City of Ballarat
2014
Recreation Strategy
August 2014
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**Executive summary**

The Ballarat Recreation Strategy (2014) analyses a range of factors and influences before recommending a series of practical projects to be delivered across the municipality over the next five years.

This strategy articulates a vision for sport and recreation in Ballarat. The vision is further developed into a series of objectives and principals which have been used to guide the development of the strategy. The objectives of this strategy, its recommendations, actions and priority areas have been linked to broader City of Ballarat Council objectives of planning for growth, managing assets, promoting a healthy lifestyle and promoting accessibility and inclusion. Council’s contribution to sport and recreation and the role of Council in delivering the strategy is also detailed.

The strategy has also been aligned to State and Federal Government sport and recreation policy frameworks and will be reviewed after a five year period.

The strategy assesses the broader context in which sport and recreation is developing and the factors influencing sport and recreation activity in Australia. The benefits of sport and recreation activities to the community from a social, recreational, health, economic and liveability perspective are identified and examined.

The key participation related trends across a range of sport and recreation activities are also identified and examined from adults and children’s perspectives. The implications of these participation trends are identified for consideration in the formulation of the strategy’s recommendations.

Trends in facilities provision, design, management, recreation based partnerships, the linkage between sport and recreation activities to open space and open space design and residential development, reserve development, and recreation planning are also examined and the implications for sport and recreation in Ballarat identified and assessed.

A detailed examination of sport and recreation within the local context has also been undertaken. This includes an extensive review of key strategy and policy as well as local development plans and influences. Extensive consultations were undertaken as part of the formulation of these strategies and background materials. Relevant implications and planning considerations are identified.

The critical issue of Ballarat’s growing population is examined and implications assessed with specific recommendations made to address these matters.

Establishing realistic and achievable recommendations having regarded to the resource capacity of the City and key stakeholders has been a key focus of the strategy. To this end the strategy makes 51 specific recommendations across the Council objectives of planning for growth, managing assets, promoting a healthy lifestyle and promoting accessibility and inclusion. These recommendations are supported by a detailed action, implementation and prioritisation framework across the areas of aquatics, active transport, grounds and pitches, hard courts, indoor sports, play experiences, new and emerging sports and statutory and operational management. There is a blend of infrastructure, programs and people based recommendations.
The supporting actions provide a clear link from Council objectives through to on the ground activities and a represent a holistic response to the City's sport and recreation needs.

Priorities have considered opportunities to achieve effective results within this framework and hence a combination of capital initiatives are supported by recommendations targeting behaviour change, community safety and awareness, facilitating participation opportunities and improved coordination of resources.

Finally, public accountability will be integral to ensuring effective ongoing relationships with community stakeholders; hence the evaluation section outlines a number of recommended actions to ensure transparency, focus and fostering ongoing involvement of community and key stakeholders.
INTRODUCTION
1. Introduction

1.1 Background and context

The City of Ballarat Recreation Strategy (Strategy) has been developed to provide detailed direction as to the use of Ballarat’s assets and resources in relation to sport and recreation from 2014. The Strategy has built on some of the exceptional work undertaken previously in the area of sport and recreation for the town. Previous strategies have been revisited and reconsidered, and extensive community engagement conducted with internal and external stakeholders. Using this information, particularly the demographic detail the engagement has provided and identifying best practice approaches of other councils and trends in recreation, has allowed a detailed document to be compiled that will steer sport and recreation in Ballarat.

This Strategy will directly link with the City of Ballarat’s Council Plan and health and wellbeing priorities outlined within the Council Plan. The inclusion of the Ballarat community’s priorities in regards to their use of sport and recreation facilities is paramount, as it is their participation in sport and recreational activities can result in a wide range of economic and health related benefits. Inclusion of the community’s priorities in the plan provides a direct link to the community’s increasing participation.

Participation in sport and recreational pursuits can provide a number of benefits, including:

- Health outcomes through an improvement of mental and physical activity;
- Building community cooperation;
- A range of economic benefits for local businesses, clubs, community groups and the City as a whole; and
- Individual and team character building, team spirit, fair play and problem solving.

Participation can also have a deterrent effect on anti-social behaviour, including vandalism, drunken behaviour and lead to decreases in petty crime. This is in part due to more people using their time constructively and community facilities being used more often.

From an economic perspective, the involvement of more people in sport and recreational pursuits provides direct and indirect employment in the recreation field. Such employment can include the need for officials to be trained, facilities to be built and maintained, and increased purchasing of sport and recreation related goods and services. That said, one of the most significant benefits to the economy is the improvement in community health through increased physical activity. Providing healthy options for passive and active recreation will decrease the risk of conditions such as cardiovascular disease, mental illness and diabetes.

The environment also receives benefit from an increase in physical activity as more people will utilise walking or cycling paths, thereby leading to a decrease in the use of motor vehicles. This lowers the City’s carbon footprint and, in turn, lowers the level of toxic gases being released into the environment.

Increased participation can also be a catalyst for investment, as demand will require more assets to be constructed to create safer and more sustainable communities.
1.2 What do we mean by recreation?

For the purpose of this Strategy, recreation is defined as:

*What people choose to do in their free time for the purpose of physical activity, enjoyment and relaxation. This includes organised recreation activities such as basketball, football and netball, and non-organised recreation activities such as walking, cycling and playing in the park.*
02
VISION & KEY OBJECTIVES
2. Vision and key objectives

The vision for the Ballarat Recreation Strategy is:

To make Ballarat a healthier and more active community that has access to a wide variety of recreational facilities and activities.

Provide recreational opportunities for all members of the Ballarat community regardless of gender, age, ability and cultural background. Facilities will be designed to increase participation to allow the Ballarat community to experience the wide range of benefits from physical activity.
03 METHODOLOGY
3. Methodology

To complete this strategy the methodology outlined in Figure 1 has been adopted:

![Diagram showing the recreation strategic planning methodology]

Adoption of this methodology has allowed the key components of the City’s sport and recreation assets and activities to be identified as well as the major factors influencing the demand for and the nature of these assets into the future. When these factors are considered against the framework of the Council’s objectives and other strategies that influence or impact on sport and recreation, a detailed, aligned and thorough recreation strategy can be developed.
04
OBJECTIVES & PRINCIPLES
4. Objectives and principles

There are both Council-specific and recreation-specific objectives this strategy should consider and link to. In addition, key principles have been established to guide the development of the strategy within the broader objectives established by the Council. The strategic framework for the strategy’s development is shown in Figure 2:

![Figure 2: Strategic framework for the development of the Ballarat Recreation Strategy](image)

4.1 Council objectives

Relevant Council objectives for the recreation strategy are outlined in Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Rationale for inclusion in recreation strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Growth and development</td>
<td>Planning for growth</td>
<td>Number and type of recreation infrastructure and facilities need to reflect City needs now and into the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managing our assets</td>
<td>Assessing and improving recreation infrastructure and facilities are critical to the objectives of improving access to leisure and recreational facilities and reducing the City's infrastructure renewal gap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People and communities</td>
<td>Promoting healthy lifestyle</td>
<td>Recreation is a vital physical activity for Victorian adults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promoting accessibility and inclusion</td>
<td>The useability and accessibility of recreational infrastructure and facilities across all age groups and areas goes to the objective of accessibility and inclusion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Relevant Council objectives
There is a clear link between the need to continually assess the suitability of the City’s recreational infrastructure and facilities and Council objectives.

4.2 Health and Wellbeing

The City of Ballarat’s Council Plan (2013-2017) outlines five health and wellbeing domains that the Council will focus on. These are:

1. Healthy, safe and inclusive communities;
2. Sustainable built and natural environments;
3. Culturally rich and vibrant communities;
4. Dynamic, resilient and local economies; and
5. Democratic and engaged communities.

Recreation as an activity and recreation assets old and new have a role to play in improving the health and wellbeing of all City of Ballarat residents.

The 2014 Recreation Strategy will assist the City of Ballarat deliver its stated health and wellbeing domains, notably in the domain of sustainable built and natural environments, where a key objective is improved access to and utilisation of leisure and recreational facilities and open space.

4.3 Recreation strategy objectives

The recreation-specific objectives that need to be delivered through this strategy are:

- Increase participation in physical activity and recreation in Ballarat;
- Increase the opportunities for all people regardless of ability to participate in recreational pursuits in Ballarat;
- Provide diverse facilities for the people of Ballarat to participate in recreational activities;
- Provide recreational facilities that meet the changing needs of residents and the wider population;
- Provide facilities that will attract sporting and recreational events to the City;
- Match capital expenditure and facility spending with Ballarat recreation participation trends; and
- Inspire all members of the Ballarat community to realise the importance of physical activity and recreation.
4.4 Link between Council and State and Federal Government policy frameworks

Whilst recognising the importance for a localised planning response, it is imperative that the Recreation Strategy align with Federal and State Government sport and recreation policies and strategic directions in order to maximise opportunities for partnerships, funding support and sustainable outcomes.

Two key policy documents guide government sport and recreation directions nationally and within Victoria, specifically:

- **Federal Government**: National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework (June 2011).

The following extract is taken from SRV's Strategic Framework (p6) which describes the national context and outlines Victoria's planning response:

> The National Sport and Active Recreation Framework was endorsed by the Australian Government and all state and territory governments in February 2011 and will remain in place for the next ten years. This framework is a guide for government activity and resource allocation in the sport and active recreation sector. It provides a mechanism for engaging the whole sport and recreation industry in the achievement of agreed goals for sport and active recreation.

> The priority areas of the national framework are:

- Participation
- International Performance
- National Competitions
- System Sustainability
- System Alignment and Collaboration
- Helping to meet Broader Objectives
- Research and Data Review.

SRV has aligned its priorities to the national framework with a small number of changes reflecting the Victorian context. Victoria competes nationally and internationally, so it makes sense from a state perspective to merge the two national priority areas of 'international performance' and 'national competitions'. It is also important to focus on performance systems, as clear pathways are needed for athletes, coaches, officials, administrators and volunteers to progress through their sport to elite level competitions and events.

In the Victorian context, all stakeholders and participants in the sport and active recreation system need to collaborate and be in alignment to ensure the greatest success can be achieved. A sustainable system is not possible if the system is not aligned and collaborative in nature. The two national priority areas of 'system sustainability' and 'system alignment and collaboration' can therefore be considered together. In summary, the directions for SRV are:

- Participation
- National/International Performance Systems
- Meeting Broader Objectives of Government
- System Sustainability
- Research and Information Provision.
Each of the SRV strategic directions are supported by a range of strategies, actions and indicators of success. Within a local government context, the Council Plan outlines the organisation's vision, strategic objectives and key directions.

The City of Ballarat Council Plan (2013-2017) identifies the strategic purpose of Council as leading sustainable growth, strengthening our community and respecting our heritage.

The strategic purpose is supported by four key themes, each of which has a number of strategic objectives that will be used to guide Council priorities. Table 2 highlights the alignment of strategic objectives across all level of government through to the Recreation Strategy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Framework Priority Areas</th>
<th>SRV Strategic Framework Strategic Directions</th>
<th>Council Plan Key Themes</th>
<th>Recreation Strategy Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>People and Communities</td>
<td>Increase participation in physical activity and recreation in Ballarat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Performance</td>
<td>National/International Performance Systems</td>
<td>People and Communities</td>
<td>Provide a diverse range of facilities and participation opportunities for the people of Ballarat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Competitions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Destination and Economy</td>
<td>Provide facilities that will attract sporting and recreational events to the City.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Sustainability</td>
<td>System Sustainability</td>
<td>Growth and Development</td>
<td>Provide recreational facilities that meet the changing needs of residents and the wider population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Alignment and Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Managing our Business</td>
<td>Inspire all members of the Ballarat community to realise the importance of physical activity and recreation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping to meet Broader Objectives</td>
<td>Meeting Broader Objectives of Government</td>
<td>Managing our Business</td>
<td>Provide recreational facilities that meet the changing needs of residents and the wider population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Data Review</td>
<td>Research and Information Provision</td>
<td>Managing our Business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Destination and Economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Sport and recreation policy alignment - Federal to Ballarat
4.5 Timeframe of the Ballarat Recreation Strategy

This strategy must accommodate the population growth and demographic issues that will occur in Ballarat during the short and medium terms. The strategy must also plan for and consider the longer term sport and recreation requirements of Ballarat.

