Mount Alexander Shire Council

Open Space Asset Management Plan 2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Activity Description

The Open Space Asset Management Plan covers the following assets and services:

- Parks
- Sports fields and venues
- Streetscapes (including street trees)
- Gardens
- Botanic gardens
- Civic plazas

A total of 209.6 hectares of parkland is managed by the Shire, of which 130 hectares is actively maintained by Council, 42 hectares are actively maintained by others, and 37.6 hectares is bushland. This equates to 6.58 hectares of actively maintained parkland per 1,000 residents, which is slightly higher than the national median of 5.9 hectares per 1,000 residents[1].

A total of 19.1 hectares of grass sports field are provided, which at 0.97 hectares per 1,000 residents is less than the national median of 1.4 hectares per 1,000 residents[2].

A total of 25 playgrounds are provided. Based on an estimated under 15 years of age resident population of 2,965, this equates to 8.4 playgrounds per 1,000 children, which is higher than the national median of 6.3 playgrounds per 1,000 children.

The annual cost of operations and maintenance is $2,039,472 (excluding depreciation), which equates to $12,161 per hectare. This is slightly higher than the national median of $10,945 per hectare. As an overall level of service indicator the cost of operations and maintenance is $103,243 per 1,000 residents. This is lower than the national median of $122,526 per 1,000 residents.

Table A-1: Land area managed by category

Category	Area (ha)	Ha/1,000 residents	Percentage of total
Bushland	37.6*	2.38	22.4%
Civic	1.49	0.09	0.90%
Community	20.7	1.31	12.35%
Linear	0.38	0.02	0.25%
Special Purpose	28.1	1.78	16.77%
Sports and Recreation	47.0	2.98	28.05%
Streetscape	32.3	2.05	19.28%
Total	**167.6****		

**An additional 66.6ha of bushland associated with Castlemaine Urban Waterways land will be handed over to Council ownership/management in stages over the course of 10 years*

***A further 42ha of Shire owned land is maintained by other parties such as, Community Asset Committees*

[1] Yardstick 2020 results. Yardstick is a local government benchmarking program provided by the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA)

[2] Yardstick 2020 results. Yardstick is a benchmarking program provided by IPWEA

B Levels of Service

Levels of service are designed to provide comprehensive direction to the asset managers so that they are able to deliver the desired levels of service through appropriate and financially sustainable acquisition, design, development, maintenance and operation of the public open space facilities and services.

Levels of service for the open space network are organised into seven distinct categories that assist in defining the expected experience:

- Bushland
- Civic
- Community
- Linear
- Special Purpose
- Sports and Recreation
- Streetscape

Each category is further defined by provision (of land), development (of assets) and operations levels of service.

Each site is assigned to one of three distinct “Quality Standards” (based on levels of use), with higher utilised sites receiving more intensive asset development and operational servicing.

Table A-2: Open Space Levels of Service

Service Hierarchy	Service Level Objective
Quality Standard 1	Highest level of service and quality of assets intended to provide for regional events and high visitation rates
Quality Standard 2	A high level of service intended to provide for district events and a moderate level of use
Quality Standard 3	A moderate level of service to provide for local recreation and a low level of use

C Planning for the future

C.1 Managing Additional Land – Castlemaine Urban Waterways

Currently managed by State Government’s Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Council is in the process of accepting maintenance / management of the Castlemaine Urban Waterways. The main challenge for Council in accepting management of the Castlemaine Urban Waterway is to define and resource effective management and operation.

It is essential that Council commits the skills and resources required to ensure that waterway environs are managed in a condition that meets community and DELWP expectations and legislative requirements. Urban waterway management involves a range of challenges, including pest animals and weeds, fire protection, tree maintenance, grass slashing, litter

removal, illegal dumping, encroachment, track maintenance and improving the natural systems of the waterways.

It is estimated that additional resource requirements will comprise a crew of two plus plant, with an additional budget for contractors to undertake specialist work.

C.2 Managing Changing Population and Demand

The 2020 Estimated Residential Population (ERP) is 20,001. This represents an increase from the 2016 ERP of 19,097, or 904 persons. The annualised growth rate from 2016-2020 was 1.28%.

Over the 25-year period to 2041, the population in the Mount Alexander Shire region is forecast to increase from 19,097 in 2016 to 23,686 people. This represents a change of 4,589 people and an annualised growth of 0.87%.

It is forecast that in 2041 there will be 4,849 people in the Retirement (65 – 79) age group representing the largest proportion of the population at 20.47%. The age group with the largest change is Elderly (80+) with an increase of 2,411 (228.31%) people from 1,056 in 2016 to 3,467 in 2041[3].

Age groups comprising preschool, school age and youth members of the community are predicted to remain relatively consistent in terms of overall numbers, but will reduce slightly over time as a percentage of the overall Shire population.

An overall ageing population, together with a relatively stable youth population, combined with broader recreational trends, would suggest that:

- there will be less demand for formal organised sport
- more demand for multi-use sites catering for:
    - casual/informal recreation such as walking and cycling (for adults)
    - alternative 'adventure' type recreational pursuits such as BMX, pump tracks, skateboarding (for younger people)

Demand and utilisation of existing parks is likely to increase in the future. This is likely to lead to:

- Increasing demand for additional assets and facilities within the parks network
- An increase in expectations of the quality and range of these assets
- An increase in operations and maintenance costs, associated with increased wear and tear plus additional asset creation
- Shorter asset lives and increasing renewal costs

C.3 Managing the Risks

Council has developed a Corporate Risk Management Policy, dated September 2020. An open space network specific risk assessment was undertaken as part of the preparation of this AMP however, the MASC's Risk Management Policy will continue to be used to manage risks.

[3] Remplan 2021
https://app.remplan.com.au/mountalexander/forecast/summary?state=PLdpcxAV3h2n0zbT6LKApxUjtpt2Xg

It is recommended that the Risk Management Policy is updated to take into account the risks identified as part of the development of this AMP. This recommendation is included in the Improvement Plan.

D How Do We Deliver Our Services

D.1 Parks and Gardens Operations and Maintenance Practices

Operations and maintenance of open space assets is carried out by the Parks and Gardens Unit, primarily through a combination of in-house delivery and external contracts (managed and monitored by the unit). A small proportion of operations and maintenance tasks falls to Community Asset Committees, sporting clubs, Landcare and Friends of Groups.

The Parks and Gardens unit is structured into four geographically based teams that carry out regular, programed maintenance and improvement works.

Mount Alexander Shire Council (MASC) are currently developing and implementing a more comprehensive and formalised quality monitoring system, based on documented service standards, using the iAuditor platform. This monitoring assesses percentage compliance with service standards at each site (random audits conducted at a random selection of sites each month with results trends monitored). This is part of a business improvement plan leading towards accurate costing of (levels of) service.

D.2 Asset Information and Systems

Asset inventory information is partially complete. Data is stored in the corporate asset management system (AMS), Assetic and linked to GIS and Intramaps.

Information is yet to be updated on an ongoing, systematic basis however, asset data collection and data updating is now a focus for Council, and built information derived from capital development projects is now populated to the AMS as standard. Keeping asset data up to date will remain challenging, and further resourcing in this area will be necessary to maintain integrity in asset management and financial decision making.

D.3 Renewal planning

A renewal plan for park assets has been prepared as part of the development of this Open Space AMP. The asset register does not yet provide comprehensive coverage across all park asset groups, in particular living assets such as trees and gardens, and assets located within Quality Standard (QS) 3 parks throughout Castlemaine.

E How Much Will It Cost

E.1 Operations and Maintenance Budget

Council's current cost of relevant operations and maintenance has been identified as follows:

- Revenue: $35,906
- Expenditure: $2,847,511
- Total Expenditure: $2,811,605

The current financial budget and reporting structure does not enable easy identification of costs by park category or by operations and maintenance activity. MASC is not currently

producing a comprehensive long term (10 year) financial plan specifically for the parks activity, in line with IPWEA Parks Management Practice Notes, which detail asset management and financial planning best practice.

Any revenue generated is currently returned to the general Council fund.

E.2 Valuation

A valuation has been undertaken for renewal planning purposes as part of the development of this Open Space AMP, noting that not all parks assets have been comprehensively captured. There will need to be a reconciliation between current financial based valuation and the asset based valuation, to arrive at a new agreed single organisation valuation for the park assets. This valuation is currently updated on a four (4) year cycle (in line with other asset classes) following an asset condition audit. Valuations can however, be performed at any time, generally by indexing the whole asset category against approved indices.

Table A-3: Parks Asset Value Summary

	Replacement Cost	Written Down Value
Valuation as at June 2021	$21,486,828	$15,899,314

F Where will we Improve

The following are the key improvement areas identified:

1. Develop corporate AM Strategy and Policy (in line with Local Government Act 2020 requirements).
2. Ensure new open space categories and activity based Level of Service (LoS) framework are aligned throughout the organisation. These must be used for all management, data, planning and operation activities. This includes the Open Space Strategy, budget structure, asset data, valuations and operation and maintenance contracts.
3. Undertake benchmarking of services and regular park user research, through annual systemised intercept surveying.
4. Restructure operations and maintenance financial information (budget / ledger) to align with the levels of service structure in line with IPWEA Parks Management Practice Notes. This will be organised based on the open space categories and operational activities (outputs) and operation and maintenance costs separately identified (currently grouped together).
5. Secure additional resources to manage new acquisitions and developments including the 66.6 hectares of the Castlemaine Urban Waterways Land, as this land is progressively handed over from DELWP to Council.
6. For capital development processes, undertake the following improvements:
    a. Ensure internal process for handover is followed
    b. Improve process to ensure all asset data is obtained and uploaded into Council's AMS
    c. Ensure park design and asset installation aligns with the desired LoS

    d. Undertake pre and post capital project evaluations
7. Secure additional resources to provide a level of business intelligence to decision making and facilitate the collection, analysis and reporting on data collected. This would also include undertaking additional tasks such as an asset inspection program, quality monitoring of service delivery, asset handover, annual update of this asset management plan and other business improvement processes.

SECTION 1: ABOUT THIS PLAN

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Background and Context

An Asset Management Plan (AMP) encompasses all the assets under Council's control and connects the investment of community wealth with service outcomes. The Open Space Asset Management Plan aims to enable the provision of agreed levels of service throughout the entire open space system within financial, resource and risk constraints.

The development of AMP's, incorporating service level assessments for all asset classes, is a key strategic direction in the Council Plan 2017-2021.

This is Council's first Open Space Asset Management Plan. The purpose of this plan is to formally document the management approach that is applied to parks services and assets. This approach ensures that acceptable levels of service are provided in the most cost effective manner and contribute to long term financial sustainability.

This AMP has been prepared as a 'core' Asset Management Plan over a 10 year planning period in accordance with the International Infrastructure Management Manual4. It is prepared to meet minimum legislative and organisational requirements for sustainable service delivery and long term financial planning and reporting. Core asset management is a 'top down' approach where analysis is applied at the 'system' or 'network' level.

Future revisions of this AMP will move towards 'advanced' asset management using a 'bottom up' approach for gathering asset information for individual assets to support the optimisation of activities and programs to meet agreed service levels in a financially sustainable manner.

Council strategies considered in the development of the Open Space AMP include:

- Asset Management Plan – Pathways 2020
- Asset Management Strategy 2015
- Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Conservation Management Plan 2019
- Castlemaine Urban Waterways Management Plan 2018
- Cycling Walking Strategy 2010 - 2020
- Environment Strategy 2015 - 2025
- Public Open Space Strategy 2016
- Victory Park Conservation Management Plan 2016

Key requirements relating to the management of open space assets considered in the development of this AMP can be found in the following legislation and regulatory frameworks:

- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

[4] IPWEA, 2020, IIMM.

- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
- Local Government Act 2020
- Native Title Act 1993
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Water Act 1989 (Vic)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Electricity Safety (Installations) Regulations 2009
- Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020
- Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020
- Asset Management Accountability Framework 2016
- Australian Standards
- Australian Accounting Standards
- Building Code of Australia

The AMP will be reviewed and updated periodically (minimum 5 years) taking into account changes with the Council plan and budget, as well as new asset categories as data becomes available. The next review date is scheduled for August 2022.

Council Stakeholders in the lifecycle management of open space assets are detailed in **Error! Reference source not found.** 1-1.

Table 1-1: Council Stakeholders in the Lifecycle Management of Open Space Assets

Owner	Director Infrastructure and Development
Client	Manager Parks Recreation and Community Facilities
Planning Renewal	Coordinator Parks and Gardens and Coordinator Active Communities
Design	Coordinator Parks and Gardens and Coordinator Active Communities
Construction	Coordinator Parks and Gardens and Coordinator Buildings and Projects
Operation	Coordinator Parks and Gardens
Maintenance	Coordinator Parks and Gardens
Asset Accounting	Coordinator Asset Management and Systems
Acquisition Disposal	Director Infrastructure and Development

1.1.2 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Asset Management Plan (AMP) is to formally document the management approach that is applied to open space services and assets. This approach ensures that acceptable levels of service are provided in the most cost effective manner and contribute to long term financial sustainability.

This long-term planning approach is considered necessary given the large capital and operating expenditure required to maintain the open space network, the long lives of the assets and the lead times in planning for upgrades, replacements and the purchase or building of new assets. This AMP also aims to demonstrate that the service potential of the open space services and assets is being maintained in accordance with best industry practice.

This AMP covers a 10 year timeframe from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2031. The Plan assumes that the parks assets as a whole have a life longer than this timeframe and the main focus of the plan is determining the strategies required for maintaining, rehabilitating and renewing components over the next 10 years.

It is intended that this plan be formally reviewed every five (5) years.

1.1.2 Assets and Services Included in the Plan

The infrastructure assets covered by this AMP include those shown in Table 1-2 (assets located within a Castlemaine Quality Standard (QS) 3 park are not included). These assets are used to provide informal and formal recreation services to the community.

Table 1-2: Assets covered by this Plan

Asset Type	Quantity 2021-22	Measure	Replacement Cost	Written Down Value
Bin Standard 80L	14	no.	*$21,000*	*$14,850*
Bin Large 240L	70	no.	*$220,400*	*$178,060*
Fence Gate Pedestrian	76	no.	*$38,000*	*$26,900*
Fence Gate Removable Bollard	172	no.	*$223,600*	*$173,160*
Fence Gate Vehicular	72	no.	*$108,000*	*$76,500*
Furniture Barbeque - Single	12	no.	*$96,000*	*$63,200*
Furniture Barbeque - Double	9	no.	*$108,000*	*$82,200*
Furniture Bike Racks < 6	15	no.	*$37,500*	*$30,125*
Furniture Bike Racks > 6	2	no.	*$7,200*	*$4,320*
Furniture Drinking Fountain	19	no.	*$76,000*	*$49,400*
Furniture Flagpole	15	no.	*$45,000*	*$33,750*
Furniture Noticeboard/shelter	7	no	*$42,000*	*$32,100*
Furniture Picnic Setting	105	no.	*$420,000*	*$293,000*
Furniture Seat Standard	253	no.	*$657,800*	*$467,090*
Furniture Seat Special	37	no.	*$203,500*	*$155,375*
Furniture Sundial/birdtable/small fountain	4	no.	*$20,000*	*$15,000*
Furniture Tap	4	no.	*$4,000*	*$3,000*
Memorial - Medium	3	no.	*$15,000*	*$12,250*
Memorial - Large	6	no.	*$60,000*	*$45,000*
Memorial/Art - Other	1	no.	*$8,000*	*$6,000*
Playground Local	9	no.	*$585,000*	*$432,250*
Playground District	15	no.	*$9,000,000*	*$7,230,000*
Playground Regional	1	no.	*$1,000,000*	*$750,000*
Playground Shade Structure Single	6	no.	*$120,000*	*$84,000*
Playground Shade Structure Double	3	no.	*$120,000*	*$90,000*
Playground Shade Structure Triple	3	no.	*$180,000*	*$147,000*
Sign Park Name Standard	13	no.	*$26,000*	*$14,100*
Sign Park Name Large Sign	28	no.	*$84,000*	*$65,400*
Sign Park Interpretive/Special	51	no.	*$306,000*	*$215,100*
Sports Coach Box	3	no.	*$45,000*	*$20,250*
Sports Court	25	no.	*$1,625,000*	*$1,010,750*
Sports Cricket Net Single	1	no.	*$50,000*	*$22.500*
Sports Cricket Net Double	7	no.	*$560,000*	*$276,000*
Sports Cricket Net Triple	4	no.	*$360,000*	*$234,000*
Sports Cricket Pitch	14	no.	*$168,000*	*$104,400*
Sports Scoreboard	5	no.	*$75,000*	*$45,750*
Sports Spectator Shelter	18	no.	*$450,000*	*$262,500*
Sports Small Shelter	5	no.	*$25,000*	*$15,250*
Sports Goal Posts	9	no.	*$45,000*	*$33,750*
Structure Pergola	9	no.	*$45,000*	*$29,250*
Sports Table Tennis Table	1	no.	$11,000	*$8,250*
TOTAL			**$17,291,000**	**$12,852,580**

Asset Group	Quantity 2021-22	Measure	Replacement Cost	Fair Value/WDV
Fence -chain mesh <1.8	*6,347*	lineal m.	*$1,269,416*	*$949,533*
Fence -chain mesh >1.8	1,948	lineal m.	*$545,514*	*$398,177*
Fence Barrier - post and rail/pipe	3,878	lineal m.	$349,083	*$245,812*
Fence Bollard Standard	1,615	lineal m.	*$161,496*	*$124,503*
Fence Handrail	203	lineal m.	*$25,321*	*$22,482*
Fence Standard < 1.2m	105	lineal m.	*$18,857*	*$16,455*
Fence Standard 1.2 - 1.8m	2,632	lineal m.	*$579,094*	*$405,645*
Fence Standard > 1.8m	10	lineal m.	*$2,821*	*$2,116*
Structure Wall < 1m - Masonry	1,662	lineal m.	*$664,812*	*$484,201*
Structure Wall 1-2m - Masonry	807	lineal m.	*$484,203*	*$326,401*
Structure Wall > 2m - Masonry	119	lineal m.	*$95,206*	*$71,405*
TOTAL			**$4,195,827**	**$3,046,734**

1.1.3 Rationale for the Activity

The open space network is provided by local government to deliver a range of benefits as identified in the Mount Alexander Shire Council Public Open Space Strategy (2016):

- Physical health – *providing opportunities for physical activity*
- Mental health – *providing opportunities for informal activities, relaxation*
- Social capital and community connections – *providing opportunities for group gatherings, socialising*
- Stimulated and sustainable *economies – providing a venue for community, tourism and commercial activities*
- Environmentally sustainable urban *areas – protection of nature values, ecosystem services and mitigating urban heat island effect*
- Artistic expression and cultural diversity – *providing a venue for community, sporting and cultural events and festivals*

Refer to the Public Open Space Strategy for more information.
http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Recreation/Public_Open_Space_Strategy_May_2016.pdf

All these benefits are considered, to varying degrees, to enhance the community's health and well-being.

Due to limited commercial opportunity and benefit, the private sector will not provide a comprehensive range of parks and recreation activities. Therefore, provision by local government, as a public good, is required.

Our open space network is generally highly valued by the community and several of the Shire's parks, gardens and reserves have significant history and values associated with them. Many are protected and managed through legislation and their underlying ownership history as crown derived or vested land.

Through protecting and enhancing this network we will create, maintain and enhance significant ecological, amenity, recreation and economic value.

Council provision and support for quality parks services and facilities is a significant contributor to the liveability of the Shire.

This investment and value of the various services to the community justifies prudent management of these assets. The community expects that parks will be managed in such a way that costs are minimised while providing the levels of service that the community desires, and that will continue to attract visitors to the Shire.

1.1.4 Strategic and Corporate Goals

This AMP is prepared under the direction of the organisation's vision, guiding principles, pillars and strategic objectives, as outlined in the Shire's Council Plan 2017-2021.

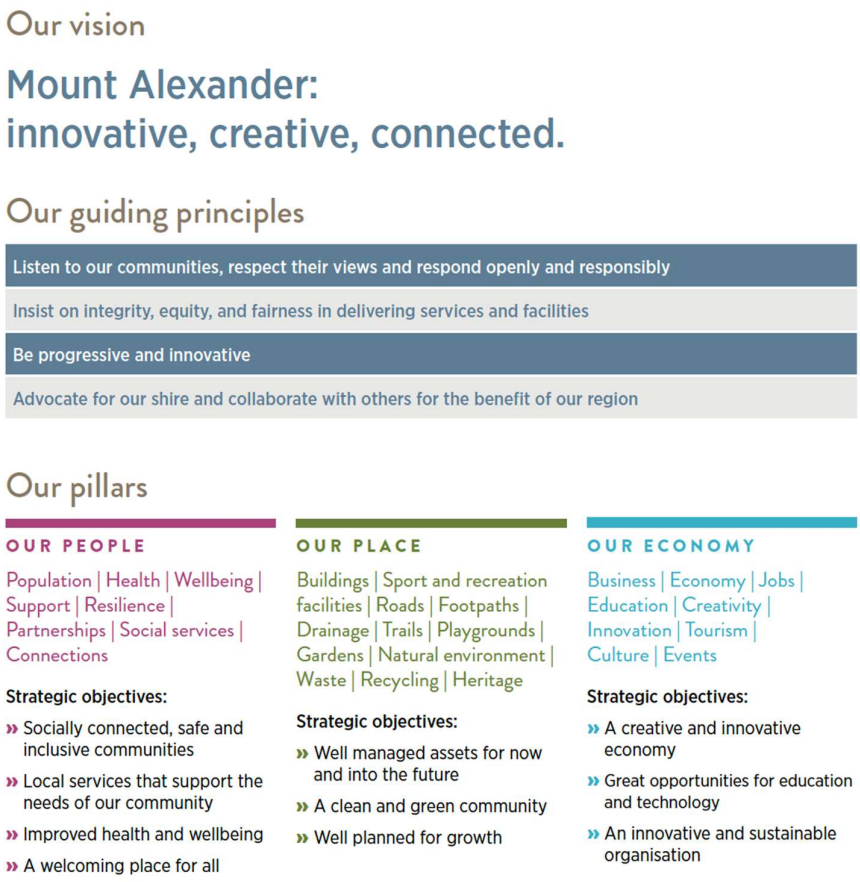


Figure 1-1: Vision, Guiding Principles, Pillars and Strategic Objectives

Relevant strategic objectives and how these are addressed in this AMP are outlined in Table 1-3.

