

DRAFT

MAY 2020

TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL SPORT & RECREATION STRATEGIC PLAN

SUMMARY REPORT

Acknowledgments

Tamworth Regional Council and Tredwell acknowledge the Gamilaroi/Kamilaroi people, who are the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council would like to pay respect to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in and visiting our region.

The Tamworth Regional Council Project Team have significantly contributed to the development of this Strategic Plan:

- Sam Eriksson, Strategic Project Coordinator
- Paul Kelly, Manager Sport and Recreation

All stakeholders and community members who have contributed through an online survey, workshop or interview are also thanked for their time and effort.

Photographs have been provided by Tamworth Regional Council.

Disclaimer

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Revision	Date	Details	Editor
Summary Draft	27.04.2020	Supporting <i>Tamworth Region Sport and Recreation Strategic Plan Draft R3</i>	AC
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01 Introduction

Project Overview

Tamworth Regional Council (Council) acknowledges the significant contribution that sport and recreation bring to the community. The planning and design of such facilities needs to be carefully considered to ensure that the needs of the community are addressed now and into the future. Council has worked with the specialist sport, recreation and open space planning firm, Tredwell, on the preparation of the Tamworth Region Sport and Recreation Strategic Plan.

The Plan provides a road map for planning and developing sport and recreation facilities (structured and unstructured) across the Tamworth region to align with the planned growth identified in Tamworth's Blueprint 100 strategy.

Regional Context

Tamworth is the major centre for the broader catchment area of Northern Inland New South Wales (NSW) which has a growing population of more than 200,000 people encompassing other major towns such as Inverell, Armidale and Gunnedah. Tamworth is also the largest population centre in the New England North West planning region.

The Tamworth region covers a diverse geographic area with a growing population of over 60,000 residents. The towns of Manilla, Barraba, Nundle and Kootingal, along with another 17 hamlets offer an attractive lifestyle underpinned by a strong regional economy.

Provision of high-quality sport and recreation facilities, clubs and programs are increasingly contributing to the attractiveness of the Tamworth region for lifestyle.

Methodology

The project's five stage methodology included:

- | | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| STAGE 1 |  | Background Research & Trends Analysis
October / November 2019 |
| STAGE 2 |  | Audit & Consultation
November / December 2019 |
| STAGE 3 |  | Issues & Opportunities Identification
January / February 2020 |
| STAGE 4 |  | Draft Sport & Recreation Strategic Plan
March / April 2020 |
| |  | Public Exhibition
June 2020 |
| STAGE 5 |  | Final Sport & Recreation Strategic Plan
July 2020 |



Council's Role

Local government plays a major role in the development of sport and recreation, particularly at the community level. Successful networks of sport and recreation facilities, clubs and programs are dependent on partnerships and ongoing cooperation between a wide range of organisations including all levels of government, peak bodies, State Sporting Organisations (SSOs), clubs and associations, as well as the wider community.

NSW sport and recreation delivery framework

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Department of Health Sport Australia
Australian Sports Commission
Australian Institute of Sport

STATE GOVERNMENT

NSW Office of Sport
NSW Department of Industry

GOVERNING BODIES

Sport NSW
School Sport NSW Peak Bodies
State & National Sporting Organisations

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Council Sport & Recreation Clubs
Schools Private Providers

COMMUNITY

Participants Officials Coaches
Volunteers Families

Council plays an important role in facilitating benefits and achieving positive outcomes for its community through sport and active recreation provision. Key roles include:

- **Planning**
 - Strategic planning
 - Master planning
 - Policy development
- **Facility Management**
 - Asset management
 - Leasing and licensing
 - Compliance with legislation & standards
- **Partnerships and Advocacy**
 - Advocating on behalf of the community and clubs
 - Partnering with other Councils, State and Federal Government
 - Strengthening relationships with sporting clubs
- **Service Provision**
 - Club development and training
 - Information provision
 - Sports club liaison/engagement
 - Special events
 - Inclusive programs
- **Funding**
 - Grants
 - Capital investment
 - Accessing external funding

Key Developments

Since Council's previous *Recreation and Open Space Plan* was prepared in 2008, the Tamworth region has experienced significant developments relating to sport and recreation. Key infrastructure projects have included:

1. Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre
2. The Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence (NICSE) which includes:
 - The Tamworth Sports Dome (2011)
 - Tamworth Athletics Centre (2019)
 - Tamworth Cycling Centre (2019)
 - Tamworth Hockey Centre (2019)
3. Tamworth Mountain Bike Park (2014)
4. Tamworth Regional Playground (2015)
5. Scully Park Regional Sporting Precinct (2015)
6. The Youthie (2015)
7. Tamworth Adventure Playground (2018)
8. Tamworth Regional Skate Park (2019)



