



TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Sport and Recreation Facility Strategy

2018-2028





Cover image: Tony Ireland Stadium



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Acknowledgement to Country

Townsville City Council would like to acknowledge the Bindal and Gurambilbarra Wulgurukaba peoples as Traditional Owners of the land on which our Council operates. We pay respect to Elders past, present and future and value the traditions, cultures and aspirations of the first Australians of this land. We acknowledge and hold in great significance the valuable contribution that Traditional Owners have made and continue to make within the Townsville community.

Contributions

The contributions and cooperation of Townsville City Council and the Townsville community throughout the strategy development process are gratefully acknowledged. Particular thanks are extended to the Townsville City Council Mayor, Councillors and Officers, and Advisors from Queensland Government Sport and Recreation Services, Townsville.



The Queensland Government provided \$29,975 to Townsville City Council to develop a 10-year sport and recreation facility strategy for Townsville City to enable Queenslanders to participate in sport and recreation activities.

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Executive Summary

Sport is at the heart of Australian culture. It can unify a town or a region at footy finals time. It can stop the nation for a horse race on the first Tuesday in November. It can make families split their time between watching the Boxing Day Test Match and playing their own versions of backyard cricket during their holidays. It can make children of all ages train harder to become more like their sporting heroes.

Townsville City Council recognises the value of sport to the community. Sport and active recreation participation in the city is generally high and the range of activities on offer is broad. This strategy was developed to embrace the region's love of sport and physical activity by guiding Council's strategic approach to its facility network development, to further enhance participation opportunities and to recognise and further build on the efforts of local volunteers in running competitions. Additionally, the planning documents that have previously guided sport and recreation policy reached the end of their 10-year planning horizons in 2016.

The Townsville City Council Sport and Recreation Facility Strategy 2018-2028 will help Council to achieve its vision to become a leader in the provision of high-quality sport and recreation facilities, building on the liveability of Townsville and enhancing the health and wellbeing of the local community through active, inclusive and diverse participation opportunities.

Whilst this strategy addresses all types of sport and recreation in Townsville, the 11 club-based sports with the highest participation rates were identified and used to provide the basis for recommendations for the future provision of sport and recreation participation spaces. This strategy focuses on sport and recreation facilities only and does not address active transport infrastructure, facility master planning, parks and open space projects, sports tourism or planning for specific sports.

Broadly, this strategy makes recommendations in the following five key focus areas:

1. Data-driven recommendations for the establishment or enhancement of participation spaces to cater for the Top 11 sports in Townsville

- These recommendations are informed by an assessment of Townsville's existing sport and recreation parks and facilities, as well as existing and projected population trends and participation rates, overlaid with provisioning ratios for each of the most popular sports in Townsville

2. Recommendations for establishment or enhancement of participation spaces and ancillary sport and recreation facilities to cater for major and minor sports, driven by justifiable and rational club and association facility needs

- These recommendations are informed by comprehensive consultation conducted with state sporting organisations, local clubs and associations, the local community, local schools, Queensland Government Department of Housing and Public Works (Sport and Recreation Services), Council officers and the Mayor and Councillors

3. A recommendation for Council's ongoing provision of unstructured recreation spaces

- This recommendation is informed by community input gathered during preparation of this strategy and assessment of previous and current Council strategy and planning documents

4. Recommendations for future research, investigation, planning or the development of specific region-wide strategies, which should be carried out by Townsville City Council to address identified sport and recreation facility needs in greater detail

- These recommendations are informed by those facility needs identified at a high level during preparation of this strategy, where greater detail and focus is required to direct Council's future aspirations and investment

5. Recommendations to guide the ongoing business improvement of sport and recreation clubs and associations in Townsville

- These recommendations are informed by some of the typical organisational challenges faced by sport and recreation clubs in Townsville, as well as more broadly in Queensland and Australia
- These recommendations are provided to help ensure the longevity of local clubs and associations, as well as their continued ability to service the participation needs of the community and their ability to manage and maintain Townsville City's leased sport and recreation assets

The recommendations below have been developed based on detailed consultation, collated information and research conducted during the development of this strategy. A thorough understanding of the sport and recreation needs of Townsville City has been developed throughout the process. These recommendations aim to guide the successful delivery of sport and recreation projects to enable Townsville City Council to become a leader in the provision of high-quality facilities, building on the liveability of Townsville and enhancing the health and wellbeing of the local community through active, inclusive and diverse participation opportunities.

The practical recommendations of this strategy are designed to allow Townsville City Council to make informed, strategic decisions in relation to its management of the sport and recreation facility network in Townsville. They support and allow for easier and committed decision making by Council which is strategic, prioritised, data driven, supported by policy and framework, well consulted and collaborative.



Pallarenda from Castle Hill

1. Recommendations

1.1 Key focus area 1 - Data-driven recommendations

The data-driven recommendations for future provision of sport and recreation participation spaces for Townsville City's highest participation sports are included in *Part C - Townsville's Top 11 Sports*, which presents:

- » A collated summary of the current facility provision relating to the 11 most participated in club-based sports in the region, namely AFL, basketball, cricket, football/soccer, hockey, netball, rugby league, rugby union, tennis, touch football and Oztag
- » Details of the adequacy of Townsville's facility provision for each of the Top 11 sports
- » Current levels of oversupply or undersupply of participation spaces for each included sport in Townsville City
- » Future projections for Townsville's facility needs for each included sport to 2021, 2026 and 2031

A summary of the recommended facility upgrades and facility development projects is included at Section 7. Further to the recommended facility provision in Part C, this plan recommends that Townsville City Council:

1.1.1 Review the current participation space supply performance for the Top 11 sports annually to keep this strategy up to date

- Council should monitor local provision of sport and recreation participation spaces against the provisioning ratios established for this strategy and by comparing actual population growth against population growth projections. The delivery timeframes for new or upgraded facilities can then be moderated accordingly

1.1.2 Conduct further provisioning investigations for sports not included in the Top 11 as new facilities are planned or requested, or as funding opportunities arise

- Townsville City Council has provisioned parts of its open space network specifically for particular sports, predominantly those included in the Top 11, acting as a *provider* of participation spaces. While Council has an opportunity to also act as a *connector*, by connecting smaller sports to appropriate facilities and organisations with sharing capacity, conducting further data-driven investigations into the facility demands of sports not listed in the Top 11 in this strategy is recommended to provide a basis for supporting facility development requests and external funding applications of local clubs and associations.

1.1.3 Provide training for relevant Council staff in the collection and management of data relating to sport and recreation

- Improved data management by Council staff will strengthen Council's understanding of the performance of its sport and recreation facility network and improve the ability of staff to respond strategically to the needs of local clubs and associations

1.1.4 Use the outputs of this strategy and improved data management skills of Council staff to develop and maintain a single point of truth relating to Townsville's sport and recreation facility network

1.2 Key focus area 2 - Ancillary Sport and Recreation Facility Needs

Recommendations for prioritised ancillary sport and recreation facilities are included in Part D. Ancillary facilities are those that support the primary participation space, e.g. clubhouse, canteen, toilets. This part of the strategy was informed by research and consultation and presents a list of projects that have been prioritised for inclusion due to their evidence of need and implementation viability. Projects listed in Part D cover a broad range of sport and recreation activities and organisations as well as the Top 11 sports.

Part D includes projects that were identified by local clubs and associations, as well as details of planned projects included in Council's contemporary master plans. Projects listed include new or upgraded participation spaces, lighting, clubhouses, change rooms, toilets, shade, storage and sport-specific facility upgrades.

Part D also lists clubs that identified other projects during consultation that were not prioritised due to clubs not having the financial capacity to contribute to the projects at this time. Townsville City Council is aware of the full list of prioritised and unprioritised projects, which have been provided in the complete data sources that informed this project. Some of these other projects may become higher priorities during the 10-year planning horizon of this strategy if funding opportunities arise, or based on the recommendations of future Council investigation (e.g. research and planning for liveability and outdoor recreation, mountain biking, motorsports, equestrian, indoor sports, aquatic sports, water sports, shooting sports and archery, inclusive participation and Indigenous participation) or in future master plans (e.g. the Murray Sports Regional Precinct Master Plan).

Further to the prioritised ancillary facility projects in Part D, this plan recommends that Townsville City Council:

1.2.1 Conduct regular investigations into advances in technology connected to sports facilities to ensure Townsville City Council is an early adopter of technology for improved field optimisation and environmental sustainability

1.3 Key focus area 3 - Recreation Facilities

In the 12 years since the previous sport and recreation strategies of the former Townsville City Council and Thuringowa City Council were prepared, the planning for and delivery of active recreation spaces, active transport networks and recreation facilities in parks and open space in Townsville has improved, in line with a significant focus on well-planned parks in Council's planning scheme.

Examples of recreation facilities successfully delivered by Council include:

- » The Strand precinct - rockpool, water park, fitness equipment, play spaces for all ages and all abilities, community open space and wide, multi-access pathways
- » Peggy Banfield Park upgrades - organised sporting areas (two new football playing fields and four grass netball training courts) as well as recreational facilities including dog off leash areas, play spaces for all ages and all abilities, pathways, new community multisport oval, half basketball court, two hard courts for community tennis and netball, amenities block and fitness equipment
- » Corcoran Park upgrades - recreational facilities including climbing and play spaces for all ages and all abilities, connecting pathways, half basketball court and fitness equipment

While this strategy has predominantly focused on recommendations for facility developments and upgrades relating to organised, club-based sport, the following recommendation is made in relation to informal active recreation:

1.3.1 It is recommended that Townsville City Council continue its focus on providing active recreation facilities and infrastructure that encourages locals and visitors to remain physically active where they live, work and play

The implementation of this recommendation includes Council's delivery of the recreational projects included in the *Townsville2020 Master Plan*, including:

- » The new Townsville Stadium Precinct, including hotel, training field, Centre of Excellence and Rehabilitation, and student accommodation
- » The Mount Louisa Open Space Master Plan, particularly including new opportunities for mountain biking, hiking, trail running and walking
- » The increased activation of Castle Hill for adventure tourism, hiking, trail running and walking
- » The proposed Townsville Strand Crystal Lagoon, providing year-round, safe swimming opportunities, as well as potential access for small non-powered recreational watercraft
- » Riverway Waterpark, planned to include water slides, better linkages to Ross River and child friendly water play spaces at the Riverway Lagoon

1.4 Key focus area 4 - Future Sport and Recreation Planning

The broad planning scope for this sport and recreation facility strategy, coupled with the challenges presented by inconsistencies in the data maintained by Council, has limited the depth to which the facility needs of sporting activities not covered in the Top 11 highest participation sports could be explored. Additional future planning is therefore recommended, as below:

1.4.1 It is recommended that Townsville City Council conduct future research, investigation, planning, or the development of specific region-wide strategies for the following:

- » Liveability and outdoor recreation
- » Mountain biking
- » Motorsports
- » Equestrian
- » Indoor sports
- » Aquatic centres
- » Water sports
- » Shooting and archery
- » Inclusive participation opportunities
- » Indigenous participation
- » Sport tourism



Corcoran Park

1.5 Key focus area 5 - Club and Association Improvement

The management and maintenance of Townsville's sport and recreation infrastructure, worth hundreds of millions of dollars, falls mainly on sport and recreation organisation volunteers. While volunteer organisations have the best of intentions, they do not necessarily have the skills required to manage sport and recreation assets at a level that is expected by the community.

Sport and recreation organisations must be aware that they are running not-for-profit businesses that need to have adequate financial capacity, human resource capacity (volunteers and staff where applicable), facility management practices and governance structures to be in a position to successfully develop and manage the region's facilities.

Local clubs and associations need additional assistance and support to develop and implement improved business models to ensure the viability of the sport and recreation facility network into the future. The recommendations below therefore address organisational challenges faced by sport and recreation clubs and are intended to guide Council in better supporting local volunteers.

It is recommended that Townsville City Council:

1.5.1 Conduct asbestos, safety and lighting audits of all Council-owned or controlled sport and recreation facilities as a priority and program remediation works as required to ensure user safety

1.5.2 Develop a consistent approach to sport and recreation facility tenure in the form of a tenure policy and appropriate implementation guidelines

- The tenure policy is to cover both Council freehold land as well as land held in trust by Council
- The policy should address the tenure application process, tenant compliance obligations, performance indicators for tenants, remissions and rebates, fees and charges, maintenance obligations of Council and tenants, a facility improvement or development application process, insurance and reporting

1.5.3 Implement a full-lifecycle facility maintenance system, to which Council and tenants have access, that allows tenants to self-maintain an asset register and that guides facility inspections and the implementation of programmed maintenance. The system should:

- Enable tenants to meet their maintenance obligations as per the tenure policy and guidelines
- Extend the useful life of Council's built sport and recreation assets
- Reduce the frequency of Council intervention due to non-conformance of maintenance obligations
- Enable Council to target support to clubs based on indications of clubs' asset management capabilities
- Provide visibility for Council over completed maintenance activities

1.5.4 Work collaboratively with organisations of the same or compatible activities, where they are suffering from similar facility constraints, to develop appropriate, shared access to sport and recreation facilities

- Council should explore opportunities to consolidate organisations at shared facilities, where such sharing would allow for growth in participation
- Examples of facility sharing and consolidation opportunities identified during consultation included water sports (rowing, dragon boating) and tennis at Queens Park

1.5.5 Continue to explore opportunities for equitable sport and recreation facility sharing between clubs and local schools, particularly as the demand for more participation spaces increases over the 10-year planning horizon of this strategy

1.5.6 Continue to partner with the Queensland Government to provide guidance, advice and support to clubs and associations in adopting and implementing contemporary governance and operational models that align with good business principles

- Skill development opportunities for the local sport and recreation workforce (volunteers and staff) may include training sessions, online support and resources and targeted assistance relating to areas such as financial management, workforce development and human resource management, and governance
- Council's support for clubs and associations can include guidance in the following areas:
 - Adopting and implementing contemporary governance and operational models that align with good business principles
 - Developing sporting programs that encourage participation among target groups (e.g. such as women and girls, Indigenous people, older people, and people with disabilities)
 - Facility sharing

1.5.7 Work with peak bodies and local clubs and associations to consider the composition of competition structures and participation opportunities to maximise facility utilisation and reduce barriers to participation

- Larger sports should consider the viability of either a home-and-away competition model or a centralised sports hub model (i.e. all clubs play in one place) to balance facility optimisation with participation opportunities near populated areas
- All sports should regularly analyse barriers to participation (including those identified during consultation for this strategy) and assess ways to remove or reduce these barriers wherever possible. For example, participation may be increased by offering more flexibility around training and competition structures, holding shorter seasons and running more social competitions that can attract people who currently don't participate in organised sport due to time constraints



Western Lions Park

2. Introduction

The Townsville City Council area is one of significant growth. The population has grown from around 159,482¹ in 2006 to an estimated resident population of 192,988² in 2017. With the population of the Townsville Local Government Area (LGA) predicted to rise to 265,015³ by 2031, a Council-wide strategic approach to planning is critical. This strategy has been prepared to provide Townsville City Council with a clear understanding of the community's needs relating to sport and active recreation facilities.

This strategy is intended to guide Council's role in achieving the following *Townsville Community Plan 2011-2021* guiding principle:

*Provide active and passive sport and recreation opportunities: An environment where there is a choice of active and passive recreational activities that contribute to the health and wellbeing of the city.*⁴

This sport and recreation facility strategy provides strategic direction and recommendations to ensure Townsville City Council fulfills its local government role as described in the *National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework (2011)*⁵ (see section 4.3).

2.1 The Vision for Sport and Recreation in Townsville

Sport and recreation are important considerations in ensuring healthy lifestyles for the Townsville community. Townsville City Council's vision for its sport and recreation facility network:

Townsville City Council will become a leader in the provision of high-quality sport and recreation facilities, building on the liveability of Townsville and enhancing the health and wellbeing of the local community through active, inclusive and diverse participation opportunities.

2.2 The Need for the Strategy

The planning documents that previously guided sport and recreation policy in the cities of Townsville and Thuringowa reached the end of their 10-year planning horizons in 2016. Since these plans were prepared, the economic and demographic circumstances of the city have undergone significant shifts, led most notably by the local government amalgamation of the two former LGAs in 2008. Council therefore prioritised the preparation of this new strategy to deliver quality sport and recreation outcomes.

While many of the projects identified in the 2006 planning documents have been successfully delivered by Townsville City Council, there remains significant opportunities to establish a well-considered, strategic approach to city-wide decision making for the development, enhancement and allocation of sport and recreation facilities.

Unfortunately, the lack of a cohesive, collaborative approach to sport and recreation planning identified in the 2006 strategies largely remains for Council. The various Council departments that deal with sport and recreation maintain different data sets and often react to community requests using divergent decision-making frameworks.

Whilst the lack of strategic planning documents has resulted in the propagation of legacy agreements that were established at a time when every club expected to have exclusive use of participation spaces and clubhouses with limited levels of accountability, it is more instructive to explore the downstream effects of such ad-hoc decisions, to give Council an understanding of the need to avoid them in the future. Examples of non-strategic decision making could include the granting of long terms of tenure over valuable community infrastructure to organisations that are not using the facilities anywhere near capacity, and sometimes excluding other community groups' access to 'their' buildings. In other cases, tenure may have been granted to one community organisation without a proper exploration of that particular organisation's ability to maximise usage of the facility.

While agreements such as these are executed with the best intentions by the Council officers involved, if they are based on out-of-date or non-existent data, or are made without properly considering the impact on Council's future options for the sites in question, they can have significant, long-term consequences and limit Council's ability to adequately provide for the community's sport and recreation needs. A strategic approach is vital for decision making for a Council area as geographically large and as populated as Townsville.

