



Phase 2 Engagement **Report**

What we heard

Draft City to River Masterplan



October 2019

Acknowledgement

The Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagalk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) acknowledges and thanks all groups and individuals who gave their time to review and comment on the City to River Draft Masterplan and all supporting documents.

Definitions

Submissions	Feedback received on the City to River Masterplan and associated documents between 4 July and 30 August 2019 via the Council feedback form (both hard and electronic versions), emails and letters.
Participants	Individuals, groups and organisations who made submissions
GovHub	A building that places a range of government departments and agencies in one building. "GovHubs are considered a new, centralised way of doing business in regional Victoria that focus on enhancing customer service. GovHubs also help to revitalise city centres and deliver a range of economic benefits during construction and ongoing operation, particularly to neighboring retail and hospitality businesses" (Frequently Asked Questions – Bendigo GovHub)

Abbreviations

Central Activity District	CAD
Horsham Rural City Council	HRCC
Wimmera Catchment Management Authority	WCMA
Greyhound Racing Victoria	GRV
Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water	GWM
Government Hub	GovHub

Accessibility

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1 Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1. Purpose of this report	4
1.2. About City to River	5
1.3. The engagement process	5
1.4. Phase 1 Engagement:.....	6
2. How we engaged: phase 2	8
2.1. Engagement objectives	8
2.2. Engagement approach	9
3. Who engaged in phase 2	9
3.1. Engagement response and who engaged.....	9
4. What we heard	11
4.1. What people liked and disliked	11
4.2. How themes are grouped	15
4.3. Project wide themes	15
4.3.1. Planning for the future	15
4.3.2. Community consultation	16
4.3.3. Increase in the number of people using an area	16
4.3.4. Impacts on existing business and community	17
4.3.5. Implementation time and scope	18
4.3.6. Politics	18
4.3.7. Funding and rate impacts.....	19
4.3.8. Transport and connectivity.....	19
4.3.9. Tourism, arts and culture	21
4.4. City to River Sub Precincts	23
4.4.1. Showgrounds precinct.....	24
4.4.1.1. Showgrounds and Greyhound Racing.....	24
4.4.1.2. Sport and the multipurpose sporting precinct	26
4.4.2. Central Activity District.....	31
4.4.2.1. Central Activity District.....	31
4.4.2.2. Accommodation and housing.....	32
4.4.2.3. GovHub.....	33
4.4.3. City Oval and Sawyer Park	35
4.4.4. Botanic Gardens and Caravan Park	38
4.4.4.1. Botanic Gardens	38
4.4.4.2. Lawn Tennis and Croquet	39
4.4.4.3. Caravan Park.....	43
4.4.5. Riverfront and Firebrace Street connection	45

4.4.5.1.	Riverfront improvements and activation.....	45
4.4.5.2.	Riverfront environment.....	47
4.4.5.3.	Café	47
4.4.5.4.	Miniature Railway.....	48
4.4.5.5.	Splash park and family friendly attractions	49
5.	Next steps	50
5.1.	Formulate recommendations.....	50
5.2.	City to River timeline	51
6.	Appendix	52
6.1.	Tables	52

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this report

This report summarises key messages heard from phase 2 of the engagement process for the Draft City to River Masterplan and associated documents. The analysis has been structured around written feedback received via the HRCC City to River feedback form, plus letter and email submissions between 4 July and 30 August 2019. This report does not provide any recommended responses, but simply summarises what the community and other stakeholders told us.

Next steps will include delivering a report outlining Council's response to feedback. Feedback received from the community and other key stakeholders through phase 2 will help inform the Final City to River Masterplan.

However, this is just the start of the conversation. As part of refining the ideas and the detailed planning and design process for individual projects, Council will undertake further engagement activities.



Engagement phases

Gather

Phase 1:

Gather existing ideas from previous engagement activities & undertake targeted engagement with key groups

Test

Phase 2:

Test ideas with the wider community by asking for feedback

Refine

Phase 3:

Targeted engagement to refine ideas based on response to community feedback

Design

Phase 4:

Engagement through the detailed design phase for individual projects



1.2. About City to River

The Draft City to River Masterplan and supporting documents proposes a suite of transformative projects aimed at enhancing and revitalising Horsham's Central Activity District (CAD), Wimmera Riverfront and Showgrounds Precinct, making Horsham a more attractive place to live, work, visit and invest.

The project seeks to deliver a 20 year Vision and Masterplan identifying a suite of 'game changing' projects for the City to River area.

The final Masterplan will allow Council to take a leadership role in attracting public and private sector interest and investment.

Other key project drivers include:

- The need to grow Horsham as the key population and employment centre for the region
- Attract and retain residents, and grow tourism

1.3. The engagement process

Council made a strong commitment as part of this project to deliver a genuine and thorough engagement process. This included using the results of earlier engagement activities undertaken in the study area and incorporating ideas already identified by the community.

The engagement process has been broken up into a number of phases as described in the adjacent figure 'Engagement phases'. The objectives of phases 1 and 2 are listed below, with phase 2 being the subject of this report.

Number and activity type	Stakeholder	Attendees
3 briefings	Council Briefings	7
1 visioning workshop	Councilor Workshop	5
3 visioning workshops	Community groups	38
16 meetings	Sporting associations & Clubs	16
1 survey (membership data, trends, facilities, demand and user needs)	Sporting associations & Clubs	28
1 workshop	Council Officers	11
1 workshop 4 meetings	State Government Agencies	13
7 meetings	Business and Tourism reps.	11
1 workshop/debrief	Horsham Multi-Use Indoor Sports Stadium	13
8 meetings	Adjoining Wimmera River Landowners	11
10 meetings	Key user groups	11

Table 1: Phase 1 targeted engagement summary

1.4. Phase 1 Engagement: January - May 2019

Ideas put forward in the Draft City to River Masterplan were identified through an initial phase of engagement, the results of previous engagement activity with the community, existing Council plans and strategies, new research, analysis and site visits.

In January 2019, Phase 1 of the engagement process was delivered, involving over 70 people and 164 engagements (refer Table 1). The process involved workshops, interviews and a survey.

Over 160 invitations were sent to sporting groups, special interest groups, agencies and community and business representatives for the three visioning workshops.



The objectives of Phase 1 were to:

- test ideas gathered through earlier Council projects on the CAD and Riverfront
- identify new ideas
- understand future development plans or opportunities and current constraints to growth or development
- sport survey membership data, trends, facilities, demand and user needs

Table 1 provides a summary of Phase 1 engagement.

The first phase involved discussions with a range of groups including:

- sporting and leisure associations
- community groups
- sporting clubs
- government agencies
- statutory authorities



2. How we engaged: phase 2

2.1. Engagement objectives

From 4 July – 30 August 2019 the community were invited to comment on ideas gathered in phase 1 of the engagement process. Ideas gathered as part of phase 1 were presented in the Draft City to River Masterplan and supporting documents.

The objectives of phase 2 of the engagement process was to:

- provide the wider community with the opportunity to have their say
- test ideas generated from the 1st phase of the engagement process with the general community
- identify how, to the greatest extent possible, the plan could be modified in response to community feedback, whilst remaining true to the objectives of the project.

Engagement activities were aimed at providing an opportunity for as many people as possible to have their say on the Draft Masterplan, across:

- a broad demographic
- all ages and stages of life
- passive, active and organised users
- the Horsham municipality and across the Wimmera Southern Mallee region



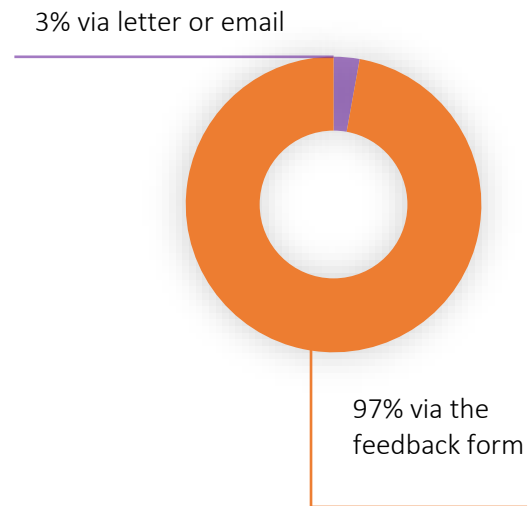
2.2. Engagement approach

A range of tools and methods were used to during phase 2 to elicit as much feedback as possible including:

- Council’s ‘Have your Say’ website
- A feedback form that could be received electronically, by text or by hard copy
- Static displays in: Council Reception Room (staffed), Kalkee Road Children’s Hub, Town Hall, Library, Aquatic Centre and 43 Firebrace St.
- Pop-up displays and listening posts: Plaza (two sessions), Riverfront (Park Run), Natimuk Post Office and Haven market.
- Direct email-outs to key stakeholders involved in phase 1
- Digital and Print Media
- Community Information Sessions
- Invitation to attend group or association meetings (to answer questions)
- Invitation to all schools in the municipality to see a presentation of the plan

summarised in this report. HRCC’s commitment to engagement is about sharing information, listening and considering everyone’s views. The process was not compulsory and whilst HRCC’s engagement process was extensive, we acknowledge that the results of engagement reflect the views of those who made their voices heard, either as individuals or organisations. HRCC thanks all of those who took the time to express their views and believe that the process will result in a stronger plan for the future of the City to River area.

Participant breakdown



3. Who engaged in phase 2

3.1. Engagement response and who engaged

The Draft Masterplan received 740 written submissions from individual members of the community, local, regional and state sporting groups, local special interest groups and State Government Agencies. A number of submissions were made on behalf of a group, with the majority being individual submissions.

A total of 719 feedback forms were completed and 21 letter or emails were received from a range of ages and genders, with females between 41 and 65 being the largest participating group.

All submissions have been reviewed and are

Figure 1: participant breakdown



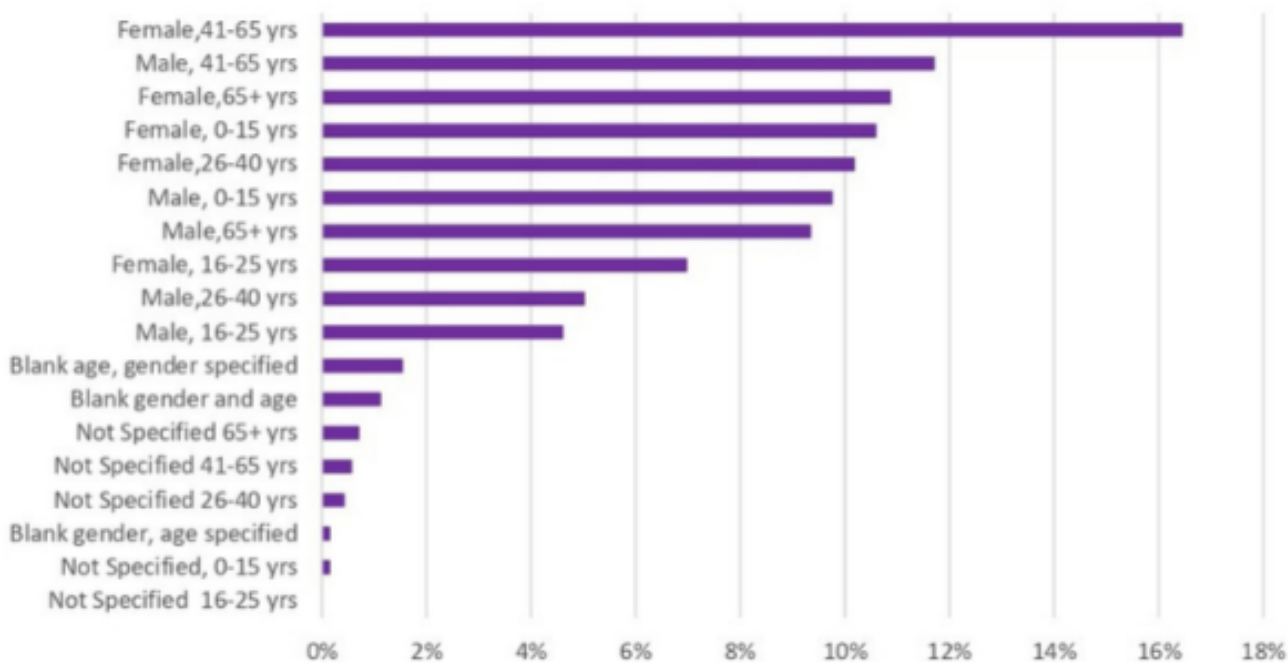


Figure 2: Participant demographics (of the 97% who submitted via the feedback form)

