

Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing

- The City of Adelaide leases and licences spaces and buildings in the Adelaide Park Lands for community use.
- Tell us your thoughts on the draft Policy, which outlines how we manage these lease and licence agreements.

Consultation closes 11:59pm, Thursday, 2 July 2026.



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Customer Centre
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ouradelaide.sa.gov.au

Project Information

We would like your feedback on a proposed update to the Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy.

The proposed draft Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy (draft Policy) explains how we manage lease and licence agreements for community land within the Adelaide Park Lands, to ensure these spaces continue to benefit the community. The draft Policy has been developed using community feedback, industry benchmarking, and current best practice.

The proposed update follows the adoption of the Adelaide Park Lands Community Buildings (Sport and Recreation) Policy in 2024, which guides the redevelopment of leased community buildings. A copy of this policy can be found at the back of this information pack.

Work has already started on redeveloping a community building in Golden Wattle Park / Mirnu Wirra (Park 21W), and planning is well underway for another community building redevelopment in Mary Lee Park (Park 27B).

The draft Policy proposes changes to how lease and licence fees are applied, including for community buildings redeveloped by Council. It introduces new fee rebates and provides clearer information about:

- the responsibilities and expectations of both lessees/licensees and Council, and
- how lessees and licensees are selected.

Background

The current Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy was adopted in 2016. A copy can be found at the back of this information pack.

Council currently manages more than 60 lease and licence agreements in the Adelaide Park Lands. These agreements include:

- community organisations, such as sporting and recreation clubs – 25 agreements
- educational institutions, including schools and universities – 17 agreements
- commercial businesses, such as kiosks and restaurants – 14 agreements
- government agencies, including SAPOL and the Bureau of Meteorology – 6 agreements

Most agreements are for five years, although some extend up to 42 years where significant investment has been made in buildings or facilities.

In the 2024/25 Financial Year, Council received approximately \$988,000 in lease and licence fees. Commercial businesses contributed almost two-thirds of this amount (\$629,000).

In 2022, Council consulted the community on a proposed update to the Policy. Following feedback from the community, Kadaltilla / Adelaide Park Lands Authority, and Council Members, the proposed update was deferred to enable the development of the Adelaide Park Lands Community Buildings (Sport and Recreation) Policy. This policy guides the redevelopment of community buildings leased by sporting and recreation groups and educational institutions.

On 9 June 2026, Council approved a draft Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy (draft Policy) for public consultation.

The draft Policy has been developed using feedback from earlier consultation, industry comparisons, and current best practice. It is significantly different from previous proposals and is based on four guiding principles:

- **Strategic Alignment:** Lease and licence arrangements will support Council's strategic objectives and deliver positive community outcomes.
- **Sustainability and Stewardship:** Leases and licences will support the long-term sustainability and responsible stewardship of Park Lands assets.
- **Inclusive and Equitable Access:** The Park Lands are a shared community asset and will remain welcoming and accessible to a diverse range of users.
- **Good Governance:** Leases and licences will be managed in a transparent, consistent and accountable manner.

The draft Policy aligns with relevant legislation, noting that the *Retail and Commercial Leases Act 1995* (SA) does not apply to the Adelaide Park Lands.

The draft Policy includes opportunities for organisations to help care for and improve the Park Lands through environmental and community initiatives. In return, they may receive access to Park Lands assets and reduced lease or licence fees.

We are seeking community feedback before the draft Policy is finalised and considered for adoption. If adopted, it will replace the 2016 Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy.

Timeline

Public consultation on the draft Policy will occur between Friday, 12 June and Thursday, 2 July 2026.

During this period, you can request to meet with a staff member, or attend a drop-in session at the Minor Works Building Community Centre on:

- Tuesday, 23 June between 10am and 12pm
- Thursday, 25 June between 1pm and 3pm

We aim to present the findings from the public consultation to Kadaltilla / Adelaide Park Lands Authority in late July 2026, and to Council Members in early August 2026.

