



**Macedon
Ranges**
Shire Council

Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2018-2028

Final Report – Adopted by Council 27 June 2018



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1. Introduction

Macedon Ranges Shire Council's ('Council') existing Leisure Strategy Plan was developed in 2006 and has successfully guided Council priorities for leisure services and facilities over the last ten years. The majority of previous recommendations have been implemented, notable successes include the Kyneton Toyota Sports and Aquatic Centre, the irrigation of all major sports ovals (all but one using non potable water), establishment of the regional netball complex in New Gisborne, lighting upgrades to numerous sports ovals, skate park improvements and ongoing commitment to walking and cycling, including the development of a *Walking & Cycling Strategy* for the Shire.

Local Government Authorities continue to play an integral role in the planning, provision and management of sport, recreation and leisure opportunities for local communities. After ten years, it is now time to review and update the previous Leisure Strategy in order to provide strategic direction for the Shire within a contemporary context for the next ten year period, 2018-2028.

"Leisure" is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as *"the time when people are not working or occupied – free time"* and as such a Leisure Strategy could be seen to be all encompassing of passive and active recreation, art and culture, sport and many other activities.

In undertaking this review it is apparent that the "Leisure Strategy" was too broad in light of this definition and the many aspects to it. For example, the strategic planning required for both open space/passive recreation provision and walking and cycling opportunities has increased in emphasis with strategies now existing for both (i.e. Open Space Strategy 2013, Walking and Cycling Strategy 2014). As a result it has been determined that these two strategies will stand in their own right and that the previous Leisure Strategy will evolve into the "Sport and Active Recreation Strategy". Council's involvement in other leisure activities such as arts and culture will get picked up by their own specific planning processes.

The role of the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy is to set out a framework for enhancing the health and wellbeing of residents through a range of services and facilities aimed at supporting and encouraging participation in physical activity, active recreation and sport and therefore community life. The strategy is an important planning tool that will be used by Council, Council officers and the community as a key reference document to help guide Councils future resource priorities and major projects and initiatives to support participation in community sport and active recreation.

The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy has been developed having regard to a number of influences, including:

- Relevant national, state and local policies, plans and strategies.
- Demographic data and population forecasts.
- Sport and physical activity participation trends.
- Community and stakeholder consultation results.
- Facility demand assessment.
- The realistic capacity of Council and stakeholders to implement actions.

This document provides an overview of selected background material and presents the vision, principles, strategies and actions to guide Council priorities in supporting the active recreation and sport needs of the community over the next ten years.

Additional information can be found in the Background Report (Supporting Material), specifically more detailed consultation results, facility ratio analysis and updated policies (i.e. *Leisure Infrastructure Development and Maintenance Policy*, and *Leisure Facility Development Funding Framework*).

2. Background

Why is providing for active recreation and sport important?

Council currently provides and/or facilitates access to a range of sport and active recreation opportunities across the municipality. These add to the culture, lifestyle and character of the region as well as enhance the liveability of the Macedon Ranges Shire ('the Shire') and are therefore recognised as an important part of a well-balanced lifestyle.

The benefits associated with participating in physical activity through either active recreation or sport and for that matter all leisure activities include personal enjoyment, social interaction, physical and mental health, personal achievement, community involvement ('social capital'), community resilience and opportunities for expression of community pride.

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

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

Participation in physical activity builds self-esteem and positive self-image, enhances life satisfaction and perceived quality of life. Evidence also suggests that regular club based participation can assist in encouraging positive behaviours and constructive social activity, build understanding between diverse cultures and reduce isolation, loneliness and alienation.

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

Defining Council's Role

Council's role in active recreation and sport provision will vary depending on the issue/s being addressed.

Council has historically had a strong focus on supporting a core suite of active recreation and sport facilities and infrastructure in each major township and settlement. A key challenge (for Council and individual communities) continues to be effective and sustainable asset maintenance and renewal.

Communities are increasingly being asked to consider their priorities in order to guide overall resource allocation. Actual need for new sport facilities across the Shire is likely to remain relatively low (despite demands from sections of the community with some notable exceptions, including additional ovals and indoor sport provision), rather the focus will be on maintaining and improving existing assets to maximise usage, maintain safety and meet contemporary user expectations.

It is also acknowledged that the Shire is located adjacent to a number of major residential growth corridors, including Hume/Sunbury, Melton and Greater Bendigo. Specialist sport and elite standard, regional sport facilities are more appropriately located in these nearby larger municipalities where population and participation demand, and the capacity to develop and maintain, warrants such facilities. This will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future, which therefore allows Council to continue to focus on a suite of core facilities, at an appropriate standard to meet the needs of local communities.

Notwithstanding the challenge associated with ongoing asset maintenance and renewal, there is an opportunity for Council to broaden its role in facilitating community wellbeing through the promotion of active, healthy lifestyles in order to help address wider health objectives and national trends (i.e. obesity, diabetes, heart disease, etc.).

To help address these wider health issues, there will be an increasing need for Council to facilitate participation opportunities in physical activity through activation of facilities and public spaces that moves beyond infrastructure provision. Options to improve Council's focus, initiatives and resourcing to support physical activity facilitation will need to be considered, including partnership opportunities with other agencies and community driven initiatives.

Council will also have an ongoing interest in the health and sustainability of local sporting clubs and groups in order to support participation opportunities for the community and maximise effective use of existing facilities. Council's role in supporting local sporting clubs and groups will generally reflect initiatives that promote well-governed, diverse, skilled and sustainable organisations.

In general, Council's role will fall into one of the following four categories:

Plan:

- Facilitate the planning and renewal of active recreation and sport facilities, services and opportunities to address identified (current and future) community needs.

Provide:

- Support the provision and development of active recreation and sport facilities, services and programs to meet the needs of the current and future community.

Partner:

- Work in partnership with other levels of Government (including neighbouring LGA's), schools, clubs and community groups to ensure that active recreation and sport facilities, programs and services meet the diverse needs of the community.
- Support sporting clubs, groups and communities to help themselves by assisting capacity building and community driven initiatives.
- Support appropriate commercial operators to provide active recreation and sport facilities and services in response to market driven demands.

Advocate & Inform:

- Advocate to other levels of Government and relevant stakeholders regarding issues and opportunities that are likely to impact on physical activity and sport opportunities in the Shire.
- Provide information to the community regarding the range of active recreation and sport opportunities available to residents, including promotion of the health and wellbeing benefits of participation in physical activity.

3. Strategic Context

The Macedon Ranges Shire Council covers an area of approximately 1,747 km². An important industry in the Shire is tourism and the area is renowned for its unique natural features including Hanging Rock, Macedon Ranges Regional Park and local heritage townships.

This project has a primary focus on Council owned or controlled land. It is acknowledged that the Shire is blessed with a unique natural environment including State and Regional Parks, forests and bushland reserves. Council will continue to support appropriate recreational uses of these areas in collaboration with relevant land managers to support the local community, tourism and visitation to the region.

The Shire is located within one hour drive north-west of Melbourne and contains a transport corridor comprising the Calder Freeway and the Bendigo-Melbourne railway, both of which run the length of the municipality. The semi-rural lifestyle and its proximity to Melbourne has seen steady growth in the population over the last five years, particularly in the south where many residents commute regularly to work in Melbourne.

The population of the Shire as at 2017 was approximately 47,850 people and based upon the profile.id projections is anticipated to grow to around 64,902 people by 2036 (an increase of 17,052 people)¹. A large proportion of all growth is projected to occur in the Gisborne District (approx. 42%). The Riddells Creek, Kyneton and Romsey Districts are also projected to experience modest population growth. Population growth is projected in all age groups, however will be particularly strong in the older aged cohorts (i.e. those aged 65+).

The Shire's population is dispersed across a wide area, which presents challenges in terms of ensuring equitable access, consistent standards and choice of sustainable community leisure facilities and services across the Shire's individual townships.

The ABS SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage indicates the Shire as a whole has a relatively low level of disadvantage; however there are pockets of disadvantage within the Shire, particularly in Kyneton, Lancefield and surrounding areas.

There is limited data available on the proportion of Macedon Ranges Shire residents living with a disability, however the National Census states that approximately 3.8% of residents have a profound disability. Kyneton, Woodend and Lancefield have the highest proportion of residents with a profound disability (7.5%, 5.1% and 4.7% respectively), hence access, equity and inclusion are important guiding principles for the Active Recreation and Sport Strategy.

¹ <http://profile.id.com.au/macedon-ranges/home>

The Council Plan 2017-2027 ('the plan') mirrors the period of the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy and incorporates the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan. The plan outlines Council's vision as aspiring to "*in partnership with the community, protect and enhance life across the Macedon Ranges*". A key priority of the plan is to promote health and wellbeing, with the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy having a significant role in contributing to the following Council priorities:

- Mental health and suicide prevention;
- Preventing violence against women through encouraging gender equality;
- Healthy eating;
- Physical activity, and
- Social connection and inclusion.

At a strategic level, the environmental context for Council's active recreation and sport services has also altered since the 2006 strategy. There is growing recognition of the impacts of climate change and increasing environmental awareness. Technologies and management practices have advanced; for leisure services this includes (but not limited to) advances in water use and sustainability, environmentally sensitive urban design, energy conservation, enhanced lighting systems and improved vegetation management, including sports turf.

Local context

Planning hierarchy & background reports

The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy will act as the key strategic document providing the vision, principles and objectives to guide Council when planning initiatives in sport and active recreation to meet community needs.

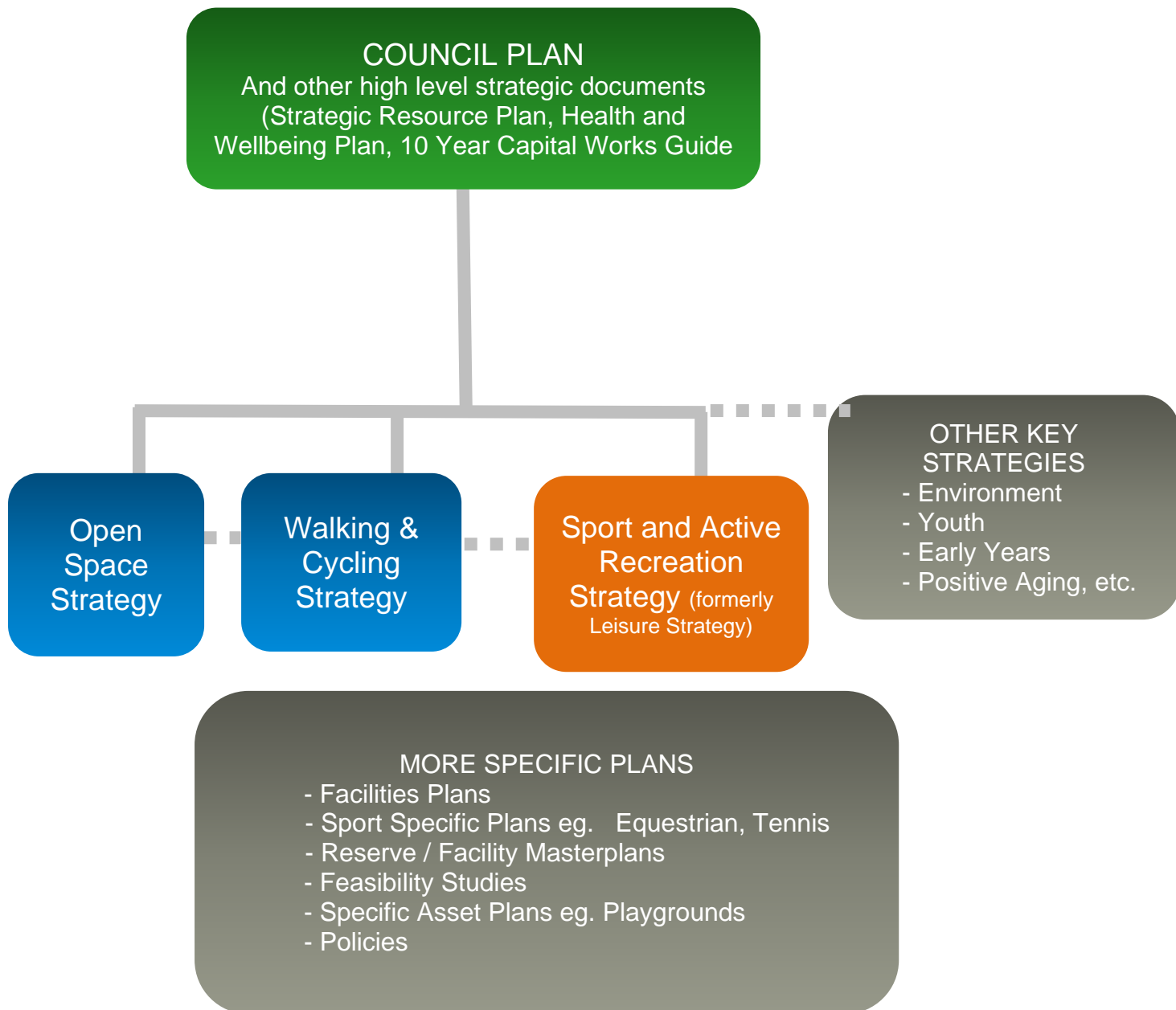
It is important to note that the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy has provision for a number of active recreation, sport, site or topic specific complementary plans which guide priorities relevant to each topic. Current examples include (but not limited to), aquatic facilities and AFL facilities as well as individual community plans, feasibility studies and reserve master plans. Others may be added over time such as an equestrian facilities plan and a tennis facilities plan for example. These are outlined in the grey section of the graphic on the following page.