Townsville City Council therefore identified the need for this sport and recreation facility strategy to:

- » Address a lack of data regarding the Townsville community's participation in structured sport as well as active recreation
- » Consolidate data on existing facilities and quantify the existing extent of development at Townsville's sport and recreation facilities
- » Establish a strategic framework against which Council can test potential future sport and recreation facility development proposals
- » Determine the city's provision of sport and recreation facilities and whether these facilities are meeting the current needs of the community and if they have the capacity to meet community need into the future, addressing population growth and development sprawl
- » Determine the need for new or upgraded sport and recreation facilities
- » Prioritise the establishment and enhancement of sport and recreation infrastructure for the next 10 years
- » Provide relevant, up-to-date data to inform forward planning for capital works and master planning
- » Identify strategies to ensure efficient use of Council sport and recreation facilities
- » Identify emerging sport and active recreation trends and establish a strategic approach to respond to these trends

2.3 Exclusions

This project did not seek to address active transport infrastructure, facility master planning or parks and open space projects currently being delivered by Council. The strategy was intended to focus exclusively on sport and recreation facilities, with future sport and recreation program planning to be conducted by Council subsequently, building on the findings of this facility strategy. This strategy does not address sports tourism, liveability and outdoor recreation, or the detailed requirements of some specific activities including mountain biking, motorsports, equestrian, aquatic sports, water sports, shooting and archery, inclusive participation or Indigenous participation. Subsequent research and investigation for these activities is recommended.

2.4 Why a Data-Driven Approach?

The data-driven approach provides the best vehicle to deliver equitable support across Townsville's sporting community. This differs to the approach many Council's have taken to exclusively base their sport and recreation strategies on sports club survey results. These surveys typically ask clubs questions about their *perception* of the facilities they use. Given the time-poor nature of our volunteers, completing the survey usually falls to one committee member who may not be armed with the best information or opinions about their facilities. The survey outcomes therefore provide little more than an indication of a few peoples' level of satisfaction with sport and recreation activity areas and supporting infrastructure. Where Councils base significant investment decisions on such ambiguous results, it is unlikely that desired participation and health outcomes will be achieved in their communities.

¹ Profile.id. (2018) *City of Townsville | Community Profile*. Available at: <https://profile.id.com.au/townsville>

² *ibid.*

³ Queensland Treasury (2018) *Data Tables: Projected population, by local government area, Queensland, 2011 to 2036*. Available at: <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-projections/tables/proj-pop-lga-qld/index.php>

⁴ Townsville City Council (2010) *Townsville Community Plan 2011-2021*. p.16

⁵ Department of Health (2011) *National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework*. Commonwealth of Australia

To clearly separate what facility developments or upgrades a club volunteer *wants* from the sport and recreation *needs* of a community, a more rigorous approach is required to gather and interrogate accurate and up-to-date data.

The Queensland Government Department of Housing and Public Works contributed funding to this strategy through the *Sport and Recreation Planning Program*, with the desired result being a document that sets out a list of prioritised sport and recreation facility projects supported by evidence of need. But what constitutes ‘evidence’ in this context? Only by applying a data-driven approach can proper baselines and benchmarks be established to support proposals for new or upgraded sport and recreation facilities and to guide the best locations for participation spaces in the LGA.

Without accurate data, Councils are unable to make realistically-informed decisions and leave themselves open to the types of reactive planning that has occurred in Townsville previously. Councils do, and must continue to, listen to their constituents; hence the increase in the statutory importance of community engagement programs over the last few years. However, if consultation outcomes are not supported by data, which constitutes proper evidence, desired community outcomes may not be adequately achieved. The development of this sport and recreation facility strategy for Townsville City Council has involved thorough community consultation in conjunction with detailed data analysis.

Data sources gathered to compile this strategy included national participation benchmarks, local participation figures and expectations, population statistics and projections, the parks that do or could accommodate sport and recreation activities, existing participation spaces for the various sporting codes that are represented in the Townsville LGA, ancillary supporting infrastructure leased to clubs and associations, and the Council-managed sport and recreation assets within its parks network.

2.5 Planning Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities for Townsville City Council in embarking on this sport and recreation facility strategy included:

- » Establishing a single point of truth for the parks within Council’s network that provide sport and recreation facilities
- » Gathering current information regarding how the Townsville community takes part in sport and active recreation
- » Identifying shortfalls in facility provision
- » Engaging with the city’s providers of participation opportunities (local clubs and associations)
- » Identifying future research, investigation and planning required for Council to address specific opportunities following completion of the overall sport and recreation facility strategy

Challenges were encountered in compiling this strategy due to the lack of quality data recorded by Townsville City Council regarding its sport and recreation facility network. Specifically, this included:

- » A lack of consistent links within Council’s various data sources, for example park names and club names being expressed differently in each data source
- » Apparent internal disagreement regarding some park names
- » Conflicting park hierarchy classifications in the different data sources
- » Incomplete sport and recreation club information, including incomplete participation and facility data
- » Lack of sporting organisation and club development plans

An additional challenge was 44% of Townsville’s sport and recreation clubs engaged in the club survey. While the gaps in data that this somewhat limited engagement left have been addressed based on national data wherever possible, Council should keep this strategy updated annually, as recommended at section 1, to capture new participation statistics and plan appropriately for sports with increasing trends.



2.6 Margin of Error

Given the data challenges outlined above, a defined margin of error rate has not been applied to the results of the calculations used to determine provisioning rates or current and future supply of sport and recreation participation spaces. Investigations were necessarily limited to the data that was made available for analysis, including Council data, peak body participation statistics, local club and association survey results and national participation rates. In cases where assumptions have been made for local participation, these are not expected to have a material impact on the future provisioning recommended in this strategy.

2.7 Delivering the Strategy

The inclusion of recommended projects in this sport and recreation facility strategy does not constitute a resolution from Council to fund those projects. It is not Council’s role to solely fund the delivery of all projects identified in this strategy. The projects recommended in the strategy may be delivered over the next 10+ years with financial contributions from:

- » Local clubs and associations
- » Queensland Government, through established grant programs or discretionary investments
- » Commonwealth Government, through established grant programs or discretionary investments
- » Council’s budgeting and forward capital works planning processes for facilities towards which Council resolves to financially contribute
- » Developer contributions for future facilities to be delivered in new residential developments, in line with this strategy

A desired outcome of the Queensland Government’s financial contribution towards this strategy was a list of projects with evidence of need, to help guide future investment by the state in local sport and recreation facility upgrades and developments. Townsville City Council can confidently support funding applications made by local clubs and associations for these facilities, based on the strategic approach to the prioritisation of facilities recommended in this strategy.

The strategy has applied the following definitions of sport and recreation, as per the Queensland Government Sport and Recreation Planning Program:

- » **Sport** is a human physical activity involving physical exertion and skill as the primary focus of the activity, with elements of competition where rules and patterns of behaviour governing the activity exist formally through organisations and is generally recognised as a sport.
- » **Active recreation** activities are those involving physical exertion where the primary focus is individual or group participation and enjoyment over elements of competition where rules and patterns of behaviour govern the activity. Active recreation does not include ‘active work’ or ‘active living’.
- » Activities that were not considered in the strategy (based on the definitions above) include **leisure** activities such as fishing and recreational boating, **craft** activities and **non-active recreation**, which may be investigated by Council separately.

2.7.1 Future Sport and Recreation Planning

This strategy provides Council with the foundations to undertake future research, investigation or planning, or to develop specific region-wide strategies to build upon the overall vision and recommendations identified in this report. This future planning will help to strengthen the identified growth areas within the Townsville region, building on the vision for sport and recreation in Townsville.

Identified areas for future research and investigation include:

- » Liveability and outdoor recreation
- » Mountain biking
- » Motorsports
- » Equestrian
- » Indoor sports
- » Aquatic centres
- » Water sports
- » Shooting and archery
- » Inclusive participation opportunities
- » Indigenous participation
- » Sport tourism

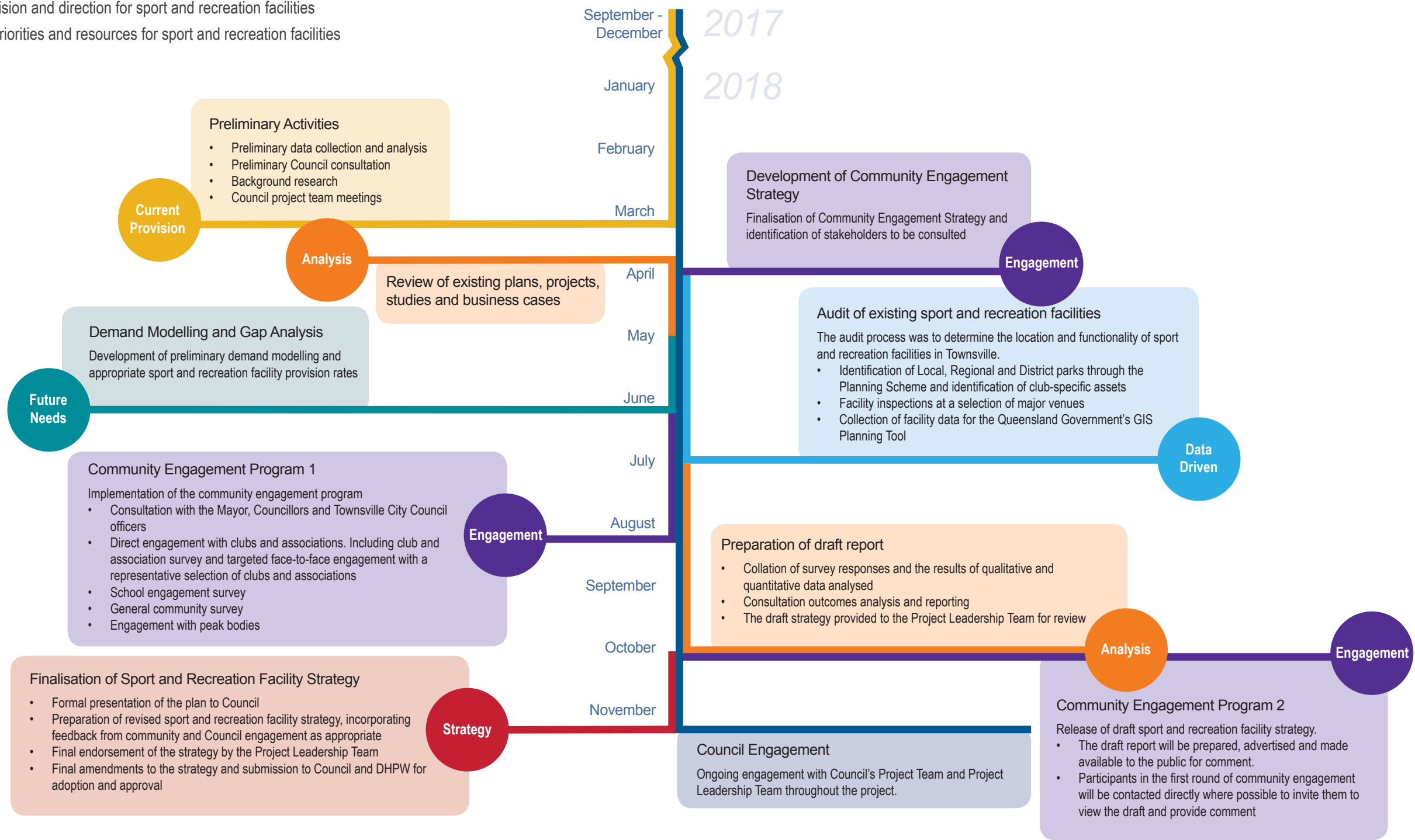


3. Project Methodology

3.1 Strategy Preparation

A systematic methodology was followed to ensure the successful preparation of the *Townsville City Council Sport and Recreation Facility Strategy 2018-2028*. As detailed in the graphics below, a data-driven process of review, engagement, audit and analysis was followed to deliver a strategy that meets a set of guiding principles aligned with Council's overall planning intent. Accordingly, this strategy has been prepared to:

- » Ensure our community is healthy, active and inclusive
- » Gain an understanding of the community's need in regard to sport and recreation infrastructure
- » Provide greater sport and recreation opportunities within the city by delivering effective sport and recreation infrastructure
- » Provide a shared vision and direction for sport and recreation facilities
- » Inform decisions, priorities and resources for sport and recreation facilities



4. Townsville Profile

The Townsville LGA covers over 3,732 square kilometres, including Magnetic Island, located 8kms offshore from the Townsville CBD. Townsville is located approximately halfway between the tip of Cape York and Brisbane and is within the Burdekin Dry Tropics Region.

Townsville is home to many regional facilities including James Cook University, Port of Townsville, Lavarack Barracks, Townsville RAAF base and Townsville Hospital. Townsville has numerous cultural and sporting facilities including the Townsville Civic Theatre, Townsville Stadium at the Murray Sports Complex, Tony Ireland Stadium at the Riverway Sporting and Cultural Complex and The Strand. Townsville is home to the North Queensland Cowboys National Rugby League team.

Sport and recreation is an important focus for Townsville, with over 600 incorporated organisations active in the region. Council is also directly responsible for facilities and services in the community including:

- » 8 public pools
- » 2 international-standard sport stadiums
- » 226 sport and recreation parks
- » 173 sport and recreation lease agreements
- » 78 sport and recreation formal occupancy agreements (Licence to Occupy, or LTO)

Townsville City Council is directly responsible for several sport and recreation events and services, with a strong emphasis on building the capacity of sport and recreation service providers and improving the health and resilience of the Townsville community.

In 2014-15, 63.6% of Townsville’s adult population were categorised as overweight or obese. Townsville recorded a 20% increase in this category between 2007-08 and 2014-15, the largest increase of any major urban area in Australia.⁶

⁶ Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (2017) *Yearbook 2017: Progress in Australian Regions*. Commonwealth of Australia.



Queens Park

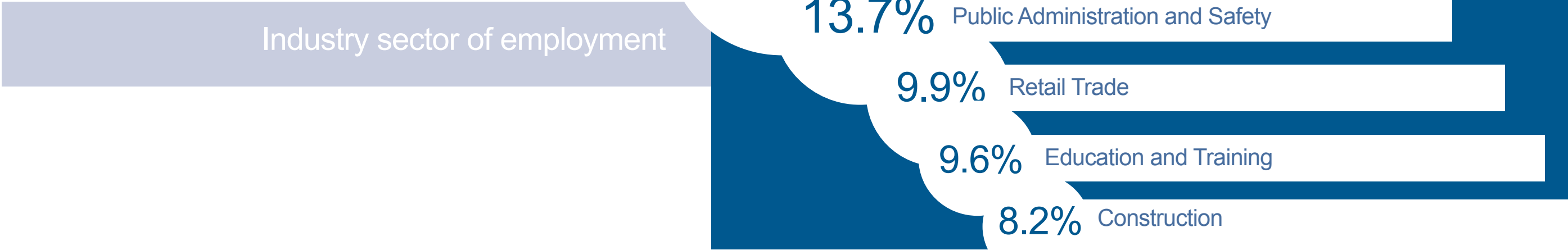
4.1 Demographics⁷



Townsville compared to QLD	Townsville	Queensland
Aboriginal / Torres strait islander	7%	4%
Median age	34	37
Couples with Children	28%	29%
Lone person households	22%	22%
Median weekly household income	\$1,414	\$1,392
Median weekly rent	\$303	\$335
Median weekly mortgage repayment	\$394	\$406
Unemployment rate	8.9%	7.6%
Population in labour force	64%	61%
SEIFA index of disadvantage	989	996
Volunteer rate	18.4%	18.8%

↑ Higher proportion of 0 to 17 year olds (24.2% compared with 23.2% for Queensland)

↓ Lower proportion of 60+ years (17% compared with 20.8% for Queensland)



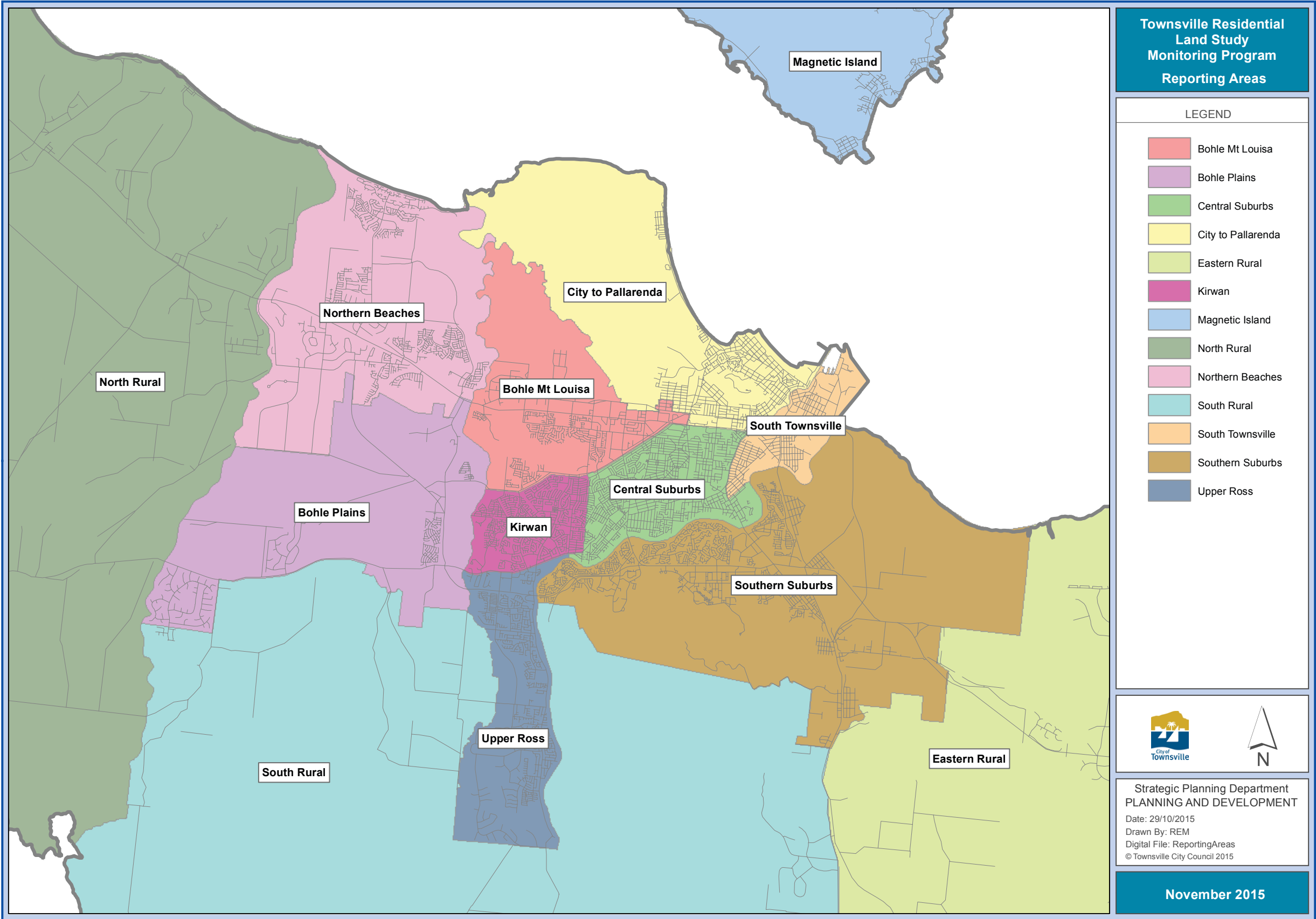
⁷ Profile.id (2018) City of Townsville Community Profile. Available at: <https://profile.id.com.au/townsville>

4.2 Regional Profiling

This section provides a summary of the projected population changes of each distinct catchment of Townsville. The expected growth has been analysed and used to inform the recommendations for the future provision, management and planning of infrastructure for sport and recreation participation.

