

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL

GOLDEN PLAINS PLAY SPACE STRATEGY 2019-29



Acknowledgements

This Play Space Strategy was prepared for Golden Plains Shire by @leisure Planners and Jeavons Landscape Architects. Play DMC undertook equipment inspections.

The contribution made by Council staff and the community is appreciated.

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CONTENTS

Summary	3
About this strategy	4
Why Golden Plains provides play spaces	5
What is play?	6
What the community said	7
What we found	8
Physical and social context	9
How will we measure the success of what we have?	10
Vision	11
Goals	12
How will we meet these goals	13
1. A sustainable distribution of built play spaces	14
Maps 1 and 2.	18
2. Residential areas that support play in their design	21
3. Better quality and higher value of play spaces through detailed master planning and site design	23
4. More trees and other natural elements in play space	26
5. More opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to play	28
6. Better maintenance of the current play facilities	30
7. More information about play and where to play in Golden Plains	32
Policy: Locational criteria for future play space developments	34
Policy: Ten design criteria for play spaces	36
Appendix 1. General improvements by location	38
Appendix 2. Other terms used in this Strategy	42

SUMMARY

How the strategy was prepared

This strategy is a 10 year plan (2019-2029).

Council will progressively work towards the actions and goals within the strategy.

This strategy was developed following community consultation that included a community survey, telephone interviews, community and staff workshops, and submissions. An analysis of demographic influences and population projections and a Demand and Consultation findings report was prepared.

An assessment of all public play spaces in Golden Plains Shire was conducted and a Locality Analysis report prepared. Key issues arising from the demand and locality analysis were presented to Council as a Findings and Issues Paper.

This document summarises the key principles endorsed, how these will be addressed and where we should start.

Key directions

Key directions in this strategy include the following:

- Improve the quality, accessibility, diversity, amenity and play and environmental value of play spaces in Golden Plains, over time
- Strategically redevelop 8 key Township parks for play and construct “the Heart” in Bannockburn
- Seek to improve the standard of future urban subdivisions to encourage play, access to nature, independent mobility and liveability
- Prepare a master plan that addresses site constraints, opportunities and the minimum requirements of a play space, before major developments and improvements or replacement works
- Adopt guidelines for design requirements, locational criteria and what should be provided in each hierarchy of play space
- Increase the current budget for play space renewal and capital development in-line with the above recommendations and introduce a more regular program of inspections and maintenance for play spaces, especially skate and BMX facilities
- Seek funds to upgrade all skate parks to increase use and the size of concrete, halt potential undermining, control soil migration and extend opportunities and minimise conflicts between users
- Improve the promotion of play spaces generally within the local community, using a variety of tools to provide information about accessibility, age suitability, context and features in play spaces.



ABOUT THIS STRATEGY

This Strategy

A Play Space Strategy is required to:

- Guide future investment in play spaces in the long term
- Identify priorities, and
- Agree on a classification and future distribution of play spaces within the Golden Plains Shire.

Apart from recognising the essential nature of play, a play space strategy will prioritise and guide the design of places to play as well as provide clear policy directions to aid decision making.

A strategy is required to prepare budgets and determine the scale, quality, design and integration of play equipment into community spaces. With limited resources, Council must make informed decisions to manage competing financial demands.

The strategy will also assist Council in responding to requests from community and other stakeholders to build or maintain play infrastructure, especially in locations that may not be suitable or strategic.

A strategy will also support better outcomes from the land development process in growing residential areas to support play and physical activity and enhanced liveability.



WHY GOLDEN PLAINS PROVIDES PLAY SPACES

Play is essential

Play is essential for developing social, emotional, cognitive and physical skills necessary for children to grow into happy, healthy and resilient adults.

Many children in urban areas have limited space at home to play and are increasingly dependent on public designated spaces for their play needs.

Council provides play spaces because they offer multiple benefits; to the individual playing, families who play together and the broader community.

The benefits

The benefits of the Council providing dedicated play spaces are:

- Expanded opportunities for social connection and inclusion, for residents and users
- Improved health and well-being resulting from outdoor play and physical activity
- Improved liveability, local environmental quality and resident's sense of place
- Opportunities for economic growth resulting from increased visitors to destination play spaces in Golden Plains
- Purpose-built play spaces legitimise play as an activity and act as a catalyst for families to encourage them to go outside and play.

Who play spaces serve

- Through universal design, play spaces can cater for everyone, regardless of age or ability.
- Children are the primary market for play spaces to ensure they have the necessary range of development opportunities. Evidence recommends a greater focus should be given to public spaces that provide not only for these essential play needs but are fun and encourage everyone to play, be physically active, connect socially, interact with nature and learn about the environment.
- Considerable benefits can accrue if adults play with children and their needs can be accommodated in the same space.



WHAT IS PLAY ?

Play is a spontaneous, free, self-generating, fun, exploratory, and intrinsically motivated activity.

Play is a medium for self-expression, learning and interaction and it helps with the development of well-balanced happy individuals who can respond to change.

Play contributes to the mastery of life skills, the development of communication and social skills, and other qualities valued by society, such as problem solving, independence and self-awareness, creativity, spatial knowledge, sharing, self-discipline and the tolerance of others.

Play can occur anywhere, and Council encourages this. However, a particular focus of this strategy is places Council designs or manages specifically for play.



WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

The key findings from the community consultation.



Importance of specific elements

Survey respondents said the most important elements in a play space were:

- Play elements for multiple age groups
- Nature areas/garden area to play in
- Swings/hammocks or rotating items.

Features extremely important for the family included:

- Grassy areas for ball games/kick to kick, and a central social area for all ages with tables

The things considered most important and not well provided were:

- A central social area for all ages with tables
- Play elements that carers/grandparents can play with their children
- Places to ride bikes
- Hard court areas for ball play
- Paved areas for skating and scooters
- Facilities suitable for community events/performance.

When choosing between play space to visit, and following the importance of specific elements, the location of play spaces that meet a families requirements and proximity to home is the next most important factor for Golden Plains residents.

The best things about play spaces

The quality of the natural environment and variety of equipment were equally the best things about play spaces.

Play spaces not well located

Play spaces identified that were not considered to be well located included:

- Bannockburn Lions Park
- Bannockburn Glenmore Estate
- Meredith Pioneer Park
- Bruce's Creek exercise equipment
- Inverleigh Lawson Reserve play space, and
- Scarsdale playground.