4.6 Overarching principles for recreation in Ballarat

There are overarching principles providing the pillars to decision-making being undertaken in the area of sport, and recreation by Council. These principles, listed in Table 3, ensure that any work being undertaken by Council is accessible for all, environmentally sustainable and meets the ongoing needs of residents. These principles underpin the 2014 Ballarat Recreation Strategy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Implication</th>
<th>Strategic response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>These changes have implications for the design and location of facilities, as well as usage patterns. There will be an increase in indoor activities; outdoor facilities will need to be more responsive to climate variability and conscious of water use.</td>
<td>Structural works will look at promoting alternative energy supplies as a way to making developments environmentally sustainable for the future. Any works undertaken in the sport and recreation area will also have special attention paid to the environmental sustainability of the works and ensure that water resources are managed accordingly. The identified irrigation and grass works of the majority of grounds throughout Ballarat will provide long-term solutions to the highly volatile changes in climate currently being experienced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to Council Vision</td>
<td>Council will not achieve its vision without improving and developing the City’s sports and recreation infrastructure and facilities.</td>
<td>Ensure recreation strategy links directly to Council vision and objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-location</td>
<td>The inclusion of multiple users into a planned facility will create economies of scale and allow the different sports and different community groups to work together to manage facilities under agreed terms and conditions for facility use.</td>
<td>Co-location principles will be used in selection of sites, as well as design and development. Sport and recreation related programs and activities will aim to bring multiple user groups together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal design</td>
<td>In order to increase disabled access and participation in sport and recreation in Ballarat, the use of universal design principles is essential. Universal design will allow for all sport and recreation facilities to be accessible for not only the disabled, but also for the aged, children and all adults regardless of abilities.</td>
<td>Sport and recreation facilities will also be designed to accommodate future changes and trends in sport and recreation activities and allow for non-sport and recreation uses as community needs evolve.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Principle** | **Implication** | **Strategic response**
--- | --- | ---
**Tourism and economy**<br>All recreation, sport and recreation facilities identified for delivery under the Recreation Plan will provide tourism opportunities to Council and the community. | Usage of sport and recreation facilities by residents and regional, national and international visitors will assist in supporting and growing the local economy. | Sport and recreation facilities will be developed with tourism and economic considerations borne in mind. Facilities will be developed that can cater for events and tourism-related activities. The sports and recreation assets and infrastructure planned will bring sporting and recreational visitors to Ballarat and, thereby, provide economic advantages that must be taken into consideration when determining the recreation strategy. |
**Health and wellbeing**<br>Any sport and recreation facility planned to be built or improved by Council must be able to directly contribute towards the health and wellbeing of residents. | Health and wellbeing outcomes are influenced by the accessibility and use of the City's sports and recreation infrastructure and facilities. | Before works commence, each facility must show to what extent it will help to improve participation in physical activity. Health and wellbeing considerations will be considered in design and development of sport and recreation facilities and programs. |
**Participation**<br>Improving City-wide participation is a fundamental aim of this strategy and of Council's vision. | An important overarching principle of all of these projects is that they are designed to increase participation of all people, regardless of sex, age and physical capabilities and, thereby, the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the community. | It is recognised that different users and users group have different needs. These need to be adequately catered for throughout the consultation and delivery phase of development. Safety and participation are considered predominant needs for all users and user groups. |
**Family friendly**<br>All facilities constructed or planned by Council are required to be family friendly. | The provision of larger change rooms, child changing areas and children's play spaces will be primary considerations for any Council sport and recreation works. Utilising a family friendly approach to facilities will also facilitate greater participation in sport and recreation activities by the female population of Ballarat, a key focus of this Strategy. | All designs and planned works will utilise a family-friendly approach in an attempt to increase female and, in turn, family participation rates. |
**Precincts**<br>Ballarat sport and recreation facilities are categorised into precincts. | Replicating the open space hierarchy as described in Council's Open Space Strategy, each park, open space and sporting areas will be categorised as either local, neighbourhood, district, regional, state and National/International | Site classification is based on the facilities present, level of development and ability to attract users and events. They provide some clarity as to the nature and desired audience of each facility and the necessary detail to assist with budgeting and completion of facility. Table 4 describes precinct classifications. |
**Partnerships and collaboration**<br>Further development of partnerships in sports and recreation with relevant agencies and community groups will be critical to | Council will foster partnerships with relevant government agencies and community groups to help facilitate infrastructure provision and sport and recreation participation opportunities. | Council will play a key role in advocating for improvements to City's sport and recreation assets, infrastructure and programs. Council will continue to support local sports and recreation clubs, groups and community participation opportunities. |
Resourcing and needs to determine prioritisation
Priorities and staged implementation of improvement initiatives will reflect community needs and the City’s resource capacity.

Council resource allocation will be guided by the prioritised implementation plan. Recommendations reflect community needs as identified in previous consultation activities.

Resource allocation will be subject to Council’s annual budget deliberation process. Opportunities to attract external grants and funding will be explored where appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Implication</th>
<th>Strategic response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>achieving the vision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resourcing and needs to determine prioritisation</td>
<td>Council resource allocation will be guided by the prioritised implementation plan. Recommendations reflect community needs as identified in previous consultation activities.</td>
<td>Resource allocation will be subject to Council’s annual budget deliberation process. Opportunities to attract external grants and funding will be explored where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Principles used to guide strategy development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy</th>
<th>Size and description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Parks typically between .1 ha and .2 ha in size. These areas cater for activities such as family play, unorganised ball sports and small-scale physical activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>Parks typically between .5 ha and 1 ha in size. Generally these parks have play space facilities and open space for family play, unorganised ball sports and small-scale physical activity. These parks generally include landscaping and provide for many frequent, short duration visits from residents from the surrounding neighbourhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>These recreational parks are for larger numbers of people competing in organised sport and other recreational opportunities. A district facility provides recreational users from the neighbourhood level with a place to play organised sport, socialise with others and access playgrounds and other facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>A significant sized area that attracts visitation from across and beyond the municipal area. The site of these regional facilities is specific to the sport or recreational pursuits they are designed to encourage. These centres attract not only organised sport from inside Ballarat and in surrounding municipalities but also across country Victoria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>These highly significant areas are focused on attracting recreation, sporting visitation from within and outside the State of Victoria. These facilities generally provide elite standard playing facilities in order to attract elite sporting teams and groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National and international</td>
<td>These highly significant areas are focused on attracting recreation/sporting visitation from within Australia and from international audiences. These facilities provide elite standard playing facilities in order to attract elite sporting teams and groups from around Australia and internationally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Open space and precinct hierarchy
4.7 Council’s Role

Council’s role in the provision and support of recreation initiatives is varied and complex. At varying stages, Council may be responsible for:

- Asset management, development and maintenance;
- Planning authority;
- Tourism and economic development;
- Referral agency;
- Partner / leader;
- Advocacy in relation to sport and recreation activities generally and on behalf of sporting clubs;
- Enforcing / compliance;
- Direct service provision, e.g. programs and events;
- Education provider to many clubs;
- Communications, marketing, education;
- Educator / capability developer;
- Capital delivery; and
- Health promotion.

There may be opportunities for improved collaboration and coordination between Council departments towards common goals and strategic directions for recreation. This could be assisted by identifying a single Council officer (i.e. champion) with responsibility for overseeing recreation initiatives and overall implementation of this strategy.

4.8 Non Council Recreation providers

Not all recreation opportunities in the City of Ballarat are provided by council. Many external business operators provide recreation and sporting opportunities for the community across a variety of sites and activities.

These opportunities are provided across the entire municipality by a variety of providers. These providers come in the form of both business and also not for profit, and are key stakeholders in the overall landscape of recreation in Ballarat. Recreation opportunities delivered by some of these external groups include:

- Aquatics;
- Gym and Fitness centres;
- Indoor sports (for example Basketball and Table Tennis);
- Passive walking groups; and
Equestrian

The City of Ballarat will continue to work with these and other groups to develop funding opportunities and to increase the ability of them to provide these opportunities to the people of Ballarat.
05 THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT
5. **The strategic context**

The following section highlights the importance of sport and recreation and presents a selection of key participation trends.

5.1 **Why is providing sport and recreation important?**

The City currently provides and/or facilitates access to a range of sport, recreation and leisure opportunities across the municipality. These add to the culture, lifestyle and character of the region as well as enhance the liveability of the City and are, therefore, recognised as an important part of a well-balanced lifestyle.

The benefits associated with participating in sport and physical activity include personal enjoyment, social interaction, physical and mental health, personal achievement, community involvement (‘social capital’), community resilience and opportunities for the expression of community pride.

The health benefits of participation in regular physical activity have been well documented and include:

- Reduced incidence of cardiovascular disease, stroke, obesity and other preventable illnesses;
- Increased life expectancy;
- Reduced incidence of bowel cancer and certain other cancers;
- Reduced incidence of stress, anxiety, depression and improved overall mental health; and
- Reduced incidence of chronic conditions such as diabetes, arthritis and asthma.

Physical activity participation builds self-esteem and positive self-image, enhances life satisfaction and perceived quality of life. Evidence also suggests that regular club based participation can assist in reducing destructive behaviour and negative social activity, build understanding between diverse cultures and reduce isolation, loneliness and alienation.

Participation in a broad range of leisure activities has the potential to improve physiological and mental health, contribute to personal development, improve well-being and assist in social learning (e.g. tolerance, respect, cooperation, and leadership). Participation may also assist in the improvement of educational performance and promote a sense of community belonging.

Quality parks and recreation opportunities also provide safe developmental opportunities for children and young people to build social skills and stimulate participation in community life. Recreation facilities are recognised as important physical assets that contribute to providing a social focus and influencing people’s perception of their community. Quality facilities facilitate broad community use, events, tourism and contribute to overall economic sustainability of the communities in which they exist. Therefore, sport and recreation facilities contribute to physical health, mental health, community connectedness, general wellbeing and economic sustainability.
5.2 Recreation trends review

Two important elements have been considered when identifying trends that are likely to influence future recreation provision in the City of Ballarat. Specifically, sport and recreation participation trends help to provide direction on likely future demand pressures and open space design and development trends will influence how future open space is provided, used and developed.

5.2.1 General industry trends

There is growing recognition of the health benefits of regular participation in physical activities within the community, including acceptance of the individual and community wellbeing benefits of belonging to sports clubs.

However, there is also growing demand for access to informal participation opportunities that can be engaged in on a casual basis (‘pay as you go’) in preference to formal club-based or organised activities. This has increased demand for greater diversity in recreation participation opportunities, both in terms of activities and times available. It has also led to an increase in commercial use of public facilities and open space for leisure participation programs (e.g. personal trainers).

Associated with an emerging preference for participation in informal activities is an increasing reliance on local, low cost participation opportunities, including increased use of the natural environment as a setting for informal recreational activities/pursuits. These trends also impact on opening hours for recreation facilities and programming, including greater reliance on weekday, evening and weekend time-slots.

There is also evidence that participants have higher expectations regarding the standard of facility provision, programming and management, which is aligned to more well defined and specific facility standards and requirements imposed by peak sporting bodies and Australian Standards. Examples include standards for sports lighting provision, netball court standards and facility requirements for soccer, to name a few.

Trends also reflect emerging changes in sports products and programming, for example T20 cricket, mid-week night tennis competitions, veterans/masters competitions, etc. These changes reflect growth in social sports participation, often combining skill levels in recognition of preferences for social outcomes.

Many sports peak bodies are also increasing the emphasis and delivery of introductory sports participation programs aimed at junior development and recruitment (e.g. Auskick, Small Sided Games, for example soccer).

There are also a number of trends impacting on formal sports clubs, most notably declining volunteerism and increasing professionalism (driven by a desire for competitive advantage and regulatory requirements). Both of these factors impact on the capacity of clubs to provide participation opportunities for the community.

