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E.11 – PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C80 'SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES' ADOPTION

Appendix 3 – South Gippsland Open Space Strategy 2007



SOUTH GIPPSLAND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY Vol.1 OPEN SPACE STRATEGY



ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document; THE OPEN SPACE STRATEGY provides broad, strategic directions for the future planning of open space in the South Gippsland Shire.

An inventory of open space in the Shire was also prepared for this project and submitted as a separate database.

A Recreation Plan 2007 including the locality analysis and a combined demand and consultation findings document is currently being prepared.

All detailed directions concerning specific localities, and the development of assets in open space, are dealt with in the Recreation Plan 2007.

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- residents who completed a survey, and
- clubs and community groups and schools who were interviewed and made submissions
- residents who came to the briefing on the Draft Strategy.

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Executive summary

The purpose of this project was to analyse the Shires open public space, for the purpose of long term strategic planning acquisition and development of future reserves and facilities, and in order to provide a basis for Council policy and decision making.

There is considerable open space available to Shire residents in the form of crown reserves, foreshore and private open space in rural areas, however there are opportunities in some instances to enhance quality and refine the form and function of open space to better reflect population changes and community needs.

For the purposes of analysis the Shire has been divided into five regions (as determined by Council Settlement Plan) and twenty seven key localities. The detailed and locality specific issues are dealt with in the Recreation Plan 2007. This plan focuses on providing strategies to address Shire wide issues.

VISION

The open space vision for South Gippsland Shire is as follows:

- Council acknowledges that the design of residential and commercial areas best integrate quality open space to support living and working environments as well as to provide health, social, economic and environmental benefits and opportunities for sustainable transport.
- Council shows the leadership and policy support to guide and encourage open space planning as a significant land use issue.
- A consistent open space planning philosophy and objectives are in place across all departments.
- Good baseline data about open space and its use, regional plans, and local master plans are available.
- Effective planning processes and funding mechanisms are in place to implement this plan and manage open space to deliver benefits the community seeks from opens space.
- A diversity of types of open space are accessible to all residents especially those that support social/family recreation¹ and play, sport, and trail based activities.

KEY ISSUES AND GOALS

Following a literature review, site inspections, interviews with stakeholders and detailed discussion with staff, Shire-wide and locality specific issues and goals have been identified. The key Shire-wide issues and goals of this strategy are:

GOAL 1: Leadership in local open space planning and design

- Enhance Council's influence on the open space planning and provision process, and
- Enhance the planning of local open space, to better serve residential communities and increase leisure participation

GOAL 2: Off-road cycle and walking trail development

- Extend the network of off-road cycle and walking trails throughout the Shire and where feasible around each locality and key reserves

GOAL 3: Sports development

- To encourage more people to continue to play a sport of their choice, and
- Provide the appropriate quality and quantity of sports infrastructure to maintain current participation

GOAL 4: Environmental quality and sustainability

- Protect and enhance local character, environmental and visual quality and biodiversity, and
- Preserve and restore natural and cultural values.

GOAL 5: Asset and information management

- Improve asset and information management to increase accessibility and sustainability of open space opportunities

Detailed locality and infrastructure issues arising from this plan are dealt with in more detail in the Recreation Plan 2007.

For strategies addressing each of these goals refer to Chapter 6.





1. Introduction

This Strategy

The aims of this strategy are to:

- undertake an analysis of the Shire's public open space for the purposes of long term strategic planning and the acquisition, development and use of leisure facilities, parks and recreation reserve
- provide content for Council policy in relation to open space provision, development levy contributions and local area planning schemes
- increase use of public open space by providing a framework for Council to develop key assets
- provide direction regarding environmental, cultural and heritage issues with respect to open space
- ensure that existing planning documents [eg OSP, reserve master plans, urban design frameworks (local level plans), etc] are considered in an integrated manner.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RECREATION PLAN 2007

The Recreation Plan 2007, closely related to this Strategy. Consultation processes (with stakeholder groups, schools, committees of management, agencies and staff) are conjoint for the two projects.

The Recreation Plan 2007 considers more detailed planning for open space (including indoor facilities) and addresses issues associated with the strategic development and management of infrastructure provided for recreation on open space.

Specific directions related to infrastructure development in each locality and specific types of facilities (eg tennis, skate parks, swimming pools) will be provided in the Recreation Plan 2007.

METHODS

The following tasks were undertaken as part of this strategy:

- a review of literature and background information
- consultation with stakeholders:
 - call for submissions
 - interviews with stakeholders and staff
 - workshops/briefings with community, Councillors and staff
 - circulation of information updates via email to stakeholders
 - distribution of a householder survey
- site inspections
- mapping of open space and inventory development
- analysis of distribution and quality of existing spaces, considering:
 - current provision compared to demand
 - opportunities to enhance: connectivity, sustainability, diversity and participation
 - distance to the population it serves
- consistency with plans, policy, planning provisions and zones
- preparation of locality analysis
- identification of key issues
- development of strategies.



Planning context



REGIONS OF SOUTH GIPPSLAND

Council's Settlement Plan divides the Shire into regions to distinguish between areas with different growth patterns and physical characteristics. These regions have been adopted for the purposes of this strategy and are as follows:

- Strzelecki region
- Drumdemara Grand Ridge region
- Prom Delta region
- Anderson's Inlet / Waratah Bay region
- Corner Inlet / Nooramunga region.

The characteristics of each region and its potential for growth are quite different.

An analysis has been conducted for each region that reviews:

- population and demographics
- supply of open space
- directions for future planning
- issues and actions that arise from previous plans
- issues from the community
- actions to be taken.

The following figure shows the approximate borders of the regions across the South Gippsland Shire.

Figure 1. South Gippsland Shire Regions²



The table below indicates the key localities in each region.

Table 1. Towns within each region of the Gippsland Shire

STRZELECKI REGION	DRUMDEMARA GRAND RIDGE REGION	PROM DELTA REGION	ANDERSON'S INLET WARATAH BAY REGION	CORNER INLET NOORAMUNGA REGION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STRZELECKI • BENA • LOCH • POOWONG • NYORA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KORUMBURRA • LEONGATHA • KONGWAK • KOONWARRA • MIRBOO NORTH • OUTTRIM • NERRENA • DUMBALK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOSTER • MEENIYAN • STONY CREEK • FISH CREEK • BUFFALO • YANAKIE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VENUS BAY • WARATAH BAY • TARWIN LOWER • SANDY POINT • WALKERVILLE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PORT FRANKLIN • WELSHPOOL • PORT WELSHPOOL • TOORA

Policy context

THE PREVIOUS PLAN

The previous South Gippsland Shire Council *Open Space Plan*, adopted in September 1999, was developed in conjunction with a Recreation Plan with the aim of providing a means to direct the planning, coordination and strategies in the development of recreation programs and facilities and open space over a five to ten year time span.

The key strategies that were developed in the previous *Recreation and Open Space Plan* were:

- to establish Council as a facilitator, provider and manager of recreational opportunities in partnership with the greater community
- the need to share and coordinate responsibilities in management between Council, clubs, associations, committees of management, the private sector and the community
- to facilitate the efficient and effective management of recreation resources throughout the Shire
- to establish an effective consultation framework between Council, recreational uses and recreation providers so that needs can be clearly identified, discussed and responded to in an environment of co-operation, respect and support
- the need for consultation and dialogue between users, providers and managers

- to ensure an appropriate level of recreation funding incorporating an equitable spread of Council subsidies, the seeking of grants, local fundraising and a consistent approach to cost recovery through user fees
- determine appropriate levels of funding and subsidisation, through equity and consistency in provision of recreation and open space services

The previous plan is superseded by this strategy and the Recreation Plan 2007.

RELEVANT COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

The key Council policies and plans of relevance and reviewed for this plan are:

- The Bicycle/Walking/Riding Paths and Trails Strategy 2001 (South Gippsland Shire Council)
- Planning Scheme and Municipal Strategic Statement (South Gippsland Shire Council)
- Gippsland Coastal Boating Action Plan, Gippsland Coastal Board 2002
- Council Plan 2006-2010 (South Gippsland Shire Council)
- South Gippsland Overall Settlement Plan (Version 2) 2006
- Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2006-2010, August 2006 (South Gippsland Shire Council)
- South Gippsland Shire Council, Coastal Management Project - Background Report, October 2005
- Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study – South Gippsland Shire Municipal Reference Document, DSE January 2006.

Specific local plans have also been integrated into local directions.

2. How shall the Shire plan for future open space?

What do we call open space?

Two terms are commonly used: open space and public open space.

Open space is generally defined here as land available to the public for sport or leisure use. However, this land may have a primary use of another kind (eg for conservation, drainage, education), or it may exist as a buffer.

Public open space is considered as land in public ownership set aside on a plan for open space use.

The focus of this plan is public land owned or managed by Council as open space.

Why do we need open space?

The value of open space depends on two things:

- the benefits it generates for people, for biodiversity, for neighbourhood character and the environment and
- the extent to which it meets local needs.

Evaluation criteria used to assess the open space network as a whole, its provision in each local area, and each individual space must be derived from these specific benefits and values as they accrue to residents and visitors.

BENEFITS OF OPEN SPACE

Access to open space is a right identified by the UN in the Human Rights Convention in recognition of the fact that open space is an important contributor to quality of life through the provision of amenity and (recreation) opportunity for residents, workers and visitors.

Open space delivers a range of benefits to individuals and the community, from physical and mental health benefits to environmental and economic benefits.

Important health benefits include:

- improving our psychological health and wellbeing through visual connection to nature and green space
- enhancing child development through play
- improving physical fitness.

Important community benefits include:

- facilitating social cohesion and interaction
- promoting community pride.

The presence of open space and attractive green neighbourhoods can deliver economic benefits: higher property values, increased tourism and business activity, and employment opportunities.

