

Draft Recreation, Open space and Sport Strategy 2026–2036



The Alexandrina Council and its communities acknowledge the Ngarrindjeri, Peramangk and Kurna people as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters of our Council district.



Image: Ngarrindjeri artist Cedric Varcoe with his Lakinyeri sculpture at Goolwa Beach

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Introduction

Recreation, open space and sport are central to the lifestyle and wellbeing of the Alexandrina community.

Our parks, natural landscapes, sporting facilities and recreational spaces provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to be active, connect with others and enjoy our beautiful environment. These spaces foster community connection, support healthy lifestyles and help make Alexandrina Council a vibrant place to live, work and visit.

This Draft Recreation, Open space and Sport Strategy (ROSS) recognises the different but complementary roles of recreation, open space and sport, noting the following:

- **Recreation** planning is informed by community input, participation data, and emerging trends at both national and local levels. These insights guide planning for current and future facility needs, as well as unstructured activities like walking or running on shared-use paths and using wheeled equipment at skate or bike parks.
- **Open space** planning is guided by the prioritisation of usable land parcels, categorised by function and hierarchy, alongside community feedback that informs service levels and shapes the inclusion of diverse features such as playgrounds, landscaped areas, and natural or conservation environments.
- **Sport** planning draws on sporting club and organisation feedback, participation data, national benchmarks, and local, national and international trends to inform current and future provision requirements. This includes structured and organised, club-based activities supported by facilities such as ovals, greens, swimming pools, courts, sports lighting and change rooms.



The intent of the ROSS is to establish clear functions, hierarchies and service levels to guide the planning, provision, maintenance and renewal of these spaces.

- For recreation, the priority is creating accessible, safe, and appealing spaces that encourage participation and lifelong activity, while assisting clubs in building capacity and supporting community needs.
- For open space, this means ensuring intergenerational access, quality maintenance, and amenities that support community use.
- For structured sport, it involves providing and upgrading facilities that meet the needs of clubs, competitions and future growth.

This strategy will be instrumental in shaping future development planning and asset management decisions, ensuring the sustainable development, maintenance and renewal of recreation, open space, and sport facilities across the Alexandrina Council region.

It is noted that by working in partnership with our community, clubs and regional partners, Alexandrina Council will deliver sustainable, accessible and enjoyable spaces that support healthy lifestyles, strengthen community connection and enhance the liveability of our townships.

Importance of participating in recreation, open space and sport

Recreation, open space and sport are essential functions of Local Government as they contribute to stronger, healthier, and happier communities by fostering social connections, improving physical and mental wellbeing, and boosting local economies.

Community benefits include:

Health and Wellbeing

Providing well designed community spaces and opportunities for active participation supports regular physical activity, which is fundamental to reducing the risk of chronic disease and improving overall health outcomes.

Social Connection

Participation helps people build social connections, reduce isolation, and foster a sense of belonging within the community.

Mental Health

Physical activity has a positive impact on mental health, reducing stress, anxiety, and depression.

Inclusive Communities

These opportunities create welcoming environments where people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can engage, connect, participate and belong.

Stronger Communities

Engaging in local activities helps build social connections and a sense of belonging, contributing to a stronger and more resilient community.

Crime Prevention

Youth involvement in constructive programs offers positive and constructive outlets for young people, reducing the risk of involvement in crime and other negative behaviours.

Economic benefits include:

Tourism and Event Economy

Hosting community-based and sporting events can attract visitors and strengthen the local economy through increased spending on accommodation, hospitality, and related services.

Business Investment and Employment

The industries generate employment opportunities and encourage business investment, contributing to broader economic growth.

Property Values

Neighbourhoods with high quality community spaces and well maintained facilities often experience increased property values, providing long term benefits to residents.



Alexandrina context

The Alexandrina region is uniquely positioned in the picturesque Southern Fleurieu Peninsula at the end of the River Murray and as a gateway to the Coorong wetlands of international importance. It is within an easy drive from metropolitan Adelaide, about an hour and a quarter or 85km south of Adelaide Airport.

The Alexandrina Council area covers 182,684 hectares, stretching from the north-western shores of Lake Alexandrina to the Murray Mouth and the western end of the Coorong. It encompasses river and lake communities such as Langhorne Creek, Milang, Clayton Bay, Goolwa, Hindmarsh Island and extends along the southern coastline to Port Elliot and Middleton, and inland to Mount Compass and Strathalbyn.

The Alexandrina community consists of multiple townships, with two primary service and activity hubs

being Strathalbyn, which is positioned to the north-east on the fringe of the Adelaide Hills, and Goolwa, which is located to the south at the mouth of the River Murray. These hubs function as key focal points for economic development, infrastructure planning, and community services within the region.

Alexandrina is one of the fastest-growing regional areas in South Australia. While noted for its high-quality agricultural production (the second largest industry in the region), the region is also renowned for its natural environments, heritage and lifestyle.

The ROSS has been developed in consideration of national, state and local level policy, strategic and legislative documents. Below is a high-level overview of the documents reviewed, which helped guide and support the development of the ROSS.



Alexandrina Council

- A2040 Strategic Delivery Plan 2025-2035
- Alexandrina Annual Community Plan
- Strategic Asset Management Plan 2025-2035
- Long Term Financial Plan
- Tourism and Visitor Management Plan 2017-2022
- Public Toilet Management Plan 2024-2034
- Other relevant Council strategies.



State and Federal Government

- State Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Plan 2020-2040
- South Australian Regional Level Recreation and Sport Facilities Planning Guidelines
- Ausplay Data
- National Sport Plan 2030
- Recreation, Sport and Racing Strategic Plan 2021-2025
- 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide
- Greater Adelaide Regional Plan.



Sport, Recreation and Open Space Guidelines

- Guidelines for Community Infrastructure
- National Sporting Association Guidelines for Grassroots
- Parks and Leisure Australia Guidelines
- Nature Play SA Guidelines
- Heart Foundation Guidelines
- Walking SA Guidelines
- Various other sporting code guidelines developed by State Sporting Bodies.