4. What we heard

4.1. What people liked and disliked

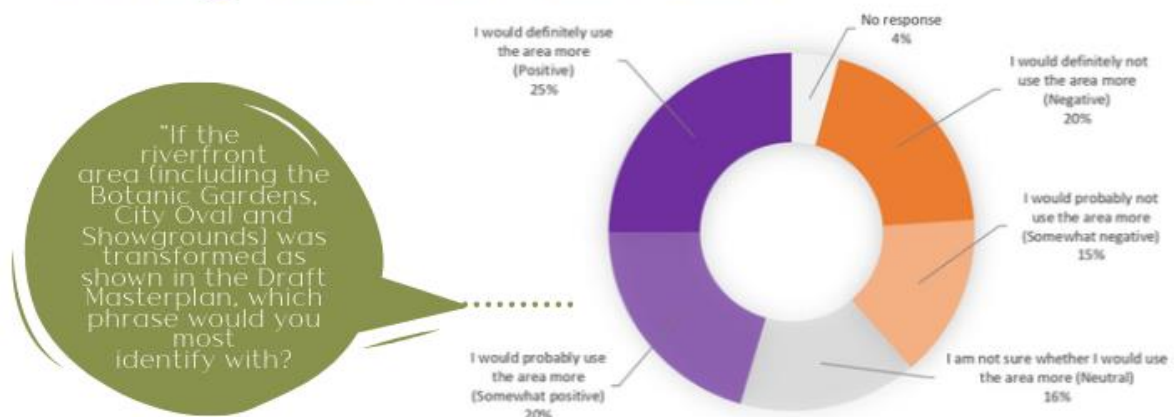
Participants were asked to complete a series of questions relating to how a transformation as suggested in the draft masterplan would change their level of use of the Riverfront and CAD, how closely the ideas aligned with what they would like to see on the Riverfront and if they thought the ideas would improve Horsham as a destination.



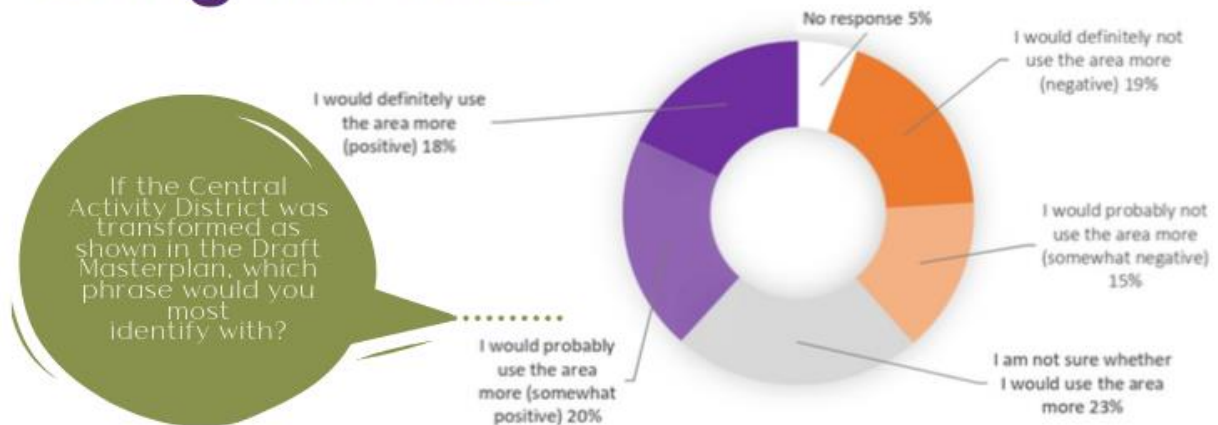
General feelings about...

97% of submitters responded to key questions and this is what they said

Using the Riverfront



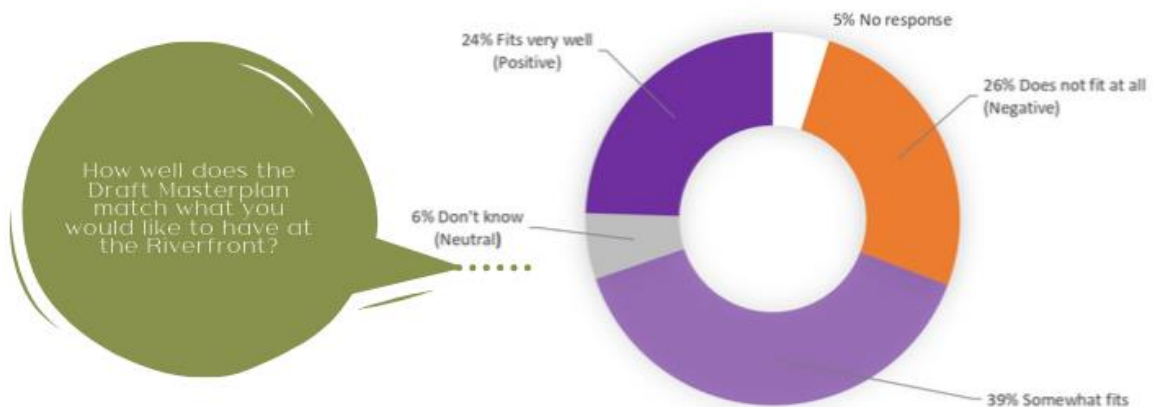
Using the CAD



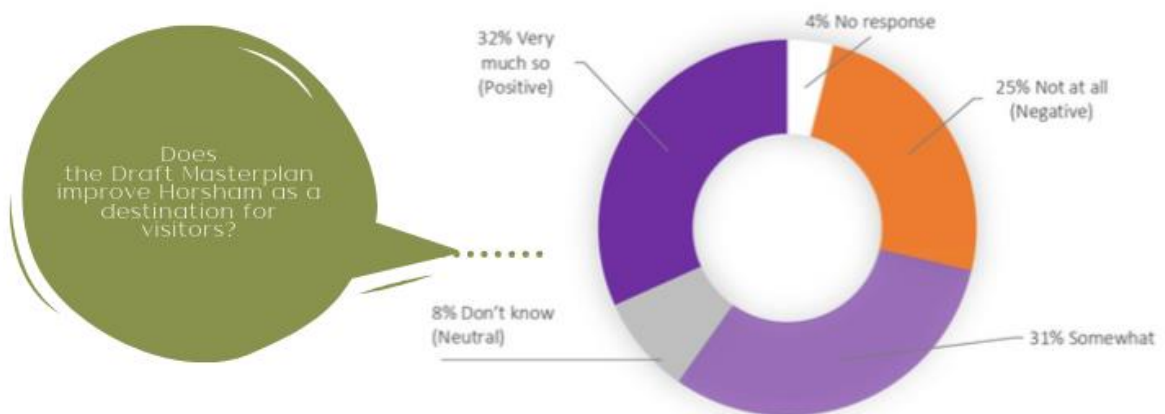
General feelings about...

97% of submitters responded to key questions and this is what they said

What you'd like to see on the Riverfront



Improving Horsham for Visitors





Top 5

Things people liked about the Draft City to River Masterplan

% of all responses that make positive comments about the theme

1



25%

That we are planning for the future

2



17%

The Cafe & other riverfront improvements

3



14%

Considerations relating to sporting facilities

4



13%

Movement linkages, inc. walking & bike paths

5



11%

Family friendly elements



Top 5

Things people felt concerned about the Draft City to River Masterplan

% of all responses that said they disliked an idea, raised concerns, issue or alternative ideas on that theme

1



24%

Considerations around Lawn Tennis

2



16%

Considerations around Croquet

3



15%

Considerations relating to sporting facilities

4



13%

Funding

5



13%

Movement linkages, inc. parking & roads

4.2. How themes are grouped

Themes have been grouped under City to River sub-precinct (see figure 8, p23) and project wide themes. Key messages, including positive messages, concerns and issues have been summarised under each of the themes. Some direct quotes have been included after each summary.

4.3. Project wide themes

The following themes have relevance to all areas of the plan or are not related to a specific idea presented in the Draft Masterplan.

4.3.1. Planning for the future

Of all themes raised, nearly a quarter of participants referred to council planning for the future as being a very positive thing. Having a vision for the future was the top overarching theme raised, making up 25% of responses (183). Whilst very few said that council shouldn't be planning for the future, some participants raised concerns including the timescale being too long and the plan not incorporating a larger area. In addition to individual submissions, Government Agency submissions and a number of regional and local sporting associations also commended Council on the preparation of the Draft.

The common overarching supportive messages for developing a 20 year Vision included:

- That we will have a plan
- Planning for the future has started and something is being done
- The need to develop long term planning so that future development does not fragment green spaces

- Planning for the future is important and it is good that the Council has a public consultation process
- The master plan will guide future development
- It will ensure better use of the Riverfront and connection with the CAD

Participants also raised concerns regarding:

- The plan doesn't go far enough
- A 20 year timespan is too long
- That too much strategic planning is happening at the same time
- Need to involve the community in all stages of the process
- That the plan hasn't been thought out enough

"Horsham is a Regional City and the Wimmera River is one of our greatest assets but to my knowledge there has been no strategic planning done to link the CBD to the river and further develop the Wimmera River precinct. This draft plan is visionary and has made me (and many others) think about what we want for our city to have, and to look like in the next 10 to 50 years."

"It is a good thing that we are starting the discussion to make Horsham a destination not just a passing location. With the upcoming bypass looming we need to become the destination or disappear as a town."

"Congratulations for having the foresight to at least get a discussion going and I hope to live to see some of this come to fruition! I think planning for the future is important and that it is good that the council has a public consultation process."

"Thank you so much for being creative and incorporating beautiful ideas and spaces for the community to enjoy our town and the river."

"It represents the kind of thinking and planning that is needed to ensure that Horsham develops into a viable, growing

regional centre, with facilities and attractions comparable to other developing urban areas.”

“... Having lived outside of Horsham and moving here when I was 17, I see from a younger person's perspective a lot of potential for Horsham.”

“Let's move forward, give the Community the right to have more say on the next stage of this plan and be a part of developing our future AND slow down, one strategy at a time and work with us.”

“I do, however, find your timescale for transforming this town appalling. Whoever heard of such a timescale.”

“However, it clearly illustrates the level of ad-hoc piecemeal planning that has plagued the lack of systematic structured planning of Horsham over many decades and the administrative culture.”

“Just a few thoughts on 'Transforming Horsham'. Whatever you do please for the sake of the town do not wait 20 years. Not everyone will be happy, that's life and some will need to come to the party kicking and screaming, that too is life so good luck.”

4.3.2. Community consultation

Both positive and negative feedback was received regarding the community engagement process. Approximately 17% (129) of all submissions made comments relating to community engagement.

The common overarching supportive messages regarding the community engagement process were:

- That council has asked and encouraged the communities feedback
- That everyone has been asked about what they think

- That Council will need to engage with affected user groups through future stages of the project, including the detailed design phase for individual projects.

Participants also raised concerns that:

- There was a lack of consultation with existing user groups in the development of the plan or where alternative sites might be
- The community were asked to comment on what they like or dislike about the ideas, without costings being provided
- The consultation and preparation of the plan was done by external consultants
- The engagement process isn't genuine and that the decision has already been made on the Masterplan.

“The seeming lack of consultation with active organisations, and the fact that so much is being taken away, which would cost so much to relocate, with very little extra benefit.”