Frequently Asked Questions

What Best Practices did we identify?

A 2020 review by the Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing and the Local Government Association (SA) provided a Guide for Leasing and Licensing Sport and Community Facilities with best practice advice provided, including:

- Expression of Interest (EOI) is the best method for selecting a new lessee for vacant facilities.
- Five years is a common lease or licence period, with longer leases linked to capital investment by the lessee.
- Incorporate renewal options to break up the terms of longer agreements.

- Provide training and support to lessees to enhance their competency and viability.
- Inspections/reviews should occur at least annually, with maintenance responsibilities clearly defined.
- Rental income can contribute to sinking funds and reinvestment into community facilities.
- Typical council services include facility maintenance, management support, club development support, grant assistance, and capital funding.

What did we identify through benchmarking?

Benchmarking of lease and licence fees across the local government sector found:

- Market valuations are common practice in determining commercial fees.
- CoA is unique in applying a flat square metre rate for lease fees.
- Most councils base lease fees on asset values, and nearly all heavily discount these fees.
- While councils apply different approaches to setting licence fees, the City of Adelaide's (CoA) fees are generally comparable. However, given that Park Lands lessees and licensees are responsible for all aspects of facility maintenance, the contribution made by lessees and licensees in the CoA is considerably higher.
- It is common practice for licence fees to be higher where access is controlled by the licensee.

What are the key differences between the draft Policy and the existing 2016 Policy?

Selection of Lessees/Licensees

The existing Policy requires an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to select a lessee/licensee, except in 'extenuating' circumstances.

The draft Policy also requires an EOI process but identifies situations in which it need not be applied.

Community Gardens

The draft Policy proposes that community organisations that license community gardens be exempt from the EOI process and charged nominal (nil) fees.

Commercial Lessees/Licensees

The draft Policy describes circumstances in which Council may deal directly with a commercial lessee without issuing an EOI.

Subletting

The existing Policy allows lessees to charge each sublessee up to 50% of all costs associated with operating and maintaining their leased or licensed area.

The draft Policy proposes that:

- a lessee must not impose or charge any obligations that are more onerous than those Council would impose; and

- non-commercial lessees and licensees obtain a formal decision of Council before entering into a subletting agreement with a commercial organisation.

Lease and Licence Fees – Non-Commercial Organisations

The existing Policy differentiates between fees for community organisations and those for educational institutions.

The draft Policy proposes three fee categories for non-commercial lessees/licensees based on annual revenue and organisation type. The annual revenue thresholds are informed by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (<https://www.acnc.gov.au/tools/topic-guides/charity-size>).

What are the key features of the draft Policy?

Permitted Use

Lessees and licensees will require approval before undertaking activities that are inconsistent with their permitted use. Non-commercial leased and licenced facilities may only be used for community development activities that are open and accessible to the public. Requests to host community events will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Tenure

Standard lease terms of five years are proposed, enabling agreement conditions and responsibilities to remain relevant.

Longer terms of 10 to 21 years will be considered where the lessee proposes a significant capital contribution.

For longer agreements, renewal rights will be incorporated to enable periodic reviews of conditions and performance. This approach provides Council with an appropriate level of control to monitor outcomes, manage risks and ensure the desired community benefits are being realised.

Park Lands Stewards

Community Organisations and Educational Institutions will be incentivised through lease and licence fee rebates to partner with Council in delivering measurable community benefits. Activities such as tree planting, Park Lands clean-ups, opening facilities as safe refuges and implementing practices that promote diverse and affordable access and participation will be acknowledged through rebates.

Rebates of up to 50% will be determined by Council and applied retrospectively in the following year, based on the previous year's fees. To qualify for the maximum rebate, lessees and licensees must demonstrate delivery of multiple measurable community benefit actions.

Responsibilities

Maintenance responsibilities will remain with lessees, with expectations clearly documented in each agreement. Council will take responsibility for the key structural elements of Council-owned buildings.

