

12. ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

12.1 Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy

Committee Victor Harbor Council

Meeting Held 24/07/2023

From Michelle James

File Reference PM16.65.014

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council receive and note the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy community engagement report as presented at Attachment A.
2. That Council endorse the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy as presented under separate cover.

INFORMATION

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the community engagement report for the development of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy, in addition to presenting the Strategy for adoption.

Background

Part of what makes Victor Harbor special is the access we have to open spaces and recreation facilities. To help council plan for, maintain, and activate these important assets, the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy has been developed.

The strategy aims to provide a long-term vision for recreation facilities and open spaces within the region, and help council make the most of these assets. Specifically, the strategy provides:

- An audit of current open space areas and sport and recreation facilities;
- Identifies current gaps in sport, recreation and open space provision across the Council area based on the needs of community now and into the future;
- Articulates a vision and principles to guide how sport, recreation and open space can be delivered at different levels, from local to regional and beyond in Victor Harbor;
- Provides short, medium and longer term recommendations to provide and/or improve sport, recreation and open space opportunities that meet government and community objectives; and,
- Develops an investment prioritisation framework that guides decision-making and non-Council investment.

The development of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy has been

undertaken in parallel with planning for the Regional Community, Sport and Recreation Precinct (The Precinct). It is important to note the difference between these two projects – The Precinct addresses an immediate need for growing indoor sport and recreation needs, while the Strategy takes a holistic approach and predominantly looks at outdoor spaces.

Commentary

The development of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy has been evidence-based and informed by:

- Analysis of strategy context and trends;
- Understanding Victor Harbor's community profile;
- Sport, recreation and open space benchmarking;
- Open space and facility audits (142 audits undertaken within City of Victor Harbor council area)
- Community consultation and stakeholder engagement.

This work has been documented in the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy Background and Needs Analysis Report, which is available for viewing online at www.yoursay.victor.sa.gov.au/open-space or, upon request, in hard copy at the Civic Centre (1 Bay Road, Victor Harbor).

About the Strategy

The investigations and analysis have informed a proposed vision and guiding principles for the Council's approach to sport, recreation and open space planning as outlined below:

- **Aim:** In recognition of the importance of active wellbeing and biodiversity to our lifestyle, the City of Victor Harbor will maintain, conserve and promote a diversity of open spaces for the enjoyment and benefit of our community and visitors.
- **Guiding Principles:**
 - Our open spaces will be well distributed, connected and be accessible by everyone in our community, regardless of where they reside or frequent within the City.
 - We will strive for our spaces to reflect the principles of universal design by promoting physical access for all abilities and genders.
 - Our sport and recreation facilities will be non-exclusive, fit for purpose and share resources to reduce the burden of our volunteers.
 - Local stories, heritage and culture are considered and interpreted through design, strengthening our identity, and fostering community ownership and pride in place.
 - Adopt a classification and hierarchical approach for developing and maintaining our open spaces.

The draft strategy also proposes a number of strategic priorities for implementation over the next 10+ years. These priorities aim to address key gaps in open space and recreation facility provision, consider resourcing and service level requirements, assist in encouraging active wellbeing and promote biodiversity outcomes.

Community Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

A significant amount of community consultation and stakeholder engagement has been

undertaken over the last 18-24 months in relation to sport and recreation, providing valuable insight to inform the development of this strategy. Building on what we heard from community during this time, a further two-phase engagement process was undertaken specifically for this strategy as outlined below:

- **Stage one:** undertaken with the intent to develop an understanding of the Victor Harbor community and stakeholders' thoughts and aspirations in relation to sport, recreation and open space.
- **Stage two:** exhibition of the draft Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy for comment.

The project engagement methodology provided a comprehensive process for engaging with key stakeholders and the community, and was also an opportunity to check-in with community and reaffirm that what we had heard through previous consultations was still relevant. This ensured all stakeholders were provided with the opportunity to have input into the development of the Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy.

Further detail about the information gathered through community and stakeholder engagement is provided in the community engagement report at Attachment A.