Townsville's 13 Local Government Infrastructure Plan (LGIP) Reporting Areas (LRAs)

LRA	Growth District
LRA 1	City of Pallarenda
LRA 2	South Townsville
LRA 3	Central Suburbs
LRA 4	Bohle – Mt Louisa
LRA 5	Kirwan
LRA 6	Bohle Plains
LRA 7	Northern Beaches
LRA 8	North Rural
LRA 9	South Rural
LRA 10	Upper Ross
LRA 11	Southern Suburbs
LRA 12	Eastern Rural
LRA 13	Magnetic Island



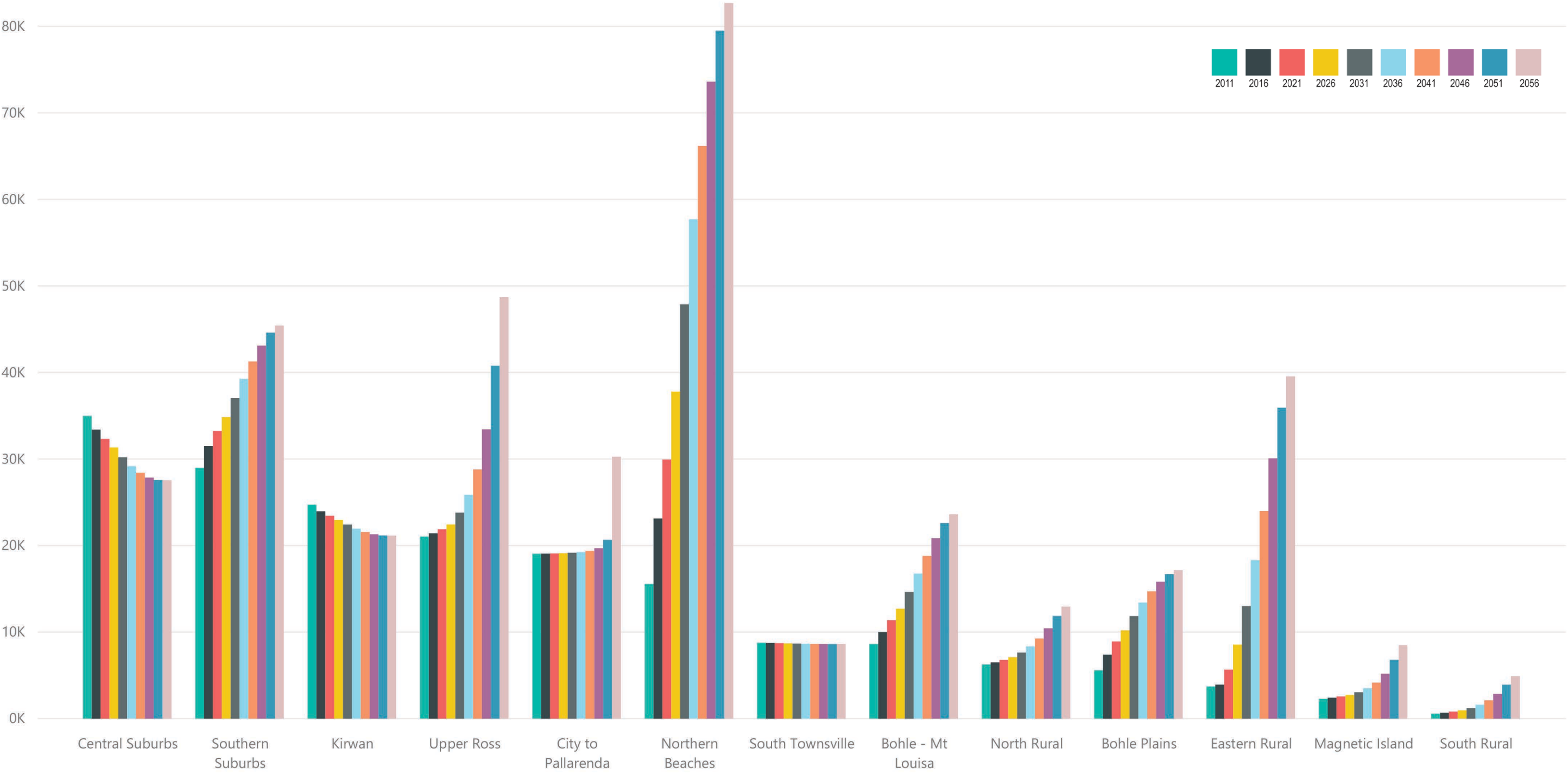
The following graph shows the projected growth for each of Townsville’s 13 LGIP Reporting Areas (LRAs).

According to this data, Townsville’s overall population is projected to increase from 180,187 in 2011 to 371,000 in 2051, representing growth of 106% over 40 years.

Northern Beaches has a stand-out growth rate, predicted to become the most populated LRA in Townsville by 2026. By 2056, this LRA is expected to grow by 431%. Another area of predicted dramatic increase is Eastern Rural, which in 2011 was the third-lowest populated region. The Eastern Rural LRA is projected to increase by 965% between 2011 and 2056, becoming the third-highest populated LRA in the region.

Healthy growth is predicted for the following LRAs:

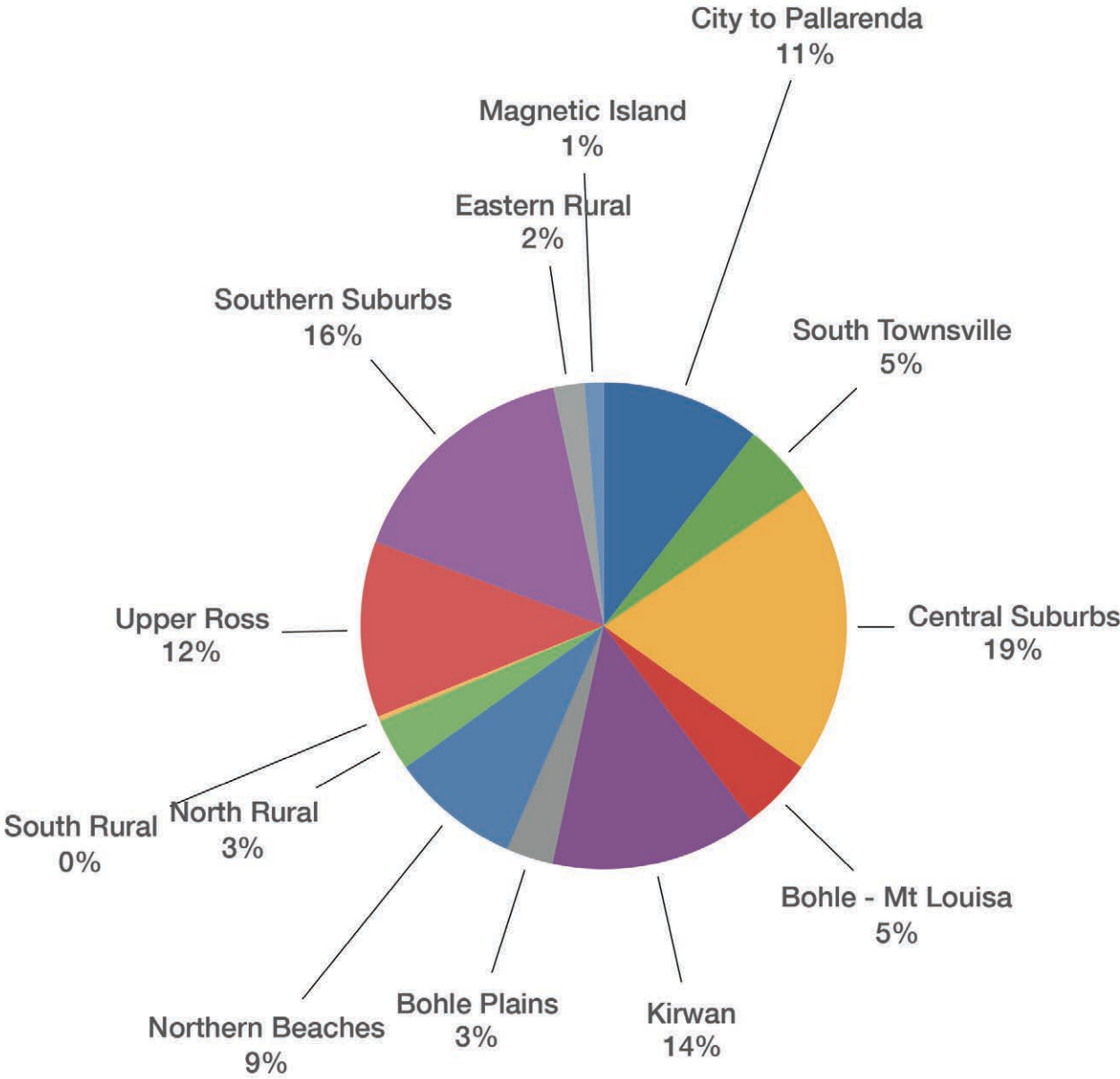
- » Upper Ross
- » Southern Suburbs
- » Bohle – Mt Louisa
- » North Rural
- » Bohle Plains
- » Magnetic Island
- » South Rural



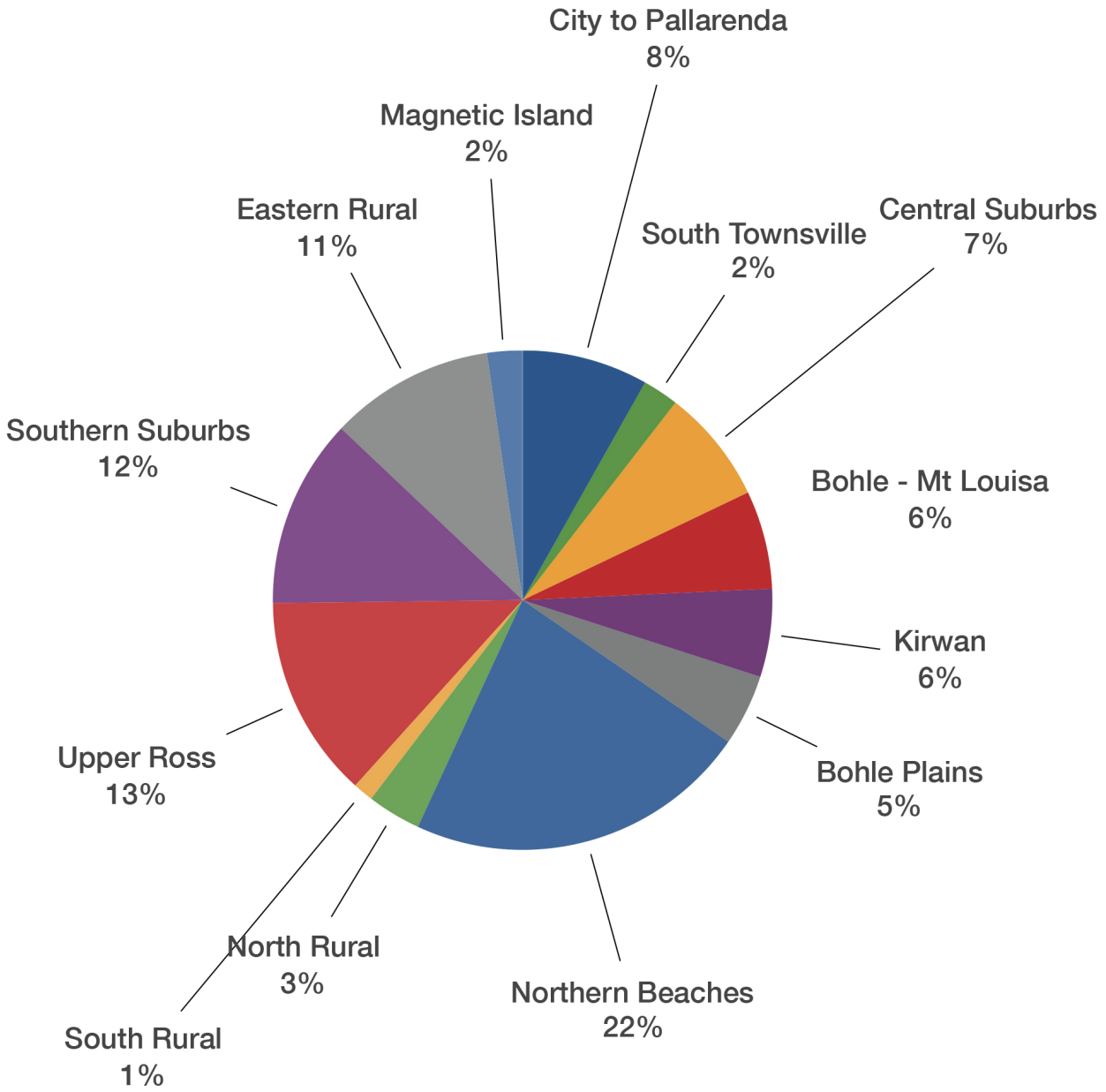
Areas of predicted decline are Central Suburbs, Kirwan and South Townsville. Central Suburbs has the largest projected decrease at -21% between 2011 and 2056.

The two graphs below demonstrate the changing population distribution. The first graph is the percentage of population in each LRA in 2011, and the comparison graph shows the percentage distribution in 2056.

2011



2056



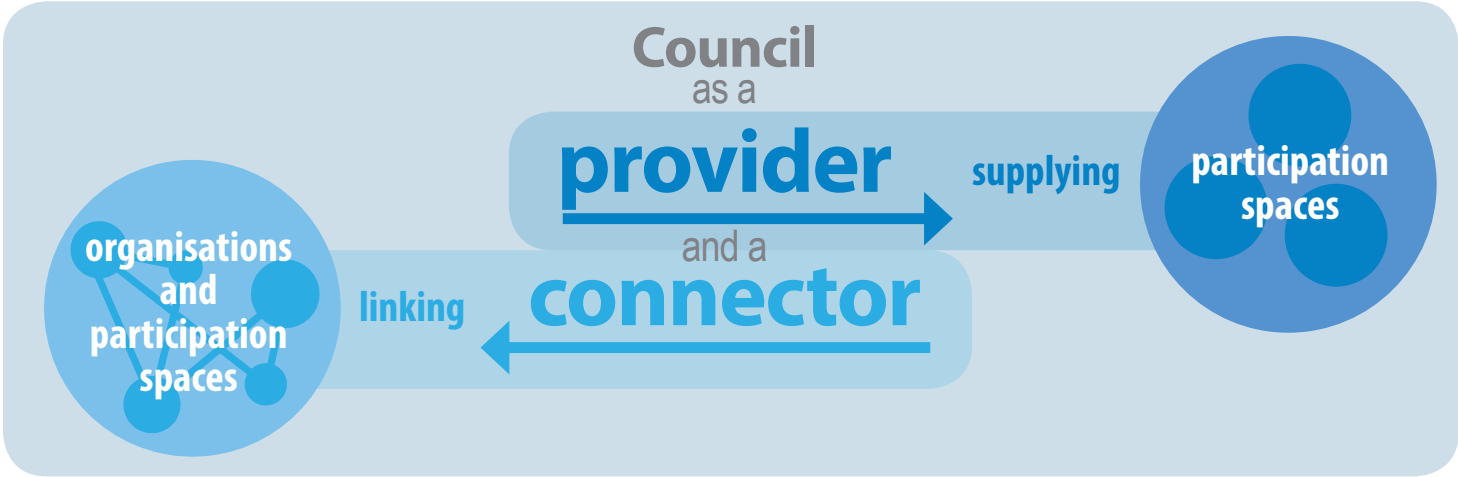
4.3 Townsville City Council’s Role in Sport and Recreation

Townsville City Council plays a vital role in the provision and management of sport and recreation facilities and services. This strategy confirms Council’s role in providing support and services to all sport and recreation organisations in the region regardless of their size, facility standard or whether they have been identified in this report as a Top 11 sport.

4.3.1 Council as a provider and connector

Council can act in a *provider* or *connector* role in the delivery of sport and recreation participation spaces. Acting as a *provider*, Council can deliver services and provision participation spaces suitable for particular sport or recreation activities. Examples of Council acting in a provider capacity include assisting organisations with governance, management and increasing participation levels through its *Get Active Clubs* program and providing fields which have been developed and embellished specifically for rugby league, hockey, cricket or touch football. While Townsville City Council has provisioned specific spaces for sports outside those in the Top 11, Council’s role as a provider is often focused on the highest participation sports in the region.

As a *connector*, Council can provide organisations with information about funding opportunities and training programs and linkages to existing participation spaces that are not being used to capacity and to other organisations where facility sharing relationships can be established.