What needs to be improved?

Residents said the most improvements are:

- Seats and tables in sheltered/shaded areas
- Shelters from weather/wind
- Paths for wheeled toys, prams and wheelchairs
- Water to drink
- Fenced areas.

What residents would like improved about spaces they use most were the playground equipment, a greater variety of equipment, followed by shade.

Comments on the draft strategy

Comments on the draft strategy reinforced the high value placed on play spaces: as places for families to gather, to get out and walk, get fresh air and exercise and for mental health.

Multiple towns identified the contributions they have made and are making toward the financing and development of community spaces.

Findings from the site inspections

WHAT WE FOUND

All play space in public spaces were inspected as part of this project. The findings from the locality analysis are provided in a separate volume to this strategy.

- Residents of Golden Plains have some spectacular and scenic natural areas that provide rich play opportunities for residents. During the consultation new residents said they don't find it easy to find these interesting spaces or meet other families to play with.
- Many communities are served by shared paths that provide access to community facilities and encourage social connections, but they would offer higher value and amenity if landscaped and tree lined.
- A number of spaces have skate and BMX tracks and hard courts, which are beneficial especially in non urban areas for wheeled activities, and offer challenges for older people. Some are in poor condition and most are not well maintained. More opportunities for older children are needed.
- Some spaces are in beautiful settings, however generally most play spaces don't offer a diversity of opportunities, for different aged children, nor social, physical and environmental elements essential for child development.
- The quality of existing infrastructure and design is lower than it should be to provide necessary attraction, levels of use and play value. A number of towns also have two play spaces which in most cases do not meet the desirable minimum standards.
- Whilst there are some items designed to be inclusive, none were placed so that they can be accessed by someone with a physical disability.
- Play equipment includes only one role play item, few rotating items, no space nets, very little senior climbing and virtually no use of the landscape elements for play. Only a narrow range of play equipment products/suppliers have been used.
- Maintenance levels of play spaces need to be increased at most sites.



Localities in Golden Plains



There are four settlement types in Golden Plains

- 1 urban area (Bannockburn) of 5000+
- 16 small towns of 200-1000+ people.
- Low density residential areas e.g. Batesford
- Other, rural localities.



The one large urban area (Bannockburn) is not central to the Shire. Bannockburn is projected to double in population by 2036. For walkability reasons, more than one play space is required in Bannockburn.



Strategic investment in play infrastructure in a selection of small towns with social/commercial hearts will increase access to quality play spaces, increase use and provide opportunities for programming.

It is not feasible for Council to provide a play space in all localities in the Shire because of the number of settlements and some small populations.



There are a cluster of towns in the north and one in the south east within a short drive of either Geelong or Ballarat.



The consultation found many families travel outside the Shire for play facilities of higher quality than what is reasonable for Golden Plains to provide.

Other wild natural areas and community places to play should be promoted in all communities.

Play spaces relative to the population



There are 52 play spaces including associated skate and BMX facilities. Currently, there are about 100 child residents per play space.

Currently there are 3000 families with dependent children, to grow to 4000.



More teenagers will stay in Bannockburn due to the presence of a school.

Prior to the 19/20 budget, Council spent approximately \$1000 per play space on management. This didn't allow for anything other than urgent repairs.



Additional maintenance staff will be required if a large play space is provided in south and any new play space is provided in the north.



Some play spaces are in very small communities and have relatively low levels of use. A balance needs to be struck between distribution and quality of dedicated play spaces.



Improving the quality and design of play spaces will attract and encourage greater community use and provide greater play value.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE THE SUCCESS?

Three key measures of success proposed for play spaces in Golden Plains Shire are:

1 Play value

The result of elements that together provide social, creative, cognitive and physical developmental benefits to children, and playful opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

2 Quality of landscape elements and site amenity

These aspects provide environmental and play benefits, contribute to the sense of well-being and civic pride, and encourage use.

3 Physical and social accessibility

Accessibility ensures the space can include everyone and is well used. These measures ultimately are reflected in the amount and diversity of use of play spaces.

VISION

Providing better quality and sustainable spaces that encourage play, social connection and physical activity



GOALS

1. A sustainable distribution of built play spaces across Golden Plain Shire
2. Residential areas that support play in their design
3. Better quality and value of play spaces through detailed master planning and site design
4. More trees and other natural elements in play space
5. More opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to play
6. Better maintenance of the current play facilities
7. More information about play and where to play in Golden Plains.



HOW WE WILL MEET THESE GOALS



GOAL 1| A SUSTAINABLE DISTRIBUTION OF BUILT PLAY SPACES

“Equitable access to facilities for all of Golden Plains Shire residents is important– consider distances community members have to travel to access facilities in the major towns.” Resident



GOAL 1 | A SUSTAINABLE DISTRIBUTION OF BUILT PLAY SPACES

Principles

- Play spaces need to be developed and distributed at scale that ensures they are better quality, fit-for-purpose and can be well used and maintained.
- A hierarchy of play spaces is required to reflect equity, in location and population.
- Small towns are better served by one larger centrally located space in social hubs and of higher quality than multiple smaller spaces.
- In rural and low density residential areas where residents have large lots with no central social or commercial hub and are less than ten minutes from another locality, play spaces are not recommended.
- The size and urban nature of Bannockburn warrants one larger more specialised subregional play space to cater to a large number of people living in a more urban area.

How will we achieve these

- Classify spaces as Sub-regional, Township or Local.
- Be selective about which spaces are upgraded. As a priority upgrade eight play spaces to a “Township” level.
- Site these in central, community and commercial hubs, in towns over 500+ people and where they may be used or programmed by schools, community centres etc.
- Seek to replace some lower value or poorly sited play spaces and consolidate multiple sites in the same town, at the end of their functional life and when a larger, central, and better quality township site is developed.
- Advocate for community access to local school play spaces and hard courts.
- Build and activate the proposed Subregional play space in Bannockburn, to include water play and highly accessible features.

Where will we start

1. Select 8 sites to be selectively upgraded as Township spaces (see table over page).
See Map 1 for distribution.
2. Prepare master plans for development sites, using the design criteria.
3. Utilise the Strategy guidelines to access facilities and play opportunities at the different hierarchies as tabulated in the following pages.



