

Recreation Strategy 2022-2025



BELMONT
CITY OF OPPORTUNITY



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Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Belmont acknowledges the Whadjuk Noongar people as the Traditional Owners of this land and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We further acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs, connection and relationship with this land which continues today. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living within the City of Belmont.

Alternative Formats

This document is available on the City of Belmont website and can be requested in alternative formats including electronic format by email and in standard print.

Purpose

Local governments have a central role to play in the provision of community sports and recreation opportunities. This position is reinforced in the *Public Health Act 2016 (WA)*, which shifts the balance towards prevention through health and wellbeing, rather than cure.

This document aims to guide the City of Belmont's planning and provision of recreation-related infrastructure, including places and spaces. Effective planning will ensure our Community's needs and aspirations are met now and in the future.

What is recreation?

Recreation includes sporting and leisure activities that people engage in for enjoyment, relaxation, physical health, and wellbeing.

Recreation primarily requires physical exertion and can include activities that are:

- competitive and non-competitive
- passive and active
- home-based and community-based.

Tee Ball



Soccer



Tai Chi



Croquet



Skateboarding



Stand UP Paddleboarding along the Swan River



Why is recreation important?

Recreation directly influences the health, wellbeing, and quality of life experienced by our Community.

Community groups, organisations, other levels of government, and the private sector all play a role in the provision of recreation services and facilities. Building stronger relationships between these crucial stakeholders will provide opportunities to deliver more effective programs, services, and sustainable facilities.

The provision of recreation is strongly aligned with the goals and strategies outlined in the City of Belmont Strategic Community Plan 2020 - 2040. The development of a recreation strategy also plays a vital role in helping the City of Belmont (City) meet its obligations in delivering the public health plan.

The City's role includes:

- Consulting with our Community
- Planning places and spaces to create healthy environments
- Providing and facilitating the delivery of programs and services
- Maintaining and continuously improving the City's places and spaces
- Administering the use of the City's places, spaces and activities
- Advocating and partnering with other stakeholders
- Reviewing and evaluating our Community's needs.



The development of this Recreation Strategy supports key features of the Public Health Act 2016 (WA) and the City's Public Health Plan 2021 - 2024, which includes:

- Promoting public health and wellbeing in our Community
- Helping prevent disease, injury, disability, and premature death
- Informing individuals and the Community about public health risks
- Encouraging individuals and their communities to plan for, create and maintain a healthy environment
- Supporting programs and campaigns intended to improve public health
- Collecting information about the incidence and prevalence of diseases and other public health risks for research purposes
- Reducing the health inequalities of disadvantaged communities.

Strategic Synergies

The Recreation Strategy aligns with the aspirations of the City of Belmont Strategic Community Plan 2020 - 2040 (key areas are outlined below) and supports and enhances other key City strategies, plans and policies.

LIVEABLE BELMONT
We are vibrant, desirable and liveable

What this will look like:

- All ages can live, work and play in the City.

What we will do:

- Encourage and educate the community to embrace sustainable and healthy lifestyles.

CONNECTED BELMONT
We can all get where we want to go

What this will look like:

- People of all abilities are able to move freely, safely and sustainably around the City.
- The City's bike paths are connected and easy to ride on.

What we will do:

- Design our City so that it is accessible by people of all ages and abilities.
- Make our City more enjoyable, connected and safe for walking and cycling.

NATURAL BELMONT
We care for and enjoy our environment

What this will look like:

- Belmont has an abundance of natural features, including the river, parks and gardens which are colourful and focus on nature.
- Tree lined streets create shade, facilitate walking and riding, and give health and environmental benefits.

What we will do:

- Provide green spaces for recreation, relaxation and enjoyment.

CREATIVE BELMONT
We are innovative, creative and progressive

What this will look like:

- The City works with local schools and businesses to run programs.

What we will do:

- Support and collaborate with local schools and businesses.

RESPONSIBLE BELMONT
We are inclusive, engaging and act with integrity

What this will look like:

- Community is actively involved in decision making through engagement.
- Engagement is part of everything the City does.


What we will do:

- Support collaboration and partnerships to deliver key outcomes for the City.
- Invest in services and facilities for our growing community.
- Engage and consult the community in decision-making.

What do we know?


Understanding our City’s needs, demographic profile, and trends provides insight into the implications and opportunities for the provision of sports and recreation to meet our Community’s diverse and changing needs. Provided below is key information in relation to the City’s demographics, that will influence the provision of recreation in the City.

