



Public Open Space Strategy 2021 – 2031 Overview



Acknowledgement of Country

City of Stirling kaadatj Nyoongar moort Nyoongar boodja-k Wadjak boodja-k. Ngalak kaadatj Nyoongar nedingar wer birdiya koora wer yeyi. Baalabang koondarm, malayin wer nakolak baalap yang ngalany-al. Ngalak dandjoo barn wer kaaratj bandang boodja-k.

The City of Stirling acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land, the Wadjak people of the Nyoongar nation, and pays respect to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia.



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Mayor's foreword

The provision of public open spaces is one of the City's most essential services given the physical, social and health benefits they provide residents.

Public open spaces are the many green spaces such as parklands, play areas, playing fields, bushland and other similar spaces that our community uses for recreation, sport and social interaction. Community needs and expectations are growing, with increasing value being placed on access to quality public open space and associated infrastructure.

This strategy identifies the benefits associated with access to public open space as well as the significant challenges and complexities impacting public open space provision across our suburbs.

Localised plans will help address the key public open space challenges, and provide the basis for advocacy to the State Government for a much-needed review of policy and planning scheme frameworks that impact public open space provision.

With population growth and densification occurring within the City, it is critical that proper planning occurs to ensure we meet the needs and demand from our community.

Mark Irwin
Mayor, City of Stirling

What is public open space?

Public Open Spaces (POS) are urban green spaces that are accessible by all community members for recreation, sport and socialising, such as parklands, play areas, playing fields and bushland.

The way our community uses public open space is changing so as our population increases the City must continue to find ways to ensure accessibility for a wide range of activities.



What POS is included in the strategy

Recreation can occur in many spaces, however the strategy is intended to apply to areas where the primary purpose of the space is sport, recreation or nature and typically the land has been set aside for these purposes.

POS outside the scope of this Strategy are listed below (DLGSC, 2012):

- Preservation and restoration of natural features or habitat such as 'bush forever', nature reserve, state forest, conservation reserve or similar (usually fenced off with restricted or no access)
- Residual land or land set aside as urban deferred or for road reserve, car parking or similar purposes
- River and coastal foreshore reserves and buffer zones (beach area, support amenities and fenced-off areas included)
- Where statutory responsibility lies with Western Australian Planning Commission, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Department of Education or other state government body
- Open space which is owned and managed by a private institution or third party, including private sporting clubs and not-for-profits
- Leased areas and facilities requiring paid entry and/or membership (eg, aquatic centres, indoor gyms and sports halls).

Why does the City need a POS strategy?

Public open space (POS) is a vital component to any community and provides a wide range of health, social, environmental and economic benefits. It contributes to a community's sense of place, identity and recreational opportunities, as well as providing a green relief to the ever expanding urban environment.

The City has seen a considerable population growth over the last 10 years. Based on the 2016 census data the City's population is 219,981 which is forecast to reach over 270,000 people by 2026 (City of Stirling Local Planning Strategy).

With this significant growth in population, urban development, and densification, the POS Strategy will guide ongoing decision making within the City to provide an equitable and accessible network of quality POS for the Stirling community.

This document provides a high level overview of the full Public Open Space Strategy.

Please visit the City's website to see the full Strategy for more detail.



Why is POS important?

Public open space is a vital part of any community. It provides a wide range of health, social, environmental and economic benefits.

