

SAWYER PARK CITY OVAL

STAGE 2 CITY TO RIVER MASTER PLAN

ENGAGEMENT REPORT



Horsham Rural City
Council urban rural balance

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

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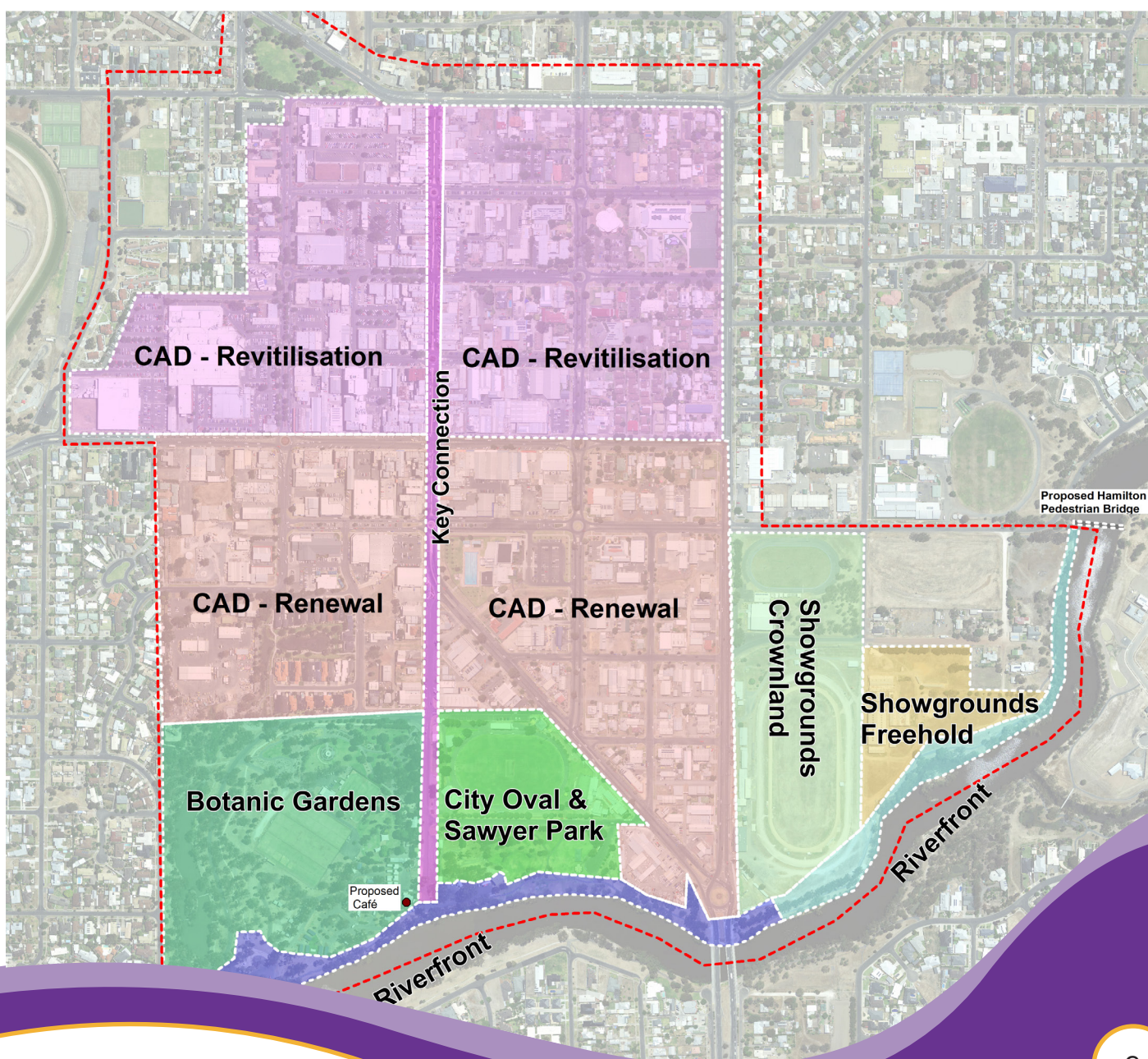
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Background

The Sawyer Park City Oval Precinct is the second stage of the City to River Masterplan, a long term 20 year plan that aims to enhance and activate the Wimmera River Precinct and its link to the Central Activity District of Horsham. The City to River project has been divided into sub-precincts to allow projects to proceed in a staged, prioritized manner.