Table 1-3: Organisational Strategic Objectives and how these are addressed in this Plan

Strategic Objective	Strategies	How Objectives and Strategies are addressed in the AMP
Socially connected, safe and inclusive communities	Support the building of social connections in each of our towns.	Provides a strategic framework for maintaining and upgrading Council's parks infrastructure that supports social interaction through opportunities to participate in active and passive recreation, cultural activities and events.
Improved health and wellbeing	Improve health through use of our public spaces and trails.	Identifies and quantifies the wide range of passive and active recreation facilities and assets provided by Council, and ensures that provision, development and operation of the parks network continues to sustainably meet the community's recreation needs and improved community health and wellbeing.
	Build the capacity of our community to manage the impact of climate change and changing weather patterns.	
Well managed assets for now and into the future	Improve streetscapes and town entrances.	Provides a strategic framework for maintaining and upgrading Council's parks infrastructure, including streetscapes and the trails network.
	Review, maintain, renew and expand the assets of our community.	
	Improve access to a range of convenient, safe, accessible and sustainable travel choices.	
A clean, green community	Protect and enhance the natural environment.	Acknowledges the role of "living assets", the challenges ahead associated with climate change and addresses funding of operations focused on maintaining and enhancing the natural environment.
	Reduce carbon emissions and manage impact of climate change.	
A creative and innovative economy	Support business growth and local employment.	Identifies the importance that attractive parks, natural areas and streetscapes have in attracting residents, businesses and tourism to the area. Supporting asset maintenance, development and renewal programing to ensure that Mount Alexander remains an attractive place to live and visit.
	Help to grow tourism to the shire.	
An innovative and sustainable organisation	Facilitate and support a transparent and innovative culture.	Analyses community and park user research and utilises the information to assist with setting levels of service and prioritising capital and operational programs in areas of most concern to the community.
	Maintain financial sustainability to deliver the Council Plan.	

1.1.5 Legislative Requirements

The organisation has to meet many legislative requirements including Federal and State legislation and regulations. Key relevant legislation is summarised in Table 1-4. This list is provided for context and may not be a comprehensive list of all relevant legislation and regulations as they are changed and updated. Council officers make it a priority to keep informed and stay abreast of changes in the regulatory framework so any issues and new requirements can be addressed.

Table 1-4: Legislative Requirements

Legislation	Requirement
Local Government Act	Sets out role, purpose, responsibilities and powers of local governments including the preparation of a long term financial plan supported by asset management plans for sustainable service delivery. The Local Government Act 2020 requires the development of an Asset Plan – refer 1.1.6 for further information
Planning and Environment Act	The Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic) introduced a framework for integrating controls in land use, development planning and environment protection in Victoria. It provides planning controls, which overlap with related Victorian legislation, such as the Environment Protection Act 1970 (Vic) ("EPA"), the Environment Effects Act 1978 (Vic) ("EE Act") and the Subdivision Act 1988 (Vic). One aim of the PEA was to provide a "onestop-shop" for land use and development assessment and approvals in Victoria.
Australian Standards	A series of published standards setting out specifications and procedures designed to ensure products, services and systems are safe, reliable and consistently perform the way they were intended to. They establish a common language which defines quality and safety criteria. It is important to note, that currently there are no specific Australian Standards for the construction and maintenance of skate and BMX facilities, rather Australian Standards for playgrounds is used in this instance (AS 4685:2014 Playground equipment – General safety requirements and test methods).
Building Code of Australia	The Building Code of Australia (BCA) is a uniform set of technical provisions for the design and construction of buildings and other structures throughout Australia.
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004	Legislation that ensures the highest level of protection against risks to health and safety to employees, other persons at work and members of the public. Assigns responsibility to persons who control or manage matters that give rise to risks to health and safety for the elimination or reduction of those risks as far as reasonably practicable.
Native Title Act 1993	Legislation that provides for the recognition and protection of native title, establishes ways in which future dealings affecting native title may proceed, sets

Legislation	Requirement
	standards for those dealings, and establishes mechanisms for determining claims to native title.
Disability Discrimination Act 1992	Legislation that seeks to ensure that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community, and to eliminate as far as possible discrimination against persons on the grounds of disability in relation to work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sports, provision of goods, facilities services and land
Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulation 2020	Legislation that includes provision for voting rights, governance requirements, council decision making, levying and payment of council rates and charges, preparation of council plans, budgets and annual reports and council powers to make and enforce local laws.
Electricity Safety (Installations) Regulations, 2009	Prescribes methods to be followed in carrying out electrical installation work; the quality of materials, fittings and apparatus used in connection with electrical installations; inspection of prescribed electrical installation work; testing and certification of electrical installation work; prescribe fees, penalties and other matters authorised by the Electricity Safety Act1998; prescribe standards for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of electrical installations, and property from damage, associated with the generation, transmission, distribution and use of electricity.
Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020	Legislation in relation to prevention of vegetation growing too close to electric lines, mitigating against safety risks such as electrocution, fire (including bushfire), and diminished reliability of electricity supply. Prescribes standards and practices in tree cutting or removal in the vicinity of electric lines.
Work Health and Safety Act, 2011	Legislation relating to work place health and safety consultation, co-operation and co-ordination, how to manage work health and safety risks, managing the work environment and facilities as these issues relate to installation of floodlighting.
Water Act 1989	Legislation to provide for the integrated management of all elements of the terrestrial phase of the water cycle, and to promote orderly, equitable and efficient use of water resources.
Asset Management Accountability Framework 2016	Establishes a flexible and non-prescriptive set of requirements which aim to ensure Victorian public sector Accountable Officers manage asset portfolios appropriately through mandatory asset management requirements and also general guidance.
Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994	Legislation to control state ‘controlled’ and state ‘prohibited’ weeds.
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999	Federal Legislation that controls the management of all land to ensure the protection of animal and plant species listed under the Act.

Legislation	Requirement
Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988	State Legislation that controls the management of public land to ensure the protection of animal and plant species listed under the Act.
Australian Accounting Standards	AASB 116 Property Plant and Equipment AASB 136 Impairment of Assets AASB 140 Investment Property AASB 1051 Land Under Roads

The organisation will exercise its duty of care to ensure public safety in accordance with the infrastructure risk management plan linked to this AMP. Management of risks is discussed in Section 7.

1.1.6 Local Government Act 2020

The new Local Government Act 2020 (Victoria) is intended to improve local government democracy, accountability and service delivery for all Victorians. The Act requires Councils to adopt an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance to ensure they are accountable, transparent, collaborative, efficient and engaged with their communities.

Council's long term Community Vision (Where do we want to be? Where are we now? How do we get there?) must be closely aligned with the organisation's other strategic plans, in particular the Financial Plan and Asset Plan. Strategic planning must take into account the resources needed for effective implementation, as well as identifying and addressing any risks to effective implementation.

The Asset Plan needs to:

- outline how Council proposes to manage the full portfolio of assets that it owns and controls (in both strategic and financial terms)
- define Council's asset management priorities and take a long-term outlook (10+ years)
- have a strong reciprocal relationship with the Financial Plan, underlying budgets and projections
- be based on an adopted Asset Management Policy and Asset Management Strategy
- be informed by internal asset management systems
- address all aspects of asset management (including maintenance, renewal, acquisition, expansion, disposal of all classes of community assets under control of Council)
- consider the age, condition and fitness for purpose of assets to deliver against adopted performance standards
- include defined functional service level standards and identifies required investments to deliver these standards (across all classes of assets)
- articulate any assumptions that underpin the Plan
- be developed using a process that incorporates 'deliberative engagement practices' that involve the community and be understandable and accessible to members of the community
- be adopted by 30 June 2022 in its first iteration and updated and adopted by 31 October in the year following a general election in all subsequent iterations

1.1.7 Asset Management Policy and Strategy

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, this Open Space AMP should sit within a framework of activities that are guided by an Asset Management Policy and an Asset Management Strategy. The Asset Management Strategy 2015 is currently in review. The review of this document is identified as a priority for improvement in this AMP.

1.1.8 Local Laws

Council has introduced Local Laws designed to protect the community and the local environment from health and safety concerns and ensure protection of amenity of the area. A new General Local Law 2020 was adopted in September 2020.

Part 3 of the General Local Law relates to Municipal Amenity – Public Places and identifies the following objectives:

The objectives of this Part are to provide for:

(1) protection of all of the following:

a. public places
b. public assets
c. the amenity of public places and of the municipal district
d. safety of persons

(2) regulation and control of all of the following:

a. certain works in public places and on, or in respect of public assets
b. activities in, and uses of, public places
c. activities within and uses of municipal buildings

Refer to:
https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Local_Laws/Mount_Alexander_Shire_Council_General_Local_Law_2020_-_Adopted_15_September_2020.pdf

1.1.9 Strategies, Policies and Plans

The following strategies and plans that have relevance to the parks activity are listed in Table 1-5.

Also refer to:
https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Policies_plans_and_strategies#BM3656

Table 1-5: Strategies, Policies and Plans

Strategy/Document Name
Public Open Space Strategy (2016) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Recreation/Public_Open_Space_Strategy_May_2016.pdf
Resourcing Recreation (2019) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Recreation/Resourcing_Recreation_-_Mount_Alexander_Shire_2019.pdf
Investing in Sport (2010) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Investing_in_Sport_document.pdf
Let's Play – Investing in Play (2014) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Recreation/Let_s_Play_-_Investing_in_Play_2014-2024_-_Play_Space_Strategy_FINAL_July_2016.pdf
Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Conservation Management Plan (2019) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Parks_and_gardens/Castlemaine_Botanical_Gardens_CMP_-_2019.pdf

Strategy/Document Name
Castlemaine Streetscape Plan and Design Standards (2020) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Policies/Castlemaine_Streetscape_Plan_and_Design_Standards_-_2020.pdf
Castlemaine Urban Waterways Management Plan (2018) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Environment/Castlemaine_Urban_Waterways_Management_Plan_-_2018.pdf
Mount Alexander Reserves Improvement Plan (2011) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Castlemaine_Reserves_Improvement_Plan_Mar_2011.PDF
Walking and Cycling Strategy (2010) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Major_Projects/Walking_Cycling_Strategy-final_combined.pdf
Bendigo Region Destination Management Plan (2015) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/DESD/Bendigo_Region_Destination_Management_Plan.pdf
Climate Change Action Plan (2016) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Environment/Climate_Change_Action_Plan_Mount_Alexander_Shire_Council_2016.pdf
Environment Strategy (2015) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Environment/Mount_Alexander_Shire_Council_Environment_Strategy_2015-2025.pdf
Flood Management Plan (2015) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Strategic_Planning/Flood_Management_Plan_Aug2015.pdf
Mount Alexander Greenhouse Action Plan (2011) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/GAP-Final.pdf
Heritage Strategy (2012) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Strategic_Planning/Mount-Alexander-Heritage-Strategy-2012-2016-Final.pdf
Honeycomb Bushland Reserve Environmental Management Plan (2016) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Environment/Honeycomb_Bushland_Reserve_Environmental_Management_Plan_2016.pdf
Interim Disability Action Plan (2015) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Interim_Disability_Action_Plan_-_2015_-_2017_-_Mount_Alexander_Shire_Council.pdf
Loddon Campaspe Integrated Transport Strategy (2016) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Corporate/Loddon_Campaspe_Integrated_Transport_Strategy_Adopted_May_2016.pdf
Maldon Town Centre Streetscape Plan and Design Standards (2018) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/DESD/Maldon_Streetscape_Plan_and_Design_Standard_FINAL.PDF
Project Priorities (2013) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/CEO/ProjectPriorities-2013-2017.pdf
Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2013) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Council_Plan/DOC_13_51174__MASC_public_health_and_wellbeing_plan_2013-2017_-_final_-_December_2013.pdf
Roadmap to Carbon Neutrality (2020) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Policies/Roadmap_to_Carbon_Neutrality_-_2020.pdf
Roadside Conservation Management Plan (2012) http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Final_and_Adopted_on_11_September_2012_Mount_Alexander_Shire_Council__Roadside_Conservation_Management_Plan_2012_-_2017.PDF
Rotunda Park Landscape Management Plan (2017) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Council_Plan/Rotunda_Park_Landscape_Management_Plan_-_Newstead_-_2017.pdf

Strategy/Document Name
Sustainable Water Use Plan (2010) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Sustainable-Water-Use-Plan-Final.pdf
Victory Park Conservation Management Plan (2017) https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Parks_and_gardens/Victory_Park_Conservation_Management_Plan_for_web.pdf
Waste Management Strategy (2010) http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Files/Mt_Alexander_Waste_Management_Strategy_2010_-_2015.pdf

In addition to these documents, other reports and data sets have also been considered as part of the development of this Plan as set out in Table 1-6.

Table 1-6: Other documents

Document Name
Yardstick Parks Benchmarks Performance Analysis Report and Improvement Plan (2019)
Budget Report 2020/21
Annual Plan 2020/21
Long Term Financial Plan 2016/2017 – 2025/2026
Local Government Victoria (LGV) Community Satisfaction Survey Report 2020
Parks and Gardens Service Review 2016 – Key Findings Report (Internal Review)
Draft Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Flora and Fauna Reserve Environmental Management Plan 2020
Tree Management Guideline (2015)
Parks and Recreation Customer Requests Summary (2015-2020)
Draft Service Standards – Open Space Standards of Maintenance (2015)
Recreation Reserve Inspections Policy (undated)

1.1.10 Asset Service Objectives

The purpose of Council assets is to support the delivery of Council services. The assets covered by this plan and their service objectives are defined in Table 1-7.

Table 1-7: Asset Service Objectives

Asset category	Definition	Asset Purpose/ Service Objective
Living assets	Trees, gardens, lawns, hedges, bushland	To enhance the visual amenity or conservation values of a space, in addition to providing natural shade and enhancing carbon sequestration.
Sports structures	Cricket pitches, practice nets, coaches boxes, flood lighting, score boards	To enable organised and competition team sport to be regularly played, allowing consistent performance in most weather conditions.
Playgrounds and youth facilities	Playgrounds, skate parks, BMX tracks	Provide a range of equipment and features that meets a wide range of ages and play values, located where demand is.
Structures	Includes picnic shelters, pergolas, vehicle and pedestrian bridges, viewing platforms and jetties, BBQ's, flagpoles, boardwalks, fountains, public art and memorials	Provide ancillary structures that extend the use and/or amenity of the space, that is fit for purpose, and appropriate for the location, use and setting.
Furniture	Includes furniture such as seating, tables, BBQs bollards etc. within parks and reserves. Excludes street side furniture	Provide safe furniture which enhances the amenity of the space that is adequate for use in locations of needs.
Hard surfaces	Includes roads and carparks on parks, tracks, trails and park pathways	To facilitate access to and use of parks, and connectivity between park features and facilities.
Irrigation and drainage	Includes sportsfield and other turf irrigation, garden bed irrigation, and sub-surface drainage	Enables healthy, vigorous plant development that improves appearance, performance and utilisation.
Fences and walls	Includes internal, and where applicable, boundary fences and walls.	Provide vehicle and pedestrian separation, site security, aesthetics, and in

Asset category	Definition	Asset Purpose/ Service Objective
		the case of retaining walls, functional stabilisation.
Lighting	Includes ornamental, security and sports lighting	To extend the visual amenity of significant plantings, artwork and other aesthetic features, the security use of parks users, and extending the utilisation of sports fields.

1.1.11 Asset Service Hierarchy

A service hierarchy is related to the asset hierarchy and reflects that not all assets will be built and maintained to the same Level of Service. It assists Council in providing tiered service levels in response to differing demands and needs. The Asset Service Hierarchy is used to assist in determining future maintenance and capital renewal priorities and will influence project rankings based on demands, needs and agreed Levels of Service.

Table 1-8: Asset Service Hierarchy

Service Hierarchy	Service Level Objective
Quality Standard 1	Highest level of service and quality of assets intended to provide for regional events and high visitation rates
Quality Standard 2	A high level of service intended to provide for district events and a moderate level of use
Quality Standard 3	A moderate level of service to provide for local recreation and a low level of use

1.1.12 Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of this AMP are shown in Table 1-9.

Table 1-9: Key stakeholders

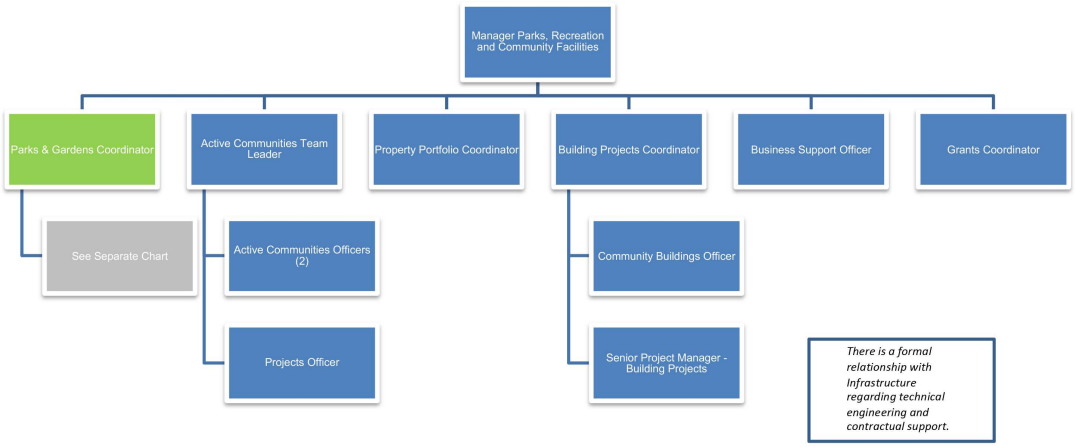
Key Stakeholder	Role in Asset Management Plan
Councillors	Represent the needs and opinions of the community, fulfilling a governance role, and approving the allocation of capital and operational resources

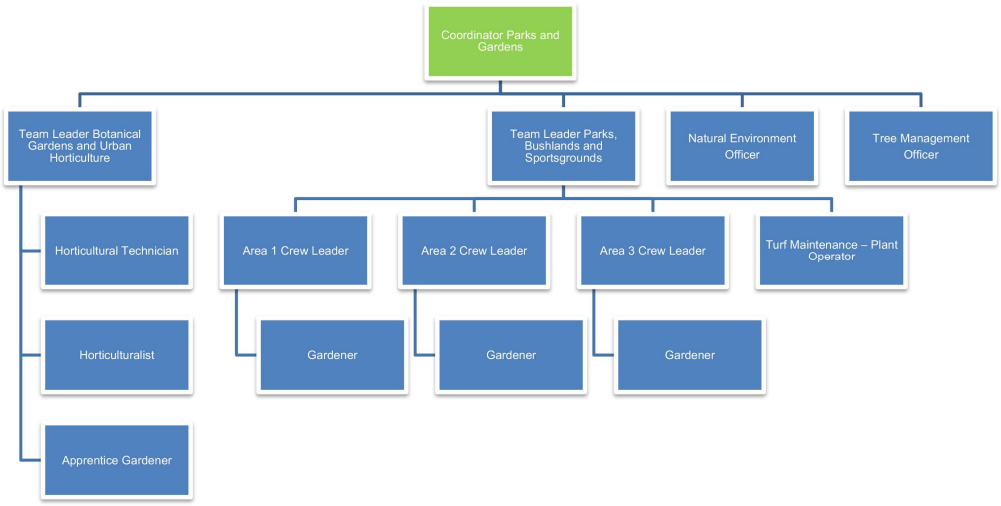
Key Stakeholder	Role in Asset Management Plan
Executive Leadership Team	Ensure the organisation is financially sustainable, that Council objectives are met, that activities are undertaken in accordance with approved Council policy and legislation, and that asset management processes are developed across all council activities, implemented and embedded in the organisations culture
Manager Infrastructure	Oversee the implementation of the Asset Management Planning process across Council
Manager Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities	Asset owner, responsible for asset management practices relating to parks, recreation, environment and community facilities, and the renewal and maintenance of associated assets
Coordinator Parks and Gardens	Responsible for development of strategic, operational planning and maintenance of open space, quality control, OH&S compliance, staff support and supervision.
Coordinator Venues and Events	Responsible for cleaning of public toilets and barbeques located in areas of open space.
Contractors/Operational Staff	On ground delivery of services
Users (formal and informal)	User of the asset

1.1.13 Parks Management Structure

The Council management structure for parks is shown in Figure 1.2 below. The open space activity sits within the Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities portfolio.

Figure 1-2: Parks Recreation and Community Facilities Management Structure





1.1.14 Goals and Objectives of Asset Management

The organisation exists to provide services to its community. Some of these services are provided by infrastructure assets. We have acquired infrastructure assets by 'purchase', by contract, construction by our staff and by donation of assets constructed by developers and others to meet increased levels of service.

Our goal in managing infrastructure assets is to meet the defined level of service (as amended from time to time) in the most cost effective manner for present and future users. The key elements of infrastructure asset management are:

- Providing a defined level of service and monitoring performance
- Managing the impact of growth through demand management and infrastructure investment
- Taking a lifecycle approach to developing cost-effective management strategies for the long-term that meet the defined level of service
- Identifying, assessing and appropriately controlling risks
- Having a long-term financial plan which identifies required, affordable expenditure and how it will be financed.[5]

1.1.15 Plan Framework

Key elements of the Plan are:

- Levels of service – specifies the services and levels of service to be provided by the organisation
- Future demand – how this will impact on future service delivery and how this is to be met
- Life cycle management – how Council will manage its existing and future assets to provide defined levels of service
- Financial summary – what funds are required to provide the defined services,
- Asset management practices
- Monitoring – how the plan will be monitored to ensure it is meeting organisation's objectives
- Asset management improvement plan

[5] Based on IPWEA, 2011, IIMM, Sec 1.2 p 1|7.

A road map for preparing an AMP is shown below.

