





G21 REGIONAL FOOTBALL (SOCCER) STRATEGY

MAY 2012

SPORT AND RECREATION PILLAR

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“Football is more than kicking a ball. Football has a unique socio-cultural dimension worldwide. Football connects people. Football has no borders.”

FIFA President Joseph S. Blatter

1 Introduction

The G21 Regional Football (Soccer) Strategy has been prepared following a review of current provision across the G21 region and to develop regional & municipal specific strategies for their improvement. The project aim is:

“To develop a strategic approach to the future provision of football (soccer) in the G21 region, including regional and local needs for football (soccer) development, governance and facilities.”

Addressing issues and challenges facing Football (Soccer) using a regional approach provides many benefits to project partners and to the sport. Strategic planning if focused at a strategic-level, allows Local, State and Federal Governments to target resources in a planned and coordinated way and to integrate future projects and funding opportunities towards achieving wider success and impact. It also recognises that sport is not restricted to Local Government boundaries and needs to be planned for accordingly.

Government and peak body commitment to regional planning ensures better communication and sharing of information. It also allows for the targeting of scarce resources towards priority projects, assists in the avoidance of facility duplication and it strengthens the ability of partners to provide a diverse range of facilities and services that are accessible to a greater number of Victorians.

For the regional strategy to be successful, the following principles have been established:

- The need for a regional approach to the development and planning of Football (Soccer) facilities
- Providing a priority focus on community level facility provision for Football (Soccer)
- Providing a rationale and direction for future regional scale facility development(s)
- Providing direction for existing facility improvement and the consideration of new development
- Providing a regional strategic framework suitable for municipal implementation
- Creating stakeholder ownership and acceptance through a viable and achievable strategy

- Prioritising facility projects that promote partnership opportunities between stakeholders and funding partners
- Recognising regional needs, local directions, challenges and opportunities
- Aligning strategic directions between Federal, State and Local Government as well as peak sporting bodies

As this Study has evolved over a greater time period than envisaged, the Geelong Regional Football Committee (GRFC) had not been established when the Study commenced, therefore Clubs were consulted individually. The GRFC will have input at the draft consultation stage.

The study area covers the G21 region, comprising the municipalities of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast, Colac Otway, Golden Plains and the Borough of Queenscliff (Figure 1).

The study area has been aligned to the FFV zone structure, as specified in their strategic directions document The Future of the World Game in Victoria 2008 – 2011. The zone included in this study is the Wimmera South Coast Zone (Figure 2).

For the purpose of this document, the study area will be referred to as the ‘G21 region’.



Figure 1: G21 region

2 Regional Findings & Considerations

Football (Soccer) Context

The G21 region environment for Football (Soccer) providers is diverse across its four municipalities. Many issues, challenges and opportunities raised in this study will impact the current governance, planning and provision of facilities, as well as the ability to provide future facilities to support the development and growth of the game in the region.

The administration of Football (Soccer), at the national level, has undergone significant change since 2002 when the Federal Government conducted an independent review into the governance and management structures of the sport in Australia. This led to a new national governing body to administer major reforms, which now includes the national level competition (A-League), the Women's National League and the National Youth League. The high profile and media exposure that the A-League, the new Melbourne Heart Team and Melbourne Victory have, combined with the generic and non-ethnically biased positioning of the League and its teams, is likely to increase the popularity of Football (Soccer) in Victoria.

The strong and continued emergence of Football (Soccer) at the local level does however place added pressure on local government to provide quality sporting venues that in many areas have not traditionally been provided for. Continued growth in junior participation in many sports that require access to sporting fields (e.g. Cricket and Australian Rules football), combined with increased soccer facility demand, an ageing stock of amenities and climatic influences on water accessibility are all creating significant resourcing issues for Councils.



Summary of Findings

The Study's findings & consideration that could influence the regional & municipal directions are:

1. Alignment of Football (Soccer) Planning

- The regional planning for respective Councils is through G21.
- Regional Planning for Football (Soccer) is now through the FFV, as the GRFA has been disbanded and replaced with a more representative GRFC.
- Local Council planning is on an individual basis, both from a sport, place or asset perspective.
- Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) has a strong regional presence and may be able to influence investment and priorities in the region.
- The Armstrong Creek development provides an ideal opportunity for all stakeholders to plan for the future of soccer, ensuring that future growth and demand is satisfied.
- An integrated approach to planning and prioritising of work is needed to integrate Regional, Local Council, FFV and Club planning, potentially through G21 and the FFV's GRFC regional advisory role.
- Strategic facility development planning at a regional level should be coordinated between Councils and FFV, while local facility planning should be by Councils in consultation with FFV and clubs.

2. Participation Pathways

- The projected growth across the region indicates that the expansion in the game will be significant to cope with the increase of 128,000 people (48%) between 2006 and 2031.

- There is a need to integrate the participation pathways between the various Small Sided Game providers, the Clubs and the FFV regional structure, due to the lack of communication and planning historically.
- Stronger pathway implementation for key groups needs to be owned and driven by FFV and clubs.
- Clubs realise the need to integrate the pathways, especially with juniors, however some clubs have identified the lack of resources and possible planning skills needed to optimize the intergration. This should be a focus for FFV and clubs.
- Recreational participation is growing especially for indoor/outdoor Futsal games. Each Council needs to be receptive to the games being put forward by clubs, recreational organisations and FFV.

3. Facility Management

- There are not enough dedicated Football (Soccer) facilities to service the projected demand for Football (Soccer) participation across the region, particularly in the key projected growth areas of the Bellarine Peninsula and Surf Coast.
- A new regional hierarchy structure is proposed to ensure that local, municipal and regional facilities are planned and developed over the next 20 years, as the population grows.
- Clubs identified a need for a greater number of facilities to cater for growth in junior participation, Futsal and small-sided games.
- Establishing a long term regional venue (Armstrong Creek) that is accessible within the Wimmera South Coast Zone will be important to:
 - Strengthen the regional winter participation leagues in the Geelong region
 - Enhance the development of talented players from the Geelong region, including participation from the FFV Champions League.
- Climatic changes and the availability and cost

of water will be a key determining factor in the ability of facility providers to deliver quality playing surfaces at the local level. Access to sustainable water sources and resources, in addition to synthetic surface options must be investigated on a site specific basis.

