

# **Community Services and Infrastructure Planning Major Policy**

December 2021

## 1.0 MAJOR POLICY PURPOSE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose is to provide rationale and justification as to how Council plans, provides and maintains services and infrastructure in ways that are both effective and efficient.

The aim of this Major Policy is to outline Council's guiding principles and commitments that inform the planning and delivery of community services and infrastructure that respond to identified and emerging needs both now and in the future.

The policy objectives for community service and infrastructure planning include:

- 1.1 To provide Council with a consistent, responsive and evidence based approach to its planning and delivery of local, connected and sustainable community services and facilities.
- 1.2 To develop and maintain a network of quality, flexible and responsive community services and infrastructure that are designed and operated to meet the diverse needs of the communities of Brimbank.
- 1.3 Applying an evidence-based planning approach to understand universal needs and demands as well as addressing specific areas of disadvantage and inequity.
- 1.4 Building and supporting an inclusive, healthy and resilient community.

## 2.0 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS BEING USED

- 2.1 **Community Infrastructure** refers to Council owned or managed facilities that accommodate services which support and contribute to meeting the needs and promoting the wellbeing of individuals, families, groups and communities through the life stages that fulfils a generic community function including:
  - a. Sport and Recreation
  - b. Arts and Culture
  - c. Life Stage Services (Maternal Child Health, Kindergarten, Playgroups, Long Day Care, Youth Services, Planned Activity Groups)
  - d. Community Halls and Meeting Spaces
  - e. Library Services
  - f. Neighborhood Houses
  - g. Bicycle/Sport and Recreation Education
  - h. Housing of local heritage and historical artefacts
  - i. Scouts and Girl Guides
  - j. Other facilities determined to consistent with the objectives of the policy
- 2.2 **Community Services** refers to the activities and programs that address an identified social or health need. Community services support individuals to actively participate in social and economic life and build more inclusive communities.
- 2.3 **Operational Guidelines** are the internal Council processes that are implemented to achieve an organisational response to community service needs analysis and community infrastructure planning.

## 3.0 MAJOR POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

### 3.1 Major Policy

#### Purpose

This is a Major Policy, in accordance with the Governance (Major Policy Consultation) Local Law No.3. Council considers this policy to be of major significance, and has committed to a public and transparent consultation process that provides an opportunity for people affected by a major policy, to address the Council.

#### Mandatory Consultation

As a Major Policy, Council will, as a minimum, undertake a community consultation process asset out in its Governance (Major Policy Consultation) Local Law No.3.

#### Additional Consultation

Council may, in addition to the mandatory process, consult individually with any person or group whose interests are likely to be materially affected by this policy.

### 3.2 Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles consistent with Council's Vision, Mission and Values and in line with the Community and Council Plans will be taken into account in the planning and delivery of community services and infrastructure.

#### a. Access, Equity and Inclusion.

- New and upgraded facilities are universally designed and aim to be welcoming, socially inclusive and encouraging of active lifestyles, taking into account the diverse needs of our community.
- Development over time will ensure facilities are equally distributed across the municipality to address diverse needs and local access.
- Services and programs from facilities are affordable to decrease economic barriers to participation.
- Facility developments address inequity of access that may occur with identified vulnerable or underrepresented groups based on evidence from available data and research.

#### b. Broad Participation and Social Capital.

- Community facilities are planned and designed for the broadest possible use by a range of groups, services and activities, and are flexible and multi-purpose in nature.
- Community infrastructure responds to and is integrated with the surrounding area, encouraging social connection, building a sense of place and contributing to developing social capital and capacity building.
- Community infrastructure and their operation focus on connecting people to services, facilities and experiences to enhance their overall health and wellbeing.

#### c. Economic efficiency and evidence based planning.

- Facilities will be cost efficient, fit for purpose and give value for money for Council and other potential funding providers.
- Establishing the purpose and function of a facility is based on the community profile and priorities for the facility's catchment area, as well as consideration of evidence based data and research of community need and vulnerability.

#### d. Sustainability.

- New and upgraded facilities are designed in an environmentally sustainability manner, with respect to heritage aspects of locations as required.
- New partnership models of funding for community infrastructure are sought.
- Community facilities are designed and governed using appropriate management models to meet their full capacity, making best use of existing community facilities where appropriate.

## 3.0 SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

### 4.1 Approach to Community Services and Infrastructure Planning

Council's approach to community service and infrastructure planning involves:

- a. **Delivering Services**— Council commits to delivering quality services in and out of Council infrastructure that adopt best practice approaches in supporting the health and wellbeing of the Brimbank Community.
- b. **Developing Multipurpose Facilities**— Council aims to align services that address all life-stages, through the provision of community infrastructure that is modern, flexible, well located and accessible rather than developing 'single use' facilities.
- c. **Maintaining and Improving Existing Infrastructure**— Council will seek opportunities to expand and improve existing infrastructure, when deemed appropriate.
- d. **Establishing partnerships**— Council will seek alternative service and infrastructure delivery options by establishing partnerships with a range of stakeholders.

### 4.2 Planning and Delivery Methodology

This policy will guide the planning and delivery of community services and associated infrastructure by utilising the following methodology and operational guidelines as appropriate:

Stage 1: Social Planning and Research  
Stage 2: Service Planning and Review  
Stage 3: Asset Management  
Stage 4: Community Infrastructure Planning  
Stage 5: Project Development  
Stage 6: Project Delivery  
Stage 7: Project Evaluation and Framework Review

### 4.3 Framework for Assessing Community Infrastructure Needs.

The following high level framework will form the basis for assessment of future priority setting and decision making in relation to community infrastructure. Each plan covered under this Major Policy will use criteria aligned and weighted as appropriate to suit the type of infrastructure being considered for prioritisation.

