1.1 ACTIVE RESERVES STRATEGY – STAGE 2
(CF 2009 124 JC)

Responsible Director: Carolyn McClean

RECOMMENDATION


INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement to conduct further consultation with sports clubs and the community in relation to the draft Active Reserves Strategy – Stage 2.

BACKGROUND

The City of Monash has approximately 80 ‘active reserves’ currently used for activities such as cricket, football, soccer, rugby, bocce, croquet, archery, baseball, athletics, fitness training, dog obedience training, school sport and informal social activities. Many of the active reserves current usage (the type of sport and tenant club/s) have evolved historically, with many clubs having existed at the one site for many years.

Consequently, Monash Council identified the need to develop an Active Reserves Strategy to understand the needs of clubs and guide the future provision of sport and sporting facility development within the municipality. The Strategy will provide a framework to protect sporting fields from overuse and develop an understanding of the priorities for infrastructure renewal and development at active reserves. Stage 1 of the Strategy primarily examined clubs at sporting fields and addressed issues in relation to carrying capacity and facility development. This was adopted by Council in June 2010.

Stage 2 primarily examines Council’s leased facilities, which include eighteen tennis clubs, four bowls clubs, two calisthenics clubs, netball centre, basketball centre, gymnastics centre, bridge club and fencing club.

KEY OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the second stage of the strategy are:

- To establish the existing use of these facilities;
- To identify the potential trends and growth patterns of the tenant clubs/groups;
- To establish the existing and future needs and requirements of the clubs, sporting associations and community at these facilities;
- To maximise the use of the facilities by identifying areas where usage can be improved, and;
- To develop recommendations in relation to capital works.
To align capital works projects to Council’s Asset Management Strategy.

**CONSULTATION**

A detailed project plan was developed which provided all key stakeholders multiple opportunities to contribute to the project and outcomes from the study. These included:

- Surveying of tenant clubs – All 29 clubs submitted a survey.
- Face to face consultations with tenant clubs - All tenant clubs were invited to meet with the consultant. A total of 28 clubs took up the invitation.

**METHODLOGY**

Council commenced consultation with sporting clubs in July 2010. The consultation process identified issues according to sporting club types, which allowed further analysis to determine their importance in the context of current trends and opportunities. Some of the key findings included:

i. Tennis Clubs – Four venues could be considered to be exceeding capacity. However, consultation highlighted the ability of other existing clubs to accommodate the additional space required by clubs that currently exceed capacity. Examination of existing facilities highlighted the need for Council to consider assisting clubs with the conversion of courts to synthetic surfaces and the installation of new lighting at clubs that have less than 50% of their courts lit.

ii. Bowls Clubs – Consultation highlighted the capacity of existing clubs to accommodate additional members. With just over 60% of greens having sufficient lighting, Council’s priority should focus on ensuring clubs have sustainable playing surfaces.

iii. Golf Clubs – The capacity of the non private golf clubs is driven by the availability of tee times and facilities. Consultation demonstrated that clubs have access to adequate tee times and functional club houses. The existing membership numbers further demonstrate the capacity of clubs to accommodate additional members.

iv. Other Sporting Club & Associations (including Calisthenics, Bridge, Basketball, Netball, Gymnastics & Fencing) - The consultation highlighted a number of works that Council could consider as part of the Recreation Facility Development Program. In addition, the demand for gymnastics warrants further investigation into the expansion of the existing facility or development of a new facility at a different site.

**TIMELINES**

The Active Reserve Strategy – Stage 2 will be available for comment from 8th December 2011 – 2nd February 2011. Sporting clubs will be also given the opportunity to meet with Council Officers to discuss the Strategy in further detail.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Active Reserves Strategy – Stage 2 will compliment the findings of Stage 1 and provide a broad framework for the future provision of sport within the municipality.

CONCLUSION

As Council faces the challenge of maintaining quality facilities and increasing demand from the community, the Active Reserves Strategy – Stage 2 provides Council with a guide for supporting the future provision of sport within the municipality.