

FAIR ACCESS SPORT AND RECREATION ALLOCATION AND USE POLICY

2024-2027



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.

Council Plan 2021-25

The Council Plan 2021-25 sets out our strategic direction and commitment to the community for the next four years. Based on six strategic objectives for our city, this is our detailed plan for our city's revitalisation and considers the needs of all people who access and experience the City of Melbourne municipality. For more information visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan



Safety and wellbeing

Ensuring the city is safe, and that people feel safe when they come into the city is our priority. We will plan and design for the safety and health and wellbeing of all people in Melbourne, and we are committed to strengthening community social connections.

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July 2024

Cover Image: Five women in Alexandra Gardens. Photo Credit: Active Melbourne 2024.

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ACTIVE
MELBOURNE

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) enrich 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 community, 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".

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, education level, occupation, ability, faith, and beliefs. We also seek to improve participation opportunities for other underrepresented groups where possible.

Our response to the Roadmap aims to build capacity to identify and eliminate systemic causes of gender inequality, ableism and cultural bias in policy, programs, communications, and community sports and recreation services delivery. We acknowledge that a number of user groups already provide a range of inclusive participation opportunities and we are committed to supporting and mentoring all groups to achieve fair access for all.

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 policy and action plan both seek to improve the access and use of the City of Melbourne's community sports and recreation facilities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

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 to understand and adopt 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.

The guiding principles will strengthen a culture of inclusion, care and respect at the community sport and recreation facilities in the City of Melbourne.

3. Objectives

Our Fair Access objectives are to:

- Provide fair and 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, social and wellbeing outcomes.

4. Purpose

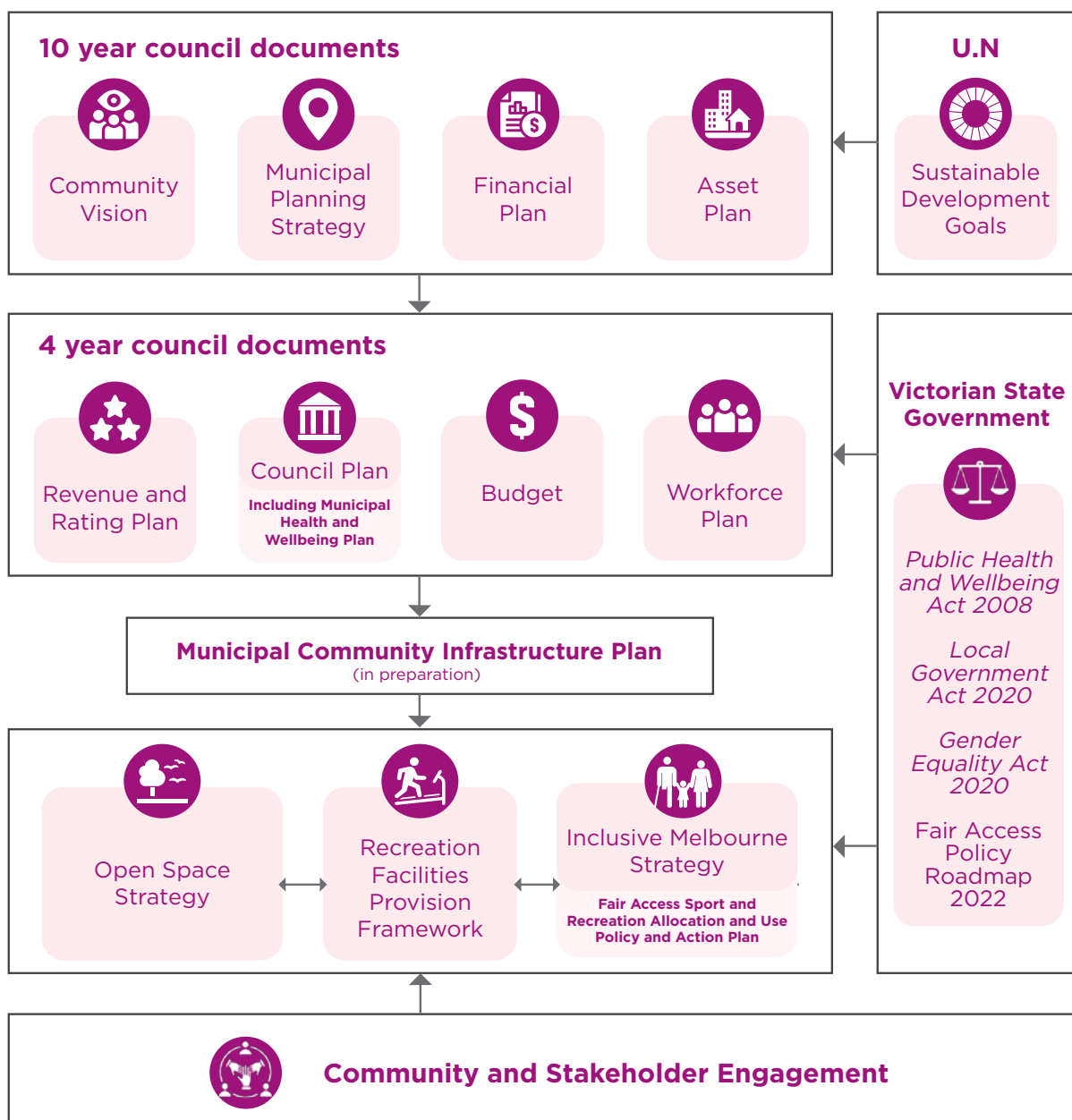
The purpose of this policy is to:

- 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.

CONTEXT AND ALIGNMENT

5. Context and Alignment

The policy aligns with other City of Melbourne plans and strategies, and relevant state government legislation including its Fair Access Policy Roadmap.



The appendices include additional information regarding alignment with City of Melbourne plans and strategies (Appendix C: Policy alignment).



SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

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 use 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.

ALLOCATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

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 different 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 (overleaf) 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 regarding smoking and vaping, alcohol, gambling, preference for the provision of healthy food, and sun safety
8. Provide facility usage data i.e. participation information, program details and any other supporting documents as requested
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.

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

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 (e.g. 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%

IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

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.

The City of Melbourne recognises that clubs and associations may, explicitly or implicitly, define their membership on the basis of certain protected attributes in the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The City of Melbourne will not adjudicate between clubs and associations about the different lawful bases on which clubs and associations advance the interests of women and girls. The City of Melbourne will not duplicate or supplant the role of the Australian or Victorian Human Rights Commissions in adjudicating conflicts of rights in law, or the role of amateur and professional sporting associations in choosing the terms of their own sporting competitions.

The person from time to time occupying the position of Director Recreation and Waterways, as the authorised delegate of Council, has the discretion to depart from the Policy where user groups may not be able to meet the 'Championing Gender Equity and Fair Access Indicators' in Section 7, but can demonstrate that they are meeting the needs of underrepresented groups or are offering a diversity of sport and recreation activities.

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.



APPENDICES

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 residents
- 2.3% residents 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 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 use of publicly owned community sport and recreation infrastructure. It requires local councils to implement allocation and use policies and action plans. 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.

APPENDICES

Appendix C - Policy Alignment

The Policy aligns with the following 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 six strategic objectives for its four-year Council Plan in response to the Community Vision. • The 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"> ◦ SDG Goal 5 Gender equality – target 5.1 ◦ 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 focus areas, including:</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 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 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:

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	South Yarra

AREA	FACILITY NAME	LOCATION
4	Sporting fields and pavilions Fawkner Park facilities - 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 Kensington Skate Park and BMX Track	Kensington
15	Recreation centres Flagstaff Gardens Multisport Courts	Melbourne
16	Recreation centres Docklands Multisport Courts	Docklands
17	Recreation centres Royal Park Golf Course	Parkville
18	Leased / licensed Rowing facilities	Alexandra Gardens
19	Leased / licensed Boating facilities	Docklands
20	Leased / licensed Carlton Gardens Tennis Courts	Carlton
21	Leased / licensed North Park Tennis Courts	Parkville
22	Leased / licensed Kensington Banks Tennis Courts	Kensington
23	Leased / licensed Princes Hill Tennis Courts	Carlton
24	Leased / licensed Parkville Tennis Courts	Parkville
25	Leased / licensed Fawkner Park Tennis Courts	South Yarra
26	Leased / licensed Powlett Reserve Tennis Courts	East Melbourne
27	Leased / licensed Royal Park Tennis Courts	Parkville
28	Leased / licensed Flemington Kensington Bowling Greens	Kensington
29	Leased / licensed Princes Park Carlton Bowling Greens	Carlton
30	Leased / licensed Flagstaff Gardens Bowling Greens	Melbourne
31	Leased / licensed North Melbourne Football Club	North Melbourne
32	Leased / licensed Carlton Football Club	Carlton
33	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 outcomes. It means that some people might be given extra resources and opportunities to achieve outcomes equal to others.

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.

User groups: organisations, including sporting clubs, associations, community groups, schools, commercial operators and others.

How to contact us

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