



**Horsham Rural City
Council** urban rural balance



HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE STRATEGY – CONSULTATION REPORT (FINAL)

2019 – COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

INTRODUCTION AND CONTENTS

Overview

In November 2018, SBP was engaged by Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) to develop an integrated Open Space Strategy that will provide Council with strategic directions to determine priorities for the planning, provision and development of open space across the municipality.

The consultation for this project has included the following:

- **30 depth interviews** with identified stakeholders from various sectors, including government, healthcare, sport and recreation organisations, and other agencies, as well as personnel from within HRCC, including Councillors and key staff;
- An **online survey** with the local community and key stakeholders which received a total of **251 complete responses**;
- Community feedback via the Pozi interactive mapping tool, which had a total of 326 interactions including **178 dropped pins**, and;
- **Two community forums**, held on March 19th and March 20th 2019 at the Council offices with 20 attendees.

This document provides a summary of the consultation findings, with key strategic recommendations to enhance the provision and development of open space over the coming years.

Please note: Due to rounding, numbers presented throughout this report may not add up precisely to the totals provided and percentages may not precisely reflect the absolute figures.

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QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Depth Interviews

The depth interviews were used to gather insights from identified stakeholders into the key open space improvements and strategic priorities for the Open Space Strategy.

The depth interviews were conducted throughout February, March and April with 30 identified stakeholders. These stakeholders were from various sectors, including government, healthcare, indigenous and sport and recreation organisations, as well as personnel from within HRCC, including Councillors and key staff.

Key Findings:

- Horsham has a **strong community feel and atmosphere and a great sense of freedom.**
- The town, its **open space and its iconic assets need regeneration** and investment to ensure they meet growing needs and changing demands, and to re-position the town as a true hub for the West of Victoria. The **icons of the region** need to be celebrated.
- Some of the city's **key assets appear/are perceived as closed most of the time/day.**
- **Tree canopy and shade including rest/relaxation spaces are lacking** in the CAD and throughout the whole region.
- A **strong underlying connection to the river and lakes system** is not overt.
- **Mt. Arapiles is "an icon"** for HRCC, and there is a **rock climbing mecca** at your fingertips which needs to be leveraged.
- The **Entry/Exits to Horsham** need rejuvenation to show the community pride in the town and region.
- Many **natural areas and open spaces** don't have the right mix of **assets and amenities**
- **Indigenous story-telling** is missing through much of the region and needs to be addressed, despite the background politics.
- Dedicated and signed **pedestrian and cycle linkages** are needed to connect the whole city.
- Shared **civic and community spaces** within walking distance of the CAD are missing.
- **North Horsham is seriously underserved by open space.**
- **South Horsham is the growth corridor of Horsham**, and in some parts, **new housing developments have proceeded with poor consideration of open space.**

**HORSHAM: A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE
WITH UNTAPPED POTENTIAL**

“Horsham, we have a great climate and it’s offering so much to a wide and diverse group of people. **It is progressing both in size but particularly a mindset way**, from a town to a city. A growing city needs investment – and new things. **It needs vibrant schools, a reliable hospital system, public transport, jobs and employment** – and of course being healthy, recreation, activity, and sport. One of the challenges is that not everyone plays sport. We have had a new theatre investment and swimming pool – and it’s all about **healthy activity** for the body and mind. Die-hard locals say we don’t need them but when we launch and open them, they do embrace these new assets and facilities.”

"Farms are getting bigger and some of our surrounding towns are getting smaller. **Our population in Horsham is growing slowly.** There are challenges to attract professionals. The only reason some residents may come here include the quality of the Aquatic Centres, Golf Courses and the Arts Centre/Precinct. We must continue to attract professionals."

"The River is our centrepiece, a great observation place, a place of activity, the paths, the tracks, the river. We need more people riding, walking and running."

“What’s great about Horsham – **it’s a great community and it’s a family**. There are old mates and families around that we have all known for years. The schools are good, it is a safe place and you know the people. It has great childcare and lots of opportunities to interact and there are clubs and groups to be involved in – and there is access to new and improved facilities. You can lead a very active lifestyle through riding, walking, fishing and even camping and rock-climbing. **We live in a great part of Australia.**”

“In our childhood here we grew up with **freedom** that you don’t have in Melbourne. The town and surrounds **offer a lot for young families**...nature, the Grampians, water, fishing. The town is getting better and improving. It is a regional City that has the freedom to be out there in nature, with a **quality lifestyle.**”

“What’s great about Horsham...the country lifestyle. **It’s big enough to get most of what you want and small enough to feel familiar and feel like a family.** In the city (Melbourne) you don’t look people in the eye...in a town like this you try and say hello to most people. The **community feel of Horsham provides lots of options** – the lakes, the fishing, fun, free, lots of festivals and events. We have the Town Hall, an arts culture, football and netball. We’d like to see **better connection, bike paths, foot paths, bike racks, linking the schools and major parks, and looking at the big picture.** All of this needs to assist with mental health too. We have all of these spaces and they need to be revitalised, made more welcoming, open and accessible to all people and all cultures – and being culturally sensitive – particularly the Indigenous.”

“I feel like the **town is growing** – we have got a fair bit of growth in the town – and we are not presenting the natural and public spaces in the town the way we should be. The River – it really makes an impact for natural space in a city and it is a **jewel**. It really is amazing. We need to also get the linkages working across the city and from north to south to make it all work. From the little things – pockets of green space to parks and ovals – we need to provide some clear thinking where space is used for multiple purposes. Sports are still very important for rural areas and you also need places where you can just relax. We also have an ageing population who are moving into town – and we need to bring **them into our future planning**”

KEY FINDINGS

KEY FINDINGS

Key Observation	Key Evidence/Insight	Strategic Recommendation
Horsham has a strong community feel and a great sense of freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horsham residents see the township as a great place to raise a family, with small schools and good childcare creating feelings of safety, and the ability to know a lot of people in the community. Family and mateship is valued, and there are many opportunities to be involved in clubs and special interest groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bigger picture - Horsham is a regional centre and hub. While many surrounding towns are getting smaller, Horsham is progression from a town to a city in terms of attitude. Council will need to keep investing in facilities such as health and wellbeing amenities to service this shift.
The town and its Open Space, needs revitalisation to ensure it meets growing needs and changing demands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone we spoke to during the qualitative phase of this project suggests that there are some great places to relax, play and be active but they all need to be aligned and invested in to enhance their use, usability and to fully benefit the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital Budgets will need to incorporate significant uplift in investment for the long term and the city will explore some partnerships to broaden investment in open space to improve utilisation, and the health of Horsham and District Residents.
The iconic assets need regeneration and investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no doubt that HRCC and the region has some incredible assets at its fingertips, yet many are underinvested in, under appreciated and under utilised. Talking to residents and stakeholders, many recognise the wonderful assets the city has at its fingertips – the river, ovals, parks, lakes, climbing assets – yet they are not linked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This open space strategy must align with the HRCC, Tourism, Sport and Rec and the Horsham CAD and Wimmera Precinct Plan. A capital investment Master Plan for open space that spans at least 10 years should be implemented.

KEY FINDINGS

Key Observation	Key Evidence/Insight	Strategic Recommendation
The Entry/Exits to Horsham need rejuvenation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of our first observations was the underwhelming nature of the entry and exits to Horsham and its Districts. Many towns and cities around Australia are taking an active and visual approach to their town or city entry/exits. HRCC should do the same; the City should be proud of itself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HRCC should investigate an entry/exit rejuvenation program including: signage, amenities, related assets as well as history and Indigenous recognition.
Some of the city's key assets seem closed most of the time/day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What surprised the reviewers is that many of the city's key assets appear to be closed off to the general public, and it is difficult for residents to find usage times and/or their rights to use some of them outside of clubs or leasee's rights. Council must recognise that not everyone wants to play sport. What unstructured physical activity and active recreation opportunities can be publicised, introduced and encouraged? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post this Open Space review, we recommend a website or portal review to uplift communication and community awareness of key council and community open space assets and their amenities. Greater levels of promotion of the abundance of natural open spaces across the municipality to those that typically would not use them (e.g. mountain biking, walking and fishing) is required.
Existing infrastructure is ageing, and the iconic assets of the region must be uplifted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council's recent investment into upgrading the Town Hall and aquatic centre has been well received by the community, however there is still more work to be done. Council should be proud of the number of assets within its control and those that are run by other relevant bodies and clubs. There is no doubt the city could celebrate and be prouder of its assets. Anecdotally there are enough sports grounds to service demand, but many have aged facilities and need to be revitalised. In addition, many will say the majority of playgrounds don't have enough shade or additional amenities to increase usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council must develop a list of iconic assets that must be strongly enhanced – or partnered with for reinvestment. The current Sport Facilities and Demand study must align with the open Space Strategy. The playground hierarchy will assist with future investment allocation decisions.

KEY FINDINGS

Key Observation	Key Evidence/Insight	Strategic Recommendation
Tree canopy and shade – including rest/relaxation spaces are lacking in the CAD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reviewers believe that there is simply not enough tree canopy or shade in the Horsham CAD – and given the climate throughout the year, a long-term tree/vegetation plan is required. Many residents drive their car around the town rather than walking between spots/shops because they say it is just “too hot to walk.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 10-15 year capital investment tree canopy plan is required, along with additional rest/relaxation places in the CAD.
Developer Contributions = the HRCC requirements are too low for modern development and lifestyles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many councils are now reviewing their requirements across the state and the contribution requirements in some LGA’s is nearing 10%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is our recommendation that the open space developer contributions needs to increase in HRCC to a minimum of 6%. Should the city wish to be a leader in this, 10% should be the future benchmark.
Underlying premise that Universal Design Principles are considered for all projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councils around Victoria and Australia are not looking into mandatory use of these principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reviewers recommend that Universal Design Principles are not mandatory but are considered in a practical and pragmatic way for all projects.

KEY FINDINGS

Key Observation	Key Evidence/Insight	Strategic Recommendation
An underlying connection to a wonderful river and lakes system is not overt to the rest of Victoria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While Horsham is described as a harsh environment by some residents, on its doorstep is an amazing river and river front and a wonderful lake system that is slowly being realised. However, some would suggest that outside of the region itself, it is not widely known for its water system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with GWM Water and local tourism bodies, invest in a tourism strategy or campaign to raise the profile of the region's great water and fishing assets.
A rock climbing mecca at your fingertips.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Grampians and the wider HRCC is known as a climbing mecca and Natimuk is a town where many climbers are now living. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position Natimuk and (Horsham more broadly) as the gateway to Mount Arapiles, an internationally important rock climbing destination.
Many natural areas and open spaces don't have the right mix of assets and amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Open Space audit has identified a series of gaps and needs for all the HRCC assets. The Open Space hierarchy will assist in decision-making in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 10 year capital improvement plan needs to be developed.

