

Supporting Amenities and User Comfort

Why This Activity Matters

Supporting infrastructure comprising toilets, drinking water, shade, seating, shelters, lighting, waste facilities, bicycle parking and wayfinding are fundamental to open space user comfort, inclusion and usability. In many locations they are the difference between nominal access and practical access, particularly for children, older people, carers, people with a disability and those using parks for longer periods.



Key Needs, Gaps and Pressure

Lighting, maintenance, cleanliness and shade are consistently identified as key factors influencing park use and user satisfaction. However, universal provision of every amenity in every park would create unsustainable capital and lifecycle obligations and may be inconsistent with park function or context. Amenities should therefore be aligned with park hierarchy, typology, dwell time, activity intensity, event role, accessibility, nearby alternatives, utilities and operational capacity.

Provision of additional amenities should be assessed against park function, levels of use, catchment demand, accessibility requirements, proximity to alternative facilities, site constraints and whole-of-life cost considerations.

Council's Strategic Position

Council will deliver coordinated provision of amenities aligned with park typology, function and levels of use.

Higher-order parks and longer-stay destinations will generally receive a more complete level of service commensurate with their role, function and demand.

Local parks will prioritise the elements essential to everyday function, including shade, seating, access and safety, with shelters, lighting and other supporting amenities provided only where justified by demand, operational feasibility and intended role within the wider open space network.

SUPPORTING AMENITIES AND USER COMFORT

Objectives

Objective	Strategic Intent
Improve practical access	Reduce amenity barriers that prevent people from using parks comfortably and confidently.
Align service to function and context	Provide infrastructure according to hierarchy, typology, activity, dwell time and demand.
Improve safety and inclusion	Design and locate amenities in accordance with universal design and CPTED principles.
Strengthen climate comfort	Prioritise tree canopy, shade, water and heat-resilient materials.
Support maintainability	Use standardised, durable and locally sourced infrastructure that supports efficient servicing, renewal and long-term asset performance.
Avoid over-servicing	Ensure infrastructure provision remains proportionate to park function, demand and character.

Technical and Desired Standards of Service Baseline

- Assess public toilet provision by park hierarchy, typology, dwell time, structured activity, event frequency, nearby alternatives, accessibility, safety and servicing capacity.
- Prioritise drinking water at higher-use play, fitness, dog, sport and gathering locations where supply and maintenance can be supported.
- Prioritise canopy over key paths and activity nodes, supplemented by built shade where immediate coverage is challenging.
- Incorporate accessible seating, including backs and armrests where appropriate, together with informal seating at activity and social nodes.
- Provide targeted lighting where it supports legitimate intended night-use, safety, accessibility and park function whilst avoiding unnecessary or inappropriate lighting in isolated or sensitive areas.
- Align waste facilities and servicing levels with expected use, activity types and operational requirements.
- Select robust, low-maintenance and replaceable components consistent with Council palettes and whole-of-life planning.

Strategic Priorities

Planning Priorities

Establish, maintain and regularly review hierarchy-based infrastructure standards and design specifications for open space assets across the network.

Assess priority parks for practical access barriers and identify amenity improvements where supported by demand, park function and community needs.

Prioritise shade and cooling at play, picnic, seating, movement and high-use locations.

Integrate amenity renewal with asset-condition, accessibility and lifecycle programs.

Integrate long-term operational funding, asset planning and investment priorities to support the ongoing delivery and sustainability of the open space network.

Monitor amenity performance and user experience to inform service improvements, renewal priorities and future investment decisions.

Ensure amenity upgrades and renewals are aligned with park typology, function, infrastructure standards, and design specifications

Measures of Success

- ✓ Increased proportion of higher-order parks meeting the required amenity standards.
- ✓ Reduction in community reported use barriers relating to shade, toilets, water, lighting and cleanliness.
- ✓ Improved accessibility, distribution and condition of priority amenities.
- ✓ Reduced reactive maintenance and improved lifecycle performance.

Action Plan Cross Reference:
Section 9.1.3 and 9.1.5, particularly Actions CG2, FI5, FI6, IP4, SM2, SM3 & SM5.