

Nillumbik Shire Council Recreation Strategy 2011-2019 Volume One

March 2011



Acknowledgements

Nillumbik Shire Council acknowledges the contributions of many people and organisations who have had input into the development of the Recreation Strategy.

Council would like to thank the residents, recreation and sporting clubs and organisations that provided input into the Strategy. These valuable contributions will help to ensure the provision of quality services and facilities to the Nillumbik community now and in the future.

Council appreciates the contribution by Sport and Recreation Victoria including the funding support received for the project.

The Recreation Strategy was prepared by officers from Council's Leisure Services Unit in collaboration with consultants *The Leisure Planners*.

Human Rights Charter Compatibility Statement

In accordance with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, the Recreation Strategy is assessed as being compatible with the human rights protected by the charter. This assessment is based on a Statement of Compatibility of the Human Rights protected by the Charter that are relevant to the Policy.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5	SECTION TWO	23
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	6	1.10 SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS.....	24
1.1 INTRODUCTION	9	1.11 MAJOR LEISURE FACILITIES.....	24
1.2 STRATEGY STRUCTURE.....	9	1.11.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues	24
1.3 PURPOSE OF THIS PROJECT	10	1.11.2. Indoor Sports Courts	25
1.4 STRATEGIC VISION	10	1.11.3 Regional Facilities	25
1.4.1. Strategy Principles.....	10	1.11.4. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations	25
1.5 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK	12	1.12 COMMUNITY FACILITIES	27
1.5.1. Internal documents.....	12	1.12.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues	27
1.5.2. External Documents	12	1.12.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations	27
1.6 LIVING IN NILLUMBIK	13	1.13 RECREATION TRAILS.....	30
1.7 KEY TRENDS.....	14	1.13.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues	30
1.8 WHAT DID WE FIND?	17	1.13.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations	30
1.9 WHAT WE CURRENTLY DO	17	1.14 OPEN SPACE/OUTDOOR SPORTING FACILITIES.....	32
1.9.1. What do we provide?	18	1.14.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues	32
1.9.2. How much does it cost?.....	18	1.14.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations	32
		1.15 RECREATION FACILITY PLANNING....	38
		1.15.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues	38
		1.15.2. Annual Sporting Capital Works Scheme	38
		1.15.3. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations	38

1.16 SKATE/BMX/SCOOTER FACILITY..... 40	1.19 RECREATION DEVELOPMENT ROLE.. 47
1.16.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues 40	1.19.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues 47
1.16.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations 40	1.19.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations 47
1.17 ADMINISTRATION/COMMUNICATION 42	1.20 PLACE BASED PLANNING 51
1.17.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues 42	1.20.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues 51
1.17.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations 42	1.20.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations 51
1.18 OCCUPANCY ARRANGEMENTS..... 45	
1.18.1. Summary of Key Findings/Issues 45	
1.18.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations 45	



Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

The previous **Recreation Strategy** was completed in 2000 and the majority of the key recommendations have been implemented over the past ten years. Council wished to develop a new plan to guide its recreation planning and service delivery over the next eight years.

This document outlines the strategy that will guide Nillumbik Shire Council in its planning and decision making with respect to the provision of recreation services and facilities. It also outlines Council’s key priorities for recreation provision and the actions it will take over the next eight years to achieve these priorities. The information contained in the document is drawn from extensive community consultation and market research.

It should be noted that individual projects will be considered on a case by case basis and may depend on the availability of external funding and Council’s budget priorities.

The Nillumbik Recreation Strategy is presented in the following three Volumes:

- **Volume One** – Nillumbik Recreation Strategy 2011 - 2019
- **Volume Two** – Issues and Options Paper
- **Volume Three** – Summary of Research and Consultation

NILLUMBIK RECREATION – KEY THEMES

The following key themes, not presented in any priority order, will drive the future strategy for recreation provision in the Shire.

- Theme One:** Nillumbik residents have **high recreation participation rates** when compared to state and national averages.
- Theme Two:** Opportunities to **increase participation** in healthy and active lifestyles should be supported.
- Theme Three:** Future funding and development should **prioritise unstructured activities**.
- Theme Four:** Resource distribution will focus on **improving equity** across all sectors of the community.
- Theme Five:** **Effective communication** is required between Council and recreation clubs and organisations.
- Theme Six:** Improved management, occupancy arrangements and effective programming will support **increased access** to facilities.
- Theme Seven:** Enhanced **equity and consistency in fees and charges** will improve the sustainability of facilities.
- Theme Eight:** Changes to services and programs to assist **‘time poor’** residents to increase participation levels.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

(i) High Participation

The survey results indicated that Nillumbik residents are active participants in recreation and sporting activities. High participation rates will continue, with approximately 94 per cent of respondents indicating they would like to take part in recreation activities in the future.

The review of Nillumbik recreation provision indicates a strong emphasis on facility provision with limited direct programming or involvement in health promotion.

(ii) Increased Participation

Promoting increased participation in physical activity is a priority for both the Victorian and Australian governments. Continuing health studies' evidence indicates people throughout the country have become less active, which in turn has capacity to contribute to a number of health problems and conditions.

While the Nillumbik participation rates are above the state and national averages, the consultation undertaken as part of this strategy identified that there has been a decline in participation over the last five years of approximately three per cent.

There is an opportunity, through the programs and services provided, to play an active role in recreation development and facilitation to increase participation and activity levels.

(iii) Unstructured Activities

Participation in unstructured activities such as walking, bike riding and swimming were identified as both current and future priority activities.

Facilities, support infrastructure and services that support unstructured activities were identified as priorities.

(iv) Equity in Resource Distribution

Historically, the provision of leisure and sporting facilities and programs were targeted at traditional senior male sporting activities, resulting in inequities in the provision of facilities and services that support junior and female participation. One of the key priorities for this strategy is to address the inequities to ensure greater access to programs and facilities for all sections of the community.

(v) Effective Communication

There is a need to work in collaboration and partnership with recreation and sporting clubs and organisations in the delivery of recreation and sporting activities across the Shire. Effective communication methods are critical to the success of these partnerships. Council needs to develop a communication strategy that includes the implementation of a range of communication initiatives.

(vi) Increased Access to Facilities

The study identified the need to undertake a number of planning studies and master plans for Council's major leisure facilities and open space areas. The master plans are required to guide the future use, development and priorities for Council's major recreation and sporting assets to ensure the facilities:

- continue to meet community need and expectation
- improve financial viability
- provide for ongoing asset sustainability and renewal.

(vii) Equity in Fees and Charges

To ensure equitable and transparent processes are in place to manage and coordinate the delivery of recreation services and facilities, there is a need to review existing, and where necessary develop new recreation related policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are required to direct the decision-making and conditions of use for Council-owned recreation facilities. Some of the key policies that require review and update include:

- occupancy arrangements
- fees and charges for use of Council's recreation facilities
- Capital Works Policy
- Sponsorship Policy.

(vii) Time Poor

Residents stated that they were 'time poor' indicating both work and family commitments as the main barrier restricting current and future participation in recreation activities. Changes to services and programs are required to assist people to increase participation levels including:

- increased/changed operating hours
- increased information about service options
- increased access to child care services.

KEY TARGETS

The recommended actions within the strategy aim to achieve the following targets over the next eight years of the plan:

- Retain leisure participation rates across the Shire at 85 per cent or higher.
- Increase junior and female participation in sport and recreation activities by 10 per cent.
- Ensure facilities are maintained at the agreed service levels and are fit for use.
- Increase communication with recreation and sporting clubs with a 75 per cent satisfaction rating.
- Improved sustainability of facilities including reduced water and energy use.
- Increased funding to support participation in and development of unstructured activities.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The strategic directions and recommended actions are based on the priorities identified through the consultation process, the agreed principles and Council's key directions identified in the Council Plan 2009 - 2013.

