



CITY OF WHITEHORSE RECREATION STRATEGY

2015–2024



Glossary of terms

Term	Definition for the purpose of the Recreation Strategy
'Unstructured' physical activity or 'Non-club/sport' based	Physical activity for exercise, recreation or sport that is not organised by a club or other organisation Other terms: non-organised, unstructured
Sport/recreation club ¹	An organisation that requires payment of membership, fees or registration
Sport ²	An activity capable of achieving a result requiring physical exertion and/or physical skill which, by its nature and organisation, is competitive and is generally accepted as being a sport.
'Organised' physical activity ¹ or 'Club/sport based'	Physical activity for exercise, recreation or sport that is organised by a club, fitness centre, school or other organisation and requires membership
Physical activity ¹	Physical activity for exercise, recreation or sport
Recreation	Activities that are generally less structured and have a lesser emphasis on competition than does sport

¹ The Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Annual Report, (ERASS), 2010

² Australian Sports Commission website November 2012

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Executive Summary

The Recreation Strategy has been prepared to provide Council with a decision-making framework for recreation and sport for the next 10 years. It has been prepared in consultation with the community and builds on the achievements of the previous Recreation Strategy.

Council is committed to the long-term planning for recreation and sport. This commitment will ensure that facilities and services are provided in consideration of current needs, as well as emerging trends that may influence the role that Council needs to play.

The Recreation Strategy has identified short, medium and long term actions required to respond to the consultation findings and community needs. It has identified the people, organisations and authorities Council will work with to achieve the community's aspirations for recreation and sport in Whitehorse.

This current Recreation Strategy has reviewed the remaining actions and where they address current issues these have been incorporated into the new Implementation Plan. The project also builds on the findings and research from a number of other key Council documents, in particular the Council Plan (2013 – 2017), Council Vision (2013 – 2023), Whitehorse Play Space Strategy, Community Wellbeing Plan and the Open Space Strategy.

The Recreation Strategy defines recreation very broadly. This is in line with the type of activities Whitehorse residents are choosing to participate in as part of their day-to-day activities and routines. The needs of people who walk in local parks or to work, compete in sporting competitions, or cycle with the family alongside local waterways, have all been considered as part of the project.

The research undertaken was extensive and included a variety of surveys, community focus groups, staff workshops and written submissions. It builds on research undertaken for a number of other relevant Council planning projects including the Open Space Strategy, the Community Wellbeing Plan and research of state, national and international trends.

Project findings have been analysed in accordance with the four themes that emerged from the project – active communities; effective information and communication; flexible community facilities; and deliverable partnerships.

This Recreation Strategy identifies actions to support physical activity. The strategy considers the role that Council might play to assist and encourage residents, their families, friends and colleagues achieve their physical activity aspirations.

The assets within the municipality include more than 335 parks and reserves, more than 50 sports fields, more than 150 community centres and buildings (including but not limited to sports pavilions, neighbourhood houses, children's services, scouts and girl guide halls, community halls, etc), more than 1300km of footpaths and trails, 170 playspaces and more than 50 schools. These assets play an important role in providing different environments for physical activity. In addition, the strategy recognises the important role infrastructure such as footpaths, roads and sport facilities play in encouraging people to be active.

The Recreation Strategy acknowledges the key role of sport and recreation clubs, private recreation providers and schools in contributing to the diverse range of sport and recreation activities and opportunities in Whitehorse. However, the Recreation Strategy has noted the clear message from the community about the need to support physical activities that do not require membership of a sporting club or have the constraints associated with playing team sport. This is particularly addressed under Principle 3 (below) and recognises the importance to support unstructured activities that assist residents to lead a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. Unstructured physical activity is defined as physical activity for exercise, recreation or sport that is not organised by a club or other organisation.

The implementation of the Recreation Strategy is subject to appropriate funding as part of Council's annual budget process. The Recreation Strategy will be monitored to ensure the recommended actions are implemented in line with identified timelines. The strategy will regularly be reviewed to identify trend, economic, and partnership considerations that may impact the timing of actions.

The Recreation Strategy has established eight principles to guide the planning of recreation services and facilities.

Principle	Description
1 Different needs	People choose to get involved in recreation activities for a variety of health, aspirational and social reasons. The reasons are varied and personal.
2 A range of opportunities	A variety of different sport and recreation options will be encouraged because they make for a vibrant, active and healthy community.
3 Addressing recreation and sport priorities	Council will have a focus over the next 10 years on unstructured (non-sport) recreation opportunities while continuing to support organised sport.
4 Integration and design of urban infrastructure	Well-designed, sustainable and integrated urban infrastructure will help achieve recreation and associated health and wellbeing outcomes.
5 Universal design	Universal design principles, that optimise access for all ages and abilities, will underpin the planning and design of recreation services and facilities.
6 Partnerships	Communities and organisations that work together will ensure Whitehorse continues to have a relevant and enjoyable exciting range of recreation opportunities.
7 Facilities	Buildings will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be planned and developed reflecting evidence based research and with the service levels defined for different classifications of facilities and in consideration of all associated costs • focus on catering for local and municipal level needs as a priority • generally be planned and designed for use by a number of groups • be developed only after the use of existing facilities are optimised.
8 The natural environment	Responsible management and care of the natural environment will ensure its preservation and capacity to cater for the different recreation needs of residents.

There are 40 actions that have been developed to address the findings from the Recreation Strategy. These actions have been prioritised based on short (1–3 years), medium (4–6 years) and long (7–9 years) term timelines.

1. Introduction

1.1 What is the purpose of the Recreation Strategy

The Recreation Strategy provides a framework to guide Council planning of recreation and sport services and facilities for the next 10 years.

The purpose of the Recreation Strategy is to:

- identify strategies to encourage residents, families and visitors to incorporate more physical activity in their daily routines
- develop a rationale for future provision of recreation facilities and services
- provide direction on the provision of facilities that facilitate people to lead a healthy lifestyle
- provide direction in relation to the type and level of support Council should provide to recreation and sport
- establish short (1–3 years), medium (4–7 years) and long term (7–9 years) actions to address the findings of the project and provide a framework for monitoring the implementation of the Implementation Plan.

The Recreation Strategy has been prepared in two parts:

- *Part A – Key findings and the Implementation Plan*
Part A contains a summary of the project findings, Council's vision for recreation, and the principles that underpin the strategy. It includes an Implementation Plan with timelines and key partnerships required to achieve Council's aspirations for recreation.
- *Part B – Background information*
Part B contains the detailed research that has informed the project and information that will assist with the implementation of the Recreation Strategy.

1.2 Achievements of the previous Recreation Strategy

The previous Recreation Strategy provided Council with a recreation management, planning, and development framework and delivered a number of key achievements including:

- Regional Soccer Strategy which was undertaken in conjunction with adjoining councils and identified the direction to address the growth in soccer
- Indoor Sports Facility Feasibility Study, which identified a major short fall in indoor court space and resulted in the development of Sportlink Vermont South
- establishment of a turf replacement and maintenance regime for sports fields that improved the quality of sports fields and enabled greater use
- Sports Field Activity Audit that identified future directions for 49 sports fields with a particular focus on risk management priorities
- preparation of master plans at reserves and parks to guide development
- an audit of 54 schools to identify possible opportunities to work with schools to upgrade facilities to accommodate community use
- an audit of pavilions and leased buildings to identify upgrades required to address disability access
- upgrade of sports field lighting at four reserves to accommodate additional sporting activities.

The achievements from the Recreation Strategy are reflected in Council's annual Community Satisfaction Surveys. These community satisfaction surveys determine the importance and satisfaction levels for certain Council run services. It is worth noting from the 2013 Community Satisfaction Surveys that 89 per cent of respondents were satisfied with all services listed under 'Leisure and Cultural Services'.

Vision for Whitehorse

The City of Whitehorse will be:

- one of the most liveable and sustainable municipalities in Melbourne;
- recognised for the quality of its open space and natural environment;
- a community rich in culture and diversity that is inclusive, healthy and vibrant;
- a well governed city that has a healthy and strong relationship with the community; and
- a municipality with a prosperous and well supported local economy.'

Reference: Council Vision 2013 – 2023

2. How Council prepared the Recreation Strategy

2.1 Consultation

The Recreation Strategy was prepared following extensive consultation with residents, community groups, schools, support agencies and government. Consultation included:

- a telephone survey of 300 households;
- a survey of clubs and organisations (91 returns, with a return rate of 41 per cent, well above average) and follow-up consultation;
- four community forums focusing on clubs and organisations, recreation for young people, recreation for over 55 year olds and a forum that focused on specific strategies for encouraging increased participation in physical activity;
- a school survey and meetings with the Regional Principals' Association and local schools;
- a survey of skateboard/inline skaters/BMX bike riders (192 respondents);
- a survey of peak recreation and sport associations and follow-up consultation;
- seven written submissions;
- a survey of relevant officers at the Cities of Manningham, Knox, Maroondah, Boroondara and Monash; and,
- workshops with Councillors and Council staff.

The project was promoted at various stages to maintain its profile in the community. Promotion included:

- direct mail outs and emails to community groups;
- updates to people on the project register;
- editorial and advertisements in the local media including the Whitehorse News;
- promotion through Council service centres including editorial in Council's Allsports Newsletter, Aqualink (Nunawading and Box Hill) Newsletter, Council's website and 'on hold' messages, and;
- promotion of the skate survey through handouts of flyers at skate parks and via Ballistyx (large skate retail shop located in Ringwood) and Rampit (indoor skate facility located in Mitcham).

2.2 Documents and organisations that have influenced the Recreation Strategy

Council has prepared a number of service planning documents and policies that are relevant to the planning of recreation and sport services and facilities.

Diagram 1 on page 7 provides an overview of the different levels of Council planning to ensure it delivers services and programs that are consistent with the vision and values of the City of Whitehorse.

In particular the Council Plan, Council Vision, the Municipal Strategic Statement, and the Community Wellbeing Plan articulate the City's vision. These documents also provide the framework used to guide decision-making to ensure the vision is achieved, in this case for recreation and sport.

Relevant findings from documents such as the Open Space Strategy, the Playspace Strategy, the Arts and Cultural Strategy (draft) research, the Eastern Region Soccer Strategy, the Young People's Strategy, and the Disability Policy have also been incorporated in the Recreation Strategy.

These documents identify specific recreation and sport activity (e.g. soccer) and population (e.g. young people) needs, all of which have been considered when establishing priorities in the Recreation Strategy.

For the purposes of this document, the City of Whitehorse population is 151,388 sourced from the ABS 2011 census. The demographics of Whitehorse residents compared to Greater Melbourne is reflected in the following two tables.

Council documents important in the preparation of the Recreation Strategy:

- Council Plan 2013–2017
- Council Vision 2013–2023
- Community Wellbeing Plan Draft 2013–2017)
- Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2007
- Playspace Strategy 2011
- Whitehorse Disability Policy and Action Plan 2012–2016
- Whitehorse Sustainability Strategy 2008–2013
- Water Action Plan 2008–2013
- Bicycle Strategy 2007
- Childhood Matters Early Years Strategy 2009–2013
- Young Peoples Strategy 2009–2013
- Indoor Sports Facility Feasibility Strategy 2005
- Positive Ageing Strategy 2012–2017
- Diversity Policy 2008–2011
- Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011
- Whitehorse Community Road Safety Strategy 2013
- Domestic Animal Management Plan

City of Whitehorse	2011			2006			Change
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne	Number	%	Greater Melbourne	2006 – 2011
Population (excluding O/S visitors)	151,338	100.0	100.0	144,767	100.0	100.0	+6571
Males	72,827	48.1	49.2	69,099	47.7	49.0	+3728
Females	78,511	51.9	50.8	75,668	52.3	51.0	+2843

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2006 and 2011.

