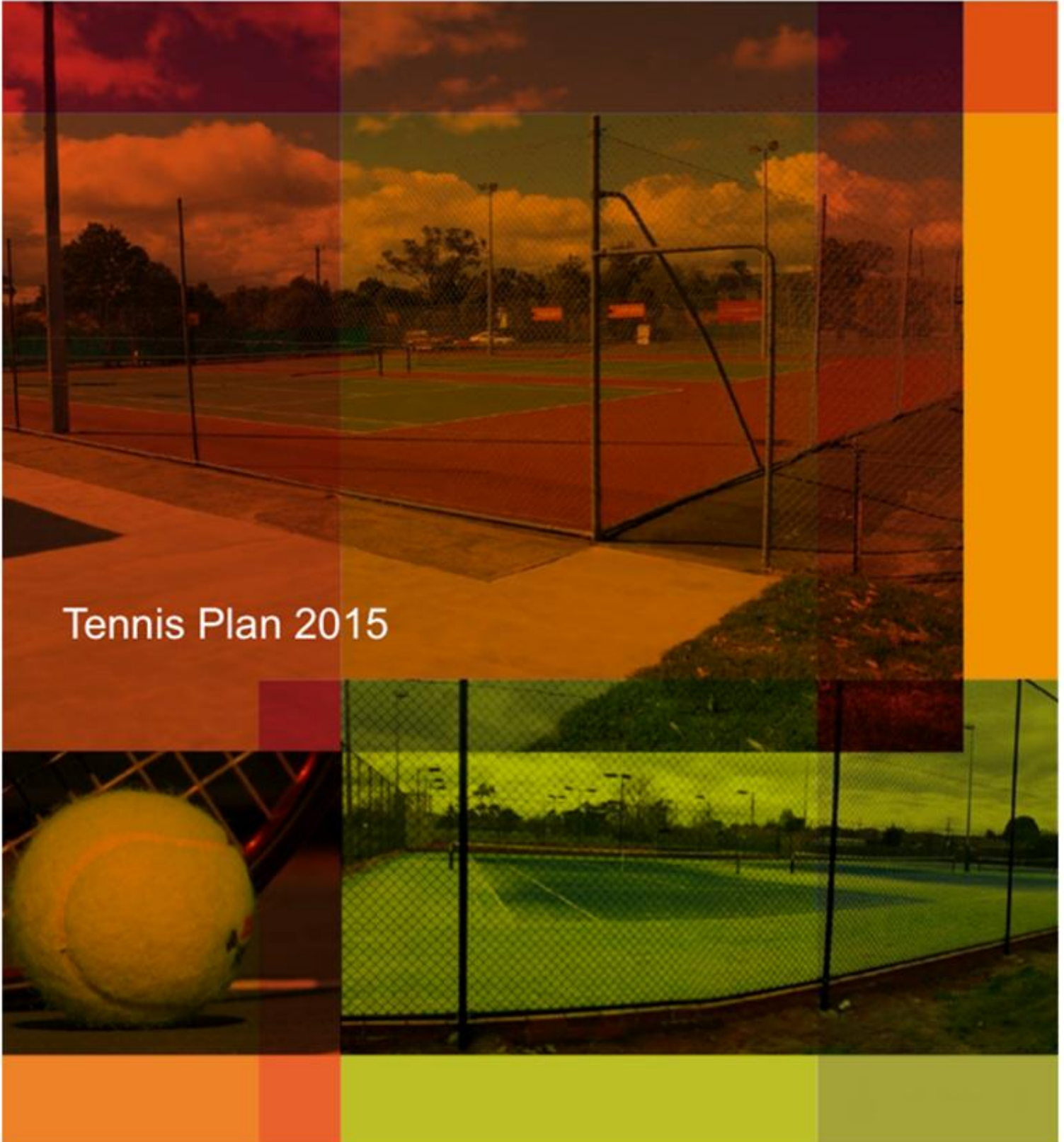




GREATER
DANDENONG
City of Opportunity

Tennis Plan 2015



About this document

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prepared by @leisure Planners for the City of
Greater Dandenong.

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Executive summary

Demand

Growth in tennis demand is most pronounced in social tennis, however growing key clubs (especially one large club to become a regional centre) will assist the sport of tennis to be sustainable in Greater Dandenong by providing the necessary:

- Quality of service desired by the community
- Programs to grow junior and school use
- Pathway opportunities for pennant and league players and tournaments
- A higher standard of service for social players.

Facilities

Retaining public access tennis courts is important to maintain and grow participation. These courts could however be promoted and used by schools, for come and try activities and for Tennis Hot Shots. They can target the immediate residential areas, and be used more for other sports and programming.

A diversity of court surfaces is healthy for the sport however it will be important to support clubs to retain both red porous and hard courts to allow the development of players, and to provide cushioned acrylic hard courts suitable for regional competition.

The condition and appearance of clubs has a very large influence on their success. Asset management is a current problem, and maintenance and renewal works do not appear to occur frequently enough. Further support, co-ordination and prioritisation of works with clubs is necessary to ensure clubs remain competitive and participation is increased.

Management

A review of agreements is desirable to better apportion roles and responsibilities, provide consistency across clubs and to encourage club development and improvement of assets.

The quality of courts, lighting and public access should be a major priority, in addition to marketing to a broader demographic and schools.

Similar to the sports of bowls and croquet, these clubs tend to be taken for granted that they will always be there. Hence there would be value in undertaking a marketing campaign to acquaint the community with the clubs, where they are, and what they can offer. There is a need to encourage other departments to be internal champions of tennis clubs. Other internal departments that target specific age groups in the community could assist in promoting partnerships and programs with clubs (for example: youth, older adults, children and families).

The priority for club development is to grow the size of clubs and build juniors and social non-member use.

Directions

Key directions of this plan include:

- Continue to improve facilities, especially courts, lighting and fencing.
- Significantly promote the public access facilities in the area with web, brochures and park signage, and through cultural and community groups and schools.
- Promote club tennis facilities frequently and highlight facility and service offerings.
- Through consultation and engagement with clubs and Tennis Victoria's 'Opening up Tennis' program or similar, investigate the concept of online booking, payment and code access to courts.
- Continue to engage with local schools and offer opportunities for them to play regular tennis.
- Assist clubs to become as self sufficient as possible and to plan for the future funding of asset replacement.
- Promote the bringing together of ideas from all tennis clubs in the City and Tennis Victoria in order to promote the sport within the region.
- Encourage additional use of clubrooms and courts through a review of occupancy agreements, in conjunction with marketing efforts.
- Enhance asset management – upgrading of lights, fences, court surfaces and clubrooms, including lights and fences on public access facilities.

1. Introduction

The project

The brief for the Tennis Plan was to provide a snapshot of the existing situation with respect to tennis in the City of Greater Dandenong (CGD), to review the 2008 Plan, and to provide a forward approach as to how Council will develop and manage facilities in the future to ensure facilities are sustainable in the long term.

Methodology

Development of the City of Greater Dandenong Tennis Plan involved an analysis of tennis facilities and clubs within CGD. Tasks undertaken included the following:

- Site visits to all Council-owned tennis clubs and facilities, and a visual walkthrough audit of facilities.
- Face-to-face interviews with all tennis clubs within CGD.
- Consultation with Tennis Victoria.
- A tennis workshop.
- Analysis of membership and demand for the sport of tennis.
- Analysis of facility distribution.
- Identification of key issues and development of proposed actions.
- Preparation of a draft strategy including an implementation plan.

Strategic Context

The **Council Plan 2013-17** acknowledges sport and recreation as integral to achieving a "healthy, active and safe community".

Similarly, the **Community Wellbeing Plan 2013-17** acknowledges the importance of physical activity, leisure and recreational opportunities in improving health and wellbeing, encouraging social interaction, and creating healthier and more inclusive communities. A strategic action of the Community Wellbeing Plan is to implement the Tennis Plan to increase community awareness of the sport and create greater opportunities for participation.

City of Greater Dandenong — Activate: Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2014-19

identified the following tennis related actions:

3.34 Encourage clubs to affiliate with Tennis Victoria.

- Support CGD clubs to be more active in implementing Tennis Victoria programs and services.

3.35 Review of the Tennis Plan 2008. This should include:

- Establishing a tennis club development forum in conjunction with Tennis Victoria.
- Working with clubs to plan future facility needs and securing support from Tennis Australia's National Court Rebate Scheme.
- Reviewing the need for a rationalisation of clubs utilising Council facilities.
- Implement recommendations from revised plan.

3.36 Work with tennis clubs to encourage more open days, casual and social play opportunities to increase tennis participation and membership.

In the **Multipurpose Use of Community Facilities Policy**, new and redeveloped Council-owned community facilities are to be planned and operated through agreements on a multipurpose use basis.