KEY FINDINGS

Key Observation	Evidence/Insight	Strategic Recommendation
Indigenous story-telling is missing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The reviewers found that the CAD, its assets and the outlying towns and assets lack strong Indigenous storytelling that reflects a cultural respect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Every major asset and/or place must have visual and written recognition of the traditional Indigenous landowners.A separate piece of work will be required to accelerate this around the HRCC RAP Plan.

ASSET OBSERVATIONS

ASSET OBSERVATIONS

Asset	Key Observation	Strategic Consideration
The Wimmera River – the Icon Centrepiece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Along with Mount Arapiles, the Wimmera River is the natural centrepiece of the town and city. It should be the most visible asset, yet is almost hidden as you enter and exit the city precinct. The River Precinct is somewhat underutilised, and has the potential to be a destination for recreational and social enjoyment. Spaces that enhance interaction and family time (e.g. Adventure Island and Weir Park) are already there but greater linkage to the rest of the township is needed to enhance usage and accessibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where feasible and possible, opening up the river front to more activity, more linkages, and more interaction with the community is a must. Longer term a restaurant/café is a requirement to draw people to this wonderful part of Victoria.
Mt. Arapiles – the 2nd icon for HRCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mount Arapiles is an internationally significant rock climbing destination with an enduring appeal drawing thousands of visitors from around the world each year. Along with the Wimmera River, this is perhaps the most iconic asset in the HRCC, yet it is not as well recognised as the Grampians by the broader Victorian community. This site is very significant to Traditional Owners, and their aspirations are set out in their Country Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support BGLC and Parks Victoria as land managers in working with visitors and the community to promote greater awareness, understanding and protection of the cultural values of the site, whilst retaining appropriate sustainable and internationally significant rock climbing opportunities.
Arapiles Big Sky Bicycle Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intermittently talked about by the community and stakeholders through this project, it is a sleeping opportunity. This trail should form a key plank of the regional tourism strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater levels of promotion of this asset is required to enhance visitation.

ASSET OBSERVATIONS

Asset	Key Observation	Strategic Consideration
City Oval and Sawyer Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, many would say these are an underutilised asset – particularly City Oval – and it is only the domain of football and cricket. • While Sawyer Park has had some investment in recent times, the whole site needs completion to increase usability and comfort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refinements of a Master Plan that incorporates and opens up City Oval – and Sawyer Park – which then leverages the river frontage to its maximum is recommended. • The reviewers believe that the long term relocation of the Caravan Park needs to be thought through and must align with the Horsham CAD and Wimmera Precinct Plan.
Police Paddock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again an underappreciated and underutilised asset. It has 'great bones' but needs additional investment to round it out. It is a 'sneaky' fishing spot for some. • It does lack a clear bike lane linkage and needs to cater for a wider base of user groups. There is great potential here to connect Police Paddock (and North Horsham) to the river. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a gap analysis based on the asset audit and identify top 2-3 recommendations. • Breaking down perceptions of the area to encourage more people to visit must be considered – and a name change to something more inviting has been pushed by the broader township. There is more to consider here, including a relevant Indigenous connection and name.
Dudley Cornell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consensus would be this park is trying to over-provide with too little space. It needs investment, it lacks adequate parking and modern amenities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletics must find a new home and the park should be used for broader lifestyle and recreational use by local residents.

ASSET OBSERVATIONS

Asset	Key Observation	Strategic Consideration
VicTrack Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without a doubt an eye sore, and it continues to be a 'missed' opportunity (and we recognize the environmental challenges of the site). There is much to play out here as the site requires heavy remediation. Strategically acquiring this asset will change the dynamics of the township. It is the missing 'link' to bring the North of Horsham closer to the CAD both visually and dynamically. The Railway Corridor is ready for a transformation and has the potential to provide the East/West connectivity and alleviate the barrier between North and South Horsham. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue this opportunity to its completion. Long term this will provide a wonderful asset or linkage for the Horsham community if it can be realised.
May Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widely talked about and known –the major missing piece is some additional lighting as some will suggest that this path can be unsafe at times or within the confines of one “dark” pocket. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As soon as practical, upgrade lighting to improve the perceived after-dark safety aspect of this key community asset.
The Showgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Its relationship with the CAD and surroundings is disjointed. The Greyhounds track is unpleasant to look at and possibly should be moved. We realise there is much discussion to play out here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reviewer recommends that in conjunction with the Showgrounds Committee of Management, a 10 year strategy is developed for this precinct. The objective should be to open up this asset to the community 24/7.

ASSET OBSERVATIONS

Asset	Key Observation	Strategic Consideration
Blue Ribbon Raceway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speedway is 19.3km from the CAD. While a useful precinct and asset (and rightly so) out of town, there is a potential option for another asset to be housed here in the longer term. Note: limited feedback to date from stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific action is determined at this stage, given its proximity from the town.
The Velodrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Horsham Cycling Club currently has six active members and has not had growth to the membership base for some time. The velodrome is used daily by recreational users including dog walkers, triathletes and many of the local schools. The track will need resurfacing in the next 5-6 years which will be an investment of approximately \$200,000. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should investigate opportunities to incorporate this site into the development of an indoor/outdoor sports precinct.
Racecourse Reserve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current usage: HDRC: 2 days at 4 hours per day, 3 race meets per year; HHRC: 2 training per week times 4 hours (each week, 10 race meets a year (includes 2 major meets). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horsham Harness Racing and the Horsham District Racing Club are open to solutions to enable more community access. It is critical to protect the quality of the track. Given recent investment in the site and the estimated replication costs of \$50-\$100 million, the club should stay in its current location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a council perspective, building a closer relationship with these clubs – and building and refining the current community footprint at this major site is for strong consideration.

ASSET OBSERVATIONS

Asset	Key Observation	Strategic Consideration
Horsham Greyhound Racing Club <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Stats: \$1.3 million upgrade but 12 months on the track \$2.9 million last 10 years Training runs being investigated on the far-side. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well utilised facilities – albeit under the radar and with little external community engagement. North West Victoria is a hub of Greyhound activity for the sport. There are now only two metropolitan Greyhound tracks in operation, so regional Victoria is the focus of growth for the sport. As it sits currently, the track site and facility do not integrate well in to the full site – and the abutment to the highway is an eye-sore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short term recommendations: improve the street scape and roadside visualisation of the club. Inside the site has been invested in, options for “flipping” the track to move it away from the highway should be considered in the medium to longer term.
Horsham Racing Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus would be that greater community, council and township engagement is required. Weekly activity is ongoing and an up-and-coming trainer lives and works in the region. Timing of their events is not optimal and some longer term considerations for moving one of the key race meets should be on the radar of decision makers. Track relocation requires a <u>significant</u> capital investment (\$50-\$100 million) and there are better investments to consider for the longer term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wherever possible, council should engage strongly with the HRC. To relocate the track is an investment of \$50 million - \$100 million. Shorter-term consideration to bolster the 3 events and engage the community and township. Improving the ‘in-field’ fields should be considered in alignment with the sports facilities demand study.
Horsham Harness Racing Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well utilised facilities and there is demand to increase the number of events. In 2018, this was the only club/centre to grow in Victoria. Again a growth corridor is the North-West of the state. Horsham is the heartbeat and trainers and riders do come from South Australia and NSW as well as many parts of Victoria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to the Racing Club, this is an undervalued activity centre. Short-term, council needs to engage with the club to bolster engagement with the community. Medium/longer-term – improve and invest in the inner-field asset for extra football (soccer) or athletics.

VERBATIM COMMENTS

"Horsham is the regional centre. If you can't get something elsewhere within a 100km radius you can come to Horsham and get it – it's a very resourceful area, and has a diverse range of businesses."

"Future priorities should be about opening up our assets, providing greater access to our facilities to other community groups and users rather than just the same old football, netball and cricket."

"We have a lot of single use, one dimensional facilities...there are no physical linkages between our assets."

"City Oval is not the city's...it's really just the Horsham Demons ground. It's not 'city' oval."

"We don't have visibility of what is on at City Oval and we would have to go through Council. But we wouldn't know when it is available outside of football and cricket times."

"What do and can community groups use and when? What access do they potentially have and what assets?"

"The big issue is transportation. It's not easy for people to get from one point to another if you don't have a car."

"Sports are still very important for rural areas, but you also need places where you can just relax."

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

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Asset	Key Observation	Strategic Consideration
Linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated and signed pedestrian and cycle linkages are needed to connect the whole city. Given Horsham's flat terrain, the city should become a cycle-based city. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated, signed cycling and walking routes are needed, not only from a safety perspective, but also to encourage broader physical activity and active transport in the region. A city wide cycling and running/walking strategy is required. This all needs to form part of the HRCC Urban Transport Network Plan.
Civic Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared civic and community spaces within walking distance of the CAD are certainly missing. There is a distinct lack of public town squares, useful civic spaces and shaded seating areas within the CAD where people can sit and enjoy their lunch. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Town Square or community garden idea has been talked about, with potential to use the vacant block of land opposite Coles. That said, there is no real central part of the CAD that represents the heart and soul of Horsham. Short-term, a canopy and shade strategy needs to incorporate access to water and water features.
Schools – a missing piece to Open Space access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the schools and Education department have not been formally engaged through this project, it is a discussion point emerging in all, if not many, LGA's. There are wonderful school based assets that are underutilised, and with some forward thinking that is aligned to community needs, should be realised in the medium term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sport and Rec department at HRCC should engage with the top 2-3 schools in the town to open engagement about a pilot program for community use. Likewise, there are schools in the region that could benefit from using City Oval at times.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Asset	Key Observation	Strategic Consideration
Dadswell Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This township should be the celebration that you have arrived in one of Victoria's most iconic areas: the Wimmera and Horsham. It is just so underwhelming on the left of the Highway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A long term revitalisation strategy for this part of the region will require a staged approach – and there must be a story about its significance and history to the region.
East Horsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary feedback from residents and stakeholders is the lack of connectivity across the river to the 3 local schools. It is a major safety concern as well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Another pedestrian bridge needs to be built across either Baillie or Hamilton Streets near the 'three schools' (St Brigids, Lutheran and Horsham 298) to enhance safety and access.
North Horsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The major observation is that the North of Horsham, a low socioeconomic area, is seriously underserved by publicly accessible and activated open space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in open space provision in this area, aligned with the Open Space Contribution policy is needed. Existing open space must be activated with community amenities such as barbecues, picnic tables, public toilets at Police Paddocks and Langland's Park.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Asset	Key Observation	Strategic Consideration
West Horsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This area of the City has been spoken about as a potential 'green-field' site for an indoor/outdoor sports hub which would service the number of schools and education institutions within close proximity (approximately 950 students). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of this site should only occur if there is significant population growth beyond current projections.
Haven and South Horsham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the growth corridor of Horsham and in some parts, new housing developments have proceeded with poor consideration of open space due to the lack of an open space contributions policy. Haven is a tight-knit community, and the recreation reserve and primary school serve as a central hub and recreation space for local residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear directions in the Planning Scheme and an Open Space Contributions Policy is critical to ensure that open spaces are made a priority in the southern growth corridor. A 10 year Masterplan of the Haven Recreation Reserve including walking and cycle linkages to the Horsham CAD should be developed.