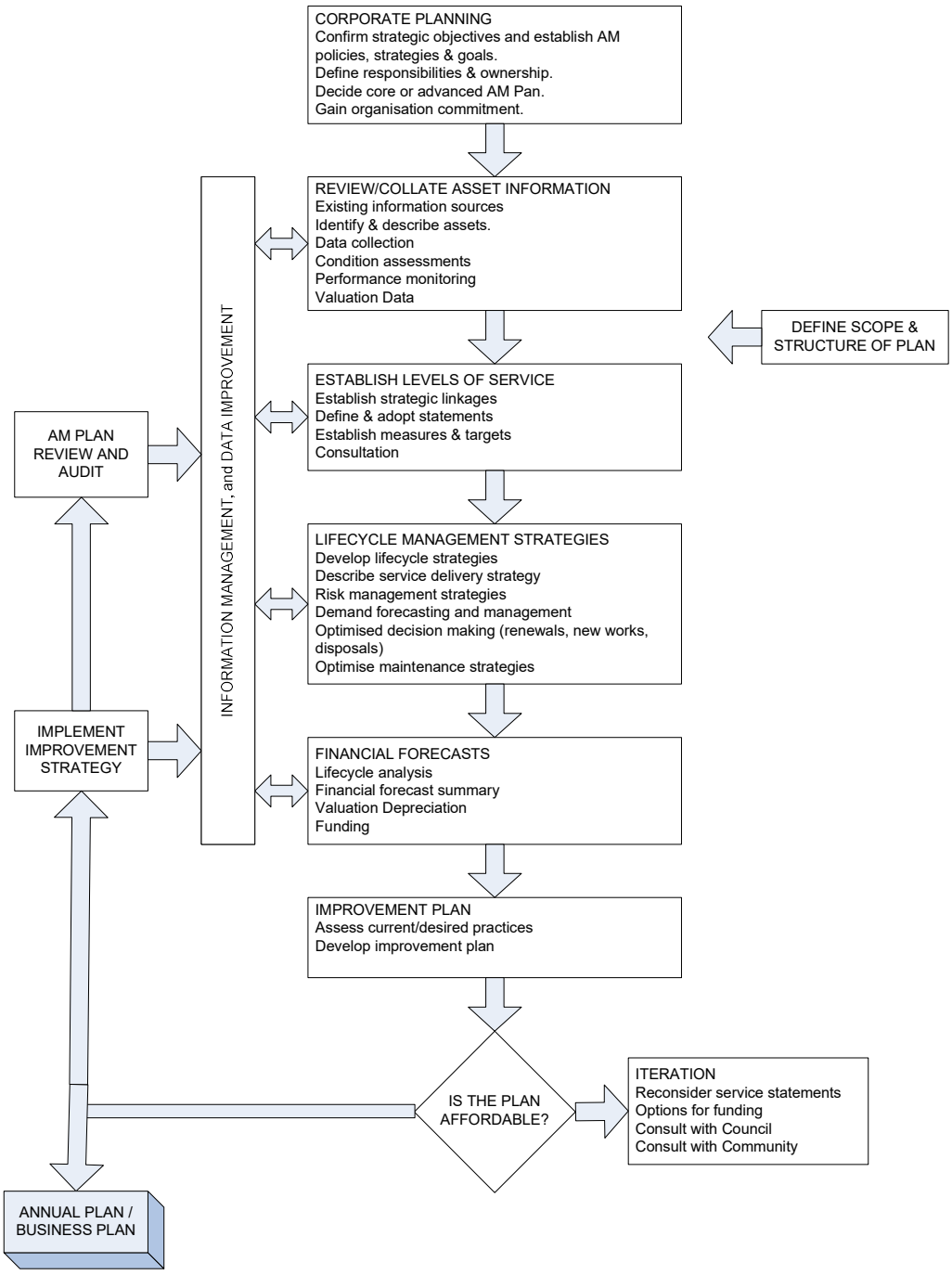


Figure 1-3: Road map for preparing an Asset Management Plan

Source: IPWEA, 2006, IIMM, Fig 1.5.1, p 1.11.

1.1.16 Core and Advanced Asset Management

This AMP is prepared as a 'core' Asset Management Plan over a 10 year planning period in accordance with the International Infrastructure Management Manual[6]. It is prepared to meet minimum legislative and organisational requirements for sustainable service delivery and long term financial planning and reporting. Core asset management is a 'top down' approach where analysis is applied at the 'system' or 'network' level.

Future revisions of this AMP will move towards 'advanced' asset management using a 'bottom up' approach for gathering asset information for individual assets to support the optimisation of activities and programs to meet agreed service levels in a financially sustainable manner.

1.2 Corporate Improvements

Improvement Item 1.1

- Update corporate AM Strategy and Policy (in line with Local Government Act 2020 requirements)

[6] IPWEA, 2020, IIMM.

SECTION 2: WHAT SERVICES DO WE PROVIDE

2.1 Activity Overview

Open space activity includes all areas managed and maintained as a reserve or park. The Shire comprises a dispersed network of settlements, with open spaces and facilities that serve each of the respective local communities. This situation can have implications that tend to result in increased costs relating to asset provision (asset duplication), and ongoing maintenance and operations activities (more assets to maintain, distance between settlements).

A total of 209.6 hectares of parkland is managed by the Shire, of which 130 hectares is actively maintained by Council, 42 hectares are actively maintained by others, and 37.6 hectares is bushland. This equates to 6.58 hectares of actively maintained parkland per 1,000 residents, which is slightly higher than the national median of 5.9 hectares per 1,000 residents.

A total of 19 hectares of grass sports field are provided, which at 0.96 hectares per 1,000 residents is less than the national median of 1.4 hectares per 1,000 residents.

A total of 26 playgrounds are provided. Based on an estimated under 15 years of age resident population of 2,965, this equates to 8.4 playgrounds per 1,000 children under 15, which is higher than the national median of 6.3 playgrounds per 1,000 children.

The annual cost of operations and maintenance is $2,039,472 (excluding depreciation), which equates to $12,161 per hectare. This is slightly higher than the national median of $10,945 per hectare.

As an overall level of service indicator the cost of operations and maintenance is $103,243 per 1,000 residents. This is lower than the national median of $122,526 per 1,000 residents.

The current written down value (WDV) of the parks assets as at June 2021 is $15,899,314 (excluding land).

2.2 Levels of Service

2.2.1 Previous Documentation

Existing Shire strategies, plans and documents were reviewed and interviews conducted with current staff members to better understand previous approaches to determining and documenting levels of service and asset supply / demand analysis.

The Public Open Space Strategy (2016) includes a high level analysis of current open space provision in the Shire and finds that the Shire benefits from a relatively high level of open space provision. However, it does not articulate any desired/target level of provision or offer any benchmarking analysis. The strategy also lacks any clear open space distribution / catchment analysis or targets (except in relation to Maldon's north west residential area, where the Strategy identifies a shortfall in provision, and a reference to ensuring sufficient provision is allocated in new subdivisions).

It is noted that Council is currently reviewing the baseline open space provision data upon which the analysis contained in the Public Open Space Strategy (2016) was based.

Resourcing Recreation (2019) identified 120 sport and recreation facilities within the Shire (excluding trails, playgrounds and swimming pools). The document makes reference to the provision of only one soccer pitch, identifying soccer as the only sport in the Shire with a shortfall in facility provision. There are also references to some cricket ovals with little or no use by sport or community groups.

Investing in Sport (2010) identified an oversupply of hard courts at that time (61 courts in total). Resourcing in Recreation (2019) identified 58 tennis courts (of which 25 are in disrepair) and a further 14 netball courts. Details associated with any supply/demand/gap analysis exercises conducted are not included in these strategic documents.

Investing in Play (2014) includes a play space classification framework (Local, District, Municipal) and includes targets for play space size and distribution/catchment. It also includes high level development LoS. No analysis of current provision or distribution is included in the document.

A draft document entitled 'Service Standards – Open Space Standards of Maintenance' articulates a range of community and technical levels of service within a parks classification framework and includes a maintenance standard hierarchy and performance monitoring for all parks assets. It is understood these standards have not yet been formally tabled for adoption and are only currently implemented in part, and inconsistently, as and when resources allow. The documenting of service standards and quality monitoring processes are currently under review.

2.2.2 Levels of Service Framework

As part of the development of this AMP Mount Alexander has reviewed and updated current approaches to its parks levels of service (LoS) to align with the format and approach supported in IPWEA Practice Note 10.3: Parks Levels of Service. LoS are structured to fit into one of the following hierarchies:

- Provision LoS – Categorises land into differing park categories, each category having the land requirements described by type, quantity, distribution and quality of land used. *Provision LoS should be defined in the Public Open Space Strategy*
- Development LoS – Describes the types of assets appropriate for use in each park category, including provision targets and quality of asset development. Development LoS also define what assets are not appropriate e.g. public toilet on a local park. Development LoS are defined in this AMP in Appendix 1 but should be included in future reviews of the Public Open Space Strategy so that they are subject to community consultation.
- Operation LoS – Defines the standards that services and maintenance work is to undertake. Operations LoS are defined in this AMP in Appendix 2.

Council intends to confirm park categories (refer 2.2.3), provision and development levels of service when it next reviews the Public Open Space Strategy.

2.2.3 Parks Categories

Levels of service for open space are organised into seven "park" categories based on the Shire's parks management activity (modified from those used in the Public Open Space

Strategy 2016). These levels of service are designed to provide comprehensive direction to the parks asset managers so that they are able to deliver the desired levels of service through appropriate acquisition, design, development, maintenance and operation of the parks facilities and services. The parks categories are:

- Civic
- Sport and Recreation
- Community
- Bushland
- Linear
- Streetscape
- Special Purpose

Table 2-1: Example overview of the Parks Category and LoS Hierarchy

	Civic	**Sport and Recreation**	**Community**	**Bushland**	**Linear**	**Streetscape**
	Open space used for community gatherings or that surround civic buildings	*Usually large sites where organised/ competition sport is played and/or other recreation activities occur*	*Open space that is used for casual recreation, providing spaces and features to encourage play, social interaction and relaxation*	*Areas that have unique or important environmental values, (flora and/or fauna) where conservation overrides other activities*	*Long and mostly narrow parks that link green spaces, provide opportunities for walking and cycling and may follow riparian features*	*Landscape improvements located in the road reserve corridor including garden beds, street trees and mowing strips*
Quality Standard 1 (high level of service)	Victory Park	Camp Reserve	Maldon Gardens			Mostyn St Traffic Islands
Quality Standard 2 (moderate level of service)	Campbell's Creek Community Centre	Sunken Reserve	Stanley Park	Flora and Fauna Reserve (Castlemaine Botanical Gardens)		Duke St Road Reserve
Quality Standard 3 (basic level of service)		Taradale Recreation Reserve	Maclise St Reserve	Parker St Road Reserve	Forest Creek Trail	Templeton St Road Reserve

Notes:

- *Example parks provided for each relevant category/quality standard*
- *Special Purpose Parks (e.g. Castlemaine Botanical Gardens) are excluded from the standard approach used above due to their unique character and specific use*

.

2.2.4 Function and Purpose

The parks categories and levels of service will be used in the following ways:

Table 2-2: Levels of service function and purpose

Function	Purpose
Set minimum standards for parks provided as part of subdivisional development.	To ensure park land and assets are provided to meet a standard that is fit for the intended purpose.
Set maximum standards for parks provided as part of subdivisional development.	To ensure assets are not provided at a significantly higher standard or quantity than has been agreed as appropriate and sustainable (affordable).
Plan future park land requirements in terms of purpose, location, distribution and size.	To provide a planning tool to calculate and identify future park land requirements, and possible disposals.
Guides the preparation of management plans, based on park categories.	To provide a consistent framework for the development and management of parks across the district.
Informs the community about the standard of park development and service they can expect.	To provide a consistent guide on facility and asset development and the maintenance standards for parks service delivery.
Informs the community and council about what developments and assets are appropriate for a given park category.	To provide a consistent guide to manage responses for development of individual services and facilities.
Key performance indicators.	To provide a framework upon which to monitor and report on the success of council in delivering the agreed levels of service.
Standardise and rationalise the quality and provision of assets and services across the parks network.	To provide equity of development and servicing across the community, and to assist with making decisions about increasing or decreasing levels of service in response to financial changes.

2.2.5 Community and Technical Levels of Service

LoS are further defined as community (or customer) LoS and technical LoS. They describe the same service but using different language for different audiences.

Community Levels of Service are used in all public documentation, and in discussions with stakeholders such as the public and Council. They use language that is easily understood, are often expressed as value statements (e.g. safe, fun, tidy etc), and describe **what** the service is that is being delivered.

Table 2-3: Open Space Network Community Level of Service

Service Area	Customer/Community Operating LoS Statements
Litter	To keep areas tidy and free of litter and debris.
	To empty rubbish bins frequently so they do not overflow.
Grass	To maintain grass areas so that their use is optimised, and disruptions to availability minimised.
	To maintain appropriate grass height throughout the year in a visually pleasing presentation suitable to the location and the use.
Sports	To maintain grass areas so that their use is optimised, and disruptions to availability minimised.
Garden and Plant Displays	To present visually pleasing and healthy garden displays.
Hedges	To maintain hedges in a pleasing, healthy and stable condition.
Trees	To maintain trees in an aesthetically pleasing and healthy condition, and which do not obstruct pedestrians, vehicles and services.
Park Furniture and Structures	To provide clean, safe, visually pleasing and functional park furniture and features at all times.
Playgrounds and Exercise Equipment	To provide safe and functional playgrounds and exercise equipment at all times.
Paths, Tracks, Roads and Carparks	To maintain hard surfaces for a variety of recreational and functional uses that are safe, provide visual satisfaction and perform for their intended use, in all weather conditions.
Bushland Maintenance	To enhance biodiversity and natural processes to support sustainable management of bushland areas.
Insect Control	To promptly and safely eradicate any nests that may cause a risk to public safety in an area of public open space or to the health and condition of ornamental plants (including trees and turf).
Graffiti Removal	To remove graffiti on Council assets located within an area of open space as soon as practical.

Service Area	Customer/Community Operating LoS Statements
Opening/Closing of Gates and Facilities	To consistently and reliably close and open gates and buildings at the publicised times.
Facility Cleaning	To keep all areas of toilet facilities clean, hygienic and functioning at an appropriate level for the toilet location and use.

Technical Levels of Service are used in all internal Council documentation, and use technical terms and measures to identify whether service delivery targets are being met. Technical LoS describe **how** the service is provided.

Development levels of service have been documented for each open space category, which define the standard of asset development as well as the number of assets to be provided (where possible). The development LoS work on the basic principle that quality standard 1 (QS1) parks have higher quality and generally have more assets per hectare provided than other parks. QS2 parks have standard quality assets and with fewer assets present. QS3 parks have minimal standard quality assets provided.

Operations levels of service are currently being documented for each quality standard of park (i.e. QS1, 2 and 3). They should be applied consistently across all park categories. The operations LoS work on the basic principle that less tasks undertaken at lower frequencies occur on lower standard parks (QS3), so that more tasks at higher frequencies can be afforded to be undertaken on the Shire's best parks (QS1). These standards will need to be monitored using a quality measurement (site audit) system. The monthly and annual quality score will be a key performance indicator to monitor compliance against the operations LoS.

2.2.6 Customer Research and Expectations

Mount Alexander regularly participates in the Victorian Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS). This telephone survey polls a sample of residents on their level of satisfaction with Council's services.

The most recent community satisfaction survey reported satisfaction levels for the following relevant services:

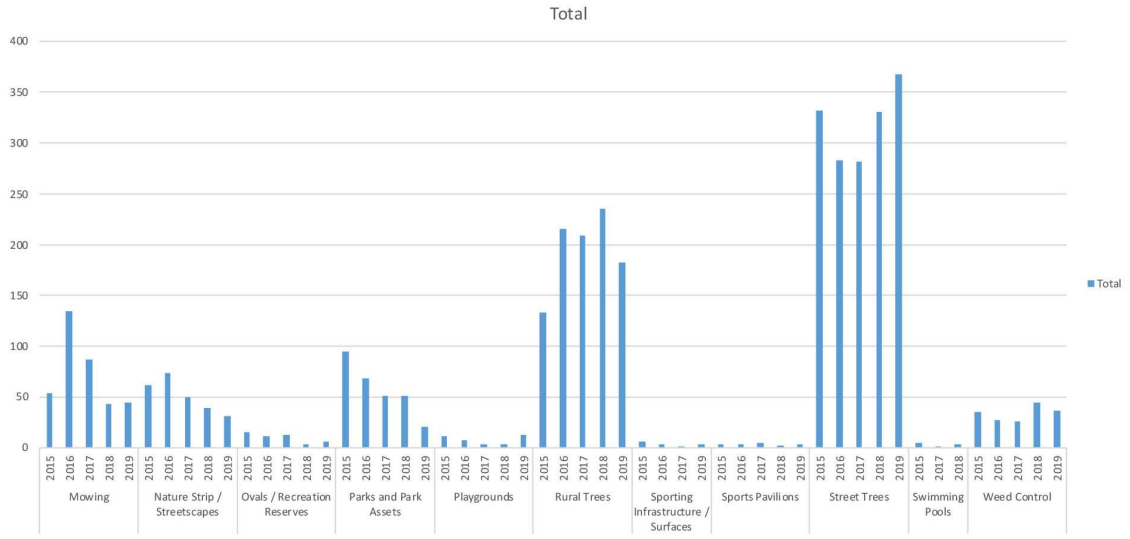
Table 2-4: Community Satisfaction Survey Levels

Service Performance	Performance Level %*					
	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Can't Say
Recreational facilities	15	39	27	10	6	3
The appearance of public areas	23	51	19	4	2	1

**Refer Community Satisfaction Survey 2020 – Mount Alexander Shire Council, pages 87-94.*

Council tracks the number of requests received annually from members of the community in relation to various assets and services. Figure 2-1 illustrates the number of requests received in relation to parks related assets and services between 2015 and 2019.

Figure 2-1: Community requests relating to parks assets and services (2015-2019)



The highest number of requests received consistently relate to street trees, followed by rural trees (inspection requests, pruning/removal requests, planting requests, fallen trees over roads). Other less frequent requests relate to mowing, nature strip/streetscape maintenance requests and damage/maintenance reporting for other parks assets (such as playgrounds).

Data capture relating to customer requests for 2020 was organised in a different format, resulting in 47% of requests relating to Council building/facility maintenance, 26% to vegetation, 20% to tree maintenance, and 7% to street furniture.

The CSS results and a review of customer requests provides some level of information and begins to indicate where community priorities and satisfaction levels lie, however it is recommended that Council measure the success of delivering its Community Levels of Service through periodic intercept surveying of parks users and through self-completion surveys distributed to stakeholders and available on Council's website.

2.3 Service Level Improvements

Improvement Item 2.1

- Align the Public Open Space Strategy categories with the level of service based park categories used in this AMP.

Improvement Item 2.2

- Align the Recreation and Playground Strategies categories with the level of service based park categories used in this AMP.

Improvement Item 2.3

- Develop provision levels of service defining size, location, etc. that align with level of service based park categories and quality standards. These will provide specific direction for future park land acquisition and enable assessment of current park land, to ensure it is fit for its intended purpose.

SECTION 3: HOW DO WE MEASURE OUR SERVICES

3.1 Customer Performance Measures

The Council Plan 2017-2021 identifies the following strategic objectives, strategies, plan of action and measures of success that are relevant to the parks activity. It does not identify any targets, rather its intention is to track progress over time.

Table 3-1: Council Plan Parks Related Measure of Success

Strategic Objective	Strategies	Plan	Measure of Success
Improved health and wellbeing	Improve health through use of our public spaces and trails.	Invest in footpaths and trails. Promote use of footpaths, trails and open spaces as a form of recreation.	Reduction in the proportion of adults who are overweight or obese.
	Build the capacity of our community to manage the impact of climate change and changing weather patterns.	Undertake streetscape works that provide more protection from the heat.	An increase in street trees.
Well managed assets for now and into the future	Improve streetscapes and town entrances.	Invest in a tree planting program. Implement actions from Streetscape Design Project. Require new developments to include relevant and quality public infrastructure. Partner with local community planning groups to implement streetscape priorities.	Enhancement of town attractiveness. Streetscapes are accessible for people of all abilities. Increase in satisfaction of the appearance of public areas (Community Satisfaction Survey). Increase in the number of trees planted.
	Review, maintain, renew and expand the assets of our community.	Complete Community Facilities Review. Develop a five-year capital works plan.	Improvement in the condition of assets.

Strategic Objective	Strategies	Plan	Measure of Success
		Adopt Asset Management Plans for all material asset classes. Review the Investing in Sport Strategy. Partner with community groups to improve assets.	Metres of footpath renewal or construction.
	Improve access to a range of convenient, safe, accessible and sustainable travel choices.	Continue to extend and improve the footpath network.	Increase in rate of footpath and walking trail use.
A clean, green community	Protect and enhance the natural environment.	Advocate for improved urban water sensitive designs to reduce environmental impacts. Work with community groups on land management and weed control.	Increase in the number of joint projects with Landcare groups. Reduction in the prevalence of roadside weeds.

The following are suggested business performance measures that could be considered.

Table 3-2: Parks Business Performance Measures

Key Result Area	Key Performance Indicator	Method	Target (Years 1-3)
User Satisfaction	% of park users satisfied with the overall provision and quality of parks and gardens	Undertake parks user intercept surveys	Maintain overall user satisfaction score above 85%
Service Delivery	% compliance with delivery of service specification	Quality monitoring and auditing against documented service standard	Maintain overall quality service delivery performance audit scores above 85%
Business Performance	% best practice score	Yardstick benchmarks	Increase best practice score to 55%
Safety	Number of reported serious harm incidents per annum	Health and safety annual reporting	Zero serious harm incidents per annum
Environmental Sustainability	Measure of Green House Gas emissions per annum	Net tree increase	Baseline target to be determined
Financial Sustainability	% of assets above the capital intervention threshold	Operating expenditure will be managed to within 5% of the actual budget	Budget target is met

Table 3-3 provides a summary of community and technical levels of service. Further details are provided within a separate operating service standards document, which documents levels of service applicable to each quality standard.