PURPOSES OF OPEN SPACE

Apart from recreation, a number of other purposes of open space can be identified, with key factors contributing to each listed below:

- Healthy Living - clean air, contact with nature, exercise, relief from overcrowding, self sufficient neighbourhoods
- Child Development/Play - risk/challenge, exploring new things, manipulating environments, finding inspiration & treasures, sociability, co-operation & sharing, co-ordination skills and physical agility
- Conservation of Biodiversity and Habitat - preservation and conservation of significant features and habitats
- Civic Pride - gathering points, ornamental decoration, visual quality
- Education - spatial knowledge, access to life forms & natural processes, understanding social, cultural and ancestral roots
- Recreation and Sport - physical exercise, relief from roles and surroundings, amusement/ spectacle, social support, nature appreciation, and spiritual fulfilment /artistic expression.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Despite the recognition of the importance of social capital for health,³ research suggests that social connectedness and civic engagement – key aspects of social capital – are in decline. Local open space, combined with street patterns and leisure-conscious neighbourhood design, can provide the necessary environment to facilitate social interaction, incidental physical activity, and sustainable forms of transport.

Researchers⁴ have found that plants and greening activities play at least three distinct roles in community development. They provide:

- improved live-ability by controlling temperature and reducing exposure to noise and pollution
- a positive image of a community for both residents and outsiders
- opportunities for people to work together to improve communities.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

In recent years, interest in sustainable transport has prompted new interest in open space and trails. A range of State Government initiatives (eg *Linking People and Places*, *Travel Smart*) are designed to support and encourage people who wish to walk or cycle to work, school and other destinations.

In a review of the transportation, urban design and planning literature⁵, it was concluded that population density, connectivity and land use mix were associated with higher rates of transport-related walking and cycle trips.

Links have been established between physical activity - including walking - and the convenience and proximity of public open space and facilities⁶, as well as cost of participation⁷, perceptions of the attractiveness, safety and interest of the neighbourhood, and the presence of footpaths.⁸

There are four main open space factors that impact on the propensity to walk:⁹ whether the path/road/trail/track is functional for the purpose, whether it is safe, whether it is a pleasant experience (aesthetics), and whether there is a worthwhile destination.

Table 2: Factors influencing walking for recreation ¹⁰

FUNCTIONALITY	SAFETY	AESTHETICS	DESTINATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> walking surface street width traffic permeability (street intersection design) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> personal safety (lighting) traffic (verge widths and crossings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> streetscape (maintenance and cleanliness) views (sights and architecture) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> parks and shops

How do we evaluate open space?

In the past, open space was typically assessed in terms of its size, total quantity and sometimes by its distance from the population it was designed to serve. Although useful indicators, these criteria - on their own - are inadequate in terms of assessing the quality of open space, and hence the capability of a particular space to deliver particular benefits.

World best practice suggests that methods of assessing open spaces shall be specific to the different purpose of the open space in question. Classifying the function of each open space is therefore a key element in assessing the current supply. In addition to this, an understanding of the value placed on reserves by users and non-users is important to factor in.

The benefits described previously can be translated into different purposes or functions of open space. The purposes or primary functions of that space, in addition to the:

- landscape setting (which will influence the atmosphere and experiences of the user)
- catchment (the target audience) and
- settlement type (nature of type residential area it is designed to serve).

together determine the selection and performance criteria against which an individual space can be evaluated.

This document does not seek to describe the outcome of an assessment of each individual space in the Shire, rather its purpose is to address the broad implications of such assessments for future policy and planning, in the context of likely demand, Council policy and resources, and the physical characteristics of the Shire.

PURPOSES (OR FUNCTIONS) OF OPEN SPACE

By defining the purpose, particularly the primary purpose, of open space, decisions more easily can be made about the amount and form of open space needed to deliver a range of benefits to a population. Also, once the purpose or function of the space is known, it is possible to identify:

- gaps in the range of spaces
- the degree of uniformity in type of open spaces

and therefore whether there are opportunities to:

- protect existing spaces in their current form or function, or
- modify that form or function to address a particular need or to increase the diversity of opportunities provided.

THE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

This plan uses a four-tiered classification:

- Settlement type – which determines the size of private open space and likely opportunities close to home
- A classification based on catchment – or the sphere of influence and the origins of users
- A function classification – taking into account the primary purpose or use of the parks and reserves within the network
- A landscape setting classification – the physical condition and characteristics of the area that influence a user's experience

SETTLEMENT TYPE CLASSIFICATIONS

Classifying each residential area will assist in determining how open space shall be distributed and what types of spaces are needed to serve a particular type of area.

For the purposes of this study four categories have been defined. In ascending order these are: rural localities, then rural hamlets/low density residential, small townships, and major townships.

Rural localities

These are small communities living in areas zoned as rural or farming. In these localities it is assumed that residents have large private open spaces, and little opportunity to walk to commercial or community hubs of facilities.

Rural hamlets/ low density residential

These localities have a residential settlement with at least one shop, hotel, hall or primary school servicing an outlying rural community.

These are generally settlement types with less than 200 people, with a limited range of land uses and community facilities. They are generally unlikely to be able support a sports club.

The following localities were classified as rural hamlet/ low density residential Bena, Buffalo, Dumbalk, Stony Creek, Yanakie, Strzelecki, Kongwak, Outtrim, Koonwarra, Nerrena, Waratah Bay, Sandy Point, Port Franklin, Welshpool, and Port Welshpool.

This settlement type assumes that there would be only one main open space for social /family recreation and one main site for sport and that further residential subdivision will not trigger the provision of new decentralised local parks. Additional demand for open space resources would typically be directed into embellishing any existing parks or recreation /sporting facilities or dedicating routeways for future trails.

Small townships

These townships would have an established commercial area with a population of more than 200 and up to 600, and could be expected to have a range of sporting and recreation facilities as well as some form of indoor sport or community centre. The following localities were classified as small townships: Meeniyah, Poowong, Nyora, Venus Bay, Fish Creek, Tarwin Lower, Toora, and Loch.

This assumes that desirably there would be one major focus for community facilities and sport, but satellite spaces for social /family recreation may be required because of geographical layout of township, barriers created by major roads etc. These however will not be encouraged, rather, the co-location and clustering of sport, leisure and educational facilities is preferred.

Major townships

Foster, Korumburra, Leongatha and Mirboo North are classified as major towns. This assumes that a number of local open space sites for social /family recreation, and one or more for district sport may be needed to serve the township, in addition to a range of other types of spaces. Local parks will need to be provided within approximately 400-500 metres of every household.

CATCHMENT CLASSIFICATIONS

The catchment hierarchy has three tiers:

- 1) Local Open Space (in the immediate locality or within walking distance)
- 2) District Open Space- (serving several hamlets or small towns)
- 3) Regional Open Space (serving a broader area than several towns or the municipality as whole)

**FUNCTION (PRIMARY PURPOSE) AND SETTING TYPES
(COMMON FORMS OF OPEN SPACE)**

The categories adopted for South Gippsland are shown in the following table.

Function Types	Setting Types
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social /family recreation • Off-road cycle and walking trail • Conservation of biological heritage • Community horticulture • Lookout /ridgeline • Sport • Buffer /environmental protection • Wayside stop • Water based recreation • Civic forecourt /gathering space • Visual amenity • Cemetery /memorial /remembrance • Drainage /floodway • Relaxation /environmental /appreciation /escape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed turf • Specialised sporting surface • Open parkland • Waterway corridor • Coastal/ lake foreshore • Plaza/ courtyard/ paved area • Vegetable garden/ farm/ environmental park • Bushland/ forest • Tree plantation/ specimen planting • Ornamental, zoological, or botanic garden • Native Grassland/ wetland/ shrub land

How much is needed, and where?

A diversity of types of open space is needed to meet the diversity of needs contained within a population, particularly as it changes over time. Some types of spaces are needed close by to where people live, and others are not.

For all residential communities with limited private space and living in hamlets and towns, public open space is required within walking distance for the purposes of social / family recreation, off road cycle and walking trail activities and sport, as a minimum.

For each type of space there are some basic core service standards that include size and location for example that will ensure these spaces can provide the benefits they are intended to provide. These are explored in the Recreation Plan 2007.

A locality analysis has been undertaken as part to this project. For each locality in South Gippsland the following information was reviewed:

- Demographics
- Distribution and nature of existing open space supply
- Planning directions for other land uses
- Issues and actions from previous plans, and
- Issues raised by stakeholders

Maps of each of these localities have been prepared and the Recreation Plan 2007 will outline any additional type or locations of open space or recreation facilities beneficial to plan for.

Where future open space may be needed a demand and supply analysis is required. The process for conducting these is listed below:

Supply Assessments

Local supply assessments shall use the inventory and site inspections to analyse existing (and any proposed) open space by function, landscape setting type and catchment. This shall occur before rezoning, development approval, or acquisition, and shall consider:

- The settlement type in which the land is to be developed.
 - Settlement type will determine what type of model of open space provision will apply. In small and large townships social /family recreation spaces, foundation sports facilities and off-road cycle and walking trails will be accessible within walking distance of each household.
 - In other settlement types such a low density residential or rural hamlets, open space to serve social /family recreation and sport will be provided centrally, preferably in one central hub.
- The ultimate housing density of the area
- Changing size and uses of private open space
- The physical characteristics, likely size, opportunities and leisure potential of the land to be developed,
- The function, form, catchment and distance to existing open space
- The suitability and capability of existing land, (including streetscapes, easements, schools and other public land) to provide the priority open space types (ie social /family recreation spaces, sport and off-road trails) or other leisure and open space benefits. Consider the availability and useability of other public land.

- Distance thresholds and locational and other core service criteria for each type of spaces required.

Demand Assessments

Demand shall be assessed by investigating:

- Likely participation in sport and leisure activities and the projections for those over time
- Likely number of participants compared to now
- What existing clubs and stakeholders say is happening participation and users numbers
- Estimates of the number of people that can be housed at each site, (ie on each playing field) depending on carrying capacity etc.
- The number of facilities that are best collocated together, (or are in conflict) considering: viability criteria, compatible schedules, levels of competition etc, hierarchy of provision, or other factors that either enable, or conflict with sharing
- If there is existing open space – what the community and stakeholders currently value about this land
- Whether or not the opportunities required can be provided by increasing the carrying capacity or quality of existing resources or whether additional land is required
- Community preferences for features and opportunities for cultural expression

3. What open space is currently provided

Overview

Few municipalities enjoy the diversity, high quality and aesthetic appeal of the physical assets that South Gippsland does. The picturesque farming country, spectacular coastlines and forested reserves provide a strong character for open space in the Shire.