4.3.2 Policy compliance

The *National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework (2011)*⁸ provides a guide for the development and alignment of policies, strategies and programs by all levels of government (local, state and federal governments and national/state sporting organisations (NSO/SSO)) within their own jurisdictions. It helps to explain the role of Councils in sport and recreation. The development of this strategy and its implementation will ensure Council fulfills its local government role as described in the framework.

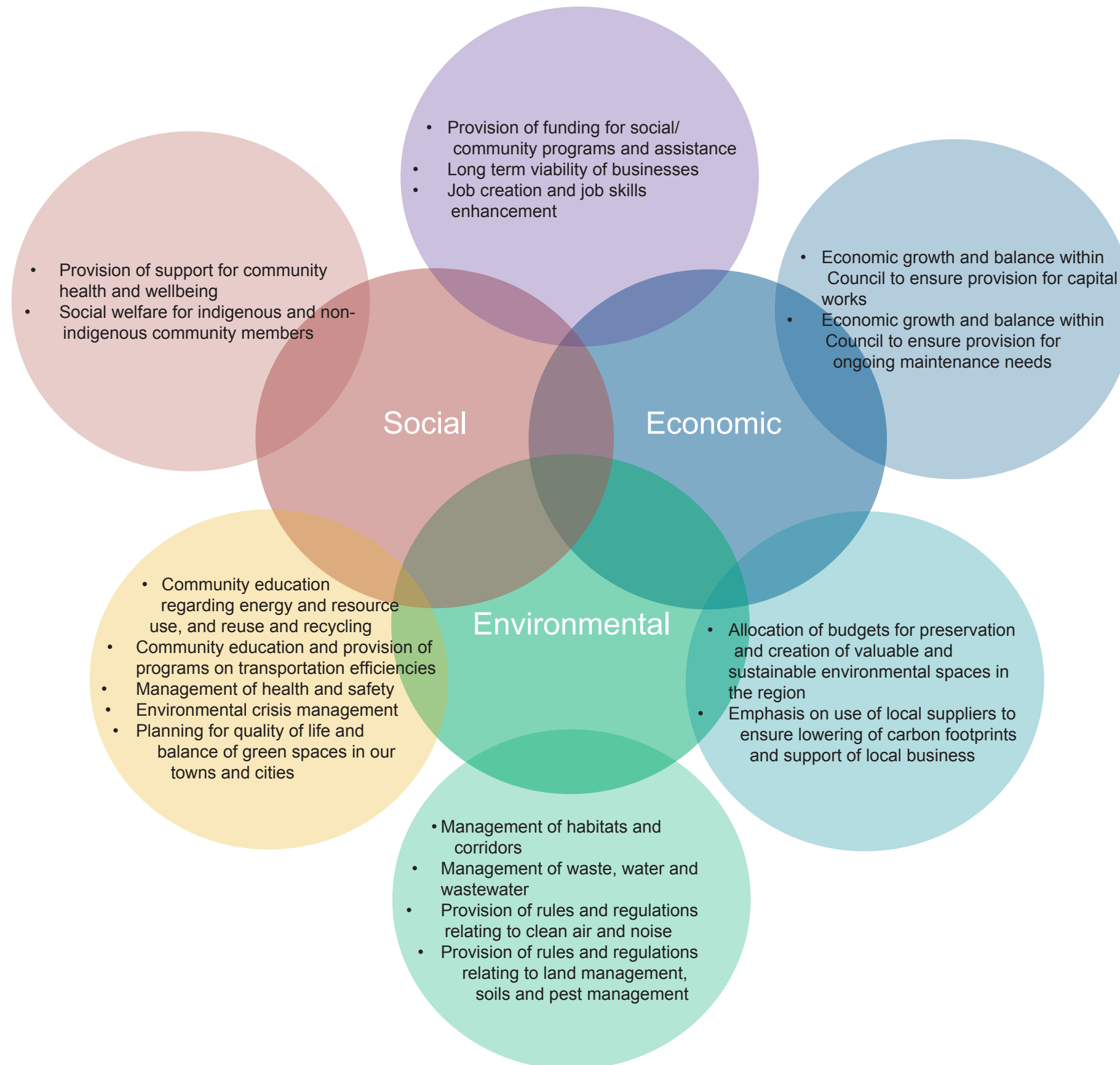
The table below summarises the expectations of the *National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework* on each level of government.

Local government	State and federal government	State government and NSOs/SSOs
Facilitating a strategic approach to the provision of sporting and active recreation infrastructure	Funding and support for elite sport, including investment in major infrastructure and events	Elite sport management
Establishing local management and access policies for facilities	Programs and direct funding to improve participation outcomes to targeted populations (e.g. disabled, Indigenous, rural/remote, CALD, women, etc.)	Undertake sports development initiatives including club and volunteer training
Supporting and coordinating local service providers	Funding of infrastructure and planning grants	State and regional facility development
Supporting and partnering with non-government organisations that enable participation		
Incorporating sport and recreation development opportunities in Council plans		
Investment in sport and active recreation infrastructure		

⁸ Department of Health (2011) *National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework*. Commonwealth of Australia

4.3.3 Triple Bottom Line Approach

Across the variety of community services provided by Townsville City Council, it is vital to ensure a triple bottom line approach is adopted to achieve balance and respect between the following key components of society. All components relate to sport and recreation spaces and organisations.



5. Strategic Context

5.1 Sport and Recreation Planning History

In March 2008, recommendations from the Local Government Reform Commission resulted in Thuringowa City Council and Townsville City Council amalgamating to form one local government authority, Townsville City Council. Following amalgamation there was a period of adjustment as the new Council worked to combine the strategic sport and recreation planning documents of each former Council.

Until 2016, the *Thuringowa City Council Sport and Recreation Strategy 2006*, the *Townsville City Council Sport and Recreation Plan 2006-2016* and the *Community Development Strategy 2014-2017* have been sport and recreation services’ key strategic documents.

The main purpose of the *Thuringowa City Council Sport and Recreation Strategy 2006* was to guide Council in future budget allocations for sport and recreation facilities, services and programs in Thuringowa for the ten year period between 2006 and 2016⁹.

The main purpose of the *Townsville City Council Sport and Recreation Plan 2006-2016* was to assist in the future planning and development of sport and recreation facilities in Townsville City during the same period¹⁰.

The *Community Development Strategy 2014-2017* was developed to replace the existing ten strategic action plans (including sport and recreation) into one comprehensive strategy. The purpose of the strategy was to set the strategic direction for Council and guide decision making about the priorities and initiatives of the community development section over the four years from 2014 to 2017¹¹. This strategy identified a Sport and Recreation Planning Project, specifically designed to plan for the future needs of sport and recreation in anticipation of the expiration of the Townsville and Thuringowa plans in 2016.

The *Townsville City Council Interim Sport and Recreation Strategy 2016* highlighted the need for Council to provide direction and guidance on the provision of sport and recreation facilities and services to meet the needs of the community. This strategy addresses the facility component of this recommendation.

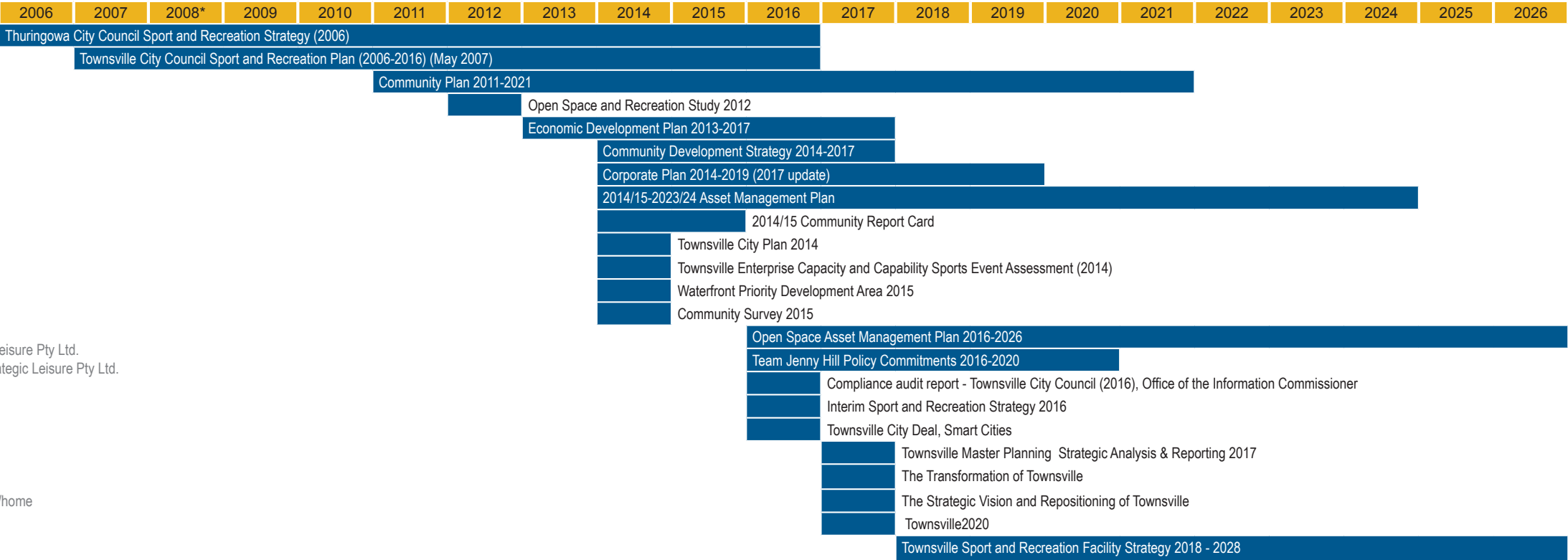
In June 2016, under the *Smart Cities Plan*, the *Townsville City Deal* was announced. The *Townsville City Deal* is a 15-year commitment between the Commonwealth of Australia, the State of Queensland and Townsville City Council to deliver a prosperous economic future and position Townsville as a vibrant, liveable, innovative city in Northern Australia¹². As part of the plan, the new Stadium and Entertainment Precinct was proposed. As described in *The Transformation of Townsville Stage 2 Report*, this began a catalytic process within the community that resulted in high expectations for the continued repositioning and reinventing of Townsville¹³.

The *Compliance Audit Report – Townsville City Council* was commissioned by Council in April 2016 to review the management structure and make recommendations to improve operations and financial sustainability. In September of the same year it was adopted in full and a new organisational structure that called for a more focused leadership team was established. The priority projects outlined in the report are expected to improve financial sustainability, community engagement and economic activation and transform Townsville City Council into a more accountable, accessible and customer focused organisation¹⁴.

In March 2017, *The Townsville City Council Corporate Plan 2014-2019* was updated. The plan guides Council and staff to make informed decisions and an emphasis was placed on Economic Activation, Community Engagement and Financial Sustainability. The outlined goals of *A Prosperous City, A City for People, A Clean and Green City and A Simpler, Faster, Better Council* further contribute to the vision of, “Townsville, Capital of Northern Australia, the City with Opportunity and Great Lifestyle”¹⁵.

Research into the transformation of Townsville continued in 2017. Council’s objective was to develop a comprehensive, creative plan for transforming Townsville into a genuinely competitive, 21st century aspirational brand; a place of quality experiences with an excellence in tourism, investment, tropical living, creativity, the arts, science, education, sports, and recreation¹⁶. As a result of the *Townsville Master Planning Strategic Analysis & Reporting*, Townsville City Council launched the *Townsville2020* website. This transformative master plan includes a number of large-scale infrastructure projects and focuses on boosting the economy, benefiting the local community and attracting tourism to the region¹⁷.

Planning History Timeline





⁹ Thuringowa City Council (2006) *Thuringowa City Council Sport and Recreation Strategy*. Strategic Leisure Pty Ltd.
¹⁰ Townsville City Council (2007) *Townsville City Council Sport and Recreation Plan (2006-2016)*. Strategic Leisure Pty Ltd.
¹¹ Townsville City Council (2014) *Community Development Strategy 2014-2017*.
¹² Commonwealth of Australia (2016) *Smart Cities Plan: Townsville City Deal*
¹³ Tourism Think Tank (2017) *The Transformation of Townsville Stage 2 Report*
¹⁴ Townsville City Council (March 2017 Update) *Townsville City Council Corporate Plan 2014 – 2019*
¹⁵ *ibid.*
¹⁶ Tourism Think Tank (2017) *The Transformation of Townsville Stage 2 Report*
¹⁷ Townsville City Council (2017) *Townsville2020*. Available at: <https://www.townsville.qld.gov.au/2020/home>



* Thuringowa City Council and Townsville City Council amalgamation





5.2 Literature Review

During preparation of this strategy, key publications were reviewed to maintain consistency. The following points have been identified as deliverables for the *Townsville City Council Sport and Recreation Facility Strategy 2018–2028* and the associated icons are used to express the link between the key publications and this strategy.

	Sport and Recreation Facility Strategy 2018 – 2028 deliverables
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Provides data for Department of Housing and Public Works to populate the GIS Sports Planning Tool (club and association data)» Provides an audit and review of existing sport and recreation facilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Provides assessment based on direct engagement with the community and relevant stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Provides sport and recreation infrastructure and facility benchmarks for Townsville» Provides a prioritised direction for Council regarding sport and recreation infrastructure needs for 10 years, supporting future growth
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Identifies strategies to facilitate engagement and participation in sport and recreation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Identifies strategies for efficient uses of Council sport and recreation facilities, maximising multi-use» Prioritises sport and recreation infrastructure for 10 years» Recommends potential future master plans and individual sport strategies

Corporate Plan 2014-2019 (March 2017 Update)	
<p>In March 2017, The Townsville City Council Corporate Plan 2014-2019 was updated. The plan guides Council and staff to make informed decisions and an emphasis was placed on Economic Activation, Community Engagement and Financial Sustainability. The below goals and objectives relate to the sport and recreation facility strategy:</p>	
<p>Goal 1: A Prosperous City</p> <p>Deliver a strong and innovative economy for Townsville with sustainable growth and support for local jobs and businesses</p> <p>Objective 1.1 Support local businesses, major industries, local innovation and employment growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">» 1.1.1 Economic Development<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a single agreed vision for the economic development for Townsville that unites business, community, industry and government• Translate the vision into an economic development strategy and an agreed set of actions to be implemented for the city and region <p>Objective 1.2 Promote our economic and geographic strengths and market Townsville as a vibrant destination for commerce, education, research, tourism, entertainment and lifestyle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">» 1.2.2 Tourism Policy<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a Tourism policy that increases visitations and focuses on our outdoor lifestyle to increase promotion of the region <p>Objective 1.3 Plan, support, provide and advocate for infrastructure and investment that supports innovation, residential and economic growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">» 1.3.2 Planning and Development<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with developers to find innovative ways to deliver and finance infrastructure for public benefit <p>Objective 1.4 Maximise opportunities for economic growth by building and maintaining effective partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">» 1.4.1 Deliver North Queensland Stadium	

Corporate Plan 2014-2019 (March 2017 Update)	
<p>Goal 2: A City for People</p> <p>Objective 2.1 Provide services and local infrastructure that meet community expectations, support growth and provide for the needs of our community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 2.1.2 Improving Local Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a dedicated pool of additional funding for local sports clubs to fund community infrastructure • Develop additional skate parks in the inner city and the north shore <p>Objective 2.2 Improve the liveability of Townsville and encourage active and healthy lifestyles by providing accessible public facilities and community infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 2.2.1 Supporting Sporting Clubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a new master plan for the Murray Sports Precinct (currently in progress) • Engage with sporting associations to develop a plan to attract sports tourism to Townsville » 2.2.3 Bike Friendly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with road cycling groups to continue to improve the city's bike network • Expand support for mountain biking, including infrastructure and events creating opportunity for this as an eco-tourism niche in North Queensland » 2.2.5 Motor Sport Precinct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with motor sporting groups to gain funding for Drive It NQ motor sport precinct » 2.2.6 Parks, Gardens and Sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Upper Ross Rams and Ross River Crocs clubs to seek funding to develop a joint facility and upgrade the fields <p>Objective 2.3 Improve the vibrancy of Townsville by supporting the community's access to, and participation in, a range of artistic, cultural and entertainment activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 2.3.1 Events and Culture Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the state government to promote Townsville as a major centre for state and national sporting events and festivals 	
<p>Goal 4: A Simpler, Faster, Better Council</p> <p>Objective 4.2 Ensure the Council's plans, services, decisions and priorities reflect the needs and expectations of the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 4.2.1 Community Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in community conversations through a more comprehensive outreach program, including holding meetings in local suburbs at least twice a year. • Actively monitor the needs of the community and adjust services and programs to meet community needs and expectations as required. 	

