

2.1 ACTIVE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY

(Author:JG)

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following public exhibition of the draft Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy, this report details the findings of the community consultation, outlines the subsequent changes made to the draft and presents a final Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy (Attachment 1) for Council consideration and endorsement.

BACKGROUND

At the 31 August 2021 meeting, Council resolved to: *approve the draft Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy for public exhibition and invite community submissions for review before finalising the Strategy for Council consideration and endorsement.*

The draft Strategy was subsequently exhibited for community feedback from 31 August to 7 October 2021. At the close of consultation, a total of 31 submissions were received via Shape Monash and email.

DISCUSSION

Submissions on the draft Strategy have since been reviewed, and where it has been considered appropriate and feasible to do so, changes have been made to the draft Strategy.

A final Strategy (Attachment 1) is now presented to Council for endorsement.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The final Strategy is aspirational and not all of the recommendations will be implemented in the life of the Strategy. The indicative costs for recommendations are outlined in the *Strategy Implementation Plan* (Attachment 1, p. 28-32) and are presented as high, medium or low priority actions that total \$9.125m.

Facility developments and infrastructure improvements will be considered as part of Council annual capital works budget process and subject to Council budget approval and/or external funding.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

Following public exhibition, the Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy (Attachment 1) has been updated and finalised for Council consideration and endorsement.

2.1 ACTIVE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note the findings of the community consultation on the draft Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy as detailed in Attachment 2 – Part B Community & Stakeholder Submissions on the Draft Strategy.*
- 2. Endorse the Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy as presented in Attachment 1.*

INTRODUCTION

Following public exhibition of the draft Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy, this report details the findings of the community consultation, outlines the subsequent changes made to the draft and presents a final Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy (Attachment 1) for Council consideration and endorsement.

BACKGROUND

Draft Strategy

At the 31 August 2021 meeting, Council resolved to: *approve the draft Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy for public exhibition and invite community submissions for review before finalising the Strategy for Council consideration and endorsement.*

Active recreation (non-competitive physical activity undertaken during leisure time) accounts for the majority of physical activity in the community and has become increasingly important due to work, education and lifestyle commitments. The City of Monash provides a network of parks and reserves across the municipality that provide space for sport, recreation and play. Parks and reserves have traditionally been developed to cater for organised sport and play, but facilities that create opportunities for active recreation are becoming more prominent due to increasing demand.

The City of Monash has delivered a range of active recreation facilities across its open space network, including outdoor fitness equipment, circuit paths and trails, basketball courts and cricket practice facilities. The Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy aims to increase the diversity of opportunities for physical activity and balance the provision of facilities across the network. The establishment of a series of 'key active recreation sites' will increase the diversity of facilities, creating destinations for active recreation and providing new opportunities for residents to become active. Supporting key sites with additional local-level active recreation nodes will increase access to regular opportunities for physical activity. Engagement with the community highlighted the importance of convenience and facility location in encouraging residents to be more active more often. Creating facilities that provide new and interesting opportunities will attract new participants. 'Unique attractor' facilities such as skate parks, climbing and parkour facilities, or obstacle courses create interest and engage residents in different ways.

Paths, trails and the active transport network play an important role in promoting a healthy and active lifestyle. Walking, cycling and running are three of the highest participation activities, and the network of paths and trails are vital in connecting communities to parks and reserves, activity centres and community facilities.

The Strategy development was informed by evidence-based research and investigations (refer Attachment 4 Background Report) and community consultation which included:

1. On-line and hard copy survey submissions
2. Community drop-in session at Monash Aquatic and Recreation Centre
3. Consultation with Council Advisory and Reference Groups (e.g. Positive Aging Reference Group, Gender Equity Advisory Committee, Disability Advisory Committee, Multicultural Advisory Committee and Young Persons Reference Group)
4. Direct engagement with year 7 secondary school students
5. Direct engagement with Monash's new Community Panel Group members.

For more information on the initial consultation refer to Attachment 3 - Part A Initial Consultation.

DISCUSSION

Public Exhibition

The public exhibition process provides stakeholders and the community with the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Strategy prior to finalisation.

The draft Strategy was exhibited on Shape Monash for community feedback from 31 August to 7 October 2021 and was promoted via the following channels:

- Monash Bulletin: Distribution commenced 20 September 2021
- Monash e-news: 23 September 2021
- Email to Shape Monash project page subscribers and general subscribers with interests aligned with active recreation: 30 September 2021
- Email to Online Community Panel members: 30 September 2021.

At the close of consultation, a total of 31 submissions were received:

- 23 submissions via Shape Monash and
- 8 submissions via email.

A summary of the submissions (anonymised) is provided on pages 5 –17 of **Attachment 2 – Part B Community & Stakeholder Submissions on the Draft Strategy**.

All submissions on the draft Strategy have been considered, and where it has been deemed appropriate and feasible to do so, changes have been made to the draft Strategy.

A final Strategy (Attachment 1) is now presented to Council for consideration and endorsement.

Changes to the Draft

Table 1 – Changes to the Draft Strategy outlines the recommended changes to the draft Strategy following the review of community submissions.

