



HOW TO PLAN FOR A COMMUNITY RECREATION AND SPORTS HUB - GUIDE

JULY 2018



Government of South Australia
Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing

Contents

| TABLE OF CONTENTS | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 1. Purpose of the Guide..... | 3 |
| 2. Background..... | 3 |
| 3. What is a Community Recreation and Sports Hub? | 3 |
| 4. General Characteristics of Community Recreation and Sports Hub.. | 4 |
| 5. Benefits of Community Recreation and Sports Hub | 3 |
| 6. How to Plan for Hubs..... | 6 |
| 7. References..... | 15 |

DISCLAIMER

While all care has been taken in the preparation of this material, no responsibility is accepted by the author(s) or the Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing (ORSR), its staff, volunteers or partners, for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies. The material provided in this resource has been prepared to provide general information only.

It is not intended to be relied upon or be a substitute for legal or other professional advice. No responsibility can be accepted by the author(s) or ORSR or its partners for any known or unknown consequences that may result from reliance on any information provided in this publication.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Designed to supplement the South Australian Regional Level Recreation and Sport Facilities Planning Guidelines this resource has been developed to assist local government officers and others responsible for the planning, development and operation of regional level recreation and sport facilities understand the principles that support the development of Community Recreation and Sport Hubs.

2. BACKGROUND

To achieve the greatest range of benefits for local communities it is important to create flexible facility environments and manage these assets in a sustainable way. Greater value from recreation and sport can be achieved through co-location and management of facilities that not only provide a greater range of participation opportunities but also build stronger communities through a sense of connection.



3. WHAT IS A COMMUNITY RECREATION AND SPORTS HUB?

A Community Recreation and Sports Hub is a multi-use facility which has been designed and programmed to meet a broad range of outcomes. Although primarily designed to meet community recreation and sport outcomes, with considered planning and design hubs have the capacity to accommodate a broad mix of other community programs and services within the same location. This includes:

- Health Club (24/7 Gym)
- Childcare Centre
- Allied health services
- Education and training
- Toy/Sports library
- Youth/Other Community Services
- Retail
- Café
- Art, music and dance
- Community gardens
- Youth Centre
- Neighbourhood House
- Sport administration offices
- Community events
- Conferences/Trade Shows.

Importantly, hubs are places that are integrated, both in terms of the programs, activities and services they provide, and in terms of the physical relationship they have with surrounding locales such as shops, schools and importantly transport corridors and nodes.

Under the hubs approach it may not be necessary to physically build completely new assets to meet demand. Retrofitting or enhancing/expanding current facilities to enable a hubs model to be achieved is also feasible and may have the added benefit of an already established user base and community support.

4. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNITY RECREATION AND SPORTS HUBS

| HIERARCHY LEVEL | GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS |
|--|--|
| <p>STATE / NATIONAL</p> <p><i>Primary catchment of South Australia attracting users and visitors from interstate and overseas.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides for the highest level of sporting competition which may include International events and competitions, National League(s) and associated state and national team and squad training centre(s). • High spectator numbers. • Are located at high profile sites with close links to major road networks and connections to public transport, cycling and pedestrian routes, community facilities or services. • Have the capacity to host major community events such as concerts. • May also provide a Headquarters for State or National Sporting Organisation administration. <p>EXAMPLE: Adelaide Oval</p> |
| <p>REGIONAL</p> <p><i>Primary catchment of local users with extended catchment across multiple local council areas, primarily for competition and events.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates competition and recreational forms of participation and provides a broad range of sport and recreation activities and programs for a large number of participants across local and regional geographic catchments, generally beyond a single local council area. • Meet the standards required to host major state or regional level competitions, events and/or training. • Have the capacity to host major community events such as festivals. • Are located at high profile sites with close links to major road networks and connections to public transport, cycling and pedestrian routes, community facilities or services. • May also provide an administration base for volunteer clubs and associations. <p>EXAMPLE: Port Augusta Central Oval</p> |
| <p>DISTRICT</p> <p><i>Primary catchment area of local communities and single local council areas.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a focus for association competition as well as service a local catchment to provide a mix of recreational, competitive and program formats of participation. • Facilities may also provide a primary function as a local finals venue or a central venue that facilitates regular competition for multiple clubs / teams. <p>EXAMPLE: Flagstaff Hill Community Centre</p> |

5. BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY RECREATION AND SPORTS HUBS

| KEY AREA | BENEFITS |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Strategic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to integrate a variety of community services in one central accessible location for example recreation and sport, allied health services, community and social services, education, and arts. • Improved links and opportunities for collaboration between sports clubs, service providers, and other hub partners, for example schools to deliver targeted community programs. |
| Economic/Financial | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economies of scale in capital and revenue costs with the aim to reduce reliance on public sector subsidy in the longer term, leading to a financially sustainable community facility asset base. • Facilities shared by a number of different sports (indoor and outdoor) bringing economic benefits from sharing overheads and maintenance cost efficiencies. |
| Community/Recreation and Sport | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for integration of sports and recreation with other community, social and health services and organisations. • Capacity to enhance social capital and community cohesiveness. • Improved knowledge sharing and efficiencies for local sports clubs through co-locating and sharing support services. • Increased opportunities for participation through diversity of facilities, linking together clubs, public and private sector provisions. • Culture and provision can be more community focused and inclusive than traditional sports clubs by providing for all sections of the community. |

6. HOW TO PLAN FOR HUBS

1. Establish the need for the facility.



2. Define a vision for the facility - what do you want it to achieve?



3. Engage with the Community.



4. Select the appropriate site for the hub.



5. Identify a considered plan for management and operation of the hub including financial feasibility.



6. Set principles for design of the facility that address functionality, user experience, and sustainability.



7. Provide a strategy for ongoing asset management.

6. HOW TO PLAN FOR HUBS *cont.*

Stage 1 – Establishing Need

To be successful and sustainable hubs need to be designed and programmed to meet the needs of the community. It is important from the onset that the drivers for a hub are clearly articulated and where possible quantified.

| KEY STEP | FOR CONSIDERATION | POSSIBLE METHOD |
|--|--|--|
| Establish the catchment of the hub. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance Population density Physical barriers such as rivers and major roads Accessibility. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circular catchment analysis. |
| Establish the demographic and socio-economic profile of the catchment area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key characteristics of the population: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age, gender, income, ethnicity, employment Access to transport modes Cultural values Participation levels Identify community recreation and sport preferences and needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Census data Review available participation data Engage sports clubs and associations. |
| Audit existing facilities and services in the catchment area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing facilities and programs in the area. Key user and representative groups in recreation and sport provision. Identify desired standard, and gaps or deficiencies in existing provision. Identify opportunities for organisations to co-locate. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review records Site inspections Review State Sport and Recreation Plans. |
| Identify any future growth areas or urban regeneration areas that may be connected to the hub. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What will the future needs of the community be? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review state, regional and local strategic plans Seek input from the developer. |
| Demonstrate how the hub fits into the strategic and policy framework for the region and the relevant sport and recreation plans (including State Active Recreation and State Sporting Organisation plans). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic planning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review state and local policy, sport and recreation plans Develop a business case. |

6. HOW TO PLAN FOR HUBS *cont.*

Stage 2 - Vision and Objectives

To determine the meaning of success facility providers must identify what they want to achieve through their proposed facility. Setting objectives for the facility should also clearly determine the relative commercial and community focus of a facility. Some Community Recreation and Sport Hubs may have greater focus on commercial success, while other hubs may weight delivery on social objectives (social inclusion, health, participation, safety).

| KEY STEP | FOR CONSIDERATION | POSSIBLE METHOD |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Scale and function | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility catchment. • Activities the hub will host. • Formal and informal groups that will use the hub. • Mix of facilities and services that will be offered. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder consultation. • Review relevant plans. |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to needs identified in the catchment. • Participation outcomes. • Particular groups to be serviced. • Social inclusion. • Social capital. • Sports pathways. • Broader community benefits. • Safety outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder consultation. |
| Environmental | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) considerations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design opportunities. |
| Financial and commercial | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial sustainability. • Revenue generating activities. • Lifecycle asset management and future upgrade. • Recurrent costs of running .programs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed analysis. |

6. HOW TO PLAN FOR HUBS *cont.*

Stage 3 - Identify and engage with all key stakeholders

It is important to engage in a meaningful way with all key stakeholders including recreation and sporting clubs and the broader community at the earliest opportunity.

