

Park Lands Licence Request – Safer Place to Gather

Wednesday, 3 September 2025
Reconciliation Committee

Strategic Alignment - Our Corporation

Public

Program Contact:

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Approving Officer:

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Shaping

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the State Government's Safer Place to Gather initiative operating from Wirrarninthe / Edwards Park (Park 23) in the western Adelaide Park Lands.

The Safer Place to Gather has been operating from Wirrarninthe / Edwards Park (Park 23) since 1 August 2023. The most recent licence was due to end on 31 August 2025.

On 5 August 2025, the City Community Services and Culture Committee (the Committee) considered a request from the Minister for Human Services for an additional licence from 1 September 2025 to 30 June 2026 ([Link 1](#)).

The Committee resolved to recommend ([Link 2](#)) to Council that an additional licence be provided for the Safer Place to Gather in the Adelaide Park Lands until 30 June 2026, alongside additional measures to ensure community awareness and review of longer-term solutions.

At its meeting held on 12 August 2025 the Council approved the request from the Minister for Human Services for a new licence from 1 September 2025 to 30 June 2026

RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE

1. Notes that the Council has provided an additional licence for the operation of the Safer Place to Gather in Edwards Park (Park 23) from 1 September 2025 to 30 June 2026.

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Places Create safe, inclusive and healthy places for our community
Policy	Community land within the Adelaide Park Lands may be subject to licences. Council granted an extension to the operation of a temporary hub in the Adelaide Park Lands as a social service response for visitors from remote and regional Aboriginal communities. The City of Adelaide's Unauthorised Camping Operating Procedure was updated by Administration in June 2023 to support the temporary use of Wirrarninthe/Edwards Park (Park 23) as a gathering space for visitors from remote and regional Aboriginal communities.
Consultation	Consultation with the City of Adelaide is ongoing through the inter-agency Safety and Wellbeing Taskforce led by the Department of Human Services.
Resource	The City of Adelaide incurs costs for essential infrastructure, including, but not limited to, power, water, toilets, phone charging, and Wi-Fi. For the duration of the initiative, the City of Adelaide has been delivering increased levels of service to the site, primarily for additional waste collection, grass cutting, and site visits/monitoring. The Department of Human Services has implemented regular industrial cleans to supplement existing cleansing.
Risk / Legal / Legislative	The City of Adelaide sought advice from the Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme in relation to the initial license. The advice requires the City of Adelaide and the Department of Human Services to consider potential issues arising from increased patronage and take measures to ensure that the facilities are fit for the intended purpose.
Opportunities	The City of Adelaide is leading an action item through the Safety and Wellbeing Taskforce to investigate culturally appropriate gathering spaces in the Adelaide Park Lands. The Safer Place To Gather initiative is broadly consistent with the intent of a cultural gathering space.
25/26 Budget Allocation	All costs incurred by the City of Adelaide are being covered by existing budgets.
Proposed 26/27 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	The Safer Place To Gather initiative was introduced as a temporary response to anti-social behaviour being experienced on and around North Terrace in 2023.
25/26 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	For the duration of the initiative, the City of Adelaide has been delivering increased levels of service to the site, primarily for additional waste collection, grass cutting, and site visits/monitoring.
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the State Government's Safer Place to Gather initiative operating from Wirrarninthe / Edwards Park (Park 23) in the western Adelaide Park Lands.

Background

2. The Safer Place to Gather initiative is a temporary hub for visitors from remote and regional Aboriginal communities, led by the Department of Human Services.
3. The Minister for Human Services first sought and was granted a license for the site from 1 August 2023 until the end of February 2024 by Council on 1 August 2023.
4. The Minister has subsequently sought two further licences from 1 March 2024 until 1 March 2025, and the current licence which is approved until 31 August 2025.
5. When the request for the current licence was made, the Minister indicated that the intention was to transition from Wirrarninthe / Edwards Park (Park 23) and put alternate longer-term measures in place to support regional and remote Aboriginal visitors.
6. The Department of Human Services has subsequently requested a new licence from 1 September 2025 to 30 June 2026 to continue the use of Wirrarninthe / Edwards Park (Park 23) for the purpose of the Safer Place to Gather for visitors from remote communities.

Park Lands Licence Request

7. The City Community Services and Culture (CCSC) Committee met on 5 August 2025 ([Link 1](#)) to consider the licence request.
8. The Committee received an external presentation on the Park Lands Licence Request from the Department of Human Services.
9. While the Council expressed reservations about another extension to the operation of the Safer Place to Gather, Council resolved to approve the request as follows:
 - 9.1. *Notes that the Adelaide Park Lands Community Land Management Plan (CLMP) references the licenced use of the Adelaide Park Lands for emergency measures where the use is temporary and it provides an essential or urgent health, social or community service.*
 - 9.2. *Approves the request from the Minister for Human Services, as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 5 August 2025, for an additional licence from 1 September 2025 to 30 June 2026.*
 - 9.2.1. *Requests that the Department of Human Services attend the November 2025 meeting of the City Community Service and Cultural Committee to provide information on the alternate longer-term measures being implemented to support remote and regional Aboriginal visitors.*
 - 9.2.2. *Requests the Lord Mayor write to the Minister for Human Services expressing Council's concern with the lack of permanent solutions and funding to develop such a solution.*
 - 9.3. *Requests that the Department of Human Services and the Administration implement a communication plan to create community awareness that the Safer Place to Gather will conclude on 30 June 2026, no less than two months prior to the licence end date.*
 - 9.4. *Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to negotiate with the State Government to grant an additional licence from 31 August 2025 until 30 June 2026 and to execute all documentation to give effect to the Adelaide Park Lands Licence Agreement.*
10. Council maintains a view that there is a need for the State Government and partners to work towards a longer-term accommodation solutions for remote and regional visitors and has requested that:
 - 10.1. The Department of Human Services attend the November 2025 meeting of the CCSC Committee to provide information on the alternate longer-term measures being implemented.
 - 10.2. The Lord Mayor write to the Minister for Human Services expressing Council's concern with the lack of permanent solutions and funding to develop such a solution.

Next Steps

11. Administration has issued the draft licence to the Department of Human Services and will continue to coordinate with the State Government for the duration of the licence agreement.

12. The Department of Human Services has confirmed its attendance at the November 2025 CCSC Committee meeting to provide an update on longer-term accommodation solutions for remote and regional visitors.
13. Lord Mayoral correspondence is being prepared to the Minister for Human Services to enact Council's decision.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 – [City Community Services and Culture Committee - Tuesday, 5th August, 2025 5.30 pm](#)

Link 2 - [Recommendation of the City Community Services and Culture Committee - 5 August 2025.pdf](#)

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

- END OF REPORT -