

1.46 Rates Subsidy Policy

Policy Owner	Executive Director Corporate & Commercial Services
Responsible Officer	Manager Finance
Date of Approval	01/07/2025
Amended/Revised	09/07/2025

Objective

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish a governing framework for consistent management of applying a full or partial rating subsidy to sporting, recreational, and community organisations; and
- Ensure that all sporting, recreational and community organisations which:
 - Lease property owned by or vested in the City of Albany; or
 - Lease from a third party; or
 - Are owned by the organisation under freehold title;
 - Are treated equitably with regard to rate charges.

Scope

The application of a rating subsidy applies to the use of land and buildings used by sporting, recreational or community organisations only.

Any portion of the land and/or buildings leased to a commercial third-party business will be subject to the appropriate rating category.

Other charges or levies that may be apply are not bound by this policy.

Policy Statements

Council recognises that sporting, recreational and community organisations:

- Exist for the benefit of the community, or subject to membership application; and
- Are not designed to generate significant revenue and/or profit; and
- Are preferably cost-neutral to the City.

A. Criteria:

- Subject to a qualifying criterion, a full subsidy of annual rates may be applied.
- Each property owned or leased by the organisation will be assessed on its own merits and a case-by-case basis.
- To be eligible for a rating subsidy:
 - The purpose of an organisation must be of a sporting, recreational or community nature, the kind outlined below:

Organisation	Nature/Characteristics
Sporting	An entity that has the principal aim of organising and encouraging community participation in sport. For example: Football, golf, bowling clubs, target sports, and equine sports.
Recreational	An entity that has the principal aim of organising and encouraging community participation of a non-sporting nature. For example: bridge clubs, theatre groups, hobby groups, community kindergarten and playgroups, music interest groups, scouts, and Girl Guides.
Community	An entity formed by a group of people residing in a defined area who have come together to address issues within their boundaries of representation and act as one voice for their particular area. These groups generally conduct community meetings and events for the benefit of the community. For example: Progress associations, district associations, and ratepayer/resident associations.

- An organisation's purpose will be stated in the organisation's constitution, details of incorporation or similar statement of purpose; and
- The organisation must be not-for-profit; and
- The property for which the subsidy is being sought must be used for the sporting, recreation or community use for which the organisation exists.

B. Exemptions:

- Council reserves the right to consider each application request for a rate subsidy on a case-by-case basis and may require additional conditions or approve exemptions at the discretion of the Approving Officer.
- The provision of ancillary services where any revenue and surplus received is for the benefit of the group or organisation, such as a bar, dining facilities or canteen, does not disqualify eligibility. Properties (or part of a property) used for a commercial purpose with the revenue and surplus retained by a third party, and/or residential purpose, will not receive a rating subsidy.
- Groups that represent industry segments, commercial businesses, promote a profit-making activity or business group, will not be eligible for any rating subsidy.

C. Documentation:

- The following standard documentation will be required to support a community group's application:
 - A copy of the organisation's constitution, details of incorporation or similar statement of purpose.
 - A statement supporting the application, detailing any service and benefit to the community.
 - Details on any portion of the land and/or buildings leased to a third party, both commercial businesses, and other community or sporting organisations.
 - Submitted documentation will be subject to a review every five (5) years.

D. Reporting:

- The City must be informed of any changes to lease agreements with any third party or changes to the nature and purpose of the community organisation.
- The update must be submitted at least 6 weeks before the 1st of March of the next financial year to determine if changes impact eligibility. If at a future point in time, it is discovered that changes were made and not reported, financial reimbursement may be requested.
- If a new application is approved partway through a financial year, the rate subsidy will apply from the date of lodgement of the application.
- As a condition of delegation, once the policy has been enacted, a list of recipients and the rate subsidy given will be submitted to Council for noting as a public document.

Legislative and Strategic Context

Legislation and policy, which applies to this policy:

- Any organisation leasing or owning land and/or buildings within the municipal boundary of the City of Albany shall be rateable unless provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* provide for them to be non-rateable.

This policy relates to the following elements of the City of Albany Strategic Community Plan:

- **Pillar:** People.
 - **Outcome:** A happy, healthy and resilient community.
 - **Outcome:** A diverse and inclusive community.
- **Pillar:** Leadership.
 - **Outcome:** Strong workplace culture and performance.

Review Position and Date

This policy is to be reviewed annually.

Definitions

Key terms and acronyms used in the policy, and their definitions:

- **Ancillary service:** a service provided for the benefit of members and visitors (for example, canteen, bar service, clubrooms, hiring of rooms).
- **Approving officer:** any person to whom power has been delegated powers concerning this policy.
- **Commercial purpose:** for this policy to conduct an activity in or on the property that is subject to a rates waiver that makes a profit that is distributed to a third party.
- **Community Organisation:** an entity whose primary objective is not directed at making a profit.
- **Other charges and levies:** Includes, but not limited to, electricity, water and gas charges, ESL (Emergency Services Levy), and waste collection charges, as applicable to each property.
- **Recreational Organisation:** an entity that has the principal aim of encouraging and organisation community participation of a non-sporting nature.
- **Sporting Organisation:** an entity that has the principal aim of encouraging and organising community participation in sport.