“I am concerned at the process that has been undertaken. Firstly there was a poor public consultation. Several key stakeholders weren't even included in the preparation of the report.”

“As is almost always the case, these visions have a foregone conclusion without true consultative process being undertaken.”

4.3.3. Increase in the number of people using an area

A small number of people commented on the potential for a transformation to increase the number of people in the area.

Approximately 6% (44) of all submissions commented on this theme. Of the submissions

received via the project feedback form 4% (31) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 1% (7) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under 'further comments' in the feedback form 1% of submissions (10) made reference to the idea of increasing the number of people using the area, being a mix of comments.

In summary key positive references included:

- More locals will use the area
- More tourists will visit Horsham

In summary key references regarding dislikes included:

- It will be too busy
- Extra people will negatively impact on residents

4.3.4. Impacts on existing business and community

Approximately 5% (39) of all submissions commented on the potential impact of the City to River project on the existing community and businesses. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form less than 1% (1) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 3% (24) raised concerns. Of the letter/email submissions and under 'further comments' in the feedback form 2% of submissions (18) made reference to the the impact of the City to River project on existing businesses and the community, being a mix of comments.

Key themes related to: the potential negative impact of reduced parking in the CAD; impact on businesses relocated by the plans; and the need for further consultation with businesses before undertaking any redevelopment works in the CAD.

In summary key positive references included:

- The Master Plan supports business growth and growing visitor numbers to the region.

In summary comments related to dislikes included:

- Uncertain or negative impact on businesses in the CBD
- There are businesses impacted by the changes in the plan
- May take business away from the main part of Firebrace Street i.e. cafes
- Business negatively impacted by reduced parking and parallel parking
- Focus on pedestrians and cycling at the expense of parking
- Disruptions to CBD because of project works.

"The Vision and Master Plan report talks about meeting the needs of the community, supporting and growing business and growing visitors to the region. I fully support these aims What is the plan for local businesses that will be effected by this major plan?."

"It will take away a lot of focus from the main part of Firebrace St where businesses are already struggling. Business effected by reduced and parallel parking. Horsham has too many empty shops now, we need to encourage city centre engagement not discourage it."

"The revamping of the CBD to a CAD appears to be aimed at cyclists and pedestrians, which is very disappointing to see as this is a shared space and seems to be disadvantaging small businesses."

"I believe creating urban parks where a great number of people can engage is of real benefit to social health of the local community. It also makes Horsham a more desirable destination for non-locals, bringing with them an economic boost to the local businesses."

4.3.5. Implementation time and scope

Timeframe and staging

Approximately 6% (43) of all submissions commented on implementation and staging of the City to River project. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form there were no specific positive comments, whilst 3% (21) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under 'further comments' in the feedback form 3% of submissions (22) made reference to implementation and timing, being a mix of comments.

The common overarching messages regarding transformation timeframe and staging were:

- Clubs could be left where they are at this stage until the new sporting precinct is established when they could transition across
- More consultation needed in the next stages of the development i.e. detailed design
- Twenty year implementation timeframe is too long, new facilities are needed before this
- Proposed timelines should be in the Masterplan
- The scope of the Masterplan is too large to possibly be completed in 20 years.

"I look forward to continued engagement through further stages of concept development, design and ultimately delivery of future facilities, such that our centre realises its vision for improved facilities within a reasonable timeframe."

"The timeframe of 15+ years is unacceptably long for improving the quality of facilities for athletics".

"Whatever you do please for the sake of the town, do not wait 20 years."

Scope: area and amount of change

A small number of submissions felt that the project area was too large. Approximately 3% (22) of all submissions commented on the idea of too much change. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, less than 1% (1) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 2% (13) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under 'further comments' in the feedback form 1% of submissions (8) referred to the scope of the change, being a mix of comments.

The general theme of the responses related to too many changes being proposed.

In summary key concerns included:

- Concern that the scope of the project is too big to be delivered
- Changes are not required for a city of our size
- Concerns about cost of infrastructure and maintenance.

4.3.6. Politics

The review of feedback found that politics appeared as a theme. Politics surrounding the City to River project elicited comments in 2% (14) of all submissions. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form there were no positive references, whilst 2% (11) raised concerns. Of the letter/email submissions and under 'further comments' in the feedback form less than 1% of submissions (3) made reference to politics, all in a negative context.

“Does the current Council have the drive and commitment to attract the people and business that would make these improvements worthwhile?”

“First please either be a councillor or not, you are elected to do a job by, for the most part, a very supportive community. In addition, if it is important to you to change something about that community you cannot do it outside the tent so better to get on with the job inside the tent.”

“Yes I agree there are some good ideas, but the community looks at something of this magnitude without any costing and immediately gets suspicious. Why put out a Masterplan for consultation without any sort of costing and timeline?”

“The cost is prohibitive, and will no doubt run well above the amount presented to the public at this time.”

“We can't even get roads graded for our rates yet we are expected to contribute to this white elephant that is going to cost millions and destroy businesses.”

“Can Horsham afford this? And can HRCC guarantee the new projects will not go over budget and our rates go up.”

“Whilst taxpayer funding seems to be the strong HRCC theme it will not cover the cost to the community of the ongoing maintenance liability.”

4.3.7. Funding and rate impacts

In total 17% (125) of all submissions made comments relating to how projects would be funded and the financial implications of the transformation. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form 11% (82) raised concerns relating to funding and cost implications, whilst 10% (76) of the letter/email submissions and under ‘further comments’, expressed concerns regarding the financial implication of the transformation.

The common overarching concerns relating to financial implications were:

- How projects would be paid for
- That rates would go up – that it will cost ratepayers
- That roads and paths should be fixed and existing assets paid off, before money is spent on the Riverfront and CAD
- That Council can't afford the ongoing operational and maintenance costs of new facilities
- Costings won't be determined and presented to the Community prior to a Council discussion on the Concept Masterplan .

4.3.8. Transport and connectivity

Transport related themes including: linkages, roads, bridges, walking and bike tracks proved to be a key theme.

In total, 27% (202) of all submissions commented on transport and related ideas. This included linkages, roads, bridges, and walking and bike tracks. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 12% (87) were of a positive nature, and 11% (82) raised dislikes, concerns or alternative ideas.

Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, less than 8% of submissions (62) made reference to transport and related themes, being a mix of comments both positive feedback and dislikes, concerns or alternative ideas to ideas proposed.

GWMWater

GWMWater submitted that there is a need to have heavy transport re-directed around the town whether this is by way of a bypass or a heavy vehicle detour. The submission noted that excessive large traffic loads adversely affect the life and performance of water and wastewater infrastructure in the road reserve.

In summary key positive references regarding transport related ideas included:

- Walking
- Connectivity
- Cycling
- Footbridge

In summary key dislikes and concerns included:

- Parallel parking in the CAD (lack of parking in other precincts was also a concern to some)
- Street closures (the majority of these relate to McBryde Street)
- Concerns that improved walkability will disadvantage older people and people with a disability

Car parking

Concerns regarding car parking related mainly to two precincts of the plan, the multi-purpose sporting precinct and the CAD.

Changes to parking in the CAD where there are a number of concerns relating to the introduction of parallel parking including that:

- a decrease in parking will have a negative impact on retail businesses and rural people who need to drive into town

- That older people and people with a disability will be disadvantaged
- That parallel parking will interfere with traffic flow and create additional hazards
- Parking issues will be increased and disadvantage the elderly & parents
- Other solutions could be considered when trying to improve walkability including more crossings at grade level, giving pedestrians priority
- Parallel parking might increase congestion of traffic.

“Changing the parking from angled to parallel seems ridiculous and pointless. Why would we want less parking? Will also mean less revenue from parking meters, or is the council just planning on putting the cost of parking up to compensate.”

“PARKING - not enough parking in ANY of the masterplan. The entire plan - no parking for City Oval, River area.”

“...very much against parallel parking. Parking on an angle is much safer and easier for the elderly, also parallel stops traffic.”

“[Horsham residents] rely on transportation in private vehicles which require adequate parking locations.”

“What consideration for car parking for large events has been planned for though?”

“How are your elders and disabled meant to enjoy the river when 99% find it hard to walk even 500 metres not all of us are 100% fit to walk and the new plan takes it away from them”

“I don't like the idea that it is going to be more difficult for us to travel into town and park anywhere to do the things we need to do. Parking in Horsham is already an issue in many places. It would be more beneficial to create a multi story parking area to relieve the congestion, not make it worse by introducing parallel parking in a town where 90% of the occupants wouldn't know how to park a car anymore.”

“Firebrace street area- Do not remove parking - retailers already struggling.”

“I like the idea of having a road that allows access for bikes and walkers, as well as cars.”

“It’s great. Fantastic that there is a long-term vision for the town. The way it connects the town.”

“I like the idea of having a pedestrian and bike way.”

“Like the connection between the Waterlink estate and central Horsham via the footbridge. Needs to be completed to allow for school access and hospital access and also park areas.”

“Parallel parking in Firebrace Street when we’re already seeing shops close because of lack of business and we have an ageing population - they need easy access to shops.”

“By closing McBryde Street, lives will tragically be lost due to traffic congestion.”

“‘The world’s most walkable city’ the most ridiculous and damaging proposal that I have ever heard. This would be a disaster ... for the elderly, physically unable to walk ...”

4.3.9. Tourism, arts and culture

Tourism, Arts and Cultural elements of the draft Masterplan was a strong feedback theme.

In total, 14% (102) of all submissions commented on the ideas relating to Tourism, Arts and Culture. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 5% (35) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 5% (37) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, 6% of submissions (41) made reference to Tourism, Arts and Culture, being a mix of

comments.

The common overarching positive messages from submissions were:

- Need to attract more tourists to stay longer in our city
- Need to make better use of our major natural asset – the Wimmera River
- Events can increase tourism and investment in the region
- Visitor Information Centre needs to be highly visible and accessible
- Support for a museum

In summary key positive references included:

- Feedback indicated that a number of elements in the Masterplan would increase tourism opportunities including:
 - Riverfront development – café, splash park, playground, cultural centre
 - Showgrounds development – Visitor Information Centre and museum
- Planned developments along the Riverfront will allow us to compete with other areas in attracting more visitors to our city
- New playground area to attract people traveling through Horsham
- Café to provide an eating opportunity for tourists
- Support for museum to showcase our strong historical collections
- Incorporation of a new museum and Visitor Information Centre in the Showgrounds creating a precinct for tourists
- Support for cultural facility along the river to acknowledge our indigenous history
- Planning for inclusion of indigenous culture
- Encouragement of more art installations in the River Precinct
- Possibility of a central Horsham market.

In summary key concerns included:

- Needs to be adequate parking for holiday vehicles i.e. RVs and caravans
- Caravan park:

- If relocated would create better use of space for festivals and open space
- Could the current location be used for better purposes
- Space to run events and markets with appropriate utilities is not identified
- Location of Visitor Information Centre, conference centre and museum is hidden and needs to be clearly accessible from Western Highway
- Insufficient linkage to the Horsham Town Hall – our major events/culture and arts space
- Don't create a separate cultural heritage centre, rather incorporate cultural heritage into the development of all facilities as appropriate
- Develop the miniature railway into a regional tourism attraction.

up with future accessibility, connectivity, permeability and community interests from the Botanic Gardens to Wimmera River."

"I feel the draft plan has missed an opportunity to "capitalise" on tourism opportunities around the area where the Western Highway crosses the Wimmera River. We need to develop this area to encourage people "to stop", at the moment this is not the case."

"Combine Horsham museum with indigenous culture facility."

"Main issue is increasing the population of the area and getting tourists to the area."

"I think it will improve Horsham as a whole and we may get more visitors in the holidays as there will be more activities to do and there will be more action for kids like me."

"I love the way it seems that the First Australians have been considered throughout the planning, and not added in at the end or just tacked on as a token effort."

