

Victoria Park, Daylesford Masterplan

Summary report | September 2025



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Otium Planning Group acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander peoples of this nation.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which our company is located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to ancestors and to Elders, past, present and emerging.

Otium is committed to national reconciliation and respect for indigenous peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas, and their rich contribution to society.

Contents

1. The project	1
2. Strategic relationship	3
3. The site	4
4. Who are we planning for?	7
5. Why do we need a Masterplan?	8
6. What did we hear?	10
7. What is proposed?	14



1. The project

The Victoria Park, (the Park) Daylesford Masterplan (Masterplan) has captured the community's and Hepburn Shire Council's aspirations for the site. The Masterplan includes a vision that builds on the site's uniqueness and establishes clear a direction for future use and functionality of the reserve.



A vibrant community park which provides physical, social, economic, and environmental benefits to the Daylesford and wider Hepburn Shire community.

This
Masterplan
has:



Ensured suitable and equitable facilities to the Park's existing user groups and the wider community.



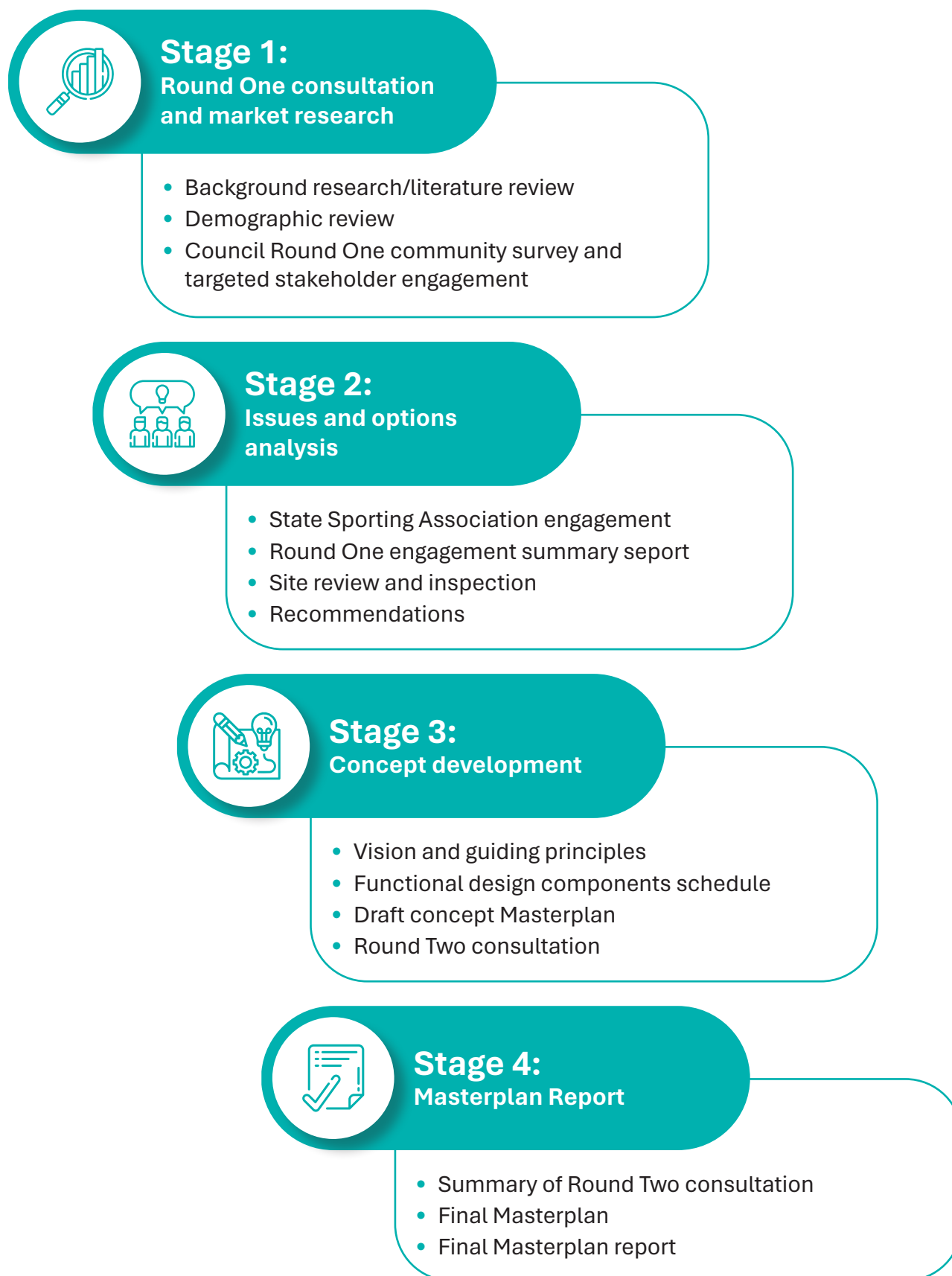
Protected the Park's character while enhancing the site's sporting, social, environmental, and cultural values.