Council reserves the right to introduce measures to prioritise access to facilities for particularly disadvantaged groups (e.g. newly established migrant and refugee communities).

Council will emphasise maximum benefits through the provision of sports facilities and services that are flexible and provide for multiple users. Wherever possible these facilities shall be provided together in centralised locations.

The 2008 City of Greater Dandenong Tennis Plan

The strategic actions from the previous 2008 Tennis Plan included recommendations in areas such as:

- Increasing participation
- Improving facilities
- Increasing community engagement and promotion.

The following table identifies key achievements since the 2008 plan.

Table 1: Achievements since 2008 Tennis Plan

2008 Tennis Plan action	Achievement since 2008
Increased participation	Free tennis activities e.g. Harmony Square in conjunction with Tennis Victoria during the Australian Open, and tennis presence at Sportsfest. Clubs offering programs such as Tennis Hot Shots and come and try social tennis.
Improved facilities	Court resurfacing, design works, accessibility, clubhouse maintenance and improvements.
Increased community engagement	CGD tennis forum. Forum with Tennis Victoria and Tennis Australia.

Tennis Australia National Facility Framework

The Tennis 2020 facility development and management framework for Australian tennis was initiated to stimulate Tennis Australia’s vision to ‘Grow the Game’ and to recognise that significant resources, both financial and human, have in the past and continue to be invested into tennis by individual tennis players, largely through accrued membership fees and by different levels of government grants.

In recent years, the introduction of court lighting and the emergence of synthetic surface types to accommodate environmental, maintenance and replacement costs as well as player preferences, has significantly impacted the way tennis is consumed by the public.

Tennis Australia endeavours to be the active partner with stakeholders in the game to ensure the public can readily access tennis within a variety of playing opportunities.

Participation: Tennis Connect

Tennis Australia’s aim is to have one million players registered to the sport and four million Aussies having a hit at least once a year.

To achieve this goal, Tennis Australia is working in five key areas: Tennis Hot Shots, schools, clubs, competitions and coaches. Tennis Australia promotes tennis as a sport for all abilities.

The following image shows the key elements of Tennis Connect.



2. Current and likely future demand for tennis

2.1 Population

The City of Greater Dandenong is approximately 129 square kilometres. The current population is estimated at 150,097. The population is projected to increase to 183,305 by 2026. This increase in population alone may mean some 2800 - 5000 additional potential tennis players based on state or local participation rates¹.

The suburbs of Greater Dandenong are: Dandenong, Dandenong South, Bangholme, Springvale, Springvale South, Noble Park, Noble Park North and Keysborough.

The following table details the resident population of the City of Greater Dandenong by suburb (as at 2011).

Table 2: Resident population (over five years of age) of the City of Greater Dandenong by suburb 2011, and projected for 2026

Suburb	Population 2011	Projected population 2026
Bangholme	798	798
Dandenong	18,980	33,731
Dandenong North	21,913	24,679
Dandenong South	5,940	11,463
Keysborough	19,885	27,937
Noble Park	28,377	38,137
Noble Park North	7,392	8,211
Springvale	19,773	25,065
Springvale South	12,186	13,284
Greater Dandenong LGA	135,244	183,305

¹ Local participation refers to the City of Greater Dandenong Sport and Recreation Participation Study 2011

2.2 Projected demand for tennis based on population growth

The City of Greater Dandenong Sport and Recreation Participation Study 2011 illustrated a participation rate in tennis of 11%. This is significantly higher than the state participation rate of 6.3% for people over 15 years of age.

The likely number of players therefore is expected to be somewhere between 8,000 and 13,000 players. They could include some 4000 organised players (i.e. those who play with a club program or school).

The table below shows potential numbers of players based on those local and state participation rates above.

Table 3: Potential number of tennis players in Greater Dandenong – by suburb based on local and state participation rates

Suburb	Pop. (aged 5+)	Projected potential players *	Projected potential players **
Bangholme	798	50	88
Dandenong	18,980	1,196	2,088
Dandenong North	21,913	1,381	2,410
Dandenong South	5,940	374	653
Keysborough	19,885	1,253	2,187
Noble Park	28,377	1,788	3,122
Noble Park North	7,392	466	813
Springvale	19,773	1,246	2,175
Springvale South	12,186	768	1,341
Greater Dandenong LGA	135,244	8,419	14,877

*Based on state participation rates

**Based on local CGD participation rates

Organised and non-organised tennis

Tennis is a sport that can be played in an organised form and in a social non-organised way. Based on current state participation rates, there could be approximately 3000 organised tennis players in CGD; this could grow to approximately 4399 by 2026.

Most tennis participants (59%) were involved in this activity only in a non-organised capacity. Approximately a third (33%) participated only on an organised basis. As with other sports, in recent years there has been a decline in the number of tennis players playing in clubs in favour of social participation. This trend is likely to be more evident in CGD than in other places, due to cultural influences.

Council provides well for non-organised tennis with public access tennis courts being provided in three locations across Greater Dandenong. For a facilities location map, refer to Appendix 3.

2.3 Demographic influences on sports participation

Age, gender, income, ethnicity and education are key determinants of participation in sport.

The demographic profile of the City of Greater Dandenong suggests a low propensity to play organised sports based on a number of characteristics:

- 60% of residents are born overseas.
- 64% of the residents of Greater Dandenong speak languages other than English.
- The City of Greater Dandenong has a relatively high unemployment rate (8.9%).
- The City of Greater Dandenong is the most disadvantaged municipality in Victoria based on the SEIFA index of disadvantage (2011).

The implications of the demographic profile are that there will be significant benefits to the population if sports participation can be increased among residents born overseas of non-English speaking countries, with high unemployment rates and low incomes.

However, significant interventions may be required to achieve potential increases in participation in these areas.

SEIFA index²

Participation in sport and physical activities is highly influenced by social determinants of health. People in areas with the greatest disadvantage are more likely to require interventions and opportunities to participate in physical activity and sport as a result of the combination of barriers associated with low socio-economic status.

The SEIFA index quantifies level of disadvantage, whereby a higher index denotes lower levels of disadvantage.

The City of Greater Dandenong is the most disadvantaged municipality in Victoria based on the SEIFA index, with an index of 895. This compares to neighbouring municipalities of Kingston (1038) and Casey (1007).

It is important that Council supports participation in both organised and non-organised tennis and a pathway to different tennis opportunities to suit the diverse nature of the CGD community.

Age profile

According to ABS data, people aged between 15 and 24 years of age have the highest participation rate in tennis. This is followed by people aged between 25-34 at 5.9%, and 35-44 at 7.0%. People aged 45-54 have less than 5.5% participation, with this rate decreasing with age.

The population in the City of Greater Dandenong is forecast to grow in all age groups by 2026 (with the exception of the 20-24 year age group, which is expected to slightly decline). Over this period significant growth is expected in the 5-19 and 30-49 year age groups. The probable growth in these age groups suggests that there will likely be a continued demand for tennis over the next 10 years.

² The SEIFA Index is a measure of the relative socio-economic disadvantage, where by a higher index reflects a lower level of disadvantage.

Gender

Gender has a strong bearing on participation in sport and physical activity, the demand for specific activities, and participation patterns.

Women and men are equally likely to participate in sport or physical recreation, (about 60% each) though women are less often engaged in organised sport (20%) than men (32%). The participation rate in tennis for males over 15 years is higher (4.9%) than for females (3.4%)³.

For children under 15 years of age the participation rate for males is 8% whereas females have a participation rate of 3%.

Education

People who have attained a Bachelor degree or above are much more likely to participate in sport or physical recreation (77%), as opposed to others whose highest educational attainment was Year 10 or below (49%).

For tennis, most adult players have an undergraduate degree. The percentage of people who hold a Bachelor degree in the City of Greater Dandenong is 21.8%. This compares to the average for metropolitan Melbourne of 23.6%.

Higher education can also lead to higher income and thereby indirectly increase a person's ability to meet the financial costs involved in participating in sport or physical recreation.

A correlation exists between participation in tennis and income, with those who earn higher incomes more likely to play tennis than people earning low incomes.⁴

It may also provide people with a better understanding of the many benefits (including health and social benefits) that such activities may offer, thereby increasing their willingness to participate.

³ For persons 15 years and over. ABS Cat. 4156.0 - Sports and Physical Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia, 2012.

⁴ TIA Research.

Cultural background

The participation rate in tennis of people born overseas in non-English speaking countries is approximately half (2.8%) of that of people born in Australia (5.3%). This has considerable implications for encouraging people to play tennis in CGD.

The City of Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse locality in Victoria and the second most diverse in Australia, with residents from over 156 different birthplaces, 55% of which are from nations where English is not the main spoken language. This compares to 26% in metropolitan Melbourne.