In summary, the engagement highlights:

- The community places high importance on access to open spaces and recreation facilities. This is also supported through the recent Community Satisfaction Survey which showed the provision and maintenance of parks, gardens, reserves and playgrounds as one of the most important service areas delivered by Council (behind the providing and maintaining roads and footpaths, waste management and recycling services).
- Supporting amenities are key to driving usage of open spaces (parks and reserves) and there are gaps in the variety of facilities to support a range of different demographics.
- Community sentiment suggests that there isn't a need for *more* open spaces, rather a focus is required on *enhancing* what we already have. This also relates to the sentiment that reserves could be better maintained.
- Community feedback reflects that a multi-purpose indoor centre is the highest priority for sporting facilities – especially basketball courts which can be used for a variety of sports.

Implementation of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy

In terms of implementation of the strategy once endorsed, there are instances where the principles and strategic priorities can be applied to what council already does. Further projects and priorities (that require additional funding) will be considered by Council through its annual budgeting process over the life of the strategy (20+ years).

To help guide decision making, recommendations have been prioritised into high (to take place within 0-3 years), medium (to take place within 4-10 years) and low (to take place in 10+ years).

High priorities actions for Council to consider within the annual budget cycle over the next three years include:

- Development of a Master Plan for Kent Reserve with the aim to integrate all elements and make this a destination playground for the city while also celebrating the history of the site and its local surrounds.
- Enhancements to Wattle Drive Reserve to enhance the playspace and broaden the age focus of the site. There is potential for the playground to be larger to increase the catchment.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The following risks have been assessed in line with Council's Risk Management Framework and Policy:

Reputation – The need for the development of this Strategy was identified within the planning for The Precinct. Through this process it was very clear that there were a number of future challenges in terms of the provision of sport and recreation facilities to meet community needs into the future. The same sentiment can also be applied to the management and maintenance of council's expansive open space network, which has increased by 8.64 hectares in the past decade. A clear evidence-based strategy will enable council to plan appropriately for the future management of these assets in a way that balances community expectations and available resources. This risk is assessed as **low**.

Reputation – While only a small number of formal responses (five) were received during stage two of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy consultation, there has been significant community engagement throughout the past 18-24 months to ensure community has shaped the development of this Strategy. In addition to this, the Strategy is supported by a robust, evidence-based foundation to ensure recommendations and actions meet current and future needs. This risk is assessed as **low**.

Financial Management – The development of this strategy aims to help identify priorities for Council's Sport, Recreation and Open Space planning over a 10+ year period. These priorities will be considered by Council in future years during the annual budgeting process. It should be noted that the data gathered through the Strategy will help inform a service review of Council's open space provision and maintenance to assist with resource planning. This risk is assessed as **low**.

REFERENCES

City of Victor Harbor Community Plan 2030

Aspiration 1 – We are a caring, connected and active community

- Strategy – Provide safe, welcoming and accessible places
- Strategy – Provide a variety of open space and recreation opportunities

Aspiration 4 – We protect our environment

- Strategy – Enhance the health and biodiversity of our natural environment

Other references used:

- Annual Business Plan 2022/23
- City of Victor Harbor Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2017
- Victor Harbor Bicycle Strategy 2016
- Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Strategy 2021
- Victor Harbor Coastal Adaptation Strategy 2020
- Victor Harbor Footpath and Pedestrian Strategy 2022
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024

BUDGET IMPLICATION

Excluding endorsed budgeted staff resources, and future annual budgeting processes, there are no budget implications in the adoption of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy.

Actions within the Strategy will be considered as a part of future budget deliberations.

CONSULTATION

Council Members (15 March 2023 – Information or Briefing Session)

Director Environment and Infrastructure – Kathy Hayter

Team Leader Environment and Sustainability – Bronson Symmonds

Inside Edge Sport and Leisure Planning – Kelly Harding (Senior Consultant)



Community Engagement Summary: Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide details of the community consultation undertaken to inform the development of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy. It outlines a summary of the consultation activities that were undertaken, the feedback gathered and how it was considered by Council.

Background

Part of what makes Victor Harbor special is the access we have to open spaces and recreation facilities. To help Council plan for, maintain and activate these important assets, the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy is being developed.

