

# ACTIVE

W R R N A M B O O L



Implementation Report - November 2018



Prepared for:  
WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## The Previous Strategy

**The Warrnambool Recreation Plan (WRP) 2007-2017 was endorsed by Council in 2008. Its Action Plan was based around the following seven key themes:**

- Planning for Recreation
- Managing Recreation
- Improving existing recreation infrastructure
- Reviewing or relocating existing recreation facilities
- Developing new and/or additional recreation facilities
- Supporting clubs and organisations
- Developing new or improving existing public open space.

The Warrnambool Recreation Plan 2007-2017 Final Implementation Review implementation scorecard, shows that a good level of implementation was achieved. Of the 84 recommended actions, 62 have been achieved, 17 remain in progress and 5 are incomplete or the issue has changed.

Apart from the direct implementation of recommendations, the WRP has also produced a range of broader outputs:

- Strategic direction to guide the work of the Recreation Unit
- Modest increase in recurrent resources to implement the WRP
- Secured a significant level of funding from the State Government with 58 projects completed over the past ten years. Council's direct investment of \$2,994,071 has resulted in expenditure of \$9,124,442 on Plan recommendations, with \$6,130,371 leveraged from external sources (Government grants, club contributions and trusts).

Council was successful in securing funding from Sport and Recreation Victoria under its 2016/17 Community Sport Infrastructure Funding program to support developing a new Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Strategy.

This Strategy is now titled the **Active Warrnambool Strategy**.

# Developing the new strategy

The Active Warrnambool Strategy is being developed in two parts.

## Part A

Part A addressed the question “**What is the Current Environment?**” and included the preparation of a comprehensive background report. The background report was completed in December 2016 and is a detailed review of the directions, policies, spaces, and practices which need to be considered in the Active Warrnambool Strategy. The report comprises:

- A review of Council's policies and strategic plans, as well as relevant regional, state and national reports;
- An analysis of municipal demographics;
- Review and mapping of current sports and recreation facilities and activities across the municipality;
- Benchmarking against delivery of sport and recreation in three comparable Victorian LGAs;
- Review and assessment of Council's current delivery of sport and recreation and physical activity.

The background report is intended as the primary resource for the development of the Active Warrnambool Strategy and will be relied upon in the preparation of the Strategy.



## Part B

Part B of the project will comprise the preparation of the directions and recommendations which will constitute the Active Warrnambool Strategy. The Strategy will inform Council's planning and provision of sport, recreation and physical activity in Warrnambool to 2028.

The development of the Strategy will be based around investigating and responding to the following key questions:

- **What is successful? (Stage 2)** – assessing the current delivery of recreation opportunity against standards and benchmarks; considering user and stakeholder comment on the current offer; and reviewing what has encouraged activity amongst the Warrnambool population.
- **What needs to be done (Stage 3)** – identifying gaps in current delivery and opportunities to build upon existing strengths to encourage greater activity amongst the Warrnambool community.
- **What are the key issues (Stage 4)** – identifying barriers to filling gaps and taking opportunities to provide enhanced access to sport, recreation and physical activity in Warrnambool to 2026.
- **How can this be done (Stage 5)** – identifying key actions and recommendations; considering appropriate timing, staging and implementation of the recommendations.

The findings and response to Stages 2, 3 and 4 are summarised in the Active Warrnambool Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper March 2018.

This Implementation Report constitutes a response to the identified issues and opportunities, as a step towards the final strategy recommendations representing completion of the Active Warrnambool Strategy. It does not provide specific recommendations, but outlines responses to the issues, opportunities and barriers previously identified.



# Community Engagement

**There are two community engagement processes informing the Active Warrnambool Strategy. The first input was from a broader Community visioning project titled Warrnambool 2040 project. The second input involved targeted engagement about the issues and opportunities for the Active Warrnambool Strategy.**

A summary of these inputs is outlined below.

## First Stage – April to mid-June 2017

In April 2017, Council commenced conversations with the community as part of the development of a new Community Plan, Warrnambool 2040 (refer to [www.w2040.com.au](http://www.w2040.com.au) for further information). The extensive engagement informs Council's Community Plan, but also provided opportunities for Council to engage the community on a range of other plans and strategies, including Active Warrnambool.

A long form survey, titled Warrnambool Now and 2040, included a series of questions taken from the Australian Sports Commission's AusPlay survey and has provided Council with data on how the community is currently participating in sport, recreation and physical activity. The data was analysed and provided as part of the background to the Active Warrnambool Strategy and has informed the Issues and Opportunities discussion paper.

## Second Stage – November 2017

The second stage of consultation was undertaken by communityvibe and involved **five focus groups** and **key stakeholder meetings**. Five written submissions were also received from the community.

The focus group and stakeholder meetings comprised selected community, staff and stakeholder representatives and addressed the following topics.

### Focus Group 1

#### STAFF FOCUS GROUP – POLICIES, PROGRAMS, SYSTEMS AND TOOLS

Selected Warrnambool City Council staff were asked to identify specific challenges that they face in relation to policies, programs, systems and tools in their work in the sport and active recreation sector.

### Focus Group 2

#### STAFF FOCUS GROUP – PARTICIPATION

Staff who work with traditionally disadvantaged people such as young people, people with disabilities and older adults were asked to identify barriers to participation, particularly in relation to their clients.

### Focus Group 3

#### FACILITY FOCUS GROUP

Thirty-two residents of Warrnambool City took part in a focus group aimed to identify priorities for the development and upgrade of both formal (i.e. sports grounds and indoor stadiums) and informal (i.e. walking/cycling trails and playgrounds) sport and recreation facilities in the municipality over the next ten years.

### Focus Group 4

#### PARTICIPATION FOCUS GROUP

A focus group was held with 22 community members to consider the creation of a more physically active Warrnambool (particularly for those who are currently inactive). Focus group participants were asked in groups to brainstorm barriers to participation and to identify some potential initiatives that are likely to increase physical activity participation.

### Focus Group 5

#### CLUB SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS GROUP

The club sustainability focus group was asked to identify key actions that may enable clubs and organisations to improve their sustainability.

### Key Stakeholder Meeting

#### SOUTH WEST SPORT (Michael Neoh, Executive Officer)

The key role of South West Sport (SWS) is to build the capacity of clubs. It is funded by Sport and Recreation Victoria (part of Department of Health and Human Services) and VicHealth. South West Sport's vision is to be: 'A leading organisation in the sport and recreation sector'

### Third Stage – June 2018

Using the Issues and Opportunities report, and this Implementation Report, draft recommendations will be developed (the initial component of the draft strategy).

The third stage of consultation will involve testing the draft recommendations with key internal and external stakeholders and interested residents. Communityvibe will facilitate the focus groups that form the third stage of engagement.



## 2. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK:

### Addressing issues, opportunities and barriers

**As outlined in the study brief and in Section 1 above, the implementation report is intended to respond to the issues, opportunities and barriers already identified.**

The question posed by the project brief - “How Can This Be Done” – relates to how the various points raised in the Active Warrnambool Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper (March 2018) can be responded to in an effective and achievable way. In this regard, the Implementation Report outlines a framework for preparing the recommendations and strategies which will underpin the Active Warrnambool Strategy.

**This framework is summarised below under five key points:**

#### **Improvements Needed**

Analysing the improvements identified through the Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper, with potential responses in relation to availability of Council and community resources and capacity, local demography, trends in provision and participation, and availability of assistance from other stakeholders and funders.

#### **Recreation Services Planning and Delivery**

Suggesting a framework for integrated recreation service planning and delivery across Council (including land use planning and management, asset management, municipal health and wellbeing, and events).

#### **Funding Sources**

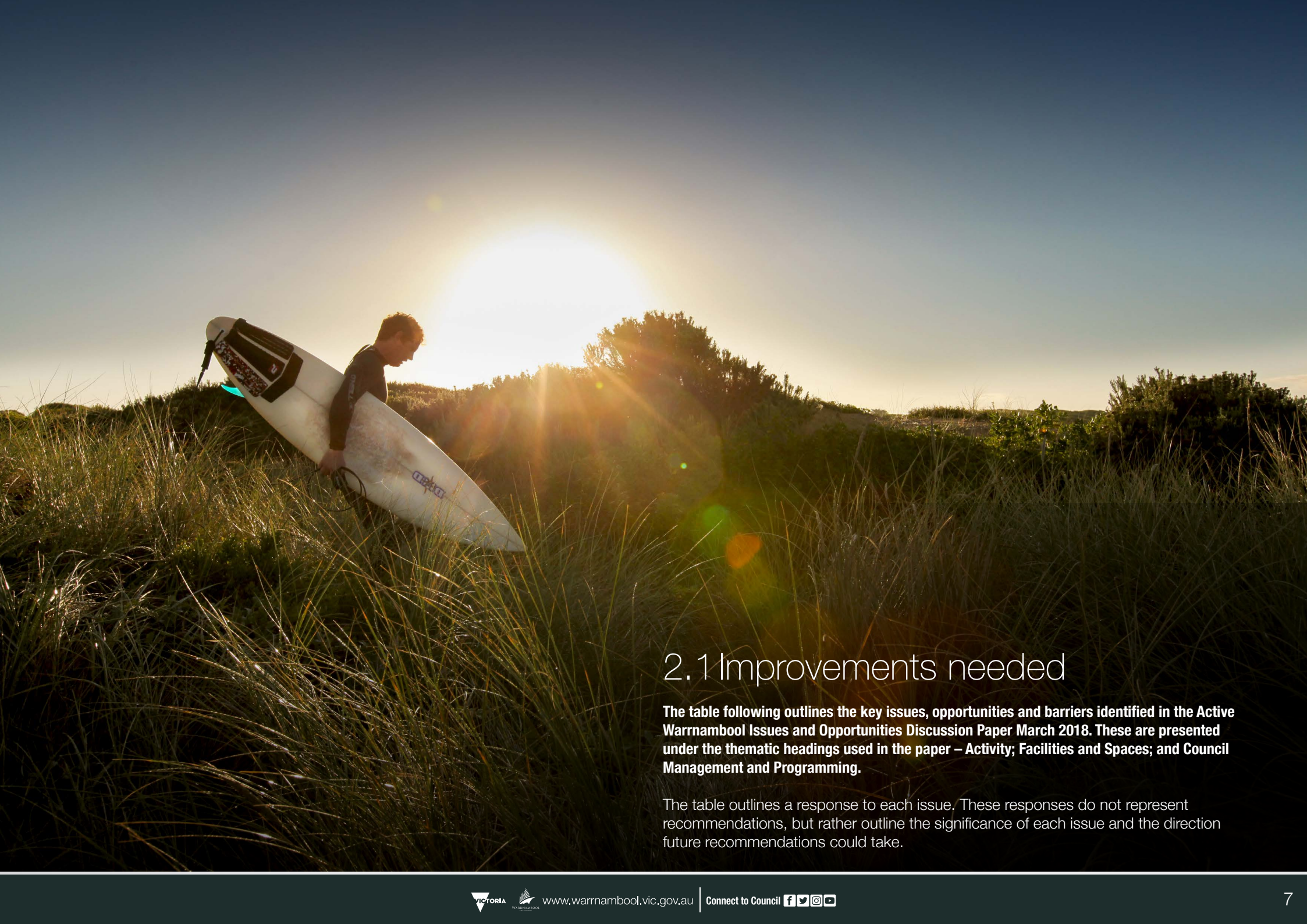
Identifying Council and non-Council funding sources and how they might support Council or other local service providers, including analysis of proposed funding allocation requirements against identified recommendations and actions over time.

#### **Future Planning**

Identifying the need for future or follow-up planning and investigation.

#### **Performance Indicators**

Suggesting a list of performance indicators for Council to measure success in recreation service provision.



## 2.1 Improvements needed

**The table following outlines the key issues, opportunities and barriers identified in the Active Warrnambool Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper March 2018. These are presented under the thematic headings used in the paper – Activity; Facilities and Spaces; and Council Management and Programming.**

The table outlines a response to each issue. These responses do not represent recommendations, but rather outline the significance of each issue and the direction future recommendations could take.

ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS (Refer Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper March 2018)	RESPONSE	KEY CONSIDERATIONS/DIRECTIONS
<b>THEME 1: ACTIVITY</b>		
<p><b>1. Understand the future needs and strategic provision of facilities (number, distribution, usage) for key sports.</b></p>	<p>It is important for Council to have a good understanding of the current and likely future use of sporting facilities for organised sport, to assist in future decision making, planning, and management of its sport and recreation assets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine approach to collecting sports participation data.</li> <li>• Determine a process to liaise with peak sporting bodies to access key information on their understanding of local demand for and participation trends of their sport in the region.</li> <li>• Investigate whether sports specific studies for football, netball, tennis, lawn bowls, golf and hockey (as has occurred for soccer and cricket) is a useful approach to this work.</li> <li>• What is the best approach to respond strategically to this need.</li> <li>• Capacity of Council Staff to complete sports-specific studies in-house, against the cost to engage external consultants to undertake this work.</li> <li>• Determine how Council responds to the recommendations from the (yet to be completed) Great South Coast Regional AFL, Netball and Cricket Strategy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. There is a need to maintain the strong culture of involvement in sports clubs and participation within them and promote the benefits of Club membership as a mechanism to increase physical activity.</b></p>	<p>There is high participation in organised sport by Warrnambool residents. Participation within sports clubs support a physically and socially connected community. A collective aim of club administrators and Council should be to inspire the community to understand the importance of physical activity and recreation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to best publicly recognise significant achievements of individuals, clubs and associations.</li> <li>• How individuals, clubs and associations share information and experiences that might inspire the broad community.</li> <li>• What are the synergies with the Warrnambool a Health a City (municipal health and wellbeing plan) that need to be identified here (emphasis on the health and wellbeing benefits of club involvement).</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Continue to assist clubs to build their capacity</b></p>	<p>Clubs with strong committees and adequate numbers of players, officials and members are typically clubs that enjoy sustained success, can operate independently, and are resourceful. Warrnambool should aim to have a network of sustainable clubs with a high degree of independence.</p> <p>Clubs and Associations continually advise their concerns around the impacts on volunteerism and growing burden of meeting legislative requirements (i.e. Working with Children Check and Child Safe Standards).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the best way of providing club development programs and services.</li> <li>• What other organisations/agencies have a role in supporting club capacity.</li> <li>• What organisations/agencies have a role to strengthen sport pathways for transition of younger participants into senior sport and recreational activities.</li> <li>• Review Council's process for dissemination of sport and recreation information to sporting associations, clubs and community groups, e.g. grants funding.</li> <li>• Is there a strategy that can provide an integrated approach to support clubs to get access to potential participants and members?</li> <li>• Review Council's approach to determine how best to respond to club requests for information and assistance.</li> <li>• Consider what role Council has in promoting/facilitating diversity of use at facilities occupied by clubs that could be a revenue source for those clubs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Consider options to assist and encourage clubs to be more inclusive of female participation</b></p>	<p>Girls and women are continuing to become more involved as players and administrators, and Council has a role to facilitate this increased participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine an approach for Council to address/influence specific needs and preferences of female participation in organised sport and other physical activities.</li> <li>• As part of this approach, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Identify what initiatives and policies that support participation by girls and women in organised sport and other physical activities (as player, administrator, volunteer) be developed.</li> <li>&gt; Understanding what improvements might facilitate increased female involvement when planning for new/ upgraded sporting facilities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Identify and recognise the emergence and increase in popularity of emerging sports and activities that have not had a strong presence in Warrnambool.</b></p>	<p>The diversity of sporting and recreation opportunities in the City is likely to continue to increase as the population increases and becomes more diverse, media coverage and the internet continue to showcase emerging sports, and people's interest in non-mainstream sports continues. Council should consider supporting emerging sports and activities to aid their establishment and development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine an approach to respond to emerging trends and requests for assistance from new and emerging groups/sports/activities.</li> </ul>



**6. There is a need to support increasing flexibility of programming to help overcome or ease the barriers to participation.**

The Valuing Sport and Recreation background report (Active Victoria) found that the mix of sport and recreation activities that Victorians engage in is changing, reflecting changed needs and interests. Changes in work patterns and lifestyle, cost, time and transport issues are all driving people to active recreation options that best fit their own circumstances.

The Active Warrnambool Strategy should aim to provide all residents with the opportunity to participate in sport, recreation and physical activity. Actions to reduce the numbers of residents not participating in any form of sport or active recreation and to remove barriers to participation should be a key focus.

Whilst there are currently incentives (funding through VicHealth and Sport and Recreation Victoria) for Clubs and Associations to increase the flexibility of their programming and diversity, feedback provided indicates that impacts on volunteerism (refer point 3 above) make it challenging for many clubs to take up these opportunities and ensure they are sustainable.

Warrnambool's population has diversified and aged significantly in recent years, and the CALD community is larger than ever before. Council has signed up to be a member of the Welcoming Cities Network and as an Age Friendly City.

- What can Council do to support increased flexibility and diversification of programming in public spaces.
- What role should Council and other organisations have in supporting clubs to increase and sustain flexible programs.
- What are the considerations for the Strategy from Welcoming Cities Network and Age Friendly Cities.
- How can Council better support place making and community led programming to increase the diversification of programming in public spaces.



ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS (Refer Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper March 2018)	RESPONSE	KEY CONSIDERATIONS/DIRECTIONS
<b>THEME 2: FACILITIES AND SPACES</b>		
<p><b>7. Investigate increasing mixed use of existing Reserves for social and non-competitive activities.</b></p>	<p>The growing desire of the Warrnambool community to be involved in an increasingly diverse range of informal, social and non-competitive active recreational pursuits could require more efficient use of Council Reserves.</p> <p>The single use focus of most existing sports Reserves presents an opportunity to diversify the offering at these facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine how Council can respond to requests for provision of informal recreation activities.</li> <li>• Determine the intervention level for an activity that triggers the need for a new facility or space.</li> <li>• Determine the process for identifying existing Reserves or sites with capacity to host additional activities i.e. review of existing strategies and plans.</li> <li>• Consider the longstanding culture of sports club ownership of these facilities and how change to this approach can be overcome.</li> <li>• Where planning (structure, development or master planning) is to occur, the provision of spaces for informal recreation pursuits should be a key outcome.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Improve connection to and between existing spaces and facilities</b></p>	<p>Review of Warrnambool 2040 long form survey data reveals that the most popular activities amongst the Warrnambool community remain running, walking and cycling. The establishment of an integrated and comprehensive trail network will not only cater for this activity as an end in itself but will also encourage greater use of the diversity of recreational spaces available to the community.</p> <p>The following plans are under development; Principle Pedestrian Strategy; a feasibility plan for active transport connections from the CBD to Deakin University; Merri River Precinct Policy and South of the Merri River Precinct Plan; and a proposed Principle Cycling Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a range of plans and investigations that will inform future walking and cycling connections across the municipality, but it is unclear if this work will address the needs for off road shared trails.</li> <li>• If there is a gap in planning for off road shared trails, determine how to develop a priority list of shared trail connections and improvements. Determine if additional community consultation is required in relation to key gaps in the pedestrian and cycle network and if the Cycling Reference Group is the best mechanism to achieve this. What level of engagement is required with other agencies to facilitate the priority list.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Enhance appropriate neighbourhood community infrastructure and its utilisation</b></p>	<p>There a need to diversify and increase the multiuse of community facilities.</p> <p>A key element in encouraging and broadening the use of sports and open space reserves by the non-sporting community is the provision of park infrastructure. Appropriate infrastructure is particularly significant in encouraging activity by groups who are often less involved in organized sport and physical activity, such as the disabled, the unwell and the elderly.</p> <p>The installation or replacement of such infrastructure is often relatively simple and comparatively low cost and so can be achieved through the annual Open Space Capital Works budget and need not be reliant upon master planning or detailed design.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is policy needed to support better utilisation of community facilities by the community.</li> <li>• Current auditing to ensure elements are fit for purpose and meet current demands.</li> <li>• Does the current Open Space Infrastructure Guidelines (Open Space Strategy) reflect the priorities to support activation of spaces for community use.</li> <li>• Priority is addressed within the Playspace Strategy's Infrastructure Design Guidelines (in progress) and within Precinct Structure Plans and Development Plans.</li> <li>• Are there existing areas of need or gaps where appropriate levels of community infrastructure are needed</li> <li>• Does the City require outdoor exercise equipment in open spaces and is a criteria needed to guide their provision and location.</li> <li>• How can the Strategy ensure that Developer Contribution Plans focus on the appropriate embellishment of open space in addition to the purchase of land.</li> </ul>
<p><b>10. Provide neighbourhood parks and open space within walking distance of residential areas</b></p>	<p>The provision of neighbourhood scale open space accessible by walking or cycling is a proven influence in encouraging informal physical activity and enhancing the liveability of residential neighbourhoods. The Warrnambool Open Space Strategy requires Neighbourhood or above classified open space within 500 metres or Local open space within 300 metres of 95% of properties in residential areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key tools to support the provision of new and enhanced neighbourhood open space.</li> <li>• As part of the Playspace Strategy review, prioritise the provision and enhancement of neighbourhood open spaces and play spaces, including their distribution throughout the municipality and the types of functions/ activities within them.</li> </ul>



**11. Review of current facility provision and sports participation levels reveal demand for up to four additional soccer pitches by 2036 and support by clubs and other stakeholders for selected sites and facilities to undergo master planning processes in the next few years**

Council should prioritise sport and active recreation facility renewal and upgrade of existing facilities, prior to developing new. An adequate level of facility provision is important to allow for participation in sports and activities by the local community, and best use of existing facilities and sites. There have been a number of specific facility development requirements identified to date (i.e. squash).

- How to ensure the adequate provision of soccer facilities into the future.
- Is there a need for any new master planning at Reserves or sites in Warrnambool.
- Determine the process for identifying Reserves or sites where master plans might be required.
- Determine the best approach to allow the Warrnambool Stadium to meet future usage demand from existing and potential new uses.
- Consider the outcomes of the Deakin University Masterplan and how it responds to the Active Warrnambool Strategy.
- Determine if there is a need for Council to be involved in further regional planning following the completion of the Great South Coast Regional AFL, Cricket and Netball Strategy in 2018.
- What are the specific facility development requirements identified to date and how are they to be prioritised or responded to.

**12. Consideration should be given to the open space facility provision for the future.**

The Active Warrnambool Strategy will inform the active open space facility provision and needs in Precinct Structure Plans and Developer Contributions Plans including. The Urban Growth Corridor, South Dennington and North of the Merri.

- Determine what is required for the Active Warrnambool Strategy to inform active and passive open space needs in Precinct Structure Planning and Development Plans undertaken during its term.
- The North of the Merri Precinct Structure Plan sunsets in 2018 and the Developer Contributions Plan must be reviewed as a result.
- Is there need for an Active Recreation Infrastructure Development Policy to guide future facility provision and needs.

Review of Warrnambool 2040 long form survey data reveals that nature-based activities including walking, swimming, cycling, bush-walking, fishing and surfing are the most popular activities amongst the Warrnambool community and have higher participation levels than National levels.

**13. The protection and enhancement of key physical and environmental assets and provision of appropriate public access to waterways and coastal environments is needed.**

Public access to waterways and coastal environments for sport, recreation and physical activity is a high priority for residents, however this must be balanced with the required environmental protections.

There are opportunities for Council to partner with Wannon Water, the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning on the development of Integrated Water Management Plans (IWMP). IWMPs present opportunities to identify water harvesting and reuse options and may increase opportunities for access to sustainable water sources for the irrigation sports grounds and open space. An IWMP will be developed for Albert Park in 2018/19 and the Lake Pertobe Master Plan recommends the development of a Plan for the precinct.

- Refer to Section 2, Point 9, first dot point under consideration/directions.
- How can Council and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning respond to demand for increased public access for Mountain Bike Riding in the Thunder Point Coastal Reserve whilst acknowledging the cultural and environment significance of the site.
- How can the protection of the natural environment be guaranteed whilst maintaining access for sport and recreation.
- Should sustainable water sources for recreation be considered at other reserve and open spaces.

**14. Changing standards in facility provision and their consequential impacts need to be considered**

Guidelines developed by the Victorian Government and State Sporting Associations inform facility development requirements and also reflect increased female participation in traditionally male sports.

Most existing sports pavilions fall short of the current standards and Council will need to determine the priority of actions required in response.

The guidelines often reflect a level of provision which will not necessarily be appropriate or achievable at small scale community facilities.

- How can Council influence the Parks and Leisure Australia review of the validity of guidelines and standards in rural and regional settings.
- How can Council achieve the renewal and enhancement of facilities that respond to local needs.
- How best can Council stay informed of industry trends in terms of design, and operation during planning for new/ upgraded facilities.
- Identify how Council responds to the recommendations from the to be completed Great South Coast Regional AFL, Netball and Cricket Strategy.



ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS (Refer Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper March 2018)	RESPONSE	KEY CONSIDERATIONS/DIRECTIONS
<b>THEME 3: COUNCIL MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAMMING</b>		
<p><b>15. Undertake an assessment of existing reports and master plans to consolidate outstanding actions that will be part of a prioritised list of projects.</b></p>	<p>Council has completed a range of strategic plans and master plans to guide the development and enhancement of existing facilities and spaces within the City. The challenge for Council is to establish a prioritised list of projects that reflects identified needs and demands from across the whole of the City.</p> <p>A review of existing strategies would ensure consistency between initiatives, actions and ideas generated in this Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the report and plans that need to be reviewed.</li> <li>• How can Council best stay informed of industry trends in terms of design, operation and open space development during planning for new/ upgraded facilities.</li> <li>• Determined the process to collate and prioritise recommendations for new/ upgraded facilities and spaces captured in existing strategic plans and master plans.</li> <li>• How can Council capture current information from users, committees and associations to ensure the priority list remains current.</li> <li>• Is there a way for Council to increase the capacity of clubs and Committees of Management to undertake capital improvement projects using their own resources?</li> <li>• Is there a way for Council to acknowledge the value of community led work?</li> </ul>
<p><b>16. There are a range of existing policies that require review or new policies required.</b></p>	<p>A review of a number of existing policies is required to inform Council processes and support.</p> <p>A gap analysis of existing policies and recommendations for new policies or improvement to existing key documents should occur.</p>	<p>Consider the priority and responsibility for update or development of the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital contributions policy (2013),</li> <li>• Community Development Fund guidelines</li> <li>• Fees and Charges for the Use of Council's Outdoor Sports Facilities (2009)</li> <li>• Finals Use of Sports Ground Allocations for Finals Use Policy (2011)</li> <li>• Assistance to Individuals or Groups Participating in National or International Events or Activities (2011)</li> <li>• Community Facility Access</li> <li>• Reserve Sponsorship and naming</li> <li>• Healthy by Design (a resource designed to help guide the design of built environments that promote health and active communities).</li> <li>• Active Warrnambool Policy (to imbed to strategies and objectives in the Municipal Strategic Statement).</li> </ul>
<p><b>17. Council does not currently have a formal and consistent framework for requesting and spending of open space contributions</b></p>	<p>The collection of open space contributions is an accepted and effective method for providing open space</p> <p>The Warrnambool Open Space Strategy recommends the development of an Open Space Contributions Policy to direct the collection and spending of open space contributions</p>	<p>Development of an Open Space Contributions Policy should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current policy and legislation that informs the collection of open space contributions;</li> <li>• Recent VCAT decisions and benchmarking against comparable Councils;</li> <li>• Whether it is appropriate to set a rate or rates for open space contributions in the planning scheme (schedule to 52.01);</li> <li>• Guidelines for what constitutes an open space contribution (land contributions); and</li> <li>• Administration of and guidelines for spending open space contributions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>18. Comparison of local participation data collected in 2013 and 2017 shows that, while facilities and infrastructure have been developed and improved over that time, responses indicate reduced participation and satisfaction in some areas. This may reflect an increase in participants' aspirations and perhaps a lack of awareness of new and enhanced facilities.</b></p>	<p>Seek to understand why there has been a reduction in participation and satisfaction.</p> <p>There may be a need for raising awareness of sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities available to the community.</p> <p>Council would have a role in raising that awareness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how the 2021 local participation data collection gains further understanding behind this matter.</li> <li>• Consider the benefit of further raising community awareness of activity opportunities.</li> <li>• Determine the type of communications and promotional opportunities required such as an awareness campaign</li> </ul>

**19. A planned approach to responding to and meeting the asset renewal gap will be critical for Council.**

The likelihood of limited funds for asset renewal now and into the future will inevitably limit Council's capacity to renew and replace community infrastructure.

This is particularly important in supporting community recreation services that rely heavily on infrastructure such as pavilions and buildings, pathways and other open space infrastructure.

- Ensuring that asset management plans are kept current and that all stakeholders are involved in their development.
- How does Council respond to the asset renewal gap in responding to renewal targets.
- Determine processes for prioritising infrastructure upgrades and the associated long term costs.
- How does Council achieve a balanced approach to asset provision including processes around winding down assets or services no longer priorities to the community.
- Consider alternatives to Council ownership of assets and funding alternatives for asset renewal.

**20. There is a need for council to invest in evidence-based development and enhancement of recreation and facilities and spaces.**

Council support for sport, recreation and physical activity infrastructure and programs should be based on:

- Maintaining what is existing and providing value.
- Maintaining and renewing high use facilities and spaces.
- Investment must be targeted towards projects and proposals that demonstrate measurable community benefit and are evidence based.
- Investment is required in communities that are disadvantaged or most in need.
- New infrastructure should be prioritized towards facilities that are publicly accessible, support high levels of community use, and include spaces that can be used by more than one group and provide for a range of activities.

- Consider how the Great South Coast AFL, Cricket and Netball Strategy and Open Space Asset Audits are responded to within asset renewal and capital works planning.
- Should the review of the Capital Contributions Policy include a response to how capital funding is prioritised.
- How can Council best respond to capital works proposals from Clubs and Organisations.

**21. Clarification of Council's role in recreation provision is needed to guide its responsibilities and ensure appropriate resources are provided for it.**

Council's role is a provider of community recreation facilities and programs, a planner, a supporter of local clubs and organisations, a funder of local projects and community initiatives and a developer of recreation projects.

Staff workload has increased, and therefore the capacity of Council to absorb increased tasks and responsibilities may be limited unless additional resources are provided.

- What are the core roles and responsibilities of the Recreation Unit and which Directorate takes responsibility for Open Space.
- How can additional priorities, identified through this report, be resourced.

**22. The implementation of sustainable and effective facility management models that support community-based leadership should be considered.**

Council is responsible for the management of 171 areas of open space, including fourteen sports grounds. One Reserve, the Allansford Recreation Reserve, is managed by a locally elected Committee of Management, and this model is highly successful at this Reserve.

- Playing Fair – Developing a Response to the Sports Ground Management Review plans to consider this management model.
- Whilst the model is effective at Allansford, given the broader issues of volunteerism and the predominantly urban nature of the municipality, can the model realistically be considered for urban based sports Reserves.



## 2.2 Recreation service planning and delivery

**Active Warrnambool is a strategy that will require a cross-council approach to its effective implementation and delivery. Whilst the Recreation Unit is the Council department responsible for the preparation of the Active Warrnambool Strategy and for its overall implementation, the following Council Units will have a shared role and responsibility for actioning selected recommendations:**

- Infrastructure Services (for operations and strategic asset management)
- Facilities & Projects (for building maintenance and capital works)
- Capacity, Access & Inclusion (for volunteer support, older adult programs, and disability access planning)
- City Strategy & Development (for longer term land use planning, development assessment and building compliance)
- Visitor Economy (for sport-tourism events)
- Community Planning and Policy (for Health and Wellbeing Planning and active living)

Service responsibilities for functional areas are also outlined within the project development cycle below:

The Strategy should determine which Directorate takes the lead for open space planning and provision. This includes leading planning for open space capital works and implementation of the Playspace Strategy. It is also important to continue to develop integration across the stages to ensure that all relevant units/directorates are represented.

An internal project working group will review the draft Strategy recommendations. As the recommendations will have implications for or a responsibility with other departments this will be an effective mechanism to gain input of the relevant departments at this



stage of the project. This will be particularly relevant for infrastructure projects, and for recommendations for service enhancements designed to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. The benefits of incorporating staff from other relevant Council departments to collaboratively plan and scope recommendations include:

- Access to expertise from staff in other areas of Council
- Ensures alignment with other Council strategies and plans being implemented by other departments
- Maximises opportunities for combining or consolidating like-projects from other Council strategies and plans
- Ensures effective information exchange across Council

Planning Cycle Stage	Walking and Cycling	Waterways	Sports Grounds and Facilities	Open Space
Project Initiation	City Infrastructure	City Infrastructure	Community Development	Various/Shared
Project Planning	Various	City Infrastructure	Community Development	Various/Shared
Project Execution and Monitoring	City Infrastructure	City Infrastructure	Community Development/ City Infrastructure	Various/Shared
Project Closure and Review	City Infrastructure	City Infrastructure	Community Development/ City Infrastructure	City Infrastructure
Post Project	City Infrastructure	City Infrastructure	Community Development	City Infrastructure





## 2.3 Investment

**An understanding of the likely levels of investment available from Council and non-Council sources is essential to guide the development of recommendations that are realistic and affordable for Council and the community.**

To support this understanding, the following information is presented below:

- a) Past five years trends in investment from Council and through grant funding from external sources used to provide recreation services to the community, implementation of the previous ten year Recreation Strategy (Warrnambool Recreation Plan), and the maintenance, renewal, redevelopment and development of new, sport and recreation assets.
- b) Key issues and analysis around investment in sport, recreation and physical activity.

### **a) Past five year trends**

The trend information is presented in two sections – recurrent investment and capital/project investment.

## I. Recurrent Investment - Community Development Directorate

Expense	Past Five Year investment 2013/14 – 2017/18 \$	Investment in 2017/18 \$	Comment
Salaries	1,050,707	240,299	Includes Manager Recreation and Culture (0.2 FTE), Recreation Service Manager (1.0 EFT) and Senior Recreation Planner (0.8 FTE), and part time and casual resources utilised at various times to meet workload requirements.  Need to determine if staff resources match workload requirements, including recommendations arising from new Strategy.
Community Development Fund	312,280	60,841	The CDF budget has not increased over the past eight years. \$376,175 invested by Council over the past five years has leveraged \$1,109,768 worth of projects.  Need to determine if the CDF is sufficient in scope and fund size.
Recreation Plan Implementation	153,983	13,228	An initial contribution of \$81,000 was provided to support the implementation of the Warrnambool Recreation Plan in 2008/09. Funds from this allocation were used to support the establishment of an ongoing Recreation Planner role, with the balance used to fund further planning, project planning and design to implement various recommendations from the Plan.  Consideration needs to be given around the amount of seed funding required for the new Strategy.
Brierly Reserve Change Rooms	5,156	5,156	Budget established in 2017/18 for the hire of portable building to provide change rooms for female cricket participants.
Annual External Contributions			
• Brauerander Park	47,273	10,000	Contribution increased to \$10,000 in 2014/15 following a request from the Committee of Management.
• South West Academy of Sport	50,000	10,000	Contribution has remained at the same level over the period.
• South West Games	15,000	0*	*Warrnambool hosts event every four years, with the next event to occur in 2020/21.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,634,399</b>	<b>339,454</b>	
Revenue	Total Actual Revenue received 2013/14 – 2017/18 \$	Actual Revenue 2017/18 \$	Comment
Reserve Fees	407,980	100,000	Sports ground user fees, finals use and casual hire fees set under the Sports Ground User Fees Policy. Council increased Reserve Fees by 25% in 2017/18 (and for a further three years). Note a small number of sport and recreation related fees sit under Corporate Strategies.
Other contributions	8,965	0	Minor grants and contributions towards Recreation Plan Implementation project.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>416,946</b>	<b>100,000</b>	

The above table shows that a net annual cost of approximately \$240,000 funds the recreation team and its current core annual programs.

## II. Recurrent Investment - City Infrastructure Directorate

Expense	Total Actual Investment 2013/14 – 2017/18 \$	Actual Investment 2017/18 \$	Comment
Parks and Gardens Municipal wide expenses – Bore Pumps, Sports Facility Infrastructure Maintenance and Water Infrastructure Maintenance	417,988	56,722	Significant variation over the period. Account structures have been revised over the period.
Parks and Gardens - Lake Pertobe	1,074,373	231,694	Annual expenditure has declined during the past four years
Parks and Gardens - Botanic Gardens	1,571,074	336,197	Increases in line with CPI
Parks and Gardens - Open Space	4,827,753	1,281,052	Increases in line with CPI
Parks and Gardens - Sports Fields	1,770, 932	401,268	Increases in line with CPI
Parks and Gardens – Foreshore	1,451,325	286,716	Increases in line with CPI
Footpaths-Bicycle Path Maintenance	1,016,531	291,940	Expenditure increased significantly in 2017/18
Rail Trail Maintenance	48,981	12,753	Expenditure remained consistent of the past three years
Recreation buildings maintenance and operations	1,128,748	250,575	Whilst expenditure has varied, overall the annual spend has declined over the period.
Recreation public amenities maintenance and operations	158,991	57,930	Expenditure declined in 2015/16 and increased in the two following years.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,466,696</b>	<b>3,206,847</b>	
Revenue	Total Actual Revenue received 2013/14 – 2017/18 \$	Actual Revenue 2017/18 \$	Comment
Foreshore Reserves	195,149	40,568	Includes user fees and beach cleaning contributions
Lake Pertobe	94,494	19,502	Commercial user fees
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>289,643</b>	<b>60,070</b>	

The above table shows that Council spends approximately \$3.2m per annum net currently on maintaining and operating recreation and open space assets.

### III. Recurrent Investment - Corporate Strategies

Expense	Total Actual Investment 2013/14 – 2017/18 \$	Actual Investment 2017/18 \$	Comment
Contribution to Allansford Recreation Reserve Committee of Management	87,000	18,000	Towards costs of Reserve management and maintenance
Contribution to the Warrnambool Surf Life Saving Club and Lifesaving Victoria	138,324	28,876	Towards costs of summer surf lifesaving patrol and operation of local SLSC
Assistance to Individuals or Groups Participating in National or International Events	52,600	5,750	Grants issued under the Individuals or Groups Participating in National or International Events Policy have remained consistent, however there was a significant drop in applications in 2017/18. Funds sit under Council Contributions and are administered by Recreation.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>277,924</b>	<b>52,626</b>	<b>Need to determine whether these contributions would better sit within the recreation recurrent budget</b>

The above table shows that Council spends approximately \$50,000 per annum currently on various contributions supporting sport, recreation and physical activity.