"The Showgrounds precinct shows remarkable vision for development with a natural amenity for the Visitor Information Centre and proposed Horsham Regional Museum. Well done on this draft concept for development for Horsham's future. Vehicle parking is more than adequate and the natural setting is wonderful to complement state of the art, best practice architectural design for these buildings. The Showgrounds area certainly needs an uplift and has for years."

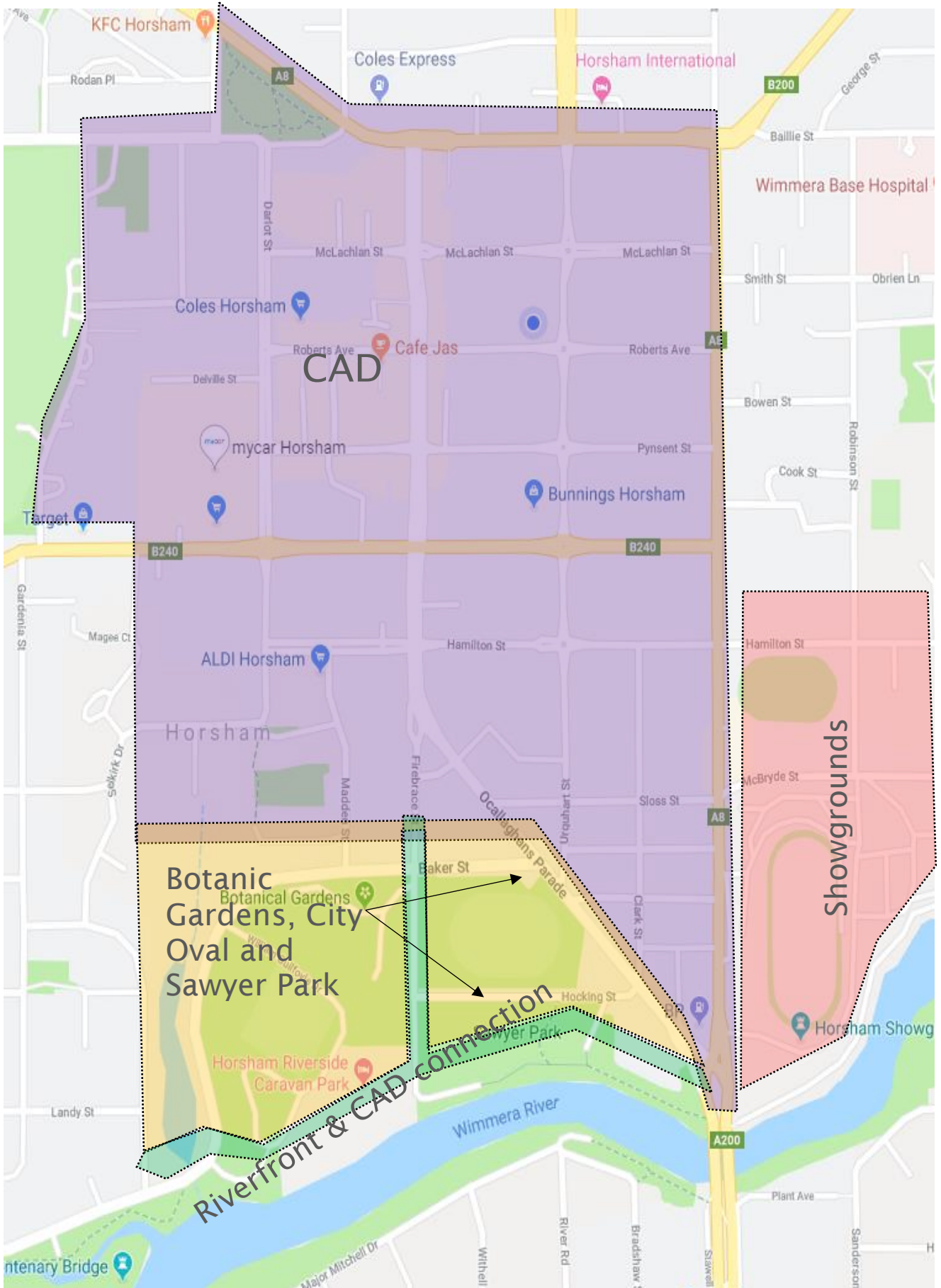
"It (the Masterplan) utilises our town's most natural asset and offers a range of things for everyone in the community with the aim of increasing tourism."

"Caravan Park needs to be moved and look at better utilising the space for festivals and open space."

"Economic benefits of retaining the caravan park in its current location need to be weighed

4.4. City to River Sub Precincts

Figure 8: City to River areas



4.4.1. Showgrounds precinct

4.4.1.1. Showgrounds and Greyhound Racing

In total, 6% (47) of all submissions commented on the relocation of the greyhounds track in the draft City to River Masterplan.

Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, less than 1% (1) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 5% (36) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under "Further Comments" in the feedback form, 1% (11) of submissions made reference to the relocation of the greyhounds, being a mix of comments.

Greyhound Racing Victoria

Greyhound Racing Victoria (GRV) submitted that they were disappointed that the draft did not recognize the social or economic contribution the Horsham Greyhounds Club makes to Horsham and the region. GRV noted that the multi-purpose sporting precinct did not include provision for the greyhound track or mention Council plans for the future of greyhound racing in Horsham.

GRV noted the economic value generated by greyhound racing across Victoria as well as the contribution to the Wimmera region:

- The value-added benefit of the greyhound racing industry to the Wimmera region is \$3.5m
- The total number of participants, employees and volunteers involved with the greyhound industry in the region is 261, which comprises:
 - 9 Breeders
 - 118 Registered Owners
 - 33 Trainers
 - 60 Employees (incl club staff, GRV staff, breeder staff, kennel

- employees, catchers and attendants)
- 41 Volunteers

- There are approximately 194 greyhounds in training in the Wimmera region.

The submission also noted the Horsham Greyhound Racing Club Activity being:

- 60 race meetings annually at the showgrounds site
- more than 1,600 individual greyhounds started at the track in 681 races, involving 472 trainers
- \$1.55 million in prizemoney was distributed and more than \$118 million was wagered on these races nationally.

GRV noted investment in the site as being over \$1.2 million on a substantial upgrade and re-build of the Horsham greyhound facility with \$600,000 to be invested this financial year.

GRV identified Horsham as being strategically important geographically and the showgrounds site as being important due to its high visibility at the gateway to the city.

GRV and the Horsham Greyhound Racing Club welcomed the opportunity to discuss with Council ideas for the greyhound racing track to be integrated into plans for new sporting facilities and development of open space areas at the showgrounds. The submission also noted a preparedness to invest in the showgrounds site to improve amenity for customers as well as users of a new multipurpose sporting facility. It was highlighted that co-location with other racing codes inside the one racetrack does not work effectively for greyhound racing and GRV do not consider that to be an option.

Key themes:

- Cost of relocating established and quality facilities
- GRV and Horsham Greyhound Racing Club have suggested further discussions

around future designs that could integrate the club at the existing site.

In summary key positive references included:

- The location would be better suited to tourism, events and a museum.

In summary key concerns included:

- There is no need to shift the greyhound track, rather integrate it into plans
- The Greyhound Club, along with the Croquet, Lawn Tennis and Miniature railway have been developed by volunteers using their time and resources
- Concern about the loss of sporting facilities
- Concern about loss of economic impact of Greyhound Racing for the Horsham economy – the submission from GRV outlines this in detail
- Query about what support would be given to the Greyhounds to relocate and that the plans need to develop an alternative location.
- Quality of existing grandstand and function room

Council and Government funding.”

“No-one can possibly justify that proposal when a long established concern such as the greyhounds, who employ several people full-time, and part-time, as well as contributing many hundreds of thousands of dollars to Horsham's benefit each year.”

“Far too many existing and well frequented facilities not included/improved such as the lawn tennis courts, croquet club, mini railway, greyhound racing.”

“Thousands of dollars have been spent by the association to give the dog owners a first class track second to none and put Horsham on the map.”

“The plan needs to have suitable, appropriate and clearly defined alternatives for historic user groups that would be displaced.”

“I think in time that the greyhounds should be assisted to move out to a more appropriate location leaving room for the showgrounds site to become Horsham's tourism/ events/ museum home with room for a new soundshell.”

“The greyhound track has just been fully upgraded costing millions of dollars.”

“I love everything about the plan, as long as it's not taking existing resources from Horsham that currently get utilized.”

“Destruction of existing clubs and facilities, eg, Horsham Croquet Club, Horsham Lawn Tennis Club, miniature railway, Greyhound Racing Club. These facilities have cost a lot of volunteers' time and money as well as

4.4.1.2. Sport and the multipurpose sporting precinct

Feedback confirmed that, in general, providing modern, regional level sporting facilities, as part of a multi-purpose complex continues to be a key issue for the community.

The location emerged as a key theme with a high level of interest in comparison to other themes, with a balanced view of support for the proposed location and an alternative location. In addition to submissions from individual members of the community, local, regional and Victorian level sporting associations contributed to the conversation.

In total, 30% (219) of all submissions commented on considerations relating to the provision of sporting facilities. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 14% (103) of comments were of a positive nature regarding ideas put forward in the draft Masterplan, whilst 15% (110) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under 'Further Comments' in the feedback form, 5% (37) of submissions made mixed comments regarding the provision of sporting facilities.

In addition to general comments on the provision of sporting facilities, specific comments relating to the idea of the indoor/outdoor multipurpose sporting facility emerged as a theme in itself.

In total, 16% (119) of all submissions received made reference to the idea of a multipurpose sporting precinct. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 3% (22) of comments were of a positive nature regarding the ideas put forward, whilst 7% (50) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under "Further Comments" in the feedback form, 8% (61) of submissions made mixed comments in relation to the indoor/outdoor multipurpose sporting facility ideas.

Government Agency feedback

Greyhound Racing Victoria

Refer to 'Showgrounds and Greyhounds' section 4.4.1.1

Victoria Sporting Associations

A joint submission was made by the below mentioned Victoria Sporting Associations specifically in relation to the outdoor multipurpose sports precinct proposal:

- Tennis Victoria
- Croquet Victoria
- Hockey Victoria
- Football Victoria
- Little Athletics Victoria

The joint submission cover letter, prepared by Tennis Victoria was supported by individual letters from each of the associations along with a concept plan outlining a number of shared options that will accommodate the following on the showgrounds site:

- Regional tennis facility
- Regional croquet facility
- Regional athletics track and field events space
- Regional hockey facility
- Local football (soccer) pitch
- Local rugby/multipurpose pitch

Each of the associations provided commentary around their specific needs and how inclusion in the sports precinct would enable participation to grow, promote community wellbeing and enhance liveability.

All six State Sporting Associations support the principle of a multipurpose sports precinct as a vision for the future of sport in the Wimmera and welcomed further consultation and input.

Victorian Planning Authority

Through its role on the project steering committee the Victorian Planning Authority provided the following key remarks:

- 1) Global experience of improving urban waterways and the open space/recreation area along them, is that they have multiple benefits, bringing together economic, social, cultural and environmental dividends to the community and businesses.
- 2) The consolidation and concentration of community and recreation facilities that have a regional function close to other complimentary facilities, such as retail, entertainment and public transport provides benefits including:
 - o The effective use of existing and new facilities
 - o Improving the case for investment in renewal and upgrade of facilities
 - o Attracting business and events to regional areas
 - o Creating overall regional competitiveness

Wimmera Catchment Management Authority

The Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (WCMA), having responsibilities under the Victorian legislation for waterway health and floodplain management submitted that they see many challenges and opportunities in relation to:

- Floodplain management
- Integrated water management and sensitive stormwater design
- Waterway health

WCMA noted that they will be pleased to work through and share their expertise with HRCC staff in more detail so these issues can be dealt with appropriately in the final Masterplan. This will ensure that State government approval processes are considered and delivered as efficiently as possible.

WCMA identifies many complementary actions to our relevant strategies and action plans and can identify areas for co-investment.

Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (GWM)

The submission supports the redevelopment of the showgrounds site to improve the aesthetics of the entry to the city as you cross the river, as the current state of the infrastructure does not present the city well and any development should enhance the presentation.

Common overarching messages of a positive nature relating to the provision of sporting facilities (by individuals, local and regional clubs) were:

- Sport is such a huge part of the Wimmera and bringing sporting facilities up to a regional and modern standard is a must because it would:
 - Help alleviate our region's sporting disadvantage
 - Create "bang for buck": draw more regional sporting events to Horsham
 - Improve the overall quality of sporting facilities in Horsham by providing modern facilities
 - Create more opportunities for people to participate in sport
 - Provide premium synthetic facilities for suitable sports that will be future proofed against drought and needing little maintenance
 - Helps all sports in the region to grow and provides opportunities for existing participants to be exposed to sports they may not have known about before
- Participation in a number of sports is growing, however many clubs do not have a permanent home or suitable facilities
- The idea of having a sporting complex in the centre of town is a great idea because:
 - Keeping everything within a central precinct will be ideal for the growth

- of the town. Being within walking distance to the main street and shops is ideal when big events are held and many tourists are coming to Horsham
- It's easy for everyone (school students and the general community) to access
- Provides an opportunity for students to walk/ride from schools without needing to be driven
- It's an accessible place for all schools and community groups to utilise
- It improves the entrance to Horsham
- It would help activate the riverfront and would be accessible by existing walking and cycling paths

The overarching concerns raised in submission regarding sporting facilities included:

- There being too much emphasis on sport; the emphasis around sporting facilities is too great!
- Some concerns were raised relating to the idea of consolidating sporting facilities including:
 - Scheduling impacts
 - Cost of modern facilities to participants
 - Overcrowding
 - Amenity impact on adjoining land

The proposed location of a multipurpose facility emerged as a concern with comments commonly including:

- Concerns about how long it will be before we have a modern multipurpose sporting facility in Horsham
- The idea of a sporting precinct being great, however further investigation is required regarding the site
- That a multipurpose sporting facility should be developed on a greenfield site because it would:

- Be closer to school students and a potential growth area - therefore having increased use
- Allow for growth and expansion
- Allow for pedestrian/bike, public transport and highway connection
- Allow for it to be built sooner – use an empty, available venue to make a start on sport projects straight away
- Avoid retrofitting into a confined space
- Allow for prime riverfront open space to be used for another purpose at the entrance to Horsham
- Not cause traffic issues and allow for ample car parking
- There would be room to build an AFL size oval
- Create an area for other non-sporting events
- Provide an opportunity to build on land with fewer design and construction considerations
- Cater for spectators
- Allow Greyhound Victoria to remain on the Showgrounds site for the long term

A number of suggested locations for a multipurpose sporting facility included:

- On the north west fringe of Horsham - off Jenkinson Avenue near Horsham College
- Opposite the police paddocks
- At the racecourse site (racecourse to move out to the Adelaide side of town)

There was also comment on the need for sporting facilities in Haven to support the community, sporting groups and school families.

It was also submitted by Horsham Primary School, that having a sporting facility in Horsham West or at Haven would be disappointing, for reasons including:

- The school being somewhat isolated
- Potential for a central facility to attract young families to the catchment area
- Lack of significant building growth in the area therefore a sporting facility built in the West or Haven would add another level of complexity to maintaining a consistent level of enrolment.

Lawn Tennis and Croquet

Comments relating to Lawn Tennis and Croquet being part of a multipurpose sporting facility are summarised under the theme of 'Lawn Tennis and Croquet', section 4.4.4.2 (p39)

AFL Oval

Comments relating to an AFL Oval being part of a multipurpose sporting facility are summarised under the theme of "City Oval", section 4.4.4.3 (p35).

General comments on sports and activities included in a multipurpose sporting complex included:

- The need to take all sports into consideration – including those not shown on the draft Masterplan
- Being understanding of the concerns of the Horsham Basketball Stadium, however a feeling they are not considering the needs of the many other sporting groups and looking to keep a monopoly on the facility
- The need to redevelop or reuse the velodrome as part of a multi-use sporting precinct
- The option of catering for "non-sporting events" as well

Submissions included concerns relating to cost implications and impacts on sporting businesses and volunteers. Overarching concerns included:

- A fear that a multipurpose sporting complex that is not run by volunteers would be more costly for participants across the region
- A fear that private sporting facility business operators would go out of business
- A concern that a complex would run at a loss and would require subsidising by Council
- The need to ensure current sporting clubs and community groups who have long established ties to the study precinct are well considered in future plans
- Financial and emotional impact of relocation of existing sporting clubs that don't want to be moved and the need to understand how to nurture and grow our communities sporting volunteers

There was a range of comments regarding design detail considerations, including:

- Being against the closure of McBryde Street as it would have an impact on surrounding school, hospital and local traffic
- The need to keep the basketball stadium separate from the new stadium

“Bringing sporting facilities up to modern standards is a must.”

“The idea of having a centralised sport region in the centre of town is brilliant. Facilities for all sports in the centre of town as an accessible place for all schools and community groups to utilise is needed.”

“I like that all sporting facilities are centralised in the town around the river. It’s easy for everyone to access and for students to walk/ride from schools, etc without kids having to be driven one side of town to out of town.”

“The greyhound lease is until 2035, we need decent sporting facilities before that ...”

“I’m worried that the sporting complex might be a bit crowded and I’m concerned on how long constructions will take.”

“Take football / netball and create new multi sports facility from scratch elsewhere - maybe north-west area.”

“Why should sports and community clubs/organisations, business, etc, be relocated under the Masterplan, as many of them are either: happy where they are, current location suits them.”

“Why not locate this in the area to the west of Horsham?”

“As a school and regional sports co-ordinator, I have lobbied hard for many years to ensure our students don't have to travel long distances to larger communities to compete. We are continually leaned on that our facilities doesn't stack up at any forum I attend and it is tough to argue and lobby for interschool sport events to come north. “

4.4.2. Central Activity District

4.4.2.1. Central Activity District

In total 12% (92) of all submissions commented on ideas relating to the vision for the CAD area. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form 5% (34) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 8% (59) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under 'further comments' in the feedback form 4% of submissions (30) made reference to the CAD area, being a mix of comments.

The general themes of the responses relating to the CAD area were:

- A strong perception that the vision would include a (non-desired) reduction of parking through conversion to parallel parking in the CAD area
- The greening of the CAD area with more shade and places for people to sit is a strong positive theme
- Removal of the Council works depot and other adjacent industry and replacement with residential housing is a second strong positive theme

In summary key positive references included:

- Upgrade of CAD area is definitely needed, including landscaping, trees, enhanced lighting, and seating
- Need for a city square
- Greening of the CAD area, providing more shade
- Need to remove large vehicles from the CAD
- Additional residential areas in the CAD i.e. medium density housing options
- Firebrace Street connection to the river
- Need to cater for pedestrian traffic and improved safe access for pedestrians i.e. treatment of roundabouts

- Movement of the depot and the concreting business out of the area
- Upgraded toilet facilities
- Gov Hub to upgrade ageing infrastructure

In summary key concerns included:

- Parallel parking – reduces car parking spaces and people will avoid areas where they have to parallel park. Does not suit an aging population. Will decrease activity in the CAD
- Planning and re-zoning of areas within the CAD and linking the CAD to the River precinct
- No need for a town square as Horsham is not large enough to make this necessary
- The plan does not adequately address revitalization of the CAD needed to address the oversupply of floor space, loss of the urban fabric to carparking
- Cost of establishing a Gov Hub is paid for by ratepayers
- Plans would not improve vehicle flow through the CBD area

“Improving the street scapes, by installing more trees and plants, especially in the CBD/Firebrace street. Roberts Avenue is the best looking street in the CBD and it makes me want to shop there more and eat at those cafes, because of the trees and the lights. I think it's really important to update/modernise the look of Firebrace st, to hopefully attract a younger group of shoppers/shop owners”.

“Great to see some of the central parking areas replaced with a central median and shade trees on Hamilton Street - same treatment needs to continue throughout CBD”.

“Love the focus on pedestrian traffic”

“Promote more residential development in the O'Callaghans Parade - Hamilton Street - McPherson Street triangle by reviewing the current zoning to allow a mix of retail/ service business at street level and residential on 1st / 2nd floors to replace the old existing warehouses. The ability to integrate residential development in conjunction with commercial developments will make the area more appealing for developers, allow for reduced rent for businesses and improve one of Horsham's not so appealing areas”.

“Continuation of pedestrian/cycle focus through CBD is required with parallel parking, bike lanes, gathering spaces, bring back the verandahs and wider verges”.

“there is no widening of arterials to accommodate bike lanes - McPherson, Firebrace, Darlot, Urquart Streets or O'Callaghans Parade”.

- Roberts Avenue - the street space between Firebrace and Darlot Streets could be made into a pedestrian area.

4.4.2.2. Accommodation and housing

In total, 2% (16) of all submissions commented on ideas relating to housing and accommodation. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, less than 1% (7) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst less than 1% (7) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, less than 1% (3) of submissions made reference to housing and accommodation, being a mix of comments.

The general theme of the responses relating to housing and accommodation was positive around the relocation of the Council works depot and concrete plant in Selkirk Drive and the use of this space for more higher density accommodation.

In summary key positive references included:

- Support for the relocation of the Council works depot and concrete plant and use of this area for new housing.

In summary key concerns included:

- Fears that change in zoning would be proposed from Commercial to Residential and the potential impact on existing landowners and businesses.

Alternative thoughts:

- Shifting the bus terminal from Roberts Avenue away from the Court House area
- Shifting library to the Town Hall carpark area as a central hub
- consideration of medium density housing precinct to the North East of the CAD.

“New housing area on depot yards, great idea. The cost to relocate can be offset by the sale of the blocks so this is a great idea. We need more houses close to city centre, I’m all for this idea.”

“The development of residential living (apartments, etc) in the CAD is a great idea and should be strongly encouraged.”

“A greater mix of residential uses close to the town centre is required to activate the centre of Horsham.”

“Ripping down businesses in the CBD to put up residential areas? I’m not sure what the thinking here is. A CBD is a “Central Business District”, not a “Central Residential District”.”

4.4.2.3. GovHub

In total, 2% (13) of all submissions commented on the idea of the Government Hub. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, less than 1% (2) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 1% (9) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, 1% (4) of submissions made reference to the Government Hub, being a mix of comments.

GWM Water

GWM submitted that they support the concept of a consolidated Whole of Government Business Precinct. They also noted that they were not in a position to comment on the location and any participation by GWM would require approval by the board. In addition they noted that the concept of a GovHub was under development in other regional centers and these may produce some learning for Council on configuration.

In summary key positive references included:

- Removal of out of date and unattractive buildings.

In summary key concerns included:

- Cost
- Loss of old police station (bus station)

“... the removal of both the Police Station and Magistrates Court. Two ageing and not especially aesthetically pleasing structures that to the untrained eye look to be past their use by date.”

“We don't need local government in a prime retail location.”

“Why move Council and police from the CBD, there is easy access for residents and visitors alike now.”



4.4.3. City Oval and Sawyer Park

In total, 16% (120) of all submissions referred to the idea of upgrading the City Oval. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 8% (58) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 6% (43) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, 4% (28) of submissions made reference to upgrading of the City Oval, being a mix of comments.

AFL Wimmera Mallee

The AFL Wimmera Mallee Commission strongly support conceptually, key directions 1 and 3 in the Background Report contained within objective four (Sport and Recreation) as a positive plan that would be beneficial to AFL football and netball. The Commission noted that City to River objectives relating to sport and recreation directly aligned with their strategic priorities, which is for a premier facility within the region capable of hosting high level marquee games of football and the development of an outdoor facility to meet the increasing demands of clubs requesting training venues within Horsham and the possible relocation of a club into Horsham into the future.