Lessees will be required to minimise waste sent to landfill and enter into electricity contracts which prioritise renewable energy sources.

Council will provide capacity-building and volunteer recognition opportunities and conduct an annual leasing and licensing forum to improve the capability and compliance of lessees and licensees.

Selection of a Lessee/Licensee

An Expression of Interest (EOI) will remain the common practice for selecting a new lessee.

The draft Policy describes circumstances in which Council may deal directly with a lessee without issuing an EOI. This will improve transparency and increase efficiency by delivering more timely outcomes and clearer decision-making processes.

Governance

There will be an obligation on non-commercial lessees and licensees to submit annual reports detailing matters, such as subletting arrangements and casual hirers, along with their annual income and expenditure.

Fees

Commercial lease fees will continue to be based on market rent valuations, with periodic reviews. This approach is consistent across the local government sector.

Council will categorise non-commercial lessees and licensees by organisation type and annual revenue, with revenue thresholds informed by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

Non-commercial lease and licence fees will be applied across the following three categories:

Category A	Category B	Category C
Not-for-profit clubs, associations and community groups with a total annual revenue of less than \$500,000.	Not-for-profit clubs, associations and community groups with a total annual revenue of \$500,000 to \$3 million. All government schools (primary and secondary) and government agencies.	Not-for-profit clubs, associations and community groups with a total annual revenue of more than \$3 million. All universities, non-government schools (primary and secondary), and associated alumni organisations.

Fees will be based on building floor area (lease fees) and playing field/court area (licence fees).

Licence fees will be doubled where access is controlled by the licensee (e.g., locked tennis courts).

Where a community building is redeveloped entirely at the lessee's cost, resulting in a new asset owned by the lessee, a ground lease will be granted. Lease fees will be applied at the prescribed rate.

Where Council contributes to the redevelopment of a community building, the lease fee will be determined through negotiation and will be no less than the prescribed rate for a building of equivalent floor area, taking into account:

- the value of the redeveloped community building (independently determined)
- the lessee's financial contribution to the redevelopment
- the lessee's capacity to pay

The negotiated lease fee will require approval via a formal decision of Council.

Community Use

Subletting and casual hiring remain important mechanisms for increasing utilisation of Park Lands assets. Council will work with non-commercial lessees/licensees to ensure processes are in place to facilitate broader community use.

Non-commercial lessees and licensees will require Council approval before entering into a subletting agreement with a commercial organisation.

How were the revenue thresholds for non-commercial lessees determined?

The revenue thresholds were informed by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

How will revenue be determined?

Total annual revenue is defined in the draft Policy as the 'gross income received over a 12-month period from all operating and non-operating sources, excluding any grant funding received and related interest earned, prior to the deduction of expenses, taxes, or other costs'.

Non-commercial lessees and licensees will be required to submit audited financial reports to Council.

How will the lease and licence fee rebates be determined?

Non-commercial lessees and licensees may be eligible for rebates of up to 50% on lease and licence fees. Rebates will be determined by Council and applied retrospectively in the following year, based on the previous year's fees.

Lessees and licensees will need to apply for a rebate, just as they would for a grant.

How will changes to lease and licence fees be implemented?

Commercial lease and licence fees will continue to be based on market rent valuations. These valuations will be carried out at the start of a lease or licence, and at scheduled review periods where applicable.

For most existing non-commercial leases, the method used to calculate fees will stay the same, with fees adjusted annually for indexation.

Licence fees will continue to be reviewed each year in line with Council's Fees and Charges schedule.

Recently signed non-commercial leases allow lease and licence fees to be reviewed annually in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges schedule.

How do I provide my feedback?

There are a number of ways in which you can provide feedback:

Feedback Form (attached to this information pack)

Online

ouradelaide.sa.gov.au

Contribute your feedback via the **Online Survey**.