In line with the consultation process, the Recreation Strategy and recommendations are presented under the following headings:

- Major Leisure Facilities
- Community Facilities
- Recreation Trails
- Open Space/Outdoor Sporting Facilities
- Recreation Facility Planning
- Skate/BMX/Scooter Facilities
- Administration/Communication
- Occupancy Arrangements
- Recreation Development Role
- Place Based Planning

Section One

Introduction and Background



1.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous Recreation Strategy was completed in 2000. Council wished to review this plan and develop a new one to guide its recreation planning and service delivery over the next eight years.

This document outlines the strategy that will guide Council in its planning and decision making with respect to the provision of recreation services and facilities. It also outlines Council's key priorities for recreation provision and the actions it will take over the next eight years to achieve these priorities.

The information contained in the document is drawn from extensive community consultation and market research.

The study process included the following seven Phases:

- Phase One:** Project Establishment
- Phase Two:** Market Research and Consultation
- Phase Three:** Needs Analysis
- Phase Four:** Identification of Key Issues
- Phase Five:** Strategy Development/Issues and Options
- Phase Six:** Draft Strategy/ Implementation Plan
- Phase Seven:** Final Strategy

1.2 STRATEGY STRUCTURE

The Nillumbik Recreation Strategy is presented in the following three Volumes:

Volume One – Nillumbik Recreation Strategy 2011 - 2019

Volume One provides a summary of the key recreation issues and recommendations for implementation over the next eight years under the following headings:

- Major Leisure Facilities
- Community Facilities
- Recreation Trails
- Open Space/Outdoor Sporting Facilities
- Recreation Facility Planning
- Skate/BMX/Scooter Facilities
- Administration/Communication
- Occupancy Arrangements
- Recreation Development Role
- Place Based Planning

Each priority area is presented under the following sub headings:

- Key Issues
- Strategy Direction/ Recommendations and Actions
- Priority
- Resources Required

The priority column within the tables indicates a timeline for each recommendation/action using the following key:

- Short 0 to 3 years
- Medium 4 to 6 years
- Long 7 plus years

The Resources Required column identifies if the action can be achieved within existing resources or if additional one-off resources are required (operational and/or capital).

Volume Two – Issues and Options Paper

Volume Two provides a summary of the key issues and needs based on a summary of the extensive market research and consultation undertaken as part of the project. The key issues and options are presented under the headings identified in Volume One.

Volume Three – Summary of Research and Consultation

Volume Three provides a summary of the extensive market research and consultation undertaken that directs the key recommendations and actions.

Included in Volume Three are the following key consultation summaries:

- Demographic review
- Review of Nillumbik Leisure Services
- Telephone survey (400 people)
- Major facility user surveys (929 surveys)
- Open space surveys (200 surveys)
- Place based workshops (four workshops)
- Overview of recreation facilities within the Shire
- Discussions with neighbouring municipalities

1.3 PURPOSE OF THIS PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to:

Develop a comprehensive Recreation Strategy to provide a strategic approach to the provision of recreation and sporting services and infrastructure within Nillumbik over the period 2011 – 2019.

1.4 STRATEGIC VISION

As a means of guiding the planning process for the development of the Recreation Strategy the Project Steering Committee developed the following vision:

Council values the role that recreation can play in improving the health and wellbeing of the people of Nillumbik. Residents will be involved in a wide variety of recreation activities and understand the importance active participation and volunteerism play in building strong and healthy communities.

The Shire will be characterised by a number of well planned and sustainable facilities and services, developed to ensure that the needs of the changing community are catered for. Opportunities to participate will be the result of strong partnerships between the Council, the community and other providers.

The uniqueness of our Shire will be celebrated and there will be something for everyone regardless of their age, ability, income, gender, or cultural background.

1.4.1. Strategy Principles

The strategy vision will be supported by the following ten principles.

Principle 1 – Partnerships

Council will work in partnership with recreation organisations, clubs, commercial operators, schools, industry groups and the state and federal governments to plan, develop, manage, fund and operate facilities, programs and services, which enhance the image and amenity of each community of interest and enhance opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in a range of activities.

Principle 2 – Community Engagement

Council will encourage community involvement in recreation facilities, programs and services by supporting the continued development of local groups and organisations.

Principle 3 – Infrastructure Renewal/Development

Council will develop an ongoing program to upgrade and renew existing leisure and sporting assets. The planning and development of new major leisure facilities will take into consideration regional facility provision.

Principle 4 – Equity

Council will prioritise equitable access to leisure facilities and services regardless of age, gender, cultural background and ability through future planning and decision making.

Council will strategically plan to provide an equitable distribution of different size and standard facilities based on categorisation of facilities as local, suburban, municipal and regional.

Principle 5 – Community Strengthening

Council will give priority to facilities, programs and services that encourage and support community strengthening and capacity building.

Principle 6 – Participation

Council will encourage participation in structured and unstructured recreation by supporting and facilitating access to a range of recreation opportunities.

Principle 7 – Sustainability

Council will support projects that protect the Shire's natural assets and outdoor recreation areas to ensure they will continue to meet people's need for high quality environmental experiences.

The development and/or redevelopment of sporting reserves and buildings will incorporate sustainable water management practices and incorporate environmentally sustainable design principles.

Principle 8 – Technology

Council will keep up-to-date with the latest technologies in the provision of recreation activities and the operation and maintenance of recreation facilities.

Principle 9 – Changing Social Conditions

The planning and delivery of recreation services and programs will take into consideration the changing social conditions. This will include hours of operation, fee structures and cultural issues.

Principle 10 – Review and Consultation

Council will implement a review process to continually monitor and evaluate the recreation needs of residents.

The vision and principles support and are consistent with the vision for Nillumbik Shire Council stated in the Council Plan 2009 - 2013.

1.5 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

There are a large number of policies, strategies and plans produced by both Council and external bodies that were relevant to the development of the Nillumbik Recreation Strategy.

The Council Plan 2009 - 2013 sets the clear vision for the Shire and forms the guiding document for all Council activities over the next four years. The following strategies and policies are incorporated into the Recreation Strategy.

1.5.1. Internal documents

Council Strategies and Policies

- Council Plan 2009 – 2013 – revised June 2008
- Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2010 – 2013
- Recreation Trails Strategy 2001
- Open Space Strategy 2006
- Living & Learning Nillumbik Strategic Plan 2006 – 2009
- Municipal Early Years Plan, Our children, Our community 2009 – 2013
- Leisure Facilities Strategy Plan – 1997
- Diamond Creek Twenty/20 2007
- Sustainable Water Management Plan
- Climate Change Action Plan
- Greenwedge Management Plan (draft)
- Footpath Strategy – 2006

Master Plans

The following master plans have been established to guide the future development and use of a number of open space areas that accommodate outdoor structured and unstructured sporting and leisure facilities:

- Plenty War Memorial Park Master Plan
- Eltham North Reserve Master Plan
- Eltham Lower Park Master Plan
- Hurstbridge Concept Plan 2010
- Edendale Farm Master Plan 2009

1.5.2. External Documents

- Go for your life – Leading the way to an active and healthy Victoria 2006 – 2010
- The Future of Sport in Australia – 2009
- A Five Year Strategic Plan for Sport and Recreation Victoria 2005 – 2010
- Victorian State Government Health Promotion Priorities for Victoria 2007 – 2012
- VicHealth Strategic Framework 2009 – 2013
- Active Australia 2010
- Australian Sport: The Pathway to Success
- Parks Victoria Plan – Linking People and Places 2002

Recreation Definition

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

“What people choose to do in their free time for the purpose of physical activity, enjoyment and relaxation.

This includes organised recreation (activities such as basketball, football, lawn bowls and netball) and non organised recreation (activities such as walking, gardening, cards and playing in the park).”

1.6 LIVING IN NILLUMBİK

Nillumbik is called the Green Wedge Shire and is known as the ‘lungs’ of Melbourne. The beautiful open spaces and natural treed environment, together with friendly villages, including Eltham, Diamond Creek, Hurstbridge and St Andrews, add to the lifestyle of the Shire.