GOAL 1. PRIORITY SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Table 1. Play space classifications, purpose, recommended sites and indicative costs of upgrade

Priority development sites

A list of the key development sites for “township” play spaces is provided in the following table with an indication of purpose and indicative costs to upgrade.

Costs are very indicative, as site issues, opportunities and designs will differ.

Note: Major capital improvements will be dependant on external grants.

*Upgrades planned/in progress.

Classification	Recommended Sites	Purpose / Who these serve	Indicative cost
Sub-regional Play Spaces	▪ “The Heart” Bannockburn	A destination play space to serve the play needs of urban residents of Bannockburn and surrounding areas	\$1 million + (with water play)
	▪ Smythesdale	A sub-regional play space to cater for residents of the wider north west area of Golden Plains	\$450,000 (no water play)
Township Play Spaces	▪ Linton ▪ Smythesdale ▪ Napoleons ▪ Dereel ▪ Meredith ▪ Lethbridge ▪ Ross Creek ▪ Teesdale*	Provide one central, better quality play space to serve Townships of 500+ residents with community facilities, and the surrounding localities	\$250,000 upgrade.
Local Play Spaces	▪ One additional in Bannockburn may be required	To provide satellite play spaces to serve areas in a) Bannockburn outside a walkable distance to existing play spaces, or b) smaller communities with existing spaces	\$100,000