What is Alexandrina Council's role?

Alongside the community, Alexandrina Council plays a multi-faceted role in the planning, provision, support, management and renewal of all recreation, open space and sport facilities.

This is guided by the strategic principles noted within the Alexandrina 2040 Strategic Delivery Plan 2025–2035, which are: **Advocate, Deliver, Facilitate, Lead, Partner, and Regulate.**

Advocate

We advocate for recreation, open space and sport facilities by considering current and future population projections, both Council-wide and by township. This ensures that planning and investment decisions reflect the evolving needs of our communities. We also play a key role in promoting the value of recreation, open space and sport to other levels of Government and stakeholders with the potential for collaboration.

Deliver

We deliver sustainable assets, funded projects, and improvements that create long term value, in line with current set budgets and the financial planning frameworks that guide local government. This includes operating within annual budgets, long term financial plans, and asset management plans to ensure that the provision, maintenance and renewal of all recreation, open space and sports facilities—such as parks, playgrounds, sports fields, skate parks and natural environments—are delivered responsibly, transparently, and sustainably.

Facilitate

We facilitate outcomes by aligning recreation, open space and sport initiatives with the Alexandrina Community Plan and A2040 Strategic Delivery Plan 2025–2035. This ensures that policies and programs are community-driven and support broader strategic goals. We also support local sporting clubs and recreation groups through advice, communication, maintenance and assistance.

Lead

We lead by applying best practices and multi-use principles to ensure facilities are adaptable, inclusive, and maintainable into the future.

Leadership also involves bringing together stakeholders to address key issues collaboratively and championing innovation in recreation, open space and sport planning.

Partner

We partner with State Government, other Local Government areas, schools, clubs, developers and the broader community to promote all things recreation, open space and sport. These partnerships help deliver shared outcomes and strengthen community connections.

Regulate

We undertake stakeholder engagement and maintain up-to-date data to help inform decision making. This ensures transparency, accountability, and sustainability in how facilities and services are managed. Regulation also supports equitable access and responsible use of public assets.

The ROSS, ROSS appendices and the ROSS Implementation Plan will help Council Members, Council Administration, communities and stakeholders understand the priorities, allocate resources and encourage a way of working to ensure transparency, accountability and sustainability for the future. This improved process will encourage effective working relationships between site users and Council.

Alexandrina demographic - snapshot

30,887

Total Population



In 2041, our forecast population will be 37,933 people, which is an increase of over 22.8%

53 years

Average age



78%

People born in Australia

51.2%

of population is **female**



48.8%

of population is **male**



35.2%

households that own two vehicles



\$1,143

Median Weekly Household Income

4.5%

Unemployment rate



63

Homeless persons estimated

988

SEIFA Index of Disadvantage



6.1%

Medium/High-density housing in the Council area



74%

Buying or own their own home

29.7%

Households in the Council area that include children



28.5 %

Households in the Council area are lone-person households



Alexandrina demographic – overview

Current overview

- Lower proportion of children (under 18 years).
- Higher proportion of people aged 60 years and over.
- Expected increase in people aged over 65 years in the future.
- 7.9% of the Alexandrina community needs help with day-to-day tasks due to disability, which is an increase from 2016.
- 10.2% of households have young children, which is lower than the state median in South Australia.
- Lower proportion of medium to high-density residences compared to regional South Australia and South Australia.
- 58% have access to two or more vehicles, as longer travel distances are often required.
- Lower Indigenous population compared to broader South Australia.
- Higher percentage of people employed.
- High vehicle ownership means that people can travel further distances to access recreation, open space and sport facilities.
- Provide intergenerational open space by ensuring there are facilities for all ages, ranging from six months to 70 years+.
- Youth require activities and facilities to stay active, engaged and part of the community, particularly in regional areas where these opportunities can be limited.
- Ensure local facilities are well connected, as a proportion of the community will prefer to access facilities within their own township/community.

Future overview

- By 2041 there will be an estimated population growth to 37,933 people, which is an increase of over 22%.
- Main growth areas will be Goolwa and Strathalbyn.
- Additional demand to accommodate around 2,800 new dwellings.
- Additional housing will bring more families and younger children, changing the current demographic profile, which is older than the state average.

How do we plan for the future?

- Ensuring adequate programs and activities for the ageing population.
- Accessibility and access to facilities for the community are important.
- Ensuring Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) standards are addressed when possible and feasible.
- High employment means that the majority of the community can afford to access sport and recreation facilities.



ROSS strategy development

This overview outlines the steps taken to better understand the value and role of recreation, open space, and sporting facilities within the Alexandrina Council area.

By combining community feedback, data, surveys, research, benchmarking and stakeholder input, we have developed a clear approach to guide decision-making. Each stage builds on the last to ensure the final ROSS is well-informed, inclusive, strategically connected, aligned with community needs and best practices. See detailed Strategy overview diagram on the right:



Noting that the ROSS is an Informing Plan with priorities that will be integrated into the A2040 Strategic Delivery Plan 2025–2035 as shown:



Village Conversations

Alexandrina's Village Conversations were a key engagement process undertaken in two phases: first in May to October 2021 and again between October and December 2023.

These sessions were held across townships to capture community expectations, priorities, and ideas for future planning. Residents shared insights on how they utilise recreation, open space and sport facilities, as well as their aspirations for future improvements.

This process provided valuable qualitative data on themes such as accessibility, inclusivity, youth recreation opportunities, and the importance of preserving local character.

Feedback gathered throughout both engagement phases has helped inform the development of the ROSS document.

Full details of Village Conversation community feedback and themes are noted within the ROSS appendices document in Appendix A.



Review of open space

What steps did we take?

The ROSS commenced with a comprehensive review of Alexandrina Council's current supply of open space. All Council-owned and managed land parcels were assessed to determine their usability for community benefit.

Definition of Usable Open Space:

Land parcels that can support formal or informal recreation, play, sport, or serve as passive green spaces preserved for environmental conservation.

Following this assessment, usable parcels were categorised into four functional areas:

- Sport
- Reserve
- Environmental
- Recreation.