The Shire of Nillumbik is located less than 25 kilometres north-east of Melbourne, and has the Yarra River as its southern boundary. It extends 29 kilometres to Kinglake National Park in the north. The Shire stretches approximately 20 kilometres from the Plenty River and Yan Yean Road in the west, to Christmas Hills and the Yarra escarpment in the east.

The Shire covers an area of 431.94 square kilometres and has an estimated population of 60,623 who live in close-knit communities which range from typical urban settings to remote and tranquil bush properties.

The population age profile review indicates people in their most active ages (0 to 34 years) account for just under half the population (47.5 per cent) whilst people aged 35 years plus represent 52.5 per cent of residents. This indicates that the current pressure and

demands being placed on Council to provide a range of leisure activities and facilities to meet the needs of residents will continue.

There was a significant share of people in the family age groups in Nillumbik in 2006, most notably children in school age groups (five-17) and their parents in their thirties and forties. This age structure is indicative of an established housing market which is attracting more mature families.

The review of annual income levels indicates that a high proportion of residents have access to disposable income enabling them to pay for and participate in a range of leisure activities of their choice. In excess of 54.4 per cent of households have access to weekly incomes \$1,000+. However, the review also indicated that a smaller proportion of the population had limited access to disposable income and therefore requires leisure facilities and activities to be set at an affordable fee level to encourage their participation.

Approximately nine out of 10 Nillumbik residents have access to a private vehicle, which could be used to travel to leisure activities and facilities. This indicates that residents are relatively mobile and not as reliant on public transport systems to access facilities.



1.7 KEY TRENDS

The following provides a summary of current sport, recreation and leisure trends that may impact upon the development and future recreation provision in Nillumbik.

1.7.1. Sport and Recreation Trends

The following summary of general sport and recreation trends impacting on Victorians and their demand for recreation, sport and leisure activities has been developed using a range of research documents including:

- *Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport: Australian Sports Commission Annual Report 2005*
- *Victorians' Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport (2007)*
- *Local Sport and Recreation in Victoria Regional Summary Report 2007: Sport and Recreation Victoria.*

A combination of these documents' findings, in relation to wider general sport and recreation trends and facility provision trends in Victorian and Australian Society over the past decade, are summarised in the following sections.

1.7.2. General Leisure Trends Impacting on Sport and Recreation Participation and Facilities

The following highlights the range of general sport and recreation trends that are likely to impact on Victorian communities in the future.

- **A gradual ageing of the population**
As life expectancy increases, birth rates stay low and the baby boomers of the 1950s and 1960s grow older. A new demand is being placed on providing specific programs and program areas for older people.

- **Flexibility in the times when people recreate**
As demands on people's time increases and work practices change, people are seeking to take their sport and recreation at different times, over a broad spread of hours and at facilities that offer a number of activities under the one roof.
- **Increased variety in sport and recreation options**
People's sport and recreation options are changing towards newer, more varied activities offered over a greater range of timeframes, compared to previous decades, where limited variety in activities and scheduling occurred.
- **Constraints to sport and recreation participation**
Lack of time, lack of facilities close by, family and work constraints, health problems and cost of services or use of facilities are the main constraints to many Victorian's sport and recreation participation.
- **Different people want different activities**
The broadening of cultural backgrounds, age and gender of the population sees the need for facilities to offer potential users a much more varied range of programs and services than previously offered. All year round available indoor and outdoor sport and recreation facilities also provide the greatest diversity of activities throughout the different seasons impacted by Victoria's weather.
- **Provision of high standards and quality of facilities and services**
People are frequently looking for high standard, high quality facilities and services to meet their sport and recreation needs.

This has also seen the trend for indoor facilities becoming very popular as they

allow activity in safe and secure spaces in all weather and environmental conditions.

This indicates that building low standard, low cost facilities will not attract the maximum user market.

- **Desire for activities to be affordable**
The development of multi-purpose aquatic, fitness and indoor sport centres has enabled the high operating cost activity of aquatics (in many cases) to be cross subsidised by more profitable activity areas such as health and fitness, food and beverage and entertainment areas.

This has enabled many facilities to keep general entry fees low to encourage use whilst seeking users who want special services to contribute at a greater level to subsidise the cost of such activities.
- **Recognition of strong links between physical activity and health**
Preventative health care and active lifestyles are very important to many Victorians and aquatic, health and fitness, indoor and outdoor sport activities are becoming a large part of people's activity choices.
- **Expectations of equity and access**
Today's society expects people to have equitable access to public facilities. This has seen improved design features to increase accessibility to and within facilities. Added to this is the growing array of programs and activities offered to people of all abilities, physical condition and skill levels.

1.7.3. Comparison of National/State Sport and Recreation Participation Trends

The Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS) is a joint initiative of the Australian Sports Commission and the state and territory government agencies responsible for sport and recreation, and was first conducted in 2006.

This publication presents results from the fifth annual ERASS collection, which was conducted in 2008. ERASS collects information on the frequency, duration, nature and type of activities that are participated in by people aged 15 years and over for exercise, recreation and sport during the 12 months prior to interview.

Participation means active playing participation, and does not include coaching, refereeing or spectating. Activities related to work or household chores are also not included.¹

During the 12 months prior to interview in 2008, an estimated 13 million people aged 15 years and over participated in physical activity for exercise, recreation and sport at least once per week, at a participation rate of 79.4 per cent. However, the participation rate drops significantly when higher frequency of involvement is considered.

¹ Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey 2007 Annual Report
© Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport 2007

It should be noted that different methodology and population samples were used in gathering the national, state and Nillumbik participation figures. Seasonal variations, methodology, sampling techniques and sample size may contribute to variations.

An estimated 7.1 million people aged 15 years and over exercised three times per week or more (43.5 per cent). A total of 3.4 million people (20.6 per cent) either did not participate in any activity, or participated less than once a week in the 12 months before the interview.

Based on the participation trends identified from the 2008 ERASS and the Nillumbik resident survey (2008), the table below details Nillumbik's top 10 most popular activities compared to the national and state leisure participation trends.

Table 1
Top 10 Most Popular Activity Comparisons

Category	N P Rate % 2008*	V P Rate % 2008+	Nillumbik R T S 2008^
Walking for recreation	33%	34%	54%
Aerobics/fitness	20%	20.8%	20%
Swimming	12%	11.3%	22%
Cycling	9.7%	10.7%	16%
Running	7.8%	8.7%	6%
Tennis	5.8%	6.4%	10%
Bushwalking	3.6%	4.6%	NA
Golf	2.6%	6.8%	12%
Football Outdoor	4.2%	3.6%	6% (soccer)
Netball	3.2%	3.8%	4%

* National Participation Rate % 2008

+ Victorian Participation Rate % 2008

^ Nillumbik Resident Telephone Survey 2008

A review of the national and state participation rates in relation to the most popular activities undertaken indicates:

- Nillumbik has a higher participation level than the national and state trends.
- Walking for recreation was identified as the most popular activity at a national, state and local level.
- Aerobics/fitness, swimming and cycling are all within the top five most popular activities at a national, state and local level.
- Activities such as swimming, cycling, golf and tennis had a higher participation rate in Nillumbik than the national and state averages.

1.8 WHAT DID WE FIND?

The study's market research, consultation and leisure trend reviews indicate that Nillumbik residents have a number of very localised trends in relation to leisure participation and facility usage.

The following broad trends will influence the directions for the future provision of recreation services and facilities.

The young age profile of almost half of Nillumbik residents (47.5 per cent in their most active years) will see high participation levels continue even though there will be a gradual ageing of the population over time.

Based on the results of the telephone survey Nillumbik has a very high participation rate in recreation activities when compared to state and national averages.

- The high participation rate will continue in the future with approximately 94 per cent of respondents indicating they would like to take part in recreation activities in the future.
- The review of annual income levels indicates that a high proportion of residents have access to income levels that allow discretionary spending on recreation activities.
- Participation in unstructured activities such as walking, bike riding, swimming and going to the gym were identified as both current and future priority activities.
- Facilities and services that support these unstructured activities were identified as priorities.