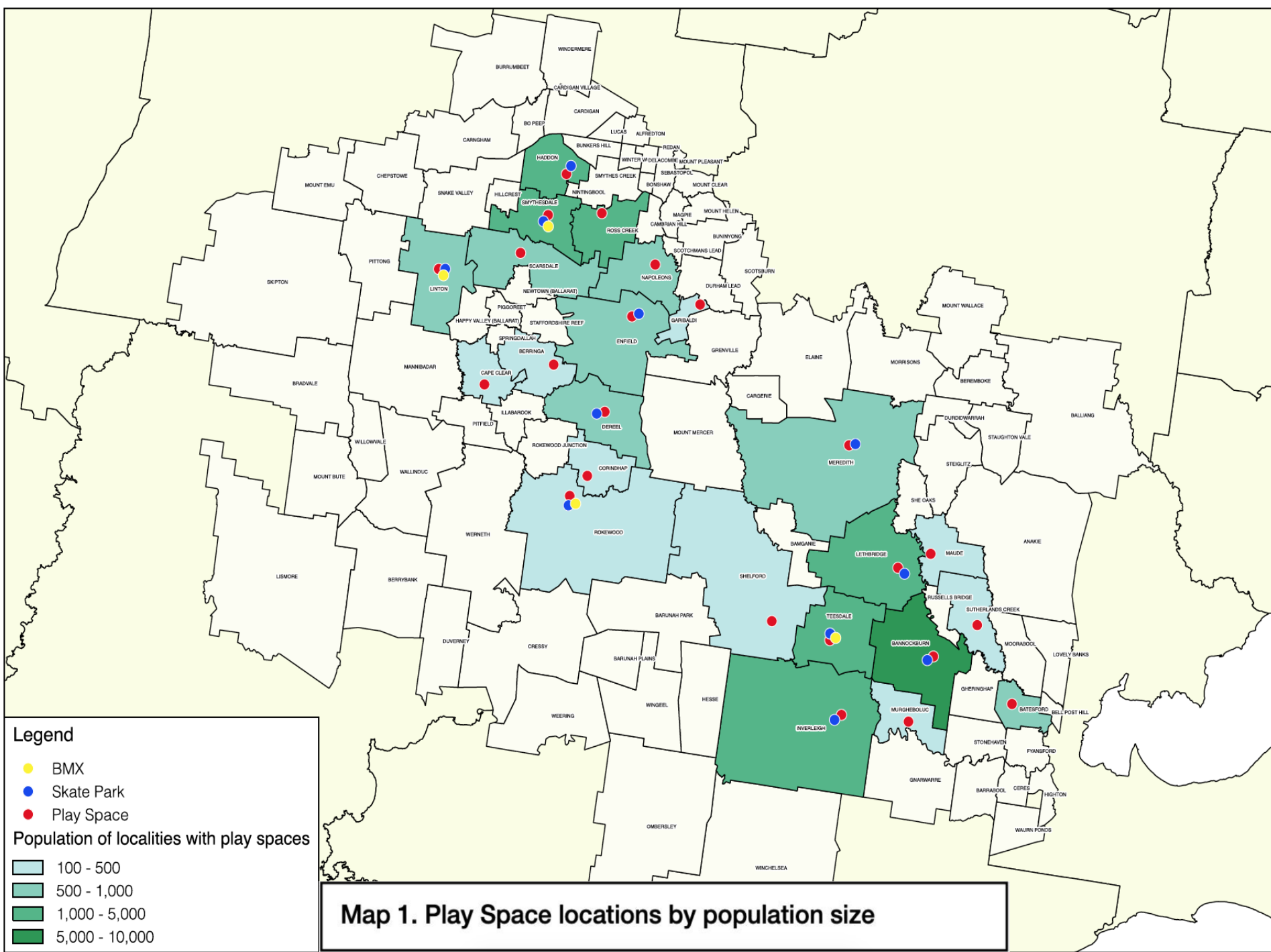
GOAL 1

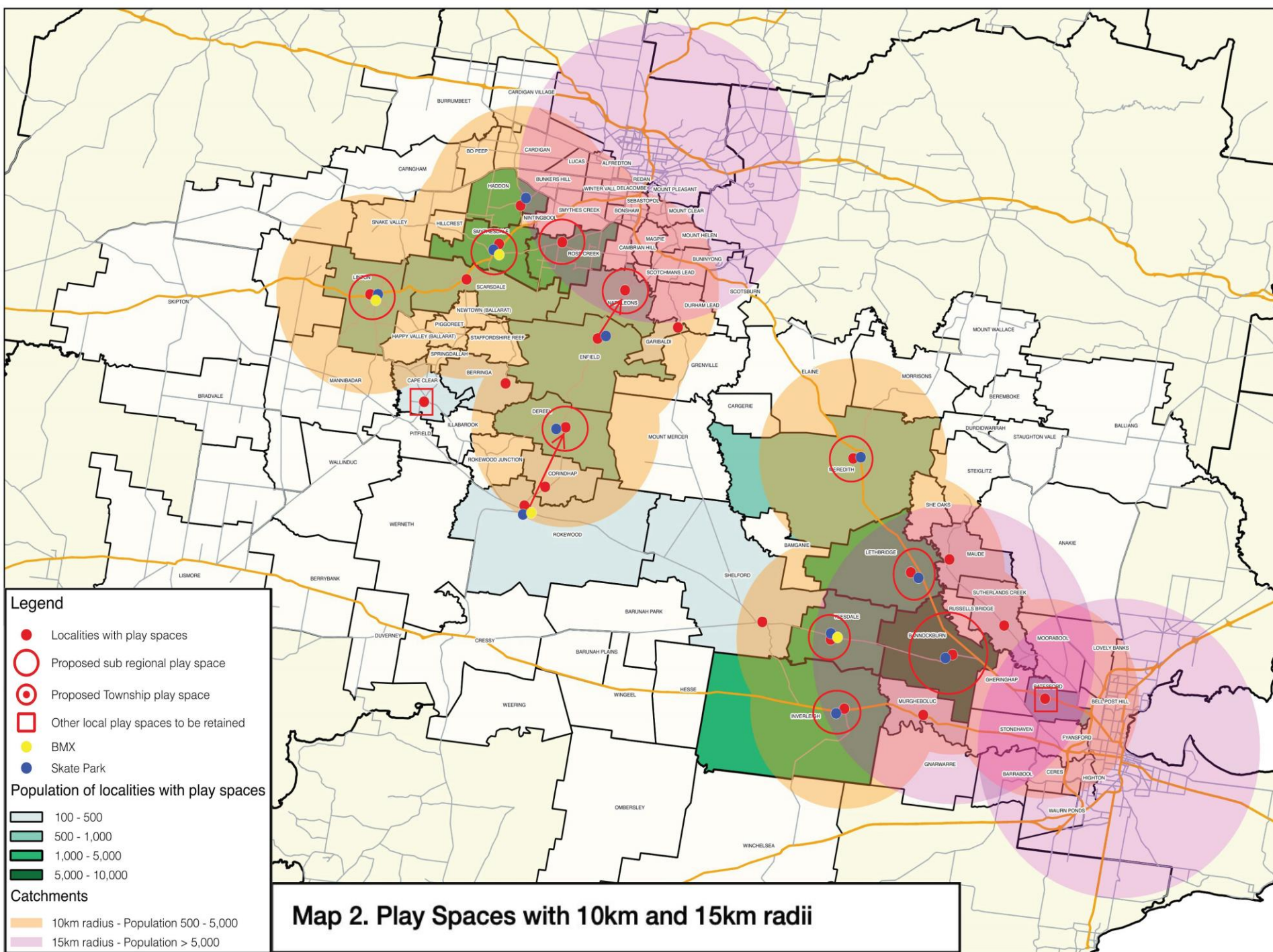
REPLACEMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

The community were asked “Are there any play spaces in parks in Golden Plains that are of low value to the community and should be relocated to a better site”. Several sites were identified as not being well sited or not being of a high quality. Multiple sites were also identified in some towns, where one better quality play space is preferred over two lesser quality sites. Following the development of flagship sites, some equipment could be moved to a better location or not replaced at the end of their life.

It is recommended that a policy be developed to inform decision making regarding the replacement or redevelopment of play spaces in Golden Plains and that Council ultimately determine what action is when a play space is no longer fit for purpose.







GOAL 1 HIERARCHY Of PLAY SPACES

Table 2. Play space classification and guide to provision standards: Facilities, Play elements and Access

FACILITIES Hierarchy	Accessible seating and tables	Drinking Water	Lighting	Fences	Built Shade / Shelter	Toilet	BBQ	Bins	Name + directional signs	Skateable surface	Hard court	Kick to Kick / goals	Trees
Township	√	X	○	○	○	C	○	○	√	○	○	X	√
Local	√	○	○	○	○	X	○	○	√	○	○	√	√
Sub-Regional	√	√	√	○	√	√	√	√	√	○*	√*	√	√

PLAY ELEMENTS Hierarchy	Social elements ♦	Environmental elements ⚙	Loose materials ✚	Swinging	Rotating / rocking	Fine motor/ Interactive items	Preschool, school and teen elements	Opportunities for adult and child interaction	Climbing
Township	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Local	√	√	○	√	√	√	√	√	√
Sub-Regional	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

ACCESS Hierarchy	Car parking immediately adjacent	Accessible car space	Bicycle parking	Accessible path of travel into play space from footpath	Site served by shared trail	Park perimeter path	Accessible path to seating, shade and equipment
Township	○	○	○	√	√	○	√
Local Urban	√	√	○	√	○	√	√
Sub-Regional	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

Legend: X not required. ○ optional. C can be provided in colocated facilities. √ required.
*Unless dedicated facilities are available elsewhere

♦ See (C) and ⚙ see (B) in Goal 7. Policy: Ten design criteria for play space design
✚ See Appendix 2. Other terms used in this plan.

GOAL 2 | RESIDENTIAL AREAS THAT SUPPORT PLAY IN THEIR DESIGN

Residential design can bring nature and play opportunities to children where they live; enhance independent mobility, social interaction and liveability and motivate more people to exercise. In the process, the heat island effect of a paved urban area can be reduced, and the rural character of Golden Plains retained.



GOAL 2 | RESIDENTIAL AREAS THAT SUPPORT PLAY IN THEIR DESIGN

Principles

- Street design that is permeable, easy to navigate and that promotes people being on the street, walking and playing, should be encouraged.
- Street trees and paths make spaces more playful (as trees provide stimuli such as living things, loose materials, light and shade, seasonal variation and paths provide for wheeled equipment, a canvas to draw and for allow for ball play) and these make better places for walking, cycling, wheeled toys and mobility devices.
- Residential design should bring nature and play opportunities to children; encourage independent mobility, physical activity, social interaction and enhance liveability. In the process, the heat island effect of a paved urban area can be reduced, and the landscape character of Golden Plains retained.
- Planning should focus on parks for play where play elements are not separate from the design of a park or open space.
- More character and flexibility in the public realm creates space and fine-grained environmental opportunities for play.