The Masterplan was developed in 2019, drawn from a large number of current Council strategies and plans along with community input and engagement conducted throughout that year. The Master Plan was approved by the Council in Nov 2019, with amendments to the Plan.

In 2020, Stage One - the Riverfront Activation Project was established with a new model of direct, consultative stakeholder engagement set up through the establishment of a Community Reference Group (CRG) for the project. The CRG deliberated over the course of 2020 and presented a draft Concept Plan, independent costings and a prioritization of proposed works. Council adopted the work and recommendations of the CRG and since then the Riverfront project has commenced implementation with funds provided by the State and Federal Governments.

A similar model for guiding the complexities and opportunities for Stage Two was established in late 2020, drawing together stakeholders from the Sawyer Park and City Oval precincts along with an expression of interest for three community representatives. Again the CRG have worked over the course of 12 months to present to Council at its November 2021 meeting a draft Concept Plan, a summary of independent costings, a priority list of works- subject to funding, a series of additional recommendations and this Engagement Summary.

At the time of presentation, no specific funding allocations have been awarded to this project. However, State Sporting Associations, Sport and Recreation Victoria and Regional Development Victoria have variously been involved and engaged in the development of the project.

This report outlines the process and engagement undertaken to develop, consider and advance the Concept planning, including technical advice, assessments and community input into the plan.

What has been looked at?

The Sawyer Park City Oval (SPCO) Precinct Project is the second stage of the City to River Masterplan. It follows on from planning by the previous Community Reference Group for Stage One - the Wimmera Riverfront Precinct.

The specific objectives set by Council for the City Oval/Sawyer Park Sub Precinct redevelopment were to:

- Maintain the current sporting role of the area and recommend upgrades to meet all contemporary facility standards including universal design;
- Increase public access to and through the site by allowing greater permeability, removing fences, encouraging passive recreation and creating an inviting public realm and interface;
- Improve integration of City Oval with surrounding areas including Sawyer Park, the Riverfront and key pedestrian access routes to the CAD;
- Upgrade City Oval as Horsham's premier regional AFL/cricket venue;

- Upgrade City Oval to a regional standard to enable regional AFL and cricket sporting events and other non-sporting events to be hosted. Upgrades required are likely to include expansion of the size of the field, a new multi-purpose pavilion and clubrooms (including fully accessible and female friendly facilities) and covered spectator areas. Delivery of a second netball court would assist in club training and matches.
- Recognise the role of Sawyer Park as an events space ensuring it is fit for purpose and meets future demand to activate the Wimmera River.
- Recognise the significance of the Cenotaph. Consider its future development.
- Acknowledge the role of the Miniature Railway in activating the riverfront and work with the Wimmera Live Steam and Model Engineering Society to explore design options and an ongoing operating model as part of the next phase of planning and design process.

The SPCO precinct encompasses the area shown below:



Purpose of Engagement Report

This Report summarises the commitment, approach and outcomes undertaken to develop the Concept Plan for the Sawyer Park City Oval Precinct.

Feedback provided from the Stage one engagement has informed and improved the process for the SPCO CRG and community engagement.

The engagement process has endeavoured to:

- Build relationships and trust with the community and key stakeholders;
- Provide an opportunity for any member of the community to provide input;
- Provide an open, transparent process so that the community understands and supports the process;
- Gain diverse community input into a plan for making the riverfront more inviting;
- Clearly communicate opportunities to be engaged and the progress of the project;

These engagement objectives have been met through undertaking the following:

- Establishing a transparent and empowered Community Reference Group (CRG) to guide the project's engagement;
- The CRG agreeing to parameters and principles under which they would operate and undertake the challenge on behalf of the community;
- Encouraging discussion and debate about the project and ideas, negating personal attacks, and setting a tone of constructive input and active listening.

- Follow best practice engagement processes (IAP2 Framework)
- Establish close and frequent feedback loops between Council staff, the Landscape Architects (Tract) and the CRG to adapt and respond to feedback along the design journey.
- Provide open avenues for a wide cross section of the public to participate through constructive feedback loops.

