



**Submission to the
Growth Areas
Authority**

Precinct Structure
Planning Guidelines

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1. VicSport

VicSport is the peak body representing Victoria's sport and active recreation sector. Our Mission is to lead the sport, active recreation and associated health agendas into the future. As an independent member based organisation, VicSport represents the needs and concerns of over 170 member groups including State Sporting Associations (SSA), Regional Sport Assemblies (RSA), Local Government Authorities (LGA), active recreation organisations, University, TAFE and school sport groups, as well as organisations representing specific sub-groups of the sector such as the Victorian Council on the Ageing, ACHPER Victoria, Aquatics and Recreation Victoria and the Australian Drug Foundation. Through our extensive network VicSport supports over 20,000 clubs and associations, and over 1.8 million participants, workers and volunteers in the sport and active recreation sector across Victoria. The activities these organisations offer play a vital role in promoting better physical and mental health outcomes for Victorians, as well as creating vital capacity within metropolitan and regional communities.

As Victoria's Peak-Body for sport and active recreation our key roles are to:

- Advocate: as the "Voice for Sport", VicSport represents the interests and concerns of the sector to government, to statutory authorities and to the broader industry.
- Inform policy development: VicSport listens to members and uses this feedback to provide visionary strategic advice to key policy and decision makers.
- Facilitate program delivery: VicSport works with government, statutory authorities and key external stakeholders to develop strategies and provide support required to assist members deliver participation opportunities for all Victorians.
- Build Members' Capacity: VicSport supports and educates members through the provision of quality advice and consultation services and delivery of professional development opportunities.
- Research: through industry research and development, VicSport analyses issues, identifies trends and develops innovative strategies that play a vital role in planning for the future.

2. Importance of Sport and Recreation

Sport and recreation are key leisure activities in Australia and integral components of our national culture, identity and social life. In 2005, over 69% of Australians aged 15 years and over, or 11.1 million people, participated at least once per week in physical activity for exercise, recreation and sport. In addition, an estimated 7.1 million Australians (42%) aged over 15 participated 3 times per week or more, the minimum recommended for maintenance of physical health benefits. (ERASS, 2006) Through the multi-faceted role community sport and active recreation plays in promoting better health, social inclusion and community capacity building, our sector makes a significant contribution to the economic, social and community well being of all Australians.

2a) Victoria's Sport and Active Recreation Landscape

Melbourne has been described as the 'ultimate sports city' in terms of hosting major events. The Victorian sporting events calendar attracts participants and spectators from across Australia and overseas, adding approximately \$1.2 billion each year to the Victorian economy. (Sport and Recreation Victoria, 2007) While elite sportspeople and major television or spectator events are at the forefront of most people's consciousness regarding sport and active recreation, millions of Australians and most Victorians are actively involved at a community level in participating, helping or supporting friends and family engage in the wide range of community sporting and active recreational pursuits that our society embraces.

The primary role of community sport and active recreation organisations is to either directly provide, or facilitate the provision of, low-cost participation opportunities for members. Recent research conducted by VicSport suggests there are at least 840,000 SSA registered sport and active recreation organisation members across Victoria, and a total of 1.1 million participants over the age of 15, and 1.77 million participants aged 5-14 years. In total 2.87 million Victorian's participate in sport and active recreation pursuits. The activities Victoria's sport and active recreation organisations offer not only play a vital role in promoting better physical and mental health outcomes for individuals, they also play a key role in building communities via the integral social capital and infrastructure they generate.