02 Demand & Trends

Demographic Overview

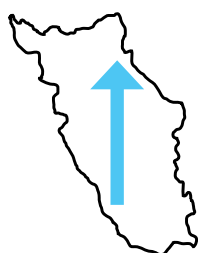
Community sport and recreation needs are influenced by the demographic profile of the region. Such as the fact that the Tamworth Region has:

One of the highest projected population growth rates in regional NSW, with NSW Government forecasting

a population of up to

75,000

in 2036 (2016)



A high proportion of the population

< 18

under 18

and

> 60

over 60
years of age

A significantly higher proportion of

Indigenous Australians

compared to other areas of regional NSW



A high rate of

volunteering

compared to other areas of regional NSW

Varied levels of

socio-economic disadvantage

across the region



Key Sport and Recreation Trends

A range of trends have been identified which will influence sport and recreation into the future, as outlined below.

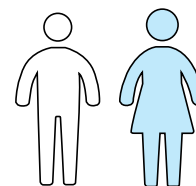
Increasing popularity of individualised activities



Increasing need for active ageing

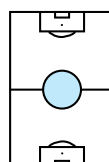
Increasing female participation

in traditionally male dominated sports



Increasingly busy lifestyles

Increasing participation in informal recreation activities



Increasingly widespread use of synthetic playing surfaces

03 Facility Inventory

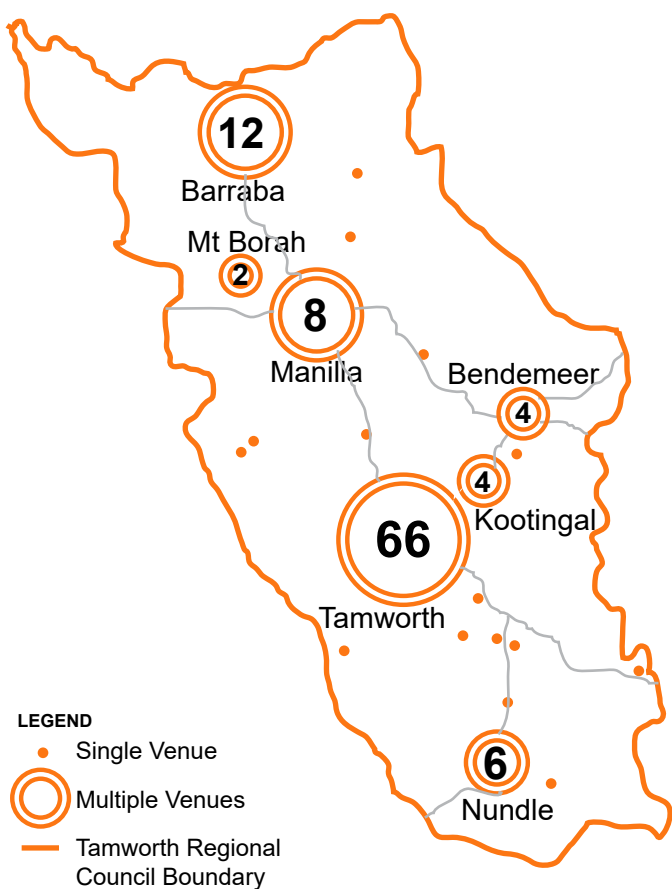
Facility Network Distribution

The facility inventory identifies 117 venues across the Tamworth Region which provide facilities for sport and recreation. The high-level distribution of facilities is shown in the map below.

Tamworth is the primary hub for sport and recreation across the region’s facility network, with many high-quality facilities of international, national, state, regional and local significance.

The network is also supported by the sport and recreation precincts in the villages of Kootingal, Nundle, Barraba and Manilla. Smaller, outlying settlements across the region typically have a recreation ground, managed under a Section 355 Committee, with a community hall, court(s), grass pitch or oval and associated amenities.