Used evidence-based decision-making to underpin the directions of the Masterplan.

The project has involved the following stages:

Figure 1: Project methodology and planning process



2. Strategic relationship

The Victoria Park Masterplan responds to the Council's strategic focus of:

- Hepburn Life: Community resilience, wellbeing, and inclusion.
- Future Hepburn: Sustainable growth, infrastructure, and preservation of local character.

Council's other strategies, including Activate 2020-2030 Regional Plan, Recreation and Open Space, Active Women and Girls and the Play Space Strategy, support the planned improvements of the Park.

The diagram below shows the strategic relationships with the Masterplan.

Figure 2: Strategic connections to Victoria Park Masterplan



3. The site

Victoria Park, located at 3011 Ballan-Daylesford Road, Daylesford, is the main recreation reserve in Daylesford and features the following facilities:

- Soccer fields and pavilion
- Australian Rules and cricket sports oval
- Netball court and change facilities
- Multipurpose community pavilion
- The Big Rainbow monument
- Table tennis shed
- Men's Shed
- Agricultural show buildings
- Open green space areas
- Leased caravan park

Victoria Park also plays a lead role in the events scene, hosting the following yearly events in addition to one-off events:

- The Daylesford Show
- ChillOut Festival
- Sustainability Expo
- Daylesford Motorfest
- Daylesford Highland Gathering



Figure 3: Location of Victoria Park, Daylesford



A previous Masterplan for the Park was finalised in 2015. While some components of this plan have been implemented, others are no longer considered priorities.



The completed works from the 2015 Masterplan include:

- Australian Rules football oval and netball court lighting upgrades
- New community pavilion
- Formalised car parking outside the new community pavilion



Works that were identified in the 2015 Masterplan but have not been completed include:

- New ticket box
- Path/link between the Australian Rules football oval and soccer field
- Upgrade to soccer changerooms
- Entry point



4. Who are we planning for?



Hepburn Shire has an ageing population with a median age of **52 years,** and over 28% of the residents are aged 65 plus.



This indicates a need for **accessible, age-friendly spaces** that encourage social engagement.



A significant percentage of the population (27.8%) are in the age range of **20-49 years.**



This drives the need for **sports fields and facilities of a good standard** that support junior and girl's participation.



Health challenges like high rates of **anxiety/depression (37.6%) and obesity (45.9%)** reinforce the need for **accessible active recreation spaces** to support mental and physical wellbeing.



Higher-than-average LGBTIQ+ and disability populations within the Shire call for safe, inclusive, and adaptable sport and recreation infrastructure.

5. Why do we need a Masterplan?

The project identified the following key challenges and opportunities:

Victoria Park has renewed or planned improvements to organised sports assets to support the recent increase in participation

Council has delivered major projects at Victoria Park, including the football/netball pavilion and lighting for the Australian Rules football oval and netball court.

Funding has been received for the installation of lighting for the soccer field, with these works proposed to be completed in 2026. Partial funding for the soccer pitch re-alignment has also been received which will allow for two senior pitches within the lighting footprint. In addition to these projects, there is an opportunity to build a new pavilion for the soccer club that meets contemporary requirements for the sport.

