



How to get support for your recreation project

A guide for sporting clubs, community groups and individuals

About this guide

If you, your club or group has an idea for a project to improve local recreation facilities – this **five-step guide** is for you.

It is designed to help you make your case to Council and to understand the factors that affect decision-making.

Where to start

The first step is to get in touch to discuss your idea. Once you have approval to move forward with a proposal you can use this guide to focus your efforts.

Section 1 gives an outline of Council's recreation network and how community members can influence the planning process.

Section 2 takes you through how we assess community proposals and the factors you should consider when putting forward a proposal.

Section 3 explains the five steps to preparing a project proposal and what information you need to include.

Get in contact

To get the ball rolling, make a call or drop an email to Council's Recreation Services team and tell us what you have in mind.

Recreation Services

Eurobodalla Shire Council

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Phone: 024474 1000

SECTION 1: The recreation and open space network

Council develops and maintains Eurobodalla's recreation and open space network on behalf of the community. The network is made up of all the land and facilities set aside for community use. It includes sportsgrounds, courts, aquatic centres, amenities and clubhouses, storage facilities, parks and public reserves.

Our objectives

To have a network that is well planned, is fair and equitable, and that is developed and maintained in a financially responsible way.

Community input is important and welcomed.

To meet these objectives we use a simple approach that relies on a central long term strategy. This helps us manage our budget and resources as well as assisting with securing grant funding.

Alongside the strategy, we have a responsive process to meet emerging needs in the community.

Long-term strategy

The Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2018 (ROSS) is our long term strategy document.

Extensive community consultation and hundreds of submissions informed its development. It sets out high, medium and low priorities to ensure all projects are well considered. It is a living document which means we periodically audit and review projects and priorities. We update the entire strategy every 5-10 years.

Community project proposals

Individuals, community groups and sporting clubs are able to put forward proposals for projects not already captured in the strategy. This gives us flexibility to consider emerging priorities, take advantage of grant funding opportunities and consider opportunities as they arise.

Other considerations for planning

Council's plans and priorities are also informed by:

- Council's role in promoting health and preventing illness
- preference for shared-use spaces that are safe, flexible and cater for a range of needs
- sustainability factors such as designs and improvements that incorporate water efficiency
- clear management arrangements for leasing, licences and usage.

SECTION 2: How we assess community proposals

All community project proposals go through a full assessment process starting with a preliminary discussion prior to preparing and submitting a proposal. Council will assess and give feedback and will advise if more information is needed. At the end of this process Council will write to you to let you know if the proposal is supported or not, including reasons for the decision.