The graphic highlights the relationship between the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy and the Open Space Strategy (2013) and the Walking and Cycling Strategy (2014) as well as other recreation related planning documents.

Informal or passive recreation activities (i.e. play, picnicking, etc.) and open space and parks provision fall under the Open Space Strategy (2013), which are also considered in more local detail in Council's Structure Plans and Outline Development Plans as relevant.

The increasing popularity and importance of walking and cycling justifies a separate strategy as per the Walking and Cycling Strategy (2014). Given that these activities could be deemed either active or passive recreation and in some cases sport there will always be crossover between the three strategies and that will be evident later in this document. This should not be seen as an issue provided the strategies are not contradictory.

The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy provides for the activities, facilities and opportunities not covered in the two other strategies.



Open Space Strategy (2013)

The Open Space Strategy provides direction to Council for the planning and provision of open space throughout the Shire. As a large proportion of sport, recreation and informal physical activity participation is undertaken utilising the region's open space reserves, effective management of open space is vital to supporting leisure opportunities for residents.

The Open Space Strategy identified three specific issues directly related to leisure provision and physical activity, specifically:

- Increasing the range of social experiences, physical opportunities and a diversity of opportunities in open space.
- Establishing a network of off-road trails and local trail circuits.
- Increasing the sustainability of sports facilities.

The guiding principles and strategic directions outlined in the Open Space Strategy to address these issues remain relevant and continue to be supported.

Walking & Cycling Strategy (2014)

The Walking and Cycling Strategy was developed based on directions outlined in the Open Space Strategy, previous Bike Strategy (2002) and Shire-wide Footpath Plan (2013) to prioritise directions for walking and cycling initiatives in the Shire.

The Walking and Cycling Strategy provides recommendations under seven overarching themes, specifically:

- Infrastructure guidelines and standards.
- Connections between towns – opportunities for on-road and off-road links.
- Connections within towns – creating walkable communities, encouraging use.
- Tourism trails.
- Support infrastructure.
- Programs and services.
- Marketing and communication.

As walking and cycling participation ranks among the most popular physical activities undertaken in the community, ongoing implementation of the Walking and Cycling Strategy remains vital to achieving many of the objectives in the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy.

Aquatic Strategy (2011)

The Aquatic Strategy reaffirms Council's commitment to providing a network of affordable indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities at an appropriate scale and standard within the Shire.

The strategy was first developed in 2000 when Council possessed four ageing outdoor pools and a strong community demand for indoor aquatic facilities. That strategy foresaw the development of indoor facilities in Gisborne and Kyneton and in the longer term Romsey and the renewal of outdoor facilities in Woodend and Lancefield.

Council last reviewed the Aquatic Strategy in 2011 and adopted three implementation actions;

1. A high level feasibility study into an indoor aquatic facility in Romsey which was conducted in 2013. The study acknowledged community demand/aspirations for development of an indoor aquatic facility, however the financial implications of providing such a facility, in terms of capital cost and ongoing operational subsidy required, was determined to be currently beyond the realistic capacity of the Shire to provide in light of the current and expected population of the Romsey District. Council resolved to reassess this in five years (i.e. 2018).
2. Master plans for the two outdoor pools at Lancefield and Woodend were also adopted in 2013.
3. Seek funding for an expansion of the Gisborne Aquatic Centre of which some planning and scoping has been undertaken.

The review of the Aquatic Strategy is included as part of this Sport and Active Recreation Strategy. Recommended strategic directions and an updated specific Aquatic Facilities Plan (to replace the Aquatic Strategy) are included as an appendix to this report.

Playground Strategy (2009-2014)

The Playground Strategy has been successful in guiding Council provision and improvement priorities at specific sites across the Shire. The strategy is now out of date and requires review/updating in order to provide contemporary recommendations that will guide resource allocation over the next 5-10 years. Greater consideration should be given to play space trends including integration of the natural environment and natural features in play space design, establishment of multi-age play spaces, opportunities for family recreation, shade/shelter and adult fitness/play equipment. This document is also to be renamed as a Playground Plan in recognising that it is not a high level strategy but more a plan for a specific asset class.

Positive Ageing Plan and Early Years Plan (2016-2020)

The Early Years Plan focuses on children from birth to eight years old. Four key themes are identified that will help achieve the overall vision for children and families in the Shire. One of these – Active and Healthy Lifestyles – directly relates to leisure services and facilities. Specific recommendations are proposed to support healthy lifestyle choices and opportunities for play and active recreation.

The Positive Ageing Plan focuses on those aged 65 years and over. The plan also identifies four key themes to help achieve the overall vision for older people and their families. Two of these – Purpose, Meaning, Learning and Growth; and Active Healthy Lifestyles – directly relate to leisure services and facilities, for example pursuing an annual events program that actively engages and connects older people, as well as opportunities to increase participation in physical activity. These directions are reflected in specific actions for the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy.

The Positive Ageing and Early Years Plans build on Council's commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of all residents, particularly through facilitation of opportunities for active healthy lifestyles.

Community Access and Inclusion Plan (2014-2018)

The Community Access and Inclusion Plan identified that there are few opportunities for social and recreational activities for people with a disability and when there are, that transport is the main barrier to attending.

The Plan recommends that Council encourage and support sporting and recreation clubs, organisations and associations to improve inclusive recreation practices, including advocating to all recreation services/clubs for registration with the Companion and Carers Card.

Leisure Strategy (2006)

The 2006 Leisure Strategy was the second Leisure Strategy developed for Council following Council amalgamations in the early 1990's. The original Leisure Strategy (1996) had a strong focus on auditing, understanding and managing the suite of recreational assets that the then new Shire was now responsible for. The second Leisure Strategy (2006) reinforced the importance of effective asset management, whilst highlighting challenges associated with increasing community participation and providing an adequate standard and scope of facilities to service the needs of a growing population.

In 2017, ongoing challenges associated with effective asset management, renewal and adequate provision of sport and recreational opportunities remain, however Council processes and organisational maturity in managing these challenges has improved on the back of directions outlined in the 2006 Leisure Strategy and other relevant Council documents.

There will continue to be asset challenges associated with an ageing stock of leisure facilities, increasing user demands, changing expectations/standards and a growing population, however there is an emerging recognition of the importance of participation in physical activities for community and individual health and wellbeing.

The 2018 Sport and Active Recreation Strategy builds on the strengths of the previous strategy in terms of guiding priorities for effective asset management and facility provision to service the needs of the community over the next ten years, however also increases the emphasis on initiatives aimed at activating open spaces and maximising use of existing facilities in order to encourage and support healthy, active lifestyle choices for the community.

Key elements from the previous vision and guiding principles outlined in 2006 remain largely relevant and will be modified to suit the contemporary context for the period 2018-2028. The previous vision stated that the Shire will *"...contribute to residents achieving a high level of physical and mental wellbeing by ensuring there are equitable and accessible opportunities for residents....to participate in a range of recreation and sporting pursuits."*

The vision was supported by key principles, including (in summary):

- Provide a range of accessible facilities and services.
- Support a planned approach to provision.
- Ensure equitable allocation of resources.
- Increase community participation in sport and leisure.
- Provide safe and supportive environments.
- Maximise shared usage and flexibility.
- Support collaborative and partnership approaches to provision.
- Ensure resource allocation is transparent, equitable and responsible.

Future sport, recreation and leisure demand will be influenced by two key factors in the Shire, specifically population changes and physical activity participation trends. These influences are briefly outlined below.

Population Changes

Depending on the source used there are different growth levels predicted over the next ten years and beyond. However, irrespective of the source, the total population of the Shire is expected to increase over the next twenty years (i.e. to 2037) and requires consideration in this strategy.

The population of the Shire as at 2017 was approximately 47,850 people and based upon the profile.id projections is anticipated to grow to around 64,902 people by 2036 (an increase of 17,052 people). A large proportion of all population growth is projected to occur in the Gisborne District (i.e. 7,131 people or approximately 42% of the Shire total). The Riddells Creek, Kyneton and Romsey Districts are also projected to experience strong population growth. Woodend and Lancefield Districts will experience relatively modest population growth, whereas the Macedon/Mount Macedon District is expected to remain at around existing levels.

The table below summarises expected population changes between 2011 and 2036.

Population Summary

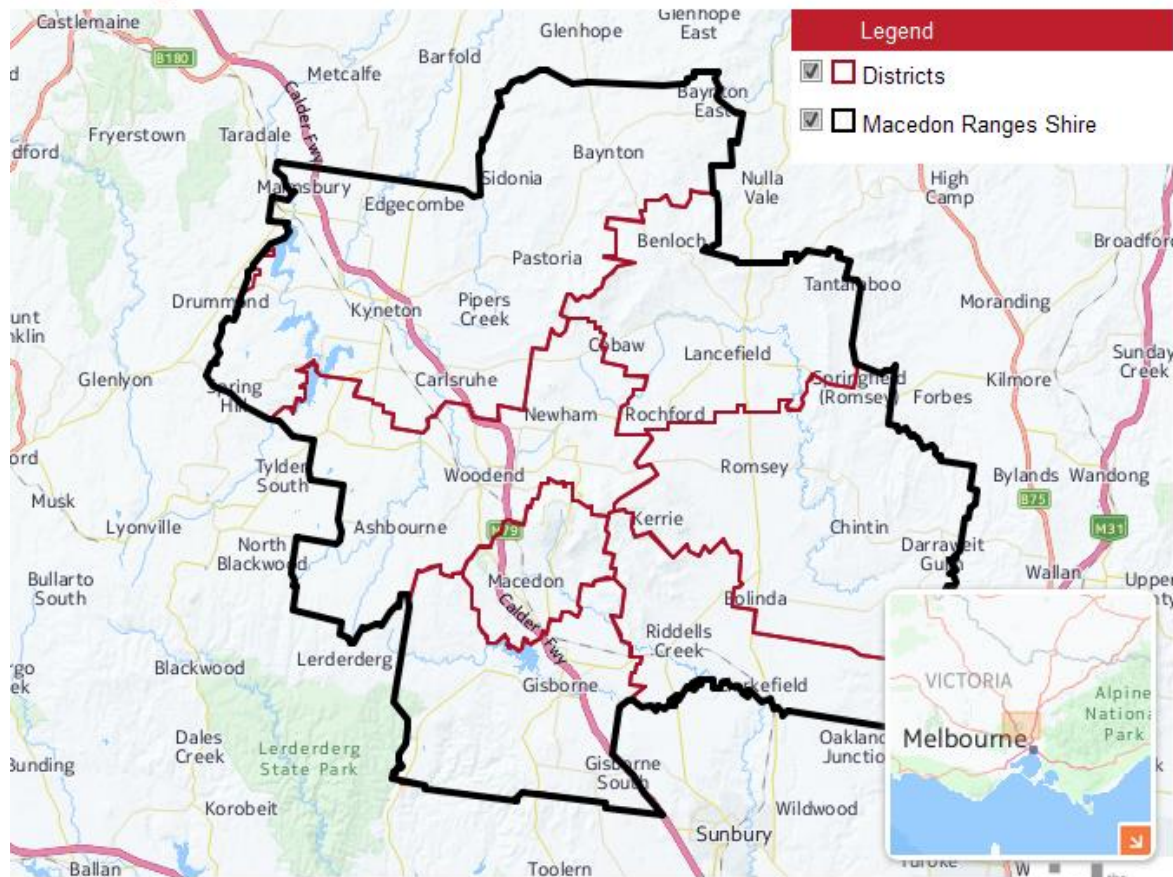
Macedon Ranges Shire	Forecast year						Change between 2011 and 2036	
	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	Total change	Avg. annual % change
Macedon Ranges Shire	42,876	47,170	50,655	55,242	59,882	64,901	+22,025	+1.67
Gisborne District	11,380	13,248	14,615	16,194	17,752	20,379	+8,999	+2.36
Kyneton District	8,383	9,250	9,558	10,383	11,170	11,431	+3,048	+1.25
Lancefield District	2,698	2,972	3,262	3,618	3,900	4,236	+1,537	+1.82
Macedon and Mount Macedon District	3,308	3,344	3,320	3,335	3,329	3,329	+21	+0.03
Riddells Creek District	4,163	4,667	4,920	5,567	6,589	7,455	+3,291	+2.36
Romsey District	5,675	5,946	6,815	7,677	8,299	8,838	+3,163	+1.79
Woodend District	7,269	7,743	8,165	8,468	8,843	9,234	+1,965	+0.96

Source: <http://forecast.id.com.au/macedon-ranges/population-summary>

The districts are presented in the image below.