Facility Network Distribution Map

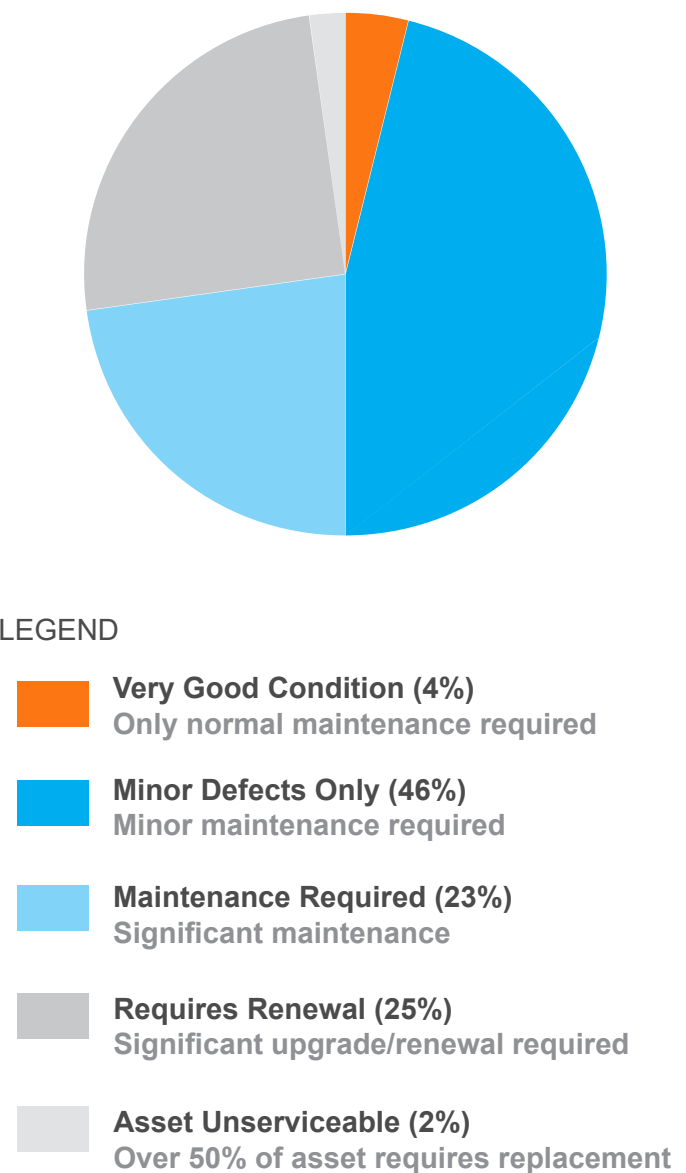


Facility Condition Ratings

The condition of venues and facilities across the region’s network vary considerably. In outlying settlements, this is often dependent on population numbers and the availability of community members to use and maintain these facilities.

Each venue has been given a rating to reflect an assessment of its current condition, with the overall percentages outlined in the graph below.