Then structured into a hierarchy to help define the characteristics and intended use of each space.

Building on this foundation, Levels of Service (LoS) were developed using insights from community engagement to better understand usage patterns and expectations. A gap analysis was then conducted using these LoS benchmarks, which informed the identification of future strategic needs and priorities for open space planning across the region.



Open space usage

Reviewing open space usage is essential for guiding decisions on where to invest and improve to deliver the greatest community benefit. We obtain this data by engaging with stakeholders and collecting feedback on how our community accesses and enjoys its open spaces.

Open Space Community Survey

A survey seeking feedback from the broader community on how they access and enjoy open space and recreation facilities within the Council area was placed out for a six week engagement process from 24 October to 4 December 2024.

The survey received feedback from 122 participants.

The majority of people who responded were either a resident, ratepayer or business owner of Alexandrina, with only two (2) participants being visitors to the area.

The feedback and themes from this survey were utilised to develop levels of service.

Full details of survey outcomes are noted within the ROSS appendices document in Appendix B.

Themes from the Open Space Community Survey



64% of participants are willing to **travel between 2-10km** to utilise open space, with over 60% travelling by car.



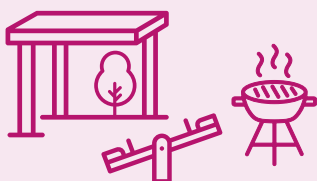
Shade, access to toilets, play equipment (mixture of natural and modern) and native vegetation are the most important requirements for open space.



They primarily use open spaces for exercise, socialising, or play.



Over 60% of participants indicated they are between very satisfied and neutral with our current playgrounds and parks.



Bristow Smith Reserve in Goolwa is the most utilised open space within Alexandrina, and participants would see this as a regional open space area.

Open Space - function

Through the open space strategic review, all usable open space parcels were assessed and then separated into four different function areas (Sport, Environmental, Recreation and Reserve).



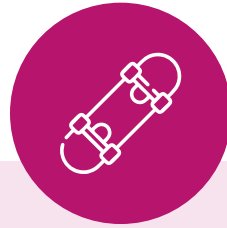
Sport

Organised sporting facilities like ovals, pitches, courts, greens, fields, aquatic centers, sports lighting and courses.



Environment

An area selected to preserve and or protect natural ecosystems or biodiversity, which can include: biodiversity sites (wetlands), environmental reserves and natural passive areas.



Recreation

Unstructured or leisure activity, which can include: skate, bike parks, water-based activities and walking trails.



Reserve

Open space that can include, playgrounds with supporting facilities, foreshore, dog parks and passive areas.

Open space, whilst it serves many different purposes, by arranging into function areas, it can help inform the following:

- Purpose
- Gap areas
- Allocation of appropriate resources
- Support long-term planning
- Strengthen decision-making.



Open space - function snapshot

808.9 hectares

Current total usable open space in Alexandrina



30,887 people

Current total population.
In 2041, our forecast population will be 37,933 people.



To find the appropriate amount of open space recommended for Alexandrina Council, we utilised a national benchmark of **four (4) hectares per 1,000 people (population)**.

Therefore, currently, **an appropriate amount of usable open space benchmark would be 114.92 hectares** with an anticipated projected benchmark of 157.6 hectares by 2041 due to estimated population projections.

Function areas	Hectares
Sport	42.87
Environmental	481.42
Recreation	58.99
Reserve	225.61
Total	808.9

An analysis of open space within the reserve and environmental function categories reveals a **total of 707.03 hectares**, indicating that **Alexandrina Council currently maintains a surplus of functional open space**.

Open space data captured by ward and township mapping are noted within the ROSS appendices document in Appendix C.



Open space – hierarchy

Combined with the function of open spaces, informing a hierarchy ensures that planning and resources are aligned with the scale, purpose, and community benefit of each space, making open space networks more effective and sustainable.

Having a hierarchy helps define and identify characteristics that match the function of the open space, and are as follows:

Hierarchy and characteristics

	Local	Neighbourhood	District	Regional
Proximity	Within 1km or 10 mins walking distance	Within 3kms or 20 mins walking distance	Within 6kms or 40 mins walking distance/driving distance 10–30 mins	10kms+ or 30 mins driving distance
Length of stay	30 mins	30 mins–1 hr	1–2 hrs	1.5 – 3 hr+
Services	Adjacent community	Local community	Township-wide surrounding community, including residents from other townships	Alexandrina region-wide and beyond
Provision (indicative only. May include more or less of these. Individual assessment required)	Seating, small play features, small irrigated grassed area, pathways, landscaping. Or natural passive areas.	Seating, picnic setting, play space with 1 special play item, natural shade, irrigated grassed area, pathways and landscaping Advanced-level reserve could include a shelter, but not always. Or a separate piece of unstructured sport, like a half pipe skate facility.	Seating, picnic settings, play space with 2+ special play items, built and natural shade, large irrigated grass or kick about area, pathways, BBQ, drinking fountain and landscaping. Advanced level could include unisex public toilets, change or club rooms, as well as sports lighting to a grassroots level. May also include unstructured recreation facilities like bike parks, pump track, multi-use court or skate facilities.	Destination play space with multiple play areas including fencing, multiple special play items, natural and built shade, large irrigated grass or kick about area, seating, picnic settings, pathways, lighting, BBQ, drinking fountain, landscaping and public toilets. May include one (1) or multiple aspects of unstructured play like bike parks, pump track, skate or court facilities. Regional walking trail/shared use path. Multi-use regional-level structured sports site could include home and away unisex change rooms, large oval, courts, clubrooms, car parking, sports lighting, fencing, public toilets and other supporting infrastructure.

Review of recreation and sporting facilities

What steps did we take?

To ensure the ROSS reflects the current and future needs of the Alexandrina community regarding recreation and sport facilities, we undertook a comprehensive review process, which involved the following key steps:

- **Data Analysis and Facility Snapshot**

We began by reviewing existing data on all sport and recreation facilities within the Alexandrina Council area. This included Council-owned, community-owned, and privately managed sites. The analysis provided a clear snapshot of the current provision distribution and the condition of facilities, helping us identify strengths and gaps.