Health benefits

Promotes **active lifestyle**



Promotes **improved mental health**



Activity **reduces risk** of chronic disease



Encourages **social and cognitive development,** particularly among children



Social benefits

Improves community cohesion,
sense of place and sense of pride



Reduces
anti-social behaviour and crime



Provides places to
celebrate
culture, heritage and history



Supports
community sporting clubs



Supports walking and bicycle networks
and movement of people between places



Environmental benefits

Provides
valuable space for mature trees
in the urban environment which are important habitats for native flora and fauna



Acts as green corridors and maintains canopy cover to
reduce 'heat island' effect



Economic benefits¹

Provides health benefits of

\$4.9bn

due to reduced risk of chronic diseases, reduced risk of falling or drowning, and improved mental health



Provides social benefit of

\$5.1bn

due to the increased human capital that results from the social interactions during participation in community sport

Creates jobs and economic stimulus

through ongoing construction, maintenance and operations



Delivers an economic benefit of

\$6.3bn

due to increased economic activity and increased productivity of community sport participants

¹ KPMG report





The City's POS Framework

The City's Public Open Space Framework has been updated to better align with current best practice.

The model has two components: **Functions** and **Hierarchy Classifications**.

Functions are the areas within public open space which cater for the primary use and activities of that public open space. There are three functions:

- sporting spaces;
- recreation spaces; and
- nature spaces.

A park can have one or more of these functions. For example, there may be a sporting space which may have a sporting oval, cricket wicket, football goals and clubrooms.

The second part of the model is the **hierarchy classifications**. The four classifications are:

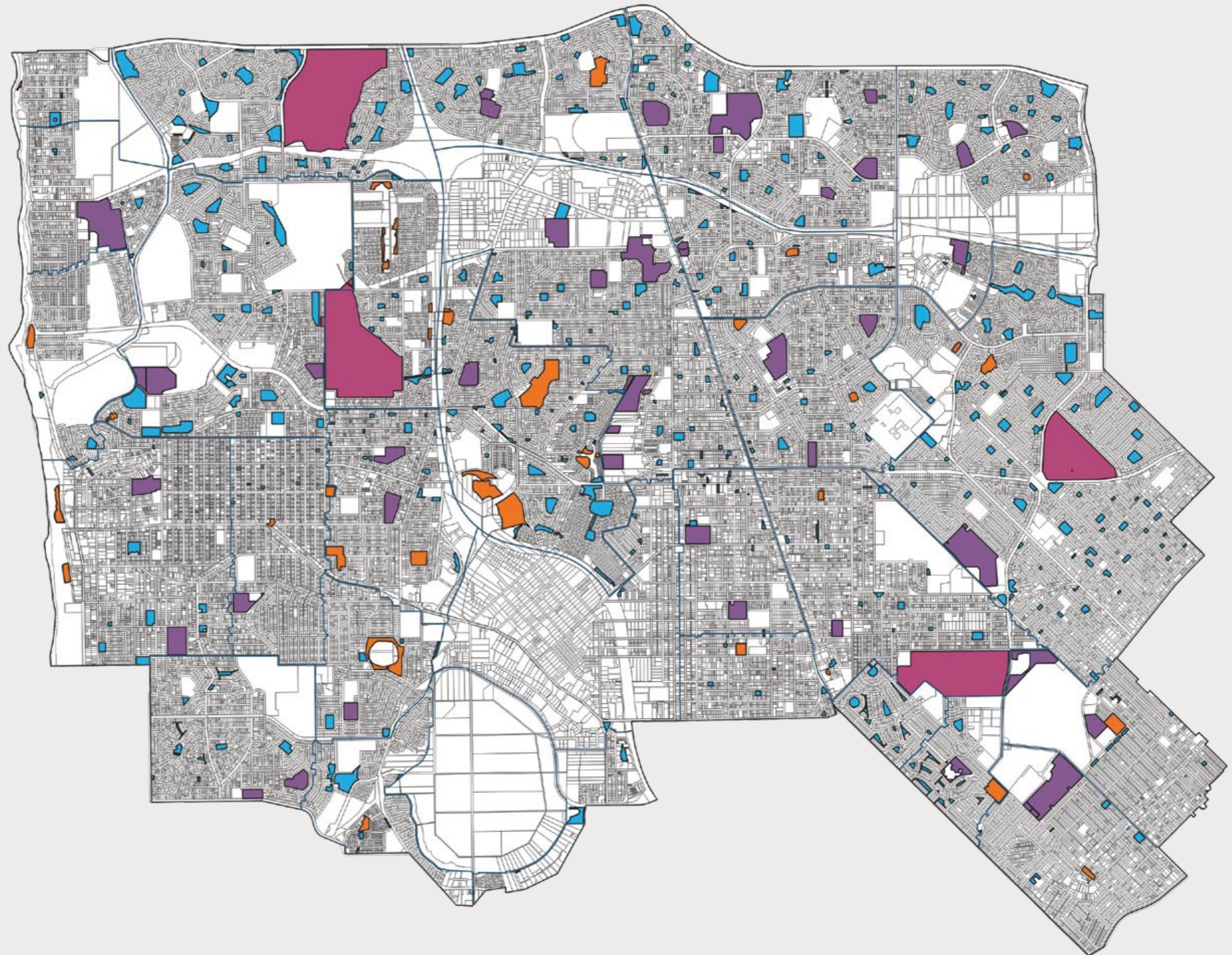
- Local
- Community
- District
- Regional.