How will we achieve this

- Having a greater focus on delivering a higher standard of residential subdivision to create more play opportunities and enhance liveability.
- Ensure future street design makes it easy to navigate on foot or by bike; encourages social interactions and people to be on the street, to walk and play.
- Develop trails as green, playful corridors that invite people and encourage play.
- Plan and design play spaces so as to complement the nature and scale of the setting and opportunities freely available in that locality.
- Ensure play spaces are looked over by a dwelling or community facilities across a road and on at least three sides.
- Ensure adequate public space is provided in walking distance of homes for social / family recreation, trails and environmental opportunities.
- Landscape main streets to feature street trees and suitable paths for walking, wheeled toys, cycling and mobility devices.

Where will we start

1. Assess and refine plans for areas of growth around Bannockburn.
2. Plant shared path corridors and streetscapes.
3. Consider the need for additional social play space to serve areas outside walking distance from a play space in Bannockburn.
4. Ensure new parks and play spaces provided in residential areas meet the location, siting and design requirements as outlined in this strategy.
5. Advocate for opportunities for gardening, making and fixing things and playing in water and dirt to be provided in some form, in public or semi-public or educational settings.
6. Provide more intense nature based or garden settings in any higher density residential developments to complement the hard nature of the environment and encourage play around dwellings.

GOAL 3| BETTER QUALITY AND HIGHER VALUE PLAY SPACES THROUGH DETAILED MASTER PLANNING AND SITE DESIGN

“Don’t make all play spaces the same. Have a diversity of items at each so people can go to different places for different things.” Resident

GOAL 3| BETTER QUALITY AND HIGHER VALUE PLAY SPACES- THROUGH DETAILED MASTER PLANNING AND SITE DESIGN

Principles

- Play space master plans ensure design and budgeting for a good balance of skill and challenge, higher play value and amenity, conscious inclusion of all age groups, types of play and people of all abilities, and a good understanding of any site constraints before development.
- Play spaces should be highly social spaces.
- Diversity is essential within each play space and across those in a local area-to cater for different ages, abilities, backgrounds and interests.
- Complexity can be built into the design to engage users longer.
- All spaces will be designed to:
 - a) Include people with a range of abilities
 - b) Serve multiple age groups, and
 - c) Provide social, physical and environmental elements.

How will we achieve these

- Master plans should precede any design or development of a play space, in order to ensure play spaces are well sited, provide high play value, can be maintained cost effectively, are inclusive and can be added to when funds become available.
- Work closely with the community and key stakeholders to master plan new play spaces.
- Adopt the simple siting and design criteria for play spaces provided.
- Consider a minimum scale play space policy-to ensure all design criteria are met.
- Use landscape architects experienced in play space design, to prepare play space master plans and design concepts.
- Address drainage, earth works, paths and basic landscaping before any equipment is installed.
- Select suitable sites that can be fenced.
- Provide permanent shade from shelters and canopy trees.
- Ensure places and spaces are physically accessible.
- Encourage parent/ child interactions.
- Build on unique qualities of each place.

Where will we start

1. Commence master planning for the Township play spaces.
2. Use the 10 design criteria provided, in play space briefs for new developments.
3. Select play elements to be included based on play value (social +physical + environmental).
4. Consider shared use arrangements with schools for hard courts.

GOAL 3| BETTER QUALITY AND HIGHER VALUE OF PLAY SPACES THROUGH MASTER PLANNING AND SITE DESIGN (SKATE AND BMX FACILITIES)

Skate and BMX facilities provide important opportunities for exercise and challenge. They add diversity and activities to rural areas where hard surfaces are often limited.

Principles

Skate facilities should be located in easily accessible, social and prominent locations and adjacent to sports facilities.

Sites for skating should be designed and perceived as safe and fun places for everyone.

Sealed shared path access should be provided to all skate facilities. These will:

- Prolong the life of facilities by minimising debris and grit migrating onto skate surfaces
- Minimise the cost of cleaning and encourage riders with better quality equipment to use the facilities
- Good sight lines and busy locations are essential for skating and BMX facilities as these activities can be high risk.

How will we achieve these

- Provide a larger skate park and potentially a BMX dirt jump area with more graded challenges in Bannockburn. This will address the increasing number of older children, add diversity to the existing offer and minimise potential conflicts.
- Provide some separation between skating and dirt tracks as skate and roller sports need clean and dry surfaces without loose materials on them.
- Provide BMX tracks in shaded areas, so the lips of the transitions don't dry out easily and crumble.
- Minimise cross movement of bikes and discourage pedestrians and dogs from using them.

Where will we start?

1. Extend the footprint around skate parks to minimise risk of undermining, provide a buffer from migrating soil and extend the range of opportunities.
2. Seek partner support for programming activities and competitions in skate parks.

GOAL 4| MORE TREES AND NATURAL ELEMENTS IN PLAY SPACES

For young children, nature encourages experimentation and provides a source of inspiration and learning about the natural world". Resident



GOAL 4| MORE TREES AND NATURAL ELEMENTS IN PLAY SPACES

Principles

- Access to nature and environmental stimuli provide an important source of inspiration, loose materials (ie leaf litter, bark, flowers) and opportunities for creative play.
- More natural elements in play spaces will promote environmental education, interaction and an attachment to a resident's surroundings.
- Trees and a diversity of landscape elements in play spaces and along trails will encourage use, increase aesthetics, play value and offer restorative qualities important to liveability and well being.
- The rich tapestry of experiences in nature that young people can discover for themselves or with their families in Golden Plains Shire should be promoted as play experiences.
- In the context of the Shire's relatively rural nature and the need to complement the play opportunities children have in their local areas, specific "nature play" (only) spaces as such, are not required.

How will we achieve these

- Include loose materials, open ended and natural play elements in all play spaces. See Appendix 2. for these terms.
- Include more sensory elements, flowering plants, trees and environmental activities in play space design, in balance with other facilities and hard surfaces for play.
- Ensure budgets allow for trees and environmental elements in all play spaces, along with social elements and physical challenges.
- Landscape and plant trees along shared trail corridors.
- Utilise specimen trees for shade and landscape character in play spaces.
- In health and community hubs, consider providing edible landscapes and horticultural plots that can provide programmable options.