- Residents indicated that they were 'time poor' indicating both work and family commitments as the main barrier restricting current and future participation in recreation activities.
- Increased communication between Council and recreation clubs/organisations was identified as a key future priority.

1.9 WHAT WE CURRENTLY DO

Across Council, a number of departments are responsible for the provision and maintenance of leisure services and facilities.

The Leisure Services Unit however, is the key area responsible for the management, strategic planning and policy development of recreation services and facilities.

The core functions of the Nillumbik Leisure Services Unit include:

- facility management and development
- open space planning and management
- liaison and support for recreation clubs and organisations
- strategic planning and policy development
- program and community development.

The Leisure Services Unit is responsible for the delivery of the above core functions. The current structure provides for 9.95 equivalent full time staff.

1.9.1. What do we provide?

A review of the current facility provision indicates that Nillumbik residents have access to a diverse range of recreation and sporting opportunities including:

- one hundred and fifteen (115) clubs across thirty-five (35) different sports
- thirty-two (32) active sporting grounds
- thirty five(35) sports and community pavilions
- over seven thousand (7,375) hectares of parks and reserves, including:
 - Council land 839 ha
 - Crown land 6280 ha
 - government utilities 256 ha
- sixty (60) playgrounds
- over twenty-five (25) kilometres of shared recreation trails
- six (6) major leisure facilities
- eleven (11) Council-managed community halls and five (5) committee of management operated halls.

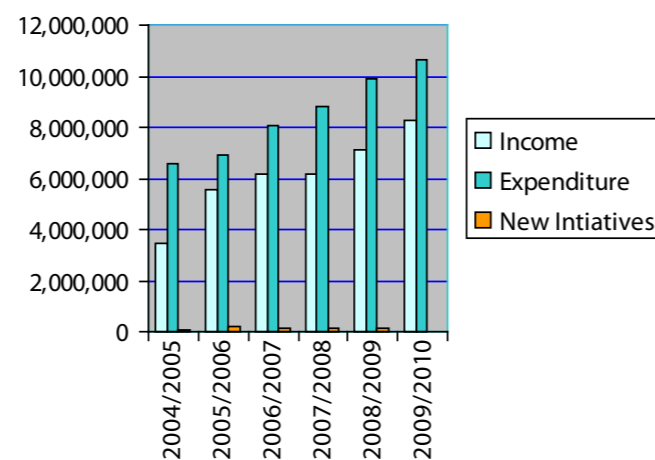
1.9.2. How Much Does it Cost?

(i) Operational Income and Expenditure

Graph 1 presents the total operational income and expenditure for Leisure Services, together with funding for new initiatives, over the past five years.

It should be noted that the data relates to the provision of leisure services and is therefore a combination of budgets from Leisure Services and relevant parks and gardens budgets. These figures exclude libraries, arts and cultural facilities and services, and Living & Learning Centres.

Graph 1.
Nillumbik Shire Council Operational Leisure Income and Expenditure 2004/2005 – 2009/2010



A review of the operational income and expenditure related to the provision of leisure services and facilities in Nillumbik indicates that:

- Council receives approximately \$7.1M from fees and charges for the use of facilities and participation in programs and services
- of the total income received approximately, 97 per cent is generated through Council's major leisure facilities
- Council currently expends approximately \$10M on the delivery of leisure facilities and services to residents; this represents 16 per cent of Councils total budget
- over the past five years, the cost of providing leisure services has remained relatively constant, while the level and quality of services has increased significantly

- in 2004/2005 the net cost of delivering leisure services to the Nillumbik community was approximately \$3M and in 2009/2010 the net cost to Council was \$2.2M
- based on the estimated population size of 60,623 people the net cost per resident in 2009/2010 was \$36 per person per annum
- of the total expenditure, approximately 70 per cent is related to the management and operation of the major leisure facilities
- the table below provides a summary of the income and expenditure related to the provision of leisure services in the Shire for the 2009/2010 financial year.

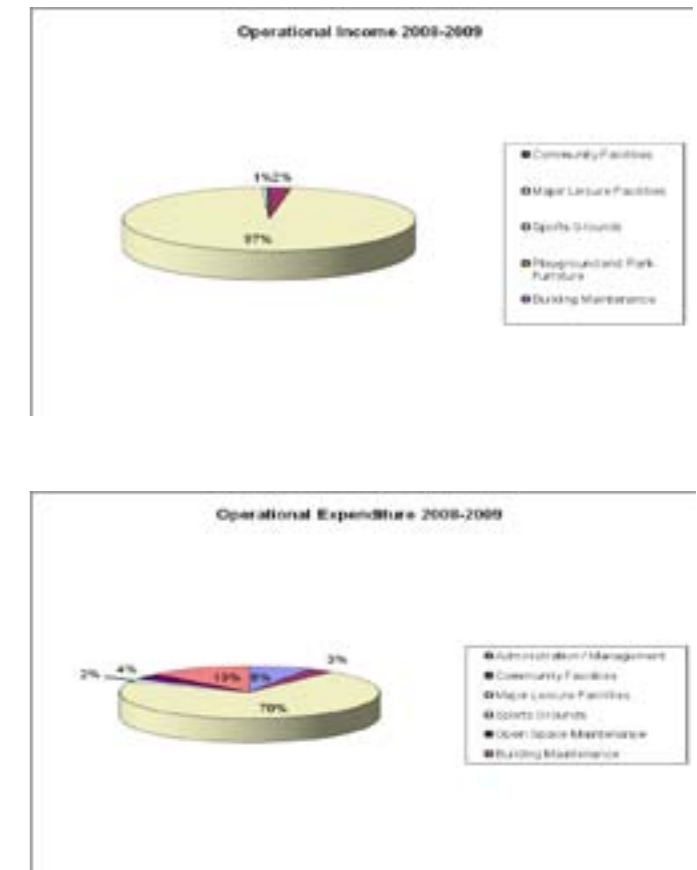


Table 2
Summary of Financial Review Nillumbik Leisure Services 2009/2010

Category	2009/2010
Income	\$8,246,546
Expenditure	\$10,649,109
Net cost	(\$2,202,563)
Estimated Population (ABS 2006)	60,623
Revenue per user	\$136
Expenditure per resident	\$175
Net contribution per user per annum	\$36
Revenue as a % of Expenditure	77%

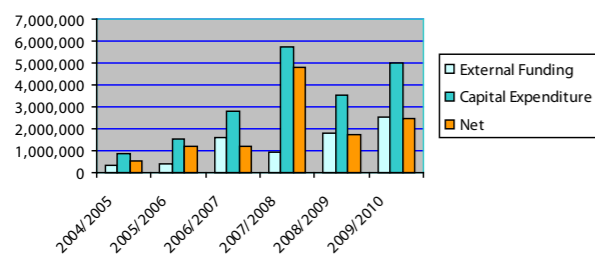
Table 3
Resource Distribution 2009/2010

Category	Number of Participants	% of Total
Senior Males	790	26
Senior Females	70	2.3
Junior Males	1,850	62
Junior Females	206	6.8
Veterans	86	2.9
TOTAL	3,002	100

(ii) Capital Income and Expenditure

Graph 2 details the capital, income and expenditure that Council provided over the last five years for the provision of leisure services.

Graph 2.
Nillumbik Council Capital Expenditure 2004/2005 – 2009/2010



(iii) Distribution of Resources

A review and comparison of the distribution of Council's resources to male, female, senior, veteran and junior leisure participants was completed. The costs associated with the provision of outdoor sporting reserves have been used as a case study to indicate the resourcing level to the different target markets.

Table 3 details the distribution of resources based on the 2009/2010 statistics. The cost of maintaining outdoor sporting reserves in 2009/2010 was \$291,155 and the participation average for the summer and winter season was 3,002 people.