5.2.2 Leisure facility development trends

The general trends noted above are influencing contemporary leisure facility design and development. It is now more common to design facilities that can be configured to meet a variety of different needs and uses (i.e. in-built design flexibility for adaptive reuse over time).
Examples of in-built flexibility include infrastructure to accommodate mixed gender use of facilities, for example cubicle showers (similar to caravan park shower/change cubicles) and removal of urinals in preference for additional toilet pans.

The importance of providing facilities that facilitate a high level of social interaction and engagement are also being increasingly recognised. Examples include undercover external viewing areas attached to sports pavilions and the design of meeting and social spaces as integral components of sport and leisure facilities.

Facility developments are increasingly adopting a hierarchal approach to facility and infrastructure provision, which reflects different service levels, usage and standards of provision. This includes the establishment of major regional sport/leisure facility hubs that offer a wide variety of activities/sports and ancillary services.

This may involve co-locating leisure and sports facilities close to other community assets such as retail precincts, arts precincts, libraries and other facilities designed to maximise the visibility, traffic and throughput.

There is also growing evidence of effective public/private partnerships between developers, government and sports clubs to develop sports facilities, including the design of joint-use facilities at school and other educational institutions which allow educational use during daytime periods (weekdays) and community use during the peak evening and weekend periods.

There is strong evidence of ageing infrastructure which will require refurbishment and/or replacement (i.e. a high proportion of recreation assets were built in the 1960's and 1970's and are now reaching the end of useful asset life).

Facility developments and renewal are increasingly considering energy efficiency and environmentally sustainable features within the design of sport and leisure facilities, as well as greater consideration of climate change impacts, including water use and environmental sustainability.

Finally, there is an emergence of new playing surface technologies which allow councils to maximise the use of existing assets (e.g. synthetic playing surfaces).

5.3 Facilities provision

The design and usage of sports, recreation and aquatics facilities have changed significantly over recent years. Usage requirements, participation rates and external pressures are requiring more strategic planning in the design and location of facilities. Some of the trends affecting facilities are as follows:

5.3.1 Design

- Increased requirement for multipurpose / multi-sport facilities for use by a range sports and community groups.
- Construction of recreation facilities and reserves using a rating system / hierarchy: local, regional and national (refer Table 4).
- The construction of a wide range of quality indoor sport and recreation facilities.
5.3.2 Management
- Inclusion of community groups and sporting clubs in the management of facilities and reserves.
- Delivery of marketing and promotional strategies to increase spending at recreational facilities and recreational events.
- Risk management and public liability issues as major concerns for recreation providers.

5.3.3 Environmental
- Planning for long term environmental changes, such as drought and heatwaves.
- Provision of passive recreation areas including natural landscaping features such as water, grass, rocks and trees.
- Encouraging non-car related transport for travel to new facilities with paths and trails linked to existing networks.

5.3.4 Partnerships for outcomes
- Increase in partnerships in funding between State and Federal Government, local councils and sporting clubs and associations.
- Recognition of the important role that community sporting groups and clubs play in building inclusive and healthy communities.
- Local government working in closer partnership with sporting clubs to provide educational opportunities to further promote the benefits of physical activity.

5.3.5 Open space design / development trends
A number of trends in open space development and acquisition have been noted that are likely to be relevant to this project. A snap-shot of these include:

Residential development:
- Growing recognition of the importance of open space and direct relationship/correlation to individual property prices.
- Emergence of high-quality, highly-developed landscaped areas in substantial residential subdivisions, including infrastructure provision such as community playgrounds, park furniture (including picnic tables and BBQ’s), lighting and even sports pavilions.
- Inclusion of highly developed landscaped open space as key entry features in new land releases (often provided for visual impact, as opposed to community recreation).
- Increasing use of water and water features in public open space (which may provide limited recreational value to the community).
- The use of illustrated promotional/sales brochures and concept plans for residential developments that depict significant open space development, which may or may not ultimately be provided.
Associated with the above trends, acquisition of open space that may not be usable for active recreation or informal use (i.e. entry features, flood plain areas).

Growing recognition of the importance of effective and appealing open space connections, linear linkages and off-road trails. At times there is inadequate consideration of connectivity to existing residential areas, key activity nodes and/or likely desired destination points.

Use of encumbered land, or land with limited usability, to satisfy required developer contributions.

Increasing recognition of the need to acquire more than the legislated maximum five per cent developer contribution to satisfy community recreation and open space needs.

**Reserve development**

- Development of open space (by developers) to an initial standard that promotes land sales; however, this may be unsustainable for councils to maintain.
- Increasing community expectations regarding the standard of facilities and maintenance.
- Inclusion of areas for informal activity and casual community use within larger active sports reserves.
- Increasing recognition of risk management and minimisation initiatives, including public safety (e.g. lighting).
- Increasing use of interpretive signage, information and interactive tools (e.g. sensory playgrounds).

### 5.3.6 Children's participation trends

The Australian Bureau of Statistics conducts a survey of children's participation levels (aged 5-14 years) in a range of sport, recreation and cultural activities approximately every three years. The latest results relate to 2010. A selection of key results from the “Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia” includes:

- Sixty three per cent of children had played a sport outside of school hours which had been organised by a school, club or association (up from 59% in 2000). Participation in organised sport was highest among 9 to 11 years olds at 68 per cent, compared with 58 per cent for 5 to 8 year olds and 65 per cent for 12 to 14 year olds.

- Participation rates were higher for boys across all age groups compared with girls, with the greatest difference being between 12 to 14 year olds (boys 74% compared with girls 55%).

- In 2009, the most popular sport for children was swimming with a participation rate of 19 per cent. This was followed by outdoor soccer at 13 per cent and Australian Rules football at nine per cent.

- However, there were notable differences between the sexes. For boys, the most popular sports were outdoor soccer (20%), swimming (17%) and Australian Rules football (16%). In comparison, the sports most popular among girls were swimming (20%), netball (17%) and gymnastics (8%).

- During the two week period prior to the survey 60 per cent of children had been bike riding and 49 per cent had been skateboarding, rollerblading or riding a scooter. However, once again there were notable differences between the sexes. For example, riding a bike (boys 66% compared with girls 54%) and skateboarding, rollerblading or riding a scooter (boys 56% compared with girls 42%).
During the 12 months prior to the survey, 37 per cent of children did not participate in any organised sport outside of school hours. A higher proportion of girls (44%) did not participate in organised sports than boys (30%).

Rates of participation in organised sports and cultural activities varied between age groups. The highest rates of non-participation were amongst 5 to 8 year olds (32%), followed by 12 to 14 year olds (24%) and 9 to 11 year olds (21%).

Cultural origins also influenced participation behaviour. For example, children born overseas in non-main English speaking countries were less likely to participate in selected sport or cultural activities (46%) than Australian born children (25%) or children born in other main English-speaking countries (United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Canada, United States of America and New Zealand - 24%).

Furthermore, children in one-parent families were less likely to participate in selected sport or cultural activities (37%) than children in couple families (23%). In addition, children whose parents were unemployed were less likely to participate in sport or cultural activities (49%) compared to those with at least one parent working (23%).

These results are similar to the ERASS Children's Survey (2010) which found the 'top ten' physical activities for children in 2010 (i.e. term participation rates), were:

- Walking (52.1%);
- Cycling (48.1%);
- Swimming (37.8%);
- Active play (24.7%);
- Outdoor football (soccer) (16.5%);
- Dance (13.7%);
- Gymnastics (13.2%);
- Tennis (10.6%);
- Basketball (9.7%); and
- Australian rules football (8.7%).

5.3.7 Adult participation trends

Figure 3, Figure 4 and Figure 5 are derived from data obtained from the ABS Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation (2011-12) report. The information identifies the overall adult participation rate in physical activities, top five activities of choice and preferred venues/facilities used for Victorians aged over 15 years.
The total participation rate in physical activities by adults aged over 15 years was 66.1 per cent in 2011-12.

There has been a modest increase in participation since 2005-06.

The most popular physical activities are dominated by informal recreation activities as opposed to club based sports participation.

Three of the top five activities utilise similar infrastructure; that is walking, jogging, cycling/BMX are all likely to utilise paths, tracks and trails.

**Figure 3: Adult participation trends 2005 - 2012**

**Figure 4: Top physical activities (2011-12) +15 yrs**
The most popular facilities / venues used for physical activity participation rely on effective public open space provision, for example:

- Parks and reserves (44%).
- Public playing fields (30.7%).
- Off-road cycle ways or paths (24.6%).
- Outdoor sports facilities (22.4%).

Until recently, the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) conducted an annual Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS) to measure Australians participation in physical activity for exercise, recreation and sport (15 years old and over). The ERASS survey results provide for more detailed analysis of the most popular activities. Key extracts from the last survey results (2010) are presented in the following section.

**5.3.8 ERASS Survey results (2010)**

As recorded by the ABS data, overall participation rates in physical activities are increasing; however, there is a strong preference for participation in non-organised/informal physical activities. For example, the total participation rate in non-organised physical activity was 70.8 per cent in 2010, whereas the total participation rate in organised physical activity was 40 per cent. The club-based participation rate was 25.7 per cent of the population aged 15 years and over.

**Total participation**
In 2010, the total participation rate (i.e. participated at least once annually in any physical activity) was 82.3 per cent of the population. This declines to 69.4 per cent for weekly participation and 47.7 per cent for regular participation (i.e. at least three times per week). Only 28 per cent of the population participated five or more times per week.

Except in the youngest and oldest age groups, females had higher regular participation rates in any physical activity. Regular participation rates in any physical activity were also higher among the university-educated and those still at secondary school.

Females speaking a non-European language at home had lower than average regular participation rates.

In terms of the top ten physical activities, the largest increase in total participation between 2001 and 2010 was for aerobics/fitness, increasing steadily by 110 per cent since 2001. Participation in running, outdoor football, cycling and walking also increased in the ten-year period, although walking, running and cycling showed greater fluctuation over the period.

Activities experiencing declines in participation between 2001 and 2010 included tennis (down 24% compared to 2001), swimming (down 6% since 2001) and golf (down 5% between 2001 and 2010).

Organised physical activities

The top ten organised physical activities are presented in Figure 7:
Figure 7: Top ten organised activities in Victoria

The total participation rate in organised physical activity was 40 per cent in 2010. The regular participation rate (i.e. at least three times per week) was 12 per cent (up three percentage points from 2001).

Overall, regular participation rates in organised physical activity were slightly higher among males (12.2%) than females (11.9%) in 2010.

Regular participation in organised physical activity was most common among those aged 15 to 24 years, regardless of gender, while participation in non-organised physical activity increased with age.

Those still at secondary school had the highest regular participation rates in organised physical activity.

In terms of the top ten organised physical activities, Australian Rules football had the largest increase in total participation between 2001 and 2010, increasing by 64 per cent since 2001.

Other top ten organised activities experiencing increases in participation since 2001 were outdoor football (i.e. soccer, 55% increase) and outdoor cricket (33% increase).

Of all top ten organised activities, tennis (~24%) and golf (~8%) experienced the greatest declines in participation between 2001 and 2010.

Non-organised activities

The top ten non-organised activities are presented Figure 8:
The total participation rate in non-organised physical activity was 70.8 per cent in 2010. The regular participation rate (i.e. at least three times per week) was 38.5 per cent (up 11 percentage points from 2001). The increase in the regular participation rate in non-organised physical activity occurred for both males and females. Overall increases in physical activity were mainly due to the increase in non-organised participation.

Females had higher regular participation rates in non-organised physical activity (41.5%) than males (35.3%). This was true in all age groups except those aged 15 to 24 years and aged 65 years and over, where regular participation rates were equivalent between males and females.

Regular participation in non-organised physical activity gradually increased with age for females and males, peaking at 55 to 64 years. Females aged between 55 and 64 years were the most active in non-organised physical activity, with a regular participation rate of 48.2 per cent.

Regular participation in non-organised physical activity was higher among those with a university education and lower than average among persons speaking a non-European language at home.

Aerobics/fitness had the largest increase in total participation between 2001 and 2010.

Club based activities
The top ten club-based activities are presented in Figure 9.
The total participation rate in club-based physical activity was 25.7 per cent in 2010; however, the regular participation rate (i.e. at least three times per week) was 6.3 per cent. This is up by three percentage points for males and one percentage point for females from 2001.