The engagement objectives and processes have shaped how the CRG works. They have work with a comprehensive engagement plan to communicate, test, collate and refine the draft plan for the Precinct, guided by input and community needs. It is recognised that any plan will not satisfy all needs and interests of the community, however if the majority are served well and are generally satisfied and the feedback provided improves the process, approach and plan, the CRG and Council will view this as a way forward to advance plans to the next stage.

Having well scoped and costed projects, tested against community need and demand, guided by land holders, traditional owners and authorities, supports Horsham Rural City to stay strong and agile in a fast moving and highly competitive economy and society.

Taking full advantage of future funding opportunities & private investment that grows business, drives opportunities, improves services and retains and attracts people is key to maintaining and growing our status as a regional city. Forward, strategic and often long term planning, thinking and preparedness, enables our region to not just survive, but flourish.

Establishment of the CRG

The Community Reference Group (CRG) was formed in November 2021 to guide effective engagement for the project, taking on lessons learnt from the Stage One Riverfront Activation process, to ensure the community's voice has been heard and feedback is acknowledged.

The CRG has worked closely with Council staff and the Design consultants- Tract, to develop the draft concept design for the SPCO Precinct. The group have met 15 times since formation. Meetings have been held via Zoom and have generally been of 1.5 hours' duration. The group initially met in the upstairs area of the Horsham City pavillion (home of the Horsham Demons) and then at the Council offices when Covid-19 related restrictions permitted.

Who makes up the CRG?

The CRG includes representatives of key stakeholders located in or adjacent to Sawyer Park and City Oval, as well three community representatives. Members of the CRG were:

- Jeff Both– Horsham Demons Football (Chairperson)
- Pam Clarke- Events Organiser Representative
- Pru Beltz – Horsham Brass Band
- David McDonald- Wimmera Live Steam and Model Engineering Society
- Neville McIntyre- Horsham Rural Ratepayers and Residents
- Don Pirouet – Horsham RSL Sub Branch
- Rod Dumesny – Horsham Demons Netball
- Chris Hopper – Horsham Cricket Association
- Simon Lynch – Horsham Pipe Band

Community representatives

- Bill Stamoudis- Community Representative
- Tony Caccaviello – Community Representative
- Katrina Heard- Community Representative

Council representatives

- Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities & Place
- Carolynne Hamdorf, Manager Arts, Culture & Recreation
- Sue Newall, City to River- Riverfront Precinct- Project Manager
- Mandy Kirsopp- Coordinator Recreation & Open Space
- Dale Schmid- Recreation and Open Space Planning Officer
- Enga Lokey- Recreation and Open Space Project Officer



Note: this photo represents only a small number of the CRG members.

What have they done?

The CRG committed to undertaking a detailed engagement process for the development of a draft Concept Plan for the SPCO precinct, which along with independent costings, recommendations and prioritisation of works was presented to the HRCC Council at the November 2021 meeting for approval and endorsement.

The CRG have spoken to the broader public, canvassed their groups and liaised with the Landscape Architects to develop the draft Concept Plan. The draft Concept Plan has been shared with the broader community for feedback over a 6 week period.

The final draft Concept Plan reflects the interests and needs of current and future residents and visitors to our region. If approved, further detailed design and plans will advance the Concept plan in readiness for seeking funding for staged components of the project.

Additional work and discussions are also required to relocate four groups currently located in the precinct that will be impacted by the proposed precinct work.



Project Timeline

November 2019: Overarching City to River Masterplan adopted

November 2020: Community Reference Group established

December 2020 to May 2021: Community Reference Group develops Concept Plans

June-July 2021: Concept Plans released for feedback

August- Sept- Feedback received, alterations made. Independent costings sought on the plans

October- Concept Plan approved by the CRG, along with any additional recommendations

November 2021- Concept Plans presented to Council for adoption

2022: Detailed designs prepared

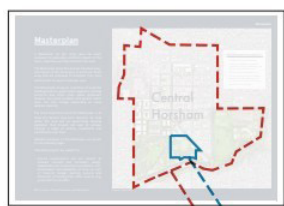
2022: Seek external project funding

Project Timeline

2018-2019

City to River Masterplan developed by HRCC, Urban Enterprise and Tract

Public Comment sought and received on Masterplan

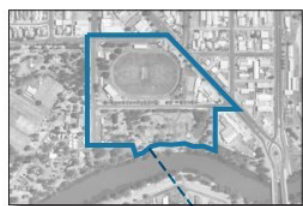


Stage 2 boundary
City to River Masterplan boundary

February-March 2021

Community Reference Group (CRG) for Stage 2 convened

Development of initial concept plans



Stage 2 boundary

April-May 2021

Stage 2 - Draft Concept Plans are progressed considering Community feedback from Masterplan and input from the CRG



