12.13 ADOPTION OF PUBLIC SPACES AND RECREATION STRATEGY 2024

ATTACHMENTS:	**1. FINAL MARK-UP PUBLIC SPACES RECREATION STRATEGY** **2. ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES REPORT - PUBLIC SPACES AND RECREATION STRATEGY**
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**LINDA PERRINE, COMMUNITY CULTURE & LEISURE DIRECTOR**
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CITY STRATEGY OUTCOME:	**3.3 – CREATE DESIRABLE PLACES TO BE AND ENJOY**
MEETING DATE:	**25 MARCH 2024**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Council's adoption of the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2024.*

2. OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Adopt the Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2024.**
2. **Rescind the Open Space and Recreation Plan 2013.**
3. **Write to everyone that provided a submission to thank and notify them of the outcomes of the exhibition of the Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2024.**
4. **Delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer to make minor amendments to the Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2024 that do not alter the intent.**

3. BACKGROUND

At the meeting of 23 October 2023, Council resolved:

1. *Endorse the public exhibition of the Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2023.*
2. *On Page 17 of the Strategy, the wording to describe gaps in access to public spaces within 200m walking distance in the suburbs of Chatswood, Artarmon, North Willoughby, Willoughby, Roseville and Northbridge be changed from "minor' to 'notable'.*
3. *Add an additional recommendation 2.7 – Seek to gain agreement at Council on the level of contributions from developers, rates and other revenue to support the building up of reserves to acquire public land in areas of agreed deficit not otherwise provided for, to support this and subsequent public spaces strategies.*
4. *Receive a report in March 2024 on the outcome of the public exhibition of the new Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2023.*

The changes referred to in 2 and 3 above were addressed in the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy* (the Strategy) prior to exhibition. As Council is being asked to adopt the strategy in 2024, the date of the strategy has been updated.

This report discusses the results of the public exhibition process and seeks Council endorsement of the final version of the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2024*.

4. DISCUSSION

The new *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2024*
The *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy* responds to multiple challenges facing Council including limited opportunities to deliver new public spaces due to constrained land availability and high land costs; population growth due to increasing housing targets; and shifting recreational preferences of the community. Adopting a placemaking approach, the Strategy encourages partnerships and collaboration to make sure existing public spaces meet community needs.

Over 350 community members and stakeholders contributed to the development of the Strategy, in Stage One of the community consultation process. This consultation highlighted how the community's recreation needs are evolving and how they would like to use public spaces in the future, informing Strategy's five strategic opportunities listed below.
Create and promote a network of public spaces via recreational links.

1. Leverage future development and underutilised assets to deliver new public spaces.
2. Activate existing public spaces for increased recreational participation.
3. Encourage shared use and multi-purpose design of sports spaces.
4. Promote collaborative and co-ordinated planning and delivery.

The Strategy, at **Attachment 1,** includes a proposed list of actions against each of these five priorities.

Exhibition process
The exhibition period for the Strategy ran from 13 November 2023 to 11 December 2023 and included the following activities:
Have Your Say project page and survey

- Pop up /drop in sessions at:
    - 15 November 2023 Chatswood Youth Centre, 3.30 - 5pm
    - 15 November 2023 Chatswood Mall, 11am - 1pm
    - 29 November 2023 Willoughby Park Centre, 3 - 5pm
    - 6 December 2023 Teams on-line meeting for sporting groups, 6 - 7pm

These engagement opportunities were promoted extensively including by:

- Social media
- Site signs at 25 parks and reserves across the City that included a QR code which linked to the Have Your Say project page
- Promotion on display boards at Council's Customer Service Centre
- Notification letters/ emails to:
    - 318 stakeholders from the initial workshops/interviews/Have Your Say survey
    - 32 attendees from the two face to face workshops
    - Recreation facility and sportsground hirers, including sporting clubs and not-for-profit recreation operators
    - Progress Associations
    - Existing Council networks and volunteers
    - Willoughby Youth Action Group
    - Council Advisory Committees

Response to feedback received
In total, 66 formal submissions were made through the public exhibition period via the Have Your Say project page and email submissions with a further 91 attendees providing general feedback across the three face-to-face drop-in session. Three participants attended the online sporting stakeholder workshop.

A comprehensive engagement outcomes report, including an analysis of key feedback themes and a proposed response to all comments, is available at **Attachment 2.**

Figure One summarises the feedback from the community on the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy, a*nd the proposed placemaking approach.