- **Sporting Club and Association Surveys**

We undertook engagement with local sporting clubs, along with Local and State sporting associations. We gained feedback through targeted surveys, where we gathered insights on membership trends, facility usage, condition, and future needs. This feedback highlighted opportunities for improvement and informed priorities for infrastructure investment and support.

- **Benchmarking and Levels of Service**

We utilised National and State industry benchmarks to evaluate current provision and produced data that can be utilised alongside demographic profiling and community feedback to help guide Levels of Service (LoS) for sport and recreation facilities. LoS set clear expectations for quality, accessibility, and functionality, ensuring equitable and sustainable provision across the region.

The application of these key steps has helped inform the future needs and priorities for all recreation and sport provision across the region.



Difference between structured and unstructured recreation

Sport and recreation is often categorised into structured and unstructured pursuits. Examples of structured vs unstructured recreation:

- **Structured** – sport, club involvement, planned and scheduled like football, soccer or basketball.
- **Unstructured** – incidental physical activity, like BMX, skateboarding, walking and cycling.

Different facility ownerships within Alexandrina Council

Within Alexandrina Council there is a high percentage of community and non-council-owned sport and recreation facilities. Approximately 63% of facilities are owned by the Council and 37% owned by others. Types of ownership include:

- **Council** – Council-owned but operated by another entity generally through a lease, license or management agreement.
- **Community** – Owned and managed by the club.
- **Private** – Owned by a private organisation or individual, which is not a government department or an incorporated club.
- **Crown** – Owned by the State or Federal Government and can be managed by Local Government.
- **DECS** – Owned by the Department of Education and Children's Services.

The ownership and conditions within the lease, license or management agreement determine who is responsible for facility improvement and maintenance.



Local Government constraints

Councils must ensure that their facilities are underpinned by sound planning and that they are able to adequately maintain the asset over its lifetime.

The South Australian Regional Level Recreation and Sport Facilities Planning Guidelines outline five challenges that councils and the sport and recreation sector are currently facing:

- Facilities are ageing and in need of major redevelopment or, in some cases, replacement to remain fit-for-purpose, affordable and sustainable to operate and maintain.
- Inefficient provision and duplication.
- Increasing expectations from sporting bodies and the general community on councils to provide higher-standard facilities.
- Pressure on open space due to an ever-increasing demand for housing supply close to population and activity centres.
- Increasing budget pressures are becoming increasingly competitive and difficult to raise the capital required to deliver new infrastructure.



Community-owned facilities

Council remains committed to supporting the evolving needs of community-owned facilities by navigating the complexities involved through collaborative, transparent, and consistent approaches.

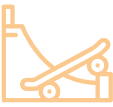
Community-owned facilities account for over 30% of the demand for sport and recreation. Community and Council-owned facilities are facing similar issues, and further work is required to determine how groups can be supported that is equitable, transparent and contributes to their sustainability.

An outcome of this strategy aims to review all facilities and existing Council support for community-owned sites, providing the basis for informed resource allocation, funding frameworks, and consistent service levels.

It is also important to review ground lease arrangements, as they can sometimes create uncertainty around building ownership. Clarifying these agreements will help support timely asset renewal and ensure facilities are maintained to a standard that meets community needs.

Sport and recreation facilities snapshot

A review was undertaken to develop an understanding of the sport and recreation provision within the Alexandrina Council. This included all Council-owned, community-owned and private facilities to develop a complete snapshot of what is available to the community. School facilities are not included. Within Alexandrina Council, there are:

			
63 Clubs/groups	63% Council owned	37% Non-Council Owned	1 Go Kart Club
			
4 Shooting Clubs	1 Horse Racing Facility	7 AFL/Cricket Ovals	1 Soccer Ground
			
10 Bowling Greens	16 Netball Courts	32 Tennis Courts	2 Rowing/ Dragon Boat
			
1 Indoor Basketball Facility	3 Outdoor Basketball Courts	3 Surf Life Saving Clubs	4 Golf Courses
			
2 Equestrian grounds	2 Sailing/ Yacht Clubs	2 Swimming Pools	2 Table Tennis Clubs
			
1 Archery Club	3 Croquet Facility	2 BMX Facilities	3 Skate Parks

Local sport and recreation club survey

As part of the ROSS, a survey was conducted with sport and recreation clubs to gather insights into current membership trends, facility conditions, usage patterns, ownership structures, and opportunities for improvement.

The survey was conducted during April/May 2024 for a period of four weeks. A total of 55 responses were received. Themes of the feedback received from the survey:

Strengths – what clubs are doing well

Financial Sustainability

- Many clubs can meet operational costs and contribute to facility improvements.
- A significant number of clubs report being self-sufficient, therefore not reliant on external funding.

Volunteer Engagement

- Clubs are generally well supported by volunteers.

Collaboration and Relationships

- Clubs report having good working relationships with other clubs that share their space.

Strategic Planning and Governance

- Majority of clubs have a strategic plan guiding their development.

Facility Management and Suitability

- Most clubs believe their facilities are well-maintained.
- Many clubs feel their facilities meet their needs.
- Facility hire fees are generally considered reasonable.

Areas for improvement – challenges identified

Financial Constraints

- Some clubs are unable to meet operational costs or contribute to facility improvements.
- A portion of clubs have reported needing external funding and assistance.

Council Engagement

- Several clubs feel they do not work effectively with Council to develop their club.

Strategic Planning Gaps

- Several clubs do not have a strategic plan in place.

Facility Condition and Suitability Concerns

- Some clubs feel their facilities are not well-maintained.
- Others believe their facilities are not appropriate for their needs.

Outcomes of the Sport and Recreation club survey are noted within the ROSS appendices document in Appendix E.

Association and state sporting organisation survey outcomes

Survey themes:

Growth in Participation

- Significant increase in female and junior participation.
- Associations are prioritising the promotion and expansion of their sports within the Alexandrina region.