Summary of comments received on initial City Oval Design from CRG

June-July 2021

Stage 2 - Draft Concept Plans completed and displayed for Community feedback in June

Feedback incorporated into final designs

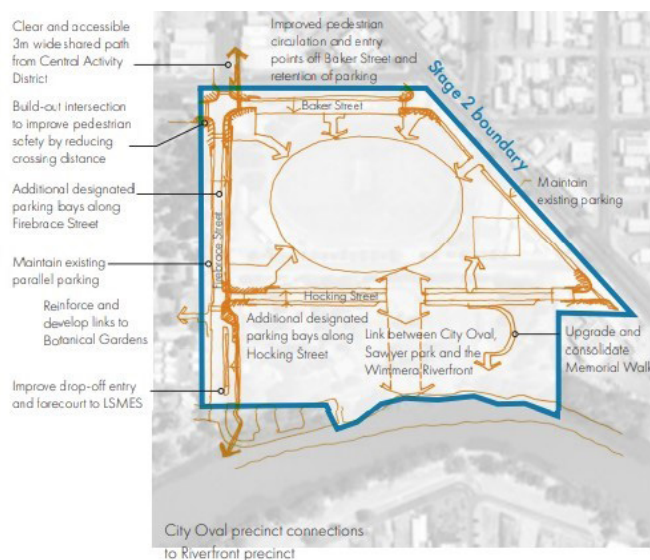


Engagement Approach

The following targeted approach guided the detailed engagement plan for the SPCO precinct, led by the CRG and supported by Council staff.

1. Background and scoping work Dec 2020- Jan 2021

Drawing on and honouring feedback provided through the 2019 City to River Masterplan. Tract Consulting and Council staff provided the CRG with details of submissions provided by the public through the 2019 Masterplan process, which specifically referenced Sawyer Park or the City Oval. Additional responses which referenced the Miniature Rail, were included later to these inputs. This feedback was summarised and informed the first stage of considerations for the Draft Concept Plan. Technical input, including a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP), was undertaken during Stage 1 and included the Sawyer Park and City Oval precinct, in its' scope of works



2. Pre planning consultation undertaken with all located parties across the site, mapping & documenting current needs, facilities' use, frequency of use, opportunitie/issues; Dec 20-Mar 21

Council representatives met with each of the CRG stakeholder groups and individual representatives to discuss needs and desires for the proposed development at the site, identify issues and problems and to collate preferences. These meetings were documented and shared back with each representative group. These sessions were facilitated by Recreation Open Space Council staff and the SPCO Project Manager. Common themes and issues were collated and shared with the CRG & and Landscape Architects during this process. This information was instrumental in formulating the initial Concept Plan.

Consultations were in depth, often extending beyond one hour and involved multiple representatives from each stakeholder group. Groups consulted included:

- Returned Services League
- Horsham Rural City Band
- Horsham Pipe Band
- Community members
- Horsham Regional & Rural Ratepayers Association
- Horsham District Football and Netball Association
- Horsham Cricket Association
- Horsham City Council Parks and Gardens Team
- Events User Groups
- Horsham Youth Council
- Wimmera Live Steam and Model Engineering Society

In total 25 'one on one' meetings were undertaken with community groups invested and impacted by the proposed changes, representing different 14 groups.

3. Ongoing discussions with technical stakeholders and land managers

As the City Oval and Sawyer Park project is close to a culturally sensitive area (The Wimmera River), this project has required input from Traditional Owners represented by Barengi Gadjin Land Council. One meeting was held with BGLC staff in April 2021.

In addition, the site is owned by the Crown, with HRCC vested as the Committee of Management for the Crown. DELWP representatives have sat on the monthly Internal Reference Group for the broader City to River project, which also includes representatives from the Wimmera CMA, Regional Development Victoria and Sport and Recreation Victoria.

The Internal Reference Group have discussed operational, strategic and linkages between all City to River projects.