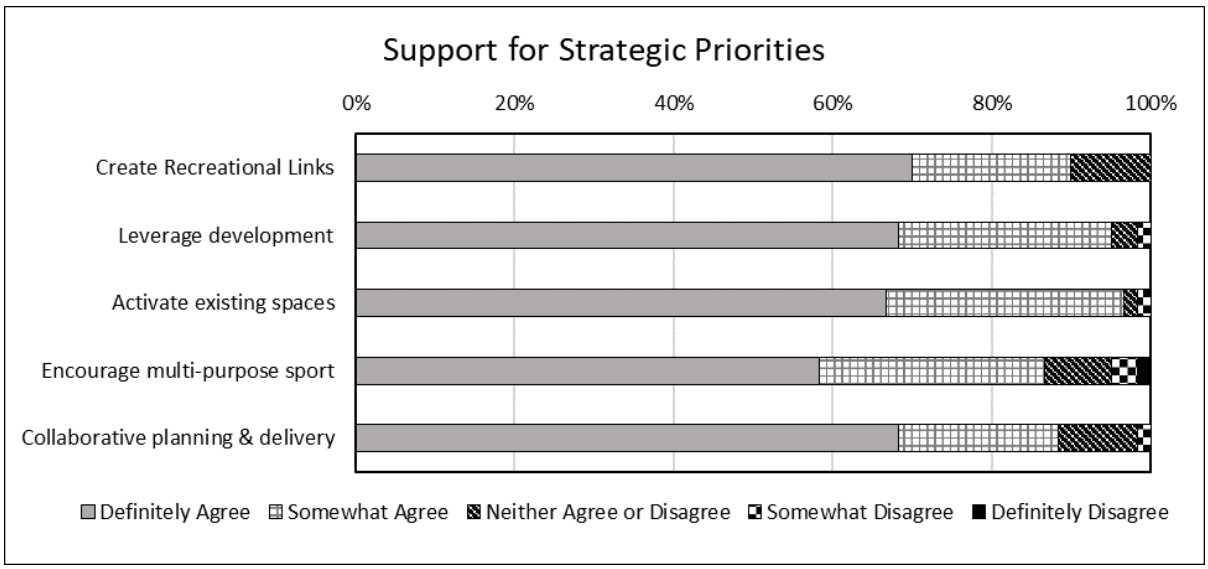
Figure One: Support for Strategy and Placemaking approach

Response	Overall Strategy (%)	Placemaking approach (%)
Very Supportive	50	53
Supportive	32	25
Somewhat supportive	13	21
Not very supportive	5	2

Across the project, the community were supportive of adopting a placemaking lens to public spaces and the increased opportunity this provides to actively shape the future of these spaces.

Figure Two summarises the feedback received across each of the five strategic principles identified within the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy*. A minimum of 87% of respondents identified either their full (definitely agree) or partial (somewhat agree) support for each of the five strategic principles.

Figure Two: Support for each of the five strategic priorities identified in the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy*



12 respondents provided suggestions on interventions/activations to improve the use of specific public spaces. The Strategy provides a framework for the use of placemaking with the community, so that such under-utilised spaces become places that the local community enjoy and use. There was also a willingness of organised community user groups, in particular sporting user groups, to collaborate with Council in achieving positive outcomes within public spaces in Willoughby.

Based on the feedback received, amendments have been made to the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy*. Two amendments are on page 37 of the marked up version of the Strategy:

- Addition of the phrase '*Where appropriate*, consider reducing the number of holes in golf courses and expanding their recreational offering' in point 4 under location opportunities for Strategic Priority number 4. This responds to community feedback received concerning potential impacts on golf courses in the Willoughby LGA.
- Revision of point 7 under location opportunities for Strategic Priority number 4 to remove reference to Tyneside Tennis Courts for pickleball activities. This responds to community feedback concerning potentially suitability of this site for pickleball. Opportunity now reads – '*Consider increasing the number of outdoor pickleball courts on offer at suitable locations.'*

Other minor amendments to the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy* which do not alter the intent, are also highlighted in the updated Strategy at **Attachment 1.**

5. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The level of risk associated with this report is low, with moderate consequences under *Council's Risk Management Framework*.

6. CONCLUSION

The new *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2024* has been on public exhibition and been considered by the Willoughby community. Over 95 per cent of respondents reported some level of support for the overall strategy. Over 98 per cent of respondents also showed some level of support for the adoption of a placemaking approach to actively shape the future of Willoughby's public spaces. A very high level of support was reported for each of the five strategic priorities identified within the strategy. Based on the feedback received, only minor amendments have been made to the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy*. The new *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2024* is recommended for Council's adoption to be the guide for the next 10 years of improving and shaping public spaces for the Willoughby community, using a placemaking approach.

7. IMPLICATIONS COMMENT

City Strategy Outcome	3.3 – Create desirable places to be and enjoy
Business Plan Objectives, Outcomes / Services	Our community will have a guiding document that will provide better access to public and recreation spaces for their health and well-being.
Policy	*Open Space and Recreation Plan 2013* - Willoughby City Council is the current policy document.
Consultation	Stage Two of the consultation for the *Public Spaces and Recreation Strategy* is the subject of this report.

Risk	The level of risk associated with this report is low, with moderate consequences under *Council's Risk Management Framework*.
Resource	All actions involved in the Stage 2 community engagement were undertaken by Council staff.
Legal	Not applicable.
Legislation	Adoption of the P*ublic Spaces and Recreation Strategy 2024* is in accordance with all relevant legislation.
Budget/Financial	The Strategy was developed using project funds allocated through the PCW program.