The main overseas birthplaces include Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, India, China, Italy, Greece, Bosnia, Afghanistan, New Zealand and Britain.

Approximately 14% of Greater Dandenong residents do not speak English well, or do not speak the language at all.

Children born in Australia had a participation rate of 65%, compared to 40% of children born in a non-English speaking country.

One of the issues that arises with respect to new communities is that sport and leisure may not be a high priority for families settling in Australia, in relation to other life activities.

Families may not stay long in affordable housing and the value of sport may not be recognised in the same way it is in Australian culture. For these reasons families may not have the willingness to pay for sport, nor commit family resources to travel, volunteering or time for training and competition.

Cultural background is also a key influence on activity preferences. Tennis is a strong sport in Vietnam, India, and Italy.

Income and employment status

Access to financial resources increases a person's ability to participate in sport or physical recreation.

People whose equivalised weekly household income was in the highest quintile reported a sport and physical activity participation rate of 80%, whereas the participation rate for people in the lowest quintile was just over half this (45%). Tennis is played more by people in higher income groups.

The City of Greater Dandenong has a relatively low level of personal and household income, with a median weekly household income of \$953. This compares to \$1331 in metropolitan Melbourne.

Families with lower disposable incomes are less likely to spend money on travel, pay for sporting and recreation services, and have the means to pay for sporting subscriptions and equipment.

Access to free and low cost activities/facilities is particularly important in lower income areas. In Greater Dandenong almost 30% of households have an income that is less than \$600 per week, compared with 22% in metropolitan Melbourne. The rates of unemployment are higher in the City of Greater Dandenong (8.9%) than across greater Melbourne (5.5%).

2.4 Tennis club registrations and membership

Tennis Victoria has some 900 affiliated clubs across the state. The largest has approximately 8,500 members (Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club).

The top 50 clubs have 359 or more registered participants. None are in the City of Greater Dandenong.

Some 60% of Victorian clubs increased their player registrations in 2014-15, demonstrating a commitment to increasing local participation and registering all players connected to their club.

The current total membership of tennis clubs within the City of Greater Dandenong is approximately 960 members. This is not considerably different from the total membership number in 2008 of 951.

The following table shows the breakdown of junior, senior and total membership in 2008 and 2015 at each of the clubs. Note that Yarraman Tennis Club and Wooranna Park Tennis Club are no longer formal clubs in 2015.

Table 4: Tennis club membership – junior and senior, 2008 and 2015

Club	Membership numbers 2008			Membership numbers 2015		
	Junior	Senior	Total	Junior	Senior	Total
Burden Park Tennis Club	40	91	131	30	110	140
Dandenong Tennis Club	50	75	125	N/K	N/K	130
Heritage Tennis Club	23	33	56	N/K	N/K	N/K
Keysborough Tennis Club	56	57	113	58	74	132
Noble Community Tennis Club	29	94	123	24	56	80
Noble Park Tennis Club	40	100	140	30	110	140
Rosswood Tennis Club	48	34	82	20	80	100
Springvale North Tennis Club	50	31	81	90	78	168
Springvale South Tennis Club	21	30	51	N/K	N/K	42
Wooranna Tennis Club	20	10	30	N/K	N/K	N/K
Yarraman Tennis Club	N/K	N/K	19	N/K	N/K	N/K
Total	377	555	951	960		

N/K = Not known.

3. Tennis facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong

3.1 Overview

There are 64 tennis courts on Council land in the City of Greater Dandenong. These courts are spread across 12 tennis facilities.

There is a mixture of court surfaces across CGD with en-tout-cas, sand filled artificial grass (SFAG), hardcourt (non cushioned acrylic coated, or asphalt) and synthetic clay making up the surfaces.

A total of eight of these facilities have active tennis clubs, while one club appears to not be active, and three facilities are considered public access tennis facilities.

There is a private indoor tennis centre in Springvale and a regional facility in Dingley (just outside CGD) that may attract participants from within the City of Greater Dandenong.

Although there are tennis courts on school land, the availability of these courts to residents or their condition has not been investigated within this study.

The table below list all facilities, by court type, club and if lit.

Table 5: Tennis club facilities by suburb, number/type of courts and lighting

Suburb	Facility	Club	No. of courts	Court surface	No. lit courts
Springvale	Springvale North Tennis Club	Formal club	8	Non-cushioned hardcourt	4
Springvale South	Springvale South Tennis Club	Formal club	6	4 SFAG	0
				2 En-tout-cas	
Springvale South	Burden Park Tennis Club	Formal club	6	En-tout-cas	6
Dandenong	Dandenong Tennis Club	Formal club	6	Non-cushioned hardcourt	4
Dandenong North	Rosswood Tennis Club	Formal club	6	Non-cushioned hardcourt	4
Noble Park	Noble Park Tennis Club	Formal club	6	Synthetic clay	4
Noble Park	Noble Community Tennis Club	Formal club	6	En-tout-cas	6
Noble Park	Heritage Tennis Club	Club - Possibly not active	4	Non-cushioned hardcourt	4
Keysborough	Keysborough Tennis Club	Formal club	8	6 SFAG	6
				2 En-tout-cas	
Total			56		38

The public access tennis courts are listed in the following table.

Table 6: Public access tennis facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong

Suburb	Club/facility	Formal club or public access courts	No. of courts	Court surface	No. lit courts
Dandenong	Fotheringham Reserve	Public access courts	2	Non-cushioned hardcourt	0
Dandenong	George Andrews Reserve	Public access courts	2	Non-cushioned hardcourt	0
Dandenong	Lois Twohig Reserve	Public access courts	4	Non-cushioned hardcourt	2
Total			8		2

3.2 Distribution of tennis facilities

The location of Council tennis facilities in Greater Dandenong is shown on the map in Appendix 3. This map identifies the courts that have formal clubs and which courts are public access facilities within the City.

The table below shows the number of tennis courts by suburb compared to the population.

Table 7: Tennis court breakdown by suburb

Suburb	Persons 5yrs +	No. of courts	People per court
Bangholme	798	0	0
Dandenong	18,980	14	1,356
Dandenong North	21,913	6	3,652
Dandenong South	5,940	0	0
Keysborough	19,885	8	2,486
Noble Park	28,377	16	1,774
Noble Park North	7,392	0	0
Springvale	19,773	8	2,472
Springvale South	12,186	12	1,016
Greater Dandenong LGA	135,244	64	2,113

This distribution shows that there are tennis courts in all suburbs within CGD except Noble Park North, Dandenong South and Bangholme. The latter suburb has quite a low population and is not likely to grow significantly in the short term.

Bangholme closely borders Dandenong to the north and the City of Kingston to the south. There are two tennis clubs within the City of Kingston close to the border with Bangholme, Chelsea Heights Tennis Club (six courts) and Aspendale Tennis Club (six courts).

There are three tennis clubs located in the greater Springvale region. The Sandown Indoor Sports Centre is also close by to Springvale North Tennis Club.

Dingley Tennis Club — a subregional centre — is close to the border of Springvale South. It would be ideal to have one or two larger clubs with strong memberships and the ability to offer more programs and services in the suburb of Springvale, rather than three clubs with smaller memberships and ongoing membership and sustainability concerns.

3.3 Management

There are several key issues associated with the management of facilities. These are:

- The nature of the occupancy agreements – in terms of suitability for the sport and considering the viability of clubs and general conditions.
- The need for consistency of terms in occupancy agreements.
- Asset management plans and systems.

The nature of occupancy agreements

Council has lease agreements with tennis clubs in the municipality. These types of agreements grant exclusive use of facilities, where clubs pay all costs.

A lease may not be the best form of agreement due to the following:

- Most clubs in the City of Greater Dandenong are small organisations with a relatively small number of courts. These do not generally lend themselves to significant commercially focused services, or capital investment by a club, where a lease may be appropriate.
- Council may prefer to encourage use of these facilities by the wider community and other community groups, rather than exclusive use by tennis club members.
- The best role for clubs, the high number of people who may prefer to play social rather than club tennis, and the size and strength of existing clubs.

The City of Greater Dandenong leases facilities to nine tennis clubs within the city. Leases were previously given to two other clubs on facilities that are now not operating as formal clubs.

The need for a consistent form of agreement

The lease agreements with clubs are not standardised. Some clubs have differing conditions and expectations written into their leases to others, and each of these leases has differing time periods. This is expensive for council to administer.

Council needs to clarify their role in the provision and development of tennis, and this should be consistent with their role in relation to other sports where Council provides land or facilities, and licenses the use of these to clubs.