VERBATIM COMMENTS

"The sound shell is the only open space performance area in Horsham. We need to encourage more arts and cultural performances. Could have graffiti art, sculptures, live music all along the river front."

"To see Haven now compared to 40 years ago, you wonder how many years down the track it will be until more services start to go South of the river."

"While the die-hard local might think we don't need [assets like the Town Hall and Aquatic Centre], once they do happen, people embrace it. You hear all the comments... *we should have had this years ago ... seeing my grandkids up on stage is so exciting.*"

"I certainly think a Town Square or civic space in the CBD would be great. There is a dirt carpark in Roberts Avenue, opposite the Coles carpark, which I always thought would be a great community open space or garden."

"Linkages are great along the river and down to the Weir, but there is nothing up near the Riverside precinct and the three schools – Lutheran, Horsham 298 and St Brigids."

"The sporting facilities in Horsham are great. My kids both play basketball and the stadium has good capacity that can cope with all the basketball tournaments."

"Every school, primary or secondary, should be surrounded by sports facilities. If you have good access to facilities and good programs for kids after school they will come."

"Horsham is very dark and lighting is a problem along the river. People don't feel safe. We need more lights for people that want to exercise early in the morning or late at night."



COMMUNITY FORUMS

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Community Forums

Two community forums were held on March 19th and March 20th 2019 at the Council offices. The purpose of the forums was to further explore the **strengths and weaknesses** of open space provision across Horsham, to identify key strategic issues and to brainstorm potential solutions with key stakeholders and community members.

20 participants from a diverse cross-section of the community attended the forums, which included volunteers, sports club stakeholders and administrators, committee members and members of community groups and local residents.

Key Findings:

- Current **strengths** of open space provision in Horsham are the **Wimmera River, well used walking and riding tracks, the new footbridge** and pockets along the river with good BBQ facilities, **May Park** is attractive and appealing, well-presented, central and accessible, the **Botanical Gardens, City Oval, the Skate Park and Police Paddocks** are all seen as great community open space assets, the Showgrounds present an opportunity for new facility development, the **variety and quantity of open spaces** and the **dog parks** and dog-friendly exercise areas.
- The **weaknesses** identified included the **need for more linkages between open spaces, and access across the river**, and **more walking/cycling paths** away from cars to improve safety. Community members also identified there are not enough **public toilets and drinking fountains** along the river, the need for **more trees and shaded areas**, the **lack of aquatic features** including fountains in the town centre and splash parks, and limited access to some community assets such as the racecourse and City Oval.
- The following solutions to address the key strategic priorities were commonly identified during the forums:
 - Install another **footbridge** and another **vehicle bridge** over the river – Baillie Street
 - Add **walking tracks to both sides of the river** and create linkages for bike pathways
 - Make the **river a destination** with several additions like family spaces, a splash park and permanent food, drink and entertainment on the river
 - Introduce **multi-purpose regional standard sporting facilities** to make it an outdoor hub with more lighting
 - Investigate areas for **civic spaces such as fountains, town squares and community gardens**
 - Introduce a policy to encourage sporting clubs and organisations to **collaborate for shared outcomes** through upgraded and co-located facilities
 - **Colour the city**, by adding more arts and sculptures, and making the entrances more welcoming to improve the city's attractiveness
 - **Plant more trees** and shaded areas that are consistent and suitable to the local climate

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The river is already great, and has even more scope and potential for future development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well used walking and riding tracks, new footbridge and pockets with good BBQ facilities • May Park is attractive and appealing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well presented, central and accessible • City Oval, the Skate Park and Police Paddocks are all seen as great community open space assets • Botanical Gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Croquet and tennis courts nearby • Showgrounds are an attraction with opportunity for new facility development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great location, grandstand and high quality sports fields nearby • Racecourse quality • Variety and quantity of open spaces • Dog parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to be more linkages between open spaces, and access across the river for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians • Previous scattered and inconsistent planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on quality and caliber at the expense of volume of paths and tracks • Not enough public toilets or drinking fountains along the river • Need more trees and shaded areas with seats along the river and at Police Paddocks to make it feel like a rural city • The south side of the river opposite the new circuit needs work to make it as walking and cycling friendly as the north side • Lack of aquatic features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fountains in the town centre, splash parks • Parking around the library at peak times (10am) • Combining, consolidating, utilising and enhancing of existing resources and facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sporting clubs, showgrounds, North facilities, Mill Street • Racecourse access and viewing are limited <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly to the facilities inside the track, which makes it difficult to publicly promote events

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority	Suggested Initiatives
<p>1. Increase connectivity <i>Improve connectivity to green/open spaces through the development of pedestrian and cycle networks, active transport connections, traffic planning, and strategic land acquisition and disposal</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install another footbridge and another vehicle bridge over the river – Baillie Street • Add walking tracks to both sides of the river and create linkages for bike pathways • Investigate tunnel/underpass opportunities, to provide more connection to the river and shift traffic away – VicRoads need to make a decision! • Focus on more safety with dedicated bike lanes, more pedestrian crossings, better lighting and enhanced road speed signage • Connect the river to May Park and Police Paddocks by implementing pedestrian and cycle paths • Limit school time congestion and improve safety for children by adding pedestrian crossings and designated pick up and drop off areas • Active transport connections and cycle networks should be a greater priority • Map land acquisitions and plan the town design
<p>2. Redefine the River <i>Activate the Wimmera River and its basin</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the river a destination with several additions like family spaces, a splash park and permanent food, drink and entertainment on the river • Create more family spaces on both sides of the river like paddle boat hire, night markets, fetes, outdoor cinema and more • Improve both the north and south ends of the river by designing full length pathways with the addition of more walking bridges • Provide more sheltered and shaded seats along the river • Add more recreation opportunities by developing mountain bike trails near the equestrian school, adding a dedicated swimming area and introducing workout equipment stations • Open up the greyhound race track to the community • Ensure accessibility

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority	Suggested Initiatives
<p>3. Improve open space provision <i>Ensure equitable access to open space across the municipality (including the railway Corridor redevelopment)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce multi purpose regional standard sporting facilities to make indoor/outdoor sporting hubs with a variety of sports • Add a splash park, new hockey and soccer pitches, dog park • Create a large community amenity blocks with showers, toilets and water fountains • Investigate areas for civic space and reduce the number of open shopfronts by turning them into a town square • Provide more shaded areas with more trees • Add more parking facilities in the city for staff and user groups • Improve the wildlife habitat near the river
<p>4. Enhance collaboration <i>Engage with other agencies (e.g. BGLC, Parks Vic, DELWP, WCMA) so that open space provision and management is a multi-agency initiative that achieves shared objectives</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage sporting clubs and organisations to collaborate for shared outcomes and the betterment of sport through upgraded and co-located facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include clubs, sporting associations, state sporting bodies etc. • Use existing facilities for new functions, like opening up schools when outside of class time for public usage, and improve coordination between user groups • Work with VicRoads to accelerate the bypass planning to ensure decision making and commitment from Council to planning projects • Facilitate regular workshops and community consultations with sports clubs so that facility provision can be efficient and beneficial for everyone • Prioritise funding opportunities to reflect the positive community impacts of new investments

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority	Suggested Initiatives
<p>5. Invest and plan for our future <i>Develop clear and defensible planning decisions to ensure developers create the environment we want</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage better collaboration between sporting clubs to plan for the future by setting clear long-term goals with strong actions and ensured accountability • Align individual plans and overall strategy through cross-functional teams • Improve provision of undercover and shaded parking in the CAD • Continue to preserve the wetlands at Police Paddocks and in the West of Horsham • Inform the community to encourage directional planning, resource management and decisions and to discourage developers from going against the plan for the sake of profit • Include bike and walking paths, and greenery when building new facilities for more connectivity; design and plan road traffic around that • Ensure case studies of success are learnt from and derive a 25 year plan for the precincts and areas that recognises the local ageing population of Horsham
<p>6. Green our City <i>Improve the provision of open space within the CAD and develop a number of multipurpose spaces for wider community use</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the community a reason to be proud of its city • Colour the city by adding more arts and sculptures, and making the entrances more welcoming to improve the city's attractiveness • Plant more trees and shaded areas that are consistent and suitable to the local climate • Add something simple and relatable to the town entrance like a Horsham garden bed • Maintain the greenery around the city and in the centre of town, then add more of a focus on vibrant colours • Keep the streets cleaner and the grass greener



ONLINE SURVEY

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Online Survey

The purpose of the survey was to understand community and stakeholder perceptions of existing open space provision across Horsham, and to identify the strengths, weaknesses and specific areas for improvement of open space across the municipality.

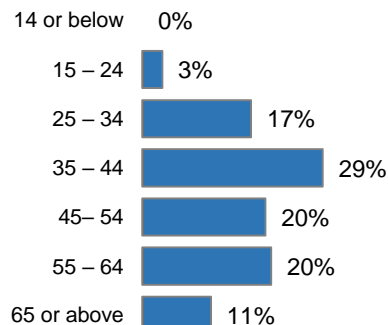
The online survey was conducted throughout March 2019, and was distributed to a database of 123 key stakeholders as well as being publicly promoted through two media releases, and Council's social media channels. The survey received a total of 251 complete responses, reportedly one of the highest response rates Council has had for a community survey, which demonstrates the importance of this project for local residents, as well as the community engagement.