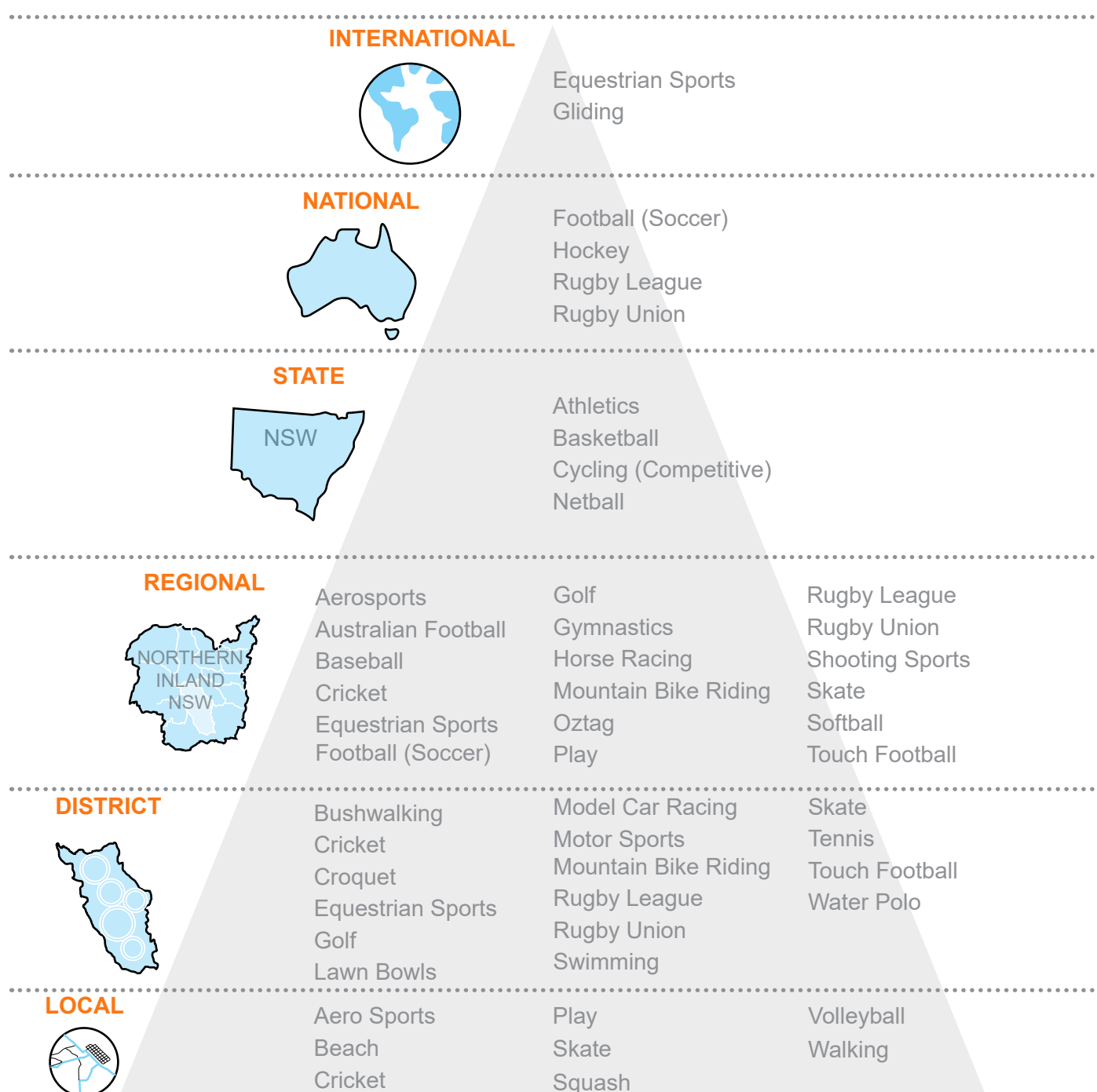
Condition Assessment Ratings



Facility Hierarchy

Establishing a hierarchy of sport and recreation facilities assists in the review of existing facilities, and the planning of new facilities. The hierarchy can be used to guide the strategic distribution of facilities and to ensure that service levels are appropriate to the intended level of usage and population catchment catered for. The facility hierarchy is outlined below.

Facility Distribution across the Hierarchy



04 Consultation

Consultation Mechanisms

The following consultation mechanisms were used during November 2019 to inform the development of the Strategic Plan:

- Six community workshops held in Kootingal, Nundle, Barraba, Manilla and Tamworth.
- Online community survey receiving 164 responses.
- Online club/user group survey receiving nine responses.
- Key stakeholder interviews

Key Themes

The themes which emerged from the consultation processes are outlined with regards to key positive feedback and key issues.

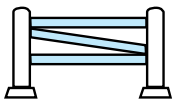
Key positive feedback related to:



Location of facilities



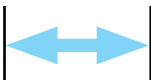
Facilities being generally well maintained and looked after



Facility provision at NICSE and AELEC



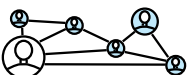
Low cost and affordable sport and recreation opportunities



Broad range of facilities



Council planning for the future

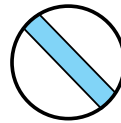


Community connectedness

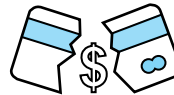
Key issues raised related to:



Need for specific facility improvements and enhanced maintenance regimes



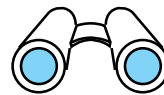
Facilities unavailable at times



High participation and facility use costs



Aged/basic aquatic facilities



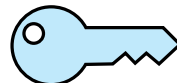
Limited spectator facilities



Limited car parking



Facilities without disability access



Need for improved access and connectivity between facilities for active transport