Standardised occupancy agreements should be developed and be consistent in relation to fees, tenure and service delivery outcomes. The service delivery outcomes should be based around Tennis Victoria's four pillars – Accessibility, Community Benefit, Sustainability and Accountability. Consideration can be given to this once current agreements with clubs expire in 2018.

These agreements should consider:

- Greater clarity in responsibility for upgrades and maintenance of each element within tennis facilities i.e. clubhouse, court surface, fencing, gardens and grounds and signage.
- The need for clubs to promote and provide more development opportunities through programs such as junior membership and competition, Tennis Hot Shots, Cardio Tennis, social tennis programs as well as their normal member competitions.
- Encouraging clubs to start to prepare business plans to give them direction and to set out the need for them to plan for facility upgrades through a sinking fund.
- The ability for all tennis clubs to hire out facilities is important, as it provides an opportunity for additional income that can be reinvested into tennis infrastructure.
- Reporting information back to Council – clubs should report achievements back to Council as part of this agreement, and provide Council with an indication of who is playing and when, for planning purposes.
- Council to consider providing assistance in areas of maintenance within the facility that they have skills/capacity to do cost effectively, such as turf, garden and tree maintenance.

Other management models

The most common types of entities that run tennis facilities include:

- Tennis clubs (as per in the City of Greater Dandenong).
- Combined incorporated sports club – such as a country club arrangement with other sporting codes: tennis, bowls and golf (e.g. Club Noble).
- Tennis coach/tennis academy/small commercial operator (e.g. The Victorian Tennis Academy, Elsternwick Park Tennis Centre, McKimm Tennis). These organisations typically run a facility operated under a lease from Council, or are a coach contracted by a club or larger business, board or committee of management. Many of these also have a club at the venue. These small entities may also have multiple sites, including schools.
- Leisure/sports facility management entity (either not for profit or commercial entity) operating tennis courts or run in conjunction with another recreation facility e.g. YMCA or LMS, as at Darebin Aquatics and Recreation Centre or Riverside tennis, netball and golf.

Typically in small tennis venues facilities are run as either a tennis club under a licence or a lease from Council, and may allow a coach to operate under an agreement with the committee of management.

For larger centres, they can be operated as a commercial venture depending on the demographics of the surrounding catchment and size of facility, or by a club that employs staff such as programming staff.

Some councils lease all tennis facilities to a commercial entity or club, including the delegation of responsibility for assets.

In this model the council is likely to have little control over participation and public access, or targeting groups that typically have low participation rates. It may not also have control over strategic decisions such as choice of court surface, which can impact on player pathways and competition depth. This model is typical in New South Wales, especially in more affluent areas.

There is some value in Council maintaining an interest in low participation groups, player pathways and competition surfaces.

Management models do need to relate to the scale and quality of the facility, the degree of control Council wishes to have over the asset and whether tennis facilities should be managed on their own, or in conjunction with other sports or with more than one venue.

For small clubs there are three critical issues:

- Relationship with a coach – this relationship is important to the development of the club and revenue. Coaches are very important to a club as they can attract juniors, activate a club, provide a revenue stream, and in some cases offer other booking and facility management services difficult for a small club to provide. However there must be a clear separation in entities, clear strategic directions from the board or committee and an agreement in place with a coach.
- Ability to manage the assets to an acceptable standard to ensure the club can continue to attract playing users and members.
- Provide a convenient way to allow casual users to book, access and pay for courts.

Future occupancy agreements need to address these issues.

Sinking funds

Tennis Victoria and Tennis Australia share the view that clubs should be putting away operational surpluses for facility replacement for the future. They believe that a club should not be too reliant on external funding for their basic infrastructure requirements.

Some councils provide incentives to, or require clubs to establish sinking funds, especially for the replacement of court surfaces.

In most cases tennis centres with less than six courts and those not located in affluent areas will find it difficult to raise enough revenue to provide meaningful contributions to major capital works, especially if they are responsible for the maintenance of assets under their lease.

3.4 Hierarchy of tennis facilities

Tennis Australia has developed a facilities hierarchy. The hierarchy model defines facility types as:

- Public Access Centres (1 court +)
- Local Tennis Centres (4 courts +)
- District Tennis Centres (8 courts +)
- Large Community Tennis Centres (Sub Regional) (12 courts +)
- Regional Tennis Centres (16 courts +)
- National Tennis Centres (20 courts +).

Based on the Tennis Australia hierarchy shown in Appendix 1, the City of Greater Dandenong provides the following mix of tennis facilities on Council land:

Table 8: Tennis facilities in CGD based on Tennis Australia Facilities Hierarchy

Tennis Australia Hierarchy	No. of facilities
Public Access	3
Local	7
District	2
Large Community	0
Regional	0
National	0

Note - These figures include the public access tennis facilities.

Although there are sub-regional and regional facilities in other parts of south eastern Melbourne (such as Casey Tennis Centre, Pakenham Regional Tennis Centre, Dingley Tennis Club and Notting Hill-Pinewood Tennis Club), Tennis Victoria suggests there remains a gap in the provision of sub-regional facilities within the City of Greater Dandenong.

It is recommended that the development of a 12 court facility be investigated in a central location within the municipality, to meet the shortfall in this sized facility.

A facility of this size could attract regional tournaments, and should provide high level coaching services, quality facilities and would have a catchment population within a 15 km radius of greater than 100,000.

Under Tennis Australia’s 2020 Plan such a facility would have:

- A minimum of 12 courts with at least 80% of courts based on International Tennis Federation (ITF) surface code A (cushioned acrylic), F (clay) and H (grass).
- Each court to be floodlit to minimum club competition standards (350 lux).
- A main court that can provide adequate seating (either fixed or mobile) for local and regional tournaments and events.
- A set of four dedicated Tennis Hot Shots courts for primary school-aged introduction programs.

Investigations could look at the possible co-location of such a facility with an existing sports or leisure venue to provide a management structure to the facility.

Such a facility would allow for the growth in population. However it will be important to work with existing clubs and Tennis Victoria to identify an appropriate site for such as facility.

3.5 Court surfaces

There are a variety of surfaces provided across the 64 courts on Council owned land within the City of Greater Dandenong.

Court surface, number and type are shown in the following table.

Table 9: Tennis court surface types in the City of Greater Dandenong

Court surface type	Number of courts
En-tout-cas	16 courts
Synthetic clay	6 courts
Sand filled artificial grass	10 courts
Non cushioned acrylic hardcourt	32 courts
Total	64 courts

Red porous court surfaces (such as en-tout-cas), cushioned acrylic hardcourt and lawn are approved surfaces of the ITF, and therefore are surfaces suitable for the development of competition and elite tennis players.

Greater Dandenong has a healthy proportion of facilities with ITF-approved court surfaces.

SFAG is not an ITF-approved surface, however coaches and clubs like this surface as aside from the capital costs, once installed there is limited frequent maintenance required, and synthetic grass can be played on when damp and dries quicker than hard courts.

En-tout-cas and red porous courts are the traditional surfaces of clubs in Victoria. This type of surface is good for developing younger players and is liked by older players, as it is ITF approved and very comfortable and easy on joints. However this variety of surface requires considerable maintenance by clubs to keep it in a good condition. With 16 of these courts within the City, it is essential that clubs be supported to retain these. Clubs with en-tout-cas need to have a consistent on-site water supply (i.e. tanks), a strong volunteer base to continue high quality maintenance, access to technical skills and forward planning by clubs and Council to resurface courts when required.

Almost all of the hard courts within CGD are in poor condition and will need to be considered for surface upgrades in the short to medium term. There are no cushioned acrylic surfaces in CGD.

Many of the existing courts are painted concrete or asphalt and these are nearly all in need of resurfacing. Some of these courts should be resurfaced with cushioned acrylic hardcourt to provide the region with high quality surfaces for continued player development.

Two clubs have had recent upgrades to include sand filled artificial grass courts. This surface provides a consistent lower frequency maintenance surface, sought after for social tennis and programming. However this surface is not suitable for the development of pathway competition players and hence strategic planning is required by Council and clubs to ensure a good mix of surfaces is retained; planning for lifecycle costs of different surfaces is conducted before surface replacements occur; and the impact of surfaces on club sustainability is assessed.

3.6 Floodlighting

Floodlighting is essential at all tennis facilities due to the changing patterns of play and participation. Night tennis, especially on weeknights is often the only time that people are able to participate in tennis and if courts are not lit, the participation opportunities are significantly reduced.

The City of Greater Dandenong has 40 tennis courts (out of a total of 64) with lighting. Lighting needs to be considered a priority.

Consultation with clubs identified that some of the lighting at existing courts did not work at all and the older style lighting is both expensive to run and costly and disruptive to repair.

Most clubs that lease tennis facilities on Council land highlighted floodlighting at their facility as an element of equal importance to the operation and viability of their club as the court surfaces and fencing.