2b) The Benefits of Involvement

The role the sport and active recreation sector plays in promoting better health, social inclusion and community capacity building makes it a vitally important part of Australia's broader community. The benefits of this involvement are now tangible. International research supports the social, economic and health outcomes associated with sport and recreational activity. In its Discussion Paper 2005-2010 (Department for Victorian

Communities, 2004) the Government articulates the contribution sport and recreation makes to Victoria's health, social and economic wellbeing by making important contributions to community, the economy, creating jobs and providing opportunities for physical activity for all Victorians. Compelling scientific evidence shows increased levels of physical activity can bring wide-ranging health benefits. These benefits extend beyond the obvious physical health outcomes and include other positive impacts relating to mental health and personal development. The sport and recreation sector is viewed as a priority area for increasing rates of physical activity in order to extract these benefits. (Jackson, Howes, Gupta, Doyle, & Waters, 2005)

Of particular importance is the fact organised sport is a feature of the lives of many thousands of young people growing up in Australia. Involvement in sport and active recreation offers young people opportunities to form lasting friendships and learn social values and organisational skills that will serve them well in other areas of their lives. (VicHealth, 1999)

2c) Social Capital

Much has been written about the contribution sport and active recreation pursuits make to the social fabric of communities. Social capital refers to the networks of trust, solidarity and reciprocity that exist in a well functioning community. (Putnam, 2000)

In a report on Social Capital and Social Wellbeing, the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicated participation in community sport and active recreation helps to develop the community networks and bonds important for social cohesion. Participation in culture and leisure activities also provides individuals with a sense of belonging, support and social interaction. Some studies suggest a potential link between participation in sport and recreation and a reduction in crime and other anti-social activities. In addition, in both suburban and rural areas, sport, recreation and cultural activities provide a strong community focal point. (ABS, 2002)

Research in the United Kingdom showed very strong correlations between a nation's level of sports membership and the levels of social trust and wellbeing. This shows those countries with higher levels of membership in sports groups among their citizens also have higher levels of social trust. Individuals who are involved in sports organisations, both as members and as participants, are slightly more likely to vote, contact a politician and sign a petition than both non-members and the average citizen. Membership of and participation in sports groups also display strong correlations with higher levels of social trust and trust in institutions, and with life satisfaction. The report concludes that as the links between participation in sport and social and political trust and levels of social engagement are so strong, sport can be a useful tool in building stronger community networks. (Delaney & Keane, 2005)

2d) Developing Communities

Community-based sporting organisations provide the structures for addressing many of the social issues facing Australia. Issues such as racial vilification, equity, diversity, access for people with a disability, Indigenous Australians, new arrivals, cultural and linguistically diverse populations, older aged participants and young people for example are all being addressed by community clubs, organisations and associations in a positive manner.

Community sport and active recreation provides many opportunities for members of our society to meet, interact, develop and grow. Young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Indigenous Australians face additional challenges in their developmental pathway that makes them vulnerable to social and structural disconnection. In these cases sport and recreation can provide an increased range of opportunities to connect with the community. (Department for Victorian Communities, 2004)

3. Benefits of a Thoroughly Planned Precinct

The 79 Local Government Authorities (LGA's) in Victoria are the single largest providers of community sport and recreation facilities in this State, hence a large proportion of sporting activity is undertaken on council owned land and facilities. Historically, LGA's have had adequate sport and recreational facilities to supply the demand of the community. However with increased urban development, population growth, and greater demand from a wider variety of sports looking to expand participation, LGA's, particularly those located in built up urban areas, are finding it difficult to satisfy the demand for sport and recreational facilities.

Many LGA's are limiting the number of teams/participants in structured sporting events due to the maximum utilisation of their facilities. Correct urban planning from the outset can minimise this concern in the future for newly developed land.

Though Guidelines such as the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines are a useful planning tool, it is important to recognise that such guidelines need to be underpinned by an effective legislative platform. The current Victorian Planning Provisions - Public Open Space Provision Objective (56.05-2) state:

- *To provide a variety of open spaces with links to other open spaces and regional parks where possible*
- *To ensure that public open space of appropriate quality and quantity is provided in convenient locations to meet the recreational and social needs of the community*
- *To support active and healthy communities*

These statements are vague in their requirements and history has shown that the S56 Clause relating to open public space saw a proliferation of largely unusable space in new suburban developments (e.g. shallow lakes). Therefore part of the role of the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines should be to minimise some of the ambiguity of the Section 56 Clause and provide relatively specific guidelines to the provision of sport and recreation facilities (with room to adapt to the local context).