#### **Sufficiency of infrastructure.**

- To meet current and future population demand both on Municipal and Planning District basis.
- Suitable available open space for new development

#### **Accessibility**

- Facilities consider universal access for all.
- Facilities are located in reasonable travel times and distances.

#### **Adequacy of facility**

- Facilities are fit for purpose and comply with legislative requirements.
- Comparison with established minimum standards or provision ratios.
- Results from Facility Condition reports and Fit for Purpose assessments.

### Strategic Alignment

- Alignment with Council Plans, Policy and the Brimbank Planning Scheme.
- Indicators of health and education and the contributing social and economic factors identified in relevant research including the Brimbank Atlas of Health and Education

### Participation

- Number of people who will directly benefit
- Level of utilisation of facilities.

### Value for Money

- Capacity for multipurpose use/ future expansion.
- Savings in maintenance costs and whole of project life cost benefit.
- External funding opportunities

### Other

- Factors determined relevant to specific infrastructure being assessed.

## 5.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Chief Executive Officer may approve the development and subsequent review of Operational Guidelines as required, in line with this policy, to assist in its implementation.

## 6.0 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

Section 9(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 (Act) requires Council to give effect to the overarching governance principles, in the performance of its role. Section 9(2) of the Act specifies the governance principles as follows:

- Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law (**Compliance with the law**);
- Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations (**Achieve best outcomes for the community**);
- The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted (**Promote the sustainability of the municipality**);
- The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making (**Engage the community in strategic planning and decision making**);
- Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued (**Strive for innovation and continuous improvement**);
- Collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought (**Collaborate with all other levels of government and government agencies**);
- The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured (**Secure the ongoing financial viability of Council**);
- Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making (**Strategic planning and decision making must take into account plans and policies in operation at all levels**);
- The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured (**Council decisions, actions and information must be transparent**).

In developing the Community Services and Infrastructure Planning Major Policy, Council has considered and given effect to the overarching governance principles, as summarised below:

	<b>Governance Principle</b>	<b>Considerations</b>
(a)	Compliance with the law	Not applicable for this Policy.
(b)	Achieve best outcomes for the community	This Policy provides Council with a consistent, responsive and evidence based approach to its planning and delivery of local, connected and sustainable community services and facilities.
(c)	Promote the sustainability of the municipality	This Policy is aligned with Council's Climate Emergency Plan, Environmental Sustainability Design Framework and has Sustainability as a Guiding Principle.
(d)	Engage the community in strategic planning and decision making	Under the Policy community consultation is undertaken when its amended and on the plans developed under its strategic direction.
(e)	Strive for innovation and continuous improvement	Not applicable for this Policy.
(f)	Collaborate with all other levels of government and government agencies	This Policy sets Councils strategic direction for infrastructure development which informs funding applications to all levels of Government.
(g)	Secure the ongoing financial viability of Council	The Guiding Principles for this Policy includes Economic Efficiency and Value for Money to ensure facilities will be cost effective, fit for purpose and give value for Council and other potential funding providers.
(h)	Strategic planning and decision making must take into account plans and policies in operation at all levels	As per 7.0 Related Council Policy and Strategy, this Policy considers a significant number of Council policies.
(i)	Council decisions, actions and information must be transparent	This Policy's Principles ensure an evidenced based fair and transparent process informs Council decisions.

## 7.0 RELATED COUNCIL POLICY AND STRATEGY

Draft Brimbank Council Plan (2021 – 2025)

Brimbank Community Plan (2009 – 2030)

Brimbank 2040 Community Vision

Brimbank Community Services and Infrastructure Plan (2018)

Brimbank Sports Facilities Development Plan (2018)

Community Facilities Capital Development Major Policy (2016)

Community Facilities and Reserves Allocation Policy (2014)

Community Facilities Hire and Leases Agreement Major Policy (2016)

Sports Facility Hire, Licences and Leases Agreement Major Policy (2014)

Brimbank Social Justice Charter 2018

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Brimbank Children's Strategy (2020 – 2024)  
 Brimbank Youth Strategy (2020-2024)  
 Brimbank Age Friendly City Plan (2018 – 2022)  
 Brimbank Cultural Strategy (2018 – 2022)  
 Brimbank Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Strategy (2018- 2023)  
 Brimbank Lifelong Learning Strategy (2018 – 2023)  
 Brimbank Library Strategy (2020-2025)  
 Brimbank Environmentally Sustainable Design Framework (2017)  
 Brimbank Heritage Strategy (2018 – 2023)  
 Brimbank Long Term Financial Plan  
 Brimbank Strategic Resource Plan  
 Municipal Development Contributions Plan  
 Brimbank Asset Management Policy  
 Victorian Local Government Act (2020)  
 Victorian Planning & Environment Act (1987)  
 Disability Discrimination Act (1992)  
 Plan Melbourne (2017 – 2050)  
 National Competition Policy  
 Growing Brimbank: The Brimbank Atlas of Health and Education (2014)  
 Growing Brimbank: The Spatial Map of Physical and Social Infrastructure (2017)

## AMENDMENT OF MAJOR POLICY

This Major Policy can only be made, amended, modified or revoked, in accordance with the requirements of the Governance Major Policy Consultation Local Law No. 3.

### History of amendment

Rev	Reviewed Date	Reason for Amendment	Next Review Date
1	December 2021	Inclusion of all relevant community infrastructure plans under this Major Policy	

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Approved by council:

Date approved by council: 16 October 2018

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