The strategy aims to provide a long term vision for recreation facilities and open spaces, and help Council make the most of these assets. Specifically, the strategy aims to:

- Audit current open space areas, and sport and recreation facilities;
- Identify current gaps in sport, recreation and open space provision across the Council area based on the needs of community now and into the future;
- Articulate a vision and principles to guide how sport, recreation and open space can be delivered at different levels, from local to regional and beyond in Victor Harbor;
- Provide short, medium and longer term recommendations to provide and/or improve sport, recreation and open space opportunities that meet government and community objectives;
- Develop an investment prioritisation framework that guides decision making and non-Council investment.

The development of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy is being undertaken in parallel to planning for the Regional Community, Sport and Recreation Precinct (The Precinct). It is important to note the difference between these two projects – The Precinct addresses an immediate need for growing indoor sport and recreation needs, while the Strategy takes a holistic approach and predominantly looks at outdoor spaces.

Consultation methodology

The development of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy has been informed by a range of investigations including:

- Analysis of strategy context and trends;
- Understanding of Victor Harbor's community profile;
- Sport, recreation and open space benchmarking;
- Open space and facility audits (142 audits undertaken within City of Victor Harbor council area)
- Community and stakeholder feedback collected through a variety of ways.



Recognising what we have heard over numerous consultations

A significant amount of community consultation has occurred over the last 18-24 months providing valuable insight to inform the development of this strategy.

The first stage of consultation for the Regional Community, Sport and Recreation Precinct, undertaken during April and May 2022, sought to understand more about community sport and recreation participation along with potential opportunities for future planning through a broad community survey that attracted 400+ responses.

In addition to this targeted stakeholder workshops were conducted – one for sport and recreation stakeholders and the other with a focus on Disability Access and Inclusion. The sport and recreation focus workshop had 40 participants (representing 14 local clubs and groups). This session provided insight into these clubs and groups with all participants documenting their needs, future challenges and potential opportunities. Detailed findings are available online at www.yoursay.victor.sa.gov.au/ThePrecinct within the phase one engagement summary for the Regional Community, Sport and Recreation Precinct project, however a summary of key findings relevant to the Victor Harbor Open Space Strategy are also provided within this engagement report.

Strategy specific engagement

Building on previous consultations, the Council implemented a two-stage engagement approach specifically for the development of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy as described below:

- **Stage one:** undertaken with the intent to develop an understanding of the Victor Harbor community and stakeholders' thoughts and aspirations in relation to sport, recreation and open space.
- **Stage two:** exhibition of the draft Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy for comment.

The project engagement methodology provided a comprehensive process for engaging with key stakeholders and the community and was an opportunity to check-in with community and reaffirm what we had heard through previous consultations is still relevant. This ensures all stakeholders are provided with the opportunity to have input into the development of the Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy.

The community consultation period for stage one ran from Monday, 5 December 2022 until Monday, 2 January 2023, while stage two was undertaken between Thursday, 25 May 2023 and Friday, 16 June 2023.

The City of Victor Harbor collected the views of the community through the following methods:

- Survey
- Workshops
- Written submissions.

The opportunity for residents and ratepayers to have a say about the strategic directions for the Community Plan was promoted in the following ways:

- Email (via Your Say Victor Harbor database)
- Public Notice



- Website
- Social Media
- Foyer display
- Signage at key open spaces.

Community feedback

The following is an outline of the feedback received from community and key stakeholders to inform the development of the Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy.