The beneficial outcomes of participation in sport and recreation are also closely related to the design of communities and neighbourhoods. An American study indicated persons living in walkable, mixed-use neighbourhoods have higher levels of social capital compared to those living in car-oriented suburbs. Respondents living in walkable neighbourhoods were more likely to know their neighbours, participate politically, trust others, and be socially engaged. (Leydon, 2003)

Sport and active recreation activities create hubs for social gathering, communication and interaction in a predominately creative and supportive environment. This is particularly important for regional and remote communities. (Driscoll & Wood, 1999) A review of the literature showed children's participation in physical activity is positively associated with publicly provided recreational infrastructure (access to recreational facilities and schools) and transport infrastructure (presence of footpaths and controlled intersections, access to destinations and public transportation). At the same time, transport infrastructure (number of roads to cross and traffic density/speed) and local conditions (crime, area deprivation) are negatively associated with children's participation in physical activity. (Davison & Lawson, 2006)

4. Response to Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines

4a) Definition

The definition of 'Active Open Space' as per the Glossary of Terms (p. 101) should be more detailed than "land set aside for use by formal outdoor space". Ideally the definition should reflect the diversity of varying outdoor facilities and some 70 structured sporting options available to the community. A more appropriate definition may read

“Land set aside for structured sporting activity including the provision of associated facilities to support this type of use”.

Throughout the document, the Guidelines give the impression that ‘sport facilities’ consist of ovals, tennis courts and indoor facilities. It is important to note that structured outdoor space is more than just ovals etc, a broader understating and more prescriptive definitions are required. Akin to the ‘Community infrastructure integration opportunities matrix’ being included in the Guidelines (p. 44), an appendix of all the possible options of outdoor and indoor sporting facilities that should be considered should be made available during the planning process. An example of which is located in Appendix A.

4b) Setting the Scene

It is important to consider that the development being planned is not a standalone entity, rather it is part of a larger region that has trends and demands that need to be considered, therefore it is at this time in the planning process that there should be a requirement to gain an understanding of the sport and recreation services and facilities provided in the region and surrounding councils.

Issues that should be considered may be:

- Is there a shortage or oversupply of a particular type of facility that needs to be considered?
- Demographics of the proposed population
- What are the sport and recreation participation trends in the region?
- What amount of space (compared to overall development space) is required now and into the future for structured sporting activity?

This information can be sought through the relevant State Sporting Association, State/ Federal/ Local Government Authority or the Regional Sports Assembly (Appendix B)

It is at this point in the planning process that varying options for sporting facility provision needs to be considered (Appendix A).

4c) Precinct Structure Plan

In reference to ‘Background Technical Report’ [p. 25]

Background Technical Reports should refer to a set of standards on space required for sport and recreation activities. For example, a minimum of 2 hectares of structured sport space per 1000 people. (Australian Social and Recreation Research, 2008) The amount of space allocated may also be directed by the space available, participation trends, population and various other considerations as mentioned above in ‘Setting the Scene’

Consideration should also be given to the standard of facility that is required. That is, the type of participants and grade of competition (junior versus open age use, casual participant versus semi-professional/professional usage, etc). The various specifications and minimum standards for each can be sourced through the relevant State Sporting Association.

Multi-use facilities and fields of play with alternate line markings are an effective method of maximising usage. Overlays of different field markings mean that the same space can be utilised for various sports. Examples being, several tennis courts (depending on the surface) laid adjacently may be marked with lines for a basketball court, and an oval may have the overlay of a soccer pitch or baseball/softball diamond. It is important to note that for natural turf (particularly in the light of water restrictions) that overuse of the one space can cause damage, wear and tear. The use of artificial turf should be considered and encouraged within the Guidelines.

It is imperative that the interests of minority groups be promoted and catered for. Consideration needs to be given to those that are culturally and linguistically diverse, people with a disability, Indigenous people, and those that are in a low socio-economic demographic.

