

**From:** [AJ Kingston](#)  
**To:** [KC Mail](#)  
**Subject:** Planning Scheme Amendment representation  
**Date:** Monday, 27 February 2023 4:38:34 PM

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To Mr Arnold, General Manager

I am writing to you to lodge a representation in relation to the current planning scheme amendment.

Public Open Space Contribution Policy:

One of the policy's aims is to provide consistency and equity in the assessment and application of public open space contributions yet one of the changes made to the policy was to allow funds accrued to be spent in another area.

I have requested details several times over the last nine months about the public open space decisions made and the monetary contributions accrued and expended (see agendas of 5 August and 19 December 2022). The transactions of the Public Open Space account have not yet been provided. There is often over \$1M in the account.

We only became aware of Council's separate Public Open Space account following a formal complaint about the decision to allocate \$200k of land sale money (that the community were led to believe was intended for the 'critical upgrades' of existing playgrounds) to a new playground in Spring Farm. To summarise, at the Council meeting on 1.3.21 a playground at Spring Farm was categorised as a low priority, in the report by the Council Officer, by Dean Winter and by the senior Council Officer. On 19.4.21 councillors allocated \$200k to a Spring Farm playground, and the report and the same senior Council Officer said it was justifiable. There was no community consultation on this (even though other projects were theoretically out for community consultation at this time). This large budget allocation was not itemised in the 2021 5 Year Capital Works Program.

There is far less transparency and accessibility of the public open space account expenditure than expenditure from the capital expenditure budget, and therefore the equitable nature of the decision-making relating to this policy is questionable.

Given the community interest in public open space provision I raised the lack of community consultation when the policy was revised. Council and the community often acknowledge the importance of providing the necessary linkages for active transport, the benefits of incorporating open space and the natural environment into residential areas, and the need to invest in the critical upgrades of our playgrounds. There should have been community involvement in this policy revision, and there should be awareness now of how the policy operates.

It should not be incorporated into the planning scheme without full transparency and full community consultation.

Kind regards

AJ Kingston