

Report to the Future Melbourne Committee

Agenda item 6.5

Draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy 2024-2027; Draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Action Plan 2024-2027

20 February 2024

Presenter: Rushda Halith, General Manager Community and City Services

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) with the draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy (the Policy) (Attachment 2) and draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Action Plan (the Action Plan) (Attachment 3) for approval to be released for community engagement (Attachment 4).
2. The Victorian Government's 2022 Fair Access Policy Roadmap (Roadmap) requires local government authorities to improve gender equitable access and use of publicly owned community sports infrastructure including sporting fields, pavilions, recreation centres and leased and licensed facilities. This position is consistent with Council's responsibilities under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and Major Initiative 36 (MI36) – Inclusive sports facilities for women.
3. From July 2024 all local governments applying for funding through the Victorian Government community sport infrastructure funding programs will be required to show evidence of a gender equitable access and use policy and action plan. These funding programs are required to deliver essential infrastructure projects, which support inclusive participation at City of Melbourne's sport and recreation facilities.
4. The City of Melbourne's response to the Roadmap aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities to identify and eliminate systemic causes of gender inequality, ableism and cultural bias in policy, programs, communications, and community sports and recreation services delivery.
5. Fair Access in the City of Melbourne has a primary focus on women and girls and acknowledges the multiple interacting experiences of individuals that need to be considered to improve participation in community sport and recreation. These include, but are not limited to, cultural and ethnic background, sexuality, age, gender, socio-economic status, income, education level, occupation, ability, faith, and beliefs. Consistent with the Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-2032, we will also seek to improve participation opportunities for other underrepresented groups facing barriers to participation, where possible.

Key issues

6. There is increasing demand on the City of Melbourne's recreation infrastructure and open space driven by; the diverse and fast-growing population, the expansion of existing sports and recreation activities, the emergence and request for new participation opportunities as well as the significant growth in participation of women and girls in sports that have traditionally had greater male participation.
7. To inform the development of the Policy and Action Plan, community consultation and research was undertaken in September and October 2023 to understand the current barriers to participation faced by users and non-users (including representatives from underrepresented groups) of community sport and recreation facilities. The key findings were that women and girls:
 - 7.1. want to feel safe getting to and from and while participating in community sports and recreation facilities at night
 - 7.2. want sport and recreation facilities that are well designed and maintained to meet their needs
 - 7.3. want to feel welcome and included at community sports and recreation facilities
 - 7.4. want to participate in sport and recreation in different ways, including activities that are more social, fun, non-competitive/routine, modified, culturally appropriate and family friendly
 - 7.5. want easier introductions to sports and recreation activities that are non-threatening, build skills and confidence, and provide a range of pathways

- 7.6. want access to sports and recreation facilities and activities at convenient times and locations
- 7.7. want nearby facilities that enable them to participate in the sports and recreation activities they are interested in.
8. The draft Policy provides overarching guiding principles, objectives and key criteria to guide the equitable and transparent allocation and use of the City of Melbourne's community sport and recreation facilities. The Action Plan outlines the high impact initiatives proposed to make sport and recreation more equitable and increase participation, including improvements to infrastructure and facilities, and training and support for clubs and other user groups.
9. The introduction of Fair Access will be a smooth transition for some community sport and recreation clubs and others may find it more challenging and require additional support to adopt more equitable practices. City of Melbourne is committed to working with and supporting all user groups through the implementation of the Policy and Action Plan.
10. Community engagement on the policy and action plan will focus on current and potential users of community sport and recreation. This will involve users such as sport clubs, commercial operators, community groups and education bodies, and non-users including women, girls and other underrepresented groups (and the agencies who represent them). Community engagement is planned from 21 February to 29 March 2024. Following the completion of the engagement process, the final policy and action plan are scheduled to be presented to the Future Melbourne Committee for approval on 11 June 2024.

Recommendation from management

9. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
 - 9.1 Approves the draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy and Action Plan to proceed to community and stakeholder engagement.
 - 9.2 Notes that following completion of the engagement process, the Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy and Action Plan are scheduled to be presented to the Future Melbourne Committee for final approval on 11 June 2024.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (page x of n)
2. Draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy 2024-2027 (page x of n)
3. Draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Action Plan 2024-2027 (page x of n)
4. Draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy 2024-2027 & Draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Action Plan 2024-2027: Summary of engagement activities (page x of n)
5. Fair Access Initial Community Engagement Findings Report (page x of n)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. No direct legal issues arise from the recommendation from management.

Finance

2. The implementation of Fair Access will require additional resources which will form part of the annual planning and budgeting processes commencing financial year 2024-25.
3. Cost estimates to deliver the three year action plan will be developed. This will include consideration of capital works, human resources, training and education and development and delivery opportunities.
4. It is intended to repurpose the funding of \$20,000 per annum from Inclusive sport and recreation grants to deliver Fair Access initiatives and support underrepresented groups including women and girls, people with disability, multicultural communities, Aboriginal peoples, LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse community members.

Conflict of interest

5. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

6. In developing this draft policy, no Occupational Health and Safety issues or opportunities have been identified.

Stakeholder consultation

7. During September and October 2023 engagement was undertaken to understand the challenges for women, girls and others, including people living with a disability, multicultural communities, Aboriginal peoples, LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse community members to participate in community sport and recreation at City of Melbourne facilities. The consultation was aimed at both users and non-users of community sport and recreation and activities focused on identifying barriers for women, girls and others, and actions to overcome them to inform the development of the draft Policy and Action Plan.
8. Feedback was provided by 205 people throughout the consultation period in several ways, including completing the Participate Melbourne Survey (126 respondents), four information sessions (19 participants), six focus group sessions (28 participants), 14 interviews and 15 conversations at the Youth Fest pop up. Five written submissions were also received from user groups, including sports and recreation clubs, individuals and community organisations.
9. The initial engagement revealed barriers to participation by women and girls, and suggested actions to overcome these in order to improve and sustain participation by users and non-users of community sport and recreation. The key findings were consolidated into three key themes including infrastructure and environment, activities, and information, engagement and partnership (Attachment 5).
10. The second round of consultation will focus on engaging current and potential users of community sport and recreation to inform and consult on the draft policy and action plan (refer Attachment 4). This will involve users such as sport clubs, commercial operators, community groups and education bodies, and non-users including women, girls and other underrepresented groups (and the agencies who represent them).

Relation to Council policy

11. The Policy is consistent with the following plans and policies:

- a. City of Possibility, Council Plan 2021–2025
 - Major Initiative 36 (MI36) – Inclusive sports facilities for women
 - Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021–2025
- b. Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022–32
- c. Creating Communities of Equality and Respect – Women’s Safety and Empowerment Action Plan 2021–2024

Environmental sustainability

12. In developing this report and the draft Policy, environmental sustainability issues were not considered relevant.



DRAFT

FAIR ACCESS

**SPORT AND
RECREATION
ALLOCATION AND
USE POLICY
2024-2027**

ACTIVE MELBOURNE



CITY OF MELBOURNE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection they have maintained to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to walking together to build a better future.