Table 3-3: Community and Technical Levels of Service

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
Green Infrastructure			
Annual Flower Display	• Annual flowering bedding displays are attractive and colourful. • Two displays per year in the winter and summer. • The overall effect of the display is neat and tidy with no weeds or soil visible between the plants.	• Annual flower beds add a splash of seasonal colour and texture to high profile areas. • Annual flower beds require a high standard of maintenance, and have a high demand for water, particularly during establishment. • A high quality of presentation is essential where gardens are viewed closely by pedestrians.	• Two displays are designed for peak floral or foliage impact at designated period. • Plant orders are submitted in line with the approved planting plan in time for propagation. • Plant numbers allow for 10% failure and vandalism and optimum spacing for rapid coverage and size at maturity. • Beds are prepared, planted and maintained in accordance with the approved planting plan and best horticultural practice to maximise floral display.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
		• Annual bedding displays may be mixed or a single species, and although usually flowering, may include foliage plants for texture and contrast.	• Nutrients, pH, soil moisture and organic matter content are maintained at levels that promote optimum plant development and flowering. • Fallow beds are maintained in a neat condition with a level, weed free surface. • All annual beds are inspected to remove any litter and check for plant health, soil moisture, weeds, plant loss and vandalism or accidental damage • Weeds are manually removed so that the display is 80% weed free. • Weeds are not allowed to set seed. • Weeds are not visible above or between established plants. • Pests and diseases are proactively controlled. • Plant numbers are maintained during the display period, with plant loss from natural attrition, damage and theft repaired and replaced in accordance with the approved planting plan. • Dead flowers are removed to maximise the length of the flowering period on plants that respond to this treatment. • Garden beds are irrigated to ensure health plant development and flowering. • Irrigation systems are tested before each display planting. • Edges are maintained in a sharp, neat condition with all clippings removed from site. • Dead or damaged plants are removed and garden edges and surface level reinstated. • Replacement planting in accordance with the approved planting plan. • Irrigation needs to be fully operational during display periods.
Garden Maintenance	• Gardens provide an attractive display of colour, form and texture. • Gardens are tidy and attractive with effective plant	• Gardens provide seasonal floral and foliage displays and provide screening and enclosure. • Plants are selected for various qualities depending on the location and purpose of the garden, including an attractive display of foliage	• Dead-heading, pruning, trimming and division is carried out in accordance with good horticultural practice to maximise plant health and floral display. • Soil nutrient levels are maintained to support optimum plant development and flowering.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
	coverage and no obvious dead. plants or branches, weeds or litter visible. • Gardens do not obscure sightlines or access or create trip or other hazards.	and/or flowers, hardiness and low maintenance requirements, or vigorous growth and the ability to cover large areas.	• Removal of dead or dying plants. • Infill and renewal planting is carried out to maximise plant health, coverage and floral display. • Garden beds are mulched evenly to reduce weed growth and promote soil moisture retention. • Mulch is cleared from the base of plants to allow air flow around the trunk/stem. • All visible litter, fallen branches and other debris is collected and disposed of. • Weeds are controlled to minimise the impact on the visual presentation of the garden. • Weeds are not flowering or setting seed. • Pests and diseases are controlled to prevent damage to plant health or display. • Garden beds are irrigated to ensure healthy plant development and flowering. • Irrigation systems are tested before growing season. • Broken branches and plants are removed. • Damage to edges and beds is repaired. • Irrigation systems and component parts are repaired in a timely manner. • Irrigation systems and component parts are repaired in a timely manner.
Grass Maintenance - Amenity	• Grass is maintained throughout the year with a presentation and grass height that is suitable for use. • Where irrigation is provided, grass is green and healthy.	• Most of the grass maintained in parks is amenity grass used for social, informal, and passive recreation purposes as well as for visual amenity. • Grass length between cuts and the colour of the sward are key customer concerns, particularly over the summer and shoulder seasons.	• Grass heights are suitable for the intended use of the area. • Flower and seed stalks don't adversely affect the use and appearance of the lawn. • Grass is cut at the appropriate frequency to maintain grass height within the specified range. • Clippings are removed or discharged evenly over the mown area without clumping or windrowing. • Mowing is undertaken to cut the full extent of the area and as close as possible (without damage) to trees and fixed obstructions. • Edge mowing by smaller equipment is completed to the same standard as the main area so that there is no discernible height difference.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
			• Edges around and along structures, trees, garden beds and fences shall be maintained with the appropriate equipment or chemical. • Edging is undertaken without causing damage to trees and other fixed assets. • All visible stones, litter, fallen branches and other debris that could damage turf or machinery, create a hazard to operators or the public, or create an untidy appearance after mowing, is collected and disposed of prior to mowing. • Grass cutting is carried out to prevent mower flung projectiles presenting a danger to park users or property. • Minimise the presence of weeds from impacting on the visual appearance of lawns. • Lawn areas are efficiently and effectively irrigated to ensure healthy grass growth. • Irrigation systems are tested and operational before Summer. • Apply appropriate levels of fertiliser to maximise turf health and vigour.
Grass Maintenance - Roads	• Grass height in rural areas is maintained so that it does not impact on sight lines, road user safety or fire risk. Grass in urban areas is maintained throughout the year with a presentation and height that is suitable for the location. • Grass height in rural areas is maintained so that it does not impact on sight lines, road user safety or fire risk	• Grass Maintenance - Roads includes grass on road reserves, medians, roundabouts and nature strips. • Depending on the location, priorities for grass maintenance along roads are predominately for sight lines, safety, and fire-risk management, or for appearance and general amenity. • Grass length and fire risk are key customer concerns, particularly over the summer.	• Grass heights are suitable for the intended use of the road. • Minimum sight lines are maintained. • Grass is cut at the appropriate frequency to maintain grass height within the specified range. • Clippings are managed so that they do not detract from the finished appearance of the grass area. • Mowing is undertaken to cut the full extent of the area and as close as possible (without damage) to fixed obstructions. • Edge mowing by smaller equipment is completed to the same standard as the main area so that there is no discernible height difference. • Edges around and along structures, trees and fences shall be maintained with the appropriate equipment or chemical. • All visible stones, bottles, litter, fallen branches and other debris that will damage machinery, create an untidy appearance after mowing, or create a hazard to operators or public is collected and disposed of prior to mowing. • Grass cutting is carried out to prevent mower flung projectiles presenting a danger to road users or property.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
Grass Maintenance - Sport	• Grass is maintained throughout the year at a height which is suitable for use. • Where irrigation is provided, grass is green and healthy. • Wickets are prepared for match play.	• Sports grass requires intensive maintenance so that the surface can accommodate high usage and impact. • Grass lengths are determined by the sport played, and most require short well-maintained, dense swards suitable for competition play.	• Grass heights are suitable for the intended type of sport played. • Grass is cut at the appropriate frequency to maintain grass height within the specified range. • Clippings are managed so that they do not detract from the finished appearance of the grass area. • Mowing is undertaken to cut the full extent of the area and as close as possible (without damage) to fixed obstructions. • Moveable obstructions are moved to allow mowing and replaced before leaving the site. • Edge mowing by smaller equipment is completed to the same standard and height as the main area. • Edges around and along structures, trees and fences shall be maintained with the appropriate equipment or chemical. • Minimise the presence of turf weeds from impacting on the quality of play or the visual appearance of the field. • Minimise the presence of turf pests (including turf weeds and diseases) from impacting on the quality of play or the visual appearance of the field. • All visible stones, litter, fallen branches and other debris that could damage turf or machinery, create a hazard to operators or the public, or appear untidy is collected and disposed of prior to mowing. • Grass cutting is carried out to prevent mower flung projectiles presenting a danger to park users or property. • Lawn areas are efficiently and effectively irrigated to ensure healthy grass growth. • Irrigation systems are tested before Summer. • Prepare and implement turf renovation programs on a site by site basis considering the seasonal weather patterns, soil types, use and ground conditions to ensure good performance from sports turf. • Maintain an even turf coverage across the whole playing field. • Fill holes and trip hazards. • Irrigation on sportsfields needs to be fully operational during dry periods.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
Trees	• Juvenile trees have a high survival rate and start life with a well-balanced and healthy canopy. • Trees are safe, attractive, and healthy. • Site lines and clearance on roads are preserved. • Damage to electrical infrastructure or other property does not occur.	• Trees are located on parks and streets, covering the full lifecycle from juvenile trees to fully mature trees. • Trees are an important community asset providing shade and landscape appeal. • While being long lived, trees require regular maintenance to ensure they develop strong resilient structures, they do not obstruct views for safety, or damage property.	• Identify an annual planting program that specifies species, nursery grade and locations. • Juvenile trees receive formative pruning throughout their early establishment phase. • Tree stakes are maintained in a functional state and removed at the conclusion of the tree establishment period or when no longer required. • Mulch depths are maintained to reduce weed growth and promote soil moisture retention. • Irrigation is provided to promote healthy establishment and sustainable growth. • Trees are assessed to inform work programs and to manage risk. • Pruning is carried out in accordance with Australian Standards and *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020*. • Crowns are lifted to maintain clearance for mowing machinery, and over pedestrian areas and roads to allow passage and ensure clear sight lines. • Vegetation is cleared from electrical and telecommunication wires, lighting, signage and buildings. • Dead and diseased wood over 50mm diameter is removed. • Remove epicormic growth. • An elm leaf beetle control program is in place for urban street and park trees. • Provide timely response to information about trees requiring work. • Site is made safe • Fallen, dangerous or unstable trees are removed safely. • Damaged branches are cleaned up and pruned correctly. • All debris is removed from site.
Conservation Management	• Biodiversity is maintained or enhanced where financially feasible. • Statutory pest plants and animals are controlled. • Fire risk is managed.	• Conservation sites include parks, bushland reserves, lakes, creeks and some road reserves. • These sites are managed to preserve, maintain and improve native flora and fauna, protect rare	• Sites visited and biodiversity content recorded and mapped • Document short (annual), medium (2-4 years) and long (5-10 years) term site specific work plans with identified tasks (habitat restoration, pest control, weeding, replanting

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
		and threatened species and enhance habitat for intrinsic values and recreational experiences. • Conservation reserves and sites require maintenance regimes that address variances in climate, soils, topography, ecosystems and species occurrence. This relies on sound knowledge of sites and their biodiversity content and potential, and the ability to document works programs to reflect these variable conditions.	• Undertake pest plant and animal control programs to keep pest levels below statutory or desirable levels • Document fuel management program with short (annual) and medium (2-4 years) term actions with identified tasks, priorities, resources, timeframes and targets. • Unsafe damage or deterioration of furniture or assets is isolated and reported.
Facilities and Infrastructure Services			
BBQs	• Park BBQs are safe, functional and presented in a clean condition. • Repairs are timely and appropriate to levels of use.	• BBQs are focal points for family and other gatherings, and can strongly influence park users' satisfaction. • BBQs are inspected and maintained to ensure they are clean and functional and that they contribute positively to the visitor's experience.	• Food scraps, fat and other surface contaminants (such as faeces, rust, debris etc) that may affect health, asset life, use and appearance are removed from all surfaces. • Hot plates and surrounds are scrubbed clean and sanitised. • Fat trays never overflow. • BBQs checked for functionality. • Painted or coated surfaces are maintained using an approved product so that surface rust, discolouration and paint deterioration is minimised and asset life is maximised. • BBQ surrounds are free of flaking or chipped paint, rust or discolouration. • Integrity of surface finish is maintained. • Unclean BBQs are cleaned. • Unsafe, damaged, or deteriorated BBQs are isolated. • Repairs will be undertaken using appropriate materials /replacement parts and to a similar standard as the original component. • Graffiti is removed in a timely manner and the original surface/finish reinstated as close to original as practicable.
Furniture	• Parks furniture is safe, functional and presented in a clean condition.	• Furniture includes seats, picnic tables, benches, signs, bike racks and drinking fountains.	• Park furniture is visually inspected during routine operations for vandalism, graffiti, damage, safety and cleanliness. • Drinking fountains checked for functionality.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
	• Repairs to furniture are timely and appropriate to levels of use.	• Furniture will be inspected regularly to ensure that it is functional and contributes to the attractiveness of the surroundings. •	• Drinking fountain bowls, handles and fittings are wiped clean. • Moss, lichen, algae and other surface contaminants (such as food scraps, faeces, grease etc) that may affect health, asset life, use and appearance are removed from all furniture surfaces. • Painted or coated surfaces are maintained using an approved product so that surface rust, discolouration and paint deterioration is minimised, and asset life is maximised. • Furniture is free of flaking or chipped paint, rust or discolouration • Integrity of surface finish is maintained • Unsafe damage or deterioration of furniture is isolated or removed. • Repairs will be undertaken using appropriate materials/replacement parts and to a similar standard as the original furniture item. • Graffiti is removed in a timely manner and the original surface/finish reinstated as close to original as practicable.
Hard Surfaces	• Hard surfaces are safe and functional and are suitable for their intended purpose. • Hard surfaces are free of obstructions, vegetation and debris. • Drainage is maintained so that hard surfaces can be safely used in wet weather and that large or long-lasting ponding does not occur.	• Hard surfaces include a wide range of surfaces for recreational use, pedestrians, cyclists and cars. • Trails, paths, car parks, hard stand areas and other paved areas located within parks and reserves are some examples of a hard surface. • All hard surfaces are inspected and maintained to ensure that they are safe and functional and appropriate to levels of use.	• Hard surfaces are functional. • Hard surfaces are swept to remove gravel, broken glass and other debris that may affect use or impact on appearance. • Gravel surfaces are topped up to fill hollows and scuffed areas. • Drainage systems are maintained to prevent flooding or surface scouring. • Hard surfaces are kept clear of encroaching and surface vegetation to maintain line-of sight, access and maximum width for use. • Trip hazards in hard surfaces are isolated and made safe. • Blocked and overflowing drains are cleaned in a timely manner.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
			• Hard surface repairs (e.g. potholes, loose, missing or displaced tiles or pavers, cracking and lifting, erosion damage etc) are conducted promptly. • Notification of line of sight infringements are responded to quickly to make them safe. • Graffiti is removed in a timely manner and the original surface/finish reinstated as close to original as practicable.
Loose Litter	• Areas are tidy and free of litter and debris.	• Loose litter is collected from sites and disposed of to ensure a tidy appearance, prevent injury from broken glass and other sharp items, reduce vermin activity and reduce machinery damage. • Loose litter includes (but is not limited to) paper, plastic, stones, bricks, bottles, glass, needles, cans, rubbish, loose refuse, plant debris, tree branches that can be lifted by 1 person and have a stem girth of less than 100mm, dead animal remains, organic or inorganic waste matter or any other material of a like nature.	• Visual inspection for loose litter. • All litter and other debris are collected, removed from site, and disposed of. • Illegal dumping and excess litter are reported for action. • All litter and other debris are collected and removed from site and disposed of.
Playground/ Youth Facilities	• Playgrounds are safe, attractive, and operational. • Playgrounds are clean and free of litter and graffiti is kept to a minimum.	• Playgrounds are inspected and maintained to ensure that they continue to be safe, attractive and functional. • Playground inspections and maintenance are guided by the requirements of the Australian Standards.	• Scheduled inspections are undertaken to ensure playgrounds are safe, function as designed and comply with Australian Standards. • Playgrounds are inspected by a suitably qualified inspector and inspections formally recorded. • Operational maintenance is undertaken to ensure the operation and functionality of the equipment, especially wear and tear associated with moving parts. • Minor repairs and component replacements are carried out to keep playgrounds safe and functional. • Dirty or graffitied equipment is cleaned. • Loose soft fall material is redistributed to fill hollows and scuffed areas. • Loose soft fall material is topped up to ensure that depth in fall zones complies.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
			• Timber edges (where present) are maintained in a safe and sound condition with no displaced, split or broken timber, or deteriorated wood with splinters or protruding nails. • Painted surfaces are recoated/treated using an approved product so that the finish is free of flaking or chipped paint, rust or discolouration. • Oiled timber surfaces are recoated using an approved product so that the timber is smooth and protected. • Unsafe damage or deterioration of equipment or safety surfacing is isolated or removed if repairs can't be carried out immediately. • Repairs that require specialist parts or materials or are greater than "minor" in scope, shall be undertaken using approved parts and materials and in accordance with manufacturer instructions and to a high quality of workmanship • For repairs that requires specialist contractors or major component replacement, the Asset Manager shall be advised of the nature of the issue immediately so that repairs can be actioned as soon as possible. • Faeces and other contaminants are removed and the affected area is cleaned. • Graffiti is removed in a timely manner and the original surface/finish reinstated as close to original as practicable.
Rubbish Bins	• Rubbish bins are functional and presented in a clean condition. • Emptying is timely and appropriate to levels of use.	• Rubbish Bins includes surrounds, bin stands and bin liners. • Rubbish Bins are inspected, emptied and cleaned regularly to ensure that they are functional and contribute to the use and appearance of the site.	• Rubbish bins are emptied completely, and rubbish is transported and disposed of according to Council policy. • Loose rubbish in and around the receptacle is removed. • Rubbish bin surrounds are wiped clean of surface contaminants. • Overflowing Rubbish Bins are emptied • Unsafe damage of Rubbish bins is isolated or removed. • Minor repairs and component replacements are carried out to keep structures safe and functional and fit for purpose. • Irreparable surrounds • Graffiti is removed in a timely manner and the original surface/finish reinstated as close to original as practicable.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
Park and Sport Structures	• Parks and sports structures are sound, safe, functional and presented in a condition that is suitable for their intended use and location.	• Park and sport structures include bollards, fences, gates, shelters, shade structures, retaining walls, public art, statues & monuments, ornamental fountains, amenity and sports lighting, cricket nets, goal posts, stairs, flag poles, water tanks, viewing platforms and bridges. • Structures will be inspected regularly by suitably qualified personnel to ensure structural integrity and safety to users.	• Structures are visually checked during routine operations for vandalism, graffiti, theft, damage, safety, cleanliness, and functionality. • Structures are inspected by a suitably qualified inspector and inspections formally recorded. • Sports lighting is inspected annually to ensure it is functional. • Moss, lichen, algae and other surface contaminants (such as food scraps, faeces etc) that may affect health, asset life, use and appearance are removed. • Ornamental fountains are kept clean of debris, algae, and contaminants such as dye and soap suds. • Statue and monument cleaning and repairs are conducted by specialists to protect integrity and heritage value. • Painted or coated surfaces are maintained using an approved product so that surface rust, discolouration and paint deterioration is minimised, and asset life is maximised. • Structures are free of flaking or chipped paint, rust or discolouration • Integrity of surface finish is maintained • Light poles in high visitation sites are in a clean condition. • Light fittings (including bulbs) are systematically inspected for operation. • Goal posts are erected and dismantled in time for the season of use. • Goal posts are firmly secure and upright with no obvious leaning in any direction. Damage or deterioration of structures are isolated or removed. • Minor repairs and component replacements (including blown bulbs) are carried out to keep structures safe and functional and fit for purpose. • Sports infrastructure is repaired in a timely manner. • Damage to bridges, viewing platforms and structural assets are reported to appropriate department for repair. • Statue and monument repairs are conducted by specialists to protect integrity and heritage value.

Area	Outcomes	Community Level of Service	Technical Level of Service
			• Graffiti is removed in a timely manner and the original surface/finish reinstated as close to original as practicable. • Be responsive to information on lights not functioning
Toilets	• Toilets are safe, functional, and presented in a clean condition. • Repairs are timely and appropriate to levels of use.	• Toilets are integral to park users' satisfaction. Toilets are inspected and maintained to ensure they are clean and functional and that they contribute positively to the visitor's experience.	• All contaminants (such as soap, water, faeces, rust, litter, debris, cobwebs etc) that may affect health, asset life, use and appearance are removed from all surfaces. • Floors are swept and scrubbed clean. • All fittings are scrubbed clean and sanitised. • Bins emptied. • Toilet rolls are never empty. • Cobwebs and other detritus are periodically removed to maintain appearance of the facility. • Unclean or fouled toilets are cleaned. • Unsafe, damaged, or deteriorated toilets are isolated. • Repairs will be undertaken using appropriate materials /replacement parts and to a similar standard as the original component. • Graffiti is removed in a timely manner and the original surface/finish reinstated as close to original as practicable.

3.2 Measurement Improvements

Improvement Item 3.1

- Collation of additional information on capacity and utilisation (performance)

SECTION 4: WHAT DO WE NEED TO CHANGE IN THE FUTURE

4.1 Growth and Demand Implications

The following defines the implications of both growth and demand regarding the ongoing function/delivery of the parks activity.

Growth – in relation to the parks activity, growth mainly refers to the growth in population in the Shire. These changes increase the demand for parks assets.

Demand – demand for services can be influenced by growth, changing community expectations and asset development.

4.2 Key Demand Drivers

The key demand drivers influencing the growth and the demand on the parks assets and services are described below.

4.2.1 Population Growth

The usual residence count from the 2016 Census was 18,749, compared to 17,592 in 2011. This represents a population change of 1,157 persons, or an annualised rate of 1.28%.

The 2019 Estimated Residential Population (ERP) is 19,754. This represents an increase from the 2016 ERP of 19,097, or 657 persons. The annualised growth rate from 2016-2019 was 1.13%.

Over the 25-year period to 2041 the population in the Mount Alexander Shire region is forecast to increase from 19,097 in 2016 to 23,686 people. This represents a change of 4,589 people and an annualised growth of 0.87%.

Reference:
https://app.remplan.com.au/mountalexander/community/population/age?state=j3r5uW!lRLGiDA2qH4gGWvfAPrDzh0cOtwZWTqtrtYt1VFltzF1OxsMEx

In addition, it is reported that the Shire receives 560,000 visitors annually, comprising 395,000 domestic daytrippers,162,000 domestic overnight visitors and 3,000 international visitors.

Reference:
https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Tourism/Tourism_Marketing_Prospectus_2019_2020.pdf

Feedback from internal stakeholder consultation suggests that population growth is not currently considered to be a major factor in future strategic decision making.

4.2.2 Age Range

Over the 25 year period the population in the Mount Alexander Shire region is forecast to increase from 19,097 people in 2016 to 23,686 people in 2041. This represents a change of 4,589 people or an annualised growth rate of 0.87%.

It is forecast that in 2041 there will be 4,849 people in the Retirement (65 – 79) age group

representing the largest proportion of the population at 20.47%. The age group with the largest change is Elderly (80+) with an increase of 2,411 (228.31%) people from 1,056 in 2016 to 3,467 in 2041.

Age groups comprising preschool, school age and youth members of the community are predicted to remain relatively consistent in terms of overall numbers, but will reduce slightly over time as a percentage of the overall Shire population.

Reference:
https://app.remplan.com.au/mountalexander/forecast/population/age-life-stages?state=dxlJsoa0OcB39WnHaJlMdCGhwI2QmTBdWaf5smgjONsGIesrqtys9tEpe

4.2.3 Urban Waterways Land Handover

Currently managed by DELWP, Council is in the process of accepting maintenance / management of the Castlemaine Urban Waterways. The main challenge for Council in accepting the management of Castlemaine's waterways is to define and resource effective management.

It is essential that Council commits the skills and resources required to ensure that waterway environs are managed in a condition that meets community and DELWP expectations and legislative requirements. Urban waterway management involves a range of challenges, including pest animals and weeds, fire protection, tree maintenance, grass slashing, litter removal, illegal dumping, encroachment, track maintenance and improving the natural systems of the waterways.

It is estimated that additional resource requirements will comprise a crew of two plus plant, with an additional budget for contractors to undertake specialist work.