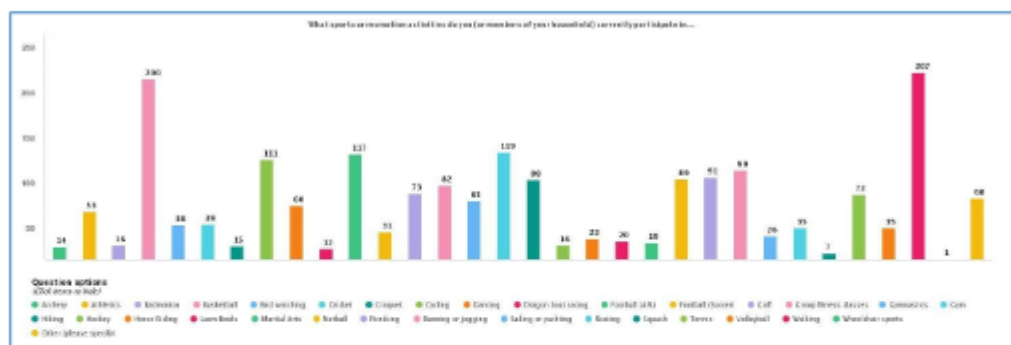
Previous Consultations – Key Findings

A community survey undertaken in 2022 sought to understand how our community participates in sport and recreation activities. This survey captured the views of 402 respondents.

The top 10 sport and recreation activities that respondents participated in were:

- Walking (207)
- Basketball (200)
- Gym (119)
- AFL (117)
- Cycling (111)
- Group Fitness (99)
- Golf (91)
- Soccer (89)
- Hiking (88)
- Running / jogging (82)

Diagram 1. Participation in sports and recreation activities



179 respondents indicated that they (or members of their household) travel outside of the region to participate in sport and recreation activities. The most common reasons for travelling outside of the region included:

- No facilities in the region (103)
- Better facilities elsewhere (96)



The top sport and recreation activities that people travel outside of the region for are basketball (63), mountain biking (10), dancing (10), gymnastics (8), skating (7), rock climbing (7), soccer (6), netball (6), tennis (5).

The following activities had four (4) or less respondents leave the region: indoor bouldering, indoor cricket, motorbike riding, sailing, hiking, racquetball, squash, hockey, rugby, volleyball, bowling, cricket, swimming, croquet, athletics, horse riding, musical theatre, go karting, football, surfing, kayaking, walking trails, dragon boating, golf, archery, bird watching, parkour, baseball, fishing, concerts, picnicking, petanque, dining, shopping, personal care services, equestrian, broomball, model planes, model railroad, ice hockey, calisthenics, triathlon, ice skating, nippers, taekwondo, kindergym, arts, bridge, BMX, boxing, gym, boating.

In addition to undertaking this survey, the Council hosted a workshop for sport and recreation groups. There were 14 clubs represented (40 participants) at this workshop. Participants were asked to share information about their club / group to help understand their needs, future challenges and potential opportunities. In summary:

- **Athletics** – looking for a new home as they have outgrown their current site at Victor Harbor Primary School (require track, multiuse field for events, club facility including storage and change facilities).
- **Martial Arts / Karate** – current facility at Recreation Centre is limiting due to ceiling heights, storage and ventilation and floor space.
- **Encounter Bay Football Club** – will outgrow current facility due to growth. Require a 2nd oval and happy to share with others.
- **Badminton** – Limited in number of courts (can't grow), need a long-term venue with clubrooms (would like 6 courts).
- **Squash and Racquetball** – need a facility to hold events and programs, space for a clubroom (would like 6-9 courts).
- **Encounter Bay Cricket Club** – require a 2nd oval and happy to share with others.
- **Victor Harbor Netball Club** – undercover courts for training and games, meeting rooms and storage areas.
- **City Harbor City Band Inc** – require adequate rehearsal space, storage, disability access and affordable.
- **Southern Breakers Soccer Club** – with growing numbers the club is running out of room to train and play. Would like to run a summer competition but currently share the oval with cricket and requires female changerooms. A five a side indoor competition could also be explored in the future.
- **Victor Dragons** – require land and storage, meeting room and social venue (i.e. coffee shop).
- **Encounter Bay Bowling Club** – Membership is increasing each year, sees the connection between the new Precinct and current sporting facilities as important, along with the importance of providing adequate car parking.
- **Great Southern Amateur Basketball Association** – don't have enough courts to meet the needs for competition and training, lack of spectator viewing – would like 4 courts and 2 external courts, meeting rooms and storage. Scoring and sponsor brand technologies.
- **Victor Harbor Gymnastics** – 300+ children on a waiting list. Need space to run all gym sports and host events with the correct space and height with supporting amenities such as toilets, storage etc.