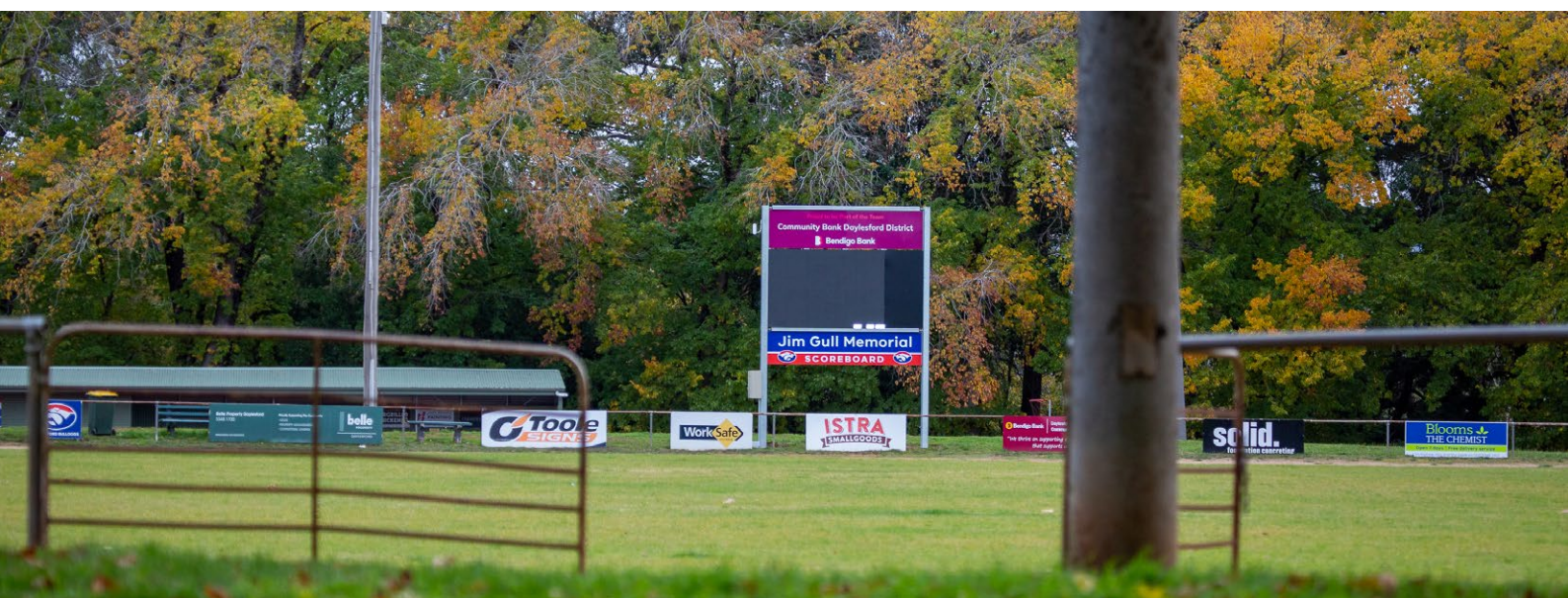
Another opportunity also exists to provide an additional netball court to support an increase in participation in the sport.

Victoria Park should maximise intergenerational social recreational play opportunities and provide accessible and safe infrastructure and amenities

There is an opportunity to welcome community and encourage greater social recreation and play activities in Victoria Park. This includes provision of a regional play space that can encourage intergenerational social recreation. Council has partnered with Traditional Owners, Djaara to produce a high-level guiding brief for the future design of the play space. The guiding brief is a standalone document to this masterplan report.

Dog walking and dog socialisation is a popular activity at Victoria Park. Creation of a dog off-lead area (DOLA) within the Park will serve a dual purpose. A DOLA will allow a future play space and the existing formal sports fields to be utilised safely and for dog owners to allow off-lead socialisation of their dogs in a compliant manner.

A lack of accessible toilets proves an opportunity to provide these amenities to support the current and increased use of the Park, with a Changing Places facility included to complement the provision of a new play space. Additionally, improved pathway networks will improve connections throughout the Park, especially the integration of new infrastructure.



Playing a lead role in the events scene for Daylesford, Victoria Park's future needs to consider and maintain the social, environmental, and economic benefits the Park brings to the township

A number of events are hosted annually within the Park; therefore, consideration must be taken when introducing additional infrastructure to ensure this does not have a detrimental effect on the ability to host events in the future.

Opportunities to provide safer and more accessible events should be considered, including accessible toilet amenities, a public address system, temperature control in buildings, and the relocation of animal rails or the provision of temporary rails for events.

The Park has a collection of significant trees, some of which are listed by the National Trust, and of varied state of health and decline. Any proposed developments or construction in the Park that may impact tree health must be assessed. This includes the construction of assets, events, sporting activities, and internal sports field maintenance.

