

MCCORMACK PARK MASTER PLAN FINAL REPORT 2022



HOBSONSBAY
CITY COUNCIL



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THE PROJECT

The McCormack Park Master Plan has provided the Laverton community with an opportunity to reimagine the park's role in providing a community place that brings people together to socialise, to play and for fitness.

The Hobson Bay Aquatic Strategy 2019 to 2030, approved by Council in July 2019, recommended the replacement of the Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre with a water play and a youth facility for McCormack Park.

The strategy involved a condition assessment of the Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre by a structural engineer. This assessment followed a series of technical reports conducted by Council over the last ten years. The assessment found the facility to be in average condition and nearing the end of its life; and that it is not technically or financially prudent to redevelop the Centre as a modern indoor aquatic and leisure centre.

In response, the Aquatic Strategy reviewed how best to provide aquatic facilities to the western areas of Hobson Bay with a view to providing for the largest number of people living within a 5km primary catchment area (driving distance), with the aim of achieving the necessary 50,000+ people to service a successful and sustainable district sized aquatic and leisure facility. Bruce Comben Reserve in Altona Meadows was assessed as meeting these objectives, whilst Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre site would only service a catchment of approximately 10,000 people. Building the proposed facility at Bruce Comben Reserve is subject to funding, including from other levels of government. The Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre will remain open until the new facility at Bruce Comben Reserve is open.

Council recognised the community sentiment towards the Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre and the role it has played in providing for recreation and fitness in the local community. It is for this reason that a master planning process was launched to seek ideas from the Laverton community on reimagining McCormack Park and understand the types of facilities and services that would encourage future activity in the space.



THE SITE

The master plan is an opportunity to build on the existing uses and park facilities and encourage a greater range of activities and experiences.

McCormack Park is a place that connects people to nature. It is centrally located to the Laverton community and is a place for social and family recreation and gatherings and where people exercise, play and skate.

The park is zoned for public park and recreation (PPRZ) and comprises an area of about 99,470m². The Laverton Creek rambles down the southern border of the park. There are residential areas to the north and south of the park and Laverton P-12 College is located on the north-east border of the park.

The park includes a large play space and skate park for young people and families. The Laverton Creek Trail connects with three bridge crossings, the broader pathway network and the Laverton P-12 College.



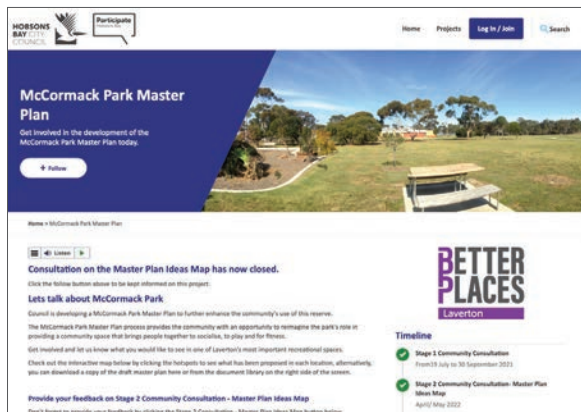
WHAT HAVE WE HEARD?

“The Park has the potential to not just be a standard park, but to be an example of what council and community can do when they work together, share ideas, incorporate technology with nature and utilise local abilities for an improved sustainable outcome” – Respondent.

A two-stage consultation process was conducted for the McCormack Park Master Plan.

Stage 1 Consultation

The first stage of consultation ran for 10 weeks from July to September 2021 and involved surveys, interviews, and drop-in sessions.



There were 940 people that visited the project page on Participate where 81 contributions were made to the online survey. There were a further 85 hard copy surveys received. Overall, 166 community surveys were received from a wide range of community members, most of which were between the age groups of 18 and 39 years.

The community survey was designed to encourage a “possibilities” discussion. To find out what people love about McCormack Park and seek ideas for future activities that will encourage people to use the park more often.

The first stage of consultation found:

- The community love that McCormack Park is a community place for families, children, young people and older adults close to home.
- The park has spacious open green space with established trees, landscape, scenery, wildlife / birdlife and a creek. These natural features offer a connection to nature, a refuge from the urban busyness and a place for restoration.
- It is an active place with kick about space, a play space, walking paths, skate park, picnic and seating areas where people can play, exercise, walk their dog, relax, socialise and meet people from the local community.
- The community want to see a balance between the natural values of McCormack Park with providing active places for all ages and abilities.