Where will we start

1. Budget for a tree planting program for all play spaces and along trails.
2. Include natural elements as a priority in the master planning of Township play spaces.
3. Choose future park and play sites that have established vegetation and landscape features or character, or introduce these into design.
4. Choose vegetation in public spaces that is hardy and robust, including trees that can be climbed.

GOAL 5| MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES TO PLAY

“Choose accessible for all options where possible and make sure all people can get to them”. Resident



GOAL 5| MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES TO PLAY

Principles

- All play spaces can accommodate people with a disability through careful and universal design, choice and placement of items, suitable surfaces, inclusion of paths and central social areas.
- Opportunities for all users to interact and for children to play and socialise alongside other children are highly beneficial.
- Spaces with integrated elements suited to multiple age groups, as well as fenced spaces and tables and seats assist carers and families with multiple children.
- A diversity of opportunities available in play spaces mean that more people of different ages, abilities, backgrounds and interests are likely to find things that they enjoy seeing and using, and they will stay longer.
- Interactive and role play items (steering wheels, levers, sand, water, shops etc.,) that users can access from a mobility device or wheelchair encourage play between users and provide challenge and engagement.

How will we achieve these

- Provide a standard range of simple play experiences that are also accessible. For example: swinging, rocking, rotating, elevated items, access a cubby or shop underneath a deck, elements such as speaking tubes, plant material, steering wheels and other movable and interactive items accessible from a chair.
- Choose features that include everyone in play spaces such as: an accessible paths system with safe surfaces, rails on stairs, higher seating with backs and arms, shelter/shade and an accessible central area with group seating and tables.
- Develop sub-regional and township play spaces to be more accessible and include more specific access requirements and supports, than local spaces.
- Provide information about which play spaces have fences and accessible items and what age groups are catered for in each space.

Where will we start

1. Develop the Heart and master plan the township play spaces, ensuring universal design and high levels of accessibility and inclusion in these developments.
2. Progressively provide accessible paths into all parks from adjacent infrastructure and include paths around all new play spaces.
3. Ensure surfaces of paths are of stable and compacted materials to enable safe walking and wheeling (sealed or unsealed paths).

GOAL 6| BETTER MAINTENANCE OF THE CURRENT PLAY FACILITIES

*“More maintenance of existing play / facilities. There is no point in building a new playground if it will become unsafe or unusable because it isn't maintained”.
Resident*



GOAL 6| BETTER MAINTENANCE OF THE CURRENT PLAY FACILITIES

Principles

- Management of play spaces requires funds for:
 - Safety inspections and the associated reporting
 - Works to address safety issues and wear and tear
 - Capital renewal of items
 - Establishment and management of vegetation.
- When equipment reaches the end of its life, design, access, connectivity and co-location opportunities should be assessed before play equipment is replaced “like for like.”
- The safety of skateboard and BMX riders will be protected by adequately maintaining the integrity and condition of surfaces and the shape of jumps.
- More integrated management of play spaces in children’s centres and those in public open space is desirable.
- Council values community ownership of play spaces and resident’s engagement in the ongoing development and maintenance of play spaces.
- Higher quality play spaces with more environmental elements require more intensive management.

How will we achieve these

- Provide a significant increase to annual play space maintenance and capital improvement budgets.
- Introduce a regular cleaning, condition assessment and maintenance program for skate and BMX parks.
- Seal additional space around skate parks, to extend challenges and minimise undermining and soil migrating onto the skateable surfaces.
- Ensure design, connectivity and co-location opportunities and ability to improve access and inclusion are considered when an item reaches the end of its life, and before it is simply replaced.
- Consider assessing centre based play spaces and reviewing the benefits of managing these in conjunction with public play spaces.

Where will we start

1. Budget \$150,000 a year for the maintenance of play spaces and \$150,000 for capital items.
2. Utilise the Locality Analysis to incrementally upgrade selective existing play spaces.
3. Seek a grant to upgrade the concrete aprons at all skate parks.
4. Encourage users to feel a greater ownership of local play spaces and identify the need for repairs.
5. Prepare a policy about replacement of play spaces at ‘end of life’.

GOAL 7| MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PLAY AND WHERE TO PLAY

“Encourage people to explore and discover the “hidden gems” of Golden Plains; it is great for nature and wild play”. Resident



GOAL 7| MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PLAY AND WHERE TO PLAY

Principles

- Encouraging parents to allow their children to interact with nature, get dirty, dig, climb and use the loose material in parks will provide additional development opportunities for children.
- Clear way of finding more information about the location of play spaces, signage, paths and shade for example will provide better choices for users and enable people to better match their needs.
- Accurate information about what different play spaces offer will assist those who rely on accessible play spaces for every day needs.
- Council values the contribution of the community in the planning and management of play spaces.
- Local users and residents are the eyes and ears of local spaces and can contribute to the Council being more responsive to information, damage and repair needs.

How will we achieve these

- Promote details of each play space, such as accessibility specific features, shade, trail connections, fencing and access to water, BBQ and shelters etc.,
- Include clear way finding in play space design that facilitates people with low vision moving around play spaces and using equipment safely.
- Seek users' feedback on play spaces and their condition, though signage in the park to enable a quick response to damage, understand specific users' wants and encourage greater community involvement.
- Promote local natural features and regional open spaces to residents.
- Encourage parents to allow their children to get dirty, dig, climb onto logs and play in nature and the loose material in parks.
- Promote the value of nature to children and how parents can encourage children to play outdoors and connect with nature.

Where will we start

1. Provide a description of each play space on Council's website.
2. Promote the value of play and nature through Council's information channels.
3. Encourage residents to report damage and repair needs in play spaces.