There are approximately 300 open space reserves in the South Gippsland Shire. About half of these are crown reserves. Twenty two open spaces have a regional catchment, thirty seven have a district catchment, and some 213 have a local catchment.

About 20% are for social/ family recreation. These are mostly local reserves. Approximately 10% serve sport, 10% conservation of biological heritage, and some 10% of spaces are school sites.

The Shire has a good developing network of shared trails. Rail trails link key towns. They appear to be in good condition and are well used. There are also additional opportunities to develop further walking and circuit tracks- due to disused trails and tram ways, and a large number of unmade government roads.

There are a number of localities where the population has declined and the activity on recreation reserves and schools has been transferred to neighbouring towns. These reserves may provide other opportunities for local communities.

Many of South Gippsland's towns are dissected by a highway or major road, and have one major reserve on one side of town. In small settlements this creates a constraint for accessibility of this reserve especially for children.

The site inspections found that in general the condition and maintenance of local parks and playgrounds was very good. Also a considerable number of items of furniture had been replaced recently with more robust and accessible items.

The condition of some of the recreation reserve infrastructure, club facilities, furniture, and boundary plantings however are aging and these need attention.

The quality of local open space in the more recently developed settlements, (and in newer subdivisions) is considerably poorer than those in well established areas. Therefore future residential development needs to be carefully managed to ensure open space can deliver the benefits required.

The Strzelecki region

Towns in the Strzelecki region had some 1050 residents in 2001. There has been a high population growth experienced over the last ten years.

Improved transportation links to Melbourne means the region has high growth potential and a likely increase of people with more urban expectations in relation to sport, recreation and open space provision. There is a relatively small population for available sporting facilities, and the growth towns are not necessarily where the facilities currently are. The population centres are small, and hence offer limited choices for sport and leisure.

Due to the significant growth potential, planning the nature and location of open space required before the residential development occurs will be a key task here.

There are approximately 40 reserves in this region: 1 regional, 2 district, and 27 local reserves.

The main functions of reserves are: social/ family recreation (15%) sport (15%) and schools(12%).

50% of open spaces are Crown land and 37% are Council owned.

Drumdemara Grand Ridge region

The population of the main towns in this region was some 8,653 people in 2001. This region contains the three largest urban centres in South Gippsland: Leongatha, Korumburra, and Mirboo North. These larger townships play important roles in the surrounding smaller towns and the wider municipality.

This region has the highest population within the municipality and there is potential for relatively high growth due to the availability of services and infrastructure.

There are approximately 100 reserves in this region: 7 regional, 12 district, and 73 local reserves.

18% have been classified as being for social/ family recreation; 10% are schools, and 9% are sports facilities.

49% of reserves are Council owned. This is relatively high compared to other regions. 39% are crown land, and 11% are privately owned.

There is a need in this region to progress cycling and walking trail developments to connect green belts, schools, housing and recreational facilities as part of potential future development.

Open space needs to be distributed more equitably across these towns, and several sectors of these towns will need to identify sites for parks and sports facility expansions if residential growth continues.

Anderson's Inlet / Waratah Bay region

The population in the main towns of this region in 2001 was estimated at 600 people.

This region has extensive foreshore open spaces reserved to protect flora and fauna and coastal values. The region is characterised by a high level of residential and commercial development, a fluctuating and relatively low permanent population (a high number of non-residential rate payers).

There are 67 open space sites in this region; 5 regional, 5 district, and 53 local reserves. Only two are for sport and 24 (41%) have no identified function. Twelve (19% of reserves) are for social/ family recreation. 9% are reserved for conservation of biological heritage. 70% of reserves are Council owned. This reflects the nature of more recent development and acquisition of open space sites as a result of residential growth. 28% of reserves are crown land.

Open spaces in this region serving residential areas are typically small parcels, and there is a limited diversity of functions and setting types, although this region has spectacular coastlines, beaches and a national park close to the foreshore. Fewer bigger better quality local parks and additional trails may be beneficial to serve permanent residents in this region.

In this region there are typically no central town parks, civic hubs, or ovals serving the residents. Community facilities and commercial land uses are scattered and there are mostly foreshore, bushland and wetland reserves.

The environment is highly fragile, but valued for its flora, fauna, biodiversity and recreational use. Tourism places high pressure on the environment and resources.

The Prom Delta region

The population of the larger towns within the Prom Delta region was in order of 1700 people in 2001. This region contains some of the Shires most picturesque landscapes, and is the gateway to the Wilsons Promontory National Park.¹¹

There are approximately 60 reserves: 7 regional, 8 district, and 38 are local reserves. 13% have been classified as sport; 13% as social/ family recreation. 11% are schools. 61% of open space is crown land. 35% of spaces are Council owned. There is a range of good quality district sport facilities developed in this region. One recreation reserve is no longer used.

In this region open space issues are mostly related to the condition of infrastructure - rather than need for more land.

The Corner Inlet / Nooramunga region

The population of the region in 2001 was in the order of 900 people. It has declined over the last ten years mainly due to the loss of industry, although some small towns such as Port Franklin have experienced some population growth.

This region has a good diversity of open space function and setting types. There are 36 reserves: 2 regional, 10 district, and 22 local reserves.

21% have been classified as being for social/ family recreation, 21% for sport and 12% as off-road cycle and walking trails.

The bulk of the open spaces are owned by the Crown (67%). 25% of reserves are Council owned.

There are some disused and run down facilities in this region. There are considerable opportunities to develop further off road cycle and walking trails here.

4. What is the demand for open space

The drivers of change in demand and supply of open space in South Gippsland will be:

- changes in demographic profile and housing choices
 - trends in physical, social and sporting activities
 - increasing expectations by residents for quality open space and better quality facilities closer to home
 - increasing pressures on the natural environment by infrastructure development, tourism and climate change
- These are briefly discussed below.

Changes in demographic profile

The South Gippsland Shire covers an area of approximately 3,295 km² and in 2004 contained a population of 27,243 people.

In 2004, the estimated resident population by age showed the following trends for the South Gippsland Shire's population¹²:

- high proportions of 10 to 14 year olds
- low proportions of 20 to 39 year olds
- high proportions of 40 to 59 year olds

The main population centres within the South Gippsland Shire are the townships of Leongatha, Korumburra, Mirboo North and Foster. The largest township of these is Leongatha with a population of 4,234 people, Korumburra is the second largest with a population of 3,037. Mirboo North has a population of 1382 and Foster has a population of 988.¹³

The key demographic characteristics for the Shire are as follows¹⁴:

- Low population growth overall (.4% annual growth) – compared to Victoria as a whole (1.2% average annual growth)
- Relatively low weekly household income
Compared with the Victorian weekly household income there is a higher percentage of the South Gippsland population receiving a low income.
- Low unemployment rate – the unemployment figures compared to both the Victorian rate (5.6%) and the Gippsland rate (8.2%) show the South Gippsland Shire is lower (4.9%).
- Low indigenous population – currently Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders make up approximately 0.5% of the South Gippsland Shire's population, although this is consistent with the Victorian average.
- Few people born overseas – Only 10.7% of South Gippsland's population were born overseas compared with 23.3% for Victoria. Of these people born overseas almost 80% speak only English

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE PROJECTIONS

The Shire's overall population is expected to experience growth to the year 2030, with all of the growth expected in the Central and Western Districts, with the Eastern district's population expected to decrease, as illustrated in the following table (table 2).

Table 2: Projected population; 2006 to 2030 ¹⁵

Statistical Local Area	2006	2010	2020	2030
South Gippsland (S) - Central	13,288	13,864	15,284	16,918
South Gippsland (S) - East	5,868	5,799	5,572	5,347
South Gippsland (S) - West	8,086	8,325	8,881	9,467
Total LGA	27,243	27,988	29,736	31,732

Key age demographic changes projected to the year 2030 include:

- A decrease in the number of young adults in the Shire (especially in the eastern statistical area where a 60% reduction is expected in the number of people aged 15 to 34 years)
- A significant increase in the number of people aged over 60 years. This will continue until 2021, after which the number of people of 65 years will decline, whilst all older ages will continue to grow until 2031. Although the overall population of South Gippsland is expected to grow only 17%, the number of people aged over 60 years is expected to grow 104% to a total of 13,445 persons and 42% of the total population in 2030.
- The number of children aged 0 to 14 years is also expected to decline by about 20% across the Shire (the number of children 5 to 14 years is likely to decline between 4% and 6%) in the same period.

RESPONDING TO A CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The changing age structure of the residential population of the South Gippsland Shire is a key issue, with changes in the demand for services and housing anticipated as an outcome of this change.

With the population of the South Gippsland Shire expected to grow 17% by 2030 there will be a requirement for additional infrastructure. More significantly however is the substantial growth in the population over 60 years of age. For open space to remain relevant to all lifecycle groups it will need to better address groups not typically well catered for (such as older persons and adolescents), along with sport and incidental play and different needs driven by changes in private space and demand for activities. These target groups needs will typically have to be addressed together in the main social spaces, as well as have spaces which focus on one lifecycle group more than other groups. In this way a diversity of choices can be provided across the network of spaces, but also there will be less need to retrofit spaces as demographics change.

Housing types

There is evidence to suggest that an increasing proportion of people in the Shire will be living on smaller lots and will be participating in sport and physical activities away from home, and hence there will be increasing numbers of activities that need to be accommodated in public open space.

More people will need supported accommodation and hence there is a likelihood that more villages for older persons: hostels, retirement villages and nursing homes will be provided in the Shire.

With the increased number of older people there may be an opportunity to increase the diversity of housing types and the nature of and quality of open space and recreation facilities provided to serve this market.

Increasing numbers of older people

The increasing number of residents aged over 60 years until 2021 will result in the demand for different open space activities, and present different constraints and opportunities. There will also be increased importance on the planning and design of open space to encourage older adults to remain more active.

The number of people in the older age groups will eventually begin to decrease post “baby boomers”. However this decline will only begin to occur for the 60 to 65 year age group after 2021 at which point all age groups over 65 will still be increasing.

With an increasing proportion of older adults participating in physical activity, demand in South Gippsland for physical activities is however likely to decline more slowly than previously expected.