The community suggested a range of ideas to achieve this aspiration that were translated into an ideas map for stage 2 consultation.



Stage 2 Consultation

The second stage of consultation ran for four weeks from April to May 2022 and involved seeking community feedback on the ideas map designed in response to the first stage of consultation. Council received surveys, conducted interviews and drop-in sessions.

The map shows how activity areas can be connected, how the natural spaces can be enhanced and ideas for celebrating the history of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre.

There were 192 people that visited the project page on Participate where 13 contributions were made to the online survey.

The second stage of consultation found:

- The overall sentiment for the ideas map was well received from the community
- There were concerns about the decommissioning of the Williams Road bridge
- Some concerns were raised on the removal of the Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre.

The total number of bridge crossings over the creek is being retained, and the new location provides easy access to the nearby school separate from the on-road crossing at Bladin Street. Opportunities for an informal rock crossing at the Williams Road crossing will be explored during detailed design and in consultation with Melbourne Water.

The concerns about the loss of aquatic and fitness programs in Laverton are acknowledged and will be addressed as part of delivering the proposed facility at Bruce Comben Reserve.

McCORMACK PARK MASTER PLAN IDEAS MAP

What Did We Hear?

The stage 1 consultation for the McCormack Park Master Plan ran from the 19 July to 30 September 2021.

The community love that McCormack Park is a place for families, children, young people and older adults close to home.

It has spacious open green space with established trees, landscape, scenery, wildlife / birdlife and a creek. These

natural features offer a connection to nature, a refuge from the urban busyness and a place for restoration.

It is also an active place with kick about space, a play space, walking paths, skate park, picnic and seating areas where people can play, exercise, walk their dog, relax, socialise and meet people from the local community.

The community want to see a balance between the natural values of McCormack Park while still providing active places for all ages and abilities.

The community suggested a range of ideas to achieve this aspiration. The below plan of McCormack Park is a mud map of these ideas. The map shows how activity areas can be connected, how the natural spaces can be enhanced and ideas for celebrating the history of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre.

Example images with more information on each idea is summarised on the following pages.



Stage 3 Consultation

The third stage of consultation ran for five weeks from August to September 2022 and involved seeking community feedback on the draft master plan designed in response to the second stage of consultation. Council received surveys and drop-in sessions.

There were 84 contributions made to the online survey.

The third stage of consultation found:

- The overall sentiment for the master plan was well received from the community. There were several comments expressing excitement for the proposed park upgrade
- Most respondents were supportive of a new creek crossing at Thomas Street
- Over half the respondents were supportive of the decommissioning of Williams Street bridge with those not supportive interested in maintaining a crossing. Council will explore a rock crossing to replace this bridge
- Most respondents supported the water play area and suggested shade, non-slip flooring, water play features and water fountains. There were concerns about water quality and sustainable energy that Council will consider in the next stage of design
- Additional improvements suggested included more planting and vegetation, access to toilets, providing dog off leash areas, social areas with seating, bbqs and shade.
- Like in the stage 2 consultation, there were concerns about the loss of aquatic and fitness programs in Laverton. Council has acknowledged these and will address these concerns as part of delivering the proposed facility at Bruce Comben Reserve.

SAMPLE OF COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Council is committed to providing engaging, inviting and accessible play opportunities for all in some of our key public parks.



The upgrade of McCormack Park will provide a wide range of recreational opportunities for users with varying levels of abilities. This will be Hobsons Bay's first All Abilities Access play space.

Key Directions

The key directions of the master plan will be delivered in three stages. This is shown in the staging plan.

