

Recreation and Leisure Strategy

2022–2030



RECREATION
AND LEISURE





This document is available in Easy English format. Easy English conveys key messages using simplified concepts and a specialised library of images. It is particularly beneficial for people with low English literacy, people with intellectual disability and people who speak English as a second language.

If you require the Recreation and Leisure Strategy 2022-2030 document in an alternative format, email leisure@nillumbik.vic.gov.au or phone **9433 3111**.

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, please contact us through the National Relay Service on **13 36 77**.

Acknowledgement of Country

Nillumbik Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the Country on which Nillumbik is located. We value the significance of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people’s history as essential to the unique character of the Shire. We pay tribute to all First Nations People living in Nillumbik, give respect to Elders past, present and future, and extend that respect to all First Nations People.

We respect the enduring strength of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and acknowledge the ongoing impacts of past trauma and injustices from European invasion, massacres and genocide committed against First Nations People. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people hold a deep and ongoing connection to this place. We value the distinctive place of our First Nations people in both Nillumbik’s and Australia’s identity; from their cultural heritage and care of the land and waterways, to their ongoing contributions in many fields including academia, agriculture, art, economics, law, sport and politics.

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Introduction



Nillumbik Shire Council values the roles that sport and active recreation play in improving the health, wellbeing and quality of life of Nillumbik residents.

People who live, work, study, volunteer and play in Nillumbik Shire are involved in a wide variety of recreational activities. Council understands the importance of physical activity, active participation and volunteerism in building strong and healthy communities.

Council acknowledges the importance of other leisure and non-physical activities in a person's life which may fall outside the scope of this strategy.

The purpose of this strategy is to renew Council's commitment to physical activity across the municipality. The strategy provides strategic priorities and objectives that will inform the development of sport and active recreation in Nillumbik over the next eight years. The strategy is underpinned by two four-year action plans spanning from 2022-2026 and 2027-2030.

This strategy has been informed by extensive community consultation with key internal and external stakeholders, including community sporting clubs, peak bodies/state sporting associations and leisure providers, as well as community users of open space, skate parks, trails and playgrounds.



Vision



Nillumbik Shire will be characterised by well-planned, sustainable facilities and environments that meet the physical activity needs of our community.

Opportunities to participate will be supported through strong partnerships between Council, the community and leisure providers.

We will remove barriers to participation in sport and active recreation for underrepresented groups in the community, including: women and girls, people with disability, gender diverse people, the LGBTQIA+ community, First Nations people, socio-economically disadvantaged individuals, migrants and refugees, older adults and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.



“Nillumbik is committed to providing high quality, inclusive sport and recreation facilities in partnership with the community to support participation for all.”



Physical Activity in Nillumbik



Participation in physical activity is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

Being physically active by engaging in sport and active recreation improves health outcomes, promotes mental wellbeing and can reduce the risk of developing chronic health conditions, such as obesity and heart disease. Being socially connected through physical activity has positive impacts on the psychological, social and emotional wellbeing of individuals and communities.

The national Physical Activity Guidelines recommend limiting the amount of time spent sitting, and doing a minimum of 30 minutes of accumulated physical activity each day for adults, three hours a day for toddlers and pre-schoolers, and 60 minutes a day for children and teens. The 2021 Nillumbik Community Profile found that only 63% of Nillumbik residents engage in sufficient physical activity.

Physical activity can take many forms. This strategy encompasses both sporting activities and active recreation.

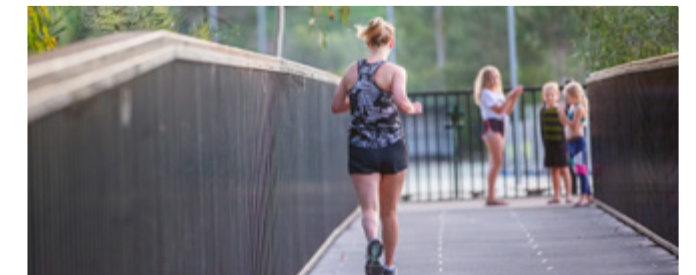
Sport includes competitive and non-competitive sporting activities which are organised, sanctioned by a governing body and are undertaken using Council resources and facilities (e.g. AFL football, netball, basketball, soccer etc.)