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1. BACKGROUND

Our city is where people of all cultures, backgrounds, ages, genders, sexualities, beliefs, and abilities are welcomed, celebrated, and protected. As a result, our urban communities are fair, sustainable, safe, affordable, and inclusive, drawing people from around the world to visit, work and live. We are proud of the vibrancy this diversity brings to every aspect of city life.

(Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-32)

Sport and active recreation are highly visible and valued features of the City of Melbourne's culture and identity. Our community sport and recreation facilities (facilities) provide opportunities for enriching our communities through supporting physical and mental wellbeing and the promotion of respect and fair-mindedness. These facilities are made available to various organisations, including sporting clubs, associations, community groups, schools, commercial operators and others (user groups) to provide a range of participation opportunities.

Our diverse and fast-growing population, the expansion of existing sports and recreation activities, and the emergence of new participation opportunities are increasing the demand for infrastructure and open spaces. To support the health and wellbeing of our communities, now and in the future, it's imperative that we carefully plan and manage these resources.

A Fair Access Policy Roadmap (Roadmap) was developed by the Victorian Government's Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth and released in August 2022. It aims to improve women's and girls' access to and use of community sports infrastructure. The Roadmap addresses Recommendation 6 from the Victorian Government's Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation (2015), which seeks to "deliver female-friendly environments and equitable facility usage policies".

Our response to the Roadmap aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities to identify and eliminate systemic causes of gender inequality, ableism and cultural bias in policy, programs, communications, and community sports and recreation services delivery.

Fair Access in the City of Melbourne has a primary focus on women and girls and acknowledges the multiple interacting experiences of individuals that need to be considered to improve participation in community sport and recreation. These include, but are not limited to, cultural and ethnic background, sexuality, age, gender, socio-economic status, income, education level, occupation, ability, faith, and beliefs. We will also seek to improve participation opportunities for other underrepresented groups where possible.

We have developed a Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy (policy) and Fair Access Sport and Recreation Action Plan (action plan). The action plan and policy both seek to improve the access and use of the City of Melbourne's community sports and recreation facilities.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our Fair Access guiding principles are:

1. Community sports infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe and inclusive.
2. Women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as players, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteers and spectators.
3. Women and girls will have equitable access to and use of community sports infrastructure:
 - of the highest quality available and most convenient
 - at the best and most popular competition and training times and locations
 - to support existing and new participation opportunities and a variety of sports.
4. Women and girls will be equitably represented in leadership and governance roles.
5. Encourage and support all user groups who access and use community sport infrastructure to understand, adopt and implement gender-equitable access and use practices.
6. Prioritise access, use and support to all user groups who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to gender-equitable access and use of allocated community sports infrastructure.

3. OBJECTIVES

Our Fair Access objectives are to:

- Provide fair, equitable access to increase participation for women and girls in recreation and physical activity.
- Increase the number and diversity of women and girls participating in recreation and physical activity and benefit from the associated physical, mental and social health and wellbeing outcomes.

4. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish a clear, consistent, transparent and equitable approach to allocating the City of Melbourne's community sport and recreation infrastructure.
- Outline expectations for user groups regarding their role in improving gender-equitable access and use of the City of Melbourne's community sport and recreation facilities.
- Establish criteria for prioritising the allocation of community sport and recreation facilities.

5. CONTEXT AND ALIGNMENT

The policy incorporates the requirements of:

- *the Gender Equality Act 2020*
- the Fair Access Policy Roadmap 2022
- *the Local Government Act 2020*
- *the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.*

The policy also aligns with key City of Melbourne plans and strategies, as outlined in Appendix C: Policy alignment.

6. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The policy applies to the allocation and use of the City of Melbourne's current and future community sport and recreation facilities, including:

- sporting fields and pavilions – in Royal Park, Fawkner Park, Princes Park, JJ Holland Park and Ron Barassi Senior Park
- recreation centres and facilities – swimming pools, gyms, skating facilities, golf course
- leased and licensed facilities – for rowing, boating, tennis, and bowling.

The appendices include a detailed listing of the individual community sport and recreation facilities by category (Appendix D: Community sport and recreation facilities).

This policy is relevant for user groups wishing to apply for the allocation and use of the City of Melbourne's community sports infrastructure on a recurring or ongoing basis.

The casual use (one-off) of the City of Melbourne's community sport and recreation facilities does not fall within the scope of the policy. However, we will use the policy criteria to determine an allocation in the case of a clash between casual users.



7. ALLOCATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

Sport and recreation facilities are allocated to provide sport or recreation programs or activities that benefit the City of Melbourne's community and meet the Fair Access objectives.

The period for which a facility is allocated to a user group varies based on the type of community sports infrastructure and the seasonality of the sport or recreation activity. Allocations are commonly based on traditional sporting seasons; however, new and emerging sports and recreation activities may have alternate schedules, which we will accommodate where possible.

User groups are required to submit a new application before each period to be considered for the new or continued allocation and use of the City of Melbourne's community sport and recreation facilities.

When allocation periods exceed one year, user groups must submit information annually that shows continued adherence to the eligibility criteria below and provide updated information about the indicators (below) that demonstrate championing gender equity and fair access.

User groups are required to submit applications under the applicable timelines. Any applications received outside these times may be considered at the City of Melbourne's sole discretion; however, they will only be assessed against the remaining capacity at the applicable facilities and not against other users' requests.

All user groups must comply with the following criteria to be eligible to use community sports and recreation facilities.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1.	Commit to the Fair Access Guiding Principles and Objectives
2.	Complete and submit an annual inclusion self-assessment
3.	Demonstrate connection of participants to the City of Melbourne
4.	Adhere to Child Safety Standards
5.	Adhere to the Victorian Government's Fair Play Code
6.	Adhere to City of Melbourne's sport and recreation facilities terms and conditions of use
7.	Adhere to City of Melbourne's policies and requirements, including no smoking or gaming, liquor licencing, safe food handling, healthy food and sun safety
8.	Provide participation data as well as any requested organisational reports, financial information, and other supporting documentation
9.	Affiliation with a State Sporting Association (SSA) or National Sporting body, if applicable

The indicators below are considered evidence that user groups are taking progressive steps towards achieving Fair Access.

When competing demand for facilities exists, allocations will be made by assessing the information provided by user groups using the indicators and weighted ratings.

User groups with higher assessment ratings against the indicators will be given priority access.