Key Findings:

- 75% of respondents rate the **quality of the Botanic Gardens as good or excellent**. In addition, the **quality of grassed formal ovals and skate parks and BMX tracks are also rated highly** by the community, with 62% and 57% respectively rating them as good or excellent. In contrast, **water sport facilities and smaller local/neighbourhood parks need investment and development**, with 37% and 35% respectively indicating the quality as poor or none of those facilities provided.
- Given the usage of open space usage reported in the survey, the following are key considerations for the Open Space Strategy: **improving linkages and connections** across the city and to the CAD, **enhancing local parks and passive recreation spaces** and improving their amenities, **protecting nature reserves** and wildlife, **providing more civic spaces** such as Town Squares, **opening sports ground up for community use**.
- The top three **most important areas for open space access are public toilet facilities** (100% total importance), **grassed areas for casual sport** (99% total importance), and **playgrounds and play areas** (99% total importance).
- The top three open space improvement suggestions that respondents most agree with include ensuring new housing developments include parks and open space with facilities like BBQs, play equipment, picnic tables and shelters (89%), having walking paths and open frontage on both sides of the Wimmera River (88%), and developing facilities similar to Weir Park at other points along the River frontage (87%).
- When asked to rank improvement suggestions in order of importance, creating **more natural areas for families and children to play** (96%), **activating the Wimmera River precinct** (95%), **increasing connections** to the Wimmera River (95%), **enhancing our existing local neighbourhood parks** (93%) and focusing more on **high quality passive recreation spaces** (92%) were the top five most important open space improvement areas.
- The least important improvement areas ranked by respondents were enhancing the provision of open space at Dadswells Bridge and improving facilities at Police Paddocks, with only 65% and 68% ranking them as important respectively. That said, the reviewers recommend that these are not overlooked in the future plan.

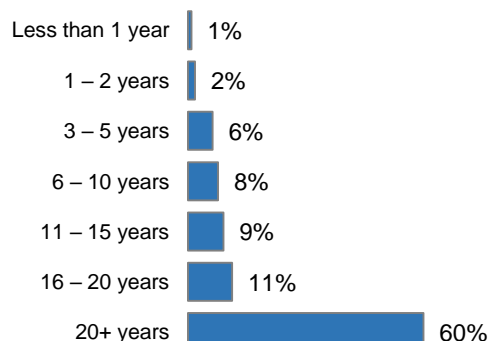
RESPONDENT PROFILE

Respondent Age



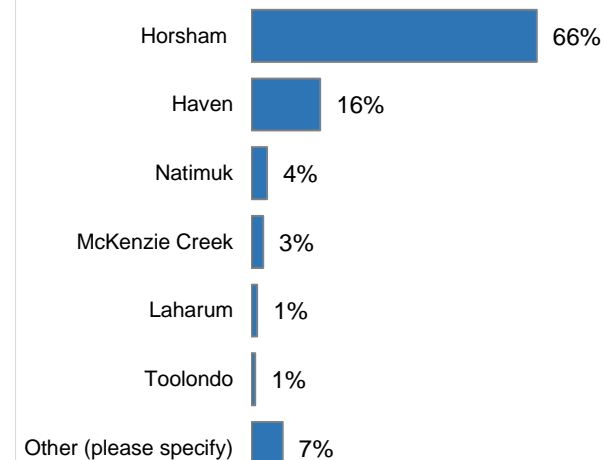
Q1. What is your age?

Years Lived



Q6. For how many years have you lived/worked in Horsham or the wider region?

Location

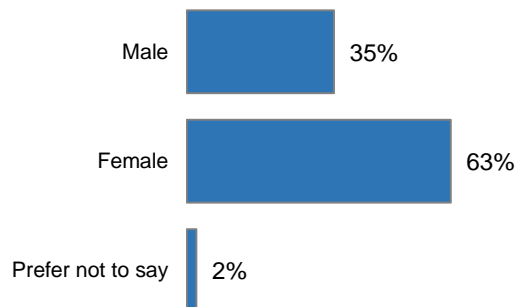


Other:

- Melbourne
- Bungallaly
- Adelaide
- Lower Norton
- Riverside
- Ararat
- Dimboola
- Kalkee
- Wonwondah
- Dooen
- Rainbow
- Longerenong

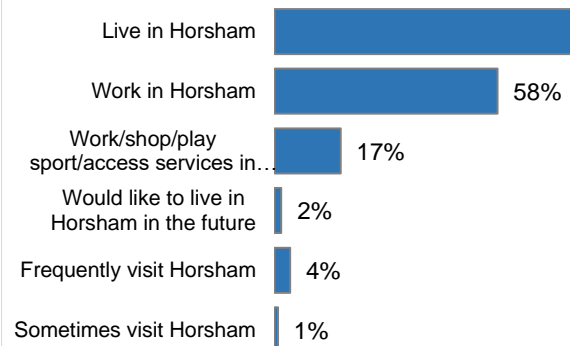
Q4. Which of the following areas best describes where you live?

Gender



Q3. What is your gender?

Connection to Horsham



Q5. Which of the following best describes your connection to Horsham? (Please select all that apply)

Key Themes

- **Walking and cycle paths**
- **Wetland areas** and bushland along the river
- Well maintained and good quality **sports grounds** for traditional sports
- **Dog friendly parks** and exercise areas
- The aquatic centre
- Recent work completed at Apex Park and the new pump track
- Well-maintained recreation spaces including the **Botanical Gardens** and **May Park**
- The **Town Hall**
- Community exercise equipment around the river and the racecourse
- Number of **natural lakes** in the municipality including Green Lake and Natimuk Lake
- The Horsham Golf Course is a high-standard golf course

Verbatim Comments

"The river and all the walking and cycling tracks along it, including the wetlands areas. The water is just so peaceful, calming and cooling given how hot it is over the summer. The shade trees make it a good place to walk and ride. We enjoy swimming in the river - both our family and our dog. We canoe along the river. Having the natural bushland so close to the edge of town (south side of the river near Weir Park, and beyond the wetlands) make very relaxing longer walks and a great place to let the dog have a decent run.."

"New dog parks are good. There seems to be a good spread of playgrounds generally. Bike paths along the river are great as is the new foot bridge to Adventure Island. Trees in streets in the CBD are a vast improvement over 20 years ago and hopefully they'll get bigger and shadier. Green Lake is a great resource and appreciated by all who do water sports."

"Walking paths are excellent. Natural areas such as Yanga Track are great.."

"Sporting grounds seem to be well maintained. Playgrounds are wonderful and great range of equipment. Kalkee Rd Hub is an excellent facility."

"The areas where sports facilities are combined e.g. skate park, netball courts and Central Park tennis with racecourse and bowls are great."

"Civic spaces such as the recently redeveloped Town Hall are a great asset to the town and now enable a wide range of cultural/musical events to take place. The Horsham Aquatic Centre is also a great asset, located in the centre of town with a variety of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities."

Q7. Using the five categories above as a reference, what are the strengths or best things about

Key Themes

- **Pedestrian bridge** near the school precinct in the east (St Brigids, Lutheran, Horsham 298)
- **Poor linkages** between Horsham North and Horsham South to the town centre
- Lack of **green space** in the town centre
- **Utilization** and appreciation of the Wimmera River
- Necessity of **upgrades** for sporting grounds, facilities and playgrounds
- Connectivity and lighting of biking and walking paths
- Child safety and **priority** through playgrounds, crossings and signage
- More **shade** and tree canopy through implementation and maintenance
- Lack of an **overarching vision** that connects the city as a whole, rather than individualistic pieces
- Open space **management**
- **Accessibility** to spaces

Verbatim Comments

"Being a small town with most 'places' in close proximity it would be good if there were better bike paths - I work in the CBD but don't feel confident riding my bike in the main traffic which is not used to sharing the roads."

"Green spaces in the CBD don't exist....so nowhere to sit and eat your lunch other than on a busy street."

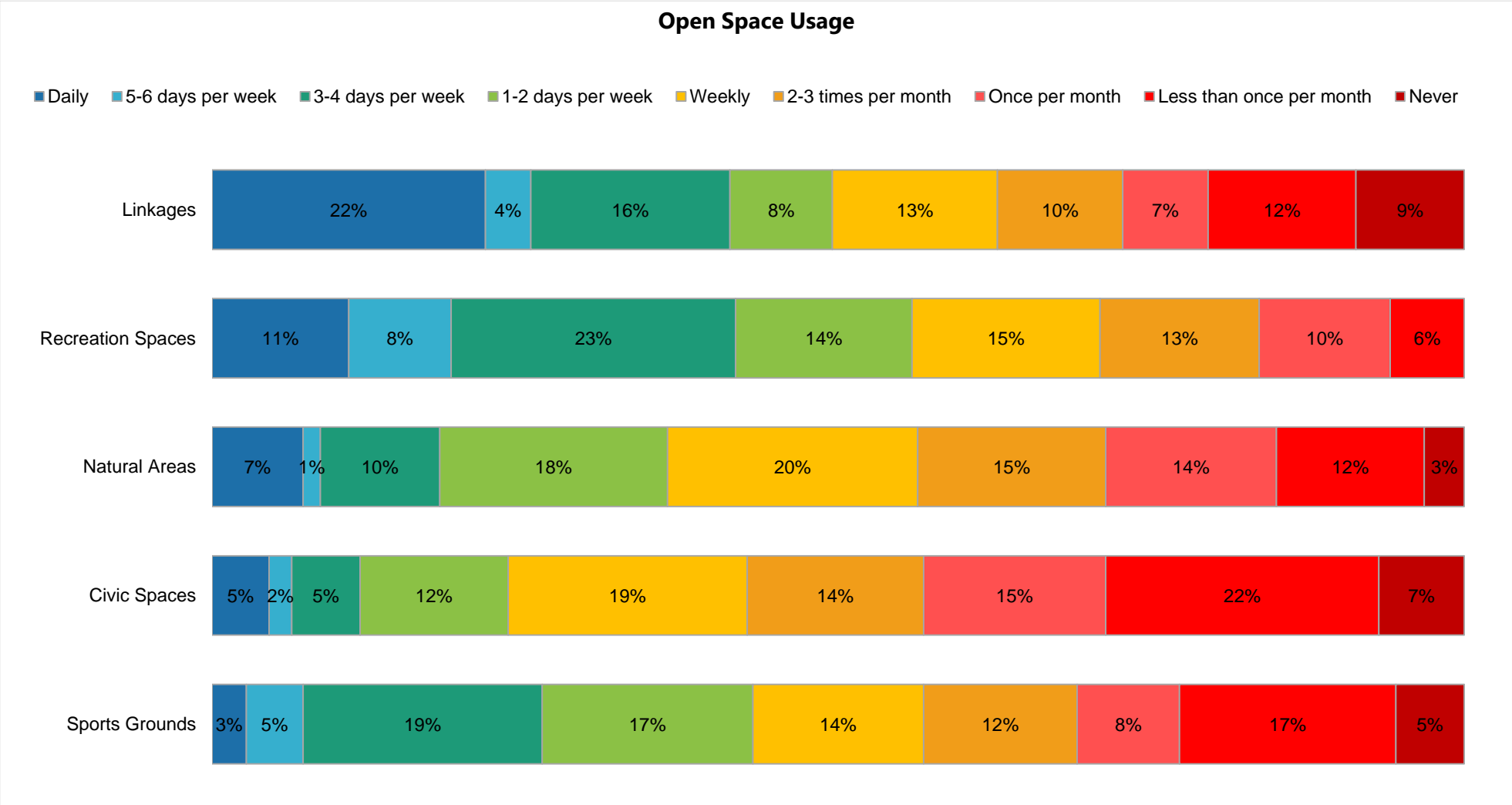
"I believe our river frontage is under utilized and a river side cafe/restaurant could add greatly for the young and old. This could be enhanced by river activities such as paddle boats & jumping mats - to attract families to. Is it the town & bring in tourist dollars that can benefit the broader community also."