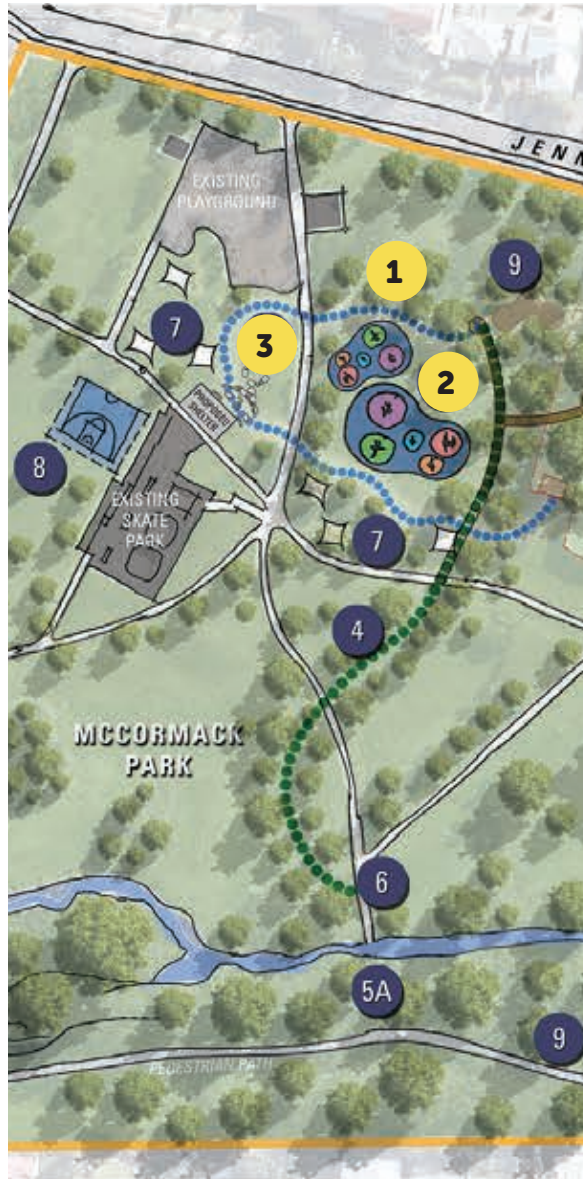
Estimated capital costs for key directions have been provided to help inform Council's long term financial planning, and funding approaches to State and Federal Government.



MCCORMACK PARK MASTER PLAN



Master Plan Components



1 Story Telling River

The story telling river will connect the location of the Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre to the new water play workshop by winding its way past the play space and social picnic areas.

The river will include interpretive signage that celebrates the aboriginal cultural connection to land and country.

Indicative Cost: \$500,000



2 Water Play Workshop

The water play workshop will connect with the story telling river and include water-based play features and sprays, shade sail, a small hut for imaginative play and stepping log course and platform benches that connect with the urban forest area.

Indicative Cost: \$800,000



3 Viewing and Climbing Tower

A tall tower structure that becomes the focal point of the park. The tower would feature a viewing platform at 3m high overlooking the play space and proposed water play workshop; and the ground level section below the viewing platform would incorporate climbing opportunities.

Indicative Cost: \$250,000

Master Plan Components Continued



4 Bush Trail

A gravel bush trail within an urban forest area. The bush trail will encourage people to immerse within nature and connect with the creek and open space areas.

Indicative Cost: \$100,000



5 Bridge Improvements

A new bridge crossing at Thomas Street that connects the park to the residents south of the creek (existing rock crossing to be retained).

5A The bridge at Williams Road will be decommissioned (investigate the installation of rock crossing with relevant authorities).