CHAMPIONING GENDER EQUITY AND FAIR ACCESS INDICATORS		
1	Provide a current inclusion action plan	20%
2	Membership and team composition demonstrate gender equity and Fair Access participation pathways (junior or senior, all gender or mixed, women only, all abilities). Please refer to Appendix E: Glossary (for definitions of gender equality and gender equity).	20%
3	Evidence of undertaking modified programs or activities encouraging participation by women and girls and underrepresented groups. Examples include non-competitive, accessible, developmental, social or family-friendly activities or initiatives.	15%
4	Ability to demonstrate diversity and equity in leadership positions, including board or committee members and coaching and support staff.	15%
5	Ability to provide evidence of completed training and education in diversity, equity and inclusion in community sport and recreation.	15%
6	Proof of equitable scheduling for all users, with women and girls and underrepresented groups allocated favourable times.	15%

8. IMPLEMENTATION

City of Melbourne is committed to working with user groups, state sporting associations, the Victorian Government, neighbouring councils and health and community agencies to achieve equity in sport and recreation in the Melbourne municipality.

The policy will apply to the allocation and use of community sport and recreation facilities for an initial three-year period, from 2024 to 2027.

9. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

We will review the policy periodically to ensure that it reflects the intent of the guiding principles and that we are progressing towards our objectives.

We may also review the policy if:

- legislation changes
- legal issues highlight a need for amendments
- insurance and risk management issues arise
- other City of Melbourne policy changes impact the administration and management of community sport and recreation facilities.

APPENDIX A – CITY OF MELBOURNE OVERVIEW

- 159,993 residents
- 50% females
- 50% males
- 910,800 people live, work, visit, study or socialise in the municipality daily
- 55% born overseas
- 46% speak a language other than English
- 87,000 overseas students
- 3114 same-sex couple households
- 768 Aboriginal people
- 2.3% people with disability
- 7.6% unemployment rate
- 31.7% reported food insecurity

City of Melbourne's Annual Report 2022-2023

- 61.1% of residents participated in sports and exercise activities in the last three months.
- 54.5% of residents did so within the City of Melbourne.
- 15.3% of residents participated in organised physical activity in the last three months.
- 7.7% participated in physical activity organised by a fitness leisure or indoor sports centre in the last three months.
- 6.6% of residents participated in physical activity organised by a sports club or association over the last three months.

City of Melbourne Liveability and Social Indicators 2021

APPENDIX B – BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

Gender Equality Act

The Victorian Government’s Gender Equality Act 2020 (Act) requires that Councils “...must consider and promote gender equality; and take necessary and proportionate action towards achieving gender equality”. The Act includes a requirement, under Part One, Section 1(a), that a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) is completed when “...developing or revising any policy of, or program or service provided by, the entity that has a direct and significant impact upon the public”. The access and use of community sport and recreation infrastructure is an example of a policy that directly and significantly impacts the public.

Fair Access Roadmap

The Fair Access Roadmap guides local governments, sport and recreation user groups and others on improving gender-equitable access and using publicly owned community sport and recreation infrastructure. It requires local councils to implement aligned use policies. Victorian Government funding criteria for community sport infrastructure require gender equitable access and use policies to be in place from 1 July 2024.

Community engagement and research

City of Melbourne undertook research and community engagement to identify the barriers women, girls and other underrepresented groups face to participation in sport and recreation. We identified barriers to involvement by users and non-users, as well as motivators for participating in sport and recreation. The key findings are below:

Infrastructure and environment

- Ensure safety getting to and from and while participating at community sport and recreation facilities at night.
- Provide well-designed and maintained sports and recreation facilities to meet their needs.
- Ensure community members feel welcome and included at community sports and recreation facilities.
- Provide access to sports and recreation facilities and activities at convenient times and locations.
- Provide nearby facilities that enable participation in the sport and recreation activities that are of interest.

Activities

- Provide opportunities to participate in sport and recreation in different ways, including more social, fun, non-competitive/routine activities, modified, culturally appropriate and family friendly.
- Provide easier introductions to sport and recreation activities that are non-threatening, build skills and confidence, and provide a range of pathways.
- Provide suitable pricing for those experiencing financial barriers to participating in sport and recreation.
- Create greater diversity in leadership and facilitation roles.
- Ensure sport and recreation staff, facilitators, and players are respectful and welcoming to all people.
- Provide equitable access to sports and recreation facilities.

Information, engagement and partnership

- Provide easily accessible information on community sport and recreation participation opportunities.
- Promote the opportunities and advantages of participating in community sport and recreation.

APPENDIX C – POLICY ALIGNMENT

The Policy aligns with the following key plans and strategies from the City of Melbourne.

DOCUMENT	ALIGNMENT
City of Possibility, Council Plan 2021-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Melbourne has developed six strategic objectives for its four-year Council Plan in response to the Community Vision. • The strategic Access and affordability objective is delivered through several Major Initiatives, including Major Initiative 36 (MI 36) – Inclusive sports facilities for women • MI 36 aligns with the following UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o SDG Goal 5 Gender equality – target 5.1 o SDG Goal 10 Reduced inequalities – target 10.2 and 10.3
Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-2025	<p>The Council Plan 2021-2025 includes a Health and Wellbeing Plan containing six Health and wellbeing focus areas. The aligned focus areas include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All people feel safe and included when participating in community life, with zero tolerance of violence, including family violence, gender inequality, violence against women, racism and discrimination in all forms. 2. All people have equal access to employment, arts, culture, nature and physical activity. 3. People are supported and encouraged to make healthy lifestyle decisions, including opportunities for participating in sports and physical activity.
Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-2032	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Melbourne’s ‘Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-32’ identifies three key priority areas, including Priority 1: Organisation, services, programs and places for all. • One of the outcomes of Priority 1 is that ‘our services, programs and places are welcoming, safe, accessible, and affordable for all’. • The indicator of success is ‘increased diversity of people and communities accessing services, programs and places’.
Creating Communities of Equality and Respect – Women’s Safety and Empowerment Action Plan 2021-2024	<p>The Plan includes the following themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advance women and gender-diverse people’s leadership and participation in economic, social and civic life across the municipality 2. Promote the safety of women and gender-diverse people in our communities and public spaces.
Women’s Participation in Sport and Active Recreation in Melbourne’s West: Action Plan for Change 2020-2025	<p>The Action Plan provides evidence-based, strategic direction to project partners in Melbourne’s west to support the planning, development, and implementation of women’s and girls’ improved participation in sport and active recreation.</p>

APPENDIX D - COMMUNITY SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The Fair Access Recreation and Sport Allocation and Use Policy applies to all current and future City of Melbourne community sports facilities, including but not limited to the following locations.