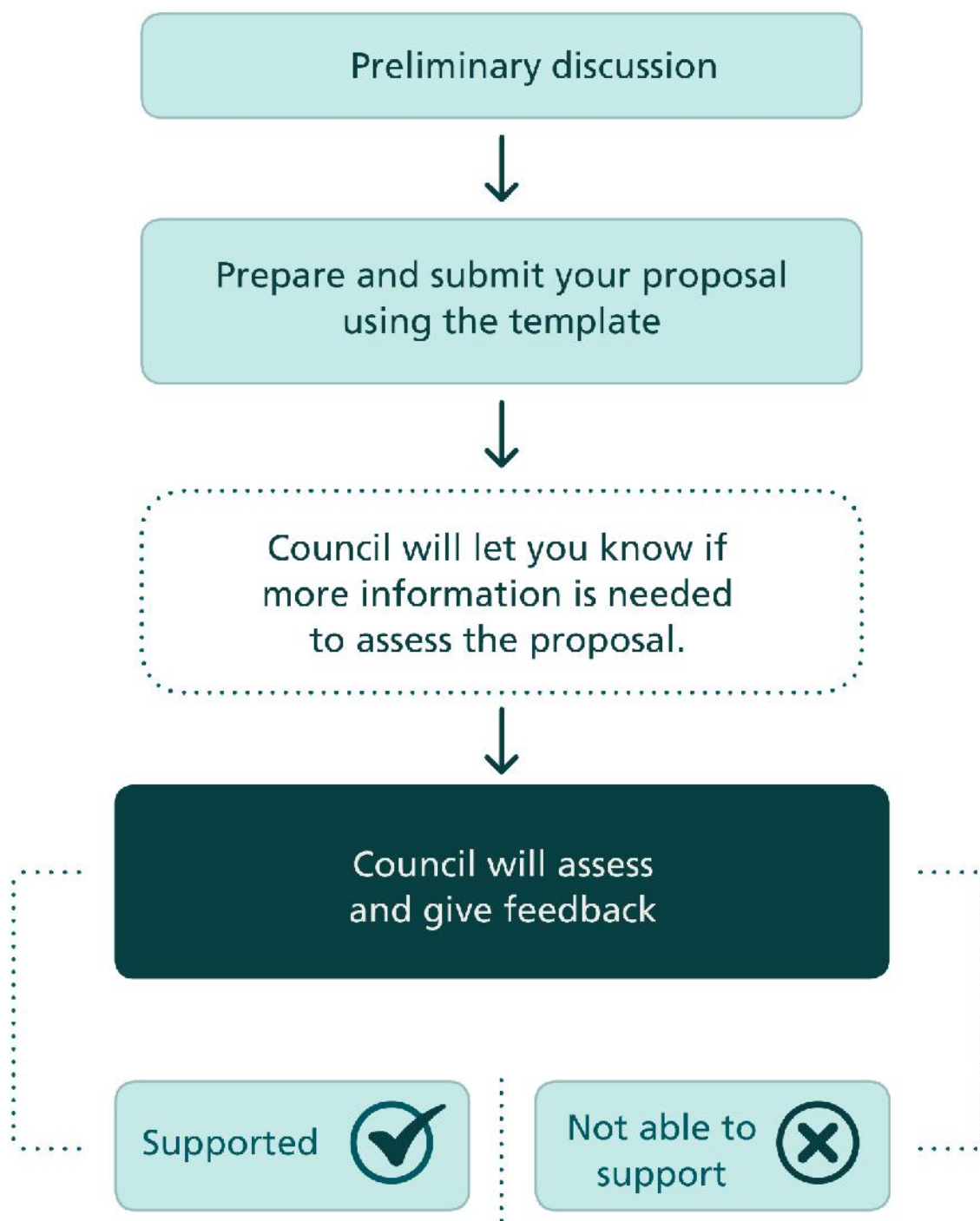
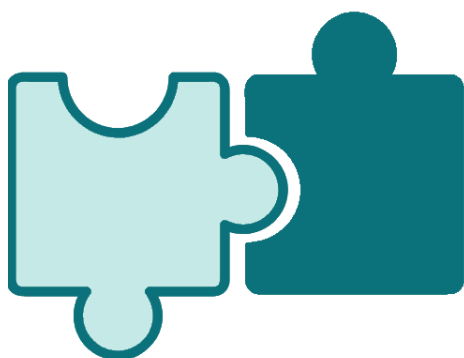


Figure 1. Flowchart of the community project proposal assessment process.

SECTION 2: How we assess community proposals

Council's Recreation Services team oversees the management of the **recreation and open space network**. Sporting clubs, community groups or individuals with support from the community, can approach the team at anytime to propose a new idea.

What is the network?



The network includes sportsgrounds and sports amenities buildings, parks and playgrounds, venues for meetings and functions, picnic facilities and park benches, walking and cycling tracks. If a project improves the recreation and open space network, it is eligible for consideration.

It is worth noting that your project may already be on Council's radar and flagged in our forward work program or in the ROSS. That is one of the reasons we ask you to have an initial discussion with us. After that, we will usually invite you to submit a proposal.

Every proposal for new infrastructure or an upgrade goes through an

assessment process to consider how the new project fits in with longer range plans. The time it takes to assess a proposal and the level of supporting information will vary depending on the complexity and cost of the proposal.