More older adults are likely to trigger a higher demand for conveniently located facilities such as:

- walking and cycling paths
- facilities for non competitive, social recreation activities such as tennis and swimming
- public toilets, seating and shade
- parks and playgrounds that are accessible to people using wheelchairs and with wider flat pavements, and with picnic areas and shelters to socialise with family

Where there is likely to be an increasing proportion of older adults there is likely to be corresponding demand for suitable activities so that more older adults may be encouraged to stay connected and get out and about:

- sports such as lawn bowls, and racquet sports (eg tennis, badminton and table tennis)
- suitable programs and fitness and relaxation classes such as: tai-chi, yoga, ballroom dancing, golf, gym, cycling, bush walking, and gardening
- supported social walking, church and volunteer and gardening activities
- better information targeting older adults
- assistance to get there or do an activity and someone to do the activity with

The changes in the size of older age groups is likely to be more pronounced in some areas. Typically fewer young people can be expected to stay in rural areas. As the rural population ages there may be an aging of the volunteer committee members for example, and a greater need for succession planning.

In townships, as older people become unable to drive, the provision of suitable paths for walking will be important. Older people may also not be as able to maintain semi public open space such as nature strips.

Decreasing numbers of young people

The decline in the proportion of young people from 0-14 yrs will influence the sports that traditionally target young people. Sports may need to continue to centralise facilities in district centres to enhance the viability of those sports.

- For the small proportion of young people it will be important to retain the range of things for young people to do, otherwise Council runs the risk of even more young people leaving the Shire.
- To serve young people it will be increasingly important to provide for young women, for example in ball sports (such as netball), equestrian activities, soccer and cycling, as well as social opportunities for exercise.

Income

As access to open space in a local neighbourhood is generally free of charge, local parks are potentially very important in providing accessible, low cost, family-based opportunities for social and family recreation. These may provide positive health outcomes to people who would otherwise be “at risk”.

Income is considered a significant determinant of leisure behaviour, and is likely to affect the use of open space in several ways.

- As income is often an indicator of education levels, lower income families may have lower expectations of open space
- Income will also impact on sport participation; the ability to play and joining a club, as well as the ability and willingness to spend time and money on transport to games.

Activity trends

An analysis of available participation rates show that the proportion of the population participation in physical exercise, sporting and recreation pursuits is generally increasing. Participation in sport and physical activity tends to peak at 15-24 years of age. It then declines steadily to 65 years. Participation rates in more recent years however, suggest that more older people are remaining active.

Trends suggest that more people are seeking active pursuits that do not have a need for ongoing routine commitment, however a high proportion of people seek to undertake physical activity in a social or organised setting.

Most leisure activities enjoy cyclic fluctuations in participation however there have been some activities that have consistently shown growth.

The following activities relevant to the South Gippsland¹⁶ are projected to experience growth up to 2021 in Victoria.

Activity	Participation rates	
	2006-16	2016-21
Walking (excl. bushwalking)	2.0%	+1.0%
Aerobics/fitness	+2.0%	+1.0%
Swimming	+2.0%	+1.0%
Yoga	+1.0%	+0.5%
Running	+1.0%	+0.5%
Surf sports	+0.5%	+0.25%
Soccer (indoor)	+1.0%	+0.5%
Cricket (outdoor)	+1.0%	+0.5%
Badminton	+0.5%	+0.25%

Note: Local demand for specific activities will be sourced from the householder survey conducted as part of the Recreation Plan 2007.

Other relevant activity trends identified an increased demand for:

- programmed activities (for example group fitness related activities) that may be conducted in indoor facilities at sports reserves
- incidental, non-routine social and physical activities as leisure (eg. going to the park with other young mothers (mums group) older men meeting up to go for a ride, or having a game of golf etc.)
- physically challenging but one-off competitive activities -without routine obligations (eg. *'fun runs, annual organised bike rides, open water swims, corporate triathlons etc.'*)
- a diversity in fitness related activities, especially trail based activities (eg. *'walking, dog and cycling'*) and a relative decrease in the dominance of traditional sports in terms of the proportion of physical activity, and the increasing
- activities that are convenient, and can be undertaken close to home or work
- pet ownership and leisure related activities (eg. *'dog walking'* and *'pet exercising'*)
- inclusive opportunities and services that include all the community, not only those with high levels of physical and intellectual ability
- the neighbourhood environment as a leisure environment: hence the desire for pleasant streetscape and footpaths or trails on which to walk, cycle, skate and wheel
- sports that can be played indoors, in modified formats and on synthetic surfaces.

Other trends include:

- a decrease in sport and physical activity of children in schools
- changing lifestyles and smaller private space, that constrain physical activity and incidental play particularly in children.
- new housing types that provide private communal open space, entertainment areas and small gym or community centres

INCREASING EXPECTATIONS

Within increasing understanding of the health benefits of exercise and open space, and those related to environmental issues generally, it can be expected that community expectations about provision and development of open space will increase.

There is a changing culture of volunteerism; towards shorter-term, task orientated roles and projects with higher recognition and rewards for outcomes. The chances of young people being involved in a committee of management for twenty years are now unlikely.

The more the Shire becomes a destination for retirement living and an escape from the stresses of the big City, the more likely it is that new residents will have values and expectations formed in an urban location. These expectations might include having facilities closer to home or of higher quality than are viable in small rural community.

Some small towns with declining populations have an expectation that facilities they have always enjoyed will always be there. In some instances small hamlets have sought to upgrade local facilities that are clearly not viable to provide in every small locality. Council needs a clear strategy for dealing with this issue and an agreed system for prioritising capital works.

There have also been incidences where new residents have complained about noise and activity from existing farms, and the same is occurring where new residential development abuts existing valuable broad-acre sport and recreation facilities (eg orienteering, shooting, motocross/ motor racing) that typically locate in rural areas so as to minimise their impact. Planning needs to address these issues.

In the larger towns and perhaps some coastal villages there may be additional communal living opportunities created (ie for older adults) and some higher density dwellings constructed in years to come. Therefore there may be proportionally fewer private yards and spaces for: incidental play and exercise, companion animals, horticulture and social gatherings and canopy trees. Therefore it is beneficial to consider how these things may be provided for in convenient and semi private or public settings.

TOURISM¹⁷

Fifty-one percent of visitors to Gippsland participate in nature based activities, which is 5% above Victoria's regional average. Nature based tourism is the predominant motivator for visitors to Gippsland, with the opportunity for an authentic country experience. The region's National Parks are positioned as a significant attractor, including Wilsons Promontory National Park.

The marine and water based experience of the Gippsland region is also an important strength. Sailing, fishing and boating are activities enjoyed by many visitors to the region. These are part of Gippsland's nature based and marine competitive strengths, and therefore are important tourism products.

Other activities that attract significant numbers to the region include four-wheel driving, trail bike riding, bushwalking and bird watching (wetlands).

There are a number of adventure activities available in South Gippsland, cycling (both mountain biking and road racing), and several rail trails, including the Great Southern Rail Trail.

The Victorian Government has created a system of thirteen Marine National Parks and eleven smaller marine sanctuaries. The parks and sanctuaries will protect 5.3% of Victoria's coastal waters. South Gippsland has several of these parks and sanctuaries, including Corner Inlet Marine National Park, and Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park. These parks are highly sensitive and development close to them has to take into account their qualities.

Visitor population

The location of the Shire, its close proximity to Melbourne and the presence of Bass Strait and Corner Inlet make the Shire and its townships popular holiday destinations. It could be expected that the population increases substantially during peak holiday periods especially in townships such as Venus Bay.

Nature based tourism is the predominant motivator for visitors to Gippsland. The Regional Tourism Plan indicates that the key activities undertaken by visitors in the region are sailing, boating and fishing, four-wheel driving, trail bike riding, bushwalking and bird watching and cycling (both mountain biking and road, and rail trail cycling).

For non permanent residents surf sports are likely to be important activities.

The fluctuation in population and increase in visitation in summer months have implications for sport. There is a significant increase in demand for some activities due to the high number of visitors and therefore opportunities and issues exist for resident clubs and facilities. These need to be addressed accordingly. The implications of the increase in visitor numbers for this plan and the Recreation Plan 2007 are:

- The potential increased demand for social sport in summer months and holiday periods (for example, tennis, cycling, swimming, lawn bowls, skate and BMX, surf sports, sailing, boating and fishing and other water based sports).

- The opportunities for providing sports and activities to target visitor interests, and for local clubs to capitalise on visitor markets (for example, casual hire of club facilities).
- The pressure for each township to have their own suite of facilities, possibly over an above that would otherwise be viable. The quantity of local based facilities for recreation and sports may constrain the viability of regional or Shire wide facilities.
- The desire to satisfy city/metropolitan based expectations concerning quality and variety of facility provision in smaller, rural/seaside townships
- The need to focus on district provision and major townships for the development of higher order sport facilities.

Issues raised by community groups

STRZELECKI REGION

Local open space issues that were raised by community groups in this region included:

- Participation levels – a number of sporting groups identified that participation numbers had been declining and given the small population in each township filling teams is difficult. The number of people walking however has been seen to be increasing.
- Reliance on volunteers – heavy reliance on the community and volunteers to manage and maintain facilities was noted as an issue, with community groups emphasising the need for additional support from the Council to look after the facilities in the small towns- as well as the larger centres.
- Drought – the drought not only affects the availability of open space and the surface of playing fields and courts but has been identified as having an impact on the communities open space and recreation priorities. Alternatively however it was noted that with the pressures of the drought the community is in need of more open space and recreation as a distraction and to build a sense of community spirit.
- Facilities – almost all community groups interviewed indicated that there were a good distribution of open space across the Shire.

DRUMBLEMARA GRAND RIDGE REGION

Community consultation with sporting clubs, associations and community groups in this region identified a number of issues:

- affordability, access and availability of facilities
- the need for additional space to ensure key sports have a dedicated facility especially in Leongatha
- the high demand for walking and cycling tracks with additional tracks required as roads become busier
- concern regarding the declining numbers in junior sport, and
- the difficulty in finding volunteers to manage facilities, sporting clubs, competitions and teams.