- Consideration should be given to the existing club network, as well as the financial implications on existing clubs. Assuming they are expected to play home fixtures away from their main ground, may have an impact on their income generation opportunities.
- There are a lack of regional and municipal venues providing for broad community and Football (Soccer) participation. Across the club network, no regional facility exists and only one municipal venue has been identified (Hume Reserve in North Geelong) . Potential development opportunities for Municipal venues in future planning include Stead Park, Hume Reserve, Myers Reserve and Conneware Reserve. Noting that whilst these reserves have the special capacity, their suitability in terms of accessibility and current management arrangements has not been accessed.
- There is currently no venue classified as A class in FFV's community venue classification system (the level required for FFV's Men's Victorian Premier League). Two existing B-Class venues are situated on private land and are operated by local clubs.

Geelong's Skilled Stadium can be used for events that require a major stadium. There is, however, a gap in provision with no venue suitable for smaller scale events such as national/international matches including W-League, National Youth League, Matildas, Joeys, Olyroos, A-League friendlies, national/international training and higher league matches for clubs requiring A class venues.

A regional venue can include the facilities required for these types of events, including 500 covered seats and a total 2000 to 5000 capacity.

2 Regional Findings & Considerations

4. Club Management and Support

- Memberships in Football (Soccer) clubs have increased over the last three years, with a high proportion of respondent clubs experiencing increases in junior and female participation.
- FFV should promote the sport in the region, working with clubs and Councils to plan and schedule events.
- Coach and referee accreditation and training needs to be administered and driven by FFV.
- The issues around relegation/promotion and an improvement to facility standards are critical, with some teams only remaining in the promoted league for a single season. The expense to upgrade facilities can be costly to Councils. Rotation of grounds should be considered to offset this issue. The development of a regional centre with A class facilities can provide shared access to clubs requiring A class facilities as one of its functions. This approach is being used successfully in other areas. Alternatively, the cost of facilities above C class at a home venue of a specific club should be borne by the club involved.
- There are strongly divergent club views on the need and appropriateness for junior teams to play in Melbourne-centered leagues. Several clubs currently field teams in the Melbourne-centered leagues (Western Zone) but are obliged to also field teams in the Geelong-based leagues. FFV should be pro-active in expanding and strengthening the Geelong-based junior leagues so that that over time the needs all junior teams can be met within their own region as well as individual players accessing regional pathways to higher levels of competition and development.

5. Resourcing and Partnering

- There was varying opinion among clubs as to who should take responsibility for developing strategic plans, business plans and other related club development strategies. The range of responses included the following comments:
 - 'Clubs should primarily be responsible for their own plans'
 - 'Direction and support should be provided by the FFV and Council in order for the club to progress in line with the sport's strategic direction'
 - 'A combined effort and dynamic approach is needed for implementation of the planning and provision of Football (Soccer)'
- Councils have limited resources for new facilities and the Capital Works Expenditure Budgets have to compete against other local priorities.
- The importance of working with developers (e.g. Armstrong Creek), the State Government, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (e.g. schools), is to promote access for the local community.





3 Municipal Considerations & Findings

City of Greater Geelong

The City of Greater Geelong is located in the South-Western coast of Victoria, about 75 kilometers south-west of Melbourne and is Victoria's largest regional city. The Council area encompasses a total land area of approximately 1,250 square kilometres, bounded by Barrabool Hills and Corio Bay, the City of Greater Geelong also has extensive basalt plain grasslands to the north. This area extends to the landmark peaks of the You Yangs and the Brisbane Ranges. In the south-east, the undulating hills of the Bellarine Peninsula extend through to the coastal dunes.

Geelong has a well-established network of 14 outdoor Football (Soccer) clubs, using 29 pitches. The municipality provides for a wide range of Football (Soccer) opportunities and is the only municipality within in the region to cater for Football (Soccer) clubs, registered outside of their municipal boundaries. The City of Greater Geelong has a well-established Futsal culture, providing Futsal competitions at four venues and contributing to half of the G21 region's total Futsal provision.

Geelong caters for 14 Football (Soccer) clubs, which will all be affiliated with FFV in the next Football (Soccer) season. Geelong provided the largest number of FFV registrations (2,139) for any one municipality in the G21 region,

contributing 82% of the G21 region's total registrations (Table 6). In gender terms, 81% of registered players were male and 19% female. From the total number of male registrations, 66.9% were of junior age groups (18 years and below) and 33.1% were of senior age groups. Junior males represented the bulk of the membership, contributing 1,159 registered players. Table 25 provides a summary of Football (Soccer) clubs, teams and players operating in Geelong.

In 2006, there were an estimated 2,139 Football (Soccer) participants. This figure is projected to grow to 3,125 by 2031, based on population growth projections of 46.1%. This constitutes an overall estimated increase of 986 likely participants in Football (Soccer) by 2031. The majority of future additional demand is estimated to come from residents aged 18 years and over, as growth in senior participants is mainly attributed to the ageing population of the municipality.

3 Municipal Considerations & Findings

The main concerns of clubs are the poor quality grounds, change rooms and ancillary facilities, availability of referees' rooms and dedicated first aid rooms, causing future anxiety if teams are promoted beyond their current levels.

All of the respondent clubs support the development of a regional facility.

Council has also initiated a significant number of site specific master planning and infrastructure development projects that will each consider and potentially deliver additional or improved Football (Soccer) facilities.

They include:

- Stead Park Master Plan
- Ocean Grove Sporting Infrastructure Plan
- Leopold Precinct Master Plan
- St Leonards Master Plan
- Hume Reserve Master Plan
- Drysdale Sports Precinct Masterplan (2011)

Surf Coast Shire Council

Surf Coast Shire Council is situated 97 kilometres from Melbourne and 22 kilometres from Geelong's City Centre. Surf Coast Shire is characterised by a diverse range of environments including rugged coastline, dense native forests and rolling, rural plains. Surf Coast Shire encompasses a total land area of nearly 1,560 square kilometres, of which 55 kilometres is coastline. A significant proportion of the shire is influenced by physical and topographical features, which impact on urban development and land use management.

Surf Coast Shire has one Football (Soccer) club, using three pitches. The club is fairly new, having only been established between two and six years ago. The Quay Reserve, Horseshoe Bend Park, is the primary outdoor Football (Soccer) reserve within the area and home of the Surfside Football Club. The Surf Coast Recreation Centre is the only venue within the municipality that currently provides Futsal / Indoor Football (Soccer).

Surf Coast caters for one outdoor Football (Soccer) club, which is affiliated with FFV, and provided 13 teams in FFV competitions for the 2009 season. Surf Coast provided 332 FFV registered players in 2009, contributing 12.7% of the region's total registrations. 66.4% of registered players were male and 33.4% female. 82.8% of the total number of registrations were of junior age groups (18 years and below) and 17.2% were of senior age groups. Junior

males represented the bulk of the membership, contributing 177 (53.3%) registered players. 98 junior females were registered across the municipality (29.5% of registrations), but only 13 senior females were identified.