Community Plan 2011-2021	
<p>The Townsville City Council Community Plan 2011-2021 states the following vision by 2021:</p> <p><i>Townsville is the northern gateway to Queensland. Our well-built city connects people to their community, via an active lifestyle that is enjoyed by all who live and visit. We are leaders of positive environmental action. We are acclaimed for our business entrepreneurship, government enterprise, innovation, technology and cultural stewardship.</i></p> <p>The community plan is underpinned by a philosophy of 'leading, creating, connecting, and shaping a place to be proud of'.</p> <p>One of the community plan guiding principles is to provide active and passive sport and recreation opportunities that contribute to the city's health and wellbeing. The plan bases achievements on the following deliverables:</p>	
<p>Ensuring recreation areas and open spaces are accessible, respond to needs and provide positive use for multiple activities</p> <p>Providing recreation and sporting programs appropriate for people of all ages and levels of ability</p>	
<p>Ensuring Townsville has adequate sporting facilities for local and regional events</p>	
<p>Encouraging joint use of facilities by clubs and community groups</p> <p>Managing community and recreation facilities in an accessible and equitable manner</p>	
<p>The plan indicates that achievements can be measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Opportunity to participate in sport and recreation activities » Availability of public recreational facilities and spaces » The number of residents who regularly take part in physical activity 	

Townsville City Deal, Smart Cities	
<p>The Townsville City Deal plans to drive economic growth, unlocking potential for the region and encouraging business and industry development to help Townsville become:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The economic gateway to Asia and Northern Australia » A global leader in tropical and marine research and innovation » A prosperous and highly-liveable city for residents and visitors 	
<p>Over 15 years the Townsville City Deal will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Revitalise development, particularly in the city and Waterfront PDA » Activate industry and export growth » Support long term growth of local businesses » Enhance liveability » Improve planning, coordination and governance 	
<p>To facilitate the transformation of Townsville into the Capital of North Queensland, one of the initiatives is to establish the city as an events destination, enabling it to host nationally-significant sporting and cultural activities.</p>	

Community Development Strategy 2014-2017

The purpose of the *Community Development Strategy* is to set the strategic direction for the community development section of Council (which includes sport and recreation) and to inform and guide decision making about the priorities and initiatives of the community development section over the next four years from 2014-2017. Of note is the sport and recreation planning project contained within the strategy's potential new initiatives. The plan describes the project as follows:

Significant work needs to be carried out to ensure we have the most up to date and relevant information available to assist with sport and recreation facility and infrastructure planning in the Townsville LGA. Project includes:

- » Demand / gap analysis
- » Audit of existing sport and recreation facilities
- » Capture sport and recreation participation numbers by activity and location
- » Collate research, trends and statistics

Data
Driven

Asset Management Summary Plan 2014/15 – 2023/24

This plan summarises the individual asset management plans. It outlines the key information of Council's overall strategy towards managing Townsville's key assets. The Social Sustainability goal from the plan relates directly to sport and recreation. The planned outcome of the goal is:

- » A vibrant community that is accessible, safe, healthy, creative and knowledgeable, where we embrace diversity and our sense of community
- » Encourage active and healthy lifestyles through accessible public facilities and community initiatives

Active
Lifestyle

- » Provide community infrastructure and services that support growth and meet community needs

The Long-Term Strategic Planning model detailed in the plan outlines the importance for a planning model that forecasts the need for and location of future recreation facilities.

Future
Needs

Open Space Asset Management Plan 2016-20266

The Open Space Asset Management Plan has three goals that align with sport and recreation.

The first goal is Economic Sustainability, including an integrated approach to long term planning where the city's assets meet the community's needs. One of the commitments to achieve this goal is for a long term demand that is understood and planned.

Future
Needs

The second goal is Social Sustainability, with the following commitments:

- » Provide appropriate facilities and flexible spaces that can be adapted to new uses over time
- » Encourage the community to actively engage with assets
- » Sports facilities are appropriate to users groups
- » Sportsgrounds available and suitable for a range of activities and events

Efficient
Uses

- » Encourage the community to actively engage with assets

Active
Lifestyle

Open Space Asset Management Plan 2016-20266

And the third goal is Responsible Governance and two of its commitments are:

- » Make appropriate information available to internal and external stakeholders
- » Provide appropriate facilities

Data
Driven

The Strategic Vision and Repositioning of Townsville

The Strategic Vision and Repositioning of Townsville report analysed the public narrative and developed strategies to reposition Townsville as a competitive, 21st century city. Five key actions to transform Townsville were identified. The steps as related to sport and recreation are listed below:

Brand Identity

- » Distinctive identity that builds on unique strengths of Townsville

Beautification and Green Spaces

- » Introduce impactful greenspaces and enliven streetscape
- » Rejuvenate and illuminate urban parkland
- » Build green linkages, incorporate shade

Experiences

- » Deliver experiences not just things
- » Implement technology as an enabler
- » Incorporate play, joy and fun - E.g. interactive public art installations, permanent table tennis tables, water play, etc.

Future
Needs

Connectivity

- » Safe, attractive and secure pathways and links between centres, landmarks and neighbourhoods
- » Lively, safe and dynamic public spaces
- » Access must facilitate contact among people
- » Connected transport, parking, walkability, cycling
- » Provide environment that encourages people to become more physically active

Community

- » Be inclusive
- » Build linkages
- » Create connections: cultural, social, sporting
- » Focus on 'great place to work, live and play'

Active
Lifestyle

5.3 Trends in Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity

Nation-wide trends in sport, recreation and physical activity have an impact on the development and provision of sport and recreation facilities and planning. The following reported trends can help to inform and shape Council’s future planning and delivery of sport and recreation in Townsville.

5.3.1 Female Participation

The Australian Sports Commission’s 2017 *AusPlay* survey reveals that participation in sport and physical activity among women and girls is strong and growing; 63% of Australian women aged 15 years and over participate in sport and physical activity at least three times a week, compared with 60% of men¹⁸.

Female participation in club-based sport peaks between the ages of 9 and 14 years¹⁹. Adult female participation is focused primarily on non-organised physical activities rather than club sport, however this tendency is starting to change.

The public survey completed during preparation of this strategy (see Section 6 Consultation) indicated that walking and fitness/gym were the most popular sport and recreation activities in which females participated, confirming the participation trend in non-organised physical activities for women. 32% of female respondents however indicated they were members of a club.

5.3.2 Child Participation

In 2016, almost 3.2 million (69%) children participated in some form of organised sport or physical activity outside of school hours. 2.5 million Australian children (54%) aged 0 to 14 were active at least once a week through organised sport/physical activity outside of school hours. Only 19% or 0.9 million children were active at least three times per week. Girls 9-11 years old are slightly more likely to participate in sport or physical activity (at least once a year) compared to boys of the same age²⁰.

5.3.3 Adult Participation

Over 17 million Australians aged 15 or over (87%) participated in a sport or physical activity in the last 12 months. 11.6 million Australians (59%) aged 15 or over participated in sport or non-sport related physical activity three or more times per week²¹.

Australian adults tend to play sports for longer durations than non-sport related physical activities. However they participate in non-sport related physical activities more often than sport. For adults up to middle-age, time pressure is by far the main barrier to participating in sport or physical activity. Poor health or injury then also become factors²².

5.3.4 Ageing Population

In 2016, 3.7 million Australians were aged 65 years and over, representing approximately 15% of the nation’s total population. By 2056, this cohort is projected to grow to 22% of Australia’s population (approximately 8.7 million)²³.

Long-term sport and physical activity behaviours have been linked to enhanced and lifelong physical, mental, and social wellbeing outcomes. An ageing population presents many significant challenges to local government, particularly across the areas of active participation of older persons in society²⁴.

Current AusPlay data indicates that seniors are more likely to remain active in self-organised physical activity (e.g. walking, swimming, cycling) than participate in organised sport . 2016/17 AusPlay data shows that only 44% of older Australians (those aged 65 years and over) participated in sufficient physical activity each week. Of these people, 40% said they were active through sport-related activities²⁵.

Townsville City Council must take account of Australia’s ageing population and its accompanying challenges in supporting local clubs and associations to successfully engage participants through program delivery (see recommendation 1.5.6).

5.3.5 Individualised Activities

Individualised sport and fitness activities are increasingly attracting people away from formalised club-based sports, with more people fitting sport into their lives to achieve personal health objectives. Involvement in activities such as running, walking and gym memberships has risen notably over the past two decades, while membership numbers in many organised sports have remained stable or declined²⁶. A high percentage of responses received as part of the public survey (see Section 6 Consultation) confirmed this trend, with walking and fitness/gym being the first and third most participated in sports respectively.

As detailed in recommendation 1.3.1, Townsville City Council should recognise that people are looking for sport and physical activities that are perceived as time-efficient, have flexible scheduling of competition structures, provide opportunities for males and females to participate together and are affordable and accessible.

5.3.6 Professionalisation of Sports Administration

Traditionally, sporting clubs and associations have relied heavily on volunteers to provide services to members. Although sport consistently represents the largest category of formal volunteers²⁷, the barriers to volunteering are growing rapidly. These include issues such as time pressures, increased bureaucracy of running voluntary sporting organisations, lack of support, appreciation or recognition, and the fear of being sued²⁸.

Whilst many sporting organisations would inevitably struggle without the consistent, significant support of their volunteers, clubs and associations must recognise that to continue offering high-quality services with a sole reliance on volunteers may be unsustainable. Indeed, the CSIRO has suggested that in time, loosely-organised community sports associations are likely to be replaced by organisations with corporate structures and more formal governance systems²⁹.

Townsville City Council should provide guidance, advice and support to clubs and associations in adopting and implementing contemporary governance and operational models that align with good business principles (see recommendation 1.5.6).

¹⁸ Australian Sports Commission (2017) *AusPlay Focus: Women and Girls Participation*. Commonwealth of Australia
¹⁹ *ibid.*
²⁰ Australian Sports Commission (2018) *AusPlay Focus: Children’s Participation in Organised Physical Activity Outside of School Hours*. Commonwealth of Australia
²¹ Australian Sports Commission (2016) *AusPlay: Participation Data for the Sport Sector: Summary of Key National Findings*. Commonwealth of Australia
²² *ibid.*
²³ Australian Sports Commission (2017) *Mature-Aged Sport and Physical Activity*. Commonwealth of Australia
²⁴ *ibid.*
²⁵ *ibid.*
²⁶ Australian Sports Commission (2013) *The Future of Australian Sport: Megatrends Shaping the Sports Sector Over Coming Decades*. CSIRO Futures, Commonwealth of Australia
²⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011) *Sports and Physical Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia* (Cat. no. 4156.0)
²⁸ Griffith University (2008) *Volunteers in Sport: Issues and Innovation*
²⁹ Australian Sports Commission (2013) *The Future of Australian Sport: Megatrends Shaping the Sports Sector Over Coming Decades*. CSIRO Futures, Commonwealth of Australia

5.3.7 Indigenous Participation

Children with Indigenous or Languages Other Than English parents and children living in regional areas have below average participation rates, but above-average participation frequencies. Children living in regional and remote areas and Indigenous Australians have below-average participation rates³⁰.

5.3.8 Persons with Disability Participation

2016/17 AusPlay data indicated that a total of 77.8% of those surveyed who had a disability or physical condition participated in sport or physical activity at least once in the previous 12 months. 68.9% participated at least once per week and 51.9% participated at least three times per week. Participation is significantly lower than for those people surveyed who did not have a disability or physical condition. For those with a disability, men are slightly more active than women on an annual and minimum three times per week basis³¹.

5.3.9 Season Creep and Facility Sharing

In Australia's competitive sporting market, the overlap between the traditional summer and winter sporting seasons is increasing each year. Due to the logical co-location of sporting clubs which share the same playing space requirements (for example cricket and Australian football), in many cases, this results in significantly reduced availability of field space in the lead up to and early in each playing season. Facilities shared between sports encounter issues such as scheduling, line marking, storage of and access to goal posts, clubhouse access and overuse of playing fields (see recommendation 1.5.6).

5.3.10 Changes in Society and Employment

The fluctuation of the Australian and global economies and consistently high national unemployment rates are having an impact on the discretionary spend of families and individuals, potentially including the available disposable income for leisure, sport and recreation. There is a risk that this situation will have a negative impact on participation and membership levels. However, this risk is difficult to quantify given the important role that sport plays in the Australian lifestyle. In line with the professionalisation of sports administration, clubs must appreciate the intrinsic value of their offering and actively mitigate against risks to their profitability by understanding the business nature of sports provision in Australia.

Changed working arrangements are resulting in the decline of the traditional weekend as a result of increased and unusual working hours by many workers, and there still exists a significant proportion of fly-in, fly-out working arrangements throughout Queensland. Additionally, growing numbers of young people, including students, are working part-time during evenings and weekends, in turn influencing leisure participation patterns.

Results from the public survey (see Section 6 Consultation) confirmed that the Townsville population faces similar changes and challenges, with the top four barriers to participation being 'work commitments' (13.5%), 'the cost of the sport/recreation is prohibitive' (12.6%), 'family commitments' (10.9%) and 'lack of time - traditional programming is not flexible enough' (9.5%).

Changing family types and the multicultural nature of Australian society mean that different strategies need to be adopted to ensure equitable delivery of sport and recreation services (see recommendation 1.5.7).

5.3.11 Changes in Technology

New technologies are streamlining the operations of clubs and associations around Queensland. Innovations such as digital online membership databases are reducing volunteer workloads, while the prolific growth of cloud computing is improving succession. Online and other digital payment options, as well as hosted bookkeeping solutions, are transforming financial management.

Advances in technology have resulted in massive changes in the way we receive media, communication and news. Social media can offer fantastic communication benefits for clubs and associations, whilst presenting a new set of challenges for administrators.

Emerging technologies in sport and recreation facility provision which may become important during the term of this strategy include:

- » Smart lighting systems that simplify switching and after payment solutions
- » A continued move towards LED lighting for participation spaces
- » Use of recycled water for irrigation of participation spaces
- » Installation of artificial playing surfaces (e.g. hybrid cricket pitches as a drought proof alternative to turf pitches)
- » Opportunities to use playing field lighting poles and luminaires as data capture devices to measure soil moisture and other conditions to inform irrigation and scheduled maintenance
- » Optical cameras for security monitoring
- » Drone technology, including automated infrastructure monitoring
- » Online booking systems for participation spaces, including smart locking systems

Townsville City Council should research new technologies and provide advice as appropriate to ensure that clubs and associations are aware of advances that can improve facility use and management (see recommendation 1.2.1).

³⁰ Australian Sports Commission (2018) *AusPlay Focus: Children's Participation in Organised Physical Activity Outside of School Hours*. Commonwealth of Australia

³¹ Australian Sports Commission (2017) *AusPlay Survey Results July 2016-June 2017*. Commonwealth of Australia

5.4 Common Gaps in Service Delivery

Consultation with local sport and recreation clubs and associations, state sporting organisations and internal Council personnel identified a series of notable issues hindering service delivery and facility provision. Failing to address these issues may impact on an organisation's ability to finance and manage facility developments and ongoing infrastructure maintenance, where these are responsibilities of the club or association.

However, these challenges in service delivery should be seen as opportunities. If Council, in collaboration with local sport and recreation organisations, can overcome the issues listed below, the local community stands to benefit significantly through improved service delivery.

5.4.1 Administration, Governance and Financial Management

Many non-profit sporting organisations that are primarily or solely run by volunteers believe that the legal and compliance requirements placed on them are too stringent. In response to questions asked by governing bodies, clubs or members, volunteers in sport throughout Townsville, Queensland and Australia are often heard saying, "But we are just volunteers".

In Townsville, clubs and associations are responsible for managing millions of dollars worth of public infrastructure. Volunteers must therefore acknowledge and commit to the need for ongoing organisational improvement and Townsville City Council should provide suitable support in this area (see Section 1.5).

Whilst the rising costs of participation in sport are a considerable factor in planning for a successful future, clubs and associations must strive to cover operational expenditure with operational income. Organisations must operate profitably to ensure their financial capacity to make necessary contributions to facility improvements. Local sport and recreation clubs and associations should seek ways to capitalise on revenue generation opportunities.

5.4.2 Field/Grounds Condition

Some fields and grounds in Townsville are maintained professionally by contracted grounds staff engaged either by a club, association or Council itself, while other clubs rely on the limited availability of volunteers to keep playing surfaces in an acceptable condition. In some cases, volunteers lack sufficient knowledge of turf management and maintenance.

Given the limited options of use for flood-prone land and decommissioned landfill sites, sporting facilities are often established on these areas, including sites that are subjected to frequent inundation and uncontrolled landfill areas that were poorly capped. Damage caused by floods and poor subsurface quality adds to the challenge of providing high-quality fields and grounds.

5.4.3 Tenure

Townsville City Council acts as trustee on behalf of the state government for the majority of sport and recreation sites in Townsville. Council works with the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) on the management of trustee leases. The majority of the organisations that lease directly from Council are on 'Peppercorn Leases' and some pay no lease fees at all. There are some sport and recreation venues in Townsville which fall outside the management of Council, as they are leased directly by DNRME to the tenant sporting organisation. These organisations pay lease fees directly to the state government.

Council is currently operating without a formal lease policy to guide leasing arrangements. Decisions are often therefore made on an ad-hoc basis and do not follow a prescribed process. This strategy recommends that Council move towards a formalised community leasing model, including a leasing policy and guidelines (see recommendation 1.5.2). The model should be implemented in phases by the appropriate teams in Council, and can include suitable arrangements and fee structures that take into account each tenant organisation's purpose, affiliation, financial position and community benefit provision.

5.4.4 School Facilities

There are 53 public and private primary and high schools within the Townsville LGA. Consultation with schools included the distribution of a targeted survey to all local schools listed on Council's database. 13 responses were received (see Section 6.5 Schools).

The majority of schools that responded indicated they make their facilities available for non-school sporting activities outside of school hours (76.9%), and 81.2% may be willing to provide access to facilities not currently available. Almost all schools that responded confirmed they use community facilities for their sport and recreation activities and programs (92.3%).

The large number of schools within the LGA provide extensive sport and recreation facilities. Access to some school facilities is limited, however, which can unbalance the impact generated by the combined community and school use of Townsville's overall sport and recreation facility network. Reasonable sharing models should take into account that the majority of schools in the region regularly access community infrastructure.

Townsville City Council needs to develop strong relationships with local schools, principals, Education Queensland and private school operators to maximise the usage of school based and non-school based facilities within the region (see recommendation 1.5.5). This sharing of facilities is particularly important as the demand for more activity space will increase over the next 10 years.



Warina Park

5.5 Sport Tourism and Economics

The outdoor recreation industry is a powerful economic sector. In Victoria alone, consumers spend \$8.3 billion on active recreation each year, with around \$3.8 billion generated through active recreation tourism³².

“As a multi-dimensional economic sector, outdoor recreation fuels employment in other sectors, such as manufacturing, finance, retail, transportation, food service, tourism, travel and more”³³.

Sport tourism might form a small section of the outdoor recreation market, but it is one of the largest and fastest-growing segments of the travel and tourism industry. Sports tourism can be defined as “all forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated casually or in an organised way for non-commercial or business/commercial reasons that necessitate travel away from home and work locality”³⁴.