GOAL 7. Policy: **Locational criteria for future play space developments**

Criteria	Standard
1. Location: Population served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 500 people in the town (and centralised community or commercial hub). Prioritise townships where some population growth is projected.
2. Location: Settlement types	<p>In localities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where residents primarily live in typical urban residential house lots or smaller, and That have a social heart where the community gathers e.g. a community centre/hall, shop, sports reserve, or school etc.
3. Location: Distribution / accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can service smaller communities with 10-15 minutes drive and on the way to a bigger centre – ie if travelling to place of school or work. Town is on the highway / main road and on the way to a bigger centre – ie direction of traveling to place of school or work.
4. Location: Service/ Programmable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a town has a school, hall, community centre or Council facility, kindergarten or shop adjacent, opportunities may arise for partnerships / programs, and for the play space to add to the attraction of available facilities and to increase its use.
5. Capability and suitability to develop an existing play space for higher play value	<p>The priority to develop one play space over another, should consider the site's potential (land capability) and suitability of the site to develop to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve multiple small localities within about 10 -15 minutes drive. Replace multiple play spaces in that town (i.e. to provide higher social/play value, greater use and hence a better return on further investment in play provision and maintenance).
6. Number of play spaces per town (excluding schools and play centres)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In relatively small localities under 1000 people, it is highly recommended that the focus be on one main higher quality play space, rather than multiple smaller ones of lesser quality Council could proportionately spend more on one space in a town and maintain it to a higher quality than multiple spaces. In towns that are urban and over 5000 people, it would be expected that there is be one subregional play space <u>and</u> social or environmental infrastructure suitable for play within approximately 400m without crossing a major road. Bannockburn for example will need play spaces equitably distributed across the urban area.

GOAL 7. Policy: **Locational criteria for future play space developments (cont'd)**

Criteria	Standard
7. Siting criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a prominent, easily accessible and social hub / gathering place. • Where visitors passing through may easily find it. • Accessible by a shared path. • Desirably, one play space in a town should be sited adjacent to an existing public toilet (ie in an associated recreation reserve, hall, centre etc.,) • If multiple play spaces exist in a township, at least one has some form of barrier / fence to any major road. • Ability to develop / or has an existing social / picnic or sport elements adjacent or in conjunction with. Adjacent to any hard court for social use. • Public land use / or a road on a minimum of two sides (preferably three sides. Good site lines into and out of the space. Passive surveillance and dwellings overlooking the space from across the road (where the play space is a stand-alone park). • Site that is public land, is well drained (or funds available to drain) and doesn't have geotechnical or planning issues. • Has existing trees and natural features that can be included in the space.

GOAL 7. Policy: Ten design criteria for play space design

Use these criteria in briefs for master planning, design and renewals.

A: Play value	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A size/ scale that is attractive for people to want to use the space regularly and stay more than a few minutes. This requires: A choice of play elements/activities that can be used by people from multiple age groups including pre-school, primary and secondary school aged children and older family members. 2. Opportunities for physical activity, climbing and various forms of movement, especially swinging, rotating or rocking. 3. Opportunities for fine motor skill interaction with hands or feet- ie in loose materials, water, or a steering wheel, levers, buttons, etc., reachable from a wheelchair or pram, and, or social/role play elements and components that encourage imagination/fantasy or role play, e.g., shop counter, cubby etc., 	C: Social and physical access and inclusion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. A path that provides access from the street, connects to the space to adjacent infrastructure and an internal path system with a suitable surface and grade that connects and enables access to different play elements and social infrastructure, toilets etc. 10. Features which encourage social interaction and active engagement by people of all ages. A central physically accessible social space including tables and seats where people feel close to the action. Opportunities for group play and social interaction. Items that hold or attract multiple children, or side by side items, (e.g. music items, shops) that are designed to include children with a disability in play activities. Features and facilities that cater well to different age groups, older care givers or family members and people with a disability, such as different places to sit together, including some higher seats with backs and arms, shelter and shade, and adequate space to move between facilities and be able to use tables, shelters and BBQs.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Shade and other trees for amenity value. 5. An open area of lawn adjacent to the play area (not separated from any play equipment by a fence). 6. Other vegetation and natural elements selected for play value, including landform changes, elements that extend obvious play opportunities beyond equipment, logs or timber rounds for stepping, flowering plants, loose natural materials and those that encourage creative/sensory play. 7. Careful placement of all items in an integrated way, that extends play between equipment and other features. 8. One or more features that create a distinctive character to the space. These might include specimen trees, for example. <p>Note: depending on the site and location; earthworks, drainage, a major shelter, lighting etc., may be required.</p>		

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 | General improvements by location
- Appendix 2 | Other terms used in this plan
- Appendix 3 | Replacement or Redevelopment Options

APP 1 | GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS BY LOCATION

Some notes follow about improvements that could be made at existing play spaces, if they are to be retained. See table 3. **Possible play space replacements or redevelopment options.** A detailed analysis of each space is provided in the separate Locality Analysis report.

Bannockburn

Bannockburn needs a much broader range of types of play opportunities. Most playgrounds are junior decks with slides and very basic climbing or stepping.

Wheelchair accessible and sensory play opportunities are needed, more trees and natural elements and more maintenance.

- Council is currently progressing the development of the 'Heart.'
- Review the location of Lions Park following the development of the 'Heart' as families suggested is not within a safe walkable distance of residences.
- Plan for the development of an additional play space in the town as it grows.
- Landscape the trail to the secondary school.
- Provide additional play elements of interest to older children in the town.
- Provide paths around larger reserves and more path access within parks to social and play elements.

- Reposition the recreation reserve play space, *redesign* with a path connection; trees and planting, seats and open-ended play. Include some loose materials and or sand with big logs, rocks and ground level, accessible elements. Remove the gravel apron and de-compact the soil. Design a strong row of shade trees around the space. Add addition swinging rotating items.
- Seal additional space around the skate park, and upgrade to extend challenges.
- Upgrade the Glenmore estate space if retained, by adding swinging and environmental elements and space for kick to kick.
- Introduce a regular maintenance program for the skate and play spaces.

Cape Clear / Illabarook / Rokewood Junction

- Seek to make some aspect of the ship at Cape Clear accessible, so children with a disability could participate in the role play/social play.
- Investigate whether it is possible to link the under-deck cubby to an accessible route or even link a ramp to the mid deck level.

Dereel

- Construct a path connecting all the facilities to make access easier.
- Undertake some minor additions to extend the play value of the play space.
- Introduce a regular cleaning and maintenance program for both the BMX track and skate park.
- Provide additional planting.

Enfield/ Napoleons

- Undertake minor changes to reflect the bush setting and improve access and play value at the Enfield play space and skate / BMX park:
- Add a path link from picnic facilities and car park to the hard court and skate park.
- Extend the concrete pad, introduce a regular cleaning and maintenance program for the BMX track and skate park.
- Provide stepping logs, modify equipment to be accessible and cater for additional ages.