"I think there couple be a lot of improvements and upgrades to recreational areas. We have some beautiful natural places just out of Horsham that aren't being used to their full potential. I'm thinking in particular the lakes around Horsham. If they were cleaned up a lot and more facilities placed around they could draw a lot more people closer to the city rather than them going out of town to places that have more facilities."

"Sport hall / gathering place next to a sport oval for Haven - we have so many young kids but no real place for them to spread their wings in a safe near environment."

Q8. What are some of the weaknesses or things that need improving in regards to open space in Horsham and surrounds?

OPEN SPACE USAGE



Q9. How often do you visit the following types of open space?

OPEN SPACE USAGE

Given the findings on the previous page and the figures below, the following are key considerations for the Open Space Strategy:

- Improving linkages and connections across the city and to the CAD
- Enhancing local parks and passive recreation spaces and improving their amenities,
- Protecting nature reserves and wildlife
- Providing more civic spaces such as Town Squares
- Opening sports ground up for community use



50% of respondents use linkages one or more days per week with 22% using them on a daily basis



42% of respondents use recreation spaces three days per week or more, with 11% using them on a daily basis



38% of respondents use natural areas weekly or one to two days per week



29% of respondents use civic spaces less than once per month or never.

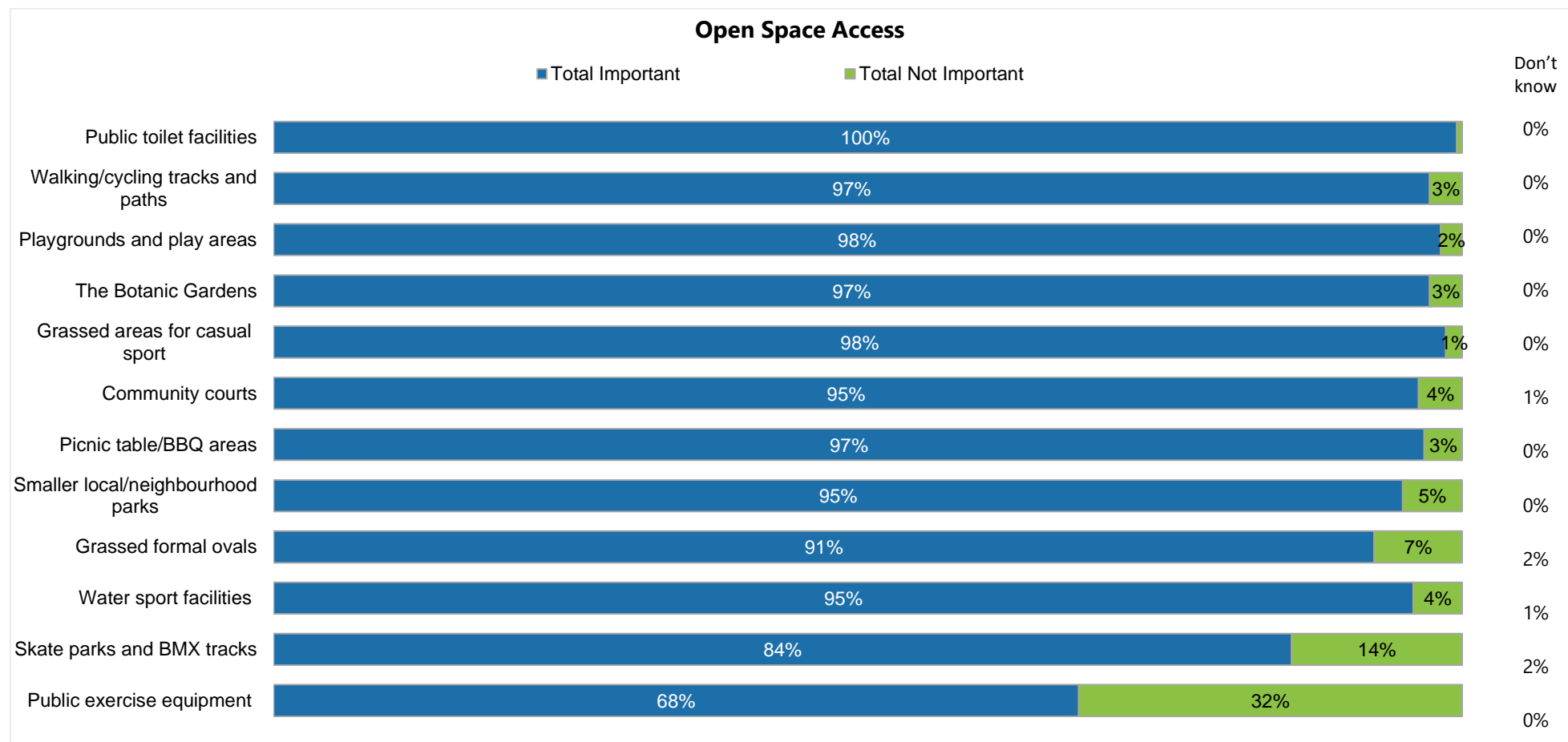


43% of respondents use sports grounds on a less than weekly basis

Q9. How often do you visit the following types of open space?

OPEN SPACE ACCESS

The top three most important areas for open space access are public toilet facilities (100% total importance), grassed areas for casual sport (99% total importance), and playgrounds and play areas (98% total importance).

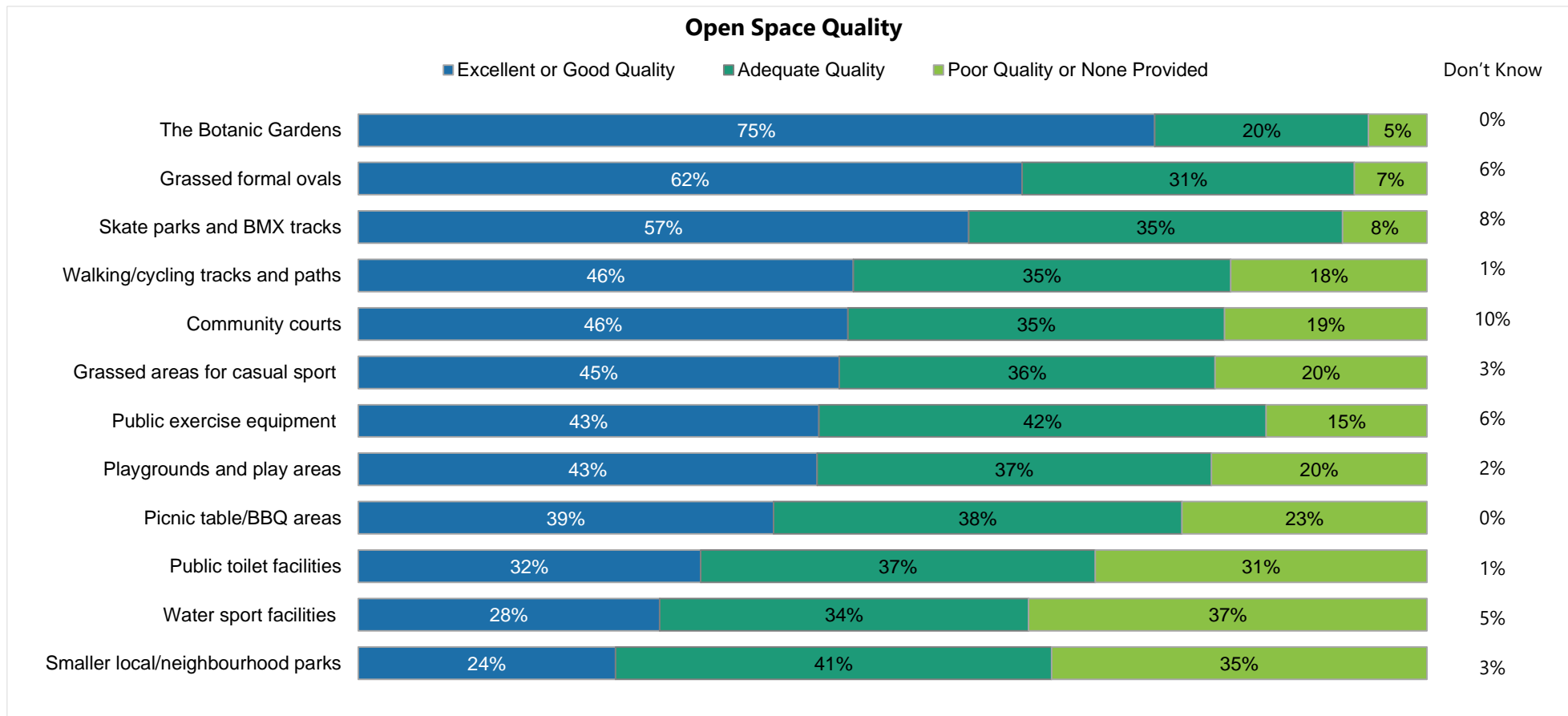


Note: The 'don't know' responses have been excluded from this analysis

Q. How important do you think it is to have access to the following types of open space and recreation areas?

OPEN SPACE QUALITY

75% of respondents rate the quality of the Botanic Gardens as good or excellent. In addition, the quality of grassed formal ovals and skate parks and BMX tracks are also rated highly by the community, with 62% and 57% respectively rating them as good or excellent. In contrast, water sport facilities and smaller local neighbourhood parks need improvement, with 37% and 35% respectively rating quality as poor or none provided.



Note: The 'don't know' responses have been excluded from this analysis

Q11. How do you rate the quality of the following types of open space and recreation areas across the municipality?

USAGE AND QUALITY SUGGESTIONS

Open Space Usage

- More quality **green and shaded areas** with available seating
- Permanent river facilities that encourage people to **spend time** there
- Connection of **safe** foot and bike paths
- Better **lighting** along all open spaces
- **Multipurpose sport** center and/or grounds
- Sustainable water park

Q10. If you could add one thing to our region that would encourage you to use open space more often or be more physically active, what would it be?