In reference to ‘Relevant Standards for the Precinct Structure Plan – S7’ [p. 42]

Relevant Standards for the Precinct Structure Plan – S7 which identifies specific sports facilities being co-located should have a broader application rather than simply ‘sports fields, aquatic facilities, lawn bowls and tennis courts’. The current definition may be misleading. Ideally the definition should read ‘All sports facilities should be co-located where possible’.

The design and construction of sports facilities within schools should consider the implications of having shared use of these facilities, issues such as after hours and weekend access, separating classroom facility access from sports pavilion access, access by sports teams to change room facilities etc. These considerations need to be addressed in the planning stage to ensure adequate functionality for all users and maximum usage.

4d) Designing Integrated Community Facilities

In reference to 'Key Principles for designing integrated community facilities' [p. 43]

The standards listed in the Guidelines are beneficial however should be broader reaching and more specific in its prescription.

The existing standards cover information such as:

"For a population of 7,000 to 12,000 people, the precinct structure plan should include an integrated community precinct that allows space for a primary school, an early childhood centre, primary health, a community centre and active and passive open space. For a population of 10,000 to 30,000 people, the precinct structure plan should provide a regional scale integrated community precinct allowing space for a range of the following: government secondary school, non-government primary school, branch library, arts and culture facilities, community centre, a youth centre, indoor recreation facilities, active and passive open space as well as additional primary schools."

The standards would be more beneficial if they were to include specific provisions such as those used for Wyndham City Council. (Australian Social and Recreation Research, 2008) The suggested provisions were:

- 1 Multipurpose Community Facility per 16000 (double preschool, dual nurse M&CH centre, meeting spaces, consulting rooms, etc)
- 1 soccer field per 3600 people
- 1 tennis court per 1000 people – configured as a 6 court facility

It is noted that specific provisions will be dependent on the local context however a general guide to provisions would prove valuable

5. Summary

In consideration of the Victorian Planning Provision's non prescriptive treatment of structured sport and recreational facilities, the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines are a vital resource to helping ensure that suitable sport and recreational infrastructure is available for the communities needs now and into the future. VicSport welcomes the opportunity for comment on the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines and welcomes the opportunity for further consultation if the need arises.

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Appendix A

Community Infrastructure Options

Ground	Key Contact Body
Athletics Track	Athletics Victoria
Discuss/Hammer field	Athletics Victoria
Javelin Field	Athletics Victoria
Shot Put Field	Athletics Victoria
Long Jump/Triple Jump Pit	Athletics Victoria
High Jump Area	Athletics Victoria
Pole Vault Runway	Athletics Victoria
Football (Aussie Rules) Field	AFL Victoria
Badminton Court	Badminton Victoria
Basketball Court (indoor/outdoor)	Basketball Victoria
BMX Track	BMX Victoria
Bushwalking Track	Bushwalking Victoria
Dance Studio	Calisthenics
Canoeing Course	Canoeing Victoria
Motor Race Track	Confederation of Australian Motorsport
Cricket Field/Pitch	Cricket Victoria
Croquet Greens	Croquet Victoria
Velodrome	Cyclesport Victoria
Cycling Tracks	Cyclesport Victoria
Diving Pool/Board (within an aquatic centre)	Diving Victoria
Equestrian Field	Equestrian Federation of Australia
Fencing Piste	Fencing Victoria
Football (Soccer) Pitch	Football Federation Victoria
Gridiron Field	Gridiron Victoria
Gymnastics Facility	Gymnastics Victoria
Hockey Pitch	Hockey Victoria
Ice Skating Rink	Ice Skating Victoria
Indoor Sports Facility (Netball, Cricket, (Soccer, Volleyball, etc)	Indoor Sports Victoria
Life Saving Facilities	Life Saving Victoria
Motorcycle Circuit/Track	Motorcycling Victoria
Netball Court	Netball Victoria
Rowing Facilities	Rowing Victoria
Bowls Greens	Royal Victorian Bowls Association