In 2006, there were an estimated 332 Football (Soccer) participants in Surf Coast Shire and this figure is projected to grow to 608 by 2031, based on population growth projections of 83.1%. This constitutes an overall estimated increase of 276 additional participants in Football (Soccer) by 2031. The key townships that they reside in (by postcode analysis) are:

- Anglesea
- Bell Brae
- Bells Beach
- Jan Juc

Participation by 5 to 17 year olds is likely to contribute a further 71 participants (25.8% of the total participation demand). Senior participation (persons aged 18 and over) is projected to contribute 74.2% of the total growth in market demand (or 537 additional participants).

There is a large projected demand increase in Football (Soccer) and these new players may benefit from the Recreation Strategy, which guides Football (Soccer) provision and supports the development of new clubs at purpose built facilities.

The development of major residential sites, particularly in Torquay, will provide opportunities for new purpose built facilities to be included.



Colac Otway Shire Council

Colac Otway Shire is located in Victoria's South West. In 2006, the total population of the Shire was estimated at 21,029. It is expected to increase by 4,015 people to 25,044 by 2031, at an average annual growth rate of 0.7%. This is based on an increase of more than 980 households during the period, with the average number of persons per household falling from 2.43 to 2.35.

The most significant increases in population are expected in Elliminyt and Great Ocean Road – Otways, based on residential expansion and, in the case of the Great Ocean Road - Otways, the additional factor of increased occupancy rates (as retirees occupy their holiday homes) has been identified. Colac West and Rural North are expected to marginally decrease or increase in population as a result of relatively low numbers of additional dwellings expected over the next 10 to 12 years. The municipality provides one Football (Soccer) club using one Football (Soccer) pitch within the municipality.

Colac Otway Shire has a newly established Football (Soccer) club called the Colac Otway Rovers AFC. The club replaces the recently disbanded Colac Otway Football Association (COSA). Collectively COSA clubs provided 13 teams in FFV competitions for the 2009 season. The disbandment of COSA resulted in the formation of the Colac Otway Rovers, which currently hopes to have one senior and one junior team with approximately 20 players each.

Colac Otway Shire provided 137 FFV registered players in 2009, contributing 5.3% of the G21 region's total registrations. 83.9% of registered players were male, 16.1% female and 75.9% were 18 years or younger. There is only one registered female player from Colac Otway Shire.

Although there is now only two teams, the latent demand is probably still strong as there is no coordinated sports development strategy by the clubs, Council or FFV. Many of the 300 plus players gave either found other clubs or likely to have temporarily ceased playing. By the FFV working with the local clubs, these players may be recaptured and encouraged to play.

In 2006 there were an estimated 242 Football (Soccer) participants in Colac Otway Shire. This figure is projected to increase by 19.1% by 2031, providing an additional 46 potential players. Participation in the 18-year-old age group is anticipated to increase with an additional 20 participants by 2031.

A key opportunity for future provision is within the Beechy Precinct, which incorporates a range of sporting facilities including two full size Football (Soccer) pitches, which is part of Stage 3 of the Colac Secondary College redevelopment. As funding for active surfaces of an acceptable community sporting standard is not available through DEECD, alternative funding opportunities will need to be explored.

3 Municipal Considerations & Findings

Golden Plains Shire Council

Golden Plains Shire is located in South West Victoria, approximately 15 kilometres north-west of Geelong and 100 kilometres west from Melbourne. The Shire is bounded by the City of Ballarat and Moorabool Shire in the north, the City of Greater Geelong in the east, Surf Coast Shire and Colac-Otway Shire in the south and Corangamite Shire and Pyrenees Shire in the west. Golden Plains Shire comprises a total area of roughly 2,700 square kilometres.

With approximately 17,076 residents across some 56 communities including 16 townships, Golden Plains Shire is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Victoria. According to ABS Population Estimates by Local Government Area, Golden Plains Shire experienced the 14th fastest population growth in Victoria. Golden Plains Shire is expected to continue strong population growth with the population expected to grow to 27,385 by 2031 at an average annual growth rate of 1.9%.

Golden Plains Shire has no clubs currently playing in any competition but it is believed that soccer players living within the Shire travel to other municipalities in order to participate in Football (Soccer) at a competitive level as shown in Appendix 6.

Although there are currently no

clubs playing in the Golden Plains Shire region, there is a possibility of latent demand in the future.

The ERASS data shows that the Victorian participation rate is 3.4%, while neighbouring Councils of Colac and the Surf Coast's registered players reflect 1.46% and 1.59% of the population. Using these rates as a benchmark, Golden Plains Shire may have players in the region of 249 to 271. With the Golden Plains Shire population projected to grow by 61%, the absolute participation figures for the region can potentially grow to between 400 and 436.

Additional planning for Football (Soccer) is proposed within the Recreation Strategy Plan as well as the promotion of shared playing facilities to maximise opportunities to participate.

There is an opportunity to develop facilities at the proposed Bruce's Creek Sporting Precinct in order to increase participation.



4 Regional Findings & Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

The following guiding directions and considerations have been prepared in response to the identified key issues. These require greater future attention in order to create the most positive impact on the provision of Football (Soccer) for the G21 region.

The overall guiding direction for the G21 region is the continued collaborative working of all partners in the future support, development and provision for Football (Soccer). Regional partners include Sport and Recreation Victoria, all participating Local Government Authorities, Football Federation Victoria and Leisure Networks.

The alignment of planning at all levels to ensure resources are directed towards priority projects and developments. The integration of service delivery at the local level will ensure that Football (Soccer) development initiatives, competitions, programs and activities are provided in a coordinated way.

Lead agencies will vary across partners in terms of how facilities and activities are delivered, but all should be involved in their development and implementation. Continued investment into communication and networking should be undertaken to create management efficiencies. Coordinated funding initiatives should also be developed to address regional needs as well as local.

In future, it would be beneficial for project partners to prepare a Local Government, SRV and FFV Football Development Strategy at the state level. This will ensure Football (Soccer) participation and development is driving facility provision, rather than available facilities influencing activities.

In regard to the Wimmera South Coast Zone, FFV's facility framework identifies regional football hubs in Ballarat and Geelong which will serve the needs of the zone (Stage 1 of the Ballarat facility has been completed and stage 2 construction will begin in 2011). A potential site for the Geelong facility has been identified in Armstrong Creek. These regional scale facilities will need to be driven and implemented by Councils, with support from SRV and FFV.