	AREA	FACILITY NAME	LOCATION
1	Sporting fields and pavilions	Royal Park facilities: - Western Oval - Western Pavilion - Ransford Oval - McAlister Oval - Ryder Oval - Ryder Pavilion - Poplar Oval - Poplar Pavilion - Walker East Oval - Walker West Oval - Smith Oval - Brens Oval - Brens Pavilion - Flemington Road Oval - Flemington Road Oval Pavilion - Ross Straw North Oval - Ross Straw South Oval - Ross Straw Pavilion	Parkville
2	Sporting fields and pavilions	Princes Park facilities: - Crawford Oval - Southern Fields - Oval 1 - Northern Pavilion - Southern Pavilion	Carlton
3	Sporting fields and pavilions	JJ Holland Park: - Oval 1 - Oval 2 - Synthetic - Bill Vanina Pavilion	Kensington
4	Sporting fields and pavilions	Fawkner Park facilities - Cordner Oval - Lawn 13 - Lawn 15 - Lawn 16 - Lawn 17 - Lawn 18 - Lawn 19 - Lawn 22 - Southern Sports Area - Northern Pavilion - Southern Pavilion	South Yarra

5	Sporting fields and pavilions	Newmarket Reserve facilities - Newmarket Lawn - Newmarket Reserve Pavilion	Kensington
6	Sporting fields and pavilions	Ron Barassi Snr Park facilities - Ron Barassi Snr Park Lawn - Ron Barassi Snr Pavilion	Docklands
7	Sporting fields and pavilions	Edmund Herring Oval - Edmund Herring Pavilion	Melbourne
8	Recreation centres	Melbourne City Baths	Melbourne
9	Recreation centres	Carlton Baths	Carlton
10	Recreation centres	Kensington Community Recreation Centre	Kensington
11	Recreation centres	North Melbourne Community Centre	North Melbourne
12	Recreation centres	North Melbourne Recreation Centre	North Melbourne
13	Recreation centres	Riverslide Skate park	Melbourne
14	Recreation centres	Flagstaff Gardens Multisport Courts	Melbourne
15	Recreation centres	Docklands Multisport Courts	Docklands
16	Recreation centres	Royal Park Golf Course	Parkville
17	Leased/licensed	Rowing facilities	Alexandra Gardens
18	Leased/licensed	Boating facilities	Docklands
19	Leased/licensed	Carlton Gardens Tennis Courts	Carlton
20	Leased/licensed	North Park Tennis Courts	Parkville
21	Leased/licensed	Kensington Banks Tennis Courts	Kensington
22	Leased/licensed	Princes Hill Tennis Courts	Carlton
23	Leased/licensed	Parkville Tennis Courts	Parkville
24	Leased/licensed	Fawkner Park Tennis Courts	South Yarra
25	Leased/licensed	Powlett Reserve Tennis Courts	East Melbourne
26	Leased/licensed	Flemington Kensington Bowling Greens	Kensington
27	Leased/licensed	Princes Park Carlton Bowling Greens	Carlton
28	Leased/licensed	Flagstaff Gardens Bowling Greens	Melbourne
29	Leased/licensed	North Melbourne Football Club	North Melbourne
30	Leased/licensed	Carlton Football Club	Carlton
32	Leased/licensed	State Fencing Centre	North Melbourne

APPENDIX E - GLOSSARY

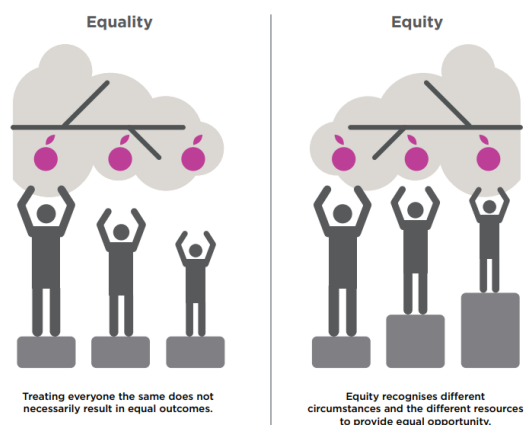
City of Melbourne: the local government body responsible for the municipality of Melbourne.

Community sport and recreation facilities: refer to City of Melbourne-owned or managed sport and recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily to facilitate community sport and recreation activities. These facilities include sporting grounds and pavilions, aquatic and recreation centres, and other sports and recreation locations.

Fair Access: refers to making community sports and recreation facilities more equitable and inclusive to increase the participation of women and girls. Opportunities to improve participation for other underrepresented groups will also be considered.

Gender equality: is where people of all genders have equal rights and opportunities. Equality does not mean that all people will become the same. Instead, their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on their gender.

Gender equity: is the provision of fairness and justice to achieve gender equality. It recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates resources and opportunities to reach equal rights and opportunity outcomes. It means that some people might be given extra resources and opportunities to achieve outcomes equal to others.



City of Melbourne, Gender Equity Action Plan 2022-2025

Gender Impact Assessment: a requirement under the Gender Equality Act 2020 to be carried out on policies, programs and services that directly and significantly impact the public. The assessment must evaluate a policy, program or service's effects on people of different genders.

The community: includes Traditional Owners, people who work, live, study, visit, pay rates or own a business in the municipality.

Underrepresented groups: groups that have lower participation rates in community sport and recreation, including women and girls, Aboriginal peoples, people with disability, multicultural communities, LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse communities.



CITY OF MELBOURNE

DRAFT

FAIR ACCESS

**SPORT AND
RECREATION
ACTION PLAN
2024-2027**

ACTIVE MELBOURNE

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1. BACKGROUND

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Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-32

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We have developed a Fair Access Sport and Recreation Action Plan (action plan) and a Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy (policy). The action plan and policy both seek to improve the access and use of the City of Melbourne's community sports and recreation facilities.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our Fair Access guiding principles are:

1. Community sports infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe and inclusive.
2. Women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as players, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteers and spectators.
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 - to support existing and new participation opportunities and a variety of sports.
4. Women and girls will be equitably represented in leadership and governance roles.
5. Encourage and support all user groups who access and use community sport infrastructure to understand, adopt and implement gender-equitable access and use practices.
6. Prioritise access, use and support to all user groups who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to gender-equitable access and use of allocated community sports infrastructure.

3. OBJECTIVES

Our Fair Access objectives are to:

- Provide fair, equitable access to increase participation for women and girls in recreation and physical activity.
- Increase the number and diversity of women and girls participating in recreation and physical activity and benefit from the associated physical, mental and social health and wellbeing outcomes.



4. KEY FINDINGS

City of Melbourne undertook research and community engagement to identify the barriers women, girls and other underrepresented groups face to participation in sport and recreation. We identified barriers to involvement by users and non-users, as well as motivators for participating in sport and recreation.

