



20 February 2017

The Hon John Eren MP
Minister for Sport
Level 36
121 Exhibition Street
Melbourne Vic 3000

Ask for: Adrian Murphy
Phone: 9932 1164
Our Ref: A2568116

Dear Minister

Sport and Recreation Strategic Framework

Hobsons Bay City Council welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Sport and Recreation Strategic Framework discussion paper.

The Hobsons Bay Recreation Strategy 2014 together with the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision (in draft), demonstrates Hobsons Bay City Council's commitment to leading, facilitating, advocating and partnering with others to deliver quality community sport and recreation infrastructure, services and programs. Council also seeks and encourages participation by all residents in the municipality in a diverse range of sport and recreation.

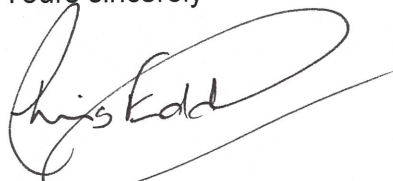
The current fiscal environment is a key challenge for local government and this requires local government to take a considered approach to its future service planning and delivery. As such, the Sport and Recreation Strategic Framework must reflect the changing environment for local government and the impact and opportunities this presents to the sport and recreation industry. Specifically the Framework must:

1. Centralise industry data and research ensuring this information is accessible and also governed to identify research and data collection needs.
2. Formalise and establish industry partnerships particularly between local government, respective state government departments and other stakeholders.
3. Investigate and establish innovative funding models for future sport and recreation infrastructure planning and development to meet future population growth and help overcome financial barriers to facility provision.
4. Continue to encourage participation in all forms of recreation (passive and active) particularly for vulnerable groups such as females, people with a disability, the GLBTIQ community and culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

Please find enclosed Council's submission to the discussion paper. Council welcomes the opportunity to participate in further considerations as the framework is further developed.

If you have any questions regarding the submission please contact Adrian Murphy, Manager Property, Sport and Recreation on 9932 1164 or email ajmurphy@hobsonsabay.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Eddy', with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Chris Eddy
Chief Executive Officer

Enc. Hobsons Bay City Council's submission: Sport and Recreation Strategic Framework

Hobsons Bay City Council's submission: Sport and Recreation Strategic Framework

What makes Hobsons Bay unique?

Hobsons Bay is situated on Port Phillip Bay, approximately seven to 20 kilometres south west of Melbourne's Central Business District (CBD). Hobsons Bay is home to the suburbs of Altona, Altona Meadows, Altona North, Brooklyn, Laverton, Newport, Seabrook, Seaholme, South Kingsville, Spotswood, Williamstown and Williamstown North. Its area is approximately 64km² with more than 1500 hectares of open space across the City.

As of 2015, the population of Hobsons Bay was 92,761 with population forecast to increase to 107,243 by 2036. In addition, 30 per cent of residents were born overseas, speaking over 100 different languages and 17 per cent of residents have a disability.

There are an estimated 362 sport and recreation clubs in the City of Hobsons Bay. They represent 44% of all community organisations within the City including:

- 165 sporting clubs providing 29 different kinds of sports activities;
- 61 recreation clubs (not including sport) that specifically cater for children and young people;
- 39 recreation clubs (not including sport) that specifically cater for older adults; and
- 47 recreation clubs (not including sport) that specifically cater for people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Hobsons Bay's rich natural environment is one of its greatest assets. As well as 23kms of coastline linked by a cycling and walking trail so residents and visitors can take advantage of the foreshore location, the area is home to significant coastal wetlands, five creek systems, remnant native grasslands, and important flora and fauna habitats.

In the development of the Sport and Recreation Strategy (2014), it was found that walking (with 84 per cent of respondents) was the most common physical activity in Hobsons Bay, followed by cycling (42 per cent of respondents).

What makes the Western Metropolitan Region unique?

The western region is a diverse and growing region and is a blend of established and emerging communities. For example, our neighbours, the City of Wyndham, is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Melbourne while the City of Hobsons Bay will continue to experience growth and an increasing demand for its existing facilities.

Despite the differences between local governments, there are vast opportunities to share and collaborate on sport and recreation service and facility provision at a regional level. Planning at a regional level requires leadership and collaboration on a number of fronts, including data and a shared understanding of the needs of the community.

There is a strong capacity and justification to achieve quality outcomes. The western councils actively participate in regional groups such as the Western Region Sport and Recreation Industry Group and the Gender Equity and Sports Practice Group. Both of these groups have produced reports and assessments specifically targeted at the local community living in the western region.

The following points are provided specifically in response to the key elements in the Sport and Recreation Framework discussion paper.

How can the sport and active recreation system meet future increased demand?