The Commission also highlighted considerations regarding design detail for the redevelopment of City Oval. This included the ability for Horsham FNC to charge patrons to attend matches, ensure crowd control and public safety and provision of car parking. The submission supported the provision of an outdoor multipurpose sports precinct to provide additional green space for club training.

The Commission’s vision is to have one grassed field and one multipurpose synthetic field that, between the two, would accommodate the requirements of football, soccer, athletics and hockey.

GWMWater

GWM’s submission acknowledged the need for a premier sporting reserve and the proposed upgrade of City Oval is important to attract premier sporting events.

Comments in support of the redevelopment of City Oval by individuals, local and regional sporting groups included:

- Support for the opening up of the City Oval for passive recreational use and making it more user friendly
- This is a major facility in a city and needs to be a show piece with excellent facilities
- Support for the redevelopment of City Oval as the major Horsham sporting facility, to provide a premier AFL quality ground to AFL compliant standard in line with extant AFL Preferred Facilities Guidelines: State, Regional, Local, School and Remote Facilities (2019 current) and Netball Victoria Statewide Facilities Strategy 2016-2026
- Support for two netball courts, a bigger oval, improved grandstand and new clubrooms for both Horsham and surrounding clubs
- Support for the potential to attract high quality games such as AFL, VFL, AFL Womens and Ballarat Rebels
- A redevelopment would enable the oval to be utilised for a variety of events, in addition to sporting events
- A redevelopment would contribute towards liveability, attracting new people to Horsham, including those in professional employment with families.

Participants also raised concerns regarding:

- Upgrades being driven by desire to attract AFL practice matches or state level cricket games and Horsham’s capacity to do that
- Justification for the cost of the redevelopment and focus on football over other sports and user/interest groups

- Exclusive use of the site by football, netball and cricket and desire to improve the asset for wider community use
- Where football and netball groups would be accommodated during a redevelopment
- Where all existing (non-sporting) groups would be accommodated during and after a redevelopment.

There was a range of comments regarding design detail considerations, including:

- The direction of the alignment to accommodating for a larger oval, including support for a north-south orientation being conducive to both football and cricket
- A number of submissions questioned the capacity (size) of the site to accommodate a larger oval and associated buildings and development including:
 - Existing and additional car parking demand generated by larger events(including provision for disabled and elderly access)
 - Road access and impact on traffic movements on surrounding businesses
 - Impact on the size of Sawyer Park and therefore the Riverfront’s capacity to be a venue for local and regional events, including Festivals that attract visitors.
- Both support and concern for the realignment of Hocking Street to make more room for Horsham City Oval upgrades. The key concern was the potential size reduction and therefore impact on events space at Sawyer Park
- Relocation of the existing lights and impact on the cost of redevelopment
- Grandstand/seating, clubroom and accessibility design considerations including:
 - The heritage significance of the existing grandstand

- Provision of shelter for spectators
- The need for both the grandstand and clubrooms to have ramp or lift accessibility
- Access to the oval for walking, gophers, wheelchairs, etc.
- User-friendly change rooms (including family and disabled rooms) and more toilets
- Access from adjoining event spaces
- Provision of public seating around the oval
- Grandstand seating option (portable /permanent) for netball court
- The impact of increasing access for passive recreation by removing fences on clubs ability to ticket games (generate income) and manage safety.

Alternative ideas

There was a mix of views regarding the location of City Oval with a number of submissions suggesting that Horsham’s premier oval should be incorporated within a multipurpose sporting precinct. This would enable shared facilities and ensure ticketing and safety requirements are met.

“The size of the City Oval playing surface and its actual east/west position on goal to goal basis is not conducive to cricket and we support the realignment of the oval towards a more north/south basis.”

“Well done on the City Oval plans. They look more functional and turning the oval to a north south orientation is long overdue.”

“... this should not be redeveloped in this location. Enlarging it would create parking problems and compromise traffic flow and given its level of usage it does not deserve to remain in this location.”

“Reconsider the City Oval. This redesign won't be adequate for planned use. Images are not indicative of final appearance size i.e. fences, parking, buildings- grandstands etc..” .

4.4.4. Botanic Gardens and Caravan Park

4.4.4.1. Botanic Gardens

In total, 14% (102) of all submissions commented on the idea of expanding the Botanic Gardens. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 7% (52) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 5% (38) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under "Further Comments" in the feedback form, 3% (23) of submissions made reference to expanding the Botanic Gardens, being a mix of comments.

On the idea of incorporating a lake into an expanded Botanic Gardens, 6% (45) of all submissions commented on the idea. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 1% (4) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 4% (26) raised concerns. Of the letter/email submissions and under "Further Comments" in the feedback form, 2% (15) of submissions made reference to expanding the Botanic Gardens, which were largely unsupportive of the idea.

The common overarching messages in support of expanding the Botanic Gardens were:

- Support for restoring Botanical gardens to original footprint
- Increasing the size of the Botanic Gardens would create more space for passive recreation including walking
- Opening up the space and removal of fencing would create connections to the river through the Botanic Gardens
- Opening up the Botanic Gardens to the river would focus activities and civic spaces around the river for all residents of Horsham
- Support for linking Horsham with the river through the botanic gardens

Whilst there was support for increasing the footprint of the Botanic Gardens and creating

access to the river, the overall idea of incorporating a lake was not supported. Concern regarding increasing the Botanic Gardens was also raised.

Concerns relating to incorporating a lake included:

- Availability of water and capacity for ongoing maintenance of a larger Botanic Gardens
- Proximity to an existing natural waterway therefore value in attracting people
- The value in replacing the tennis courts with a lake
- Safety concerns
- The idea does not appear to match the illustration of Guilfoyle's original plan
- Opportunity for a lake with ecological "refuge islands" for birdlife as a retreat from feral and wandering cats and city dogs; predation problems by exotic species probably would not have been evident at the time of the first development of the gardens.

Participants also made suggestions and raised concerns regarding:

- Management associated with a larger Botanic Gardens
- The existing gardens could be better served by developing the current space better, including wayfinding signage and access infrastructure to make it easier for people to engage with the gardens
- A great place that should not be changed too much.

There was a range of comments regarding design detail considerations, including:

- Allow dog access.

"I really like the focus on increasing connectedness to the river and focusing activities and civic spaces around the river."

"I like that we are actually making our gardens bigger and a lot more attractive to walk through and spend a whole heap of time at rather than just a few minutes walking in and out."

"Love everything that has been proposed in the masterplan, particularly the location of facilities, the increased access and opportunity to engage with the Wimmera River and surrounding environment. The central location of the proposed facilities provides amazing opportunities for local community members to engage with one of Horsham's best features – Wimmera River. It will also be a great draw card for visitors and improve the township on a whole. The improved facilities are also exciting for community members and school groups with regard to opportunities to participate in more physical activities with easier access. As well as opportunities to learn about the environment and develop valued connections with the environment that encourages the Horsham community to conserve and protect the environment."

"I like the idea of continuing the Botanical gardens to the east embracing Firebrace St, which is to become a walkway to the river from the city i.e. giving the area including the city oval more of a park theme."

"... Good to see the removal of the croquet club and lawn tennis to make the space more accessible to all, without fencing and barriers for pedestrian movement from the botanic gardens through to the river."

4.4.4.2. Lawn Tennis and Croquet

Considerations relating to lawn tennis and croquet emerged as a strong theme. Of the 740 submissions received, a total of 208 (28%) submissions (from individuals and groups) made reference to lawn tennis, ranging from support for the draft

Masterplan, support for an alternative site for lawn tennis and strong local support for the retention of lawn tennis in the current Botanic Gardens location.

Similarly, across all 740 submission, 139 (19%) submissions commented on considerations relating to croquet, ranging from support for the draft Masterplan, support for finding a suitable alternative site, to support for the retention of croquet within the Botanic Gardens.

Tennis Victoria and Croquet Victoria

Tennis Victoria and Croquet Victoria, in conjunction with Hockey Victoria, Football Victoria and Little Athletics Victoria, made a submission on City to River, specifically to the outdoor multi-purpose sports precinct proposal.

Tennis Victoria and Croquet Victoria, along with the abovementioned sporting associations, agree that a multi-purpose sports precinct presents a "unique opportunity to develop a 'game changing' facility that will see Horsham and the Wimmera well positioned as a regional centre for participation, development and sporting excellence" (Ken Barton, General Manager – Government Relations and Places to Play, Tennis Victoria, July 2019).

Tennis Victoria support the recommendation put forward in the Horsham Sports Facility Demand Assessment (Urban Enterprise, 2019) that tennis and hockey can co-locate and consolidate existing tennis venues. Tennis Victoria also notes that whilst Horsham Lawn Tennis Club is in favour of a regional tennis facility and potential amalgamation of two clubs, it is not in favour of a relocation from its current site nor the loss of grass courts.

Tennis Victoria submit that some (shared) natural grass courts can be facilitated through the inclusion of a regional croquet venue as part of a multi-purpose sports precinct at the Showgrounds site. Tennis Victoria did not suggest including 24 natural grass courts in a multi-purpose sporting precinct, but rather 24 courts of the same all-weather surface. Tennis Victoria believes that this approach will achieve Council's objectives of a long-term strategic approach to developing sporting infrastructure that meets contemporary standards,

promotes participation, accommodates regional events, makes efficient use of public land and integrates with the urban and river environment. “Development of a regional facility in Horsham servicing the Wimmera, capable of hosting tournaments and events, enables expenditure to be circulated through the local economy” (Ken Barton, General Manager – Government Relations and Places to Play, Tennis Victoria, July 2019).

Croquet Victoria submitted that “Growing Croquet Facilities Infrastructure Planning Project 2020-2030” identified Horsham Croquet Club as a Regional Facility, showing how a regional level croquet facility could be incorporated in a multi-purpose sports precinct on the showgrounds site. Croquet Victoria submitted that the loss of the facilities provided by the Horsham Croquet Club would be a huge loss to the entire Wimmera Croquet Association.

Below is a summary of the overarching comments made to Lawn Tennis and Croquet by individuals, local and regional sporting groups.

Comments in support of the ideas in the Masterplan included:

- The infrequency of use by the Lawn Tennis Club of prime riverfront crown land and the idea of opening up and expanding the botanical gardens
- Council must work with the clubs to identify an alternative (better) site for the future
- Support for regional tennis facilities forming part of a multi-purpose sporting facility.

Submissions that had concerns around Lawn Tennis/Croquet and the Masterplan commonly felt:

- Disappointed that there was no provision made for lawn tennis and croquet in the Masterplan, including identifying a potential alternative location
- Disappointment that Lawn Tennis and Croquet Clubs were not properly consulted

- Lack of recognition of the contribution the Club makes to the community
- It is unclear what would be achieved by moving these Horsham institutions
- The current facilities are fully maintained by members with no cost to ratepayers
- The facilities should be upgraded to encourage local and regional participation
- Council should find a way for the river's beautification to move ahead, whilst integrating the existing tennis and croquet clubs by:
 - Downsizing the current lawn tennis facility, keeping a number of lawn courts well maintained for players to experience the surface whilst setting up another venue with 24 courts
- The idea would impact the development of lawn tennis by:
 - Losing a 24 court complex without another facility and ability to host larger tennis events
- Lawn tennis should be retained in Horsham because:
 - The junior lawn tennis program is growing
 - Improved coaching
 - Lawn tennis court improvements
 - Promotion of alternative forms of tennis
- The clubs having visions for the future and desire to upgrade their current facilities
- The croquet courts should be retained because of:
 - the general health and wellbeing benefits of the sport, particularly to the ageing population
 - opportunity to run regional events, drawing people to the region
- The historical significance of the clubs in the Botanic Gardens location, having been established there for a significant number of years and grass court tennis is especially unique to regional Australia



- It being vital that the historic aspects of both clubs be kept and maintained
- Not wanting to see lawn tennis and croquet moved from the current location to allow for the expansion of Botanic Gardens because:
 - Of the historical significance of the site to the club and wider community
 - The current location is considered ideal for events and families, being near the caravan park, gardens and playground
 - The facilities have been constructed and maintained by the community
 - Tennis is a major sport in Horsham
 - The Croquet Club has been identified by Croquet Victoria as a regional level facility
 - Courts need to be near the riverfront for water supply
 - The beautiful location
 - Croquet and lawn tennis are complementary sports
 - The cost of relocating and replacing the facilities and affordability of facilities run by private enterprises in another location
 - Replacing the area with a lake wouldn't be a good use of the space
 - Lawn tennis and croquet complement the Botanic Gardens

Other comments relating to lawn tennis included:

- With a number of courts in the one complex with lighting and easy access, tennis could be a sport that is played 12 months of the year
- There are tennis coaches in Horsham who are restricted in their activity due to lack of lighting
- Tennis Victoria has put forward a very good plan for a tennis complex whilst also incorporating a number of other sports that have not been included in the multi-sports stadium proposal.