- **Victor Harbor Croquet Club** – Challenges are currently faced with its clubhouse, require catering facilities and need to stand alone (can't share lawns), storage sheds.

The City of Victor Harbor's Community Satisfaction Survey shows that providing and maintaining parks, gardens, reserves and playgrounds is considered one of the most important service areas delivered by Council. In 2022 88% of respondents to the Community Survey rated this service area as very important, this increased to 90% in 2023.

Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy engagement

As previously mentioned, two stages of community consultation were undertaken specifically for the development of the Victor Harbor Open Space Strategy.

Stage One

Stage one predominantly involved a community survey to understand how people use our parks, playgrounds, trails, sport facilities and open spaces. The consultation enabled the project team to reaffirm key issues and areas for exploration as a part of the development of the draft strategy.

The following is a summary of the key findings from the survey.

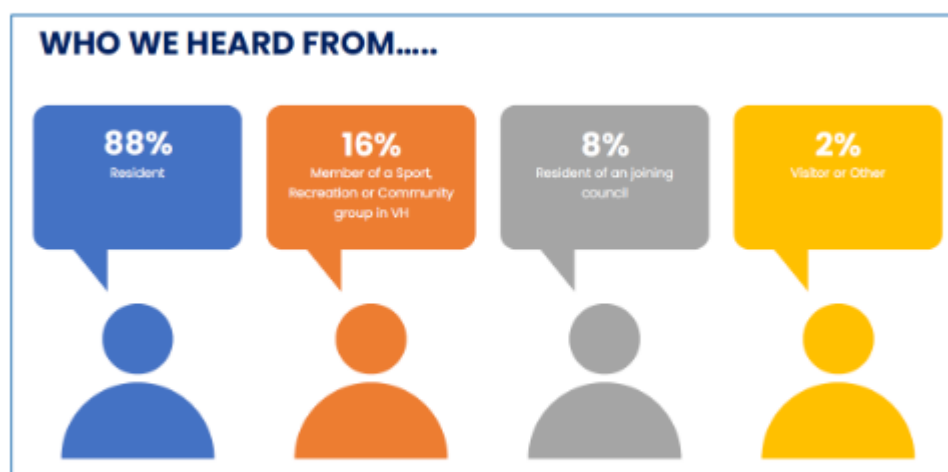
Who we heard from

A total of 164 survey responses were received during this consultation period. Of these respondents:

- 88% identified as a resident
- 16% identified as a member of a sport, recreation or community group in Victor Harbor
- 8% identified as a resident of an adjoining council area
- 2% identified as a visitor or other.

Note: respondents were able to tick more than one box.

Diagram 2. Who we heard from

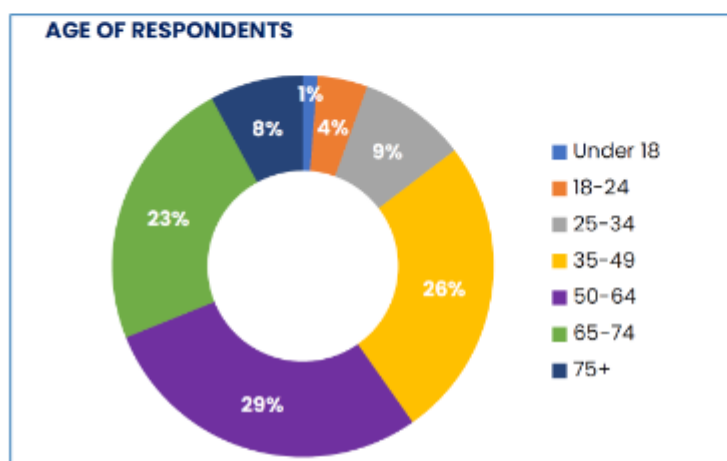


A broad range of demographics were captured within the responses:



- 1% were under 18
- 4% aged between 18-24
- 9% aged between 25-34
- 26% aged between 35-49
- 29% aged between 50-64
- 23% aged between 65-74
- 8% aged over 75

Diagram 3. Age of respondents



How often people use/visit open spaces or recreation facilities

When asked how often people use open spaces or recreation facilities in the City of Victor Harbor council area:

- **Everyday** – 36 respondents (22%)
- **Several times a week** – 80 respondents (49%)
- **Once a week** - 11 respondents (7%)
- **Several times a month** – 66 respondents (40%)
- **Once a month** – 5 respondents (3%)
- **A few times a year** – 18 respondents (11%)
- **Rarely** – 4 respondents (2%)

When asked about the reason why they visited spaces, 56% of respondents said their most visited space was close to home, while 18% said it was good facilities that attributed to their most visited space.

