutions, and the ongoing work with Resilient East – our partnerships have delivered on environmental, community, and corporate efficiency opportunities.

With a strong focus on environmental sustainability across the sector, the City of Adelaide provides leadership and could explore additional opportunities with shared waste and recycling, and how the Park Lands are utilised, accessed, managed and funded. The ongoing investment in the City of Adelaide's fast fibre network presents new technological capabilities that could enable the delivery of corporate services for other Councils.

Shared interests across local government reform, service delivery, community insights and Park Lands use can potentially be furthered through new arrangements or by expanding existing partnerships through the Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA SA) and with neighbouring Councils.

Additionally, partnership opportunities and advocacy for local government interests are advanced through the City of Adelaide's participation in state and national fora including the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), the Capital City Committee (CCC) with the State Government, and with our Capital City peers through the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM).

Council partnerships will continue to be considered through the process of the annual review of Service Delivery Plans and through the CEO Scorecard. Council decision making and Council's future Strategic Plan and the City Plan currently under development may additionally identify and guide the exploration or formalisation of partnerships.

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The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 9 August 2022 for consideration:

That Council

1. Notes the report including the mechanisms for assessing and formalising future partnerships.
2. Notes the current partnerships and future opportunities as outlined in Attachments A & B in Item # on the Agenda for the meeting of the Council held on 9 August 2022.

# IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2020-2024 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Enabling Priorities
Policy	Not as a result of this report
Consultation	Not as a result of this report
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Risk analysis to be undertaken on potential partnerships as required
Opportunities	To share knowledge across the sector, act as a leader in local government, provide increased/improved services to the community and ratepayers, and to create financial revenue streams and/or resource efficiencies for the organisation.
22/23 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 23/24 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Not as a result of this report
22/23 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

# DISCUSSION

## Background

1. On 10 November Council resolved the following in regards to Partnership Opportunities:
  - a. *requesting administration to advise Council of all current partnerships with South Australian Councils;*
  - b. *explore partnership opportunities with all 7 neighbouring Councils; and*
  - c. *report back to Council with identified opportunities and associated resourcing and financial implications.*
2. In 2017 the Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA SA) commissioned the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies to prepare a range of local government case studies which can be found [here](#) in regards to Shared Services with Local Councils. The report found that the value of these partnerships came through either the production of savings for ratepayers, or through the provision of new / increase in the quality of current, services to the community.
3. When collaboration and partnerships work well and are underpinned by good governance and a strong business case, councils can save money, improve planning and processes and improve access to services for communities.
4. There are many benefits to sharing knowledge, resources and services for the City of Adelaide in working with other Councils including the opportunity to:
  - 4.1 Deliver services more cost efficiently for ratepayers.
  - 4.2 Deliver increased or better services for ratepayers.
  - 4.3 Undertake joint advocacy to obtain funding from other sources that may otherwise not be available, for example the South Australian Government and the Australian Government.
  - 4.4 Advocate to other levels of Government about issues of importance with more than one voice
  - 4.5 Demonstrate leadership in the local government sector as the Capital City Council.
5. Since Council made the decision in November 2020, Council has:
  - 5.1 Adopted and started to deliver on its 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.
  - 5.2 Appointed a new CEO that has seen a CEO Scorecard developed to include partnerships.
  - 5.3 Resolved that the CEO identify more than \$20m in permanent operational expenditure savings which has resulted in comprehensive service reviews across the organisation.
  - 5.4 Demonstrated leadership in supporting the City of Adelaide to recover from the impacts of COVID-19, investing more than \$20m in city support measures and incentives.
6. During this time, there has been ongoing work undertaken linked to Local Government partnerships, predominantly through the sharing of knowledge and advocacy priorities being progressed, as well as relationship management with nearby Councils. Examples of this work has included:
  - 6.1 Discussions with nearby Councils and the State Government around the future of the Adelaide Aquatic Centre.
  - 6.2 Opportunities to work closely on and the shared impacts of infrastructure developments – including entrance statements on Prospect and Hutt Road, recreational facilities in the southern Park Lands and the wetlands redevelopment in Victoria Park / Pakapakanthi (Park 16).
  - 6.3 Consideration of transportation routes in/out of the City, including the recent collaboration to expand the e-scooter trial into the Southern Park Lands, which resulted in partnerships with the City of Unley and the City of Norwood, Payneham and St Peters, providing residents and workers with the opportunity to travel more easily across to/from key entertainment, business and community precincts.
  - 6.4 Investigations with nearby Councils on capability to share services in Finance and Information Management as well as City Operations.
  - 6.5 CEO discussions with counterparts in metropolitan Councils and the LGA SA about rates reform and advocacy.
  - 6.6 CEO participation at LGA SA CEO meetings and invited presentations at local government roadshows and other professional development for a to showcase the services and capabilities of the City of Adelaide.