4.3 The Effects of Population and Recreation Trends on Parks Activity

4.3.1 Sports and Recreation

The Shire's strategic planning documents in relation to sport and recreation [Resourcing Recreation (2019) and Investing in Sport (2010)] offer a level of analysis in terms of facility supply and demand:

- identifies soccer as the only sport in the Shire with a shortfall in facility provision (1 soccer pitch)
- references to some cricket ovals with little or no use by sport or community groups
- oversupply of hard courts, with a significant number in disrepair

Limited analysis is included in these documents in relation to population change and recreation trends

An overall ageing population, together with a relatively stable youth population, combined with broader recreational trends, would suggest that:

- there will be less demand for formal organised sport
- more demand for multi-use sites catering for:
    - casual/informal recreation such as walking and cycling (for adults)

- alternative ‘adventure’ type recreational pursuits such as BMX, pump tracks, skateboarding (for younger people)

4.3.2 Walkways and Cycleways

In the foreseeable future, there is expected to be ongoing and increasing emphasis on facilities such as walkways catering for casual exercising such as walking, jogging and cycling. An increasing number of visitors to the Shire will also drive this demand.

Sustainable transport initiatives, ageing populations, increasing tree cover and rising popularity of electric bikes will further increase demand for these assets.

4.3.3 Environmental Parks

There is a general trend for greater emphasis on the environment and restoration of native vegetation and habitat. Accordingly, it is likely that there will be increasing demand to identify areas for environmental protection and restoration.

4.3.4 Gardens

The Shire is increasingly becoming known for its high quality garden parks, in particular the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens. The continuing focus on tourism for its economic benefits and the predicted increase in visitor growth will continue to place pressure on these resources and require a strong level of investment to maintain assets and services to a high standard (and that will continue to play their part in attracting visitors).

4.3.5 Playgrounds

Investing in Play (2014) includes a play space classification and includes targets for play space size and distribution/catchment and high level development LoS however, no analysis of current playground provision or distribution is included in the document.

A key driver for playground provision and improvement is increasing community expectation based on experiences at other locations, with modern equipment and recent innovations and design. This leads to current equipment becoming obsolete in terms of perception in meeting community needs. This can be a significant driver for the renewal and development of play equipment, more so than actual physical condition.

4.3.6 Community Expectations

Community expectations are a strong driver in determining the demand for services and consequently the level of service that is delivered. Special interest groups and clubs often have specific requests for improvements relating to their facility or activity and for the addition of new services and facilities or improvement of existing ones. While these requests can result in the addition of major facilities and associated maintenance costs, they are generally relatively small in number and of minor impact.

4.3.7 Utilisation

No overall usage data is available for open space at this time.

4.3.8 Climate Change

Climate Change modelling indicates average temperatures increasing as much as 3°C over the next 70-100 years along with more extreme weather events. This could result in longer, drier and hotter summers and more frequent flood events.

The main effects of climate change on the parks activity are:

- **Water needs** – with drier and warmer summers, there will be an increase in the demand and need for the installation of irrigation systems and subsequent water supply, primarily on sports fields and high profile park areas.
- **Drainage –** more frequent heavy rain events will create additional drainage problems particularly on sporting fields where there is limited drainage infrastructure (due to not being required traditionally), and in parks with poor draining soils.
- **Temperatures** – increasing temperatures resulting in hotter, longer, drier summers, and shorter, milder winters will have the greatest impact on living assets (trees, gardens, grass) placing them under greater stress potentially resulting in reduced amenity or premature death. Increased temperatures and reduced air moisture will also affect the potential prevalence and severity of bushfires.
- **Shade** - demand for shade will increase in parks and streetscapes as longer, hotter summers heighten social vulnerability. Large shady trees will be valued assets.
- **Tree selection** - many of the Shire's current tree species are at high risk from increased temperatures. To maintain and enhance tree cover for urban cooling, the current tree stock in parks and streetscapes must be shifted towards a wider diversity of climate resilient species.
- **Greenhouse emissions** - in keeping with Council's target of zero net emissions by 2025, emissions from transport and maintenance works need to be reduced where possible.

Council has already commenced works to begin to mitigate for some of these impacts, including switching sportsground ovals over to summer grasses that are better able to withstand drier, warmer conditions.

4.4 Demand Management Strategies

Demand management strategies provide alternatives to the creation of new assets in order to meet demand and look at ways of modifying customer demands in order that the utilisation of existing assets is maximised and the need for new assets is deferred or reduced.

Generally the objective for an open space network is to promote active recreation and unstructured, passive use of parks and facilities, for general benefits of health and wellbeing that this fosters. This usually limits the application of demand measures to manage utilisation.

The areas where demand management is applicable are:

- Efficient use of parks – particularly sport and recreation parks where shared and multi-use design and management is used to maximise the utilisation of a given area and the facilities.
- Centralised and regional facility provision – particularly major and specialist sports facilities to avoid duplication of high cost facilities and to maximise use and investment to achieve high quality facilities and services.

In this context, it is acknowledged that the Shire comprises a dispersed network of settlements with open spaces and facilities that serve each of the respective local communities. This situation can have implications that tend to result in increased costs

relating to asset provision (asset duplication), and ongoing maintenance and operations activities (morel assets to maintain, distance between settlements).

4.4.1 Demand Management Actions

Council will implement the following demand management strategies for the provision and rationalisation of parks:

- Development LoS will be applied to avoid asset over embellishment
- Community involvement: Involve the community in policy and park development through consultation over Strategies and Park Management Plans to ensure needs are being effectively and appropriately met.
- Strategic Planning: Council will monitor and assess changes in population structure and recreation preferences to enable provision to be related to varied and changing needs.
- Multiple Use: The Council will aim for the development of flexible, multi-use facilities and parks, and avoid facility duplication wherever possible.
- Regional and Joint Solutions: Seek to develop effective partnerships with other adjoining Councils in the region, the Victorian State Government, the community, community groups and the private sector for the provision of recreation services and facilities.
- Fees & Charges: Consider options to improve recovery costs through user charges, taking into account the ability to pay, assessment of public and private benefit, and council's objectives with respect to community participation in recreational activity.
- Promotion: Encourage participation in a range of recreational experiences actively promoting opportunities for all levels of age, ability and gender.

4.5 Strategic Planning

4.5.1 Summary

A number of strategies and plans have been prepared to guide the Council's provision and delivery of parks services and assets. Key documents include:

- Public Open Space Strategy (2016)
- Resourcing Recreation (2019)
- Investing in Sport (2010)
- Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Conservation Management Plan (2019)
- Castlemaine Streetscape Plan and Design Standards (2020)
- Castlemaine Urban Waterways Management Plan (2018)
- Mount Alexander Reserves Improvement Plan (2011)
- Walking and Cycling Strategy (2010)

All documents reviewed are listed in Table 1-4 and Table 1-5.

4.5.2 Public Open Space Strategy (2016)

The Public Open Space Strategy was prepared in 2016 and is due for a 5 year interim review in 2021.

As is typical for most organisations, the current Public Open Space Strategy has been developed separately to asset management and operation activities and as a result, lacks clear integration across the Shire's parks management activities.

A review and update would benefit from integrating parks categories and levels of service consistently across the various parks management activities (planning, asset management and operations), so as to provide a unified direction that uses common terminology and is strongly underpinned by financial sustainability.

4.5.3 Plans of Management

The current approach is to develop master plans for major sites and landscape concept plans for smaller sites which are consulted on, together with the overall parks policy providing policy direction.

Future master plans need to be cognisant of the development LoS requirements, to ensure that the standard of development is appropriate to the park category and economically sustainable. Strategic justification for an increase or decrease in an open space's category will need to be incorporated in to the decision making process.

The preparation of management plans would provide detailed information regarding the objectives, usage and management polices specific to the park. They can also include an analysis of the operations, maintenance and renewal cost of any proposed development.

The common approach is to prepare individual plans for key sites and group other parks into omnibus plans, organised by park category.

Park Management Plans should include the following components:

- An assessment of the park in the overall land use pattern;
- The determination of management and operational policies supported by criteria;
- Identification of users and interest groups;
- Documenting formal and informal physical and legal encumbrances;
- Preparation of design/development plans if required (supported by development levels of service);
- Analysis of additional operations, maintenance and renewal costs of any proposed developments;
- Consultation with park users, other stakeholders and the community; and
- The incorporation of regular monitoring and review to ensure that the plan remains relevant under changing circumstances and demands.

4.6 Growth and Demand Improvements

Improvement 4.1

- Secure additional resources to manage the Castlemaine Urban Waterways Land, as this land is progressively handed over from DELWP to Council (2 crew and plant, plus budget for external contractor to conduct specialist work).

Improvement 4.2

- Continue to develop and refine a model that identifies the cost of operating and maintaining a hectare of parkland related to population size/growth. This will enable more accurate forecasting of future funding requirements

Improvement 4.3

- When the Public Open Space Strategy (and any other strategy document) is reviewed, ensure the parks categories and levels of service are integrated/consistent with those used for asset management and service delivery

Improvement 4.4

- Consider developing full park management plans in addition to current approach of design (master plans) and overall parks policy

Improvement 4.5

- Future master plans need to be cognisant of the adopted Development LoS requirements, to ensure that the standard of development is appropriate to the open space category and economically sustainable

SECTION 5 – HOW DO WE DELIVER OUR SERVICES

5.1 Parks Asset Information

5.1.1 Parks Land and Asset Provision

A recent desktop mapping and data collection exercise (January – April 2021) resulted in the availability of significantly more accurate and up to date data, that provides a more comprehensive picture of parks and parks assets provision across the Shire. Data collected included a broad range of asset groups, focusing on point and line assets however, certain asset groups and parks are yet to be included in the asset register.

For efficiency and resource limitation purposes, asset data collection processes have initially prioritised data capture in relation to open space as follows:

1. Assets at QS1 and QS2 parks in Castlemaine
2. Assets at QS1, QS2 and QS3 parks in the remaining Shire townships
3. Assets at QS3 parks in Castlemaine
4. Assets at any other location across the Shire not identified above

To date, core assets have been captured in relation to priority 1 and 2 above. Parks asset categories yet to be collected within any of the Shire's parks include:

- Irrigation
- Services infrastructure (stormwater, electricity)
- Lighting (sports lighting column data has been collected previously)
- Pathways/hard surfaces
- Bridges (pedestrian/vehicular)
- Playground safety surfaces – *areas to be captured by desktop exercise*

Table 5-1: Land area managed by category

Category	Area (ha)	Ha/1,000 residents	Percentage of total
Bushland	37.6*	2.38	22.4%
Civic	1.49	0.09	0.90%
Community	20.7	1.31	12.35%
Linear	0.38	0.02	0.25%
Special Purpose	28.1	1.78	16.77%
Sports and Recreation	47.0	2.98	28.05%
Streetscape	32.3	2.05	19.28%
Total	**167.6****		

**An additional 66.6ha of bushland associated with Castlemaine Urban Waterways land will be handed over to Council ownership/management in stages over the course of 10 years*

***A further 42ha of Shire owned land is maintained by other parties, such as Community Asset Committees*

5.1.2 Parks Asset Values

As part of the development of this AMP, a parks asset valuation exercise was conducted comprising the benchmarking of typical asset development costs to generate an overall valuation of assets within the Shire's open space network. Asset development cost data was sourced from a variety of sources including, actual costs from recent capital development works undertaken by the Shire, and valuation data supplied from local Councils including the City of Greater Bendigo and Macedon Ranges Shire Council plus data from other Victorian and interstate Councils.

Table 5-2: Parks Asset Value Summary

	Replacement Cost	Written Down Value
Valuation as at June 2021	$21,486,828	$15,899,314

5.1.3 Parks Asset Summary

Table 5-3: Parks Points Asset Quantities and Value

Asset Type	Quantity 2021-22	Measure	Replacement Cost	Written Down Value
Bin Standard 80L	14	no.	*$21,000*	*$14,850*
Bin Large 240L	70	no.	*$220,400*	*$178,060*
Fence Gate Pedestrian	76	no.	*$38,000*	*$26,900*
Fence Gate Removable Bollard	172	no.	*$223,600*	*$173,160*
Fence Gate Vehicular	72	no.	*$108,000*	*$76,500*
Furniture Barbeque - Single	12	no.	*$96,000*	*$63,200*
Furniture Barbeque - Double	9	no.	*$108,000*	*$82,200*
Furniture Bike Racks < 6	15	no.	*$37,500*	*$30,125*
Furniture Bike Racks > 6	2	no.	*$7,200*	*$4,320*
Furniture Drinking Fountain	19	no.	*$76,000*	*$49,400*
Furniture Flagpole	15	no.	*$45,000*	*$33,750*
Furniture Noticeboard/shelter	7	no	*$42,000*	*$32,100*
Furniture Picnic Setting	105	no.	*$420,000*	*$293,000*
Furniture Seat Standard	253	no.	*$657,800*	*$467,090*
Furniture Seat Special	37	no.	*$203,500*	*$155,375*
Furniture Sundial/birdtable/small fountain	4	no.	*$20,000*	*$15,000*
Furniture Tap	4	no.	*$4,000*	*$3,000*
Memorial - Medium	3	no.	*$15,000*	*$12,250*
Memorial - Large	6	no.	*$60,000*	*$45,000*
Memorial/Art - Other	1	no.	*$8,000*	*$6,000*
Playground Local	9	no.	*$585,000*	*$432,250*
Playground District	15	no.	*$9,000,000*	*$7,230,000*
Playground Regional	1	no.	*$1,000,000*	*$750,000*
Playground Shade Structure Single	6	no.	*$120,000*	*$84,000*
Playground Shade Structure Double	3	no.	*$120,000*	*$90,000*
Playground Shade Structure Triple	3	no.	*$180,000*	*$147,000*
Sign Park Name Standard	13	no.	*$26,000*	*$14,100*
Sign Park Name Large Sign	28	no.	*$84,000*	*$65,400*
Sign Park Interpretive/Special	51	no.	*$306,000*	*$215,100*
Sports Coach Box	3	no.	*$45,000*	*$20,250*
Sports Court	25	no.	*$1,625,000*	*$1,010,750*
Sports Cricket Net Single	1	no.	*$50,000*	*$22.500*
Sports Cricket Net Double	7	no.	*$560,000*	*$276,000*
Sports Cricket Net Triple	4	no.	*$360,000*	*$234,000*
Sports Cricket Pitch	14	no.	*$168,000*	*$104,400*
Sports Scoreboard	5	no.	*$75,000*	*$45,750*

Asset Type	Quantity 2021-22	Measure	Replacement Cost	Written Down Value
Sports Spectator Shelter	18	no.	*$450,000*	*$262,500*
Sports Small Shelter	5	no.	*$25,000*	*$15,250*
Sports Goal Posts	9	no.	*$45,000*	*$33,750*
Structure Pergola	9	no.	*$45,000*	*$29,250*
Sports Table Tennis Table	1	no.	$11,000	*$8,250*
TOTAL			**$17,291,000**	**$12,852,580**

Table 5-4: Parks Line Assets Quantities and Value

Asset Group	Quantity 2021-22	Measure	Replacement Cost	Fair Value/WDV
Fence -chain mesh <1.8	*6,347*	lineal m.	*$1,269,416*	*$949,533*
Fence -chain mesh >1.8	1,948	lineal m.	*$545,514*	*$398,177*
Fence Barrier - post and rail/pipe	3,878	lineal m.	$349,083	*$245,812*
Fence Bollard Standard	1,615	lineal m.	*$161,496*	*$124,503*
Fence Handrail	203	lineal m.	*$25,321*	*$22,482*
Fence Standard < 1.2m	105	lineal m.	*$18,857*	*$16,455*
Fence Standard 1.2 - 1.8m	2,632	lineal m.	*$579,094*	*$405,645*
Fence Standard > 1.8m	10	lineal m.	*$2,821*	*$2,116*
Structure Wall < 1m - Masonry	1,662	lineal m.	*$664,812*	*$484,201*
Structure Wall 1-2m - Masonry	807	lineal m.	*$484,203*	*$326,401*
Structure Wall > 2m - Masonry	119	lineal m.	*$95,206*	*$71,405*
TOTAL			**$4,195,827**	**$3,046,734**

5.1.4 Processes and systems

Table 5-5: Asset Information Processes and Systems

Ref.	Best Practice	Status	Improvement
5.1	All assets collected to an appropriate component level and recorded in asset management system (AMS), including construction date (estimate acceptable)	• Have collected core asset data. • Is considered to be 75% complete and accurate	• Add recently captured data to the AMS: • Collect remaining asset data and add to the AMS:
5.2	Data aligned across all management activities	• Need for alignment of new parks categories with asset information • Need for alignment of new parks categories with planning categories in Public Open Space Strategy • Need for alignment of new parks categories with service delivery contracts • Need to align asset labelling in AMS with valuation register	• Align asset data, open space strategy categories and maintenance contract structure with new parks categories for consistent application of levels of service. • Align AMS data with finance (valuation) labelling to ensure one consistent set of data is used
5.3	Asset data up to date (no older than 4 years	• Street trees data collected on a 3 yearly cycle • No formalised processes previously in place to keep other asset data up to date • No formalised processes in place to reflect asset disposal in AMS system	• Conduct condition audits on an ongoing annual basis, targeting 100% coverage on a four yearly cycle • Investigate resource to undertake rolling inspection program (and could also include asset handover, quality monitoring and other

Ref.	Best Practice	Status	Improvement
			business improvement processes)
5.4	GIS positioning/mapping being used	• All assets collected to date mapped with link between AM data and maps	• GIS position/map any additional assets captured
5.5	AMS appropriate for needs	• Assetic specialist AM system being used • No organisational Asset Management Strategy or Policy in place • Parks team currently able to view this information through Intramaps but with limited ability to interrogate/analyse data	• Advocate for corporate asset management strategy (with defined roles and responsibilities) • Review and update asset categories to simplify, reduce and link with new Level of Service Categories • Assetic platform training for Parks team
5.6	Asset updating procedures being effectively implemented	• Asset data updated on an ongoing basis • As built plans are provided and used to update asset data • Handover process for new capital developments in place	• Improve handover process for capital projects to ensure all asset data obtained

5.2 Asset Condition

5.2.1 Condition Assessment

A condition assessment gives a clear understanding of the condition of the assets and how they are performing. It requires a comprehensive asset register and regular updating of condition based on clear criteria and repeatable assessment processes.

The condition assessment is based on the physical condition (rather than any cosmetic appearance issues) of the asset and where it is in its lifecycle to assist in planning for the optimal time to replace it.

Table 5-6: Condition Rating Model

Grade	Assessor observations during assessment	Capital Works Renewal Response
1	Asset is as new, and in perfect condition.	No action required.
2	Asset is not new, but delivering its intended service level. There is no foreseeable need for considering renewal or replacement.	No action required.
3	Asset is meeting its designed service level, but has a limited foreseeable life. Specified level of maintenance required. Asset may become a candidate for Renewal replacement within 4-8 years.	No immediate action required. Possible inclusion in draft Capital Renewal plans in 4 or more years' time.
4	Asset is approaching the end of its useful life and has limited remaining capacity to meet its designed service level. Requires frequent maintenance. Candidate for replacement/renewal within next 1 – 3 years.	Consider for inclusion in the next 2–3 years' Capital Renewal program.
5	Asset is in extremely poor condition, unable to meet its designed service level and is a strong candidate for immediate replacement.	Consider for inclusion as a priority in the current or following years' Capital Renewal program.

Table 5-7: Parks Asset Condition and Calculated Remaining Life

Asset Type	Average Condition	Average Asset Life	Average Remaining Life
Bin Standard 80L	2	20	10+
Bin Large 240L	2	20	10+
Fence Gate Pedestrian	2	30	10+
Fence Gate Removable Bollard	2	25	10+
Fence Gate Vehicular	2	30	10+
Furniture Barbeque – Single	2	25	10+
Furniture Barbeque – Double	2	25	10+
Furniture Bike Racks < 6	2	25	10+
Furniture Bike Racks > 6	2	25	10+
Furniture Drinking Fountain	2	20	10+
Furniture Flagpole	2	40	10+
Furniture Noticeboard/shelter	2	15	10+
Furniture Picnic Setting	2	20	10+
Furniture Seat Standard	2	25	10+
Furniture Seat Special	2	25	10+
Furniture Sundial/birdtable/small fountain	2	50	10+
Furniture Tap	2	20	
Memorial – Medium	2	100	10+
Memorial – Large	2	100	10+
Memorial/Art – Other	2	100	10+
Playground Local*	2	20	10+
Playground District*	2	20	10+
Playground Regional*	2	15	10+
Playground Shade Structure Single	2	20	10+
Playground Shade Structure Double	2	20	10+
Playground Shade Structure Triple	2	20	10+
Sign Park Name Standard	3	15	8
Sign Park Name Large Sign	2	15	10+
Sign Park Interpretive/Special	2	15	10+
Sports Coach Box	3	20	8
Sports Court	2	20	10+
Sports Cricket Net Single	3	25	10
Sports Cricket Net Double	3	25	9
Sports Cricket Net Triple	2	25	10
Sports Cricket Pitch	2	25	10
Sports Scoreboard	3	50	10
Sports Spectator Shelter	3	50	10+
Sports Small Shelter	2	35	10+
Sports Goal Posts	2	12	9
Structure Pergola	3	35	8
Sports Table Tennis Table	2	25	10+
Fence -chain mesh <1.8	2	40	10+
Fence -chain mesh >1.8	2	40	10+
Fence Barrier – post and rail/pipe	2	35	10+
Fence Bollard Standard	2	30	10+
Fence Handrail	1	45	10+
Fence Standard < 1.2m	2	40	10+
Fence Standard 1.2 – 1.8m	2	40	10+
Fence Standard > 1.8m	2	40	10+
Structure Wall < 1m – Masonry	2	70	10+
Structure Wall 1-2m – Masonry	2	70	10+
Structure Wall > 2m – Masonry	2	70	10+

** the asset condition and remaining life values associated with the Shire's playgrounds might suggest that they will remain suitable/ fit for purpose for another 10+ years, however also to be considered is asset obsolescence (i.e. the process of becoming outdated and no longer used). While the condition of the playgrounds remain acceptable, the play value of these assets may no longer meet community expectations, therefore requiring consideration for earlier renewal.*

5.2.2 Processes and Systems

Table 5-8: Asset Condition Processes and Systems

Ref.	Best Practice	Status	Improvement
1	Condition score and remaining life assessed and recorded for all assets where renewal approach being used	• Latest asset assessments conducted in line with IIMM (and IPWEA PNs) – condition grading 1-5, including capture of remaining life • Remaining parks asset groups/types to be collected	• Capture remaining assets in line with best practice, including condition grading, remaining life
2	Repeatable and reliable process used	• Asset data not previously collected • Processes and systems now in place to maintain data • Adequate resources required to implement these processes	• Advocate for additional resource to implement processes
3	Assessment undertaken by competent staff	• General staff competency for this task not yet established • No dedicated targeted resource currently assigned to this task • Current selection and skills likely will be focused on maintenance tasks – not asset condition assessment	• Advocate for additional resource and/or train existing staff to conduct assessments

5.3 Parks Performance

The assessment of asset performance in addition to condition, is the next step in developing asset knowledge. This will provide more useful information to modify service delivery standards, and determine priorities for asset development and renewal.