Facility and Infrastructure Needs

- Upgrades to change rooms and sports lighting are a common request, especially to support growing female participation and evening use.
- New ovals and access to additional playing spaces are required to accommodate expanding club memberships and new developments.
- Indoor court stadiums to meet rising demand and support regional competitions.

Regional Collaboration and Planning

- Ongoing discussions with neighbouring councils (e.g. City of Victor Harbor) to explore shared infrastructure solutions, particularly for indoor sports like basketball.

- Interest in multi-purpose facilities that can serve various sports and community needs.

Event and Tourism Opportunities

- Expressed interest in hosting more events.
- Emphasis on the need for updated facilities to attract and support such events.

Emerging and Under-represented Sports

- Expressed interest in establishing programs in Alexandrina, contingent on community demand.
- Seek access to suitable indoor venues for competitions and programs.

Sustaining and Growing Local Sport

- Emphasised the importance of sustaining current participation levels and expanding their presence in the region through promotion and development initiatives.

Association and State Sporting Organisation survey outcomes are noted within the ROSS appendices document in Appendix F



Sport and recreational themes

Through utilising club and association feedback, township-level analysis, AusPlay data, assessment of current trends, conducting benchmark analysis, and reviewing Local, State, and National strategies, the following themes were presented:

Master Planning and Infrastructure Renewal

There is a clear need for master planning at key recreation and sporting precincts to address ageing infrastructure and increased usage. This includes the development of site-specific plans to guide future investment and ensure facilities remain fit-for-purpose.

Planning for Growth Sports

Sports such as soccer and basketball are experiencing significant growth, particularly among juniors and females. Strategic planning is required to identify future facility needs, including additional pitches and indoor courts, in collaboration with schools, neighbouring councils, and state sporting bodies.

Facility Condition and Suitability

Several existing ovals and courts are underutilised or in poor condition. Targeted assessments are needed to determine whether these facilities should be upgraded, consolidated, or repurposed to better align with current and projected community needs.

Enhancing Amenities and Accessibility

Upgrades to change rooms, particularly to support female participation, and improvements to sports lighting have been identified as priorities across multiple sports. These enhancements will support increased usage, safety, and inclusivity.

Asset Optimisation and Repurposing

There is an opportunity to review under-utilised assets, such as older tennis and netball courts, and explore options for consolidation or repurposing into multi-use or alternative recreational spaces.

Co-location and Shared Use

The co-location of sports and shared use of facilities is emerging as a practical solution to maximise space, reduce duplication, and improve access. Partnerships with schools and other stakeholders are key to achieving this.

Support for Community-Owned Facilities

Many community-owned clubs are facing financial and infrastructure challenges. A consistent and transparent support framework is needed to assist these clubs in maintaining and upgrading their facilities, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Club Development and Capacity Building

Clubs are seeking support in areas such as governance, volunteer management, strategic planning, and promotion. Providing training and resources will help clubs become more resilient and self-sufficient.

Youth Recreation Opportunities

There is a recognised gap in unstructured recreation opportunities for young people in some townships. Investment in youth-focused infrastructure, such as outdoor multi-use courts, bike parks, and skate parks, is needed to support active lifestyles and community benefits.

Township Sport Analysis is noted within the ROSS appendices document in Appendix D, Aus Play data analysis is noted within the ROSS appendices document in Appendix G and Analysis of Local sport trends and findings, along with State and National trend and SA Games On Strategy is noted within the ROSS appendices document in Appendix H.

Determining appropriate provision

For the ROSS, we have utilised national sport and recreation benchmarks to help guide appropriate provision for sport and recreation facilities. These benchmarks are widely used and accepted by Local Governments, State Governments and State sporting organisations.

NB: National benchmarks provide an indication of provision and are to be considered in addition to other relevant information, including demographics, community engagement findings, membership and trends to support decision making.

Alexandrina sport and recreation provision

Through the analysis and national benchmarking of recreation and sport facilities within Alexandrina Council, the table below informs us of the current and future provision requirements. It is based on the recommended national benchmarks. The table includes all Council, private, community and State Government owned facilities. School facilities are not included.

Facility type	Provision requirement	Current provision	Need based on population (30,887)	2025 Surplus/ deficit	Future need forecast population 2041 (39,400)	2041 Surplus/ deficit	Current need met	Future need met	Comment
AFL / Cricket Ovals	1:5000	7	6	+1	8	-1	Yes	no	Adequate provision of ovals Council-wide. However, challenges with overall distribution. E.g. in townships with low population, some ovals are under-utilised. In the townships with high populations, ovals are at capacity (Goolwa, Strathalbyn). *Note: Finnis Oval has not been included in the current or future provision, as this oval is in very poor condition and cannot be used. Ashbourne Oval has also not been included as it is suitable for cricket only.
Soccer Pitch	1:6000	3	5	-2	7	-4	No	No	Only one dedicated soccer ground in Alexandrina Council (Strathalbyn –privately owned) that has 3 full-sized soccer pitches. Port Elliot and Mt Compass soccer clubs play on an AFL/ Cricket oval.
Netball Courts (outdoor)	1:5000	16	6	+10	8	+8	Yes	Yes	High provision of netball courts, therefore, no additional courts are required. This is acceptable as country netball is played at individual club courts rather than a centralised location.

Facility type	Provision requirement	Current provision	Need based on population (30,887)	2025 Surplus/ deficit	Future need forecast population 2041 (39,400)	2041 Surplus/ deficit	Current need met	Future need met	Comment
Basketball Courts (indoor)	1: 5000	1	6	-5	8	-7	No	No	Low supply of indoor basketball courts. Only one indoor court at Goolwa Sports Stadium. Additional basketball courts are required.
Tennis Courts	1:2000	32	14	+18	20	+12	Yes	Yes	High supply of tennis courts. Regional areas often have a higher supply of tennis courts due to the distances between townships.
Hockey Field (synthetic)	1:100,000 (based on an individual business case)	1 grass field (sports oval)	0*	0*	0*	0*	See comment	See comment	Not required based on population. But hockey currently utilises Goolwa Oval.
Athletics Tracks	1:75000	0	0	0	0	0	NA	NA	Not required based on population.
Bowling Clubs	1:30000	5	1	+4	1	+4	Yes	Yes	Regional areas often have a high supply of bowling clubs (often one in each township). With an ageing population, a high supply of bowling clubs is appropriate if well utilised.
Swimming Pool	1:75000	2	1	0	1	0	Yes	Yes	Adequate provision.
Skate Park	Neighbourhood – 1:7,500 District – 1:25,000 Regional – 1:50,000	3 neighbourhood	4	-1	5	-2	No	No	Currently have three skate parks catering for beginner to advanced skaters. Additional skate provision may be required in the future.
BMX	1:20,000	2	1	+1	2	0	Yes	Yes	Adequate provision of BMX. However, in townships where the youth population is higher and there is limited unstructured recreation for youth, community BMX tracks could be justified.