A summary of floodlit club tennis courts within the City of Greater Dandenong is provided in the following table.

Table 10: Tennis facilities by number of lit courts

Tennis facility	No. of lit courts
Burden Park Tennis Club	6/6 courts lit
Dandenong Tennis Club	4/6 courts lit
Heritage Tennis Club	4/4 courts lit
Keysborough Tennis Club	6/8 courts lit
Lois Twohig Reserve	2/4 courts lit
Noble Community Tennis Club	6/6 courts lit
Noble Park Tennis Club	4/6 courts lit
Rosswood Tennis Club	4/6 courts lit
Springvale North Tennis Club	4/8 courts lit

3.7 Public access courts

The following tennis venues are facilities that until recently have formally hosted clubs but no longer do. These are considered as public access tennis facilities, but could be marketed as “Free Play” tennis centres which can be booked and promoted for school and casual use.

Table 11: Public access tennis facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong

Facility Name	Suburb	No. courts	Surface
Fotheringham Reserve	Dandenong	2	Hardcourt
George Andrews Reserve	Dandenong	2	Hardcourt
Lois Twohig Reserve	Dandenong North	4	Hardcourt

The three public access tennis facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong provide the potential for increased social tennis opportunities within popular reserves. It is essential that to increase the usage of these facilities they should:

- Be kept in a tidy, well maintained condition. The condition of fencing and tennis nets is critical to these facilities.
- Provide lights that can be used by the public.
- Have well-planned and located promotional signage not only at the centre itself but also in the local area.
 - This needs to indicate name, street directions and that they are free to access, how to operate lights, as well as any code of conduct. This might include what activities are suitable, and how long it is appropriate to play when people are waiting.
 - Council should coordinate the development of prominent signage at each of these public access tennis facilities that identifies where the formal club tennis facilities are and what each of them offers. This provides clubs with another way to attract members from those participants who are already playing or considering playing socially.

- Be followed up with regular promotion in Council publications.
- Be considered in some instances for use as multi-sport courts.
- Heritage Tennis Club has four courts. If the club does not continue as a formal club in the future, the four courts at this venue could be used as public access tennis courts and be converted into multi-use courts, including two for netball for club use, and two that have inbuilt soccer goals and basketball rings.
- Similarly one court at Fotheringham Reserve could be marked as a multipurpose court to include basketball and futsal, or netball courts if such courts are required for training and if the courts can be extended to the correct size.
- Be investigated as locations for hit-up walls/or nets, for use by individuals as well as for practice and for training.
- Be promoted to primary schools to develop tennis programs, and could be programmed and used for overflow competition for juniors, programs such as Cardio Tennis or Tennis Hot Shots, or by other community and cultural organisations.

3.8 Condition of tennis facilities

Some clubs and facilities are in very good condition in the City of Greater Dandenong, while other clubs and facilities are in are in poor condition.

All formal clubs are passionate about their club and their facilities and they try their hardest to keep facilities in the best condition possible, however there are a number of issues related to courts and other essential facility elements that need to be addressed.

Court resurfacing

All of the hard courts at facilities within the City are significantly worn requiring attention, while most of the en-tout-cas courts in the City are in reasonable condition.

The courts at the Dandenong Tennis Club are very worn and will need to be resurfaced. The preferred surface at this club is cushioned acrylic hardcourt (with Australian Open True Blue).

The remaining two en-tout-cas courts at the Keysborough Tennis Club require resurfacing in the near future due to their poor condition. To bring consistency to this club and provide a more cost effective playing surface, the club's preferred surface for these two courts is sand filled artificial grass.

Issues remain with the synthetic clay surface at Noble Park Tennis Club. The bristles of the synthetic clay surface have folded over, causing slippery surfaces around each of the baselines. This issue needs to be addressed with either a resurface of the courts with new synthetic clay (as per the club's preference) or to resurface with another surface such as sand filled synthetic grass.

The court surfaces at Rosswood Tennis Club are all in poor condition and at least some of these courts will require resurfacing in the near future with acrylic hardcourt. Issues with net posts also need to be addressed.

Fencing

There are currently fencing issues at most of the tennis clubs within CGD, including at the public access tennis facilities.

The clubs and facilities that have the more severe fencing issues (both that affect the game of tennis as well as the security of courts and clubrooms) are:

- Burden Park Tennis Club
- Noble Park Tennis Club
- Springvale North Tennis Club
- Rosswood Tennis Club
- Fotheringham Reserve Public Access Tennis Facility
- Heritage Tennis Club
- Lois Twohig Reserve Public Access Tennis Facility.

It is essential that if a court is to be used for multiple purposes, the fencing be reinforced to reduce the damage sustained by fences from, for example, soccer balls and basketballs.

Floodlighting

Forty of the courts in the CGD have lights (see Table 3) but some are in poor condition and some may not even work. Two clubs have coin operated lighting systems that enables them to be used for casual use.

Lighting is one of the elements that in recent times has become essential to any tennis facility, due to the changing way that people are participating in their recreational activities.

High quality, accessible lighting can make a big difference to the viability of clubs due to the opportunities that night tennis presents.

Many of the lights at tennis facilities are old style lights that would be poor in terms of energy efficiency and more expensive to maintain.

Clubroom facilities

Clubroom facilities can be just as important as the playing surface in attracting and retaining members and social tennis players, though this does not mean that they have to be large.

Many of the clubroom facilities, especially at the formal clubs, are in excellent condition as club members and Council have worked very hard to keep them in the best condition.

Physical accessibility of clubhouses is essential to allow the whole community the opportunity to utilise a tennis facility, especially at hardcourt facilities that can support wheelchair tennis.

There are some issues and opportunities in the area of clubhouse improvements that would make big differences to the way these club environments operate.

Noble Park Tennis Club has a small but neat clubhouse, however the internal layout of the building does not allow for larger groups to congregate inside. This clubhouse could be 'opened up' by removing some of the internal dead space and making it more of an open plan room that would help the club attract external hirers and benefit the social environment at the club.

Springvale North Tennis Club has a small clubhouse that is quite serviceable but would benefit from a toilet upgrade incorporated within a small change room.

Burden Park Tennis Club requires minor works within the male toilets. This may include the installation of an exhaust fan, or the removal of the urinal and replacement with a toilet suite.

Facilities such as the tennis courts at Fotheringham Reserve, Heritage Tennis Club and Lois Twohig Reserve all have small clubhouse buildings that in future may not be required to support a club. If clubs no longer require them, these buildings could be utilised by other sports or recreational groups and/or be used to support the public access tennis facility in the future.

It is important that the surrounds of public access tennis facilities are kept in good condition, and that there is very prominent and clear signage inviting public use. This will help make these facilities appealing for families and other social user groups.

It is also important that all clubhouse facilities (as well as access to courts) are fully accessible, as the hard courts can be used for wheelchair sports.

Funding opportunities

Tennis Australia offers funding opportunities to tennis clubs and local government to contribute to tennis infrastructure in communities. Funding programs include:

- National Court Rebate Scheme
- Tennis Australia Facility Loan Scheme
- Community Grants.

These opportunities support court surfaces, lighting, clubhouse developments and tennis infrastructure in park environments. Continuing to work closely with Tennis Victoria on facility improvements will be important in the future for the City.

There are other Federal and State funding programs (such as the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund), corporate grants and foundations that offer funds for facility and club development programs. The Australian Sports Foundation's Giving4Grassroots provides grants for community based organisations to enable them to undertake activities and programs focused on increasing the participation of local community members in sport. The benefits of sports participation are well known and include healthier lifestyles, social inclusion and the development of teamwork and leadership skills.

4 Key issues

4.1 Opportunities for further use of tennis facilities and clubrooms

Most clubs make their facilities available for use by external groups.

Not all clubs were certain whether their occupancy agreements supported them hiring facilities to other groups.

Most clubs need the potential extra income source, but few promote hire for a number of reasons including insufficient time to promote, access issues and not wanting to risk potential damage to clubhouses and courts.

Below is a list of those clubs who have current external user groups hiring the clubhouses and courts:

- **Burden Park Tennis Club** – has one regular hirer, a group from the Cambodian community conducting a computer course. This is in addition to other casual hirers, including family groups and schools.
- **Dandenong Tennis Club** – has had some external groups use facilities but have experienced some issues. The club regularly hires courts to external users.
- **Keysborough Tennis Club** – some use by members for parties, however they do not consider external bookings.
- **Noble Park Tennis Club** – has rented to small groups for parties but do not actively promote this.
- **Rosswood Tennis Club** – rents the courts and clubhouse to local disability groups and are trying to set up links with local gyms and a local golf club for joint membership opportunities.
- **Lois Twohig Reserve and other public access tennis facilities** – although there is no club at these venues, there is some evidence of external hiring of these facilities presently or in the past.
- There is potential for the Council to rent spaces within the Fotheringham Reserve and Lois Twohig Reserve clubhouses, as they all appear usable and they do not host clubs at present.