As a rule of thumb assessments generally take 2-4 months. The flowchart in figure 1. illustrates the proposal assessment process.

In simple terms, assessment involves:

- weighing the proposal against the guiding principles for decision making
- reviewing against existing strategies and forward workplans
- considering budgets and funding models.



Strategies and workplans

When assessing a project we consider whether it aligns with the ROSS as well as the relevant Plans of Management and Council's Asset Management Strategy.

SECTION 2: How we assess community proposals

We plan our annual work schedules and budgets 12 months in advance. When you submit a proposal it is critical you allow plenty of lead time for assessing, planning and scheduling.

Funding models



Projects may be fully funded by Council, jointly funded by Council in partnership with the community, or fully funded by the community.

The relevant funding model for your project depends on a number of factors including project cost, community benefit, lead time and grant options available. Recreation Services will advise you which funding model would be most suitable for your project.

Grants and fundraising

Grants and fundraising are two key ways community and sporting groups can obtain funding for joint Council and community funded projects or projects that are fully-funded by the community.

Preparing a proposal, getting supporting data, and a signed letter of support from Council are essential steps in the process of applying for grant funding.

Recreation Services can help you identify suitable grant opportunities.

Decision making principles

A set of guiding principles frames Council's assessment process. These ensure the projects we endorse are feasible, meet planning codes, match demonstrated community need, are equitable, and that funding and whole-of-life costs can be met.

There are 16 guiding principles for decision making, which is a good indication of the scope of issues we consider when assessing a proposal.

Factors that come into play when Council assesses a proposal include the type, cost and benefit of the improvement, community needs and participation rates, environmental factors, and the distribution of existing facilities.

When putting forward a project or idea, taking these factors into consideration will help you make your case.

Review the guiding principles on page 6 to see if your project is a good fit with our criteria.

SECTION 2: How we assess community proposals

Guiding principles for decision making	
<p>Proper planning Improvements are properly scoped, planned and designed by qualified professionals.</p>	<p>Environmentally sustainable Facilities are designed to achieve energy efficiency and minimise water use.</p>
<p>Replacing or improving infrastructure Proposals for replacing, improving or upgrading infrastructure are viewed more favourably where the work helps reduce maintenance or running costs and/or improves functionality.</p>	<p>Financially responsible Prioritising and costing for projects considers 'whole of life costs' (construction, maintenance, replacement and disposal). Community need is balanced with broader responsibilities of Council.</p>
<p>Safety Actions and developments consider the safety of the community as well as the safety of the facility.</p>	<p>Participation and access Projects improve accessibility and opportunities for participation in community, sport and recreation activities.</p>
<p>Partnerships Improvements to community infrastructure are achieved through constructive partnerships with different levels of government and community organisations.</p>	<p>Quality over quantity Council favours delivering a small number of larger projects with better outcomes for user groups, over a large number of smaller projects across the shire.</p>
<p>Demand and growth Planning is based on justifiable demand and allows for growth based on reliable data.</p>	<p>Improve amenity Improvements in facilities seek to enhance presentation and visual amenity.</p>
<p>Optimising infrastructure Facilities and spaces are adaptable to allow for multipurpose use as a priority, and for grouping and sharing amenities (eg. toilets, storage, car parks) to maximise community use and benefit.</p>	<p>Appropriate management There are appropriate management arrangements for community projects and these arrangements are reviewed as part of any future renewal work of facilities and reserves.</p>
<p>Community connectedness Facilities help people to come together and strengthen community life.</p>	<p>Monitoring and review Improvements are regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure optimal use and continued relevance to the community.</p>
<p>Equal opportunity There is equal opportunity for participation by children, youth, seniors, men, women and those with a disability.</p>	<p>Economic development and tourism Facilities that serve local residents, support tourism and economic development are encouraged.</p>

SECTION 3: Preparing your proposal



The five steps to preparing your proposal

This section steps out the process for community groups and individuals to request improvements to recreation or sporting infrastructure. There are five steps to preparing your proposal: the initial proposal, make your case, feasibility and costs, detailed designs, and construction

1. The initial proposal

Complete the online community project proposal form to present a case for consideration.