There are three main approaches for assessing performance:

- Benchmarking
- User surveys
- Performance assessment

As noted elsewhere in this AMP, the Shire comprises a dispersed network of settlements, with open spaces and facilities that serve each of the respective local communities, and resultant pressures on finite resources to develop and maintain assets across the network. This, combined with a relatively low population, will have an effect on parks performance overall.

5.3.1 Benchmarking

The provision of parks and assets is a useful indicator of performance in regard to overall levels of service in relation to park provision, asset provision, and operational expenditure.

Table 5-9: Park provision per 1,000 residents

Category	Mount Alexander per/1,000 residents	Industry median per/1,000 residents
Actively maintained park land	6.58ha	5.9ha
Premier	1.3ha	0.7ha
Recreation	2.38ha	1.4ha

Table 5-10: Asset provision per 1,000 residents

Category	Mount Alexander per 1,000 residents	Industry median per 1,000 residents
Playgrounds (per 1,000 children)	8.4	6.3
Street trees	941	504
Gardens	1,000m2	3,064m2

Table 5-11: Asset provision per hectare

Category	Mount Alexander per hectare	Industry median per hectare
Playgrounds	0.33	0.18
Gardens	267m2	400m2
Seats/Bench	3.9	1.5
Tables/picnic setting	1.4	0.28
Barbeques	0.4	0.08
Drinking Fountains	0.26	0.12

5.3.2 User Surveys

Systematic and regular surveying of park users to collect information on their opinions regarding the services provided in the parks provides the most accurate feedback in terms of the success of the assets, services and quality standards being delivered.

In addition to overall satisfaction, the survey methodology should also collect in-depth information regarding users opinion on the importance of a range of assets and services and their satisfaction with them. This enables a gap analysis to be undertaken, which in addition to deriving overall satisfaction, enables levels of service to be determined and prioritised.

An intercept survey methodology will obtain the most reliable results and this can also be supplemented by self-completion surveys that can collect feedback from both park users and non-users.

Currently MASC relies on data from the Victorian Community Satisfaction Survey. While this provides high level feedback, the implementation/methodology of the current surveying is not considered to be robust or detailed enough to provide reliable results that provide overall network results, that can be used in a meaningful way for reviewing levels of service or setting development /renewal priorities.

5.3.3 Performance assessment

A further level of asset management maturity is to undertake site by site performance assessment. This involves using the levels of service requirements for each park category; further developing assessment criteria, and then physically assessing each park against these criteria. This will determine if the park is achieving the desired level of service and quality expectations, or possibly overachieving (i.e. more assets than required by the development LoS).

The results are scored and converted to a percentage which provides a clear comparison of how different parks are performing. This can be used to review priorities for development and renewal, in combination with asset condition data.

The current approach (the standard industry approach) is very asset centric and detailed and can therefore fail to take into account the "bigger picture" of whether a park is overall achieving the desired level of service.

As this is a somewhat subjective process, the assessment criteria and methodology used needs to be carefully developed and implemented.

Rather than attempting to undertake this process for all the open space network, it may be useful to focus on specific open space categories. For example community parks, or significant asset groups such as public toilets and playgrounds.

5.3.4 Processes and Systems

Table 5-12: Asset Performance Processes and Systems

Ref.	Best Practice	Status	Improvement
1	Performance assessment being undertaken through a combination of benchmarking, user surveying and park/activity assessment	• Performance assessment currently being undertaken limited to membership of Yardstick benchmark program • 'Informal' assessments /professional judgement undertaken to inform decision making/ priorities. • Currently identified challenges include soccer field allocation/ provision, sports field flood lighting, consistent maintenance standards and mowing regimes • Other areas for focus include Castlemaine Botanical Gardens, public toilets, playspace provision and demand for events at Victory Park • Open Space and Recreation strategies offer limited analysis on provision targets or are dated	• Undertake assessment of actual asset provision compared with stated level of service. Assess financial gap. Feed information into renewal and park upgrade planning • Conduct annual intercept surveys and targeted observation studies • Update Recreation Strategy • 5 year review of Public Open Space Strategy
2	Undertake park/activity performance assessment where beneficial	• Limited understanding of how individual parks are performing from a customer perspective (residents and visitors)	• Undertake site by site performance assessment of parks; and/or specific asset categories, e.g. public toilets, gardens

Ref.	Best Practice	Status	Improvement
3	Effective customer research being undertaken	• No user surveying currently undertaken • Reliant on high level Victorian Community Satisfaction Survey for feedback • Recreation planners undertake consultation for specific projects	• Conduct annual intercept surveys and targeted observation studies • Investigate new technologies for counting visitors • Investigate usage counters for suitable locations

5.4 Management and Financial

The life cycle of any asset includes the following management and financial categories. Figure 5.1 illustrates the components of these categories.

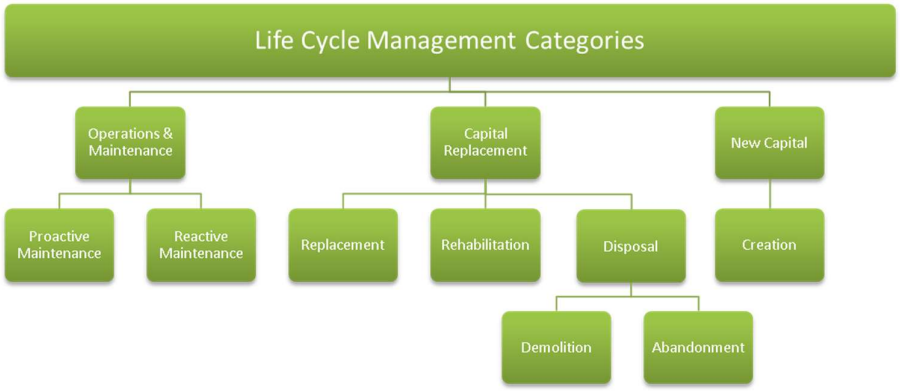


Figure 5-1: Life Cycle Management Categories

5.4.1 Operations and Maintenance

Operations and maintenance work is that required for the day-to-day operation of the network whilst maintaining the current levels of service. Costs associated with this type of work are:

- **Overheads and management expenses**
  Costs associated with shared organisation services allocated to the activity such as IT services, human resources, governance, etc. and costs associated with general management, planning and asset management tasks
- **Operations**
  Tasks and costs associated with routine works such as mowing and spraying
- **Maintenance and Repairs**
  Tasks and costs associated with maintenance works, repairs and minor renewals that are not budgeted within capital renewal budgets.

Best practice is to further split maintenance expenditure into the following sub groups:

- Planned Maintenance – covers tasks that can reliably be predicted, usually on a cyclic basis e.g. renovation of sports fields
- Unplanned Maintenance – covers tasks that cannot be specifically predicted but are usually required over the course of a year, e.g. repairs and breakages.

5.4.2 Capital Works

New Works

New capital works are the creation of new assets, or work, which upgrade or improve an existing asset beyond its current capacity or performance in response to the following drivers:

- **Growth** – Any asset development (Council funded or externally funded) that is required as a result of growth.
- **Levels of Service** – Any asset development that is required as a result of an increase in levels of service.
- **Legislative** – Any asset developed to meet legislative requirements.
- **Vested** – Any assets vested (gifted) with Council.

Lifecycle costing
Before any new works projects are undertaken (or new assets accepted) a lifecycle costing analysis should be undertaken to identify the full long term cost of the new asset (or asset class) including operating and maintenance funding requirements.

Renewal Works
Renewal expenditure is work that restores an existing asset to its original level of service, i.e. capacity or the required condition. These broadly fit into the following work categories as follows:

- **Rehabilitation** – Involves the repair of an existing asset, or asset component. Rehabilitation does not provide for a planned increase in the operating capacity or design loading. It is intended to enable the assets to continue to be operated to meet the current levels of service.
- **Replacement** – Does not provide for a planned increase to the operating capacity or design loading. Some minor increase in capacity may result from the process of replacement, but a substantial improvement is needed before asset development is considered to have occurred.

5.4.3 Current financial information

To enable effective asset management decisions and support other processes, financial budget and reporting information needs to be organised in the format outline in sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2. It also needs to align with the parks categories and levels of service structure.

Currently MASC operations and maintenance budget information is structured along historical lines and requires an update to clearly define/separate parks operations from other activities and align with the new park categories and level of service framework. It also needs to identify expenditure by activity (output), rather than by input (plant, labour and materials) costs. These are typically showing budgets for mowing, irrigation, gardens, trees, cleaning and rubbish, structures, paths and trails, etc.

5.4.4 Processes and systems

Table 5-13: Asset Performance Processes and Systems

Ref.	Best Practice	Status	Improvement
1	Lifecycle costing	• Not being undertaken • Lack detailed lifecycle costs of operations and maintenance	• Develop operations and maintenance costing model • Develop life and renewal cost for individual assets
2	Additional OPEX costs associated with new developments being funded	• Not being undertaken	• Implement process that automatically identifies additional costs associated with new developments
3	Effective project management systems	• Renewals managed by parks and gardens team for modest landscape projects	

Ref.	Best Practice	Status	Improvement
		• Larger projects go to capital works team	
4	Development standard/design matches level of service	• Development LoS just being established	• Ensure park design and asset installation matches Development LoS
5	For capital projects and new parks, maintenance periods and handovers being appropriately managed. Assets received at correct service level and asset data/ as built plans supplied	• For internal projects, an appropriate process has been defined, but this is not being implemented as effectively as it could be.	• Ensure internal process for capital projects handover is followed. • Include parks team in handover process

5.4.5 Summary

The following table is a list of typical work items and how they are allocated at MASC. To implement asset management best practice for financial management, operations and maintenance expenditure should be separately identified as indicated in table 5-14. Currently budgeting for all operations and maintenance work is combined.

Table 5-14: What expenditure goes where

Work item	Operations Expenditure	Maintenance Expenditure		Capital Expenditure	
		Planned	Unplanned	Renewals	New
Mowing	✔				
Vegetation/edge control	✔				
Garden maintenance	✔				
Garden replanting		✔			
Hedge pruning	✔				
Tree pruning		✔	✔		
Tree storm damage clean-up			✔		
Tree replanting		✔	✔		
Refuse and litter removal	✔		✔		
Refuse bin repairs			✔		
Refuse bin replacement				✔	
Sports turf renovation		✔			
Sports turf weed control	✔				
Sports turf fertilising	✔				
Irrigation operation	✔				
Irrigation repairs			✔		
Irrigation install					✔

Work item	Operations Expenditure	Maintenance Expenditure		Capital Expenditure	
		Planned	Unplanned	Renewals	New
Playground inspections – regular	✔				
Playground inspections – safety assessment		✔			
Playground repairs			✔		
Playground replacement				✔	
Playgrounds – New					✔
Furniture & structures – graffiti removal	✔				
Furniture & structures – vandalism and damage repairs			✔		
Furniture & structures – repainting		✔			
Furniture & structures – replacement				✔	
Hard surfaces - gravel path top up		✔	✔		

5.5 Monitoring the Assets

5.5.1 Maintenance inspections and service standard monitoring

An inspection and reporting program is a critical aspect of ensuring that managers are aware of any issues relating to the maintenance of assets, and services are provided to the expected standard on a reliable basis. Current quality monitoring comprises:

- Sportsfields – systematic, audited and documented records in place
- Street trees – systematic, audited and documented records in place
- Grass maintenance – informal monitoring
- Park furniture – informal monitoring
- Garden beds – informal monitoring
- Public toilets – informal monitoring

MASC are currently developing and implementing a more comprehensive and formalised quality monitoring system, based on documented service standards, using iAuditor platform, to assess % compliance with service standards at each site (random audits conducted at a selection of sites of each month with results trends monitored).

5.6 Parks Operating and Maintenance (O&M) Practices

5.6.1 Parks O&M Practices

The Parks and Gardens Unit delivers maintenance and improvement of open space areas throughout the shire. The service aims to encourage the use and enjoyment of public open space, contributing to additional resident and visitor return, improved public health and

promotion of Mount Alexander Shire as a destination for visitors, future residents and business.

The Parks and Gardens Unit is structured into four areas that comprise geographically based teams that carry out regular, programed maintenance and improvement works. Sportsground and broad acre maintenance is undertaken across all areas. A Natural Environment Officer provides a vital source of expertise and coordination of natural resource management, fulfilling legislative, corporate and community expectations. A Tree Management Officer provides programed and responsive tree management across the shire.

- Area 1 – Castlemaine Botanical Gardens and Castlemaine CBD
- Area 2 – Castlemaine surrounds
- Area 3 – Baringhup, Campbells Creek, Maldon, and Newstead
- Area 4 – Chewton, Elphinstone, Fryerstown, Guildford, Harcourt, Metcalfe, Taradale and Sutton Grange
- Sportsground/broad acre maintenance
- Natural Environment
- Tree Management

The Parks and Gardens Unit is based at the Castlemaine Depot, shared with Council's Works Unit. There is also a satellite depot located in Maldon.

The unit is led by a Coordinator with responsibility for works and operational planning, quality control, OH&S compliance, staff support and supervision.

Operations and maintenance of parks assets is carried out through in-house (63%), external service delivery (32%) managed and monitored by MASC staff, with responsibilities to maintain sportsground surrounds and other parcels of land falling to Committees of Management, Landcare and Friends of groups (5%).

Asset inventory information is partially complete (data on assets located within a Castlemaine Quality Standard (QS) 3 park have not been collected). Data is stored in the corporate AM system, Assetic and linked to GIS and Intramaps. Information is yet to be updated on an ongoing, systematic basis however, asset data collection and data updating is now a focus for Council, and as built information derived from capital development projects is now populated to the AMS as standard.

The Parks and Gardens team are currently in the process of improving the use of technology to reduce/remove the demand for paper based record keeping. It is intended that the capture of new open space assets will be a part of this process improvement.

5.6.2 Tree planting and maintenance

The unit is responsible for maintaining and developing a sustainable tree population throughout the urban public spaces of the municipality to improve open space and urban amenity and mitigate tree related risk to Council.

Tree Management Guidelines were developed in 2015. This document provides a framework for the effective and efficient management of Council's tree population. A number of tree maintenance programs have been established:

- Park and Property Tree Assessment Program – a systematic and proactive approach to the risk assessment of trees located on Council managed parks and properties.

- Powerline Pruning Program – Council managed trees within the Declared Area of Castlemaine are audited and pruned annually to achieve compliance with statutory requirements and Council's Electricity Line Clearance Management Plan.
- Street Tree Maintenance Program - proactively maintains urban street trees on three year cycle.
- Elm Leaf Beetle (ELB) - control program proactively manages ELB throughout the urban areas of the shire on a three year cycle.
- Rural Tree Management Program – responsive maintenance of trees along rural roadsides.
- Tree Planting Program – a proactive program that aims to achieve a sustainable urban tree population.

The capacity to complete tree work with internal staff is limited due to skills, equipment and resources. Around 95% of street tree maintenance is outsourced, managed by the in-house Tree Management Officer (who also takes on simple maintenance works).

5.6.3 Sports ground maintenance and improvement

The Unit is responsible for maintaining and improving sportsground playing surfaces and surrounds to provide opportunities for formal and informal sport in accordance with relevant playing surface standards.

Part of the Parks and Gardens service is the maintenance of the 13 sportsfields throughout the shire. The maintenance of sportsfield playing surfaces requires the highest levels of service due to the requirement to provide a suitable playing surface each week to manage risk. Sportsground maintenance varies on a site by site basis and may include maintaining the playing surface and / or surrounds, renovations and seasonal changeovers. Council's role in sportsground maintenance is conducted in conjunction with Community Asset Committee Instrument of Delegation (IoD) at many sites.

While internal capabilities satisfy many of the day to day maintenance requirements, skills, equipment and resources limit the completion of specialised work. A panel of contractors is engaged to undertake specialised services. Mowing of one oval and the maintenance of three sportsground cricket wickets are the responsibility of the respective clubs. Maintenance of the surrounds at several sportsgrounds is the responsibility of the respective Community Asset Committee.

The Active Communities Unit is responsible for the capital improvement and strategic development of recreation reserves and serves as the primary contact for sporting clubs. Liaising with sporting clubs is largely undertaken as part of the delivery of the Active Communities Unit service.

Sportsground irrigation systems are operated by Community Asset Committees. Maintenance of irrigation systems is undertaken by Council.

The existing situation of various maintenance models (described under the range of Community Asset Committee Instruments of Delegation) can lead to inconsistent outcomes, potentially exposing Council to additional risk and reputational damage.

5.6.4 Playspace inspections, risk management and maintenance

The Parks and Gardens Unit maintains playgrounds, playspaces, (in parks and childcare centres), skate parks and BMX tracks in accordance with relevant standards to ensure safe

and high quality play spaces for residents and visitors. Mount Alexander has 29 playspaces featuring a diverse range of equipment and styles. Of these, 26 are in public open space and three are in childcare centres.

A playspace inspection program is based upon the play space classification and anticipated use and aims to reduce the likelihood and severity of injury in play settings.

Table 5-15: Playspace Inspection Program

Play space classification	Interim Inspection (weekly cycle)	Interim Inspection (two week cycle)	Routine Inspection (six week cycle)	Independent audit (annual)
Municipal	✓		✓	✓
District		✓	✓	✓
Local			✓	✓
Childcare centre			✓	✓
Skate park/ BMX track			✓	

Staff have been trained to undertake inspections of playspaces located within their allocated maintenance areas. Follow-up works are undertaken including repair of play equipment and maintenance of soft fall areas. All maintenance works are consistent with the relevant Australian Standard.

There are no set standards for the design, construction, auditing, assessment and or maintenance of BMX tracks in Australia.

Although routine inspections and reactive maintenance has improved, scheduled proactive and preventative asset maintenance such as painting, sanding, oiling and greasing is limited. This means that the condition of equipment declines over time. The establishment of a programed, proactive approach to playspace maintenance would mitigate the risk of equipment breakdown, extend the useful life of equipment and improve visitor experience.

5.6.5 Streetscape maintenance and improvement

Urban streetscapes are maintained and developed, addressing entrance treatments, urban trees, street furniture and non-standard public lighting to improve overall amenity while reinforcing and building upon an area's values and character.

There are 198 streetscape sites. The majority of these are highly visible and feature a range of planting styles and designs from landscaped garden areas to mown entrances to a town. Council's streetscape management is based on streetscape character, plant health and asset maintenance, visibility for drivers and pedestrians and township amenity.

5.6.6 Castlemaine Botanical Gardens maintenance and development

The Parks and Gardens Unit provides a very high standard of horticultural, conservation and arboricultural maintenance and implement improvement programs to protect and present the heritage elements of the Botanical Gardens. The site is staffed by a Team Leader, two Horticulturalists and an Apprentice Gardener.

An inventory of the 761 trees located on east side of Barkers Creek was completed in 2014. Trees are now routinely inspected and works prioritised based on the level of risk. Tree

work is undertaken by a panel of contractors engaged to undertake specialised tree services.

Staff at the botanical gardens are fully utilised undertaking day to day maintenance of the more formal section on the east side of Barkers Creek. They are also responsible for maintenance of Victory Park and other key areas of Castlemaine such as the Burke and Wills monument and CBD streetscapes. They are currently limited in their capacity to undertake essential improvement works to ensure adequate management of these significant community assets.

The Flora and Fauna Reserve is one of a very small number of sites where the Eltham Copper Butterfly (ECB) has endured and where its complex lifecycle remains viable. A listing of the ECB under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 increases requirements for Council to protect the butterfly by managing and responding to potential threats.

The site is experiencing increased visitor numbers and has weed management issues that as part of the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994, Council is required to control. Current resourcing significantly limits the ability to establish an on-going proactive weed management program within this section of the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens. The Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Flora and Fauna Reserve Environmental Management Plan 2020 is currently in draft, and includes a recommendation to establish a Friends of Group.

5.6.7 Provision and maintenance of park furniture and paths

Council's open space areas include a number of assets. The majority of these assets are maintained or overseen by the Parks and Gardens Unit. The renewal of gravel paths is facilitated by the Parks and Gardens maintenance budget.

5.6.8 Urban Waterways

Council currently has a licence agreement with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) regarding the management of the Castlemaine Urban Waterways. The area covered by the licence is 66.6 hectares.

Council, as the licencee of the waterways area, holds public liability and has responsibilities to manage safety risks, maintain water quality for downstream users, and keep the area free of pest animals and weeds. A process is underway to reserve the urban waterways for public benefit, with Council set to become the formal Committee of Management. The main challenge for Council in accepting the management of the Castlemaine Urban Waterways is to define and resource effective management.

It is essential that Council commits the skills and resources required to ensure that waterway environs are managed in a condition that meets community and DELWP expectations and legislative requirements. Urban waterway management involves a range of challenges, including pest animals and weeds, fire protection, tree maintenance, grass slashing, litter removal, illegal dumping, encroachment, track maintenance and improving the natural systems of the waterways.

DELWP intend to commence the handover process to Council within the next two years. It is DELWP's intention that the maintenance/management of the entire area known as the Castlemaine Urban Waterways will be the responsibility of Council within the next 10 years.

5.6.9 Customer Service

Customer requests / service calls are managed through the centralised corporate system. Operational / maintenance requests are forward direct to the Parks and Gardens team. The system is considered to generally work effectively, with no notable issues.

5.6.10 Volunteer and community support

With the exception of an active environmental community as part of various Landcare and Friends of Groups, there is minimal involvement of voluntary groups in assisting with the maintenance and / or improvement of MASC parks. Community Asset Committees are currently responsible for maintaining the surrounds of some sportsgrounds.

5.7 Shared management

5.7.1 Buildings

The Building Projects team are primarily responsible for maintenance and operations work on buildings. The Parks and Gardens team are also currently responsible for some maintenance and operation works for some built structures located on parks.