Age groups	2011			2006			Change
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne	Number	%	Greater Melbourne	2006 – 2011
0 to 4	8829	5.8	6.5	8989	6.2	6.3	-160
5 to 9	8781	5.8	6.0	8537	5.9	6.3	+244
10 to 14	8529	5.6	5.9	7804	5.4	6.4	+725
15 to 19	9180	6.1	6.3	8913	6.2	6.7	+267
20 to 24	11,970	7.9	7.5	10,105	7.0	7.4	+1,865
25 to 29	10,318	6.8	7.9	8712	6.0	7.1	+1,606
30 to 34	9389	6.2	7.5	10,333	7.1	7.7	- 944
35 to 39	10,570	7.0	7.5	11,339	7.8	7.9	- 769
40 to 44	11,274	7.4	7.5	10,436	7.2	7.5	+838
45 to 49	10,288	6.8	6.9	10,028	6.9	7.2	+260
50 to 54	9697	6.4	6.4	8995	6.2	6.4	+702
55 to 59	8429	5.6	5.6	8403	5.8	5.9	+26
60 to 64	7873	5.2	5.1	7183	5.0	4.5	+690
65 to 69	6577	4.3	3.9	6241	4.3	3.6	+336
70 to 74	5809	3.8	3.0	5664	3.9	3.0	+145
75 to 79	5091	3.4	2.4	5397	3.7	2.6	- 306
80 to 84	4457	2.9	2.0	4227	2.9	2.0	+230
85 and over	4277	2.8	1.8	3461	2.4	1.6	+816
Total	151,338	100.0	100.0	144,767	100.0	100.0	+6,571

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2006 and 2011.

The research and data in this report was taken from, but not limited to, the following key sources:

- Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS), Australian Sports Commission 2010,
- Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009.
- Recreation Strategy Review Household Survey, City of Whitehorse 2011

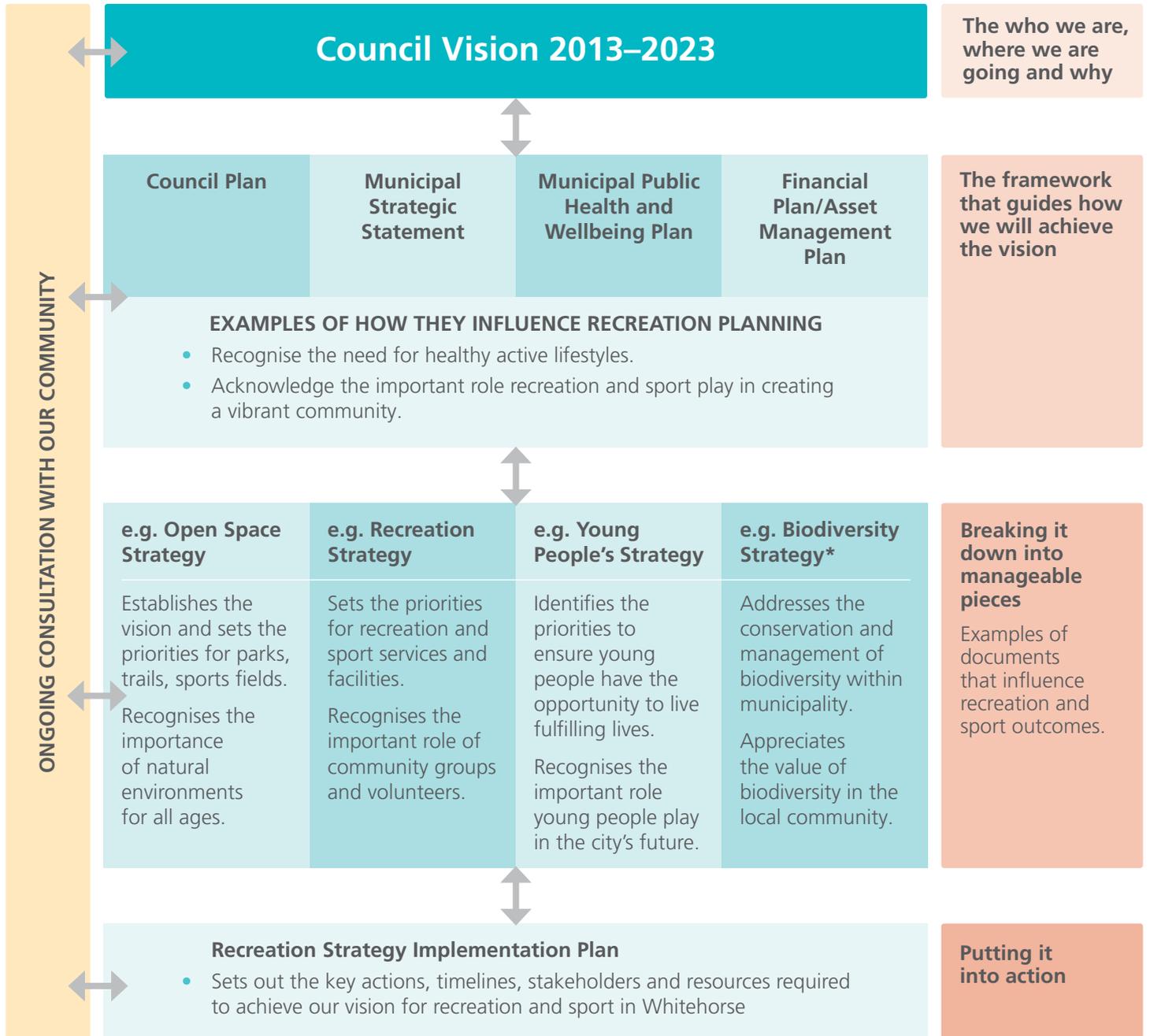
The Recreation Strategy Review Household Survey was completed by 300 residents in the municipality. The breakdown of the household survey included males 15–39 years (57), males 40 plus (81), females 15–39 years (64) and females 40 plus (98) representing 0.2 per cent of the population.

There are a number of local, state, national and international documents and policies that have also influenced the Recreation Strategy. These include Plan Melbourne, the federal *Disability Discrimination Act* and research carried out by Australian governments / agencies, not-for-profit organisations, academic institutions and professional associations such as:

- Australian Sports Commission
- The Heart Foundation (Australia)
- Municipalities adjoining the City of Whitehorse
- Parks and Leisure Australia
- Peak Victorian sport and recreation associations.



Diagram 1 How the Recreation Strategy relates to other Council documents and planning processes



* Whitehorse Urban BioDiversity Strategy for Council Managed Open Space, Streetscapes and Community Facilities.

3. The benefits of recreation

Previous Council research³ identifies that residents of Whitehorse enjoy a comparatively good level of health and wellbeing. Whitehorse is one of the 10 healthiest municipalities in Victoria; however, some residents from lower socio-economic backgrounds, Indigenous and non-English speaking backgrounds do not share the same level of health as other residents.

Despite a positive health report Council wants to enhance opportunities for residents to live even healthier and fulfilling lives. Much of the burden of disease in Whitehorse is attributed to lifestyle factors, the most significant being the lack of physical activity.

Recreation and sport provide the most obvious opportunity to increase the number of people being physically active. The following provides a summary of the well-documented social, health and wellbeing, economic and environmental benefits associated with physical activity.^{4 5}

Communities with high levels of involvement in physical activity are more likely to achieve the following:

Social outcomes:

- well-connected communities, which are associated with reduced levels of fear, increased interaction, greater involvement in community based projects, a stronger sense of 'belonging', people supporting one another, increased employability
- a stronger sense of local pride
- more informal community gatherings where people play, talk and share experiences
- increased opportunities for people from different cultural backgrounds and age groups to mix with their community
- less crime and anti-social behaviour.

Physical, psychological, and intellectual outcomes:

- greater mental health
- lower incidence of major illnesses and diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers
- lower levels of injury due to higher levels of alertness (e.g. work) and physical wellbeing (e.g. older people)
- higher levels of self-esteem and lower levels of stress, depression and anxiety related conditions
- improved fitness, strength, flexibility and coordination
- improved mobility, flexibility and functional ability
- improved academic and learning performance

Economic outcomes:

- higher levels of employment
- reduced health costs
- growth in retail, service and equipment supply sectors
- higher levels of tourism associated with special events and significant destinations such as regional parks and aquatic centres
- improved work place productivity and less absenteeism.

Environmental outcomes:

- more positive perceptions about safety in their community
- enhanced urban environments and streetscapes because communities want attractive and safe environments for physical activity
- enhanced natural environments because of an appreciation of the benefits and needs of the natural environment
- a reduction in air and noise pollution because of a decrease in use of motorised transport.

Sports clubs and community organisations are important conduits for developing social capital and are good barometers of community strength.

Reference: Putnam (2000) as cited in⁴

Under-achieving young people involved in sport showed a 29 per cent greater improvement in academic performance than their non-sporting counterparts.

Reference: The culture and sport evidence programme

Every \$1 invested by government generates \$2.36 in direct economic activity and \$6.51 in total economic activity.

Reference: More than winning: The real value of sport and recreation in Western Australia

³ Whitehorse Community Wellbeing Plan Draft (2013 – 2017)

⁴ Facts and stats: Benefits of physical activity, Department of Sport and Recreation, Western Australia

⁵ More than winning: The real value of sport and recreation in Western Australia

4. Recreation in Whitehorse

4.1 What is recreation for Whitehorse?

Whitehorse has a rich history of community involvement in recreation and sport. This continues with Council research showing that residents participate in a wide range of recreation, sport and arts and cultural activities. Recreation and sport is a significant part of the city's community life and provides opportunities for individuals and communities to come together to achieve, celebrate, socialise and for mutual support and encouragement.

The Recreation Strategy adopts a broad definition for recreation in recognition of the extensive range of recreation, sport and cultural activities Whitehorse residents choose to undertake.

This strategy has been prepared understanding that recreation means very different things to different people depending on stage of life, background, ability to get involved and time available. Recreation can be:

- a casual walk or bike ride along a bushland trail
- playing 'chasey' in the park with friends, family or the pet dog
- playing competitive sport or a social game of sport with friends or work colleagues
- working out in the gym or training for a marathon at the local oval
- fishing or reading from the side of a river
- visiting sites of historical interest or working with the local historical preservation society
- volunteering for a sporting, service or welfare organisation
- involved in producing a local play, festival or attending a local art and craft exhibition.

Council recognises and will continue to support this broad definition of recreation. However, research indicates a need for Council to place particular emphasis on helping residents achieve their physical activity aspirations and in particular incorporate physical activity into their daily routines.

4.2 Recreation and sport facilities

The City of Whitehorse is home to a diverse range of indoor and outdoor recreation and sporting facilities including:

- more than 50 sports fields and more than 40 pavilions located at 26 of the City's reserves. These sports fields cater for a range of sports e.g. soccer, football, cricket, rugby
- 170 play spaces
- more than 1300kms paths and trails
- more than 85 tennis courts
- 20 ball courts (netball and basketball)
- two athletics centres
- two skate/BMX facilities (Box Hill and Vermont South)
- three golf courses (Morack Golf Club, Box Hill Golf Club and Wattle Park Golf Club)
- two aquatic and leisure centres (Aqualink Box Hill and Aqualink Nunawading)
- two recreation centres (Nunawading Community Centre and Sportlink).

There are a number of facilities that facilitate recreation activities, but which are not the focus of the Recreation Strategy. These facilities are:

- Box Hill Community Hub (Box Hill Town Hall)
- Whitehorse (Arts and Culture) Centre (Nunawading)
- Box Hill Community Arts Centre (Box Hill)
- 10 neighbourhood and community houses.

In addition there are:

- more than 60 commercial providers of sport and recreation facilities and services, and;
- more than 30 major recreation facilities in adjoining municipalities which are accessible to Whitehorse residents.



4.3 Facilities at neighbouring councils

The City of Whitehorse is bordered by the municipalities of Manningham, Maroondah, Knox, Monash and Boroondara. These five councils have an extensive range of sport and recreation infrastructure to support a healthy lifestyle including regional facilities, of which some are, within close proximity to the Whitehorse border.

These facilities include, but not limited to:

- 'wet' aquatic facilities and 'dry' recreation centres
- basketball and netball facilities
- gymnastic centres
- skate parks / facilities
- golf courses
- baseball / softball facilities.