The following review indicates:

- The majority of outdoor sporting participants are junior males, representing 62 per cent of total participation, followed by senior males 26 per cent.
- There is significantly less use of outdoor sporting reserves by females for structured activities with both senior and junior participation representing only 9.1 per cent.

- In relation to outdoor sporting facilities, significantly greater resources are provided for male dominated senior sporting activities than female or junior sporting activities.
- While there is greater use of indoor sporting and leisure facilities by females and juniors, anecdotal evidence indicates that there is still a predominance of use by males.
- Council has undertaken a number of initiatives to address the inequities in resource allocation including:
 - the redevelopment of the health and fitness components at the Eltham Leisure Centre
 - the development of the health and fitness area at the Diamond Valley Sport and Fitness Centre
 - the development of an additional synthetic hockey pitch at Plenty Park
 - the proposed development of the Diamond Creek Stadium with netball and gymnastics being priority users
 - the development of the Eltham North Synthetic Soccer pitch to support further participation in soccer by females and juniors
- resurfacing of tennis facilities including the provision of night lighting to support greater participation
- greater emphasis on the development of the recreation trails network.

A comparison of male and female usage at Council's major leisure facilities has been undertaken. The comparison is based on membership only as casual use does not record gender. Table 4, on page 22 details the participation levels of members at each facility.

The review of participation levels indicates that:

- there are a greater number of male golf club members than female members
- with the exception of the Diamond Valley Sports and Fitness Centre, there are more female gym members than male members
- participation in learn-to-swim programs, which are primarily for children, is even between boys and girls
- due to the significant casual use of these facilities and the lack of reporting, the subsidy comparison between males and females is not able to be accurately calculated.

Table 5, on page 22 indicates the current junior and senior participation levels of indoor sporting codes.

(iv) Conclusion

The above analysis indicates that for Council to provide the same level or improve on current service levels in the provision of leisure services and facilities to the community, it will need to maintain its financial commitment for both recurrent and capital funding.

In some circumstances, additional funding support will be required to address the changing trends in leisure participation and demands for access to quality facilities and services, such as the continued upgrade and development of recreation trails.

Table 4
Participation at Major Leisure Facilities

Facility	Membership Category	% of Total
Yarrambat Golf Course	Male	63
	Females	21.6
	Veterans	14.85
	Juniors	0.23
Diamond Creek Community Centre		
(Health and Fitness)	Male	36.3
	Female	63.7
Diamond Valley Sports and Fitness Centre		
(Health and Fitness)	Male	64
	Female	36
Eltham Leisure Centre		
- Learn to Swim	Male	51
	Female	49
- Group Fitness	Male	11.6
	Female	88.4
- Swim Pass	Male	48.5
	Female	51.5
- Gym	Male	44.2
	Female	55.8

Table 5
Junior and Senior Indoor Sport Participation

Sport	Junior Players	Senior Players	Total Players
Netball	1,960	2,250	4,210
Basketball	4,870	5,905	10,775
Badminton	60	350	410
Table Tennis	30	200	230
TOTAL	6,920	8,705	15,625

Section Two

Summary of Key
Issues and Strategic
Directions

1.10 SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

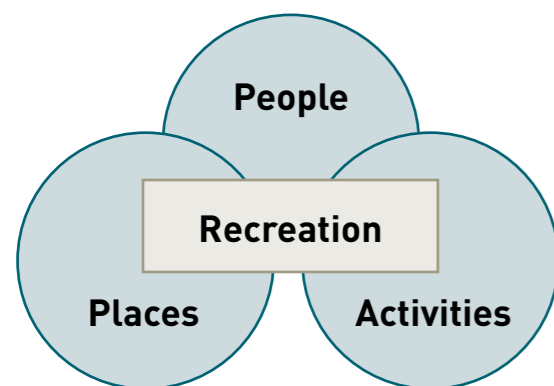
This section of the report consolidates the findings from the market research and consultation, to provide the framework and recommendations for the Nillumbik Recreation Strategy.

The strategic directions and recommended actions are based on the priorities identified through the consultation process, the agreed principles and Council's key directions identified in the Council Plan 2009 - 2013.

Inline with the consultation process, the Recreation Strategy and recommendations are presented under the following headings:

- Major Leisure Facilities
- Community Facilities
- Recreation Trails
- Open Space/Outdoor Sporting Facilities
- Recreation Facility Planning
- Skate/BMX/Scooter Facilities
- Administration/Communication
- Occupancy Arrangements
- Recreation Development Role
- Place Based Planning

The following model details the key three components that need to be balanced to provide successful leisure services to communities.



1.11 MAJOR LEISURE FACILITIES

1.11.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

Within the Shire of Nillumbik, there are six major leisure facilities:

- Eltham Leisure Centre
- Diamond Valley Sport and Fitness Centre
- Hurstbridge Sports Stadium
- Diamond Creek Community Centre
- Diamond Creek Outdoor Pool
- Yarrambat Golf Course

In addition to these facilities, Council has approved the development of the Diamond Creek Stadium, one of the key recommendations of the Diamond Creek Twenty20 Plan. The facility will include three indoor sports courts and a purpose built gymnastics training facility. Construction of this facility commenced in 2010 with the scheduled opening of the facility planned for late 2011.

A range of key needs and opportunities have been identified to ensure that the major facilities continue to meet the current and future facility, service and program needs of residents. One of the key recommendations for these facilities is the need to update existing master plans or develop new master plans to identify the key priorities, cost and timing to direct the future development and use of the major leisure facilities.

1.11.2. Indoor Sports Courts

Within Nillumbik, there are a total of eight indoor sports stadiums totalling 16.5 indoor sports courts that are available for community sporting groups. Of the eight facilities, four are Council-owned and located in the major leisure facilities and the remaining four are located in school facilities owned by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The 2007 Leisure Facilities Review indicated a high demand for additional indoor courts in Nillumbik. The review also identified inconsistencies in the pricing and occupancy arrangements of Council owned indoor sporting facilities.

1.11.3. Regional Facilities

The development or redevelopment of any major facilities in the Shire will take into consideration regional facility provision and proposed future regional facility developments.

1.11.4. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings the table on the following page details the strategic directions and recommendations.



Table 6
Major Leisure Facilities Strategic Direction and Recommendations

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
The major leisure facilities continue to meet the changing needs and expectations of our community.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Three – Prioritise Unstructured Activities.	Prepare detailed master plans for each of the major leisure facilities to identify and direct the priorities, cost and timing of necessary upgrade and refurbishment works. The master plans should be undertaken in the following priority order: 1. Yarrambat Park Golf Course 2. Diamond Creek Community Centre – consider the inclusion of change room facilities to support the use of Marngrook Oval. 3. Diamond Valley Sports and Fitness Centre 4. Diamond Creek Outdoor Pool 5. Hurstbridge Sports Stadium. Develop a Feasibility Study for the redevelopment of the aquatic areas of the Eltham Leisure Centre.	Short Short Medium Long Long	AR* AR AR AR AR
There is an inconsistent schedule of fees and charges for the use of the indoor sports courts across the Shire.	Theme Seven – Equity in Fees and Charges.	Develop a policy that sets a consistent model of fees and charges for the use of Council owned indoor sporting facilities.	Short	WER
There are no clear guidelines in relation to the opportunities for staff and management of facilities to seek sponsorship to support the future development and/or operations.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Expand the existing naming rights sponsorship policy to include other forms of sponsorship for major leisure facilities.	Short	WER

* (Funded 2009/2010 budget) AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

1.12 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1.12.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

Council operates a network of ten community halls and meeting places. These halls and venues are available for hire for weddings, celebrations, meetings, seminars, exhibitions and live theatre. In aggregate, these facilities are used by approximately 183,000 people per year with approximately 15,900 booked hours.

