

QUALITY AND DIVERSE SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES, PARKS AND COMMUNITY SPACES

The issue

The quality of most local parks is poor and the community is not being provided the expected benefits social recreation parks can provide.

These parks need to be improved.

Social recreation parks are located within 400–500 metres of where people live and are an important place for relaxation, socialising and play. The local and district social parks provide a picnic area, play space and open park area for informal ball games and activities and a variety of settings from open parkland and gardens to bushland.

Sports reserves have ageing infrastructure that requires redevelopment to offer greater diversity in sports activity and to respond to participation demands. For example, most sports pavilions do not accommodate female participation.

The household survey indicated that the community strongly supports the provision and development of shared use and multi-use facilities. This includes sports clubs sharing with other sports clubs, schools and community groups to prevent the unnecessary duplication of facilities. Sports clubs, however, are reluctant to share facilities with others. There needs to be a shift in sports clubs' expectations away from being the sole user of a facility.

With the emergence of new activities that require space and built infrastructure, multi-use of existing facilities is increasingly necessary to provide the diversity in recreation opportunities and quality in infrastructure.

It is important that master plans consider social recreation and sport use of reserves, the needs of the community and the role the reserve plays in the area. Clustering functions of open space will increase the sphere of influence of open spaces through attracting multiple user groups and viability as a community recreation resource.

What are we currently doing?

Council is promoting greater shared use and multi-use of sports facilities through planning processes.

A new position has been created to manage the delivery of the neighbourhood parks and play space program. The position designs creative, imaginative and educational play space environments, embracing the benefits of connecting with nature.

Providing diverse open space opportunities is now central to planning processes, which includes discussions with developers.

How will we meet this challenge?

Yarra Ranges Council will provide a community that can access quality and diverse sport and recreation facilities, parks and community spaces.

We will do this through a number of initiatives:

- Adopt principles to **maximise use of reserves and shared use of facilities** in master planning and building projects.
- Identify opportunities to **diversify open space functions** or settings to offer greater variety in recreation opportunities.
- Resource the **delivery of the neighbourhood parks and play space program** and prioritise the development of creative, imaginative and educational play space environments and embrace the benefits of connecting with nature.
- Ensure that the **open space allocation** taken as part of a subdivision are developable land that is **suitable for quality sport and recreation purposes**.
- **Inspect annually** and invest in the upgrade of **park furniture, landscaping and trails** in our parks.