In club-based physical activity, and in contrast to non-organised physical activity, the male regular participation rate (7.9%) exceeded the female rate (4.8%).

Regardless of gender, regular participation in club-based physical activity was most common among those aged 15 to 24 years (17.7%).

Australian Rules football, outdoor football (soccer), outdoor cricket, basketball, netball and lawn bowls all experienced increases in participation between 2001 and 2010. Whereas martial arts (−44%) and tennis (−13%) had the greatest declines in participation during the same period.

5.4 Local sporting participation

The City of Ballarat commissioned the VicHealth survey in 2011. There was a significant sample size (n=1,644) of residents age 18 to 95.

There were over 70 physical activities identified. The top 20 activities undertaken by frequency are shown in Figure 10.
These figures have similarities to the Victorian figures (Figure 8) with walking, cycling, aerobic / gym, swimming and cycling also being the top 5 activities across the state. Golf, Netball and AFL are also the top played club based activities across played across Australia (Figure 9). The local sporting profile is very similar to broader state and national participation levels.

Other relevant information from the survey includes:

- 91.2% of respondents either ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ there were enough opportunities to participate in physical activity in their local area;
- The same pattern of answers is evident according to gender. For people with a disability the result was slightly lower at 88.7% either ‘agreeing’ or ‘strongly agreeing’ there were enough opportunity to participate;
- 82.5% of the population reported they had participated in physical activities for exercise, recreation or sport in the last 12 months;
- Residents with higher incomes and higher levels of education are much more likely to have engaged in physical activity and a discrepancy of 37.6% exists between the participation rates of least educated and the most educated;
Physical activity participation rates do not change dramatically with age until people reach more than 65 years; and

There is a 20% reduction in physical activity between those with a self-defined disability compared to those without one.

5.5 Recreation planning implications

Examples of likely impacts on future recreation planning and provision from the trends review include:

5.5.1 Participation demand

- Greater consideration may need to be given to opportunities to enhance informal recreation participation opportunities within open space, as these account for the largest proportion of overall physical activity participation by the community including walking, cycling and running. This reinforces the importance of quality walking paths, trails and accessible open space facilities and programs.
- It can be expected that the use of parks and open space by personal trainers is likely to increase associated with a growing preference for ‘pay as you go’ activities and increasing recognition of the health benefits of regular physical activity participation.
- Focusing on access to sport and recreation facilities and programs amongst lower educated cohorts and those with disabilities will be crucial to lifting participation rates.
- The similarity of participation patterns in Ballarat to State and National levels provides for an opportunity for the City to work closely with major peak bodies on development and participation programs.
- Demand for organised sport opportunities, particularly for children aged 5-15 years and young adults aged 15-24 years, will remain significant (and growing), including soccer, football, cricket, netball, basketball and aerobic/fitness. Demand for organised tennis and golf is likely to continue to decline.
- Participation in tennis (in Victoria) has declined significantly between 2001 and 2010 (down by 24%), therefore future facility provision may not need to reflect historical levels of provision or previous benchmarks.
- Despite a growing preference for informal (non-club based) physical activity participation, opportunities for participation in more popular club based activities such as soccer, cricket, football, basketball, netball, lawn bowls and aerobic/fitness will need to be considered.

5.5.2 Facilities and infrastructure

- Future facility and service provision will need to be cognisant of recent industry trends in terms of design, operation and open space development (e.g. maximising opportunities for multi-use, the development of ‘service hubs’, partnerships with developers, establishment of a hierarchical approach to facility provision that is linked to defined service levels and asset management planning etc.).
- Facility and infrastructure developments will need to consider an improved emphasis on quality, not just quantity of facilities.
New and refurbished facility provision should consider opportunities to support social gathering spaces, multi-use and incorporating a high degree of environmental sustainability in design, development and operation.

Ensure future residential areas ‘embrace’ open space reserves and encourage casual surveillance and design outcomes.

Plan, provide and maintain linear connections to/from recreation reserves and key destinations as a high priority.

Adoption of universal design principles.

Ensure open space and recreation facility provision standards in growth areas are operationally sustainable.

5.5.3 Programs and services

Greater consideration will need to be given to initiatives that support participation in formal sport and club based physical activities by women and girls.

In addition, supporting non-organised physical activities (through infrastructure, services and programs) will help facilitate increased physical activity participation by the community, in particular by women and older age groups (both genders). Opportunities to support walking/jogging/cycling clubs and informal groups should be considered.

Greater consideration will also need to be given to opportunities that encourage, promote and facilitate increased participation by children in organised sports and activities, particularly by 5-8 year olds and those from non-English speaking backgrounds (the latter being almost 50% less likely to participate than Australian-born children).
06
THE LOCAL CONTEXT
6. The local context

Ballarat is a unique regional city, offering a diverse and plentiful range of sports and recreational assets for the enjoyment and recreation of its residents and those of the broader region. To ensure the quality and access to the sport and recreation infrastructure and facilities are enhanced, this recreation strategy must reflect the specific issues that Ballarat faces now and in the future. These issues must be considered in the context of the existing sports and recreation assets the residents of Ballarat currently have access to.

6.1 Background reports and research

The following section provides a summary of key background documents and research material that has helped inform the Recreation Strategy. Key documents reviewed (Table 5) include, but are not limited to:

- City of Ballarat CBD Strategy;
- Victoria Park – A Vision (2013);
- Victoria Park – Summer Criterium Racing (2012);
- Victoria Park Ballarat Equestrian Precinct Master Plan (2007);
- Victoria Park South and Ballarat Livestock Selling Centre Precinct Plan (2007);
- Ballarat Livestock Selling Centre Precinct Plan (2007);
- Ballarat West Growth Area Plan (2009);
- Ballarat Aquatic Strategy (2014);
- Ballarat Bike Strategy (2014); and

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Recreation related issues</th>
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<tr>
<td>City of Ballarat CBD Strategy.</td>
<td>Relevant objectives include:</td>
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<td>Maximise connectivity to surrounding areas.</td>
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<td>Encourage access to and within the CBD by walking and cycling.</td>
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<td>Investigate options for expanded community access education programs and cultural or recreational activity.</td>
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<td>Strategy provides for a range of cycling-related objections, actions and recommendations</td>
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<td>Victoria Park – A Vision (2013)</td>
<td>Recreation in general and cycling in particular are key activities undertaken in Victoria Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victoria Park – Summer Criterium Racing (2012)</td>
<td>There is expected to be an increase in cycling-related activities in the park</td>
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<td>Existing cycling paths are highly valued</td>
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<td>There is an opportunity to develop cycling criterium events in multiple locations throughout the park</td>
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<td>Some remediation and improvement works of trials and roads would be needed if the park's cycling options were to be fully exploited for criterium events.</td>
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<td>Victoria Park, Ballarat</td>
<td>Ongoing development of the precinct for a range of users including Riding for the Disabled, Ballarat Adult Riding Club, Ballarat Pony Club, Ballarat and District Quarter Horse</td>
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- Development and use to be consistent with broader principles of use and development outlined for the park  
- Expanded and improved facilities could bring in additional events and create recreational tourism opportunities  
- Development of the facility to be based on ‘clustering’ principals to ensure park amenity is maintained  
20 year horizon (2027) contemplated with the following priorities:  
- Indoor arena so that needs of Riding for the Disabled are provide for  
- Completion of the cross country course  
- Develop horse yards, car parking and camping infrastructure  
- Shower and additional toilet facilities and upgrade existing buildings |
| Victoria Park South and Ballarat Livestock Selling Centre Precinct Plan (2007) | Victoria Park is a regional open space asset accommodating a wide variety of land uses. Some uses are not appropriate within a parkland setting and do not accord with the zoning or the purpose of the reservation. The northern part of Victoria Park contains predominantly formal recreational uses, with a dominance of sporting ovals and fields set within tree-lined avenues, and informal recreational spaces in between. The southern part of Victoria Park is less cohesive, with more informal recreational uses and areas that are rarely used (e.g. grasslands, south-eastern area) or are restricted to general public access, such as the BPC grounds, BLSC sheep holding yards and the residential allotment. A shared pathway circumnavigates a large section of the park, tying the two precincts together for pedestrians and cyclists.  
Consultations have highlighted:  
- High value placed on the accessible and varied wide open spaces, vegetation, natural environment, birds, lakes and lack of development in Victoria Park, and the opportunity it provides for informal and passive recreation near the centre of Ballarat.  
- Victoria Park should provide for relatively low impact activities requiring low scale infrastructure, such as horse riding, passive recreation, and activities that create a sense of community and have minimal impact on the environment. Some respondents encouraged more intense use and events, including the installation of a sound shell complex and other development to service the community.  
- Facilities that support passive and informal recreation and use of open space, such as barbeques, seating, play equipment, more paths and toilets, are needed in the southern precinct of Victoria Park.  
- The Park is used for an extensive number of activities including activities such as animal groups and show dogs.  
- Activities or land uses suggested for the BLSC site include uses that would benefit the broader community such as sporting facilities, community uses, an entertainment complex or equestrian facilities. Some respondents suggested a more standard approach to the redevelopment, with industrial, commercial or residential land uses.  
The plan recommends that:  
- Opportunities for community and recreational activities in the south-west corner of the park are explored;  
- Utilising the park for major events (tourism) hosting large crowds and requiring large open space areas, closed road circuits or buffer zones to surrounding residential areas; and  
- As a high profile heritage parkland and flexible open space for a range of land based uses including active and passive recreation to national competitions |
<p>| Ballarat West Growth Area Plan (2009) | As part of planning for residential areas, the plan provides for new town centres at Alfredton and Delacombe, community infrastructure, recreation and sports grounds, and direction for the... |</p>
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<th>Strategy</th>
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<td>development of a future residential community. New residential growth will occur around centrally located ‘town centres’ providing for retail, employment, recreational and other services. The plan provides for an open space network that aims to provide a dispersed network of large local parks and a sports reserve distribution that collocates sports grounds with schools and allows for higher order sports facilities to be developed in Victoria Park. Within the Growth Area Alfredton Recreation Reserve contains an oval and tennis courts along Cuthberts Road and is large enough for additional sporting and leisure activities. Recreation opportunities in localities adjoining the study area include:</td>
<td>Victoria Park (cycling, multi-sports ovals, and equestrian activities), the Doug Dean Reserve in Delacombe (an oval and walking track); Marty Busch Reserve, Sebastopol (two ovals, a velodrome and a BMX track) and Morsehead Reserve Additional facilities include Bray Raceway (harness racing, greyhounds); Trekardo Park (soccer); Western Oval; Ballarat Golf Course; Prince of Wales Park (baseball, oval); Lake Wendouree (walking cycling, botanic gardens); Golf driving range located on Learmonth Street; and To the north west of the GAP is the Skipton Rail Trail, providing scope for a connecting link to Ballarat to the east and the trail to the south west</td>
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<td>In addition to significant recreational development opportunities, the plan highlights principles and details potential open space developments. The plan specifically links open space to recreation and recreation activity to the well-being and health of communities. The plan notes that: The full spectrum of public open spaces should be provided, distributed and designed to optimise safety within and near them, and access to them, so that they provide for a broad range of community interactions. Urban plazas provide gathering places in the town centres. Many small playground parks should be distributed across the urban areas such that at least one small park is within a five minute walk of virtually all residences. Major existing reserves close to the plan area have the capacity to be enhanced to accommodate much of the recreational needs of the new community. Victoria Park particularly is only partially developed and has the capacity to provide a major, higher order open space facility for the plan area.</td>
<td>Council sports fields should couple with schools for shared usage. Large regional sports facilities should be highly accessible to the user population and locate in flood plains without significant environmental Significant creeks should become public parkways, wherever viable, and fronted generally by small streets and/or foot/cycle paths, and overlooked by development. This will ensure the long-term preservation of these important resources for both biodiversity and the community. The plan also contains various cycling-related strategies, objective, actions and recommendations</td>
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<td>Indoor sports facilities</td>
<td>The plan also addressed indoor sports facilities making the following recommendations: Two medium sized or one large indoor sports facility generally occupying a site of around one hectare. Detailed planning through Development Plans and town centre planning Should recognise a site of one hectare for an indoor sports facility within the Delacombe town centre and at Alfredton.</td>
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<td>Strategy</td>
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| Ballarat Open Space Strategy (2008)           | - Open space (of which recreational assets is a subset) is a significant contributor to the provision of quality communities.  
- Open space provides a range of benefits including physical benefits that promote health and wellbeing.  
- Ballarat has a high portion of open space per capita  
- Future open space provision in Ballarat will address a range of priorities around the preservation and creation of natural landscapes, responsible design, development and management of spaces, quality sporting surfaces, fun and challenging play environments for all ages, waterway corridors and linkages that connect communities, flora, fauna and the development of a diverse open space system that is accessible to all residents.  
- Water saving initiatives and environmentally sustainable practices and design should be built into open space assets and infrastructure |
| City of Ballarat Bicycle Strategy (2014)       | - Detailed analysis of the City’s current and future bicycling needs  
- Detailed recommendations for the cycling network are detailed in the strategy. Priorities have been identified in the areas of:  
  - On-road routes:  
  - Off-road routes:  
  - Mountain bike trails:  
  - Support infrastructure:  
  - Programs and service: and  
  - Partnerships and collaborations. |
| City of Ballarat Aquatic Strategy (2014)        | - Considers a range of issues pertaining to Aquatics in the city, including putting forward a model for future growth of aquatic facilities and management of existing assets.  
- 16 recommendations, of which the priority actions was to implement the 2013-14 aquatics upgrade package, including:  
  - Construction of a regionally-significant indoor Aquatic Play Space at the BALC;  
  - Consideration of a South Ward Aquatic Play Space; and  
  - Continue to provide community and family areas with improvements in play, shade and furniture at Eureka Pool facility. |
| Major Events Precinct Masterplan (underway)    | - The City of Ballarat is currently concluding an integrated Masterplan for the Ballarat Major Events precinct.  
- The Masterplan seeks to integrate the future infrastructure requirements for the existing tenants on site, while also contemplating a range of future development scenarios.  
- The plan, which is expected to be completed by October, will enable all levels of government to determine their interest in investing in a variety of projects which focus upon local, regional and state level activities.  
- The Masterplan will also align with the Recreation capital plan, which seeks to provide significant investment in priority projects across the city. |