The community facilities include:

- Diamond Creek Senior Citizens Centre
- Outdoor Performance Centre
- Eltham Community and Reception Centre (Council's major community venue which comprises three function areas and a commercial kitchen)
- Eltham Library Multipurpose Room
- Eltham North Hall
- Eltham Performing Arts Centre
- Eltham Senior Citizens Centre
- Hurstbridge Hall
- Kangaroo Ground Hall
- North Warrandyte Family Centre

There are also a number of community-managed facilities supported by Council. These facilities include:

- Arthurs Creek Hall
- Christmas Hills Hall
- Hurstbridge Community Centre
- Panton Hill Hall
- Plenty Hall
- Strathewen Hall (to be rebuilt 2011)
- St Andrews Community Centre
- St Andrews Reserve Hall
- Yarrambat War Memorial Hall

The consultation process highlighted the need to review the use and future development options for the Eltham Community and Reception Centre including the potential development of a dedicated performance venue. A number of initiatives to support the ongoing management and use of the facilities were also identified including the need to develop an equitable and transparent fees and charges policy.

1.12.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings, the table on the following page details the strategic directions and recommendations.

Table 7
Community Facilities Strategic Direction and Recommendations

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
Ensure the community facilities' networks continue to meet the changing community need and expectations in relation to community meeting spaces.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Review the Eltham Community and Reception Centre to determine the future use and purpose of the facility. Funding for this is provided for in the 2009/2010 budget.	Short	AR
		Review the function and use of the Eltham North facility to determine its capacity given the recent development of the synthetic multipurpose pitch at the Eltham North Reserve.	Short	WER * (funded 2010/11 budget)
A number of community facilities are managed by volunteer-based community committees across the Shire. There is a need for continued support of these committees.	Theme Six – Increased Access.	Council to provide increased support to the committees managing the facilities and develop a management handbook that defines the roles and responsibilities of all parties.	Short	WER
There is a need to replace the Strathewen Community Hall lost during the 2009 bushfires.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Council to continue working with the Strathewen Renewal Association in the development of a new community facility in Strathewen.	Short	WER
There is an inconsistent schedule of fees and charges for the use of community facilities across the Shire.	Theme Seven – Equity in Fees and Charges.	Review of the fees and charges practices for community facilities. The outcomes of the review will shape a clear policy to ensure uniformity and equity in access to the facilities for all groups and organisations in the community.	Medium	AR

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources



1.13 RECREATION TRAILS

1.13.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

Council provides an extensive network of recreation trails in a range of settings, for use by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Currently twenty-five kilometres of urban and three kilometres of rural trails, enable people to be physically active and enjoy a variety of recreation, natural and cultural landscape settings.

The household telephone survey identified that walking and bike riding were within the top four current and future most popular activities. The community consultation information sessions and the public submission process strongly identified that recreational horse riders are concerned with the potential reduction in access to remaining off road and bush experience trails for horse riders. This will result in continued pressure on Council to provide quality trails that are linked to a greater network of trail facilities.

In 2001, Council developed the Recreation Trails Strategy. The Strategy outlines Council's principles and program of works

for the ongoing development of trails across the Shire. The strategy was not adopted by Council, however it provided the framework to determine the future strategies and trail priorities.

One of the key outcomes from the process was the establishment of the Recreation Trails Advisory Committee and the adoption of the Recreation Trails Development Principles and Development Processes. The Committee was formed to assist Council in determining priorities and the strategic directions for future trail development. Council officers together with the Committee have been reviewing the findings from the 2001 Trails Strategy and have developed a revised draft strategy.

It is anticipated that the Recreation Trails Strategy will be completed by the end of 2011 and will provide Council with a priority works plan and funding requirements.

1.13.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings, strategic directions and recommendations on page 31 have been developed.



Table 8
Recreation Trails Strategic Direction and Recommendations

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
Confirm a strategy direction for the recreation trails network across the Shire that provides access to a variety of trail experiences for walkers/ joggers, horse riders and bicycle riders.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Three – prioritise unstructured activities and Theme Four – improving equity and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Conduct a review of the existing <i>Recreation Trails Strategy 2001</i> to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • priorities for the development or redevelopment of trails based on the provision of a diverse range of experiences • off-road trails provide an important recreation opportunity for the community and should be carefully managed, developed or redeveloped as a priority, where possible. • development of consistent signage • tourism opportunities • development of construction guidelines for the different type of trail experience. 	Short	WER
Mountain bike riding has emerged as an activity with increasing participation rates. There is a need to formalise a Mountain Bike Club to work in collaboration with Council to manage use of trails.	Theme Two – Increase Participation.	Facilitate the establishment of an incorporated Mountain Bike Club within the Shire.	Short	WER

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

1.14 OPEN SPACE/OUTDOOR SPORTING FACILITIES

1.14.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

Nillumbik residents have access to an extensive range of structured and unstructured open space areas within the Shire.

The audit of facilities indicates that residents have access to thirty-two structured sporting reserves, in excess of five hundred hectares of parks and reserves and sixty playgrounds.

The results of the telephone survey indicate that residents already have high levels of participation in outdoor activities, particularly those which are unstructured and allow casual participation. A comparison of the most popular activities indicates that seven out of the 10 activities (walking, swimming, gym, bike riding, horse riding and jogging) could be classified as unstructured activities that may not be part of a competitive environment. These results are consistent with industry trends that indicate people are less likely to join a club that commits them to an activity on a regular basis. Due to changing work patterns, people are often more likely to undertake an activity that can be done on a more flexible basis.

In 2006, Council developed an *Open Space Strategy* which defines Council's vision and strategic direction for the development and management of open space. The document was developed to focus on unstructured recreation and conservation open space, rather than organised sporting areas.

The Strategy recommended the following hierarchy for the classification of open space areas.

Regional Facilities will attract people from within and outside of Nillumbik, and will be built and maintained to an elite or premier standard.

Municipal Facilities will serve a municipal wide catchment and will be of a higher level than is available at other facilities within the Shire.

District Facilities will principally attract people from within Nillumbik, and will cater for senior and junior training and competition and are normally the 'home ground' facility for clubs.

Local Facilities are usually lower grade open space areas that primarily cater for junior training and competition and in some cases as over flow facilities for senior teams.

1.14.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings, the following strategic directions and recommendations on pages 33-36 have been developed.

**Table 9
Open Space Strategic Direction and Recommendations**

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
Increasing demand for access to unstructured open space for participation in informal leisure and sporting activities.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Three – Prioritise Unstructured Activities and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Any future planning for unstructured open space should provide opportunities for people to participate in unstructured activity and that the necessary infrastructure be provided to support these activities. Some of the options to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing informal social picnic areas with support infrastructure such as tables, seating, shade, barbeques and amenities ensuring some open space areas are available and designed to allow informal games i.e. kick-to-kick, soccer, cricket, kite flying and exercise stations ensuring the provision of sporting facilities that support 'pick up games' such as basketball and netball half court pads, tennis rebound walls, bocce courts and chess games ensuring sporting facilities with restricted access i.e. tennis and lawn bowl facilities support and encourage casual access to the facilities during non competition times. 	Short	WER
Increasing demand for access to quality soccer facilities including soccer pitches, all weather training facilities and club rooms that provide male and female amenities.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Develop a strategic plan to address the increasing demand for access to quality soccer facilities including facility, infrastructure and management opportunities.	Short	AR

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
Facility audits identified ageing sporting infrastructure and the need to provide increased service levels and ongoing cyclical maintenance programs.	Theme Six – Increased Access.	There is a need to place greater emphasis on the management and maintenance of the structured sporting reserves to maximise the use of existing facilities. This should include a review of the current service level agreements with Parks and Gardens for the maintenance of sporting reserves.	Short	WER
Ensure both structured and unstructured open space meets the changing community needs and expectations of our community.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	<p>Develop master plans for the following areas taking into consideration opportunities to improve use, access and functionality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yarrambat Park Golf Course • Nillumbik Park Precinct • Civic Drive Precinct • Former Kangaroo Ground land fill site • Alistair Knox Park • Former Plenty Land Fill Site • Plenty Open Space Purchases – DPO4. <p>Review the current lighting infrastructure at sporting reserves and outdoor sports courts. The review should consider the lighting levels required for the different codes of sport and level of competition.</p> <p>Develop management plans for the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Park • Yarrambat War Memorial Park • Wattle Glen War Memorial Park • A E Cracknell Reserve • St Andrews Reserve • Peppers Paddock. 	<p>Short</p> <p>Short</p> <p>Short</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Short</p> <p>Short</p> <p>Short</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Long</p> <p>Long</p> <p>Long</p>	<p>AR*</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>WER</p> <p>WER</p> <p>WER</p> <p>WER</p> <p>WER</p>