4.2. Regional Strategy

4.2.1 Regional Priorities

A number of key sport and government stakeholders were engaged through a Master Class with a representative from the English FA on local club development in the UK. This was to identify issues, constraints and opportunities influencing the planning, provision and growth of Football (Soccer) in the G21 region. The Consulting Team has refined the key issues following consultation with project partners and stakeholders into priority areas for inclusion in the Strategy. Priority areas and objectives are:

1. Alignment of Football (Soccer) planning

Align planning for Football (Soccer) at local, municipal and regional levels to ensure that all levels of the planning cycle are working collaboratively to deliver benefits to the community and the sport.

2. Participation and pathways

Facilitate the growth in number and diversity of Football (Soccer) participants and programs available across the G21 region through a structured pathway.

3. Facility management

Maximise the use of existing facilities by initiating and supporting localised facility investment projects, whilst providing a coordinated regional

response to catering for training and match facilities through a proposed hierarchy model.

4. Club management and support

Initiate and support club development activities that respond to club needs and changing demands, providing particular emphasis on supporting financial sustainability, coach development and club / business planning.

5. Resourcing and partnering

Ensure regional resources (financial and other) and efforts are coordinated to provide greater emphasis on regional delivery and to avoid the duplication of major facilities.

Each of these areas presents a range of issues identified as potentially constraining or influencing the current and future provision for Football (Soccer) and Football (Soccer) facilities within the region and individual localised areas.

4.2.2 Alignment of Football (Soccer) Planning

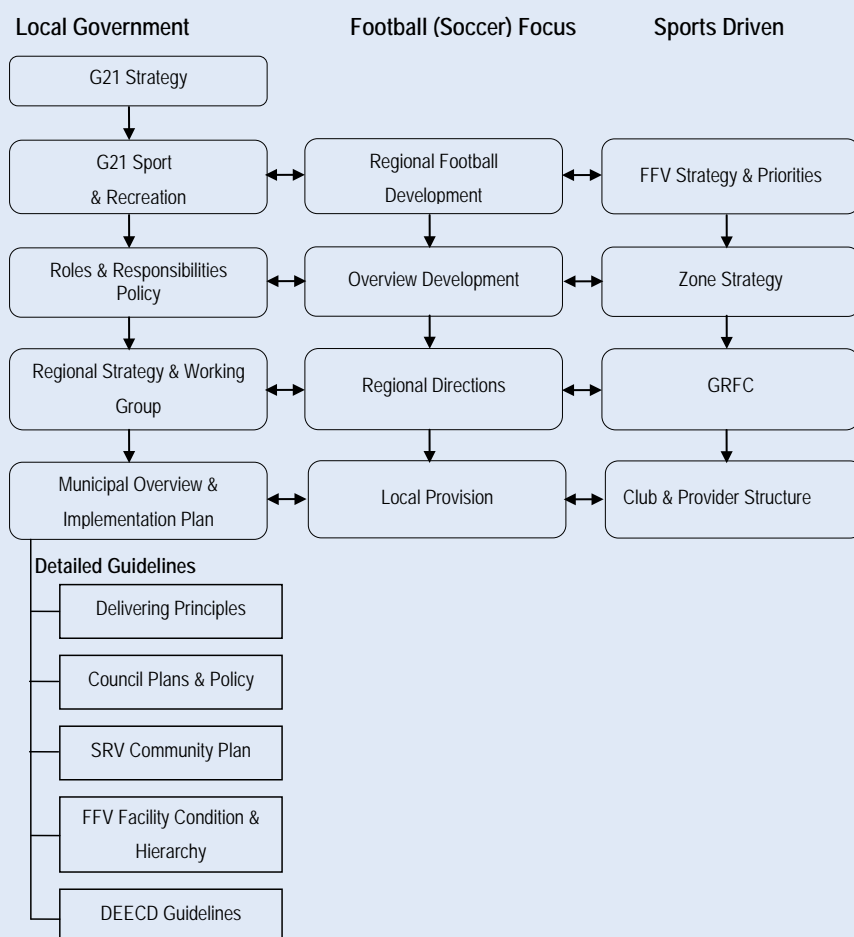
Objective

Align planning for Football (Soccer) at local, municipal and regional levels to ensure that all levels of the planning cycle are working collaboratively to deliver benefits to the sport.

Findings Summary

The creation and implementation of local and state government, sport and club specific strategies and policy directions ultimately impact, support and influence the provision for Football (Soccer) at all levels. The preparation of this Strategy has highlighted a lack of alignment between government policy and community planning (regarding Football (Soccer)) with peak body directions, competition structures and game development objectives.

Figure 2: Integrated Planning Framework



4 Regional Findings & Recommendations

The following integrated Planning Framework for the Region explores how local government and sport can work together with this strategy integrating the focus of all parties.

Each Council is inherently different in the way in which they will approach issues facing them and consequently will differ in the way they currently support and provide for Football (Soccer) and the way they will cater for the sport in the future. A focus on improved communication, partnership working and the alignment of planning objectives between government (local and state), the FFV and local clubs is a clear direction of this Strategy at all levels of Football (Soccer) provision.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided from the analysis done in the preceding section:

1. Ensure representative(s) from SRV, Councils, FFV, G21 other indoor and recreational Football (Soccer) leagues and clubs continue to collectively plan for Football (Soccer), and oversee the implementation of regional recommendations by collectively agreeing the priorities of the implementation plan annually through a FFV led process that is fully inclusive of all Councils and the GRFC.
2. FFV to use GRFC as a communications channel with clubs in the region in the course of strategic and facilities planning.
3. Each partner to note the

principles proposed in the G21 Regional Facility Hierarchy into relevant planning documents and policies where appropriate.

4. FFV to revise current facility guidelines in-line with the proposed G21 Regional Facility Hierarchy and to produce new criteria, guidelines and design suggestions (or samples) specifically for 'new facilities' or redevelopment of current facilities.
5. Align all sources of facility development between State and Local Government and FFV to assist in the delivery of priority regional projects.
6. Relevant lead agencies to engage with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to plan for community Football (Soccer) facilities within existing schools and in new school developments, especially around Armstrong Creek.
7. FFV and representatives from the City of Geelong and the Surf Coast Shire to explore opportunities for land gain for new facility development.
8. New venue developments for all Councils to be FFV's C-Class venue standard.

4.2.3 Participation & Pathways

Objective

Facilitate the growth in number and diversity of Football (Soccer) participants and programs available across the G21 region through a structured pathway.

Findings Summary

All government and Football (Soccer) partners have an overall aim of increasing access to Football (Soccer) participation opportunities for the broader community. Strategies aimed at achieving this include enhancing multi-use and shared use of facilities, providing safe and welcoming facilities, increasing volunteering, providing a diversity of opportunities, encouraging partnerships, supporting growth in low participation segments and ensuring safety and risk management issues are addressed.

