

ACT Community, Recreation and Sports Facilities Needs Assessment and Social Infrastructure Audit: Final Report

City and Environment Directorate (CED)

December | 2025



Independent
insight.



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Key terms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT districts	Refers to the urban districts defined spatially and used in the ACT's planning – generally corresponding with the ABS's SA3 level geography
CALD	Cultural and Linguistic Diversity
CED	City and Environment Directorate, formerly the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD)
CSTM	Canberra Strategic Transport Model, administered by CED, formerly Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS)
EOI	Expression of Interest
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas defined by the ABS

Executive summary

Study context

This study is part of the City and Environment Directorate's (CED, formerly the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD)) strategic planning functions and implementation of the objectives and actions outlined in the ACT's District Strategies and the associated Indicative Implementation Plan.

SGS Economics and Planning has undertaken a Community, Recreation, and Sports Facilities Needs Assessment and Social Infrastructure Audit for the ACT (the study), which provides the ACT Government with the appropriate data to allow for a better understanding of:

- Current and forecast population of areas across the ACT¹
- Community infrastructure provision ratios, in consultation with ACT Directorates and Agencies
- Forecast community infrastructure needs
- Recommendations to meet future community, service, and infrastructure needs.

The study area for this report included all ACT districts, except the Molonglo Valley district, Canberra East, and Uriarra-Namadgi.

The study establishes an evidence base and the starting point for further, more detail analysis to inform the delivery of appropriate infrastructure to support the needs of current and future communities.

Methodology

The study included a range of community, recreation, and sporting infrastructure. The categories of education, emergency services, health and specialist social services, and services for older people were excluded from the needs assessment component, as these are planned for specifically by different parts of ACT Government. ACT Directorates were engaged throughout the project to understand the existing supply of infrastructure and identify infrastructure benchmarks to be applied for the relevant facility types across the study – noting that the benchmarks applied are indicative only as the first step for understanding future needs, to be supplemented by further analysis, such as asset quality analysis, participation trends, and, most importantly, community consultation.

The study included a quantitative and qualitative assessment of need. This involved reviewing current ACT strategic directions, forecast population trends, best practice community infrastructure principles, and spatial accessibility.

The initial findings of the assessment were further tested with the ACT directorates, before being finalised.

¹ Note: this study was undertaken prior to the 2025 release of the ACT Treasury population projections.

Recommendations

The study has resulted in a range of recommendations. At a whole of study area, the following infrastructure will be required:

- **General community spaces** – neighbourhood centres and meeting rooms (though there could be an oversupply in the interim as there are meeting rooms that are not captured in the data currently)
- **Specific community spaces** – youth and seniors-specific spaces
- **Cultural facilities** – arts facilities and libraries
- **Sports facilities and active recreation** – multi-purpose indoor court facilities, outdoor courts, and skate/ BMX facilities
- **Open space, passive and informal recreation** – subdistrict playgrounds.

These needs differ across each of the districts. The study provides detailed recommendations per district along with high level facility size guidelines and site considerations.

Implementation and next steps

Implementation to address the findings of the study will require additional detailed planning and co-ordination across ACT Government. It is recommended that the following is actioned:

- Review benchmarks for indoor courts, netball and basketball courts, and BMX/ skate facilities to ensure these align with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
- Integrate the findings of the Molonglo Valley Community Needs Assessment into the findings of this assessment and identify any potential overlap.
- Establish a CED cross-directorate steering committee to coordinate the provision of facilities, including:
 - Enhancement of existing process within government for the identification of community needs and allocation of sites for those uses in land release/ development processes, to ensure that needs are understood up front and are integrated in planning effectively.
 - Collaboration with other Directorates/Agencies on the findings of this report as a starting point, to align the findings from upcoming studies (e.g. assessments being done by ACT Property Group, ACT Health, artsACT), including where there may be opportunities for co-location and the utilisation of currently underutilised land, and/ or better utilisation of existing assets. This is particularly the case for sports grounds/ fields, where some facilities could increase the quality and carrying capacity of fields. This could include interventions such as lighting, surface improvements, improved drainage, and integration of multiple sports on the one field.
 - Continued collaboration between relevant stakeholders in the design of both schools and sports and recreation facilities, with processes in place to ensure that these facilities can complement each other and provide for more efficient use of land through co-location (noting that some facilities with sensitive uses and/ or servicing vulnerable groups may may not be appropriate for co-location).
 - Continue to improve community infrastructure data, including asset data and utilisation data.

- Investigate whether there is the opportunity for the permitted uses for open space and non-urban zones in the Territory Plan to be expanded or made more flexible.
- Undertake a prioritisation process to identify infrastructure to be delivered within the next 5, 10, and 15 years, to include:
 - Identifying relevant sites (land and or integration opportunities within existing infrastructure) for the new services and infrastructure to be located (based on the above prioritisation process).
 - Community engagement and co-design to understand specific services and delivery models for new community infrastructure.
- Investigate potential federal government funding opportunities to overcome funding barriers.
- Review the findings of the ACT needs assessment at a minimum of every four years, including the Molonglo district and other districts as appropriate.

1. Introduction

This section provides background and context to the preparation of this report along with the scope and key focus areas.

1.1 Purpose and structure of this report

Purpose of this report

This report documents the Community, Recreation, and Sports Facilities Needs Assessment and Social Infrastructure Audit for the ACT (the study), prepared by SGS Economics and Planning for the City and Environment Directorate (CED, formerly the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD)).

The study provides the ACT Government with the appropriate data to allow for a better understanding of:

- Current and forecast population of areas across the ACT
- Community infrastructure provision ratios, as endorsed by ACT Directorates and Agencies
- Forecast community infrastructure needs
- Recommendations to meet future community, services, and infrastructure needs.

The study is part of CED's broader strategic planning functions and is part of the implementation of the objectives and actions outlined in the District Strategies and the associated Indicative Implementation Plan - in particular implementation and action 10.1:

Undertake a broad assessment of community, sport and recreation facilities needs across the ACT to help fill the gaps identified in the district strategies.

The study will be used to inform the future strategic planning and the delivery of appropriate infrastructure to support the needs of current and future communities and is focused on:

- An updated audit of existing, committed, and proposed facilities
- Socioeconomic demographic profiles of the future population
- Stakeholder engagement (with ACT Government Directorates)
- A demand and gap analysis of community, sport, and recreation facilities
- Identification of future community facility land area and gross floor area requirements.

The study also recommends where further detailed investigation should be undertaken.

1.2 Background and context

The key aim of planning for community, recreation, and sports facilities and social infrastructure was to make sure that:

- All areas, including growth areas are sufficiently supplied with community infrastructure
- Community infrastructure is distributed as equitably as possible
- Community infrastructure is effectively and efficiently configured so that service providers can respond to changing local community needs flexibly over a long time period
- Data and benchmarks underpin community infrastructure provision and associated recommendations.

ACT District Strategies

The ACT's nine District Strategies were finalised in 2023. These Strategies, a new element of the ACT's planning system, form key inputs into a range of areas including, guiding how Canberra will change and grow in the coming decades and where growth may occur in future.

The District Strategies include a number of directions and actions related to community infrastructure, at both the wider ACT level and district-specific level, with key objectives including:

- Aligning community infrastructure with planned growth in infill areas
- Co-locating community facilities for efficiency and accessibility
- Providing community facilities as new communities are developed in greenfield areas.²

Recent policy context and trends

The importance of community infrastructure was among the priorities identified in the Minister for Planning's Statement of Planning Priorities 2024-25.³ Specifically, under the priority to *Support community needs across the ACT*, includes directions to:

- Undertake community needs assessments to inform planning to meet the needs of the community
- Release community facility sites, which will provide the opportunity for centres for community activity and religious worship.

Similar objectives are also identified in the subsequent Statement of Planning Priorities 2025-2028.⁴

This comes at a time when there are a range of trends and factors influencing both the demand and supply of community, sports and recreation infrastructure. The ACT is growing quickly, and

² ACT Government, 2023, 'District Strategies 2023 Volume One Metropolitan Context and Big Drivers,' https://www.planning.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2324682/district-strategies-2023-volume-1-metropolitan-context-and-big-drivers.pdf

³ ACT Government, 2024, 'Statement of Planning Priorities 2024-25,' https://www.planning.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/2457028/minister-statement-of-planning-priorities-2024.pdf

⁴ ACT Government, 2025, 'Statement of Planning Priorities 2025-2028,' https://www.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2969928/statement-of-planning-priorities-2025-2028.pdf

communities need community infrastructure to accompany this growth. This makes it important to understand what, where, and when this infrastructure is needed.

Building on previous policy investigations

In undertaking the analysis for the study, SGS has built on the preceding studies concerning community infrastructure provision that have been undertaken in the ACT in recent years, updating the relevant data and approaches to reflect the current context. This includes district assessments previously undertaken for the Gungahlin, Belconnen and Woden districts, and the ACT Social Infrastructure Study completed in 2019. This assessment is the first in recent times to be undertaken at an ACT-wide level and is intended to provide a guide for other community needs assessments in future.