Sport tourism can be categorised as hard and soft. Hard sport tourism relates to active sport tourism that is designed to attract a large number of visitors to a particular place to witness an event such as the Olympic Games or large state-based or regional competitions. Soft sport tourism refers to tourists traveling to participate in a recreational setting or signing up for leisure activities such as rowing, hiking and mountain climbing for example.

The sport and recreational activities within Townsville form parts of both the soft and hard sports tourism markets. Both markets contribute significantly to the tourist traffic and economic development of the region and increase social capital in the community.

In 2017 the Townsville Local Government Area received over 2 million visitors, of which 886,000 were domestic overnight, 1.1 million were domestic day trip visitors and 120,000 were international visitors³⁵.

According to Tourism Research Australia, the average expenditure for day trips in Townsville was \$128 and the average nightly expenditure was \$226 for domestic overnight visitors and \$65 for international overnight visitors. Visitor expenditure also supports a range of industries including restaurants, accommodation, transport and retail, which actively contribute to developing liveable communities.

³² Sport and Recreation Victoria (2018) *Active Impacts: The Economic Impacts of Active Recreation in Victoria*. Marsden Jacob Associates. p.10

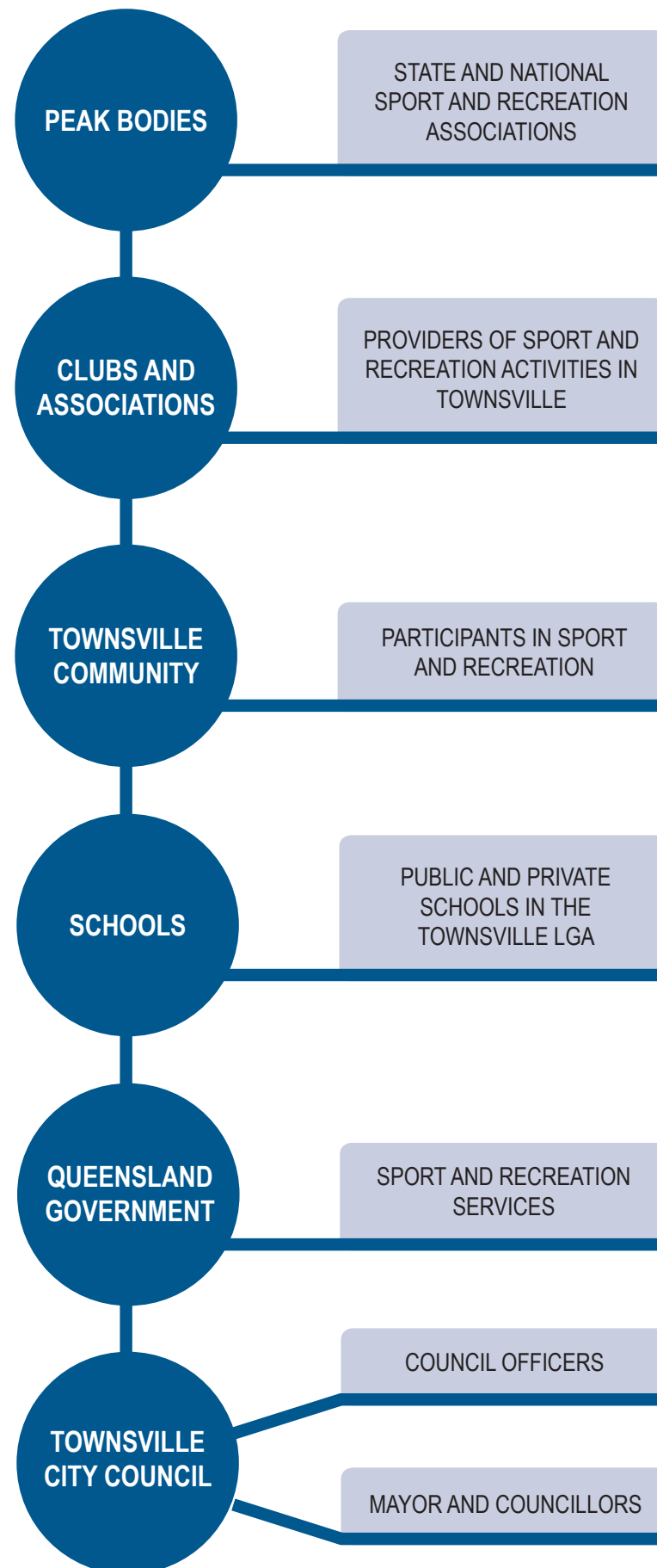
³³ Outdoor Industry Association (2018) *Outdoor Industry Association releases first ever congressional-level outdoor recreation economy reports*

³⁴ Adair, D. and Ritchie, B. (2004) *Sport Tourism: Interrelationships, Impacts and Issues*. Channel View Publications, p.8

³⁵ Austrade (2016) *Local Government Area Profiles 2016: Townsville*. Tourism Research Australia, Commonwealth of Australia

Magnetic Island from Castle Hill





6. Consultation

This plan and its recommendations have been informed by the extensive consultation conducted as part of the project. A comprehensive community engagement program was developed to ensure important information and feedback was received from identified stakeholders.

6.1 Community Engagement Program

The community engagement program included consultation with state sporting organisations, local clubs and associations, the local community, local schools, Queensland Government Department of Housing and Public Works (Sport and Recreation Services), Council officers and the Mayor and Councillors.

Meetings were held with the Mayor, Councillors, Council officers and Sport and Recreation Services officers. Three separate, tailored surveys were distributed to clubs, local schools and the wider community. Telephone consultation was conducted with state sporting organisations and targeted face-to-face meetings were held with a representative selection of clubs and associations.

The infographic to the left identifies those consulted as part of the planning process.



6.2 Peak Bodies

Face-to-face and phone consultation was conducted with an extensive range of peak sport, recreation and physical activity organisations in Queensland. The purpose of the consultation was to collect up-to-date participation statistics relating to the various sport and recreation activities represented in Townsville.

The following peak bodies were contacted or consulted for this plan.

- » AFL Queensland
- » Archery Queensland
- » Athletics North Queensland
- » Australian Outrigger Canoe Racing Association (AOCRA)
- » Baseball Queensland
- » Basketball Queensland
- » BMX Queensland
- » Bowls Queensland
- » Cycling Queensland
- » Dragons Abreast
- » Equestrian Queensland
- » Football Queensland
- » Golf Queensland
- » Gymnastics Queensland
- » Hockey Queensland
- » Mountain Bike Australia
- » Netball Queensland
- » North Queensland Rifle Association
- » Queensland Canoeing
- » Queensland Clay Target Association
- » Queensland Cricket Assoc
- » Queensland Dragon Boat Federation
- » Queensland Little Athletics Association
- » Queensland Polocrosse Association
- » Queensland Rugby Football League
- » Queensland Rugby Union
- » Queensland Touch Association
- » Queensland Volleyball Association
- » Rowing Queensland
- » Softball Queensland
- » Surf Life Saving Queensland
- » Tennis Queensland
- » The Pony Club Assoc of Queensland
- » The Rock Climbers Association of North Queensland Inc

6.3 Clubs and Associations

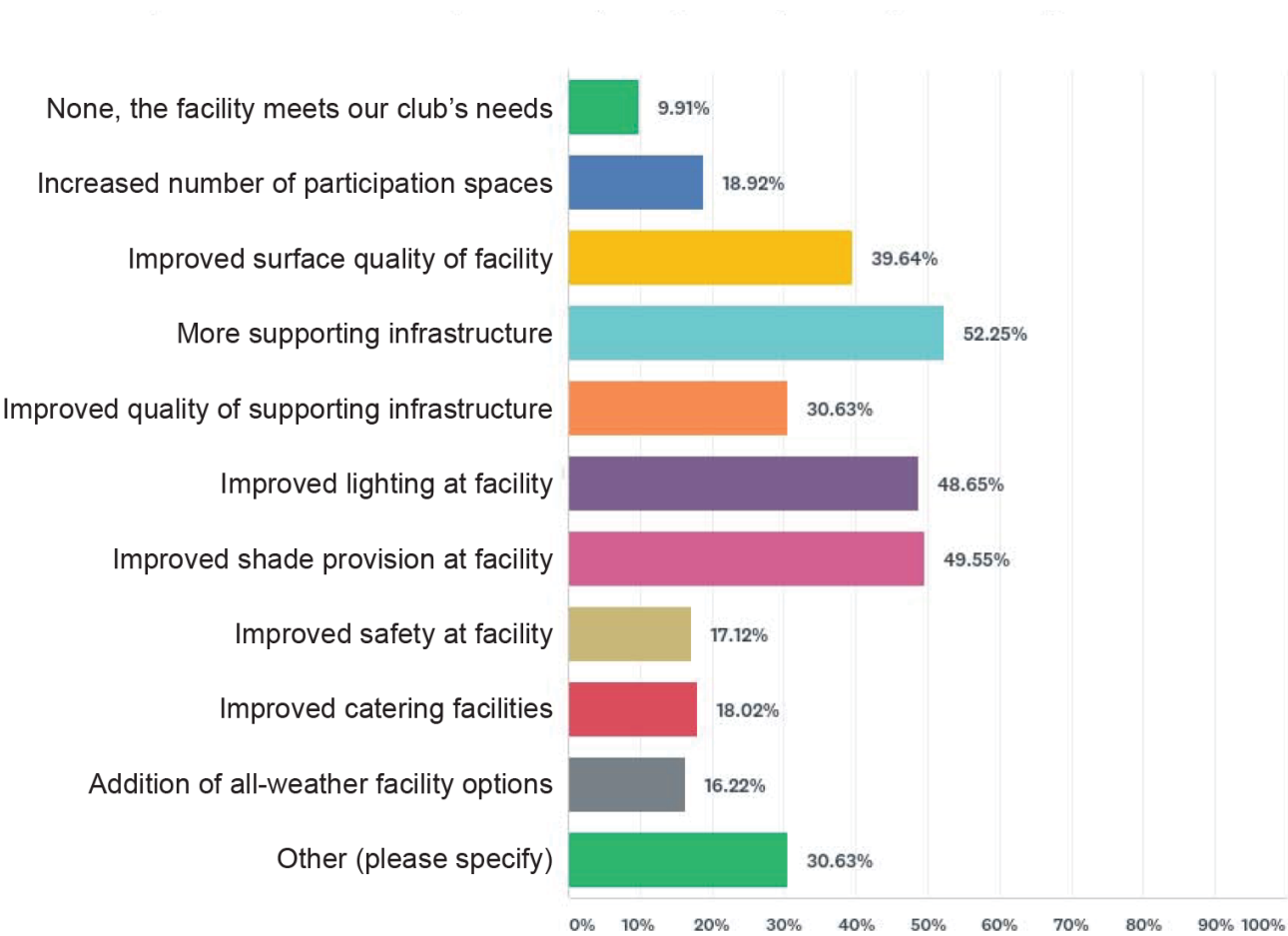
6.3.1 Online Club Survey

Local clubs and associations were invited to complete a survey to help determine participation rates, facility usage, maintenance, future plans, challenges and opportunities. 111 club survey responses were received. The survey was designed to gather information on the clubs' level of participation and their facilities, including how their facilities could be improved to meet their needs.

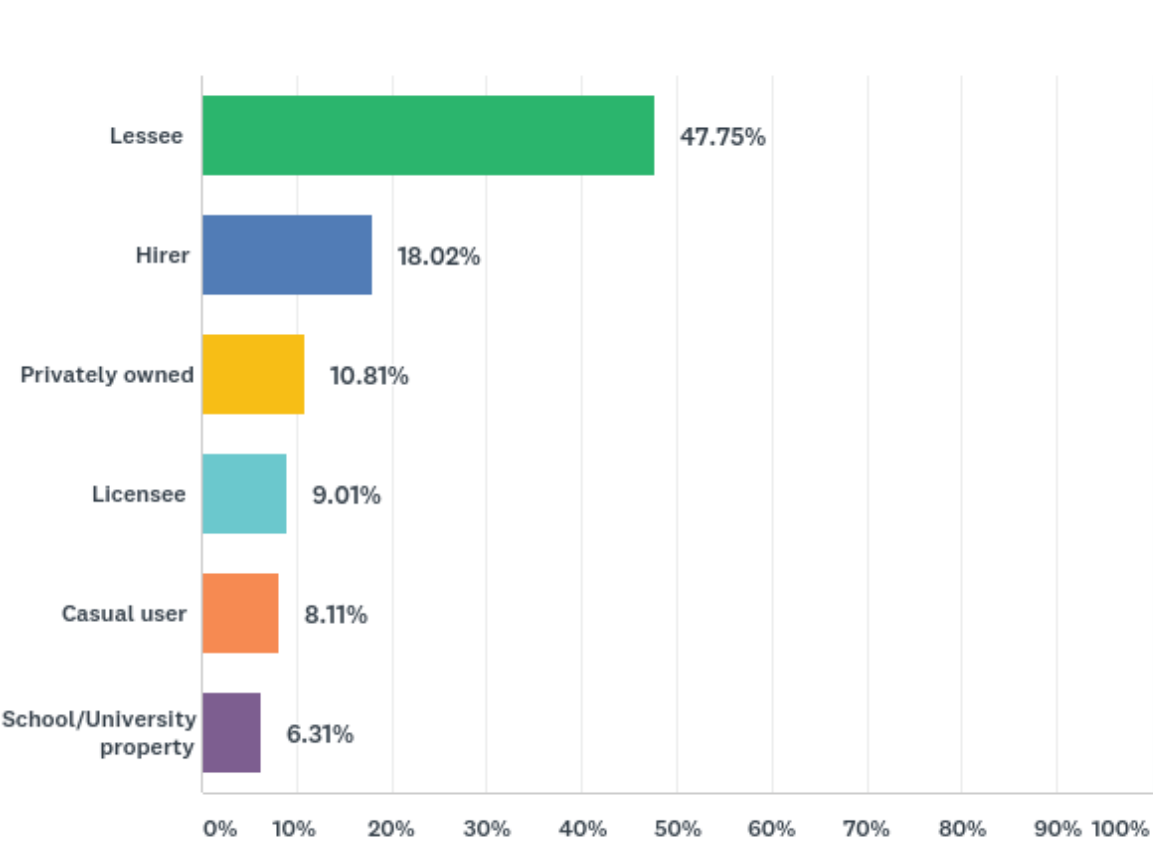
The following graphs provide a snapshot of the data collected from club surveys.

6.3.2 Online Club Survey Results

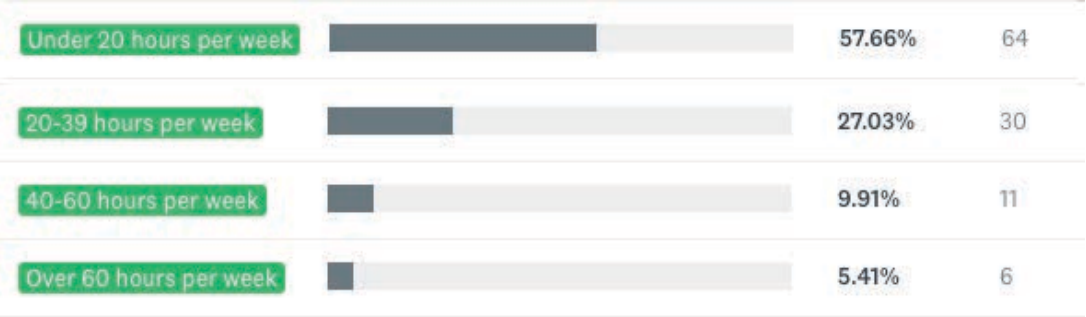
What improvements are required at your primary facility to meet your club's needs?



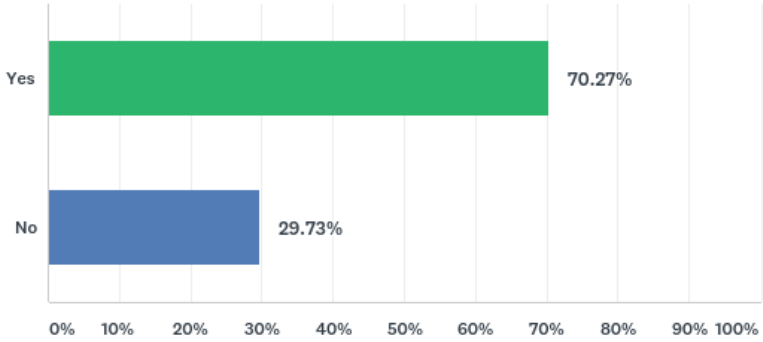
What is your club's tenure at your primary facility?



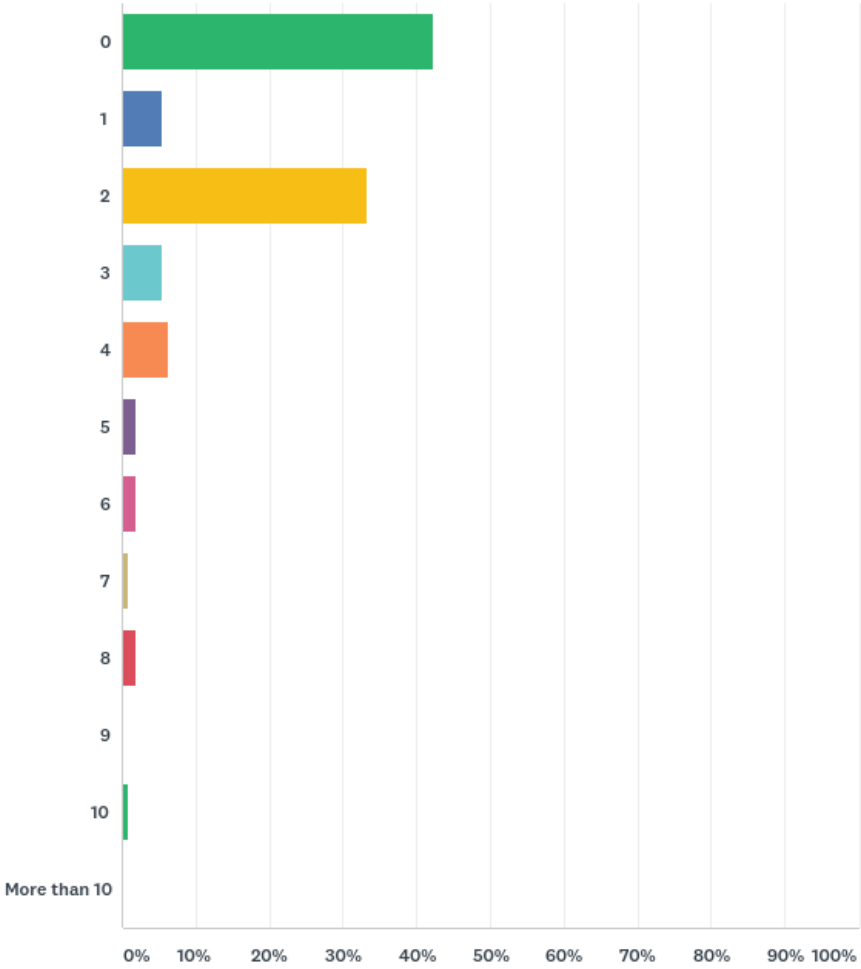
How often does the club use the participation spaces (e.g. fields or courts) at your primary facility during the season? (hours per week)



Does your club have access to a clubhouse?