Table 5 – Summary of relevant local strategy documents
6.1.1 Implications for Ballarat Recreation Strategy

The extensive planning previously undertaken in Ballarat has a range of implications for this strategy. Key amongst these include:

- There are previously established principles and precedents that are to be applied to sports and recreation development across the municipality;
- The link between sport and recreation and community wellbeing is embedded in the strategic planning undertaken;
- The importance of sports and recreation to the community of Ballarat, now and in the future, is recognised in the previous strategic and planning work. Ensuring this is maintained as Ballarat further develops is critical to the ongoing liveability of the city;
- Ensuring sports and recreational assets and infrastructure continue to be developed in line with development of the city and the growth in the city's population;
- The opportunities for sports and recreation centred recreational tourism are recognised; however, to fully develop these opportunities, the development of appropriate sports and recreation infrastructure is also needed;
- The high quality of sport and recreation assets the City has at its disposal which can be leveraged to increase sport and recreation participation;
- Highlighting the role the City as stewards for future generations of the existing sports and recreational assets and infrastructure currently managed and maintained by the City;
- Management of the linkage between open space and the provision and planning for recreation reserves and assets;
- There is an extensive range of sport and recreation activities that need to be considered, ranging from traditional sporting and recreation pursuits such as football and bicycling to other pursuits such as dog clubs;
- The City's sport and recreation assets can be further developed and enhanced to attract higher standard sport and recreation events;
- The Major Events Masterplan will need to take account of this strategy;
- Highlighting the amount of informal recreation activities that occur across the city; and
- Accessing and understanding usage patterns and using this data to develop evidence for future planning is difficult.
6.2 Planning for population growth

Ballarat is experiencing a period of high rates of population growth. The city's growth profile is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. The City of Ballarat's Strategic Planning Unit is actively identifying and planning for future new communities and business activity. These plans must continue to consider the need for sport and recreation assets, infrastructure and participation of local residents.

Fundamental to the planning and provision of new residential growth areas is ensuring connectivity within and external to any new development through the provision of appropriate sport and recreation facilities such as ovals, community facilities, open space, on-road and off-road paths, tracks and trails.

Maximising physical activity participation opportunities through sport and recreation activities will improve social integration and community wellbeing. Infrastructure development, urban design and streetscapes must ensure future growth areas are well catered for, with sufficient and appropriate sport and recreation assets, infrastructure and participation opportunities. Ensuring connectivity of sport and recreation activities to growth areas and existing population centres is a critical aspect to encouraging participation. Ensuring sports clubs and those associated with sport and recreation facilities have access to a range of amenities that support and develop off-field capabilities and networks should also be considered.

6.2.1 Ballarat’s population trends

Ballarat’s population is expected to grow in several demographics, including in particular:

- Families with school-aged children;
- Regional and rural home leavers and university students;
- Retirees and seniors from western Victoria and Melbourne; and
- New arrivals and refugees from overseas.

Figure 11 shows the population growth projections and helps to identify future works under this Plan and how future aquatics would benefit the Ballarat community.
Forecasts show that by 2018 an additional 7,500 people will reside in Ballarat and that by 2038, this number increases to over 40,000. The breakdown of this growth by suburb is shown in Figure 11:

![Ballarat Population Forecast (2013 - 2038)](image)

**Figure 11: Ballarat’s population growth (2013 - 2038) (Id Forecasting, 2013)**

**Ballarat Population - Growth by Suburb 2013 - 2038**

![Ballarat Population Growth by Suburb](image)

**Figure 12: Population growth trends by Ballarat suburb (Id Forecasting, 2013)**
Most suburbs within the municipality are expected to increase in population over the next 10 years and beyond. Much of this population growth is expected in areas to the north, south and west with Delacombe, Alfredton, Cardigan - Lucas and Sebastopol showing significant increases.

These suburbs have been identified as having the greatest capacity to accommodate growth due to land availability for new housing.

### 6.2.2 Implications for Ballarat Recreation Strategy

The rapid growth in the City’s population has significant implications for the Recreation Strategy, including (but not limited to):

- Connectivity between growth areas (Delacombe, Alfredton, Cardigan - Lucas and Sebastopol) and established residential areas and/or activity centres;
- Balance facility and infrastructure needs between growth areas and established residential areas and/or activity centres;
- Development of off-field sports and recreation amenities should be considered in future planning;
- Co-ordination of the provision of sport and recreation infrastructure, facilities, programs and activities across relevant agencies and organisations;
- Encouraging consideration of sport and recreation in all relevant infrastructure design;
- Integration of sport and recreation planning and safety into transport and land use planning;
- Identifying clear responsibilities for sport and recreation related actions and activities within City of Ballarat, including commitment to longer term resourcing;
- Sport and recreation infrastructure will need to be developed in key growth areas;
- There is a growing need to house the ever expanding groups of people undertaking active transport type activities such as community paddling sports, walking and bushwalking, jogging and running, cycling for recreation, tai chi and lion dancing. Many of these activities are centred around the Lake Wendouree / Victoria Park precinct;
- Assessing usage data; and
- Ensuring potential sport and recreation spaces are identified and protected, with particular reference to links to new growth areas.

### 6.3 Council’s contribution to recreation

Council plays a major role in the provision of recreation opportunities for the broader community and provides a wide range of facilities and infrastructure, including:

- More than 100 recreation and sporting facilities including stadiums, pavilions, fields, courts, community venues and more;
- One regional aquatic and leisure centre, including the development of a 50m pool and aquatic playspace;
- Four outdoor neighbourhood aquatic facilities;
A regional outdoor aquatic facility with waterslide;
40 outdoor sporting grounds, including three baseball diamonds;
14 soccer facilities and a Regional Soccer Facility (under construction);
54 tennis courts.
Extensive shared trail network catering for walking, jogging and cycling;
Three BMX and two skateboard facilities;
14 indoor and outdoor netball courts;
Over 2,000 ha of public open space;
Three major lakes;
45km of walking trails;
18 major parks and 149 neighbourhood parks;
Service agreements with community organisations for facility management and programming;
Community grant programs; and
Community sport and grants information program.

These assets are built and managed to ensure the people of Ballarat and the region have access to a range of safe and accessible sports and recreation opportunities and venues. Figure 13 and Figure 14 show the location Ballarat's sporting indoor and outdoor sporting facilities

The grants program, service agreement schedule and community sports grants provide communities with additional resources to work closely with Council to continue to improve their facilities in line with the changing trends in sport and recreation.
Figure 13: City of Ballarat Indoor Sporting facilities (excluding aquatics)
Figure 14: City of Ballarat Outdoor Sporting facilities (excluding aquatic)
6.4 Councils contribution to Play Space

The City of Ballarat has over 250 parks, reserves, creek corridors and urban spaces. There are 110 playgrounds with traditional play equipment within the City of Ballarat's open space network, with a further 31 locations designated as places for playful activity, 5 skate and youth activity spaces, 5 BMX tracks and other providing the community with aquatic play and fitness activities.

Overall the play opportunities provided within the City of Ballarat are good, with some examples of very high quality play spaces and youth facilities. The community has access to a range of different sized play spaces catering for different age groups, needs and interests in a diversity of open space.

Play is an activity that people of all ages enjoy and Council’s role is to provide a good quality and well distributed range of opportunities throughout the urban and rural areas of the municipality. This includes the provision of play spaces in parks, youth activity spaces in both urban spaces and parkland, and areas that promote natural play and playful activity in green open spaces.

6.5 Roles and responsibilities of the Recreation Unit

The City of Ballarat's recreation unit undertakes a range of activities that aim to ensure the City’s assets are useable and meet current and future expectations. The unit undertakes the following roles and responsibilities:

- Operational management including bookings, website, ICT, OH&S, licences, legal agreements and asset leasing and management;
- Governance support for various committees of management;
- Strategic planning across a range of areas such as major precincts, aquatic, bicycle, open space and growth areas;
- Relationship management with a range key stakeholders, including State and Federal Government;
- Stakeholder management and community development;
- Project management, major project management and capital works;
- Facilities maintenance;
- Educator and advocate for sporting clubs;
- Contract, grant and funding management; and
- Volunteer management.

The unit requires specialist staff, skills and resources across a range of disciplines to ensure the Council's sport and recreation objectives can be delivered.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
7. **Community engagement**

In order to accurately represent the recreation needs and wants of the Ballarat community, a program of consultation events were conducted to inform the development of the Strategy. With the inclusion of a number of Council business units, information was gathered regarding the use of recreational facilities in Ballarat. Decisions regarding spending and recreational priorities in this Strategy align with the findings of the consultation process undertaken by the Council’s People and Communities directorate. Table 6 outlines the key consultation activities undertaken to inform the strategy and in which areas of the strategy and its development the consultations have impacted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Engagement</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Recreation strategy impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Indicators Victoria</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Influence on Council plan and wellbeing which integrates on strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Scope</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Bike Strategy separately completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing Borders Trails Project</td>
<td>Survey and advisory meetings</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Bike Strategy separately completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Engagement</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Open space implications, aquatic play space is a major feature of aquatic strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Pools Engagement</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>Jan / Feb</td>
<td>Aquatic strategy separately completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BALC Members Engagement</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>Aquatic strategy separately completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYou Youth Engagement</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>Participation and needs assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association Submission Process</td>
<td>Submission</td>
<td></td>
<td>Feb / March</td>
<td>Participation, needs assessment and project prioritisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Wellbeing Forums</td>
<td>Forums</td>
<td></td>
<td>Feb / March</td>
<td>Influence on Council plan and wellbeing which integrates on strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super Tuesday &amp; Sunday</td>
<td>Bike Count</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Bike Strategy separately completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASR Community Infrastructure Plan</td>
<td>Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Bicycle, walking and active transport elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport Forum</td>
<td>Forum</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Bicycle, walking and active transport elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koori Survey</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Participation implications and locational considerations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Park Revision</td>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jan / Feb</td>
<td>Open space, precincts, walking, bicycling, recreational elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Community Advisory Committees</td>
<td>Advisory meetings</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Community needs identification, assist in prioritisation of projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grampians Best Practice Group</td>
<td>Advisory Meetings</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Community needs identification, assist in prioritisation of projects and regional implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft document open for submission</td>
<td>Submissions &amp; meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Participation, prioritisation and recommendation formulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballarat VicHealth Survey</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>1,644</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Participation and prioritisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Community engagement activities 2012-13
08
RECOMMENDATIONS
8. **Recommendations**

The recommended strategies have been organised into the four Council objectives identified in 4.1 Council objectives above, those being:

1. Planning for growth;
2. Managing our assets;
3. Promoting healthy lifestyle; and
4. Promoting accessibility and inclusion

Linking the recommendations directly to Council objectives ensures alignment between broader Council objectives and those of the Recreation business unit.

8.1 **Planning for growth**

1. Ensure new growth areas appropriately plan for sufficient and appropriately located sport and recreational assets.

2. Progress the Major Events Precinct Master Plan as a major project for Ballarat, which will provide a facility befitting a regional city of Ballarat’s standing, increase economic output, create employment opportunities and increase sporting and recreational opportunities for residents.

3. Complete review of Victoria Park strategy documents with a view to commencement of updating plans for the precinct.

4. Work with Athletics clubs to identify possible expansion at regional and club based facilities.

5. Continue to strengthen the City’s ability to work with other organisations (across all levels of government and within the community) in the planning, development and management of sporting and recreational activities.

6. Revitalise and reactivate Royal Park in Buninyong as location for soccer.

7. Work with Ballarat Regional Tourism to promote the City’s recreational and sporting assets as a basis for continuing to attract events, national and international sporting events and tourism activity to the City.

8. To maximise usage and value, where possible, develop multi-purpose sport and recreation assets.

9. Attract elite games such as AFL, first class cricket, rugby and soccer and teams to Ballarat.

10. Linking junior and senior sports clubs to ensure a pathway for transition of younger participants into senior sport and recreational activities.

11. Complete strategies for Rowing, Golf, Lawn Bowls and Skating including the development of the infrastructure needed to develop and grow participation.
8.2 Managing our assets

1. Ensure relevant Council departments (i.e. Recreation Unit and Major Projects) work closely to successfully plan for and deliver major recreational projects.

2. Design and promote sustainable recreational assets, and where feasible, retrofit existing assets to improve sustainability outcomes.

3. The City's recreation unit complete a detailed business planning process to guide the unit's key objectives, roles and responsibilities.

4. Develop the Eastern Oval into a regional cricket centre of excellence capable of hosting first class and international cricket through the provision of a masterplan for the oval and surrounds.

5. Work with relevant sporting associations, groups and peak bodies to support club sustainability, encourage participation and to improve governance and asset management outcomes.

6. Where possible, look for clubs to share facilities to the extent possible, for example various equine clubs could develop shared resources and facilities.

7. Subject to results of ongoing strategy work, continue to support the development of horse and pony facilities within the City.

8. Continue to work closely with the Asset Maintenance unit of the Council to ensure sport and recreation assets are safe, functional and fit for purpose. Implement best practice asset management practices to ensure the long-term sustainability and usability of Council recreation assets within the realistic financial capacity of the organisation.

9. Adopt the open space hierarchy (Table 4) for sport and recreation assets.

10. Develop a program to systematically source empirical usage data so that long term and longitudinal evidence is gathered to aid in future decision making, planning and management of the City's sports and recreation assets.

11. Work with Athletic clubs to develop long term plans for the continued development, replacement and management of the City's athletics facilities.

12. Develop an evaluation program to assess the effectiveness of existing and past sport and recreation programs.

13. Support the redevelopment the Regional Tennis facility at Hollioake Park.

14. Review statutory and operational management requirements including but not limited to:
   - Appropriate leases and licensing arrangements are in place and up to date;
   - Emergency management protocols are developed;
   - Signage is upgraded and standardised to ensure consistency, safety and fairness to all;
   - Improvements of onsite storage and the removal of temporary storage facilities;
   - Consistency, equity and strategic basis for fees and charges for grounds and facilities; and
Asset management and disposal plans.

### 8.3 Promoting healthy lifestyle

1. Actively promote Ballarat’s vast array of quality assets as a cornerstone feature of the City’s liveability.
2. Continue to improve Councils information in relation to its sport and recreational facilities.
3. Develop new approaches to the dissemination of sport and recreation information to sporting associations, clubs and community groups.
4. Complete a strategy into female participation in sports and recreation based activities.
5. Support sports and recreation activities located in the City of Ballarat whose facilities are privately owned and operated, for example ten pin bowling, go-carting and dance.
6. Work with AFL, local leagues and clubs to further develop the facilities to increase participation levels of AFL by all ages and both sexes.
7. Build on rowing and associated infrastructure works completed at Lake Wendouree as well Ballarat’s growing reputation as a rowing destination to increase participation in this sport through building the relationships between rowing clubs, schools, Council and peak agencies.
8. Complete a Lake Wendouree Activation Strategy to:
   - Encourage the participation across a range of aquatic sport and recreation activities such as rowing, sailing, fishing; and
   - Link the lake to aquatic and non-aquatic based sports and recreation activities
   - Link the lake to other key sporting and infrastructure assets
9. Support the development of a regional active transport hub which support and encourages active recreation and which could potentially be developed to provide a base for:
   - Non-organised sport and physical activity; and
   - Other community groups such as Rotary 9780 and Probus.
10. Increase the development and quality of the City’s athletic facilities to make Ballarat a destination to visit and participate.
11. Continue to encourage participation in tennis through:
   - Remaining proactive in cleaning and playing a role in the maintenance of tennis facilities across the municipality;
   - Work with Tennis Victoria / Australia to develop a strategy to review the future of tennis in Ballarat and regional areas; and
   - Continue to provide community based court presence across the municipality where free usage exists.
12. Ensure programs are developed for sports clubs and communities that continue to encourage healthy lifestyles, as well as address specific target issues including obesity, drugs and alcohol abuse and violence.
### 8.4 Promoting accessibility and inclusion

1. Given the importance of aquatics to the Ballarat Community, the existing high levels of participation, and unique asset challenges, complete a separate strategy in relation to future aquatic facility and program provision.

2. Given the importance of cycling to the Ballarat Community and the high levels of participation, complete a separate cycle strategy to guide future resource allocation and priorities.

3. Ensure recreational assets are designed to allow access and use by all residents.

4. Work with local schools to promote physical activity participation opportunities, active transport and links to existing sporting club, groups and activities.

5. Continue to involve community in discussions as to the future needs and planning for recreation and open space assets.

6. Consider the linking of Council licencing arrangements to the preparation of strategies and inclusion policies for women, disabled and other underrepresented groups.

7. Where appropriate, design and retrofit selected recreation assets (e.g. sports pavilions and change rooms) to improve their functionality, standard and multi-use potential.

8. Design and where possible retrofit existing assets so as to make assets assessable and usable outside of daylight hours.

9. Encourage and facilitate the development of elite sporting with Ballarat and the region.

10. Formalise relationships with all sporting and recreation clubs, including those of lesser known recreational pursuits, such as dog and show dog clubs.

11. As new and emerging sports develop, ensure their needs are factored into future planning and Council activities.

12. Develop the Council owned property adjacent to the City Oval into a sports hub and facilities which could act to provide off-field infrastructure to clubs and stakeholders, such as training rooms and networking facilities.

13. To assist Council engaging with stakeholders as well playing a more active role in assisting to develop sport and recreation activities consider providing City of Ballarat Sport and Recreation permanent space in the proposed sports hub.

14. Ensure future facility design, development and refurbishment considers opportunities to incorporate spaces for social gathering, informal interaction and spectator amenity.

### 8.5 Resourcing:

All recommendations have been developed having regard to the following considerations:

- Council’s financial capacity to implement capital initiatives;
Opportunities for partnerships, collaboration and external funding to support capital initiatives;

Implementing relatively low cost initiatives that are likely to positively influence participation or address known gaps (‘pick the low hanging fruit first’ and maximise ‘bang for the buck’);

Community priorities;

Distribution of investment and initiatives across the City;

Accessibility and availability of State and Federal Government Grants; and

Initiatives that support, expand and/or build on existing sport and recreation assets and infrastructure, or existing programs and services.

A five-year implementation framework, together with indicative costs has been developed to help guide future resource allocation, and is included as an appendix to this report.

8.6 Funding the Strategy

The Strategy indicates the priorities for the future of aquatic facilities planned by Council for Ballarat. Many of the priorities are not short-term and may take time to attract funding for final project design and delivery. Funding can be applied for from a variety of sources, with several reliant upon grants from State and Federal government bodies. The following funding options will be explored for each of the projects:

- Council capital expenditure;
- Income collected from facility management, for example profit share arrangements;
- Federal and State Government funding: such as Sport and Recreation Victoria, Community Facilities Funding Program and the Putting Locals First program;
- Multi-party use of facilities such as the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, elite sporting teams and associations and a range of other public and private users and agencies;
- Asset sale and consolidation that are in line with the various strategies complied by the recreation department such as Aquatic, Bikes, Play Space and Open Space; and
- Current and future potential developer contributions.

8.7 Evaluation

Overall recommendations should be reviewed annually as part of the annual budget process to ensure short-term recommendations remain relevant and achievable. A more comprehensive review of the strategy should be undertaken after five years to assess the overall status of implementation, ongoing relevance of recommendations, changes in priorities and to identify new initiatives or opportunities.

Public accountability is an important component of the overall evaluation process, therefore opportunities to update the community on implementation progress and involvement in reviewing annual implementation priorities may need to be explored.

A critical component of evaluation is monitoring changes in behaviour over an extended period of time. Aside from some limited statistics and reports, there is a lack of empirical data regarding levels of use of specific the
City’s sport and recreational assets; however, collection of usage data via in situ counters, monitoring or survey measures are problematic in terms of resource requirements and external influences (e.g. weather, time of day, time of year etc.).

In the absence of empirical data, it is therefore suggested that evaluation incorporate opportunities for community feedback and input. This may be via Council’s municipal-wide LGA satisfaction survey and/or other mechanisms. Hence, evaluation may include a simple annual question (e.g. How satisfied are you with the provision of cycling paths, track and trails within the City?) and more detailed questions as part of the five-year review of the strategy. Critical questions to consider as part of the five-year review include:

- Do you currently participate in sport and recreation for exercise, transport or relaxation? (i.e. establish baseline participation rate for future comparisons).
- What prevents you from participating in sport and recreation activities cycling?
- Does the current range of sport and recreation FACILITIES and ASSETS available in the City meet your needs?
- Does the current range of sport and recreation PROGRAMS and SERVICES available in the City meet your needs?

Other opportunities to collect and record usage data, satisfaction and economic impacts should also be considered; this may include club membership trends, number and attendance at specified events, evaluation of the economic impact of significant events and tourism activity.
DETAILED ACTION PLANS
9. **Detailed action plans**

In order to meet the recreational needs of the residents and communities of Ballarat and the wider region, a Action Plan has been developed for key sport and recreation activities, assets and projects. The Action Plan provides detail on the:

1. Background and context for each theme;
2. Information on local and national trends;
3. The consultation process undertaken for each theme;
4. Major priorities in each area; and
5. Forecasts of required investment and development timing.

A detailed grants program will be developed to support the attraction of external funding in addition to funds identified in Council’s budget. State and Federal funding sources will be targeted, as well as other funding opportunities such as community impact grants and private business donations and partnerships.
9.1 Aquatics

### Background and context

Council currently operates five outdoor pools at Eureka, Brown Hill, Black Hill and Buninyong, as well as a major indoor facility: the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre. The Brown Hill pool is operated by the Brown Hill Progress Association via a community shared management model, whilst the other three facilities are managed using a profit share model with the YMCA.

The entry prices for the outdoor pools are subsidised by Council. All these neighbourhood outdoor pools are ageing facilities and require constant maintenance, with some costing significantly more than others and all major maintenance being Council's responsibility.