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
Identify increased opportunities to enter into partnership for the provision of leisure services and facilities.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	<p>That opportunities for additional sharing of sporting reserves located on land owned by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development be identified.</p> <p>That Council collaborates with State Sporting Associations to ensure that sports development, infrastructure, rules and regulations, club support and programming are consistent with the relevant sporting code standards.</p>	<p>Short</p> <p>Medium</p>	<p>WER</p> <p>WER</p>
The drought conditions have had an impact on access and use of quality sporting reserves by sporting clubs and organisations.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	<p>That funding be provided to convert the following sporting reserves to warm season grasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eltham North Adventure Playground Reserve • Yarrambat Reserve • Plenty War Memorial Park • Diamond Hills Reserve • Arthurs Creek Reserve • Campbell Street Reserve, Diamond Creek • Strathewen Reserve • St Andrews Reserve • Wattle Glen Reserve <p>Council to investigate alternate water source options to irrigate sporting reserves.</p>	<p>Short</p> <p>Short</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Long</p> <p>Long</p> <p>Long</p> <p>Long</p> <p>Long</p> <p>Short</p>	<p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p> <p>AR</p>
Confirm a strategy direction for the provision of playgrounds across the Shire in line with the recently completed audit.	Theme Six – Increased Access.	<p>Council officers from Leisure Services and Children’s Services review the recently completed playground audit and identify an implementation plan that identifies the priority locations and type of equipment to be provided in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open space areas • Kindergartens • Long and short day child care facilities 	Medium	WER

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
Identify the opportunities to increase the provision of tennis courts to address any unmet current and future demand.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access and Theme Eight – Support for Time Poor Residents.	Additional tennis courts to be provided at the Eltham Tennis Club and the Challenger Street tennis facility in Diamond Creek.	Long	AR capital
There is a need to consolidate lawn bowls at the three current facilities within the Shire.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Council recognises that there is no present indication of unmet demand for more lawn bowls facilities and that any future development should include upgrade and consolidation of the existing facilities.	Medium	AR
The occupancy arrangements for horse and pony clubs are inconsistent across the Shire.	Theme Six – Increased Access and Equity in Fees and Charges.	Council to develop a lease agreement and management plan in collaboration with the horse and pony clubs for the use of Council owned Horse and Pony club facilities.	Short	WER
There is a conflict between structured sporting reserves being used/ allocated as off leash dog areas.	Theme Six – Increased Access.	Review of the off leash dog areas, in particular the use of structured sporting reserves.	Short	WER

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources



1.15 RECREATION FACILITY PLANNING

1.15.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

Council has expended millions of dollars in the provision and development of recreation facilities and assets. Council has recently developed a framework and Asset Management Plan to ensure Council's assets are maintained at a safe and acceptable standard.

A review of the range of existing facilities in the Shire indicates most of them have been historically planned, designed and provided independently of each other.

A review of Council's policies and practices identify a need to develop a system that prioritises and coordinates facility service and maintenance standards against facility quality, occupancy arrangements, fees and charges, maintenance levels and capital works.

There is a need to develop a process that works towards linking facility provision, standards and quality of facilities, occupancy arrangements, fees and charges, maintenance levels and capital works under a coordinated system.

1.15.2. Annual Sporting Capital Works Schemes

Due to the broad range of self help, minor and major improvements requested for sporting projects, future grant schemes will need to have a number of different funding levels. State government sport and recreation grant schemes (Sport and Recreation Victoria) have been successful in supporting a broad range of projects through the use of small grant, minor grant and major grant categories. Each category has an upper funding limit and set of eligibility criteria.

1.15.3. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings, the strategic directions and recommendations on page 39 have been developed.

**Table 10
Recreation Facility Planning Direction and Recommendations**

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
There is currently no system that categorises the level and quality of leisure or sporting facilities and links the facilities to maintenance schedule.	Theme Six – Increased Access and Theme Seven – Equity in Fees and Charges.	Council to adopt the standardised facility categorisation system detailed in Volume Two – Issues and Options Paper that coordinates and directs the differing levels, sizes, capacity, maintenance and needs of sporting facilities within the Shire. The proposed categories should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regional • municipal • district • local. 	Short	WER
The current capital works policy for leisure and sporting clubs is outdated and in need of review.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Council to review the current capital works policy/program and establish an equitable and consistent process for the future upgrade, development, maintenance and preservation of community sporting facilities.	Short	WER
		Council to adopt the suggested Facility Funding Contribution Schedule detailed in Volume Two as part of the Capital Works Policy.	Short	WER
		Council to adopt the Leisure Facilities Grants Priority Criteria Rating System, detailed in Volume Two, as a means of assessing capital works requests from sporting groups and organisations.	Short	WER

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

1.16 SKATE/BMX/SCOOTER FACILITY

1.16.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

Council undertook a Skate/BMX Facility study in response to a demand for additional skate and BMX facilities in the Shire. The market research and consultation undertaken, as part of the recreation strategy, confirmed that access to skateboard and BMX facilities was a high priority by residents, particularly young people.

The Skate/BMX facilities study identified the opportunity to develop a number of facilities in key locations across the Shire. As a result of the recommendations skate facilities have been developed in Eltham and Diamond Creek. A recommendation was also made to develop a skate facility within Hurstbridge.

1.16.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings, the strategic directions and recommendations on page 41 have been developed.



Table 11
Skate/BMX/Scooter Facilities Direction and Recommendations

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
There is ongoing demand for access to quality skate/ BMX/scooter facilities that are designed to meet the current requirements for these activities.	Theme Two – Increase Participation. and Theme Six – Increased Access.	The planning and development of a skate/BMX/scooter facility in Hurstbridge should be planned in collaboration with young people taking into consideration the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • location options • environmental issues • safe and easy access via the trail network • the provision of support amenities such as toilets, shade, seating etc. • programming and event opportunities • provision of ongoing funding for the maintenance and upgrade of the facility • ongoing inspections of dirt jumps. 	Short	WER
There is a need for young people to access relevant community based programs and services that are outside of main stream leisure and sports activities.	Theme Two – Increase Participation. and Prioritise Unstructured Activities.	Investigate the facilitation of programs for young people through actively programming community spaces such as skate parks and informal basketball areas.	Medium	AR

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

1.17 ADMINISTRATION/ COMMUNICATION

1.17.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

Consultation with recreation clubs identified a need to improve the communication processes between Council and the clubs. With the constant change over in office bearers within clubs there is a need to ensure that people are kept informed of processes, policies and procedures related to the management and operation of sporting and recreation facilities.

With the increase in accountability and governance for sporting and recreation clubs there is a need to provide additional education and training for club administrators.

As an alternate revenue stream, clubs identified the opportunity to access sponsorship. There is a need to develop a sponsorship policy for recreation groups and facilities that clearly sets out the process and responsibilities.

1.17.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings, the strategic directions and recommendations pages 43 and 44 have been developed.



