



## **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

### ***PUBLIC TOILET OPERATING GUIDELINES***

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**Responsible Officer**

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## 1. Introduction

Public toilets play a vital role in creating a vibrant city. Clean, safe, well-designed and accessible public toilets help create a welcoming city, supporting activation and visitation. The level of public toilet provision in a city is influenced by and can have an impact upon crime prevention, urban design, public health, transportation, economic and cultural development and social equity. Public toilets contribute to the life of the city in the following ways:

### *A positive City experience*

Providing and maintaining a network of safe, accessible, clean and well-designed toilets can play a part in creating an enjoyable city experience. Public toilets support well-managed events, recreation and activities and enable ease of daily life in city streets and public places. The provision of public toilets contributes to the amenity of places with high pedestrian traffic and late night entertainment areas.

### *A healthy City*

Council supports a healthy city community through a range of measures to promote health and wellbeing while minimising disease and illness. Experience has shown that where there are no facilities, people will use the public realm as a public convenience. Provision of public toilets, therefore, ensures that the streets are cleaner and the risk of public health issues is reduced.

### *A safer City*

Well-maintained public toilets contribute to a perception of safety and a well-managed public realm. People feel more confident using toilets that are well-designed for safety, clean and pleasant to use.

## 2. Strategic Context

The *City of Adelaide Strategic Plan 2012-2016* provides the strategic intent for the provision of public toilets in the city. The provision of well-located and designed, high quality public toilets supports the achievement of all six strategic outcomes. However *Outcome 4: Liveable City* is the primary outcome which states:

*'Neighbourhoods, streets and public spaces are safe and welcoming places that promote social interaction'*

The following Council policies and strategies govern, make reference to and / or impact upon the planning, design and provision of public toilets:

- Adelaide (City) Development Plan 2011
- Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy 2010
- Asset Management Policy
- City Community Strategy 2012-2016
- Community Land Management Plans
- Community Safety Strategy 2009-2012
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Guidelines 2013
- Access and Inclusion Strategy 2012
- Park Lands Building Design Guidelines 2008
- Recreation and Sport Park Lands Facilities Policy 2002
- *Smart Move* Transport and Movement Strategy 2012-2022
- Urban Design Framework (in development)
- Waste Management Action Plan 2011-2015
- Wayfinding Project (in development)

### 3. Legislative Context

The State Government confers the responsibility of adequate sanitation measures in an area to the local public health authority, namely local councils. The provision of public toilets is underpinned by a number of legislative and regulatory requirements:

- *Local Government Act 1999*, Section 7b states that the functions of a Council include the provision for services and facilities that benefit its area, its ratepayers and residents, and visitors to its area
- *Adelaide (City) Development Plan - Principles of Development Control* states that public conveniences promote the safety and security of the community in the public realm
- *Public Health Act 2011*, Division 4 Section 37 – Councils, states that (1) council is the local public health authority for its area and that a number of functions are conferred by subsection (1) including (2) (c) to ensure that adequate sanitation measures are in place in its area

### 4. Objectives

The objectives of the Public Toilet Guidelines are:

- To ensure a high quality and safer experience for public toilet users
- To ensure consistency and quality in the operation and management of public toilets
- To provide planning and decision making tools for commissioning new toilets, decommissioning or upgrading facilities

### 5. Public Toilet Decision-Making Tools

Council may wish to consider a range of factors when making decisions on a new or replacement public toilet facility or refurbishing an existing facility. Decision-making tools (**Appendix A**) may also assist in effective planning and action, particularly when there are a range of competing interests and concerns regarding commissioning, upgrading or removing public toilets.

The key considerations in planning and decision-making in relation to public toilets are:

- Accessibility and social inclusion
- Asset Management
- Good Design
- Safety and health
- Movement and placemaking

The decision-making tools provide a mechanism for ensuring these key considerations guide action and encourage a shared understanding and approach to planning and development of public toilets across Council Programs and the broader community.