4. Formal targeted discussions with State funders- Sports & Recreational Victoria-Mar, May 21

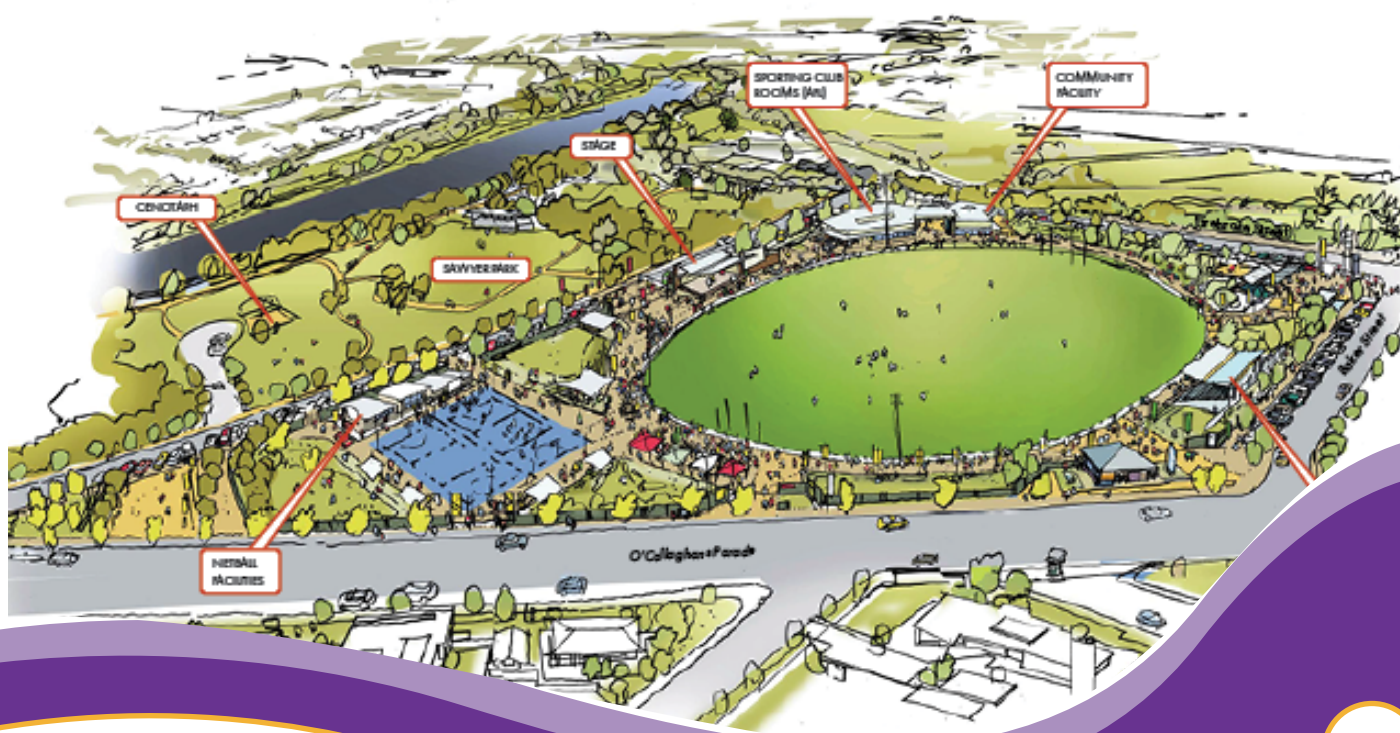
The Project Manager met with representatives from SRV on three occasions to update key staff on the Concept Plan, development, compliance with SRV priorities for funding, ensuring the Draft Plan was covering the principles of access, standards, and participation.

This was in addition to SRV's attendance and representation on the IRG.

5. Discussions with State Sporting Associations Cricket Vic, AFL Football and Netball Vic regarding standards and specifications for new infrastructure according to these sports

Additionally & importantly the sporting infrastructure standards for key sports already in the precinct (AFL Football, Netball and Cricket) required detailed discussions to ensure compliance of new facility standards.

These discussions were held by the Project Manager and shared with the Project Consultant and where relevant the CRG. Six formal meetings were held, with additional and numerous follow up phone calls.



6. Direct face to face feedback collected from the Horsham public, as part of the 'Why we live here Expo' at Jubilee Hall from 24-29 June, (200 attendees)

A large number of projects were underway earlier in the year and a new method was trialled to both inform, and invite feedback from the community. An Expo at Jubilee Hall, located across from the Civic Centre, was held that allowed the community to view all projects in once space. Information was provided as well as the opportunity to provide feedback in innovative, interactive forms. Covid-19 restrictions set the timing of the expo, which was held across five days from Thursday 24 June – Tuesday 29 June (excluding Sunday)



In relation to feedback provided to the SPCO project at the Expo, most people attending the Expo wanted to see the draft plans first hand, in large format and also appreciated being able to speak to staff directly about the project. The Expo provided an opportunity for the public to share their views, both positive and negative and also ask questions. The Expo was a valuable addition to the wider engagement undertaken for the project.

7. Draft Concept Plan shared formally and discussed with 5 groups shown as relocating from the precinct

An important aspect of the draft Concept plan is the potential relocation of groups from the site to enable aspects of the plan to be realised. Numerous face to face meetings have been held with the following groups. These meetings are ongoing and have been intended to share the draft plans, seek feedback and to discuss alternate future locations for these groups. Groups consulted include:

- Horsham Pipe Band,
- Horsham City Brass Band,
- Wimmera AFL,
- Horsham Men's Shed,
- St Johns Ambulance- (this group is already considering independent relocation from the site)

8. Public Consultation of draft Concept Plan

A six week public consultation of the draft concept plan saw 78 formal submissions made.

Copies of the draft Concept Plans were displayed at the Horsham Men's Shed, with copies available at the Brass Band and Pipe Band halls. Copies of the draft Concept Plan were placed on display & available at HRCC offices.

Detailed feedback from the public consultation was provided to the CRG with key changes made to the draft plan as a result

9. Governance

The CRG formally met on 15 occasions over a 12 month period from 21 Nov 2020 - late Nov 2021.

Formal briefings have also been made to the Executive Management Team at Council on 11 occasions and to the Councillor Group 3 times. The draft Concept Plan, costings and recommendations are due for Consideration of Council at their November 2021 meeting.

10. Media

Two radio interviews were provided by the Chair of the CRG

Project updates were provided through the Community Notices Page in local print media. Social Media – 18 Facebook posts and 5200 engagements

Project Webpage developed on the HRCC website



Key themes

Key outcomes identified from the community engagement have informed the draft Concept Plan, these include:

Upgrades to sporting and other facilities

Throughout the City Oval precinct multiple measures are proposed to make the precinct more accessible and to facilitate increased participation in sports across a range of codes. Facilities including;

- Change rooms and toilets,
- community meeting and gathering facilities,
- social spaces, kitchen / canteen,
- storage and plant rooms,
- umpires rooms and First Aid will be accommodated in accordance with Sporting Association Facility Standards and guidelines for local and regional sporting events. (AFL / Netball Association Guidelines and Accessibility Standards)

City Oval

The playing surface will be widened on the short (north and south) axis to enlarge the playing area for both cricket and AFL matches. A new drain and perimeter fences (to oval and site) are proposed to replace existing drainage together with a new broadcast and timekeepers boxes, integrated into the new buildings.

Fencing around the perimeter of the City Oval will be maintained and upgraded to secure the site for licensed events and match days. Entrances into the site will be reconfigured to provide generous openings at all other times to welcome public access through the precinct.

A system of retractable gates will enable easy closure of these entrances for ticketed events. Additional covered viewing areas are proposed, including a new grandstand with ramped access and roofed area.

Grandstand

Following assessment of its' heritage value and limiting accessibility constraints, the Grandstand will be replaced and HRCC will investigate interpretive measures to ensure the historical and social aspects of the grandstand valued by the community are recognised.

Research and oral history from stories and memories associated with the building, together with physical elements from the structure will be meaningfully and respectfully interpreted and integrated into the redevelopment.

- Parks and Gardens maintenance storage, Grounds Keeper Store and access around the site is provided in a new maintenance area under the new Grandstand located on Baker Street. Various upgrades to the oval surrounds including; fencing, drainage and access to the playing field- are also proposed.

