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Mr Ian Hunter  
Facilities Consultant  
Department of Sport & Recreation  
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Dear Ian

### **OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION FRAMEWORK**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Draft Public Open Space Classification Framework (POSCF), that has been prepared following consultation with, and input from, the membership of Parks and Leisure Australia - WA Division (PLAWA).

PLAWA commends the Department of Sport and Recreation for seeking to address the long running issue of terminology in relation to public open space types, classifications and functions.

PLAWA facilitates an Open Space Planners Network (OSPN), which is an active group of professionals involved in various aspects of public open space planning, design and management, with the aim of improving the quality of all public open space for public recreation. Members of this network were involved in the preliminary workshops to inform the POSCF and have recently met to review and analyse the draft document provided for public comment.

PLAWA would like to thank Julie Rutherford, Nerisa Finau and yourself for taking the time to brief the OSPN on the draft document and answer questions from the OSPN.

Our comments on the POSCF are detailed below:

- The structure and hierarchy proposed in the POSCF is logical, generic and adaptable. It appears to be focussed more towards the planning of open space, however it could equally be applied to management. It is considered necessary to clarify the intent of the POSCF and provide comment on how it may be used in a management context. In this regard, it is considered a solid starting point for additional detail to be added by individual local governments to reflect local management regimes and/or aspirations.
- The POSCF needs to clarify that it is not a substitute for development guidelines and that local governments still need their own POS strategic plans and development guidelines to better define individual POS requirements and acceptable standards.

- The terminology utilised in the POSCF is generally supported. By primarily using terms and definitions already being used by many local governments, it lends itself to being more readily used and applied. As a result there is potential for a consistent definition of POS across the industry. One notable exclusion from the terminology is the terms 'active' and 'passive'. This is seen as a positive omission, as these terms regularly cause the most confusion when trying to define the nature of a POS and its use.
- The example illustrations included for each of the catchment categories should either be removed (so as to avoid literal interpretations of the category) or improved such that they are clearer and more defined. If they are retained, more of the information included in the category should be reflected in the illustration, and consideration should be given to including an "example only" heading.
- The open space functions included in Table 1 should be broadened to include spaces for community events and celebration – perhaps under the 'recreation spaces' heading. Further, recognition and preservation of cultural heritage and/or artefacts needs to be recognised as a real function of POS and accommodated in the POSCF.
- The fact that POS sites with higher level catchments also serve to meet the needs of smaller catchments needs to be recognised in Table 2 (i.e. a regional open space will also serve a local function for those residents within the local catchment).
- Table 4 should be expanded to provide greater definition to each of the values and moved to the front of the document so that the key principles of POS provision are well understood by the reader. Presently it sits as a bit of an afterthought to the catchment information and serves no real function.
- The comments in Table 2 relating to accommodating biodiversity and environmental management goals should be reworded to say that the POS should seek to *enhance* biodiversity.
- Reference should be made to the Department of Sport and Recreation's *Sports Dimensions Guide* to inform appropriate size for POS proposed to accommodate sporting use. The illustrations provided as an example for District Open Space do not reflect the preferred orientations for playing fields as recommended in the Sports Dimensions guide and this should be rectified. Further, sufficient buffers to roads and/or hard infrastructure are not shown or listed as a major consideration. This should also be addressed as this is a key issue for planning of new spaces to accommodate sporting uses.
- The Regional Open Space catchment should be expanded to include other spaces usually reserved under this category in the Metropolitan Region Scheme such as foreshore reserves, as well as state sporting facilities or other infrastructure that is often location on spaces of this size and catchment.

It is hoped that the comments outlined in this response can be incorporated into a more useful and applicable POSCF.

Should you require further information on these comments or have any questions, please contact Mr Nicholas Stawarz at the City of Wanneroo on [Nicholas.stawarz@wanneroo.wa.gov.au](mailto:Nicholas.stawarz@wanneroo.wa.gov.au)

Yours sincerely



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