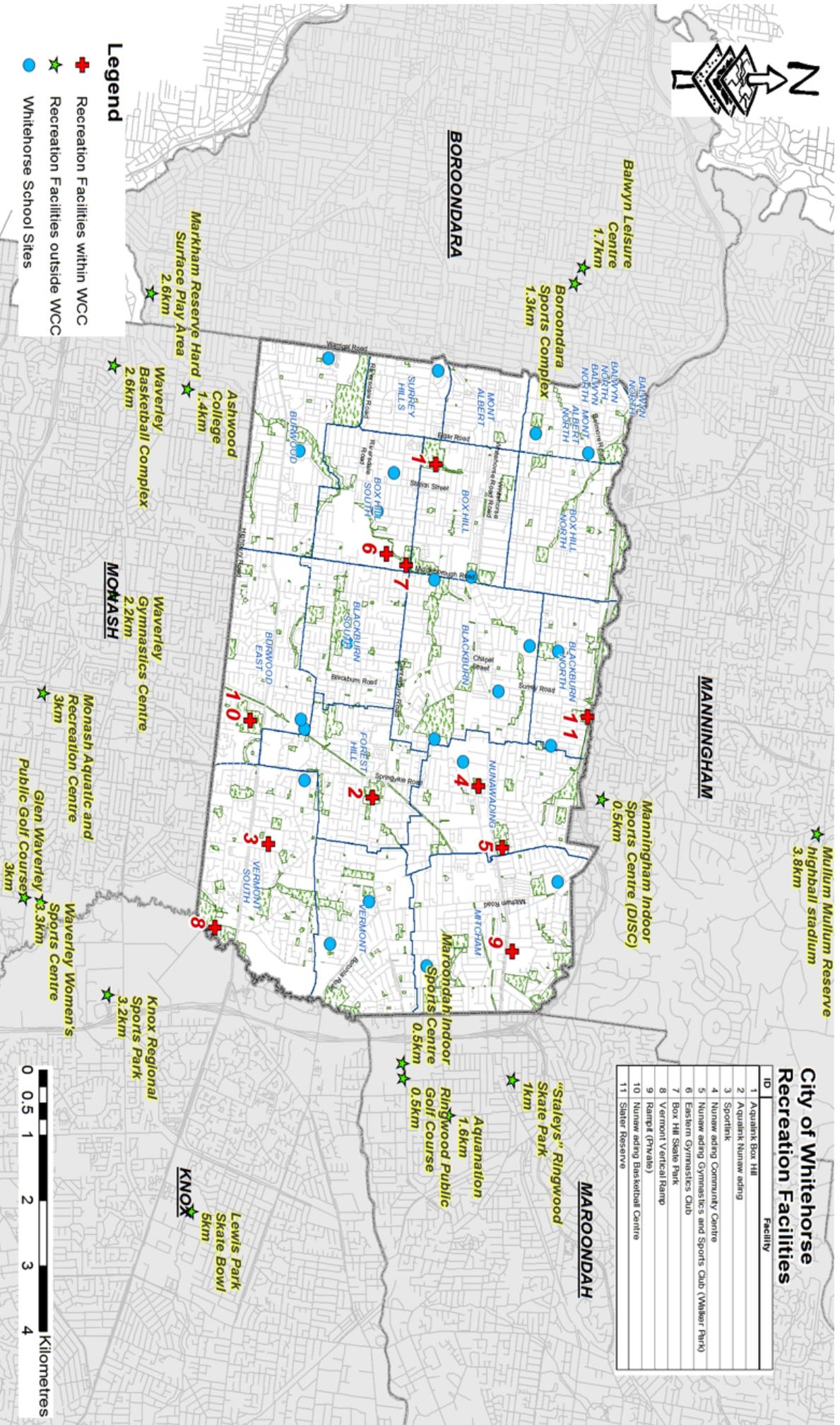
Many of these major recreation facilities are located approximately five kilometres from the City of Whitehorse's municipal boundary as indicated by the map on the following page. Additional recreation facilities are located within a 10km distance. This map highlights school sites that are known to have a highball indoor facility. It is not the intent of this map to identify all schools and sport and recreation facilities in Whitehorse.

There is no defined catchment area that people are prepared to travel in order to participate in recreation and sport activities; however, indicative catchment distances are used within the industry. Generally, within the metropolitan area, 80 per cent of residents will travel up to five kilometres. For regional facilities the catchment is wider. These catchment distances are consistent with data collected from Centre for Environment and Recreation Management (CERM) annual reports for Council's key aquatic and leisure facilities. While these catchment areas are general in nature there are considerations such as physical barriers (e.g. major roads or freeways) that will influence residents travel behaviour.

It is worth noting that residents will travel past 'older' facilities to utilise 'new' facilities or even facilities that have 'new' equipment.

Travel behaviours may need to be challenged as a necessity particularly for densely populated councils as a lack of green field sites and limited resources limit opportunities for further development.

It is worth noting that the Melbourne East region (incorporating the seven local government areas of Maroondah, Knox, Yarra Ranges, Monash, Manningham, Boroondara and Whitehorse) are being supported by the state government to develop the Melbourne East Regional Sport and Recreation Strategy. The Melbourne East Regional Sport and Recreation Strategy will deliver a strategic framework for the planning of sport and recreation facilities that promotes healthy and active communities for the next 20 years.



Legend

- + Recreation Facilities within WCC
- ★ Recreation Facilities outside WCC
- Whitehorse School Sites

City of Whitehorse Recreation Facilities

ID	Facility
1	Aquatic Box Hill
2	Aquatic Nunawading
3	Sportlink
4	Nunawading Community Centre
5	Nunawading Gymnastics and Sports Club (Walker Park)
6	Eastern Gymnastics Club
7	Box Hill Skate Park
8	Vernont Vertical Ramp
9	Rampit (Private)
10	Nunawading Basketball Centre
11	Slater Reserve



4.4 What is our vision for recreation and how will we achieve it

The vision for recreation in Whitehorse has been developed based on the feedback from the community consultation forums. This vision is also consistent with the community's vision as outlined in the Council Vision 2013 –2023 and in particular Council's Playspace Strategy 2011 which is based on the principles of Council's Open Space Strategy 2007.

Our Vision

- A community where people want to be more physically active and find ways to incorporate it into their daily routines
- Places where people can go to play, to have fun, to compete, to learn, or to just 'be'
- People and organisations that celebrate and support respect, perseverance, sharing and success
- Activities and environments that encourage connection with people, nature and the local community
- Opportunities for people to support each other in their health, fitness or wellbeing aspirations
- Clubs and organisations that attract individuals and families because they are well organised, friendly, encouraging and prosperous
- Opportunities to participate in recreation regardless of ability or age.

Table one outlines the principles that have been developed to guide the actions to address the city's recreation needs and achieve the vision for recreation over the next 10 years. These principles build on directions from other Council planning documents such as the Community Wellbeing Plan and the Open Space Strategy.

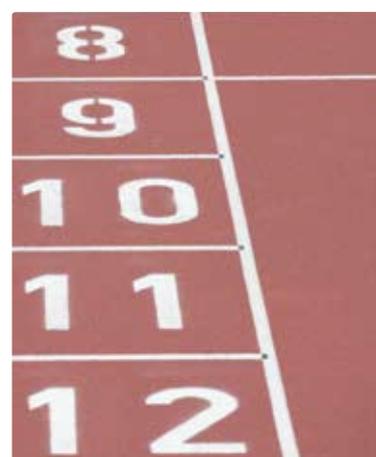


Table 1: How the vision for recreation will be achieved

The principles that guide the planning of recreation	What does this mean for recreation?
<p>Principle 1: Different needs</p> <p>People choose to get involved in recreation activities for a variety of health, aspirational and social reasons. The reasons are varied and personal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will liaise with the community to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the community's changing motivations for being or getting more active - the support the community needs to achieve its physical activity outcomes • Council will continue to promote recreation and sport, together with arts and cultural activities and to find effective ways to enhance community awareness of these opportunities.
<p>Principle 2: A range of opportunities</p> <p>A variety of different sport and recreation options will be encouraged because they make for a vibrant, active and healthy city.</p> <p>Links to Council's Community Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 1 – <i>Support a healthy, vibrant, inclusive and diverse community.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to a range of local, neighbourhood and district level facilities provided in line with our policies and provision frameworks e.g. for sports fields, play spaces, recreation and leisure centres and trails. • A range of Council operated services and facilities • Council will work with other providers, including clubs, commercial operators and not-for-profit organisations to encourage new and enhanced opportunities. • Effective planning that minimises the need for the duplication of facilities and encourages variety of opportunity. The principle recognises that different opportunities will be provided across the city. The variety and availability of recreation and sport opportunities will vary depending on the availability of facilities and space to conduct activities. It will in part be determined by where residents choose to initiate and base their activities or clubs.
<p>Principle 3: Addressing recreation and sport priorities</p> <p>Council will have a focus over the next 10 years on unstructured (non-sport) recreation opportunities (e.g. walking) while continuing to support organised sport.</p> <p>Council recognises the importance to support (non-sport and sport) activities that assist residents to lead a healthy lifestyle through physical activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for recreation and sport will acknowledge that most residents get their physical activity through non-club based and social activities. • Council will have a more significant focus on providing for the casual or unstructured recreation needs of the community than in the past. • Council recognises the benefits associated with unstructured physical activity options – flexibility, better health, spontaneity, local access, minimal cost, choice of environment and connecting with the community. • Council will continue to enhance and develop physical activity opportunities for all residents however, consideration should be given to high growth areas as identified in Council's Housing Strategy. • Council recognises the benefits associated with sport or structured physical activity – skill development, competition, social contact.
<p>Principle 4: Integration and design of urban infrastructure</p> <p>Well-designed, sustainable and integrated urban infrastructure will help achieve recreation and associated health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council recognises that urban environments such as footpaths and shopping precincts and less traditional facilities such as outdoor fitness equipment are increasingly important recreation environments. • Urban environments that are well planned, attractive and well linked together will encourage physical activity as part of residents' daily routines. • Council recognises the need to provide facilities (e.g. bike storage facilities, safe road crossings, seats, trails/footpaths) that allow people to incorporate physical activity into their daily work, school and family routines. • Federal, state and local government working together to create an urban environment in Whitehorse that encourages physical activity.
<p>Principle 5: Universal design</p> <p>Universal design principles, that optimise access for the whole community, will underpin the planning and design of recreation services and facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The greatest benefits will accrue to the wider community if Council plans services and facilities that allow and encourage use by the widest possible range of age groups, abilities, and cultures. • Universal design principles will be applied to the planning of all primary recreation and sport environments (e.g. buildings, trails) and associated environments (e.g. car parks).

The principles that guide the planning of recreation

Principle 6: Partnerships

Communities and organisations that work together will ensure Whitehorse continues to have an exciting range of recreation opportunities.

Links to Council's Community Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 4 – *Strategic leadership and open and accessible government.*

Principle 7: About – Facilities

Facilities will:

- be planned and developed in accordance with the service levels defined for different classifications of facilities and consideration of all associated costs
- focus on catering for local and municipal level needs as a priority
- generally be planned and designed for use by a number of groups (i.e. multi use)
- be developed only after the use of existing facilities are optimised (i.e. maxi use)

Links to Council's Community Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 2 – *Maintain and enhance our built environment to ensure a livable and sustainable city.*

Principle 8: About – The natural environment

Responsible management and care of the natural environment will ensure its preservation and capacity to cater for the different recreation needs of residents.

Links to Council's Community Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 3 – *Protect and enhance our open space and natural environments.*

What does this mean for recreation?

- Council recognises volunteers, community groups, not-for-profit organisations, schools and businesses as an important part of the city's recreation and sport network.
 - Strong community and Council-community partnerships will continue to ensure diverse recreation and sport opportunities continue.
 - Partnerships that ensure that changing community needs are identified and unique opportunities associated with the city's diverse cultural mix explored and promoted.
 - Council will enter into different partnerships over time to achieve recreation and sport objectives.
 - Council will continue to review the partnership roles it plays to support recreation and sport groups.
-
- Planning and development of facilities will be in line with guidelines to cater for the type and level of activities and the age groups, abilities and catchment.
 - The responsible planning and management of facilities requires Council to address the capital, ongoing operational and maintenance costs associated with facilities. This ensures the real cost of constructing, operating and replacing facilities is understood. It will ensure Council has the capacity to make timely budget inclusions over the life of facilities.
 - Council will focus on the development of local and municipal level facilities to deliver the greatest benefit. Council will consider the funding of regional projects however, funding will generally be in line with relevant Council policies that focus on local and municipal level facilities.
 - Council will seek to optimise the use of existing facilities, (including Council, school and private facilities), before considering the development of new facilities.
 - Council will encourage developments where a number of community groups or organisations are partners to a proposal, over single club/organisation proposals.
-
- Natural bushland areas, sporting fields, trails, lakes and gardens provide important recreation and lifestyle opportunities.
 - Quality natural environments are important providing habitats for wildlife, strengthen vegetation corridors and allow residents to connect with nature as part of their leisure time.
 - Natural environments provide:
 - peaceful environments for reflective recreation activities such as meditation, bird watching and ambling;
 - opportunities for families and children to learn about and interact with nature, and;
 - relief from the urban environments and lifestyles.

4.5 Key trends relevant to the Recreation Strategy

Whitehorse is a vibrant recreation and sporting community where residents are regularly involved in over 40 activities that keep them physically active provided by more than 220 clubs and organisations.

Whitehorse residents over 15 years of age are likely to stay near to home for their physical activity (78 per cent) with only 22 per cent of residents likely to travel outside the city for their sport and recreation activities.

In keeping with national and state trends, most residents aged 15+ get their physical activity through 'unstructured' or non-team based activities. For Whitehorse residents this is likely to be through walking, which they appear to do in far greater numbers than their fellow Victorians. At a state and national level the percentage of people walking as their most frequent form of exercise is 36.6 per cent and 35.9 per cent respectively. In Whitehorse, 62 per cent of residents are likely to walk as their most frequent form of exercise.

On a national level participation in club based sport is 4.8 per cent, the same as in 2003. However, between 2003 and 2006 participation fell to a low of 3.4 per cent. By 2010 participation had returned to 4.8 per cent⁶. In Whitehorse, the participation rates appear to have dropped slightly over the last three years.

Of particular note is the decline in participation in club/team based tennis, swimming and golf. These sports have all declined in participation at the national level since 2001 and in Whitehorse since 2004. There is no definitive research available to explain the decline however, some factors may include competition from other sports, the need for a greater focus on 'social sport' participation opportunities and a lack of profile at the elite level. Project research identified that the under 29 age groups and in particular the under 15 age groups are the ones most likely to be involved in club or team based sport and recreation.

Data collected by the ABS⁸ indicates that an estimated 63 per cent of children aged 5–14 participated in at least one organised sport outside of school hours. The same report found the participation rate in organised sport was highest among 9–11 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.

Table 2 highlights the activities household survey respondents stated they were doing in 2011 compared to those activities they were doing three years earlier in 2008.



⁶ ERASS, Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey, 2010, p39

⁷ Recreation Strategy Review 2011, household survey

⁸ Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, April 2009

Most popular activities in Whitehorse			
2011	% of respondents	2008	% of respondents
Walking	62	Walking	57
Gym/Weights	20	Gym/Weights	19
Swimming	14	Swimming	19
Running/Jogging	14	Running/Jogging	14
Bike Riding	13	Bike Riding	14
Walking the dog	11	Golf	13
Gardening	10	Tennis	12
Golf	7	Walking the dog	11
Cycling	7	Cycling	10
Tennis	7	Basketball	9
Basketball	6	Gardening	8
Aerobics/Fitness	4	Netball	6
Australian Rules	3	Soccer	5
Netball	3	Australian Rules	4
Yoga	3	Aerobics/Fitness	4
		Cricket Outdoor	4

Table 2 – Activities household survey respondents stated they were doing in 2011 compared to 2008⁷

Comparison of most popular activities					
WHITEHORSE 2011 Activities ⁹	% of respondents	VICTORIAN 2010 Activities	% of respondents	AUSTRALIA 2010 Activities	% of respondents
Walking	62	Walking	36.6	Walking	35.9
Aerobics/fitness #	24	Aerobics/fitness	24.7	Aerobics/fitness	23.5
Swimming	14	Swimming	13.5	Swimming	13.0
Running/Jogging	14	Cycling	12.7	Cycling	11.9
Bike riding	13	Running	12.7	Running	10.6
Walking the dog	11	Golf	7.3	Golf	6.7
Gardening	10	Tennis	6.8	Tennis	6.0
Golf	7	AFL	5.4	Football (outdoor)	4.8
Cycling	7	Basketball	4.8	Walking (bush)	4.8
Tennis	7	Walking (bush)	4.6	Netball	3.7
Basketball	6	Yoga	4.3	Basketball	3.5
Australian Rules	3	Netball	3.8	Yoga	3.5
Netball	3	Cricket	3.5	AFL	3.3
Yoga	3	Football (outdoor)	3.5	Cricket	3.2

Table 3 – Comparison of the most popular activities in Whitehorse compared with Victoria and Australia¹⁰

Combines 2011 Whitehorse survey results for aerobics/fitness (4 per cent) with gym/weights (20 per cent)

⁹ Recreation Strategy Review 2011 household survey

¹⁰ The Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Annual Report, (ERASS), 2010

5. The four key themes of the Recreation Strategy

Findings from the consultation have identified four key themes:

- Theme 1 – Active communities
- Theme 2 – Effective information and communication
- Theme 3 – Flexible community facilities
- Theme 4 – Deliverable partnerships.

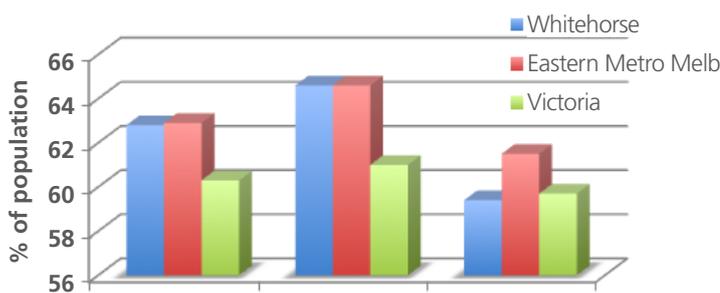
5.1 Active communities

One of the strongest messages communicated throughout the project was the importance of services, programs and facilities that enable residents to be healthy and active as part of their daily routines.

Project research found that 93 per cent of residents feel it is important to be physically active; however, Community Indicators Victoria (CIV)¹¹ information indicates that Whitehorse residents are not as active as they think they should be.

CIV data shows that nearly 63 per cent of residents stated they get the prescribed five sessions/150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity a week. This is comparable to eastern metropolitan Melbourne and Victoria; however, females are likely to get less physical activity than males.

People Engaged in Adequate Physical Exercise (2008)



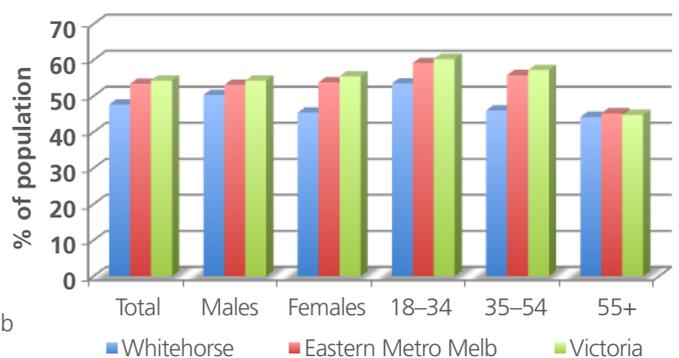
There was a strong view that residents should have access to recreation options regardless of their physical, intellectual, cultural, age, gender or financial circumstances. Respondents to the survey stated that getting people active should be a key driver for the Recreation Strategy.¹²

Within the group of people who don't get enough exercise or physical activity, there are some specific groups identified that should be the focus of future programs. These include young people, who often drop out of organised sport and physical activity towards the end of secondary school and older people who represent an increasing percentage of the population and are looking for greater access to a broader range of physical activity options.

Research¹³ has found a number of key factors that will motivate residents to be more physically active. Regardless of age, gender, or culture, the ability to fit some physical activity into the daily routine is a major motivator.

Feeling unfit, having other people to exercise with, and setting an example for the children are important considerations in increasing the physical activity levels in the community.

People Self-Reporting Health as Excellent or Very Good (2007)



The 10 activities residents aged over 15 participate in most frequently are walking (62 per cent), gym/weights (20 per cent), swimming and running/jogging (14 per cent), bike riding (13 per cent), walking the dog (11 per cent), gardening (10 per cent), golf, cycling and tennis (7 per cent), basketball (6 per cent), aerobics/fitness (4 per cent), Australian Rules football, netball and yoga (3 per cent).

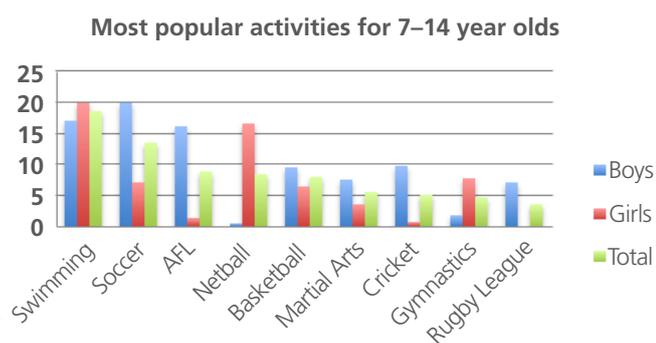
¹¹ Community Indicators Victoria, www.communityindicators.net.au

¹² Consultation workshops

¹³ Recreation Strategy Review 2011 household survey

It would seem the high participation rates experienced nationally by under 15 year olds in netball and basketball is reflected locally by an increase in demand for indoor court space. In 2009¹⁴, the most popular sport for children aged 7–14 was swimming with a participation rate of 19 per cent, followed by soccer at (13 per cent) and Australian Rules football at (9 per cent). Basketball ranks as the fifth most popular activity with a 7.9 per cent participation rate.

For boys, the most popular sports were soccer (20 per cent), swimming (17 per cent), and Australian Rules football (16 per cent). For girls, the most popular activities were swimming (20 per cent), netball (17 per cent), and gymnastics (8 per cent). Of the 37 per cent of children who are not involved in sport out of school hours, 44 per cent are likely to be girls and 30 per cent boys.



This research found that children born overseas in non English speaking countries are less likely to participate in sport and cultural activities (46 per cent) than Australian born children (25 per cent) or children born in other English-speaking countries (24 per cent). This is worth noting given the diverse cultures that make up the Whitehorse community. Children in one parent families participated in sport and recreation activities less (37 per cent) than children in couple families (23 per cent). Research did not identify any conclusive evidence to suggest there is a different level of participation for adults from different cultural backgrounds in Whitehorse.

The need to consider opportunities associated with 'unstructured' or non-club/sport based activities (e.g. walking or bike riding) as well as club-based activities (e.g. organised sport) was emphasised throughout the project.

It would appear that only 31 per cent of Whitehorse residents get their exercise through structured or club-based sport and recreation. The remaining 69 per cent of residents responding to the household survey get their activity through unstructured or non-team based activities. Council has recently undertaken an internal investigation to consider the installation of various recreation equipment and facilities (e.g. hard court pads for ball sports, fitness equipment, rebound walls etc) to support residents to get active in Whitehorse parks. As a result significant development has taken place in the form of the Multipurpose Space and 1km circular pathway at Box Hill Gardens. This development provides people with the opportunity to walk, run and participate in a range of unstructured physical activity such as table tennis, tennis and cricket at the rebound wall, basketball, netball and other children's running games.