Community Facility

Replacing the existing Football Club building, the Community Facility will support a wide range of gatherings. The facility will have the potential to cater for a wide variety of groups and will provide greater access to the precinct for members of the community. Several community groups are currently located on the site and have been contacted to consider appropriate relocation to alternate and workable sites.

Pathways & linkages

Each of the adjoining streets has been adjusted to better define pedestrian and vehicular areas and to provide improved facilities for pedestrian and cycle circulation around and through the precinct. The design of pathways and circulation, grading to suit step free access and provision of adjacent parking, is included to ensure access for all users, regardless of mobility, age or ability. Where steps are included, adjacent graded walkways are proposed.

A shared, 3m wide path for pedestrians and cyclists is proposed along Firebrace Street to the Riverfront, facilitating improved connection between the Central Activities District and the River – a key requirement under the agreed City to River Masterplan.



Next Steps

- *Present the Concept plan with detailed schematics plans to Council for approval within the current term*

The Engagement Report, Schematic plans, costings, first stage options and recommendations to be presented to Council on Nov 2021.

- *If approved, advocate and seek funding for aspects of the projects, ideally as suggested by the CRG, but contingent on funding sources*

If endorsed by Council, the next stage will be to continue to advocate for funding and to review the work of the CRG to inform and guide subsequent precinct planning work.



ENGAGEMENT REPORT

CITY TO RIVER

RELOCATED USER GROUPS

Engagement Report

Horsham Rural City Council is committed to working with the located user groups within the Sawyer Park/City Oval precinct as part of the City to River Stage 2 project to ensure a positive outcome for all groups. Of the existing user groups, three will be required to relocate as there is no provision of space for these groups in the proposed concept plan. These three groups to be relocated are:

1. Horsham Men's Shed
2. Horsham Pipe Band
3. Horsham Rural City Band

Engagement: To Now

Meetings with each of the to-be relocated user groups as part of the City to River Stage 2 project have been held. Discussions have involved the groups clearly defining their needs and wants in a facility with possible sites discussed and viewed. A summation of the discussions to this point with each of the three groups is outlined below.

- 1. Horsham Men's Shed:** Council staff members met on site with Geoff Witmitz from the Wimmera PCP (Program Coordinator) as well as a number of program participants. Facility requirements include workshop space and a meeting/morning tea area. Potential facilities were discussed however there are not any current Council owned facilities that are fit for purpose for this group. Privately owned facility options are being explored as well as the potential for investment in existing or new co-located spaces.

- 2. Horsham Pipe Band:** Meetings with the Horsham Pipe Band have involved both general discussions regarding facility requirements and potential locations as well as facility viewings. The Horsham College Community Pavilion was viewed and may be an option however there are a number of limitations (access, storage, and break out spaces). Roberts Ave Kindergarten site is a suitable location however the facility would require significant investment. This is to be further explored by HRCC and links in to the Horsham CAD Revitalisation Project. Private facility options may be explored.

- 3. Horsham Rural City Band:** The requirements of the City Band are similar the Pipe Band in many ways and much of the discussions and potential locations explored mirror those of the Pipe Band. The City Band has a significant storage and space requirement due to the nature of their operations. Again, the Horsham College Community Pavilion was presented as an option however has a number of limitations. The Roberts Ave Kindergarten site was viewed and is a potential location. Jubilee Hall was viewed and Band representatives expressed a view that this facility would be fit for purpose however challenges include current leases in place at the facility and access requirements.

Engagement: Next

Council is continuing to investigate facility options for each of the three impacted user groups. Through consultation with the groups a number of facility options have been explored and classified as either *suitable*, *unsuitable* or potential with *significant investment required*. Non-Council owned facilities, such as the Horsham College and Federation University, are to be explored.

Two key projects are currently ongoing that will inform the relocation of the three impacted user groups:

- CAD Revitalisation Project: The Roberts Ave Kindergarten and Jubilee Hall are within the scope of this project.
- Community Facility Audit

Additionally, HRCC is committed to ensuring suitable facilities are available for the three relocated groups. Investment into existing facilities or new fit for purpose facilities will be explored. Council has a commitment to maximizing usage of community facilities and shared usage is preferred where appropriate.

Thanks

The work of the individual members of the CRG has been valuable and is greatly appreciated. The skills of the Chair have made this group work cooperatively and to a high level of functionality and in a collegiate way. This bodes well for future CRG models for complex community asset planning.