The entry/exit to Victoria Park requires further investigation

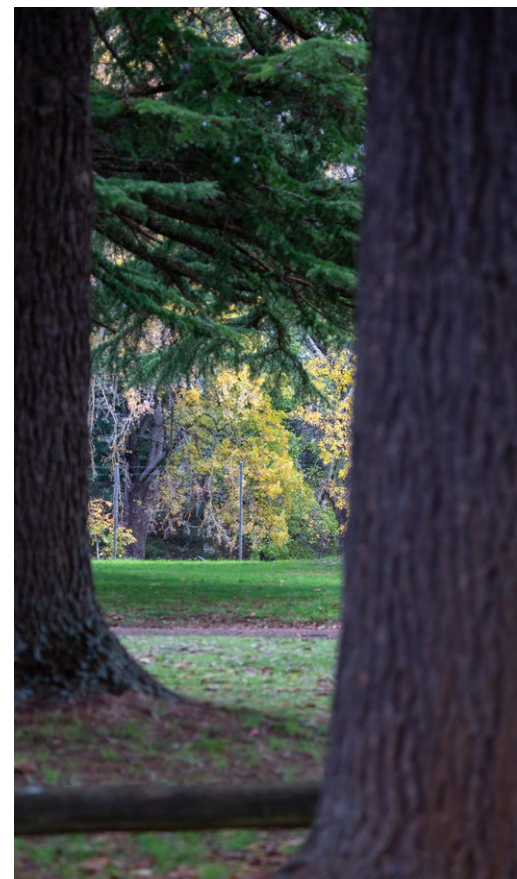
The current location of the Park's entry/exit is a safety concern, as it is very closely located to the intersection of Ballan-Daylesford Road and Bural Street. In addition to the site entry, the gate only allows single access in/out of the Park, which creates a bottleneck at this intersection, another safety concern.

A full traffic engineering investigation and solution for the entry/exit from the Park will improve safety and connection.

Some of the supporting sporting and event infrastructure is considered ageing, and rationalisation may be necessary in the future

There is an opportunity to investigate the long-term viability of the Daylesford & District Agricultural Society infrastructure throughout the Park and whether the locations of the infrastructure are best for the Park's overall use. As some of the infrastructure is ageing, it may be advantageous that, instead of renewing when the time comes, some permanent structures may be replaced with temporary structures during an event.

In addition, some of the supporting infrastructure for the sports (for example, the spectator seating surrounding the Australian Rules football oval) will require renewal. However, this should be treated as a general renewal project from Council.



6. What did we hear?

Round One consultation was conducted by Council between 16 June and 4 July 2025 to:



Gather initial needs/wants data to inform the development of a draft Masterplan.



Invite established user groups of Victoria Park to attend a drop-in session to provide input.



Invite informal users of the reserve and the broader community to complete an online or hard copy survey.

The **key findings** from the community survey were:



The survey had a higher female participation rate (60.9%), and most respondents were aged between 50–59 years, with strong representation from Daylesford and surrounding areas.



Park visitation is frequent, with over half of respondents visiting at least three times a week, indicating high community engagement.



Respondents value the Park for sports, inclusive recreation, dog walking, community events, and its natural beauty.



While infrastructure like the pavilion and sports grounds are praised, upgrades are needed for netball facilities, toilets, roads, parking, and signage.



Missing features include a second netball court, fenced dog park, playground and shaded seating area.



Top priorities are improved netball facilities, a safe off-leash dog park, and upgraded public toilets, all while preserving the Park's heritage and natural environment.

Key external stakeholders of the Park were consulted. Those being:

- Daylesford and Hepburn United Soccer Club
- Daylesford & District Agricultural Society
- Daylesford Highland Gathering Committee
- Daylesford Table Tennis Club
- The Men's Shed
- ChillOut Festival
- Daylesford Football Netball Club
- Rotary

Additionally, DJANDAK and Daylesford Bowling Club were spoken to during Round One as well as State Sporting Associations with interest in the Park (AFL Victoria, Netball Victoria, Football Victoria and Bowls Victoria).

Council's internal departments were also consulted to inform the development of the draft Masterplan.

Round Two consultation was held to gather feedback on the two draft Masterplan options. The community was engaged via the following methods:



Online community
survey



Drop-in sessions on 19,
20 and 21 August 2025



Internal Council
workshops

The preferred (option 1) and alternative (option 2) Masterplan options were available for the community to review and provide feedback on.

The following points summarise the **key findings** from the Round Two consultation process.

Community survey respondent profile

43 people completed the survey, with most identifying as women (60.4%) and concentrated in the 40 to 49 years age range. A majority (72%) lived in Daylesford and surrounding townships, with strong representation from parents/guardians and members of the LGBTIQ+ community.