Need for improved sports lighting



Need for improved changerooms

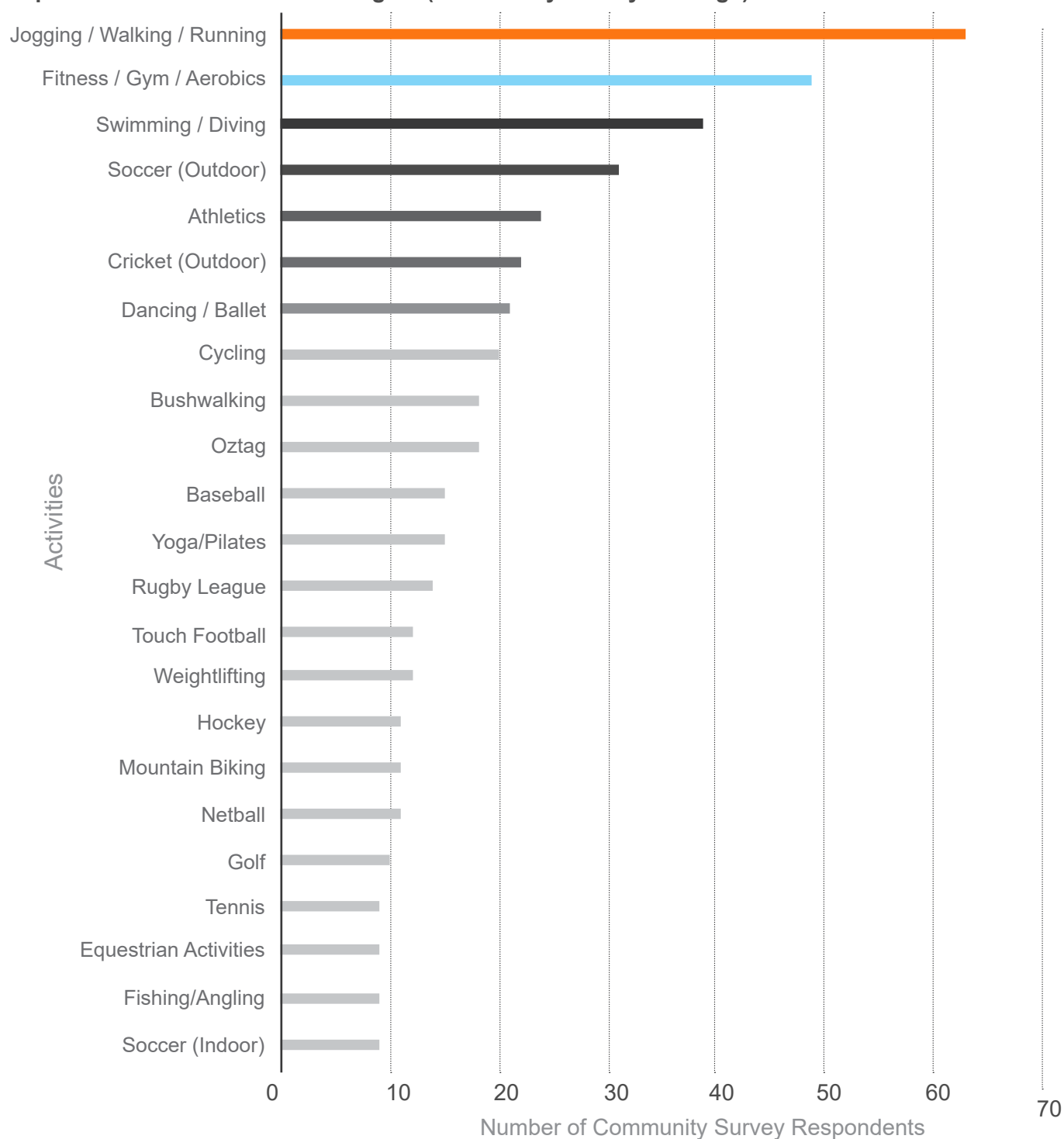
Local Participation

The following graph is based on community survey responses to the following question:

What sport and recreation activities do you participate in, and how regularly?

The 'number of responses' identifies those who indicated participation on at least a fortnightly basis.

Top Activities in the Tamworth Region (Community Survey Findings)



05 Supply & Demand Analysis

Activity-Specific Provision Needs

To assess the facility provision requirements to cater for anticipated population changes across the Tamworth Region, supply and demand factors have been considered where possible across the following key sport and recreation activities:

- Athletics
- Hockey
- Cycling
- Netball & Basketball
- Swimming
- Baseball & Softball
- Tennis
- Rugby League & Union
- Football (Soccer)
- Oztag & Touch Football
- Cricket
- Australian Football
- Gymnastics
- Skate
- BMX
- Equestrian Sports
- Motorsport
- Lawn bowls
- Golf
- Walking & Cycling

The following table outlines the projected future facility requirements and the focus/directions for each of the key activities listed above.

This analysis and focus/directions are based on consideration of:

- Supply and demand factors used by ActiveXchange data analytics
- Requirements of the broader population of Northern Inland NSW
- Facility Inventory (including location, condition, usage, hierarchy)
- Council, club and community plans and aspirations for the facility network
- Strategic directions of the Federal Government, NSW Government, Council, State Sporting Organisations, Clubs and Associations.
- Population projections and trigger points
- Trends influencing sport and recreation
- Best-practice facility provision which includes multi-use, adaptable and flexible spaces.

Activity Focus/Directions

Athletics



Focus on activating the existing NICSE Tamworth Athletics Centre through attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions.

Hockey



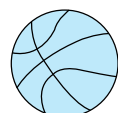
Focus on activating existing facility at NICSE Tamworth Hockey Centre through attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions.

Cycling



Focus on activating existing facility at NICSE Tamworth Hockey Centre through attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions.

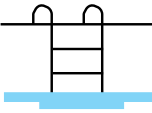



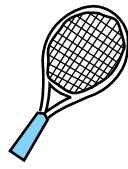


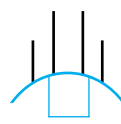
Netball and Basketball







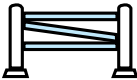



Focus on maintaining existing high-quality netball and basketball facility with indoor & outdoor courts.