Verbatim Comments

"Utilise the Wimmera river particularly at the sound shell area, with a cafe, water sports, and encourage people to our beautiful natural resource!"

"Connecting all bike/footpaths into town with sealed paths. There are school students in our area who would ride into school if there were sealed paths into town, however they can't as it is too unsafe with the amount of traffic (including trucks). It is disappointing that we can't encourage such good and regular physical activity because of this."

"There needs to be lights put in on the walking track along the river at the corner of St Brigids oval - it's dangerous when it's dark."

"As Horsham is a Regional City I believe that Horsham should provide one large sporting hub for both indoor and outdoor sports in the west of Horsham (purchase acres of land next to the Horsham College - Jenkinson Land). This large hub should then be supported by all of the schools having their own hub of sport and recreation activities."

"A free water/splash park in Summer would be amazing for adults, teenagers and children."

USAGE AND QUALITY SUGGESTIONS

Open Space Quality

- Keep things **accessible** through additions and plan ahead
- Have more **readily available** and **well maintained** toilet facilities throughout the open spaces
- Ensure **equal access** for all demographics and remember that not the entire population is young, fit and interested in organized sport
- **More shaded areas** will allow people to spend more time in the open spaces, even when the weather climbs to higher temperatures

Q12. Do you have any additional comments regarding the quality of open space across the municipality?

Verbatim Comments

"Make sure plenty of open space is kept in the municipality so people can enjoy incidental exercise. Open spaces need to be free of charge and accessible to everyone and need to be developed in all areas of Horsham."

"Some toilet facilities are very poor quality - for instance the one in Woolworths carpark does not even have seats. Given our ageing population that must be a nightmare."

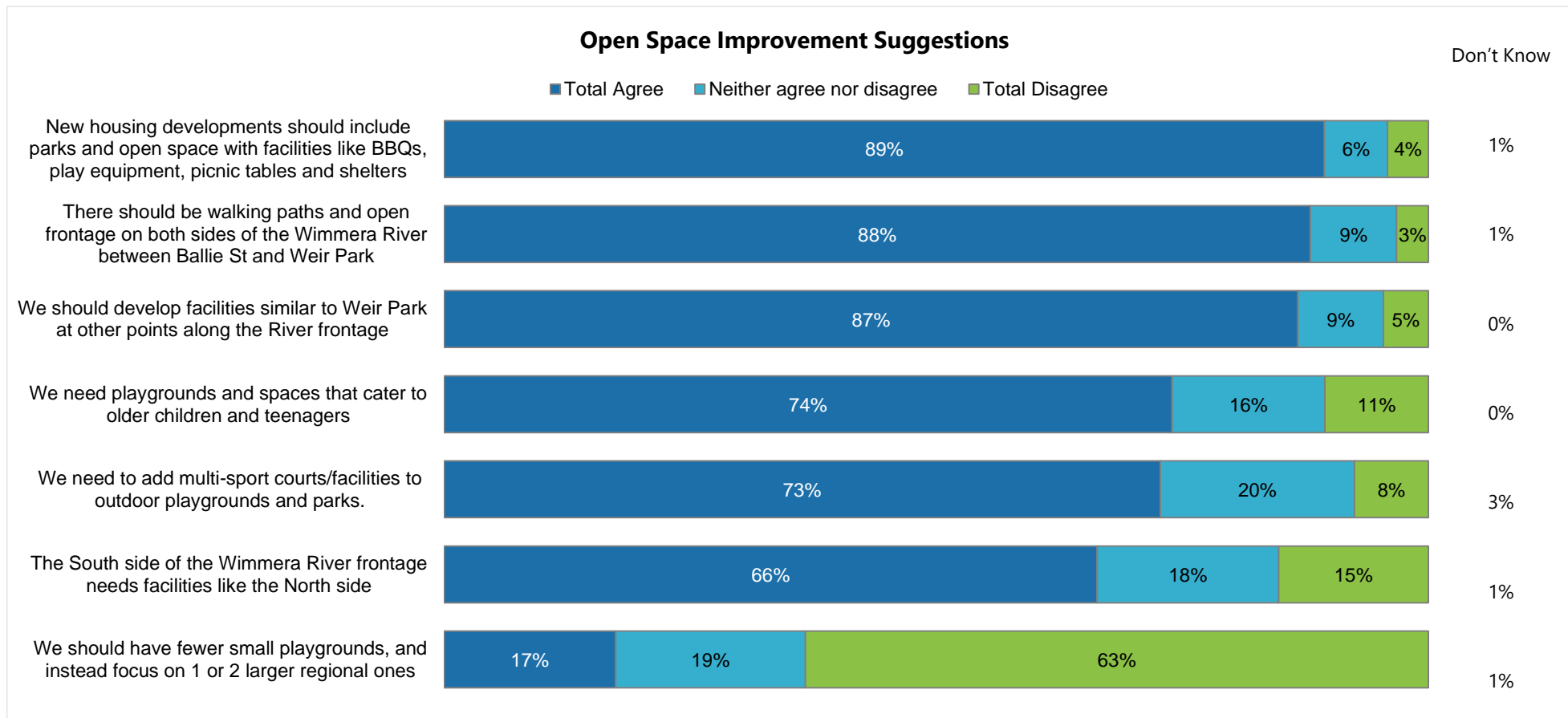
"Way insufficient seating across the region for senior citizens who may prefer a stroll and rest rather than power walking, jogging or cycling. The great outdoors is not equally catered for across all generations."

"Horsham generally has a lot of good open spaces to offer but some of these areas could do with some improvements/enhancements (new equipment, better fencing, re-vegetation, weed management, improved surfaces etc.). In particular the dog park areas have been a successful improvement and great initiative, but some improvements such as better fencing, signage, water (for dogs to drink), shade could be made to make them even better."

"If funds aren't adequate to supply a new park then perhaps consider at least upping the quality of what we have. One swing, one circular swing and one baby swing is not enough to cover the amount of people that share the botanical gardens park."

IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS

The top three open space improvement suggestions that respondents most agree with are ensuring new housing developments include parks and open space with facilities like BBQs, play equipment, picnic tables and shelters (89%), having walking paths and open frontage on both sides of the Wimmera River (88%), and developing facilities similar to Weir Park at other points along the River frontage (87%).

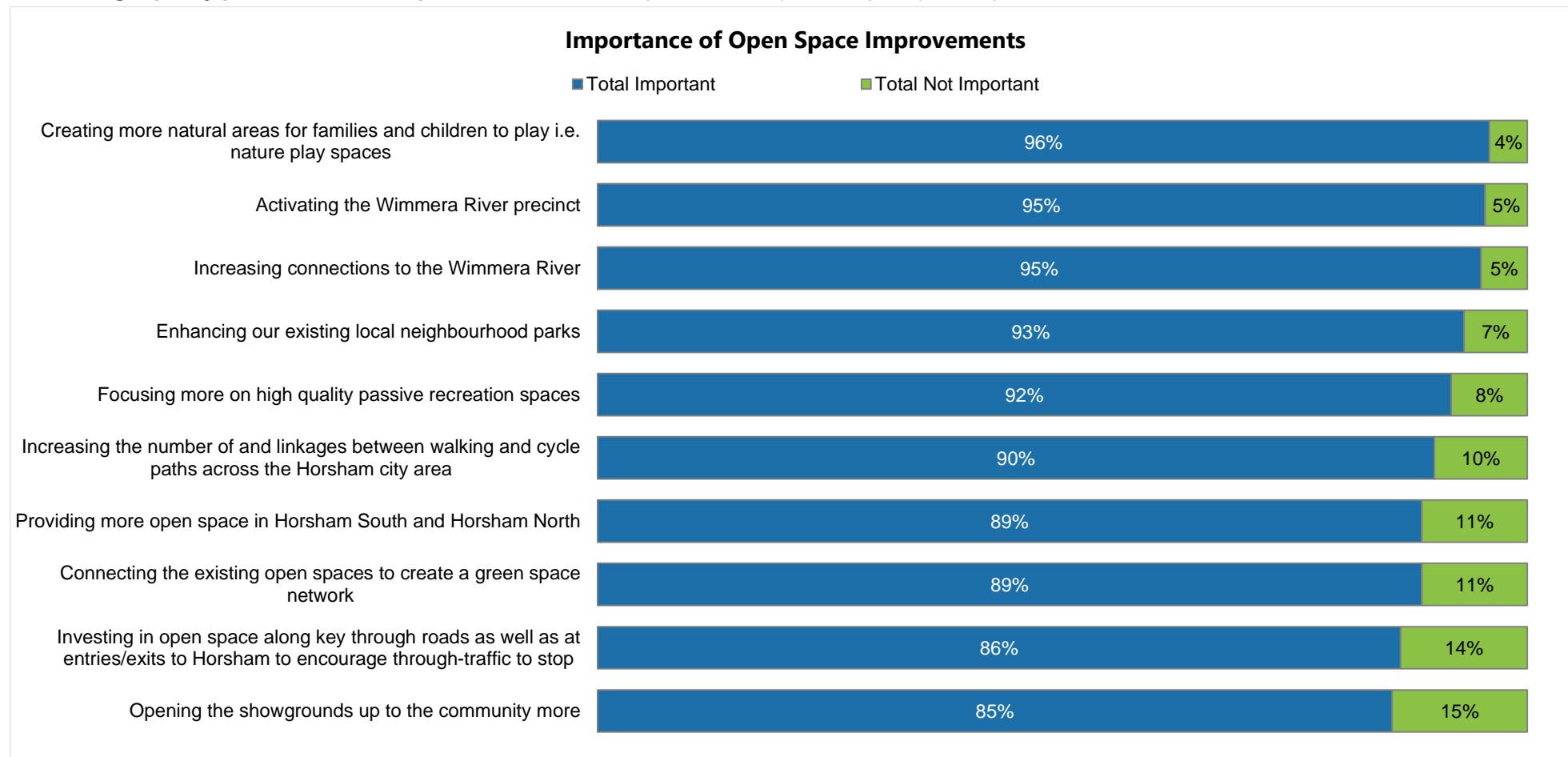


Note: The 'don't know' responses have been excluded from this analysis

Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following suggestions for improving Open Space in Horsham and surrounds?

IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVEMENTS

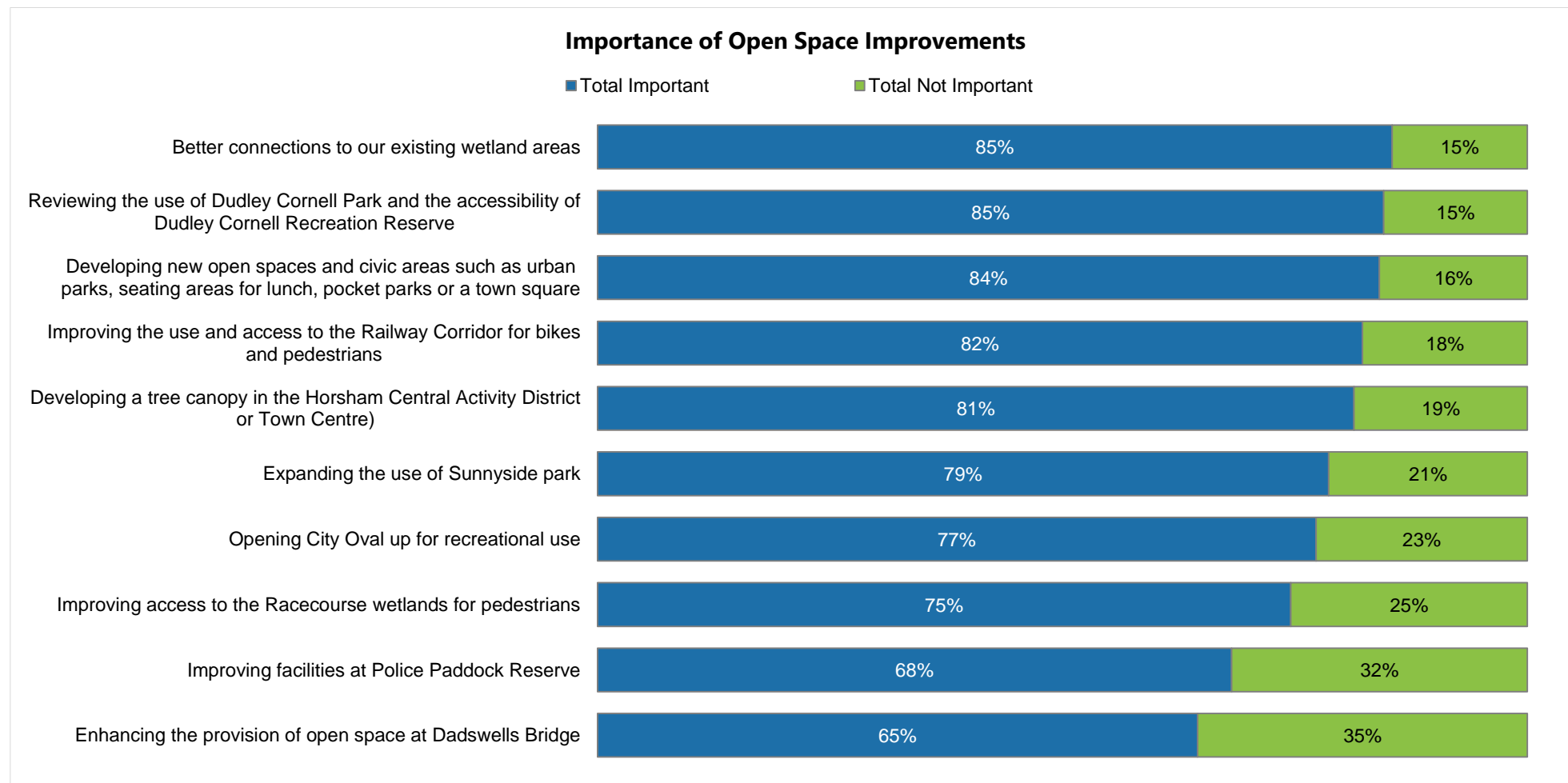
When asked to rank improvement suggestions in order of importance, creating **more natural areas for families and children to play** (96%), **activating the Wimmera River** precinct (95%), **increasing connections** to the Wimmera River (95%), **enhancing our existing local neighbourhood parks** (93%) and focusing more on **high quality passive recreation spaces** (92%) were the top five most important open space improvement areas.



Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following suggestions for improving Open Space in Horsham and surrounds?

IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVEMENTS

The least important improvement areas ranked by respondents were enhancing the provision of open space at Dadswells Bridge (35% not important) and improving facilities at Police Paddocks (32% not important).



Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following suggestions for improving Open Space in Horsham and surrounds?

Improvement Suggestions

- Create changes **sooner rather than later** with the input from those who are affected
- Place the focus on **quality** over quantity
- Place a focus on **weekend and holiday activities**
- **Balance the improvements** across Horsham in a variety of disciplines
- Create one large sporting facility that will be able to have **use by everybody**

Q15. Do you have any additional suggestions for improvements to open space across the municipality?

Verbatim Comments

"I just think the need for weekend or holiday type recreational things would be a lot more beneficial for the area rather than what the community uses day to day. Places for family's and friends to spend their weekends, long weekends and holidays. Somewhere for people from out of town to come to the community and spend their time."

"Open spaces should be everywhere - plan for them in developments, areas don't have to be highly developed just a nice space with shade, but have a variety of things available at different spaces so that people can choose their relaxation or activity."

"The quality of the open space is as important as the space itself."

"Stop focusing on just 'Horsham' and take a look at what is already there and in our outlining communities and how it can be improved on. People that live along or near the Wimmera river already have access to great parks, BBQ areas, grasses areas plus more."

"I think we are very lucky with what we have but one large sporting facility would be great as long as the others can keep going."

Final Comments

- Enhance the **connectivity** of the open spaces, and improve mobility to encourage activity throughout the region
- Create motivations for people to see Horsham as a destination and make it **welcoming, and a reason to turn off the highway**
- **Improve and maintain** the existing initiatives, and upgrade the main park areas
- Find ways to **be practical but excitable** in new developments and improvements
- Generate **community engagement** for young people; events need locations
- Innovate expansions to add **water** to Horsham to counterbalance the dry climate
- Implement **a well communicated plan** that gets executed

Verbatim Comments

"Develop facilities that will bring more people into town - hence supporting local business, whether it's attracting bigger events or providing more things for tourists to do."

"Encouraging Horsham residents to be active through increased connections of walking and bike paths, increased utilisation and appreciation of the Wimmera river, different areas of Horsham and surrounds having spaces near their homes to go play/relax with nature."

"Look to the future & develop our amenities in a fashion that our town & ratepayers can afford & that such amenities are situated in appropriate areas."

"We live in a beautiful City and area, lets do it with vision and full Community Consultation."

"Take advantage of what the Wimmera river can bring to the community as well as our other water infrastructure."

Q16. Finally, please tell us the top 3 key outcomes or initiatives that you would like to see as part of the Open Space Strategy?



POZI MAP

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

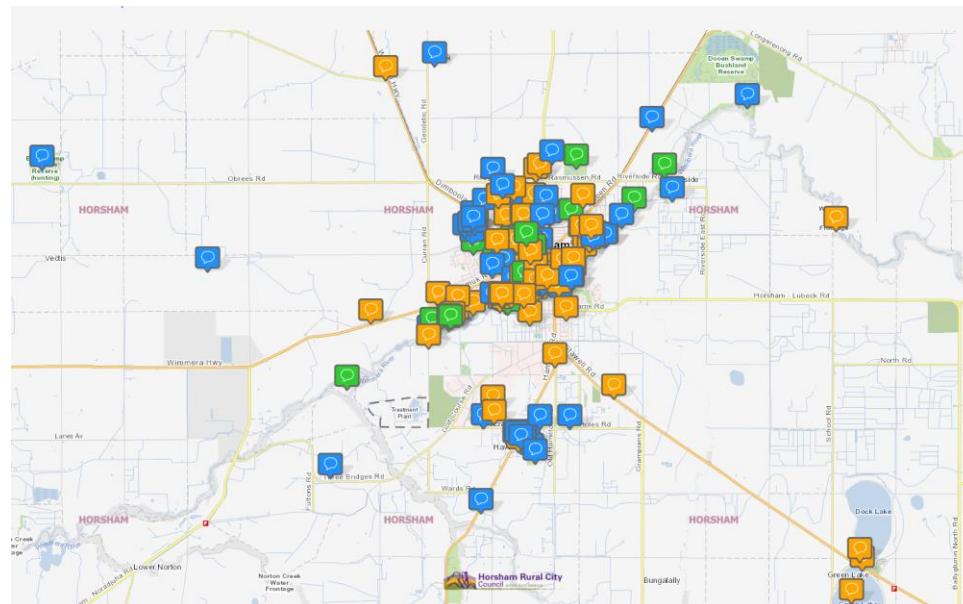
Pozi Map

The purpose of using the Pozi interactive mapping tool was to provide the community with an additional opportunity to have their say through an interactive map. The map allowed users to 'drop a pin' on various areas of open space across the municipality and provide specific feedback based on the location selected.

The Pozi map was open for responses from Wednesday 27th February until Friday 22nd March and received a total of 326 interactions including 178 dropped pins. An image of the map and summary of the types of pins that were dropped is provided to the right.

Key Findings:

- There is an opportunity to **activate the riverfront** at various points to encourage **increased utilisation and visitation**. Key points where pins were dropped were at Sawyer Park, along the Menadue Street foreshore, and at Major Mitchell Drive on the southern bank.
- **Racecourse Reserve and City Oval** are great quality facilities that are **underutilised** and need to be opened up for broader community use.
- Weir Park is an optimal location for a **regional standard playground**.
- The **Haven Recreation Reserve** has great potential, and could be developed into a **natural area with walking and cycling tracks** connected to the river.
- Small **parks and playgrounds in the North**, such as Langlands Park and Pioneer Court Reserve are ready for **revitalisation**.
- **Pedestrian crossings** in East Horsham are needed to capture school traffic and improve safety.
- Jenkinsons Road is a **potential green-field site** for a regional sports facility home to a range of indoor and outdoor sports.