The key findings were that women and girls:

- want to feel safe getting to and from and while participating in community sports and recreation facilities at night
- want sport and recreation facilities that are well designed and maintained to meet their needs
- want to feel welcome and included at community sports and recreation facilities
- want to participate in sport and recreation in different ways, including activities that are more social, fun, non-competitive/routine, modified, culturally appropriate and family friendly
- want easier introductions to sports and recreation activities that are non-threatening, build skills and confidence, and provide a range of pathways
- want access to sports and recreation facilities and activities at convenient times and locations
- want nearby facilities that enable them to participate in the sports and recreation activities they are interested in.

Other key findings were that women and girls need easily accessible information on participating in community sport and recreation and want people like them in leadership and facilitation roles. Women and girls also said they would benefit from the promotion of the opportunities and advantages of participating in community sport and recreation.

Our research and community engagement also found that women and girls who experience financial barriers need suitable pricing to participate in sports and recreation. Another key finding was that women and girls want sport and recreation staff, facilitators and players to be respectful and welcoming to all people.

5. PURPOSE

This action plan outlines the high impact initiatives to achieve Fair Access improvements at sport and recreation facilities in the City of Melbourne.

6. ACTIONS

We have used the Fair Access guiding principles as a framework for the detailed action plan below. The action plan includes 13 outcomes, informed by the key findings from research and community consultation.

We have created specific actions for each outcome to minimise the barriers to participation experienced by women and girls.

City of Melbourne will work with key stakeholders, including state sporting associations, peak bodies, community organisations, neighbouring councils, facility operators, clubs and users, to achieve the desired outcomes from the action plan.

We will progressively implement the action plan starting on 1 July 2024. It applies to the City of Melbourne's current and future community sport and recreation facilities, including sporting fields, pavilions, recreation centres, and leased and licensed facilities.

The plan covers an initial three-year period to July 2027. It will be reviewed and updated after two years or as required.



Principle 1: Community sports infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive.						
#	Outcomes	#	Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicator of Success
1	Women and girls feel safe getting to and from, and participating at community sports and recreation facilities at night.	1.1	Review public and sports lighting on access routes and at sports and recreation facilities.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways Property Services Parks and City Greening	A review of lighting at all facilities is completed and recommendations for improvements are provided
		1.2	Implement public and sports lighting improvements, including from transport and parking locations.	Year 2-3	Recreation and Waterways City Property Parks and City Greening	Lighting improvements are implemented per the proposed recommendations.
2	Women and girls have sports and recreation facilities that are well-designed and maintained to meet their needs.	2.1	Develop and apply universal design principles for all future sport and recreation developments to ensure they are accessible to a wide range of users with diverse access needs.	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways City Property Parks and City Greening City Design Community Development	Universal design principles are developed. Principles are applied in all new developments.
		2.2	Conduct an audit of existing sports and recreation facilities that identifies and prioritises design improvements that support fair access. Improvements could include accessible and all gender change facilities, toilet amenities, quiet and reflection spaces, family rooms, multi-use spaces and access requirements (signage, Braille, ramps, accessible emergency systems)	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways City Property City Projects Parks and City Greening City Design Community Development	A facility audit is conducted.
		2.3	Implement identified priority design improvements at existing sports and recreation facilities.	Year 2-3	Recreation and Waterways City Property City Projects Parks and City Greening City Design Community Development	Facility design improvements implemented.
		2.4	Review existing cleaning and maintenance schedules and reporting mechanisms to ensure sport and recreation facilities are regularly clean and well maintained.	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways City Property City Projects Parks and City Greening City Design Community Development	Review of schedules and reporting mechanisms undertaken. Annual customer satisfaction survey results

Principle 1: Community sports infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive.						
#	Outcomes	#	Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicator of Success
3	Women and girls feel welcome and included at community sports and recreation facilities.	3.1	Develop and promote a welcome statement and signage (for example, Pride and Aboriginal flags, posters, stickers) that demonstrates sport and recreation facilities as places where people of all cultures, ages, genders, sexualities, backgrounds, religions, beliefs, and abilities are welcomed, celebrated, and protected.	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways Community Development Aboriginal Melbourne City Property	Welcome statement and signage developed.
		3.2	Display welcome statements prominently on our website and in promotional material at all facilities.	Year 2	Recreation and Waterways Community Development Aboriginal Melbourne City Property	Welcome statements and signage are displayed at all suitable facilities.
		3.3	Provide advice and training to community sport and recreation users and facilitators on how to create an inclusive and welcoming environment that is culturally and psychologically safe.	Year 1-2	Recreation and Waterways City Property Aboriginal Melbourne Community Development	Two inclusion training workshops are held annually. Increased feelings of safety and inclusion are reported in the Social Indicators Survey. Appropriate memorabilia, displays and decorations are maintained. Code of conduct and inclusive language guides used.

Principle 2: Women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as players, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteers and spectators.

#	Outcomes	#	Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicator of Success
4	Women and girls can participate in sports and recreation in different ways, including more social, fun, non-competitive/routine activities, modified, culturally appropriate and family friendly.	4.1	Work with the community to identify and pilot three new activities that allow women and girls to participate in sports and recreation. Participation should be in ways that are non-competitive, accessible, modified, socially and culturally appropriate, and family friendly. Introduce the successful activities as permanent programs to encourage ongoing participation.	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	Engagement is undertaken with the community to identify activities. Three pilot activities are undertaken and evaluated. Number of permanent programs introduced.
		4.2	Work with sporting clubs, commercial operators and other providers (for example, Victoria Walks, Proud to Play, Queer Sports Alliance) to offer more sport and recreation activities that are non-competitive, accessible, modified, social, culturally appropriate and family friendly.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	An increase in alternative activities offered by sporting clubs, commercial operators and other providers.
		4.3	Work with national bodies and state sports associations to improve social and alternative sporting opportunities, pathways and different scheduling for women and girls.	Years 1-3	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	Meetings between national sporting bodies, state sporting associations and City of Melbourne.
5	Women and girls have easily accessible information on participating in community sports and recreation.	5.1	Consult with the community to better understand the ways women and girls who currently don't participate would like to receive information about sports and recreation opportunities	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	Consultation activities are undertaken with community members and key agencies.
		5.2	Create and promote a dedicated Active Melbourne information source that provides information about sport and recreation opportunities, including options for searching by age group, gender, social sport or club competition, first-time participants, location and access provisions.	Year 1-2	Recreation and Waterways	Active Melbourne information source developed and promoted that is easily understood and searchable.

Principle 2: Women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as players, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteers and spectators.