In terms of getting to open spaces, 55% said they used a car while 37% of respondent walked.

Reasons for avoiding open spaces or recreation facilities

75% of survey respondents said there weren't any open spaces or recreation facilities that they choose to avoid, while 25% indicated there were.



When asked why they avoid these spaces of facilities, the following were key themes for the responses:

- Small reserves due to overgrown grass
- Disorganised facilities
- Quality of the facilities / play equipment
- Lack of parking
- No public toilets
- Not well maintained
- No enclosed fence in reserve
- Popular tourist spaces in peak times.

Some of the specific reserves mentioned several times that they avoid include:

- The Bluff – no amenities (seating, tables, toilets, BBQs)
- Kent Reserve – quality / overgrown grass
- Warland Reserve – gets too busy / parking
- Skate park – poor quality
- Train Park (GT Fisher Playground) – due to parking / poor quality toilets.

Participation in outdoor activities

The top five outdoor activities that respondents participate in include:

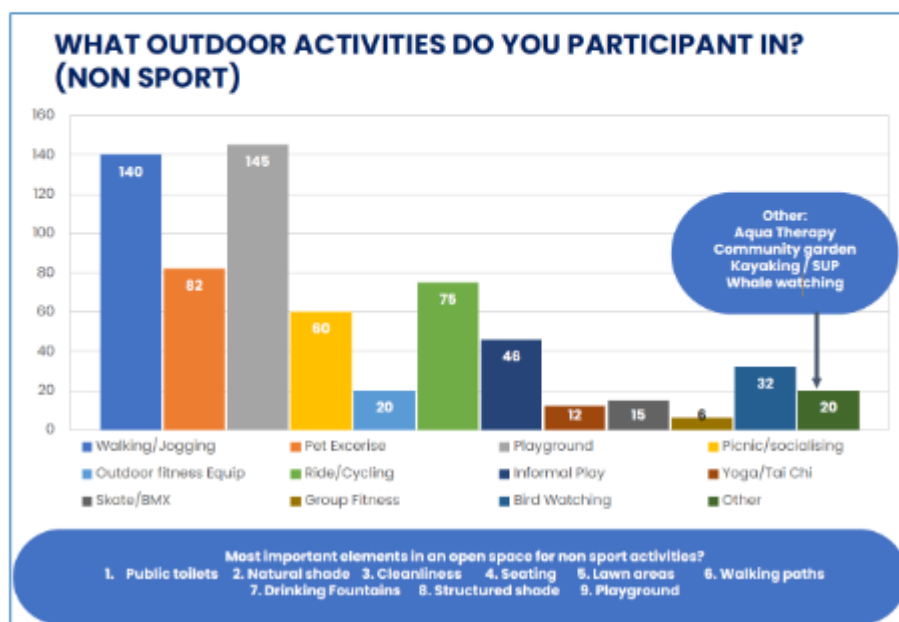
- Playground (145 or 89%)
- Walking jogging (140 or 85%)
- Pet exercise (82 or 50%)
- Bike riding / cycling (75 or 46%)
- Picnicking / socialising (60 or 37%)

The most important elements in an open space for non-sport activities were seen to be:

1. Public toilets
2. Natural shade
3. Cleanliness
4. Seating
5. Lawn areas
6. Walking paths
7. Drinking fountains
8. Structured shade
9. Playground



Diagram 4. Outdoor activity participation



Sports participation

Respondents were asked to identify any sports they (or their families) participate in. The top five sports for respondents were basketball (22), AFL (17), cycling (16), netball (15) and tennis (13).