The Eureka Pool is the flagship outdoor pool in Ballarat and consists of several aquatic areas and a waterslide. The facility has had a program of works completed and has significance capacity and scope for future improvement works.

The Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre (BALC) is the premier indoor facility in Ballarat and provides for a variety of aquatic and other recreational activities for the region. The facility and site has land available for upgrades and improvements. Although services such as swimming lessons and aquatic safety classes are well catered for at the BALC, the Centre is operating close to capacity and is unable to provide important classes for senior and the disabled.

A 50m pool and aquatic playspace is currently under construction at the BALC.

### Trends

State, national and international trends are moving away from the construction of 50 metre swimming facilities and toward aquatic play and aquatic play spaces. The trends suggest that 50 metre pools service a small cohort of the community, whilst aquatic play areas engage and service a much larger section of the community.

Swan Hill and Shepparton are two regional areas that have recently commenced inclusion of aquatic play spaces in their aquatic facilities. Other cities in Australia including Brisbane, Townsville and Sydney have recently installed aquatic play spaces with a focus on providing play for three subsets of the community: families, teenagers and children.

These play spaces are generally offered in two contexts: the facility is used on a pay per use and is attached to an existing, high patronage pool; or is constructed at a community or open space and is free to users. Research suggests that aquatic play not only provides an enjoyable aquatic opportunity but also provides high level of educational opportunities for young children.

Many LGA's are also moving toward the consolidation of ageing aquatic facilities. Bendigo City Council has experienced very similar ageing aquatic issues to Ballarat and in 2013 decided to close three local pools. Other local governments across metropolitan and regional Victoria have also followed this approach to minimise costs and move resources toward the construction of aquatic play spaces.

### Consultation and engagement

Over the past five years, extensive engagement has been undertaken in Ballarat in relation to the provision of aquatics. Council's aquatics discussion paper has outlined the background of the aquatic scene in Ballarat and also discusses numerous possibilities for aquatics in Ballarat.

In 2012-13 a program of consultation occurred with stakeholders inside and outside of local government. Several surveys and questionnaires have been undertaken at all aquatic facilities in the Ballarat with the community indicating very strong support for an aquatic play space and good support for a 50 metre indoor pool. In addition to this consultation program, Ballarat residents were given the opportunity to comment on sport and recreation through various consultation mechanisms outlined throughout this strategy.

An aquatics workshop was also held with councillors and internal council staff to review and cost aquatic priorities outlined in this Strategy.
Key priorities

- Undertake a review of the existing Aquatic Strategy (expiring end of 2013);
- Aquatics upgrade package;
- Development of an aquatic play space at BALC and a further site to be determined;
- Landscaping and irrigation work at the Eureka Pool;
- Maximise aquatic resources including a review of current patronage and maintenance; and
- Aquatic playspaces at Local Parks; a partnership project with Council’s Children’s Services.
- Regional aquatic playspace (including waterslide) at BALC
- Removal of waterslide at Eureka

9.1.1 Spend priorities

To reflect the significance of aquatics to the Ballarat community it is a recommendation of this strategy that a separate Aquatics Strategy be prepared. That strategy will detail specific recommendations for future investment in relation to aquatics.

- Implement the 2013-14 aquatics upgrade package, including:
  - Construction of an indoor Aquatic Play Space at the BALC;
  - Consideration of a South Ward Aquatic Play Space; and
  - Continue to provide community and family areas with improvements in play, shade and furniture at Eureka Pool facility.
### 9.2 Active transport

#### Background and context

As well as walking trails and paths, Ballarat provides a wide variety of on and off road bicycle opportunities for the community. There are several off road cycling tracks throughout Ballarat covering the majority of geographical locations. On road paths and routes are provided for active transport from outlying suburbs into the CBD. The current Bike Strategy expires at the end of 2013 and has provided significant guidance regarding the requirements of bike users within the City. A new Bike Strategy has been developed in early 2014, and following public comment and review will provide clarity and direction in regards to bicycle use and development for Ballarat.

#### Trends

With the level of obesity amongst children and adults in regional Victoria dramatically increasing, the idea of active transport is becoming more popular in the community. The use of the motor vehicle as a first point of preference is changing with walking, cycling and other modes of active transport increasing significantly. Walking is the highest participation sport / recreational activity within Ballarat and within the State of Victoria. Cycling and bike use is also increasing significantly, in not only its popularity but its appeal to all ages and both sexes. Alternative means of active transport are also becoming more common, with scooters and skateboards becoming popular again amongst younger members of the community.

To address numerous health and environmental challenges, global and Australian-wide trends suggest that infrastructure be built and altered to encourage active transport in all its forms. The benefits of active transport for not only physical but mental health have been widely promoted in Victoria and nationally through education and awareness raising initiatives. In addition, community and infrastructure planning closely considers and encourages active transport opportunities, including public transport, walking and cycling networks and integrated transport infrastructure. Linking community education and promotion initiatives with infrastructure planning and development is a strategic way forward for local government to promote and facilitate active transport.

#### Consultation and engagement

There has been extensive consultation with the community in relation to active transport. These activities have sought and gathered a significant amount of information in relation to the active transport requirements of the community. They include the:

- Previous and current (2014) Bike Strategies;
- Crossing Borders Report; and
- Active transport forums meetings 2012-13 and ongoing;
- Super Sunday and Super Tuesday bicycle counts 2012, 2013 and 2014;
- Ongoing engagement with community groups;
- Consultation with Council business units including traffic management, open space, youth services and aged care; and
Key priorities

- Undertake a review of the existing Bike Strategy (expiring end of 2013);
- Construct a mapping and directional "one-stop shop" for walking and cycling throughout Ballarat;
- Undertake a review of walking paths and trails throughout Ballarat;
- Review open space and passive recreation reserves;
- Work to identify an alternative criterion track for Ballarat;
- Work and liaise with internal and external stakeholders to deliver the recommendations from the new Bike Strategy and from the Bike Scope reports; and
- Develop an education plan to promote the benefits of active transport to all members of the community.

9.2.1 Spend priorities

To reflect the significance of bicycling to the Ballarat community it is a recommendation of this strategy that a separate Bicycle Strategy be prepared. That strategy will detail specific recommendations for future investment in relation to bicycling.

Recommendations for the cycling network have been presented in the City of Ballarat Bike Strategy (2014). Priorities have been identified in the areas of:

- On-road routes:
- Off-road routes:
- Mountain bike trails:
- Support infrastructure:
- Programs and service: and
- Partnerships and collaborations.
## 9.3 Grounds and pitches

### Background and context

There are over 45 sporting grounds and pitches across the municipality. In addition to grounds and pitches, these facilities also include associated infrastructure such as pavilions, change rooms and coach and interchange boxes as well as other sport specific assets. Therefore, for the purposes of this Strategy, this section encompasses all elements of a sporting reserve.

Council is looking to implement a fully integrated sports ground strategy. This will package a number of initiatives to deliver additional recreational opportunities, maximise facility use, increase participation and deliver social, health and economic benefits to the community and local sporting organisations. Elements of this strategy will include classification of sporting grounds as senior and junior ovals, and include a standard design roll-out of supporting infrastructure associated with these classifications.

Current facilities are home to a wide range of sporting codes and accommodate approximately 50 clubs. Sporting codes include as football, soccer, cricket, touch football, athletics and fitness and recreational based activities, some of which can run concurrently at the same reserve.

Emerging sports such as gridiron, rugby and organised health and fitness activities mean grounds and pitches are facing increased usage demands, placing additional strain on oval conditions. Facilities now need to cater for higher demand and be sustainable and multi-purpose.

The usage capacity of a number of grounds and pitches are severely impacted by climatic conditions and the need to provide an extensive program of maintenance and renewal. This Strategy looks to address this venue specific issue through the provision of irrigation, drainage and resurfacing works. Such works will increase Council’s ability to attract significant oval based sporting activities, resulting in social and economic benefits for the community.

### Trends

Sport and recreation trends for Australia and Ballarat suggest a shift in the use of grounds and pitches for structured team-based sports to uses for a wide range of recreational pursuits. Although the number of junior football, cricket and soccer team members is increasing, so too are the number of individuals and small groups utilising open space grounds and pitches for recreational pursuits such as running, walking, ball sports and physical fitness training. This has resulted in more people utilising facilities across all times of the day. To facilitate this spread of use, local governments are having to invest in improvements to lighting, park and ground furniture and even passive surveillance to make facilities more user-friendly and user safe.

High-end quality grounds and pitches are also increasingly used as venues for recreational and social events that are not necessarily sport based. This is particularly the case for Ballarat, which is seen as a highly attractive and successful location for festivals and events.

Due to climate change and variability in rainfall and water supplies, maintaining the condition of grounds and pitches is a legitimate concern for local governments and users. Drought and other impact resistant species of grass are being sourced and synthetic surfaces are being tested in order to find the most rigorous, yet user-friendly alternatives. Several local governments in Victoria and Queensland have installed and are testing fully synthetic football and cricket ovals, to match the already tried and tested synthetic soccer pitches that are used throughout Australia and globally. In addition, management of irrigation systems and water usage are other facility issues that need to be closely monitored by councils.

### Consultation and engagement

- User associations submission process;
- Club submission process;
- Direct consultation with league representatives; and
- Direct consultation with clubs.
Key priorities
- Completion of Ballarat Regional Soccer Facility;
- Condition audit of selected facilities to identify power, water and sewer for future works;
- Constant upgrades of facilities including major oval redevelopment and associated infrastructure works at CE Brown, Alfredton, Marty Busch and City Oval;
- Minor oval redevelopment and associated infrastructure works to complement major oval redevelopments and align with oval classifications and standard designs concepts;
- Roll out of standard design works across senior and junior ovals and pitches;
- Coaches boxes, storage and bleachers;
- Interchange boxes; and
- Interchange stewards boxes

9.3.1 Spend priorities

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<td>Buninyong Bowls (construction)</td>
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<td>Coquet/Lawn Bowls Shelters</td>
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<td>Croquet additional shelters</td>
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## 9.4 Hard courts

### Background and context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Ballarat currently</strong></th>
<th><strong>Trends</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>has a range of outdoor hard court facilities which include over 10 netball courts, 50 tennis courts and a hockey field. These facilities have associated infrastructure such as pavilions and change rooms as well as other sport specific requirements. For the purposes of this Strategy, therefore, this section encompasses all elements of hard court facilities. Council will implement a strategy to provide new facilities to cater for participation numbers within a particular hard court sport, but also to implement a maintenance and standard design strategy which will help increase the longevity of existing venues. Consideration has been given to participation in the associated sports and projected future growth. The provision for use of these facilities will be based around maximising community access and providing appropriate supporting infrastructure for players and spectators.</td>
<td>Hard court sports such as netball, tennis and hockey have surfaces that are not dramatically affected by weather and other conditions for participants. Netball is one of the fastest-growing sports, with participation growth beyond the traditional female participation that includes boys, men and senior community members. Tennis has a high profile throughout the world due to the several Grand Slam Opens that occur throughout the year. The sport is safe with low levels of possible injury for its participants. Local and regional Victoria participation numbers have recently plateaued, but significant investment in several regional centres should see a reverse in this trend. Hockey is a nationally significant sport with Australia succeeding in Olympics and Commonwealth Games. Participating on hard court minimises the effect of weather, while the size of the facilities provide possibilities for children, adult and disabled participation. National trends toward the use of hard courts for other educational and physical activities, such as boot camps, personal training and fitness groups are on the increase. Many groups utilise these hard courts due to their year-long usability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Consultation and engagement

- User associations submission process; and
- Club submission process.

