



# Public Toilet Service Policy

## 1. PURPOSE

### 1.1 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Policy to inform how Council makes decisions about when public toilets are open.

### 1.2 Background - Types of Public Toilets

Public toilets are essential community assets which contribute to the enjoyment and amenity of public spaces by residents and visitors to the municipality. The provision and governance of public toilets can be complex.

A list of Council public toilets is provided in **Appendix 1**. This list may be changed from time-to-time as services change.

'External public toilets' are toilets that can be accessed directly from the outside and not through another facility. They come in two primary forms:

- 7 Day Facilities - They are open seven days per week; and
- Weekend Facilities – They are open on request or if there is a sports activity that weekend by the clubs.

There are some Council public toilets that are sited within public buildings such as libraries, civic buildings or sporting or recreation facilities. This Policy does not cover internal public toilets as they are only available when the facility is open and there is no discretion to open or close them at other times.

External public toilets are in a variety of different building types including:

- Exeloo – automated toilets;
- Stand-alone structure – toilet block; or
- Part of a sporting facility building or community facility building

### 1.3 Background - 7 Day Facilities

There are '7 Day Facilities' at:

- Parks and sporting facilities
- Shopping centres / commercial precincts

The opening times and cleaning schedule for '7 day Facilities' is summarised below:

- Exeloos – Automated Toilets
  - These are automatic toilets that have a self-cleaning function.
  - The toilets automatically open at 6am and close at 10pm (except Box Hill Skate Park closes at 7pm due to vandalism).
  - In addition to the self-cleaning the toilets are manually cleaned and the frequency of cleaning depends on the locations, varying from:
    - Cleaned every day and twice on Saturdays and Sundays
    - Cleaned every day
    - Cleaned every second day
- Stand-alone structures, part of sporting facilities and community facilities:
  - These are opened between 7am and 9am. The newer facilities like the toilets at Elgar Park south pavilion and Terrara Park pavilion automatically open at 7am.
  - These are closed between 5pm and 7pm in winter and 7pm and 9pm in summer. The toilets at Elgar Park south pavilion and Terrara Park pavilion automatically close at 7pm in winter and 9pm in summer. The winter / summer change over dates coincide with Daylight Saving change over dates.
  - These are cleaned in the morning when opening or at the end of the day when closing.

## **1.4 Background - Weekend Facilities**

'Weekend Facilities' are a combination of stand-alone structures or part of a sporting facility building. They are open on request or if there is a sports activity that weekend by the clubs.

If there is a sports activity generally the club will open the toilets prior to the Council's contractor attending. The contractor will then clean and restock the toilets and close them in the evening.

If there are no games on, the contractor will still attend and do a security check (vandalism, graffiti). They check that the toilet is locked.

## **1.5 Background - Register of Public Toilets 'The National Public Toilet Map'**

There is a register of public toilets available on the website <https://toiletmap.gov.au/> 'The National Public Toilet Map'.

The National Public Toilet Map shows the location public and private public facilities across Australia, including toilets, adult change and baby care. Information is provided about each toilet, such as location, accessibility details, opening hours and features like sharps disposal and showers.

The Toilet Map is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health as part of the National Continence Program and is managed through the Continence Foundation of Australia.

All of Council's external public toilets are included on the Toilet Map as well as toilets from other facilities such as train stations, petrol service stations, shopping centres, Wattle Park and Deakin University.

There are a number of public toilets that are not included on the Toilet Map that are available to customers including large retail shops, hotels, fast food restaurants, and other shopping centres like Homemaker HQ, Home Co Box Hill, Brand Smart,

Burwood Heights Shopping Centre, Burwood Brickworks and Vermont South Shopping Centre.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

There is no statutory or legislative requirement for councils to provide public toilet facilities.

The relevant sections of Council's key strategic documents to the provision of public toilets are:

### **Council Plan 2021–2025**

*Strategic Direction 4: Our Built Environment; Movement, and Public Places*  
*Objective 4.1: Assets, facilities and urban design of a quality that provides the highest levels of utility and enhances the connection between the built, natural, heritage and social environments.*

*4.1.1: Plan, build, renew and maintain community assets and facilities to meet current and future service needs in an environmentally, financially and socially sustainable way.*

### **Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025**

There is reference to opening toilet facilities in the strategy to achieve the objective of more liveable neighbourhoods:

*Neighbourhood Liveability*

*A liveable neighbourhood is one that is safe, accessible and attractive, and provides good connectivity*

*Objective*

*By 2025 our community will enjoy more liveable neighbourhoods*

*Strategies to achieve the objective*

*Seek opportunities to open up and diversify use of Council spaces and facilities for multi-use, e.g. on-demand lighting, casual use sports infrastructure such as basketball/netball rings, oval walking tracks, picnic seats, community gardens; unlock athletics tracks, open toilet facilities.*

### **3. SCOPE**

The Policy is to be used to respond to requests about when public toilets are open.

