

## **ASSET SUSTAINABILITY**

### **5.1. Open Space Strategy Development**

**Prepared by:** Damon Sydes, Technical Officer Environment

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, November 24, 2022

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#### **Executive Summary:**

Council's 2022-23 Operational Plan has identified an initiative to seek community feedback on a draft Open Space Strategy currently in development. A draft proposed Parks and Sports reserves hierarchy, proposed Levels of Service and associated parks and sports reserve embellishments document has been prepared in alignment with the Cassowary Coast Local Government Infrastructure Plan 2019 (LGIP) and Recreational and Natural Areas Asset Management plan 2019.

Initial assessment of Council parks and reserves network has identified Council manages over 315 open spaces to a similar standard across the region. The opportunity exists to develop a parks and reserves hierarchy, future levels of embellishment and service standards to better suit community needs.

Public feedback is sought on proposed open space classifications, embellishments and service levels which will inform future investment and management outcomes across the Cassowary Coast parks and reserves network.

#### **Recommendation:**

##### **"That Council:**

- 1. adopt the strategic goals of an open space strategy, being**
    - **Develop a holistic long term strategy for the provision of Open Space by Council in our region,**
    - **Explore further opportunities for partnerships with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, State Schools and other open space providers,**
    - **Develop a hierarchy of council managed open space consistent with LGIP and Recreation and Natural asset plans,**
    - **Allocate a Level of Service (Star Rating) to guide service levels and outcomes,**
    - **Provide improved facilities at identified regional and district parks, whilst assessing oversupply of open space, local and village parks,**
    - **Achieve targeted savings of 5% by refining operations and maintenance costs; and**
  - 2. endorse the release of the draft Open Space Classification and Service Level document for community consultation for a period of five weeks."**
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#### **Background:**

Cassowary Coast Regional Council owns, operates and maintains 315 open spaces comprising approximately 17Ha of open space for every 1000 residents (median for state is 5Ha/1000). These open spaces fall under a wide variety of categories with an equally diverse level of embellishments. The proposed Park Hierarchy, Function and Embellishments will allow for future assignment of each of these spaces to a clearly defined category to:

- Create a uniform system to categorise open spaces;
- Create a uniform level of embellishment for each category; and
- Create a uniform level of service for each category.

This will address currently identified oversupply of open space and undersupply of quality regional parks by providing clear guidance on management, future investment and replacement of ageing assets.

Figure 15.2 - Surplus/Deficit by Park Type

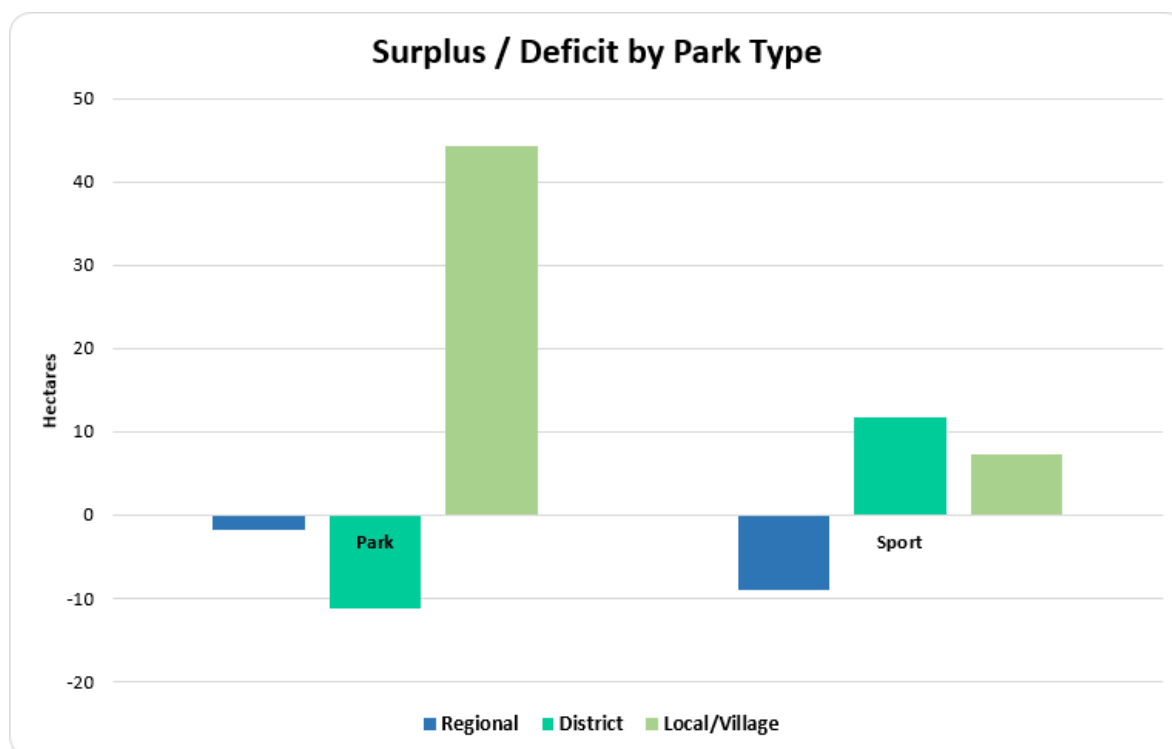


Image – Initial assessment of current park network against CCRC Local Government Infrastructure plan (2019)

Full description and proposed Classification Categories, Level of Service Criteria and Embellishments are listed in attached document.

### Supporting Plans and Strategies

Ongoing alignment is required with CCRC Local Government Infrastructure plan 2019 (LGIP) for base trunk infrastructure supply (development conditions) and Recreation and Natural Areas Asset Management plan (2019).

The Local Government Infrastructure Plan (2019) is a statutory planning requirement under the *Planning Act 2016*, which establishes a sustainable program of local, higher order infrastructure necessary to support population and employment growth, including transport, water and wastewater, parks and land for community facilities.

The Recreation and Natural Areas Asset Management Plan (2019) provides the financial and asset information only. It should be read in conjunction with:

- CCRC Asset Management Policy
- CCRC Asset Management Strategy
- CCRC Disposal Policy

The Recreation and Natural Areas Asset Management plan aims to:

- Develop asset hierarchy and undertake basic asset criticality assessment;
- Formalise a prioritised approach based around hierarchy for the allocation of capital, maintenance and operational funds; and
- Develop basic utilisation data for community Recreation and Natural Areas and work with Council to identify opportunities to improve service delivery.

The ongoing development of an Open Space Strategy will utilise existing plans and strategies and will contribute towards the following goals;

- Developing a holistic long term strategy for the provision of Open Space by Council in our region,

- Explore further opportunities for partnerships with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, State Schools and other open space providers,
- Developing a hierarchy of council managed open space consistent with LGIP and Recreation and Natural Asset plans,
- Allocating a Level of Service (Star Rating) to guide service levels and outcomes,
- Providing improved facilities at identified regional and district parks, whilst assessing oversupply of open space, local and village parks,
- Achieve targeted savings of 5% by refining operations and maintenance costs.

## **Other Open Space**

Other open Space in the region also has to be identified as part of the network with opportunities to explore improved relationships with other providers such as Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Public Schools and other open space providers (private or public).

The National Park protected estate in the region comprises over 60% of the Cassowary Coast local government area and provides a wide range of recreational facilities including day use areas to campgrounds, walking trails and swimming holes.

In addition Marine open space is well represented in our region with over 120km of beaches and numerous offshore Islands that contribute to the overall open space network.

Access to public Schools is supported by “Community use of state school facilities policy” and they also contribute to the open space network. Policy principles are outlined below:

- State school facilities are valuable community assets and when not required by schools, should be available for use by communities for activities that do not interfere with the school’s teaching and learning programs and that provide benefits to the community;
- Significant benefits can be achieved when schools and communities work together to maximise the use of school facilities including;
- fostering closer links between the school and local community groups;
- promoting a positive image of the school in their community; and
- creating opportunities for additional revenue to enhance school programs.

## **Future actions to progress Cassowary Coast Open Strategy include;**

- Undertake benchmarking of current provision versus future needs based on supported classifications, LGIP standards and projected population growth;
- Refine asset replacement and investment program based on supported function and hierarchy;
- Adjust Level of Service based on agreed Park Hierarchy and identification of key amenity areas;
- Development of a standard for playground provision for each of the park classifications;
- Development a style guide to improve consistency of Park and Recreation assets across the region; and
- Development and Implementation of a community engagement and education plan on the Open Space Strategy.

## **Link to Corporate Plan:**

## **INFRASTRUCTURE - OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

### **What we want to see by 2025**

Regional infrastructure that delivers levels of service supported by the community and is financially sustainable.

### **Strategic Objectives**

- I3 Sustainable asset management to effectively deliver services in a consistent and financially sustainable manner representing value to the community
- I6 Integrated planning to support current and future needs of the region

### **Consultation:**

It is proposed consultation is available via 'Your Say' for a five (5) week period.

**Legal Implications (Statutory basis, legal risks):**

Council has given due consideration to the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) in passing any resolution emanating from the recommendations in this paper or otherwise.

**Policy Implications:**

CCRC Asset Management Policy.

CCRC Asset Management Strategy.

CCRC Disposal Policy.

**Risk Implications (Corporate, Operational, Project risks):**

Nil.

**Financial & Resource Implications:**

Nil.

**Report authorised by:**

David Goodman, Director Infrastructure Services

**Supporting Documents:**

1. Open Space Classification - Draft4 - 16.11.2022