How many change rooms does your club have access to?



6.3.3 One-on-One Consultation

Face-to-face and phone interviews were conducted with a representative group of local Townsville clubs and associations during August 2018. Organisations that participated in the consultation included:

- » AFL Townsville
- » Dragons Abreast Townsville
- » Drive It NQ
- » M A Olympic Football Club
- » North Queensland Football
- » North's Tennis Club
- » Northern Beaches Suns Australian Football Club
- » Riverway Rowing Club
- » South Townsville Bowls Club
- » The Sporting Wheelies And Disabled, Sport And Recreation Association Of Queensland
- » Townsville And District Pony Club
- » Townsville Basketball
- » Townsville Castle Hill Touch Association
- » Townsville City Netball Association
- » Townsville Cycle Club
- » Townsville Dragon Boat Club
- » Townsville Outrigger Canoe Club
- » Townsville Rockwheelers Mountain Bike Club
- » Townsville Table Tennis Association

Other Townsville clubs and associations consulted directly through the project included:

- » Citibeach Volleyball
- » Gymnastics Townsville
- » Magnetic Coast Western Horse Club Inc
- » North Queensland Reining and Performance Horse Club
- » North Queensland Touch Association
- » Northern Monsoons Volleyball
- » Oztag
- » PCYC Townsville
- » Rowes Bay Archery Club of Townsville Inc
- » Thuringowa Touch Football
- » Townsville & District Pleasure Harness Society Inc.
- » Townsville Gun Club Inc
- » Townsville Pistol Club
- » Townsville Western Pleasure & Performance Horse Club Inc

The purpose of face-to-face interviews was to collect aggregated data about the ability of clubs to develop and manage their facilities based on their financial capacity, human resource capacity (volunteers and staff where applicable) and governance structures.

Consultation therefore focused on broader areas than only facilities, as facility provision and development were addressed in the club survey (see Section 6.3.1), to which all Townsville sport and recreation clubs and associations were invited to contribute.

Consultation outcomes resulted in recommendations regarding the need for Townsville City Council to make informed, strategic decisions in relation to its management of the sport and recreation facility network in Townsville. A lack of strategic focus has resulted in some previous legacy agreements negatively impacting on the community's ability to make the highest and best use of the current sport and recreation facility network.

Consultation identified areas where clubs need additional assistance or support to develop business models to ensure the viability of the facility network into the future. Areas of discussion included continued collaboration between Council and the state government on the delivery of training programs, professional development for Council staff where appropriate, and tailored support for clubs and associations where this is feasible.

During consultation, the following diagram was presented to organisations as a tool to explain the importance of having good people, finance and governance systems in place to maximise facility usage. The diagram shows the interdependence of each component in ensuring that facilities operate to their highest possible level.



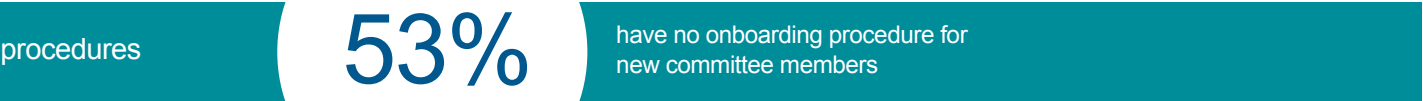
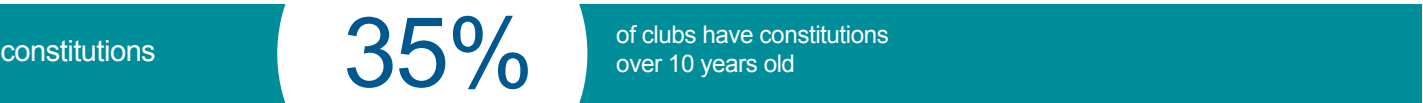
Consultation confirmed that clubs in Townsville City experience similar issues to those across the rest of the nation. Most of the issues raised during consultation were a result of a lack of planning, limited governance expertise and inadequate financial management practices, which are common trends amongst most not-for-profit clubs and associations. It is the role of Council's sport and recreation team to assist local organisations to improve their operations, with the support and backing of state sporting organisations and the Department of Housing and Public Works (Sport and Recreation Services). Clubs and associations must also be prepared to improve their operations to maximise facility potential.

The following diagram summarises the results of the targeted one-on-one consultation.

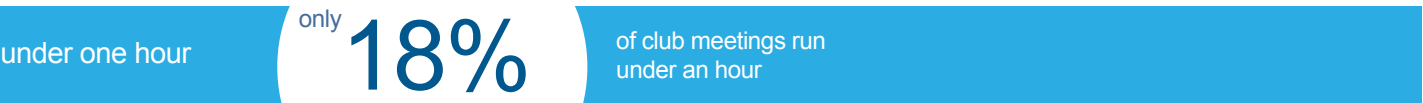
Financial Management



Governance



Meetings



Asset Management



Volunteers



6.4 Townsville Community

The wider community was invited to complete a survey via Council's website and Facebook page. Council officers interviewed and surveyed interested local residents at the following locations during August 2018:

- » Annandale Shopping Centre, Annandale
- » Castletown Shopping Centre, Hyde Park
- » Cotters Markets, Townsville City
- » Fairfield Central Shopping Centre, Townsville City
- » Garbutt IGA
- » Magnetic Island
- » Rasmussen Shopping Centre
- » Rasmussen Shopping Centre, Rasmussen
- » Senior Expo, Townsville Stadium, Murray
- » Stockland North Shore Shopping Centre, Burdell
- » Stockland Townsville Shopping Centre, Aitkenvale
- » Strand Markets, The Strand
- » Townsville Running Festival, The Strand
- » Willow Markets, Kirwan
- » Willows Shopping Centre, Kirwan

A total of 2,237 responses were received. The survey was designed to gather information on the demographic profile of respondents, level of participation in physical activity, perceptions of the quality of sport and recreation facilities, barriers to participation and suggestions for new or upgraded facilities

A large push to complete the survey was made by local motorsport groups including NQ Motorsport Association. Their promotion of the survey was extremely effective and resulted in 839 submissions from interested respondents, making up 38% of the total responses received. Due to the larger than expected volume of responses relating to motorsports, these responses have been collated and summarised separately in the following section.

Other than survey responses relating to motorsports, survey respondents indicated the top 5 most participated in sports were:

1. Walking (12.4%)
2. AFL (8%)
3. Fitness/Gym (7.7%)
4. Football (soccer) (6.7%)
5. Cycling (5.5%)

The top 5 barriers to participation were:

- 1. Work commitments (13.5%)
- 2. The cost of the sport is prohibitive (12.6%)
- 3. Family commitments (10.9%)
- 4. Lack of time - traditional programming is not flexible enough (9.5%)
- 5. Facility quality (7.5%)

The top 5 suggested facility improvements were:

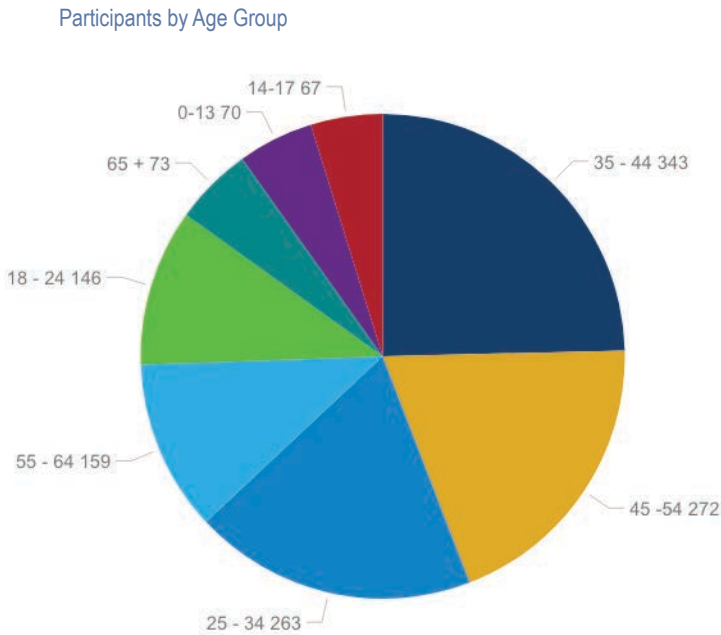
- 1. Improved shade provision at facility (13.7%)
- 2. More supporting infrastructure (toilets, change rooms, car parking, storage, etc.) (11.7%)
- 3. Improved lighting at facility (11%)
- 4. Improved surface quality at facility (10.1%)
- 5. Improved quality of supporting infrastructure (toilets, change rooms, car parking, storage etc.) (9.2%)

Female participants

- 1. Walking (17.3%)
- 2. Fitness/Gym (10.5%)
- 3. Do not participate in sport and recreation (6.1%)
- 4. Hockey (6%)
- 5. Other (6%)

Male participants

- 1. AFL (10.9%)
- 2. Football (soccer) (8.8%)
- 3. Cycling (6.9%)
- 4. Walking (6.4%)
- 5. Mountain Biking (4.3%) / Fitness/Gym (4.3%)



6.4.1 Motorsport and Motorcycling

830 survey respondents indicated they participated in some form of motorsport or motor cycling, accounting for 38% of all responses received. The survey was heavily publicised by NQ Motorsport Association, as part of their ongoing campaign to construct the North Queensland Driver Education and Motorsport Precinct in Calgium. The large response has provided extensive data, indicating the popularity of motorsport and the desire for further facilities to be developed.

70% of respondents indicated they were involved in a club or association, 29% were aged between 25 and 34 and 85% were male.

The top 5 barriers to participation were:

- 1. My preferred sport/recreation is not offered (19.6%)
- 2. Distance from facility (16%)
- 3. Other barrier (14.2%)
- 4. Facility quality (14.1%)
- 5. The cost of the sport/recreation is prohibitive (4.3%)

Suggested facility improvements included:

- 1. Other facility improvements (24%)
- 2. Addition of quality sporting facilities/options close to home (15.4%)
- 3. Increased number of participation spaces (8.8%)
- 4. More supporting infrastructure (toilets, change rooms, car parking, storage etc.) (6.4%)
- 5. Improved surface quality at facility (5.6%)

This sport and recreation facility strategy recommends that a separate motorsports strategy be completed subsequently, to progress the development of a premier motorsports facility in Calgium.

6.5 Schools

A survey for schools was developed to gather information on school sporting facilities, schools use of Council facilities and opportunities for community use of school facilities. 13 school survey responses were received.

The following is a summary of some of the data collected.

- » Does your school make its facilities available for non-school sporting activities outside of school hours?
 - 76.92% yes
- » If your school facilities are not available for non-school sporting activities, could they be?
 - 81.82% Likely
- » Does your school use non-school facilities for sport and recreation activities?
 - 92.31% yes

6.6 Queensland Government

Officers from the Department of Housing and Public Works (Sport and Recreation Services) were involved in the initial planning for this project and have been consulted throughout its delivery. This consultation included a presentation of the data model developed for the strategy and discussion regarding the consultation program for the project.

The development of this strategy was partly funded under the Queensland Government's *Sport and Recreation Planning Program*. The intent of the program was to provide clarity regarding prioritised sport and recreation facility projects supported by evidence of need.

Through the Department of Housing and Public Works, the state funds sport and recreation projects. It is therefore in the best interests of Queenslanders that government investment in facilities in Townsville City are logical, genuinely needed and increase participation in physical activity, thereby delivering the government's desired long-term health outcomes.

6.7 Council Officers

As part of the consultation program, face-to-face meetings were held with the following Townsville City Council officers:

- » Future Cities
 - General Manager
 - Senior Planners
 - Demographic and Social Planner
 - Principal Inclusive Communities
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officer
- » Community Engagement and Cultural Services
 - Team Manager Public Affairs – Public Affairs
 - Stakeholder Engagement Advisor – Public Affairs
 - Stakeholder Engagement Officer – Public Affairs
 - Communication Officer – Public Affairs
 - Digital Content Officer – Public Affairs
 - Communication Support Officer – Public Affairs
 - Coordinator Community Programs – Community Engagement
 - Sport and Recreation Officers – Community Engagement
 - Coordinator Venue Management – Community Engagement
- » Planning
 - Director – Planning and Community Engagement
 - Team Manager Planning Services – Planning
 - Coordinator Infrastructure Planning - Planning
 - Spatial Planning Officer – Planning
 - Senior Development Assessment Planner – Planning
 - Senior Strategic Planner – Planning

- » Infrastructure Planning, Assets and Fleet
 - Director – Infrastructure and Operations
 - Acting Senior Project Manager: Open Space - Project Management
 - Open Space Planner – Civil and Open Space Planning Services
 - Acting Project Manager: Open Space – Project Management
 - Team Manager Property Management – Property Management
 - Commercial Lease Manager – Property Management
 - Land and Facility Lease Officer

The following summarises the themes and issues discussed during meetings with Council officers:

- » Council suffers from a lack of forward planning for sport and recreation facilities. Future planning should be based on a thorough understanding of the needs of local clubs. An evidence-based needs approach should be implemented as part of any future planning strategies
- » Future developments identified in the strategy may be prioritised in five-year blocks
- » Council has the opportunity to capitalise on positioning the area as a winter training venue for international competition. This should be further explored in a future sports tourism investigations for the region
- » Investigation should be conducted into the potential for collaborative planning between similar sports, e.g. shooting and archery; various equestrian sports disciplines
- » Council should work to activate the local community through maximising the use of local district parks for sport and recreation participation. The high levels of obesity that occur outside the Townsville CBD could be addressed through complementary activities in parks or through the provision of additional training spaces for clubs
- » Parks in the northern catchment area are used very differently to the rest of the city, with more emphasis placed on socialisation rather than structured competition
- » Council needs to conduct asbestos, safety and lighting audits as a priority
- » Work with regional and/or state sporting organisations to identify gaps in their service delivery and capitalise on those opportunities through facility provision in Townsville
- » There is an opportunity for Council to use this strategy, in conjunction with parks planning, to address any gaps in service provision
- » This strategy should be reviewed annually to allow for monitoring and review and project priorities/timeframes to be adjusted in line with actual population growth and market conditions
- » Where possible, flexibility in the allocation of spaces will provide for the highest use of sites. Field provisioning depends on the park shape and the types of sports that can be accommodated
- » Council's role for niche sports may need to be as a *connector*, rather than a *provider*. E.g. connecting niche clubs such as ultimate disc with other clubs which have suitably-shaped facilities to accommodate them
- » Council needs to develop a new leasing model. Leases need to define the level of maintenance required by lessees to meet Council standards of service
- » The ageing population means that elderly participants may be major users of sport and recreation facilities over the next five years. Council needs to plan for appropriate facilities and programs to support this age group
- » Research and evidence may indicate that Council needs to better utilise existing facilities before developing more
- » Recommendations for future facility development should consider locating new facilities in areas of predicted population growth, e.g. the Northern Beaches LGIP reporting area

- » Council needs to strike a balance between providing smaller sporting facilities in populated areas with providing facilities in major sport and recreation precincts such as Murray Sports Regional Precinct. Another similar-sized precinct is likely to be needed in the future in the Northern Beaches LGIP reporting area
- » Existing local community sport infrastructure may not be being used as efficiently as possible due to shortcomings in the way that tenure has been allocated. Some clubs currently work in isolated pockets instead of collaboratively with proximate and similar clubs
- » There is an existing parks hierarchy, but there is not much distinction between clubs using parks of different levels at this stage. Council currently classifies facilities as District, Regional or Local
- » This strategy needs to highlight the link between facility strategy and the need for lessees to run their organisations as good businesses, i.e. addressing governance practices, human resources management (including volunteers) and good financial management practices. Clubs must be able to operate and maintain assets to meet Council requirements
- » Some sports may need specialised planning and separate strategies in addition to this project e.g. mountain biking, motorsports, equestrian, indoor sports, aquatic sports, shooting sports and archery, inclusive participation and Indigenous participation

6.8 Mayor and Councillors

Meetings were held with the Mayor and Councillors. This consultation provided valuable insight into Council's vision for sport and recreation.

Discussions were held regarding Council's role in providing sport and recreation infrastructure and defining resource allocation parameters for sport and recreation infrastructure.



7. Current and Future Infrastructure Provision

The data-driven approach to the development of this sport and recreation facility strategy has culminated in a clearer understanding of Townsville City Council's current performance in its provision of participation spaces, current and future facility needs, and the way that the Townsville community participates.

The following diagram details the data-driven methodology adopted for this project, the data inputs that informed each step and the project's outputs.



Step 6

Townsville City Council should keep this strategy up to date by monitoring local provision of sport and recreation participation spaces and by comparing actual population growth against population growth projections and adjust the delivery timeframes for new or upgraded facilities as necessary.

Step 5

Details of the number of participation spaces for Townsville's Top 10 club-based sports that are recommended for development or redevelopment. Where possible, development opportunities at Townsville's parks have been noted.