Active Recreation is not organised and is without a governing structure. The three most popular forms of active recreation in Nillumbik are walking (58.2 per cent), cycling (15.4 per cent), and jogging or running (12.4 per cent). Other examples of active recreation include use of playgrounds, skate parks and trails.

In addition to community sport and active recreation assets, Council owns and operates six major leisure facilities:

- Yarrambat Park Golf Course
- Eltham Leisure Centre
- Diamond Creek Community Centre
- Diamond Creek Outdoor Pool
- Diamond Valley Sport and Fitness Stadium, and
- Community Bank Stadium

These settings facilitate both sport and active recreation and are managed through long term partnerships with specialised leisure providers.



COVID-19 and Recreation

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has evolved, there has been a broad range of impacts on the lives of Victorians, including to the economy, education, employment, healthcare and participation in community activities.

The 2021 'Together in Nillumbik' survey found 52 per cent of Nillumbik residents reported they were less physically active as a direct result of COVID-19 restrictions.

The height of the state's lockdown directive resulted in the temporary cessation of all community sport in Victoria. From adopting strict hygiene protocols to modifying training and game formats, community sport has been quick to adapt to the evolving public health guidelines in order to continue to provide participation opportunities to the community.

As part of the 2020-21 Club Development survey, Nillumbik sporting clubs identified their top concerns in regards to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local community sport.

Two thirds of Nillumbik clubs expressed concern around their ability to retain members, and half of all clubs highlighted the detrimental financial impact of the pandemic. One in five clubs expressed concern at their capacity to comply with COVID-19 operational guidelines.

Possible long-term outcomes of COVID-19 for community sport may include:

- Decline in participation and memberships
- Loss of volunteers
- Financial instability.

Conversely, the restrictions imposed on community sporting clubs during COVID-19 saw a significant increase in participation in active recreation, highlighting the important role that active recreation infrastructure and open space play in improving physical and mental health and wellbeing.



Priorities



Strategic alignment

The *Local Government Act 2020* promotes an integrated approach to strategic planning and reporting. Integrated strategic planning and reporting seeks to ensure strong alignment between key strategic documents and policies that direct and influence initiatives, activities and projects undertaken by Council.

The following symbols will be used throughout each priority to indicate the direct alignment to strategies included within Nillumbik's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25 and Council Plan 2021-25.

Symbols

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25 

Council Plan 2021-25 

In compliance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, Council will apply a gender and intersectional lens across the strategy and associated action plans.

More broadly, the Recreation and Leisure Strategy plays a role in supporting Council to achieve objectives under each of the four themes for a Community Vision - Nillumbik 2040 which are *Our People, Our Place, Our Future and Our Council*.

Six key priorities

Council has identified six key priorities which will guide the strategic direction of recreation over the next eight years. These include:

1. Increasing Participation and Usage of Facilities and Open Space
2. Promoting Equity and Inclusion
3. Infrastructure Renewal and Upgrade
4. Community Engagement and Partnerships
5. Community Development and Strengthening
6. Sustainable Environments

Priority 1.

Increasing Participation and Usage of Facilities and Open Space



Increasing participation in physical activity is a priority for both State and Federal governments.

As a local government authority, Nillumbik Shire Council has a responsibility to maximise participation opportunities for the local community.

Council is committed to actively maintaining and renewing recreation assets, including sport grounds, playgrounds, trails, skate parks and leisure facilities, in alignment with asset management plans, to ensure they are able to cater to an increase in usage.

Council will work closely with community sporting clubs and leisure providers to deliver programs and services that maximise opportunities for individuals and groups to be physically active.

Objectives

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 1.1 | Overall participation in sport and active recreation is increased annually |  |
| 1.2 | Participation in key targeted demographics (including women and girls, people with disability, First Nations people, gender diverse people, the LGBTQIA+ community, older adults, migrants and refugees, CALD communities and individuals from rural/remote areas) is increased annually |  |
| 1.3 | Nillumbik Shire Council works proactively with community groups to address decline or stagnation in participation through targeted action plans | |
| 1.4 | Nillumbik Shire Council actively supports and promotes opportunities to participate in active recreation opportunities, including walking, skating, scootering and cycling | 
 |
| 1.5 | Nillumbik Shire Council completes Gender Impact Assessments for all projects and planning (where applicable) to support the participation of women and girls, gender diverse people and the LGBTQIA+ community |  |

Priority 2.