The Policy applies to 'external public toilets' and not public toilets that are sited within public buildings. The internal public toilets are only available when the facility is open and there is no discretion to open them at other times.

The Policy does not cover the renewal or upgrade of toilets or the provision of new facilities. The renewal or upgrade program is based on Council's Asset Plan. If the facility is to be replaced due to condition and function, an assessment will be made about the best type and location of a replacement facility.

The provision of new public toilet facilities needs to be considered strategically. There is a significant capital cost to provide a new facility as well as ongoing servicing, cleaning, maintenance and renewal. There are other strategic documents to advise potential new public toilet facilities including the Open Space Strategy, Play Space Strategy and relevant masterplans.

### **4. DEFINITIONS**

Not applicable

### **5. POLICY**

#### **Opening Times of External Public Toilets**

The following evaluation criteria are used to assess the opening times of external public toilets:

1. Demand

2. Safety / Community Impact
3. Cost

### **Criteria 1 - Demand**

The current public toilet service opening hours have evolved over time. Not all public toilets need to be considered for daily opening as there is low demand or there are other operational toilets nearby. Many parks are frequented by local residents for short periods of time, meaning the need to use a public toilet is low – people simply go home to use a toilet.

A measurement of demand is an estimate of the weekday use of the area. A score (out of 5) is assigned based on:

- Rarely used by more than 4 people at a time Score 1
- Used for some of the day by more than 4 people Score 3
- Frequently used by large numbers of people for most of the day Score 5

A further measurement of demand is the location of other public toilets in the vicinity. A score (out of 5) is assigned based on:

- Within 400m Score 1
- Between 400m and 800m Score 3
- Over 800m Score 5

### **Criteria 2 - Safety / Community Impact**

Not all public toilets can be considered safe to open at all times. Unfortunately public toilets attract antisocial behaviour and unless they are appropriately designed and in an area where there is frequent activity, they can become unsafe places. Some of the public toilet locations that are only open on weekends or during events do not have sufficient activity to provide the passive surveillance to consider them safe for opening during the quieter times of the week.

The assessment of this criteria is based on the four main principles of CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) – including:

- Principle 1 – Natural Surveillance  
Providing opportunities for effective surveillance, both natural and technical, can reduce the attractiveness of crime targets.

A score (out of 5) is assigned based on:

- Low (entry points are obscured from public view) Score 1
- Medium (easily observed by people in immediate area) Score 3
- High (easily observed by members of the public passing by) Score 5

- Principle 2 – Access Control  
Physical and symbolic barriers can be used to attract, channel or restrict the movement of people, and in turn, minimise opportunities for crime.

A score (out of 5) is assigned based on:

- Low (manually opened and closed) Score 1
- Medium (automated opening and closing via time clock) Score 3
- High (Exeloo fully automated) Score 5

- Principle 3 – Territorial Reinforcement  
This principle relies on the users of spaces or areas feeling that they have some ownership of public space and therefore are more likely to gather and enjoy that space.

All existing toilets are scored equally on this. This is considered in considering location of new toilets.

- Principle 4 – Space Management  
Public space that is attractive and well maintained is inviting to users and becomes a well-used space. Linked to the principle of territorial reinforcement, space management ensures that the space is appropriately utilised and well cared for.

All existing toilets are scored equally on this. This is considered in considering location of new toilets.

### **Criteria 3 - Cost**

The cost of changing the opening times for external public toilets varies depending on the size of the public toilet facility. Any change to the opening times will have ongoing operational budget costs for servicing, cleaning and maintenance. Council needs to consider any increase in the cost of providing public toilet services in the context of a limited budget and other services that require funding.

A score (out of 10) is assigned based on the relative cost of opening the facility for 12 months based on 2022 prices:

- Over \$10,000 per year Score 1
- \$7,000 to \$10,000 Score 3
- \$5,000 to \$7,000 Score 5
- \$2,000 to \$5,000 Score 7
- Under \$2,000 Score 10

### **Priority Assessment**

Requests received from the community to extend the opening hours of a toilet from a 'Weekend Facility' to a '7 Day Facility' are evaluated against the criteria listed above.

The rankings of the total scores are:

- Very High - 20 to 30
- High - 15 to 19
- Merit - 9 to 15
- Low – Less than 9

Facilities ranked Very High or High are considered for extending the opening hours subject to budget considerations. Facilities ranked Merit or Low are not recommended for extending the opening hours.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITIES**



Council's City Services Department is responsible for the opening, closing and cleaning of Council's external public toilets.