Participation in Football (Soccer) is growing in the G21 region and participation projections indicate that its growth will continue to be strong and significant over the medium-term. Demand for Football (Soccer) already exceeds supply in some localised areas. Catering for future players will require some immediate action to capitalise on and enhance growth. Critical to supporting and encouraging further participation across the region will be greater integration of participation development and service delivery. Greater focus on 'Football (Soccer) development' as a whole will enable the enhancement

of partnership networks and provide more emphasis on the delivery of coordinated and integrated Football (Soccer) programs and services.

It will be important for government and Football (Soccer) to continue to provide a focus on supporting all levels of the participation pathway, and include target groups (e.g. juniors, CALD communities, women and girls, people with a disability), competition and training, elite performance and casual participation in all aspects of Football (Soccer) planning. Better support for clubs to deliver coordinated programs at all levels of participation will be important for their success and influence on the development of the game.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided from the analysis done in the preceding section:

1. FFV to develop a Regional Junior Football (Soccer) Development Plan with the GRFC that focuses on aligning player pathways and program delivery across the region with clubs and schools in implementing state and national body directions.
2. FFV to continue the Zone Development Officer role's focus on coach development and enhancing (and linking) player development pathways. FFV to consider appointing a regional administrator or CEO for the region.
3. FFV to align planning for target audience participation and

program delivery (e.g. women and girls, CALD communities, people with disabilities) with other providers and seek support with delivery from the SRV Sports Programs Unit and Leisure Networks.

4. Councils and FFV to continue to focus on providing and facilitating opportunities for participation in club level Football (Soccer). FFV to initiate, resource and develop the elite pathway level programs and competition as necessary.
5. All partners to investigate opportunities to provide and foster variant forms of Football (Soccer) (i.e. Futsal, 5-a-side, 7-a-side, social competition) to introduce new participants to the game and to support formal competition structures.
6. Councils to identify the opportunity to grow the indoor game. within their recreation/sport strategies

7. As part of the "new growth" corridor (e.g. Armstrong Creek), Councils to consider the development of a football (soccer) hub with an emphasis on programming as part of the management responsibilities.

8. Councils to consider providing clubs with further incentives for the season to achieve target participation rates for women, juniors and other low participation target audiences to encourage growth and programming.
9. Council to develop a set of performance measures with the FFV that should be integrated into lease and licensing arrangements, to ensure maximum asset utilisation.

4.2.4 Facility Development and Management

Objectives

Table 1: Summary of Football (Soccer) pitch provision in the G21 region

Floodlighting	Senior Floodlights	Senior No Floodlights	Junior Floodlights	Junior No Floodlights	Training Floodlights	Training No Floodlights	LGA Total
City of Greater Geelong	13	12	1	0	0	3	29
Surf Coast Shire	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Colac Otway Shire	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
Golden Plains Shire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G21 Total	15	14	1	0	0	5	35

4 Regional Findings & Recommendations

1. Maximise the use of existing facilities by initiating and supporting local facility upgrade projects
2. Develop new club-level facilities in areas of population growth, including support for the establishment of new clubs where needed.

Findings Summary

Council partners identified that 35 pitches at 20 venues are being used for Football (Soccer) across the region, most of which are senior in size with many floodlit. The presence of dedicated junior pitches across the region was minimal, and only two dedicated training areas were identified. At the time of writing, no synthetic Football (Soccer) pitches were provided within the G21 region (noting that a synthetic surface in the Surfcoast Shire is expected to be completed by late 2011). Table 35 provides a summary of pitch provision across the region by Council.

The range of playing pitch issues identified throughout the region is both extensive and complex.

The management and seasonal allocation of pitches is conflicting with the changing nature of the sport - summer competition, pre and off-season training is becoming more prevalent at the local club level. Over-use of pitches was observed at many grounds, contributing to already low quality surfaces and over extending their capacity by trying to cater for new growth.

Across all facilities throughout the Geelong region there were 26 male only change rooms, 12 unisex change rooms and no female only change rooms. The key influence on unisex provision was attributed to facility age and/or whether the associated pavilions had undergone recent renovation or upgrade.

The general differentiation between male and female / unisex change rooms was the provision of urinals and unscreened (or

communal) shower facilities. In all other circumstances, provision requirements for male and female change rooms are generally the same.

Shortfalls exist in player change room provision across the region. The FFV required ratio of two player change rooms per pitch in use was only met in four venues – Evans Reserve, Lake (Len Trewin) Reserve, Horsehoe Bend Park (The Quay) and Pirron Yallock Recreation Reserve all being single pitch facilities.

Using the current FFV facility requirements as a guideline, significant shortfalls also exist in the provision of dedicated first-aid and official's rooms. Consultation identified that these shortages, combined with the quality of some facilities and a lack of dedicated women or unisex change rooms suitable for women and girls were significant issues constraining the development of clubs.

Football (Soccer) facilities are a finite resource and continued overuse of pitches is not sustainable. Without new facilities, the projected increasing number of Football (Soccer) participants will place unsustainable pressure on existing facilities. Many issues identified were often related to planning and funding issues experienced by individual Councils or related to club and participation growth that is constrained by a lack of available and accommodating facilities within localised areas or

Table 2: Summary of change room provision in the G21 region

	Total Number	Male	Female	Unisex	First Aid	Officials
Greater Geelong City	30	24	0	6	3	8
Surf Coast Shire	4	0	0	4	0	1
Colac Otway Shire	4	2	0	2	0	1
Golden Plains Shire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	38	26	0	12	3	10

unrestrained increases in team numbers.

The key challenge for the G21 region in providing future facilities is 'how should they be provided, where shall they be provided and for whom?' Demand for facilities varies across municipalities and for different activities, as does supply in terms of number, type and quality. Balancing existing facility renewal with the provision of new facilities across the region will be significant, particularly in aligning local government asset management strategies and capital works programs with the key regional needs of Football (Soccer). A regional facility hierarchy has been prepared to guide future facility provision across the region.

New facility provision within future Football (Soccer) growth areas will be strategically important, and a higher priority than new facility development in other established urban areas. Competition for sport specific facility developments in growth areas is extensive, and government planners will need to carefully weigh the community benefits of providing single or multi-purpose facilities, as well as providing indoor and/or outdoor facilities with synthetic surfaces to support activity growth.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed:

1. Each Council to note and utilise the G21 Regional Facility Hierarchy and continually review

the gaps in their provision, then prioritise capital works projects that address gaps yearly.

2. Each Council to assess the capacity of each individual male change room for conversion potential to 'unisex' to help promote female participation within the club network.
3. FFV to redefine facility guidelines and requirements and outline processes and timelines for improvements, giving consideration to Council capital works programs and facility improvement policies.
4. Councils and FFV to work together with clubs to identify any further shortcomings in current facilities used for higher-level FFV competition, and agree on an individual course of action for each of them.
5. The Surf Coast and Golden Plains Shire municipalities to consider designating a minimum of one key venue to upgrade for pre and off-season training activities, as well as for general community and club use. This should be a FFV C-Class venue.
6. Ensure all Local and Single Pitch Facilities provided can at least meet existing FFV C-Class guidelines.
7. Ensure all new Football (Soccer) pitch developments are supported by a 2-player change room to pitch ratio, and include the provision of associated officials and first aid rooms.
8. Greater Geelong and Surf Coast Shire to provide at least one FIFA accredited synthetic Football (Soccer) pitch by 2016 that is accessible for shared use by multiple clubs as well as for recreational and player development programs.
9. Councils to consider the provision of flexible and programmable synthetic Football (Soccer) pitches in new school and leisure centre developments and environments.
10. FFV to consider the establishment of a 'technical advisory service' to assist Councils in facility and site planning and development processes (assistance could include advice on design briefs, specifications, tender evaluation processes, concept designs etc.)
11. FFV to investigate the potential of sourcing or establishing an accredited testing and certification solution for FIFA endorsed synthetic grass products that are financially achievable for Councils and facility providers.

4.2.5 Club Management and Support

Objective

Initiate and support club development activities that respond to club needs and changing demands, providing particular emphasis on supporting financial sustainability, coach development and club / business planning.

4 Regional Findings & Recommendations

Findings Summary

Historically the governance structure and operations of Football (Soccer) in Victoria have been focused on running and administering competitions and the management of elite teams, with minimal support in terms of club development and management assistance provided to clubs via the peak body.

Clubs have been generally left to their own devices to exist, operate and evolve through the old GRFA structure. Club development has traditionally been led by a few strong market leaders, with other clubs following unsupported by the existing governance structure. However, the FFV has restructured the region, and in-line with new national directions, has implemented significant development programs with greater emphasis on club development, general targeted participation and better access to player development pathways. The FFV has established the new regional committee which has seen representation on the (new) GRFC from each of the Football (Soccer) clubs through their Presidents. The GRFC has already met and is identifying with the FFV the regional priorities.

One of the key issues within the Clubs is the need/perception that some Clubs need to compete with the Melbourne Leagues. FFV as part of their strategy for the zone need

to address this issue by building capacity and quality in the zone, so that there is not a need to travel.

Council's have supported facility development aspects of club development, but consultation with clubs highlighted limited assistance concerning key club operational areas such as volunteer support, coach development and strategic and financial planning. A greater focus by partners on Football (Soccer) development and provision, rather than concentrating solely on the facility development aspects of sport and club development would be beneficial in assisting club growth. In-line with this focus, clubs may need to review their expenditure priorities towards key items that provide overall sustainable benefits to all club operational areas.

New club development will be important to consider in Football (Soccer) growth areas and to coordinate with localised facility provision.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed:

1. FFV to work with Leisure Networks to refine and roll-out FFV's new club strategic planning program to assist clubs in planning for their long-term sustainability.

2. FFV to consider the timing of club affiliation and player registration fees to assist in club budgeting prior to the commencement of the regular season.
3. FFV to promote and deliver the Football (Soccer) ACE program to clubs.
4. FFV and Council representatives to work together to plan new club development in the future Football (Soccer) as participation and clubs grow in the G21 region.
5. FFV to work with Colac Otway Shire Council and the present club to develop a participation strategy to recapture lost players and grow Football (Soccer) in the Colac area again.

4.2.6 Resourcing & Partnering

Objective

Ensure regional resources (financial and other) and efforts are coordinated to provide greater emphasis on regional delivery and to avoid the duplication of major facilities.

Findings summary

The resourcing and implementation of proposed strategies and actions will be critical to the successful support for Football (Soccer) throughout the region. Gaining regional adoption of the Football (Soccer) planning framework, strategic directions and recommendations by all partners will be important in order to develop a regional strategy that can be implemented at the municipal level.

Resourcing regional and municipal implementation activities will include: developing strategy ownership and endorsement; regional communication; project coordination; addressing the cost of delivering on facility needs and accessing required funding. Resourcing also links to the alignment of Football (Soccer) planning and considers the roles and responsibilities to be played by clubs, Councils and peak bodies.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed:

1. Empower key representatives of the regional network as strategy champions to guide strategy delivery and implementation.
2. FFV to be the lead agency responsible for facilitating and coordinating on regional recommendations (or specific projects) relevant to broader development of the game, clubs and facilities.
3. SRV to continue to fund synthetic pitches and expand its synthetic turf funding program or to create a specific program in conjunction with assistance from FFV.
4. SRV to consider providing packaged funding for the collective roll-out of Regional Centres proposed in this Strategy.

5. FFV to consider providing funding contributions towards the development of Regional Centre facilities, where Centre of Excellence programs are delivered and amenities provided.
6. FFV and SRV to investigate funding opportunities to extend programs that initiate and deliver coordinated target audience activities throughout the G-21 Region.

Where priorities align, all Councils are encouraged to utilise relevant grant funding to improve Municipal Venues and develop synthetic pitches. In addition, working closer with DEECD to partner with educational institutions is recommended.

4.3 Regional Facility Needs

Football (Soccer) facilities are a finite resource across the G21 region, and without new facilities the projected increasing number of Football (Soccer) participants will place additional pressure on existing

Table 3: Resourcing and funding roles

	Club	FFV/FFA	Councils	Leisure Networks	Sport & Recreation	Note Ref
Participation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Competition	✓	✓				
Elite		✓			✓	
Events		✓	✓		✓	
Players	✓	✓			✓	1
Coaches	✓	✓			✓	2
Umpires/Refs	✓	✓			✓	2
Administrators		✓	✓		✓	2
Facilities (Local)	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Facilities (Regional)	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Volunteers		✓		✓	✓	2

4 Regional Findings & Recommendations

facilities and constrain future growth. Additionally, a range of opportunities to improve and develop the facility network exists across all participating Councils, including the upgrading and renewal of existing facilities and the development of new facilities – at the local and municipal levels.

Consultation with clubs and other project stakeholders identified that any future facility development should initially provide a focus on supporting the development of junior and club participation, competition and new growth. Secondly, it will be important to deliver facilities that provide for higher level competition as the need and demand grows, in conjunction with further enhancement of local talent along the FFV player pathway.