Council and some clubs already offer facility hire opportunities to the disability sector.

Daytime use of facilities (either clubrooms or courts) is going to become a vital part of ensuring a club becomes sustainable into the future in this sector. It will be essential that club environments have good accessibility to clubrooms and courts to enable this type of opportunity to develop.

The acceptability and requirements associated with clubs hiring out facilities, especially for activities other than tennis, must be clarified in future occupancy agreements.

In addition, one club does not make their facilities available for casual court use to non-members. Council should require all clubs to make courts available for non-member tennis players, and should work with Tennis Victoria to overcome any access issues that may need to be addressed to encourage social and casual use of courts.

Other uses of courts

The brief called for an investigation into other users of courts.

The most common uses of tennis courts other than for tennis include:

- Social basketball (requires non-cushioned hard court surface).
- Netball (requires non-cushioned hard court surfaces and multiple courts (larger footprint)).
- Futsal (requires at least a netball sized court).
- Hockey (requires four SFAG courts for minkey, training and development programs, or 12 SFAG courts for a low level community sand filled hockey pitch).
- In-line racing or hockey (requires non-cushioned hard court surfaces and multiple courts with a larger footprint).

The footprint of tennis courts will need to be extended to accommodate these sports. If the facility is to be used for futsal, fences will also need to be reinforced.

4.2 Club development opportunities and growing participation

Tennis Victoria and Tennis Australia promote and support numerous programs to aid in the development of tennis. Programs such as Tennis Hot Shots and Cardio Tennis are becoming popular ways to start or continue playing tennis as a child or as an adult.

With some clubs having quite senior memberships, it is essential that programs that promote young and new people to the sport of tennis are embraced, to ensure that the club thrives into the future.

Junior participation is low in some of the clubs while other clubs have quite strong numbers in this area. A number of clubs have worked together and tried hard over the years to attract junior members and participants, some with little success and have therefore given up on further promotion.

Some clubs within the City already run programs such as these through their club coaches or through “come and try days” coordinated by committees.

Most clubs have been involved in various Council coordinated “come and try” and promotional days and events that aim to attract culturally and linguistically diverse communities, but the benefits in terms of increased participation or memberships do not generally transpire.

Some of the clubs identified the following issues and barriers to tennis participation:

- Local residents are too busy working to play traditional tennis.
- Parents not willing to get involved in the club – preferring to ‘drop and run’.
- Clubs are losing volunteers and existing volunteers are running out of energy and ideas to try and build membership.
- Poor quality of facilities in some cases, especially court surfaces, fencing and lighting.
- The high proportion of people born overseas without knowledge of or interest in tennis.

Tennis Victoria runs entry-level programs for people of all ages and abilities. These programs include: Tennis Hot Shots, Cardio Tennis, Future Leaders, club open days, Mums’ Program, 35+ Seniors’ Social Program, programs for people with

a disability, Indigenous Tennis Program and the Multicultural Tennis Program. They also produce a “Welcome to Tennis” booklet, designed to welcome people newly arrived to Australia to the sport of tennis, and information is provided in 14 different languages.

Partnerships between clubs, Tennis Victoria and Council to encourage adoption of these programs and ensure sporting clubs and facilities are offering welcoming, accessible and inclusive environments to all abilities and segments of the community is critical.

Some clubs successfully run some of these programs. Dandenong Tennis Club invites the community of Dandenong for social sessions of tennis every Sunday from 2.30-4.30pm. The program provides an opportunity for a fun weekly hit of tennis for people of all ages, cultural backgrounds and abilities. Racquets and balls are provided.

There are a large number of cultural groups in the City of Greater Dandenong. Council could assist clubs to work closely with these organisations that support specific cultural groups, to develop tennis related programs and activities, and increase promotion of the game among their members.

Clubs had ideas to increase participation and membership that included:

- Targeting multicultural communities, possibly with the help of Council
- Linking more effectively with local schools
- Clubs working together to promote the sport rather than individual clubs
- Improve facilities to make clubs more appealing to new participants.

Getting more people playing tennis in any form is a key aim of Tennis Victoria and Tennis Australia. This aim can only be achieved with the support of clubs and councils who own and manage the tennis courts and programs.

Tennis Victoria is currently undertaking a trial of a program called ‘Opening up Tennis’ which, with the assistance of technology and some minor infrastructure modifications, allows the general public to book a court at a tennis club and pay a fee online, and gain access to the courts with an access code.

This project has the potential to increase both participation in tennis as well as offering clubs another revenue stream and the prospect of targeting new members. Opportunities to trial this project are currently being considered by Keysborough Tennis Club.

Developing partnerships between clubs and local schools is an opportunity that is not currently reaching its potential. Tennis Victoria and the Australian Sports Commission support the development of the school/community sporting participation model.

There is an opportunity to offer schools the chance to utilise tennis courts during the day when they are normally idle, combined with the prospect of promoting the club environment and its developmental programs, coaching and competitions to school students.

There are a number of quality tennis facilities within the City of Greater Dandenong. To increase participants and members, Council and the clubs should make improvements in the following areas:

- Continue to improve facilities, especially courts, lighting and fencing.
- Significantly promote the public access tennis facilities in the area with web, brochures and park signage, and through cultural and community groups and schools.
- Promote club tennis facilities frequently, highlighting what they have to offer at public access tennis facilities.
- Through consultation and engagement with clubs and Tennis Victoria's 'Opening up Tennis' program or similar, investigate the concept of online booking, payment and code access to courts.
- Continue to engage with local schools and offer opportunities to them to play regular tennis.
- Council to assist clubs to become as self sufficient as possible and to plan for the future funding of asset replacement.
- Promote the bringing together of ideas from all tennis clubs in the City and from Tennis Victoria in order to promote the sport within the region.

Clubs should also be encouraged to affiliate with Tennis Victoria. This provides considerable benefits

through: current programs and access to information, attracting new members, insurance coverage, opportunities through hosting sanctioned tournaments, assistance with funding, and infrastructure and IT resources that can reduce club administration.

A series of benchmarks, called the Club Health Check, is offered by Tennis Victoria and Tennis Australia for tennis clubs and facility operators to annually measure and benchmark the performance of tennis facilities against other similar centers. The Club Health Check provides clubs with data that allows them to identify strengths and weaknesses and compare their own performance over time.

Use of the Club Health Check resource by clubs should be encouraged.

4.3 Partnerships with other community facilities and clubs

There are a number of opportunities for tennis clubs to engage and partner with groups, organisations and other clubs within their communities. These partnerships have the potential to grow memberships, gain sponsorship and to offer tennis to those within the community that have not or would not normally get this opportunity.

A number of tennis clubs are located adjacent to other sporting clubs and facilities such as bowls, football, netball, golf and soccer.

Rather than wait for the people at these other clubs to choose to contact the tennis club, there is an opportunity to develop specific "come and try" or special days, competitions and social tennis events targeted to these club environments. In some cases combining clubs located in the same reserve under an umbrella club would increase the availability of resources and reduce the cost of club administration.

There are a large number of cultural community organisations in CGD, including cultures where tennis is considered a traditional sport. In many instances newly arrived people feel more comfortable participating with people from the same cultural background in a social environment before joining a sporting club. Council staff could facilitate the connection of community groups with

tennis clubs and assist with the development of specifically-designed activities to encourage additional participation.

Clubhouses can also attract new people to the tennis club even if it is for a non-tennis related sport or activity. Opening up clubhouses for hire and spending some time developing targeted marketing strategies for the hire of clubhouses has the potential to benefit clubs, or return funds to asset management. The benefits will not only be financial, but also raise public awareness of what tennis clubs have to offer the community.

Some clubs in the City already open their facilities for hire and with appropriate management do see the benefits of this activity to the club.

Other potential compatible activities that can be conducted on hardcourt tennis courts include futsal and inline hockey, floorball and skate and scooter clinics for young children.

For sand filled artificial grass other compatible activities that may be programmed on tennis courts off peak could include hockey training or development program activities.

4.4 Priority facility improvements

Through consultation with tennis clubs, other local governments and Tennis Victoria and Tennis Australia, it is clear that the essential elements of a tennis club facility are primarily the sport related elements such as:

- Courts, including the base and surfaces
- Nets and net posts
- Court lines
- Floodlighting
- Fencing.

Other important elements include the:

- Clubhouse (inside clubhouse and outside social and viewing spaces)
- Signage and promotion (at facility and in surrounding areas)
- Accessibility to clubhouses and courts.

