

# **THEEWATERSKLOOF MUNICIPALITY**



## **GUIDELINE**

### **“ADOPT A PUBLIC OPEN SPACE”**

## **PREAMBLE**

Theewaterskloof Municipality is committed to occupying an impactful role as a socially responsible Local Government. This commitment is rooted in a deep moral conviction and is driven by prudent business sustainability practice. This is reinforced by the Municipality's Mission, "***To provide, develop and promote equal opportunities for everyone to stay in a safe and healthy crime free, economically sustainable and viable environment through transparent and effective governance, political stability, planning, services and the efficient and effective utilization of resources***".

In this context we intend embracing sustainable social projects which are of benefit to both the community and the Municipality at large.

### **Definition (Land Use Planning Scheme Regulations)**

**Public Open Space** means land which is under or will be under the ownership of a local authority, which is not leased nor will be leased on a long term basis, and which is utilised or will be utilised as an open space or a park, garden, picnic area, playground or square and includes a public place.

### **Purpose**

"Adopt a Public Open Space" is an initiative by Council to enable members of the public, industries or companies to adopt an open space area at no cost to the applicant.

The "adoptee" would be responsible to clear the area of alien vegetation and rubble as well as to maintain or landscape the area with indigenous vegetation or by engaging in sustainable livelihood projects such as communal or home food gardens.

The adoptee may advertise its involvement in this initiative on site, subject to certain conditions.

The main reasons for launching this initiative are to encourage the public to take care of the Environment by:

1. Combating alien vegetation which in some communities has posed as a danger (rape and murder).
2. Combating illegal dumping which has a financial implication to the municipality and a health risk to the community.

### **How is it different from leasing an open space?**

By leasing an open space you pay for the right to utilize the area for private use. "Adopt a Public Open Space" does not give the adoptee the right to restrict public access to the area.

## Which areas could be “adopted”?

Any unused road reserve, servitude, walkway and other open space areas could be considered for adoption. Areas worthy of conservation would be promoted for conservation purposes.

## Why should we “adopt” these areas?

This is a great marketing initiative to show that we care about our environment! Companies and industries could use “Adopt a Public Open Space” as a corporate responsibility initiative. Landscaping companies could use this initiative to showcase their creativity and expertise. The environment would benefit by the eradication of alien vegetation and previously disadvantaged communities can adopt an open space for food security projects – there are many benefits!

## Would the public lose its right to access these public open spaces?

No, the areas would remain public domain.

Should the adoptee want to fence the area for security purposes or to curb illegal dumping, or wish to improve the property in any way, the applicant would have to formally apply for approval from Council, in which case Council might decide that the area should be formally leased at a cost to the applicant.

## What would the application process involve?

- The applicant would **give a written application** to the Municipality for approval of the “adoption” of an open space;
- An agreement will be drawn up setting out the conditions of the agreement, and would be signed by both parties **before the land is occupied**.
- A **5 year** time period would be attached to the lease with a three month term of notice for both parties.
- The area would be made available to the applicant at no cost;
- In accordance with the agreement, the applicant would be responsible for the removal and/or treatment of any alien vegetation prevalent in the area.
- The Department of Parks/Environmental Management will be responsible to identify alien vegetation that should be removed. The removal of any indigenous vegetation is strictly prohibited;
- The area should then be rehabilitated or landscaped with indigenous vegetation or vegetables and should be maintained at regular intervals;
- The applicant would be entitled to **put up an acceptable** fence in the area for security reasons and/or to combat illegal dumping, subject to approval.
- The public should have unrestricted access to the adopted area at all reasonable times; **unless it has been fenced**. **If fenced in a sign stating restricted area must be put up for Health and Safety reasons**

- The applicant would be entitled to advertise its involvement in the initiative on site, subject to Council's ***Advertising Signs Bylaws***.
- The sustainability of the project would be the responsibility of the applicant.
- The Municipality will not be responsible for the provision of water. In instances where water is not available in the form of river/storm water, the applicant can apply for a water connection in the form of a water meter and would be responsible for the account.