Indicative Cost: \$500,000



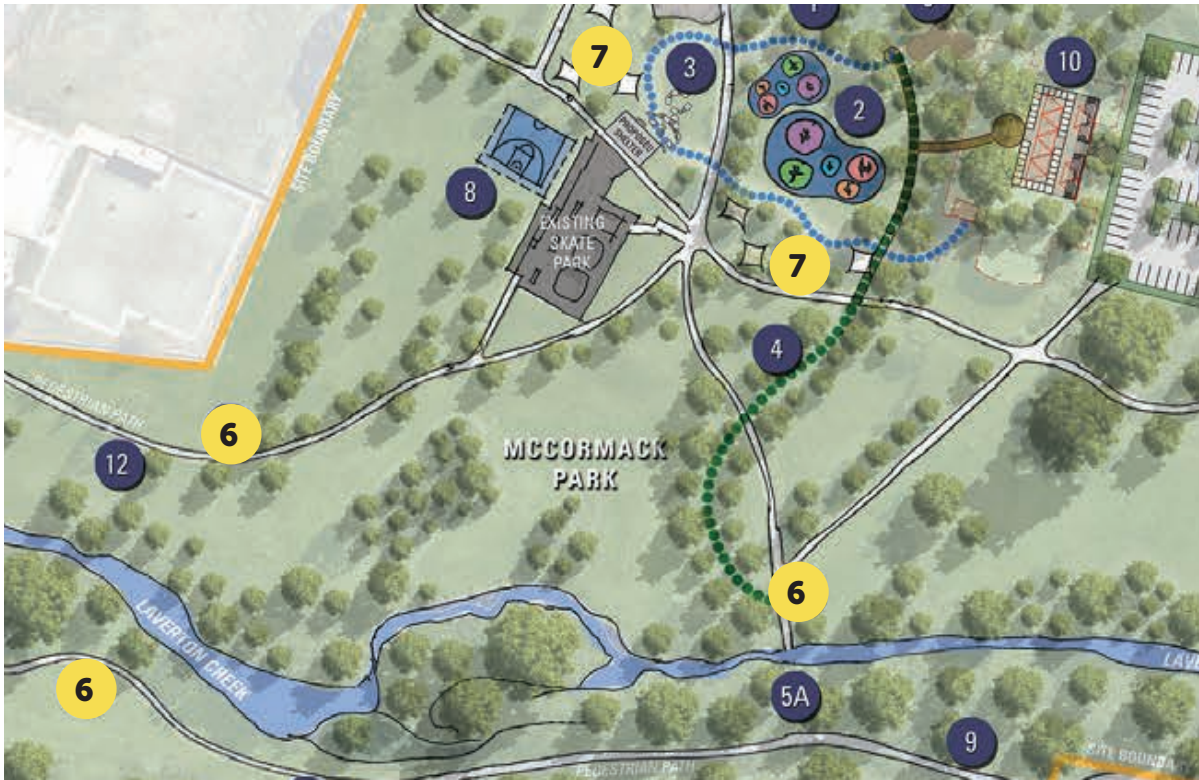
Master Plan Components Continued



6 Socialising Hubs

Provide social hub areas around the park away from the main hub of activity with seating under established shade trees, shrub planting, stepping logs / log seats and interpretive signage.

Indicative Cost: \$80,000



7 Picnic Facility Expansion

Expand the picnic facilities with an additional barbecue, seating, shade structure and changing places toilet centrally between play space, water play workshop and skate park.

Indicative Cost: \$500,000



Master Plan Components Continued



8 Multi-Sport Court

A new multi-sport court sited near the skate park that may include a basketball ring, hit up wall, table tennis table, four square and hopscotch markings and social seating areas.

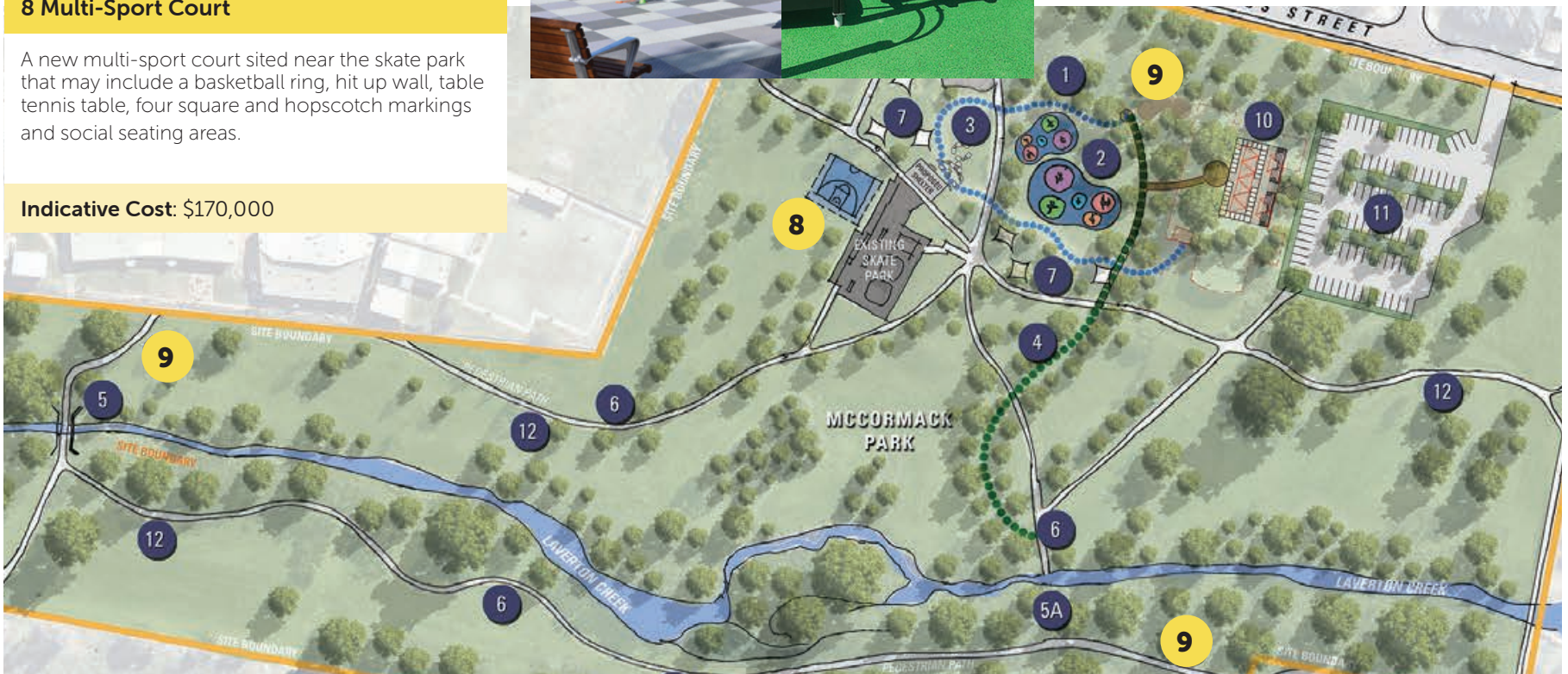
Indicative Cost: \$170,000



9 Exercise Hub

Develop a large exercise hub that includes adult, seniors and all abilities exercise equipment on the footprint of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre and two additional small exercise stations south of the creek. The hub would have access to drinking stations and support exercise groups.

Indicative Cost: \$400,000



Master Plan Components Continued



10 Amphitheatre

A park entry water feature that connects with amphitheatre seating on the footprint of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre.

Indicative Cost: \$1,200,000



11 Car Park

Redesign car park area and incorporate tree planting 'channels' that capture runoff into rain garden plant areas.

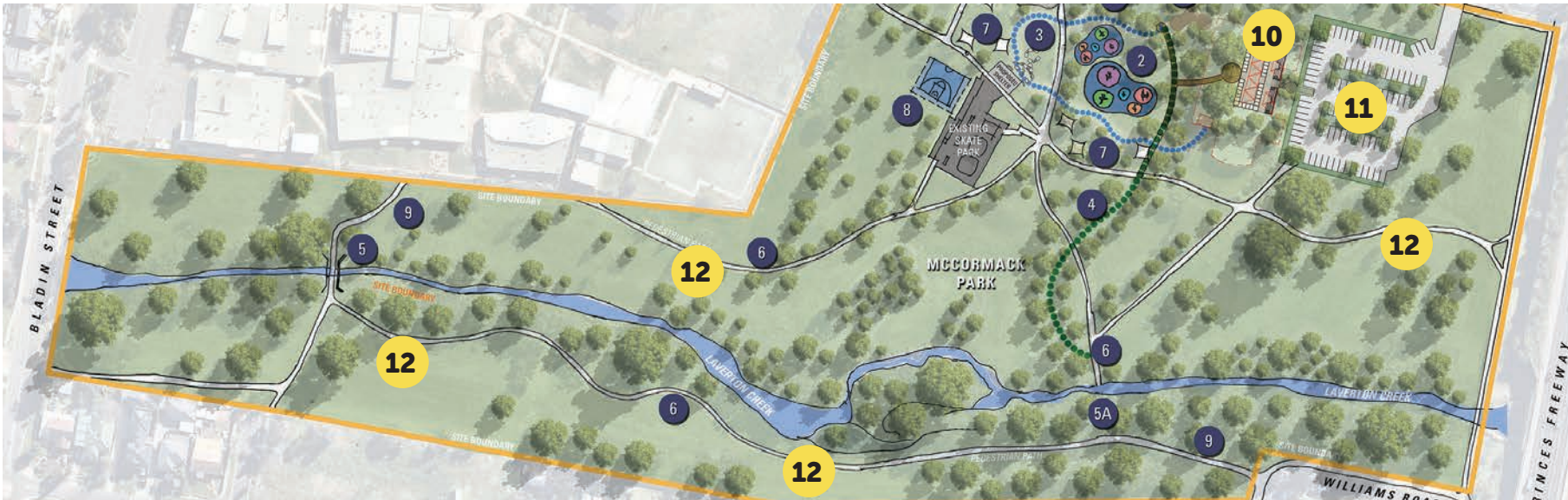
Indicative Cost: \$500,000



12 Pathway Improvements

Upgrade a priority path circuit around the park and improve functionality and connections with other lead in paths.

Indicative Cost: \$200,000



STAGING AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The total estimated benchmark costs to implement the master plan over the next ten years is \$5,400,000 with benchmark costs on key facility components included below. Please note that independent cost estimates will be obtained as part of detailed design stage for reserve improvements.



MASTER PLAN KEY DESIGN FEATURES

ENVIRONMENT VALUING OUR ENVIRONMENT*



Location of active use zones

- Active use zones are contained in pockets within the larger parkland to retain the openness and appeal of the park.
- A dedicated zone in the play space for children in the 0-3 years age group, that supports active supervision and safety. Located away from high speed areas such as large swings, big water body areas.



Sustainable use of water

- Water play will be timed and seasonal
- Water used for the play features will be treated and recycled onsite, only requiring top-up for evaporative losses and due to use.



Shade

- Most of the active areas shaded by trees / shelter structure / shade sails.



Urban forest corridor

- As part of the staged Master Plan implementation, an urban forest comprising of approximately 50 new trees will be planted including mature trees.
- The development will seek to protect all existing trees. Any tree removals, if required would be thoroughly investigated.



All year use spaces

- The space will facilitate picnicking and gathering all through the year even when water features are turned off.



Water play activities

- Opportunities to engage with water for all age groups..

COMMUNITY HEALTHY, EQUITABLE AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES*



Places for gathering / picnics

- Additional shelter structure with barbecues and picnic seating to support more group gatherings. All existing facilities will be retained i.e. play equipment, shelters, toilets.
- Additional bins and water refill station to supplement existing waste disposal and drink fountain.



All Abilities Access play space

- Changing places toilet to facilitate user groups that may require adult sized changing bench, tracking hoist etc.
- Additional unisex toilet cubicle (total 3 cubicles).



Plenty of seating opportunities

- Benches, picnic settings, platform benches all through the park; but concentrated in active use zones like the play equipment, multi-purpose court
- Also plenty of rocks and logs throughout the activity zones for additional seating and play opportunities.



A place for all

- A wide range of activities, fitness and play equipment to cater to users with different levels of fitness and ability; of a wide range of age groups.

MASTER PLAN ADDITIONAL DESIGN FEATURES

ENVIRONMENT VALUING OUR ENVIRONMENT* CONSERVATION & AWARENESS



Native vegetation pockets

- Fenced areas with native vegetation (shrubs, grasses and groundcovers) to increase biodiversity and support small animals.
- These will be similar in nature to the current fenced native vegetation area close to the skate park.



Signage

- Awareness raising signage that highlights important native plants and animals will be installed.
- This builds on the existing preserved animal specimens that are installed in the play space.



JOINING THE DOTS... BUILDING ON THE ALREADY ESTABLISHED LOCAL FLORA AND FAUNA DISCOVERY TRAIL



MASTER PLAN KEY DESIGN FEATURES

COMMUNITY HEALTHY, EQUITABLE AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES*



Outdoor fitness stations

- Outdoor fitness stations will include accessible pieces of equipment to cater for a diverse range of user groups
- They will be in clusters around the main walking circuit.



Storytelling

- Acknowledging and celebrating our heritage especially in our parks makes our outdoor spaces richer and connects us to our community
- This will be facilitated by installation of interpretive signage, sculptures and through tools that support fun activities for families.



EXPRESSIONS OF INDIGENOUS HERITAGE INTEGRATED INTO COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES



WARRANTIES AND DISCLAIMERS

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their own experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence' and as such these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

There will be differences between projected and actual results, because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite or guarantee the achievability of the projections as it is not possible to substantiate assumptions which are based on future events.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.



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SPORT + LEISURE + COMMUNITIES



Fitness stations... also a multi-generational component integrated within the community space



Water and nature play... indigenous heritage discovery trail... meandering through an urban forest