Land releases for community facilities

In August 2024, the ACT Government announced the release of over 23,000 square metres of land for community facilities across the ACT, intended to be delivered via an Expression of Interest (EOI) process.⁵ The initial six blocks identified for this process are located in:

- Gungahlin, 4,075m² for a Community Activity Centre or Religious Associated Use
- Chisholm, 12,284m² for a Place of Worship, Community Activity Centre, Indoor Recreation Centre or Outdoor Activity Centre
- Evatt, 1,872m² for a Place of Worship or Community Activity Centre
- Kambah, 1,523m² for Community Activity Centre
- Gowrie, 1,692m² for a Place of Worship, Community Activity Centre or Residential Aged Care
- Molonglo Town Centre, a site between 2,000m² and 4,000m² for a Place of Worship.

A seventh block is also noted for the future Molonglo 3 suburb.

Through the EOI process potential providers will be required to demonstrate community demand for a particular facility type identified for the relevant block, and how the community will benefit from this. Further Territory land is expected to be released for community use in future years, via the Housing Supply Land Release Program.

Study area

The study area for this report consists of the following ACT districts (highlighted in Figure 1 below):

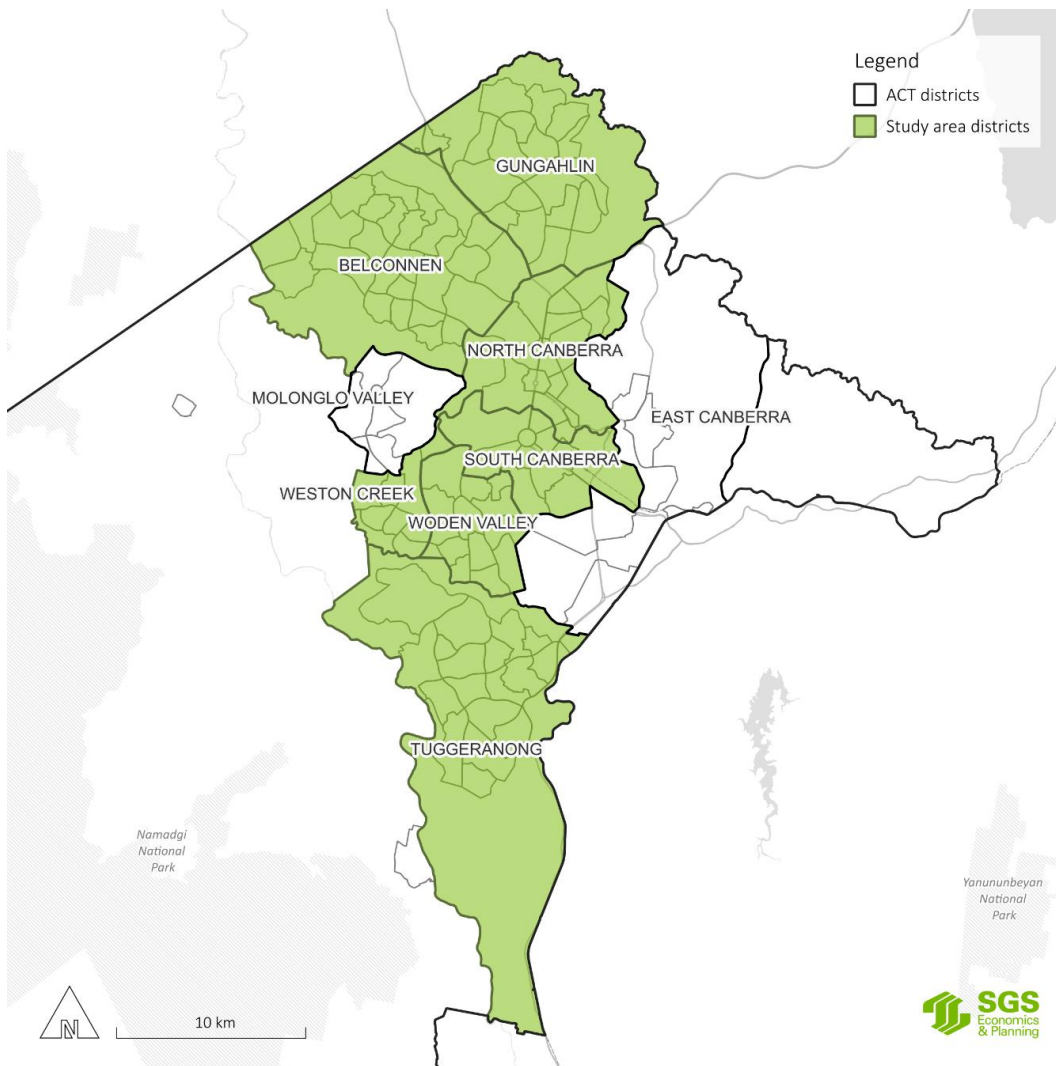
- Belconnen
- Gungahlin
- Inner North and City (North Canberra)
- Inner South (South Canberra)

⁵ https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/chris-steel-mla-media-releases/2024/releasing-more-land-to-support-community-diversity

- Woden
- Tuggeranong, and
- Weston Creek.

The Molonglo Valley district has not been considered in this analysis as a community needs assessment for that area has been completed separately. The ACT’s remaining districts – Canberra East and Uriarra-Namadgi – have not been considered as these districts have a very small population and have not been identified for any significant future development and/or population growth.

Figure 1: Study area – ACT districts included in analysis



Source: SGS, 2024.

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 defines and identifies key principles that should be considered in planning for community infrastructure.
- Section 3 outlines the methodology for undertaking the study and needs assessment.

- Section 4 considers the current and projected population of the study area, and demographic characteristics which may affect the future demand for different types of facilities.
- Section 5 summarises the outcomes from engagement with ACT Government stakeholders.
- Section 6 summarises the needs assessment for the study area overall, to give a picture of the collective need for facilities being considered.
- Section 7 details the needs assessment applied to each of the districts.
- Section 8 provides a summary of the recommendations from the summary.

This report is also supported by a detailed demographic analysis report and stakeholder engagement report, which are provided as appendices.

2. Community infrastructure

This section defines and identifies key trends that should be considered in planning for community infrastructure.

Community infrastructure refers to the places and programs through which people socialise, learn, recreate, create, and celebrate culture. It is the sum of ‘hard’ infrastructure (buildings) and ‘soft’ infrastructure (support services and programs).

Community infrastructure can be owned and managed by government, not for profit providers, and private providers.

The development of hard community infrastructure can be in place for 50 years or more. Given this it is important that new infrastructure is able to respond to changing community needs and trends. In addition, there have been key challenges on service and infrastructure providers such as funding constraints, that is impacting on how infrastructure and services are delivered.

Key trends to consider in the planning and delivery of community services and infrastructure are outlined below. SGS have collated these trends based on our knowledge and understanding of community infrastructure and sports infrastructure provision across Australia, including in the ACT.

Table 1: Trends impacting on community and sports infrastructure provision

<p>Moving away from stand-alone facilities towards integration</p>	<p>Traditional stand-alone facilities for the exclusive use of specific community or socio-demographic groups do not offer the same cost-effectiveness or range of benefits as an integrated community hub or co-location of infrastructure. Stand-alone infrastructure can result in limited and exclusive use, increased maintenance costs due to increased numbers of assets, inability to adapt with community needs, and limited opportunities for sharing ideas, resources, social interactions or referrals between service providers. Limited land availability in most cities is also a significant constraint for stand-alone provision.</p> <p>Instead, practice has shifted toward the provision of integrated facilities. Examples of this include community hubs that might be based around a community centre, where complimentary services such as libraries, community arts, youth and seniors programming, and bookable meeting rooms may share circulation spaces and core amenities like parking and toilets. Integration can also occur with school infrastructure, including integrated early learning centres and spaces and facilities designed to be accessed by the wider community after school hours.</p>
<p>Preferences for co-location with suitable uses</p>	<p>In a similar vein, co-location involves several facilities being located within the same area. These generally include community centres/hubs, schools, recreation facilities, open spaces, and retail centres. Co-location can improve access by enabling multi-purpose trips providing better community visibility to the range of assets and services available.</p> <p>Co-located community infrastructure typically enables different age cohorts and demographic make-ups to participate in a space simultaneously. This can improve passive surveillance and encourage more community interaction and social</p>

	<p>connection through passive exposure to other community groups and community members.</p> <p>It should be noted however, to support the co-location of some types of uses infrastructure design can be important. This can include things such as different entrance points for health services, ample storage space, sound proofing between rooms to enable noisy activities, and technology to support alternative hours of access. Working with service providers during the detailed design of infrastructure will ensure the building is fit for purpose for all users.</p>
<p>Changes in how people participate in sport and recreation</p>	<p>How communities engage with sports and physical activity has changed over time. Regular participation overall has consistently increased over recent decades, with the ACT having the highest participation rate across all states – increasing from 83.4 per cent of people participating (in 2001) to 92.8 per cent in 2023.⁶ Increases in female sports participation is also impacting on the demand for sports and recreation facilities.</p> <p>However, the types of physical activities that people are engaging in continue to change. This period has seen a significant increase in non-structured recreation activities, including bushwalking, gym/fitness activities (including yoga), and dancing, while participation in sport-related activities has remained stable.</p> <p>This means there is a need to provide facilities and spaces for the community that can accommodate specific sports, but also spaces that can accommodate more casual and passive forms of physical activity and participation.</p> <p>In addition, the impacts of climate change will continue to change how people engage with sports and other activities. This includes increased hot days and rain events disrupting play, increased impact on assets due to climate events, and community members seeking an increase in indoor activities. In addition, facilities will also be more relied upon as ‘third spaces’ and potentially places of refuge.</p>
<p>Increasing cost for infrastructure</p>	<p>Financial constraints can be one of the largest barriers to community and recreation infrastructure delivery. In an inflationary economic environment where government budgets are tight, this becomes even more difficult. This also extends beyond the capital costs associated with providing new infrastructure, to the ongoing maintenance, management, and programming of facilities over time.</p> <p>Partnerships and co-location of uses offers potential ways to ease some of the financial burden for government-provided facilities – for example, having a mix of tenancies with market operators able to offset subsidised rents of Not for Profit and Community Service Providers can improve the financial viability of service providers and ensure their longevity in community hubs. Co-location of publicly available facilities with school campuses also provides the potential for improved cost (and land) efficiencies.</p>
<p>Increased need for flexibility</p>	<p>With continuing changes in demand, how people use community facilities, and the constraints identified above, there is an increasing need for facilities to be flexible and allow for greater adaptability. One way to achieve this is by creating a range of adaptable spaces through using moveable and retractable partition walls. Flexibility is also about having unprogrammed spaces (also referred to as ‘bumping spaces’)</p>