Assisting tennis clubs to achieve the redevelopment and upkeep of the above elements of the tennis club environment is considered the best way to support them at this stage. Once facilities are in good condition, Council can help clubs achieve the four key elements of a tennis club:

- Accessibility
- Community benefit
- Sustainability
- Accountability.

These elements are essential to the operation of tennis clubs, and lowering standards in these areas will not contribute to ongoing sustainability and development of clubs and the sport.

Of most importance is the need to make facilities look and feel inviting and welcoming to the broader public.

Through the consultation with clubs as well as the site visits, the following facility projects have been identified as critical to the operation of tennis clubs in the City of Greater Dandenong. This list includes projects at public access tennis facilities.

Lighting of courts

Floodlighting is considered an essential part of any tennis facility, allowing members and the general public to play tennis when they are mostly available and for clubs to offer programs and developmental opportunities throughout the whole year. Council should ensure that in the short to medium term, all tennis facilities on Council-owned land have lighting on all or most of their courts.

Lighting upgrades should consider the ease and cost of ongoing maintenance as well as the energy efficiency of lighting.

Tennis facilities that require lighting upgrades are:

- Dandenong Tennis Club
- Rosswood Tennis Club
- Springvale North Tennis Club
- Springvale South Tennis Club.

Coin operated tennis lighting systems, or other mechanisms to provide casual access to lit courts should be investigated where they do not already exist.

Court surfaces

There is a sufficient range of surfaces across clubs in the City of Greater Dandenong, including surfaces that are important to the development of strong junior players such as en-tout-cas, synthetic clay and hard courts.

Several clubs have resurfaced some of their courts with sand-filled artificial grass, which provides a consistent playing surface and requires minimal maintenance. This is more costly to replace than other types of surfaces. There are issues with the synthetic clay courts and some desire for a further rollout of more sand filled artificial grass surfaces.

Most of the hard courts within City of Greater Dandenong tennis clubs are in poor condition with cracking and worn coatings and paint.

The clubs and tennis facilities that require attention to their court surfaces as a priority are:

- Dandenong Tennis Club
- Noble Park Tennis Club
- Rosswood Tennis Club
- Keysborough Tennis Club
- George Andrews Reserve public access tennis courts.

Fencing

Fencing is a vital part of the tennis facility environment. In addition to stopping the ball around courts, fencing also provides an element of security to a tennis facility.

Strong, well maintained tennis court fencing can make a tennis facility look not only attractive, but also professional and inviting to the general public while still performing as an essential sport element.

Fencing conditions at clubs are average in general.

A number of clubs have had unresolved fencing issues since they were documented in the last 2008 plan.

If a court is to be used as a multipurpose facility such as is proposed for some of the public access tennis venues, it is important to ensure that fencing is reinforced as soccer balls and basketballs require more robust fencing than tennis.

The George Andrews Reserve public access courts are inside the enclosure of a soccer facility. This may restrict access to the courts when competition is being held at the soccer facility.

The following clubs/public access tennis facilities require attention to their fencing:

- Burden Park Tennis Club
- Dandenong Tennis Club
- Noble Park Tennis Club
- Rosswood Tennis Club
- Springvale North Tennis Club
- Springvale South Tennis Club
- Heritage Tennis Club
- Fotheringham Reserve public access tennis courts
- Lois Twohig public access tennis courts.

Clubhouses/surrounds

Clubhouses are generally in good condition and Council provides regular maintenance and upgrades of kitchens, toilets, and structural elements of buildings.

Most clubs are very proud of their clubhouses and help keep them in good condition.

The following clubhouse facilities require attention in the short to medium term to improve their operation, functionality and social sustainability into the future:

- Burden Park Tennis Club — men's toilet upgrade
- Dandenong Tennis Club – men's toilet upgrade and roofing repair
- Noble Park Tennis Club — internal reconfiguration of building

The surrounds of clubhouses provide important social, accessibility and visual amenity elements to a tennis facility. Due to Council's expertise in park maintenance and economies of scale available, the maintenance of clubhouse surrounds may be better allocated to Council, who could maintain the adjacent park areas.

The following issues and opportunities have been identified as projects that would make considerable differences to the club and facility in general, and are outside of club expertise:

- Keysborough Tennis Club — tree concerns and issues and general grass management surrounding courts (external to fencing).
- Noble Park Tennis Club — tree root damage to courts.
- Lois Twohig Reserve and Fotheringham Reserve (public access tennis facilities) and Heritage Tennis Club – general upkeep of all surroundings including trees, pathways, grass and park furniture.
- All clubs and public access tennis facilities require a concerted effort to maintain quality surrounds and garden areas to ensure that facilities continue to look inviting and appear to offer quality sporting opportunities.

Signage and wayfinding

Signage and wayfinding are essential in increasing awareness, usage of courts and membership of clubs. Well designed and located signage and wayfinding offers:

- The potential for the general public to know that the club or courts are there, and that they can use them.
- That the courts are available for use through the club or as a public access tennis facility.
- Who to contact regarding tennis opportunities.
- What each club/facility offers and specialises in.
- What programs and services the club/courts offer.

There should be a review of all tennis facility signage, both at the club sites and in the reserve near the club, and from adjacent streets directing people to the club/facility. This signage needs to ensure that clubs and facilities are easy to find, provide good quality, accurate information regarding what services are offered at the club or facility and contact details for the club/facility.

This signage should be supplemented with off site information including promotional material about each facility and club, including the nature, surface and accessibility of all facilities, programs offered and target groups.

5. Action and implementation plan

5.1 Capital works program and priorities

Below is a summary of the identified and recommended capital works projects as well as significant maintenance works required across tennis facilities in the City.

Capital works items identified within this project include improvements in the provision of the following facility elements:

- Court surfaces
- Floodlighting
- Fencing
- Clubhouse usability and maintenance
- Upkeep of surrounds and grounds at facilities.

The following table outlines key capital and other works required at tennis facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong and the priority of each.

Table 12: Capital works and facility maintenance

Club/facility	Proposed works	Detail (if applicable)	Priority
Burden Park Tennis Club	Fencing repair and replacement	Replacement of the northern fencing along the entire length due to wind damage.	High
	Upgrade to clubhouse facilities	The toilet and kitchen upgrade required.	Medium
Dandenong Tennis Club	Court resurfacing (all courts)	All courts at the club are worn and will require resurfacing in the near future. Drainage of courts also an issue. The club's preferred surface is acrylic hardcourt. Other related improvements include: the construction of a retaining wall at the back of the front court where asphalt has been laid down (the slope causing a possible hazard).	High
	Court lighting	Lighting is required on two additional courts as only four are lit.	High
	Men's toilet upgrade		Medium
	Clubhouse roof repair		High
	Need to access more courts	Possibly investigate an arrangement with the netball facility adjacent.	High
Keysborough Tennis Club	Resurface of two remaining courts to synthetic grass	Keysborough have had six courts converted to synthetic grass in recent times and require the other two courts to be resurfaced in the near future.	High
	Additional synthetic grass court with lighting to be constructed in the park adjacent to the back courts	Club doesn't have enough courts at peak times and an additional good quality court would be beneficial.	Low
	Tree issues	An arborist is required to review the large gum tree adjacent to the barbecue area.	High
	Key pad access to courts	Support the club to develop the Opening Up Tennis program with Tennis Victoria to increase casual use at the club.	High

Club/facility	Proposed works	Detail (if applicable)	Priority
Noble Community Tennis Club	Court surface issues	Tree root intrusion into the courts needs to be addressed.	High
Noble Park Tennis Club	Court surface issues	Issue with the synthetic clay fibre. Bristles folded over causing slippery surface behind the base line. Had specialists inspect but likely to require a full resurface. Club would consider synthetic grass but would prefer synthetic clay again. Tree root intrusion into the courts also needs to be addressed.	High
	Clubhouse layout	There is the potential to open up the internal spaces of the clubhouse to make an open plan area that would improve functionality. There is a lot of wasted space. Potential for more external user rentals if this work is undertaken.	Medium
	Fencing repairs	A general repair and renewal of some sections of the court fencing is required due to vandals and wear and tear.	High
Rosswood Tennis Club	Court surfacing	The court surfaces are very poor with large cracks opening up in many places. Net posts are in poor condition. Identify at least two courts to upgrade at a time.	High
	Fencing	The fencing is in poor condition across the club. Poor appearance and doesn't perform as required.	Medium
	Wayfinding	This club is tucked down a little side street and is difficult to find. There is plenty of signage at the club but little signage to make people aware that the club exists.	High
Springvale North Tennis Club	Lighting	Poor quality lighting needs addressing in the future.	High
	Fencing	Fencing is poor and requires attention in places.	High
	No changing rooms	The clubhouse is very small and could do with additional space for a changing room and toilet upgrade.	High
Springvale South Tennis Club	Lighting	The club has no lights and with most people only able to play after working hours, lights are the number one requirement.	High
	Fencing	Some repairs to fencing required.	Medium
Fotheringham Reserve (public access tennis facility)	Fencing	The fencing around the clubhouse should be removed to make the public access courts more attractive for the public.	High
	Possible removal of second court	Following consultation, possibly remove the rear court and return to bushland, or provide multi sport court here.	Low
	New signage	Signage to be installed to promote the public use of the tennis court facility.	High
Heritage Tennis Club	Fencing	The fencing at this venue is in poor condition with holes and fallen sections and requires renewal.	High
	Signage	If this is to be considered for use as a public access facility in the future, there needs to be better signage on the street and in other parts of the reserve to promote these courts.	High