## **6. Operating Guidelines**

**6.1 Utilise the Public Toilet Decision-Making Tools (Appendix A) to ensure a strategic and evidence-based approach to planning and implementing public toilet projects.**

**6.2 Good Design is to be employed in planning, building and upgrading facilities.**

Key considerations are:

- Adhere to the Park Lands Building Design Guidelines
- Be informed by the Urban Design Framework (in development)
- Employ universal design principles in relation to accessibility
- Ensure the toilet capacity matches the anticipated use
- Environmental sustainability including use of natural light and minimising energy, waste and water use
- Design to support ease of cleaning and maintenance
- Design suited to place and location
- Graffiti and vandalism resistant materials
- Incorporate additional features to suit the area and users such as bike racks, drinking fountains, change tables and external hand wash facilities

**6.3 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should guide the planning, design and operation of public toilets.**

The CPTED Operating Guidelines provide detailed examples of design solutions to minimise crime and maximise safety. The following design considerations support safety:

- Consider the need for an automated (Exeloo) in the location where safety risks are extremely high
- White lighting including at entry/exit points and external pathways
- Internal natural lighting including use of skylights
- Consider surveillance of entry/exit points in locating public toilets as greater community surveillance and ownership of the area will deter anti-social behaviour and use
- Place public toilets outside playground fences
- Utilise design solutions such as corner mirrors and open space and clear sightlines to deter inappropriate behaviour
- Ensure sufficient distance between cubicles i.e. thick wall or two stud walls with a space in between

**6.4 Public toilet planning and operations should support community safety.**

Actions to facilitate improved perceptions of safety in relation to public toilets include:

- Co-sharing arrangements and encouragement of local ownership
- Consider locking or closing toilets where after-hours access may put the public at risk
- Ensure regular maintenance and cleaning

- Toilet attendants for security in high risk areas where Exelooos are not present
- Consider small venue liquor licensing and other late night activity access to shared facilities with security/surveillance in one location to support safer activation
- Engagement with local agencies including SA Police, men's health and community services can assist with solutions for loitering and inappropriate behaviour in toilet facilities

**6.5 In the commissioning of new toilets permanent facilities should be explored first and automated facilities considered upon detailed assessment of costs and benefits.**

Automated facilities may be preferable in high vandalism but low use areas. Safety is the primary reason for installing automated toilets in an area. Temporary toilets are preferable in high peak/irregular use such as events or in the late night economy precinct. Provide sewer points/water and power in place in regularly used event spaces to accommodate temporary toilets.

Non-automated buildings and facilities have a number of advantages over automated toilets. These include:

- Flexibility in design to include superior accessibility and sustainability features
- Potential for higher patron capacity
- Longer life (25 years) compared to approximately 15 years for automated
- More cost effective over time
- Aesthetically superior and better integration with the existing built form (provided they are well-designed and maintained)
- Preferred by the community

**6.6 Undertake measures to support public health and minimise injury, illness and disease.**

Measures include but are not limited to:

- Soap dispensers
- The inclusion of sharps disposal units in each cubicle over 4 feet from the ground for child safety
- Consideration and inclusion of appropriate sanitary disposal units including nappy disposal
- Consideration of additional toilet facilities in late-night high pedestrian access areas where public urination is occurring
- Regular cleaning cycles in accordance with ACC Cleaning Service Standards 2008
- Condom vending machines where there is high likelihood of sexual activity
- Waste containers where surrounding uses may result in rubbish being brought into the facilities, and
- Hand drying machines

**6.7 Ideally public toilets will be placed at regular intervals across the city with a focus on greater provision in high pedestrian and significant city places.**

The following is also to be considered to support this guideline:

- A distance of no more than 500 metres (so no toilet is more than a 250 metres away) between facilities across the City is to be considered as a basic guide however connectivity and ease of access are to be considered more heavily in siting assessment for a new facility
- There is no minimum distance recommended between public toilets.

**6.8 Design and upgrade public toilet for universal access including considering best practice inclusions such as larger cubicles for carers, adult change tables, appropriate height handles and dryers and accessible pathways.**

Features to support inclusion are change tables, accessible design, information and clear signage to support way-finding.

**6.9 Public toilets are to be inclusive of all city users. Community information should be made widely available in a variety of places and formats including public signs, maps, online tools and smart phone applications.**

Public toilets can be utilised for community safety and health advertising and messages. Consideration can be made to charge for advertising space, in line with Council's strategic objectives.