Profile areas

Macedon Ranges Shire



Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.



The collective impact from sustained population growth between 2011-2016 and forecast growth to 2036 will increase demand for access to existing facilities and therefore requires a pro-active approach to asset management and collaboration with sporting clubs and groups to ensure any additional demand – particularly for formal sports - can be accommodated within existing facilities and complimented by strategic development of new facilities.

At a Shire-wide level, the median age of residents is approximately 42years. Almost twenty-one percent (21%) are aged between 0-14 years and 17% are aged 65 years and over. However, the proportion of those aged 65 years and over is expected to increase to over 20% by 2026. The ageing profile of the community will also influence leisure participation demands. Whilst demand for participation in traditional formal sports can be expected to experience modest growth associated with population increases, demand for informal, non-club based leisure opportunities can be expected to increase associated with the physical activity participation preferences of an ageing community.

Industry Trends

The Australian Sports Commission released a paper titled *'The Future of Australian Sport, Megatrends shaping the sport sector over coming decades'* in April 2013. The paper identified six megatrends that are likely to shape the sport sector over the next 30 years. Megatrends were described as important patterns of social, economic or environmental change.

The megatrends identified are summarised below:

1. A Perfect Fit:
 - A rise in personalised sport and fitness activities for individual health and fitness.
2. From Extreme to Mainstream:
 - The rise of lifestyle, adventure and alternative sports - particularly popular with younger generations.
3. More Than Sport:
 - Increasing recognition (by Government and stakeholders) of the broader benefits of sport, including mental and physical health and community wellbeing.
4. Everybody's Game:
 - Evidence of Australians embracing sport participation into old age.
5. New Wealth, New Talent:
 - On an international scale, population and income growth, particularly within Asia, will create tougher competition and new business opportunities for Australians.
6. Tracksuits to Business Suits:
 - Emergence of new market pressures and business models, resulting in pressure for community sport organisations to adopt more formal corporate structures and governance systems. The cost of participating in sport is also on the rise.

In addition to the Megatrends identified above, two important elements have been considered when identifying trends that are likely to influence future leisure provision in the Shire. Specifically, sport and physical activity participation trends and leisure facility development trends.

Physical Activity

Australian adults are significantly less physically active than is recommended for good health. Being physically active is essential for health and wellbeing and can help reduce the risk of chronic disease. Not being sufficiently active is the leading contributor to preventable illness and morbidity among women. Despite most women recognising the range of benefits to being physically active, when they exercise they do so at a lower level of intensity and have higher amounts of sedentary time than young men².

Physical activity also decreases with age (though not uniformly) with a clear turning point identified in the late teen years, particularly amongst females. Many young women do not feel they can be physically active. They face a number of additional barriers not experienced by young men. In response to this public health issue the Australian Government (through the Department of Health) has developed the “*Girls make your move*” campaign featuring *real* girls playing sport and being physically active. The campaign aims to establish sport and physical activity as a natural part of young women’s lives – to be enjoyed, not endured.

Women and Girls

The Victorian Government’s *Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation (2014)* resulted in the release of *A Five Year Game Plan for Victoria*, in November 2015. The report outlines a vision of the future, where women and girls in all roles in sport and active recreation are the norm, and where females and males have the same choices and opportunities to lead and to participate.

² VicHealth: *Female participation in sport and physical activity*, Aug 2015. Publication # P-PA-283.

The inquiry has resulted in a number of new State Government programs and funding to support improvement initiatives, including establishment of the *Female Friendly Facilities Fund*.

The research urges a shift in focus from creating “equal” opportunities for females to determining how best to support women and girls so they have **equitable** opportunities to participate. In this context, “equity” requires consideration of the unique needs, interests and experiences of the target group when developing and delivering services and allocating resources. At a local level (i.e. within the Shire) additional research is needed to explore the participation preferences and experiences of women and girls in order to complement State and Federal Government initiatives to develop specific actions aimed at this target group.

Participation Preferences

At a State level, walking for exercise, fitness or recreation remains the most popular physical activity of choice for Victorian adults (regardless of gender) with a regular participation rate approaching one quarter of the population (i.e. 24.3%). When combined with jogging/running (7.8%), almost one third (32.1%) of all Victorian adults either walk, jog or run for exercise, fitness or recreation³.

The most popular physical activities are dominated by informal recreation as opposed to club based sports participation. This has increased demand for greater diversity in recreation participation opportunities, both in terms of activities and times available. It has also led to an increase in commercial use of public facilities and open space for leisure participation programs (e.g. personal trainers).

Detailed local participation data is not currently available for the Shire which prevents a comparison with State and National data. Undertaking a periodic *physical activity census* (or similar) within the Shire will provide valuable information to compare local participation preferences, trends and changes over time which will provide a valuable planning tool to help guide investment priorities and targeted actions. This strategy therefore recommends Council undertake such research every 5-10 years to help inform future planning⁴.

Industry trends also reflect emerging changes in sports products and programming, for example 20:20 cricket, mid-week night tennis competitions, veterans/masters competitions, etc. These changes reflect growth in social sports participation, often combining skill levels in recognition of preferences for social outcomes.

Across the State there is also burgeoning interest and participation (both as players and officials) in a range of sports by women and girls, including activities traditionally dominated by males, for example Austrian Rules Football, Cricket and Soccer (Football) as well as ongoing participation interest in Netball and Basketball to name a few.

Many sports peak bodies are also increasing the emphasis and delivery of introductory sports participation programs aimed at junior development and recruitment (e.g. Auskick, Small Sided Games (Soccer), Net-Set-Go Netball, etc.).

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

³ MRSC *Walking and Cycling Strategy, 2014*.

⁴ *The City of Ballarat and City of Greater Bendigo have recently undertaken similar research projects which could provide a useful model for consideration in MRS.*

Facilities

The general trends noted above are influencing contemporary leisure facility design and development. It is now more common to design facilities that can be configured to meet a variety of different needs and uses (i.e. in-built design flexibility for adaptive reuse over time).

The importance of providing facilities that support a high level of social interaction and engagement are also increasingly being recognised. Examples include under-cover external viewing areas attached to sports pavilions and the design of meeting and social spaces within sport and leisure facilities.

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

The *Strategic Context* section also highlighted industry trends in response to increasing environmental awareness and climate change impacts, including water and energy conservation initiatives. There is also an emergence of new playing surface technologies which allow Councils to maximise the use of existing assets (e.g. synthetic playing surfaces).

Planning Implications

- Greater consideration will need to be given to opportunities to enhance informal recreation participation opportunities within open space as these account for the largest proportion of overall physical activity participation by the community including walking, cycling and running. This reinforces the importance of quality walking paths, trails and accessible open space facilities and programs.
- Supporting non-organised physical activities (through infrastructure, services and programs) will help facilitate increased physical activity participation by the community, in particular by girls, women and older age groups. Opportunities to support walking, jogging and cycling should be considered a priority.
- It can be expected that the use of parks and open space by personal trainers is likely to increase associated with a growing preference for 'pay as you go' activities and increasing recognition of the health benefits of regular physical activity participation.
- Demand for organised sport opportunities, particularly for children aged 5-15 years and young adults aged 15-24 years, will remain significant (and growing), including soccer, football, cricket, netball, basketball and aerobic/fitness.
- Greater consideration will need to be given to initiatives that support participation in formal sport and club based physical activities by women and girls.
- Future facility and service provision will need to maximise opportunities for multi-use, including the development of 'service hubs' and the establishment of a hierarchical approach to facility provision that is linked to defined service levels and asset management planning.
- New and refurbished facility provision should consider opportunities to support social gathering spaces, multi-use and incorporating a high degree of environmental sustainability in design, development and operation. Facilities development or improvement must consider Universal Design principles, including female friendly design⁵.
- Ensure future residential areas 'embrace' open space reserves and encourage casual surveillance to support informal recreational use.

⁵ Refer to www.sport.vic.gov.au/female-friendly-sport-infrastructure-guidelines

- Plan, provide and maintain linear connections to/from recreation reserves and key destinations as a high priority.
- Additional research is needed to identify and monitor local physical activity participation preferences, trends and changes over time.
- Additional research is also needed to explore the unique needs of specific target groups, including women, girls, older people and people with a disability.

Consultation Summary

The following section provides a summary of key themes and issues identified during the initial consultation activities conducted in 2016 including an on-line community survey completed by 247 residents, club survey completed by 48 individual clubs and 34 meetings, interviews and submissions.

Participation:

- Similar to State and National trends, there is an overall preference for informal, non-club based physical activity participation in the Shire, however participation in traditional club based sports remains strong.
- Walking and Cycling are the most popular physical activities undertaken in the Shire. There is also evidence of desire for additional participation in these activities by individual survey respondents.
- The majority of individual clubs have reported membership growth over the last three years.
- Club based participation is dominated by males.
- 95% of community survey respondents indicated that they regularly participate in physical activities.
- Identified barriers to participation included lack of facilities, awareness of existing opportunities, costs, access and perceptions of personal safety.

Meeting needs:

- Community:
 - Current *facilities* and *programs/services* are generally meeting community needs (68% and 65% respectively).
 - Areas suggested for possible improvement in Council services included:
 - Pavilion and building maintenance.
 - Developing new facilities.
 - Improving existing sport and recreation facilities (including parks).
 - Diversity of provision.
 - Club development and support.
 - Encouraging / promoting participation.
- Clubs:
 - Three quarters of clubs (75%) indicated that existing facilities are not meeting their needs.
 - Whilst the responsiveness of Council officers was rated as 'good', areas for possible improvement in Council services included:
 - Pavilion and building maintenance.
 - Developing new facilities.
 - Keeping groups informed.
 - Seeking input and suggestions from clubs.
 - Managing risks.
 - Club development and support.
 - Encouraging / promoting participation.

Sport Specific Challenges:

- Consultation activities identified a number of common sport-specific challenges including development or improvement works to tennis facilities, demand for additional indoor stadia, replacement/upgrade of ageing cricket practice facilities and enhancements to equestrian club facilities.

4. Sport and Active Recreation Strategy

Vision

Sport and active recreation play an integral part of community life within the Shire. Individual townships and communities have a long and proud history of facilitating participation opportunities through local clubs, community groups, events and activities. Community groups and clubs also play a vital role in supporting the sustainability, maintenance and development of community sport and active recreation assets through the dedicated efforts of volunteers.

Council highly values these partnerships and will continue to support collaboration opportunities with a host of government and non-government agencies, community groups, organisations, clubs and (where appropriate) individuals to assist in the delivery of a range of active recreation and sporting opportunities for the Shire residents. An ethos of self-help exists, which is supported and encouraged by Council so that individual communities play a lead role in identifying priorities and self-determination.

The vision for provision of active recreation and sport in the Shire is therefore defined as:

To provide all residents, regardless of gender, age or ability, with opportunities to participate in a range of sport and active recreation activities.