"The tennis courts may claim to be well used by the club, however, I rarely see any activity."

"I can live with the fact that Lawn tennis clubs aren't the way of the future, but please respect what has been done by many people to maintain that club."

"I am concerned that there is no allowance made for the Lawn Tennis Courts and Croquet Lawn. I believe this is an important part of our community and it provides social opportunities along with exercise."

"Lack of consultation. Consultations were done by non-Horsham people therefore they have no concept of local heritage/history. The Horsham Lawn Tennis Club is one of the best grass courts in Victoria".

"The first recorded game of tennis at the botanic gardens occurred in 1883 and Horsham Lawn Tennis Club was established in 1884. The Horsham Lawn Tennis Club is the oldest tennis club in Horsham."

"Played tennis in Horsham when I was younger. I particularly remember how beautiful the courts were, a truly special place."

"Maybe if a new regional tennis centre (24 courts) was developed in the future as part of a regional indoor- outdoor sports HUB in the West then they may see value in shifting, and if discussed along the way it may be very different to being told they are out."

4.4.4.3. Caravan Park

The draft feedback elicited a mixture of responses in relation to the location and size of the caravan park in the draft City to River Masterplan.

In total, 4% (28) of all submissions commented on the caravan park in some way. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 1% (5) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 2% (13) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, 3% (22) of submissions made reference to the caravan park, being a mix of comments.

Key themes related to retaining the caravan park in its current riverfront location, or alternatively, relocating elsewhere along the river foreshore area, possibly along the eastern edge of the showgrounds precinct.

In summary key references supporting the caravan park included:

- Good to retain the caravan park as a major tourism facility
- The location along the riverfront makes the caravan park an attractive destination
- Tourists staying at the caravan park will support the café and other facilities along the river
- The caravan park should be enhanced and enlarged to make it a premier destination particularly for the ‘grey nomad’ demographic.

In summary key dislikes, concerns and alternative comments included:

- Caravan park should be relocated away from the river and the area better utilised for other recreation and social aspects i.e. pond and gardens
- Caravan park is not a good fit within a beautiful botanical gardens area
- Walkways to the river shouldn’t have to meander through a caravan park

- The caravan park should be moved to the new proposed sporting precinct (showgrounds eastern river foreshore area) which is still next to the river and could provide accommodation for the sports tourism market
- The caravan park should be relocated as it can operate on any site (i.e. Southbank) and the Botanical Gardens could then be increased by using that location
- Road links to caravan park will mix large vehicles and vans with pedestrian traffic through from Firebrace street creating safety issues
- The caravan park should stay at its current capacity to cater for demand and maintain viability.

“The Caravan Park should be moved. I don’t want to walk past people’s clotheslines, cars and paraphernalia. All located in a community space.”

“Great that caravan park will be retained. This is a major attraction.”

“Dislike profoundly the presence of caravan park - cheapens a lovely park, which should have serene areas.”

“The grey nomad community is on the increase and brings an enormous economic benefit to the region. The caravan park should be enhanced and enlarged to make it a premier destination for this demographic.”

“The concept of expanding the botanical gardens is great but this could be done by relocating the caravan park. After all, the caravan park is a commercial enterprise that could serve the same purpose wherever it is situated.”

“Economic benefits of retaining the caravan park in its current location need to be weighed up with future accessibility, connectivity, permeability and community interests from the Botanic Gardens to Wimmera River. By moving the caravan park to the east side of the road bridge or south of Wimmera River, creates opportunities for future community-based development, events and greater connectivity between the CAD and river. The caravan park is not a friendly place to walk past as a resident or solo female.”

“There seems to be some great work to link town to river and then to utilise the river frontage but then this is cut off drastically by the caravan park.”

“Visitors will swamp to the rationalised caravan park and the biggest botanical gardens in the Wimmera.”

“I think it is a retrograde step to reduce the size of the caravan park when we wish to encourage visitors to Horsham. When there are special events in Horsham the park is filled.”

4.4.5. Riverfront and Firebrace Street connection

4.4.5.1. Riverfront improvements and activation

The need to enhance, improve and activate the riverfront emerged as one of the most strongly supported ideas in the draft Masterplan.

In total, 25% (185) of all submissions commented on ideas relating to the development of the riverfront. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 16% (114) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 5% (38) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, 7% (52) of submissions made reference to ideas relating to the development of the riverfront, being a mix of both support for ideas put forward, concerns, issues or alternative ideas.

Comments relating specifically to riverfront boardwalks were made in 6% (46) of all submissions. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form 4% (29) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 2% (11) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, 1% (7) of submissions made reference to ideas relating to riverfront boardwalks, being a mix of both support for ideas put forward to concerns or issues.

Refer to WCMA and GWM feedback in previous sections

The common overarching supportive messages for the development of the riverfront, including boardwalks related to:

- The riverfront being Horsham’s greatest natural asset and capitalising on it is fantastic and well overdue

- Enhancing and making the riverfront more attractive should be a priority
- The ideas being progressive and visionary
- Responding to something the community have been asking for, for many years
- The importance of a shared vision that recognises and celebrates the riverfront as an important place for the community
- Enhancing the quality of the riverfront through:
 - Riverfront boardwalks
 - Landscaping
 - Water play areas
 - Playgrounds
 - Shared paths for all ages
 - Enhancements to the botanic gardens
 - Indigenous/cultural facilities
 - Infrastructure to improve access to the water.
- The development of the riverfront promoting recreation, nature based and physical activities, while providing mental health and wellbeing benefits
- Increasing activities and scenic areas, improving and increasing access to the riverfront as a way of drawing the community and visitors to the riverfront
- Linking Horsham’s CAD with the river and botanic gardens
- The land where Wilson Bolton are is prime riverfront land at the entrance to Horsham and could be much better used to enhance the entrance to Horsham.

Participants also raised concerns regarding:

- The river being nice as it is
- Overdevelopment or commercialization of the riverfront posing a risk to its natural beauty and values
- the use of the word ‘plaza’ given the riverfront is a recreation area, not a commercial area
- changing the edge of the riverbank to a boardwalk

- The belief that a splash park would increase use of the riverfront
- Too many sports grounds being within the riverfront area
- The lack of access to the riverfront for travelling public, especially caravans
- A desire to see more shops for refreshments around the river
- Lack of provision to host major events and or upgrades to the soundshell
- The distance between the CAD and the river being too far to make a connection
- Incorporating boardwalks on the riverfront due to impacting the natural feel of the riverfront, cost of ongoing maintenance and appearance overtime and ability to withstand flood

There was a range of comments regarding design detail considerations, including:

- The need for any works to celebrate and enhance the outstanding natural values of the river
- Development should include upgrades to hold major events
- The need for more toilets (to modern standards), seating, tables, barbeques and picnic areas spread along the river as well as additional pedestrian crossings over the river
- The need for adequate signage on the highway directing people to the river precinct
- Safety concerns resulting from increased activity and shared access for cars, cyclists and pedestrians
- Security concerns if the fences are not retained
- Opportunities for river activities including paddle boats and a ‘dancing fountain’ in the river
- Public art being incorporated along the riverfront

- Projections into the river severely affecting rowing activities and access to the ‘rope swing’.

“Progressive and visionary, finally attempting to fully utilise the river precinct the community has been complaining about for many years and is in desperate need of.”

“They will bring more opportunities for other people to come and visit. It will give Horsham a new meaning and it will give the elderly residents more of an opportunity to get out and see the river if they wish.”

“I would rather you keep the natural look of the river. I would hate it to look like a city square with water.”

“I love the desire to connect the city with the river and increase flow between the two.

I love the willingness to create a river precinct i.e. cafe and subsequent area around cafe. Creating more usable community gathering space along the river is vital and could be a significant improvement on attracting visitors and locals without the need to cut out other gathering places.”

“Perfect for families. We have 4 small children and it’ll be so nice to have places for them to play, while also spots to have coffee, a nice picnic or just meet up with friends in a beautiful environment that WELCOMES you. I DO NOT feel inspired by our town at the moment. It’s ugly and bleak. This is the OPPOSITE.”

“My teenage daughter has said to me how Horsham is so boring and there isn’t much to do here. Well something like this plan being bought to action could really help keep people who have grown up here and make Horsham more attractive to them making them want to stay.”

"I dislike the urbanised and domestic treatment of the river's riparian zone (e.g. Artists vision 1 & 2) showing off the shelf treatment of a beautiful natural environment - the teared edge treatment, standard bench seats, traditional layout, Mallee trees and market umbrellas communicates poorly the sense of place of Horsham - it is important to consider the natural materials & forms and offer a unique and bespoke treatment that says more of Horsham - a blending of our historical & cultural past with the transformative vision for the future."

"... the increased access and opportunity to engage with the Wimmera River and surrounding environment. The central location of the proposed facilities provides amazing opportunities for local community members to engage with one of Horsham's best features - Wimmera River."

"This draft plan is visionary and has made me (and many others) think about what we want our city to have, and to look like in the next 10 to 50 years. I like many of the options in the draft plan particularly in relation to improvements to passive and active recreation opportunities."

"The vision does not represent the people and culture that we are. The plan looks like a poor man's version of something in Melbourne."

4.4.5.2. Riverfront environment

In total, 9% (67) of all submissions commented on environmental considerations relating to the riverfront. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 4% (29) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 4% (31) raised concerns or ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under "Further Comments" in the feedback form, 2% (12) of submissions made reference to the environment, being a mix of comments.

In summary key positive references included:

- Increased tree coverage/greenery

- Increased shade
- Increased capacity to spend time in nature.

In summary key dislikes and concerns included:

- Concern around flood impacts
- Risk of overdevelopment
- Removal of large native trees
- Planting of introduced species.

*"The extensive tree planting is genius."
"The green canopy and more shade."
"Dislike the idea of lots of concrete and paving."*

4.4.5.3. Café

The idea of a café emerged as a strongly supported idea. In total, 23% (172) of all submissions commented on the idea. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, 17% (122) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 3% (25) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under "Further Comments" in the feedback form, 5% (39) of submissions made reference to the café, being a mix of comments.

In summary key positive references included:

- Attract more people to the river
- Make greater use of the beautiful river
- It's something the community have wanted for a long time.

In summary key dislikes and concerns included:

- Would not be viable
- Will damage existing food businesses.

“...especially having a cafe along the river would definitely attract more people to it.”

“...a cafe using our beautiful natural river for families to enjoy.”

“An empty Cafe/Restaurant is NOT a tourist attraction.”

“...a restaurant is pointless; there are lots of choices now.”

4.4.5.4. Miniature Railway

In total, 10% (75) of all submissions commented on the idea of not having the miniature railway within the riverfront precinct. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form, less than 1% (2) of comments directly supported the removal, whilst 6% (61) of all submissions raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, 4% (31) of submissions commented on the idea of not having the miniature railway within the riverfront precinct, being a mix of both support for the idea and concerns or alternative ideas.

Although 90% of all submissions did not comment on this theme, where it was specifically noted, the common overarching supportive messages was that Council would need to provide a suitable alternative and relocate the miniature railway.