#	Outcomes	#	Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicator of Success
6	Women and girls know the opportunities and advantages of participating in community sports and recreation.	6.1	Create a marketing campaign aimed at women and girls that outlines the benefits of participating in sport and recreation and where to find information about local opportunities.	Year 2-3	Recreation and Waterways	Marketing campaign and collateral developed.
		6.2	Work with stakeholders and leverage key calendar events to increase and promote the participation of women and girls in sport and recreation activities within the municipality. Events could include This Girl Can, International Women's Day, International Day of the Girl, International Day of the Older Persons, IDAHOBIT, Transgender Awareness Week, International Day of Persons with Disabilities and Harmony Week.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	Promotional materials developed and distributed for key events.
		6.3	Work with community leaders, elders, and role models with different lived experiences to promote sports and recreation opportunities at various events and community meetings.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	Facilitate the attendance of suitable persons at community meetings and events.
7	Women and girls have easier introductions into sports and recreation activities that are non-threatening, build skills and confidence, and provide a range of pathways.	7.1	In partnership with user groups, host and promote a minimum of two annual events that invite women and girls to try a range of sport and recreation activities.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways	At least two annual events are hosted and promoted.
		7.2	Encourage and support all community sports and recreation facilitators to implement introductory programs, including Come and Try and skill-building sessions.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways	Number of Come and Try activities held at City of Melbourne facilities.
8	Women and girls experiencing financial barriers have suitable pricing to participate in sports and recreation.	8.1	Conduct a review of sport and recreation facility fees and community grant programs to ensure financial barriers are addressed and subsidies are offered to women and girls who experience hardship and disadvantage.	Year 1-2	Recreation and Waterways	The fees and charges and community grants programs are reviewed, and changes are implemented.

Principle 3: Women and girls will have equitable access to and use of community sports infrastructure:

- of the highest quality available and most convenient
- at the best and most popular competition and training times and locations
- to support existing and new participation opportunities and a variety of sports.

#	Outcomes	#	Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicator of Success
9	Women and girls can access sports, recreation facilities, and activities at convenient times and locations.	9.1	Develop and implement a Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy to facilitate equitable access to community sport and recreation facilities	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways	Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy (policy) developed and implemented.
		9.2	Increase the capacity and conditions of existing facilities to ensure that those of the highest quality and most convenient times and locations are available for women and girls. Examples include tightening scheduling, implementing additional sports lighting, upgrading ground conditions, drainage, and surfaces.	Year 1-2	Recreation and Waterways City Property Parks and City Greening City Projects Community Development	Develop a plan to increase capacity and conditions at existing facilities. Implementation of policy.
		9.3	Ensure that additional capacity at sports and recreation facilities is primarily reserved for programs and activities that encourage the participation of women and girls.	Year 3	Recreation and Waterways	Implementation of policy. Increased participation of women and girls as a percentage of total bookings.
		9.4	Work with neighbouring councils to advocate to state sporting associations and peak bodies about scheduling community sports and recreation to achieve equitable access for women and girls.	Year 2-3	Recreation and Waterways	Attendance at meetings with state sporting associations and peak bodies.
10	Women and girls have nearby facilities that enable them to participate in the sports and recreation activities they are interested in.	10.1	Work with neighbourhood partners to identify the types of sports and recreation activities that women and girls want to participate in their local area and complete a gap analysis with the existing facilities.	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways	Research and gap analysis completed.
		10.2	Prioritise the redevelopment of sports and recreation facilities that align with activities in demand by women and girls.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways City Property Parks and City Greening City Design City Projects	Redevelopment of existing facilities. Development of new sports and recreation facilities.
		10.3	Explore options to provide additional infrastructure that supports unstructured activities (including free exercise equipment, running tracks, walking, skating and bicycle trails, ball courts, and climbing walls).	Year 2	Recreation and Waterways City Property Parks and City Greening City Design City Projects	Community engagement and research are undertaken to identify preferred activities and suitable locations for the future.

Principle 4: Women and girls will be equitably represented in leadership and governance roles.

#	Outcomes	#	Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicator of Success
11	Women and girls see people like them in leadership and facilitation roles.	11.1	Promote, identify and incentivise leadership and facilitation roles to women and girls to ensure all staff and volunteers represent the community.	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	Number of women, girls and gender diverse people in leadership and facilitation roles at City of Melbourne sport and recreation facilities.
		11.2	In collaboration with state sporting associations, peak bodies and clubs provide training and education to encourage and upskill women and girls to fulfil administration, management and leadership roles in sport and recreation clubs and facilities.	Year 2	Recreation and Waterways	Two training sessions are facilitated at City of Melbourne's sports and recreation facilities. Number of women and girls in leadership and facilitation roles at City of Melbourne sport and recreation facilities.

Principle 5: Encourage and support all user groups who access and use community sport infrastructure to understand, adopt and implement gender-equitable access and use practices.

#	Outcomes	#	Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicator of Success
12	Women and girls view sport and recreation staff, facilitators and players as respectful and welcoming to all people.	12.1	Provide training and information to sport and recreation staff, facilitators and players to ensure people of all cultures, ages, genders, sexualities, backgrounds, religions, beliefs, and abilities are welcomed, celebrated, and protected when using City of Melbourne facilities.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	Provide training and education opportunities twice a year Increased feelings of safety and inclusion reported in the Social Indicators Survey
		12.2	Support and promote events and initiatives demonstrating diversity and inclusion in sport and recreation in the City of Melbourne.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways	Attendance at events. Funding and partnerships are provided for suitable events and initiatives. Promotion of events and initiatives.
		12.3	Work with stakeholders, peak bodies and state sporting associations to ensure appropriate and consistent processes are in place to address bullying, discrimination and harassment in community sport and recreation.	Year 2	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	Suitable and consistent processes are in place to address bullying, discrimination and harassment. Information about reporting processes is provided and promoted to clubs and users.
		12.4	Review and update sport and recreation lease and license, supplier and user agreements to incorporate adherence to all of the Fair Access guiding principles.	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways City Property	The lease, licensed supplier, and user agreements include Fair Access guiding principles.

Principle 6: Prioritise access, use and support to all user groups who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to gender-equitable access and use of allocated community sports infrastructure.

#	Outcomes	#	Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicator of Success
13	Women and girls have equitable access to sports and recreation facilities to increase participation.	13.1	Provide information, training opportunities, advice and support to sport and recreation clubs and other activity providers to identify ways they can increase the participation of women and girls at their club.	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways Community Development	Information, advice and resources (for example, self-assessment tool).
		13.2	Ensure that participation data is provided by all community sport and recreation facility users, including a breakdown by women and girls to identify gaps in use.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways City Property	All users are supplying the required participation data.
		13.3	Ensure sport and recreation activities and programs encouraging the participation of women and girls capture feedback and program satisfaction.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways City Property	Feedback is collected on program satisfaction.
		13.4	Incorporate questions that measure participation levels and attitudinal changes among women and girls into the City of Melbourne Social Indicator survey to monitor progress.	Year 1	Recreation and Waterways	The required questions are included in the Social Indicators Survey.
		13.5	Develop and complete an annual Fair Access performance scorecard to monitor and report on progress.	Year 1-3	Recreation and Waterways	Fair Access performance scorecard developed and completed annually.