Active Recreation Objectives:

Council's involvement in active recreation and sport will be driven by the following core objectives:

1. Increase participation in sport and physical activities in the Shire.
2. Enhance the inclusiveness of sport and physical activity participation opportunities across the Shire, regardless of age, gender or ability.
3. Support partnerships to deliver sustainable asset management and participation outcomes.
4. Provide recreational facilities that meet the changing needs of residents, including activation of open space through programming and design.
5. Promote the benefits of sport, recreation and physical activity participation.
6. Support an appropriate range of places, settings and built facilities that facilitate sport and recreation in the Shire.
7. Provide tailored responses that reflect changing community and club needs.
8. Work in partnership with State and Federal governments and their agencies to attract funding and resources to active recreation and sport projects that meet the needs of residents and visitors to the Shire.

Guiding Principles

Having regard to available resources, the following guiding principles underpin Council's involvement in sport and active recreation provision:

- Equity of Access:
 - Council recognises that all residents should have access to an appropriate range of sport, active recreation and physical activity participation opportunities regardless of their socio-economic status, ethnicity, age, gender or ability.
 - All new (or redeveloped) active recreation and sport facilities and infrastructure will consider opportunities to incorporate *Universal Design* and *Female Friendly Sport Infrastructure* principles as standard practice in order to encourage access for all.
 - Council will strive for an equitable allocation of resources that promotes inclusiveness and reflects community needs.
- Diversity and Choice:
 - Council encourages and supports a variety of participation options that enable individuals to make choices based on their needs and interests.
- Lifelong Involvement:
 - Council will support opportunities for participation in physical activities for individuals and groups across all age groups and life stages, i.e. children, adults and seniors.
- A Sustainable Hierarchical Approach:
 - Council supports the provision of an appropriate range of facilities and participation opportunities that recognises different standards may be required to support different levels of participation and/or catchments (i.e. reflecting the role and capacity of each settlement but most importantly the capacity of Council to fund the development and maintenance of facilities).
 - Furthermore, the standard, scale and scope of facilities will primarily focus on servicing local Shire residents. Therefore elite, specialist or low participation facilities that are designed to service larger catchments beyond the Shire's population capacity are unlikely to be a priority and should not be considered.
 - Provision for organised sports will generally concentrate on major townships, residents from small settlements and rural areas will be able to access major township facilities, however all communities will have access to a range of local informal physical activity participation opportunities appropriate to individual settings.
 - Council encourages and supports the development of sustainable sport and active recreation facilities and operational environments having regard to the financial capacity of Council, key stakeholders, lifecycle costs and effective asset maintenance capacity.
 - Council will seek to facilitate transport options for smaller communities to access sports facilities in larger settlements.
- Research and Planning:
 - Council supports appropriate research and planning that identifies current and future active recreation and sporting needs and informs sound decision making. Consultation with local and state wide stakeholders will be necessary in this regard.
- Shared Use and Flexibility:
 - The provision of open space settings (particularly active / formal sports reserves) and facilities shall maximise opportunities for shared use and in-built flexibility to adapt or change over time in order to respond to potential variations in community needs or aspirations.

- Opportunities for co-location of active recreation and sport facilities with other compatible community facilities will be explored in order to create vibrant multi-use community activity hubs.

Themes and actions

The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy sets out four key themes and related actions that respond to the recreation objectives and identified needs of the community. The key themes are:

Theme 1: Informal sport, active recreation and physical activity.

Theme 2: Support for sports clubs, groups and organised recreation.

Theme 3: Active recreation and sport facilities.

Theme 4: Management and planning.

Implementation and review

Council's Recreation and Sport department will be responsible for leading the implementation of the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, however a collaborative approach to implementation is likely to be required depending on specific projects, including internal and external partnerships. This includes other Council departments, community clubs, groups, service providers and agencies of state and possibly federal government. Council's Recreation and Sport unit will actively pursue internal and external funding opportunities to support implementation as required.

The Action Plan which follows presents all recommendations within an overall prioritised implementation framework. Capital and planning projects will need to be considered as part of Council's annual budget process.

Ultimately funding and timing of implementation will be subject to Council's financial capacity, competing demands, partnership opportunities and availability of external grants.

The implementation framework is not intended to represent the level of importance of individual actions rather, the framework is intended to provide Council and stakeholders with a guide to assist staged implementation of all recommendations in an order which is likely to provide maximum benefit to the community within realistic operational parameters.

Furthermore, certain actions may need to be implemented in a logical order to maximise economic efficiencies and usability. These factors have been considered in determining the recommended order of implementation.

The prioritisation categories used are:

- Short Term – Target implementation within 2-3 years (2018-2021).
- Medium Term – Implementation within 4-6 years (2022-2024).
- Long Term – Implementation within 7-10 years (2025-2028).
- Aspirational - Beyond 10 years unless opportunities arise.
- Ongoing – Relate to recommendations that should be addressed as part of ongoing operations.

Note that the time periods outlined are indicative only and many factors may influence actual implementation. Some actions may be delayed and others may be brought forward depending upon funding opportunities and other factors such as:

- Availability and priorities of state and federal government funding programs.
- Capacity of clubs and groups to provide contributions.
- Capacity of Council to provide funding against other priorities.
- Change in circumstances – risk issues, demand etc.

Note also that the funding indicated is an estimate and would need to be confirmed during more detailed project scoping. The funding also does not take into account contributions from other levels of government (i.e. grants etc.) and clubs and groups.

This Sport and Active Recreation Strategy Action Plan will be monitored annually by Council staff in order to identify key projects for consideration in Council's budget process. Ongoing progress of the strategy will be reported annually to Council, and adjusted accordingly in line with other Council strategies with a more formal review occurring every five years in consultation with key stakeholders to ensure outstanding actions remain relevant and appropriate.

5. Action Plan

Theme 1: Informal sport, active recreation and physical activity.

Goal: Contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents by facilitating opportunities for increased physical activity participation.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Leading department	Resources
1.1 Support opportunities for participation in informal physical activities.	1.1.1 Implement priority recommendations from the Shire’s Walking & Cycling Strategy*, in particular connections between townships and improved linkages and infrastructure provision within individual towns, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with VicRoads to scope and implement improvements or development of the Principal Bike Network, including provision of line marking, stenciling, rumble strips and signage (as appropriate). Continually develop the Primary Pedestrian Routes identified in each main township (refer to Walking and Cycling Strategy maps). Continue the staged implementation of the Shire-wide Footpath Plan. Progressively implement improvements to the shared trail along the Campaspe River in Kyneton. Ensure future public open space acquisition and development incorporates adequate provision for shared trail infrastructure within natural creek, river and waterway corridors, including connections to existing trail networks and residential areas. Proactively explore opportunities to progressively establish the following proposed major trails in the Shire as opportunities arise: 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Engineering, Infrastructure and Projects Recreation and Sport Recreation and Sport	To be determined on a case by case basis.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Leading department	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Woodend to Hanging Rock shared trail. ○ Gisborne to Riddells Creek off-road trail feasibility study (including Gisborne - Macedon – Woodend as per 1.1.3) ○ Daylesford to Macedon Ranges Rail Trail inclusive of linking Woodend and Kyneton. ○ Township specific heritage, arts or loop trails. <p><i>*The Walking and Cycling Strategy is a document in its own right but certain key actions play a large role in achieving the benefits of active recreation and hence are reinforced in this strategy.</i></p>	<p>Short/ Medium</p> <p>Short (feasibility)/ Medium -Long (implementation)</p> <p>Short (feasibility)/ Medium-Long (implementation)</p>	<p>Recreation and Sport</p> <p>Engineering/ Infrastructure</p>	<p>Include in Rail Trail investigations</p> <p>\$50,000 (planning – allocated 2017/18)</p> <p>\$50,000 (planning – allocated 2017/18)</p>
	<p>1.1.2 Implement priority recommendations from the Shire’s Open Space Strategy including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing open space in Gisborne for sports fields function to cater for growth. • Preparing a masterplan for Gisborne Racecourse Reserve and Magnet Hill. • Implementing an off road trail along the Campaspe River in Kyneton. • Planning and providing an off road circuit in Riddells Creek. • Establishing a social family recreation space in Romsey (Romsey Ecotherapy Park). • Improving facilities at Gilbert Gordon oval in Woodend. • Developing social family recreation space at Lancefield Park. 	<p>Most of these priority actions are underway at different stages with short term planning and medium term implementation.</p>	<p>Recreation and Sport</p>	<p>To be determined on a case by case basis subject to stage of implementation.</p>

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Leading department	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing a masterplan for Ash Wednesday Park in Macedon. Investigating a heritage trail in Malmsbury. Identify suitable dog off-leash areas to exercise and socialise dogs in the Shire (NB: Council's latest Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021 recommends Council investigate the feasibility of introducing an Order that identifies dog on and off lead areas in the Shire, including regulatory requirements, with the investigation to be completed by 2018/19);. <p><i>*The Open Space Strategy is a document in its own right but certain key actions play a large role in achieving the benefits of active recreation and hence are reinforced in this strategy.</i></p>			
	<p>1.1.3 Support initiatives to promote and advocate for the Shire as a Mountain Bike (MTB) destination</p>	Short	Economic Development and Tourism/ Recreation and Sport	
	<p>1.1.4 Consider the establishment of a trail connection to/from Woodend Rail Station to existing MTB trails in the Macedon Regional Park and Wombat State Forest. Undertake feasibility in conjunction with Gisborne to Riddells Creek investigation (see above).</p>	Short	Engineering/ Infrastructure Recreation and Sport	To be determined pending feasibility of possible trail route / line marking.
	<p>1.1.5 Support provision of a broad range of physical activity participation opportunities and programs through Council's existing leisure and community facilities (e.g. yoga, health and fitness, dance, martial arts etc.)</p>	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	<p>1.1.6 Explore options to provide outdoor fitness equipment / stations at key locations in major townships initially and in priority order along Jacksons Creek in Gisborne, Five Mile Creek in Romsey and Campaspe River trail in Kyneton</p>	Short/ Medium./ Long	Recreation and Sport	3 x \$35,000 = \$105,000

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Leading department	Resources
	1.1.7 Remain aware of partnership opportunities and innovative ways to promote increased participation in physical activity, for example involvement in the annual <i>Victorian Premiers Active Challenge</i> (or similar).	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport Council and Customer Service	Within existing resources.
	1.1.8 Remain aware of opportunities to partner with VicHealth to promote and deliver physical activity participation programs in the Shire.	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	To be determined.
	1.1.8 Continue to improve current skate park facilities in major settlements as opportunities arise (in the case of Kyneton this is likely to require complete replacement). Replace the current steel Kyneton skate park with a concrete one at the end of its useful life. Consider location at the time. If smaller townships were to be considered for skate parks further work to undertake a Skate Park Facilities Plan and to scope cost versus demand should be undertaken. Demand for bigger and better facilities would indicate that major settlement skate parks which are in close proximity to whole of shire should be improved first.	Long Long	Recreation and Sport Recreation and Sport	\$400,000 (\$100,000 from SRV) \$30,000 inclusive of anticipated extensive consultation
	1.1.9 Continue to support appropriate recreational uses of State and Regional Parks (and other areas not controlled by Council) in collaboration with relevant land managers to support local community use, tourism and visitation to the region, including informal recreation activities such as walking, running, cycling, bird watching, dog walking, fishing, nature appreciation, orienteering, trail riding, rock climbing, etc. Encourage these activities to be considered in Environmental Management Plans for Council managed conservation reserves.	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Case by case.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Leading department	Resources
1.2 Facilitate opportunities to activate existing open spaces.	1.2.1 Support community-led initiatives for events, festivals and activities that promote physical activity, social gathering and community strengthening.	Ongoing	Economic Development and Tourism Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	1.2.2 Support the attraction of major sport/recreation participation events in the Shire e.g. Great Victorian Bike Ride, Jayco Cycle Tour, Mother's Day Classic Fun Run, etc.	Ongoing	Economic Development and Tourism Recreation and Sport	Case by case
1.3 Promote the benefits of physical activity participation.	1.3.1 Review Council's marketing and promotional material, to promote positive images, health messages and benefits of physical activity participation (draw on information and resources available from VicHealth to help support positive health messages and resources to encourage increased participation, particularly material which supports targeting women and girls).	Short	Recreation and Sport Council and Customer Service	Within existing resources (cost implications from possible changes to be determined).

Theme 2: Support for sports clubs, groups and organised recreation.