Skate Park	Skate Victoria
Ski/Snowboard facilities	Ski and Snowboard Australia
Shooting Range	Sporting Shooters Assoc. of Victoria
Swimming Pool	Swimming Victoria
Table Tennis Courts	Table Tennis Victoria
Tennis Courts	Tennis Victoria
Touch Football Field	Touch Football Victoria
Judo Mat	Victorian Amateur Judo Association
Billiards/Snooker Tables	Victorian Billiards and Snooker
Golf Course	Victorian Golf Assoc/Women's Golf Victoria
Ice Hockey Rink	Victorian Ice Hockey Association
Rugby League Field	Victorian Rugby League
Rugby Union Field	Victorian Rugby Union
Softball Diamond	Victorian Softball Association
Baseball Diamond	Baseball Victoria
Squash Courts	Victorian Squash Federation
Ten Pin Bowling Lanes	Victorian Ten Pin Bowling Association
Water Polo Field	Victorian Water Polo Association
Volleyball Court	Volleyball Victoria
Yachting Facilities	Yachting Victoria

- Consideration to be given to disabled access and usage
- Many of these fields of play can be co-located on the same land due to identical dimensions, or with alternative line marking

Appendix B

Contact List

State Sport Associations

Athletics Victoria 03 9428 8195
www.athsvic.org.au

Australian Football League Victoria 03
8663 3000
www.footballvic.com.au

Badminton Victoria 03 9686 4777
<http://www.insports.com.au/bv/>

Baseball Victoria 03 9645 8000
www.baseballvictoria.com.au

Basketball Victoria 03 9927 6666
www.basketballvictoria.com.au

BMX Victoria 0448 400 423
www.bmxv.com.au

Bushwalking Victoria 03 8846 4131
www.vicwalk.org.au

Calisthenics Victoria Inc 03 9562 6011
www.calisthenics.asn.au

Canoeing Victoria 03 8846 4120
www.vic.canoe.org.au

Confederation of Australian Motor Sport
03 9593 7777
www.cams.com.au

Cricket Victoria 03 9653 1100
www.cricketvictoria.com.au

Croquet Victoria 03 9379 5257
www.croquetvic.asn.au

Cyclesport Victoria Inc 03 8480 3000
www.vic.cycling.org.au

Diving Victoria 03 9686 7534
www.vda.com.au

Dragon Boats Victoria 03 9457 3944
www.dragonboatsvictoria.com.au/

Equestrian Federation of Australia
(VIC) 03 9974 0511
<http://www.vic.equestrian.org.au/>

Fencing Victoria 03 9521 4430
[www.sportingpulse.com/assoc_page.cgi
?c=1-3825-0-0-0](http://www.sportingpulse.com/assoc_page.cgi?c=1-3825-0-0-0)

Football Federation Victoria 03 9474
1800
<http://www.footballfedvic.com.au/>

Gridiron Victoria 03 5248 8022
www.gridironvictoria.com.au

Gymnastics Victoria 03 9214 6020
www.gymnasticsvictoria.org.au

Handball Victoria 0412 160 607
<http://www.handballvictoria.com.au/main.htm>

Hockey Victoria 03 8379 4288
www.hockeyvictoria.org.au

Ice Skating Victoria Inc 03 9570 1169
www.isa.org.au

Indoor Sports Victoria 03 9720 9600
www.indoorsportsvictoria.com.au

Lacrosse Victoria 03 9926 1390
<http://www.lacrossevictoria.com.au/>

Life Saving Victoria 03 9676 6900
www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au

