



Environmental

Policy Type:	Council Policy
Reference Number:	COU112
Responsible Department:	Community
Responsible Officer:	General Manager
Legislation	Not applicable
Relevant Delegations:	Not applicable
Related Policies and Procedures	Not applicable
Community Goal	3.1 Ensure the protection, management and enhancement of the natural resource and built environment of the City.
Previous Policy No:	COU 118, 4.4.05
Council Resolution:	CSP 16 May (31/11) Council 23 May (135/11) CSP 8 Oct (139/12) C 22 Oct (564/12)
Date Adopted:	22 October 2012
Review Date:	2014

(1) The Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to provide an overarching policy framework, which defines the role of the City of Unley in managing the environment for both present and future generations. It integrates with the Community Plan 2015 which has a key objective promoting a safe, sustainable environment in Unley.

(2) Philosophies and Principles

The City of Unley recognises that it has a responsibility to protect and enhance natural resources, and to provide a safe, secure and healthy environment for both present and future generations as reflected in the Community Plan 2015.

The City of Unley recognises that the Kaurna people were the traditional owners and occupiers of the land that now comprises the City of Unley.

(a) *Sustainability principles*

The City of Unley acknowledges that the goal of sustainable development is underpinned by the following principles as outlined in the Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future* (1987).

- (i) *Carrying Capacity Principle*
This principle recognises that the planet has finite resources and operates as an interconnected system. As a finite system the earth has limits and can only sustain a certain degree of change. Although there is a lack of certainty about where the limits to the earth's natural resources are, this is not a reason for inaction. There are significant global consequences of overstepping the limit of the earth's capacity to repair itself.
- (ii) *Intergenerational Equity Principle*
This principle introduces a long-term dimension to decision-making to ensure that natural resources are not depleted at such a rate that they are unavailable for future generations.
- (iii) *Precautionary Principle*
This principle outlines there are limitations in our knowledge about the complex eco-systems, which sustain the earth. This lack of scientific knowledge does not preclude us from acting to prevent environmental degradation; instead it requires that an additional degree of caution be applied when making decisions.

(b) *Other Principles*

The City of Unley acknowledges that:

- (i) All spheres of government, the private sector and members of the community are responsible for ensuring a healthy environment.
- (ii) Local actions impact globally, and decisions made about the management of Unley may have regional implications.
- (iii) Decisions made now may have consequences for future generations, and a long-term view is necessary to limit risk to the environment.
- (iv) Sustainable development requires a "whole of organisation" commitment with all sectors of the Council adopting a considered approach towards their impact upon the environment.
- (v) Conflict may arise within various sectors of the community in regards to environmental management and in cases where Council has jurisdiction, the decision-making process will take into consideration the three principles of sustainability.

- (vi) Knowledge and awareness of environmental issues within the community is essential for the effective participation of community members in Council decisions.
- (vii) Community involvement in Council projects encourages joint responsibility in supporting the local environment.
- (viii) Partnership with other levels of government, councils, regional bodies, private business community groups and individuals is integral in responding to complex environmental issues.

(3) Policy Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are:

- (a) To protect and enhance natural resources and to provide a safe, secure and healthy environment for the community both now and in the future.
- (b) To ensure that environmental considerations become integral to the Council's every-day decision-making and operations.
- (c) To promote greater awareness and understanding of environmental issues within the Council and the community.
- (d) To support the establishment of partnerships for ecologically sustainable practices within the community.

(4) Policy Statements

Leadership

- (a) Council will plan for, promote and model ecologically sustainable development.
- (b) Council will ensure that environmental considerations are integrated into the Council's everyday decision-making and operations.
- (c) Council will integrate the principles of sustainability into Council tender documents and contracts. Use of renewable resources will be preferred.
- (d) Council will participate with other Councils, and with state and national governments, in setting public policy and achieving regional, state and national objectives.
- (e) Council will adopt environmentally sound working practices within Council operations that reduce the consumption of natural resources and prevent pollution by:

- (i) implementing a range of actions to ensure that the refuse/reduce/re-use/repair/recycle philosophy is fundamental to Council operations;
 - (ii) reducing waste to landfill from Council buildings;
 - (iii) establishing and maintaining facilities for recycling and/or composting within Council-owned and occupied buildings;
 - (iv) purchasing sustainable goods wherever possible and using contractors and goods from companies that have environmental policies;
 - (v) limiting risk of pollution to groundwater and creeks through minimisation of chemical use, efficient street cleaning and prevention of discharge of polluting substances during Council works;
 - (vi) reducing water consumption in Council properties, parks and reserves;
 - (vii) utilising alternatives to mains water wherever possible through exploring use of rainwater, stormwater and wastewater; and
 - (viii) enhancing biodiversity within parks, reserves and streetscapes.
- (f) Council will continue to endeavour to encourage alternative and renewable energy use.
- (g) Council will encourage energy efficiency and the minimisation of water use and run-off in building design and orientation.
- (h) Council to support waste minimisation, recycling and re-use schemes within the community by providing efficient, environmentally friendly waste collection and recycling services.
- (i) Council will identify opportunities to extend the City of Unley's open space network and availability.
- (j) Council will encourage walking, cycling and public transport as an alternative to the private motor vehicle and will emphasize pedestrian and cyclist safety in urban design.
- (k) Council will ensure a sustainable, safe and integrated transport system is developed for the community considering a balance between intra-city and inter-city demands.
- (k) Council will investigate opportunities for the revegetation of creeks and their environs.
- (l) Council will maximise opportunities to increase indigenous vegetation throughout the City of Unley.
- (m) Council will ensure remnant/significant vegetation throughout the City of Unley is protected.

- (n) Council will ensure the protection, management and enhancement of the natural resources and built environment of the City through all Council activities.

Legislation

- (n) Council will comply with the requirements and intent of relevant legislation, conventions, standards and codes aimed at conserving natural resources and pollution prevention.
- (o) Council will introduce performance targets and standards for Council operations, which go beyond legislative compliance.

Partnerships/Community Education

- (p) Council will support programs that focus on international, national, state and local events, which highlight sustainable living and other environmental issues.
- (q) Council will establish and maintain working partnerships with government agencies, local industries and the community to promote projects which improve the local environment.
- (r) Council will provide small grants through the Community Grants Scheme to non-profit groups initiating projects with environmental outcomes.
- (s) Council will advise local traders, property owners and residents of initiatives and assistance available to reduce pollution risk on their properties.
- (t) Council will encourage a sense of ownership and guardianship of water management within the community of the Patawalonga Catchment area.
- (u) Council will support and promote community-based initiatives, which conserve natural resources, prevent pollution and raise awareness of environmental issues.

Advocacy

- (v) Council will act as an advocate on behalf of the community where environmental harm has occurred and jurisdiction lies outside Council control.

(5) Relevant Council Policies

This Policy is to be implemented with regard to a range of related Council Policies and plans, such as:

Unley Environment Sustainability Plan 2010-13 incorporating Unley Water, Waste, Climate Change and Sustainable Landscape Action Plans.

City of Unley Food Security Strategy
City of Unley Community Plan 2015
Council Policies;
Contracts and Tenders
Community Consultation
Open Space
Recreation
Cultural Policy
Tree Policy.

This list is not exhaustive.