#### IV. Projects / Capital

Expense	Total Actual Investment 2013/14 – 2017/18 \$	Actual Investment 2017/18 \$	Comment
Recreation - Projects	635,368	144,328	<p>Examples include strategic recreation projects - the Reid Oval Development Plan, Active Warrnambool Strategy and AquaZone Water Treatment investigation.</p> <p>Funds come from a range of sources as outlined in the income section below.</p> <p>Sufficient leverage funds from Council is critical to allow for external grant funding to be sourced.</p>
Recreation – Capital	5,531,255	1,699,021	<p>Examples include the Jubilee Park Playspace, Friendly Societies Park Sports Ground Lighting Upgrade, Netball Stadium Ventilation Improvements and BMX Track Redevelopment.</p> <p>Funds come from a range of sources as outlined in the income section below.</p> <p>A sufficient amount of leverage funds from Council is critical to allow for external grant funding to be sourced. Council currently allocates \$190,000 per annum as leverage funds. Given the increased cost of capital projects, what is the right level of leverage funding to ensure Council is able to maximise attraction of external capital funding for these projects.</p>
Environmental Management Construction Capital	144,316	40,200	Annual beach access replacement and risk mitigation program
Footpaths/Bicycle Paths Renewal Capital	1,440,710	288,532	Annual footpath/bicycle path replacement program
Footpaths/Bicycle Construction Capital	1,149,548	507,539	Annual program for construction of new footpaths and linkage paths
Playground Renewal Capital	631,178	158,315	Annual program for playground replacement
Public Open Space Improvement Program	353,900	210,644	
Building Construction Capital	101,215	91,822	AquaZone Roof Replacement
Bridge Construction Capital	229,770	0	Lake Pertobe and Jubilee Park footbridges
Construction Engineering Capital	426,655	51,126	Hopkins and Merri River works including Jetty replacement program
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,713,915</b>	<b>3,191,527</b>	

Revenue	Total Actual Revenue received 2013/14 – 2017/18 \$	Actual Revenue 2017/18 \$	Comment
Recreation – Projects	463,464	124,000	Includes funding from Sport and Recreation Victoria towards the examples listed above.  Typically project co-funding is dollar for dollar.
Recreation – Capital	2,264,728	302,691	Includes funding from Sport and Recreation Victoria, and local club and philanthropic trust financial contributions towards the examples listed above.
Environmental Management Construction Capital	80,000	80,000	Beach access renewal and risk mitigation program
Footpaths/Bicycle Construction Capital	296,028	52,728	Annual program for construction of new footpaths and linkage paths
Playground Renewal Capital	21,601	0	Annual program for playground replacement
Bridge Construction Capital	169,880	0	Lake Pertobe and Jubilee Park footbridges
Construction Engineering Capital	213,433	113,449	Hopkins and Merri River works including Jetty replacement program
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,509,134</b>	<b>672,868</b>	

The above table shows that Council spends approximately \$2.5 million per annum net currently on projects and capital works. Some of this expenditure is funded exclusively by Council, some of it uses Council funds as leverage to secure external funding from a range of sources.

Over the five year period, every \$2 invested by Council has leveraged \$1 externally.

## b) Key issues and analysis

### I. Asset Renewal

The following table provides a summary of Council's Sport, Recreation and Open Space assets:

Asset Type	No. Properties	No. Assets	Capital Replacement Value	Renewal Program Expenditure 2010-2017	Renewal Expenditure forecast 2018-28	Deferred Renewal
Sport and recreation buildings	40	183	\$68,175,732	\$3,322,951	\$5.7 million	\$836,000
Open Space (seating, boardwalks, fences, signs, etc)	133	1,663	\$8,685,955	\$1,899,630	\$867,000*	\$113,000*
Playgrounds	63	66^	\$6,830,000		\$1.35 million	Unconfirmed
Sports lighting	13	94	Data not available	No budget yet allocated	No budget yet allocated	Unconfirmed

Note: \*Open Space Asset Audit currently being completed, ^includes centre based playgrounds

Council has responsibility for over \$83 million worth of buildings and infrastructure that provide for sport, recreation and physical activity purposes.

Over the past ten years, approximately \$3,320,000 was spent on the renewal of sport and recreation building assets and \$1,900,000 on sport, recreation and open space infrastructure including off street car parks, parks, footpaths, seals, playgrounds, drainage, roads, and bridges.

Council has identified the need for asset renewal funding of \$8,866,000 over the next ten years to meet its sports and recreation buildings and open space asset management plan requirements. This figure includes \$949,000 in deferred renewal that is currently not funded. It is also noted that the Open Space Asset Audit is currently being updated and revised renewal forecast and deferred renewal estimates are due shortly.

Council's capacity to manage its assets and meet renewal targets in a rate capped environment will continue to be a significant challenge. A further challenge for Council is that a number of its sport and recreation assets, including sports ground lighting, ovals and hard court surfaces, are not recognised or funded within the asset renewal program. It is noted that \$150,000 will be spent in 2018/19 to make sports lighting structurally safe in response to condition audit findings.

Most assets are also assessed as like for like and current service standards are not documented. This means that facilities may not be fit for purpose and there is likely to be a greater gap in asset renewal costs than what is currently projected.

Playing fair - developing a response to the Sports Ground Management Review has

identified that Council provides a high level of service in the maintenance of sports ground facilities, and lacks documented roles and responsibilities for the development and replacement of assets. The draft Great South Coast Regional AFL, Netball and Cricket Strategy, due for completion in 2019, identifies a range of renewal and improvement works that support participation outcomes.

There is an opportunity for Council to formalise hand over of operational responsibilities and/or hand over or share responsibility for assets with limited or no broader community benefits (ie social clubrooms, exclusively occupied facilities including storage sheds and gymnasiums, and sports lighting). Savings made in these areas could free up resources to decrease the renewal gap.

## II. Warrnambool Recreation Plan capital projects 2007 - 2017

The Warrnambool Recreation Plan attracted funding of \$9,124,442 for the implementation of 58 projects over the past ten years. Key findings from an analysis of the projects found:

- Council's direct investment of \$2,994,071 levered investment of \$9,124,442, a cash investment of 33% (every dollar invested by Council generated two external dollars).
- Of the forty capital works projects completed 88% involved two or more funding partners and 52% had contributions of in kind labour or materials in their development.
- Of the forty capital works projects completed 75% were new or upgraded facilities.
- The average capital project cost was \$173,000, with the largest project supported the \$781,000 first stage redevelopment of Reid Oval and the smallest was a \$10,000 netball shelter at the Dennington Recreation Reserve.
- The largest contribution from State or Federal Governments was \$204,000 for the Jubilee Park Reserve Woodford playground and social gathering space project.
- 75% of planning projects were fully funded by Council.

### Learnings that can be drawn for the above data:

- **Council needs to continue to make cash contributions to support these projects**
- **Council resources are required to ensure funding partners are secured for projects – both local and governmental**
- **A range of projects – both in scope and cost – should continue to be supported**

## III. Council contributions to capital projects

Council's contributions are provided in the following two ways:

### 1. Annual capital allocations

- Minor works programs (Stadium and AquaZone have allocations of \$30,000 and \$40,000 respectively),
- Capital allocations to lever funding for projects from the Sport and Recreation Victoria's Community Sports Infrastructure Fund Minors program (\$140,000) and SRV Country Football Netball Program (\$50,000). These allocations have not changed over the past ten years. Given the increase cost of delivering capital works over the past ten years, the value of these allocations has correspondingly diminished, and increased the reliance on external funding to allow capital works projects to proceed. **Consideration needs to be given around the level of funding allocated to support access to SRV funding programs, including whether new funding needs to be allocated to support access to new funding programs, particularly the Female Friendly Facilities funding.**

## 2. Discretionary capital works allocations

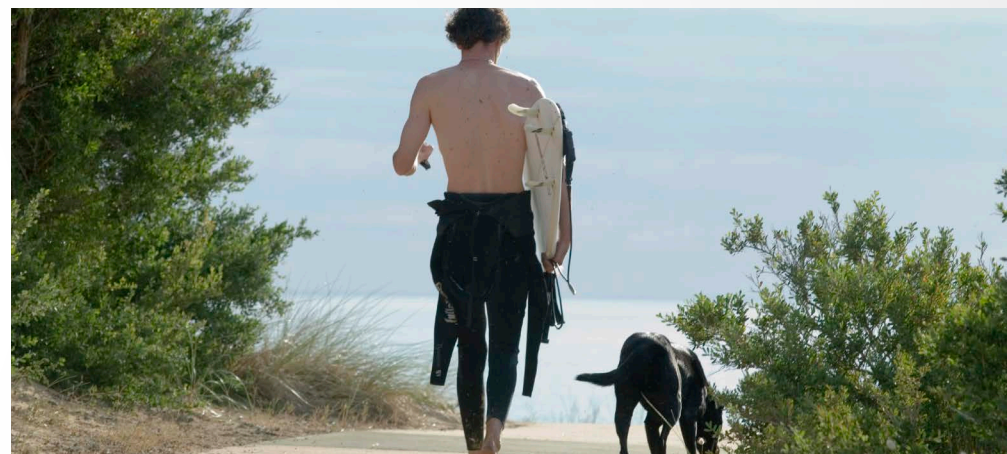
- Discretionary capital and project funding is allocated through a competitive assessment process as part of Council's annual budget process. Available funding has reduced significantly over the past three years as a result of rate capping. In the past two budget processes the competitive assessment process has not occurred, with only a small number of projects deemed urgent or essential approved by Council. It is unsure what amount of discretionary capital will be available into the future.

## IV. Future projects

Of the committed works that Council has in its forward plan; AquaZone Water Treatment (\$540,000 2018/19); changing places amenity at Lake Pertobe; Russells Creek Estate open space; Petanque Piste; and dog park projects align to the Active Warrnambool Strategy. There are a number of potential capital projects that align with the Strategy but are not currently funded including:

- Brierly Master Plan implementation
- AquaZone pool/plant redevelopment
- Sports pavilion renewal program
- Sports lighting renewal
- New skate park
- Lake Pertobe Master Plan implementation
- Renewal of the synthetic hockey pitch
- Allansford Township Playspace
- Beach access renewal.

With a number of major projects carried over from the Warrnambool Recreation Plan including Reid Oval, AquaZone and Brierly Reserve, and the restricted funding





environment, there is a question as to whether the Active Warrnambool Strategy should recommend further major capital works. The issues and opportunities paper brought forward a range of other potential projects including the Warrnambool Stadium, Table Tennis Centre and Squash facilities. There are also projects that have been discussed in the community including the Surf Club redevelopment and Premier Speedway upgrades.

For major projects to proceed, Council will need to secure a significant level of external funding, or consider staging of projects.

## V. External Capital funding

50% of the capital works projects implemented under the Warrnambool Recreation Plan 2007-17 received co-funding from Sport and Recreation Victoria through its Community Sports Infrastructure Fund (CSIF), Country Football Netball program or other minor infrastructure funding programs that have arisen from time to time. Recent changes to the CSIF have resulted in increased maximum grant amounts as shown below:

- The Female Friendly Facilities Fund has been established as its own program with funding up to \$500,000.
- The Major facilities per project funding has increased from \$650,000 to \$800,000.
- The Minor facilities per project funding has increased from \$100,000 to \$250,000.
- Small Aquatic Projects per project funding has increased from \$200,000 to \$250,000.

While this additional funding is welcome, it remains subject to Councils and their local funding partners (clubs, etc) being able to find the necessary matching funding for these projects to come to fruition. Projects involving the renewal and upgrade of existing facilities frequently trigger the need for utility upgrades and to resolve other longstanding renewal issues. Projects recently developed at various reserves have cost/ are estimated to cost in excess of \$600,000. The current leverage funding of \$190,000 means that Council is only in a position to consider one eligible project per year under the Minors category. Council currently does not have leverage funding to support applications from the Female Friendly Facilities Funding program.

It is also critical for Council to maintain a strong working relationship with Sport and Recreation Victoria, particularly at the regional office level.

Council should also be pro-active in exploring other external capital funding options. Local philanthropic trusts, potential corporate supporters, SRVs \$100 million sporting facilities loan scheme, opportunities to review the lease income derived from commercial sports clubs with poker machine income or exclusively occupied facilities, are all potential revenue opportunities.

## 2.4 FUTURE PLANNING

**The following list includes a range of current plans that will require further investigation and implementation over the term of the Strategy.**

1. AquaZone 2025 Strategy
2. Various Sporting Reserve Master Plan's including: Allansford Recreation Reserve, Brierly Recreation Reserve and Reid Oval
3. Community Services and Infrastructure Plan
4. Lake Pertobe Master Plan
5. Open Space Strategy
6. Public Amenities Strategy
7. South Warrnambool Crown Land Precinct Plan
8. Structure Plans for the North East, North of the Merri, North Dennington, South Dennington, Eastern Activity Precinct, Hopkins Coastal and the Urban Growth Corridor
9. Various plans and strategies that are currently under development, including: Municipal wide Principle Pedestrian Network Analysis, Principle Bicycle Analysis and Playspace Strategy.

The following items may require further planning and investigation during the term of the Strategy to fully understand the issue and to identify an appropriate response or direction, if required:

1. The future of AquaZone.
2. The future needs of the Warrnambool Stadium
3. Cultural Heritage Management Plan for Thunder Point Coastal Reserve
4. Asset Management Plans for Active Recreation and Open Space.
5. North of the Merri Active Open Space Development Plan
6. Sports specific studies for Basketball and Tennis to guide future sport sustainability and facility needs
7. Planning Scheme and Municipal Strategic Statement (to reflect the Active Warrnambool Strategy)

## 2.5 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

**It is important that the implementation of Active Warrnambool is monitored over time to ensure that the strategic objectives, principles and recommendations remain relevant and are able to be effectively implemented.**

Investigation into a number of Local Government Authorities of similar scale to Council has revealed no specific Key Performance Indicators or performance measures to assess the success or impact of recreation service provision. There are specific measures included in the Community Satisfaction Survey conducted by the Office of Local Government of Victoria (recreation facilities) and the Essential Services Commission (Aquatic facilities).

Warrnambool A Healthy City 2017-2021 includes the following measures that are relevant to the Active Warrnambool Strategy:

### Goal 1 – Support Healthy Lifestyles

#### Objective 2 – Increase Active Living

##### Measures:

- **Proportion of adults who:**
  - Are sufficiently physically active
  - Sit for more than 7 hours on an average weekday (Victorian Population Health Survey)
  - Proportion of local people who state that the availability of facilities to play sport and be active is excellent or good (WCC Survey)
  - Proportion of local people who indicated that their main reason for being physically active was for transport or 'to get around' (WCC Survey)
  - Proportion of local people who say that lack of physical activity is the thing that worries them most about their own health (WCC Survey)
- **Proportion of residents who used public transport, walked or rode a bike to work (ABS Census)**

The WCC Survey data will be captured every four years with the next survey to be undertaken in 2020.

In the absence of comparable benchmarks, and in order to ensure that the strategy remains relevant, it is suggested that Council in partnership with key stakeholders should:

- Develop a detailed action plan to appropriately resource and deliver recommendations contained in the strategy

- Identify agencies and other groups with a responsibility for implementation, where assistance and partnership opportunities might be possible
- Report against the action plan every twelve months as occurred for the Warrnambool Recreation Plan 2007-17
- Monitor and revise the strategy to consider emerging issues, opportunities, trends or changing conditions
- Review the strategy, and the proposed action plan, on a triennial basis to consider emerging issues, opportunities, trends or changing conditions
- Conduct a major review of the strategy, including public consultation, in year ten
- Devise a communications strategy to regularly promote the Strategy and any reviews and update

The success of Active Warrnambool can be measured by application of the following indicators:

##### 1)

The number of strategy recommendations delivered/ actioned, which by their implementation will deliver improvements to sport and recreation infrastructure and service delivery

##### 2)

Stable and increasing membership numbers of sporting clubs and associations, and of other community groups providing physical activity opportunities

##### 3)

Stable or increasing levels of participation in non-club based physical activity programs and events

##### 4)

Satisfaction ratings for Council from sporting clubs and associations, and other community groups, for the performance of Council in the overall delivery of sport and recreation services

##### 5)

The ratio of the funding mix between Council and external funding sources for the delivery of recommended projects

##### 6)

The overall health and wellbeing levels, and physical activity levels of the Warrnambool City population (measures from Warrnambool A Healthy City as outlined above)

##### 7)

An increase in the performance rating of Warrnambool City in the service area of Recreational Facilities in the annual Council Community Satisfaction Survey.

# 3. NEXT STEPS

The next steps for the project will be:

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- **Review of the Principles and Implementation Report by internal and external project working groups**
  - **Develop draft recommendations**
  - **Consultation on draft recommendations**
- **Consolidate Implementation Report and recommendations into draft Strategy**
  - **Draft Strategy for public comment**
  - **Council to adopt Strategy**

# ACTIVE

WARRNAMBOOL



Draft Recommendations Report - February 2019



Prepared for:  
WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## The Previous Strategy

**The Warrnambool Recreation Plan (WRP) 2007-2017 was endorsed by Council in 2008. Its Action Plan was based around the following seven key themes:**

- Planning for Recreation
- Managing Recreation
- Improving existing recreation infrastructure
- Reviewing or relocating existing recreation facilities
- Developing new and/or additional recreation facilities
- Supporting clubs and organisations
- Developing new or improving existing public open space.

The Warrnambool Recreation Plan 2007-2017 Final Implementation Review implementation scorecard, shows that a good level of implementation was achieved. Of the 84 recommended actions, 62 have been achieved, 17 remain in progress and 5 are incomplete or the issue has changed.

Apart from the direct implementation of recommendations, the WRP has also produced a range of broader outputs:

- Strategic direction to guide the work of the Recreation Unit
- Modest increase in recurrent resources to implement the WRP
- Secured a significant level of funding from the State Government with 58 projects completed over the past ten years. Council's direct investment of \$2,994,071 has resulted in expenditure of \$9,124,442 on Plan recommendations, with \$6,130,371 leveraged from external sources (Government grants, club contributions and trusts).

Council was successful in securing funding from Sport and Recreation Victoria under its 2016/17 Community Sport Infrastructure Funding program to support developing a new Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Strategy.

This Strategy is now titled the **Active Warrnambool Strategy**.

# Developing the new strategy

The Active Warrnambool Strategy is being developed in two parts.

## Part A

Part A addressed the question **“What is the Current Environment?”** and included the preparation of a comprehensive background report. The background report was completed in December 2016 and is a detailed review of the directions, policies, spaces, and practices which need to be considered in the Active Warrnambool Strategy. The report comprises:

- A review of Council's policies and strategic plans, as well as relevant regional, state and national reports;
- An analysis of municipal demographics;
- Review and mapping of current sports and recreation facilities and activities across the municipality;
- Benchmarking against delivery of sport and recreation in three comparable Victorian LGAs;
- Review and assessment of Council's current delivery of sport and recreation and physical activity.

The background report is intended as the primary resource for the development of the Active Warrnambool Strategy and will be relied upon in the preparation of the Strategy.



## Part B

Part B of the project will comprise the preparation of the directions and recommendations which will constitute the Active Warrnambool Strategy. The Strategy will inform Council's planning and provision of sport, recreation and physical activity in Warrnambool to 2028.

The development of the Strategy will be based around investigating and responding to the following key questions:

- **What is successful? (Stage 2)** – assessing the current delivery of recreation opportunity against standards and benchmarks; considering user and stakeholder comment on the current offer; and reviewing what has encouraged activity amongst the Warrnambool population.
- **What needs to be done (Stage 3)** – identifying gaps in current delivery and opportunities to build upon existing strengths to encourage greater activity amongst the Warrnambool community.
- **What are the key issues (Stage 4)** – identifying barriers to filling gaps and taking opportunities to provide enhanced access to sport, recreation and physical activity in Warrnambool to 2026.
- **How can this be done (Stage 5)** – identifying key actions and recommendations; considering appropriate timing, staging and implementation of the recommendations.

The findings and response to Stages 2, 3 and 4 are summarised in the Active Warrnambool Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper March 2018.

The Implementation Report, completed in November 2018, provided a number of considerations and directions that have directly informed the development of the draft recommendations.

This draft Recommendations report represents Stage 5 of this process and constitutes a response to the identified issues and opportunities.



# Community Engagement

**There are two community engagement processes informing the Active Warrnambool Strategy. The first input was from a broader Community visioning project titled Warrnambool 2040 project. The second input involved targeted engagement about the issues and opportunities for the Active Warrnambool Strategy.**

A summary of these inputs is outlined below.

## First Stage – April to mid-June 2017

In April 2017, Council commenced conversations with the community as part of the development of a new Community Plan, Warrnambool 2040 (refer to [www.w2040.com.au](http://www.w2040.com.au) for further information). The extensive engagement informs Council's Community Plan, but also provided opportunities for Council to engage the community on a range of other plans and strategies, including Active Warrnambool.

A long form survey, titled Warrnambool Now and 2040, included a series of questions taken from the Australian Sports Commission's AusPlay survey and has provided Council with data on how the community is currently participating in sport, recreation and physical activity. The data was analysed and provided as part of the background to the Active Warrnambool Strategy and has informed the Issues and Opportunities discussion paper.

## Second Stage – November 2017

The second stage of consultation was undertaken by communityvibe and involved **five focus groups** and **key stakeholder meetings**. Five written submissions were also received from the community.

The focus group and stakeholder meetings comprised selected community, staff and stakeholder representatives and addressed the following topics.

### Focus Group 1

#### STAFF FOCUS GROUP – POLICIES, PROGRAMS, SYSTEMS AND TOOLS

Selected Warrnambool City Council staff were asked to identify specific challenges that they face in relation to policies, programs, systems and tools in their work in the sport and active recreation sector.

### Focus Group 2

#### STAFF FOCUS GROUP – PARTICIPATION

Staff who work with traditionally disadvantaged people such as young people, people with disabilities and older adults were asked to identify barriers to participation, particularly in relation to their clients.

### Focus Group 3

#### FACILITY FOCUS GROUP

Thirty-two residents of Warrnambool City took part in a focus group aimed to identify priorities for the development and upgrade of both formal (i.e. sports grounds and indoor stadiums) and informal (i.e. walking/cycling trails and playgrounds) sport and recreation facilities in the municipality over the next ten years.

### Focus Group 4

#### PARTICIPATION FOCUS GROUP

A focus group was held with 22 community members to consider the creation of a more physically active Warrnambool (particularly for those who are currently inactive). Focus group participants were asked in groups to brainstorm barriers to participation and to identify some potential initiatives that are likely to increase physical activity participation.

### Focus Group 5

#### CLUB SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS GROUP

The club sustainability focus group was asked to identify key actions that may enable clubs and organisations to improve their sustainability.

### Key Stakeholder Meeting

#### SOUTH WEST SPORT (Michael Neoh, Executive Officer)

The key role of South West Sport (SWS) is to build the capacity of clubs. It is funded by Sport and Recreation Victoria (part of Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions) and VicHealth. South West Sport's vision is to be: 'A leading organisation in the sport and recreation sector'

### Third Stage – June 2018

Using the Issues and Opportunities report and the Implementation Report, draft recommendations have been developed (the initial component of the draft strategy).

The third stage of consultation will involve testing the draft recommendations with key internal and external stakeholders and interested residents.



## 2. PRINCIPLES

### Responding to the Issues, Opportunities and Barriers

**Following the identification of Issues, Opportunities and Barriers in Stages 1-4 of the strategy development, the proposed role of Council in the provision of sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities for the Warrnambool City community was clarified, and a range of principles were developed to guide the preparation of draft recommendations.**

Council's role in the provision of sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities will have four key components.

<b>PLAN</b>	Facilitate the planning, development and management of sport and recreation facilities and programs to cater for and respond to current and future community needs.
<b>PROVIDE</b>	Provide sport and recreation facilities through direct funding, shared funding, and facilitated funding arrangements.
<b>SUPPORT</b>	Support sporting clubs and community groups with the development, management and maintenance of sport and recreation facilities.
<b>PARTNER</b>	Work with the community, education sector, private sector, sport and recreation sector, and all levels of government to ensure that sport and recreation facilities and delivered services meet community needs and optimise investment opportunities.

In undertaking this role, Council will be guided by the following principles, which reflect the findings from the background policy review and issues paper. It is intended that the three broad themes of Activity (What People Do), Facilities and Spaces (Where they do it), and Council Management and Programming (How they are supported to do it) will sit below these principles, and that the principles will be embodied in each of the recommendations.

### Health and Wellbeing enabled by Participation:

**Recognising that encouragement of participation in sport, recreation and physical activity is fundamental to community health and wellbeing.**

Council support for participation in sport, recreation and physical activity is based on:

- Supporting everybody to be more active more often.
- Balancing the provision of structured and unstructured recreation facilities that are safe, affordable and functional for people of all ages, abilities and interests.
- Supporting increased flexibility of programming that helps overcome or ease barriers to participation (modified approaches, shortened or alternate timeframes, social activities, etc).

### Environmental Sustainability:

**Recognising that the community seeks to use the natural environment for sport, recreation and physical activity.**

Council support for environmental sustainability is based on:

- Supporting public access to waterways and coastal environments for sport, recreation and physical activity, subject to adequate environmental protections.

### Financial Sustainability:

**Recognising that resources, including public funds, are likely to be restricted in the foreseeable future.**

Council support for sport, recreation and physical activity infrastructure and programs is based on:

- Maintaining what is existing and providing value.
- Maintaining and renewing high use facilities and spaces.
- Council investment must be targeted towards projects and proposals that demonstrate measurable community benefit and are evidence based.
- New infrastructure investment is prioritised towards facilities that are publically accessible, support high levels of community use, and include spaces that can be used by more than one group and provide for a range of activities.
- Establishing partnerships and joint ventures with clubs, community and service groups, schools, all levels of government, peak sporting organisations, and the private sector for the planning, provision and management of sport and recreation facilities.