Support attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions

Plan for the development of three additional indoor courts when the population of the Tamworth Region reaches 90,000-100,000.

Activity	Focus/Directions	Activity	Focus/Directions
Swimming 	<p>Focus on development of the Tamworth Regional Aquatics and Leisure Centre at the NICSE, and consolidation of the two aged district-level facilities in Tamworth urban area – both to remain open until new centre is constructed & operational.</p> <p>Continued provision of district aquatic facilities in Barraba, Manilla, Kootingal and Nundle.</p>	Football (Soccer) 	<p>Focus on optimising quality and usage of existing facilities, as well as developing additional multi-use playing fields.</p> <p>Support attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions.</p>
Baseball and Softball 	<p>Focus on optimising quality and usage of existing facilities at Riverside Sports Complex.</p> <p>Ensure fields are multi-purpose where possible.</p> <p>Enhance facility to attract and host tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions.</p>	Oztag and Touch Football 	<p>Focus on optimising quality and usage of existing facilities, as well as developing new/additional multi-use playing fields.</p> <p>Support attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions.</p>
Tennis 	<p>Focus on balancing the provision and distribution of tennis facilities across the region to support attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions.</p> <p>Enhancements to include upgrades at Treloar Park Tennis Centre (13 courts), enhancements at facilities with five or more courts, and repurposing of disused courts in outlying settlements.</p>	Cricket 	<p>Focus on balancing the provision and distribution of cricket facilities across the region. Future provision to include development of state/regional-level venue at the NICSE, enhancements at Riverside Sports Complex, and repurposing of disused ovals in outlying settlements.</p> <p>Support attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions.</p>
Rugby League and Union 	<p>Focus on optimising quality of existing facilities and enhancing community access, as well as developing Riverside Sports Complex with multi-use field capacity to host large tournaments/events as well as to support regular programs/competitions.</p>	Australian Football 	<p>Focus on developing state/regional-level venue at the NICSE, and enhancements at No. 1 Oval & Riverside Sports Complex.</p> <p>Support attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions.</p>

Activity	Focus/Directions	Activity	Focus/Directions
Gymnastics 	Focus on maintaining high quality regional-level gymnastics facility, with access to additional capacity at Tamworth Regional Events and Conference Centre (TRECC) to cater for large events.	Motorsport 	Focus on developing state-level multi-use motorsport facility at Oakburn Park Motorsport Precinct.
Skate 	Focus on progressive development of new youth activity spaces (including skate facilities) as the population grows.	Lawn Bowls 	Focus on supporting clubs to sustainably provide, high quality and highly valued facilities to the community. Support clubs/facility owners to determine suitable redistribution and/or repurposing of facilities as required.
BMX 	Focus on upgrading existing competitive BMX facility to a state-level. Support attraction and hosting of tournaments/events as well as regular programs/competitions. Progressively develop of new youth activity spaces (incorporating recreational skate and BMX facilities) as the population grows.	Golf 	Focus on supporting clubs to sustainably provide, high quality and highly valued facilities to the community. Support clubs/facility owners to determine suitable redistribution and/or re-purposing of facilities as required.
Equestrian Sports 	Focus on maintaining high quality national, regional and district level facilities, and continued attraction of equine events and regular programs. Ensure balance between elite and community level facilities and pathways for Tamworth to maintain its position as 'Australia's home of equine sports'. Consider opportunities for additional facility to cater for district-level requirements.	Recreational Walking and Cycling 	Focus on strategically planning for a well distributed and connected network of recreational trails across the region.

06 Challenges & Opportunities

Key Challenges and Opportunities

The following key challenges and opportunities have been identified for sport and recreation in the Tamworth region.

Key Challenges

	Water security, drought and usage restrictions
	Some venues with limited support facilities (e.g. change rooms, lighting)
	Wide regional catchment across Northern Inland NSW
	High forecast population growth
	Maintaining Tamworth's reputation as 'Australia's Home of Equine Sports'
	Limited formal networks for active transport and recreational trail use
	Some sport and recreation precincts located in flood prone areas
	Limited surface capacity of existing playing fields
	Aquatic facilities age, costly to operate and require renewal
	Requirement for facilities & open spaces in new developments
	Encouraging active lifestyles at all life stages
	Balancing need for community-level & elite sport
	Balancing needs of traditional sport & emerging activities
	Balancing needs of Tamworth City and villages

Key Opportunities

	Balanced regional-level provision
	Enhancing support facilities
	Strategic framework for play space provision
	Attracting sport and recreation events
	Enhancing motor sport facilities
	Promoting and optimising usage of facilities
	Three additional multi-use indoor courts
	Resilient and fit-for-purpose facilities
	Youth precincts
	BMX Track/s
	Tamworth Regional Aquatic & Leisure Centre
	Aquatic recreation along the Peel River
	Formalising connectivity between facilities
	Additional playing field capacity
	Optimising capacity and flexible use
	Developing an oval for elite competition

07 Vision & Principles

Vision

The following vision has been developed as a reflection of the aspirations of the Tamworth region community in relation to sport and recreation.