Levels of Service

Levels of Service (LoS) describe the standards of quality, functionality, and accessibility that we commit to delivering to our community. They define what services we will provide, to what standard, and for whom.

Why do we have LoS?

- To clearly set out what the community can expect.
- Ensure services are delivered fairly and to agreed standards.
- Help us prioritise resources, budgets, and projects based on community needs and available funding.
- Provide a benchmark against which performance can be measured and reported.
- Involve the community in deciding priorities, ensuring services align with local needs and values.

Our key Recreation Levels of Service

- Deliver more unstructured recreation for youth with the inclusion of an additional skate park and bike park facilities.
- Support equitable unstructured recreation access across townships.
- Maintain Council-owned recreation facilities by undertaking regular inspections and risk assessments to ensure they meet compliance and future developed service standards, whilst utilising this information to help guide future operational, renewal or upgrade needs.

Our key Open Space Levels of Service

- Plan to have 1km distance between open spaces that are either a Reserve or Environmental function within largely populated areas with over 500 people population within a defined township boundary, or where possible.
- Maintain two regional open spaces within the Council area, which are Goolwa (Bristow Smith) and Strathalbyn (Soldiers Memorial Gardens, including Strathalbyn Lions Park playground on Colman Terrace).
- Plan to develop a framework to help guide future dog park provision within Alexandrina.
- Design reserves to be welcoming, inclusive, intergenerational and reflective of local character and apply universal design principles to promote accessibility and comfort for all users.
- Maintain accurate open space asset data by conducting inspections, audits, and valuations, and utilise this information to help guide future operational, renewal or upgrades priorities.
- Maintain reserves as per service standards for Parks and Reserves.

Our key Sport Levels of Service

- Plan to maintain Sporting Hubs within Goolwa and Strathalbyn.
- Maintain Council-owned sports facilities to ensure they meet grassroots needs, including future developed service standards, while also promoting inclusivity and multi-use.
- Review facility provision in alignment with population growth, participation rates and catchment demand.
- Plan for shared use between schools, clubs, and community groups through multi-use facility design to maximise utilisation.
- Maintain sports facility data by undertaking regular inspections, audits and valuations and utilise this information to help guide future operational, renewal or upgrade requirements.

ROSS Implementation Plan

The Alexandrina ROSS outlines a 10 year implementation plan, designed to guide the planning, delivery, and management of recreation, open space, and sport infrastructure across the Alexandrina Council region. The Implementation Plan prioritises actions that align with Council's strategic objectives of creating a liveable, green, and connected community.

Liveable		Green	Connected	
Trusted & Financially Sustainable Council Alexandrina Council is a trusted, transparent and committed organisation that listens, advocates and delivers value for our community in a financially sustainable way	Well-planned Towns & Growth Alexandrina is a liveable region of well-planned towns and growth areas with coordinated infrastructure and opportunities that support our growing population, rural heritage and lifestyle	Climate & Environmental Stewardship Alexandrina is a climate resilient community that values its natural assets, adopts and encourages new ways to reduce environmental impacts and support circular economies	Inclusive & Thriving Community Alexandrina is a welcoming community and prosperous economy with places and opportunities that support the wellbeing, creativity, active participation and quality of life of all people	Transport connections Alexandrina is a region with accessible road, pedestrian, cycle and public transport networks that make it easy to get around, do business, commute and explore

No	Area	Category	Priority Action Title	Priority Action Statement	Council's Role	Strategic Connection	Timeframe (year 1-10)	Cost
1	Council-wide	Open Space	Undertake audits on Open Space infrastructure	Acquire up-to-date data on the condition and useful life of assets within the open space category, including but not limited to playground, softfall, shelters, seating, lighting, drinking fountains, jetties and irrigation.	Lead/Deliver	Liveable	1-10	BAU
2	Council-wide	Open Space	Review gaps analysis with regard to over-supplied open space areas	Undertake a review of all over-supplied open space areas utilising the service level to meet 1000m (1km) walking distance between open spaces that are either a Reserve or Environmental function within largely populated areas with over 500 people population within a defined township boundary, or where possible. This will help determine the need and inform of any potential parcels for potential future rationale.	Lead/Deliver	Liveable	1-10	BAU
3	Council-wide	Open Space	Undertake a 20-year implementation plan for Open Space	Utilise data on asset life, condition, gaps analysis and opportunities within growth areas to produce a 20-year implementation plan to help inform the future financial needs.	Lead/Deliver	Liveable	1-3	BAU