Pin Type	This could be improved!	This is great!	I'd like to see something new here
Linkage	21	2	17
Recreation space	21	5	13
Sport ground	9	4	7
Natural area	8	5	6
Civic space	4	2	2
Other	3	0	1
Multiple OS categories chosen	16	7	11

City Oval

- *City Oval is very dated, the clubrooms need to be refurbished."*
- *"Feel like this place is off limits to people that aren't involved in footy or cricket. Given the amount of my rates that go to manage it I think it should be accessible to all!"*

Sawyer Park

- *"People want to spend time down at Sawyer Park, but there is barely anything to do here - there are no performances or markets or events or activities. Even watching water sports here would be interesting. We have the Sound Shell that is used only a few times per year. Improve the sound shell, open a cafe/restaurant, get rid of that awful car yard (looks like a wreckers at the back)."*
- *"A permanent shelter built for protection from the elements. Parkrun starts and finishes here every Saturday morning. Currently there is no where to shelter when it is raining for the volunteers who are time keeping and recording the times."*
- *"I'd rather visitors and locals spend time here using something fun like a splash park or picnic area than a caryard."*

Racecourse Reserve

- *A large parcel of land under utilised. Race and trot meeting occur not even once a month. A great open space for a sports/community stadium should be built on the central area."*
- *"This is a great facility, but I'm not sure if the public can access it for free? It would be good to see this area with more vegetation and access to the public."*

Major Mitchell Drive River Frontage

- *"Would be good to have grass to sit and play on. Don't use it because it doesn't look appealing at the moment."*
- *"Best playground in Horsham for children under 5. Would be nice to see a little more added plus a fence around it like the Weir as it is quite close to the water. But really nice playground with great concrete path along that part of the river too so kids can ride and scoot along there as well."*

CAD

- *"Close Roberts Avenue for traffic and have a shady, park-like place in the center of Horsham. Allow for a weekly farmers market."*
- *"A pedestrian/bike path through here would connect from Robarts Ave/CBD shops/cafes to Coles/McLachlan St parking - it's a bit mayhem walking through these carparks at lunch time."*
- *"It's such a shame the library lacks an outdoor space it would be a great addition to this vital public asset."*
- *"Improved shared roads - infrastructure and community education about sharing the roads with people community via bicycle."*

HORSHAM EAST

Sunnyside Park

- *"This is a wonderful open space utilised by many in the local community but also by families before and after school drop off and pick up. The area needs accessible and safe shared (bikes and walking) paths. The playground is long overdue for improvement - a BBQ - variety of equipment for all ages and close access for those visiting in hospital who need a break."*
- *"Tennis courts are well utilised but not well maintained. Would be a pity if this went the way of the previous courts."*
- *"There appears to be a lack of completed footpathed areas/pram crossings in the Horsham Primary & Lutheran School areas. Especially between Baillie St/Dooen Rd/Peppertree Lane triangle."*

Pedestrian Crossings

- *"The end of Baillie Street would be a good location for a bridge (while the land on the east side is vacant). It would take a lot of pressure off the Williams Road/Western Highway traffic lights and a great link road to the hospital, Lutheran School, Horsham 298, St Brigids College and the Showgrounds."*
- *"Key area for a pedestrian crossing to capture school kids. Would probably minimise the number of cars in the morning at Williams road taking the kids to school."*

Mendaue Street Foreshore

- *"Need public toilets along the river, seating, shade, places of interest."*
- *"More activities/facilities would be needed here. Drinking water, shelter, seating, bbqs and lighting."*

HORSHAM WEST

Jenkinsons Road

- *"Such a great space which could be utilized! This area is perfect for a centralized sporting precinct. The Horsham community has so much to gain from this venture, this is the perfect spot for it."*
- *"This area would allow for a new stadium with room for future expansion. It connects to a major bus route and college. Easily accessible from both major roads into Horsham."*

Adventure Island

- *"This island has the potential to something really special. It could become a major attraction for our region if developed carefully and with imagination."*

Weir Park

- *"This could be a regional play area - for young and old. The natural setting is ideal for a wonderful park that could become a major tourist attraction. The pump track is a great start."*
- *"This is a great spot but could use a more modern playground."*
- *"Love this area, but the weir boardwalk needs widening to allow for pedestrians as well as the people fishing with all their bikes and fishing tackle"*
- *"Lovely environment... Improve diversity of play experience, nature play, enabling environments, focus on river health and education and social connections."*
- *"Some drinking water for the dogs inside the dog park area. A higher and more solid fence. A smoke free zone as they leave their cigarette butts all over the ground around the table! It's filthy and potential dangerous for the dogs using the area."*

HORSHAM NORTH

Police Paddock Reserve

"This is a great area, but people don't know about it."

Railway Corridor

- *"Currently wasted space, a nice garden/ park area which invites people to sit and relax. Too few of them in Horsham North. Could make it very inclusive by including a sensory garden for those with disabilities."*
- *"I believe this area around the old concrete plant and bitumen has some contamination issues so its uses are limited – maybe a green corridor through this area."*
- *"I use this underpass but so do cyclists. I've been nearly hit many times by cyclists who don't dismount. Its dangerous."*
- *"Would love to see artificial rock climbing on and in the silos."*

Foundry Park

- *"This park area has a bad feel to it, it would be nice to see this space used for something."*

Langlands Park

- *"The dog park is under developed and needs better fencing and more amenities for people and for dogs. More off-lead dog parks are required in Horsham. They should be green as well - not left to be dry and dusty."*

Pioneer Court Reserve

"This little park seems to be a waste of space for its size. Its hidden away and has not got much appeal as a playground."

HORSHAM SOUTH

River Frontage

- *"The large area (near the Horsham time capsule) has so much potential. Could have a cafe/resteraunt/anything here and still plenty of green space. The current grass is terrible. A nicer grass and irrigation, increase shade and park/gym equipment. maybe fenced off dog area and somewhere where you can get a coffee. Even install some concrete pad areas with access for power to lease out to food trucks/shipping container vendors. There is a cafe in a shipping container in Mildura along the river area."*
- *"New walking track and fencing it off is great but some work along the fence line would help to improve this area as a natural area. Be more picturesque to use and be a plus for native wildlife!"*
- *"A proper walking track along here would be great."*

Fisher Square

- *"This is such a beautiful spot in an area with lots of families. Plenty of shade and enough grass to kick a ball around. This area would be great with an undercover barbeque area with tables etc. and would love to see an improved playground and maybe a concreted path around the grass area so the kids can use their scooters and bikes etc."*

Old Hamilton Road/Henty Highway

- *"Make a safer bike path crossing here. very dangerous intersection for children to ride if they or families wish to use the bike path out to Haven."*

Haven Recreation Reserve

- *"The Haven oval could be developed into a fabulous natural area with walking tracks and green spaces. The wetlands at the rear of the area could be extended. Bike tracks need to connect west along Plozza's Rd to the golf course and then to the river - north and south."*
- *"This area is the central civic space for Haven. It would be used more if the playground was improved and expanded to cater for older children, improved gardens to beautify it and more facilities to make it an attractive, practical meeting space. The park in Natimuk is a good example with the woodfire pizza oven, skate ramps and play grounds."*
- *"Haven is the perfect space to be developed because the land is already owned by the Council, the school is growing, the community is growing and the Haven facilities will provide a great backup to the busy facilities in Horsham."*
- *"This is a perfect spot to develop some wetlands with bird boxes, seats and walking paths. The area is already populated with kangaroos, wallabies, echidnas, frogs, birds - also a perfect educational opportunity for the school and visitors. Only a 5km bicycle ride from Horsham."*
- *"A wetlands already exists but some seats in the area would be great to watch the wildlife in this area."*
- *"Plenty of space for a full sized oval that would allow some new sports at Haven including football and cricket."*
- *"This area is excellent for new sporting grounds and facilities, There is space here to be able to expand on the space that Horsham needs for a bigger city oval and it could double as a community hall and could be used as a evacuation centre for disasters."*

- *"A bike path would help commuting to Horsham, from McKenzie Creek and Wonwondah. It could also be a starting point for a bike path to the Grampians and further south."*

Hunts Road

- *"Hunts Road is quite busy. It is important for the safety of our community to have a new bicycle/walking track."*
- *"There are a lot of young families living around this area. For their safety it is important that there be a bicycle/walking track along Hunts Road."*

Watsons Lane

- *"There are numerous people that walk and ride along Plozza's Road. For their safety it is important that a bicycle/walking track be provided."*
- *"This lane should extend right through to Golf Course Rd - for cycling and natural linkages throughout Haven."*
- *"Shared trail connecting Golf Course Rd to the trail adjacent to Haven Primary School."*

Green Lake

- *"Green Lake is SO popular in summer, but it is hard to know if it is open or closed before you go out there."*
- *"Keep the lake full."*
- *"Dump some sand, rake and groom the beach area to make a really nice water recreation area for families."*
- *"This would be ideal for mountain bike tracks and would bring many people to the area and if done right could lead to community cycling events."*

Lake Natimuk

- *"Fantastic lake close to regional tourist attractions. Existing caravan park. Water in the lake provides a huge economic boost to Natimuk and surrounding areas."*
- *"Create a fabulous rural railtrail from Horsham to Natimuk and utilise other rail connection opportunities. Tree and habitat planting."*

Natimuk (creek Rd and Wimmera Highway)

- *"This should be a natural bush area for wildlife. It has slowly been cleared and added to the mowing regime. More tree planting of lower and middle story plants would enhance this area, and reduce mowing and maintenance costs!"*

Mount Arapiles Tooan State Park

- *"This would be ideal for mountain bike tracks and would bring many people to the area and if done right could lead to community cycling events."*

Pimpinio Sports & Community Centre

- *"This is a fantastic recreational facility, however there is only currently one netball court. A second netball court would greatly enhance this space."*

Dadswells Bridge

- *"Toilets in shop are good but you are obliged to buy something. It would be good to have some public toilets here."*

Dooen Weir

- *"This is the site of the old Dooen Weir, and hence has heritage value, as well as being an attractive natural area on the river, being at the upper reaches of the Horsham Weir Pool. (Canoe-able all the way!) Also provides an entry point to the Dooen Swamp area, the largest Natural area in close proximity to Horsham. Has been discovered by Mountain Bike riders, but few others. Most recent works by Parks Victoria has been subject to some vandalism, making upgrade all the more needed."*

Blue Ribbon Raceway

- *"A multi purpose mountain bike track/pump track would be great along side the MotoX track."*



APPENDIX: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION LIST

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION LIST

Organisation	Position/Title
Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly	Regional Sport Program Manager
Wimmera Primary Care Partnership	Evaluation Officer
Wimmera Health Care Group	Community Health Co-ordinator
Wimmera Catchment Management Authority	Chief Executive Officer
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning	Program Manager Land and Built Environment
Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (GWM)	Chief Executive
Barengi Gadjin	Chief Executive Officer
Parks Victoria	Area Chief Ranger - Wimmera
Department Sport and Recreation	Manager – Grampians Region
Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative	CEO and Manager Health & Wellbeing Programs
Horsham Harness Racing	Executive Officer
Horsham District Racing Club	Manager
Horsham Greyhound Racing	Club Manager
Community Member	Haven
Community Member	Sunnyside
GRV	CEO
Country Racing Victoria	CEO
Harness Racing Victoria	CEO
Cycling Victoria	Manager, Clubs
Horsham Cycling Club	President
HRCC	Mayor, 2x Councillors; CEO; Director Community Wellbeing; Manager Arts, Culture and Recreation; Manager Strategic Asset Management and Infrastructure Development; Asset Data and GIS Officer; Community Engagement Facilitator; Coordinator Recreation and Open Space Planning



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