Classification	Summary description
Local	Local spaces are typically small parklands that service the recreational needs of the local residential population, such as children's play, dog walking and relaxation. Function: Recreation and nature
Community	Community spaces serve as the recreational and social focus of a community. Residents of surrounding areas are attracted by the variety of features and facilities and opportunities to socialise. Function: Recreation and nature
District	District spaces are principally designed to provide for organised formal sport and can provide for local or community-level recreation. Function: Sport, recreation and nature
Regional	Regional spaces may accommodate important recreation and organised sport space as well as significant nature spaces for conservation. They may also include environmental features such as water bodies. Function: Sport, recreation and nature

POS in the City of Stirling

Legend:

- Local open space
- Community open space
- District open space
- Regional open space



How much POS is enough?

There is a State requirement to provide 10 per cent of the gross area for a residential subdivision for the purpose of public open space. This is based on a standard of 3.36 hectares of public open space per 1,000 people. As explained in Part 4 of the Strategy.

As per State Policy, reserves under the Metropolitan Regional Scheme are not included in this 10 per cent calculation. This '10 per cent Standard' is often applied across a suburb creating challenges around ensuring the community has access to sufficient public open space.

Part 3 of the Strategy considers the City's total public open space provision. It identifies the amount

of POS that our community currently has access to for sport, recreation and nature, only excluding areas where there is restricted access such as bush conservation areas.

Assessing the quantity of public open space on its own does not always ensure sufficient public open space is provided.

This highlights the importance to undertake planning at a localised suburb level to ensure that local community's needs, current POS provision and access is understood and assists in delivering a sustainable response to future provision or improvements in the area.

Key POS challenges and next steps

The City's challenge is to find the balance between growth and maintaining access to quality public open space, which helps our community members to live a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle.

The Strategy sets the framework to plan for a better future that ensures equitable access to a network of quality and functional public open spaces. To achieve this the Strategy outlines some key outcomes including:

- Develop localised suburb-by-suburb public open space plans which identify specific opportunities to improve amenity and infrastructure in response to community needs
- Identify and respond to any identified gaps in POS provision through a range of strategies

- Advocate to the Western Australia Planning Commission (WAPC) for review of current Public Open Space policy standards and cash-in-lieu contributions
- Advocate to the WAPC to investigate options to provide additional public open space through the Metropolitan Regional Scheme
- Advocate to the Department of Education and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries for a review and improvement of policies regarding shared-use outcomes between local schools and local government
- Prioritise the retention of existing public open space.

Further information






To obtain a full copy of the POS Strategy and view the explainer video, please visit the City of Stirling website.

For more information about the POS Strategy, please contact the City of Stirling Administration Centre on (08) 9205 8555 or visit www.stirling.wa.gov.au/enquiries





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This information is available in alternative formats on request. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre on (08) 9205 8555.