No	Area	Category	Priority Action Title	Priority Action Statement	Council's Role	Strategic Connection	Timeframe (year 1-10)	Cost
4	Council-wide	Recreation	Review renewal needs for all Recreation assets	Acquire up-to-date data on the condition and useful life of all recreation assets, including but not limited to skate, bike parks, pump track and walking trails.	Lead/Deliver	Liveable	1-10	BAU
5	Council-wide	Open Space	Establish a framework to set benchmarks for the future installation of dog parks within Alexandrina	Review previous feedback and council resolutions to develop a benchmark for the installation of future dog parks within Alexandrina. With the next dog park to be implemented within Strathalbyn.	Lead/Deliver	Connected	2-4	\$15k
6	Council-wide	Open Space	Open Space style guide	Produce a style guide for open space to be utilised in all future provision of open space infrastructure.	Lead/Deliver	Connected	4-6	\$15k
7	Council-wide	Sport and Recreation	Mapping of all sports and recreation facilities	Undertake mapping of all sport and recreation facilities, including community and privately owned.	Lead/Deliver	Liveable	2-3	\$10k
8	Council-wide	Sport and Recreation	Review renewal needs for all Council-owned sporting and unstructured recreation facilities	Undertake audits to obtain useful life, condition and replacement costs on all council-owned sporting and unstructured recreation facilities, including but not limited to irrigation, lighting, fencing, courts, practice nets, bike and skate parks.	Lead/Deliver	Liveable	2-3	\$20k
9	Council-wide	Sport and Recreation	Undertake a 20-year implementation plan for all Council-owned sport and unstructured recreation infrastructure	Utilise data on asset life, condition, gaps analysis and opportunities within growth areas to produce a 20-year implementation plan to help inform the future financial needs.	Lead/Deliver	Liveable	4-5	BAU
10	Council-wide	Sport	Community and Private-Owned Facility guidelines	Undertake further consultation with community-owned clubs and develop guidelines on the support Council can offer these groups, and the requirements clubs must meet to be provided support (e.g. community access, facility standards).	Lead/Deliver	Liveable	2-3	\$15k
11	Council-wide	Sport	Review Council's sporting club grants or funding access	Review payments or funding opportunities for all sporting facilities within Alexandrina (including community-owned facilities).	Lead/Deliver	Liveable	3-5	BAU
12	Council-wide	Sport and Recreation	Sport and Recreation Facility frameworks	Develop sport and recreation facility frameworks with guidelines for Council departments and Council Members on the management, leasing, upgrade and maintenance of sport and recreation facilities.	Lead/Deliver/Facilitate	Liveable	3-4	\$15k

No	Area	Category	Priority Action Title	Priority Action Statement	Council's Role	Strategic Connection	Timeframe (year 1-10)	Cost
13	Council-wide	Sport	Service standards for sport	Develop and implement service levels for buildings, sports playing surfaces, buildings utilised by sport and recreation providers and their associated facilities. Ensure standards are reflected in lease/license/management documents.	Lead/ Deliver	Liveable	5-7	\$15k
14	Council-wide	Sport	Leases	Review all ground leases, where Council own the land and other parties own the infrastructure.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Liveable	1-10	BAU
15	Council-wide	Open Space, Recreation and Sport	Joint use agreements	Advocate for long-term joint use agreements with developers, public and private schools, to gain shared sport facilities, especially near Strathalbyn, Goolwa and Port Elliot townships, to help complement Council facilities that have reached their capacity.	Partner Advocate	Liveable	1-10	BAU
16	Council-wide	Sport	A plan for growth in sports (basketball and soccer)	Review growth in soccer and basketball across Alexandrina Council and develop a plan on how we can meet the demand for these sports, working with schools, Football SA, Basketball SA, State Government and other Council regions.	Lead/ Partner/ Advocate	Liveable	3	\$20k
17	Council-wide	Sport	Club development	Produce a new Recreation Planner position to undertake planning, coordinating and guiding of the future for all sport and recreation clubs and facilities within the region, which will include the following: Deliver support for club development through targeted advice, training, and leadership initiatives to strengthen capacity, enabling clubs to effectively manage and promote their facilities and programs. Monitor club membership by undertaking an annual club survey. Maintain a club database with contact details for committees and membership data. Monitor trends to assess community needs to support participation and community wellbeing.	Lead/ Deliver	Connected	2027/28 - ongoing	\$100k Investigating internal resourcing through current FTE
18	Council-wide	Sport and Recreation	Promotion of Sport and Recreation	Promote both Council-owned and non-Council sport and recreation facilities, programs, and townships to encourage increased participation and visitation across the region.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Connected	1-10	BAU
19	Council-wide	Sport and Recreation	Partnerships	Develop and maintain partnerships with relevant funding bodies, peak bodies and other relevant stakeholders.	Partner	Liveable	1-10	BAU
20	Council-wide	Sport	Sports and Event Tourism	Develop a plan to attract sporting events to the region and to facilities/venues within the council area.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Liveable	6	\$15k

No	Area	Category	Priority Action Title	Priority Action Statement	Council's Role	Strategic Connection	Timeframe (year 1-10)	Cost
21	Council-wide	Sport and Recreation	Community access	Ensure the community has access to Council-owned facilities, including tennis and netball courts for casual use. Requirements for community access are to be included within future lease agreements.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Connected	1-10	BAU
22	Council-wide	Sport	Building and facility condition audits	Maintain Council-owned facilities in accordance with building and condition audits. Undertake a further audit of change room facilities at sites other than Strathalbyn Recreation Ground and Goolwa Recreation Ground. Also assess sports lighting conditions and LUX levels.	Deliver	Liveable	5-7	\$15k required to review the condition and Lux levels of council-owned sports lighting.
23	Council-wide	Recreation	Wheeled Park Maintenance and Inspection Program (Skate, BMX and pump tracked)	Develop a maintenance and inspection program for wheeled park facilities to ensure these facilities are well-maintained and risk management issues are addressed.	Lead/ Deliver	Liveable	1-10	BAU
24	Council-wide	Sport	Tennis and Netball Court provision	Consider community needs and club membership prior to any asset renewal of tennis/netball courts. There is a potential high supply Council-wide, and future consolidation to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.	Lead/ Deliver	Connected	1-10	BAU
25	Council-wide	Open Space, Recreation and Sport	Strathalbyn Recreation Precinct (Lot 10)	Continue with the Strathalbyn Recreation Precinct (Lot 10) with Stage 1 being first priority. This project is a high priority for this region. Strathalbyn is known as a Sporting Hub that will continue to grow in population.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate/ Partner	Liveable	4-8	Partly funded through the A2040 Strategic Delivery Plan
26	Council-wide	Recreation and Sport	Aquatic Pool Service Review	Undertake an aquatic pool service review in line with Alexandrina's Continuous Improvement framework to help inform the future requirements for aquatic pool facilities for the region. This process should be guided by benchmarking data provided through the ROSS, while considering current and potential community use, anticipated community benefits, cost implications for renewal, and an assessment of infrastructure in neighbouring councils.	Lead/ Deliver	Liveable	9-10	\$20k