Whitehorse residents also participate in other unstructured activities such as walking the dog (11 per cent of residents walk the dog according to the Recreation Strategy Household Survey 2011). Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan 2013–2017 acknowledges the important role that dogs and cats provide many families throughout the City from a social and general wellbeing perspective. The Domestic Animal Management Plan recognises the needs of dog walkers through the development of services and programs to support responsible pet ownership including the use of Council's 19 off-lead sites across the municipality. Walking the dog is an unstructured recreation activity that contributes to the health and wellbeing of the pet and the owner.

Despite the smaller level of participation in structured activities or organised sport compared to unstructured activities, the Recreation Strategy recognises the importance of sport. Local sport and recreation clubs remain major facilitators of people coming together, physical activity and fitness and they play an important role in building a vibrant, inclusive and dynamic community.

¹⁴ 4901.0 – Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, Apr 2009



It is therefore important to retain support for organised sport and recreation as well as enhancing support for non-club based activities. The strategy recognises the challenges that sport clubs face including, but not limited to, the recruitment and retaining of volunteers, the responsibilities associated with running a club and the challenges of growth that comes with the success of a sport. Council has limited resources and facilities which is challenging when some clubs are experiencing success with an increase in memberships and teams. These challenges highlight that all stakeholders including the peak sporting association, the clubs and Council have a shared responsibility to manage the growth.

The project identified a number of opportunities in relation to schools. Ten of the 11 schools responding to the project survey are interested in initiatives to encourage families to be more active. Similarly, 10 schools are interested in initiatives to increase the number of children walking and cycling to school and in particular initiatives to address barriers that discourage walking and cycling. A number of barriers were identified during the project including a lack of support by parents, traffic congestion at school drop-off/arrival points and a lack of off-road shared and cycle paths.

Council strongly encourages and supports the Whitehorse community to lead a physically active and healthy lifestyle. Council's Transport Team actively engage with schools to address the barriers and promote safe sustainable and active travel to and from school. The Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011 and the Whitehorse Community Road Safety Strategy 2013 highlight the extensive range of programs and resources that encourage walking and cycling. Other initiatives include the Victorian Government, through the Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure, promoting the important role of walking as a mode of transport by assisting local councils to develop Principal Pedestrian Networks (PPNs). Another example is 'Walk 21' which was set up to develop healthy, sustainable and efficient communities where people choose to walk.

While it is not practicable to mention all projects and initiatives it is important to acknowledge that there are some good projects occurring at a local, state and national level. There are also some innovative practices taking place at an international level that should be acknowledged as contributing to the overall health of local communities. Wherever possible the Whitehorse community should link into existing programs whilst being open to new innovative programs that demonstrate a benefit to the broader community.

The need to provide for the recreation and sport needs of all age groups was emphasised by project participants. The ageing Whitehorse population means a particular focus should be on providing opportunities, including through recreation centres, for older age groups. All of Council's major recreation facilities report increasing demand on their services by older age groups and the need for program space to cater the growing demand from increasingly active older age groups.

It is also important for people of all abilities irrespective of age or culture to have access to sport and recreation opportunities. Council's facilities are constructed based on a universal design approach that optimises access for the whole community. Universal design will underpin the planning and design of recreation services and facilities which will ensure accessibility for people once they physically come into contact with the facility or service. However, accessibility begins with the commute to the facility (normally from the persons home). Council does provide a Community Assisted Transport Service for eligible residents; however, it is not possible for Council to be everything for all people. In addition to the public transport system, services such as the Multi Purpose Taxi Program administered by the Taxi Services Commission will support residents to commute to sport and recreation facilities.

A number of sport and recreation clubs expressed a desire to understand how they might respond better to the changing recreation and sport participation trends. Some peak sporting associations are working with their member clubs to identify alternative participation opportunities that do not require the same time commitments as competitive sport. This will help to keep clubs relevant to residents and, as a result, more viable.

A number of other Council documents, including the Playspace Strategy, the Bicycle Strategy, the Open Space Strategy and the Integrated Transport Strategy are paramount to the planning of facilities and environments that encourage and support active lifestyles. It is important that initiatives in these documents that increase physical activity opportunities are developed as a priority.

Council has finite resources and will need to work within existing resources and be innovative with respect to the resources required to respond to the increasingly diverse range of participation opportunities residents are looking for. Some of these activities will be provided through existing sport and recreation facilities and community groups, however residents are not only looking for different and alternative activity options but are also looking for strategies that can help them connect with other like-minded people and stay motivated.



5.2. Effective information and communication

Council provides information to residents about recreation and sport opportunities in different formats. This includes the online Community Directory with information about clubs and associations operating in Whitehorse and brochures such as *Walking and Wheeling in Whitehorse* and the *Travelsmart* map publications which outlines cycling and walking pathways.

In addition Council has formed the Whitehorse Sport and Recreation Network, which provides a forum through which Council can consult with and receive advice and guidance on the future of sport and recreation development. Council produces the 'Allsports Newsletter' to keep sporting clubs informed about planning projects and sport development opportunities.

Residents raised a number of opportunities to build on the information already available and to address some of the matters identified through the project. These opportunities include:

- more detailed information about recreation clubs and the programs / activities they offer
- enhanced signage to raise the profile of walking and cycling pathways and linkages between neighbourhoods
- information for clubs and associations that assists them to understand Council processes and timelines, particularly in relation to securing funding for planning and infrastructure projects projects.

A key motivation for increasing physical activity levels was the ability for residents to measure the benefits they are deriving from their activity. There are a growing number of incentive programs including the '10,000 Steps' Program¹⁵, which uses a pedometer to measure the number of steps taken in a day or exercise session. Research cited in the *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*¹⁶ indicates that pedometers enhance the motivation to walk and the frequency of walking because users can establish walking challenges or targets.

Examples of other programs include the Kidfit Baby Brigade Pram Walking Programs¹⁷ which provide opportunities for parents to meet and to learn how to use the pram for 'healthy walking', the Walking School Bus Program and the 'Walk a Hound, Lose a Pound'¹⁸ walking program. All these programs allow residents to incorporate their physical activity or exercise into their daily routine – another key requirement if residents are to increase their level of physical activity¹⁹.

Emerging activities such as geocaching provide another source of motivation. Geocaching is an outdoor sporting activity where participants use a global positioning system or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers, called 'geocaches'. The activity encourages people to get out of doors and potentially walk or cycle to hidden cache sites in local neighbourhoods. There are 106 geocaching sites already established within a five kilometre radius of Blackburn.

There is an opportunity to use these existing and innovative programs as a basis for initiatives to increase the level of physical activity in Whitehorse.



¹⁵ www.10000steps.net.au

¹⁶ Total and Leisure-Time Walking Among U.S. Adults: Should Every Step Count?

¹⁷ [kidfit.com.au/FindaProgram/PramWalkingPrograms,Sunshine Coast](http://kidfit.com.au/FindaProgram/PramWalkingPrograms,Sunshine%20Coast)

¹⁸ Steps to a Healthier Cleveland at the Cleveland Department of Public Health

¹⁹ Recreation Strategy Review 2011, household survey

Whitehorse clubs have a desire to better understand Council funding and decision-making procedures relating to infrastructure projects. This will enable them to understand Council planning processes and associated timelines and will assist clubs to better plan their future. Clubs also asked for Council contact and referral processes to be streamlined particularly in relation to facility maintenance. Clubs indicated that they often deal with more than one department in relation to an issue and they asked for this to be streamlined where possible.

Feedback from community forums indicates a need for an integrated approach to the promotion of community facilities available for hire. Council managed facilities are promoted on Council's website and therefore information is easy to access. However, preliminary feedback indicates information about facilities managed by committees of management or owned by other organisations is more difficult to find. This presents an opportunity for Council to work with other agencies to enhance the promotion of community run facilities and services that may advantage residents.

There are an increasing number of small and large commercial enterprises that provide different physical activity and fitness options for residents. Some of these businesses such as mobile park based fitness classes e.g. 'bootcamps' enable residents to access programs in their own locality. Given Whitehorse is home to one of the largest communities of home-based enterprises and encourages business initiatives, this provides an opportunity to achieve Council's economic as well as physical activity outcomes.



5.3 Flexible community facilities

Clubs responding to the club's²⁰ survey expressed a high level of satisfaction with the standard of buildings. Kiosk/kitchen facilities, and male player change and toilet facilities received the highest level of satisfaction (70–76 per cent of clubs satisfied). Change facilities for females, equipment storage spaces and outdoor verandah areas scored the lowest level of satisfaction (59–63 per cent of clubs satisfied).

Other priorities for clubs include the need for additional playing fields (30 per cent of relevant clubs), surface drainage and flood lighting (24 per cent of relevant clubs). Because of the high standard of buildings, clubs are now particularly focused on ancillary and social infrastructure such as shade structures, BBQ facilities, signage and security lighting.

Council's capacity to meet some of the future recreation and sporting needs will be limited due to suitable land being available. This means that partnerships with other land holders and service providers, such as schools and neighbouring councils, will be an important factor in providing for the future recreation and sporting needs of the community. In 2007, Council was instrumental in developing a regional soccer strategy in partnership with five adjoining Councils, Football Federation Victoria and the state government to establish a planning framework to accommodate the growth of soccer including facility development. Regional partnerships similar to this should be considered in the future to undertake a strategic framework for the future planning and development of sport and recreation facilities.

It is important that Council identify opportunities to optimise the use of existing facilities to enable more residents to access sport and recreation activities in their own community.

The following highlights other key feedback relating to buildings/facilities:

- need to optimise the use of the existing facilities such as pavilions through multi-share arrangements where practical;
- new facilities should be designed to accommodate multiple users;
- need to enhance the management approach for the maintenance, renewal and upgrade of recreation facilities to meet current and future levels of service for the community. This will ensure priority works are directed to well used facilities, and;
- investment in facilities and infrastructure to support non-club based recreation and club-based sport.

Residents responding to the household survey²¹ stated that footpaths, parks and gardens and trails are very important to their recreation activities. In particular, footpaths are seen as an important recreation asset and not only a way by which they can get from one place to another. This correlates with the high level of participation in activities such as walking, which make use of this infrastructure.

Feedback through public submissions and the workshops stressed the importance of a well-connected pathway and trail network. This was highlighted in the Open Space Strategy, Bicycle Strategy and the Integrated Transport Strategy through which the community stressed the need for pathways that are designed so they cater for a range of uses (e.g. walking, prams, families, running etc), link effectively to the public transport network and have support infrastructure such as bike storage facilities.

This infrastructure is required with residents being encouraged to be physically active as part of their daily routine, in particular their journey to work and school.

The project examined possible opportunity in the provision of facilities. The following provides an overview of findings in relation to the supply of and demand for facilities:

'Unstructured' recreation participation

The findings of the project reflect the need for a focus on providing access to facilities and environments that allow residents to participate in recreation and sport when it best suits them. Changing lifestyles that respond to changing work patterns requires recreation facilities to be available outside of traditional timeframes and in more flexible environments such as parks.

A prime example of this is the recent installation of the Box Hill Gardens Multipurpose Space – *a flat, multi use activity area that can support a diverse range of activities and functions, including ball games, tai chi, boot camp, table activities (board games, laptop), as well as small events*²². As part of the Box Hill Gardens Master Plan Council recently completed a 1km circular pathway to provide further opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in physical activity and support a healthy lifestyle.

This requires a review of the type and timing of programs in recreation facilities. It requires the upgrading of community-based infrastructure (e.g. pathways) those not traditionally used for recreation and sport purposes (e.g. outdoor exercise equipment). Partnerships with entrepreneurs (e.g. exercise in the park programs) who are responding to the different and more flexible ways community wants to engage in physical activity will be important.

²⁰ Recreation Strategy Review 2011, clubs survey

²¹ Recreation Strategy Review 2011 household survey

²² Box Hill Gardens Master Plan: Once and Future Generations (February 2011)



Demand for additional facilities

Many local sports clubs identified the need for assistance with the upgrading of pavilions, sports fields and courts to better cater for their needs.

Older people were identified as a key group within the community that will have an increasing demand for access to facilities in the future. Finding ways to expand the level of use and accessibility of existing facilities will be important to increase opportunities for older people and the broader public to participate in recreation activities.

Improving the functionality and capacity of facilities to cater for multiple activities and users will be important if the accommodation of new and expanded activities is to be optimised. It is important the design of new facilities optimises use by different activities, age groups and abilities.

The Recreation Strategy considered opportunities to increase the use of existing sports fields given the lack of space in Whitehorse to develop additional sports fields. A preliminary review of Council's sports fields identified a modest capacity to increase the use of sports fields.

Nine sports fields were found to have some capacity for increased usage without any significant works, and eleven sporting fields may have additional capacity if works are undertaken to upgrade them. The greater number of playing fields do not have potential for any increased usage. Further work and discussions with clubs using the sports fields is required to fully understand the opportunities and constraints associated with any proposed increase in use.

Council received many requests for a dedicated table tennis facility through the public exhibition stage of the draft Recreation Strategy. Council is aware of various facilities (including Council and non Council sites) utilised for table tennis activities. The facility requirements for table tennis should be investigated through a feasibility study to better understand the sport's requirements. The challenges with table tennis may include exclusivity (in accommodating the sport at multi purpose facilities), access arrangements and logistical requirements to set up facilities from an Occupational Health and Safety particularly for elderly participants.



Gymnastics

Two of the local gymnastics/calisthenics clubs reported the need for additional facilities because of the steady growth in membership over the last three years.

This is consistent with the findings from the Indoor Sports Facility Feasibility Study and the Aqualink Box Hill Redevelopment Feasibility Study. Demand is reflected at the regional level with the cities of Monash and Knox planning on how the needs of gymnastics might be accommodated. A regional gymnastics centre may be established at the Knox Regional Sports Park; however, this will be determined in future planning. Manningham City Council is also looking at opportunities to further increase their capacity to accommodate gymnastics at the Donvale Indoor Sports Centre.

This presents an opportunity for Council to continue to work collaboratively with local clubs on their facility requirements. Council needs to further consider long term facility requirements for gymnastics. This could be via regional level planning and reviewing the need and logistics for the development of gymnastics facilities in Whitehorse. A feasibility study will assist to better understand the gymnastics demand and facility provision within Whitehorse.



Court Sports

Consultation identified a number of challenges being experienced by some indoor and outdoor court sports. Some basketball clubs have indicated a need for additional court space including access to 'championship' court requirements (e.g. spectator seating) and others have indicated a need for facilities to be in line with basketball provision guidelines (e.g. appropriate court size and associated safety run off).

Basketball participation in Whitehorse had dropped from 9 per cent (2008) to 6 per cent (2011) according to a Household Survey undertaken in 2011 as part of the Recreation Strategy review. Anecdotal evidence suggests basketball is experiencing growth in the last few years across Whitehorse and maybe isolated to some local clubs.

In addition to the 15 indoor and 10 outdoor courts owned by Council there is approximately 24 courts located on school land. Some of these school courts are currently utilised by local basketball clubs and associations however, there is scope for additional utilisation of school courts. School sites are generally single court facilities which have limitations for basketball clubs / associations in running their competitions. In particular some school facilities do not meet the required standards with respect to appropriate run offs. Programming large basketball competitions at single court facilities is not ideal due to the logistics of coordinating players and officials over multiples sites. It is worth noting that the Basketball Facilities Master Plan identifies a shortfall in court space in the City of Manningham but not the City of Whitehorse.

Source: Basketball Victoria Facilities Master Plan (February 2014).

According to Basketball Victoria's Facilities Master Plan (February 2014) 50 per cent of players travel five kilometres or less to play their game with approximately 78 per cent of participants travelling less than 10km to their facility. Less than a quarter (22 per cent) of players travel more than 10km to play and train.

From a regional perspective Knox City Council has recently completed a state of the art indoor sports centre known as the Knox Regional Sports Park. The site is near the boundary of Whitehorse and has six courts, with a capacity for up to 3200-seat show court. The master plan indicates an additional 14 indoor courts at the centre in future stages and possibly a gymnastics facility.

Knox City Council will consider the future role of the Knox Regional Netball Centre and whether the needs of regional netball might be better served at the new sports park.

Opportunities to address some of Whitehorse indoor sports court needs at the Knox Regional Sports Park should be investigated given the regional focus for the facility and its proximity to Whitehorse.

In addition, Manningham City Council is undertaking planning to accommodate basketball and other activities in highball stadiums.

Feedback through the project indicates a need to work with netball clubs and associations in relation to local outdoor netball courts that cater for junior competition and training. The condition of some outdoor netball courts is compromising the ability of clubs to provide activities in local communities where children can access activities independently. An approach that provides a balance between centralised, consolidated and local facilities should be considered.

Similarly to gymnastics Council needs to further consider long term facility requirements for basketball. Council should discuss long term facility requirements with neighbouring councils as part of regional level planning. In addition further investigation in the form of a feasibility study would assist to better understand the basketball (and other court sports) demand and facility provision within Whitehorse.

Skate facilities

Consultation with skate and BMX riders and anecdotal feedback received during the project indicates a need to review opportunities to optimise the use of existing facilities.

There are opportunities to provide additional facilities for younger age groups and beginners at both the Box Hill Skate Park and the Vermont Vertical Ramp subject to site constraints.

However, due to the site specific conditions it is important for any development to be aware of the following design considerations:

[Vermont South Vertical Ramp](#)

The site of the Vermont South vertical ramp is on Council land adjacent to a former land fill. Council has been monitoring a range of environmental issues on the site for several years. The gathered data is being evaluated as part of the preparation of a Land Management Aftercare Plan (LMAP) for the site. The LMAP includes a program of works and ongoing monitoring. It is envisaged that environmental management works will be implemented over a number of years. Future use of the former landfill site will be determined after the LMAP and the recommended works have been completed and a risk assessment of the proposal.

[Box Hill Skate Park](#)

The Box Hill Skate Park is well used for a wide range of skate, scooter and BMX cycling activities. Maintaining the facility to an acceptable standard remains a challenge. Graffiti is regularly removed, there is ongoing renewal works being undertaken and general cleaning of the site ensures that the facility can accommodate the requirements of the users. Any proposals to enlarge the facility should include a major renewal component for the existing skate area, amenities, paths and surrounding landscaping.

The development of the Box Hill Skate Park is limited by the physical site constraints; the skate park is surrounded by Canterbury Road to the north, Gardiners Creek to the west and car park / business to the east and south. This facility is located on Department of Sustainability and Environment land. Any development of this site will require the Department's approval.

In 2013/2014 Council developed concept designs for the extension of the Box Hill Skate Park. Following a consultation process with users of the park the draft designs were updated and finalised. The proposed extension accommodates a range of different skill levels including a dedicated section providing a safe environment for beginners to learn the sport. It includes a half basketball court providing opportunities for alternative recreation at the site. Construction of the extension is subject to the project achieving funding as part of Council's Capital Works budget.

With respect to Council-managed skate facilities across Whitehorse there is an opportunity to consider:

- finalising designs for the expansion of the Box Hill Skate Park to cater for a wider range of ages and abilities;
- the upgrade / expansion of the Box Hill Skate Park subject to Council approval and budget; and;
- the addition of infrastructure at the Vermont Skate Ramp to cater for intermediate skill levels (to complement the existing vert ramp – advanced skill levels) and provide for social needs, subject to Council completing recommended works from the Land Management Aftercare Plan.

5.4 Deliverable partnerships

While Council’s role in providing for community recreation and sport needs is significant, it cannot fulfill all these needs on its own. Partnerships with the following groups are important if recreation and sport opportunities for residents are to be optimised.

- **Community clubs and organisations**

These groups are the face of sport and recreation and provide the administration, competitions, activities and skill development programs for a diverse range of ages and abilities.

Council supports these groups by funding the development and maintenance of facilities, funding club development seminars and identifying facilities from which they might operate. Council seeks to strengthen relationships with clubs to enhance their profile and viability and to seek facility development opportunities.
- **Peak recreation and sport associations**

Council seeks to strengthen relationships with peak sporting associations to optimise their support to local clubs. Council will continue to work with associations to strengthen the operation of clubs and consider sport development initiatives.
- **Education institutions**

Council will continue to work with schools and tertiary institutions to identify opportunities to enhance access for residents to local school facilities. A number of schools already allow the community to use their facilities. Some schools are planning the development of new facilities which will include broader community use. Council acknowledges the benefit this provides the community and will work with schools to identify similar opportunities.
- **State government departments and agencies**

Council will continue to optimise funding from government for the planning and development of facilities and implementation of service innovations and negotiate with the state government to enhance access to school facilities and other government agencies such as Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria to optimise access to land and facilities to support sport and recreation development.

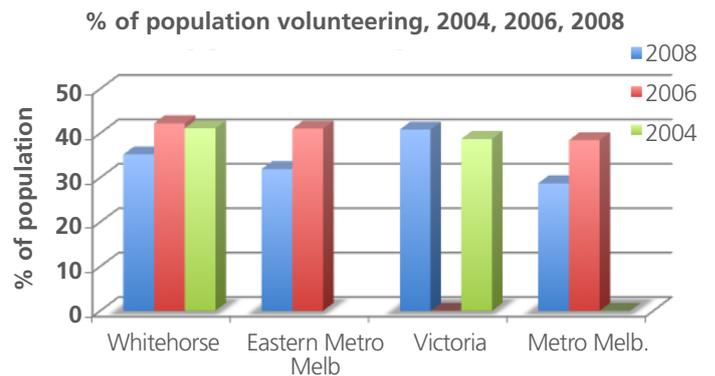
- **Adjoining councils**

Work with adjoining councils to identify regional opportunities to address common recreation and sport issues and priorities.
- **Commercial service providers**

Council recognises the important role that commercial providers play in addressing the recreation and sport needs of the community. Council will encourage partnerships with commercial providers to promote activities and services and identify partnership opportunities.

Council recognises the important role that volunteers play in the running of clubs and organisations. Consultation through the project indicates the number of people volunteering is decreasing and this is having an impact on the viability of clubs and organisations. Of particular note is the ageing of volunteers due to the smaller number of younger people volunteering than in the past.

This anecdotal information is supported by Community Indicators Victoria data which shows a 5.9 per cent decrease in the number of people volunteering between 2004 and 2008. While this is significant it is not as dramatic as the drop in volunteering in the eastern metropolitan area (9 per cent between 2006 and 2008) and the Melbourne metropolitan area (9.7 per cent between 2006 and 2008).





6. Council's role

Council has a key role to play in implementing the Recreation Strategy; however, community partnerships will be essential to optimise recreation outcomes for people who live in the city or visit.

Council plays a number of roles to ensure the community has access to a wide range of recreation opportunities. These include:

- The **planning** of services and facilities
This involves identifying community needs, priorities and opportunities; developing strategies to address these; and identifying project partners, funding sources and timelines.
- **Providing services directly** or facilitating other agencies or community groups to provide these.
- **Developing and maintaining infrastructure for recreation**
This involves the planning, design and construction of buildings, roads, pathways and leisure/community centres and working with project partners to fund and manage these assets. The construction of infrastructure is subject to a needs analysis, strategic priorities and appropriate funding through Council's annual budget process.
- **Advocacy and partnership building** with state and federal government, business and local community to secure services and facilities.

- **Innovation** that requires research and encouraging and identifying new and alternative opportunities to provide for the community's changing recreation needs.
- **Communication** involving the exchange of ideas, information and advice to capitalise on the knowledge and expertise in the community or available from outside.
- **Coordination** of activities conducted by various Council departments.
- Council will have different roles relative to each of the actions in the Implementation Plan. Council's role will vary in consideration of:
 - The capacity of Council to maintain its role in relation to the task over the life of the strategy
 - The benefit of Council's involvement in one task compared to another
 - How Council's role may help to secure funding from other sources such as state government or private enterprise
 - The capacity of the community to play a role in one task compared to another.

Council anticipates that other stakeholders including community groups, schools and the Victorian Government will play a significant role in the development of recreation and sport facilities and programs.

7. What will influence development priorities

Priorities in the Implementation Plan will be determined according to how well they address the following criteria. These criteria have been determined by the findings from the project research and consultation.

Priority services and facilities will be those that:

- have the greatest potential to increase the time people spend being physically active
- achieve benefits for a range of community health and wellbeing needs as well as recreation and sport needs
- address changing recreation and sport participation trends
- achieve the greatest benefit for the cost outlay
- optimise the use of existing facilities and services, including non-Council services and facilities
- respond to population and demographic changes that may influence how and where recreation and sport is provided
- provide for recreation and sport needs where there is an identified gap in supply
- create efficiencies in procedures and operations
- address risk management issues.

8. How the Recreation Strategy will be reviewed and monitored

The Recreation Strategy will be monitored regularly to identify any actions that have not been implemented in line with the proposed timelines.

These actions will be reviewed to ensure they are still consistent with community and Council priorities and aspirations. Any issues that may have prevented these actions from being implemented will be addressed.

A major review of the Recreation Strategy will be undertaken in 10 years.

Key evaluation measures are included in the Implementation Plan for each recommendation.

9. The Implementation Plan

Implementation Plan

The tasks outlined in the Implementation Plan respond to the issues and opportunities identified throughout the project and have been prioritised, according to whether these issues and opportunities:

- were significant throughout the consultation process
- have been identified in other community planning projects
- address risk management issues
- will achieve significant benefits for the outlay of resources
- have particular implications in relation to the demographic trends in the municipality
- have been identified as a priority by Council, state and federal government agencies, or special interest groups or organisations.

Actions within the Implementation Plan that have identified the need for resources or will require resources such as facility development will be subject to strategic priorities, policy development, a detailed business case and the allocation of sufficient resources as part of Council's annual budget process.

The Implementation Plan provides indicative timelines for addressing the issues and opportunities identified in the Recreation Strategy. Timelines may vary depending on the availability of external funding, the capacity of the community to support initiatives, changing council and community priorities, and other demands on the council budget.

The Implementation Plan identifies short, medium, and longer term actions. Short term actions are those identified for implementation in years 1–3, medium term actions are those identified for implementation in years 4–6, and longer term actions are those identified for implementation in years 7–9.

The Implementation Plan identifies the actions recommended to address the findings of the project and are listed under the four project themes – active communities, effective information and communication, flexible community facilities, and deliverable partnerships.

The mechanism to evaluate the Implementation Plan will include regular reporting on each action based on project status and anecdotal feedback.

The Implementation Plan identifies which specific actions contribute towards the achievement of Strategic Objectives outlined in Council's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

THEME 1 – Active Communities Actions	Timeline			Stakeholders (Bold = lead stakeholders)	Resources
	S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9		
<p>Increasing levels of physical activity</p> <p>1. Encourage an increase in walking through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to support local service providers to provide or develop new walking programs targeted at children and families with a focus on 'learning through children' and 'setting the right example for our kids' mapping existing walking trails around the municipality. consideration of the Healthy Spaces and Places Design Principles to plan, design and create sustainable communities that encourage healthy and active living. consideration of infrastructure, as part of site specific park planning, such as walking posts along council's linear open space path network to motivate people to keep active. planning well connected and accessible trails and paths. continue to implement a range of active transport programs that promote walking as a healthy and sustainable way to travel within our community. consider developing a Principal Pedestrian Network. <p> Council's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 1 (Objective 4) – <i>To provide opportunities for increased social connections through participation in arts and culture, recreation, sporting and other community activities.</i></p>	○			<p>Int: Human Services Departments, E</p> <p>Ext: walking groups, running groups (e.g. Hash Harriers), recreation centres, retirement villages, pre-schools, schools, universities, neighbourhood houses.</p>	Funding to be allocated through annual funding process.
<p>2. Investigate partnership opportunities with universities to facilitate a longitudinal research over the length of the strategy that collects information on behaviours, attitudes and trends in physical activity (i.e. walking) for key target groups in Whitehorse.</p>	○			<p>Int: PP&R, AQN, AQBHH, CD</p> <p>Ext: universities, TAFE, VicHealth, walking groups, recreation centres, doctors, retirement villages, pre-schools, schools</p>	Funding to be allocated through annual funding process.

WCC Dept/Unit Legend:

ARD=Arts and Recreation Development, **AQBHH**=Aqualink Box Hill, **AQN**=Aqualink Nunawading, **C**=Communications, **CD**=Community Development, **CI**=City Works, **CW**=Capital Works, **DEECD**=Department of Education & Early Childhood Development, **E**=Engineering and Environmental Services, **HACC**= Home and Community Care, **HFS**=Health & Family Services, **OD**=Organisational Development, **LF**=Leisure Facilities, **NCC**=Nunawading Community Centre, **PP&R**=Parks, Planning and Recreation, **PW**=ParksWide, **SL**=Sport Link, **YS**=Youth Services

THEME 1 – Active Communities		Timeline			Stakeholders	Resources
Actions		S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9	(Bold = lead stakeholders)	
<p>Older adults and recreation centres</p> <p>3. a) Continue to support older adult fitness programs e.g. Aqualink’s Fab Living program and educational walking programs for older adults such as ‘Wiser Walkers’ and community cycling courses.</p> <p>b) Investigate programs, promotion and customer service initiatives to support and encourage older people into centre-based programs with a particular focus on low impact activities.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expanding current program to include ‘social exercise’ activities e.g. walking, bike riding developing a strategy (marketing and programming) to increase the attractiveness of existing recreation/leisure centre facilities for older adults. enhancing customer service and membership protocols (e.g. membership strategies), that respond to the customer service needs of this target group targeted strategies with existing older adult groups e.g. U3A <p> Council’s Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 1 (Objective 4) – <i>To provide opportunities for increased social connections through participation in arts and culture, recreation, sporting and other community activities.</i></p>			●		<p>Int: AQN, AQBH, NCC, SL, E, PP&R.</p> <p>Ext: Senior citizens groups, retirement villages, early retirement planning groups, clubs, U3A, wider community, neighbourhood houses.</p>	Within existing resources.
<p>Older adults – promotion of opportunities</p> <p>4. a) Encourage sport / recreation clubs and leisure centres to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop promotional and participation strategies actively promote participation opportunities and develop ‘introduction’ processes to make older adults feel welcome consider modified versions of their sport / activity to accommodate the physical needs of older adults <p>b) Continue to provide social support program and planned activity groups for eligible HACC clients.</p> <p>c) Consider broader opportunities and programs for older adults to support a physically active lifestyle.</p>			●		<p>Int: PP&R, HACC, AQN, AQBH, NCC, SL</p> <p>Ext: sport and recreation including but not limited to golf clubs, walking groups, bicycle groups, dance groups, disability networks.</p>	Within existing resources.
<p>Physical activity programs</p> <p>5. Continue to promote and encourage employee participation in a diverse range of opportunities to maintain / increase their physical activity for overall health and wellbeing e.g. initiatives as part of Council’s Work Safe Month, use of Aqualink facilities, healthy eating, men’s health program, health checks, walking / cycling initiatives and other relevant health information etc.</p> <p> Council’s Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 1 (Objective 4) – <i>To provide opportunities for increased social connections through participation in arts and culture, recreation, sporting and other community activities.</i></p>		Ongoing			<p>Int: OD, E, AQBH, AQN, NCC</p>	Within existing resources.

THEME 1 – Active Communities		Timeline			Stakeholders	Resources
Actions		S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9	(Bold = lead stakeholders)	
<p>6. Sport participation pathways</p> <p>Facilitate opportunities to strengthen participation pathways through identifying barriers and linking schools with peak sporting associations / local clubs.</p> <p>Consideration may be given to a ‘school of excellence’ program for a specific sport, sport development programs/clinics in schools (associations, clubs), teacher/parent advocates and new club referral channels. Consider partnering with state and national sporting associations (e.g. Tennis Victoria) who have expressed an interest in exploring opportunities. Consider coordinating forum to identify interested clubs and schools. Evaluate and assess relevance of running future sessions.</p>			●		<p>Int: ARD</p> <p>Ext: peak sporting associations, local sporting clubs, schools, regional school network, DEECD.</p>	<p>Within existing human resources.</p>
<p>Minimising barriers to walking and cycling to schools</p> <p>7. Support schools that want to explore and put in place initiatives that address physical, ‘lifestyle’, and motivational barriers to walking and cycling to school with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimising traffic congestion around schools and drop off points • encouraging Bicycle Network Victoria initiatives in schools including ‘part way is ok’ and Ride2School programs • review the Walking School Bus program • encourage the installation of bike storage facilities • identifying and where relevant remedy pathway/footpath barriers • identifying ‘safe routes to school’ • assisting schools to implement education programs that support walking and cycling to school e.g. Council’s Bike Education program • working with schools to address infrastructure issues that will improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. 		Ongoing			<p>Int: E, CI, HFS, CW, PP&R</p> <p>Ext: schools, regional school network, DEECD Parents Ride2School/ Part Way is OK programs (Bicycle Network Victoria),</p>	<p>Within existing human resources.</p> <p>Some items will require additional resources or subject to Capital Budget as required.</p>
<p>Young adult participation in physical activity</p> <p>8. Develop a ‘pilot’ program aimed at increasing participation by young adults in physical activity.</p> <p>Strategies should consider how to address ‘lifestyle’, physical and motivational barriers to participation.</p>				●	<p>Int: LF, PP&R, YS, HFS, CD</p> <p>Ext: young people, peak sporting associations, clubs, schools, universities.</p>	<p>Within existing resources.</p>
<p>Alternative sport participation options through clubs</p> <p>9. Develop a ‘pilot’ program designed to assist sporting clubs to identify and implement programs/activities that respond to the demand for ‘social’ and ‘fitness’ participation options from the community. Focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing levels of physical activity for people who not actively involved in club-based sport • opportunities to identify additional income for clubs networking and partnership sessions encouraging clubs to work collaboratively to share resources and develop programs. 				●	<p>Int: PP&R</p> <p>Ext: peak sporting associations local sport and recreation clubs, disability networks</p>	<p>Within existing resources.</p>

THEME 1 – Active Communities Actions		Timeline			Stakeholders (Bold = lead stakeholders)	Resources
		S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9		
<p>Peak Sporting Association New Initiatives</p> <p>10. Encourage sports clubs to work with their State and Peak Sporting Associations to develop and/or introduce new initiatives to increase participation in physical activity.</p> <p> Council’s Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 1 (Objective 4) – <i>To provide opportunities for increased social connections through participation in arts and culture, recreation, sporting and other community activities.</i></p>		○			<p>Int: PP&R</p> <p>Ext: peak sporting associations local sport and recreation clubs, disability networks</p>	Within existing resources.
<p>Active Participation promotion</p> <p>11. Investigate a ‘Be Active’ banner for Whitehorse under which programs and facilities could be collectively promoted and badged and healthy lifestyle options promoted/incorporated.</p>			○		<p>Int: ARD, PP&R, C, AQN, NCC</p> <p>Ext: Sports clubs, formal and informal groups,</p>	Within existing resources.
<p>Get Active In Whitehorse Parks</p> <p>12. Consider infrastructure in Council’s parks (consistent with Council’s Open Space Strategy) that facilitates people to get active (eg, Box Hill Gardens Multipurpose Space).</p> <p> Council’s Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 1 (Objective 4) – <i>To provide opportunities for increased social connections through participation in arts and culture, recreation, sporting and other community activities.</i></p>				○		Funding for specific recommendations will be subject to Capital Works Budget.