# Social Connection, Access and Inclusion:

**Recognising that providing opportunities for physical and social connection for all is a key factor in community health and wellbeing.**

Council support for physical and social connection is based on:

- Connections for walking and cycling are provided to and between existing open spaces and facilities, with at least one open space within walking distance of every home.
- Supporting a strong culture of involvement of the broader community in local clubs and organisations – as participants, spectators, members or officials - to support a socially connected community.
- Ensuring that inclusion for all abilities and all ages is embedded in all planning and provision of active recreation opportunities, guided by the principles of Universal Design.

# Diversity:

**Recognising the importance of providing opportunities to encourage participation by those traditionally less engaged in physical activity.**

Council support for diversity is based on:

- Clubs and organisations building their capacity to support increased membership diversity.
- Supporting increased diversity of available activities.

# Best Use:

**Recognising that Council, and other service providers, seek to ensure facilities and programs are well used to optimise good outcomes and provide the best return for investment.**

Council support for participation in best use of services and facilities is based on:

- Maximising the use and capacity of existing facilities and spaces.
- Increasing mixed use and sharing of existing facilities, encouraging co-location of social and non-competitive activities at them.
- The application of Universal Design principles to ensure good facility design to cater for multiple users and changing needs.

# Infrastructure Quality and Provision

**Recognising that providing the right quality and quantity of sport, recreation and physical activity infrastructure is critical to achieving good participation and health and wellbeing outcomes.**

Council support for quality and quantity of sport, recreation and physical activity infrastructure is based on:

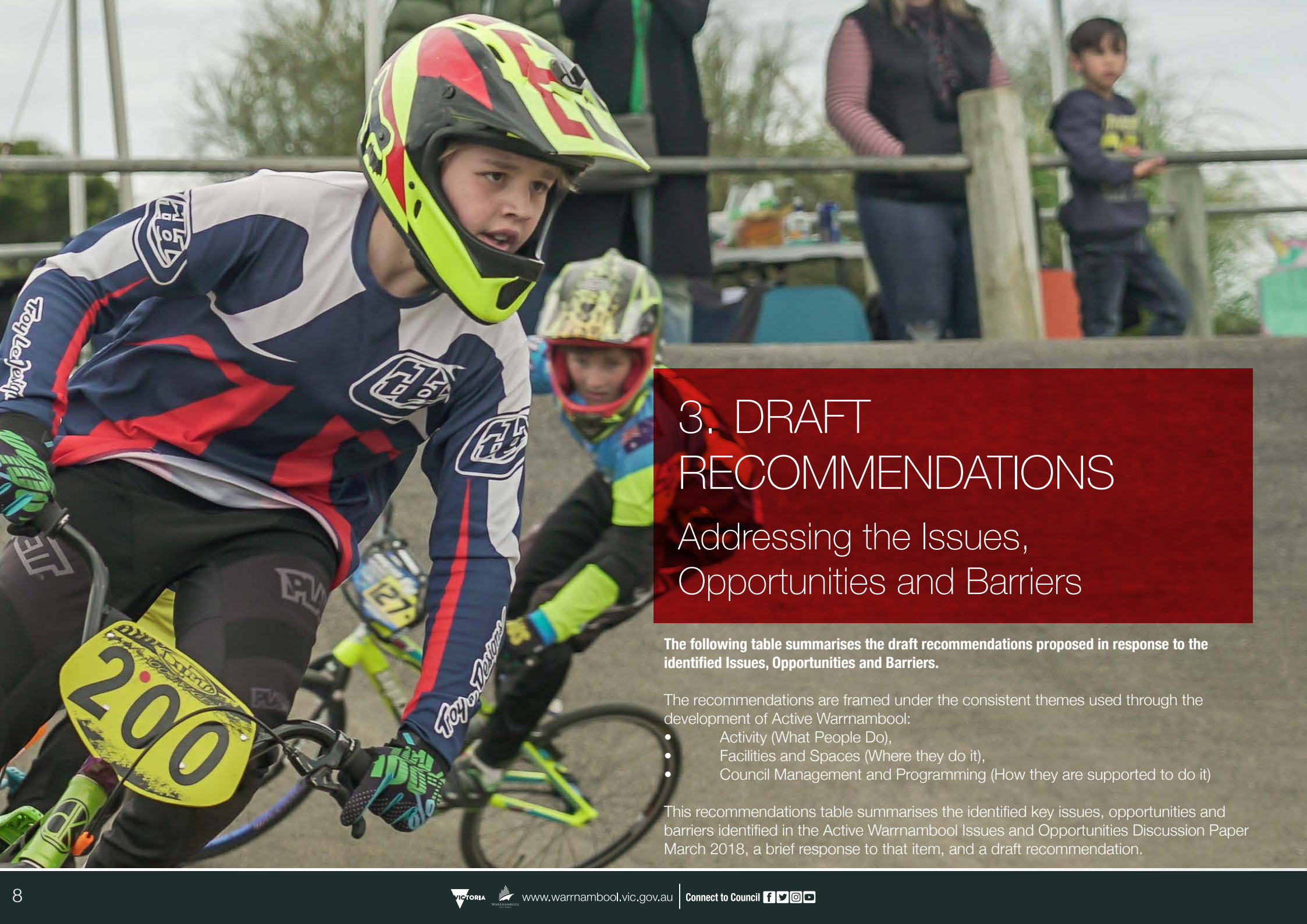
- Maintaining the level of provision of outdoor sports facilities except for soccer, where increased access to facilities is required to meet demand. Longer term planning should also provide for flexible active open spaces that provide for non-traditional sports.
- Maintaining access to high quality indoor sports facilities that meet the community's needs.
- Developing facilities according to the requirements determined in strategies and plans, community demand and to standards.
- Guiding the development and provision of new recreation and open space infrastructure in precinct structure plans, development plans or areas where gaps in facility provision are identified.
- Assessing and determining community infrastructure priorities based on the evidence of community needs, increasing the level and diversity of use, and funding availability (with contributions from multiple partners).
- The application of Universal Design principles to all sport and active recreation infrastructure, which encourages best practice and principle based design thinking.

# Partnerships:

**Recognising the importance and value of partnerships to share the responsibility for the provision of sport, recreation and physical activity infrastructure and programs.**

Council support for partnerships is based on:

- Identifying opportunities for joint ventures for new/ upgraded sport and recreation facilities with clubs, schools, all levels of government, peak sporting organisations, and the private sector.
- Collaborating with clubs, community and service groups, schools, and the private sector for the management of sport and recreation facilities.
- Investigating funding opportunities from clubs, service groups, all levels of government, peak sporting organisations, and the private sector for maintaining and upgrading existing infrastructure, or for the development of new facilities and spaces.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Addressing the Issues, Opportunities and Barriers

The following table summarises the draft recommendations proposed in response to the identified Issues, Opportunities and Barriers.

The recommendations are framed under the consistent themes used through the development of Active Warrnambool:

- Activity (What People Do),
- Facilities and Spaces (Where they do it),
- Council Management and Programming (How they are supported to do it)

This recommendations table summarises the identified key issues, opportunities and barriers identified in the Active Warrnambool Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper March 2018, a brief response to that item, and a draft recommendation.

ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS (Refer Issues and Opportunities Discussion Paper March 2018)	DISCUSSION	DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>THEME 1: ACTIVITY</b>		
<b>1. Understand the future needs and strategic provision of facilities (number, distribution, usage) for key sports.</b>	<p>It is important for Council to have a good understanding of the current and likely future use of sporting facilities for organised sport, to assist in future decision making, planning, and management of its sports and recreation assets.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect sports club and association membership data annually.</li> <li>2. Collect regional participation data every three years from the peak bodies of the major participation sports to monitor trends.</li> <li>3. Undertake a needs assessment for tennis and basketball.</li> </ol>
<b>2. There is a need to maintain the strong culture of involvement in sports clubs and participation within them, and promote the benefits of Club membership as a mechanism to increase physical activity.</b>	<p>The Warrnambool 2040 Community Plan identifies the long term visions and goals for Warrnambool's environment, economy, place and people.</p> <p>The Warrnambool 2040 visions include:  Our People – Warrnambool will be a city where all people thrive  Our Place – Warrnambool will be Australia's most liveable regional city  Our Economy – Warrnambool will be Australia's most resilient and thriving regional economy  Our Environment – Warrnambool will be Australia's most sustainable city</p> <p>Warrnambool - A Healthy City 2017-2021 is the key Council Plan that guides the development of the Active Warrnambool Strategy. The Plan seeks to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes for Warrnambool's community. It confirms the following priority health and wellbeing issues to be addressed over time that align with state policy and local priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical activity</li> <li>• Healthy Eating</li> <li>• Harmful use of alcohol &amp; other drugs</li> <li>• Smoking</li> <li>• Violence against women and children</li> <li>• Mental (social and emotional wellbeing)</li> <li>• Access to programs and services</li> </ul> <p>There is high participation in organized sport by Warrnambool residents. Participation within sports clubs support a physically and socially connected community. A collective aim of club administrators and Council should be to inspire the community to understand the importance of physical activity and recreation.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Collaborate with other regional Agencies to determine how to best continue to support sports clubs.</li> <li>5. Utilise 'Connect' as the preferred social media platform to publish positive information and stories about individuals, clubs and associations to inspire the broad community to participate.</li> <li>6. Encourage clubs and associations to upload 'good news' stories concerning their members and group's achievements.</li> <li>7. Support clubs and associations to develop, endorse and implement diversity, disability access, gender equity and inclusion policies and strategies.</li> <li>8. Promote a safer drinking culture in Warrnambool and increase the participation of sports clubs in the Good Sports program.</li> </ol>
<b>3. Continue to support the sustainability of sporting clubs</b>	<p>Clubs with strong committees and adequate numbers of players, officials and members are typically clubs that enjoy sustained success, can operate independently, and are resourceful. Warrnambool should aim to have network of sustainable clubs with a high degree of independence.</p> <p>Clubs and Associations continually advise their concerns around the impacts on volunteerism and growing burden of meeting legislative requirements (i.e. Working with Children Check and Child Safe Standards).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Continue to collaborate with and encourage State Sports Associations to strengthen sport pathways and the transition of junior players into senior ranks.</li> <li>10. Utilise 'Connect' to disseminate sport and recreation information to clubs, associations and community groups,</li> <li>11. Implement the new sports ground management system.</li> </ol>
<b>4. Consider options to assist/ encourage clubs to be more inclusive of female participation</b>	<p>Girls and women are continuing to become more involved as players and administrators, and Council has a role to facilitate this increased participation.</p> <p>Framework options include reduced seasonal charges, Community Development Funding criteria weightings being influenced and the introduction an annual capital funding program to co-fund projects to make sporting facilities female friendly.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Direct clubs and associations to available resources from the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, to actively support female players, administrators, volunteers and supporters.</li> <li>13. Develop a policy and an incentive-based framework to encourage clubs and associations to actively support female players, administrators, volunteers.</li> </ol>

**5. Identify and recognise the emergence and increase in popularity of emerging sports and activities that have not had a strong presence in Warrnambool.**

The diversity of sporting and recreation opportunities in the City is likely to continue to increase as the population increases and becomes more diverse, media coverage and the internet continue to showcase emerging sports, and people's interest in non-mainstream sports continues. Council should consider supporting emerging sports and activities to aid their establishment and development.

Key considerations will include factors such as :

- a. Cultural diversity
- b. Female participation
- c. Limitations of budgets
- d. Disabled sport
- e. Versions of traditional sports, such as cardio tennis.
- f. Access for emerging sports and clubs to facilities, administration and promotion
- g. Allowing sharing of facilities through co-location with compatible tenants
- h. Provision of seed funding for new clubs
- i. Need for new facilities
- j. Review of tenancy agreements- allow new clubs to also expand or share

The Valuing Sport and Recreation background report (Active Victoria) found that the mix of sport and recreation activities that Victorians engage in is changing, reflecting changed needs and interests. Changes in work patterns and lifestyle, cost, time and transport issues are all driving people to active recreation options that best fit their own circumstances.

A key objective of Warrnambool – A Healthy City 2017-2021 is to support healthy lifestyles by increasing active living. The following Plan strategies align with the Active Warrnambool Strategy:

- Increase opportunities and encourage people to participate in active travel, sport and active recreation.
- Create safe, convenient, inclusive and accessible places which encourage physical activity

The Active Warrnambool Strategy should aim to provide all residents with the opportunity to participate in sport, recreation and physical activity. Actions to reduce the numbers of residents not participating in any form of sport or active recreation and to remove barriers to participation should be a focus.

Whilst there are currently incentives (funding through VicHealth and Sport and Recreation Victoria) for Clubs and Associations to increase the flexibility of their programming and diversity, feedback provided indicates that impacts on volunteerism (refer point 3 above) make it challenging for many clubs to take up these opportunities and ensure they are sustainable.