⁶ Australian Sports Commission 2022 *Participation trends in Australia*

	<p>for informal activities and socialising. Opening spaces up to outdoor zones can also provide expanded opportunities.</p> <p>To future proof facilities, engagement with services and user groups is critical. This avoids the delivery of spaces that are not fit for purpose, for example, in general community spaces, including things like sprung floors to allow for dance classes, and wet zones that can support art activities.</p> <p>Furthermore, all spaces should be inclusive of all ages, genders and abilities. This can be achieved through the application of universal design⁷ and disability access standards.</p>
<p>Rapid technological change</p>	<p>Rapid technological changes mean it can be hard for many, particularly those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage or the elderly, to keep up with the latest advances. The COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the importance of digital infrastructure, with many relying on quality internet and conferencing equipment for their work, daily tasks, and socialising.</p> <p>Increasingly, community facilities such as community centres and libraries are having an online presence and are delivering online services, as well as providing access to technology resources. This shift has re-emphasised the importance of tech-enabled spaces to be delivered, particularly at multipurpose facilities.</p> <p>In addition to this, technology is being used to monitor asset usage to inform service costs and maintenance and support better booking platforms to enable accurate asset management, renewal and asset recycling.</p>

Source: SGS Economics and Planning, 2024.

⁷ Universal design refers to, as per the *ACT Disability Strategy 2024-2033*: “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without need for adaption or specialised design. Universal design supports the inclusion of people with disability across all aspects of life, including but not limited to housing and the built environment, information and communications technology, transportation, recreation (e.g. arts and culture, sports), travel and tourism.”
https://www.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/2431811/ACT-Disability-Strategy-and-First-Action-Plan.pdf

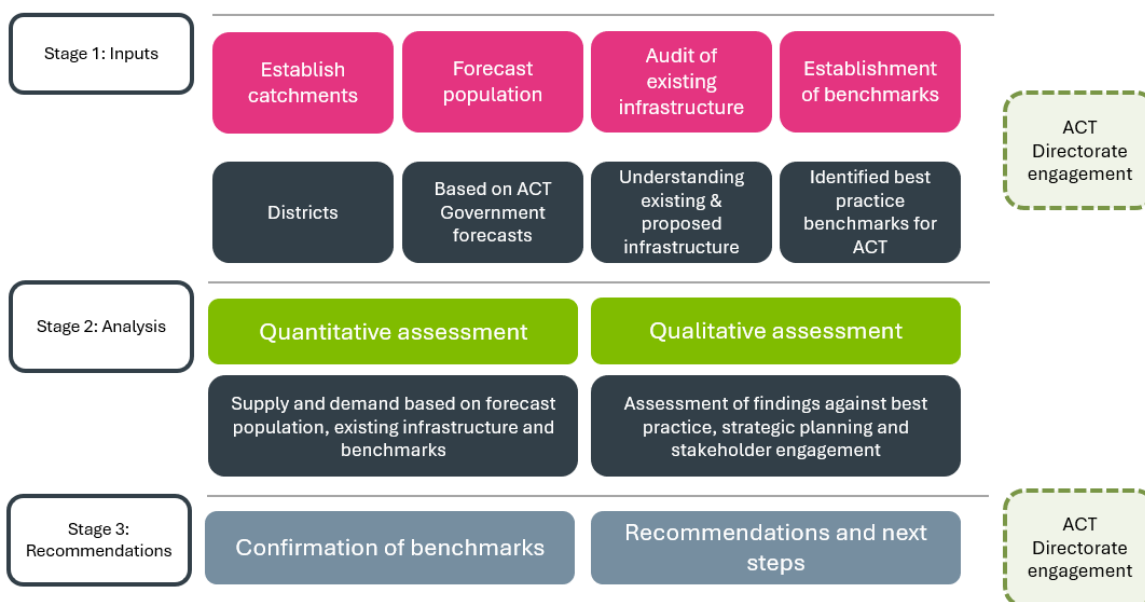
3. Methodology overview

This section outlines the methodology for undertaking the study and needs assessment. Each of these inputs and the analysis is further discussed in the specific sections within this report.

3.1 Needs assessment methodology

The community, recreation and sports facility needs assessment has been undertaken in three stages, as shown in Figure 2, with the findings from each stage included in this report.

Figure 2: Needs assessment methodology



Source: SGS Economics and Planning, 2025.

The tasks indicated in **Stage 1** included establishing the study area, understanding the ACT’s demographics and projected future population,⁸ documenting the existing provision of infrastructure, and identifying appropriate benchmarks.

The analysis in **Stage 2** included both quantitative and qualitative assessment of the potential future demand for community, recreation and sports facilities for the study area – through applying benchmarks to understand the future supply and demand, spatial auditing to understand geographical distributions and gaps, consideration of best practice, and consultation with Directorates and Agencies within ACT Government.

⁸ Provided to SGS from the Canberra Strategic Transport Model (CSTM) – see Section 4 below.

The results from the preceding stages were then used to distil recommendations for the study, at a general and district-based level (**Stage 3**).

3.2 Community infrastructure included in the assessment

How social, community, sports, and recreation infrastructure is defined often varies in different contexts. For the purposes of this study and in discussion with CED, community infrastructure types have been identified and considered in two ways:

- **Audit:** All community infrastructure listed has been included in the asset audit for the purposes of documenting the location of facilities across the study area.
- **Needs Assessment:** Where there are available established benchmarks this community infrastructure has been included in the needs assessment. This **excludes** the categories of education, emergency services, health and specialist social services, and services for older people (as these are planned for specifically by different parts of ACT Government). Religious facilities are also excluded as these do not have associated benchmarks.

The facility types that are included in the needs assessment are detailed in the benchmarks Table 2 below. Where relevant, the other facility types that are captured in the audit but excluded from the needs assessment have been considered qualitatively in forming the recommendations.

Facility hierarchies

The needs assessment refers to different hierarchies, which reflect catchments that each of the facility types will typically service. For the purpose of this study, these are defined as follows:

- District – generally aligns to the ACT’s district boundaries however this will vary depending on population catchment within the district boundary.
- Subdistrict – generally an area of 4-5 suburbs i.e. there will be multiple of these within a district.
- Local – facilities generally service 1-2 suburbs.

3.3 Establishment of benchmarks

Population based benchmarks are used to provide an initial gap analysis of community services and infrastructure demand. Analysis then couples this demand with best practice community infrastructure principles, insights from engagement, and an understanding of the socio-demographic context in the wider district to make recommendations on the future need for community infrastructure by asset type.

The ACT does not have adopted infrastructure service benchmarks. Given this, benchmarks adopted for this assessment were based on the most up to date and relevant benchmarks that are applicable for the ACT. They were drawn from industry benchmarks and further discussed and agreed with CED to reflect best practice as well as being contextually suitable for the ACT and informed by engagement with ACT Government Directorates where appropriate.

Benchmarks were applied to projected populations in ten-year horizons to 2051 to determine likely demand gaps across each district across different time horizons as an indication of likely staging and priority requirements.

It is important to note that while population-based benchmarks are often used for community and recreation needs assessments some considerations should be noted:

- **Benchmarks are intended to be indicative only.** They provide a starting point for assessing the likely need for facilities, as there are many factors and trends which also impact on the supply and demand of different facilities both now and into the future. In the ACT, different Directorates have their own methods of planning for future demand and the delivery of new facilities which are based on more detailed information beyond the application of benchmarks.
- **Population projections are uncertain and subject to change.** All population projections have inherent uncertainty due to the difficulty of forecasting how the population will change in response to unforeseen events and trends in future.
- **Benchmarks have been typically based on the number of facilities rather than gross floor area.** The assessment has been based on the number of facilities that may be required, with an indication of the size and scale of the asset reflected in its hierarchy along with the typical floorspace requirements.
- This approach notes the total number of services and allows the size to be able to adapt depending on how the services are being delivered. For example, an integrated service requires less floor area than a standalone service. Using gross floor area instead of a population benchmark can also result in extremely large facilities that are not practical or needed.
- **Benchmarks to be supported by broader analysis.** Benchmarks are a starting point for analysis. Findings from the benchmark analysis are used alongside accessibility analysis, asset data, stakeholder feedback, and broader market, policy and best practice trends.

Table 2: Adopted benchmarks

Facility type	Definition	Hierarchy	Provision standard	Size requirements	Rationale / Context
General community spaces/centres					
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Small halls available for multi-purpose uses e.g. scout halls, Griffith Hall scale; unstaffed. These facilities would no longer be provided, rather replaced with flexible larger community centres.	Local	1 centre per 9,000 residents	1,000-1,500sqm	These benchmarks are in alignment with what has been used in previous ACT studies. They are also in alignment with the original source, Australia Social Recreation Research, Planning for Community Infrastructure in Growth Areas 2008.
Community centre	Larger centre with several multi-purpose spaces and/or co-location of other uses such as spaces for young people, older people, local art programs, library services or health focussed services. Facility bookings should be accessible and affordable to a wide range of people and be available during business and after hours, including a concierge available during business hours to assist in room bookings, coordinate a program of activities, and provide information on local services.	District	1 centre per 45,000 residents	1,500-2,000sqm	
Meeting rooms	Bookable spaces for general community and service use. They provide flexible spaces for meetings, programs (e.g. seniors groups, playgroups) activities (e.g. art, play, education) and events (e.g. civic events, birthdays, celebrations).	1-20 ppl	Local	1 room per 4,000 residents	In previous ACT studies the meeting rooms benchmark used did not consider the various sizes of meeting rooms required. The inclusion of this benchmark provides greater clarity on what types and size of spaces should be included in community centres and other community infrastructure. These benchmarks are in alignment with industry standards and applied across urban areas. They were originally developed by Australia Social Recreation Research, Planning for Community Infrastructure in Growth Areas 2008
		21-50 ppl	Subdistrict	1 room per 8,000 residents	
		51-100 ppl	Subdistrict	1 room per 8,000 residents	
		101-200 ppl	Subdistrict	1 room per 8,000 residents	

Facility type	Definition	Hierarchy	Provision standard	Size requirements	Rationale / Context
	200+ ppl	District	1 room per 20,000 residents	150-200sqm+	
Specific community spaces					
Youth centre	Flexible space for young people to access and activities/age-specific programs to be delivered from. This space would be integrated into either community centre, library or similar.	District	1 facility per 45,000 residents	Various – integrated into community centre or library spaces	This benchmark is generally in alignment with previous ACT studies for flexible youth spaces and is in alignment with the Community Centre benchmark which is where youth spaces should be provided (along with libraries).
Senior citizens centre	Flexible space for older people to access and activities/age-specific programs to be delivered from. This space would be integrated into either community centre, library or similar rather than provided as a standalone service/facility.	District	1 multi-purpose meeting space per 50,000 residents	Various – integrated into community centre	This benchmark is generally in alignment with previous ACT studies, however slightly higher rate noting the increasing ageing population. Generally, these spaces are no longer benchmarked, rather integrated into community centres through the use of flexible meeting spaces.
Cultural facilities					
Community arts centre/ theatre	Flexible spaces that can be used for arts practice in different mediums, co-located/ delivered as part of general community spaces through the use of appropriate flooring, sinks, storage etc.	Local	1 facility per 9,000 residents	Various – integrated into flexible meeting space	In previous ACT studies only one arts benchmark was applied. To provide a better understanding of arts spaces two benchmarks have been used. These align with ASR Research, Planning for Community Infrastructure in Growth Areas 2008.
	Dedicated community arts centre that can include space for performances, rehearsal, exhibitions, and workshop/studio spaces. Staffing and programming required.	District	1 facility per 50,000 residents	2,800sqm to 3,700 sqm ⁹	Collectively these two benchmarks provide a core base level understanding for arts and culture infrastructure. Further detailed assessments of arts facilities should be considered in future assessments.

⁹ Based on Tuggeranong Arts Centre and Manuka Community Arts Centre respectively.

Facility type	Definition	Hierarchy	Provision standard	Size requirements	Rationale / Context
Library	<p>Providing a range of services, programs, resources and spaces to support sharing of information, learning, and leisure services across all ages and abilities.</p> <p>Where possible, libraries should be integrated under the same roofline as other community services and infrastructure increasing the ability to provide shared spaces.</p>		Based on NSW Libraries floorspace calculator. Sizes can vary between 1,000sqm-4,000sqm depending on service level. (Note: 194sqms to 3,100sqm across current ACT branches)		State Library of NSW (SLNSW) calculator ¹⁰ has been applied in previous ACT studies.
Sports facilities and active recreation (note: These benchmarks serve only as a guide to prompt further analysis to determine the need for additional sport and recreation facilities)					
Playing fields	<p>Includes:</p> <p>Enclosed Ovals – these provide competition venues for premier sporting competitions/events.</p> <p>District playing fields – these provide multiple fields for training and competition for organised sport.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Ovals – these provide one or two fields for training and competition for organised sport.</p> <p>Measured in land area (hectares).</p>	District	0.62ha of playing field area per 1,000 residents	<p>Various</p> <p>Approx. 15 hectares for multiple fields (subject to site conditions)¹¹</p> <p>4 hectares for enclosed ovals.</p>	<p>Based on recent ACT Sports and Recreation advice of the existing per capita provision across the ACT as a whole.</p> <p><i>Note: recommended that provision ratios/ benchmarks specific to ACT classifications for playing fields be further developed.</i></p>
Aquatic centres and public pools	Smaller pool facilities (e.g. 25m indoor or outdoor), including swim schools and pools that are only open in summer.	Subdistrict	1 facility per 30,000 residents	2ha+ land required	In previous ACT studies only one aquatics benchmark was applied (50m pools). Both 25m and 50m pools have a role to play in the delivery of services as recently

¹⁰ Note: The SLNSW calculator is from People Places: A Guide for Planning Public Library Buildings which is endorsed by the Australian Library and Information Association as the national standard. As guided by the standard, floorspace calculation is intended to be used in conjunction with service planning, not in isolation. E.g. services relate to space requirements for different collection formats and space allocation required. The configuration and density of shelving however can make a difference on total floor space required. Currently libraries in the ACT range from 194sqm to 3,100sqm.

¹¹ Based on advice from ACT Sport and Recreation.

Facility type	Definition	Hierarchy	Provision standard	Size requirements	Rationale / Context
	Larger pools/centres (typically with 25m-50m pools) with learn to swim and complementary uses (e.g. splashpad, warm water pool, dry gym) e.g. Stromlo, Lakeside, Gungahlin	District	1 facility per 75,000 residents	3ha+ land required	<p>noted in the Royal Life Saving Australia State of Aquatics Facilities Report 2025.</p> <p>These provision ratios generally align with Parks and Leisure Australia, Guidelines for Western Australian Community Infrastructure, 2020. These are the most recent and relevant benchmarks for this asset type that are used across different jurisdictions and provide a scale of asset sizes.</p> <p><i>Note: The financial feasibility of pool provision for governments is evolving and needs to be considered beyond this study in planning for facilities.</i></p>
Indoor recreation centres including multi use sports club	<p>Indoor centres with multiple multipurpose courts (e.g. basketball, netball, cricket, etc.) to service a range of indoor activities relevant to the specific community.</p> <p>In addition, these facilities include associated amenities such as reception, kiosk, medical rooms, courtside seating. They require staffing and management.</p> <p>e.g. Kaleen Indoor Sports</p>	District/ local	1 court facility (2-4 courts) per 40,000 residents	2-4 court facility 1-2ha land required	<p>This benchmark differs to what has been previously used in ACT assessments. This is in alignment with Parks and Leisure Australia, Guidelines for Western Australian Community Infrastructure, 2020</p> <p>Mid-point of range.</p> <p><i>Note: there are a range of approaches for benchmarking that can be used for indoor sports facilities (for example, being based on the number of courts) – for this study, a facility-based approach has been taken which assumes a facility with 3-4 indoor multi-purpose courts, as a starting point for understanding potential demand, which should be further refined beyond this study in planning for sports and recreation in the ACT.</i></p>

Facility type	Definition	Hierarchy	Provision standard	Size requirements	Rationale / Context
Outdoor courts: tennis	Best delivered as multi-court facilities of a minimum 8-10 courts and supporting infrastructure (e.g. pavilion and carparking)	Subdistrict	1 court per 5,000 residents	Min. 593sqm (34.77m x 17.07m) per court, plus additional space for run-off ¹²	<p>This benchmark differs to what has been previously used in ACT assessments. This is in alignment with Tennis Australia (cited in Parks and Leisure Australia, Guidelines for Western Australian Community Infrastructure, 2020).</p> <p>Tennis courts located at ACT Government schools with community access outside of school hours also form part of this provision model.</p>
Outdoor courts: basketball	Best delivered as multi-court facilities. Potential to integrate with other sports facilities/ open space and school campuses.	Subdistrict	1 court per 3,000 residents	Min. 608sqm (32m x 19m) per court, including boundary line ¹³	<p>This benchmark differs to what has been previously used in ACT assessments. This is in alignment with Parks and Leisure Australia, Guidelines for Western Australian Community Infrastructure, 2020.</p>
Outdoor courts: netball	Best delivered as multi-court facilities. Potential to integrate with other sports facilities/ open space and school campuses.	Subdistrict	1 court per 5,000 residents	Min. 781sqm (21.4m x 36.6m) per court, including run off space ¹⁴	<p>The benchmark is for neighbourhood level provision (meaning not competition scale). These are the most recent and relevant benchmarks for this asset type that are used across different jurisdictions and provide a scale of asset sizes.</p>
Skatepark/ BMX facilities	Smaller scale facilities, or 'skate features' as in ACT Play Space Strategy, e.g. existing Kippax mini ramp	Subdistrict	1 facility per 7,500 residents	Various	<p>This benchmark differs to what has been previously used in ACT assessments. This is in alignment with Parks and Leisure Australia, Guidelines for Western Australian Community Infrastructure, 2020</p> <p>These are the most recent and relevant benchmarks for this asset type that are used across different jurisdictions and provide a scale of asset sizes.</p>
	Larger central facilities with multiple features, 'major skate parks' as in ACT Play Space Strategy, e.g. Belconnen Skate Park, Eddison Park in Woden <i>Note: does not include elite level/ racing BMX facilities.</i>	District	1 facility per 17,500 residents	Various	

¹² Based on Tennis Australia, 'Court and Enclosure Dimensions' for club/ recreation use, <https://www.tennis.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Court-and-Enclosure-Dimensions-2012.pdf>

¹³ Based on WA Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport, <https://www.cits.wa.gov.au/sport-and-recreation/sports-dimensions-guide/basketball> .

¹⁴ Based on Netball Victoria, 'Facilities Manual,' <https://vic.netball.com.au/sites/vic/files/2020-01/NV-Facilities-Manual.pdf>

Facility type	Definition	Hierarchy	Provision standard	Size requirements	Rationale / Context
Open space, passive and informal recreation (including outdoor public 'third spaces')					
Playgrounds/ play spaces¹⁵	Small scale spaces servicing immediate catchment e.g. swing set; local as defined in ACT Play Spaces Strategy	Local	1 playground per 2,000 residents	Located on open space. Various sizes depending on service catchment.	Playgrounds have not been included in previous assessments. This benchmark is in alignment with Parks and Leisure Australia, Guidelines for Western Australian Community Infrastructure, 2020 These are the most recent and relevant benchmarks for this asset type that are used across different jurisdictions and provide a scale of asset sizes. Where the benchmark indicates a range, the mid-range has been selected.
	Defined as 'central' in ACT Play Spaces Strategy, often located with centres and other community facilities	Subdistrict	1 playground per 9,000 residents		
	Defined as 'district' in ACT Play Spaces Strategy, large park with additional features e.g. Community Recreation Parks.	District	1 playground per 50,000 residents		
Community gardens and allotments	Community gardens/plots available for community hire and use; ACT Government facilities managed by the Canberra Organic Growers Society (COGS).	District	1 per 60,000 residents	Various	This benchmark is in alignment with previous ACT studies. The original source is Buckley Vann Town Planning, 2013 (ACT benchmarks)
Open space (configured for informal active and passive recreation)	Open space available for passive and active recreation. The land triggered in this benchmark would be used for the district, neighbourhood parks, and play spaces. Measured as PRZ1 zoned land.	N/A	30 square metres per resident	Various depending on open space service catchment.	This benchmark is generally in alignment with previous ACT studies. This benchmark is supported by the SGS Economics and Planning report developed in 2024 ¹⁶ and is being applied across urban areas.

Source: Compiled by SGS Economics and Planning, 2025.

¹⁵ Note: the benchmarks used for playgrounds here are different to MIS standards used by CED (formerly TCCS) – the benchmarks here are population-based, whereas the MIS standards are based on location/distance and hierarchy and asset maintenance considerations.

¹⁶ SGS Economics and Planning, 2024, Public open space contributions in Victoria: A preferred approach

3.4 Audit of existing infrastructure

A facility audit was undertaken to create a database of existing assets across the study area districts. This utilised existing data sets, including those available from the ACT Government geospatial data catalogue,¹⁷ as well as desktop research, sense-checking and ground-truthing, stakeholder engagement, and a review of strategic documents for planned infrastructure.

Note on planned facilities.

Some planned future facilities have also been included in the audit data to account for likely future provision in relation to the projected demand. Planned future facilities that have been included and counted in the audit process are those identified in the ACT's Infrastructure Plan and/or identified by the ACT Government through the Built for CBR Infrastructure Pipeline.¹⁸ These projects are at different stages in the development process, ranging from detailed design through to construction. For the purposes of this study, all the relevant community infrastructure projects listed at Built for CBR have been included in the supply count with notes identifying these facilities as 'proposed' in the text and discussed where appropriate to account for the potential uncertainty in delivery.

Additional planned facilities that are known or were identified in the process of stakeholder consultation, but which were not identified the Infrastructure Plan nor the Built for CBR website at the time of the audit, and have therefore not been counted in the supply data, include:

- Emergency services station in Casey
- Police Headquarters and new City Police Station in Civic
- Kippax Community Hub
- Woden Community Services Hub.

Ground-truthing of audit

To supplement the desktop analysis, site visits were undertaken to selected existing facilities, including a mix of older and newer community spaces to understand what current and previous provision in the ACT looks like on the ground. A summary from the site visits is provided in **Appendix A**.

The findings of these site visits have been used to provide additional context and inform the recommendations of this needs assessment.

¹⁷ <https://actmap-actgov.opendata.arcgis.com/>

¹⁸

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrjoiZjZmMGQ3YTktODQ2Zi00MWRkLWJjNzAtZDNhOTk0NGJjZmJlIiwidCI6ImI0NmMxOTA4LTAzMzQtNDIzNi1iOTc4LTU4NWVlODhINDE5OSJ9&pageName=faeeee113a5bb940c8a5b>

3.5 Quantitative assessment considerations and limitations

The quantitative assessment is based on the data from the facilities audit. It should be noted that:

- The existing supply of open space in each district is calculated based on PRZ1 zoning, excluding large water bodies in relevant districts, with some additions made to include Designated Area zoned land in the Inner North and City district.
- The existing supply of outdoor courts is based on the estimated number of individual courts rather than facilities. For basketball courts, different configurations have also been reflected in the counts (e.g. double courts count as two, half court as 0.5, 4-way hoops as 0.25). Indoor basketball courts are accounted for in the indoor recreation centres benchmark for this study, however the provision ratios will need to be reviewed based on the level of service ACT Government intends to provide in future (e.g. competition suitable facilities).
- The existing supply of library floorspace is identified in approximate square metres from Libraries ACT.
- The count of meeting rooms in each district is based on the meeting spaces available in existing community centres, halls, and libraries only, and as such may be underrepresenting the total supply (e.g. meeting rooms that are made available to the community by private operators, commercial buildings, and so on). Further work will be needed to fully understand meeting room provision in the ACT, including from a qualitative perspective and useability.
- The supply of both outdoor courts and indoor gymnasium may also be underrepresenting the level of provision, as ACT schools also provide access to some of these facilities, and not all of these are captured in the audit. Further work may need to be undertaken to understand the full capacity of these types of facilities at school sites in terms of their availability to the community, noting that not all of these are easily accessible out of school hours, however that current and future upgrades to school-based facilities are being designed with community use in mind.

The qualitative analysis and synthesis of recommendations undertaken for the assessment has factored in these limitations.

4. Demographics and projected population

This section considers the current and projected population of the study area, and demographic characteristics which may affect the future demand for different types of facilities.

4.1 Demographics

Demographic profiling of the relevant districts was undertaken, with comparison to the ACT as a whole.¹⁹ The profiling focuses on demographic attributes that may influence the need for different types of community, sports, and recreation facilities, drawing primarily on the 2021 ABS Census.

This includes analysis of the ACT and district:

- Age and gender profiles
- First Nations status
- Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD)
- Level of disability
- Level of socioeconomic status (SEIFA)
- Household size
- Household composition
- Level of education
- Youth disengagement
- Household incomes
- Housing tenure
- Housing stress.

The detail of this analysis is provided in **Appendix B**.

Summary findings

Key takeaways from this analysis for the study include:

- The ACT's population growth is expected to continue, and by 2050 reach over 700,000 people. The **distribution of this growth however is not likely to be uniform across districts**, which means that

¹⁹ The ACT boundary as defined by the ABS's Greater Capital City Statistical Area (GCCSA).

different areas will require different provision of new and/or enhanced community and sports infrastructure.

- Similarly, the **differing age profiles in each district will affect the types of facilities needed to meet community needs** – for example, districts such as the Inner South and Weston Creek which have greater proportions of their populations in older age groups and higher shares of people needing assistance with daily activities, will need access to different services compared to districts like Gungahlin which have larger populations of young people, particularly in the short to medium term.
- Patterns in **migration and linguistic and cultural diversity in each district will influence the types of facilities that are required**. In the ACT, nearly half of the population does not have a religious affiliation, with this cohort being more significant in some areas (particularly in the Inner North and City), however, there is a mix of religious affiliation which varies substantially between districts. The diversity in countries of birth, languages spoken at home, and proficiency in English seen across the districts also reflects potentially different needs and services from community infrastructure.
- Canberra is known to be socio-economically advantaged compared to most parts of Australia, however, this can mask the **pockets of disadvantage that do exist**. Outer suburban areas in Belconnen and Tuggeranong have historically seen higher levels of disadvantage than other parts of the ACT. Outside of measures such as SEIFA, close to a quarter of the ACT's renting households in 2021 could be considered to be in housing stress, and nine per cent experiencing mortgage stress (which is likely to have increased with recent economic conditions), though again, this varies by district.
- Canberra is also a highly educated city, in terms of residents with post-school qualifications. However, **levels of educational attainment also differ between districts, and is reflected in level of youth engagement with employment and education**. The outer-suburban districts (Belconnen, Tuggeranong, Gungahlin) have higher shares of their youth populations only partially or not engaged, suggesting that different facilities and services for this cohort may be needed.

4.2 Projected population by district

As of the 2021 Census, the ACT had a population of over 454,000 people, which is estimated to have grown to around 483,000 as of March 2025.²⁰

Looking to the future, the ACT is expected to reach a population of 500,000 after 2026, and by 2051, reach over 700,000 people. Table 3 below shows the projected population of the ACT by district in 10-year intervals to 2051, based on the current ACT Government population projections from the Canberra Strategic Transport Model (CSTM).²¹

Over this future period, the most significant growth among the districts is expected in Molonglo, closely followed by Belconnen at over 55,000 people – with these two districts accounting for over 45 per cent

²⁰ ABS 2021 Census QuickStats, <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/8>; ABS, 2025, 'National, state and territory population,' released 18 September 2025, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/latest-release#states-and-territories>

²¹ TCCS, 2024, 'Canberra Strategic Transport Model (CSTM) Population Projections (District Strategies Constrained Distribution) (2024-02-05),' provided to SGS 20th June 2024. *Note: these differ from the 2025 release of the ACT Treasury population projections.

of the growth across the ACT. Excluding Molonglo as the ACT's primary greenfield growth area, Woden is projected to see the largest proportional increase to 2051 (75 per cent), followed by the Inner North and City (69 per cent) and Inner South (58 per cent) – reflective of an increased policy focus on infill development and the future staging of light rail.

By 2051, the distribution of population between the districts is expected to see a similar pattern to that observed in 2021, though with the development of Molonglo, that district will account for a more significant share while districts such as Gungahlin and Tuggeranong will account for a smaller share of the ACT total population than they currently do.

Table 3: Projected population by district, 2021-2051

District	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051	Change 2021-2051	% change 2021-2051	% of ACT growth 2021-2051	% of ACT in 2051
Belconnen	105,872	120,010	129,110	136,926	144,742	153,079	161,449	55,577	52.5%	22.2%	22.9%
Canberra East*	1,932	2,661	2,569	2,535	2,500	2,514	2,528	596	30.9%	0.2%	0.4%
Gungahlin	87,843	94,895	98,450	100,434	102,418	105,035	107,653	19,810	22.6%	7.9%	15.3%
Molonglo*	11,382	20,003	35,229	48,416	61,565	65,845	70,126	58,744	516.1%	23.4%	10.0%
North Canberra**	61,372	68,321	75,760	81,924	88,088	96,005	103,750	42,378	69.1%	16.9%	14.7%
South Canberra**	31,591	36,035	39,519	41,935	44,350	47,153	49,956	18,365	58.1%	7.3%	7.1%
Tuggeranong	89,245	88,797	88,620	91,777	94,935	101,556	108,178	18,933	21.2%	7.6%	15.4%
Urriarra – Namadgi*	621	536	478	435	392	389	385	-236	-38.0%	-0.1%	0.1%
Weston Creek	24,522	24,961	25,847	26,990	28,133	29,834	31,536	7,014	28.6%	2.8%	4.5%
Woden Valley	39,178	41,999	44,513	48,906	53,298	60,925	68,552	29,374	75.0%	11.7%	9.7%
Total	453,558	498,218	540,096	580,278	620,421	662,336	704,112	250,554	55.2%	100.0%	100.0%
Total Study Area districts	439,623	475,017	501,820	528,892	555,964	593,588	631,073	191,450	43.5%	76.4%	89.6%

Source: SGS, based on TCCS, 2024. Note: these projections differ from the 2025 release of the ACT Treasury population projections. *Not included in the study area. ** Districts as named in the CSTM data, which correspond with Inner North and City and Inner South respectively.

5. Stakeholder engagement

This section summarises the outcomes from engagement with ACT Government stakeholders.

Engagement with relevant ACT Government directorates and agencies was undertaken to assist in identifying future plans for different types of facilities, understand current issues, and supplement the quantitative analysis undertaken in this report with relevant qualitative insights.

There are a range of new and/or upgraded facilities in the pipeline. Those that are committed to/most likely to be delivered have generally been identified in the recent updates to the ACT Infrastructure Plan. Other facilities that may be delivered are in the early planning phases and are less certain.

Additional facilities in the pipeline that were identified through the consultation include:

- Possible relocation of Civic Library into the Canberra Theatre Centre redevelopment and Canberra Civic and Culture District
- Possible relocation of Belconnen Library
- Upgrades to AIS facilities
- Opportunities with the Acton Waterfront masterplan process
- Stromlo district playing fields.

A summary of the outcomes and key themes from the consultation is provided Table 4, with the detailed engagement report provided at **Appendix C**.

Table 4: Key outcomes from stakeholder engagement

Theme	Summary findings
<p>Additional audits and coordination</p>	<p>A number of the directorates/agencies are in the process of undertaking their own audit and needs assessment work around their assets and future demand, including Libraries ACT, ACT Health, Sport and Recreation, artsACT and the Emergency Services Agency (ESA). These initiatives will be able to inform the planning for future provision at a more detailed level and may over-ride the findings from this needs assessment.</p> <p>It was consistently raised that there is a need to better co-ordinate the planning and provision of community infrastructure across the ACT Government.</p>
<p>Demand pressures</p>	<p>There are demand pressures being seen across facility types, but to different extents. A lot of the demand pressures are being driven by the population growth being seen, with issues in both greenfield and infill areas.</p>
<p>Meeting space</p>	<p>The need for flexible spaces that can cater to different activities, and that are available and affordable to the community, has been consistently raised as an issue across districts.</p>
<p>Sports facilities</p>	<p>There are currently lots of demand pressures on different sports facilities with substantial demand for indoor sport and recreation facilities. It can be difficult to retrofit sites to provide sport assets given the size required in some cases (e.g. for playing fields), however there is now a more concerted focus between directorates to integrate facilities for community use with school campuses where possible.</p>
<p>Land availability and funding</p>	<p>The main barriers identified to the provision of facilities were the availability of land and funding.</p> <p>A key element of this going forward will be identifying future needs early in the process of planning for new and existing areas, thereby helping to avoid the common barriers to provision including the availability of land and the delivery of siloed infrastructure. (Note: A Land Allocation to ACT Government Agencies Framework is currently being finalised by CED to better coordinate and allocate land for community facilities to ensure that this is measured with the need for land for housing and other uses.)</p> <p>It was noted that ongoing operational funding (rather than capital costs) was often harder to come by and thus affects the ongoing sustainability of facilities and services.</p>
<p>Co-location</p>	<p>There has been a move away from the provision of stand-alone facilities and the allocation of facilities/ sites for particular groups, towards co-location models and opportunities for flexible spaces. This includes a new EOI process being introduced for the sale of community facility zoned sites.</p> <p>However, co-location of facilities may not be appropriate in some circumstances (such as for domestic/ sexual violence services, counselling).</p>

Theme	Summary findings
Asset optimisation	Directorates and agencies are considering alternate provision models and optimisation approaches to the ACT’s existing assets to make better use of the capacity that is available, before exploring new facilities. New facilities are beneficial but also create additional requirements around the cost of maintenance and operational cost and staffing that need to be factored into planning.

Source: SGS, 2024.

6. Needs assessment

This section summarises the needs assessment for the study area overall, to give a picture of the collective need for facilities being considered.

6.1 Quantitative assessment and overall gaps

Application of the benchmarks to the projected future population of the study area is detailed in Table 5. The benchmarks have been applied to the projected population in 10-year increments from 2021 to 2051 to identify the demand. This is then compared to the existing supply of facilities to identify the potential future gap for each.

This suggests that at a whole-of-study area level, there are some potential gaps in provision by 2051, including in:

- **General community spaces** – meeting rooms (though there could be an oversupply in the interim as there are meeting rooms that are not captured in the data currently)
- **Specific community spaces** – youth and seniors-specific spaces
- **Cultural facilities** – arts facilities and libraries
- **Sports facilities and active recreation** – multi-purpose indoor court facilities, outdoor courts (though not all additional capacity available at ACT schools is captured in the data currently), and skate/BMX facilities
- **Open space, passive and informal recreation** – subdistrict playgrounds.

Furthermore, based on existing and planned community infrastructure, the following infrastructure will meet the provision requirements of the future community.

- Community and neighbourhood centres
- Playing fields
- Aquatic facilities
- Indoor recreation centres
- Tennis courts
- Local and district playgrounds
- Community gardens
- Open space (for passive and active recreation).

While the amount of the above community infrastructure may be sufficient, **areas within districts may not be able to access this infrastructure**. Given this, a spatial assessment has been undertaken with findings outlined in Section 6.2.

Table 5: Whole of study area benchmarking

Legend	
✘	Indicates a projected deficit in provision of facilities and/ or services based on quantitative benchmarks.
✔	Indicates a projected surplus in provision of facilities and/ or services based on quantitative benchmarks.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
General community spaces/centres										
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Local	68	39.1	28.9	44.6	23.4	49.4	18.6	56.1	11.9
Community centre	District	14	9.8	4.2	11.2	2.8	12.4	1.6	14.0	0.0
Meeting rooms	Local (Level 1)	35	109.9	-74.9	125.5	-90.5	139.0	-104.0	157.8	-122.8
	Subdistrict (Level 2)	33	55.0	-22.0	62.7	-29.7	69.5	-36.5	78.9	-45.9
	Subdistrict (Level 3)	27	55.0	-28.0	62.7	-35.7	69.5	-42.5	78.9	-51.9

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
	Subdistrict (level 4)	8	55.0	-47.0	62.7	-54.7	69.5	-61.5	78.9	-70.9
	District (Level 5)	2	22.0	-20.0	25.1	-23.1	27.8	-25.8	31.6	-29.6
Specific community spaces										
Youth centre	District	9	9.8	-0.8	11.2	-2.2	12.4	-3.4	14.0	-5.0
Senior citizens centre	District	5	8.8	-3.8	10.0	-5.0	11.1	-6.1	12.6	-7.6
Cultural facilities										
Community arts centre/theatre	Local	13	48.8	-35.8	55.8	-42.8	61.8	-48.8	70.1	-57.1
	District	9	8.8	0.2	10.0	-1.0	11.1	-2.1	12.6	-3.6
Library ²²	District	9	7.3	1.7	8.4	0.6	9.3	-0.3	10.5	-1.5
Sports facilities and active recreation										

²² Note: for the study area-level assessment a more general benchmark of 1 library per 60,000 people has been applied as the State Library of NSW calculator does not work for the size of the population being considered.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Playing fields – ha	N/A	465.0	272.6	192.4	311.1	153.9	344.7	120.3	391.3	73.7
Aquatic centres and public pools	Subdistrict	14*	8.8	5.2	10.0	4.0	11.1	2.9	12.6	1.4
	District	9	5.9	3.1	6.7	2.3	7.4	1.6	8.4	0.6
Indoor recreation centres including multi use sports club	District/local	27	11.0	16.0	12.5	14.5	13.9	13.1	15.8	11.2
Outdoor courts: tennis	Subdistrict	173	87.9	85.1	100.4	72.6	111.2	61.8	126.2	46.8
Outdoor courts: basketball	Subdistrict	55.5	146.5	-91.0	167.3	-111.8	185.3	-129.8	210.4	-154.9
Outdoor courts: netball	Subdistrict	77	87.9	-10.9	100.4	-23.4	111.2	-34.2	126.2	-49.2
Skatepark/ BMX facilities	Subdistrict	16	33.5	-17.5	38.2	-22.2	42.4	-26.4	48.1	-32.1
	District	5	25.1	-20.1	28.7	-23.7	31.8	-26.8	36.1	-31.1
Open space, passive and informal recreation (including outdoor public 'third spaces')										
	Local	435	219.8	215.2	250.9	184.1	278.0	157.0	315.5	119.5

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Playgrounds/ play spaces	Subdistrict	61	48.8	12.2	55.8	5.2	61.8	-0.8	70.1	-9.1
	District	14	8.8	5.2	10.0	4.0	11.1	2.9	12.6	1.4
Community gardens and allotments	District	17	7.3	9.7	8.4	8.6	9.3	7.7	10.5	6.5
Open space (configured for active and passive recreation) – ha	All	3,874	1,319	2,555	1,505	2,369	1,668	2,206	1,893	1,981

*Note: count of facilities includes swim schools and hydrotherapy pools – see discussion by district in Section 7 below.

6.2 Spatial considerations

Community facilities, whether local, subdistrict, district, territory-wide or regional, are available to everyone, regardless of where they live. In many cases, a facility outside someone's immediate area may be more convenient, better suited to their needs, or designed to serve a particular population or group. For example, a sports facility located on the edge of one district might be easier to reach for residents of a neighbouring district than a facility within their own area, depending on factors like travel time, facility type and location. This means that not every district will have every type of facility (or meet the infrastructure benchmarks) however across the Territory there should be an adequate level of infrastructure that is well located and accessible. Broadly, Canberra is well serviced by its network of facilities, which work together to meet the current and growing needs of the diverse population.

The following sections consider the geographic accessibility of the facility types **where a gap has been identified at the study area-level**. This mapping identifies 400 metre and 800 metre walking catchments, and five and ten-minute driving catchments respectively around the existing and selected planned facilities documented in the audit, for all types in the hierarchy (i.e. local, subdistrict, district). This helps to understand where there may be spatial gaps in provision within the study area.

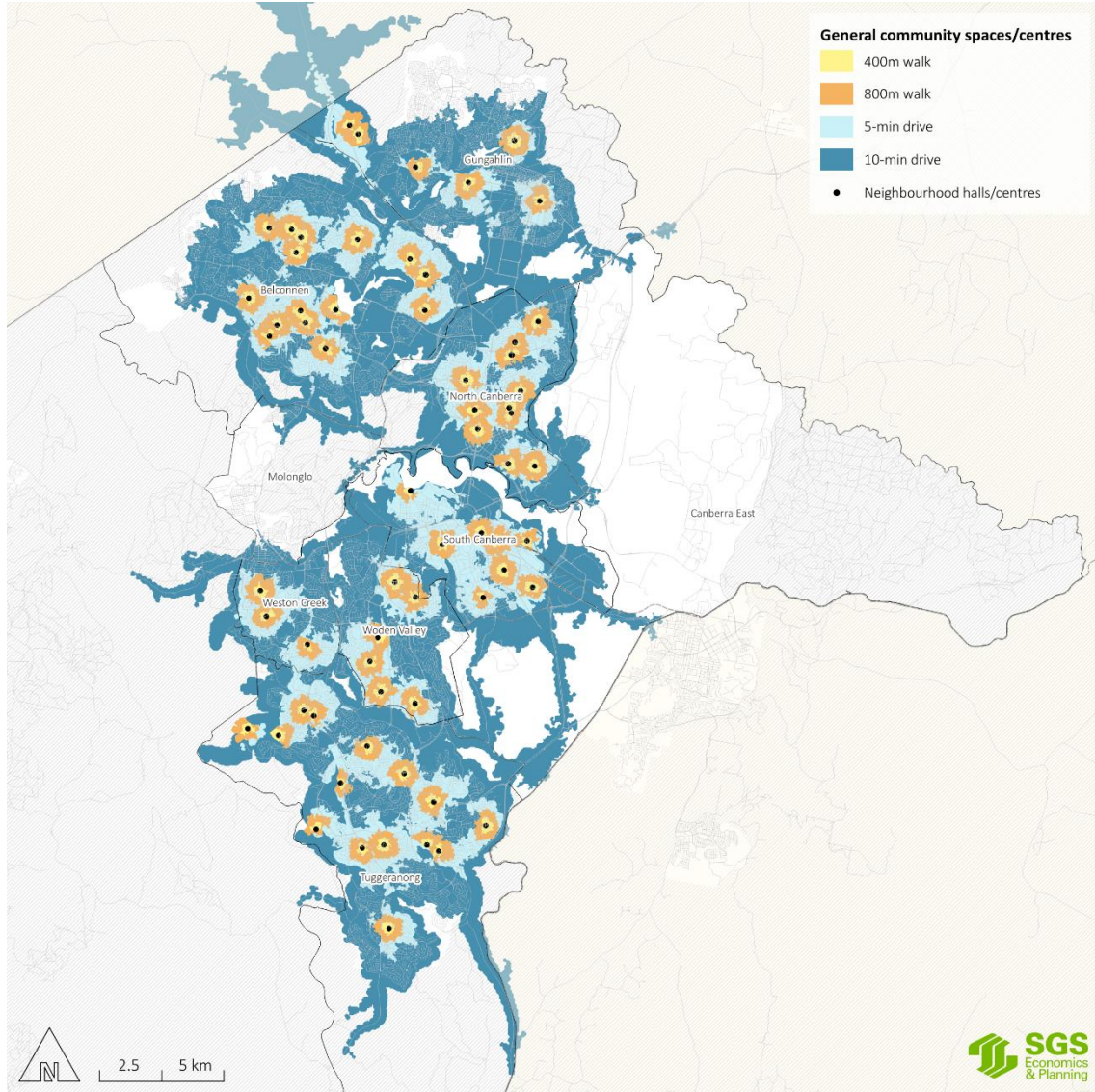
The spatial accessibility is also considered in the detailed assessments for each district in the study area in Section 7.

Note: The consideration of accessibility is limited here to spatial accessibility only. Other factors, including costs for entry and other fees, also impact on how accessible facilities and services are to the community in practice.

General community spaces

Figure 3 identifies the accessibility for the neighbourhood halls/ centres across the study area. Spatially, most areas of the districts are within at least a 10-minute drive of a facility, however, there are gaps at the periphery of west Belconnen, the north of Gungahlin, and south of Tuggeranong in particular. Many suburbs are also outside of walking distance to a neighbourhood facility.