1. Regional Facility

Discussions regarding the need and demand for a regional facility or facilities located within the G21 region have been highlighted through all stages of this study. The exact definition however, of a 'regional Football (Soccer) facility' and views on who it should provide for are conflicting across the range of project stakeholders. As such, definitions for a range of regional facilities have been developed (under the proposed hierarchy) and will ultimately be driven by the services, programs, users and management models it can deliver, rather than solely focussing on the facilities that it provides.

The extent to which a regional facility should be provided has been previously explored in detail through the G21 Regional Football Facility Feasibility Study (July 2009). The study investigated likely regional facility catchment areas across the region, identified key considerations in its design and identified key location and provision rationale and principles.

The Study drew the following conclusions regarding the need for, and provision of, a regional facility within the G21 region¹⁶ :

- Through project research, analysis and definition of a regional facility and its role within Greater Geelong, no existing site or location across the existing facility network was identified as providing the necessary facilities, likely usage capacity and management model to serve as a regional facility
- Based on the principles and discussion provided in this report, one key location with the potential to be developed to a regional level standard has been identified – the Armstrong Creek West Precinct. The timeframe for development of this area is medium to long-term and is dependent upon the Armstrong Creek development progressing from its Eastern boundary across to the west. Installation and connection of

major services and success of sub-divisions and land sales will ultimately determine how quickly the development site will progress.

- While the Armstrong Creek development site continues to progress, an immediate opportunity for a regional scale facility to be operational by 2011 exists within the Surf Coast Civic and Community Precinct, located within Torquay. At the time of writing detail design projects were underway and the Surf Coast Shire is progressing to a construction date of November 2011. The facility when fully constructed will provide a mix of three (or more) full-size floodlit natural and synthetic turf pitches and could service the current additional demand for local and regional competition. It would provide opportunities to conduct FFV Champions League competitions, Zone development squad training, local club matches and training, coaching clinics etc. and act as a 'regional centre' until such time as the Armstrong Creek development is completed.
- Further partnership work will be required between the

¹⁶ G21 Regional Football (Soccer) Facility Feasibility Study, Smart Connection Company, July 2009.

Surf Coast Shire, FFV and the club network to ensure current planning can address regional needs as well as local requirements.

Recommendations

In assessing the key regional facility development needs across the G21 Region, the Study identified the following key recommendations:

1. FFV and State Government to assist Local Government to progress existing development plans at the Surf Coast Civic and Community Precinct (Torquay) and Canterbury Road East (Lara) in the short-term to meet immediate club needs.
2. Utilise the Surf Coast Civic and Community Precinct, when completed in 2011, as a regional centre to provide some of the needed regional Football (Soccer) services and programs, until such time as a regional centre can be developed within Armstrong Creek.
3. FFV, City of Greater Geelong Council and State Government to commence planning for a Regional Centre (providing a minimum of 2 grass and 2 synthetic pitches and A and C class amenities) to be located within the Armstrong Creek development area (Armstrong Creek East or West Precinct). Provision will be targeted towards a regional training venue initially (by 2016), with potential to develop into the A class components by 2021. Likely investment required of \$6 million to \$8 million.
4. Plan any new development (higher than club level facility) to provide at least one synthetic pitch (FIFA licensed product) to assist in meeting club training, FFV Zone and community use requirements.

5 Municipal Priorities





5.1 City of Greater Geelong

Key Focus Area	Proposed Recommendations
Alignment of Football (Soccer) planning	<p>GG 1. Support Surf Coast Shire to upgrade and improve the Connewarre Reserve to a Municipal Venue and promote its location and facility offering to Bellarine Peninsula based clubs.</p> <p>GG 2. To plan for Armstrong Creek as the key development for Football (Soccer) in Geelong from the period 2012 onwards.</p>
Participation and pathways	<p>GG 3. Work with the FFV to focus on the introduction of local Football (Soccer) activities through the existing primary and secondary school network.</p> <p>GG 4. Work with FFV clubs to lead the expansion of Futsal Geelong across the existing indoor sports stadiums in Geelong, prioritising the Bellarine Aquatic and Sports Centre and existing school based stadiums.</p> <p>GG 5. Work with FFV on establishment of new clubs in population growth areas</p>
Facility management	<p>GG 6. Continue the planning and development of the Shell Road Oval precinct in Ocean Grove and ensure that pitch improvements, lighting and supporting change and social amenities are provided for Football (Soccer).</p> <p>GG 7. Continue the planning and development of a dedicated Football (Soccer) facility in Lara in-line with the Lara Outdoor Recreation Facilities Study. In the short-term, support the line marking and use of Lara Recreation Reserve for Football (Soccer) training and competition activities.</p> <p>GG 8. Initiate the planning and design of a new pavilion at Grovedale Recreation Reserve and develop to the scope and scale commensurate with a two floodlit pitch Football (Soccer) facility. This venue could potentially serve as a Municipal Venue to the Southern and city areas of Geelong, particularly prior to the development of Armstrong Creek facilities.</p> <p>GG 9. Develop the Drysdale / Clifton Springs sports precinct as a Municipal Venue to service the Bellarine Peninsula area.</p> <p>GG 10. Prioritise the development of one Municipal Venue to serve the network of Northern Geelong based clubs. Consider the options of Hume Reserve, Stead Park and Myers Reserve in-line with current master plans for each site and or Consider the development of a synthetic non aligned pitch at the Leisuretime Centre.</p> <p>GG 11. Council and FFV to explore all options to utilise Skilled Stadium (Kardinia Park) as the preferred major events match venue and work with FFV to attract such events.</p> <p>GG 12. Continue to plan and align future facility development with new education facility developments.</p> <p>GG 13. When demand exceeds supply for Futsal activities at BVAC and Leisuretime Centre, negotiate use of The Geelong Arena to create additional Futsal competition opportunities at the venue. Explore the future development of Futsal as part of Council's Indoor Sports strategy</p>
Club management and support	<p>GG 14. Consider Council's formal role in the way it supports the ongoing development of private Football (Soccer) clubs based in the City of Greater Geelong to ensure consistency across the GRFC network.</p>
Resourcing and partnering	<p>GG 15. Continue to work with FFV on facility design related projects outlined in various reserve master plans and align outcomes with SRV and other government related funding partners.</p>