Goal: Support opportunities for community participation and involvement in a range of formal sports, activities and recreational opportunities.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
2.1 Facilitate appropriate partnerships to provide a range of programs and services that support the sustainability of existing clubs and/or facilitate physical activity participation opportunities for residents.	2.1.1 Work with relevant State (or Regional) Sporting Associations, particularly AFL, cricket, netball, golf, tennis, soccer and basketball to proactively work with local clubs to support sustainability needs, increase participation, implement sustainable competition structures and provide coach/volunteer education and training.	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	2.1.2 Support football-netball clubs to implement organizational and cultural change action plans to enhance gender equality as a follow on from the <i>Rural Challenge Project</i> and support any other initiatives in other sports and activities.	Short	Community & Culture	Within existing resources
	2.1.3 Liaise with <i>Sports Focus</i> (i.e. the local Regional Sports Assembly) to plan for the delivery of support priorities and initiatives to be delivered in the Shire.	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	2.1.4 Proactively work with existing user groups at the Kyneton Showgrounds to facilitate establishment of an effective consultative structure and plan for minor review and staged implementation of the existing Master Plan. (NB: It is not intended that Council participate on the Committee on an ongoing basis, rather Council's role is to facilitate the existing groups to establish an effective consultative structure for ongoing self-determination).	Short	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	2.1.5 Explore opportunities for community access to any sport and recreation opportunities as the Braemar Woodend campus develops.	Short	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources as opportunity arises.
	2.1.6 Council to support Golf Victoria to explore club development needs, priorities and opportunities for collaboration, cross-promotion and increasing participation between golf clubs (including possible Shire-wide golf events/functions)	Short	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
	2.1.7 In accordance with the Community Access and Inclusion Plan (2014-2018), encourage and support sporting and recreation clubs, organisations and associations to improve inclusive recreation practices, including advocating to all recreation services/clubs for registration with the Companion and Carers' Card.	Short	Community Support	Within existing resources.
	2.1.8 Work in partnership with relevant providers to help build the capacity of local clubs and recreation groups to understand practices around inclusion for people with disabilities and Disability Awareness Training.	Ongoing	Community Support	Within existing resources.
	2.1.9 Explore opportunities to promote use of the Shire's recreation facilities and leisure programs (e.g. aquatic facilities) to support participation by people with disabilities, e.g. NDIS provider.	Short	Community Support	Within existing resources.
2.2 Continue to recognise and support the role of community volunteers, reserve consultative groups and club committees in providing sport and recreation opportunities to all.	2.2.1 Continue to publicly recognise and support best-practice club initiatives and volunteerism that promote inclusiveness. Possible initiatives could include recognition and publicity in Council and recreation newsletters, support for <i>Sports Focus</i> programs, formal recognition of achievements by Council via letters from the Mayor, support of the Council's volunteer appreciation night and the like.	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	2.2.2 Continue to facilitate and/or provide information and assistance in relation to external grants and funding for individual clubs and groups.	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	2.2.3 Maintain a high level of officer responsiveness to requests for information and assistance from community sport and recreation clubs and groups as a means of recognizing and acknowledging their contribution.	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
2.3 Ensure a range of formal sport participation opportunities are available in each major township/district.	2.3.1 Support provision of a sustainable range of facilities and services in main population centres. Residents from smaller settlements and rural areas may be required to travel to larger population centres in order to access relevant clubs, groups and facilities as they do for other services – refer to the appendices for a summary of action by Major Districts and Summary by Selected Organised Sports.	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	To be determined, case by case.

Theme 3: Active recreation and sport facilities.

Goal: Support the sustainable provision of facilities that reflect community needs, contemporary standards and facilitate physical activity participation opportunities for the community.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
3.1 Support partnerships with clubs/groups and external agencies as appropriate for the sustainable maintenance, renewal and upgrade of sport and active recreation facilities in the Shire.	3.1.1 Improvement initiatives and actions are guided by the recommendations for individual sports as outlined in the <i>Summary by Selected Organised Sports</i> (i.e. Appendix 1).	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	To be determined, case by case.
	3.1.2 Support staged development of two multi-use playing fields (one synthetic) and associated infrastructure in New Gisborne.	Short -Long	Recreation and Sport	Capital cost estimated at \$12.4M with staging to be determined based on funding opportunities and Council priorities for large projects.
	Complete detailed concept plans and design investigations to determine and guide above development.	Short		
	In the interim period upgrade facilities at Clifford Reserve to support over flow use.	Short		2017/18 \$150,000 – change room upgrade, parking/ access improvements, other
	3.1.3 Consistent with the AFL Goldfields and AFL Central Regional Facilities Strategies investigate and support upgrade / improvement requirements at Kyneton Showgrounds, Romsey Park and Gardiner Reserve to reinforce these venues as the Shire’s premier AFL/ cricket sporting reserves. Priority actions include change room improvements at both Kyneton Showgrounds and Gardiner Reserve including catering for female participants and umpires. Other appropriate infrastructure and oval surfacing to be considered (i.e. access and car parking, behind goal netting, goal posts, etc.).	Short – Long	Recreation and Sport	Kyneton Showgrounds main oval change rooms completed in 2017/18 (\$500,000). Gardiner Reserve netball change rooms funded \$80,000 2017/18 – football/ umpires change rooms to be upgraded in short term (estimate

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
	Initial investigations/ scoping to be undertaken of proposed works.	Short		\$650,000) – considered in 2018/19.
	Consideration of oval upgrade at Gardiner once New Gisborne ovals on stream.	Long		Within existing resources To be determined (estimate \$800k)
	3.1.4 Support upgrade/resurfacing at Gisborne Tennis Club (Dixon Field) as required. Also support lighting provision to the final 2 courts (i.e. all 8 courts to be lit).	Short	Recreation and Sport	Considered in 2018/19 - \$300,000 project total
	3.1.5 Support resurfacing and lighting to 4 existing tennis courts in Kyneton – moving to total provision of 8 lit courts.	Short	Recreation and Sport	Funded 2017/18 – \$450,000 and additional funding considered 2018/19.
	3.1.6 Support improvements to Barkly Square reserve to improve capacity for soccer use, including: Lighting improvements Car parking improvements.	Short Medium	Recreation and Sport	Considered in 2018/19 - \$400k (\$100k from SRV, club contribution) To be determined (estimate approximately \$300k)
	Upgrade old change rooms	Long		\$100k
	3.1.7 Support improvements to facilities at Gilbert Gordon reserve (Woodend), particularly change rooms and cricket net facilities.	Short	Recreation and Sport	Change rooms \$1.2million – funded 2016/17/18. Cricket nets – short term

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
	3.1.8 Support provision of three new lit tennis courts with consideration for multi-purpose use (stage 2) in Riddells Creek in line with the existing site Master Plan.	Short	Recreation and Sport	2017/18 \$560,000 (\$100k SRV, \$230k Club)
	Plan for stage 3 for further three multi-purpose courts.	Aspirational		To be determined
	3.1.9 Continue to support modest improvements to track and field facilities at Dixon Field in order to cater for local / municipal demand. Consider options for replacement of synthetic section at the end of its life as per 2006 LSP recommendation (i.e. maximum Council contribution of \$20k to replace with grass or synthetic).	Long	Recreation and Sport	To be determined - \$20,000 Council contribution.
	3.1.10 Undertake Stage 2 improvement works to refurbish the old sports pavilion at Dixon Field.	Medium	Recreation and Sport	Allowance \$80,000 plus external grants
	3.1.12 Support establishment of a synthetic cricket pitch at Barkly Square (without impacting on capacity for shared use with soccer).	Short	Recreation and Sport	\$20,000
	3.1.13 Ensure sports club lease and/or user agreements clearly define Club and Council maintenance responsibilities. As a requirement of future agreements, ensure clubs establish an annual maintenance plan/schedule for asset renewal and maintenance works.	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	3.1.14 Continue to provide Council's Community Grants Program to assist clubs with minor improvement initiatives, equipment and participation programs (grants are currently capped at a maximum of \$6k).	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	3.1.15 Allow for consideration in Council's annual budget process for minor capital works (i.e. for projects ranging from \$10k-\$80k). Projects greater than \$80k will be considered as options for possible joint funding in-line with Sport & Recreation Victoria (SRV) funding programs.	Medium	Recreation and Sport	As determined.
	3.1.16 Explore opportunities for possible co-location of the Gisborne Fitness Centre and the Gisborne Aquatic Centre including expanded aquatic facilities in line with previous recommendations from Council's Aquatic Strategy.	Short	Recreation and Sport	Investigations previously undertaken and review within existing resources.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
	<p>Enables current fitness space at Gardiner Reserve to be reused for community / sporting group activities. Undertake development.</p> <p>3.1.17 Undertake an ongoing program in conjunction with (and at the initiative of) resident clubs to progressively provide Australian standard sports lighting at all sports ovals used by senior football and soccer clubs, club tennis courts, football netball courts (one per town), regional netball complex and synthetic lawn bowls rinks.</p> <p>Develop high priority list (i.e. remaining senior AFL/ soccer fields; tennis courts and synthetic bowling greens).</p>	Long		Estimated cost of development \$1.5- \$8m subject to review
3.2 Develop and implement Asset Management Plans in accordance with Local Government best practice for leisure facilities and infrastructure.	3.2.1 Implement actions from existing asset management plans in order to improve sport, recreation and leisure assets including ancillary infrastructure (e.g. reserve fencing, bollards, drainage, signage, lighting, car parking, goal posts, etc.).	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Requires approximately \$250k per annum to complement grant and club funding (depending on individual projects, case by case). Many of these projects require power upgrades and other related works.
	<p>3.2.2 Ensure adequate resources continue to be provided in order to maintain Council's playing fields to appropriate levels having regard to increasing usage demands (i.e. activity loads) and maximise opportunities for multi-use.</p> <p>Undertake an audit and develop a capital renewal plan for all senior AFL and soccer turf playing facilities (specifically the fields) and consider the facilities and standards at other junior and over flow facilities.</p>	Ongoing	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
		Short		Allowance for initial condition audit \$15,000.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
	3.2.3 Progressively upgrade change rooms at sports fields to maintain asset and at the same time provide for female and umpire friendly facilities including netball change facilities where applicable. Prioritise senior AFL and soccer facilities (see previous recommendations relating to premier AFL and soccer facilities).	Short, medium, long	Recreation and Sport	Estimate \$100k per annum depending upon project.
	3.2.4 Audit existing tennis court conditions and surrounds at Macedon, South Gisborne, New Gisborne, Romsey and Lancefield to determine scope of works required to ensure compliance with relevant competition standards and renewal requirements in conjunction with tenant clubs and support improvement initiatives as required subject to available funding. Aside from Riddells Creek, there are no additional courts to be developed – refer to Tennis summary in the following section.	Short, medium, long	Recreation and Sport	\$30,000 allowance for initial audit Estimate \$200k biannually depending upon individual projects and available funding.

Theme 4: Management and planning.