PROM DELTA REGION

Key issues raised in consultation with sporting clubs, associations and community groups in this region included:

- the aging population –community groups noted that with an aging population the running of clubs and maintenance of facilities was difficult. Also filling teams in junior competition and losing kids after school age affected use of open space. The bowls and golf clubs however both indicated strong participation levels
- a number of groups indicated that they felt the larger towns were given more support than some of the smaller towns
- there is a need to expand some sporting facilities in this region.

ANDERSON'S INLET / WARATAH BAY REGION

Consultation with community groups in this region mainly concerned the management of the foreshore and the need to limit the development of open space in the area.

Local groups are concerned about inappropriate development, and are wanting to keep pockets of land as open space, or to return some areas to wetland.

School groups and sporting organisations also noted that although there were good facilities in the area some were dated and Councils support of the small town facilities was just as important as supporting the larger centres.

Having to travel long distances to play sport was also highlighted as an issue.

CORNER INLET / NOORAMUNGA REGION

The main issues highlighted by community groups in this region included:

- population decline
- travelling distances for leisure and recreation and the costs involved
- the strong sense of community and voluntary involvement in undertaking maintenance and upkeep of local facilities.



5. What are the key open space issues for the Shire?

Following a literature review, site inspections, interviews with stakeholders and detailed discussions with staff, a number of Shire-wide and locality specific issues have been identified.

Five key Shire-wide issues have arisen that provide a focus for Council's future open space planning work. These are:

1. providing leadership and refining local open space planning processes
2. developing further off-road walking and cycling trails
3. providing for sport
4. protecting the natural environment, coastal and waterway reserves
5. managing assets and information

These issues are discussed in turn, in the following pages.

5.1 Refining local open space planning processes

COUNCILS ROLE IN OPEN SPACE PLANNING

Council needs to actively elevate open space as a landuse issue and ensure parks and open spaces are strategically located to serve future populations.

Council has very limited funds and a current focus on asset renewal rather than acquisition or creation. However it does have the opportunity to take greater control over what open space is provided and where, (through planning) and to facilitate better quality provision and development without

considerable capital outlay, and additional ongoing maintenance responsibilities.

The key roles Council will play in open space planning in the next five years are to:

1. Establish a clear policy and planning framework for open space planning.
2. Identify priority areas for local provision and development and devise strategies to deliver these, in conjunction with other parties. This will require rigorous assessments of open space demand and supply, on an ongoing basis.
3. Work closely with the land development industry and other providers to deliver a diverse range of open space functions and opportunities that are conveniently located to serve each residential community
4. Encourage a greater range of population to participate in physical activity, sport and play and enable them to find satisfying, outdoor leisure and environmental experiences both now and in the future.
5. Support local organizations to develop, program and promote the use of open space and infrastructure thereon, for the benefit of the local community.
6. Work in close co-operation with other municipalities, private land owners and other land managers to protect, and enhance the region's biological, cultural and landscape heritage and values in open space, as well as address issues of regional significance.



THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Applying simplistic open space planning standards such as an “area to population” ratio (ie 4ha per 1000 people), or % percentage of land area, or, allowing developers of residential land to determine what open space shall be provided; have now been shown to be ineffective in delivering a good diversity of high quality open space opportunities that are conveniently located to serve all residents.

Open space is not homogenous, and a range of different open space types are needed in response to: the range of benefits and experiences desired, and the different characteristics of local natural resources, housing types and demand for activities.

A planning framework that can facilitate more informed and effective decision making is required. This framework includes:

1. An approach which is enshrined in a classification system (see Chapter 2, How do we evaluate open space?)
2. A policy, and agreed planning process

The planning framework uses a four-tiered classification system as follows:

- Settlement type – which determines the size of private open space and likely opportunities close to home
- A classification based on catchment – or the sphere of influence and the origins of users
- A function classification – taking into account the primary purpose or use of the parks and reserves within the network
- A landscape setting classification – the physical condition and characteristics of the area that influence a user’s experience

This classification is a key element of the planning framework and can be a powerful tool. By ensuring a range of types of open space are provided to serve each locality we can ensure equity, as well as service specific needs.

By varying the function, setting type and catchment of spaces a diversity of open space opportunities can be created, that will serve the greatest range of the population, both now and in the future. This can be applied across the whole Shire, across one region within the Shire, across a specific town or locality as well as along the length of a foreshore or water way for example. Similarly, diversity across one type of open space function can be created by varying the settings in which they are provided. More diverse play opportunities could for example result if some were provided in bushland, or water based settings rather than just open grassy areas.

Classifying each reserve will help us with an overall snapshot of what types of spaces are available (how they are distributed, what gaps in types of space and areas are evident). This information can then be compared with likely future demand.

Each open space in the Shire has been given a classification. These are provided in the inventory and will be integrated into Councils GIS.

THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

Having a strong policy framework that is clearly articulated to stakeholders can ensure that Council, local communities and the land development industry work toward the same goals.

The policy framework shall include:

- Clear goals and open space objectives and principles
- Strategies to address specific issues (provided in Chapter 6)
- An agreed process related to identification of open space in new land development
- Any core service standards related to different settlements or categories of open space (to be provided in the Recreation Plan 2007)
- Clear roles of stakeholders in planning and development of open space and
- Mechanisms to fund, provide and develop land for open space

Key goals

The key goals of this strategy are:

GOAL 1: Leadership in local open space planning and design

- Enhance Council's influence on the open space planning and provision process, and
- Enhance the planning of local open space, to better serve residential communities and increase leisure participation

GOAL 2: Off-road cycle and walking trail development

- Extend the network of off-road cycle and walking trails throughout the Shire and where feasible around each locality and key reserves

GOAL 3: Sports development

- To encourage more people to continue to play a sport of their choice, and
- Provide the appropriate quality and quantity of sports infrastructure to maintain current participation

GOAL 4: Environmental quality and sustainability

- Protect and enhance local character, environmental and visual quality and biodiversity, and
- Preserve and restore natural and cultural values.

GOAL 5: Asset and information management

- Improve asset and information management to increase accessibility and sustainability of open space opportunities

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of open space planning and this strategy are:

- A network of accessible, high quality open spaces, sport and recreation facilities, that meet the needs of residents and visitors, and that are fit for purpose, and economical and environmentally sustainable
- An appropriate balance between provision of additional open space and enhancement/ development of existing space
- Clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and land owners in relation to the requirements and expectations of planning authorities in respect of open space, sport and recreation provision.

Key principles

Key principles that shall be enshrined in Council's open space policy include:

Sustainability

(Is this action environmental, socially and economically sustainable?)

Transparency

(Is the open space planning process transparent?)

Health and wellbeing

(Ecological and social) does action this contribute to better environmental for flora or fauna or social well-being?

Goal directed

(Does this action meet the key goals set?)

Involvement

By community and stakeholders; (have stakeholders been engaged in planning this action?)

Protection

Of biological and cultural heritage

Participation

(Does this action encourage more people to participate in physical or social activity?)

Size and complexity

Is it of sufficient size to perform its function. What elements and facilities shall relate to what to maximise their value?

Locational convenience

(What is the distance threshold from residents for this type of park?)

Accessibility

(Is this park physically accessible and socially inclusive?)

Neighbourhood character

Does this action reinforce or protect or neighbourhood character?)

Diversity of opportunity

(Does this action lead to diversity of opportunity or open space experiences?)

Where Council sees fit it may enlist the support of key community members in a specific locality through an open space advisory committee to ensure major open space proposals are also commented on at the local level.

THE PROCESS FOR DETERMINING WHAT TYPE, FORM AND QUALITY OF SPACE IS REQUIRED AND WHERE

Council shall not leave the identification of what open space is required to the land development industry. However, as open space is an important marketing tool, and a vital community investment, it is important to land developers. Council will work closely with developers to provide surety about the Council's position and where possible achieve mutual objectives.

Skills and information required

Open space planning is a multi disciplinary function. There is a need for open space planning and demand and supply assessment to be undertaken by recreation and open space professionals in conjunction with strategic and statutory planners, park and environmental planning and landscape design personnel.

Council shall ensure staff in these disciplines are deployed to make an open space planning input into locality all plans, structure planning and subdivision layout and design.

Co-ordination between staff in open space decision making roles is essential. When a development proposal is submitted, Council shall ensure a team of personnel including the recreation development officer and /or an open space professional, in conjunction with strategic and statutory planners, park / environmental planner and landscape design personnel, assess these for open space and maintenance implications. When rezonings or new developments are proposed they shall be assessed by all these staff for open space implications prior to being submitted to Council.

Council shall require the land development industry to engage recreation and open space professionals to prepare any residential development proposals that are not in accordance with an existing Development Plan, or any policy or development intent outlined in this or future Recreation Plans.

Prior to determining whether additional open space is required, and what type, form and quality of open space is required in a residential area, a local demand and supply assessment is necessary. See page 13 where a process for Demand and Supply is presented. Typically this shall occur prior to a large residential development, when rezoning is being proposed, or prior to planning permit stage.

Good supply analyses requires good land information and where this is not provided as part of a rezoning or permit application or a residential development proposal, Council shall require information concerning existing site conditions, flora and fauna, geotechnical conditions, heritage significance and any existing infrastructure be submitted as part of the such a proposal.

Process and priorities

Once the demand and supply of open space has been assessed for a particular locality, it will then be possible to identify any gap in existing or future provision, potential duplication, or mismatch in quality prior to determining where additional refinements in open space are required.

Whilst a range of open space functions may be required in new development the key considerations in relation to open space will be to establish whether:

- a. an open space for social/family recreation function is available or required for new residents or workers. This is typically a slightly larger space than playgrounds and it will offer the range of activities to serve a wider range of people and other family members, such as kick about spaces, planting for nature appreciation, paths, picnic facilities and possible specific facilities for adolescents and older adults and some foundation sports facilities eg a free access tennis court
- b. to ensure sport and off-road cycle and walking trails are available
- c. to add diversity to existing open space functions, setting types and opportunities to ensure that the widest range of people can be catered for
- d. to determine the need to embellishing existing facilities or spaces to increase us and better meet people needs.