5 Municipal Priorities

5.2 Surf Coast Shire

Key Focus Area	Proposed Recommendations
Alignment of Football (Soccer) planning	SC 1. Continue the dialogue with neighbouring municipalities in the early planning for proposed facilities and identify opportunities to work with Surf Coast Soccer Club and FFV for establishing new clubs within Surf Coast's boundaries.
Participation and pathways	SC 2. Work with the FFV to focus on the introduction of local Football (Soccer) activities through the existing primary and secondary school network. SC 3. Work with FFV and the City of Greater Geelong to expand the Futsal Geelong program across the existing indoor sports stadiums in the Surf Coast Shire. SC 4. Work with FFV on the establishment of recreational and development programs at the new sythetic pitch facility.
Facility management	SC 5. Continue the planning and development of the Surf Coast Civic and Community Precinct in Torquay and ensure that a minimum of one FIFA 1 or 2 Star synthetic pitch is provided. SC 6. Consider designating the Football (Soccer) facilities at the Surf Coast Civic and Community Precinct as a Regional Centre to service the G21 region in the short to medium term and consider the relocation of the Surf Coast Soccer Club to the venue as a key tenant. SC 7. Redevelop Connewarre Reserve and its supporting amenities to a Municipal Venue and promote its location and facility offering to Bellarine Peninsula and Southern Geelong based clubs. SC 8. Continue to plan and align future facility development with new education facility developments, in particular the indoor stadium development at Torquay College.
Club management and support	SC 9. Following relocation of the Surf Coast Soccer Club to the Surf Coast Civic and Community Precinct, conduct an EOI for the ongoing licensed used of The Quay Reserve by any other emerging Surf Coast Shire based Football (Soccer) clubs.

5.3 Colac Otway Shire

Key Focus Area	Proposed Recommendations
Alignment of Football (Soccer) planning	CO 1. Continue to work with the Corangamite Shire to support the ongoing activities of the Colac Otway Rovers.



Key Focus Area	Proposed Recommendations
Participation and pathways	<p>CO 2. Work with the FFV to focus on the introduction of local Football (Soccer) activities through the existing primary school network.</p> <p>CO 3. Assist Colac Otway Rovers to link with Bluewater Fitness Centre, the Geelong Futsal competitions and FFV to develop a G21 wide Futsal program across the existing network of indoor sports stadiums (being Bluewater Fitness Centre and Apollo Bay P12 College).</p> <p>CO 4. Work with FFV and the club on participation strategies to rebuild junior and Small Sided Football opportunities</p>
Facility management	<p>CO 5. Continue planning and development of the Beechy Precinct and ensure that provision for Football (Soccer) training and playing pitches is accommodated within precinct development</p> <p>CO 6. Support the Pirron Yallock Recreation Reserve Committee of Management to undertake minor oval redevelopment works to create two full-size pitches on the site.</p> <p>CO 7. Pirron Yallock Recreation Reserve should continue to serve as the main base for Colac Otway Rovers activities in the Shire in the short to medium term. Limit the number of satellite venues (and in-turn the investment into their improvement for Football (Soccer)) and seek a long-term solution to provide a main facility base for Colac Otway Rovers within the Colac township.</p> <p>CO 8. Negotiate the use of Central Reserve for Colac Otway Rovers to run Football (Soccer) open days and any marquee games or community Football (Soccer) events.</p> <p>CO 9. Continue to plan and align future facility development with new education facility developments.</p> <p>CO 10. To review feasibility of upgrading Central Reserve rectangular area (ex hockey), to allow it to be redeveloped as a senior pitch and training ground facility.</p>
Club management and support	<p>CO 11. Support Colac Otway Rovers and FFV to develop club administrative structures which enable the growth and sustainability of the club</p> <p>CO 12. Support the FFV to deliver its Football (Soccer) ACE program to Colac Otway Rovers affiliated clubs.</p>
Resourcing and partnering	<p>CO 13. Advocate for Council funds to support proposed Pirron Yallock Recreation Reserve ground realignment and development and support any Colac Otway Rovers applications made to external grant funding bodies.</p>

5 Municipal Priorities

5.4 Golden Plains Shire

Key Focus Area	Proposed Recommendations
Alignment of Football (Soccer) planning	GP 1. Work with the City of Ballarat in the future planning and development of the Ballarat Regional Soccer Centre (at Moorshead Park) to ensure that residents and future clubs based in the Northern area of the Shire can access a regional centre and existing club network.
Participation and pathways	GP 2. Work with the FFV to focus on the introduction of local Football (Soccer) activities through the existing primary school network. GP 3. Work with the City of Greater Geelong and FFV to develop a Futsal program across the existing network of indoor sports stadiums.
Facility management	GP 4. Continue planning for the Bannockburn Sports Precinct and ensure that two full-size dedicated Football (Soccer) pitches are developed during Stage 1 or 2 of the precinct development. GP 5. Undertake a cost-benefit analysis of providing a FIFA 1 Star synthetic pitch as one of the two proposed Football (Soccer) pitches at the Bannockburn Sports Precinct. GP 6. Ensure all stadium courts are line marked for Futsal and support Committees of Management to purchase Futsal goals. GP 7. Work with Recreation Reserve Committees of Management to introduce Football (Soccer) activities on existing reserve sites. Priority should be given to introducing Football (Soccer) at one central location in the Southern area of the Shire (suggest Bannockburn Recreation Reserve) and one in the Northern area (suggest Smythesdale Recreation Reserve). GP 8. Continue to plan and align future facility development with residential growth areas, and where possible, with new education facility developments.
Club management and support	GP 9. Support FFV to help establish a local Football (Soccer) club within the Bannockburn area to create a player base for the future development of the Bannockburn Sports Precinct.
Resourcing and partnering	GP 10. Advocate for Council funds to support proposed Bannockburn Recreation Precinct developments and align objectives and applications with SRV (or other government) funding sources. GP 11. Continue the dialogue with neighbouring municipalities in the early planning for proposed facilities and identify key clubs and user groups from inside and outside Golden Plain's boundaries.





Acknowledgements

The preparation of this Strategic Report has been a collaborative effort of the partner organisations. The Consulting Team wishes to thank the Project Steering Group representatives for their involvement in, and commitment to, the preparation of this document.

In particular, we wish to thank Paul Jane (City of Greater Geelong), Ian Waugh and Janice Lane (Surf Coast Shire Council), Marg Scanlon and Ian Seuren (Colac Otway Shire Council), Louise White and Shann Briggs (Golden Plains Shire Council), Caroline Jordan (Leisure Networks) and Phil Currie (Sport and Recreation Victoria) for their project management and coordination of project partners. The Borough of Queenscliffe has been included in some areas of the study due to its geographical location within the regional context, but is not part of the overall strategy.

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We wish to also acknowledge the significant contribution made by a number of other stakeholders in the development of this document, including Football (Soccer) clubs, community groups, peak bodies (including Football Federation Victoria and Leisure Networks) and many other staff of each participating Council.



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