The list of priority ancillary sport and recreation facility projects includes details of each project's associated club, sport and park.

Step 4

Details of the predicted future supply of sport and recreation participation spaces for Townsville's Top 10 club-based sports, demonstrating any sports that will meet desired provisioning rates, have a future undersupply or be oversupplied in Townsville in 2021, 2026 and 2031.

Step 1

A collated summary of the details of Townsville City's primary sport and recreation parks, including each park's location, hierarchy classification, sporting facilities, ancillary infrastructure, assets, buildings, tenancy agreements by lease and licence to occupy (LTO), and details of the various ways that some parks are identified.

Step 2

A collated summary of the details Townsville City Council's agreed provisioning rates for the 10 most participated in club-based sports in the region (AFL, basketball, cricket, football/soccer, hockey, netball, rugby league, rugby union, tennis and touch football). This is the number of people per population able to be accommodated by one participation space.

Step 3

Details of the current supply of sport and recreation participation spaces for Townsville's Top 10 club-based sports, demonstrating any sports that are meeting desired provisioning rates, have a current undersupply or are oversupplied in Townsville in 2018.

7.1 Project Outputs

The list below provides details of the outputs of this sport and recreation facility strategy, which have been provided to Townsville City Council as separate parts to this report:

» Part B - Parks Stocktake

- Part B presents a stocktake of the major existing parks in Townsville which are used for sport and recreation. For each park included in the stocktake, details are provided regarding the park's location, hierarchy classification, sport and recreation assets, buildings, sport and recreation user organisations, relevant leases and licenses, and analysed participation spaces. Details regarding park master plans and Works for Queensland projects are listed where relevant. The stocktake also lists identified development potential at each park which could help accommodate current or future facility needs
- Some notable sport and recreation venues were excluded from the stocktake. While these venues contribute to the overall sport and recreation facility network in the Townsville LGA, the stocktake was intended to focus primarily on Townsville's grassroots participation venues. Facilities excluded from Part B are:
 - 1300Smiles Stadium - Queensland Government venue, owned and operated by Stadiums Queensland
 - Brothers Leagues Club - private venue, owned by Brothers Leagues Club (Townsville) Ltd
 - Townsville Turf Club - private venue, owned by Townsville Turf Club Incorporated; it is recommended that future research, investigation and planning for equestrian is undertaken
 - Townsville Sports Reserve - Queensland Government venue, owned and operated by the Department of Housing and Public Works

» Part C - Townsville's Top 11 Sports

- The third part of this sport and recreation facility strategy is a collated summary of the current facility provision relating to the 11 most participated in club-based sports in the region, namely AFL, basketball, cricket, football/soccer, hockey, netball, rugby league, rugby union, tennis, touch football and Oztag
- The Top 11 sports in Townsville are different from the top 11 sports nationally, as the sports included are prioritised based on data provided for analysis for this strategy. There is therefore a variance between the sports listed above and the club sports that appear in national AusPlay lists³⁶ (e.g. swimming and golf are not included in the Top 11 sports for this strategy). Analysis conducted to determine the local Top 11 took into consideration Townsville's participation rates as provided through consultation and research
 - This strategy recommends that Council review the participation space supply performance for the Top 11 sports annually and that further provisioning investigations are conducted for sports not included in the Top 11. These recommendations are made to enable Council to continually address gaps in its sport and recreation data, so that the strategy remains up to date and so that future planning for other sports, such as swimming, accounts for changing participation trends which are likely to continue to have an impact on the sports that are actually the Top 11 in Townsville at any given time
 - Some of the sports not represented in the Top 11, including aquatic sports, are recommended for future detailed investigation in sport or activity-specific planning strategies
- Part C includes the number of equivalent participation spaces which currently exist for each sport. This number takes into account the fact that '1' participation space for a grass field sport is a fully-lit and irrigated field, capable of accommodating intensive participation. A field that is irrigated but not lit, lit but not irrigated or not lit and not irrigated cannot be used as intensively, and so has been counted as an appropriate fraction of a '1' participation space to account for the reduced level of intensity of usage able to be accommodated by that field. For fields that are shared between multiple sports, a high-level, logical and strategic approach was taken to determining an appropriate fraction of the '1' participation space to be counted for each sport. For sports played on hard courts, a similar calculation was applied, but only addressing lighting, as hard courts do not require irrigation

- Throughout the project, a desired provisioning ratio was established for each sport and endorsed by the Council project team. This provisioning ratio is the number of people able to be accommodated by '1' participation space. This ratio, together with the current population and the existing number of '1' participation spaces, as per the Parks Stocktake, was used to determine the adequacy of Townsville's facility provision for each of the Top 11 sports. Current levels of oversupply or undersupply are noted for each sport, as are future projections for Townsville's facility provision compared against population projections for 2021, 2026 and 2031



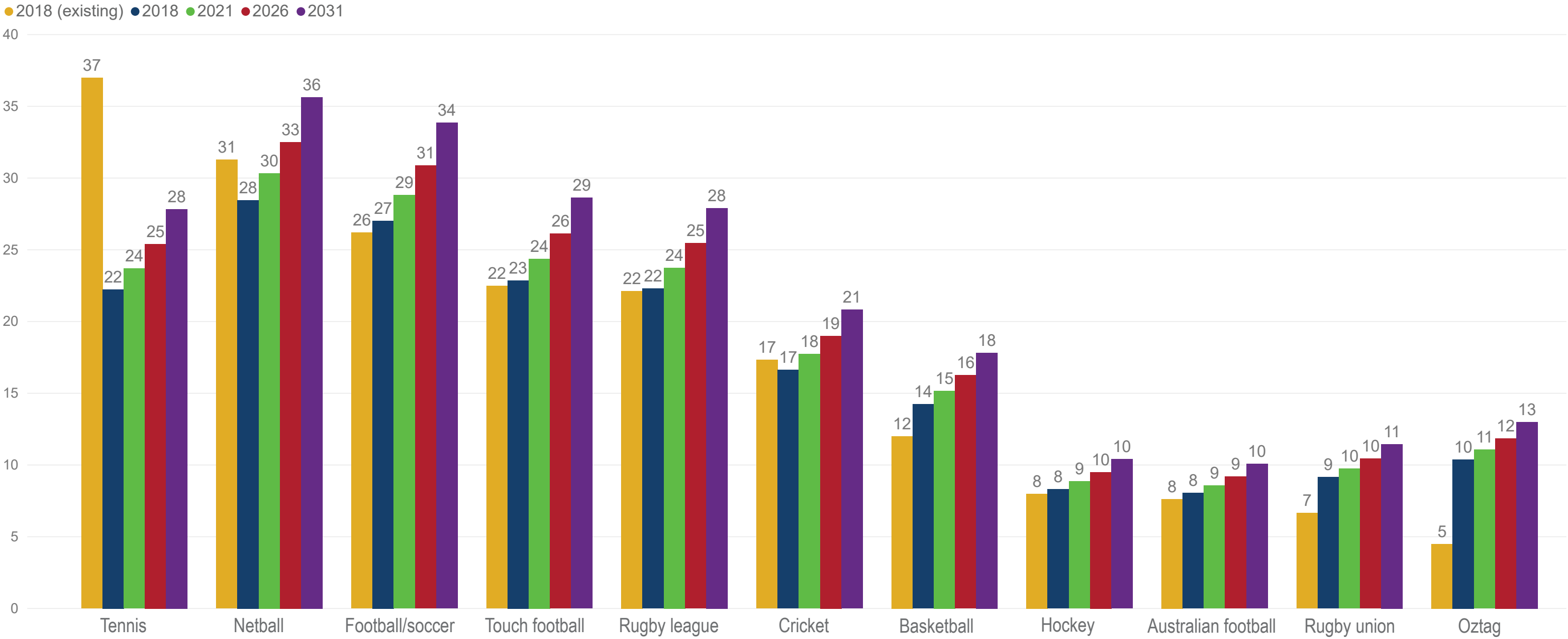
Townsville City from Castle Hill

³⁶ Australian Sports Commission (2016) *AusPlay: Participation Data for the Sport Sector: Summary of Key National Findings*. Commonwealth of Australia. p.16

The following graph summarises the current number of ‘1’ participation spaces for each of the Top 11 sports, together with the total number of participation spaces required to meet current and projected future demand.

The gold bars show the current number of ‘1’ participation spaces for each sport and the blue bars show the number of participation spaces required to meet 2018 demand, according to the established provisioning ratios and the 2018 Townsville City population. The green, red and purple bars then display the number of participation spaces required to meet future demand in 2021, 2026 and 2031 respectively, based on Townsville City’s population projections.

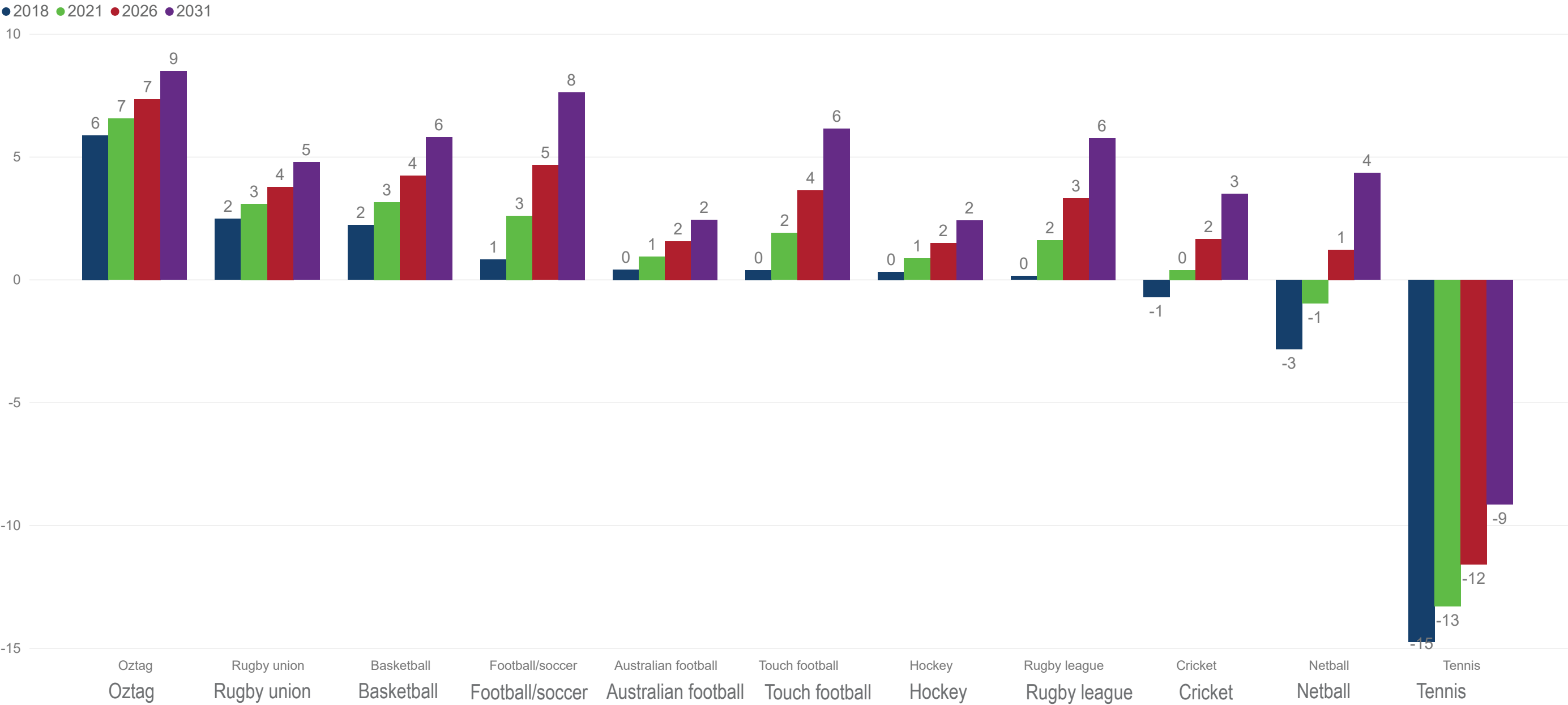
Participation Spaces - Supply and Demand for the Top 11



The graph below shows the number of additional ‘1’ participation spaces required immediately (2018), by 2021, by 2026 and by 2031 (in blue, green, red and purple respectively) to meet the facility demand shown in the graph above. Negative numbers on the graph (for cricket, netball and tennis) indicate a current oversupply according to the established provisioning ratios. Note that the oversupply of participation spaces reduces as the population is projected to increase.

Note that the numbers of existing spaces and required spaces shown in each graph have been rounded to the nearest whole number, hence some variance between each graph.

Participation Spaces Required for the Top 11



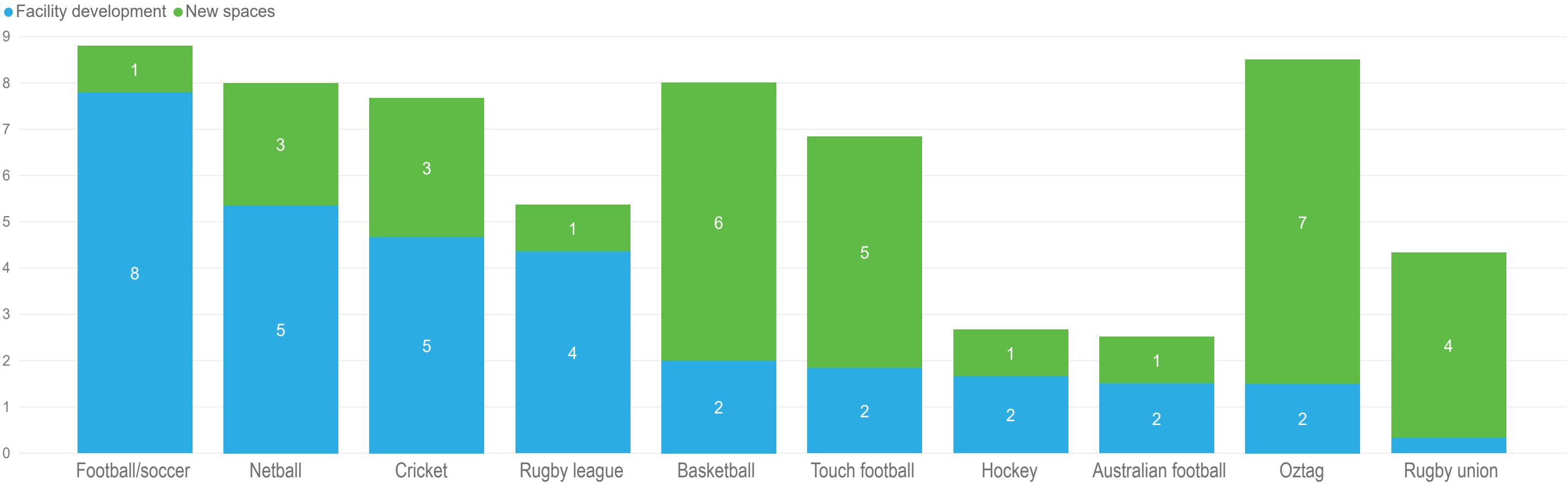
Many of the additional participation spaces required could be provided by further embellishing existing spaces, to increase the contribution towards Townsville’s facility network made by spaces that are currently underdeveloped (that is, those that have been calculated only as a fraction of ‘1’ participation space). This includes installing new or better lighting, or irrigating grass surfaces to increase the capacity of the participation spaces.

The graph below shows a breakdown of how the number of participation spaces required for each sport to 2031 could be met. The blue portion of each bar displays the number of participation spaces able to be delivered by embellishing existing facilities. The green portion of each bar in the graph displays the number of new spaces required to meet facility demand by 2031. New spaces are likely to comprise a combination of new fields or courts in parks that are yet to be developed, the development of fields or courts in existing parks where space allows, and the reallocation of underutilised or untenanted spaces, including some that are currently only used for public recreation.

Note that the graph below only includes sports for which a future demand has been identified. Sports with an oversupply of facilities, according to the established provisioning ratios, have not been included.

Further details of where and when existing participation spaces could be embellished, and where and when new participation spaces for each sport could be established are provided for each sport in Part C. Additional information regarding facility development opportunities for each of the Top 11 sports is included in Part E.

Embellished and New Participation Spaces Required to Meet Demand



» Part D - Ancillary Sport and Recreation Facility Needs

- Part D of the sport and recreation facility strategy presents:
 - A list of prioritised projects as identified by local clubs and associations
 - Details of planned projects included in Council's contemporary master plans
- The prioritised club and association projects were identified in consultation and are presented together with their rationale for inclusion and details of other clubs that will benefit from projects at shared venues
- Projects listed include new or upgraded participation spaces, lighting, clubhouses, change rooms, toilets, shade, storage and sport-specific facility upgrades. The list includes projects that relate to more than only the Top 11 sports as presented in Part C
- Other projects were identified by clubs during consultation, but these have not been prioritised. The reason that most of these other projects were not prioritised was because the respective clubs do not currently have the financial capacity to contribute to the projects. Some other projects noted by clubs and associations were not prioritised in this strategy as they are recommended to be addressed in future research, investigation or planning (e.g. for mountain biking, motorsports, equestrian indoor sports, aquatic sports, water sports, and shooting sports and archery) or in future master plans (e.g. the Murray Sports Regional Precinct Master Plan)

» Part E - Development Potential

- This part of this strategy provides details of the development opportunities that exist at current and planned sport and recreation parks in Townsville City. These opportunities, presented on a sport-by-sport basis in Part E, were identified through analysis of the facility provision at each existing park, available space for development of potential new participation spaces, participation space upgrades, and opportunities to increase sport provisioning by installing lighting and/or irrigation (i.e. to increase the fraction of each '1' underdeveloped participation space)

» Part F - Draft Strategy Feedback

- The final part of this strategy summarises the feedback gathered as part of the second round of community engagement which involved releasing the draft report to the public for comment. Participants who were consulted directly as part of the first round of community engagement were contacted for their feedback



Castle Hill