In most instances there will not be a need for significant new parcels of open space. Instead there will be a progression of refinements to existing reserves in established areas and a preference to take monetary contributions instead of land. Land, however may required to expand; the size or value of playgrounds (to provide social /family recreation parks), existing sports facilities (to add extra fields, areas for car parking, or to secure water) or trails.

Council shall consider enhancing the use of existing open spaces as opposed to creating multiple smaller public open spaces for play or other functions.

Single-purpose open spaces shall no longer be provided in residential areas (such as narrow access ways and tiny playgrounds) that cannot be used for

other purposes. Open space must be of a form and large enough to enable a change of use over time.

Council shall ensure any open space that is required serve new residential developments is provided in developable land, separate to, but potentially abutting land required for drainage/retention and floodway purposes or for the preservation native vegetation or heritage values. The nature of any open space contribution shall therefore be expressed as a percentage of the net developable area.

Council shall ensure that encumbered land is not taken as open space to satisfy the demand for: sport, or social /family recreation functions.

Where there is no social /family recreation space within 400m Council will seek to take at least 10% of land subdivided as open space, or an equivalent cash contribution, unless there is a specific schedule identifying a more locality specific percentage. ¹⁸.

Residents need a range of open space opportunities that cannot be provided immediately adjacent to their residences. For example residents may need to have outside their immediate locality the use of a swimming pool. Similarly as sports club facilities cannot be provided to serve very hamlet, one sports complex may be shared by several towns. Therefore, a proportion of all open space to serve every household will need to be provided outside the locality in which the residential development occurs. Hence, it is appropriate that a proportion of open space contributions be spent on district and regional projects outside the locality generating the contribution.

MECHANISMS

For larger developments, greenfield and rezoning proposals Council shall use: the Recreation Plan to determine the nature of any open space refinement required, or a demand and supply assessment to determine these. Such requirements will, where possible, be included in Development Plan Overlays.

New residential, commercial and industrial developments that will increase demand for open space may occur without subdivision – especially in mixed use/ residential areas, and supported, or resort style residential developments. However, Council will continue to use the subdivision process as a major mechanism to fund further open space development, mainly due to the cost of other mechanisms, and the likely scale of future residential development.

The open space contribution process as part of subdivision shall not, be confused with the identification of what is required.

Council will prepare Development Contribution Plans only where there is a significant financial incentive to do so.

Council shall prepare a locality specific schedules of percentages of land likely to be required for open space purposes. As far as possible the Recreation Plan 2007 will identify areas for any future provision of open space, or embellishments required based on known land development factors, and demand and supply.

Council shall agree to the design of any space provided by a developer to ensure it can be adequately maintained by Council, is DDA compliant, and consistent with shire standards for similar spaces, and that it is in good condition before handover.

Council shall establish a system to more accurately account for where open space contributions are taken and where they are spent.

For projects identified with a district catchment such as sports facilities, rail trails etc, it is appropriate that contributions taken from localities in the same region be used for improvement or acquisition.

For local open space improvements or developments it is appropriate that open space contributions taken only from the same locality or nearest hamlet be used.

5.2 Cycle and Walking Trails

Walking and cycling are the core leisure activities undertaken by the population for fitness and pleasure.

Off-road cycle and walking trails provide the foundation for children to learn the basic skills of wayfinding and cycling. They provide health benefits through physical exercise, the benefits of getting outdoors and connecting with other members of the community, and the benefits of an improved sense of well being through the release of tension and escaping from routines and surroundings.

Off-road cycle and walking trails also provide leisure choices, enhance accessibility to other community facilities and provide sustainable transport options. Encouraging more people to do activities such as walking cycling, running, wheeling and riding horses that can be spontaneous and are highly accessible to the majority of the community, shall continue to be strong focus for Council.

Walking and cycling are important to visitors and the local economy. A recent study completed by Latrobe University suggested that there were considerable benefits of rail trails, citing particular examples of economic benefits to localities along the Great Southern Rail Trail.

Many localities lack footpaths and therefore impair accessibility to leisure opportunities for an increasingly large proportion of the population as it ages and the proportion of people with mobility impairments increase.

Major trail routes and circuits

South Gippsland Shire has a good developing network of shared trails especially rail trails that link key towns. They appear to be in good condition and are well used.

The Shire is also extremely fortunate to have an extensive network of disused rail, tramways, and government roads that lend themselves to the potential development of trails for walking and cycling. There are also creek

corridors and foreshores where off-road cycle and walking tracks and trails could be developed.

Council shall, as a priority, identify the major trails that extend existing trails, link towns and connect into other municipalities and regional trail networks in order to progressively secure alignments in conjunction with other stakeholders and seek funds for their construction.

Circuits around each locality could be developed relatively easily utilising existing reserves, paths, unmade road reserves, foreshores, creek corridors, disused rail and tram ways. It would be desirable to define these circuits quickly to secure as part of subdivisions and before further development prevents access.

Care shall however be taken to ensure trails do not lead to degradation of fragile environments, or the fragmentation of reserves, and that regional trail routes are designed to address adjacent land uses whilst protecting the view shed of trail users.

Park perimeter paths

There are some large recreation reserves where trails suitable for jogging and walking could be easily integrated into the design of the reserve around their perimeter. These will assist in motivating additional people to walk and cycle.

In more urban settings, some reserves could include sealed circuit paths to aid use by people in wheelchairs and to assist small children learning to ride.

End of journey facilities and activity hubs

The rail trails have nodes of support facilities including parking and toilet facilities. Some smaller communities are working hard to develop these as hubs to benefit their township.

5.3 Providing for Sport

Interviews with community groups highlighted the significance of sport to the Shire's communities.

There are some highly developed and good quality sporting reserve across the Shire, and residents, clubs and committees of management commit considerable resources to the administration, programming and conduct of sporting activities and the maintenance and development of sporting infrastructure.

Whilst participation in sport is very strong, the range of sports is hampered by the small population in most localities.

A number of issues have arisen associated with the future of sport in the Shire. These range from:

- concerns about dwindling volunteer numbers and declining populations,
- the need for additional support to manage existing sport infrastructure
- the need to expand and upgrade facilities, and for assistance to develop emerging sports as well as secure long term home bases for several sports
- alcohol in junior sport
- distances, difficulty and cost of travel to play sport
- the number of single ground sports facilities
- condition of some sports playing surfaces eg tennis
- the impact of the drought and strategies to minimise water use, to
- resourcing committees to management of sporting reserves.

5.4 Protecting the natural environment, coastal and waterway reserves

CLIMATE CHANGE¹⁹

Small changes in average climate conditions are expected to generate large changes in Gippsland. These include extreme events, a reduction in the availability of water, an increase in the number of days over 35°C, longer droughts and a rise in sea level.

Temperature

An annual warming of 0.2 to 1.4 °C and an increase in the number of hot summer days over 35 °C are projected. In remaining natural areas there will be implications for vegetation and also fauna some of whom may not be able to adapt. There will also be implications for playing sport, choice of surfaces, and a higher demand for indoor spaces, shelter and shade.

Winds, storms and sea level rise

Winds are likely to intensify in coastal regions of Victoria, particularly in winter as a result of more intense low pressure systems. Sea level is projected to rise between 7 and 55cm by 2070.

The implications of these on open space in south Gippsland include: loss of beach and foreshore areas, inundation of assets and the need for more robust infrastructure such as jetties, moorings and boat ramps.

Water

Droughts are likely to become more frequent and longer, particularly in winter-spring. Rainfall is likely to decrease (between 3 to 10%) by 2030. Also extreme heavy rainfall events may become more intense.

The hotter, drier conditions likely to increase bushfire risk and will increase the stress and water demands of turf on playing fields, and impact on playability of playing surfaces. Reduced rainfall will also decrease average run-off in streams, impacting on recreational value and ability to navigate some creeks by boat.

Water demand can be expected to increase as a result of increases in temperature and evaporation.

Lower flows and higher temperatures would also reduce water quality by creating a more favourable environment for microbes and algal blooms.

Decreases in run-off due to climate change has the potential to contribute further to the decline in wetland habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Preservation of coastal and rural areas

The coastal and natural areas of South Gippsland are the focus of development pressures and tourism use, however their pristine condition and strong landscape character is also the very reason many residents have chosen to settle there.

Without innovative and appropriate management of indigenous vegetation, waterways and rural and coastal spaces, anticipated urban development may lead to further reduction of biodiversity values, agricultural land productivity, water supply and quality and lifestyle appeal of the region.

Some residents have expressed their concern that Council needs to provide resources for bushland management, weed control and revegetation inline with those expended on other open space tasks.

Land management

The management of natural resources in South Gippsland falls across the responsibility of a number of land and water management agencies as well as Council. Greater strategic coordination of local, and regional initiatives would be of benefit.

The opportunity exists to improve efficiency, reach and effectiveness of environmental campaigns through increased collaboration, coordination and integration of programs from local, national and international government and non-government organisations and private industry.

Whilst Council is commonly seen as the managers of all local open space, it has little control over the large proportion of open space that is used as open space by the community. Land used as local open space is commonly reserved for other purposes (eg easements), is not formally identified as open space (eg road or railway reserves) or owned by other agencies and authorities (eg schools, public housing, catchment management, water, or transport). Much of this land is integral to delivering the social, environmental and leisure benefits described earlier in this plan.

This presents four key challenges:

- how to protect open space uses and values, on land reserved for other purposes
- how to “*maximise the open space and open space potential of neglected or underused areas such as some railway land, cemeteries and schools*”²⁰ and easements
- how to ensure open space use of this land that is compatible with the intended land use is planned for and accommodated
- how organisations such as schools can be resourced to deliver open space and sports benefits, community-wide.²¹

A large number of open space sites are also crown land managed by community committees. There would be considerable value to the community for these reserves to be managed and committees resourced, in the same way and to the same extent as Council reserves.

Shade

Shade is a major issue at sporting reserves and playgrounds. Council shall work with partners in open space management to develop further shade. A desirable strategy to address shade would consist of the following:

- the planting of a significant number of additional trees
- permanent roofed shade structures in strategic places
- temporary shade (shade sails) while trees are establishing.
However sails are not generally suitable in the long term because:
 - they are relatively costly
 - their effectiveness declines over time
 - they have a limited life span
- Use species identified as suitable for the area by the Cancer Council Victoria.