Table 12
Administration and Communication Direction and Recommendations

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
There is a lack of effective communication between Council and leisure clubs and organisations.	Theme Five – Effective Communication.	Review the current communication strategy and identify alternate methods for communicating with leisure clubs and organisations. Consideration should be given to the following:	Short	WER
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of a recreation website SMS messaging electronic newsletter. Council to undertake annual User Forums at key open space areas within the municipality to ensure that the needs and issues of informal users are identified.	Medium	WER
There is a need to provide increased support to club administrators to assist with the increasing levels of accountability and governance.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Five – Effective Communication.	Club administration programs should be extended to ensure clubs and organisations are fully aware of the role and responsibilities of club administrators and their governance requirements. This should include an opportunity to link the programs to services provided at Living & Learning centres.	Short	AR
		Develop and distribute an electronic recreation club/organisation resource manual to provide an easy reference guide for club administrators.	Short	WER
		Establish liaison forums before each season, with all sporting codes, as a means of communication.	Short	WER

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
Leisure and sporting clubs are unclear about the opportunities and guidelines for obtaining sponsorship at Council-owned facilities.	Theme Two – Increase Participation.	Council to extend the existing sponsorship policy to identify opportunities for clubs and organisations to seek additional revenue streams.	Short	WER
There is a need to ensure residents are fully informed of available leisure opportunities.	Theme Five – Effective Communication.	Council to develop a communication and promotion strategy that includes a diverse range of communication methods ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to access information to service, facility and program options.	Medium	AR
The current allocation of expenses limits an accurate analysis of existing financial resources for leisure services and facilities.	Theme Four – Improved Equity.	Review the allocation of expenses against leisure facilities and services to enable an accurate analysis of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost of leisure services to Council • level of financial resources being provided for female and male activities • level of financial resources being provided for senior and junior activities 	Short	WER

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

1.18 OCCUPANCY ARRANGEMENTS

1.18.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

A review of current occupancy agreements for use of sporting facilities by sporting clubs and organisations indicated there are a range of different arrangements in place, which gives rise to a number of issues. These include:

- inconsistency in the type of agreements issued or conditions across similar types of facilities, including rental and tenure
- some agreements have expired, particularly in relation to tennis and bowling club leases
- there is no agreement for the casual use of sporting grounds for activities such as personal training programs
- seasonal allocation gives preference to clubs who have used the sporting ground in the previous year. There is considerable cost involved in Council administering grounds, which are likely to be used by the same club each year. Seasonal allocations do not provide incentives to clubs to contribute funds to the development of facilities

- many clubs considering themselves to be in a position to contribute to capital improvements however, they are concerned with the short-term tenure of their occupancy agreements. Such clubs would only consider contributing to capital improvements if the Council commits to a longer occupancy term.

1.18.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings, the strategic directions and recommendations on page 46 have been developed.

Table 13
Occupancy Arrangements Direction and Recommendations

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
There is a need to provide a consistent occupancy policy for the use of Council-owned sporting and leisure facilities.	Theme Two – Increase Participation & Theme Seven – Equity Fees and Charges.	Council to develop a range of occupancy agreements for the ongoing use and management of sporting facilities. The agreements should provide for regular and ongoing reporting and clearly identify maintenance and renewal responsibilities.	Short	WER
		Council to adopt a streamline approach to the management of occupancy agreement for the use of sports facilities based on the guidelines and principles proposed for seasonal permits, licences and leases.	Short	WER
		Replace existing agreements with either a new seasonal, licence or lease as the current arrangement expires.	Short	AR
		Review fees and charges and develop a consistent Nillumbik schedule of fees and charges.	Short	AR
		Develop a set of guidelines and a formal occupancy arrangement for personal trainers using open space areas for training programs. These arrangements should support access to the areas and encourage participation in physical activity.	Medium	AR

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

1.19 RECREATION DEVELOPMENT ROLE

1.19.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

The review of Nillumbik’s recreation provision indicates a strong emphasis on facility provision with limited direct programming or involvement in health promotion.

Promoting increased participation in physical activity is a priority for both the Victorian and Australian Governments. Continuing health studies’ evidence indicates people throughout the country have become less active, which in turn has the capacity to contribute to a number of health problems and conditions.

While Nillumbik participation rates are above the state and national averages, the research undertaken as part of this strategy identified that there has been a decline in participation

over the last five years of approximately 3 per cent. This decline is evident in both males and females, and across all age groups.

The development of additional facilities supports both governments’ health planning frameworks through the development and expansion of facilities that can be the activity outlets for targeted programs and services that assist people being more active. However, there may be an opportunity through the programs and services provided, to play an active role in recreation development and facilitation including health promotional activities.

1.19.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings, the strategic directions and recommendations on pages 48-50 have been developed.



Table 14
Recreation Development Direction and Recommendations

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
There is a need to support and encourage increased levels of participation in leisure and sporting activities and provide education about healthy lifestyles.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Identify opportunities to continue to support emerging sports i.e. soccer and women’s football, through access to facilities and support infrastructure.	Medium/ Long	AR
		Identify opportunities to retain and increase participation in leisure and physical activity for the following priority groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> women young people particularly aged 15-18 yrs people with disabilities older adults. 	Medium	AR
		Investigate opportunities to deliver programs aimed at keeping older adults physically and mentally active.	Short	WER
		Continue to foster partnerships with industry organisations such as Sport and Recreation Victoria, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, VicHealth and state sporting and recreation associations to support and expand the provision of leisure services in Nillumbik.	Short	WER
		Investigate and secure external funding opportunities to support the development of a health promotion campaign around the key issues of increased physical activity and healthy eating.	Medium	AR

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
There is a need to support and encourage increased levels of participation in leisure and sporting activities and provide education about healthy lifestyles.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Encourage and support Nillumbik schools to instigate a walking school bus program.	Short	AR
		Encourage and support any new commercial and retail developments in the Shire to include infrastructure to support bicycle riding as a form of transport.	Short	AR
		Encourage major employers in the Shire to provide and support opportunities for increased physical activity during working hours.	Short	AR
		Advocate for additional support for early childhood centres and schools to plan for quality play spaces and ensure that opportunities for outdoor active and explorative play are provided for.	Medium	AR
		Council to implement a process to regularly collect and collate leisure participation statistics to support the ongoing planning and development of leisure and sporting facilities and services to the Shire.	Short	WER
		Encourage and support new commercial and retail developments in the Shire to improve walkability through their facility, across car parks and between the development and existing infrastructure such as public transport stops, footpaths and recreational trails.	Medium	WER

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendations/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
There is a need to support and encourage increased levels of participation in leisure and sporting activities and provide education about healthy lifestyles.	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Council to contribute to the St Andrews, Strathewen and Christmas Hills bushfire recovery planning, which includes recreational pursuits, advocacy for the creation of pathways and trails and other local area planning.	Short	WER

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources



1.20 PLACE BASED (TOWNSHIP) PLANNING

1.20.1. Summary of Key Findings/ Issues

In 2007, Council developed the *Twenty20 Structure Plan* and *Leisure Facilities Plan* for the Diamond Creek area. This plan included a detailed investigation into the key facility and infrastructure needs of the Diamond Creek Township.

Over the past two years, Council has also developed a number of master plans at key open space areas across the Shire. These master plans have identified the key needs and issues of the parks and recommended an implementation plan including priorities, timing and costs.

Place based planning has also been a successful means of consulting with individual communities as part of the development of the Recreation Strategy.

There is a need to continue with the more detailed place based planning in the Eltham area. As part of this plan, more detailed reviews could be undertaken for the following areas:

- Susan Street Reserve
- Bridge Street Reserve
- Alistair Knox Park
- Eltham Central Oval
- Andrew Park

1.20.2. Strategic Directions/ Recommendations

Based on the consultation and key findings the following strategic direction and recommendation have been developed.

Table 15
Place Based Planning Direction and Recommendations

Key Issue	Link to Key Themes	Strategy Direction Recommendation/Actions	Priority	Resources Required
There is a need to undertake place based planning for the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eltham • St Andrews • Panton Hill. 	Theme Two – Increase Participation and Theme Six – Increased Access.	Council to undertake a place based plan for Eltham, St Andrews and Panton Hill.	Medium	AR

AR - Additional resources WER - Within existing resources



Civic Drive, Greensborough
PO Box 476, Greensborough, VIC 3088
Telephone 9433 3111 Facsimile 9433 3777
Website www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au
Email nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au

Printed in Nillumbik on recycled paper.