43 people



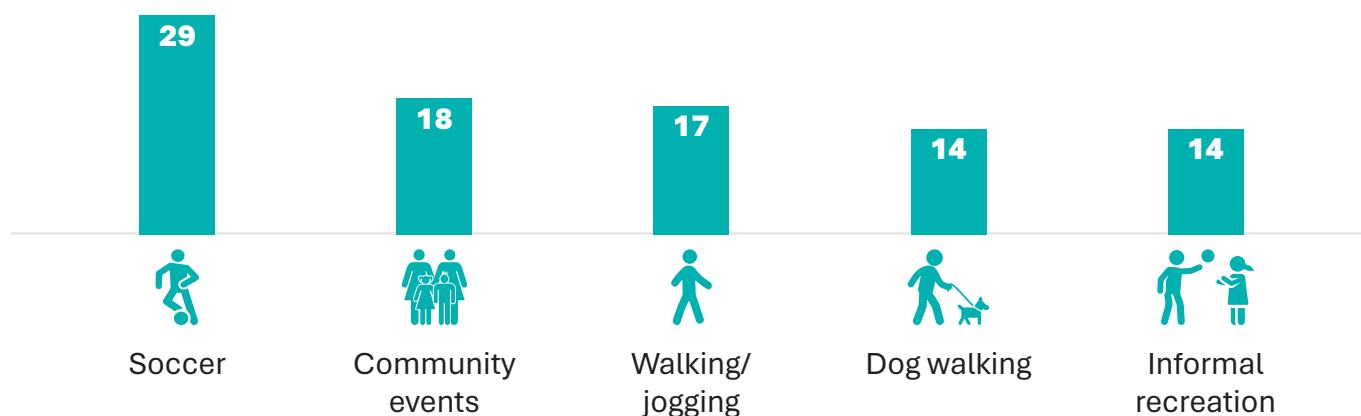
**60.4%
women**



**72% lived in
Daylesford**

Park usage

Soccer was the dominant activity (29 respondents), followed by community events (18), walking/jogging (17), dog walking (14), and informal recreation (14), confirming the Park's importance as both a sporting and community hub.



Masterplan alignment

Most respondents (80.9%) supported the vision and goals of the draft Masterplan, with 73.8% preferring option 1, which prioritised two full-sized soccer pitches, an additional netball court, a regional play space, and improved parking/traffic flow.



80.9%

supported the draft Masterplan



73.8%

prefer option 1



Soccer facilities

There was **strong support for soccer upgrades**, including new pitches, changerooms, and improved pavilions, reflecting the club's rapid growth, safety concerns, and demand for better scheduling.



Other facilities and spaces

The proposed regional play space, dog off-lead area, additional netball court, and expanded social rooms were broadly supported. However, many respondents emphasised the importance of ensuring that the placement of these new facilities does not compromise the park's existing functions—particularly its role in hosting sports, community events, and preserving open green space.



Event and community use

Stakeholders from the Daylesford Highland Gathering Committee and Daylesford & District Agricultural Society emphasised the need to **protect event spaces, infrastructure, and access** (e.g., sheds, roadways, power supply, parking). Concerns were raised about new paths, fencing, and car parks limiting event functionality.



Broader priorities

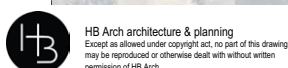
Feedback highlighted the need for **safe traffic management, upgraded toilets and amenities, disability access, tree succession planning, storage, shaded seating, and safer walking surfaces**. The placement of the off-leash dog area and proposed bowling green remained contested.



Club and community input

The soccer club strongly **favoured option 1** with fenced senior pitches; community members called for improvements in accessibility, event support infrastructure, and PA/audio systems for the Park.

A masterplan has been developed for Victoria Park, based on feedback received during the consultation periods of the project and aligning to the vision for the Park.



A preliminary cost plan has been prepared by Quantity Surveyors Turner and Townsend to help inform Hepburn Shire Council's long term financial planning. Detailed design and cost plans are recommended to confirm the project costs of recommendations at the time of delivery.

Table 13: Indicative Cost Plan

Plan Reference	Description	Indicative Cost 2025
1, 2, 2b	Soccer pavilion	\$7,952,672
4, 4a, 4b, 5, 6, 11	Netball and table tennis precinct	\$1,189,372
10, 21, General Precinct items	Event-related infrastructure	\$300,897
3, 7	Play space	\$1,274,604
9	DOLA	\$113,769
12, 14, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19,	Pedestrian and Vehicle Movement	\$1,763,392
	TOTAL	\$12,594,705



Hepburn
SHIRE COUNCIL