While responsibilities are somewhat unclear, in some circumstances the rough rule of thumb is that if the structure has four walls then it is the responsibility of the buildings team. The Public Amenities Cleaning team is responsible for servicing, including park toilet blocks and BBQs.

5.7.2 Paths and Bridges

The Infrastructure Unit provide condition assessment and renewal modelling for all paths and bridges outside parks. Within parks the situation is less clear, with park path maintenance and operations typically falling to the Parks and Gardens Unit. An Asset Strategy and Policy should resolve these areas of uncertainty and ensure paths within parks are suitably identified and maintained.

5.8 Parks Asset Renewal and Replacement

5.8.1 Introduction

A renewal plan for the parks assets has been prepared as part of the development of this Open Space AMP. However, the asset register does not yet provide comprehensive coverage across all parks asset groups, such as paths and living assets such as trees and significant gardens.

5.8.2 Future improvement

Asset management best practice for renewal planning is based on producing a 10 year renewal plan for each individual asset based on a combination of information including:

- Asset life and calculated remaining life
- Condition
- Assessed remaining life (when below 10 years)
- Asset replacement cost
- Performance

Assessing and planning for renewals at an individual asset level will provide more accurate renewal funding requirements compared with the modelled approach using averaged condition data.

Renewal and replacement should also take into consideration environmental and sustainability considerations for instance, favouring use of recycled products and sourcing materials locally where available.

A further level of maturity is to undertake performance assessment on a park by park basis (or asset group such as playgrounds, public toilets or park category). When these assessments are combined with asset condition information, more effective prioritisation can be achieved.

The renewal plan should be updated annually based on:

- What was actually achieved in the previous year
- Updated asset condition/remaining life assessment information
- Changing priorities
- Other unplanned events e.g. storm/disaster events

MASC requires additional asset information to move to this level of AM maturity. In particular:

- Life and replacement value for all individual asset component types
- Assessed remaining life for all individual asset component types (this will provide more accurate renewal timing/prioritisation compared with only condition score)
- Resource to regularly reassess these asset attributes on an ongoing rolling program

5.9 Asset Acquisition

An additional 66.6ha of bushland associated with Castlemaine Urban Waterways land will be handed over to Council ownership / management in stages over the course of 10 years, with implications for maintenance and operations resourcing. Refer also 4.2.3 and 5.6.8.

It is anticipated that further small parcels of land (e.g. attenuation basins) associated with land subdivision and development will also be acquired over the duration of this AMP.

5.10 Asset Disposal

There are currently no plans to dispose of any parks or assets.

Assets will be assessed based on the development level of service for the park category and performance assessment results (where available) to determine the need for, and standard of replacement. Assets that are considered surplus to requirements will not be replaced at the end of their life. Assets surplus to requirements may also be considered for relocation prior to the end of their useful life.

Any assets that are disposed of generally do not have any residual value and none is provided for in any financial planning.

If at any future stage a parcel of land is considered for disposal, this decision will be guided by the Shire's land acquisition and disposal policy, alongside any provision levels of service specified within an updated Public Open Space Strategy.

5.11 Lifecycle Management Improvements

Improvement Item 5.1 Asset Information

5.1.1 Latest asset data to be added to the AMS

5.1.2 Align asset data, open space strategy categories and maintenance contract structure with new parks categories for consistent application of levels of service

5.1.3 Align AMS data with finance (valuation) labelling to ensure one consistent set of data is used

5.1.4 Review and update asset categories to simplify, reduce and link with new (2021) Level of Service Categories

5.1.5 Ensure handover process for capital projects is consistently followed to ensure all asset data obtained and include parks team in handover process

5.1.6 Collect asset information for remaining parks asset groups

Improvement Item 5.2 Asset Condition

5.2.1 Utilise condition assessment criteria as defined by IPWEA Practice Note 10.1, which provides condition grading guideline for individual asset types

5.2.2 Collect remaining life in addition to condition (and move away from reliance on mathematical calculation)

5.2.3 Undertake condition assessment on a rolling three year cycle

Improvement Item 5.3 Parks Performance

5.3.1 Undertake assessment of actual asset provision compared with stated level of service. Assess financial gap. Feed information into renewal and park upgrade planning

5.3.2 Continue to participate in benchmarking program such as Yardstick

5.3.3 Undertake formal and regular (annual) user surveying

5.3.4 Undertake site by site performance assessment of specific park categories including street trees, street gardens and botanic garden displays

5.3.5 Investigate new technologies for counting visitors and identify suitable locations

Improvement Item 5.4 Management and Financial

5.4.1 Ensure financial data and reporting is consistent across the organisation and restructure operations and maintenance financial information (budget) so that parks activity separate from other activities and organised based on parks categories and levels of service framework; and operation and maintenance costs separately identified

5.4.2 Develop operations and maintenance costing model

5.4.3 Implement process that automatically identifies additional operating and renewal costs associated with new developments and seeks approval for additional costs

5.4.4 Ensure park design and asset installation matches Development LoS

5.4.5 Ensure internal process for capital projects handover is followed, undertake pre and post capital project evaluations and include parks unit in the handover process

5.4.6 Periodically test the market and analyse cost/benefit for in-house vs outsourced service delivery

5.4.7 Provide training for parks unit in use of Assetic platform

Improvement Item 5.5 Renewal Planning

5.5.1 Develop renewal planning for all parks assets building on newly developed 10 year renewal plan, addressing each individual asset based on a combination of information including:

a) Asset life and calculated remaining life
b) Condition
c) Assessed remaining life (when below 10 years)
d) Asset replacement cost

5.5.2 Consider undertaking performance assessment on a park by park basis (or asset group such as playgrounds, public toilets or park category)

Improvement Item 5.6 Operations

5.6.1 Review roles/responsibilities of Community Asset Committees with consideration to taking on maintenance responsibilities in-house or formalising/redefining service level agreements with Community Asset Committees

5.6.2 Review and amend contract specifications to:

a) Ensure they reflect the parks categories and levels of service.
b) Contract schedule to be designed so that unit rates for each asset/activity is provided and aligns with levels of service framework so that operating levels of service can be costed.

5.6.3 Undertake a service review of Castlemaine Botanical Gardens to assess current levels of resourcing

Improvement Item 5.7 Asset Information

5.7.1 Secure additional resources to undertake tasks including asset inspection program, quality monitoring, asset handover and other business improvement processes

SECTION 6 – HOW MUCH WILL IT COST

6.1 Financial Projections

To undertake a sustainable, long-term approach to asset management, it is essential to prepare long-term financial forecasts. This allows a long term view of how the activity will be managed, how much this will cost and when additional funding may be required to meet expected service levels.

The Open Space AMP and associated financial projections, should be treated as a working document and reviewed frequently. This will ensure that it remains fit for purpose and responsive to changing circumstances and priorities as a result, for instance, of external grant funding opportunities becoming available for a particular type of project.

Also of note, Council has an open space reserve comprising public open space contributions derived from property development in the Shire. Access to these funds is determined on a project case by case basis.

Council is not currently producing a comprehensive long term (10year) financial plan that specifically incorporates the open space activity.

6.2 Financial Summary

6.2.1 Combined Current Operations and Maintenance Budget

The combined current cost of relevant parks / gardens and recreation operations and maintenance has been identified as follows:

- Revenue: $35,906*
- Expenditure: $2,847,511
- Total Expenditure: $2,811,605

** Revenue generated is currently returned to the general Council fund. In addition, several recreation reserves are managed by Community Asset Committees who may collect additional revenue directly through the hiring of facilities.*

6.2.2 Future Operations and Maintenance Expenditure

Figure 6-1 shows forecast operations and maintenance expenditure over the next 10 years:

- Operations and maintenance expenditure for 2020/21 is $2,811,605
- Forecast operations and maintenance expenditure is assumed to increased annually in line with inflation/consumer price index, estimated at 2%
- There is a general trend towards increasing costs for operations and maintenance
- The planned, staged acquisition of 66.6ha of land (Castlemaine Urban Waterways) over the course of the next 10 years will increase costs for operations and maintenance

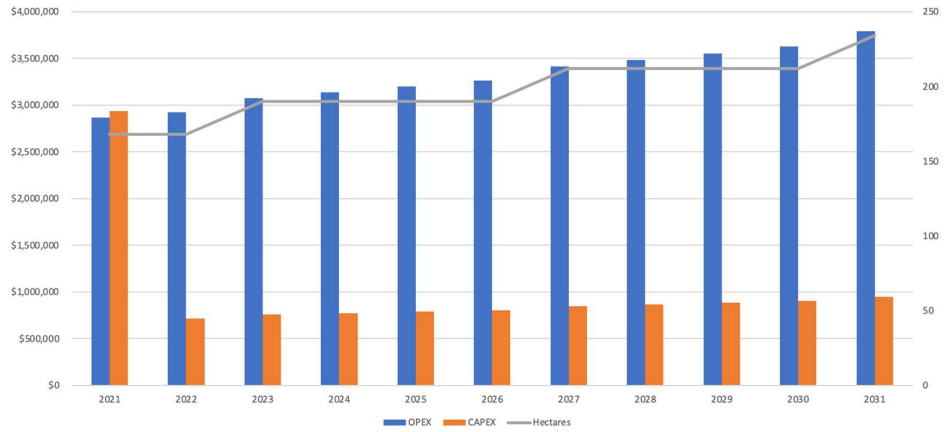


Figure 6-1: Future Operations and Maintenance Expenditure

6.2.3 Future Renewal and Replacement Expenditure

Figure 6-2 shows forecast renewal and replacement expenditure over the next 10 years:

- Given the relatively good condition of the majority of assets relatively few fall due over the initial 10 year planning period
- There is a predicted renewal spike at the end of this planning period (2032). This relates in particular to the renewal of Council's municipal playground (Castlemaine Botanical Gardens) and several cricket nets at this time, totalling approximately $1.8 million
- The timing of specific asset renewal can be carefully managed over this period to ensure efficient and timely use of available renewal funds
- Beyond the initial planning period there is another significant renewal spike forecast for 2036 to the approximate value of $8.5 million. This relates in particular to the renewal of 18 local and district playgrounds
- Elsewhere in this AMP it is noted that while condition and remaining life assessments of the playgrounds indicate many of these facilities are not due for renewal in the near term, asset obsolescence considerations mean that while the condition of the playgrounds remain acceptable, the play value of these assets no longer meets community expectations, therefore requiring consideration of earlier renewal.

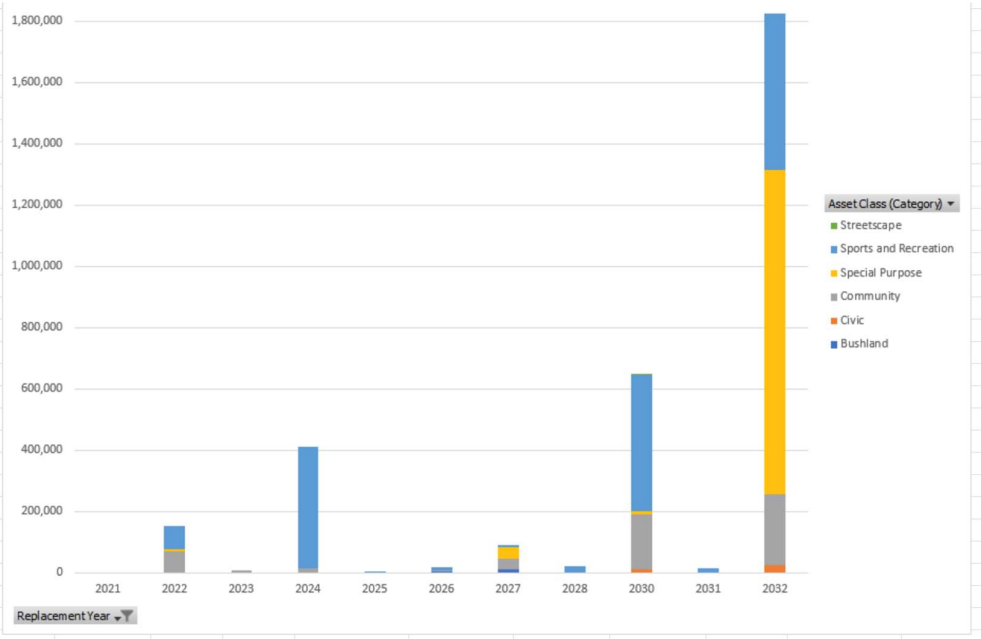


Figure 6-2: Future Renewal and Replacement Expenditure

6.2.4 Future Upgrade/New Assets Expenditure

Figure 6-3 shows forecast upgrade/new assets expenditure over the next 10 years:

- There is currently no formalised 10 year capital works program relating to open space assets to inform new capital expenditure forecasts.
- Capital expenditure for 2020/21 was $703,575.
- Major projects scheduled for delivery in 2021/22 (including projects carried forward from the previous year) will be primarily funded by external grant funding including the following significant projects:
    - Harcourt Recreation Reserve Change Rooms ($705,197)
    - Newstead Recreation Reserve Lighting ($410,202)
    - Camp Reserve Master Plan pavilion and hard court design ($400,000)
    - Norwood Hill Reserve Stage One ($249,350)
    - Botanical Gardens Lighting ($237,090)
    - Priority Recreation Facility Property Renewals ($159,262)
    - Bill Woodfull Oval Change Rooms ($125,572)
    - Botanical Gardens Interpretation Plan ($110,575)
    - Maldon Recreation Reserve Irrigation Upgrade ($108,900)
    - Newstead Recreation Reserve Irrigation Upgrade ($108,900)
    - Botanical Gardens Irrigation and Path Rehabilitation Project ($106,175)
- Including projects that have been carried forward from the previous year total new capital expenditure for 2021/22 is identified at $2,938,331. A significant number of these projects relied on external funding to enable implementation; expenditure in subsequent years is expected to return to more typical levels, with fewer opportunities to secure significant levels of external funding.
- Allowing for an annual 2% increase (inflation / consumer price index), and a proportional increase in new asset expenditure related to the staged land acquisition, by 2031 annual capital expenditure is estimated to be $948,409.

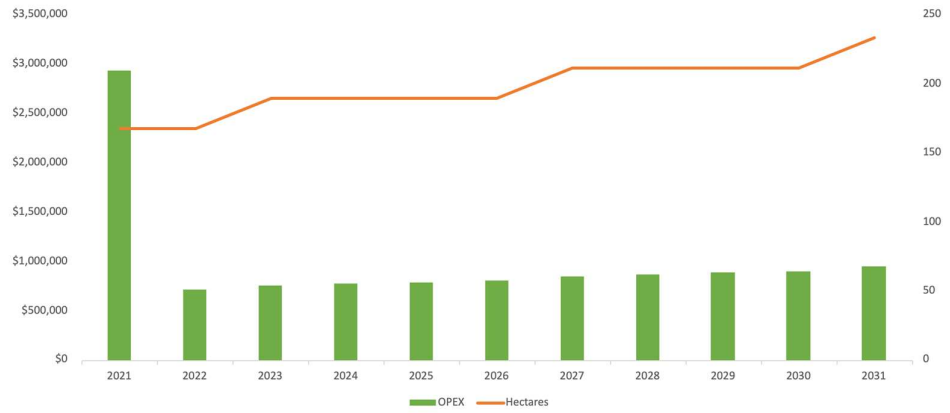


Figure 6-3: Future Upgrade/New Assets Expenditure

6.3 Asset Valuation

6.3.1 Current situation

Valuations have been reviewed as part of the AMP development. The improvement plan includes actions to align parks asset data with that held in financial records so that an accurate valuation exercise can be completed.

6.3.2 Parks Asset Based Valuation

A parks valuation has been undertaken for renewal planning purposes as part of the development of this Open Space AMP, noting that not all parks assets have been comprehensively captured. Further details of this valuation exercise are included at 5.1.2.

There will need to be a reconciliation between current financial based valuation and the asset based valuation, to arrive at an new agreed single organisation valuation for the parks assets. This valuation should be updated annually.

Improvement Item 6.1

- Following the development of a specific parks O&M budget structure based on the parks categories, levels of service and activities, complete preparation of long term (10yr) financial plan.

Improvement Item 6.2

- To meet current asset management financial best practice, finalise new asset naming hierarchy, set asset lives and values and then prepare a full valuation based on individual component level

Improvement Item 6.3

- Reconcile the asset based valuation with the financial valuation to produce a single parks valuation for the organisation

Improvement Item 6.4

- Develop / formalise a 10 year capital works program relating to open space assets to inform new capital expenditure forecasts

SECTION 7 – WHAT ARE THE RISKS

7.1 Purpose of Risk Management

The purpose of risk management is to identify the risks associated with parks services and assets. This requires considering potential risks from many perspectives, which may include financial, operational, future demand, organisational and public health and safety considerations, to name a few.

7.2 Insurance Associated with this Activity

The type and level of insurance cover taken is dependent on the level of risk associated with the activity. Insurance policies taken out by the Council cover property and business interruption such as material damage as a result of fire, storm, explosion, flooding etc., and the consequential loss of profits from that event. Council employees are also covered for liability risks of a work related injury.

All contractors who undertake work for the Council are required to show that they hold adequate insurance for Public Liability, Professional Indemnity and Contract Works. The level of insurance cover for the contractor is dependent on the nature of work and associated risk exposure.

7.3 Risk Management Approach

Council has developed a Corporate Risk Management Policy, dated September 2020. An open space network specific risk assessment was undertaken as part of the preparation of this AMP however, the MASC's Risk Management Policy will continue to be used to manage risks.

It is recommended that the Risk Management Policy is reviewed to take into account the risks identified as part of the development of this AMP. This recommendation is included in the Improvement Plan.

Reference:
https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/files/Policies/Policy_-_Risk_Management_-_Adopted_by_Council_15_September_2020.pdf

7.4 Resilience and Climate Change

The impacts of climate change may have a significant impact on the assets we manage and the services they provide.

How climate change impacts on assets will vary depending on the location and the type of services provided, as will the way in which we respond and manage those impacts.

As a minimum we consider how to manage our existing assets given potential climate change impacts for our region. Increasing temperatures, hotter / longer summers and shorter / milder winters, falling rainfall levels and the increased frequency of extreme weather events all have the potential to impact on assets and services.

Building resilience can have the following benefits:

- Assets will withstand the impacts of climate change
- Services can be sustained
- Assets that can endure may potentially lower the lifecycle cost and reduce their carbon footprint.

Council has already recognised some of these challenges and put in place processes to build in resilience, such as replacing sports field grass to more suitable species and developing species planting lists for trees, plants and grasses that are suited to predicted climate change for the region.

The impact of climate change is a new and complex discussion and further opportunities to address these challenges will be developed in future revisions of this AMP. Further consideration might be given to developing a water management plan (there is currently a review in progress of water supply / irrigation infrastructure) and reviewing asset materials specification (i.e. prioritising robust materials that are more capable of withstanding extreme climate conditions).

Improvement Item 7.1

- Review Risk Management Policy to take into account the parks specific risk assessment undertaken as part of the preparation of this AMP.

Improvement Item 7.2

- Incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Design and Climate Mitigation measures into Council management and development of its open space network and assets.

SECTION 8 – WHAT ARE OUR SYSTEMS

8.1 Asset Management System

Asset data used for this AMP is currently recorded in a specialist AM system “Assetic”.

All asset information currently available is also geographically located and linked through the Council’s GIS system and Intramaps for mapping purposes.

Information is yet to be updated on an ongoing, systematic basis however, asset data collection and data updating is now a focus for Council, and as built information derived from capital development projects is now populated to the AMS as standard.

To enable cost analysis and reporting to be effectively and consistently achieved, it is recommended that budgets, parks categories and asset system information be closely aligned.

8.2 Data Confidence and Reliability

Table 8.1 provides the framework (IIMM) used to determine the confidence in the asset data used in this AMP.

Table 8-1: Asset Data – Confidence Grades

Confidence Grade	General Meaning
Highly Reliable	Data based on sound records, procedure, investigations and analysis, documented properly and recognised as the best method of assessment.
Reliable	Data based on sound records, procedures, investigations and analysis, documented properly but has minor shortcomings, for example the data is old, some documentation is missing, and reliance is placed on unconfirmed reports or some extrapolation.
Uncertain	Data based on sound records, procedures, investigations and analysis which is incomplete or unsupported, or extrapolated from a limited sample for which grade highly reliable or reliable data is available.
Very Uncertain	Data based on unconfirmed verbal reports and/or cursory inspection and analysis.

The tables below reflect the confidence in the asset data. The tables relate to the percentage of components that fall into each confidence grade category.

Table 8-2: Overall Average Data Confidence

Asset Type	Highly Reliable	Reliable	Uncertain	Very Uncertain	No Asset data
Hard Surfaces					x
Horticulture					x
Irrigation					x
Furniture	95%			5%	
Trees	90%	5%	5%		
Playgrounds	100%				
Stormwater					x
Water Features					x

Table 8-3: Overall Condition Confidence

Asset Type	Highly Reliable	Reliable	Uncertain	Very Uncertain	No Asset Data
Hard Surfaces					x
Horticulture					x
Irrigation					x
Furniture	95%			5%	
Trees	90%	5%	5%		
Playgrounds	100%				
Stormwater					x
Water Features					x

SECTION 9 – WHERE WILL WE IMPROVE

9.1 Asset Management Improvement Projects

The following recommended improvement projects have been graded and sorted by priority of High, Medium and Low over a timeframe of four years from 2021 to 2026.

High priority projects are those where a significant benefit to operational effectiveness and efficiency will be achieved, or where there is a significant information gap or weakness, or where the improvement can be implemented relatively quickly and easily. High priority projects are identified to be completed with the next two years.

Resource and budget estimates are annual for recurring (R) or ongoing tasks.

Table 9-1: Improvement Plan

Ref.	Area	Description	Priority	Target Completion	Resource (hrs) (Internal)	Budget (External)
1.1	Corporate	Update AM Strategy and Policy (in line with Local Government Act 2020 requirements)	High	2021/22	100	
5.3.2	Parks Performance	Continue to participate in benchmarking program such as Yardstick	High	2021/22 (R)	24	$2,700
5.1.1	Asset Information	Latest asset data to be added to the AMS	High	2021/22 (R)	24	
5.1.4	Asset Information	Review and update asset categories to simplify, reduce and link with new (2021) Level of Service Categories	High	2021/22	24	
5.2.1	Asset Condition	Utilise condition assessment criteria as defined by IPWEA Practice Note 10.1, which provides condition grading guideline for individual asset types	High	2021/22	8	
5.1.2	Asset Information	Align asset data, open space strategy categories and maintenance contract structure with new parks categories for consistent application of levels of service	High	2021/22	80	

Ref.	Area	Description	Priority	Target Completion	Resource (hrs) (Internal)	Budget (External)
5.1.3	Asset Information	Align AMS data with finance (valuation) labelling to ensure one consistent set of data is used	High	2021/22	80	
5.4.8	Management and Financial	Provide training for parks unit in use of Assetic platform	High	2021/22	40	
7.2	Risk	Incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Design and Climate Mitigation measures into Council management and development of its open space network and assets.	High	2021/22	16	
6.2	Financial Management	Develop/formalise a 10 year capital works program relating to open space assets to inform new capital expenditure forecasts	High	2021/22	32	
5.6.3	Operations	Undertake a service review of Castlemaine Botanical Gardens to assess current levels of resourcing	High	2021/22	40	$20,000
5.3.3	Parks Performance	Undertake formal and regular (annual) user surveying	High	2022/23 (R)	16	$15,000
7.1	Risk	Review Risk Management Policy to take into account the open space network specific risk assessment undertaken as part of the preparation of this AMP	High	2022/23	32	
5.7.1	Asset Information	Secure additional resources to undertake tasks including asset inspection program, quality monitoring, asset handover and other business improvement processes	High	2022/23 (R)	32	$75,000
5.3.1	Parks Performance & Renewal Planning	Undertake assessment of actual asset provision compared with stated level of service. Assess financial gap. Feed information into renewal and park upgrade planning	High	2022/23	150	$25,000
5.4.3	Management and Financial	Formalise and adopt a process that automatically identifies (and seeks approval for) additional funding to cover resultant operational and renewal costs associated with all new capital development.	High	2022/23	20	$10,000
5.4.5, 5.1.5 & 5.4.4	Management and Financial	For capital development processes, continue to undertake the following improvements: a. Ensure internal process for handover is followed. b. Improve process to ensure all asset data obtained c. Ensure park design and asset installation matches Development LoS d. Undertake pre and post capital project evaluations	High	2022/23	24	$7,500

Ref.	Area	Description	Priority	Target Completion	Resource (hrs) (Internal)	Budget (External)
5.1.6	Asset information	Collect asset information for remaining parks asset groups	High	2022/23	374	$10,000
5.4.1	Management and Financial	Ensure financial data and reporting is consistent across the organisation and restructure operations and maintenance financial information (budget) so that parks activity separate from other activities and organised based on parks categories and levels of service framework and operation and maintenance costs separately identified	Medium	2023/24	40	
4.1	Growth and Demand	Secure additional resources to manage the Castlemaine Urban Waterways Land, as this land is progressively handed over from DELWP to Council	Medium	2023/24 (R)	*Refer 6.2.2 for further details*	
5.3.4 & 5.5.2	Parks Performance	Undertake site by site performance assessment of specific open space categories including street trees, street gardens and botanic garden displays	Medium	2023/24 (R)	20	$25,000
5.2.2 & 5.2.3	Asset Condition	Collect remaining life in addition to condition (and move away from reliance on mathematical calculation for renewal planning) Undertake condition assessment on a rolling three year cycle	Medium	2023/24	40	$40,000
5.5.1	Renewal Planning	Develop renewal planning for all parks assets building on newly developed 10 year renewal plan, addressing each individual asset based on a combination of information including: ○ Condition ○ Asset life and calculated remaining life ○ Assessed remaining life (when below 10 years) ○ Asset replacement cost	Medium	2024/25	20	$10,000
5.6.2	Operations	Review and amend contract specifications to: ○ Ensure they reflect the parks categories and levels of service. ○ Contract schedule to be designed so that unit rates for each asset / activity is provided and aligns with levels of service framework so that operating levels of service can be costed	Medium	2024/25	40	$15,000

Ref.	Area	Description	Priority	Target Completion	Resource (hrs) (Internal)	Budget (External)
6.2	Financial Management	To meet current asset management financial best practice, finalise new asset naming hierarchy, set asset lives and values and then prepare a full valuation based on individual component level	Medium	2024/25	20	$12,000
6.3	Financial Management	Reconcile the asset based valuation with the financial valuation to produce a single parks valuation for the organisation	Medium	2024/25	40	
3.1	Performance Measurement	Collation of additional information on capacity and utilisation (performance).	Medium	2024/25	80	
		Conduct open space performance assessments across the open space network (prior to review and update of Public Open Space Strategy)	Medium	2024/25	24	$35,000
5.4.7	Financial Management	Periodically test the market and analyse cost / benefit for in-house vs outsourced service delivery	Medium	As required	24	
4.3	Growth & Demand	When the Open Space Strategy (and any other strategy document) is reviewed, ensure the parks categories and levels of service are integrated/consistent with those used for asset management and service delivery.	Medium	As required	20	
4.4	Growth & Demand	Consider developing full park management plans in addition to current approach of design (master plans) and overall parks policy.	Medium	As required		
4.5	Growth & Demand	Future master plans need to be cognisant of the adopted Development LoS requirements, to ensure that the standard of development is appropriate to the open space category and economically sustainable	Medium	As required		
5.6.1	Operations	Review roles / responsibilities of Community Asset Committees with consideration to taking on maintenance responsibilities in-house or formalising/redefining service level agreements with Community Asset Committees	Medium	2025/26	80	
2.1	Service Levels	Align the Public Open Space Strategy categories with the level of service based park categories used in this AMP	Low	2025/26	20	

Ref.	Area	Description	Priority	Target Completion	Resource (hrs) (Internal)	Budget (External)
2.2	Service Levels	Align the Recreation and Playground Strategies categories with the level of service based park categories used in this AMP	Low	2025/26		
2.3	Service Levels	Develop provision levels of service defining size, location, etc. that align with level of service based park categories and quality standards. These will provide specific direction for future park land acquisition and enable assessment of current park land, to ensure it is fit for its intended purpose.	Low	2025/26	20	$7,500
4.2	Growth & Demand	Continue to develop a model that identifies the cost of operating and maintaining a hectare of parkland related to population size/growth, in line IPWEA Parks Management Practice Notes. This will enable more accurate forecasting of future funding requirements.	Low	2025/26	20	$10,000
5.3.5	Parks Performance	Investigate new technologies for counting visitors and identify suitable locations	Low	2025/26	40	
5.4.2	Management and Financial	Develop operations and maintenance costing model	Low	2026/27	20	$10,000
6.1	Financial Management	Following the development of a specific parks Operations and Maintenance budget structure based on the parks categories, levels of service and activities, complete preparation of long term (10yr) financial plan.	Low	2026/27	60	

Appendix 1

Development Levels of Service by Open Space Category

A1 Bushland Parks

A1.1 Development Level of Service – Quality Standards

Table A1: Bushland Park Development LoS

Bushland				
Generally a low level of development is envisaged for Bushland Reserves with the objective being to provide a "natural" outdoor experience. Development will generally be limited to low impact activities such as walking and mountain bike tracks. Higher use sites may require ancillary visitor facilities such as car parking, signage and toilets.				
	Quality Standard 1	**Quality Standard 2**	**Quality Standard 3**	**Notes**
Access Roads	Access roads only permitted to gain access to natural features on the site where this can be achieved without compromising any ecological values of the site - sealed surface only		x	
Ancillary Sports Structures	x		x	
Artificial Cricket Strip	x		x	
BBQs	x		x	
Bike Racks	x		x	
BMX Tracks	x		x	
Buildings - Community	x		x	
Buildings - Visitor	Architecturally design using high quality materials		x	
Car Parking Onsite	Permitted - sealed only		x	
Dog Exercise Area	x		x	
Dog Infrastructure	x		x	
Drainage	x		x	
Drinking Fountains	x		x	
Entrance Sign	High quality sign on main entrance, standard quality signs on other entrances		Standard quality sign on main entrance only	
Exercise Equipment	x		x	
Fencing and Barriers	Rural style fencing only.		Rural style fencing only	
Flagpoles	x		x	
Footbridges	Permitted where appropriate, using high quality materials		Permitted where appropriate, using standard quality materials	
Fountains	x		x	
Gardens	x		x	
Interpretive Signs	Permitted where appropriate, using high quality materials		x	
Irrigation - Turf	x		x	
Lighting	x		x	
Public Use Mains Power	x		x	
Paths	Permitted where appropriate. Sealed paths within and immediately adjacent to other infrastructure, otherwise gravel.		Permitted where appropriate. Un-sealed only	
Playgrounds	x		x	
Public Art	x		x	
Public Toilets	1 unisex facility		x	
Rubbish bins	Up to 4 bins in association with picnic facilities		x	
Seats	High quality, only in association with picnic facilities		x	
Shelters	High quality, only in association with picnic facilities		x	
Skate Parks	x		x	
Stormwater Devices	x		x	
Picnic Setting	High quality, only in association with picnic facilities		x	
Trees	x		x	
Turf Wicket Table	x		x	
Viewing Platforms	Permitted where appropriate. High quality materials		Permitted where appropriate. Standard quality materials	
Water Body	Natural water features only		Natural water features only	
Water Points	1 water point in association with picnic facilities		x	

A2 Civic Parks

A2.1 Development Level of Service – Quality Standards

Table A2: Civic Park Development LoS

Civic Parks				
Civic Parks are areas of open space provided within retail/business areas, designed to provide a space for visitors to the town centre, casual gatherings, meetings, relaxation, lunchtime gatherings, etc. These areas will have a high standard of development and presentation associated with their high profile location and visitor usage.				
	Quality Standard 1	**Quality Standard 2**	**Quality Standard 3**	**Notes**
Access Roads	x			
Ancillary Sports Structures	x			
Artificial Cricket Strip	x			
BBQs	x			
Bike Racks	High quality, provided where required to meet demand.			
BMX Tracks	x			
Buildings - Community	x			
Buildings - Visitor	x			
Car Parking Onsite	x			
Dog Exercise Area	x			
Dog Infrastructure	x			
Drainage	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.			
Drinking Fountains	High quality drinking fountain at 1 unit per site.			
Entrance Sign	High quality, ornamental and decorative sign at main entrance. High quality signs at other entrances.			
Exercise Equipment	x			
Fencing and Barriers	Where appropriate. High quality and ornamental.			
Flagpoles	Where required. High quality and ornamental.			
Footbridges	Where appropriate. High quality and ornamental.			
Fountains	Where appropriate. High quality, ornamental and decorative.			
Gardens	Where appropriate, shrub and perennial gardens.			
Interpretive Signs	Where appropriate. High quality.			
Irrigation - Turf	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.			
Lighting	Where appropriate, of high quality, ornamental and decorative.			
Public Use Mains Power	Where appropriate. 3-phase.			
Paths	Where required. Kept to a minimum. Sealed or paved.			
Picnic Setting	High quality. Up to 4 units per site			
Playgrounds	x			
Public Art	Where appropriate. High quality art installations.			
Public Toilets	x			
Rubbish bins	High quality, ornamental bins at 2 units per 500m2 to meet demand. To a maximum of 4 units.			
Seats	High quality ornamental seats where appropriate, associated with meeting points and vistas.			
Shelters	x			
Skate Parks	x			
Stormwater Devices	Permitted where appropriate.			
Trees	Newly planted trees 1.8m+ with excellent form.			
Turf Wicket Table	x			
Viewing Platforms	x			
Water Body	x			
Water Points	x			

A3 Community Parks

A3.1 Development Level of Service – Quality Standards

Table A3: Sport and Recreation Park Development LoS

Community Parks				
Community Parks are developed urban parks used by the local community for a range of informal recreation activities, particularly children's play and family based activities. They should provide an open grass area suitable for small-scale ball play, children's play equipment, seating, paths and attractive amenity planting.				
	Quality Standard 1	**Quality Standard 2**	**Quality Standard 3**	**Notes**
Access Roads	Where appropriate. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	Where appropriate. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	x	
Ancillary Sports Structures	x	x	x	
Artificial Cricket Strip	x	x	x	
BBQs	Standard quality provided at 1 BBQ per 1000m2 up to a maximum of 4 units	Standard quality provided at 1 BBQ per 1000m2 up to a maximum of 4 units	x	
Bike Racks	Standard quality, provided where required to meet demand.	Standard quality, provided where required to meet demand.	x	
BMX Tracks	x	x	x	
Buildings - Community	x	x	x	
Buildings - Visitor	x	x	x	
Car Parking Onsite	x	x	x	
Dog Exercise Area	Where appropriate.	Where appropriate.	Where appropriate.	
Dog Infrastructure	Only in association with off leash areas. High quality.	Only in association with off leash areas. Standard quality.	Only in association with off leash areas. Standard quality.	
Drainage	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	
Drinking Fountains	Standard quality drinking fountain at 1 unit per site.	Standard quality drinking fountain at 1 unit per site.	x	
Entrance Sign	Standard quality sign at all main entrances.	Standard quality sign at all main entrances.	Standard quality sign at all main entrances.	
Exercise Equipment	Where appropriate. Between 4 and 10 items.	Where appropriate. Between 3 and 6 items.	x	
Fencing and Barriers	Where appropriate. High quality.	Where appropriate. Standard quality.	Where appropriate. Standard quality.	
Flagpoles	x	x	x	
Footbridges	Where appropriate. High quality.	Where appropriate. Standard quality.	Where appropriate. Standard quality.	
Fountains	x	x	x	
Gardens	Mixed shrub gardens only, where appropriate.	x	x	
Interpretive Signs	Where appropriate. High quality.	x	x	
Irrigation - Turf	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	
Lighting	High quality functional lighting, where appropriate.	Standard quality functional lighting, where appropriate.	x	
Public Use Mains Power	x	x	x	
Paths	Where required. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	Where required. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	Where required. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	
Picnic Setting	Standard quality picnic setting at 1 unit per 1500m2	Standard quality picnic setting at 1 unit per 1500m2 up to a maximum of 4 units	Standard quality, 1 unit per site where there is demand.	
Playgrounds	Where appropriate. Large to medium size, high quality playgrounds.	Where appropriate. Medium to small size, standard quality playgrounds.	x	
Public Art	x	x	x	
Public Toilets	1 unisex facility	x	x	
Rubbish bins	Standard quality, 1 unit per 2000m2 up to maximum of 4 units.	Standard quality, 1 unit per 4000m2 up to maximum of 2 units.	Standard quality, 1 unit per site where there is demand.	
Seats	Standard quality seats at 4 units per 2,000m2, up to a maximum of 12 seats per park.	Standard quality seats at 2 units per 2,000m2, up to a maximum of 6 seats per park.	Standard quality, 1 unit per site where there is demand.	
Shelters	x	x	x	
Skate Parks	x	x	x	
Stormwater Devices	Permitted where appropriate.	Permitted where appropriate.	Permitted where appropriate.	
Trees	Newly planted trees 1.8m+ with excellent form.	Newly planted trees 1.8m+ with excellent form.	Newly planted trees 1.8m+ with excellent form.	
Turf Wicket Table	x	x	x	
Viewing Platforms	x	x	x	
Water Body	x	x	x	
Water Points	x	x	x	

A4 Linear Parks

A4.1 Development Level of Service – Quality Standards

Table A4: Sport and Recreation Park Development LoS

Linear Parks				
Linear Parks are long, narrow parks, often associated with waterways, that predominately cater for walking and cycling activities, that often provide for walkway/transport linkages from one precinct to another or to link parks together. *Generally Linear Parks will have a low level of development, except where usage and demand warrants it. This may include formalising accessways, tracks, park furniture and signage.*				
	Quality Standard 1	**Quality Standard 2**	**Quality Standard 3**	**Notes**
Access Roads			x	
Ancillary Sports Structures			x	
Artificial Cricket Strip			x	
BBQs			x	
Bike Racks			x	
BMX Tracks			x	
Buildings - Community			x	
Buildings - Visitor			x	
Car Parking Onsite			x	
Dog Exercise Area			x	
Dog Infrastructure			x	
Drainage			x	
Drinking Fountains			x	
Entrance Sign			Standard quality sign at all main entrances.	
Exercise Equipment			x	
Fencing and Barriers			Where appropriate. Standard quality.	
Flagpoles			x	
Footbridges			Where appropriate. Standard quality.	
Fountains			x	
Gardens			x	
Interpretive Signs			x	
Irrigation - Turf			x	
Lighting			Where required. Standard quality functional lighting.	
Public Use Mains Power			x	
Paths			Where required. Kept to a minimum. Sealed or loose chip.	
Picnic Setting			x	
Playgrounds			x	
Public Art			x	
Public Toilets			x	
Rubbish bins			x	
Seats			x	
Shelters			x	
Skate Parks			x	
Stormwater Devices			Permitted where appropriate.	
Trees			Newly planted trees 1.8m+ with excellent form.	
Turf Wicket Table			x	
Viewing Platforms			x	
Water Body			x	
Water Points			x	

A5 Sport and Recreation Parks

A5.1 Development Level of Service – Quality Standards

Table A5: Sport and Recreation Park Development LoS

Sport and Recreation Parks				
Sport and recreation Parks are primarily used for organised sport and competition with the focus on formally maintained sports turf for a mixture of winter and/or summer sport. The sports turf areas are maintained to an appropriate standard for the sports code use. It may accommodate hard court and built recreation facilities. *Some parks may have recreation facilities such as playgrounds, and other facilities serving a local neighbourhood and community function creating a multi-function park with a wide range of activities occurring.*				
	Quality Standard 1	**Quality Standard 2**	**Quality Standard 3**	**Notes**
Access Roads	Where appropriate. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	Where appropriate. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	Where appropriate. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	
Ancillary Sports Structures	Space permitting and appropriate, any necessary structures that support participation of assigned sports codes.	Space permitting and appropriate, any necessary structures that support participation of assigned sports codes.	Space permitting and appropriate, any necessary structures that support participation of assigned sports codes.	
Artificial Cricket Strip	Permitted where appropriate.	Permitted where appropriate.	Permitted where appropriate.	
BBQs	x	x	x	
Bike Racks	Standard quality, provided where required to meet demand.	Standard quality, provided where required to meet demand.	x	
BMX Tracks	Permitted where appropriate.	x	x	
Buildings - Community	Pavilion/club rooms permitted where appropriate.	Pavilion/club rooms permitted where appropriate.	Pavilion/club rooms permitted where appropriate.	
Buildings - Visitor	x	x	x	
Car Parking Onsite	Permitted where appropriate - sealed	Permitted where appropriate - unsealed	Permitted where appropriate - unsealed	
Dog Exercise Area	Where appropriate.	Where appropriate.	Where appropriate.	
Dog Infrastructure	Only in association with off leash areas. High quality.	Only in association with off leash areas. Standard quality.	Only in association with off leash areas. Standard quality.	
Drainage	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	
Drinking Fountains	Standard quality drinking fountain at 1 unit per per site.	x	x	
Entrance Sign	Standard quality sign at all main entrances.	Standard quality sign at all main entrances.	Standard quality sign at all main entrances.	
Exercise Equipment	x	x	x	
Fencing and Barriers	Where appropriate. High quality.	Where appropriate. Standard quality.	Where appropriate. Standard quality.	
Flagpoles	x	x	x	
Footbridges	Where appropriate. High quality.	Where appropriate. Standard quality.	Where appropriate. Standard quality.	
Fountains	x	x	x	
Gardens	Mixed shrub gardens only, where appropriate.	x	x	
Interpretive Signs	Where appropriate. High quality.	x	x	
Irrigation - Turf	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	
Lighting	High quality functional lighting, where appropriate. Sports lighting on main ovals.	Standard quality functional lighting, where appropriate.	Standard quality functional lighting, where appropriate.	
Public Use Mains Power	x	x	x	
Paths	Where required. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	Where required. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	Where required. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	
Picnic Setting	Standard quality picnic setting at 2 units per hectare to a maximum of 4 units	Standard quality picnic setting at 1 units/ha to a maximum of 2 units	Standard quality picnic setting at 1 units/park	
Playgrounds	x	x		
Public Art	x	x	x	
Public Toilets	Where services permit, 1 standard quality toilet facility per site.	x	x	
Rubbish bins	Standard quality bins at 4 units per park.	Standard quality bins at 3 units per park.	Standard quality bins at 1 unit per park.	
Seats	Standard quality seats at 15 units per park.	Standard quality seats at 8 units per park.	Standard quality seats at 2 units per park.	
Shelters	x	x	x	
Skate Parks	Permitted where appropriate.	Permitted where appropriate.	x	
Stormwater Devices	Permitted where appropriate.	Permitted where appropriate.	Permitted where appropriate.	
Trees	Newly planted trees 1.8m+ with excellent form.	Newly planted trees 1.8m+ with excellent form.	Newly planted trees 1.8m+ with excellent form.	
Turf Wicket Table	Space permitting, competition turf wicket tables.	x	x	
Viewing Platforms	x	x	x	
Water Body	x	x	x	
Water Points	x	x	x	

A6 Streetscape Parks

A6.1 Development Level of Service – Quality Standards

Table A6: Streetscape Park Development LoS

Streetscape Parks				
Streetscape Parks predominately provide landscape values such as grass, gardens and trees to enhance the landscape, provide shade, shelter, visual interest, beautification and in some cases are used for traffic management purposes. Not generally used except for pedestrians passing through.				
	Quality Standard 1	**Quality Standard 2**	**Quality Standard 3**	**Notes**
Access Roads			x	
Ancillary Sports Structures			x	
Artificial Cricket Strip			x	
BBQs			x	
Bike Racks			x	
BMX Tracks			x	
Buildings - Community			x	
Buildings - Visitor			x	
Car Parking Onsite			x	
Dog Exercise Area			x	
Dog Infrastructure			x	
Drainage			x	
Drinking Fountains			x	
Entrance Sign			Standard quality sign at all main entrances.	
Exercise Equipment			x	
Fencing and Barriers			Where appropriate. Standard quality.	
Flagpoles			x	
Footbridges			Where appropriate. Standard quality.	
Fountains			x	
Gardens			Mixed shrub gardens only, where appropriate.	
Interpretive Signs			x	
Irrigation - Turf			Permitted in all areas where appropriate.	
Lighting			Standard quality functional lighting, where appropriate.	
Public Use Mains Power			x	
Paths			Where required. Kept to a minimum. Sealed.	
Picnic Setting			x	
Playgrounds			x	
Public Art			Where appropriate. High quality art installations.	
Public Toilets			x	
Rubbish bins			x	
Seats			x	
Shelters			x	
Skate Parks			x	
Stormwater Devices			Permitted where appropriate.	
Trees			Newly planted trees 1.8m+ with excellent form.	
Turf Wicket Table			x	
Viewing Platforms			x	
Water Body			x	
Water Points			x	