Meet with a Staff Member

You can organise to meet or speak with a staff member by emailing your request and contact details to activecity@cityofadelaide.com.au

Drop-in Sessions

Where: Minor Works Building Community Centre, 22 Stamford Court, Adelaide

When:

- Tuesday, 23 June between 10am and 12pm
- Thursday, 25 June between 1pm and 3pm

Email your comments to ouradelaide@cityofadelaide.com.au.

Written Submissions

Written submissions can be delivered to the Customer Centre, 25 Pirie Street Adelaide, or posted to:

Community Consultation
Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing
GPO Box 2252, Adelaide SA 5001

What happens next?

We will acknowledge your feedback either by email or in writing.

We aim to present the public consultation findings to Kadaltilla / Adelaide Park Lands Authority in late July 2026, and to Council Members in early August.

If adopted, the draft Policy will supersede the 2016 Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy.

For enquiries, please contact:

Ray Scheuboeck

Team Leader, Community Lifestyle

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E: r.scheuboeck@cityofadelaide.com.au

Draft Leasing and Licensing Policy



Feedback Form

This form can also be completed online at ouradelaide.sa.gov.au.

Q1. First Name and Last Name

Q2. Are you a member of or associated with an organisation that leases, licences or subleases/sublicences an area within the Adelaide Park Lands?

a) ☐ Yes. If so, what is the name of the organisation(s)?

b) ☐ No

Q3. Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?

a) ☐ Yes. If so, what is the name of the organisation?

b) ☐ No

Q4a. In relation to Section 2.1 – Park Lands Stewards in the draft Policy, what do you consider to be the most important community benefit actions for lease/licence fee rebate eligibility?

Q4b. Do you have suggestions for additional eligible community benefit actions?

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Q5. To what extent do you agree that the responsibilities of Council and lessees/licensees are clearly outlined in Section 2.2 – Responsibilities in the draft Policy? (please circle)

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Please explain your response.

Q6. To what extent do you agree that organisations with greater financial capacity should pay higher lease or licence fees than organisations with fewer financial resources? (please circle)

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

Please explain your response.

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Q7. To what extent do you agree with the situations listed in Section 4.2 – Selection of a Lessee/Licensee in the draft Policy where Council may choose a new lessee/licensee without an Expression of Interest process? (please circle)

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

Please explain your response.

Q8a. What actions could lessees/licensees take to increase community use of leased and licensed facilities?

Q8b. Do you feel there are barriers to achieving what you suggested?

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Q9. Are there any sections of the draft Policy where additional explanation or detail would be helpful?

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Q10. Do you have any other feedback on the draft Policy?

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Draft Leasing and Licensing Policy



Contact Details (optional)

Providing contact details in a feedback form is optional. However, we ask for this information because we want to know a little more about who you are and how you use the city to ensure we get a higher quality of data to go along with your feedback. The data will help us analyse feedback from specific groups (e.g. age, gender, City users), which in-turn will provide a richer and more valuable response to help Council make decisions.

First Name:		Last Name:	
Email Address:			
Address:			
Business/Organisation Name (if applicable):			
Gender:	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other Identity	Year of Birth:	
Are you a City of Adelaide Ratepayer?		☐ Yes ☐ No	
Please tell us how you participate in city life (tick all that apply):			
☐ Work	☐ Live	☐ Shop	☐ Business Owner/Operator
☐ Study	☐ Tourist	☐ Play (e.g. leisure, recreation, entertainment, dining)	
Please indicate your main areas of interest (tick all that apply):			
☐ Our Community	☐ Our Economy	☐ Our Environment	☐ Our Places
Please indicate the locations that are of interest to you (tick all that apply):			
☐ East End	☐ North Adelaide	☐ South East	
☐ South West		☐ West End	

OurAdelaide.sa.gov.au is Council's online consultation website. It is your chance to be kept up-to-date and provide feedback on areas of the city that interest you. Would you like to sign up to Our Adelaide to receive the monthly newsletter and be notified of new projects that match your interests?

☐ Yes* ☐ No

**Please provide your email address above*