APPENDIX A - COMMUNITY SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The Fair Access Recreation and Sport Allocation and Use Policy applies to all current and future City of Melbourne community sports facilities, including but not limited to the following locations.

	Area	Facility Name	Location
1	Sporting fields and pavilions	Royal Park facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Western Oval - Western Pavilion - Ransford Oval - McAlister Oval - Ryder Oval - Ryder Pavilion - Poplar Oval - Poplar Pavilion - Walker East Oval - Walker West Oval - Smith Oval - Brens Oval - Brens Pavilion - Flemington Road Oval - Flemington Road Oval Pavilion - Ross Straw North Oval - Ross Straw South Oval - Ross Straw Pavilion 	Parkville
2	Sporting fields and pavilions	Princes Park facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crawford Oval - Southern Fields - Oval 1 - Northern Pavilion - Southern Pavilion 	Carlton
3	Sporting fields and pavilions	JJ Holland Park: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oval 1 - Oval 2 - Synthetic - Bill Vanina Pavilion 	Kensington
4	Sporting fields and pavilions	Fawkner Park facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corder Oval - Lawn 13 - Lawn 15 - Lawn 16 - Lawn 17 - Lawn 18 - Lawn 19 - Lawn 22 - Southern Sports Area - Northern Pavilion - Southern Pavilion 	South Yarra

5	Sporting fields and pavilions	Newmarket Reserve facilities - Newmarket Lawn - Newmarket Reserve Pavilion	Kensington
6	Sporting fields and pavilions	Ron Barassi Snr Park facilities - Ron Barassi Snr Park Lawn - Ron Barassi Snr Pavilion	Docklands
7	Sporting fields and pavilions	Edmund Herring Oval - Edmund Herring Pavilion	Melbourne
8	Recreation centres	Melbourne City Baths	Melbourne
9	Recreation centres	Carlton Baths	Carlton
10	Recreation centres	Kensington Community Recreation Centre	Kensington
11	Recreation centres	North Melbourne Community Centre	North Melbourne
12	Recreation centres	North Melbourne Recreation Centre	North Melbourne
13	Recreation centres	Riverslide Skate park	Melbourne
14	Recreation centres	Flagstaff Gardens Multisport Courts	Melbourne
15	Recreation centres	Docklands Multisport Courts	Docklands
16	Recreation centres	Royal Park Golf Course	Parkville
17	Leased/licensed	Rowing facilities	Alexandra Gardens
18	Leased/licensed	Boating facilities	Docklands
19	Leased/licensed	Carlton Gardens Tennis Courts	Carlton
20	Leased/licensed	North Park Tennis Courts	Parkville
21	Leased/licensed	Kensington Banks Tennis Courts	Kensington
22	Leased/licensed	Princes Hill Tennis Courts	Carlton
23	Leased/licensed	Parkville Tennis Courts	Parkville
24	Leased/licensed	Fawkner Park Tennis Courts	South Yarra
25	Leased/licensed	Powlett Reserve Tennis Courts	East Melbourne
26	Leased/licensed	Flemington Kensington Bowling Greens	Kensington
27	Leased/licensed	Princes Park Carlton Bowling Greens	Carlton
28	Leased/licensed	Flagstaff Gardens Bowling Greens	Melbourne
29	Leased/licensed	North Melbourne Football Club	North Melbourne
30	Leased/licensed	Carlton Football Club	Carlton
32	Leased/licensed	State Fencing Centre	North Melbourne

APPENDIX B - GLOSSARY

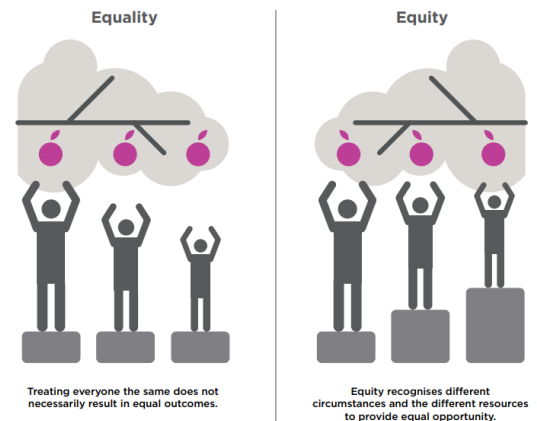
City of Melbourne: the local government body responsible for the municipality of Melbourne.

Community sport and recreation facilities: refer to City of Melbourne-owned or managed sport and recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily to facilitate community sport and recreation activities. These facilities include sporting grounds and pavilions, aquatic and recreation centres, and other sports and recreation locations.

Fair Access: refers to making community sports and recreation facilities more equitable and inclusive to increase the participation of women and girls. Opportunities to improve participation for other underrepresented groups will also be considered.

Gender equality: is where people of all genders have equal rights and opportunities. Equality does not mean that all people will become the same. Instead, their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on their gender.

Gender equity: is the provision of fairness and justice to achieve gender equality. It recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates resources and opportunities to reach equal rights and opportunity outcomes. It means that some people might be given extra resources and opportunities to achieve outcomes equal to others.



City of Melbourne, Gender Equity Action Plan 2022-2025

Gender Impact Assessment: a requirement under the Gender Equality Act 2020 to be carried out on policies, programs and services that directly and significantly impact the public. The assessment must evaluate a policy, program or service's effects on people of different genders.

The community: includes Traditional Owners, people who work, live, study, visit, pay rates or own a business in the municipality.

Underrepresented groups: groups that have lower participation rates in community sport and recreation, including women and girls, Aboriginal peoples, people with disability, multicultural communities, LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse communities.



Draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Allocation and Use Policy 2024-2027; Draft Fair Access Sport and Recreation Action Plan 2024-2027

Community engagement plan

Timing (public delivery date)	Activity
December 2023	Preparation of community engagement plans
January / February 2024	Finalise engagement activity content and communication strategy
20 February 2024	FMC report
Phase two engagement	
21 February 2024	Commence community engagement – Participate Melbourne live and activities commence (open 5.5 weeks)
Feb - March 2024 (21 February – 29 March)	<p>Deliver targeted and tailored engagement, including in person sessions and online tools, to capture feedback about the draft policy and draft action plan with users and non-users of community sport and recreation facilities. Accessible documents will be available to support engagement activities.</p> <p>User groups Key groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community sports and recreation clubs, • commercial operators, • education bodies • community groups. <p>Other Groups Community members and the agencies who represent them, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • women and girls • people with a disability • multicultural communities • Aboriginal peoples • LGBTIQA+ and gender diverse community members • international students. <p>Internal stakeholders We will also conduct additional consultation with key City of Melbourne branches, staff and partners, including: YMCA, Aboriginal Melbourne, Parks and City Greening, City Property, City Design and Community Development.</p>
Phase 3 Analysis of community engagement and draft policy and action plan updates	
April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of community engagement activities • Incorporate community engagement feedback into final policy and action plan • Close out findings with Participants • Finalise policy and action plan documents
Phase 4 Policy and action plan approval, endorsement and release	
April 2024	Final policy and action plan endorsed by Management.
June 2024	Final policy and action plan to Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) for approval.