POPULATION PREDICTION




- 43,873 people in 2021
- 65,659 people predicted by 2041

CULTURE




- Significant multicultural population with 41% of residents born overseas
- 31% of residents speak another language at home (other than English)

HOUSING AND SOCIO-ECONOMICS



- Growth in medium and high-density housing has increased by 1106 dwellings since 2016
- The City's SEIFA (Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas) is 985 (2016), which is considered to be low

SERVICE GROUP PREDICTIONS



- Over the next 10 years, it is forecasted that there will be a 28.3% increase in population under working age, a 41.4% increase in population of retirement age, and a 19.0% increase in population of working age
- The largest increase in persons forecast are Parents and Homebuilders (35 to 49), and in the ages 0 to 4
- Lone person households are forecasted to increase by 1,834 households and account for 33.5% of all households

Our Physical Health

Participating in recreational activities can significantly improve physical health. Evidence suggests sufficient physical activity is a primary prevention against many lifestyle-related diseases. Physical activity helps manage weight and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, some cancers, and diabetes. Physical activity increases bone and muscle strength and assists in managing mental wellbeing (Department of Health, 2014).

The City of Belmont Community Health Profile (2019) data prepared by the East Metropolitan Health Service demonstrates the need for a recreation strategy to address the City’s low physical activity levels and highly sedentary lifestyles, and their associated health impacts.

Our Community’s Priorities

Over the past three years, the City has engaged in community consultation to understand the community’s aspirations to help inform decisions and deliver better services.

The following surveys, workshops and reviews have particularly informed the development of this strategy:

- Youth Plan Review
- Markyt® Community and Wellbeing Scorecard surveys (2019 and 2021)
- Local Planning Scheme Review
- Strategic Community Plan workshops and surveys
- COVID-19 survey
- Let’s Celebrate Sync Up and Christmas Markets Recreation survey
- Local Sporting Club workshop

The following points represent the high-level findings. Our Community:

- Values local sporting clubs and groups
- Values events, programs, and facilities that encourage physical activity, cycling, and walking
- Wants to be more aware of what is available in the community
- Wants our local parks and related amenities such as playgrounds, skate parks, lighting, outdoor exercise equipment, and activities to become focal points that support physical activity
- Appreciates the importance of local parks and open spaces to exercise during outbreaks of COVID-19
- Experiences the barrier of participation because of limited finances.



Our Local Sporting Clubs Challenges and Priorities

Local sporting clubs play a pivotal role in providing physical activity opportunities accessible to our Community. The City has over 40 recreation clubs with over 3,000 residents participating.

A workshop for sporting clubs held in March 2021 asked clubs about their needs. The following issues and challenges were noted:

- Lack of community connection and networks
- Challenging to market services effectively
- Facility limitations in size, sports lighting, change rooms, and storage
- The high cost of participating in sport
- Limited collaboration with schools to access school sites
- Understanding what the Community wants from sporting clubs (mainly adults)
- Lack of volunteers
- Time-poor participants due to other commitments
- Accessibility for people with disabilities
- Funding, grants, and sponsorship
- The inability of clubs to create a ‘home’ feel in community facilities, including clubrooms and signage.

Our Facilities

The City has several purpose-built facilities to support both organised and informal recreation. As part of the analysis undertaken for the Community Infrastructure Plan, it was identified that:

- There are opportunities to maximise the use of existing facilities and active reserves
- Sports lighting at facilities needs review, plus the development of an associated policy and plan
- There is a need to develop Standards of Provision for community facilities considering the changing needs of users
- The City should review its approach with leased facilities to enhance performance management mechanisms
- Options for the future redevelopment of the 400 Abernethy Road site need to be determined
- A strategic approach should be developed for future skate parks and informal play/recreation spaces
- Shared use at school sites may need to be considered in the future, should there be a need to offset any deficits in access to sporting facilities across the City. Through shared use, both parties may benefit from reduced costs, subject to reaching a mutually beneficial agreement with the schools.

The City's Public Open Space (POS) Strategy includes a detailed analysis of POS provision and proposes strategies to address a range of opportunities, including:

- Balancing the diversity and function of POS to include sport, recreation, and nature
- Recommending levels of development/ facilities at each catchment hierarchy of POS, that is, Local, Neighbourhood, District and Regional
- Ensuring green spaces meet changing community requirements.

Recreation Trends

General Trends

The sporting landscape in Australia is changing, and how we live, work, and engage in sport has changed.

These changes present several industry challenges to adapt and provide suitable physical activity opportunities that encourage and allow all Australians to be more active more often throughout their lives. Previously people planned their weeks around sporting and physical activities; today, many Australians now look for sporting and physical activities that work around their week or have become inactive.