Asset and Information management

ASSET MANAGEMENT

A large focus of Council's role in leisure is liaising and supporting committees of management, clubs and organisations in the municipality, in addition to planning (and developing funding proposals for) asset development and maintenance.

Committees and clubs need more support to plan and design viable facilities, make them robust and accessible and manage assets as well as encourage use.

By improving open space planning and creating more strategic and valuable open spaces Council will be able to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of asset management and maintenance.

Council will need to assess the maintenance implications of taking any additional land that is proposed to be transferred to Council for open space, before it is taken. A maintenance plan may be required for further land and resources allocated accordingly.

Providing facilities is best considered as an input into a process centred around the provision of experiences and community benefits. With changing demand for activities and an older and more diverse population, there will need to be a shift in Council's support role of the traditional sport and park asset management, to embrace the increasing importance of:

- bushland management, biodiversity plantings and community horticulture
- programmed physical activity and events in open space and community settings
- marketing and information dissemination to ensure choice



- sports development: to assist not for profit clubs grow their sports, and manage their organisations and volunteers
- inclusion of older adults and people with a disability.

Further policy direction to determine the relative importance of specific assets and their viability as well as greater control over asset development and management, would also be beneficial.

Council can influence who is targetted and what is provided more directly through planning and funding, and a more conscious connection between these activities and participation outcomes can be made.

There is a need to manage the portfolio of infrastructure, and its quality, so as to stimulate participation and positive leisure experiences, especially for specific target populations, eg adolescents, females, older adults and people with a disability: groups who have been marginalised by the lack of accessible infrastructure in the past. Further development is also required to make assets in open space accessible and to improve the condition of skate parks across the Shire.

Planning and maintenance of much of this infrastructure may not have been sufficient or strategic enough to maintain participation rates, and as the population ages, and expectation increase, further resources will need to be invested to continue to deliver the same participation outcomes.

MARKETING AND INFORMATION

Council will stimulate residential development especially around open space and community recreation and sporting infrastructure. This is fundamental to retaining the range and quality of recreation resources now available and making them function better. Promoting these recreation resources may assist in attracting new residents and increasing participation.

A greater focus on marketing and information dissemination about leisure opportunities in open space would be beneficial. This shall include:

- information on infrastructure and opportunities, and user groups clubs and recreation providers, (for planning, management and marketing purposes)
- distributing cost effective information in a range of formats and through a range of means to residents, visitors and stakeholders.
- additional signage of reserves and facilities
- encourage information exchange and communication with and between stakeholders.



6. How will these issues be addressed?

Open Space Vision

- Council acknowledges that the design of residential and commercial areas best integrate quality open space to support the living and working environment as well to provide health, social, economic and environmental benefits and opportunities for sustainable transport.
- Council shows the leadership and policy support to guide and encourage open space planning as a significant land use issue.
- A consistent open space planning philosophy and objectives are in place across all departments.
- Good baseline data about open space and its use, regional plans, and local master plans are available.
- Effective planning processes and funding mechanisms are in place to implement this plan and manage open space to deliver benefits the community seeks from open space.
- A diversity of types of open space are accessible to all residents especially those that support social/ family recreation and play, sport, and trail based activities.

Key Goals

The key goals of this strategy are:

GOAL 1: Leadership in local open space planning and design

- Enhance Council's influence on the open space planning and provision process, and
- Enhance the planning of local open space, to better serve residential communities and increase leisure participation

GOAL 2: Off-road cycle and walking trail development

- Extend the network of off-road cycle and walking trails throughout the Shire and where feasible around each locality and key reserves

GOAL 3: Sports development

- To encourage more people to continue to play a sport of their choice, and
- Provide the appropriate quality and quantity of sports infrastructure to maintain current participation

GOAL 4: Environmental quality and sustainability

- Protect and enhance local character, environmental and visual quality and biodiversity, and
- Preserve and restore natural and cultural values.

GOAL 5: Asset and information management

- Improve asset and information management to increase accessibility and sustainability of open space opportunities

Strategies

The following table summaries the key strategies of this plan.

WHAT IS THE GOAL?	WHY WE NEED TO DO IT	WHAT STRATEGIES SHALL WE EMPLOY?
<p>GOAL 1. LEADERSHIP IN OPEN SPACE POLICY, PLANNING AND DESIGN</p> <p>Enhance Council's influence on the open space planning and provision process</p> <p>Enhance the planning of local open space, to better serve residential communities, and increase leisure participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To increase the effectiveness of open space planning and exert more influence in the outcome of open space planning and land development ○ Take control of where open space, of what type, and form is provided in the long term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Take a strong leadership role in open space planning rather than allowing the land development industry to control future open space provision and form ☑ Adopt the open space planning policy framework to guide decision making ☑ Classify all open space in accordance with the planning framework in this plan ☑ Provide clear open space objectives and principles in the Municipal Strategic Statement ☑ Cite this Open Space Strategy, and the Recreation Plan 2007 as a referral document in the Planning Scheme ☑ Devise core service standards related to different settlements and categories of open space ☑ Identify areas required for future open space in Development Plans ☑ Engage professional open space and Recreation Planning personnel to contribute to Structure Plans, Urban Design Frameworks and other local planning projects that impact on open space ☑ Ensure professional recreation and open space planning personnel critique land development proposals prior to being submitted to council ☑ Keep an open space inventory up to date and aligned with an open space layer in Council's GIS to provide a current over view of open space supply for planning and marketing purposes ☑ Ensure all internal stakeholders embrace and implement the new open space planning framework and process (ie benefits approach and classifications) ☑ Undertake a review of demand for open space and recreation activities every four years

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

*GOAL 1. LEADERSHIP IN
OPEN SPACE POLICY,
PLANNING AND DESIGN
(cont'd)*

*Enhance Council's influence
on the open space planning
and provision process*

*Enhance the planning of
local open space, to better
serve residential
communities, and increase
leisure participation*

WHY WE NEED TO DO IT

- o To clarify stakeholders role in open space planning, to maximise the effectiveness of planning

WHAT STRATEGIES SHALL WE EMPLOY?

- ☑ Work in close co-operation with other municipalities, private land owners and other land management agencies to protect, and enhance the region's biological, cultural and landscape heritage values in open space, as well as address issues of regional significance
- ☑ Assist the land development industry to provide better quality and sustainable open space in new subdivisions
- ☑ Ensure internal parks, planning and recreation development staff agree on open space elements of all land development proposals
- ☑ Maintain regular ongoing dialogue with: user groups, schools, water authorities, land developers, land managers and neighbouring municipalities on strategic open space planning issues
- ☑ Educate local surveyors, developers and other land development stakeholders about Councils objectives, processes and preferred outcomes
- ☑ Continually review strategies developed with stakeholders to enhance functionality, useability and carrying capacity of existing open space
- ☑ Require existing site conditions and land capability information be submitted as part of development proposals to aid the open space planning process
- ☑ Develop and disseminate a range of information products about existing open space and opportunities to use it
- ☑ Provide incentives or tools to ensure private developers provide a higher standard of embellishment in new open space and to protect remnant vegetation / sites of high recreation potential
- ☑ Support local organizations develop, program and promote the use of, open space and infrastructure thereon for the benefit of the local community

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

*GOAL 1. LEADERSHIP IN
OPEN SPACE POLICY,
PLANNING AND DESIGN
(cont'd)*

*Enhance Council's influence
on the open space planning
and provision process*

*Enhance the planning of
local open space, to better
serve residential
communities, and increase
leisure participation*

WHY WE NEED TO DO IT

- o To provide an agreed planning process related to identification of open space, in new land development

WHAT STRATEGIES SHALL WE EMPLOY?

- ☑ Ensure all open space proposals are supported by rigorous assessments of open space demand and supply (as described in this plan)
- ☑ Develop strong internal co-ordination and planning process for open space that embrace the following: the nature of the settlement, ultimate housing density, characteristics of private open space, the function, form, catchment of open space required and provided, the suitability and capability of available land, distance thresholds and core service criteria for each type of space, as well as community and stakeholder preferences
- ☑ Consider the provision of social/family recreation, sport and cycle and walking trails as the priority for open space types to serve new residential development
- ☑ Where gaps in open space provision have been identified, consider options for provision or embellishment that include use or development on other government land and joint development with providers such as a schools
- ☑ Consider taking cash contributions for open space refinements in established areas that include: streetscape works to provide street trees and off-road cycle and walking trails, embellishments to increase carrying capacity and use, and the expansion of existing spaces to extend use, as well as to enhance sustainability and the viability of facilities
- ☑ Ensure open space to serve new residential developments is provided from the net developable area of land, separate to, but potentially abutting, land required for drainage/retention and floodway, or for the preservation native vegetation or heritage values
- ☑ Ensure that encumbered land is not taken as open space to satisfy the demand for: sport, play or social /family recreation functions.

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

*GOAL 1. LEADERSHIP IN
OPEN SPACE POLICY,
PLANNING AND DESIGN
(cont'd)*

*Enhance Council's influence
on the open space planning
and provision process*

*Enhance the planning of
local open space, to better
serve residential
communities, and increase
leisure participation*

WHY WE NEED TO DO IT

- o To provide agreed mechanisms to fund, provide and develop land for open space

WHAT STRATEGIES SHALL WE EMPLOY?