Club/facility	Proposed works	Detail (if applicable)	Priority
Lois Twohig Reserve (public access tennis facility)	Fencing	The appearance of this facility was poor and hasn't received any attention for some time. It does have potential to be a very good public access tennis facility. The courts were suitable for a public facility but the fencing requires significant repair and renewal.	High
	Surrounds	General repair and regular upkeep required of surrounds (grass, trees, paths, park furniture, leaves on the courts etc.).	High
	Signage		High
All venues	Other facility improvement opportunities	Council should continue to support clubs who choose to have en-tout-cas. This is a Tennis Australia preferred surface and is valuable for player development.	Medium
		Improve basic infrastructure at public access tennis facilities.	Medium
		Consider designating some public access tennis facilities (where space allows) as multipurpose courts for futsal, netball and basketball, provide goal posts and reinforced fencing.	Medium
		Prepare a lighting improvement program to provide and ultimately replace lighting with more energy efficient systems at all tennis sites on at least 75% of all courts. Lighting upgrades should consider the ease and cost of ongoing maintenance as well as the energy efficiency of lighting.	Medium
		Work with clubs and Tennis Victoria to provide an easy way for casual users to book, access and pay for lights on tennis courts, such as the Opening Up Tennis program.	High
		Develop asset management plans for all tennis centres and prepare a costed capital works and maintenance improvement program to address all listed issues.	High
		Work with clubs to prepare individual surface improvement and replacement programs, clubs to consider a sinking fund with contributions from hire fees.	High

The following table lists recommended actions that are not capital works.

5.2 Club and sporting development action plan

Table 13: Club and sporting development actions proposed for tennis

Key direction area	Actions
Club development – needs, initiatives, promotions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a review of all tennis club and facility signage, both at the club sites and in the reserves near the club, directing people to the club/facility. This signage needs to ensure that clubs and facilities are easy to find and consistently branded, and that signage provides good quality, accurate information regarding what services are offered at the club or facility and contact details for the club/facility. 2. Support tennis clubs with marketing, communications, promotions and community development, and promoting tennis to diverse cultural groups. 3. Increase the promotion of tennis as a sport, as well as individual clubs and facilities and what each offers. This may include local newspaper, brochures, social media, newsletters, website directory and communications to other community groups, especially CALD communities and their support groups. 4. Develop and support partnerships between clubs, state sporting associations and disability support organisations to improve access to the sports and sporting facilities by people of all abilities.
Management/ occupancy agreements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Consider the suitability of agreements and opportunities to prepare standardised, service-based occupancy agreements that are linked to achievements based on Tennis Australia's four pillars (Accessibility, Sustainability, Community Benefit, and Accountability). Agreements should encourage clubs to focus on programs, competitions and the development of the sport. 6. As a priority identify core responsibilities of Council and clubs in areas of asset maintenance, replacement and community access levels, participation targets and promotional activities. 7. Identify maintenance elements areas currently being completed by tennis clubs that could possibly be completed by Council staff such as garden and tree management.
Facility location/ distribution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Investigate the development of a larger tennis centre in a prominent central location to meet additional growth, and support the provision of additional tennis services, growth in junior pennant players and events. Consider possible co-location with an existing leisure centre for ease of management. 9. Maintain the current tennis court numbers on Council land and investigate the possible multiuse of some of the public access tennis courts in the future. 10. Monitor the demand for tennis as well as the needs of the increasing population and respond with changes to tennis court supply when needed. 11. Encourage the Springvale clubs (North, South and Burden Park) to work more closely together and consider becoming one club in the long term, with a stronger membership and participation rate.
Opportunities for other sports to use facilities and club rooms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Encourage programming and use by school, cultural and community groups of public access tennis facilities. 13. Work with clubs and Tennis Victoria to identify and promote the use of tennis club facilities by other user groups, not just sporting groups. 14. Support clubs to work with other sporting clubs to enhance the sustainability and use of facilities.
Partnerships with other organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Increase links between all Council departments, tennis clubs and City of Greater Dandenong's culturally diverse communities to improve awareness of tennis, build partnerships and increase tennis and other participation and use of facilities. 16. Increase links with social inclusion organisations and disability service providers either for tennis participation programs or building hire. 17. Tennis clubs to build links with schools and school holiday program providers to coordinate participation programs based at club venues.
Resourcing/ funding opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Continue to work with tennis clubs in the City to identify opportunities for funding to improve tennis facilities, and undertake surface replacements. 19. Following the costing of capital works and other development programs, seek funding from Tennis Australia, the State Government and other sources to support the future funding of capital works projects.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: Tennis Australia's hierarchy of facilities*

Facility type	No. of Courts	Facility management focus
Public Access Centres	1-3	Tennis engagement opportunities Health and social objectives Public accessible venues Community development objectives
Local Tennis Centres	4-7	Interclub tournaments High performance training feeder Grass roots development Sustainable tennis development objectives Sustainable community health and development objectives
District Tennis Centres	8-11	Interclub tournaments High performance training feeder Grass roots development Sustainable tennis development objectives Sustainable community health and development objectives
Large Community Tennis Centres (Sub Regional)	12-15	Intra/inter club tournaments High performance training feeder and focus Resource for smaller centres, clubs and associations Grass roots development Sustainable tennis development objectives Community health and wellbeing objectives
Regional Tennis Centres	16-19	National/state based tournaments High performance training and talent feeder and focus Resource for smaller centres, clubs and associations Economic driver Grass roots development Sustainable tennis development objectives Community health and wellbeing objectives
National Tennis Centres	20+	Inter/national tournaments and events High performance training environment Sustainable tennis development objectives Community economic development objectives Showcase for tennis

*Tennis 2020: Facility Development and Management Framework For Australian Tennis. Tennis Australia 2012

Appendix 2: Tennis facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong

Club/facility	Location: reserve and facility address	Public access or club	No. of courts	Court surface	No. lit courts
Springvale North Tennis Club	Warner Reserve, corner Furnew and Wood Street, Springvale	Club	8	Non cushioned acrylic hardcourt	4
Springvale South Tennis Club	Alex Nelson Reserve, 4 Mackay Street, Springvale South	Club	6	4 Sand filled artificial grass	0
				2 En-tout-cas	
Burden Park Tennis Club	Burden Park, 880 – 924 Heatherton Road, Springvale South	Club	6	6 En-tout-cas	6
Dandenong Tennis Club	Greaves Reserve, Bennet Street, Dandenong	Club	6	Non cushioned acrylic hardcourt	4
Rosswood Tennis Club	Tirhatuan Park, 112A Somerset Drive, Dandenong North	Club	6	Non cushioned acrylic hardcourt	4
Lois Twohig Reserve Tennis Courts	Lois Twohig Reserve, 80 Carlton Road, Dandenong North	Public access	4	Non cushioned acrylic hardcourt	2
Fotheringham Reserve Tennis Courts	Fotheringham Reserve, Alexander Avenue, Dandenong	Public access	2	Non cushioned acrylic hardcourt	0
Noble Park Tennis Club	Parkfield Reserve, Ellendale Road, Noble Park	Club	6	Synthetic clay	4
Noble Community Tennis Club	Noble Park Reserve, 46-56 Moodemere Street, Noble Park	Club	6	En-tout-cas	6
Heritage Tennis Club	Barry J Powell Reserve, 2C Bakers Road, Noble Park North	Club	4	Non cushioned acrylic hardcourt	4
Keysborough Tennis Club	Frederick Wachter Reserve, 194 Bloomfield Road, Keysborough	Club	8	6 Synthetic grass	6
				2 En-tout-cas	
George Andrews Reserve Tennis Courts	George Andrews Reserve, 21 Trewin Street, Dandenong	Public access	2	Non cushioned acrylic hardcourt	0
TOTAL NO.			64		40

Appendix 3: Tennis facilities map