Modern Pentathlon (Victoria) Inc 03 9857 0110
www.pentathlon.org.au

Motorcycling Victoria 03 9482 5422
www.motorcyclingvic.com.au

Netball Victoria 03 9321 2222
www.netballvic.com.au

Orienteering Victoria 03 8846 4140
www.vicorienteering.asn.au/

Pool Victoria 03 9758 2566
www.poolvictoria.org.au

Rowing Victoria 03 9820 8888
www.rowingvictoria.asn.au

Royal Victorian Bowls Association 03 9819 6177
www.bowlsvic.org.au/RVBA.html

Skate Victoria 03 5622 0095
www.skatevictoria.com.au

Sporting Shooters Association of Australia 03 8892 2777
www.ssaavic.com.au/

Surfing Victoria 03 5261 2907
www.surfingaustralia.com

Swimming Victoria 03 9686 5222
www.swimmingvictoria.org.au

Table Tennis Victoria 03 9682 2011
www.insports.com.au/ttv/

Target Rifle Victoria 03 5862 2141
<http://www.trv.org.au/>

Tennis Victoria 03 8420 8420
www.tennisvic.com.au

Touch Victoria 03 9206 6755
http://www.sportingpulse.com/assoc_page.cgi?c=1-703-0-0-0&slD=7899

Triathlon Victoria Inc 03 8616 0538
www.trivic.org.au/

Victorian Amateur Football Association 03 9531 8333
www.vafa.com.au

Victorian Amateur Judo Union 03 9383
2244

Victorian Amateur Pistol Association 03
9398 5351
www.vapa.org.au

Victorian Baton Twirling Inc 03 9704
9383
www.twirling.org

Victorian Billiards and Snooker Inc 03
9360 4144
www.vbsa.org.au

Victorian Country Football League 03
8663 3060
www.vcfl.com.au

Victorian Darts Council
<http://www.dfadarts.org/index.html>

Victorian Golf Association 03 9889
6731
www.golfvic.org.au

Victorian Ice Hockey Association Inc 03
9578 0496
www.icehockeyvictoria.org.au

Victorian Ladies Bowling Association 03
9819154
www.bowlsvic.org.au/vlba.html

Victorian Parachute Council Inc 0417
376 792
www.apf.asn.au

Victorian Rifle Association 03 5449
3153
www.vra.asn.au

Victorian Rogaining Association Inc 03
9425 0000
vra.rogaine.asn.au

Victorian Rugby League 03 8412 4942
www.sportingpulse.com/assoc_page.cgi?c=1-2121-0-0-0

Victorian Rugby Union 03 9529 1377
www.vicrugby.com.au

Victorian Softball Association 03 9360
0817
www.victoria.softball.org.au

Victorian Speedway Council Inc 03 5250
4600
www.victorianspeedway.org.au

Victorian Squash Federation 03 9682
2199
www.victoriansquash.com.au

Victorian Tenpin Bowling Association 03
9363 5239
www.victenpins.com.au/

Victorian Water Polo Association 03
9926 1552
<http://www.sportserver.com.au/waterpolo/VWPI/index.php>

Victorian Water Ski Federation 03 9602
4244
www.waterskiracing.com

Victorian Weightlifting Association Inc 03
9819 5999
www.vicweightlifting.com

Volleyball Victoria 03 9794 0009
www.volleyballvictoria.com.au

Regional Sports Assemblies

Leisure Networks 03 5222 3911
www.leisurenetworks.org

South West Sports Assembly 03 5561
1699
www.southwestsport.com.au/

Central Highlands Sports Assembly 03
5331 6966
www.chsa.org.au

Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly 03
5382 4599
www.wrsa.org.au

Wheelchair Sport Victoria 03 9473 0133
www.wsv.org.au

Women's Golf Victoria 03 9524 7610
www.womensgolf.org.au

Yachting Victoria 03 9597 0066
www.vic.yachting.org.au/

Mallee Sports Assembly Inc 03 5021
3464
www.malleesportsassembly.org.au

Sports Focus Inc 03 5442 3101
www.sportsfocus.com.au

ValleySport 03 5831 8456
www.valleysport.net.au

The Centre 03 5762 4311
www.thecentre.vic.edu.au

GippSport 03 5135 8335
www.gippsport.com.au/index.php

Local Government Authorities

For a full list of Local Government Authorities, visit the Municipal Association of Victoria website at:

<http://www.mav.asn.au>