Table 1 – Changes to the Draft Strategy

Section	Page/s	Change to the Draft Strategy
Footer	all pages	Removed "(draft)"
Front cover	Front cover	Removed "Draft Strategy" and changed the date to November 2021
Methodology	8	Removed "(this document)" from stage 4 description
Engaging community and stakeholders	11	Included "Public exhibition: 31 August - 7 October 2021"
Active recreation framework	16	Added "safe" to principle 4 of the Active Recreation Framework
Grammar corrections	19, 21, 25	As per feedback from Sport and Recreation Victoria
Physical requirements	19	Statement added - Universal design principles should be applied to the planning and development of all active recreation facilities to ensure that barriers to participation are removed or minimised (see guidance note page 52).
Implementation plan	28	Changed to: Cost estimates provided within the implementation plan are based on an opinion of probable <i>capital</i> cost for infrastructure similar to the scope recommended.
Implementation plan	28	A statement has been included relating to including an additional 30% has been applied to the adjacent table summarising the estimated cost of implementation to allow for the additional costs, including design, project management and contingency. A statement relating to consideration of annual cost escalations is also included.
Implementation plan	28	An additional column has been added to provide the total estimated cost including an additional 30% has been applied to the adjacent table summarising the estimated cost of implementation to allow for the additional costs, including design, project management and contingency.
Implementation plan	29-31	Updated estimated costs for project recommendations
Implementation plan	30	Item 9 - Batesford Reserve - Install local-level outdoor fitness equipment node - \$50k
Hierarchy	44	Catchment of the Municipal hierarchy changed from 4-5km to 3-5km to align with other references within the Strategy
Active Recreation Node Sample Designs	49	Component costs and total cost updated (increased). Inclusion of cost estimates for other items that could be included/exchanged within active recreation nodes to indicate design flexibility. Alternate examples now only provide the estimated total costs.
Universal design principles	52	Universal design ensures that all facilities and environments are innately accessible to the broadest range of participants as possible. The universal design philosophy is focused on user-centred design and considers the needs of all potential facility users from the outset rather than attempting to retrofit accessibility as an afterthought. Active recreation facilities are aimed at providing participation opportunities to all residents of the City of Monash. Ensuring that universal design principles are applied to the planning of each facility will ensure that barriers are minimised. Further information can be found in the Victorian Government Design

		Guide for Everyone: https://sport.vic.gov.au/publications-and-resources/design-everyone-guide
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A full report detailing the community feedback received on the draft Strategy and project team responses is provided in **Attachment 2 – Part B Community & Stakeholder Submissions on the Draft Strategy**.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are a number of Council policies, strategies and plans that provide an important framework for the Strategy. In particular, the Council Plan, A Healthy and Resilient Monash, Monash Open Space Strategy, Gender Equity Strategy and Action Plan, Age Friendly Monash, Active Monash Capital Works Priorities Framework, Active Monash's Vision and Active Communities Framework and Council's Asset Management Policy.

Key State Government strategies and plans that impact on this project include:

- Active Victoria Framework
- Safe and Strong - A Victorian Gender Equality Policy

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The social implications of adopting and implementing the Strategy include:

- a) Enhanced sense of community and community pride e.g. active recreation opportunities for families and social cohesion.
- b) Enhanced active recreation participation opportunities for women and girls e.g. Page 11 of the Strategy specifically discusses *Female Participation in Active Recreation* and recognises increasing opportunities for participation in active recreation is vital for encouraging women and girls to be more physically active.
- c) Improved community health and well-being and opportunities to participate will contribute to happy and healthier communities.
- d) Improved physical literacy skills development.
- e) Improved flexibility, accessibility and reduced barriers to participation i.e. people can *participate in their own way*.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no human rights implications.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Strategy is aspirational and not all of the recommendations will be implemented in the life of the Strategy. The indicative costs for recommendations are outlined in the *Strategy Implementation Plan* (Attachment 1, p. 28-32) and summarised below:

Actions	Estimated Construction Cost	Total Estimated Cost* (incl. Design, PM & Contingency etc)
High Priority	\$2.535m	\$3.296m
Medium Priority	\$6.015m	\$7.819m
Low Priority	\$0.575m	\$0.748m
Total	\$9.125m	\$11.863m

*30% added to construction costs to allow for design, site investigations, project management & contingency costs.

CONCLUSION

Extensive planning and consultation has been undertaken to inform the development of the Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy.

It is important to note that the Strategy is a high-level strategic document that seeks to identify the active recreation needs of existing and future residents of Monash and identifies potential gaps in the provision and opportunities to address those gaps. The Strategy will guide the future planning, provision, design and management of active recreation spaces and facilities in Monash for the next decade.

The Strategy is aspirational, and it is acknowledged that not all of the recommendations will be able to be implemented in the life of the Strategy. Implementation relies on a number of factors including budget approval, external funding, urban densification and population growth, open space accessibility and capacity.

It is recommended Council endorse the final Strategy as presented in attachment 1 and note that the Strategy actions (including active recreation infrastructure improvements) will be considered as part of Council's annual capital works budget process and subject to Council budget approval and/or external funding.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy

Attachment 2 – Part B Community & Stakeholder Submissions on the Draft Strategy

Attachment 3 – Part A Initial Consultation

Attachment 4 – Background Report