APP 1 | GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS BY LOCATION (cont'd)

Enfield/ Napoleons

Address the drainage issues at Napoleons play space. This site is important as a community focus.

Upgrade the landscape and prepare a plan to upgrade access and amenity, repair damaged elements and add character and play value.

Rokewood / Corindhap

If possible, modify the fence at the Rokewood play space.

- Add a carousel, some large rocks or similar for stepping, seating and play.
- Plant some large beautiful shade trees and rocks for stepping and seating.
- Reform the BMX jumps, separate and a desirable distance from skate park.
- Extend the concrete around the skate park to extend opportunities for scooters etc.,

Shelford

When this play equipment is due for replacement, relocate in the reserve to a more amenable, accessible location with a better relationship to the toilets and picnic shelter. Include a variety of activities for a range of age groups and abilities.

Ensure any equipment is different from Teesdale.

Inverleigh

Construct one central play space in a prominent location, instead of multiple small spaces.

- Master Plan the development site in accordance with the design criteria in this report, and ensure a high degree of accessibility and social and environmental elements are provided.
- Add an access path to the skate park and consider providing a hard court.
- Introduce a regular cleaning and maintenance program for both the BMX track and skate park.
- Add a compacted gravel path linking the shelter to the picnic table. Make the picnic table accessible. Provide a sign to toilets across the highway.
- Determine the future of Lawson Reserve as a play space.

Lethbridge

- Prepare a master plan for the space with a path system linking all facilities.
- Add play elements including a new item that children could use from a wheelchair.
- Add a few open-ended elements such as a big log or rocks for climbing and accessible elements, and bring the spring see saw into the play space.
- Introduce a regular cleaning and maintenance program for the skate park.
- Stabilise the skate park surrounds and address poor drainage.

Meredith

- Review the layout and design details of whole play space at Pioneer Park, the design and location of paths, accessible surfaces and impact areas- and consider re siting and or redevelopment.
- Relocate the basketball ring and extend the concrete pad at the skate park to the other side of the hit up wall.
- Introduce a regular cleaning and maintenance program for the skate park.

APP 1 | GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS BY LOCATION (cont'd)

Teesdale

- Don Wallace Reserve- extend the fence line and add a ground level wheelchair accessible cubby and interactive panels, trees, seats and a planted small-scale space for play.
- Eventually seek to consolidate play equipment between Turtle Bend and Bridge Reserve. These spaces should be master planned with different play opportunities. Ensure the special character of the place is preserved.
- Prepare a sketch master plan for Turtle Bend play space to improve the layout, circulation, location of picnic facilities, furniture and play opportunities, add natural elements, resize the wall.
- Add an accessible cubby, stepping stones and a construction zone where children can build their own cubbies.
- Separate vehicles from the skate park.
- Seal the surrounds of the skate park to stop erosion and limit soil from transitioning onto the park.
- Regrade the BMX jumps track and introduce a regular cleaning and maintenance program for the BMX and skate park.

Haddon

- Create a more interesting playful landscape at Centenary Park that encourages creative play.
- Seal an additional area around the skate park to reduce erosion, minimise soil moving onto the park and the undermining of the concrete, consider adding additional ball courts.
- Introduce a regular cleaning and maintenance program for the skate park.
- If the recreation reserve play space is further developed, consider: adding imaginative play and accessible activities such as a ground level cubby or role play item and paths. Integrate the tunnel into the mulch area with fall zones. Investigate options to upgrade the picnic shelters as funds become available. Add junior bars and a circuit of balancing logs, stepping stones etc.

Scarsdale

- Plant an avenue of trees to form an impressive entry into Scarsdale. Consider divesting the play equipment that appears to have little use and invest more in a larger, better play space in another nearby township that would provide an outing.

Linton

- Stabilise the slope between the rail trail and the skate park and extend the concrete footprint of the skate park.
- Regrade the jumps on the BMX track.
- Create a better connection and path between tables and seats with the BBQ, and between play, sport and trail infrastructure.
- Introduce a regular cleaning and maintenance program for the BMX track and skate park.
- Redevelop the play space, adding a more interesting swing such as a bird's nest swing and possibly even a space net climber.

APP 1 | GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS BY LOCATION (cont'd)

Smythesdale

- Select a central new play space site in Smythesdale in a prominent, focal location and master plan to offer some social amenities, cater for a greater range of age groups, develop as a more complex space with additional planting, offer accessible activities and provide for a range of types of play.
- Address drainage
- Introduce a regular cleaning and maintenance program for both the BMX track and skate park.
- Continue to regularly inspect and maintain the BMX track and skate park
- In future, consider the need for a subregional play space in this area to enhance liveability and service the wider community in the north of the Shire.

Berringa, Garibaldi, Murgheboluc, Sutherlands Creek

Focus on upgrading an alternative site in a nearby township and decommission play spaces in these locations. If play spaces in the following localities are retained, the following incremental improvements would be required.

Murgheboluc

- Consider divesting this space that doesn't appear to be used.

Berringa

- Address the drainage problem and provide adequate surfaces under the swing.
- Provide a simple plan to increase the play value of a site with landscaping.

Garibaldi

- Undertake maintenance, drainage works and a plan for access.
- Introduce additional features at ground level, and an accessible cubby with the theme of the big old pine trees.

Ross Creek

- Improve the play space to make it more inclusive and functional. Add more challenging items for older children and ground level features that could be used from a wheelchair.

Sutherlands Creek

- Remove the slide and rusting steel tunnel
- Redesign around a cubby/storage for loose play materials including sand, retain a swing, and add an accessible ground level play deck.

APP 2 | OTHER TERMS USED IN THIS PLAN

Loose materials:

These are materials that children can manipulate and use in their play – for example: sand, water, dirt, pieces of wood and plant materials that are provided and or can be picked or gathered by children such as leaves, seed pods, flowers and bark.

Loose materials may also include buckets and objects that are provided to facilitate play.

Nature play space:

Nature play spaces are purpose-designed spaces primarily of natural elements (such as land form, flowering plants, other vegetation and plant materials; sand, boulders, logs, rocks, branches and soil) designed and placed to create play value in an urban environment. These are considered separate to the need to include such elements in conjunction with other equipment and infrastructure in all play spaces.

Wild play:

The term wild play is used to refer to parks and natural areas used for, but not specifically designed for play.

