

	OPEN SPACE
POLICY	The provision and management of open space is a primary role for Council. To outline Council’s role in planning for and supporting the development and management of a range of quality open space experiences within the Town and to create an awareness of relevant legislation, standards, conventions and strategies relating to open space provision.
Council Adoption Date:	
Related Policies:	
Responsible Officer	
Procedure Reviewed:	
POLICY PROCEDURE	<p>Council represents its local community and will ensure that its practises and decisions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountable and transparent; • Provided equitably, efficiently and effectively; • Consistent with Councils strategic, corporate and financial directions; • Compliant with the requirements and intent of relevant legislation; and • Cater for current and future community needs <p>The unique and diverse open space environment within the Town of Katherine should be recognised, protected and enhanced where appropriate, for current and future generations.</p> <p>Local areas and communities differ so appropriate local area responses must be devised to reflect local qualities.</p> <p>Multi-use of Council used open space is to be actively encouraged.</p> <p>Providing fairness and equity in the distribution of, and access to, quality open space for all members of the community is important.</p> <p>Access to Council’s services, programs of facilities and to those of any other organisations to which it provides facilities or funding should be provided without prejudice.</p> <p>The concept of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) is integral to all decision making.</p> <p>Council values the significant role of volunteers and their contribution to Open Space.</p>

	<p>Local residents place a high level of importance on the need for accessible open space within living environments. This is reflected in Territory Government planning legislation, which requires new residential land divisions to provide open space or payment in lieu of provision, with the latter to be used for open space acquisition of development.</p> <p>Open space functions in a variety of ways and may comprise one or more of the following; active and/or passive recreation; linkages between areas; sites for public art; landscape amenity; personal and community health; landscape character; preservation of biodiversity; creating a sense of place; buffering incompatible uses and performing a drainage and/or water quality function.</p> <p>There are various statutory requirements to which local government must comply or for which it has the task of administering in relation to open space.</p> <p>Significant Council resources are tied up in open space assets along with the on going obligations of development, maintenance and management. The shrinking pool of public funding and increasing community demands will influence Councils position.</p> <p>Areas subject to attention may include reserve rationalisation; management options; implementing sustainable design and maintenance techniques; adopting user pay schemes; sponsorship and partnership investments with private developers and others.</p> <p>Katherine Town Council’s strategic directions document highlights a number of key directions for the Town, namely;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realising and supporting economic development opportunities and tourism initiatives; • Promotion of equity, diversity and participation; • Realising and supporting economic development opportunities and tourism initiatives. • Facilitating supporting and promoting festivals and events; • Effective management of public assets on behalf of current and future generations and involving the review of asset management practises and options; and, • Promoting good human health. <p>Council will demonstrate leadership by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibly managing public open spaces and administering reserve funds, in the long term best interests of the community and the environment; • Planning and developing the area’s open spaces in a manner which enhances the Towns image and the quality of life of the residents and visitors;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysing the need for, and establishing priorities for the development of, new and existing open space, through research and analysis of relevant information, trends and the identification of open space users needs; • Providing a fair and transparent process for the disposal of Councils open space that is based on open (public) sale, except when Council determines that specific circumstances warrant alternative approaches, which achieves greater benefits to the community. • Promoting the design and development of open space that respects local ambience, site characteristics, the needs and aspirations of user groups and creates safe environments; • Seeking and applying sustainable landscapes that reconcile recreational, ecological and economic land management principles and practices; • Establishing partnerships and facilitating the involvement of other levels of government, private developers/investors, professional managers and community groups, in owning, supplying and /or managing open space assets at appropriate levels and standards throughout the Town; • Optimising the utilisation of open space assets including the multi-use of facilities; • Realising economic development and tourism opportunities associated with open space assets; and, • Striving to attain and equitable distribution of, and access to, quality open space within the Town. <p>COMMUNITY SUPPORT</p> <p>Council will use funds generated by the disposal of open space, to fund further open space acquisition and/or development.</p> <p>Council will support community initiatives directed toward enhancing open space through the provision of advice and exploring opportunities for funding and partnership agreements, in accordance with resource availability.</p> <p>REGULATOR</p> <p>Council will consider and apply legislative provisions for the acquisition of open space, or money in lieu thereof, to realise a balance between the distribution of open space throughout the Town, its quality and functions and the resources required developing and maintaining those open spaces.</p> <p>Council will act in accordance with the requirements of relevant legislation, conventions, codes and standards with regard to open</p>
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	<p>space.</p> <p>Council will act in accordance with the requirements of the Act in terms of land disposal or adopting occupancy arrangements (eg. Leasing, licensing and permits) within its facilities. Community users of merit facilities will contribute to the costs of provision and use of the facility and in commercial situations the terms of use shall be based on commercial considerations.</p> <p>INFORMATION/SERVICE PROVISION</p> <p>In consultation with the community, council will represent the specific needs of the local area to other spheres of government, wider networks and public forums, especially for adequate levels of open space services within the Town.</p> <p>Council will act as an advocate to attract appropriate developments and events to suitable open spaces within the Town.</p> <p>Council will solely or in collaboration with others, promote the availability of open spaces across the Town, through effective marketing practises and programs.</p> <p>Council will cognisant of the various demographic, social, cultural and economic attributes of the local community when preparing and/or distributing information contained in its databases and other records.</p> <p>Service provision will reflect established strategies and priorities for open space development and management, arising from research, planning and analysis of relevant information, trends and community expectations.</p> <p>Council will provide and develop neighbourhood and district open spaces directly or through land division, sponsorship and other processes.</p> <p>Council will determine whether it will provide services directly, in partnership with others or engaging contractors.</p> <p>Council will provide a level of service commensurate with the return on its investment. Council’s role in open space provision may change over time, through periodic reviews.</p>
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