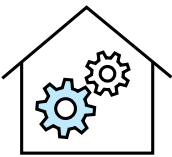
A balanced network of high-quality sport and recreation facilities, clubs/ service providers, programs and events which ensures Tamworth is the sporting hub of Northern Inland NSW and meets the needs of the growing and diversifying population.

A network which enables sport and recreation to contribute significant social and economic benefit through maximising community participation, encouraging active lifestyles, attracting a wide range of events and offering pathways for sporting excellence.

Key Components

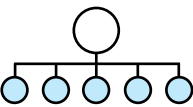
Planning for sport and recreation is multifaceted and interrelated. Consideration needs to be given to the following three major components of planning.

Facilities



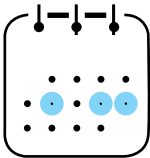
- Planning (strategies, feasibility studies, master plans, reviews)
- Delivery (upgrades, new facilities, re-purposing, collocation, multi-purpose, accessible)
- Management (governance, occupancy agreements, programming, asset management, maintenance)

Clubs and Service Providers



- Club development
- Communication
- Engagement
- Accessibility
- Volunteering
- Partnerships
- Training and development

Programs and Events



- Targeted population groups
- Events, programs and services
- Resourcing
- Communication and marketing
- Inclusion
- Pathways

Planning Principles

The following planning principles have been developed, based on community aspirations and industry best-practice, to guide the development and management of sport and recreation across the Tamworth region.

Principle 1

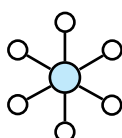
Maximum Community Participation



- Facilities, clubs and programs offer a range of accessible recreational opportunities targeted to the needs of the community and deliver associated health benefits to all people regardless of age, socio-economic status or ability.
- A balanced approach to the provision of facilities across community-level participation, as well as elite pathways, programs and events.
- A balanced approach to the provision of facilities which facilitate active lifestyles through informal recreation activities as well as through competitive sport.

Principle 2

Shared Precincts and Community Hubs



- Where appropriate and practical, facilities are clustered and co-located with compatible users to optimise use whilst maintaining organisational identity and individual needs through adaptable and flexible designs.

Principle 3

Sustainability



- Facilities, clubs and programs effectively integrate long and short-term economic, environmental, social and cultural considerations.
- Facility and program developments strategically align with Council strategies to meet current and future community needs and provide value-for-money.

Principle 4

Partnerships



- Collaborative approaches are used to plan, deliver and manage facilities, clubs and programs with the community, government, clubs, associations, educational institutions and the private sector.
- Partnerships are utilised to achieve community outcomes beyond sport and recreation.

Principle 5

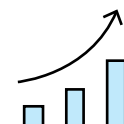
Working Together with Clubs and Community



- Clubs and the wider community are effectively engaged in the planning and design of sport and recreation facilities and programs.
- An inclusive culture of sport and recreation is achieved through club development programs, positive relationships and provision of facilities that support opportunities for all.

Principle 6

Maximised and Validated Community Benefit



- Community benefit is identified, validated and maximised through the investment of sport and recreation facilities.
- Investments which demonstrate the maximum local and regional community benefits are prioritised.

