

## 21.14 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

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C68(Part 1)

The municipality has a good supply of open space, however consistent with national and state trends, there is greater demand for recreational spaces across a wider range of recreational infrastructure types. The trend in choice of recreation activities is not only diversifying with greater choices of sports available, but is also moving more towards informal and casual pursuits such as passive recreation, walking, cycling, swimming and fitness activities.

The population of the Rural City of Wangaratta is expected to increase to 30,457 in 2026, representing a 6.3 per cent increase from the population in 2009. There is a need for additional open space of sufficient quality to cater for the anticipated population growth. In addition, an emerging priority is the provision of open space and recreational infrastructure to meet the growing needs of an ageing population - by 2026 25% of the population will be aged 65 years and over, up from 15% in 2006.

*The Wangaratta Recreation Strategy and Open Space Strategy, 2012* provides a framework for management, use and development of open space and recreation assets.

To ensure community needs are met now and in the future, the *Wangaratta Recreation Strategy and Open Space Strategy, 2012* includes actions and policies to improve the open space system throughout the municipality of Wangaratta and to guide Council decision making and statutory planning outcomes.

With anticipated growth in Townships, further work, completed in the Township Development Plans for Glenrowan, Oxley and Milawa provides guidance around the preferred location of future public open space and open space networks.

### Vision:

The vision for open space in the City of Wangaratta is to provide:

*A range of accessible open space and recreation opportunities that are well planned and sustainable, and meet the health, social and environmental needs of a diverse community.*

### Principles

The principles for the development of open space are:

- Provision will complement and contribute to the unique landscape, identity and vibrancy of the communities of the municipality.
- A well balanced and diverse range of recreation and open space opportunities will be offered that enable people to achieve health and wellbeing benefits.
- Recreation activities and open space will be inclusive and accessible to the whole community regardless of age, gender, cultural background, location, ability or interest.
- Flexible design and multi-use of facilities (where possible and appropriate) will ensure the most successful outcome in response to changing community needs and demands.
- Safe and well maintained facilities and spaces will encourage people to participate in secure and comfortable environments.
- Investment decisions will be made for the long term benefit of the broader community and to develop manage and maintain quality recreation facilities and open space areas to appropriate standards.
- The community will be encouraged to be involved in the planning, design and management of recreation and open space areas and facilities.
- Sustainable and contemporary facilities and spaces that are managed to conserve environmental values will enhance liveability.

- Partnerships with relevant authorities, agencies and the community are critical in the provision of the open space network and the delivery of recreation opportunities.
- The community will be well informed about the range of recreation opportunities and open spaces that are available in the Rural City of Wangaratta.

**Objective 1: To ensure the sustainable provision of sport and recreation facilities in accordance with sound planning and community need.**

- Encourage the development and maintenance of public open space and recreation in accordance with the *Wangaratta Recreation Strategy and Open Space Strategy, 2012 and Glenrowan, Oxley, and Milawa Township Development Plans*.
- Increase the diversity of available open space and recreation opportunities, such as nature walks, walking circuits, exercise stations, informal recreation opportunities for young people and older adults, seating / picnic facilities and play spaces.
- Prepare strategic plans to guide the development of existing and proposed public open spaces. Master plans for new residential developments are to show the location of open space and recreational facilities.
- Encourage the co-location of open space with other community infrastructure and facilities, including greater sharing of school and community facilities / infrastructure.
- Improve open space in areas with a current or projected deficiency as a priority within the resources available for the open space network.

**Objective 2: To ensure that all current and future residents and visitors have good access to a comprehensive open space network that expands with population growth.**

- Encourage the development / enhancement of linear links, shared pathways, walking and cycling routes to provide high quality facilities and safe access to a range of destinations consistent with the *Wangaratta Recreation Strategy and Open Space Strategy, 2012*.
- Ensure 95 per cent of all dwellings are within 400 metres walking distance of a neighbourhood park.
- Encourage residential subdivisions to be linked with existing and proposed pedestrian and cycling paths and trails
- Encourage the design of open spaces which encourage use by residents of all ages, abilities and interests.

**Objective 3: To maintain, protect and enhance the landscape, and environmental and natural heritage values quality of open space and unique habitats in a sustainable manner.**

- Protect environmental values, including landscape and places of natural heritage significance.
- Establish and maintain open spaces as Australian landscapes using indigenous species except in circumstances where a flora theme exists for heritage or cultural reasons. Landscapes are to be drought tolerant and attractive to native animals and especially birds.
- The development and maintenance of open spaces should apply sustainable approaches and seek to improve environmental outcomes, including the application of alternative sources of water supply, incorporating water sensitive urban design, and minimising chemical use, embodied energy and waste.

**Objective 4: To obtain appropriate and sustainable public open space contributions at the time of subdivision.**

- Require public open space contributions (by financial payment or vesting of land) for residential, commercial and industrial subdivision pursuant to Clause 52.01 (Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision) of the Wangaratta Planning Scheme.
- Accept and use public open space contributions (whether by financial payment or vesting of land) in accordance with *Wangaratta Recreation Strategy and Open Space Strategy, 2012*.

**Implementation**

The strategies contained in this clause will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

*Policy guidelines*

- Apply Clause 52.01 (Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision) and the Schedule to Clause 52.01 to require a public open space contribution to be made to Council when land is subdivided.
- Consider any relevant master plan or management plan in planning for the use and/or development of an open space.
- The provision of open space and recreation is to be consistent with the *Wangaratta Recreation Strategy and Open Space Strategy, 2012*.

*Other actions*

- Implement open space and recreation projects as listed in the *Wangaratta Recreation Strategy and Open Space Strategy, 2012*.
- Support the completion and promotion of pedestrian and bicycle trails along the Ovens River riverine corridor to form an integrated linear recreation corridor that links recreation, residential, commercial and other areas and uses in Wangaratta. .
- Improve connectivity in and around Townships by creating and supporting linear recreation reserves.
- Protect the HP Barr Reserve, Merriwa Park and Apex Park as destinations for tourists, landscape and biodiversity resources and attractive backdrops and gateways to the Wangaratta Central Activities Area.
- Active and passive recreation areas, rail trails and pedestrian and bicycle trails all form part of the municipal open space and recreation assets. Further development of open space areas and recreation corridors will enhance livability, connectivity and linkages between other recreation and community assets.
- Provide an integrated network of sporting and recreational opportunities in conjunction with neighbouring municipalities, including an integrated network of bike paths, a regional sports academy and a variety of events.
- Establish international standard cycling and walking tracks to link a range of tourism experiences.
- Establish Wangaratta as a regional centre for a wide range of accessible and high quality passive and active recreational sporting events and opportunities.
- Provide access to a range of well planned, safe sporting and recreational opportunities and facilities in urban and rural areas that adequately cater for the changing needs of the community and respond to environmental considerations.
- Provide access to and enhance sporting and recreational opportunities that promote active lifestyle, health and wellbeing of individuals and the community, including people with a disability, older adults, youth and migrant populations.
- Enhance livability, connectivity and linkages between other recreation and community assets through the further development and integration of open space

areas and recreation corridors consistent with the *Wangaratta Recreation Strategy and Open Space Strategy, 2012*

**Further strategic work**

- Develop a Play Space Strategy
- Develop a Walking and Cycling Strategy
- Develop a Rural West District Recreation Plan, Rural North District Recreation Plan, Rural East District Recreation Plan and Rural South District Recreation Plan

The following policy is relevant to this strategic direction:

- *22.09 Public Open Space Contributions*