No	Area	Category	Priority Action Title	Priority Action Statement	Council's Role	Strategic Connection	Timeframe (year 1-10)	Cost
27	Council-wide	Recreation	Develop a Master Plan for Shared-Use Trails	Conduct a review of data relating to all shared-use paths and trails within Alexandrina Council. Then undertake an assessment to review their condition, accessibility, and connectivity to key destinations such as parks, wineries, and cultural sites. Produce a master plan to help inform future needs and develop material that can be utilised for the Council website for promotion.	Lead/ Deliver	Connected	4-7	BAU
28	Ashbourne	Sport	Ashbourne Oval	Seek further information on the use of the Ashbourne Oval from the cricket club. Consider how community-owned sites could be supported in the future to ensure their sustainability.	Facilitate/ Advocate	Liveable	1-10	BAU
29	Clayton Bay	Recreation	Bike facilities	Undertake engagement with the community on the type of bike facilities required and undertake construction on Island View Reserve along the foreshore near the playground.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Connected	1	Captured within the 2025/26 budget.
30	Finniss	Sport and Open Space	Finniss Sports Ground	Assess the future of the Finniss Sports Ground. This site is currently not suitable for sport or community use.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Liveable	2-3	BAU
31	Goolwa	Sport	Goolwa Oval Recreation Precinct	Working in collaboration, support the Goolwa Oval Recreation Precinct clubs to establish the Oval Management Committee and ensure the management of the new facility is successful. The Goolwa Oval is at capacity for use; therefore, help facilitate the development of joint user agreements with schools to access ovals as overflow if required. Consider hockey in any future planning for soccer facilities.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate/ Advocate/ Partner	Liveable	1-2	BAU
32	Goolwa	Sport	Goolwa Rowing Club	Determine any opportunities for Goolwa Rowing Club to share with other clubs in the region.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate/ Advocate	Liveable	1-10	BAU
33	Goolwa	Sport and Open Space	Equine Facilities and Land Use review	Review equine facilities and associated land use within Goolwa to help inform future needs. The review is to include an assessment of current membership levels, the condition and capacity of existing facilities, projected future demand, compatibility with surrounding land uses, benchmarking against best-practice standards, and alignment with broader strategic planning objectives.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Liveable	1-10	BAU

No	Area	Category	Priority Action Title	Priority Action Statement	Council's Role	Strategic Connection	Timeframe (year 1-10)	Cost
34	Middleton	Recreation	Skate facility	Review suitable locations in Middleton for a new skate facility.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Liveable	1-3	BAU
35	Milang	Sport	Milang Oval	Work with clubs to ensure buildings are maintained, and the grounds are fit for purpose. Milang Oval has capacity for greater use and could assist other clubs in the Council area seeking additional ovals for training or games. Consider the medium-to-long-term future of Milang Oval in consultation with the clubs that use the facility.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Connected	2-4	BAU
36	Milang	Sport	Milang Tennis Courts	In consultation with the community, review the need for tennis courts at Luard Street. Consider consolidation and re-purposing courts by providing multi-use courts with tennis, basketball and other games, that can be used by the community and visitors.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Liveable	1	Design captured within the 2025/26 budget
37	Mount Compass	Open Space	Review open space requirements within Mount Compass	Due to gap analysis findings, there is a restricted amount of open space within Mount Compass. Undertake a review of open space within the township to develop options to increase usable open space for the community.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate/ Advocate	Liveable	1-10	BAU
38	Port Elliot	Sport	Port Elliot Oval	Prepare a master plan for Port Elliot Oval that prioritises the needs of all sports and informal recreation, with a focus on upgrading or providing additional change room facilities to support growth in participation, particularly among females. Produce a concept with cost estimates for upgraded change room facilities that can be utilised for available grant funding opportunities. Review the suitability of cricket and soccer sharing facilities given different types of use.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate/ Advocate	Liveable	1-2	Captured within the 2025/26 budget
39	Strathalbyn	Recreation and Sport	Basketball facilities	Continue to plan for the Strathalbyn Recreation Precinct (Lot 10) with the potential for Indoor basketball court facilities as they are a high priority; also consider opportunities for indoor courts within future residential developments in Strathalbyn. Work with schools and neighbouring Councils (e.g. Mount Barker District Council) in the short term to resolve the challenges in indoor basketball court provision.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate/ Partner	Liveable	2-8	Partly funded through the A2040 Strategic Delivery Plan

No	Area	Category	Priority Action Title	Priority Action Statement	Council's Role	Strategic Connection	Timeframe (year 1-10)	Cost
40	Strathalbyn	Sport	Soccer facilities	Continue to plan for Strathalbyn Recreation Precinct (Lot 10) with the potential for soccer facilities. Soccer facilities in Strathalbyn are a very high priority. Consider opportunities for greater provision within future new residential developments in Strathalbyn. Also work with schools and neighbouring Councils (e.g. Mount Barker District Council) in the short term to resolve the challenges in soccer provision.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate Partner	Liveable	2-8	Partly funded through the A2040 Strategic Delivery Plan
41	Strathalbyn	Sport	Strathalbyn Recreation Ground	Monitor use of Strathalbyn Recreation Ground to ensure the oval continues to be fit for purpose and not overused. Support the football and cricket clubs to access other facilities during times of high demand. This could be through agreements with schools or through the use of other under-utilised ovals (e.g. Milang Oval) within the broader Council area.	Lead	Liveable	1-10	BAU
42	Strathalbyn	Open Space	Dog park	A dog park to be assessed for consideration within Strathalbyn (review with outcomes of Lot 10). Feedback from previous engagement to be reviewed and locations assessed. Develop a concept design for community engagement and construction.	Lead/ Deliver/ Facilitate	Connected	2-8	Partly funded through the A2040 Strategic Delivery Plan



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