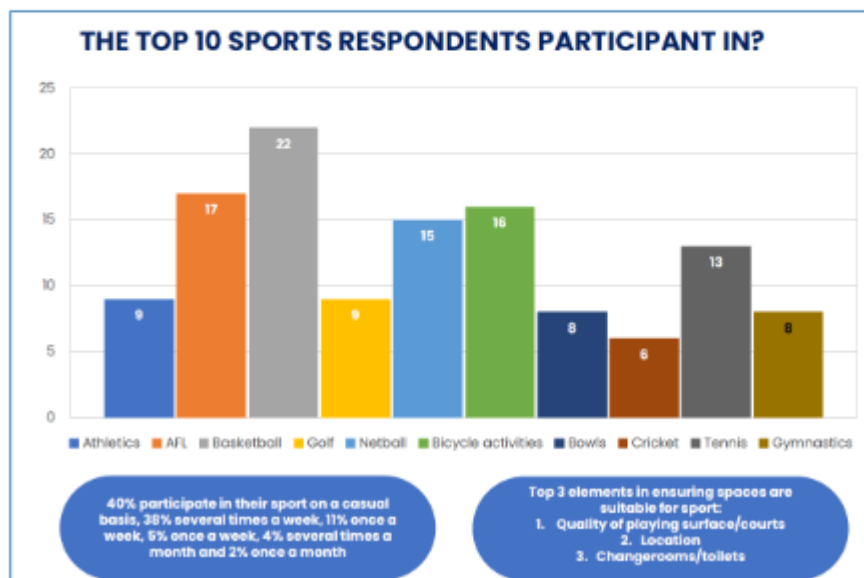
The survey results indicated that 40% of respondents participate in their sport on a casual basis, while 38% indicated they participate several times a week, 11% once a week, 5% once a week, 4% several times a month and 2% once a month.

The top three elements identified by respondents for making sure spaces are suitable for sport include:

1. Quality of playing surface / courts
2. Location
3. Changerooms / toilets.



Diagram 5. Sports participation



Key themes from survey

The following are the key themes that emerged through this survey:

- Spaces are being used regularly – several times a week
- Supporting amenities are important and generally drives the usage of the reserve
- Playgrounds need to be improved and offer different play opportunities including exercise equipment along the foreshore
- Need mountain bike trails
- Need more cycling / walking paths that connect open spaces
- Better maintenance of spaces – overgrown areas, creek maintenance, not enough bins
- Don't need more spaces just need better quality spaces
- Car parking
- More accessible facilities

In terms of comments relating to specific sports, the key themes were:

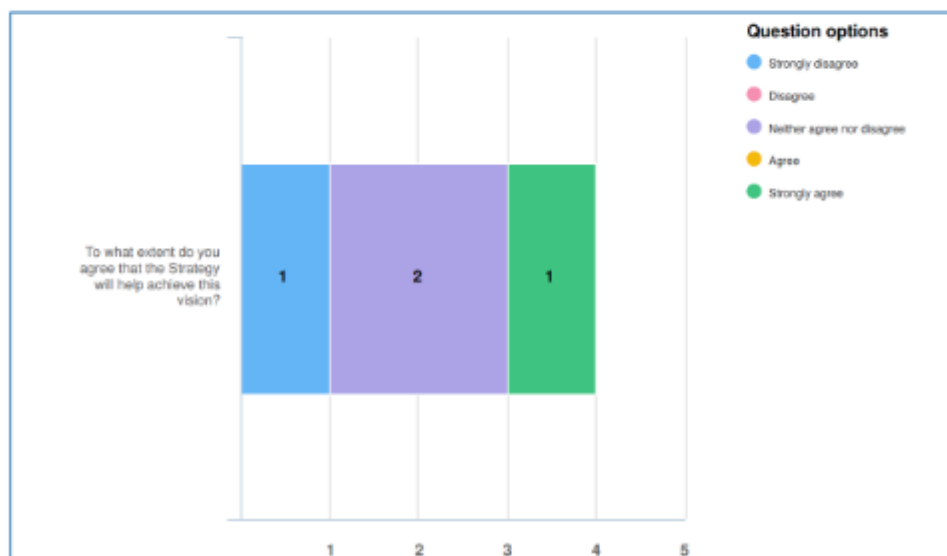
- A multi-purpose indoor centre is needed – especially basketball courts
- A number of other facilities should be investigated further as a part of the next phase of the project including feasibility for a fit-for-purpose gymnastics facility, a second oval at the Encounter Bay Recreation grounds, regional tennis facility, athletics track. The need for these facilities should be tested further as the strategy is implemented. This is covered and addressed within the background and needs analysis report prepared by Inside Edge Sport and Leisure Planning.