Before you start, pitch your proposal to Recreation Services. Tell us what it's about, what the outcomes will be and who it will benefit.

Your initial concept should have enough detail so we can see if it is a good fit with existing planning objectives. We will guide you as to how much detail to provide based on the size of your project.

Get buy in from other users to strengthen your proposal. Work with your community group, committee and club members to get clear on the project details.

You'll find the community project proposal form on Council's website along with some useful strategic documents you may like to review. See the boxed section at the end of this document for suggestions.

2. Make your case

Do some analysis and build a case for why your project is needed.



The Recreation Services team will let you know what, if any additional information you need to provide. This may include preparing a written needs analysis to help you build your case.

It should be a clear and honest view of the project that:

- Identifies any gaps
- makes a case for filling them
- identifies ways to do that.

SECTION 3: Preparing your proposal

Two key questions

Q: What is the need?

Q: How will the community benefit?

Your needs analysis should answer these questions and also consider:

- existing infrastructure and usage
- primary users and where they're from
- proximity to similar infrastructure
- trends in demand
- what the proposal will achieve
- whether same outcomes could be achieved for less
- examples of how this type of infrastructure has supported another community
- effects on other community assets and businesses.

It ensures the community doesn't inherit unexpected or long term costs. We look more favourably on projects with a financial management plan that outlines how ongoing operations and maintenance will be funded.

A feasibility study may take into account expected return on investment; operating, maintenance and management costs; and who will manage the asset.

4. Detailed designs

We may ask you to develop more detailed design plans and we will let you know what information to include.



Council will give 'in-principle' support or may recommend amendments based on steps 1-3. Once a project has 'in principle' support, the next step is to develop more detailed design plans.

These need to show the scope of proposed works, alterations to infrastructure and any conflict with existing operations or stakeholders. Depending on the type of project, designs may need:

- dimensions, levels, maximum heights, building materials.
- engineered structural details
- compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act

3. Feasibility and costs

Weight up costs and come up with a plan for financial management



This looks at all aspects of a project, identifies potential problems. It's not just the initial investment that Council needs to consider. All projects carry with them a long term cost. We may ask for a feasibility study to assess if a project is financially viable.

SECTION 3: Preparing your proposal

- provision for amenities and services (eg. toilets, wash bays)
- hydraulic and electrical design
- compliance with relevant legislation and standards
- energy and water efficient design
- assurance that the building is in line with the building classification.

If a Development Application is needed we will let you know. If so, designs will go through the standard approval process and the community will get a chance to comment. The elected Council will have the final determination.

During this step we will put in place formal agreements for long term asset management, building maintenance and any necessary licenses.

Before Step 5 – construction can begin, Council will need to see detailed specifications. This will ensure all stakeholders are clear on the outcomes and will help with seeking quotes or tenders for construction.

Useful documents

There are a number of strategic documents that you may wish to refer to in developing your proposal. These documents are all available for download from Council's website:

www.esc.nsw.gov.au

- Recreation and Open Space Strategy, 2018
- Delivery Program and Operational Plan
- Eurobodalla landscape masterplans

5. Construction

Final checks and construction

The project may go through a tender process, a formal quotation process, or be constructed by Council staff.



This will depend on the estimated final cost. Commissioning a contractor for construction must comply with local government procurement legislation:

- **tender:** full design specification must be documented, the tender advertised, tender assessed and a contract signed by authorised person
- **quotation:** at least three quotes needed for each project component, quotes assessed and agreement signed by authorised person.
- **Council staff:** competitive estimates provided for budgetary purposes and a construction plan agreed.

All works on Council-managed land are subject to regulated controls relating to insurance, occupational health and safety, management systems and relevant codes of compliance.

Council may oversee construction or may permit an appropriately qualified person to project manage the construction.