Warrnambool's population has diversified and aged significantly in recent years, and the CALD community is larger than ever before. Council has signed up to be a member of the Welcoming Cities Network and is an Age Friendly City.

Initiatives to support increasing flexibility of unstructured programs and activation of public spaces include:

- Support for the establishment of neighbourhood and community based physical activity initiatives.
- Promotion to clubs and the community the benefits of non-traditional activities on traditional active spaces, particularly sports reserves.

**14.** Develop a policy and implementation plan around support for new and emerging sport and recreation activities.

**15.** Develop a promotional campaign encouraging residents to be more active more of the time.

**16.** Work with Victoria Walks to promote a culture of walking for transport and recreation within the Strategy / or Develop a policy to embed a culture of walking for travel and recreation within the City

**17.** Collaborate with other regional agencies to identify key initiatives that aim to increase participation for residents less likely to be active.

**18.** Improve the coordination and promotion of the various Council physical activity initiatives

**19.** Increase the use of Council Reserves and open spaces for flexible and unstructured physical activities.

**20.** Promote opportunities to use the courts at the Warrnambool Stadium and the Val Bertrand Netball Centre at non-traditional times of the week.

**6. There is a need to support increasing flexibility of programming to help overcome or ease the barriers to participation.**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentive-based framework to encourage clubs and associations to make available facilities and programs at non-traditional times of the week with options being reduced seasonal charges, and Community Development Funding criteria weightings being influenced.</li> <li>• Renew sports lighting at reserves to increase the opportunities for use at non-traditional times.</li> </ul>	
<b>THEME 2: FACILITIES AND SPACES</b>		
<p><b>7. Investigate increasing mixed use of existing Reserves for social and non-competitive activities.</b></p>	<p>The growing desire of the Warrnambool community to be involved in an increasingly diverse range of informal, social and non-competitive active recreational pursuits could require more diverse use of Council Reserves. The single use focus of most existing sports Reserves presents an opportunity to provide this diversity at such facilities. Further, increasing the diversity of use at existing reserves will make more effective use of existing Council resources by reducing the need for development of additional facilities and spaces.</p> <p>An important consideration will be to ensure that the capacity of a reserve to provide for its primary activity is not compromised by the introduction of a new activity. Since participation in informal, social and non-competitive activities is not able to be gauged by traditional measures (such as club membership) this may require Council to undertake more focused and regular review and survey of activity than has occurred in the past.</p> <p>Educating existing reserve tenants on the need for a greater diversity of activity, once the capacity of a reserve to provide for a range of new informal recreation activities has been established, will be an important consideration.</p>	<p><b>21.</b> Review the facility infrastructure provision needs required to support the most popular informal recreation pursuits (as revealed in the Warrnambool 2040 research).</p> <p><b>22.</b> Develop a policy which guides Council officers in responding to requests for provision for informal recreation activities including criteria that identifies when the popularity of an activity will trigger the provision of new spaces and facilities.</p> <p><b>23.</b> Review current reserve master plans and existing facility use to determine the capacity of Reserves to host additional activities.</p> <p><b>24.</b> Implement new use agreements that reflect how facilities are used and managed, and who is responsible for them.</p> <p><b>25.</b> Ensure that the review of current master plans clearly identifies capacity for additional activity at Reserves and additional use of buildings to effectively maximise and diversify use of all facilities.</p> <p><b>26.</b> Develop protocol to guide and assist Council in increasing use of underutilised facilities and identifying mechanisms to encourage user groups to partner with other compatible users.</p> <p><b>27.</b> Investigate and pursue increased use of school facilities and spaces to diversify the range of activities available to the Warrnambool community and to make more effective use of available public land.</p>
<p><b>8. Improve connection to and between existing spaces and facilities</b></p>	<p>Warrnambool 2040 has identified the goal that Warrnambool's environment encourages and supports sustainable transport. To achieve the goal all daily destinations (work, school, shopping, recreation and health services) will be accessible within 15 minutes using active/sustainable travel modes.</p> <p>Review of Warrnambool 2040 long form survey data reveals that the most popular activities amongst the Warrnambool community remain running, walking and cycling. The establishment of an integrated and comprehensive trail network will not only cater for this activity as an end in itself but will also encourage greater use of the diversity of recreational spaces available to the community.</p> <p>The following plans related to pedestrian and cycle networks and infrastructure are under development or planned to commence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principle Pedestrian Network</li> <li>• Principle Bicycle Network</li> <li>• South of the Merri River Open Space Precinct Plan</li> <li>• Botanic Precinct Local Area Traffic Management Plan</li> </ul>	<p><b>28.</b> Complete the preparation of the Principle Pedestrian Network and Principle Bicycle Network ensuring they address all relevant recreation links and routes.</p> <p><b>29.</b> Use open space contributions from the sub-division process to close trail gaps along the coast and waterways.</p> <p><b>30.</b> Once the Principle Pedestrian Network and the Principle Bicycle Network are completed, determine the level of engagement required with other agencies to facilitate the implementation of the priority works.</p> <p><b>31.</b> Improve open space access and connectivity along the Russell's Creek Trail, along the Merri River, the Warrnambool to Port Fairy Rail Trail and along the Hopkins River in WarrnamboolEast.</p> <p><b>32.</b> Develop a recreational trail network within Victoria Park and investigate the potential to activate the perimeter of the Warrnambool Racecourse with a trail..</p> <p><b>33.</b> Implement the feasibility study for the connection from the CBD to Deakin University and progress its implementation.</p> <p><b>34.</b> Review secretariat arrangements of the Cycling Reference Group to ensure it continues to provide effective advice to council.</p>

**9. Provide neighbourhood parks and open space within walking distance of residential areas and enhance appropriate neighbourhood community infrastructure and its utilisation**

The provision of neighbourhood scale open space accessible by walking or cycling is a proven influence in encouraging informal physical activity and enhancing the liveability of residential neighbourhoods. The Warrnambool Open Space Strategy requires Neighbourhood or above classified open space within 500 metres or Local open space within 300 metres of 95% of properties in residential areas.

There is a need to diversify and increase the multiuse of community facilities.

A key element in encouraging and broadening the use of sports and open space reserves by the non-sporting community is the provision of park infrastructure. Appropriate infrastructure is particularly significant in encouraging activity by groups who are often less involved in organized sport and physical activity, such as the disabled, the unwell and the elderly.

The installation or replacement of such infrastructure is often relatively simple and comparatively low cost and so can be achieved through the annual Open Space Capital Works budget and need not be reliant upon master planning or detailed design.

Principles to guide the provision of community recreation infrastructure may include:

- Provision of seating, particularly in clusters, within open spaces associated with playgrounds, and also in sporting reserves to further encourage social interaction and involvement of non-participants. To encourage use, seats should be located to take advantage of built or natural shade, to provide views to points of natural interest, and to provide views to activity areas and play spaces.
- Seating should be appropriately placed and easily accessible for all users (e.g. connected to adjoining footpaths).
- Regular seating along circulation routes both within reserves and along trails. The provision of 1 seat per 400m of path or trail is a commonly used standard to particularly encourage use of paths and trails by the elderly and the disabled. Such seats should have arm rests and backs to allow for use by all ages.
- Provision of shade structures in both open space and sports reserves to encourage the use of spaces in all weather conditions and the interaction of non-participants with sporting events.
- Provision of cycle rails around all buildings, at all activity nodes (such as picnic shelters), near all sports fields and at all play spaces to encourage access to open space via active transport.
- Provision of drinking fountains at key locations along paths and trails, near all public hardcourts areas and at all play spaces.
- In keeping with the provision of informal active recreation opportunities wherever possible, formal exercise equipment should be considered in open space of appropriate character and size and particularly along shared and pedestrian trails.

The Open Space Contributions review and policy that is under development will include criteria to guide open space planning and design guidelines.

**35.** Prepare open space planning and design guidelines to inform the provision of open space that:

- Builds a network approach to parks/ play spaces
- Encourages a diversity of spaces for all ages and abilities
- Supports both formal (sport based) and social recreational activities
- Ensure the parks and spaces are well connected to footpaths and bike paths
- Incorporates seating, shade and access to water.

**36.** Consider the provision of community open space infrastructure where opportunities arise through associated works, such as maintenance, repair or other capital works.

**37.** Develop a policy to guide provision, location and management of use of exercise equipment and spaces.

**38.** Ensure that the provision of open space in accordance with the Warrnambool Open Space Strategy is embodied in the preparation of Precinct Structure Plans and subsequent development plans.

**39.** Complete and implement the Warrnambool Playspace Strategy to inform and prioritise the provision and enhancement of neighbourhood open spaces and play spaces, including their distribution throughout the municipality and the types of functions/ activities within them.

**40.** Develop a policy guiding future recreation infrastructure development in growth areas. In these growth areas, pre-application negotiation with developers should identify a range of spatial requirements for informal as well as formal active recreation.

**41.** Review the current Wayfinding Strategy to ensure it contributes effectively to a functional and connected network of neighbourhood parks and open spaces.

**10. A review of current facility provision and sports participation levels reveals:**

- demand for up to four additional soccer pitches by 2036
- demand for flexible active open spaces that provide for non-traditional sports
- planning is needed to ensure that the indoor stadium can cater for future growth

An adequate level of facility provision is important to allow for participation in sports and activities by the local community, and best use of existing facilities and sites.

There have been a number of specific facility development requirements identified to date. Recent advice from Football Victoria (FV) suggests that they have placed additional resources to support club and facility development at the regional level, and Council should work with FV to progress football development in Warrnambool.

The facility provision and sports participation needs identified should inform the active open space facility provision and needs in Precinct Structure Plans under development or to be reviewed.

**42.** Provide improved facilities to support the current and future growth in soccer participation by continuing to implement the Brierly Reserve Master Plan or improve amenities for females at the existing sports facilities.

**43.** Implement the Reid Oval Development Plan

**44.** Undertake a feasibility study for the upgrade and expansion of the Warrnambool Stadium that includes assessment of the potential for increased opportunities for other compatible sports.

**45.** Continue implementing the AquaZone 2025 Strategy to allow continued participation in swimming.

**46.** Determine a list of facility improvements to enhance provision for specific sports and activities as identified under Part 4. Detailed Considerations.

**11. The protection and enhancement of key physical and environmental assets and provision of appropriate public access to waterways and coastal environments is needed.**

Warrnambool 2040's vision for the environment is that Warrnambool will be Australia's most resilient city. The goals identified include; achieving zero net emissions for a renewable future; adapting to the impacts of climate change; being waste and water wise; and respecting and caring for the natural environment.

Review of Warrnambool 2040 long form survey data reveals that nature-based activities including walking, swimming, cycling, bushwalking, fishing and surfing are the most popular activities amongst the Warrnambool community and have higher participation levels than National levels.

Public access to waterways and coastal environments for sport, recreation and physical activity is a high priority for residents, however this must be balanced with the required environmental protections.

There are opportunities for Council to partner with Wannon Water, the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning on the development of Integrated Water Management Plans (IWMP). IWMPs present opportunities to identify water harvesting and reuse options and may increase opportunities for access to sustainable water sources for the irrigation sports grounds and open space.

An IWMP is currently being developed for Albert Park and the Lake Pertobe Master Plan recommends the development of a Plan for the precinct.

**47.** Support development of landscape guidelines to guide Council asset provision and environmental protection where recreation occurs in areas of environmental sensitivity.

**48.** Council to work with DELWP to support the Warrnambool Mountain Bike Riding Club with its proposal to extend the trail network at the Thunder Point Coastal Reserve to be a network of regional significance

**49.** Council to continue to support IWMPs and environmentally sustainable design process and complete and implement the Albert Park IWMP.

**50.** Continue to support the improved sustainability of sports reserves through oval irrigation upgrades, drainage improvements and LED lighting redevelopments.

**51.** Support clubs and associations to build their knowledge, skills and involvement in protecting the natural environment and increasing sustainable practices.

**12. Changing standards in facility provision and their consequential impacts need to be considered.**

Guidelines developed by the Victorian Government and State Sporting Associations inform facility development requirements and also reflect increased female participation in traditionally male sports.

Most existing sports pavilions fall short of the current standards and Council will need to determine the priority of actions required in response.

The guidelines often reflect a level of provision which will not necessarily be appropriate or achievable at small scale community facilities.

**52.** Council to ensure Universal Design Principles are considered when designing all new and upgraded sporting facilities to encourage more facilities that can cater for all users in the community.

**53.** When scoping new and upgraded sporting facility projects, refer to the standards and preferred guidelines of relevant State Sporting Associations.

**54.** Council to advocate for more appropriate facility provision standards by State Sporting Associations and SRV for rural and regional facilities.

**55.** Support the attendance and participation of sport and recreation staff in industry conferences, forums and focus groups to ensure they are kept up to date with sector trends and innovations.