Use a co-design approach to the planning process through early and active involvement with those impacted (users, local community etc) will provide greater “buy in” and ownership of the Community Recreation and Sports Hub.

| KEY STEP | FOR CONSIDERATION | POSSIBLE METHOD |
|--|---|---|
| Identify and engage potential partners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners in the successful development and operation of a Community Recreation and Sport Hub can include user groups, clubs and associations, councils and commercial service providers. Do all partners share the vision? If not how can they be aligned? Are there any partners missing that are needed to deliver on the vision? Is there potential for a shared use model and if so who should be engaged? Garner “buy in” from stakeholders as early as possible in the process. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and implement a Community Engagement Plan. |
| Engagement Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify communities of interest. Who will have input and who will be informed. How the community will be engaged and when. The organisations, groups, and individuals to be consulted with may be different at different stages of the project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Plan may include individual meetings/ briefings, group workshop. |

6. HOW TO PLAN FOR HUBS *cont.*

Stage 4 - Site Selection

Selection of an appropriate site is a critical factor in the success of the facility. Where possible, co-location with existing infrastructure including public transport, education, health and community services, existing local sports clubs, business and shops can contribute significantly to the success of hubs.

It may not be necessary to physically build completely new assets to meet demand. Retrofitting or enhancing/expanding current facilities to enable a hubs model to be achieved is also feasible and may have the added benefit of an already established user base and community support.

| KEY STEP | FOR CONSIDERATION | POSSIBLE METHOD |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Location | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of growth/demand. • Accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, private vehicles and public transport (including those with a disability). • Physical barriers such as rivers and major roads. • Existing infrastructure. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage stakeholders. • Site inspections. • Strategic Land Use Assessment. |
| Availability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land ownership. • Land tenure. • Land cost and affordability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps and GIS data. • Stakeholder consultation. |
| Site analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size and shape. • Topography. • Vegetation. • Exposure to wind. • Views. • Watercourses. • Land contamination. • Compatibility with surrounding land uses. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps and GIS data. • Site inspections. |
| Linkages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to and ability to link with adjacent or nearby complementary facilities or services (e.g. schools, childcare, existing sport and recreation facilities, libraries, community centres, shopping centres, medical centres etc.). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban design framework. |
| Functional and iconic potential | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway site. • Site well known to the regional community. • Extent of support and interest in the site as a Community Recreation and Sports Hub by stakeholders and the community; network of existing clubs and organisations willing to participate. • Interest of potential private sector partners – are there areas of the site that will be attractive to them? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban design framework. |

6. HOW TO PLAN FOR HUBS *cont.*

Stage 5 - Management and Operation

Selection of a management model will depend on a range of factors including:

- The hub objectives
- The in-house expertise and resources of the hub owners. Are they able to deliver on the objectives?
- The scale and nature of activities undertaken at the hub
- The level of control the hub owner wants to maintain
- If considering a contract management model, the availability of suitable contractors.
- Capacity to fund, to operate, to maintain and improve
- Establishing who will have responsibility for the decision making process

It is preferable that an early decision is made on the preferred Management Model.

In line with the identified users and uses of the facility is the need to explore the best management arrangement to ensure all needs are met while the centre is operated in the most cost effective manner. This includes an assessment of the rationale for service delivery and a clear understanding of whether or not the facility will be a centre catering solely for community groups; expected to operate commercially, or a mix of both.

This is best explained in terms of a 'community' facility that offers maximum access but may require ongoing subsidy, through to a commercial centre that may be viable but not fully accessible to the broader community.

Understanding why the precinct is being developed and clearly articulating the community benefit is a key outcome of the overall process. Clearly identifying the intended level (local, regional or state) will also assist in the type of management best suited to the facility with smaller localised facilities tending to have more of a social outcome and therefore more suited to lease and licence arrangements with local groups through to larger more commercial facilities that may be outsourced under strict contractual and procurement arrangements.