Operating hours will ideally be displayed on the exterior of the toilet facility. Contact details for urgent maintenance and cleaning must be clearly visible on all toilets.

Consideration should be taken to ensure public toilets are in areas where marginalised people may be excluded from private facilities.

Engage the community and key representatives to assist with decision-making and planning. Public consultation is to be undertaken prior to decommissioning a toilet.

**6.10 Council has a responsibility to manage public toilets to ensure the City's assets are cared for and protected for future generations and support cost effective delivery of its services.**

Asset Management should support sustainability of the built and natural environment. Strategies to support sound asset management practices include:

- Regular maintenance and replacement/renewal programs to extend the life of facilities including consideration of historic value
- Co-locating facilities or sharing initial capital investment with partners i.e. schools/sports clubs.

**6.11 Regular cleansing and maintenance of public toilets will be undertaken for all facilities in accordance with the Corporation’s Cleaning Service Standards 2008.**

The following is to be considered to support this guideline:

- Cost effective cleansing and maintenance solutions will be employed
- Fittings, floorings, signage and design must support effective cleaning and maintenance i.e. avoid porous tiles and use anti-graffiti materials
- Design to support minimum disruption while cleaning i.e. separate cubicles to remain open while being cleaned where possible
- Cleaning products are to be biodegradable (low toxicity)
- Costs of maintenance will be recorded and assessed to regularly explore alternatives or improvements to services
- Public toilet attendants/security will be placed in peak times where high vandalism and safety concerns exist, to ensure the ongoing operation of the facility (such as 121 Hindley Street late at night).

**7. Restrictions and Limitations**

The Public Toilet Guidelines refer primarily to Council owned and operated facilities. Council has limited influence on privately owned facilities so continues to advocate, facilitate and encourage access to toilets for city users.

**8. Monitoring and Implementation**

The City Safety and Customer Services Program holds responsibility for the monitoring, implementation and review of these Guidelines.

**9. Review**

The Operating Guidelines will be review in July 2016.

**10. Revision History**

| <i><b>Revision #</b></i> | <i><b>Approval Date</b></i> | <i><b>Council or Committee</b></i> | <i><b>Decision #</b></i> | <i><b>TRIM Reference</b></i> | <i><b>Related policy documents</b></i> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|
|                          |                             |                                    |                          |                              |  |
|                          |                             |                                    |                          |                              |  |

## Appendix A – Decision-Making Tools

### Decision Making Tools

The following tools have been developed to assist in the decision-making process for commissioning a new public toilet in a particular location, upgrade or decommissioning. The tools can assist to prioritise planning and budget allocation. The four tools are:

1. Decision Making Tool for a New Public Toilet
2. Public Toilet Use Assessment Tool
3. Decision Making Tool for Renewal (refurbish) or Upgrade (replace) of Public Toilets
4. Decision Making Tool for Removal or Decommissioning a Public Toilet

| <b>Decision Making Tool for a New Public Toilet</b>   |  |                |
|---|--|----------------|
| <b>Consider the following criteria to assess the need for a new toilet in a particular location</b>                 | <b>Indicate a Yes or No for each criteria</b>  |                |
|   | <b>Consider new toilet if 5 or more Yes</b><br><b>Do not consider a new toilet if No to all</b><br><b>Comments can assist to describe or justify</b> |                |
|   | <b>Yes/No</b>  | <b>Comment</b> |
| Is a significant city place now or planned for the future   |  |                |
| High pedestrian movement area   |  |                |
| Safety and health issues including a lack of public toilet causing public urination                                 |  |                |
| Late night entertainment precinct/small venues without toilet facilities  |  |                |
| Food and beverage are sold in that location   |  |                |
| Distance to nearest toilet is considered too far (over 250 metres)  |  |                |
| Community demand / requests indicate a toilet is wanted in that location to meet specific need now or in the future |  |                |
| Nearest toilet does not meet CPTED requirements/safety issues   |  |                |
| Nearest toilet does not meet accessibility requirements   |  |                |



## 2. Public Toilet Use Assessment Tool

To be used to audit use patterns of a current toilet to assist decision-making regarding renewal, upgrade or decommissioning.

Very Low indicates there is less need for a toilet in that location, Very High indicates that a toilet is required in that location and there could be demand for greater capacity.

| Rating:                | Very Low  | Low   | Medium   | High   | Very High   |
|------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Pattern of use</b>  | Light peak use weekly to monthly only                 | Low intermittent Use – some days without use            | Heavy peak use on 1 to 4 occasions per day               | Light regular use averaged across 8 hours                  | Heavy regular use across 8 hours (note this could also be applied from evening to late night) |
| <b>Number of users</b> | Overall use averaging <4 per hour / 8 hours/days open | Overall use averaging 5-10 per hour / 8 hours/days open | Overall use averaging 11-20 per hour / 8 hours/days open | Overall use averaging 21-80 per hour / 8 hours / days open | Overall use averaging >80 per hour / 8 hours/ days open                                       |

| <b>3. Decision Making Tool for Renewal (refurbish) or Upgrade (replace) of Public Toilets</b> |            |  |
|---|------------|--|
| <b>Siting</b>   |            |  |
| Does Toilet siting meet CPTED requirements  | <b>Yes</b> | Refurbish if cost-benefit is less than replacement   |
|   | <b>No</b>  | Replace and relocate to new site to meet CPTED requirements  |
| <b>Accessibility</b>  |            |  |
| Does toilet meet at least minimum accessibility regulations                                   | <b>Yes</b> | Refurbish if cost-benefit is less than replacement   |
|   | <b>No</b>  | If the toilet can be made compliant, refurbish if the cost-benefit is less than replacement  |
|   | <b>No</b>  | If toilet cannot be made compliant, and there is not another compliant toilet within 500 metres (may need to build new toilet not refurbish) |
| <b>Building Structure</b>   |            |  |
| Does current public toilet meet building compliance requirements                              | <b>Yes</b> | If can be made compliant with siting and disability access, refurbish is cost-benefit is less than replacement                               |
|   | <b>No</b>  | Replace is preferred option  |
| <b>Historic/heritage considerations</b>   |            |  |
| Is the building of historic value   | <b>Yes</b> | Refurbish if can be made compliant with CPTED and accessibility  |
|   | <b>No</b>  | Undertake Cost-benefit analysis to determine best option if current building capable of being made compliant with CPTED and accessibility    |

## Decommissioning a Public Toilet

Council may also wish to decommission a public toilet. Public consultation is to be undertaken prior to decommissioning a toilet.

In addition to community feedback and careful consideration of community needs, the following factors may influence this decision:

- Safety – repeated serious safety issues in a toilet block may result in permanent or temporary decommissioning, provided an alternative solution can be found to ensure toilet facilities are made available nearby, particularly if it is a high-use toilet.
- Vandalism - repeated vandalism, requiring significant ongoing maintenance, repairs and therefore regular closure, may lead to a decision to decommission a toilet.
- Use – lack of use of a toilet may lead to decommissioning, provided this is evidence based rather than anecdotal.
- Temporary toilets - in some cases, such as event spaces that are used irregularly, infrastructure to enable temporary toilets to be installed may be a better option, to replace an infrequently used, inadequate and or regularly vandalised toilet block.
- Decommissioning or removal of a public toilet should involve careful consideration of the availability of nearby toilets and contingency plans for ensuring seamless provision of public toilets in a location.

| <b>4. Decision Making Tool for Removal or Decommissioning a Public Toilet</b>                               |            |   |
|---|------------|---|
| <b>Optional Toilet</b>  |            |   |
| Will the removal of the toilet result in a greater than 500 metre distance to the nearest accessible toilet | <b>Yes</b> | Do not consider decommissioning unless usage is very low and infrequent |
|   | <b>No</b>  | Decommission  |
| <b>Risk to users</b>  |            |   |
| Users are at risk due to poor siting CPTED and/or anti-social behaviour                                     | <b>Yes</b> | Decommission if use is low  |
|   | <b>No</b>  | No need to decommission   |