		<p><b>56.</b> Integrate the recommendations from the Great South Coast Regional AFL, Netball and Cricket Strategy into the Recreation Capital Works and Asset Management Plans. Council to lead the coordination of the Great South Coast Regional Sport Partnership Network.</p>
<p><b>THEME 3: COUNCIL MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAMMING</b></p>		
<p><b>13. Undertake an assessment of existing reports and master plans to consolidate outstanding actions that will be part of a prioritised list of projects.</b></p>	<p>Council has completed a range of strategic plans and master plans to guide the development and enhancement of existing facilities and spaces within the City. The challenge for Council is to establish a prioritised list of projects that reflects identified needs and demands from across the whole of the City.</p> <p>A review of and prioritisation of works embodied in existing strategies would ensure consistency between initiatives, actions and ideas generated in this Strategy. This review would consider the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those projects that are consistent with the planning principles developed for Active Warrnambool, and which are validated by the research and findings from the Active Warrnambool study process.</li> <li>• Those projects aligned with the strategic priorities of other organisations, such as peak sporting bodies and government.</li> <li>• Those projects that will, or have potential to, maximise usage and value, or will result in multi-purpose/ shared-use sport and recreation assets.</li> <li>• Those projects which meet immediate and high priority club needs.</li> <li>• Those projects that have potential to be implemented by clubs and other community groups, or have relatively low cost implications for Council to implement, while remaining likely to positively influence participation or address known gaps.</li> <li>• Does the project create new or increased sporting participation opportunity, e.g. female friendly facilities, sports lighting?</li> <li>• Will the project increase operational self- sufficiency or improve the viability of a club(s)?</li> <li>• Will the development reduce the level of maintenance costs to Council?</li> <li>• Is the facility available for public use, and is it accessible?</li> <li>• Will the project provide increased safety and security to users?</li> <li>• Will the project reduce gaps in current facility provision?</li> <li>• Is the club, or other external group, able to fund the required capital contribution?</li> <li>• Will the project increase multiuse and cater for a broader range of users?</li> <li>• Will the project upgrade an existing low-standard (non-compliant) facility?</li> <li>• Is the project identified as a strategic priority?</li> </ul>	<p><b>57.</b> Compile a consolidated list of outstanding projects from completed master plans and strategic facility plans. Consolidation of this list will include a review of the relevance and the priority for implementation of these projects to guide future funding allocation.</p> <p><b>58.</b> Develop a capital funding assessment tool to prioritise sport and recreation facility improvement projects that incorporates the Active Warrnambool planning principles within its criteria. Prioritise the consolidated list of projects shortlisted from completed master plans and strategic facility plans.</p>

**14. Undertake further investigation into a range of current reports and plans to address issues, opportunities and barriers identified in the preparation of Active Warrnambool.**

The following list includes a range of a range of current plans that will require further investigation and implementation during the period of the Active Warrnambool Strategy.

- AquaZone 2025 Strategy
- Various Sporting Reserve Master Plan's including: Allansford Recreation Reserve, Brierly Recreation Reserve and Reid Oval
- Community Services and Infrastructure Plan
- Lake Pertobe Master Plan
- Open Space Strategy
- Public Amenities Strategy
- South Warrnambool Crown Land Precinct Plan
- Structure Plans for the North East, North East, North of the Merri, North Dennington, South Dennington, Eastern Activity Precinct, Hopkins Coastal, Allansford and East of Aberline Road.

The following list includes a range of further planning and investigation needs required during the period:

- The future of AquaZone.
- Cultural Heritage Management Plan for Thunder Point Coastal Reserve
- Asset Management Plans for Active Recreation and Open Space.
- North of the Merri Active Open Space Precinct Master Plan
- Planning Scheme and Municipal Strategic Statement (to reflect the Active Warrnambool Strategy)
- E.J.King to Scoborio Precinct Master Plan

**59.** Undertake further planning and investigation of these projects during the implementation of Active Warrnambool in order to fully understand their scope and to identify an appropriate response or direction.

**15. There are a range of existing policies that require review or new policies required.**

A review of the following existing policies is required to inform Council processes and support.

- Capital contributions policy (2013),
- Community Development Fund guidelines
- Fees and Charges for the Use of Council's Outdoor Sports Facilities (2009)
- Finals Use of Sports Ground Allocations for Finals Use Policy (2011)
- Assistance to Individuals or Groups Participating in National or International Events or Activities (2011)

A gap analysis of existing policies and recommendations for new policies or improvement to existing key documents should occur.

- Encouraging Female Participation in all Aspects of Club Activity
- Open Space Contributions (commenced)
- Community Facility Access
- Reserve Sponsorship and Naming
- Healthy by Design (a resource designed to help guide the design of built environments that promote health and active communities).
- Active Warrnambool Policy (to imbed to strategies and objectives in the Municipal Strategic Statement).
- Development of active recreation infrastructure in growth areas
- Support for new and emerging sport and recreation activities
- Provision of Sport and Recreation Infrastructure on flood-prone land
- Assessment of proposals for disposing of or change use of open spaces

**60.** Review existing Council policies informing sport and recreation service delivery.

**61.** Develop new policies for sport and recreation where guidelines and a consistent approach by Council will assist with decision-making and implementation of sport and recreation service delivery.

<p><b>16. Council does not currently have a formal and consistent framework for requesting and spending of open space contributions</b></p>	<p>The collection of open space contributions is an accepted and effective method for providing open space.</p> <p>A review of open space contributions has commenced and should be completed to inform an open space contributions Policy.</p> <p>An Open Space Contributions Policy would direct the collection and spending of open space contributions, ensuring this considers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current policy and legislation that informs the collection of open space contributions;</li> <li>• Recent VCAT decisions and benchmarking against comparable councils;</li> <li>• Whether it is appropriate to set a rate or rates for open space contributions in the planning scheme (schedule to 52.01);</li> <li>• Guidelines for what constitutes an open space contribution (land contributions)</li> <li>• Administration of and guidelines for spending open space contributions; and</li> <li>• A review of current open space provision and demand.</li> </ul>	<p><b>62.</b> Complete the development of an Open Space Contributions Policy and review effectiveness of the policy after 5 years (in terms of impact on provision of neighbourhood and local open space).</p> <p><b>63.</b> Use the open space contributions review to identify areas where there are gaps in open space provision and to provide for appropriate and fair developer contributions to open space.</p>
<p><b>17. Comparison of local participation data collected in 2013 and 2017 shows that, while facilities and infrastructure have been developed and improved over that time, responses indicate reduced participation and satisfaction in some areas. This may reflect an increase in participants' aspirations and perhaps a lack of awareness of new and enhanced facilities.</b></p>	<p>Seek to understand why there has been a reduction in participation and satisfaction.</p> <p>There may be a need for raising awareness of sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities available to the community.</p> <p>Council would have a role in raising that awareness. This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering the benefit of further raising community awareness of activity opportunities.</li> <li>• Determining the type of communications and promotional opportunities required such as an awareness campaign</li> </ul>	<p><b>64.</b> As part of the 2021 Municipal Health and Wellbeing and Recreation participation data collection seek to gain further understand regarding these issues.</p>
<p><b>18. A planned approach to responding to and meeting the asset renewal gap will be critical for Council.</b></p>	<p>Council should prioritise sport and active recreation facility renewal and upgrade of existing facilities, prior to developing new.</p> <p>Warrnambool 2040 has identified the goal that Warrnambool has accessible, high-quality public spaces and facilities. To achieve the goal the asset renewal gap (the gap is the difference between the level of asset renewal expenditure allocated and the asset renewal funding required) for community/recreational/social facilities and infrastructure will be addressed and assets maintained to maximise the benefits for the community.</p> <p>The likelihood of limited funds for asset renewal now and into the future will inevitably limit Council's capacity to renew and replace community infrastructure.</p> <p>This is particularly important in supporting community recreation services that rely heavily on infrastructure such as pavilions and buildings, pathways and other open space infrastructure.</p>	<p><b>65.</b> Provide additional resources for sport and recreation facility renewal.</p> <p><b>66.</b> Continue to partner in asset renewal projects, including user groups, other community organisations, and the private sector.</p> <p><b>67.</b> Consider alternatives to Council Management and ownership of sporting and recreation assets.</p> <p><b>68.</b> Increase the annual funding allocation of the Community Development Fund to provide the opportunity for club and groups to apply for seed funding for approved capital improvement projects.</p> <p><b>69.</b> Where assets and services are assessed to be surplus to need or not sustainable, either decommission the asset or determine a future sustainable use. Undertake assessments, with full involvement of tenant groups.</p>
<p><b>19. There is a need for council to invest in evidence-based development and enhancement of recreation and facilities and spaces.</b></p>	<p>Council support for sport, recreation and physical activity infrastructure and programs should be based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining what is existing and providing value.</li> <li>• Maintaining and renewing high use facilities and spaces.</li> <li>• Investment must be targeted towards projects and proposals that demonstrate measurable community benefit and are evidence based.</li> <li>• Investment is required in communities that are disadvantaged or most in need.</li> <li>• New infrastructure should be prioritized towards facilities that are publicly accessible, support high levels of community use, and include spaces that can be used by more than one group and provide for a range of activities.</li> </ul>	<p>A number of above listed recommendations address this issue.</p>

**20. Clarification of Council's role in recreation provision is needed to guide its responsibilities and ensure appropriate resources are provided for it.**

Council's role is a provider of community recreation facilities and programs, a planner, a supporter of local clubs and organisations, a funder of local projects and community initiatives and a developer of recreation projects.

Staff workload has increased, and therefore the capacity of Council to absorb increased tasks and responsibilities may be limited unless additional resources are provided.

Council needs to provide and fund, physical and financial resources to support its role.

**70.** It is expected that Council will need to consider the provision of additional resources over the life of the Active Warrnambool strategy to ensure it can be implemented.

Specific initiatives proposed include:

- Leverage funding for existing SRV funding programs to increase from \$190,000 to \$300,000
- Establish new leverage funding of \$200,000 for SRV female friendly facilities.
- Increase the Community Development Fund budget by 35% per year over three years.
- Increase asset management funds for recreation and community facilities by \$235,000 per year.
- Funding for implementation of the Active Warrnambool Strategy of \$50,000 per year over the life of the Strategy.
- Increase staff resources

**21. The implementation of sustainable and effective facility management models that support community-based leadership should be considered.**

Council is responsible for the management of 171 areas of open space, including 14 sports grounds. One Reserve, the Allansford Recreation Reserve, is managed by a locally elected Committee of Management, and this model is highly successful at this Reserve.

An internal review of Council's management of sports grounds identified a high level of inconsistency and inequity in the delivery of a number of operational services. A report, Playing Fair – Developing a response to the Sports Ground Management Review was presented to Council in early 2017. Council will need to consider how it might respond to the issues (and to what level).

If the full review is implemented, it would be a high priority project to deliver the resultant changes. The review should also investigate the impact of season creep by some oval based sports, e.g. football and soccer, on other sports sharing grounds, such as cricket, and on the capacity of Council staff to complete ground refurbishment tasks between seasons.

In the interim work will continue on a range of specific elements already identified, including recommendations 11, 23, 41 and 42.

**71.** Consider if alternative approaches to sports ground management are feasible and warranted.

**72.** Present Council with the next steps to implement Playing Fair A response to the Sports Ground Management Review.

## 4. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the specific Issues, Opportunities and Barriers identified through the Warrnambool 2040 and Active Warrnambool consultation processes, leading to the strategic recommendations above, a number of further detailed considerations have emerged which will require investigation and resolution beyond the preparation of the current strategy, but during its lifetime.

These considerations are summarised in the table below, according to the relevant sport or activity.



SPORT / ACTIVITY	CONSIDERATION
<b>Cycling</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the future of the Friendly Societies Park cycling track?</li> <li>2. Is there a need for an off-road cycling facility?</li> <li>3. What improvements are required to the BMX facilities?</li> </ol>
<b>Surfing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Definition and provision of relevant amenities in appropriate locations</li> </ol>
<b>Athletics / Open Space</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. What is the long-term future of Brauerander Park?</li> </ol>
<b>Golf</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. On-going implementation of the South Warrnambool Crown Land Development Plan</li> </ol>
<b>Canoeing / Kayaking / Access to Waterways</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Future infrastructure requirements for improved facilities to support use of the Merri and Hopkins Rivers</li> </ol>
<b>Gymnastics</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Future facility provision</li> </ol>
<b>Lawn Bowls</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Future of the facility at Lake Pertobe</li> </ol>
<b>Soccer</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Condition of surface at Harris St Reserve</li> </ol>
<b>Hockey</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Facility renewal – synthetic pitch and sports lighting</li> </ol>
<b>Surf Life Saving</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. What are the future facility requirements to meet the needs of the sport in Warrnambool?</li> </ol>
<b>Squash</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Future of the sport in Warrnambool</li> </ol>
<b>Archery / Sport Shooting</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. What is the long-term future of the Lake Gilleard Complex?</li> </ol>

## 5. NEXT STEPS

**The next steps for the project will be:**

- Consultation on draft recommendations
- Consolidate Implementation Report and Recommendations into draft strategy considering appropriate timing, staging and implementation of the recommendations.