## **7. RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION**

The following external policies and strategies are related to this Policy:

- Open Space Strategy
- Play Space Strategy
- Asset Management Policy

### **Internal Use Only**

## **8. REVIEW**

Responsible Manager: Director Infrastructure and Manager City Services

Date Adopted: 28 November 2022

Date of Next Review: 5 years

This policy has been reviewed for Human Rights Charter compliance.

## **9. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – List of Council Public Toilets

**EXTERNAL PUBLIC TOILETS**  
**7 Day Facilities at Parks, Sporting**  
**Facilities**

No	Location	Type of Building	Suburb
1	Blackburn Lake Sanctuary	Part of Community Facility	Blackburn
2	Kalang Park - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Blackburn
3	Slater Reserve - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Blackburn North
4	Eley Park – Community Centre	Part of Community Facility	Blackburn South
5A	Box Hill Gardens	Exeloo	Box Hill
5B	Box Hill Gardens	Stand-alone structure	Box Hill
6	Surrey Park	Exeloo	Box Hill
7	Box Hill Skate Park	Exeloo	Box Hill South
8	Bennettswood Reserve	Part of Sporting Facility	Burwood
9	Antonio Park	Stand-alone Structure	Mitcham
10	Halliday Park	Stand-alone Structure	Mitcham
11A	Schwerkolt Cottage	Exeloo	Mitcham
11B	Schwerkolt Cottage	Exeloo	Mitcham
12	Simpson Park	Part of Sporting Facility	Mitcham
13	Yarran Dheran Reserve	Part of Community Facility	Mitcham
14A	Elgar Park – Main Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Mont Albert North
14B	Elgar Park – Miniature Rail	Stand-alone structure	Mont Albert North
15	Terrara Park	Part of Sporting Facility	Vermont South
16	East Burwood Reserve	Stand-alone Structure	Burwood East
17	Mahoneys Reserve North	Part of Sporting Facility	Forest Hill
18	Springfield Park	Part of Sporting Facility	Box Hill North
19	Mont Albert Reserve	Part of Sporting Facility	Mont Albert

**7 Day Facilities at Shopping Centres**

No	Toilet	Type of Building	Suburb
1	Blackburn Shops, South Parade	Exeloo	Blackburn South
2	Wattle Park Tram Stop	Exeloo	Burwood
3	Brentford Square Shopping Centre	Exeloo	Forest Hill
4A	Britannia Mall	Exeloo	Mitcham
4B	Britannia Mall	Exeloo	Mitcham
4C	Britannia Mall	Stand-alone structure	Mitcham
5	Rangeview Shops	Exeloo	Mitcham
6	Mont Albert Shops, Hamilton Street	Exeloo	Mont Albert

**Weekend Facilities**

No	Toilet	Type of Building	Suburb
1	Morton Park - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Blackburn
2	Koonung Park - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Blackburn North
3	Highbury Park	Stand-alone Structure	Burwood
4	Forest Hill Reserve - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Forest Hill
5	Heatherdale Reserve - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Mitcham
6A	Walker Park - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Nunawading
6B	Walker Park - Stand-alone	Stand-alone Structure	Nunawading
7	Vermont Reserve - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Vermont
8A	Sparks Reserve North - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Box Hill
8B	Sparks Reserve South - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Box Hill
9	Ballyshanassy Reserve - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Burwood
10	Mirrabooka Reserve - Pavilion	Part of Sporting Facility	Blackburn South
11	City Oval	Stand-alone Structure	Box Hill
12	Wembley Park - Stand-alone	Stand-alone Structure	Box Hill South

**PUBLIC TOILETS - INTERNAL TO THE FACILITY**

No	Toilet	Type of Building	Suburb
1	Aqualink Nunawading	Part of Sporting Facility	Forest Hill
2	Aqualink Box Hill	Part of Sporting Facility	Box Hill
3	Sportlink	Part of Sporting Facility	Vermont South
4	Nunawading Civic Centre	Part of Community Facility	Nunawading
5	Box Hill Town Hall	Part of Community Facility	Box Hill
6	Nunawading Community Hub	Part of Community Facility	Nunawading
7	Box Hill Community Arts Centre	Part of Community Facility	Box Hill
8	Blackburn Library	Part of Community Facility	Blackburn
9	Box Hill Library	Part of Community Facility	Box Hill
10	Nunawading Library	Part of Community Facility	Nunawading
11	Vermont South Library	Part of Community Facility	Vermont South