THEME 2 – Effective Information and Communication Actions	Timeline			Stakeholders (Bold = lead stakeholders)	Resources
	S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9		
<p>Information systems</p> <p>13. Explore opportunities to further develop Council's website to support community needs and to take advantage of technology with a particular focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information wanted by community groups (e.g. clubs wanting access to grant applications, funding guidelines, council policies). easy to read style and layout of information. 	○			Int: C , PP&R Ext: Whitehorse Sport & Recreation Network, clubs, residents, recreation centres,	Within existing resources
<p>Administrative systems and procedures</p> <p>14. Review administrative systems and processes to optimise the ease with which sport and recreation groups can access the people and information they want from council, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> key contacts for clubs so they can deal directly with relevant council staff information relating to council procedures and policies 'how to' information e.g. make a submission to council for a new capital development, engage or partner with council on a project roles and responsibilities of clubs, tenants clear signage guidelines for sports facilities. 	○			Int: PP&R , C	Within existing resources
<p>Social media and technology</p> <p>15. Investigate opportunities to use social media e.g. Twitter, facebook and other technology (e.g. texting, applications) to promote physical activity opportunities, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one-off activities/specials at council recreation centres Council run/funded events. 		○		Int: C, AQN, AQBH, NCC, SL, Golf Course , PP&R.	Within existing resources

THEME 3 – Flexible Facilities		Timeline			Stakeholders	Resources
Actions	S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9	(Bold = lead stakeholders)		
<p>Park master plans</p> <p>16. Ensure planning of Council’s parks and reserves considers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pathways for casual/local recreation and fitness activities for different age groups ancillary infrastructure such as seating, bike racks, toilets etc. as per Council’s Open Space Strategy directional signage and distance markers spaces and infrastructure that optimise opportunities for local physical activity. <p> Council’s Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 2 (Objective 1) – To integrate health outcomes when considering land use planning and urban design projects.</p>		Ongoing			<p>Int: PP&R, CI, CW, PWE</p> <p>Ext: residents and other relevant stakeholders</p>	<p>Funding will be required to develop large master plans.</p> <p>Funding to implement master plans will be subject to Capital Works Budget.</p>
<p>Integrated planning of pathways</p> <p>17. Continue to coordinate programs and services listed in the Recreation Strategy, Bicycle Strategy and the Integrated Transport Strategy to ensure an integrated approach to the planning of all pathways including footpaths, trails and bike lanes. The focus should be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing a hierarchy of pathways based on the role they play in the pathway network identifying gaps and priorities for addressing these integrating pathways and linkages to transport interchanges active transport infrastructure e.g. bicycle storage and lockup facilities at railway stations creation of safe crossings, connections and linkages of pathways that encourage and support people to walk, cycle, skate as an alternative mode of transport provision of directional signage. <p> Council’s Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 2 (Objective 1) – To integrate health outcomes when considering land use planning and urban design projects.</p>					<p>Int: E, PP&R, CI, CW, HFS,</p>	<p>Within existing resources.</p>
<p>Skate facilities – Box Hill South</p> <p>18. Develop concept designs, for Council consideration, to expand the Box Hill South Skate Park to accommodate a broader age group and range of skills and abilities including a new multi purpose activity area.</p>		 c & d	 c		<p>Int: PP&R, E, CI, CW</p> <p>Ext: children, skaters, BMX riders, young people, young adults,</p>	<p>Within allocated resources Consultation and design (c&d) Capital works funding will be subject to findings from the consultation and design process.</p>
<p>Skate facilities – Vermont South</p> <p>19. Consider expanding the Vermont vertical ramp including additional basic skate elements and ancillary works (e.g. shade structure, new seating, connected pathways, water fountain and landscaping) after completing recommended works from the Land Management Aftercare Plan.</p>					<p>Int: PP&R, E, CI, CW</p> <p>Ext: children, skaters, BMX riders, young people, young adults, parents/ carers, adjoining business, residents</p>	<p>Subject to capital works funding for design and implementation.</p>

THEME 3 – Flexible Facilities Actions	Timeline			Stakeholders (Bold = lead stakeholders)	Resources
	S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9		
<p>Partnerships with schools</p> <p>20. Continue efforts to develop a strong working relationship with schools to identify opportunities to gain access to school sports fields and indoor facilities for community organisations.</p> <p> Council's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 2 (Objective 1) – To integrate health outcomes when considering land use planning and urban design projects.</p>	Ongoing			Int: PP&R Ext: schools, regional principals network, DEECD, local sporting clubs	Within existing resources
<p>Access to sports pavilions</p> <p>21. Enhance use of sports pavilions with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increasing the level of use by casual hirers optimising shared use of facilities by sporting clubs and other community groups amending tenancy agreements where necessary to ensure access to pavilions by the wider community design of facilities that optimise use by compatible activities and organisations. 	Ongoing			Int: PP&R Ext: sports clubs, residents, peak associations	Within existing resources.
<p>Potential upgrade of sports fields</p> <p>22. Consider / identify existing sports fields that could have potential upgrades to accommodate additional usage.</p>				Int: PP&R, PW Ext: sports clubs, peak associations	Within existing resources.
<p>Access to sports fields</p> <p>23. Enhance use of sports fields with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> optimising use of grounds via sports field upgrades where appropriate increasing lighting of sports fields and training areas where appropriate design of sports fields that optimises use by compatible activities and organisations. 	Ongoing			Int: PP&R, PW Ext: sports clubs, residents, peak associations	Upgrade of sports fields will be subject to Capital Works Budget.
<p>'Service driven' asset planning</p> <p>24. Undertake service driven asset management planning for sports fields and buildings that consider the demands of the service. Plans should be driven by the capacity (condition, size, components) of sport and recreation facilities to cater for current and projected needs.</p>				Int: PP&R, LF CW, SL, PW. Ext: sports clubs, residents, peak associations	To be referred to the Council Internal Working Group for direction.
<p>Pavilion development guidelines</p> <p>25. Develop Pavilion Provision Guidelines which consider room components and identifies financial responsibility of relevant stakeholders.</p>				Int: PP&R, CW Ext: sports clubs, peak associations, other, community groups	Within existing resources.

THEME 3 – Flexible Facilities		Timeline			Stakeholders	Resources
Actions	S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9	(Bold = lead stakeholders)		
<p>Usage guidelines for sports fields</p> <p>26. Develop guidelines and criteria that will determine the trigger for reducing or removing activities from sports fields. Guidelines should consider triggers relating to weather conditions, type and level of use and outline club and Council obligations.</p>	○			Int: PW , PP&R Ext: sports clubs, peak associations	Within existing resources	
<p>Elgar Park Master Plan</p> <p>27. Develop a master plan for Elgar Park with a holistic focus on the integration of all park users and user groups.</p> <p> <i>Council's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 2 (Objective 1) – To integrate health outcomes when considering land use planning and urban design projects.</i></p>	○			Int: PP&R , PW, CW, CI, E Ext: clubs, park users, residents and other relevant stakeholders.	Within existing resources.	
<p>Melbourne East Regional Sport and Recreation Strategy</p> <p>28. Support and participate in the development of the Melbourne East Regional Sport and Recreation Strategy coordinated by Maroondah City Council.</p>	○			Int: ARD Ext: other councils, state government, peak sporting associations and other relevant stakeholders.	Within existing resources.	
<p>Netball Courts</p> <p>29. Further investigate opportunities to upgrade outdoor netball courts to cater for local and junior netball on an as needs basis.</p>	○			Int: PP&R , CW, CI Ext: Netball Victoria, netball clubs and other relevant stakeholders.	Within existing resources.	
<p>Indoor courts</p> <p>30. Identify opportunities to improve access to indoor court space with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • optimising access to school facilities • joint initiatives with adjoining councils • additional provision within Whitehorse subject to further investigation through an indoor sports feasibility study (refer action 32). 		○		Int: PP&R , CW, CI Ext: adjoining local government authorities, local schools, Netball Victoria, Basketball Victoria, Badminton Victoria netball and basketball clubs, residents.	Within existing resources.	

THEME 3 – Flexible Facilities Actions		Timeline			Stakeholders (Bold = lead stakeholders)	Resources
		S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9		
Gymnastics 31. Continue to assist gymnastics and calisthenics clubs, as required, to identify short-term solutions to address their accommodation needs.		○			Int: PP&R Ext: Gymnastics Victoria, gymnastics and calisthenics clubs, adjoining LGAs, schools	Within existing resources.
Indoor Sports Study 32. Undertake a feasibility study to better understand the demands of various indoor sports and facility provision with a particular focus on gymnastics, basketball and table tennis. The Indoor Sports Study will be informed by the Melbourne East Regional Sport and Recreation Strategy (refer action 28).		○			Int: PP&R Ext: Gymnastics Victoria, Basketball Victoria, Table Tennis Victoria, local sport clubs, adjoining LGAs.	Funding to be allocated through annual funding process.
Accessible Facilities 33. Apply universal design principles (including physical accessibility) when planning new recreation facilities or upgrading existing facilities in order to optimise use by all ages and abilities.  Council's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Strategic Direction 2 (Objective 3) – To create safe, inclusive and accessible environments for all.		Ongoing			Int: PP&R, LF, ARD, CW.	Within existing resources.
Advocacy for New Facilities 34. Investigate opportunities, in line with Council's Open Space Strategy, innovative ways to create access to new facilities including supporting infrastructure. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating access to state government land for recreation purposes • Advocating the incorporation of recreation facilities, for public use, as part of the design of high density developments 		Ongoing			Int: ARD, PP&R.	Within existing resources.
Bicycle Strategy 35. Review the existing Bicycle Strategy to guide Council decisions for the next 5–10 years to encourage safe cycling as a healthy and sustainable mode of transport, recreation and sport.		○			Int: PP&R.	Funding to be allocated through annual funding process.

THEME 4 – Deliverable Partnerships Actions	Timeline			Stakeholders (Bold = lead stakeholders)	Resources
	S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9		
<p>Sporting Facilities Guidelines</p> <p>36. Review and update the Sporting Facilities Guide with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple and easy to understand document • information about the responsibilities of clubs/facility users and Council in relation to facilities and their use • encouraging clubs to be inclusive as part of their programming and activities • opportunities/options to increase the period of tenancy for sporting facilities used by clubs as means to improve efficiencies for clubs and Council. 	○			<p>Int: PP&R</p> <p>Ext: sport and recreation clubs, relevant sporting leagues.</p>	Within existing resources.
<p>Club amalgamations</p> <p>37. Assist clubs that want to consider amalgamation by providing guidance and facilitating discussions between clubs.</p>		Ongoing		<p>Int: PP&R</p> <p>Ext: clubs, peak sporting associations</p>	Within existing resources.
<p>Club development programs</p> <p>38. Continue to provide an ongoing club development program that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organise presentations and workshops based on Club requirements • facilitates opportunities for clubs and organisations to network with each other • encourages excellence in leadership and innovation • investigate partnerships with adjoining municipalities where practical. 		Ongoing		<p>Int: PP&R</p> <p>Ext: clubs, peak associations</p>	Within existing resources.

THEME 4 – Deliverable Partnerships Actions	Timeline			Stakeholders (Bold = lead stakeholders)	Resources
	S Yrs1-3	M Yrs4-6	L Yrs7-9		
<p>Managing clubs’ growth</p> <p>39. Work with growth sports and clubs to identify strategies to manage future growth in line with available facilities as required.</p> <p>Managing the growth of a particular sport or a successful club is a shared responsibility of various stakeholders including the peak sporting association, the club/s and Council.</p> <p>Due to finite resources consideration should be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative ways to accommodate members e.g. increasing the size of teams / extended bench • Partnerships and merging • Membership capping. 	○			<p>Int: PP&R</p> <p>Ext: clubs, peak associations</p>	Within existing resources
<p>Volunteers</p> <p>40. Continue to facilitate activities that develop the capacity of community organisations to support volunteers including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the referral and linking of community clubs (including sport, recreation and park groups) with other key organisations such as Eastern Volunteers and Volunteering Victoria with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strategies and programs to recruit, retain and support volunteers including young people - connection with corporate volunteers • convening a volunteer network to provide an opportunity for organisations to share ideas and resources, and participate in professional learning on topics of interest to members • the consideration of topics relevant to Volunteer management as part of Council’s Club Development Program (Refer Action 38) • disseminating information as required to a volunteer distribution list • the coordination of a volunteer expo every second year • the production of a Local Volunteering Opportunities booklet every second year. 		Ongoing		<p>Int: PP&R, CD</p> <p>Ext: clubs, peak associations, Eastern Volunteers, Volunteering Victoria</p>	Within existing resources.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of reconciliation, Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners of the land now known as Whitehorse and pays respect to its elders past and present.

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