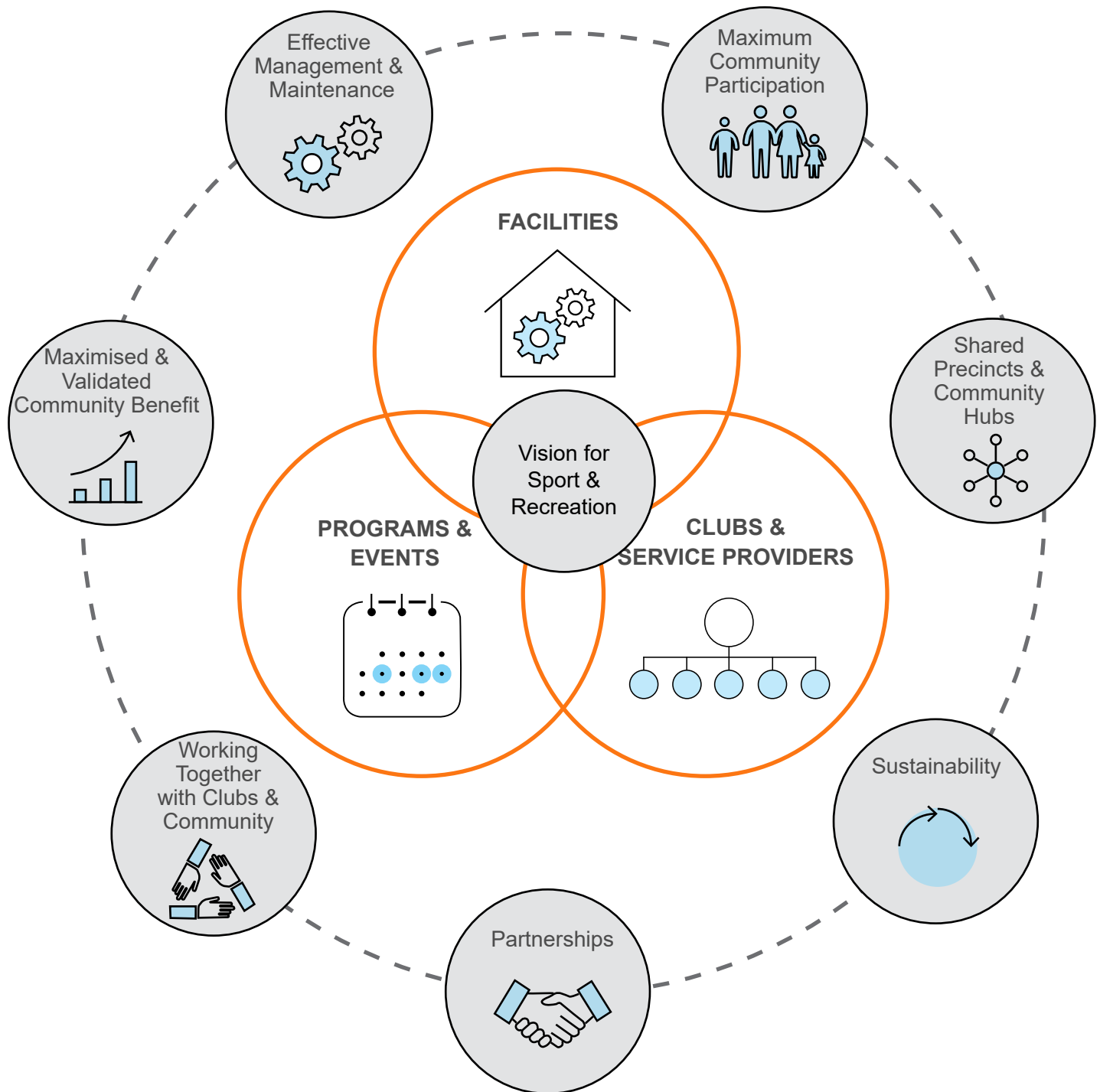
Principle 7

Effective Management and Maintenance



- Facilities are managed and maintained in a manner that promotes safe condition, minimises financial liability and complies with relevant legislation, policies and standards.

Interrelated Components of Sport & Recreation Planning



08 Action Plan

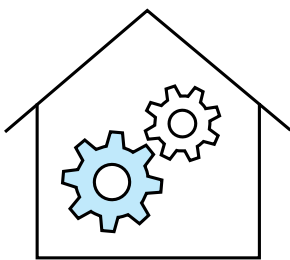
Strategy and Action Plan

Strategies and actions for developing sport and recreation across the Tamworth region have been categorised into the three key components of planning. The topics covered by each of the strategies are outlined below.

The complete Strategy and Action Plan with corresponding rationale, timeframes, partners and resource estimates is included within the comprehensive version of the *Tamworth Region Sport and Recreation Strategic Plan*.

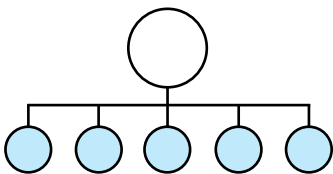
Strategies

Facilities



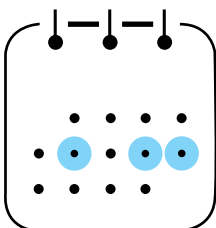
- 1** Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence (NICSE)
- 2** Council Owned and/or Managed Regional-Level Sport and Recreation Facilities
- 3** Tamworth Urban Area - Council Owned and/or Managed District/Local-Level Sport and Recreation Facilities
- 4** Villages and Outlying Areas - Council Owned and/or Managed District/Local-Level Sport and Recreation Facilities
- 5** Non-Council Owned or Managed Sport and Recreation Facilities
- 6** New Developments
- 7** Facility Management and Operation
- 8** Research and Planning

Clubs and Service Providers



- 9** Governance, Training and Development
- 10** Volunteering
- 11** Partnerships

Programs and Events



- 12** Events
- 13** Communication
- 14** Resourcing
- 15** Inclusion and Access