



**WARRNAMBOOL**  
CITY COUNCIL

# **OPEN SPACE POLICY**

## **Version 1.1**

**APPROVAL DATE: [May 2021]**

# WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL OPEN SPACE POLICY

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Purpose

Warrnambool offers a large and well-used network of parks and reserves, which contribute significantly to our coastal lifestyle and attract visitors to our City.

From the wild coastline to the popular Lake Pertobe, the residents of Warrnambool value our open spaces and the benefits they provide. Ensuring the open space network is preserved and enhanced for current and future residents is an important role of Council.

Warrnambool City is experiencing significant population growth. By 2031, it is anticipated that the City's population will be around 43,000 people with the growth occurring across all age groups. This growth, along with accompanying population growth across the wider region, impacts on the demand for open space across the city.

The purpose of this policy is to provide the general community, developers and Council staff with an understanding of Council's objectives and approach to providing for open space in Warrnambool.

### 1.2. Scope

The Warrnambool City Council Open Space Policy applies to all open space under the management or ownership of Warrnambool City Council, within the municipality of Warrnambool. It also applies to private land under agreement or negotiation to become future open space under the management or ownership of Warrnambool City Council.

### 1.3. Definitions

<b>Open Space</b>	Publically owned land set aside for leisure, recreation, and nature conservation purposes. It includes pockets of natural landscape within the urban area, sports reserves, and areas of high scenic, cultural or conservation value.
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## 2. REFERENCES

### 2.1. Internal Council Documents

- Warrnambool City Council - Council Plan
- Warrnambool 2040 Community Plan
- Warrnambool City Council - Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Warrnambool Planning Scheme
- Green Warrnambool Plan 2018
- Active Warrnambool Strategy 2019
- Merri River Parklands Framework 2020

### 2.2. External References

- Open Space Planning and Design Guide, Parks and Leisure Australia (2013)
- Safer Design Guidelines for Victoria, State of Victoria Department of Sustainability and Environment (2005).

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## 3. POLICY

### 3.1. Policy Statement

Warrnambool will have a high quality, diverse, accessible open space network that supports cultural connection, reflects community needs, and enhances social connection, environmental protection and economic benefit.

### 3.2. Principles

The Warrnambool Open Space Policy expresses Council's strategic policy in relation to the planning and delivery of open space. The policy helps implement the Warrnambool Open Space Strategy.

It is Council's position that the open space network of Warrnambool should be:

#### **Accessible**

- Provide a variety of open spaces that are safe and accessible to all residents, regardless of age, ability and culture.
- Ensure universal access is incorporated when open spaces with a recreational function are created or upgraded.
- Ensure that all residents have access to at least one open space within walking distance of their home.

#### **Adaptable**

- Ensure open space is flexible, multi-use and provides opportunities for passive and active recreation that is responsive to community needs.
- Ensure that adaptability and multi-functionality is incorporated into the design and development of neighbourhood or above open spaces.

#### **Connected**

- Incorporate open space corridors and shared trails that improve the connectivity of the network and provide links for walking, cycling and biodiversity movement.  
Improve connectivity along the Merri River corridor and other major waterways

#### **Diverse**

- Provide a variety of experiences and cater for a range of recreational needs.

#### **Efficient**

- Consider adaptability and maintenance in the development and management of open space.
- Ensure that open space infrastructure in new or redeveloped open spaces is appropriate to its hierarchy and category.
- Ensure that asset renewal, maintenance and whole of life costs are considered in the design process for development and redevelopment of open spaces.

#### **Equitable**

- Access to open space will be distributed as fairly as possible across the municipality.
- Ensure that there is no net loss of open space from the open space network.
- Provide new recreation infrastructure and open space when developing precinct structure plans, development plans, or in areas where significant gaps in provision are identified

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## Protective of the environment

- Preserve and enhance areas with environmental values and provide appropriate public access to waterways and coastal environments.
- Ensure that where conservation has been identified as the primary function of a reserve, other uses must be compatible with this.
- Ensure that new open spaces or redevelopments demonstrate environmentally sustainable design principles.
- Incorporate areas of high environmental value into the open space network as the opportunity arises
- Indigenous only species should be planted in and adjoining open spaces where the primary function has been identified as conservation (as per the Warrnambool Open Space Strategy)

## Reflective of local knowledge and partnerships

- Work in collaboration with Eastern Maar people in decisions regarding cultural landscapes
- Work in community partnerships where possible to leverage Council resources and provide more collaborative outcomes that reflect community needs

### 3.3. Open Space - Hierarchy

Council supports the development of open space as set out in Table 1.

The classification of individual open spaces can be found in the Warrnambool Open Space Strategy and corporate Council GIS.

**Table 1. Hierarchy of open space**

Open Space	Description
<b>Regional</b>	High-profile parks that attract users from within and beyond the municipality and cater for a broad cross-section of ages. Regional open spaces are characterised by their uniqueness and provide significant environmental, social, recreational, heritage, amenity or tourism value. They may offer a large range of recreational opportunities, or alternatively, highly specialised facilities not present in other open spaces in the region.
<b>Municipal</b>	Medium to large parks which provide recreational and leisure opportunities to residents primarily from within the municipality. Users may need to travel a short distance to reach the park. Municipal open spaces offer a range of recreational opportunities and attract high visitation by local residents.
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	Relatively small parks that offer limited recreational opportunities to the community of an area, and provide a social meeting place for local residents. Intended for frequent, short duration visits within a walking or cycling distance of users.
<b>Local</b>	Small parks which cater primarily for residents in the immediate area. Local open spaces offer a limited number of recreational opportunities, such as a small playground and a grassed area for informal uses. These parks are intended for frequent, short duration visits within a short walking distance of users.

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## 4. GOVERNANCE

### 4.1. Owner

Director of City Growth

### 4.2. Review

The Director of City Growth will review the policy for any necessary amendments no later than 4 years after its formulation or after the last review.

### 4.3. Compliance Responsibility

#### ***Executive Management Team***

- The Chief Executive and Directors are responsible for ensuring Managers, Supervisors, and Employees under their control comply with the actions detailed in this policy.

#### ***Managers and Supervisors***

- Managers and Supervisors are responsible for ensuring Employees under their direct control comply with the actions detailed in this policy (and related procedures).
- Demonstrate Warrnambool City Council values through being positive role models for this policy.
- Ensure any revised or newly developed policies/procedures are communicated appropriately to all relevant staff.

### 4.4. Charter of Human Rights Compliance

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights Act (2007).

Warrnambool City Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees. The Council will formally involve elected employee health and safety representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health and safety of its employees.

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