- 6.7 Lord Mayor and Councillor participation at the LGA OGM and AGM and in the Greater Adelaide Region of Council's (GAROC) meetings, where representations were made on Council's behalf in relation to advocacy priorities. At the 2020 LGA Annual General Meeting (AGM), Members considered a CoA approved item of business (motion) that the AGM request the LGA to work with interested councils to develop a framework and approach fostering greater cross council collaboration and co-funding of social and other facilities and infrastructure which support communities across multiple council areas, and provide materials and resources to support councils seeking partnership and co-funding arrangements with State and Federal Governments as well as private and non-government sector organisations to support such facilities and infrastructure. At that time, the item failed to garner sufficient support on the floor of the AGM so it was not carried.

#### **Current environment**

7. At least 25 current connections, shared memberships and partnerships are identified in **Attachment A**.
8. These partnerships range from formal relationships for contractual agreements to deliver services such as kerbside waste and recovery collection, to collaborative networks such as the SA Public Library Network (OneCard) and LGA SA membership, through to shared services for IT and Finance.
9. During the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting recovery period, the focus of many Councils has been on delivering immediate support to their local communities. While there has been regular and helpful information sector-wide information sharing about COVID-19 responses and recovery initiatives, the appetite and ability to explore new partnerships or to expand existing partnerships has been limited.
- 9.1 Delivering more than \$20m in permanent operational expenditure savings while maintaining service levels does impact Council's capacity to meaningfully explore and to commit further resources to new partnerships.
- 9.2 While the City of Adelaide has the capability to support neighbouring Councils with range of services, the progression of any new partnerships may impact the delivery of current services and will require Council to consider how resources are either expanded, costed or re-prioritised.

#### **Future opportunities**

10. As part of the 2022/23 Business Plan and Budget build, we undertook Service Delivery Planning which included a review of potential service opportunities and priorities, taking into consideration:
- 10.1 Future community expectations for the delivery of that service.
- 10.2 How we can be more innovative and efficient.
- 10.3 Where there is flexibility in being able to respond to change or expand the delivery of a service.
- 10.4 Where there are partnerships that can be created.
11. Service Delivery Plans exist for Council's 13 community facing services and eight corporate orientated services and are being built with a four-year outlook, to be reviewed ahead of Council's annual budget consideration.
12. The CEO Scorecard now also includes a partnerships component which extends to Local Government connections. The immediate focus will be on relationship building, information sharing, best practice benchmarking, while being open to more formal partnership opportunities.
13. The following principles should be taken into consideration when assessing and exploring partnership opportunities across Local Government:
- 13.1 Shared goals or interests (Strategic).
- 13.2 Capability and sufficient time to collaborate (Resources).
- 13.3 Value for ratepayers (Community).
- 13.4 Share responsibilities (Legislative).
14. A list of opportunities to work with nearby Councils (Burnside, Charles Sturt, Port Adelaide Enfield, Prospect, Norwood, Payneham and St. Peters, Unley, Walkerville, and West Torrens) is provided in **Attachment B**:
- 14.1 The opportunities that have been provided are grouped by theme to best support how conversations would occur across Local Government, given each Council operates using different, but similar, service and strategic language.

14.2 Council partnerships will continue to be considered through the process of the annual review of Service Delivery Plans and through the CEO Scorecard. Council decision making and Council's future Strategic Plan and the City Plan currently under development may additionally identify and guide the exploration or formalisation of partnerships.

### Partnership Pillars

15. The table below provides three key pillars to guide the assessment of opportunities and formalising partnerships. The level of risk, resources and governance structures required for each differs, with less intensive activity required to co-operate and more intensive, higher risk and structured arrangements required to collaborate on shared issues:

15.1 Cooperation: informal approaches, including advocacy and network memberships. Likely to have low level strategic and community alignment and requires little resources. Provides a potential for future expansion into more formal partnerships.

15.2 Coordination: mutually agreeable approaches with similar strategic goals and some resource use.

15.3 Collaboration: Strong strategic alignment is shared and CoA has the capacity and capability to provide shared service delivery.

	COOPERATION	COORDINATION	COLLABORATION
Level of Strategic alignment	Leadership role – advocate on behalf	Joint advocacy and agreed outcomes	Shared goals and long-term alignment
Resources required and capacity to deliver	Information sharing	Some resources required	Capability to share and create efficiencies
Community benefit and value for money	Low benefit, education focus on opportunities and services available	Ratepayer benefit through increased value of service delivered	Increased or better services
This could look like	<i>Networks / MoUs</i>	<i>Contractual agreement / Partnerships</i>	<i>Shared procurement, or established legal body</i>
	<i>Participation in joint government bodies and grant applications</i>	<i>Working together to build infrastructure</i>	<i>Joint service delivery – merging services</i>

## DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

LGA SA report (2016.16) “Shared Services Analysis and Economic Modelling”  
 2017 CoA report “Co-operation with other Councils”

# ATTACHMENTS

**Attachment A** – List of current Local Government partnerships

**Attachment B** – List of opportunities to work with inner-rim Councils

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- END OF REPORT -