6. HOW TO PLAN FOR HUBS *cont.*

Stage 5 - Management and Operation (*cont.*)

| KEY STEP | FOR CONSIDERATION | POSSIBLE METHOD |
|---|--|--|
| Are other parties able to contribute to operating costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to operating costs will partly determine the financial sustainability of a hub. The following will inform the selection of the operating model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Will operating costs be met almost entirely by the host council with little or no contribution from operating income. ○ Will operating costs be met by operating income from multiple partners and some subsidy required from council. ○ Will operating costs be met entirely from user fees and operating income. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Management (depending on resource skills and requirements). • Consider Joint Management Shared Use Agreement. • Multiple options for operation. |
| Will the facility or program facilitate full-time use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility/program is primarily out of hours. • Facility/program requires all hours. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared use with an educational institution (shared use). • Multiple options. |
| Resourcing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be very minimal staff input required for facility/program and skills are available. • There will be considerable staff requirements and local employment/training requirements and resources needed to administer the facility, and specific skills are not readily provided in-house. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-management. • Outsourced delivery. |

6. HOW TO PLAN FOR HUBS *cont.*

Stage 6 - Design

The design of a Community Recreation and Sports Hub will involve consideration of the size, location and nature of the site and its surrounds, the facilities to be developed, the objectives of the hub, who the primary user groups will be, and the budget.

Implementing a facility design that suits the activities and the users is a key component of success and critical to this are facilities that meet the sport's standards to enable competition at the appropriate level.

Responsive design can create a place where people come to play, meet and connect with the local community, and that is inviting and stimulating, visually sensitive and expressive, and has a feel good atmosphere for people of all ages and cultures.

| KEY STEP | FOR CONSIDERATION | POSSIBLE METHOD |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Definition of objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design objectives in relation to the look, feel and function of the facility may be in addition to the objectives for the facility overall. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner, stakeholder and community engagement. Application of Universal Design Principles. |
| Concept design | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Size and shape Topography Vegetation Exposure to wind Views Watercourses Land contamination Compatibility with surrounding land uses Opportunities and constraints. User requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility users needs in terms of total floor area, characteristics of spaces, linkages between spaces, accessibility requirements. Relevant sports governing bodies playing field and supporting facilities standards. Identity of facility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> User groups, club identities, desired facility outcomes. Flexibility and changing functions. Shared use. Passive surveillance and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Cost estimates. Approvals. Whole of life economic and financial costs associated with constructing, procuring and operating a facility. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared use with an educational institution (shared use). Multiple options. |
| Asset Management Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole of life economic and financial costs associated with constructing, procuring and operating a facility. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life cycle cost planning. |

6. HOW TO PLAN FOR HUBS *cont.*

STAGE 7 - Provide a strategy for ongoing asset management

Community Recreation and Sports Hubs are long term assets that generally require large amounts of public money to develop, operate and maintain. As a consequence it is important that councils consider what level of funding support, if any (through mechanism such as subsidies and/or grants) will be provided to off-set some or all of the costs of managing, operating and maintaining the facility.

In particular council has to decide whether:

- It will utilise a ‘user pays’ model for a facility where user groups and/or participants pay all of the costs associated with the facility (full cost recovery), or
- Especially where the facility and the programs and services it delivers supports council meet its social and community priorities and targets:
 - o ‘Fully fund’ all or some costs of managing the facility including the programs and services it delivers to the community, or
 - o Use a ‘shared cost’ subsidy model to reduce the cost to user groups and/or participants.

| KEY STEP | FOR CONSIDERATION | POSSIBLE METHOD |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Asset Management Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole of life economic and financial costs associated with constructing, procuring and operating a facility. • It is important that the outcomes and targets set are consistent and align with the council asset and financial management plan targets. • Consider implementing a ‘Community Facilities Subsidy Policy’ which provides a framework to standardise the level of subsidy provided to community groups who use facilities (e.g. sports clubs) based on the extent to which they meet councils priority community/social outcomes for the facility (e.g. provides programs for men and women, provides membership concessions or discounts to low income earners). • To offset costs consider other income generating opportunities for the facility that can such as inclusion of an onsite commercial tenancy for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Club (24/7 Gym) • Child Care Centre • Retail Shop • Office/administration • Allied Health Service (e.g. Sports Physio) • Neighbourhood House • Youth/Other Community Services • Monthly Community Markets. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life cycle cost planning |

7. REFERENCES

Community Planning Toolkit, Queensland Local Government Community Services Association, Queensland.

Facility Planning Guide, Sport and Recreation Facilities, Department of Sport and Recreation, Government of Western Australia.

Waikato Regional Sports Facility Plan, Reference Document, Waikato Region of Councils, Sport New Zealand, Sport Waikato, New Zealand.

Developing Sustainable Sports Facilities: A toolkit for the development of a Sustainable Community Sports Hub, Sport England.



Government of South Australia

Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing