



# **Infrastructure Asset Management Plan**

## **Part 'E' – Parks and Open Spaces**

**December 2012**



# Infrastructure Asset Management Plan

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## 1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

### 1.1 **Overview**

This Asset Management Plan has been developed to document Council's asset management processes, to guide the planning, acquisition, operation, maintenance, renewal and disposal of parks and open space assets with an objective to maximise service delivery potential and manage related risks and costs over entire asset lives.

Council is responsible for parks and open space infrastructure with a total brownfield replacement value of \$12.69 million which represents a significant investment by the community and is vital to its health and well-being. These open space areas and infrastructure assets have been acquired and developed over several generations and must be properly maintained and developed to provide benefits for future generations.

It should be noted that some of the assets types within a given park or open space will be covered by the asset management plan relating to that classes, for example a fully enclosed building would be covered under Buildings Infrastructure Asset & Service Management Plan whilst a pergola or shade structure will be covered by the Parks and Open Spaces Infrastructure Asset Management Plan.

### 1.2 **Future Demand**

With an ever growing community (currently around 2% pa), the demand for increased public open space and improved facilities on that open space will continue to be a high priority for Council.

While Council can to some extent manage demand by optimising utilisation and performance of existing assets it also has the opportunity to require a developer to make provision for public open space, under the s18 of the Subdivision Act 1988. This process is undertaken in the planning and development stage and is support by the Mitchell Shire Planning Scheme and Recreation and Open Space Strategy.

As new provisions come on line they will be automatically incorporated into the Parks and Open Spaces Asset Management system.

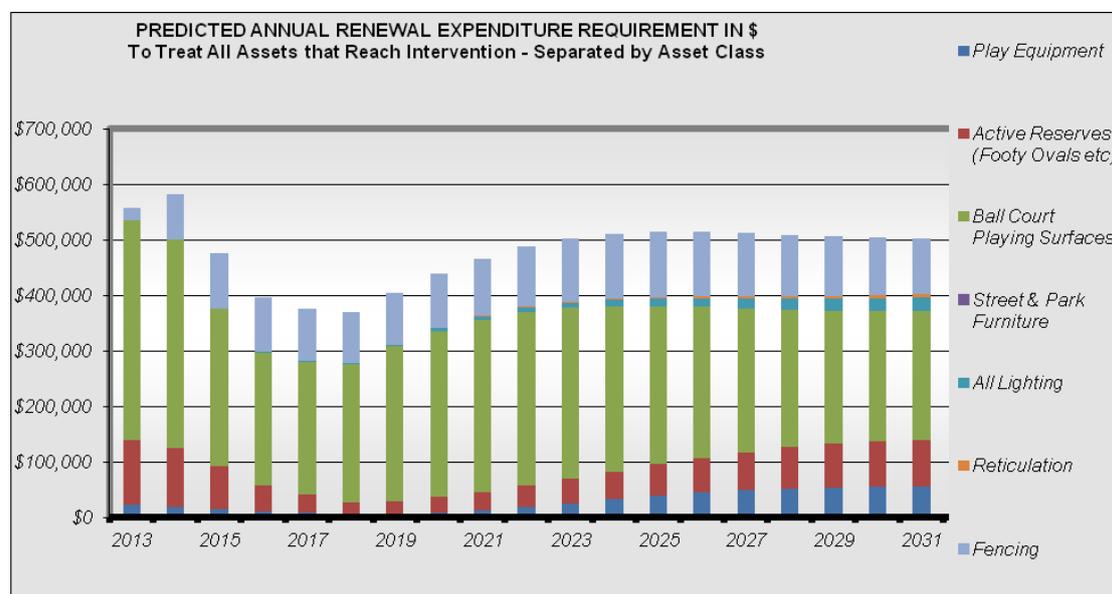
### 1.3 **Current Condition of Council's Parks and Open Spaces Assets**

An initial audit and condition assessment of most of Mitchell Shire's parks and open spaces assets has recently been undertaken. In general the average condition of these assets was rated "very good" or higher, however in each asset category there were assets that were reaching the end of the useful life.

This condition data is used in the predictive modelling of future renewal expenditure requirements contained in this Plan. As new or updated data becomes available the financial models will be further refined.

## 1.4 Financial Position

The following chart presents the renewal capital expenditure requirement across each asset group over the next 20 years based on financial modelling. The Average Annual Renewal Demand over that period \$481,000 with a peak of \$582,000 in 2014.



Current Recreation and Leisure renewal allocations in the Strategic Resources Plan 2013-2016 exceed the modelled renewal requirements for those years however the Long Term Financial Plan will need to be reviewed to address the predicted increasing renewal requirement after 2018.

It should be noted the southern region of Mitchell Shire has now been incorporated into the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). This was due to the Victorian Parliament passing legislation to expand Melbourne's UGB. With the Shires population expected to reach 40,000 within the next 5 years, this will have a large impact on Councils modelling due to new service related assets being created.

Maintenance expenditure levels are considered adequate to sustain current service levels but will need to increase as new assets come on line.

## 1.5 Improve Activities Required

The Asset Management Plan uses levels of services & intervention levels that have remained relatively unchanged in recent years.

It is intended that the Asset Management Plan and its reference documents be updated periodically to reflect changes to service needs that impact on the management of Council's Infrastructure assets. It is to be a 'living' document that should always reflect as closely as practicable actual practices used in managing the various assets. Only in this way will Council be best able to ascertain the long term financial needs for these assets.

During the development of the Asset Management Plan a number of issues arose that require addressing. These are included in the Table of Improvement Actions (refer to Section 6.3.22).

## 2. **INTRODUCTION:**

Council's Infrastructure Asset Management Plans are sectioned into separate Parts for ease of reference by users. **Part 'A' - General Information** is applicable to each of the separate asset group plan. **This document, Part 'E', covers Parks and Open Spaces.**

Council provides and is responsible for maintaining an extensive network of recreation and open space facilities that range from sports grounds, parks, and playgrounds to conservation reserves and street trees. The replacement value of the infrastructure improvements to these open space areas is estimated at \$12.69 million (brownfield rates).

A breakdown of the number and value of open space assets by category is shown in Section 4.1.

### 2.1 **Purpose of the Asset Management Plan**

The Asset Infrastructure Management Plan is a means of outlining the key elements involved in managing the contained within parks and open spaces, It combines management, financial, engineering and technical practices to ensure that the level of service required by user groups is provided at the lowest long term cost to the community within the limits of any fiscal constraints that may be imposed by Council.

The specific purpose of this plan is to:

- Demonstrate responsible stewardship by the Council.
- Define and articulate how the infrastructure is and will be managed to achieve the organisation's objectives.
- Provide a basis for customer consultation to determine the appropriate levels of service.
- Manage risk of asset failure.
- Achieve savings by optimising whole of life costs.
- Support long term financial planning.
- Minimise injury risk.

The outcomes of the Parks and Open Spaces Infrastructure Asset Management Plan will identify future funding requirements, service delivery and accounting requirements for the following factors:

- Adopted Levels of Service.
- Future demand for infrastructure.
- Current asset performance.
- Asset failure.
- Injury risk.
- Required works.
- Funding constraints.

Council's performance in providing the funding necessary to meet lifecycle renewal needs through asset depreciation will be measured.

### 2.2 **Legislative Basis for Plan**

This Asset Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with the following Acts, Regulations & Codes of Practice where relevant to Parks and Open Space:

- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Occupational Health & Safety Act 1985;*
- *Building Act 1993*
- *Emergency Management Act 1986;*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987;*
- *Road Management Act 2004;*
- *Building Regulations 2006;*
- *Mitchell Shire Planning Scheme; and*
- *Australian Standards:*
  - *AS/NZS 4422 : 1996*
  - *AS/NZS 4486 : 1997*
  - *AS1924 Part 2 : 1981*
  - *AS4685 – 1 – 2004*
  - *AS4685 – 2 – 2004*
  - *AS4685 – 3 – 2004*
  - *AS4685 – 4 – 2004*
  - *AS4685 – 5 – 2004*
  - *AS4685 – 6 – 2004*

### **2.3 Scope of Plan**

The Parks and Open Spaces Asset Management Plan is directed at those areas set aside for open public use and contain physical infrastructure . This infrastructure would include such items as set out in section 2.8 of this document.

It should be noted that some of the assets within a given park or open space will be covered by the asset management plan relating to that asset class, for example a fully enclosed building would be covered under Buildings Infrastructure Asset & Service Management Plan whilst a pergola or shade structure will be covered by the Parks and Open Spaces Infrastructure Asset Management Plan. Specific exclusions are listed in Section 2.4

### **2.4 Asset Exclusions**

- Footpaths as covered in the Road Network Asset Management Plan (generally those directly linking road reserve footpaths).
- Building structures specifically covered in the Building and Infrastructure Asset and Service Management Plan
- Amenity Blocks
- Drainage structures in open space areas

### **2.5 Asset Function**

With a diverse array of recreational assets located in the various locations throughout the Shire, the assets function is to enhance the experience in visiting the location, therefore the assets should be maintained in a safe operational and presentable manner

### **2.6 Key stakeholders**

The Plan is intended to demonstrate to stakeholders that Council is managing its Parks and Open Spaces related assets responsibly.

The key stakeholder groups include:

- The community in general (for recreation, sport, leisure) .
- Tourists and visitors to the area;
- Pedestrians (including the very young, those with disabilities, and the elderly with somewhat limited mobility);
- Users of a range of miscellaneous smaller and lightweight vehicles such as pedal cyclists, wheel chairs, prams, etc;
- Vehicle users using motorised vehicles such as buses, commercial vehicles, cars and disabled motorised scooters ;
- Emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, SES);
- Council as custodian of the asset, with Councillors representing the residents and setting strategic direction as per their Council Plan;
- The Engineering and Infrastructure Directorate as the designated Council Strategic Custodian of the group of assets, responsible for the overall management of the assets from planning, design, maintenance, capital works and monitoring and updating the plan and ensuring its outcomes are realised;
- Other council departments that assist with the management, planning and enforcement of regulations;
- Council as custodian of the asset;
- State and Federal Government that periodically provide support funding to assist with management of these areas;
- Council's insurers

## 2.7 Asset Hierarchy

Mitchell Shire sets a two class level of asset on the Parks and Open Spaces:

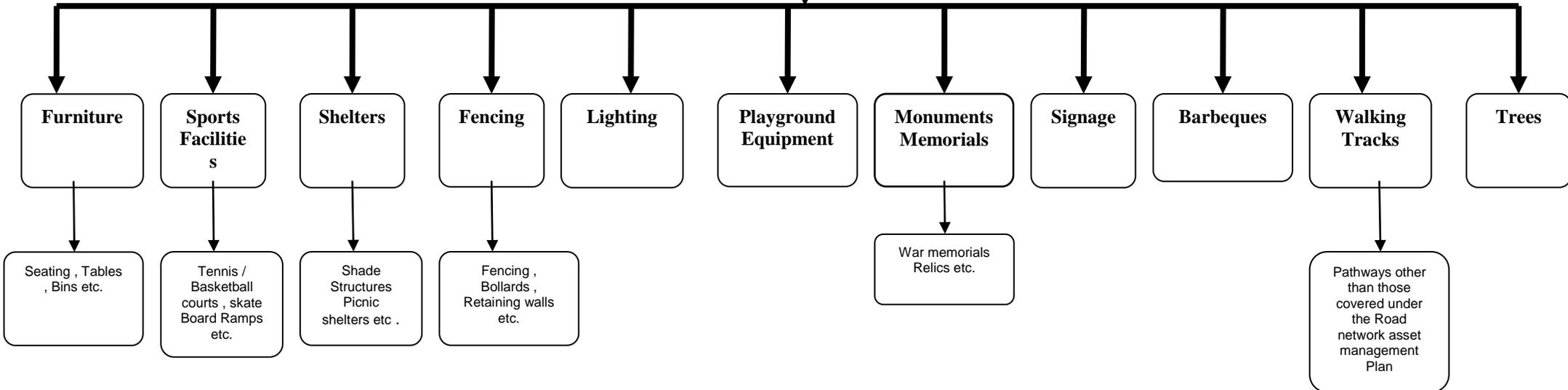
- Land asset
- Park Infrastructure
  - Furniture – seating, tables, bins etc.;
  - Barbecues;
  - Shelters – shade structures picnic shelters etc.;
  - Signage;
  - Playground equipment;
  - Fencing – fencing, bollards, retaining walls etc.;
  - Lighting;
  - Trees (under arborist direction);
  - Walking Tracks;
  - Monuments – War memorials, relics etc.;
  - Sporting facilities;

# Mitchell Shire Asset Management System Hierachy

**Playgrounds-Parks-Recreation Facilities  
and Reserves**

**Town Identifier**

**Park/Reserve Identifier**



### 3. LEVELS OF SERVICE:

#### 3.1 Current Levels of Service

The 'level of service' is the defined service quality for a particular activity or service area against which service performance can be measured. They provide the basis for the life cycle management strategies and works programme identified within the Asset Management Plan.

Levels of service support the Organisation's strategic goals and are based on customer expectations and statutory requirements.

Levels of service can be broken down into three basic aspects:

- **Function** – its purpose for the community
- **Design Parameters** – what is required of and from the asset itself
- **Performance & Presentation** - the effectiveness of delivery of the service

**Community Levels of Service** relate to the community's expectation of what the service will deliver and then performance & presentation of delivery of that service.

**Technical Levels of Service** include the parameters to meet the required function covering technical aspects (eg legislative compliance, design standards, safety, maintainability, reliability and performance, capacity, environmental impacts and cost/affordability) as well as community requirements (eg location & aesthetics), then performance to achieve these ends.

**Table 3.1** shows the Key Performance Indicator in current levels of service along with performance measures, targets and current performance.

Current levels of service have been based on what it is assumed that the customer expects (refer to **Section 3.2**). Levels of service have been driven by available budget funding and based on historic practices.

The levels of service will be refined over a period of time in an endeavour to match the expectation of customers, which requires a clear understanding of customer needs, expectations, preferences and their willingness to pay for any increase in the levels of service that they require.

It should not be overlooked however that although a formal community consultation has not often taken place in the past, communities especially those in rural councils have generally been able to get their message across to councillors and officers. Most often service limitations are due to funding constraints.

#### 3.1.1 **Technical & Management Requirements**

These represent more detailed management and technical levels of service that are necessary in managing the parks and open spaces to meet the various requirements expected of the service.

They include:

- long-term sustainability of the service;
- operation and maintenance of the system;
- monitoring of the system's performance;

- operational technical standards;
- design technical standards;
- materials technical standards;
- construction & maintenance technical standards;
- financial management;
- budget management;
- maintain service potential of the assets (asset management);
- customer contact;
- ensuring community health and safety;
- hazard identification (risk management);
- complying with relevant legislation, and
- other measures deemed useful for achieving the community service standards.

### 3.1.2 Maintenance Levels of Service

These represent more detailed management and technical levels of service that are necessary in managing parks and open spaces to meet the various requirements expected of the service.

Service Standards for Parks and Open Spaces (**Refer Attachment No 1**) have been established which identify the maintenance requirements for each park component including:

- Scope of Maintenance Service
- Inspection frequencies
- Response times

While based on maintenance levels of service established as part of the Parks and Open Space Maintenance Contract Specification (1999), the current Service Standards reflect a slight lowering of service levels during that period.

The following matters have also been taken into account with development of the maintenance standards:

- (a) **Routine maintenance standards** – routine maintenance, repair functions and standards, intervention levels and actions are based on risk assessment for a particular asset element.
- (b) **Repair and maintenance works** – routine maintenance and repair works are undertaken within a specified reasonable period of time having regard to intervention action priorities, and to specified standards.
- (c) **Temporary measures** – temporary works to be undertaken to reduce the risk of an incident until such time as maintenance or repair works can be completed.
- (d) **Emergency works** – works required to be undertaken immediately outside routine works programs to ensure the safety of the community as a result of emergency incidents.

Table 3.1 - Service Levels

Key Performance Indicator	Level of Service	Performance Measure	Target Performance	Current Performance	Actions to meet performance target	Resources Required
<b>COMMUNITY LEVELS OF SERVICE</b>						
<b>Function</b>	Parks & Open Spaces meet user requirements including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appearance</li> <li>• Fitness for use</li> <li>• Availability</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	User satisfaction measured by Customer Service requests and periodic Customer Surveys	TBA % of Users satisfied	Not yet analysed	An initial assessment of users to established what will satisfy needs	TBA
<b>Utilisation</b>	Parks and Open Spaces used to their full potential	Annual assessment of usage levels. Parks and open spaces used within capacity.	TBA% of recreation and open spaces have usage rates of medium or better	Not yet analysed	Establish usage rates with internal staff and users. Establish capacity of recreation and open spaces. Establish possible hours open, actual hours open and hours used.	TBA
<b>Health and Safety</b>	Parks and open space areas are safe and hazard free	Absence of significant health and safety hazards	Defects audited annually, then prioritised and works carried out to remove, repair, mitigate as appropriate / as resources allow.	Not yet analysed	Audit of Safety Reports	Undertake safety audit checks as part of the inspection program
<b>Responsiveness</b>	Council's response to various community raised issues ranging from calls about problems, response to and repair of problems, handling correspondence and service applications	Compliance with Parks & Open Spaces "Service Standards" – Response Times	TBA % of response times met for each category of response.	Service available % Compliance TBA	Ongoing analysis of Customer Service and audit/inspection/response times data	Nil
<b>Cost/Affordability</b>	Cost of service	Average per household cost	Target to be set	Current average cost	Not Available	Not Available

Table 3.1 - Service Levels continued

Key Performance Indicator	Level of Service	Performance Measure	Target Performance	Current Performance	Actions to meet performance target	Resources Required
<b>TECHNICAL LEVELS OF SERVICE</b>						
<b>Legal Compliance</b>	Service complies with all statutory requirements	Number of notices of non-compliance issued against the service by various Government agencies.	Nil	Not yet analysed	Unknown	Unknown
<b>Condition</b>	Carry out routine maintenance activities as per service standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspection frequency</li> <li>• Defect response times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspections on time</li> <li>• Responses on time</li> </ul>	Not yet analysed	Inspection regime to be generated	Refer Asset Management Improvement Plan 6.1.3
<b>Cost effectiveness</b>	Provide and manage parks and open spaces in cost-effective manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit maintenance cost for key components</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unknown</li> </ul>	Not yet analysed	Unknown	Unknown
<b>Standard of new works</b>	Quality of new works taken over by Council and also renewals	Number of new assets designed and constructed/renewed in accordance with the relevant Council standards	100% of new assets taken over by Council	Not yet analysed	Commence measurement of performance	Unknown

## **3.2 Customer Needs & Expectations**

### **3.2.1 *Historic Background to Service Levels***

Council officers in Local Government have traditionally worked to the provision of levels of service that is assumed to be expected by the community. During any future consultation process Council will test these assumptions to make sure that they are correct or amend them accordingly.

It should not be overlooked however that although a formal community consultation has not often taken place in the past, communities especially those in rural councils have generally been able to get their message across to councillors and officers. Most often service limitations are due to funding constraints.

### **3.2.2 *Stakeholder/Community Service Level Expectations***

Stakeholder expectations relating to parks and open space assets may vary depending on the location, nature and use of the particular asset group.

The following are the levels of service outcomes that the community is generally interested in:

- Quantity of open space
- Quality of facilities
- Availability and accessibility
- Cleanliness of public areas
- Safety of public areas and equipment
- No detrimental effect on the natural environment
- Responsive maintenance
- Responding to service enquiries and complaints
- Customer contact when there are service problems

### **3.2.3 *Community Input/Consultation***

Although community consultation is an important consideration in developing asset management plans, in this the initial Parks and Open Spaces Drainage Asset Management Plan, this has not occurred. The approach has been taken that at this stage it is important to determine the current status of the assets and whether or not the current levels of service are in fact financially sustainable before seeking community input.

Community consultation will be undertaken as part of the Mitchell Shire Council Infrastructure Maintenance Value Review which will be designed to measure residents' perceptions of Council's performance on its urban stormwater drainage assets as well as the processing of complaints and related requests made to Council.

### **3.2.4 *Recreation and Open Space Strategy***

Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategy (2005 ) provides an overall framework for the effective and efficient planning for and management of open space, recreation/leisure resources and the provision of a range of recreation and leisure programs/services.

Considerable public consultation was undertaken in developing the Strategy which provides guidance to current levels of service particularly the type, quantity and use of parks and open space areas.

## 4. PARKS AND OPEN SPACES LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 4.1 Physical Parameters

The following table provides a summary of the facilities and infrastructure within Parks and Open Space areas, including the estimated renewal cost of each asset group and an indication of the useful asset life for individual assets within each group.

Parks and Open Space Asset Groups	Asset Types include:	Qty	Estimated Current Brownfield Renewal Cost	Average Useful Life (Years)
<b><u>Infrastructure Assets</u></b>				
Playground Equipment	Playground Equipment Parks & Reserves	175	\$953,748	25
Sports Facilities	Ovals	13	\$2,880,000	25
	Ball Court Playing Surfaces	84	\$5,184,000	25
Street and Park Furniture	BBQs , Seats, Litter Bins, Signs, Tree Guards etc	41	\$19,900	10-20
Paths/Walking Tracks	Sealed and granitic sand paths, BMX Tracks	20.7km	Modelled as part of path network	20
Irrigation Systems	-	3	\$179,520	50
Lighting		76	\$1,405,080	60
Fencing		4652 sq m	\$2,074,378	25
<b><u>Other Assets</u></b>				
Trees		2372	NA	NA

Park and Open Space assets have been valued in accordance with the required accounting standards based on asset data currently held in the Conquest Asset Management System. Replacement values have been determined from current contract rates on the basis of the cost of replacing the asset with modern materials that provide the equivalent service in terms of capacity to the user.

### 4.2 Asset General Information

#### 4.2.1 Ownership Responsibilities

A function of Mitchell Shire Council, as custodian of much of the community's infrastructure assets has an obligation to the community to manage those assets to ensure that the standard of services are achieved and maintained in an efficient and cost-effective manner that also meets environmental requirements.

Management involves ensuring cost-effective lifecycle management of assets to maximise the investment on behalf of the community in those assets.

Council's asset ownership function, and therefore cost imposition, can involve a number of aspects including:

- Initial provision of the asset;
- Management and operation of the service utilising the asset;

- Management of environmental aspects relating to the functioning of the system (quantity & quality of discharge waters)
- Ongoing maintenance of the asset;
- Renewal or disposal requirements at the end of its useful life.

It is vital when considering the provision of a new service to the community that all these aspects are taken into account, not just the cost to provide the initial capital outlay.

#### 4.2.2 Asset Condition Rating Process

The condition of the majority of Parks and Open Space assets has been assessed in accordance with the condition ratings in the following table. This data is held in the Conquest Asset Management System and is used for financial modelling of future asset renewal requirements.

Rating	Condition Rating Description
0	A new asset or an asset recently rehabilitated back to new condition.
1	A near new asset with no visible signs of deterioration often moved to condition 1 based upon the time since construction rather than observed condition decline.
2	An asset in excellent overall condition. There would be only very slight condition decline but it would be obvious that the asset was no longer in new condition.
3	An asset in very good overall condition but with some early stages of deterioration evident, but the deterioration still minor in nature and causing no serviceability problems.
4	An asset in good overall condition but with some obvious deterioration evident, serviceability would be impaired very slightly.
5	An asset in fair overall condition deterioration in condition would be obvious and there would be some serviceability loss.
6	An asset in Fair to poor overall condition. The condition deterioration would be quite obvious. Asset serviceability would now be affected and maintenance cost would be rising.
7	An asset in poor overall condition deterioration would be quite severe and would be starting to limit the serviceability of the asset. Maintenance cost would be high
8	An asset in very poor overall condition with serviceability now being heavily impacted upon by the poor condition. Maintenance cost would be very high and the asset would at a point where it needed to be rehabilitated.
9	An asset in extremely poor condition with severe serviceability problems and needing rehabilitation immediately. Could also be a risk to remain in service
10	An asset that has failed is no longer serviceable and should not remain in service. There would be an extreme risk in leaving the asset in service.

#### 4.2.3 Condition of Parks and Open Spaces Assets

The average condition of each asset group is shown in the following table. It should be noted that some asset data is incomplete and needs further review.

Parks and Open Space Asset Groups	Asset Types include:	Average Condition (0-10 Scale)
<b><u>Infrastructure Assets</u></b>		
Playground Equipment	Playground Equipment Parks & Reserves Playground Equipment Community Facilities (Pre Schools etc)	1.5 1.5
Sports Facilities	Ovals Ball Court Playing Surfaces	3.5 3.5
Street and Park Furniture	BBQs , Seats, Litter Bins, Signs, Tree Guards etc	Data incomplete
Paths/Walking Tracks	Sealed and granitic sand paths, BMX Tracks	3.4
Irrigation Systems	-	2.5
Lighting		3
Fencing		2.9
Shelters	Shade structures, picnic shelters etc	1.8
Monuments / Memorials		2

#### 4.2.4 Asset Valuations and Depreciation

In accordance with Accounting Standard AASB116, Council is required to account for all of its Infrastructure Assets, including the value of current and non-current assets in financial reports thereby identifying to the community the level of investment in infrastructure. The valuation method used is depreciated replacement cost. This is the “current cost of replacement (CRC) or reproduction of an asset less deductions for accumulated depreciation, physical deterioration and all relevant forms of obsolescence and optimisation”.

Council’s infrastructure assets are non current assets and are depreciated on an annual basis with the aim of reflecting the community usage of its infrastructure assets. Their depreciation will be treated as follows:

Assets having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to the Council in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in those assets. Estimates of remaining useful lives and residual values are made on a regular basis. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where infrastructure assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Straight line depreciation is charged based on the residual useful life as determined each year.

### 4.3 Routine Maintenance Plan

#### 4.3.1 Maintenance Programs & Budgets

The current maintenance budget together with the previous years actual expenditure is shown below:

Description	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Budget
46802 - Fencing	10,195	36,000
48403 - Mowing Program	710,200	690,048
48404 - Weed Program	123,353	167,147
48416 - Park Furniture-Playground Maintenance	175,741	203,532
48417 - Tree Maintenance Administration	422,657	496,489
48418 - Garden Beds	270,062	170,884
48419 - Path Maintenance	34,165	112,401
48420 - Litter Parks & Gardens	286,185	260,488
48471 - Parks watering	27,737	41,143
48474 - Oval Maintenance	139,482	137,595
48476 - Graffiti removal	36,305	34,205
48841 - Tree planting and establishment	64,681	60,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,300,763</b>	<b>2,409,932</b>

#### 4.3.2 Maintenance Arrangements

The asset maintenance system for Parks and Open Spaces is based around the adopted ***Service Standards for Parks and Open Spaces (Refer Attachment No 1)***.

Council relies on maintenance and inspections being undertaken by its own direct labour organisation which has good skills and experience in this field supported by local tradespersons as contractors & subcontractors as and when required.

The maintenance service objectives are to:

- To maintain the parks and open spaces in a safe, serviceable, hygienic and aesthetic condition to the satisfaction of Council and the community;
- To maintain and preserve the functionality and value of the existing assets; and
- To provide and maintain a safe environment for the community within the constraints of Council's financial capacity and resource capability, while displaying a reasonable "duty of care";
- Ensure the provision of excellent customer service and that customer requests are responded to quickly and efficiently.

In conjunction with the ***Service Standards for Parks and Open Spaces*** maintenance of sporting ovals is undertaken by contractors under a ***Specification for Oval Maintenance***.

#### 4.3.3 Inspection Arrangements

A three-tier inspection regime has been implemented covering safety, incidents, defects and condition.

**Reactive Inspections** - Response to customer enquiries or notifications. Inspection of all reported defects are undertaken following notification by members of the community or Council employees while undertaking their normal work duties. The subsequent inspection will be conducted by an appropriate Council representative;

**Incident Inspections** - Response to incident or injury. An inspection carried out to comply with the requirements of the Liability Mutual Insurance (LMI) risk management practices. This inspection enables an incident condition report to be prepared for use in legal proceedings and the gathering of information for the analysis of the causes of incidents and the planning and implementation of management and safety measures. This inspection also includes notification of any immediate repair works to be undertaken;

**Condition Inspections** - identify deficiencies in the assets which if untreated, are likely to adversely affect asset performance. The deficiencies may well impact short-term serviceability as well as the ability of the component to continue to perform for the duration of its intended life span. Routine inspection frequencies are outlined in ***Attachments 1 and 2***

Safety audits need to be undertaken where specific risks are identified.

Details of inspections are recorded on the Conquest Asset Information System against the particular asset.

#### 4.4 Renewal/Replacement Plan

##### 4.4.1 Renovation, Replacement or Reconstruction

Renewal works fall into the following categories:

- **Rehabilitation/Renovation:** Involves the repair of an existing asset, or asset component. Rehabilitation does not provide for a planned increase in the service provided by the asset. It is intended to enable the asset to continue to be operated so as to meet the current standards of service.
- **Replacement/reconstruction:** Involves replacing an existing asset or component of that asset with the equivalent size or capacity (ie does not provide for a planned increase in the service provided by the asset).

Required levels of expenditure on the cyclic asset renewal/replacement program will vary from year to year, and will reflect:

- the age profile of the assets,
- the condition profile of the assets,
- the ongoing maintenance demand, and
- the differing economic lives of individual assets comprising the overall system of assets

##### 4.4.2 Renewal Strategy

The strategy adopted for formulation of the schedule of parks and open spaces works submitted for budget consideration is as follows:

- The Conquest Asset Information System is used to prepare preliminary priority listings of assets that have been indicated, by modelling, that they require renewal;
- This schedule is then forwarded to the Manager Parks and Community Greening who arranges for field inspections to be undertaken of the listed assets to ascertain if the listing is

appropriate and then recommends changes to be made where necessary;

- In addition the Co-ordinator lists additional assets/projects that may not been highlighted by the modelling but which do in fact require attention;
- Finally, the schedule may also be subject to change when presented to Council for review and adoption.

The final schedule of works forms the ongoing rolling capital asset renewal program for Parks and Open Spaces.

#### **4.5 Asset Creation/Acquisition/Augmentation/Upgrading Plan**

New works create an asset that did not previously exist, or extend an asset beyond its original size or capacity.

Projects (including land purchase) for the extension or upgrading of assets required to cater for growth or additional levels of service, including:

- Works which create an asset that did not exist in any shape or form, or
- Works which improves an asset beyond its original size or capacity, or
- Upgrade works which increase the capacity of an asset, or
- Works designed to produce an improvement in the standard and operation of the asset beyond its original capacity.

For the parks and open space network, provision of new or upgraded works fall into the following categories depending upon the extent and type of works:

- Council funded, or
- Funded by Government Grants either wholly or in conjunction with Council funds; or
- Funded by the general development contributions pool; or
- Funded by a specific developer in conjunction with an adjoining development.

As new projects are brought forward for consideration with the annual budget, they will also have an assessment of these ongoing operational (recurrent) costs presented to Council as part of the overall project cost projections.

It is not reasonable to expect costs for new or upgraded assets to be absorbed into existing budgets without an increase in funding allocation. To not provide additional funding is to effectively reduce the current levels of service to some or all of the rest of the Shire.

##### **4.5.1 Upgrading Existing Assets**

Upgrading of Parks and Open Space assets is generally required when service demands require an improved service level, for example:

- A sports oval may require upgrading to improve shape, surface quality or drainage to enable it to be used for higher level sporting activities. It is important to recognise that such an upgrade would typically involve significant renewal of the existing asset as part of the upgrade works.
- An unsealed walking path may be sealed to allow all weather access.

#### 4.5.2 Acquisition Plan

The provision for new parks and open spaces infrastructure over the next 20 years may be undertaken in a number of ways:

- Provision under section 18 of the subdivisions act 1988 which provides for councils to request land be set aside as part of a development for the purposes of open spaces or park land. This process is assessed and provision is made during approval process planning stage.
- By way of structured park or reserve master plans these plans are instigated by the Leisure & Wellbeing unit in consultation with the community.
- To a much lesser degree, council owned land with no specific designation which may be required for parks and open spaces in accordance with the current or updated Recreation and Open Space Strategy.

#### 4.6 Asset Disposal Plan

There is provision for the disposal of assets which are deemed to have reached the end of their lifecycle due to act of god, accident, vandalism or expended lifespan. Corporate / community consultation would be undertaken for replacement within a responsible time frame.

The strategy for the development of a recreation and open space asset disposal plan is to first identify those recreation and open spaces or parts thereof that are either:

- Surplus to requirements;
- No-longer meeting community needs; or
- Have simply reached the end of their useful life and there is no demand for renewal or replacement or funding is not available to replace them.

When disposal does occur, recognition needs to be made in the recurrent/operating budget of the reduction of associated operating or maintenance costs of the decommissioned assets as well as any disposal costs. Costs associated with the sale, demolition or relocation of decommissioned assets and any associated works are to be included as part of the Disposal Plan. Associated works could include any necessary site remediation or rehabilitation. This is a risk management issue as failure by Council to undertake relevant site remediation to allow it to be used for an intended future purpose that may be permitted for it under the Town Planning Scheme may involve Council in future litigation if problems arise over its failure to remediate the site.

Disposal of parks and open spaces within Mitchell Shire is very infrequent and no planning or policy has been developed.

## 5. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### 5.1 Current Financial Position

#### 5.0.1. Current Parks and Open Spaces Funding

The following table summarises budget allocations for 2012/13 together with forward indicative funding for Recreation and Leisure renewal projects as per Council's Strategic Resources Plan 2013-2016. It should be noted that:

- Budget maintenance and operations allocations do not always align directly to a particular asset group and may relate to a number of asset groups;
- Where maintenance allocations directly relate to an asset group they are shown against that Group;
- All other maintenance which includes items such as mowing, graffiti removal and parks watering is shown as "Non Specific Expenditure"; and
- Recreation and Leisure renewal allocations in the Strategic Resources Plan 2013-2016 are not currently broken down into asset categories and are also shown as "Non Specific Expenditure".

Parks and Open Space Asset Groups	Estimated Current Renewal Cost	Maintenance Budget 2012/13	Renewal Budget 2012/13	Indicative Renewal Budget 2013/14	Indicative Renewal Budget 2014/15	Indicative Renewal Budget 2015/16	Average Useful Life (Years)
<b><u>Infrastructure Assets</u></b>							
Playground Equipment	\$794,790	\$203,532					10-20
Sports Facilities	\$4,075,004	\$137,595					25
Street and Park Furniture	\$50,000	(included in Playground \$s)					10-20
Paths/Walking Tracks	\$664,172	\$112,401					20
Irrigation Systems	\$89,760						25
Lighting	\$791,010						25
Fencing	\$1,037,189	\$36,000					25
Shelters	\$728,000						30
Monuments / Memorials	\$1,122,553						100
<b><u>Other Assets</u></b>							
Trees	NA	\$556,489					NA
Non Specific Expenditure		\$1,363,915	\$601,000	\$582,752	\$476,365	\$397,190	
	<b>\$9,352,478</b>	<b>\$2,409,932</b>	<b>\$601,000</b>	<b>\$582,752</b>	<b>\$476,365</b>	<b>\$397,190</b>	

The 2012/13 Capital Works Budget allocates \$374,425 towards new or upgrade parks and open spaces projects. At this stage the Council's Strategic Resources Plan 2013-2016 does not identify any specific new or upgrade projects for years 2013/14 to 2015/16.

The importance of the identification and planning of these future projects is recognised and is to be addressed as part of the Asset Management Improvement Plan (Section 6.2.3).

**5.0.2. Predicted Capital Renewal Demand**

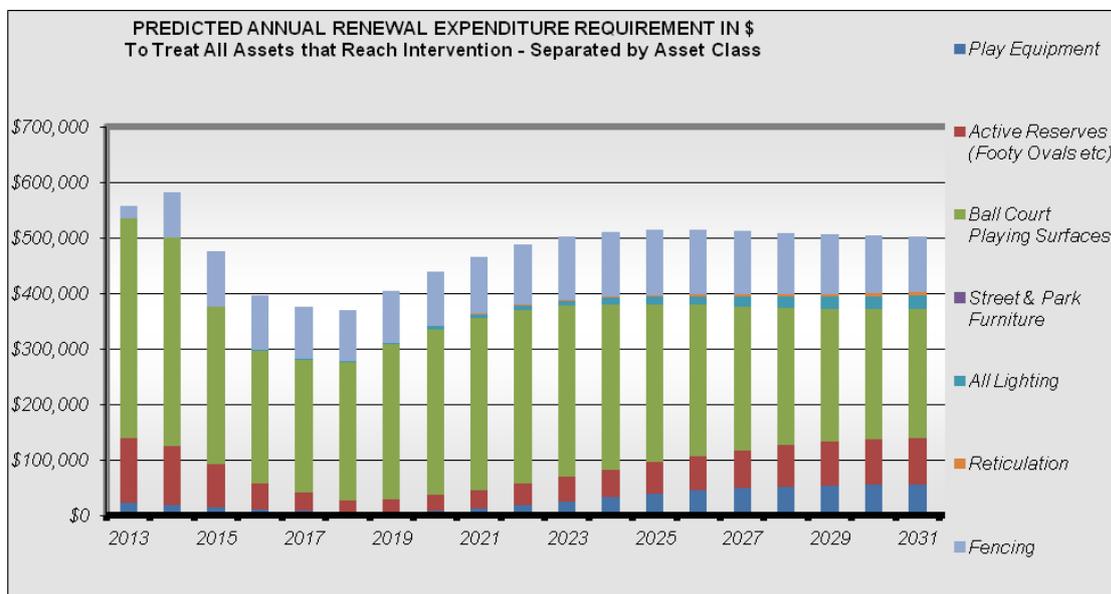
Financial modelling enables predictions for future funding requirements to be made based on available data and recent trends in asset life expectancies, condition, replacement costs, etc. The modelling looks at likely renewal expenditure requirements based on the condition profile across all assets within each asset group.

Modelling outcome is very much dependent upon the accuracy of the input data and how assets are grouped for modelling. The model does not identify specific individual projects for any given year nor does it factor in bringing forward future renewal expenditure that is part of an asset upgrade project (eg a service level driven sports oval upgrade that is undertaken while there is some useful life left in the original asset). At this stage it also does not predict the impact on long term renewal requirements due to future new assets (either constructed by Council or gifted as part of subdivision development).

While it is not a precise process the modelling does provide a good guide as to future long term renewal expenditure requirements based on current assets and is used across Local Government for this purpose.

The following chart presents the renewal capital expenditure requirement across each asset group over the next 20 years based on the modelling. The Average Annual Renewal Demand over that period \$481,000 with a peak of \$582,000 in 2014.

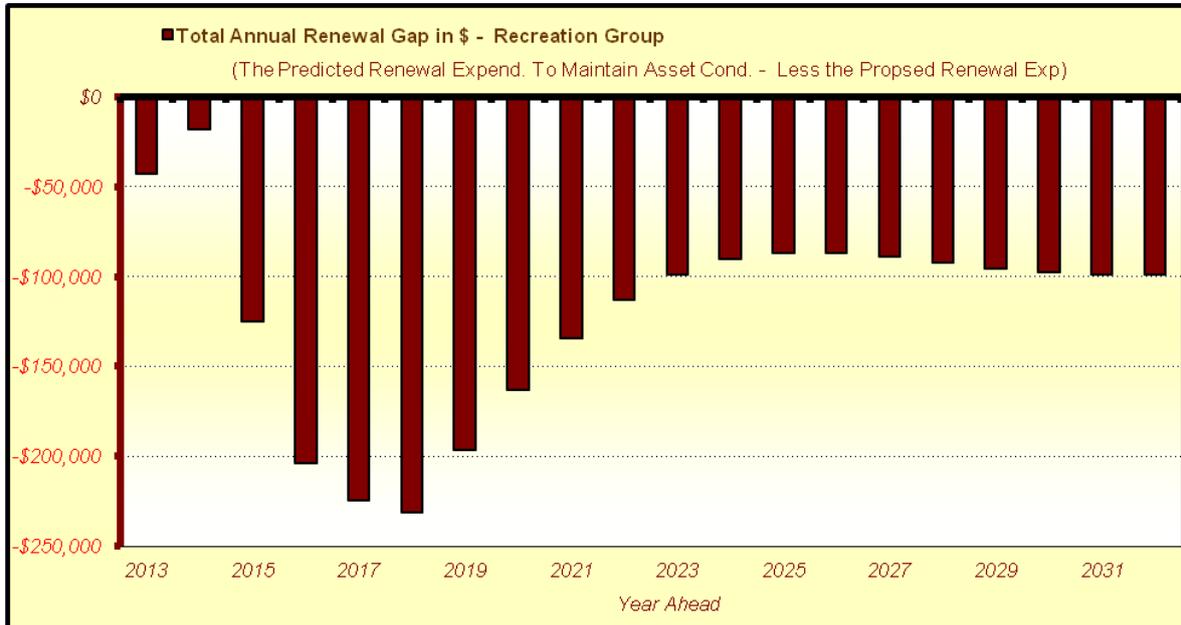
As some asset and condition data is incomplete the modelling will be subject to review as the accuracy of data is improved.



**5.2 Renewal Gap**

The following chart taken from the Modelling shows the predicted renewal compared with the current funding for 2012/13 and an anticipated average level of funding of \$481,000 pa from 2013/14 onwards (the model is based on 2012 \$s ie no inflation is factored in).

This anticipated level of funding of \$481,000 pa was selected as the longer term base after considering the current 2013-2016 indicative renewal budget in the Council Plan and its capacity to fund renewal and combined renewal/upgrade projects.



The Chart highlights the spike in committed renewal expenditure for 2012/13 (including \$460,000 on netball courts) compared with modelling predictions and indicates that renewal expenditure will need to decrease over the next 20 years . It should be noted that the establishment of service levels (refer Asset Management improvement plan 6.1.3) will have an impact on this model.

The development of 5 to 10 year project based renewal capital works plan will assist in further refining this model and its impact on Long Term Financial Plan provisions for asset renewal.

**5.3 Funding Capacity**

The annual budget is prepared within an overall planning framework. This framework includes the 5-year Strategic Plan, Council Annual Plan and, for the parks and open spaces network, modelling information from the Moloney System. These documents guide the Council in implementing community needs and aspirations over the long term and converting these into medium (5 year Council plan) and short term (annual budget allocations) objectives.

The commitments and obligations specified in this Plan are matched to the financial resources available to deliver those commitments and obligations as set out in the Council Plan and Council Budget. To achieve and sustain acceptable standards for service of infrastructure assets in parks and open spaces requires Council to commit annual funding adequate to provide for regular and responsive maintenance and, for timely renewal or replacement of the asset.

**5.4 Staffing Resources**

In order to meet its ongoing requirements to manage the parks and open spaces network in a sound and competent manner, Council supplements its existing staff resources with the limited, periodic use of contractors and specialist consultants. Currently there is an industry wide shortage of qualified

engineering and asset management staff across Australia and Council in the future may increasingly need to use consultancy services for specialist and support tasks as and when they arise.

## 5.5 Funding Strategy

In relation to renewal funding, the intention is to retain the parks and open spaces assets at a sustainable level therefore future funding must recognise any current funding deficiencies as well as likely future demand. Council itself needs to determine its long-term funding strategy to ensure the sustainability of the assets for the future.

### 5.4.1. Recommended Renewal Funding

Where practicable, funding levels for renewals should address any outstanding renewal issues. Modelling indicates a need to gradually decrease funding.

Actual funding allocations will need to address the specifics of individual projects and factor in:

- Any need to upgrade the asset due to service demand ie project cost will comprise a renewal plus an upgrade component;
- The benefits of bringing forward complementary renewal work for project efficiency. eg It may be more economical to bring forward the replacement of an irrigation system as part of surface rejuvenation of a sports oval;
- Funding constraints that may require a project to be undertaken/funded over 2 financial years.

It is intended that a project based indicative 5 to 10 year Capital Works Program be developed to assist with refining future funding requirements.

### 5.4.2. Recommended Maintenance Funding

This asset management plan has been developed on the basis that the current level of maintenance funding is adequate to maintain current assets at their current level of service. As there is no history of condition data for parks and open spaces assets this will need to be reviewed over time as accurate condition trends become available.

Maintenance funding will need to increase as new parks and open spaces assets are created. Any new capital works project or the process of gifting subdivisional assets to Council should include an assessment of the increased maintenance impact which should be factored in to the maintenance budget when assets are handed over.

### 5.4.3. Prioritising New Works

A ranking process is used for assisting in determining the priority of new capital works. This process enables key criteria for each type of asset to be assessed in an objective manner, ranked, and a composite “need” score to be assigned to each project. This enables a number of projects of the same asset type to be objectively ranked against each other and prioritised.

As each class of asset uses a similar and compatible ranking method, the high priority projects within each class of asset can be generally compared across asset classes, to provide a priority listing of projects across all asset classes.

Council carries out a capital works planning process each year prior to commencing its overall budget process.

Council determines the capital works program for the coming financial year based upon the objective rankings provided on the Infrastructure Service Agreement and Council's own priorities. In the process a 'rolling' 5-year capital works program is developed.

## 5.6 Performance Measures for funding

Important performance measures for funding of infrastructure assets are:

- Renewal Gap – i.e. the funding gap expressed as a ratio of current spending on renewal to the predicted long term requirement.
- Renewal & Maintenance Gap – i.e. the ratio of current spending on renewal plus maintenance to predicted long term renewal plus maintenance.

Information on these funding gap measures are presented to Council on an annual basis for consideration prior to the development of the Council Budget.

Council's insurer, LMI, regularly audits the councils it insures to assess their performance in the management of risk. Infrastructure assets incur amongst the highest claims made on councils. These audits are made by LMI to minimise its exposure to damages claims and the potential for litigation against councils.

These audits are occurring right across councils in Victoria. Key issues that are audited are the documentation of levels of service, defect intervention levels, the inspection regime to detect any risk defects, response times to address reported defects. The actual performance against these various standards is also audited.

Poor performance by a council in any of these important risk reduction management issues may well see increases in a council's annual insurance premium.

## 6. MANAGEMENT ISSUES

### 6.1 Management Responsibilities

The Engineering and Infrastructure Directorate administers the Asset Management system and develops the strategic and operational parks and open space programs, for presentation to Council for its consideration and adoption. The Engineering and Infrastructure Directorate is responsible for custodianship of Mitchell Shire's infrastructure assets.

Table 6.1: Asset Management Responsibilities

Area of Responsibility	Officer Responsible
<p><b>Data Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommend to the Director of Engineering and Infrastructure and Director of Corporate Services on the quantity and quality of asset related data required to be loaded into and maintained in the <b>Conquest Asset Management Information System (AMIS)</b>.</li> <li>• Ensuring that relevant asset data is collected, installed in the asset information systems, and that the data is kept current.</li> <li>• Responsible for the integrity of data within the AMIS.</li> <li>• Provision of the asset systems and technical expertise to assist asset information management</li> <li>• Development of &amp; keeping up-to-date Asset Management Plans.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Manager Engineering Services</b></p>
<p><b>Strategic Management of the Asset</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determination of the quantity and quality of asset related data required to be loaded into and maintained in the AMIS</li> <li>• Responsible for the use and operation of the asset and for formulating corporate standards and agreements for the relevant asset.</li> <li>• Determines maintenance standards and ensure that these standards are met. Through the relevant officers.</li> <li>• Also responsible for providing advice to Council on the most appropriate levels of service for each particular use and should also set</li> </ul>	<p><b>Director of Engineering and Infrastructure</b></p>
<p><b>Asset Operations &amp; Maintenance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for undertaking the designated inspection program;</li> <li>• Management and operation of programmed and reactive inspections.</li> <li>• Maintenance management activities and some minor capital works upgrades associated with the road network according to the agreed service level agreement.</li> <li>• Co-ordinate external contractors that are engaged on an annual basis to undertake renewal replacement and other augmentation works.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Manager Parks and Community Greening</b></p>

## 6.2 Asset Management Improvement

### 6.2.1 Review of Parks and Open Spaces Asset Management Plan

This first edition of the Parks & Open Spaces Asset Management Plan uses levels of services that have existed over recent years.

It is intended that this Asset Management Plan be updated periodically to reflect any changes to management of parks and open space assets. It is to be a 'living' document that should always reflect as closely as practicable actual practices used in managing the asset grouping. Only in this way will Council be best able to ascertain its long term financial needs for the network.

The Parks & Open Spaces Asset Management Plan will formally be reviewed in detail at least every five years. More frequent reviews of various aspects will be considered in the event of changes to budget funding, legislation, Council Policy or the need to review Level of Service standards.

The following table is a list of measures that can be used to monitor progress with Parks and Open Space Asset Management.

	Monitor	Measure
1	Compliance with Legislative Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audits</li> </ul>
2	Customer/Stakeholder Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Feedback from internal Customers (Council Staff)</li> </ul>
3	Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LMI Audits</li> <li>• Reduced number of incidents</li> </ul>
4	Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement in condition established by audits</li> </ul>
5	Recreation and Open Space Asset Management Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement Actions progressed or complete</li> <li>• MAV "Step" program</li> <li>• Staff awareness, contributions and use</li> </ul>
6	Financial Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used for budget and capital works planning</li> </ul>
7	Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response times achieved</li> <li>• Quality of work</li> <li>• Compliance with contract</li> </ul>

### 6.2.2 Key Issues

During the process of developing the Parks & Open Spaces Asset Management Plan a number of issues arose that require addressing. These are listed in the Table of Improvement Actions in Section 6.2.3 which forms the Asset Management Improvement Plan.

In summary, the key improvement issues are:

- **Parks & Open Spaces Asset Register** – complete audit of all parks and open spaces assets and ensure they are properly listed and categorised in the Register.
- **Condition Assessments** – in conjunction with above audit complete condition assessments of assets and record in Conquest Asset Management System.
- **Asset Useful Life** – review for each asset group as more accurate data becomes available and reconcile with historic depreciation lives.
- **Valuations** – ensure that each asset is valued as per AASB116
- **Community Consultation** – prepare and implement a consultation plan, and review assumptions made with respect to service levels and amend to suit the true position. (Section 3.2.3)
- **Levels of service** - need to be established for the tennis courts, netball courts , skate facilities and BMX tracks.
- **Maintenance Activities** – review Service Standards for Parks and Open Spaces in light of community consultation outcomes
- **Long-term Renewal & Maintenance Modelling** – based on updated data reassess long-term renewal requirements should be undertaken, including modelling of various financial alternatives. This information should then be provided to the Council's Long-term Financial Strategy
- **Parks and Open Spaces Renewal and Replacement Program** – prepare program based on modelling, condition data and available funding
- **10 Year Capital Works Plan** - develop integrated project based 10 year Capital Works Program for renewals, upgrades and new parks and open spaces and update annually
- **Playground Assets** - review asset management responsibilities for parks & open spaces and community facility playgrounds.
- **Ovals managed by Incorporated Bodies** – clarify maintenance and renewal responsibilities and management systems for assets eg irrigation systems

6.1.3. Asset Management Improvement Plan

No	Action	Target Date	Responsibility
1	<b>Parks &amp; Open Spaces Asset Register</b> – complete audit of all parks and open spaces assets and ensure they are properly listed and categorised in the Register.	30/06/2013	Assets Department
2	<b>Condition Assessments</b> – in conjunction with above audit complete condition assessments of assets and record in Conquest Asset Management System.	30/06/2013	Asset Department
3	<b>Asset Useful Life</b> – review for each asset group as more accurate data becomes available and reconcile with historic depreciation lives.	30/06/2013	Asset Department
4	<b>Valuations</b> – ensure that each asset is valued as per AASB116	30/06/2013	Asset Department
5	<b>Community Consultation</b> – prepare and implement a consultation plan, and review assumptions made with respect to service levels and amend to suit the true position. (Section 3.2.3)	30/06/2014	Community & Recreation Department
6	<b>Levels of service</b> - need to be established for the tennis courts, netball courts , skate facilities and BMX tracks.	30/06/2014	Community & Recreation Department
7	<b>Maintenance Activities</b> – review Service Standards for Parks and Open Spaces in light of community consultation outcomes	30/06/2014	Parks & Community Greening Department
8	<b>Long-term Renewal &amp; Maintenance Modelling</b> – based on updated data reassess long-term renewal requirements should be undertaken, including modelling of various financial alternatives. This information should then be provided to the Council's Long-term Financial Strategy	30/06/2014	Assets Department
9	<b>Parks and Open Spaces Renewal and Replacement Program</b> – prepare program based on modelling, condition data and available funding	30/06/2014	Asset management Working Group for Parks And Open Spaces
10	<b>10 Year Capital Works Plan</b> - develop integrated project based 10 year Capital Works Program for renewals, upgrades and new parks and open spaces and update annually	30/06/2014	Asset management Working Group for Parks And Open Spaces
11	<b>Playground Assets</b> - review asset management responsibilities for parks & open spaces and community facility playgrounds.	30/06/2014	Asset management Working Group for Parks And Open Spaces
12	<b>Ovals Managed by Incorporated Bodies</b> – clarify maintenance and renewal responsibilities and management systems for assets eg irrigation systems	30/06/2014	Asset management Working Group for Parks And Open Spaces
13	Appointment of full time asset inspector to Parks and Community Greening for infrastructure inspections as detailed in this asset management plan	30/06/2013	Parks and Community Greening Department
14	Appointment of full time asset inspector to Parks and Community Greening for Agriculture and Irrigation inspections as detailed in this asset management plan	30/06/2013	Parks and Community Greening Department

## 7. **STANDARD, MANUALS AND GUIDES**

Key standards, manuals, policies & guidelines include:

- *International Infrastructure Management Manual (IIMM) 2006, IPWEA.*
- *Australian Infrastructure Financial Management Guidelines, Edition 1.0 – 2009 – IPWEA*
- *Developing Levels of Service Performance Measures (Creating Customer Value from Community Assets) – Version 2.0, NAMS (NZ) 2007*
- *Sustaining Local Assets – Policy Statement 2003, DVC*
- *Accounting for Infrastructure Assets – Guidelines 2003, DVC*
- *Australian Accounting Standard AAS27 & AASB116*
- *Risk Management Standard, AS/NZS 4360:2004*
- *All relevant Australian Standards and Codes of Practice*
- *'Maintaining water sensitive urban design elements' – EPA Victoria, April 2008*
- *Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2005 - Mitchell Shire*
- *Asset Management Policy - Mitchell Shire*
- *Sports field Surface Management Policy - Mitchell Shire*
- *Street Tree Policy - Mitchell Shire*
- *Various Master Plans for Specific Parks/Areas - Mitchell Shire*

## 8. **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Service Standards – Parks and Open Spaces

Attachment 2 – Parks and Open Spaces Inspection Schedule



ATTACHMENT 1

# SEVICE STANDARDS

## Parks & Open Spaces

November 2012

**RESPONSE TIME**

Staff shall respond to any requirement to make safe, repair or rectify any condition it is required to attend to under the guidelines in accordance with the response times below or otherwise specified.

Staff may be advised of a requirement, by advice or complaint from a member of the public, by notice from a Councillor or by its own inspections or observations.

<b>REQUEST</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE TIME</b>
<b>EMERGENCY</b>	The condition has caused or the potential to immediately cause serious injury to person or property (Council, MERO request for emergency assistance)	1 hour
<b>URGENT</b>	If the condition is not attended to within the specified period it will have the potential to cause injury to persons or property	24 hours
<b>COMPLAINTS</b>	Issues relating to staff conduct, or poor performance or safety standards	48 hours
<b>PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE</b>	Routine maintenance not considered 'Emergency' or 'Urgent'	5 Days
<b>PARKS MAINTENANCE</b>	Routine maintenance not considered 'Emergency' or 'Urgent'	10 Days
<b>IRRIGATION MAINTENANCE</b>	Routine maintenance not considered 'Emergency' or 'Urgent'	3 Days

REQUEST	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSE TIME
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## INSPECTIONS

The Inspector shall regularly inspect Parks and Open Space Service Areas to ensure the provision of an attractive and safe environment and carry out essential works required to maintain and enhance the recreational capacity of the Parks and Open Space.

This will involve conducting systematic and regular inspection of the different features of the Service Areas and to rectify immediately, or to identify, record and program those features outside the specified Intervention Levels (defects) that need correction to keep the areas maintained in accordance with the appropriate designated condition standard.

The Inspector will be required to submit any defects into Council electronic inspection tablet and from there it will be uploaded onto Councils computer system where a work order is created to action the works.

Different Assets can be inspected at different frequencies depending on the special safety needs, usage and location. However, the following minimum guidelines should be met:

ASSET	LOCATION	INSPECTION CYCLE
<b>Grass &amp; Garden Beds</b>	Other Significant Gardens	Weekly
<b>Grass</b>	Other than above	As per Mowing Cycle
<b>Garden Beds</b>	Other than above	Monthly
<b>Playgrounds /Park Furniture</b>		Monthly

## OPEN SPACE USAGE FOR ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Council has established a bookings system which shall handle events bookings in Open Space (including weddings, social functions) through Community and Recreation.

Team Leaders and Coordinators will be provided with a list of all booked and scheduled major events and sports ground allocations, and shall be notified in advance of other incidental bookings as they arise.

Community and Recreation shall establish (where necessary) and maintain effective liaison with events managers, tourism authorities, the media and other relevant

parties as a means of promoting Open Space, special events, activities and services within the Municipal District. Such marketing must be in line with existing and future Council Policies and Plans (Open Space Strategy, Tourism Strategy, Leisure Strategy, Pricing and Allocation Policy).

Community and Recreation shall liaise with and provide information to Council, community groups and event's organisers regarding operations, events, facility tolerance and capacity, inventory location and other information as requested.

The Coordinator of Parks and Community Greening shall ensure the availability of, and access to, areas and services booked for sporting and other activities and events that have been booked through Council.

The Coordinator of Parks and Community Greening must be available to mark out irrigation lines and make provision to protect any other Council assets when required prior to events in parks.

### **6.3 GRASS AREAS**

#### **SCOPE OF SERVICE**

Staff (Maintenance Workers) shall be responsible for the maintenance of all lawn and grassed areas within the Service Areas (Grass Areas).

Grass maintenance shall include mowing and associated works that includes:

- (a) machine mowing to lawn/grass areas to maintain grass between specified heights and to keep a tidy appearance for use by the public, maintain grass growth and control weeds;
- (b) edge trimming of overhanging grass to kerbing, around fixtures and paving.
- (c) filling, seeding etc to maintain an even and safe surface.
- (d) broadleaf applications to maintain optimum surface condition free of weeds to the main reserves
- (e) litter control
- (f) control of vegetation noxious weed growth.

#### ***MOWING***

- a. Grass length will not exceed 80mm and will not be shorter than 45mm. Staff where required due to hazards identified can adjust to adjust grass cutting heights to not exceed 100mm and not be shorter than 45mm.
- b. Areas will be at least 75% free of Paspalum, Capeweed, Bindii and rosette type weeds in playgrounds and high visible areas of towns.
- c. All Playgrounds in Mitchell Shire will be mowed twelve (12) times per year at a minimum standard. All other requirements of general turf, litter and rubbish removal and maintenance of irrigation systems will be provided to such areas.

- d. All grassed areas in the following reserves will mowed sixteen (16) times per year due to the frequency in which these reserves are utilised by people.
  - Kings Park Seymour
  - Goulburn Park Seymour
  - Lions Park Seymour (including Goulburn River Walking Trail)
  - Memorial Park Broadford
  - Hudson Park Kilmore
  - Hadfield Park Wallan
- e. The mowing of all areas above will include edging and removal of debris from paths and litter collection on the same day of service. Edging and trimming works will be completed on the same day as mowing. Edges are to be trimmed to the same height and consistency as adjoining mown areas.

## ***SPORTS FIELDS***

(For more information please Oval Specification as per Tender CT/121414)

Grass length not otherwise specified will not exceed 60mm and will not be shorter than 20mm. Records are to be maintained of the height of grass prior to cutting at each site to verify that maximum grass heights are not being exceeded.

During playing seasons the following turf lengths will be provided:

1. cricket fields maximum 40mm and minimum 20mm Depending on the surface. Records are to be maintained of the height of grass prior to cutting at each site to verify that maximum grass heights are not being exceeded.
2. areas will be at least 95% free of Paspalum, Capeweed, Plantain, Bindii, Clover and rosette type weeds.
3. grounds will be clearly marked for each game to the satisfaction of the Parks and Community Greening Manager with flat water based white paint. Herbicides or diesel will not be used. All ovals are to be clearly marked by a representative of the user groups
4. when goal posts are removed at the end of the football season, the base area of the goal posts will be reinstated to enable safe use of the ground.
5. Wickets will be clean with no grass encroaching on their surface or under the Synthetic wicket.
6. Surface is to be free of moss, algae or any organic matter that would reduce its suitability for purpose.
7. The surface surrounding wickets will be even and level with the wicket, free from holes and cut to sports field mowing specifications.

8. The wicket and immediate surrounds will be suitable for match play as assessed by the Contract Manager.
9. During winter, synthetic and concrete wickets will be covered with a suitable plastic membrane before being covered with soil and grass to ensure their suitability for other sports. Alternatively, a synthetic grass membrane can be used as an additional covering. Synthetic wickets will be uncovered directly after the football season and covered directly after the cricket season.

## 6.4 GARDEN BEDS

### SCOPE OF SERVICE

All garden beds shall be kept in good order and condition as well as presented in a tidy, healthy and neat appearance.

1. Staff (Maintenance Workers) shall maintain the garden beds by regular watering, fertilising, cultivation, pruning, clipping and trimming, pest and weed control and planting.
2. Staff (Maintenance Workers) ensure Garden Beds are maintained in accordance with the current Council Planting Plans or Schedules.

Staff (Maintenance Workers) shall maintain the garden beds by:

- (a) adequate watering;
- (b) mulching;
- (c) keeping the plants free from pests infestations;
- (d) pruning, clipping and trimming as determined by seasonal requirements and good gardening and horticultural practices;
- (e) pruning to maintain adequate clearances from roads, paths and walkways and maintain visibility of signs, markers etc;
- (f) supplying and applying suitable plant fertiliser in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations;
- (g) removing spent or dying plants before they become unsightly and replace dead, vandalised or stolen plants with stock of the same species;
- (h) removing weeds by mechanical and /or herbicidal treatment;
- (i) supplying and planting new 'annuals' (twice yearly);(Seymour Only)
- (j) infill planting to maintain garden beds in accordance with approved planting plans and schedules taking into consideration Master Plans for reserves;

## 6.5 PATHWAYS

### SCOPE OF SERVICE

The Team Leader is responsible for the regular inspection, general maintenance and monitoring the condition of all pedestrian pathways, bicycle paths associated within Service Areas.

“**Paths**”, provide all-weather access and are defined by their surface material and usage which shall be fully trafficable at all times, effectively drained of all surface water and maintained in a sound condition that ensures the safe passage of pedestrians bicycles and vehicles.

Pathways shall be swept clean of all grass clippings after each cutting operation of grass adjoining pathways ensuring in the process that grass clippings are not swept into drains.

Potholes or depressions in paths shall be filled with material similar to that in the existing pavement or shoulder.

The maintenance of Paths, shall include but not be limited to the following tasks that should be performed on a regular basis.

- (a) maintaining gravel and other unsealed pavements
- (b) immediately make safe and report dangerous potholes, depressions, cracks, steps and damage to sealed pavements
- (c) sweeping aggregate, dirt, debris from paving surface
- (d) repairs to timber / brick / bluestone edging
- (e) clear entry pits and pipes
- (f) monitoring and reporting on the condition of all Paths, Access Roads, Car Parks and Drainage issues to the Manager of Operations with in 24 hours of the defect being identified.