Goal: Provide a sustainable framework for the management and operation of facilities and services which reflects or exceeds best practice industry standards having regard to the realistic capacity of Council and key stakeholders, including community volunteers.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
4.1 Explore opportunities to improve promotion and awareness of existing sport and recreation opportunities in the Shire.	4.1.1 Work with Council's Communication Unit to review existing promotional information and suite of communication tools to proactively identify opportunities for improving promotion and awareness of existing sport and recreation opportunities available in the Shire, including establishment of a regular <i>Recreation Newsletter</i> (or similar). Ensure future promotional material includes appropriate imagery and information to support inclusiveness.	Short	Recreation and Sport Council and Customer Service	Within existing resources (cost implications from possible changes to be determined).
4.2 Ensure Council has adequate sport and recreation strategic planning to guide future resource allocation, decision making and priorities.	4.2.1 Develop Master Plans (or review existing Master Plans that are more than 5-years old) for high use recreation reserves to guide future facility and infrastructure provision, including consideration of additional facilities that support informal recreation, physical activity and social gathering. Dixon Field (Gisborne) is considered a high priority for Master Plan development in order to address future facility and playing field requirements (including cricket, croquet and soccer) to service the needs of a growing population with diverse sporting interests.	Short - Long	Recreation and Sport	\$25,000p.a. x 10 years = \$250,000
	4.2.2 In consultation with the New Gisborne Tennis Club and Tennis Victoria, consider future options – current site or opportunities to relocate/replace the existing four tennis courts at Ross Watt Reserve to the proposed new <i>Sports Precinct</i> (ovals) in New Gisborne in the long-term (i.e. consider as part of the Master Plan design for this site), including shared use of proposed pavilion facilities.	Short	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
	4.2.3 Review the 2009-2014 Playground Strategy in order to develop a new Shire-wide Play Space Plan to guide improvement priorities, including a greater focus on nature play, social gathering and sites that can cater for multiple age groups, including the needs of parents/guardians.	Short-Medium	Recreation and Sport	Allowance \$20,000 to support in-house development of plan.
	4.2.4 Develop a Master Plan for Tony Clarke Reserve (Macedon) in order to guide future improvement priorities and enhancement initiatives. Consideration may need to be given to traffic calming measures in the short-term.	Short - Medium	Recreation and Sport	Included in allowance for annual Master Plans. Allowance for short-term traffic measures (e.g. signage) \$2,500
	4.2.5 Consider implementation of completed feasibility study into the need for further indoor sports courts in the Macedon Ranges. Pursue Council adopted concept for a Sports hub (up to 6 indoor courts) at New Gisborne subject to Council budget imperatives and directions. Feasibility study recommends review of other stadium priorities once sports hub is operational. The timing and staging of implementation is considered as part of Council's budgetary processes.	Short – study Medium to Long - implementation	Recreation and Sport	2017/18 \$100,000 - completed Sports hub total \$27M – can be staged Other stadiums ~\$27M – In stages – assess timing after sports hub commissioned
	4.2.6 Conduct a “Macedon Ranges Shire Physical Activity Census” at least once every 10-years (ideally every 5 years) to monitor local participation preferences, trends and changes overtime and to inform ongoing planning and resource allocation. (Explore partnership opportunities with educational institutions to deliver the census, e.g. Federation University and Victoria University have undertaken similar projects for the City of Ballarat).	Medium	Recreation and Sport Community and Culture	Indicative planning allowance \$20,000
	4.2.7 Develop an “Active Women and Girls Approach” (or similar) to address the specific needs and preferences of female physical activity participation which moves beyond infrastructure provision to address culture, behavioral change and informal participation opportunities in the Macedon Ranges context.	Short/ Medium	Recreation and Sport Community and Culture	Subject to availability of funding.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
	<p>4.2.8 Facilitate an <i>Equestrian Facilities Plan</i> in conjunction with equine clubs, groups and associations to determine;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit the quality and quantity of existing facilities and identify future improvement needs. • Opportunities for access to existing facilities for 'non club' equestrian users. • Opportunities to promote and grow participation, including 'Come and Try' days. • Opportunities to establish safe trail riding locations in collaboration with other land management agencies. • Work with peak equestrian bodies to facilitate Shire wide equestrian club planning and sustainability. 	Short	Recreation and Sport	Indicative planning allowance \$30,000
	<p>4.2.9 The Aquatic Strategy (2011) currently has three implementation actions;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A high level feasibility study into an indoor aquatic facility in Romsey which was conducted (2013). The study acknowledged community demand/aspirations for development of an indoor aquatic facility, however the financial implications of providing such a facility, in terms of capital cost and ongoing operational subsidy required, was determined to be currently beyond the realistic capacity of the Shire to provide in light of the current and expected population of the Romsey District. Council resolved to reassess this in five years' time (2018). 2. Master plans for the two outdoor pools at Lancefield and Woodend were also adopted in 2013. 3. Seek funding for an expansion of the Gisborne Aquatic Centre of which some planning and scoping has been undertaken. 	Short	Recreation and Sport	As part of this Active Recreation and Sport Strategy development.

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
	<p>The Aquatic Strategy is to be evolved into an Aquatic Facilities Plan (2018) with key actions proposed in the life of this strategy to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progressively implement recommendations from the Lancefield and Woodend outdoor pool facility master plans as funding becomes available, 2. Review the Council's need for and financial capacity to fund an aquatic facility in Romsey in 2027 as 2018 is considered too early in light of other priorities, available funding and population catchment. 3. Continue to consider an expansion of the Gisborne Aquatic Centre and co-location of the Gisborne Fitness Centre should funding opportunities present. <p>The updated plan based on the above is provided as an appendix to this report.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Long</p>		
	<p>4.2.10 As part of the scheduled review (in 2019), review of Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy (subject to available funding) and broaden scope to provide greater consideration of cycling facilities, needs and infrastructure on non-Council land, in particular MTB trails.</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p>Recreation and Sport</p>	<p>Indicative planning allowance \$50,000 (seek SRV funding \$25k)</p>
	<p>4.2.11 Undertake a Gymnastics Facilities Plan that should also incorporate the compatible activities of calisthenics, dance and martial arts. As these activities tend to be commercial enterprises (and they are primarily in the Macedon Ranges shire including Jets Gymnastics) there is the possibility of consideration of commercial funds being provided to create a centralised facility (given that many smaller community facilities are supporting these businesses at the local level).</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Recreation and Sport</p>	<p>Allowance \$30,000</p>

Strategies	Actions	Priority	Key Stakeholders (Lead in bold)	Resources
<p>4.3 Ensure Council has adequate sport and recreation policies to guide future resource allocation, decision making and priorities.</p>	<p>4.3.1 Review and update previous Council policies developed as part of the 2006 Leisure Strategy to ensure they align with current state government expectations, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leisure Infrastructure Development and Maintenance Policy (including reflecting SRV <i>Female Friendly Facility Guidelines</i>). Leisure Facility Funding Framework. <p>Refer to the Background Report (Supporting Material) for initial Draft Revised Policies.</p>	Short	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.
	<p>4.3.2 Establish new Council policies to address the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal trainers and commercial use of open space. Community/club capital contributions policy for sport facilities and infrastructure. Sports ground lighting policy. Sport and recreation fees and charges policy. <p>The Background report (Supporting Material) provides the principles for these polices.</p>	Short - Medium	Recreation and Sport	Within existing resources.

6.0 Appendices

6.1 Summary by selected organised sports.

For ease of referencing the following Appendix provides a summary of recommendations and key information presented for each sport/activity. It presents a summary of key data into an easy reference guide with more detail.

The following section provides a summary of key directions for a range of organised sport activities in the Shire.

Sport	Summary of existing provision	Comments and strategic directions
Athletics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grass athletics tracks are currently available in Gisborne, Kyneton, Romsey and Woodend. The Gisborne facility (Dixon Field) also incorporates a synthetic 100m straight section. These facilities service local Little Athletics Clubs and cater for school use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of a full scale all-weather synthetic athletics track in the Shire is not considered feasible. These are highly specialised regional facilities that generally cater for populations of 100,000+ people due to their costs (including capital development (\$1M+), ongoing maintenance and asset replacement costs (\$600k). Access to regional all-weather synthetic facilities are available in neighboring municipalities, including Bendigo, Brimbank, Melton, Hume and Whittlesea (Epping). Council's focus should remain on supporting local, community standard participation. Higher standards of participation will be required to travel outside the municipality to access specialist facilities as required. Continue to support improvements to track and field facilities at Dixon Field in order to cater for local / municipal demand. Consider options for replacement of synthetic section at the end of its life as per 2006 LSP recommendation (i.e. maximum Council contribution of \$20,000 to replace with grass or synthetic).
Australian Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council currently provides 15 AFL ovals spread across major townships and districts. This equates to approximately one oval for every 3,000 people which is above the benchmark ratio of 1:4,500 people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the exception of the Gisborne District, existing levels of provision are considered adequate to service the needs of the community over the next ten years. As a result the emphasis should be on the improvement of current facilities particularly change rooms and lighting. The recent acquisition of land by Council in New Gisborne to develop two multi-use ovals (i.e. AFL/Cricket) possibly in stages will address any potential shortfall in this area. Provision of a synthetic oval provides an all-weather training venue to service shire wide needs. Development of the New Gisborne site could be undertaken in stages. Development of the new venue presents an opportunity to establish new clubs in the Shire in senior football (similar to Gisborne Giants Football Club), rather than an existing club moving into this space. Demand for participation by women and girls can be expected to grow significantly over the next ten years. There are adequate ovals to accommodate additional use, however increasing female participation will drive demand for improvements to existing support facilities that are suitable for female use, particularly change rooms.
Badminton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Badminton is currently available in each of the Shire's multi-use indoor stadia (i.e. Kyneton, Macedon, Riddells Creek and Romsey). A total of 19 individual courts are available across these venues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional badminton facilities are required. Continue to ensure management of existing indoor facilities allows suitable times for badminton access/court allocation. Encourage the use of the Macedon centre as a badminton specialist centre due to inadequate run-offs for other sports
Baseball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No facilities currently provided in MRS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor demand for baseball facilities, however provision is not likely to be required during the life of this strategy and is more likely to be provided by nearby larger municipalities.

Sport	Summary of existing provision	Comments and strategic directions
Basketball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council currently provides 8 multi-purpose indoor courts across Gisborne (2), Kyneton (2), Macedon (1 – not suitable for competition use, training only), Riddells Creek (1), Romsey (1) and Woodend (1). This equates to one court for every 5,793 people, however by 2027 this will drop to 1:6,939 people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is expressed demand for community access to additional indoor court space to cater for the needs of a variety of sports – particularly basketball and netball. With the possible exception of Kyneton and Macedon, each of the existing venues are currently used near their capacity at peak times. Limitations on court access / availability may be constraining opportunities for increased participation. Climatic conditions and changing participation patterns (particularly for netball which is increasingly being played indoors) is driving demand for additional indoor courts. Furthermore, existing basketball clubs/associations are limited in their capacity to expand due to limited court availability. Limited court availability also constrains opportunities for basketball training. High demand from basketball for court space also limits availability for other sports/activities to utilise indoor courts. Industry research indicated that multi-court stadiums are more financially and operationally viable compared to single court venues. The Federal Government funded a business plan/ feasibility study for a “sports hub” looking into the need for additional indoor sports courts in the Shire – Council has adopted this concept and a New Gisborne location. Furthermore, as part of that study it is recommended Council seek Basketball Victoria to engage with local associations to explore options for a single consolidated Macedon Ranges Basketball Association to oversee competition structures.
Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council currently provides 19 cricket ovals across the Shire. This equates to one oval for every 2,439 people based on the current (2016) population. By 2027 this will equate to 1:2,922 people which is in-line with recommended benchmarks (i.e. 1:3,500 people). Despite the overall ratio appearing adequate, there are potential gaps in the Gisborne District to cater for emerging residential growth, (i.e. potential short-fall of two ovals) and possibly in Romsey. A number of existing practice net facilities require replacement/renewal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council’s recent (2015) acquisition of land in New Gisborne for the development of two additional multi-use sports ovals will address the identified short-fall. Therefore additional land acquisition, or development of additional ovals beyond those planned for New Gisborne are unlikely to be required during the life of this strategy. It is recommended that the New Gisborne site be developed – potentially in stages – over the short-medium term. Development of the new venue presents an opportunity to establish a new club in the Shire, rather than an existing club moving into this space. Continue to advocate partnerships and joint-use with schools to allow community use of school ovals – particularly for junior cricket and possibly in Romsey – as required. Undertake a program of staged upgrade/renewal of cricket practice nets throughout the Shire based on an audit of current cricket training facilities to determine priority. Council notes the development or provision of turf cricket wickets have challenges with high maintenance requirements, the climatic conditions in the Shire and impact on volunteer resources. Preference is for synthetic cricket pitches. However where turf pitches are existing or proposed, the development and ongoing maintenance will be a club/ association responsibility. Support the return of cricket to Barkly Square (without impacting on capacity for shared use with soccer).
Croquet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Croquet facilities are currently available in Kyneton and Gisborne. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional croquet facilities are required during the life of this plan. Work in partnership with existing clubs to support initiatives aimed at maintaining or increasing participation at existing venues, including undertaking facility improvement audits as required (i.e. as part of the broader Dixon Field Master Plan). Proposed capital upgrades would be subject to available funding opportunities.