Key national trends include:

- As a nation, we are becoming older, more ethnically diverse, and time-poor
- The exponential growth in digital technology has transformed the way we live, work and play
- Participation in traditional sport-related activities has stagnated over the last 20 years, whilst participation in non-sport physical activities has increased significantly. Organised sports now compete with less organised physical activities such as yoga, cycling, bushwalking, and fitness/gyms. (Sport 2030 – Participation, Performance, Integrity, Industry).

Recent findings from the Future of Australian Sport report highlighted six significant trends that are likely to redefine the sports sector in Australia over the next 30 years (SPORT 2030: Sport AUS). These include:

- A Perfect Fit – Personalised sport for health and fitness. Sports need to be tailored to meet personal needs as Australians become increasingly timepoor.

- From Extreme to Mainstream – The rise of lifestyle sports. Adventure and alternative sports are becoming more popular with younger Australians. Future participation will be driven by widespread exposure through digital media platforms.
- More than Sport – Increased focus on the broader benefits of sports participation. This includes physical and mental benefits, crime prevention, and social inclusion.
- Everybody's Game – Demographic, generational, and cultural change. The types of sports Australians get involved in are likely to shift as demographics, including cultural landscapes, change.
- New Wealth New Talent – Economic growth and sports development in neighbouring countries like Asia will impact sports participation.
- Tracksuits to Business Suits – Market pressures and new business models. Professional athletes are likely to be drawn away from sports with lower salary bases. Sports administration is expected to change from community-based organisations to corporate structures as they face increased accountability and responsibility.

Women in Sport Trends

Across Australia, women and girls are exposed to new ways of participating in organised sports. Previous AusPlay research indicates that girls and women are as active as boys and men; however, they tend to move away from organised sports, earlier than boys, in their midteens towards exercise and gym-type activities.

In Australia, the recent establishment of professional female sports competitions and associated development pathways have seen female participation become the fastestgrowing segment in organised sports, including Soccer, Australian Rules Football, Rugby League and Rugby Union, Athletics, and Cricket. Increased exposure through televised coverage, financial investment, and the development of suitable female sporting facilities is expected to drive further growth in organised sport in the coming years.

Volunteers

An estimated 3 million Australians choose to volunteer in the sports and active recreation sector each year. Volunteers contribute to sports' social and economic value at the community level. Many sports and sporting organisations are reliant on volunteers to operate. They would be unable to survive without volunteers who fill many critical roles, including coach, official, manager, administrator, board, and committee member (AusPlay).



Volunteering Australia research shows the rate of volunteering through an organisation has declined significantly over the last ten years. A review into Volunteer Management Activity has highlighted several ways in which the volunteering landscape in Australia is changing:

- The population is ageing, the workforce is contracting, and people are more discerning about how they want to volunteer their time
- Information technology provides people new opportunities to find volunteering opportunities that suit their interests and circumstances and volunteer in different ways
- The term 'new volunteerism' was used to portray how volunteering is becoming more irregular and self-orientated in volunteer motivations.

Due to the decline in volunteers, sporting clubs and community groups need to proactively plan, recruit, and manage volunteers to ensure they are well organised and recognised for their contribution. A planned approach to managing volunteers enhances volunteer experience and improves retention.

Impact of COVID-19

In the short term, the global pandemic has accelerated an increase in participation in nontraditional sports activities. The emergence of the pandemic resulted in physical activities, such as running, walking, home gyms, and cycling, which are continuing to rise over sports and organised sporting activities in popularity.

How these recent changes will impact longterm participation trends will be measured over the coming years (AusPlay).

Participation Trends

Data on recent recreation participation levels and trends helps the City to develop an understanding of contemporary recreation interests in our Community and how the City can respond.

National and state physical activity statistics are captured twice yearly by Sport Australia. Key participation statistics and trends identified during the 2019/2020 survey before the onset of the global pandemic discovered (AusPlay):

- Participation rates for boys and girls were similar; however, girls are more likely to participate in non-sport-related physical activity than boys. Boys were more likely to join in sport-related physical activity and club sports of all ages.
- Participation for men is highest among 15- to 17-year-olds and tends to decline in successive adult age groups. For women, participation remains reasonably consistent.
- Australian adults tend to play sports for longer durations than non-sport-related physical activities; however, they participate more frequently in non-sportrelated physical activities.
- Common barriers identified for participation in sports included being time-poor, having too many other commitments, age-related issues, being too expensive, having poor health or injuries, and not being interested in sports and physical activities.
- The top motivators for participation in physical activity included improving general health/fitness, fun/enjoyment, and performance/competition.

social reasons, psychological/ mental health benefits, being outdoors, helping lose/manage body weight, active transport, and performance/competition.