## 6.6 PARK FURNITURE

### SCOPE OF SERVICE

The Playground Inspector is responsible for the regular inspection, monitoring and reporting of defects of all Park Furniture/Structures and similar facilities within Service Areas of Parks.

All Park Furniture/Structures will be regularly inspected to ensure that they remain clean and maintained in good repair at all times.

Where park furniture /structures have been damaged, vandalised or in need of repair, the Playground Inspector must immediately make safe / put out of service and report the defect to the Coordinator of Parks and Gardens so that the work can be prioritised based on a risk assessment.

Where park furniture / structures are found to be showing signs of excessive wear or damage or require painting they shall be reported to the Coordinator of Parks and Gardens.

Councils Playground Inspector is responsible for carrying out repairs and replacements of Park Furniture/ Structures and liaising with contractors to ensure the works are carried out.

**Park Furniture** includes

- (a) regulatory, directional and other signs and information displays (signs do not include building identification / information signs or car park regulatory signs associated with buildings / car parks located within or adjacent to the Service Area.)
- (b) seats and tables, litter bins (including bin inserts)
- (c) drinking fountains
- (d) internal fencing, fencing to street frontages including gates, bollards
- (e) chain mesh fencing, cricket nets and tennis court backnetting
- (f) lighting

**Park Structures** includes

- (a) retaining walls, rock walls, garden walls, planter boxes
- (b) shelters, pergolas, arbors, picnic and information shelters, shade sails
- (c) boardwalks, Jetties, stairways, bridges, etc.
- (d) basketball backboards and rings

## 6.7 PLAYGROUNDS

### SCOPE OF SERVICE

The Playground Inspector is responsible for the regular inspection, maintenance and upkeep of all playground equipment.

**'Playground'** areas are precise areas in which climbing, swinging, sliding, balancing and passive role playing occurs on constructed playground equipment within a soft fall area. Playgrounds shall include designated skateboard ramps and basketball rings.

Playgrounds are to be maintained to the highest quality to ensure the safety of the children both using and watching the activity. Playground standards are established and defined by **AS/NZS 4486.1 1997 Playgrounds and Playground Equipment** (this will be the overriding quality standard). The playground includes all play equipment, under surfacing safety areas, fencing and edges. Typically specialised playground equipment suppliers manufacture playgrounds with under surfacing that has been tested and approved for its soft fall qualities

The maintenance of Playgrounds and play equipment shall include but not limited to the following tasks:

- (a) monthly inspection to check condition, defects reporting and carry out maintenance as necessary
- (b) responsible for arranging the repair of Playgrounds outside handy man repairs
- (c) immediately take out of service any unsafe equipment
- (d) check all moving components for the correct movement.
- (e) check and maintain the soft landing area around the equipment
- (f) check and maintain the landing area edging
- (g) remove all litter and rubbish from within the playground and surrounds

- (h) immediate reporting of graffiti
- (i) report all issues that should come to the attention of the Parks and Gardens Coordinator
- (j) prepare a monthly Condition Report

The Playground Inspector shall regularly inspect playground equipment in designated Service Areas, **(these exclude playground equipment located within pre-schools and child minding centres)**, and immediately repair or take out of service any unsafe equipment.

The Playground Inspector is to ensure that all playground equipment is maintained in a safe condition for normal usage.

Where playground equipment has been damaged, vandalised or in need of repair, the Inspector must immediately:

- (a) carry out handyman repairs to restore to operational condition
- (b) make safe / put out of service and report to the Parks and Gardens Coordinator

Where any components are found to be showing signs of excessive wear, fatigue, distress or suspected of being not up to the required standard they shall be reported to the Coordinator Parks and Gardens.

The operation of equipment shall be checked to ensure that no condition exist for any person's fingers, limbs, eyes, ears, hair or other parts of the anatomy can sustain any injury or be entrapped as a result of using the equipment.

## Soft Fall Material

Soft fall material shall be an approved material supplied from an approved source and which is free of large and sharp objects. Sufficient soft fall material shall be provided around all equipment to provide a cushioned landing area for the users of the playground equipment. The soft fall material shall be a minimum of 250 mm thick and shall be mulch complying with **AS/NZS 4486.1 1997**.

All soft fall material is to be raked over on a regular basis to redistribute it in areas where it has been removed from by use of the equipment. Raking shall be carried out to such an extent that any rubbish, debris, and unwanted objects are exposed and then removed by the Playground Inspector. The Inspector shall remove and dispose of all animal excreta found in the soft landing material or on the play equipment itself. Where excreta is removed from the surface of play equipment, the Inspector shall scrub and disinfect the surface of the equipment.

## Assessment of Playgrounds (Inspections)

The Inspector shall carry out regular inspections of all Playgrounds to check the structural integrity of all playground equipment and its conformance with all current regulations and standards. Inspections and reporting on the condition of playground equipment shall be carried out in accordance with **A AS/NZS 4486.1 1997**.

The minimum frequency with which inspections are to be carried out shall be monthly.

The Inspector shall provide monthly reports on all playgrounds.

Records of inspections carried out shall include as a minimum:

- (a) inspection date
- (b) condition assessment
- (c) repairs/replacements carried out
- (d) repairs/replacements recommended
- (e) other recommendations
- (f) conformity with Australian Standards

**ATTACHMENT 2****PARKS AND OPEN SPACES INSPECTION SCHEDULE**

The following is the inspection schedule that will be followed:

**Routine/safety compliance inspections:**

<b>Furniture:</b>	A visual conducted by Parks and Community Greening on a monthly basis
<b>Sports Facilities:</b>	Quarterly conducted on behalf of the committee of management and every second year on courts by an external inspector.
<b>Shelters:</b>	A visual conducted by Parks and Community Greening on a monthly basis and a qualified builder on a yearly basis.(category includes Shade Sails).
<b>Fencing:</b>	Quarterly conducted on behalf of the committee of management and every second year by an external inspector.
<b>Lighting:</b>	A visual conducted by Parks and Community Greening on structure undertaken on a monthly basis, inspection by a qualified electrician every second year.
<b>Playground Equipment:</b>	Full inspection undertaken by Parks and Community Greening on the last week of each month and by an independent external qualified auditor once per year.
<b>Monuments/Memorials:</b>	A visual conducted by Parks and Community Greening on a monthly basis and a qualified builder on a yearly basis
<b>Signage:</b>	A visual conducted by Parks and Community Greening on a monthly basis
<b>Barbeques:</b>	A visual conducted by Parks and Community Greening on a monthly basis, qualified electrician every second year.
<b>Walking Tracks:</b>	A visual conducted by Parks and Community Greening on a monthly basis, remedial action undertaken by works unit.
<b>Trees:</b>	A visual conducted by Parks and Community Greening on a monthly basis, remedial action under direction of Mitchell Shire Council Arborist.
<b>Irrigation:</b>	Annual Testing undertaken by Parks and Community Greening .

**Inspection details:**

<b>Equipment:</b>	<p>Monthly inspections - general visual inspection of playground equipment for damaged, loose or missing parts. In the event of damage, the play equipment is isolated until repairs are completed.</p> <p>The inspection process will be carried out electronically and the inspection data uploaded into the AMS at the end of each inspection, remedial actions will be programmed according to requirement.</p>
<b>Under Surfacing:</b>	<p>Check that under surfacing area is free of debris and contamination, and that no 'dishing out' of loose soft fall material has occurred. Remove any foreign objects and rake out soft fall if necessary.</p> <p>This process is documented electronically and the inspection data uploaded at the end of each inspection.</p>
<b>Other:</b>	<p>Tennis courts are inspected every fourth year by an external auditor and reports any defects to Council officers for remedial work programming.</p>

**9. Operational inspections:****Inspection details:****Equipment:**

- Check all fasteners. Tighten and replace any that are missing.
- Check that all uprights and components are secure in the ground and that no footings or concrete are showing through the soft fall
- Check steel play equipment for rust or corrosion. All metal equipment will show signs of breakdown over time.
- Replace any badly corroded parts.
- Check timber equipment for splintering, cracking and warping. Replace any damaged items. Remove splinters and make safe.
- Check all moving parts for excessive wear, and replace any worn parts.
- Check all chain links for wear, and replace any damaged items.
- Check for any bending or cracking of steel components and replace where necessary.
- Check all paintwork and touch up any areas that are worn or chipped.

**Under Surfacing:**

- Check that the under surfacing is at the recommended depth, and top up if necessary.

- Check that any borders are secure in the ground, that they do not constitute trip hazards and have no rough or sharp edges. Remove any rough or sharp edges

**Play environment:**

- Check the area for overgrown bushes, trees or other hazards that may have intruded into the play area over time. Remove the hazards.
- Check fencing where applicable repair or replace as required.
- Check for graffiti on or around play area and deal with accordingly.

10.

11. **Comprehensive inspections:**

Frequency: All playgrounds – annually

Inspection details: Undertaken by an external auditor in accordance with the applicable Australian Standards, all anomalies are reported to shire staff for corrective action as required

**Equipment, Under Surfacing and General:**

- Undertaken by an external auditor in compliance with the appropriate Australian Standards. These inspections will be undertaken in accordance with all current Australian Standards relating to playground equipment.