Sport	Summary of existing provision	Comments and strategic directions
Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different modes of cycling are catered for to different degrees across the Shire, including at the Kyneton velodrome, dirt BMX tracks, off road shared trails and on road cycle lanes. An extensive range of Mountain Bike (MTB) tracks and trails also exist, however the majority of these are not on Council controlled land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Walking and Cycling Strategy outlines directions to support cycling activities. The higher priority actions are re-emphasised in this strategy, specifically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing improvements to on-road and footpath facilities. Council is also undertaking a Macedon Ranges Shared Trail Feasibility Study in conjunction with Hepburn Shire in 2017/18 which will explore options for a shared trail between Woodend and Hanging Rock; Riddells Creek and Gisborne; and possibly further onto Macedon and Woodend. Further explore a rail trail between Macedon Ranges and Daylesford that could connect the towns of Kyneton and Woodend. Support initiatives to promote and advocate for the Shire as a Mountain Bike (MTB) destination. Consider the establishment of a trail connection to/from Woodend Rail Station to existing MTB trails in the Macedon Regional Park and Wombat State Forest.
Equestrian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council currently supports a range of equestrian clubs/groups in Bullengarook, Gisborne, New Gisborne, Kyneton, Lancefield, Riddells Creek, Macedon and Woodend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite Council's strong support for the broader equestrian industry within the Shire (i.e. Macedon Ranges Equine Strategy 2012-2016 and Equine Centre Feasibility Study (2015) there is limited direction to support existing community based equestrian clubs and groups (e.g. Pony Clubs, Adult Riding Clubs, etc.). Multiple requests for facility improvements to service existing equestrian clubs and groups have been received ranging from minor works to significant capital projects. Requests have been received from clubs in Kyneton, Macedon and Gisborne. No additional community based equestrian venues are required. Existing venues have capacity to cater for additional demand. Facilitate an <i>Equestrian Facilities Plan</i> in conjunction with equine clubs, groups and associations to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit the Quality and quantity of existing facilities and identify future improvement needs. Opportunities for access to existing facilities for 'non club' equestrian users. Opportunities to promote and grow participation, including 'Come and Try' days. Opportunities to establish safe trail riding locations in collaboration with other land management agencies. Work with peak equestrian bodies to facilitate Shire wide equestrian club planning and sustainability. In consultation with all existing users groups at each site, undertake a Master Plan for Rollinson Reserve (Kyneton) and I.R. Robertson Reserve (Gisborne) to explore requirements and options for staged upgrade of facilities, including opportunities for shared use. Monitor the ongoing sustainability of the Macedon Pony Club (i.e. evidence of declining membership) and support club initiatives for modest improvements to existing facilities to service local club needs.

Sport	Summary of existing provision	Comments and strategic directions
Football (Soccer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council currently provides 7 pitches (5 in Gisborne and 2 in Kyneton). • Ratio analysis (1:5,000) suggests that single pitches may be required in smaller townships i.e. Riddells Creek, Romsey and Woodend, however this is not supported by existing evidence of participation demand. • Although the ratio analysis suggests that there are an adequate number of pitches in Gisborne, the club have indicated significant participation growth (i.e. increasing from around 120 in 2013 to 400 in 2017) which drives demand for additional playing fields. • Indoor Soccer (Futsal) is currently provided in Macedon, Woodend, Romsey, and Gisborne. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor soccer provision should continue to be consolidated at existing sites and existing clubs (i.e. Dixon Field (Gisborne) and Barkly Square (Kyneton). No additional soccer venues or clubs are proposed at this time. Should demand emerge in Romsey, the feasibility of a club utilising the Romsey Park #2 oval and pavilion or other facility could be considered. Currently such a feasibility study is considered aspirational but may change over the life of this plan. • Support improvements to Barkly Square reserve to improve capacity for soccer use, including car parking, lighting improvements and relocation of fencing to allow potential ground expansion. • Dixon Field should be progressively developed as a regional standard facility for soccer in the Shire, including possible establishment of a synthetic pitch with match standard lighting within the next ten years – or sooner subject to available funding - to cater for additional usage loads. The proposed Master Plan for Dixon Field should consider future playing field, facility and spatial requirements for soccer and provide a prioritised list of actions to address future needs at this site. • Monitor demand for local provision in Riddells Creek, Romsey and Woodend. If demand eventuates, explore options in the long term for establishment of single pitches as training venues utilising existing ovals and/or shared use of school ovals, including possible shared use of potential facilities at Braemar College campus. • Continue to support indoor soccer (Futsal) utilising existing Council and school venues. Options for additional court time may become available if/when the proposed new multi-court stadium is established (refer to Basketball).
Golf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 6 golf courses available in the Shire including Gisborne and Kyneton (both private courses) as well as Lancefield, Mt Macedon, Romsey and Woodend utilising Council, Crown or Commonwealth land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional golf courses are to be provided. The onus is on clubs to be self-sufficient and sustainable in their own right. Club development support is available via Golf Victoria. • Clubs can apply to Council's existing grants and funding programs for minor capital works and improvement initiatives on a case by case basis. • Council to encourage Golf Victoria to explore club development needs, priorities and opportunities for collaboration, cross-promotion and increasing participation (including possible Shire-wide golf events/functions). • The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy supports Council's existing Open Space Strategy (2013) and Romsey Aquatic Centre Feasibility Study (2013) in regard to the Romsey golf course however revises the action to <i>"In the long term at a time when either golf club sustainability, open space pressures, or aquatic and sporting needs require land investigate the future direction of the Romsey golf course in consultation with the club taking into account golf course facilities and trends across the shire and beyond."</i> It is also recommended that the Romsey Golf Club continue to work with the Romsey Sports Association to resolve local clubhouse/accommodation issues.

Sport	Summary of existing provision	Comments and strategic directions
Gymnastics (plus calisthenics, dance and martial arts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A dedicated purpose built gymnastics facility is located at 14 Newry Drive, New Gisborne. The commercial venue provides a full scope of facilities to cater for all ages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jets Gymnastics Gisborne was established through a partnership between Jets Gymnastics and the Gisborne Gymnastics Club which previously operated from the Gisborne High School. This venue provides valuable participation opportunities to the community. Gymnastics Victoria have suggested that the Jets facility is already at capacity and that another dedicated gymnastics facility is required within the Shire. It is therefore recommended that the level of demand and feasibility of establishing a new facility be considered as part of a Gymnastics Facilities Plan that should also incorporate the compatible activities of calisthenics, dance and martial arts. As these activities tend to be commercial enterprises (and they are primarily in the Shire including Jets Gymnastics) there is the possibility of consideration of commercial funds being provided to create a centralised facility (given that many smaller community facilities are supporting these businesses at the local level).
Hockey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No facilities or clubs currently available in the Shire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no evidence of demand for hockey facilities in the Shire. Synthetic pitch facilities are available in Bendigo and metropolitan Melbourne. Synthetic pitches are generally provided for catchment of around 100,000 people. No facilities are feasible in the Shire.
Lawn Bowls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 9 greens currently available across the Shire. Each major township/district with the exception of Riddells Creek currently has access to at least one green. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional greens are required across the Shire during the life of this plan. In-principle aspirational support for the possible development of a bowling green in Riddells Creek in the long term future in line with their master plan for the site should future demand warrant, however it is noted that an existing 2-green facility is already available in Gisborne which has capacity for additional use. In collaboration with Bowls Victoria, continue to encourage club development and support initiatives as required.
Netball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 20 outdoor netball courts currently available across the Shire, including the recently established regional centre in New Gisborne (8-courts). The ratio analysis (1:5000) suggests an additional outdoor court may be required in Kyneton and Romsey as the population grows. The Shire also provides 8 indoor multi-purpose courts – other users include badminton, basketball, volleyball and futsal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For football netball venues Council considers a minimum core level of provision to be 1 conforming court, with lighting and access to appropriate change room facilities at Country Football/Netball senior venues in the life of this plan. Demand for additional courts is aspirational after other priorities are met (i.e. lighting, change rooms, etc.) and then in the regional premier venues of Showgrounds, Romsey Park and Gardiner Reserve as a priority. The exception would be where a second netball court is part of a larger project (change room, lights, tennis courts etc.). Junior AFL./ netball would make use of senior venues as a preference If an additional outdoor netball court is required in Romsey consider options for shared use utilising an existing tennis courts in Romsey Park. If an additional court is required in Kyneton, consider options for line marking/upgrade of the existing fire track to provide an additional court as guided by the 2014 Kyneton Showgrounds Master Plan. In Gisborne at Gardiner the second court should extend over the BMX track. There is growing demand, aligned with State participation trends, for increased access to indoor netball courts. Refer to Basketball i.e. Council has recently completed a feasibility study for the possible development of a new multi-use indoor stadium facility.
Rugby – League and Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No facilities or clubs currently available in the Shire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No facilities are currently feasible in the Shire. Should demand emerge over the next ten years, consider options for shared use of existing reserves or school facilities where appropriate.

Sport	Summary of existing provision	Comments and strategic directions
Softball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No facilities currently provided in the Shire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor demand for softball facilities, however provision is not likely to be required during the life of this strategy.
Skateboarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council currently provides 6 skate park venues – one in each major settlement (i.e. Woodend, Romsey, Riddells Creek, Kyneton, Lancefield and Gisborne). These are designed to service each major town and surrounding districts. The current distribution of skate parks is considered appropriate, therefore the emphasis is on enhancing existing facilities to continue to service each district rather than new or additional venues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve current facilities (in the case of Kyneton this is likely to require complete replacement). If smaller townships were to be considered for skate parks further work to undertake a Skate Park Facilities Plan to scope cost versus demand should be undertaken. Demand for bigger and better facilities would indicate that major settlement skate parks in close proximity to whole of shire should be improved first. Installation of flood lighting at existing skate parks is currently not supported due to limited demand and existing availability during day light hours (particularly over the warmer months) but could be considered in the above plan.
Swimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public swimming pools are currently provided in Gisborne and Kyneton (both indoor) as well as outdoor facilities in Lancefield and Woodend. There are also a number of private operators providing learn to swim programs, including South Gisborne and New Gisborne. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council reviewed its Aquatic Strategy in 2011 and adopted three implementation actions; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A high level feasibility study into an indoor aquatic facility in Romsey which was conducted (2013). The study acknowledged community demand/aspirations for development of an indoor aquatic facility, however the financial implications of providing such a facility, in terms of capital cost and ongoing operational subsidy required, was determined to be currently beyond the realistic capacity of the Shire to provide in light of the current and expected population of the Romsey District. Council resolved to reassess this in five years' time (2018). Master plans for the two outdoor pools at Lancefield and Woodend were also adopted in 2013. Seek funding for an expansion of the Gisborne Aquatic Centre of which some planning and scoping has been undertaken. Actions proposed in the life of this strategy are to evolve and replace the Aquatic Strategy within Aquatic Facilities Plan and to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Progressively implement recommendations from the Lancefield and Woodend outdoor pool facility master plans as funding becomes available, Review the Council's need for and financial capacity to fund an aquatic facility in Romsey in 2027 Continue to consider an expansion of the Gisborne Aquatic Centre and co-location of the Gisborne Fitness Centre should funding opportunities present. Reaffirm as part of this strategy the current directions of the Aquatic Strategy and the above implementation actions. The reviewed Aquatic Facilities Plan is an appendix to this report.

Sport	Summary of existing provision	Comments and strategic directions
Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 62 tennis courts provided across major Districts in the Shire, including 44 lit courts. • This equates to one court per 747 people, by 2027 this will be 1:895 people. This is significantly higher than the benchmark ratio of 1:1,500 people. • The ratio analysis suggests that the only area with a potential short-fall in courts is Riddells Creek. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The emphasis is on improving existing facilities in order to maximise usage opportunities, including court resurfacing and lighting, rather than additional court provision. • There is high demand for court resurfacing and lighting to be funded (at least in part) by Council. The majority of clubs have limited capacity to fund capital improvements. A more sustainable approach to asset replacement and renewal needs to be considered which may involve clubs paying Council fees based on courts/lights and Council funding maintenance of such . • A number of tennis facilities are permanently locked when not in use by resident clubs, which prevents informal use / access by the community. Council should encourage Clubs to support Tennis Victoria's new online court booking system called 'Book a Court' which enables access for non-members whilst providing income and security for the home club. • With the exception of Riddells Creek, no additional/new tennis courts are required. Therefore it is recommended that Council establish a tennis court improvement program to upgrade/renew court surfaces, surrounds and increase lighting provision. Priority projects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support provision of new lit courts in Riddells Creek in line with the existing site Master Plan. ○ Support resurfacing and lighting to four existing courts in Kyneton – moving to total provision of eight lit courts. ○ Audit existing court conditions and surrounds at Macedon, South Gisborne, New Gisborne, Romsey and Lancefield and support improvement initiatives as required, including reliable irrigation to support maintenance of the en-tout-cas courts or replacement with synthetic (NB: six of eight courts at Tony Clarke Reserve are currently lit, which is considered adequate unless lighting also required for shared use with netball). ○ Support surface upgrade at Gisborne Tennis Club (Dixon Field) as required. Also support lighting provision to final two courts (i.e. all eight courts to be lit). • Other actions to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In consultation with the New Gisborne Tennis Club and Tennis Victoria, consider opportunities to remain at Ross Watt or relocate/replace the existing four tennis courts at Ross Watt reserve to the proposed new <i>Sports Precinct</i> (ovals) in New Gisborne in the long-term (i.e. consider as part of the Master Plan design for this site), including shared use of proposed pavilion facilities. ○ Support Lancefield Tennis Club to negotiate an appropriate long-term lease arrangement with DELWP. ○ Support innovative re-use of former club facilities in smaller settlements to encourage broader community use, recreational appeal and sustainable management at Daraweit Guim and Tylden. Until these arrangements are proven successful do not construct or replace any non-club facilities (i.e. Malmsbury).