Table 1 below lists the top ten most participated physical activities at national and state levels, plus locally within the City. The data used to collate the federal and state lists was obtained from AusPlay surveys completed in 2019/2020. The City's data was obtained from a study undertaken during a local community event and online submissions. The local data closely mirrors the national and state data.

Table 1: Top Ten Physical Activities (All Ages)

Ranking	National	Western Australia	City of Belmont
1	Walking	Walking	Walking
2	Fitness/Gym	Fitness/Gym	Fitness/Gym
3	Athletics/running	Swimming	Swimming
4	Swimming	Athletics/Running	Outdoor Exercise Equipment
5	Cycling	Cycling	Jogging/running
6	Bushwalking	Soccer	Bushwalking
7	Soccer	Australian Rules	Cycling
8	Yoga	Basketball	Yoga
9	Golf	Yoga	Tennis
10	Tennis	Netball	Pilates

Female participation is becoming the fastest-growing segment in organised sports



Local Sporting Clubs and Participation

The City has several sporting clubs that use City facilities on a seasonal hire or lease basis. The City currently collects participation data from seasonal hire sporting clubs and a limited number of sporting groups under a lease arrangement.

Table 2 below shows the highest to the lowest total participation numbers by sport, for the top 11 sports. The data demonstrates there is a large discrepancy between junior and organised senior sports participation.

Notably, the data is limited and does not consider all sports or recreation activities that take place in the City such as karate, dance, squash, swimming, and climbing.

Table 2: 2020/2021 City of Belmont Organised Seasonal Sport Participation by Age Grouping and Sport

Ranking	Sport	Senior	Junior	Total
1	Australian Rules	61	438	499
2	Athletics	0	464	464
3	Netball	90	274	364
4	Soccer	116	232	348
5	Cricket	105	219	324
6	Baseball	75	64	139
7	Tee-Ball	0	112	112
8	Lawn Bowls	87	0	87
9	Tennis	62	20	82
10	Rugby Union	32	40	72
11	Softball	55	21	76
Total		683	1,884	2,567

Recreation Goals and Strategies

Increase Participation

1

Why?

Increased participation, whether formal or informal, makes us healthier.

How?

- Strengthen local neighbourhood communities through place-based recreation programs.
- Ensure a broad range of recreation activities and programs are accessible and affordable catering to all life stages.
- Support traditional organised club-based sports and informal recreation opportunities, including active travel like walking and cycling for commuting.
- Encourage programs that engage low participation groups, including disengaged youth, ATSI people, CaLD people, people with disability, seniors and adolescent girls.
- Continue to consult and understand the barriers and motivations driving low engagement levels.

Well-Planned Places & spaces

2

Why?

Well-planned and designed places and spaces engage our diverse interests and encourage our participation.

How?

- Ensure facilities are at optimal use before developing new facilities.
- Plan, design and manage attractive multi-functional facilities, including co-location to create active hubs for casual and organised recreation activities.
- Renew and refurbish City assets to ensure they meet community needs and expectations in line with the City's Public Open Space Strategy, Community Infrastructure Plan and asset management processes.
- Create opportunities for active travel through connected streets and neighbourhoods.

Collaboration & Partnerships

3

Why?

Working together creates diverse and sustainable recreational opportunities.

How?

- Partner with organisations to maximise engagement with target population groups.
- Collaborate with local sporting clubs and providers to develop a partnership approach to deliver recreation opportunities.
- Consult and collaborate/partner with neighbouring local governments and/or relevant recreation networks to create new synergies.
- Seek funding opportunities that support the delivery of recreation initiatives.
- Explore opportunities to develop shared use opportunities with local schools.

Build Community Capacity

4

Why?

Raising awareness and building capacity will ensure our Community is more confident to participate and deliver different recreation opportunities.

How?

- Assist sports and recreation clubs to build their capacity.
- Programs should be supported by health promotion to encourage behaviour change.
- Explore new and innovative ways to provide information about recreation opportunities.
- Use evidence-based decision making, through research and consultation, to target and effectively address needs.

Implementation

To support the implementation of this Strategy, an implementation plan has been developed to identify key actions required to ensure the objectives and outcomes outlined in this Strategy are achieved.

The implementation plan will inform both the City's Long Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget and include the following key considerations:

- Inclusion of measures to monitor the successful implementation of this Strategy
- Ongoing proactive identification of external funding opportunities
- Ensuring the community is well informed in relation to recreation opportunities within the City
- Enhancing the City's knowledge in relation to current and future needs in relevant to the provision of recreation
- Ongoing engagement with key organisations and groups involved in recreation
- Providing the community with free and lowcost recreational opportunities.

Finally, as part of the City's ongoing review process and consultative approach, the Recreation Strategy will be monitored and adjusted as required to ensure outcomes are in the Community's best interests.





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