Participants also raised concerns regarding:

- The lack of recognition of the value miniature railway gives to the riverfront
- The volunteer time and financial investment that has been made in the miniature railway and contribution it makes to the community
- The time and cost involved in relocating
- Removal of Miniature Railway due to:

- It being an existing use, with the location being supported by Council in the past
- The view that the ideas would dismantle the Society or the Miniature Railway (volunteer group) run by volunteers who have contributed a lot to the site over a number of years
- The view that the miniature railway is an asset and drawcard for families and visitors and that it should remain
- The frequency of use, operated 12 months of the year – running once a month in addition to organised birthdays, Carols by Candlelight, Kanamaroo, the 19:14 event, and as required for events at the Soundshell
- It being unclear what would be achieved by removing miniature railway from the current location
- Suitability of the site for miniature railway to shade, proximity to the caravan park, sound shell and other amenities.

- Where miniature railway would go if required to move, what support would be given to the group to relocate and the impact on the volunteer group
- Concerns about the historic use of the site and suitability for other uses if not used for the miniature railway
- The Draft Masterplan doesn't mention the Society or the Miniature Railway, with no information about the operation and impact that the removal of the Miniature Railway would have
- The potential to work with the group to further develop miniature railway to enhance it as an attraction to the riverfront.

Alternative idea:

- Retain the railway and put the splash park on the South side of the railway to incorporate it all as a family area
- Reposition the miniature railway along the river or around the gardens.

“The mini railway station is in the perfect spot. Leave it. Its growth has been a credit to the club that has built the station. Why move this attraction that can be used year-round for a water play park that has a seasonal use.”

“I am concerned that the miniature railway may not stay where it is. The group of men who regularly use the railway are volunteers, and have given many hours of their time to set up the railway and they provide hours of enjoyment for Horsham children and also visitors by running the train on the track at that excellent site.”

4.4.5.5. Splash park and family friendly attractions

The splash park and family friendly attractions were among key ideas discussed in submissions. In total, 16% (119) of all submissions commented on the water play and family elements of the City to River Draft Masterplan. Of the submissions received via the project feedback form 11% (82) of comments were of a positive nature, whilst 3% (25) raised concerns or alternative ideas. Of the letter/email submissions and under “Further Comments” in the feedback form, 3% (24) of submissions made reference to water play and family elements, being a mix of comments.

The feedback around the waterplay area was very positive overall.

In summary key positive references included:

- Water play area will be great for children
- What people want and have been asking for
- Perfect for families, an area where they can meet with friends, with places for children to play
- A tourist attraction that will encourage visitors to stay longer in our city
- An investment in the liveability of our city - creating a gathering space for our community of all ages to enjoy.

In summary of key dislikes and concerns included:

- The water play area is a waste of money
- Water play area is not financially sustainable
- Location of water play area
- Focus water activities at the Horsham Aquatic Centre
- Splash park mainly for younger children
- Water restrictions could impact on future use
- Replacing the miniature railway with a splash park
- Safety issues.

“Great to see a plan put forward to increase the liveability of our town!”

“I think the water play area is a waste of money, why not focus on the existing facilities at the Horsham Aquatic Centre.”

“Waterways- they look great but not long ago we had stage 4 water restrictions in this city, seems shortsighted in this area.”

“Instead of a splash park maybe a water park with big slides.”

“I think a water play area is only sustainable in a very large tourist area and could be a dangerous liability.”

“Further issue of concern relates to the development of a new water play area at the expense of the miniature railway.”

5. Next steps

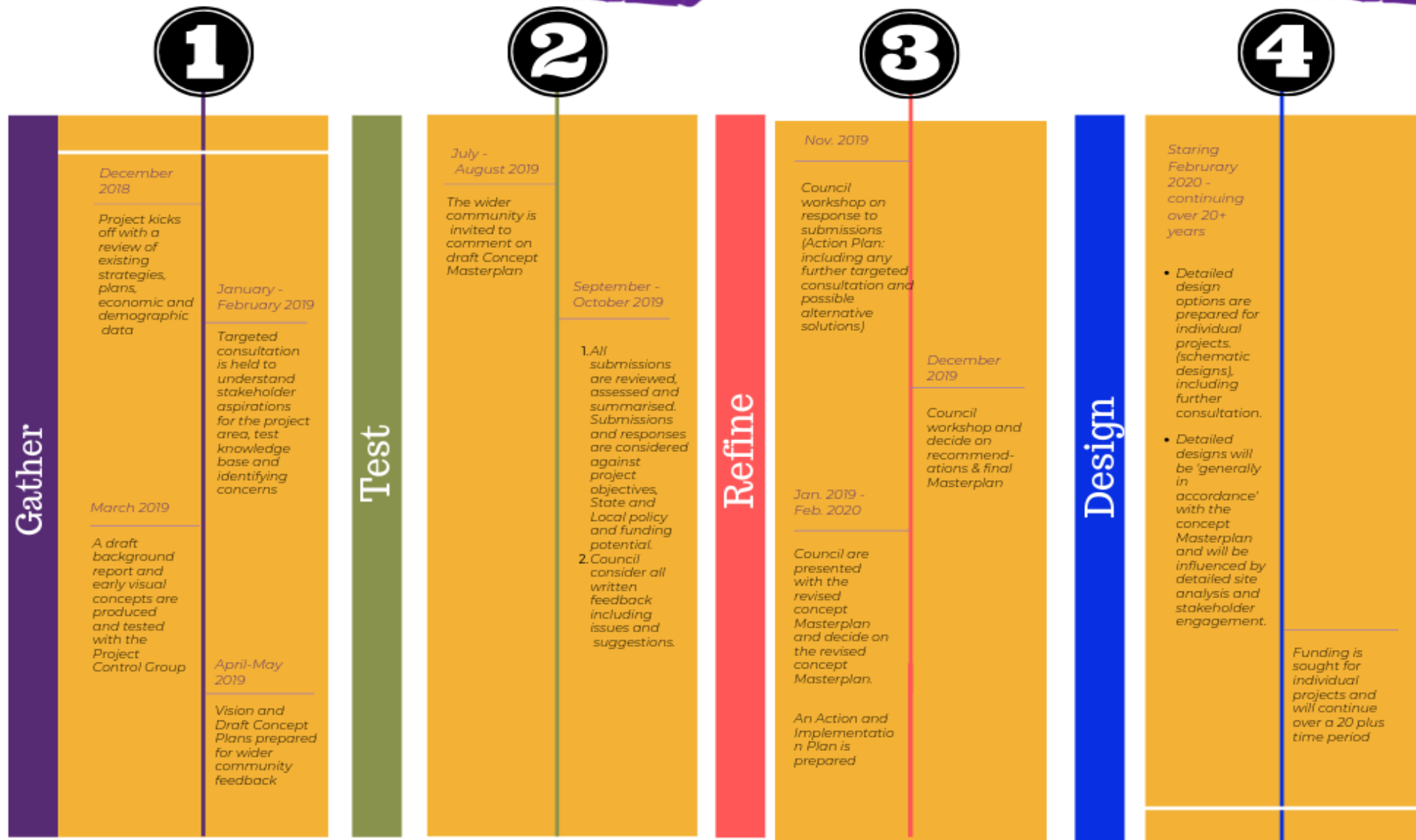
5.1. Formulate recommendations

This Engagement Report, together with further targeted engagement activities and assessments and other relevant information, will be used by Council to formulate a final City to River Masterplan. When the Masterplan has been finalised and adopted by Council, an action and implementation Plan will be prepared. Through the detailed planning and design phase for individual projects, further engagement will be undertaken – focusing for example on location, design, function and aesthetic elements and based on the preliminary feedback collected through engagement to date. HRCC would again like to thank those who contributed to this process, and we hope to continue the conversation about City to River with you soon.

The timeline overleaf provides more detail and indicative delivery dates.



CITY TO RIVER TIMELINE

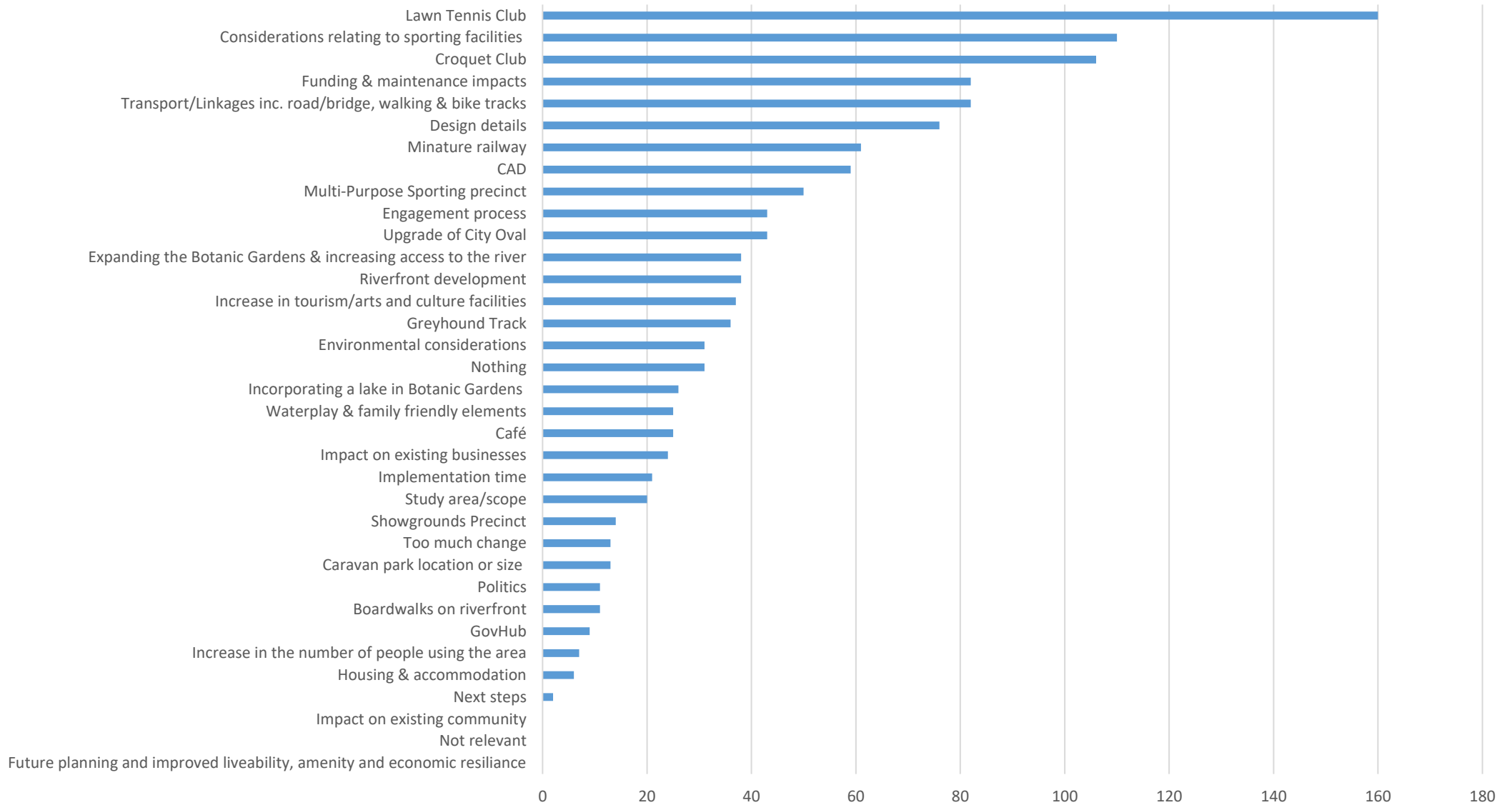


*This timeframe may be subject to change

6. Appendix

6.1. Tables

Number of submissions (received via the form) who raised concerns, issues or alternative ideas by theme



Number of submissions (received via the form) who like ideas by theme