Promoting Equity and Inclusion



Council has a responsibility to ensure that all people have the opportunity to participate in sport and recreation, regardless of their age, gender, sexuality, ability, religion, location, cultural background or socio-economic status.

Council plays a significant role in actively encouraging equity and inclusion across all aspects of recreation, and in addressing inequities to ensure greater access to programs and facilities.

Council will prioritise projects and programs that provide equity of access and support the meaningful participation of underrepresented groups in sport and recreation. This will be achieved through the adoption of universal design principles, as well as through equitable scheduling and resource distribution.

Council will incentivise equity, diversity and inclusion through fees and charges and funding opportunities.

Objectives

2.1 Projects, programs and services that support an increase in access, equity and inclusion in sport and recreation are prioritised for funding



2.2 Fees and charges for sporting facilities incentivise equitable access and promote inclusive practices



2.3 Nillumbik Shire Council works proactively with community groups to increase awareness and build capacity around inclusion best practice



2.4 Nillumbik Shire Council actively pursues options to make sport, recreation and leisure facilities more accessible



2.5 Lease agreements for sport and recreation assets are reviewed and adapted to promote fair and equal access

Priority 3.

Infrastructure Renewal and Upgrade



Council will actively pursue funding opportunities to renew ageing infrastructure, upgrade existing infrastructure and develop new infrastructure to meet the community's needs and expectations around sport and active recreation.

Council will work closely with partners, including but not limited to: community groups, leisure providers, state sporting associations and the State Government to better understand community needs and deliver projects.

Council will make decisions around funding in a transparent, principled and consistent manner. Projects will be prioritised on a needs basis, with an emphasis on projects that deliver inclusive and accessible participation opportunities.

Objectives

3.1

Nillumbik playgrounds meet the needs of Nillumbik residents and visitors



3.2

Infrastructure renewal and upgrade projects that meet multiple strategy principles are prioritised



3.3

Nillumbik Shire Council actively pursues grant and funding opportunities to develop and renew assets to meet community needs



Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25 

Council Plan 2021-25 



Priority 4.

Community Engagement and Partnerships



Council will continue to engage enthusiastically with community sporting clubs, governing bodies, leisure providers and members of the community regarding physical activity throughout the municipality.

Council will continue to build positive and supportive partnerships with community sporting clubs, with a focus on beneficial occupancy arrangements, acquisition of funding and grants and provision of club education.

Council values its relationships with the leagues, associations and the state and national sporting bodies that govern sporting activities. Council will continue to work collaboratively with them to advocate for Nillumbik community sporting clubs, strengthen partnerships and align strategic direction.

Council will undertake community consultation on sport and recreation projects in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy. Council is committed to meaningful engagement with community members to identify and address the recreation needs of those who live, work and play in Nillumbik. Consultation findings will shape the development of the Recreation and Leisure Strategy's Action Plans and Levels of Service.



Objectives

- 4.1** All community engagement is undertaken in alignment with Council's Community Engagement Policy
- 4.2** A Recreation Advisory Committee is formed to provide guidance on sport, recreation and leisure opportunities within the Shire
- 4.3** Nillumbik Shire Council supports community sporting clubs and contracted leisure providers to both seek new community partnerships and optimise existing partnerships with local businesses and community organisations
- 4.4** Nillumbik Shire Council proactively seeks to form partnerships with groups and organisations that support the participation of underrepresented community groups in sport and recreation



Priority 5.

Community Development and Strengthening



Council will support community sport and recreation clubs to become viable, independent and well-governed organisations.

Professional development opportunities, funding incentives and auditing processes will assist clubs in becoming financially sustainable as well as safe, inclusive and welcoming environments. Community sport volunteers will be supported to upskill and we will celebrate their contribution to our Shire.

Council will continue to work closely with other partners, including contracted leisure providers, to provide programs that upskill the community to lead healthier and more active lifestyles.

Council will give priority to facilities, programs and services which encourage and support community strengthening and capacity building.



Objectives

- 5.1** Club development is delivered annually as per the Club Development Framework
- 5.2** Where relevant, community sporting clubs are provided with the opportunity to transition from seasonal user agreements onto lease or license agreements
- 5.3** Nillumbik Shire Council supports clubs to be safe, welcoming and sustainable organisations
- 5.4** Nillumbik Shire Council supports community sporting clubs to apply for funding



Priority 6.

Sustainable Environments



The protection of the Shire's natural assets and outdoor recreation environment is of utmost importance. Council supports the efficient use of resources and actively encourages the minimisation of waste production in its projects and services.

The development and/or renewal of recreation assets, such as pavilions and leisure facilities, will incorporate sustainable management practices and environmentally sustainable design principles.

Objectives

6.1

Lease and licence agreements include a sustainability clause which outlines environmental considerations, including recycling and energy-saving measures

6.2

Nillumbik Shire Council adheres to Council's Climate Action Plan 2022-2032 in regards to the renewal, upgrade and maintenance of sport and recreation assets

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25 
Council Plan 2021-25 



Implementation and Evaluation

The 'Recreation and Leisure Strategy is underpinned by two four-year action plans spanning from 2022-2026 and 2027-2030. Each action plan will provide detail on how Council will implement the strategic objectives in this strategy and measure progress. Actions will be reviewed every 12 months, and an evaluation on the 2022-2026 action plan will be completed prior to the 2027-2030 action plan being prepared.

The four-year action plans will include:

- Actions related to each strategic objective in the strategy
- Timeframe each action will be delivered
- Who is responsible within Council to deliver the action
- Partners involved in delivering the action.

Annual reviews

Annual reviews will be undertaken by Council officers to evaluate the progress made within each of the priority areas.

A traffic light rating system will be used to identify actions within the annual implementation plan that are **complete**, **on track** or **delayed**.

Case studies from key initiatives will also be included in each annual review.

The reports will also monitor trends, identify opportunities for improvements and inform the development of the next four-year action plan to ensure actions remain relevant for continued investment by Council over the life of the strategy.

Council will prepare a summary report at the completion of each four-year action plan to be shared with key stakeholders including Councillors, Council officers, service providers and the wider community.



Related Council strategies

- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
- Disability Action Plan 2020-2024
- Gender Equity Policy 2018
- Ageing Well in Nillumbik Action Plan 2019-2022
- Equine Strategy 2020
- Lifetime Play Strategy 2017
- Northern Regional Trails Strategy 2016
- Open Space Strategy 2005
- Soccer Strategy 2014
- Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2032
- Community Engagement Policy 2021
- Community Grants Policy 2022
- Youth Strategy 2022-2026
- Eltham Lower Park Masterplan 2008
- Inclusive Sports Pavilion Plan



Glossary of Terms

Active Recreation - Active recreation is leisure time physical activity undertaken outside of structured, competition sport. It is a set of activities within the wider range of physical activity options that also include active living, active transport and sport

CALD - Culturally and linguistically diverse communities. A widely used definition of CALD refers to those people born overseas, in countries other than those classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as 'main English speaking countries'

Disability - Disability is an umbrella term for impairments of body function or structure, activity limitations or participation restrictions

Exercise - Planned physical activity with bodily movements that are structured and repetitive, performed for the purpose of improving or maintaining physical fitness

First Nations People - 'First Nations People' respectfully encompasses the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities

Gender Diverse - A broad term that encompasses a diversity of gender identities and gender expressions including: bigender, trans, transgender, genderqueer, gender fluid, gender questioning, gender diverse, agender and non-binary. Gender diverse refers to identities and expressions that reject the belief that gender is determined by the sex someone is assigned at birth

Health - A state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity

Inclusion - the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised; such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of other minority groups

LGBTQIA+ - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer/questioning, intersex and/or asexual

Older Adult - Being an 'older' person is a relative concept—chronologically, medically and culturally. It does not have a precise definition and specific ages may be used for particular purposes. People over 65 are generally classified as 'older' for Australian Bureau of Statistics

Physical Activity - Physical activity is defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscle that requires energy expenditure. Popular ways to be physically active include walking, cycling, sports, and play, and can be done at any level of skill and for enjoyment by everybody

Recreation - Recreation is an activity that people engage in during their free time, that people enjoy and that people recognise as having socially redeeming values

Sport - includes competitive and non-competitive sporting activities which are organised, sanctioned by a governing body and are undertaken using Council resources and facilities (e.g. AFL football, netball and soccer)

Nillumbik Shire Council

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