Sport	Summary of existing provision	Comments and strategic directions
Tennis (cont.)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support Tennis Victoria and Macedon Ranges Tennis Association in initiatives that support club development, sustainability and participation, including exploring management options to increase the operational sustainability of clubs – particularly in order to help prepare clubs for future asset renewal contributions. ○ Continue to support clubs in each major township, development of a consolidated or regional tennis complex in the Shire is not recommended. Over time clubs with limited population catchments, such as Hanging Rock and Bullengarook may consider sustainability options with clubs in larger townships (i.e. Woodend and Gisborne respectively) in consultation with Tennis Victoria, Council and <i>host</i> clubs.
Volleyball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volleyball is currently available in existing multi-use indoor stadia across the Shire (i.e. Kyneton, Macedon, Riddells Creek, Romsey and Woodend). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional/new volleyball facilities are required. • As with other less popular indoor sports, continue to utilise existing multi-purpose stadia at existing locations.
Nature Based Recreation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Shire is blessed with a unique natural environment including State and Regional Parks, forests and bushland reserves – the majority of which are not controlled or managed by Council - however they are used to support a range of informal nature based recreation activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support appropriate recreational uses of State and Regional Parks (and other areas not controlled by Council) in collaboration with relevant land managers to support local community use, tourism and visitation to the region, including informal recreation activities such as walking, running, cycling, bird watching, dog walking, fishing, nature appreciation, orienteering, trail riding, rock climbing, etc. Encourage these activities to be considered in Environmental Management Plans for Council managed conservation reserves.
Other Active Recreation and Sports Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council is aware that there are a myriad of formal and informal sports and physical activities undertaken by residents throughout the Shire – including activities utilising Council facilities and venues. For example calisthenics, martial arts, dance and health/fitness classes to name a few. These activities generally occur within multi-use community facilities, halls, leisure centres and/or meeting spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the principals outlined in this report, Council will continue to support initiatives targeted at increasing physical activity participation by the community. The needs of individual sports, activities or community groups will be considered on a case by case – having regard to opportunities provided by the private sector; as well as maximising use of available Council resources, facilities, venues and options to participate.

6.2 Summary by major districts.

For ease of referencing the following Appendix provide a summary of recommendations and key information presented for each major district. It presents a summary of key data into an easy reference with more detail.

The following section provides a summary of key directions for each major district in the Shire.

Settlement District	Summary of key directions
Gisborne District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support staged development of two multi-use ovals and associated infrastructure in New Gisborne over the short-medium term. In consultation with the New Gisborne Tennis Club, consider options to remain at Ross Watt Reserve or explore opportunities to relocate/replace the existing four tennis courts at Ross Watt Reserve to the proposed new Sports Precinct (ovals) in New Gisborne in the long-term (i.e. consider as part of the Master Plan design for this site), including shared use of proposed pavilion facilities. • Investigate and support upgrade / improvement requirements at Gardiner Reserve to reinforce the venue as one of the Shire’s three premier AFL/ cricket sporting reserves – particularly cricket net facilities (address safety issues with balls entering the adjacent netball courts, and change room improvements including catering for female participants). • Dixon Field should be progressively developed as a regional standard facility for soccer in the Shire, including possible establishment of a synthetic pitch with match standard lighting in the very long-term (i.e. 10+ years) to cater for possible additional usage loads. • Support court upgrade at Gisborne Tennis Club (Dixon Field) as required. Also support lighting provision to final 2 courts (i.e. all 8 courts to be lit). • Support improvements to South Gisborne Tennis facilities subject to condition audit outcomes. • In consultation with all existing equestrian user groups undertake a Master Plan for I.R. Robertson Reserve (Gisborne) to explore requirements and options for staged upgrade of facilities, including opportunities for shared use. • Support installation of outdoor fitness equipment at suitable locations along Jacksons Creek. • Continue staged implementation of township specific recommendations from Council’s <u>Walking & Cycling Strategy</u> and <u>Open Space Strategy</u>
Kyneton District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support resurfacing and lighting to four existing tennis courts in Kyneton – moving to total provision of eight lit tennis courts. • Proactively work with existing user groups at the Kyneton Showgrounds to facilitate establishment of an effective consultative structure and plan for staged implementation of the existing Master Plan. (NB: Council will not have an ongoing role in the governance of the reserve, however will support existing groups to establish an effective consultative structure for ongoing self-determination). • Support improvements to Barkly Square reserve to improve capacity for soccer use, including car parking, lighting improvements and potential relocation of fencing to create a larger playing field. • Replace the skate park at the end of the life of the current steel one. • Support establishment of a synthetic cricket pitch at Barkly Square (without impacting on capacity for shared use with soccer) as required. • In consultation with all equestrian existing user groups at undertake a Master Plan for Rollinson Reserve (Kyneton) to explore requirements and options for staged upgrade of facilities, including opportunities for shared use. • Continue staged implementation of township specific recommendations from Council’s <u>Walking & Cycling Strategy</u>. • Support installation of outdoor fitness equipment at suitable locations along the Campaspe River.
Woodend District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities for community access to proposed indoor stadia facilities at the proposed Woodend Braemar College campus to help cater for multi-sport demand. • Support improvements to facilities at Gilbert Gordon Reserve, particularly change rooms and cricket net facilities and as guided by the 2014 Gilbert Gordon Oval Master Plan. • Continue to upgrade the Woodend pool in line with the Aquatic Facilities Plan. • Retain long-term spatial flexibility for the possible establishment of an additional oval/playing field at Racecourse Reserve if required in the future. • Monitor demand for local soccer provision in Woodend. • Continue staged implementation of township specific recommendations from Council’s <u>Walking & Cycling Strategy</u>. • Further explore a rail trail between Macedon Ranges and Daylesford that could connect the towns of Kyneton and Woodend. • Support initiatives to promote and advocate for the Shire as a Mountain Bike (MTB) destination. • Consider the establishment of a trail connection to/from Woodend Rail Station to existing MTB trails in the Macedon Regional Park and Wombat State Forest.

Settlement District	Summary of key directions
Romsey District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and support upgrade / improvement requirements at Romsey Park to reinforce the venue as one of the Shire's three premier AFL/ cricket sporting reserves. Monitor demand for local soccer provision in Romsey. If demand eventuates, explore options for establishment of single pitch as a training venue and with capacity for cricket utilising existing ovals and/or shared use of school ovals or other location (e.g. Romsey Park). Monitor demand for additional outdoor netball courts in Romsey. If required, consider options for shared use utilising an existing tennis court at Romsey Park. Continue staged implementation of township specific recommendations from Council's Walking & Cycling Strategy. Support installation of outdoor fitness equipment at suitable locations along Five Mile Creek. The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy supports Council's existing Open Space Strategy (2013) and Romsey Aquatic Centre Feasibility Study (2013) in regard to the Romsey golf course however revises the action to <i>"In the long term at a time when either golf club sustainability, open space pressures, or aquatic and sporting needs require land investigate the future direction of the Romsey golf course in consultation with the club taking into account golf course facilities and trends across the shire and beyond. It is also recommended that the Romsey Golf Club continue to work with the Romsey Sports Association to resolve local clubhouse/accommodation issues.</i> Review the Council's need for and financial capacity to fund an aquatic facility in Romsey in 2027.
Riddells Creek District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the staged provision of new lit tennis courts in Riddells Creek in line with the existing site Master Plan. Council to continue working with the Riddells Creek Recreation Reserve Advisory Committee to review and implement the existing site Master Plan. Continue staged implementation of township specific recommendations from Council's Walking & Cycling Strategy. In-principle support for the possible development of a bowling green in Riddells Creek in the future in line with their master plan for the site should future demand warrant, however it is noted that an existing two green facility is already available in Gisborne which has capacity for additional use.
Lancefield District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the Reserve Committee to review the 2011 Master Plan and update the priority list of proposed actions. Continue to upgrade the Lancefield pool in line with the Aquatic Facilities Plan. Continue staged implementation of township specific recommendations from Council's Walking & Cycling Strategy.
Macedon and Mt Macedon District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit existing tennis court conditions and surrounds in Macedon and support improvement initiatives as required, including reliable irrigation to support maintenance of the en-tout-cas courts (NB: six of eight courts are currently lit, which is considered adequate). Macedon is well positioned to support mountain bike aspirations of the community through enhancement and expansion of the existing trail network (on Council and non-Council controlled land, in particular the Wombat State Forest). Continue staged implementation of township specific recommendations from Council's Walking & Cycling Strategy, including trails connecting to the Wombat State Forest and to/from the train station. Support community initiatives to position Macedon as a cycling hub. Continue to work with the local community to explore opportunities to establish a significant play space / community hub (e.g. multi-purpose stage, amphitheater, picnic areas and play space). Monitor the ongoing sustainability of the Macedon Pony Club (i.e. evidence of declining membership) and support club initiatives for modest improvements to existing facilities to service local club needs.

6.3 Aquatic Facilities Plan

AQUATIC FACILITIES PLAN (reviewed 2018)

1. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the plan is to develop an integrated strategic approach to planning and provision well managed, maintained and affordable aquatic facilities across the Shire.

2. VISION – Based upon previous Aquatic Strategy

That Council is to provide a range of quality and affordable indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities across the Shire.

There will be a network of aquatic facilities coordinated with each other in location, use, management, marketing and fitting into an overall regional context.

In particular:

- Indoor aquatic facilities will be located in the major population centres of Gisborne, Kyneton and Romsey at a time when it is economical to do so.
- Modern user friendly and exciting outdoor aquatic facilities will be managed and maintained for long term sustainability and seasonal use in Woodend and Lancefield serving those communities and, at times, the larger catchment areas.

3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 Access to aquatic opportunities is to be provided with as much equity as possible for all residents including those geographically isolated or those with disabilities.
- 3.2 Facilities developed are to be as sustainable as possible both economically and environmentally. This will include the use of alternative energy sources where possible, and low environmental impact built form and product use.
- 3.3 The plan is to take a community focus considering all of our communities and other stakeholders (i.e. schools, private aquatic operators, health providers, swimming clubs etc.)
- 3.4 The plan is to be mindful of the fiscal limitations of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council as a large rural Council with many competing demands.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the plan are to:

- 4.1 Provide a network of affordable indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities within the Macedon Ranges Shire.
- 4.2 Maintain, upgrade, develop and / or maintain to industry standards as a minimum, aquatic facilities for the communities of the Macedon Ranges.
- 4.3 Maximise potential use of the Shire's aquatic facilities through appropriate management and marketing.
- 4.4 Develop a long term plan for financially and environmentally sustainable aquatic facilities that are not reliant on external funding.

- 4.5 Develop and maintain facilities within a regional context taking into account the capability of larger centres (e.g. at Sunbury and Melton) to provide more specialised services such as swimming carnivals and higher level squad training (e.g. 50 metre pools) and for other centres (e.g. Kilmore) to service some of the Shire's communities.
- 4.6 Ensure that the development, management and operation of the Shire's present and potential future aquatic facilities provide maximum benefit to Shire residents through shared marketing, memberships and services offered.

5. IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- 5.1 That Council progressively implement recommendations from the Lancefield and Woodend outdoor pool facility master plans as funding becomes available.
- 5.2 That Council review the Council's need for and financial capacity to fund an aquatic facility in Romsey in 2027.
- 5.3 Continue to consider an expansion of the Gisborne Aquatic Centre and co-location of the Gisborne Fitness Centre should funding opportunities present.

6. REVIEW PROCESS

This plan is due for review in 2022.