### Key priorities

- Development of new netball courts at venues which currently do not have one;
- Implementation of acrylic surfacing across all hard courts;
- Implementation of standard design shelter and storage at netball courts;
- Ensure all hard courts have adequate fencing and lighting; and
- Implementation of ongoing scheduled maintenance program and acrylic renewal across hard court surfaces.
### 9.4.1 Spend priorities years 1-5

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### 9.5 Indoor sports

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<tr>
<td>The City of Ballarat works in partnership with several sporting organisations to provide indoor sporting opportunities for the community, including sports such as basketball, netball, badminton and table tennis. The majority of these facilities are managed by sports associations with Council providing additional resources for day-to-day upkeep. It is important to acknowledge that the majority of the indoor sports facilities in Ballarat are dated and generally situated in ageing facilities, where they have been for many years.</td>
<td>State and Australian-wide trends suggest that indoor mainstream sports such as netball and basketball are continuing to grow with participation rates steadily increasing. The majority of major regional centres struggle to meet the structural needs of these sports with fixturing, game times and service delivery often being compromised. This has resulted in indoor sports organisers having to identify and promote complimentary competitions that can be run in alternative facilities, e.g. 3 on 3 basketball and 5-a-side netball. The development of cooperative relationships between indoor sports has resulted in an increased pool of resources and higher levels of management innovation. Trends in Ballarat and across most of Victoria suggests that parents feel more comfortable with their children playing indoor sports as they are generally perceived as “safer” and are able to be played “during all weather conditions”. Many existing indoor sporting facilities are now referred to as multipurpose as more than one sport can be housed or played in them. Government funding looks favourably on funding proposals of buildings and sports facilities that are multipurpose, can include more than one sport and can be used for other functions such as conferences and events. New building principles being adopted across the country are based around a relatively new building phenomenon known as universal design. Universal design suggests that newly built indoor sporting facilities should have the ability to adapt their purpose as the wants and needs of the community change. Building a one sport only indoor sporting facility is now generally restricted to major centres hosting major events. It is now expected that new facilities are universally designed, can attract and house more than one sport, are environmentally friendly and have the adaptability to host events other than sport.</td>
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#### Consultation and engagement
- Ballarat Major Events Precinct Master Plan
- User associations submission process;
- Club submission process;
- Direct consultation with league representatives; and
- Direct consultation with clubs.
### Key priorities
- Minerdomed Basketball extension;
- Eastwood Leisure Centre maintenance program;
- Ongoing capital support program for indoor stadiums;
- Masterplanning of Hollioake Park Precinct.

### 9.5.1 Spend priorities

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<td>Llanberris Indoor Netball Centre (insulate facility, scoreboards acrylic surface, lighting)</td>
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<td>Ballarat Regional Tennis Centre (facility improvement, toilets, shade, seating)</td>
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<td>Holioake Park Precinct urban design and facility expansion planning</td>
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<td>Wendouree Indoor Stadium (design work)</td>
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<td>Indoor stadium car park improvements (surface, line marking, lighting)</td>
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9.6 Play experiences

### Background and context

Play is an essential part of the growth and development of children and is a critical element of their physical, social, cognitive and emotional development. Children represent the future of our society and planning for quality play environments is therefore seen as an investment in the future (Playground and Recreation Association of Victoria, Play Area Development Policy for Local Government 2004).

This Strategy provides guidance for the provision of integrated play opportunities for people of all ages, interests and abilities throughout the municipality. It is based on ten geographic precincts that comprise the City of Ballarat and form the basis for planning and development of play spaces for all ages. The Strategy is not intended to cover all forms of physical activity (like sport and organised competition), but focus on informal playful and casual activities.

This Play Space Planning Framework is extending beyond children’s play into considerations for providing play for all ages. It is recognised that young people enjoy physical challenge, risk taking and socialising in their play and leisure. Providing safe public spaces for young people is an important priority for Council and can promote healthy lifestyle and active participation in community life.

### Trends

Research indicates that parks and open space play a vital role in the physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people. The increasing incidence of obesity and sedentary lifestyles in all age groups, is an important consideration in the planning of play spaces that can cater for a diverse range of interests and ages.

It is important in providing ‘youth friendly’ places and spaces for young people, that consultation and engagement is genuine and collaborative. Young people need to be involved as an integral part of the design, decision making and sometimes even the development of spaces. This is likely to increase ownership and commitment to using spaces that are created for everyone, with young people as a key focus.

In recent times trends have shifted toward the development of aquatic play spaces. A number of new developments and upgrades to existing facilities within aquatics have seen such play space elements included. Evidence also suggests that ongoing provision needs to cater for:

- Young people and public space; and
- Play and adults

### Consultation and engagement

A significant amount of consultation has taken place which will help position the Strategy with meaningful play actions. Consultation activities have included:

- Aquatic Patron Survey (2013);
- Municipal Early Years Plan (2012);
- Child and Family Friendly Cities Consultation (October 2009);
- Ballarat Children’s Plan Consultation (November 2009);
- Ballarat Youth Strategy (2009); and

### Key priorities

- Review current status of the Play Space Planning Framework (2010);
- Develop a new Play Space Planning Framework (Play Experiences) (2013 – 2017);
- Skating masterplan; and
- Installation of aquatic play spaces at the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre and one other site in Ballarat.
### 9.6.1 Priority spend years 1-5
- Preparation of a Skating masterplan;
- Revised priorities list from Play Space Framework (2013 – 2017);
- Installation of aquatic play spaces at the BALS and one other site in Ballarat

### 9.7 New and emerging sports

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<th>Background and context</th>
<th>Trends</th>
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<tr>
<td>The City of Ballarat encourages new and emerging sports to access government funded programs to build sustainable clubs and making them eligible for Council assistance. Grounds are provided for emerging sports such as shooting and archery and individual facilities are provided to the ever expanding motor vehicle related sporting groups. The City also provides grounds, meeting and change room facilities to the wide variety of animal related sports clubs in town. In order to maximise the resources and sustainability of some of these groups, specific facilities may need to be constructed to best suit their needs and identify community capacity to accommodate future emerging sports activities.</td>
<td>What we consider as a sport today could be viewed very differently in the future. Many countries have their own native sports, for example Australian Rules football here and gridiron in the US. Due in part to the increase of media coverage and the internet, the popularity of these native sports is now not exclusively contained within home country borders. Sports such as American football, lacrosse and Frisbee golf are three examples of sports that are continuing to grow in Australia but originated overseas. The growth rate and spread of new sports is hard to forecast; however, trends in metropolitan and other major regional centres suggest that sport and recreation planning need to take these new sports into account. There is also a growth in animal-related sports throughout Australia. The number of dog clubs, horse related clubs and other animal sport groups is growing. They not only provide recreation-based benefits but also generally accepted wide-ranging benefits associated with animal ownership. The City of Ballarat would like to be seen as a progressive supporter of new and emerging sports and to provide appropriate resources and assistance to aid their establishment and development in Ballarat.</td>
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**Consultation and engagement**
- Ongoing approaches from new and emerging sports groups;
- Group discussions regarding the combination of clubs into shared facilities; and
- Clubs and association submission process.
Key priorities

- Feasibility study into a potential target shooting and archery facility;
- Assessment of needs of animal clubs;
- Feasibility study into a potential motor sport / car related facility;
- Specific ground and possible shared facility for rectangle ground based sports such as gridiron and rugby; and
- Animal clubs resource maximisation study.
- Develop a special dog arena

9.7.1 Priority spend years 1-5

Complete the following (seek funding where possible) from the sport and recreational operational budget:

- Needs analysis completed for animal clubs;
- Feasibility study for shooting and archery; and
- Feasibility study into motor sports related facility.
### Statutory and operational management

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In order to best provide support for Ballarat's sport and recreation clubs, several internal projects of significance must be undertaken and completed. These projects vary in scope and size but have essential links to the continued provision of quality, safe recreational facilities for the Ballarat community. Providing clarity for both internal Council business units and the people of Ballarat are essential parts of each of these projects. With significant investment planned for the recreation sector in Ballarat, there are a number of statutory and operational management requirements that need review and in some cases urgent attention. These include but are not limited to:</td>
<td>Many local governments throughout Australia construct internal frameworks and working documents that deal with and acknowledge the issues listed above. These frameworks and the involvement from major clubs and government departments can provide clear and distinct direction for recreation-related issues. The formalisation of lease and licence agreements, paired with the revision of fees and costs of sporting grounds and facilities is a major piece of work that is occurring across numerous capital and regional city based local governments. It has been seen as imperative that all new facilities or upgraded facilities are valued and correct legalities and costings are attached to them. The majority of sporting facilities require additional or sundry accessories, such as coaching boxes, change rooms and official's boxes. Due to changes in environmental expectations and the continual development of universal design principles, the standardisation of these types of additional facilities is becoming common practice in Australian sport and recreation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Appropriate leases and licensing arrangements are in place and up to date;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Emergency management protocols are developed;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Signage is upgraded and standardised to ensure safety and fairness to all;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Improvements of onsite storage and the removal of temporary storage facilities;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fees and charges for grounds and facilities; and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Asset management and disposal plans.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Several specific sports and community assets such as lawn bowls and Victoria Park require special attention due to the complexity of land uses and ownership issues. There is also an enhanced role for Council to provide quality education and information to clubs and associations of Ballarat in relation to best practice management and strategic planning.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Consultation and engagement

- Internal consultation with Council business units; and
- User associations' submission process.
Key priorities

- Formalise lease and licence agreements for all recreational clubs and teams;
- Review of fees and charges for recreational facility usage;
- Incorporate emergency management protocols to leases and licences across the City;
- Standardise coaches and officials boxes at football facilities;
- Review of lawn bowls participation and facilities;
- Signage upgrade program across all Council recreation facilities;
- Review of the Victoria Park Vision document;
- Provide education opportunities to clubs and associations regarding best practice approaches;
- Development of a Shipping Container Storage Policy for facilities and users; and
- Development of a Recreation Asset Disposal Policy.
10 CONCLUSION
10. Conclusion

The Recreation Strategy has been developed having regard to a range of existing Council planning documents that influence preferred directions including (but not limited to) Bike and Aquatic Strategies (2014), Ballarat Open Space Strategy (2008), Ballarat West Growth Area Plan (2009) and City of Ballarat’s CDB Strategy. Extensive consultations were undertaken in the formulation of these planning strategies.

This strategy responds major sport and recreation based trends and external influences. The strategy also recognises the high value placed on sporting and recreation opportunities by the community by providing clear priorities and guidelines for future action. The range of social, recreational, health, economic and environmental benefits of sport and recreation are acknowledged.

Creating a City where sport and recreation are valued and woven into the development of the City and its function is seen as critical to achieving Council’s stated vision, including supporting a variety of physical activity participation and well-being opportunities. To this end the strategy is directly aligned to Council’s objectives as well as being linked and aligned to State and Federal Government policy frameworks.

Establishing realistic and achievable recommendations having regarded to the resource capacity of the City and key stakeholders has been a key focus of the strategy. 30 recommendations have been developed and aligned to Council objectives of planning for growth, managing our assets, promoting a healthy lifestyle and promoting accessibility and inclusion.

A range of actions are included across the areas of aquatics, active transport, grounds and pitches, hard courts, indoor sports, play experiences, new and emerging sports and statutory and operational management. The actions provide a clear link from Council objectives through to on the ground activities and represent a holistic response to the City's sport and recreation needs.

Priorities have considered opportunities to achieve effective results within this framework and hence a combination of capital initiatives are supported by recommendations targeting behaviour change, community safety and awareness, facilitating participation opportunities and improved coordination of resources.

Finally, public accountability will be integral to ensuring effective ongoing relationships with community stakeholders; hence the evaluation section outlines a number of recommended actions to ensure transparency, focus and fostering ongoing involvement of community and key stakeholders.
APPENDIX A: LINK BETWEEN COUNCIL OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Objectives</th>
<th>Recreation Strategy Objectives</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning for growth</td>
<td>Increase participation in physical activity and recreation in Ballarat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing assets</td>
<td>Increase the opportunities for all people regardless of abilities to participate in recreational pursuits in Ballarat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting healthy lifestyles</td>
<td>Provide diverse facilities for the people of Ballarat to participate in recreational activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting accessibility and inclusion</td>
<td>Provide recreational facilities that meet the changing needs of residents and the wider population.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide facilities that will attract sporting and recreational events to the City.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inspire all members of the Ballarat community to realise the importance of physical activity and recreation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations

Priority actions and spending

- Aquatics
- Active transport
- Grounds and pitches
- Hard Courts
- Indoor sports
- Play experience
- New and emerging sports
- Other recreation projects