Collective data collection, research, planning and sharing of data and analysis is critical in supporting local government and the industry ensure services and facilities are future proofed. Data is constantly changing and it is vital that information is kept on a central database, accessible to local governments, so as to assist with funding submissions, strategy and policy development and service planning. Working with other research and industry groups can assist in making the process of data collection and analysis easier.

Collective and coordinated planning of key standards and specifications of state owned and other district assets, such as shared trails along the foreshore, will greatly enhance valuable open space assets. Open space contributes significantly to the quality of life and is a popular option for recreational activities in Hobsons Bay, with open space occupying 24 per cent of the municipality's land area, well above the metropolitan average of 15 per cent.

Council suggests that a Ministerial led cross department forum be established to include Sport and Recreation Victoria, Parks Victoria, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and Department of Human Services, with local governments to establish governance and specifications to help alleviate the blurred lines and gaps in management responsibilities. Hobsons Bay City Council is an active member of the Western Region Sport and Recreation Industry Group, the Gender Equity and Sports Practice Group, works closely with Play Australia and is an active member of Parks and Leisure Australia. Fostering partnerships across the regions will assist in future service and infrastructure planning at a local and a regional level and will provide the opportunity to leverage on already existing networks and enable them to work collaboratively across the sector on common issues.

Council supports the establishment of partnerships at the state level, such as with VicHealth, the private sector and state industry groups, to develop and deliver programs at the local level. Vulnerable groups such as females, people with a disability, the GLBTIQ, Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities have repeatedly shown to have lower participation in active and passive recreation. In addition, programs that can assist and enable sporting associations and sports club be more inclusive and welcoming to a diverse group of participants and reduce the barriers of entry as well as the retention of these participants.

Maintaining a funding program that is sustainable is important for local government to provide a level of certainty over the long term. Rather than small allocations to large projects, it is recommended that funding contributions by the State Government continues to grow to help overcome financial barriers which will support the ongoing provision of sport and recreation facilities.

What are the key levers and methods needed to drive broader and more inclusive participation in sport and active recreation?

Increasing affordable transport options such as walking and cycling especially in areas of disadvantage is a key lever in increasing participation in sport and recreation, particularly passive recreation. Areas isolated from essential services such as education, employment, health services, community and social events and recreation facilities, tend to have an over representation of people with diabetes, obesity and chronic health diseases. An integrated transport plan which is accessible, affordable, safe, reliable and well connected to public open space with quality provisions will increase participation in sport and active and passive recreation.

In addition, prioritising the need for accessible spaces, including communications and engagement techniques, to assist sporting clubs and other service providers support vulnerable and hard to reach

groups is necessary. Hard to reach groups will access facilities that are safe and secure, thus providing funding and support for the construction of infrastructure that incorporates safety by design principles is important.

A focus on participation programs for adults, given that juniors are the captive audience, is needed to extend the active participation age range beyond adolescence. It is evident that participation in sport and passive and active recreation drops in adulthood so programs and activities that can motivate more adults to get involved in sport and recreation is both necessary and supported.

How can the sport and active recreation system support the increasing demand for participation in individual and unorganised recreation activities?

As above, the Framework needs to encourage, promote and make public open spaces accessible for more informal activity. This includes an emphasis on open space planning that supports walking, cycling, relaxing and other informal recreational activity.

An emphasis on research, development of a set of Victorian standards and better data collection and analysis can allow service providers better understand how their work is having short and long term impacts in the community.

What are the biggest challenges and opportunities to the sustainability of the sector, what are the links and co-dependencies?

The biggest challenge and opportunity to the sustainability of the sector is the lack of co-ordination between state and local government and the respective authorities delivering sport and recreation services and facilities. Local government together with State Government and other stakeholders, share common issues and it is important existing partnerships and networks are utilised and formalised.

Local government is committed to reviewing its financial contribution, particularly in the rate capping environment, therefore it is vital to determine how else the provision, maintenance and management of sport and recreation assets, programs and services will be funded. The sport and recreation industry is at the forefront of infrastructure planning and management and it is heavily reliant on internal and external funding to sustain the services and infrastructure needs for the existing and future population in the municipality. It is therefore important that innovative processes and mechanisms are found to enable better distribution of funds, such as through developer contributions.

Local Governments cannot plan on its own and therefore need the assistance of research and industry groups to better plan for the future. Parks and Leisure Australia, Universities, VicHealth and other stakeholders are keen to lead research and data collection. Of greatest benefit would be for research to be undertaken at a state and regional level. Research and other industry groups can also assist in developing clear measures of success that the sector can use and enable better tracking of the benefits and trends which are evident as a result of funding for services and infrastructure at a local and regional level.