- ☑ Refine the open space contributions policy and revise the planning scheme to provide a strong basis for open space planning
- ☑ Prepare a locality specific percentages of land required as any additional open space in future residential development and specify open space contribution levels in the Planning Scheme (local policy section and in the schedule to clause 52.01)
- ☑ Consider taking open space contributions in commercial and industrial zones to meet the needs of workers for social /family recreation, to provide relaxation /environmental appreciation /escape, buffers, and for the development of off-road cycle and walking trails
- ☑ Consider using Section 173 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 to enter into an agreement with owners of land concerning the use or development of the land to achieve open space planning objectives
- ☑ Establish a system to more accurately account for where open space contributions are taken, and where they are spent
- ☑ Specify that contributions taken from localities in the same region can be used for improvement or acquisition of district open space (such as sports facilities, rail trails)
- ☑ Take open space contributions for local open space projects from the same locality or the rural catchment surrounding a hamlet
- ☑ Take open space contributions as land where land abuts or provides a strategic link to a waterway, foreshore, or open space, fills an identified gap, or where the need for open space is high
- ☑ Determine the nature of any cash contribution on the basis of the cost of embellishment or the development of an alternative site
- ☑ Ensure the design of any space provided by a developer can be adequately maintained by Council, is consistent with standards of similar spaces in the rest of the Shire, and that it is in good condition before handover

WHAT IS THE GOAL?	WHY WE NEED TO DO IT	WHAT STRATEGIES SHALL WE EMPLOY?
<p><i>GOAL 1. LEADERSHIP IN OPEN SPACE POLICY, PLANNING AND DESIGN (cont'd)</i></p> <p><i>Enhance Council's influence on the open space planning and provision process</i></p> <p><i>Enhance the planning of local open space, to better serve residential communities, and increase leisure participation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide convenient access to a core range of opportunities in line with settlement type ○ Ensure local spaces provide a wide range of benefits to the whole population\ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Ensure every open space is designed and managed with a particular function, setting, and target user group in mind, and that desired attributes are provided to meet the recreational needs of the population both now and in the future ☑ Ensure open space has been designed specifically for a range of age groups, both genders, and can provide for future demand ☑ Identify and design open space areas before providing development approval ☑ Provide larger more diverse spaces for social/ family recreation (instead of small playgrounds) equitably distributed in residential areas ☑ Design local open space to better suit older adults, adolescents and people with the disability, and accommodate leisure activities that are in high demand ☑ Progressively redesign reserves of poor quality on a locality-by-locality basis

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

GOAL 2: OFF-ROAD CYCLE AND WALKING TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Extend the network of off-road cycle and walking trails throughout the Shire and where feasible around each locality and key reserves

WHY WE NEED TO DO IT

- To meet the demand for walking and cycling
- To encourage physical activity and promote sustainable transport
- To motivate people to get out and stay connected
- Ensure that during the planning and development of trails, the following are protected:
 - sensitive environments;
 - adjacent land holders interests; and
 - view sheds of trails for users

WHAT STRATEGIES SHALL WE EMPLOY?

- ☑ Develop a Shire-wide trail network along rail and tram reserves, waterways, and disused roads
- ☑ Continue to support local groups conduct trail feasibility and design projects
- ☑ Assist in planning for trail networks around each township
- ☑ Plan for park perimeter paths to be developed around key reserves
- ☑ Support the creation of end of journey facilities and activity hubs along trails
- ☑ Develop Shire guidelines that protect the environment through which they pass, address risk and accessibility issues, and adjacent landuse
- ☑ Develop a capital works program for approved footpaths and off-road cycle and walking trail developments

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

GOAL 3: SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

To encourage more people to continue to play a sport of their choice

Provide the appropriate quality and quantity of sports infrastructure to maintain current participation

WHY WE NEED TO DO IT

- Sport provides considerable benefits to individuals and communities
- Sporting infrastructure needs to be better planned and resourced so as to be sustainable
- Clubs need support to maintain operations and viable facilities
- Sport need to embrace changing demographics

WHAT STRATEGIES SHALL WE EMPLOY?

- ☑ Establish a hierarchy of sports facilities to guide levels of provision and maintenance
- ☑ Investigate opportunities to enhance viability of sports infrastructure and increased shared use
- ☑ Assist sports to include people from a broader range of ages and abilities as players, officials and in administration
- ☑ Support key sports in identifying secure home bases
- ☑ Devise a policy on which to base development and funding decisions
- ☑ Continue to encourage Master Planning to limit incremental development
- ☑ Assist clubs to adopt water conservation practice and maintain better quality playing fields

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

GOAL 4: ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Protect and enhance local character, environmental and visual quality and biodiversity

Preserve and restore natural and cultural values

WHY WE NEED TO DO IT

- Protect the natural features and character on which many leisure experiences depend
- Enhance environmental sustainability, biodiversity and minimise climate change
- Enhance resident's contact with nature to provide psychological benefits and amenity value in residential areas

WHAT STRATEGIES SHALL WE EMPLOY?

- ☑ Continue to protect and reinforce the natural character of each locality in streetscape works, protection of vegetation and in building design
- ☑ Work co-operatively with other land and water agencies to address weed infestation, vegetation remediation and species protection issues
- ☑ Enhance biodiversity and increase proportion of tree canopy in public and private open space
- ☑ Investigate assets vulnerable to sea level rise and damage in extreme weather events
- ☑ Retain and extend ecologically functional open space corridors especially along waterways and transport links
- ☑ Support local groups to undertake tree planting and landscape improvement works to priority reserves
- ☑ Support an increase in the community's understanding and appreciation of South Gippsland environmental values through targeted interpretation and education
- ☑ Protect and preserve natural and cultural sites of significance
- ☑ Diversify the range of open space settings, introducing more trees and shade into the many 'open grassy areas' and use a greater range of natural elements in design
- ☑ Continue to progressively renovate playing surfaces to introduce warm season grasses and introduce specific efficient irrigation regimes including subsurface irrigation at selected sites
- ☑ Progressively provide shade and shelter at sports and social /family recreation reserves, and at hubs along trails

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

WHY WE NEED TO DO IT

WHAT STRATEGIES SHALL WE EMPLOY?

GOAL 5: Asset and information management

Improve asset and information management to increase accessibility and sustainability of open space opportunities

- o Better information and higher quality facilities will increase use of open space and extend its sphere of influence
- o Committees and clubs need more support to plan and design viable facilities, make them robust and accessible and manage assets as well as encourage use
- o A better clarity of roles between Council Committee, clubs, volunteers will ensure tasks are done more efficiently and effectively.
- o Better Information about available opportunities and contact details about user groups, will increase the opportunity for more people to join, play, and find opportunities that match their needs

- ☑ Refine the basis of funding to committees to better match their needs and abilities, Council priorities and funds available
- ☑ Consider brokering Shire wide programs with a corporate sponsor and sports peak bodies, to selective upgrade facilities -sport by sport
- ☑ Consider brokering an outreach program from existing recreation providers to deliver instructors for community fitness and sport programs in existing community facilities
- ☑ Consider brokering a centralised volunteer identification and engagement program in conjunction with committees and sports clubs
- ☑ Continue to improve the accessibility of sport, play and park infrastructure
- ☑ Provide detailed information about what sport and leisure opportunities are available where in the Shire to enhance choices and use of facilities on reserves
- ☑ Encourage strategy planning of assets with regional partners and schools
- ☑ Ensure the asset management strategy addresses cyclic maintenance and the development of capital works in open space areas
- ☑ Ensure asset and maintenance implications of new open space are considered prior to transfer.

ENDNOTES

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- 1 Social /family recreation (SFR) areas are local parks that are more than just a playground. They are spaces with a variety of activities for different age groups: places to ride, play, kick a ball, sit relax, picnic, stroll, appreciate the bush, socialise with friends, watch sport, play with the dog, and where it is possible to push a pram or person in a wheelchair.
- 2 *Source: South Gippsland Overall Settlement Plan, South Gippsland Shire Council, Version (31 May 2006)*
- 3 *Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital Putnam, R. D. 1995. ' Journal of Democracy, 6, 65-78.*
- 4 *Relf As cited in David Malakoff, Managing Editor of Community Greening Review Urban Parks Institute USA. Project for Public Spaces, Inc. New York 2001*
- 5 *Costs of Illness Attributable to Physical Activity in Australia Stephenson, Bauman, Armstrong et al, 2000*
- 6 *The Costs of Illness Attributable to Physical Inactivity In Australia: A Discussion Paper Bauman et al., 1999; Rutten et al., 2001; Sallis et al., 1990; Sallis et al., 1997 (as cited in a report prepared by John Stephenson & Adrian Bauman for the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care and the Australian Sports Commission.*
- 7 *Salmon et al., 2003 (cited in Getting Australia Active ii, Appendix: An Update of Evidence on Physical Activity, Fiona Bull, Adrian Bauman, Bill Bellow, Wendy Brown 2004)*
- 8 *Giles-Corti & Donovan, 2002*
- 9 *Pedestrians and Health Terri Pikora, School of Population Health, The University of Western Australia, 2003*
- 10 *Pedestrians and Health Terri Pikora, School of Population Health, The University of Western Australia, 2003*
- 11 *South Gippsland Overall Settlement Plan, South Gippsland Shire Council, Version 2 (31 May 2006)*
- 12 *ABS Population by Age and Sex (2004) Cat No. 3235.2*
- 13 *Towns in Time (2001)*
- 14 *Gippsland Research and Information Service, Statistical Profile South Gippsland Shire, Monash University (December 2005).*
- 15 *Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria in Future (VIF) 2004 Projections, Estimated Resident Population as at June 30th By Statistical Local Areas. Note that population projections are not published for smaller locations.*
- 16 *Sourced from ERASS and applied to the projected population for South Gippsland Shire.*
- 17 *Tourism Victoria Gippsland Regional Tourism Development Plan 2000-2007*
- 18 This is based on the following:
- Quantifying the most basic minimum of land area requirements to provide for the core functions of play, social family recreation, access way trail, relaxation contemplation escape and sport.
 - Likely indicators of what each function will require in terms of Core Service Provision by Function Type and Catchment
 - Based on the current Victorian Planning Provisions (clause 56.05) small parks are required within 150-300m, local parks of 1ha are required within 500m and 3ha district parks are required with 2km of all residents. This amounts to approximately 5.43% of residential land area (even without allowing for barriers). In addition the clause requires: Regional public open space where appropriate, including along foreshores, streams and permanent water bodies.
 - Approximately 2% of all land is required just to provide a park of one hectare within 400-500m of all dwellings
 - Additional land is required to compensate for barriers such as rail, creek and industrial land plus arterial roadways that form barriers to pedestrian movement.
 - Additional land in every locality is required to provide for a range of setting types, and open space for non-recreational uses.
- 19 *Report For The Climate Change Impacts And Adaptation In Gippsland Project A Regional Pilot Project. West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority 2006*
- 20 *Melbourne 2030, Department of Infrastructure, 2002*
- 21 *Unpublished report on open space planning prepared for the State of Victoria. @leisure 2006*