FAIR ACCESS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FAIR ACCESS INITIAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT— SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

January 2024

Executive summary: Overview and key findings

The City of Melbourne undertook engagement to understand why it is difficult for women, girls and other underrepresented groups, including people living with a disability, multicultural communities, Aboriginal peoples, LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse community members, and international students (underrepresented groups) to participate in community sport and recreation. The consultation was aimed at both users and non-users of community sport and recreation and activities focused on identifying barriers for women girls and others, and actions to overcome them. The feedback will inform the development of a new Council policy and action plan, The Fair Access Sport and Recreation Use and Allocation Policy (policy), and Fair Access Sport and Recreation Action Plan (action plan).

The activities were undertaken between 1 September and 13 October 2023. Feedback was provided by 205 people throughout the consultation period in several ways, including completing the Participate Melbourne Survey (126 respondents), four information sessions (19 participants), six focus group sessions (28 participants), 14 interviews and 15 conversations at the Youth Fest pop up. Five written submissions were also received from user groups, including sports and recreation clubs, individuals and community organisations.

The engagement revealed barriers to participation by women and girls, and suggested actions to overcome these in order to improve and sustain participation by users and non-users of community sport and recreation. The key findings are highlighted in this report.

Background and Methodology

We are developing our response to the Victorian Government's Office for Women and Girls Fair Access project.

Initially a significant literature review was conducted to determine barriers to sport and active recreation participation and motivators for women. Following this, community engagement activities focused on understanding why it was difficult for women, girls and underrepresented groups to participate in sport and recreation within the City of Melbourne, and what could be done to make it easier. The engagement was undertaken from 1 September to 13 October 2023.

The engagement included two parts. The first sought to introduce the concept of Fair Access to user groups, to inform them of the background, the Road Map and process, and invite them and their members to contribute to the development of a policy and action plan. Users were able to find out about the project and provide feedback across a number of activities including:

- online and in person information sessions,
- focus groups,
- Participate Melbourne Survey,
- sending an email to the dedicated Fair Access inbox.

The second stage of consultation sought to engage those currently not participating in sport or recreation within the City of Melbourne, with a focus on engaging women and girls and underrepresented groups. Non-users provided feedback via:

- focus groups,
- phone interviews,
- Participate Melbourne survey.

FAIR ACCESS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To support community members complete the survey and provide feedback, as well as find out more about Fair Access, City of Melbourne project staff held six community pop ups:

- Kathleen Syme Library & Community Centre,
- Boyd Park in South Bank,
- Fawkner Park,
- Riverside Skate Park in Alexandria Gardens,
- Youth Blockfest & Future Melbourne Committee meeting events at North Melbourne Community Centre.

The invitation to participate in the community engagement and become familiar with the project was promoted through a range of mediums including:

- Promotion via community agencies, Neighborhood portals, Participate Melbourne e-Newsletter.
- Emails and phone calls to sport and recreation clubs and operators.
- Social media posts, including a paid targeted campaign promoting the Participate Melbourne Survey.
- Posters, postcards, e-newsletters and digital promotion in libraries, community centres, and sport and recreation facilities

Engagement findings

205 people provided feedback throughout the consultation period (126 survey respondents and 79 in person and online engagement activity participants), with over half of participants being women (62%). Feedback was provided from a range of users and non-users of community sport and recreation, including clubs and committee members, peak bodies and community members from underrepresented groups (and the agencies who represent them).

Throughout the engagement activities, respondents were asked about the types of sport and recreation programs they would like to participate in. The activities non-user participants were most interested in included swimming (particularly women only sessions), gym or group fitness, martial arts, and tennis, with some respondents expressing interest to try a variety of field sports. The activities with the least amount of interest included baseball, rugby, and cricket.

Feedback about the participation barriers experienced by women, girls and others differed between users and non-users. The key barriers for current users were largely about facilities and safety, including:

- the need for lighting, facility condition and design improvements, cleanliness, and equitable allocation and scheduling of facilities,
- limited resources, including low awareness of gender equity and inclusion issues,
- low recruitment and retention of volunteers and committee members are barriers to facilitating more gender equitable activities and initiatives.

The survey results and activities for non-users, the key barriers that emerged included time, scheduling or competing demands, cost and fees, and lack of confidence. Additionally, many respondents across underrepresented groups (LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse community members, multicultural communities, Aboriginal peoples and people with a disability) expressed issues related to inclusion, including:

- inadequate facilities,
- experiencing incidences of discrimination (indirect and direct),
- staff and coaches not having appropriate training,
- no opportunities to participate in ways that are modified,
- lack of inclusive indicators (flags, signage) and not seeing people like them participating as a player or leader, including in promotional materials.

FAIR ACCESS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In response to overcoming barriers, suggested actions were identified to increase the participation of women, girls and other underrepresented groups. The actions were grouped into 13 key findings that related to three themes including infrastructure and environment, activities, and information, engagement and partnership.

Infrastructure and environment

- Ensure safety getting to and from, and participating at community sport and recreation facilities at night.
- Provide well designed and maintained sport and recreation facilities to meet their needs.
- Ensure community members feel welcome and included at community sport and recreation facilities.
- Provide access to sport and recreation facilities and activities at convenient times and locations.
- Provide nearby facilities that enable participation in the sport and recreation activities that are of interest.

Activities

- Provide opportunities to participate in sport and recreation in different ways, including activities that are more social, fun, non-competitive/routine, modified, culturally appropriate and family friendly.
- Provide easier introductions to sport and recreation activities that are non-threatening, build skills and confidence, and provide a range of pathways.
- Provide suitable pricing for those experiencing financial barriers to participating in sport and recreation.
- Greater diversity in leadership and facilitation roles.
- Ensure sport and recreation staff, facilitators and players are respectful and welcoming to all people.
- Provide equitable access to sport and recreation facilities.

Information, engagement and partnership

- Provide easily accessible information on community sport and recreation participation opportunities.
- Promote the opportunities and advantages of participating in community sport and recreation.

Next steps

The next steps of the project are to develop a draft use and allocation policy and action plan. The draft use and allocation policy will be undergo further community consultation in 2024.