Stage Two – Exhibition of Draft Victor Harbor Open Space Strategy

In considering the findings from stage one (and previous community engagement exercises) along with research and other investigations and draft Victor Harbor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy was prepared and presented to community for comment.

There were four survey responses during the consultation period. The following outlines a summary of the feedback provided.



The respondents provided the following feedback in relation to the draft strategy:

Respondent	Respondent Commentary	Response	Changes
1	Recreational Fishing is not included in the strategy	While recreational fishing is not included in this strategy, the amenities along the foreshore bikeway have been included that will support this activity.	No changes recommended
2	- We have a large number of open spaces, more should be focused on native trees and vegetation to support our wildlife. - We already have a large number of open spaces, sports ovals including the ones connected to schools. More should be focused on native trees and vegetation to support our wildlife.	While the Open Space Strategy recognises the important role nature open spaces play in our community, Native vegetation and trees are further covered in Councils Tree Management Strategy and Environmental Management Plan.	No changes recommended



3	- Upgrade our bike path to port Elliot. It is the most used 'open plan structure' in Victor harbor! - Yes up grading our encounter Bikeway and a new and larger spaced mini golf	Encounter bikeway upgrade recommendations included in the Strategy. Outlined in the Implementation section of the strategy.	No changes recommended
4	- This is key to a healthy lifestyle. The more proximity and diversity to healthy activities, the healthier the community will be with flow-on effects etc (less health care, less MH issues etc). - Love the kent Reserve Playgroung There is solid room here , especially on the playground the road side of the grounds (eh oitehr side if great for events). A solid Adventure playground would be a smart move. - Walking Trails: I would create proper walking trails! and integrate in nature where you can. Including getting solid walking trails and guard rails (keep people on the track) for the Bluff/ Rosetta Head. - Walking trails along creeks and right up to hindmarsh falls would be great and would attract more visitors looking for solid walks. Proper walking trails: get something in place that is a proper walking trails all the way from the Bluff to Goolwa) including along the road at Middleton. Sealded paths, clear signage, seating at ideal locations etc. Having to cut back onto roads etc is painful. Something that a bit more serene and nostalgic is the go. - Bike Trails: Bike trails that head up into the hills and along creeks etc would be great!	- The strategy recommends the development of a master plan for Kent Reserve including the development of a destination playground. - Walking trail upgrades have been recommended inline with Councils Footpath and Pedestrian Strategy - Bike trail upgrades have been recommended inline with councils Footpath and Pedestrian Strategy as well as the Mountain Bike Strategy. - Middleton surf beach noted.	No changes recommended



	Other: I appreciate Middleton isn't on your wheel house but I see that Bullies and teh Dump are >> Showers for surfers: Please get some showers installed and car parks sealed. Make it a bit more surfer friendly. Thanks		
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Conclusion

In summary, the engagement highlights:

- The community places high importance on access to open spaces and recreation facilities. This is also supported through the recent Community Satisfaction Survey which showed that the provision and maintenance of parks, gardens, reserves and playgrounds as one of the most important service areas delivered by Council (behind the providing and maintaining roads and footpaths, and waste management and recycling services).
- Supporting amenities are key to driving usage of open spaces (parks and reserves) and there are gaps in the variety of facilities to support a range of different demographics.
- Community sentiment suggests that there isn't a need for more open spaces, rather a focus is required on enhancing what we already have. This also relates to the sentiment that reserves could be better maintained.
- Community feedback reflects that a multi-purpose indoor centre is the highest priority for sporting facilities – especially basketball courts which can be used for a variety of sports.