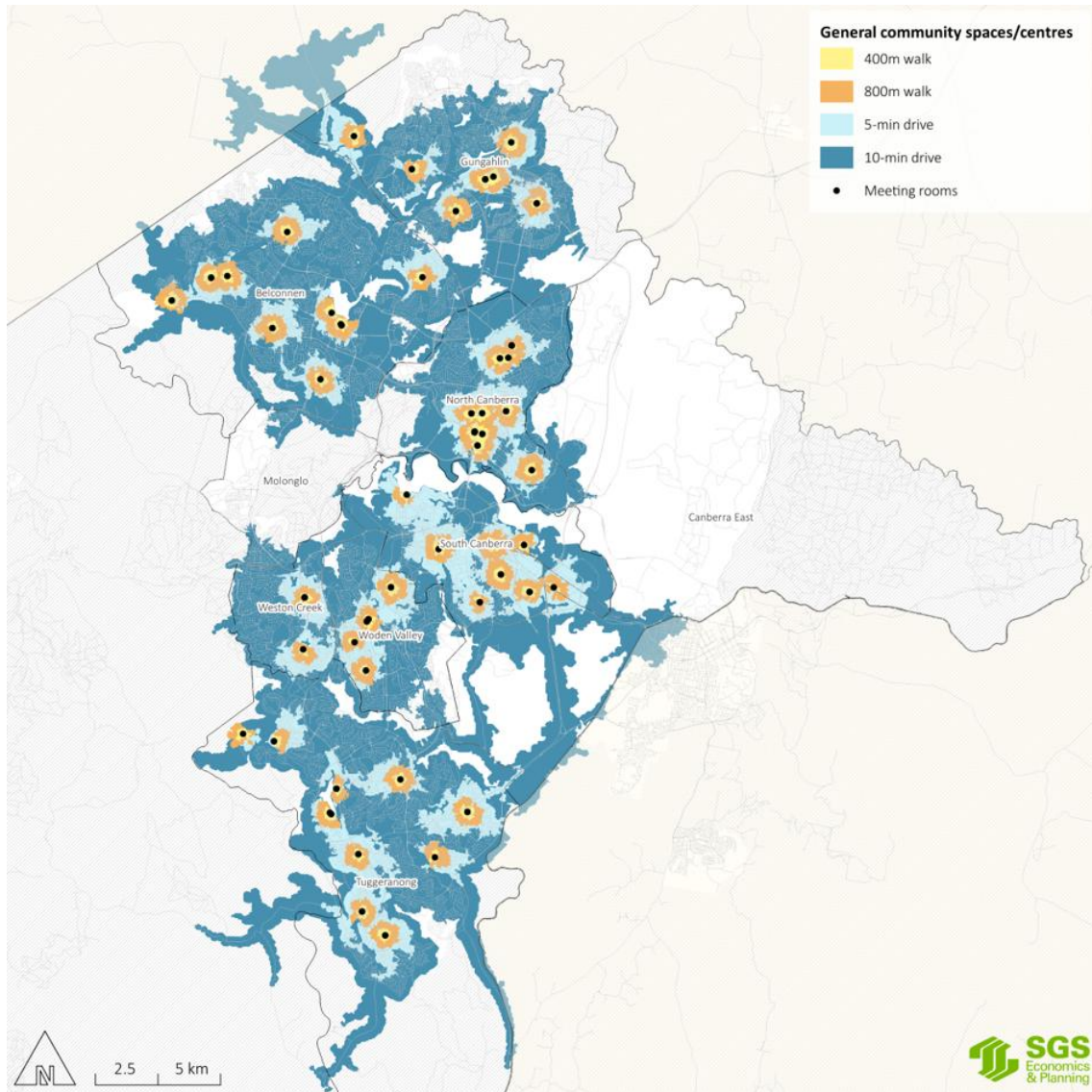
Figure 3: Accessibility – neighbourhood halls and centres



Source: SGS, 2024.

Figure 4 identifies a similar pattern for meeting rooms with a gap particularly for north Gungahlin and south Tuggeranong— noting that the meeting rooms including in the audit are limited and may be undercounting the actual supply.

Figure 4: Accessibility – meeting rooms



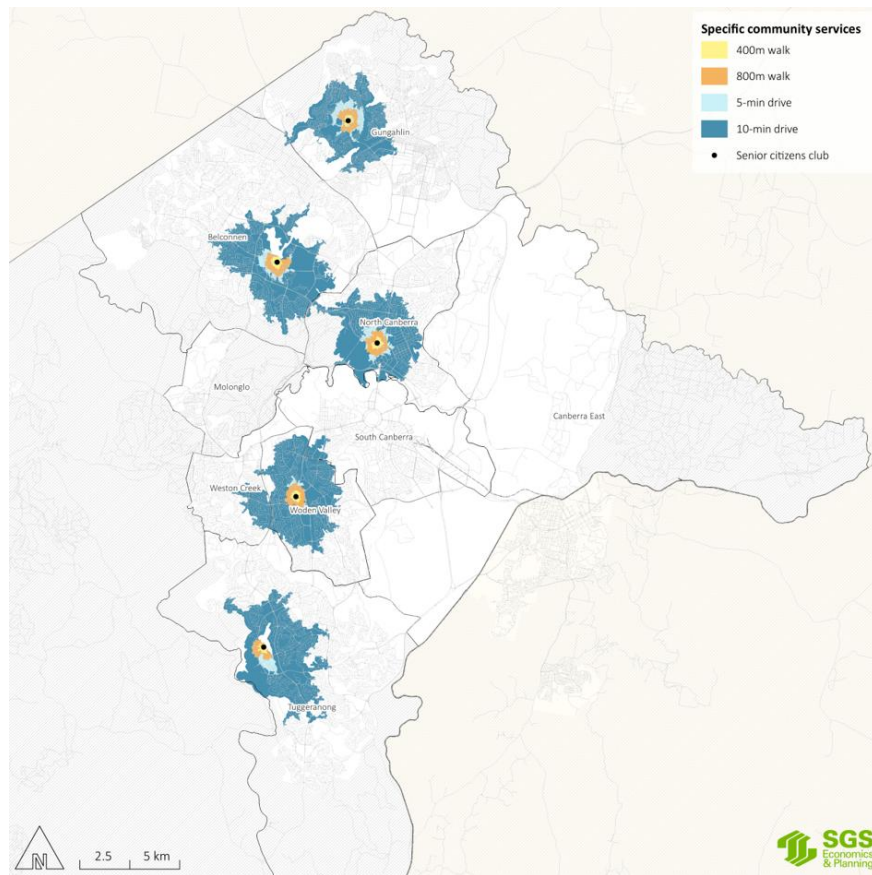
Source: SGS, 2024.

Specific community spaces

Figure 5 identifies the accessibility catchments around the existing senior citizens clubs and youth centres. As these are generally concentrated in the Town Centres, many suburbs are outside of a 10-minute drive of these facilities.

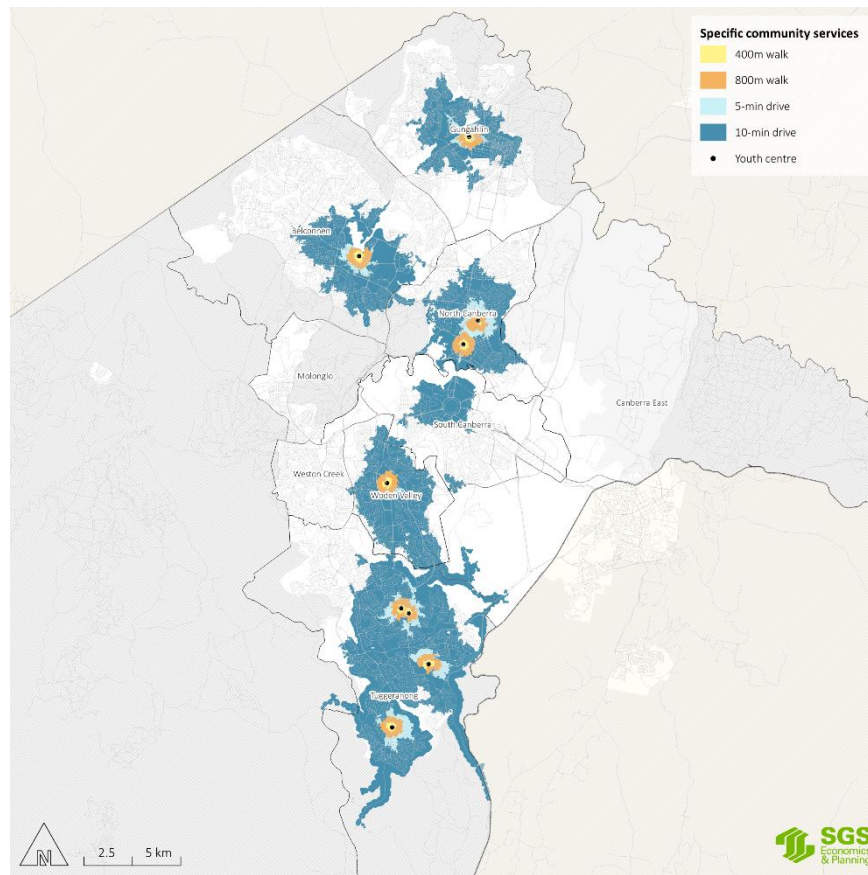
While Town Centres are ideal locations for this infrastructure, to enhance accessibility the future provision of seniors and youth-oriented spaces should consider colocation opportunities within Town Centres as well as outside of these catchments, co-located with other supporting infrastructure and accessible by public transport.

Figure 5: Accessibility – seniors citizens clubs



Source: SGS, 2024.

Figure 6: Accessibility – youth centres

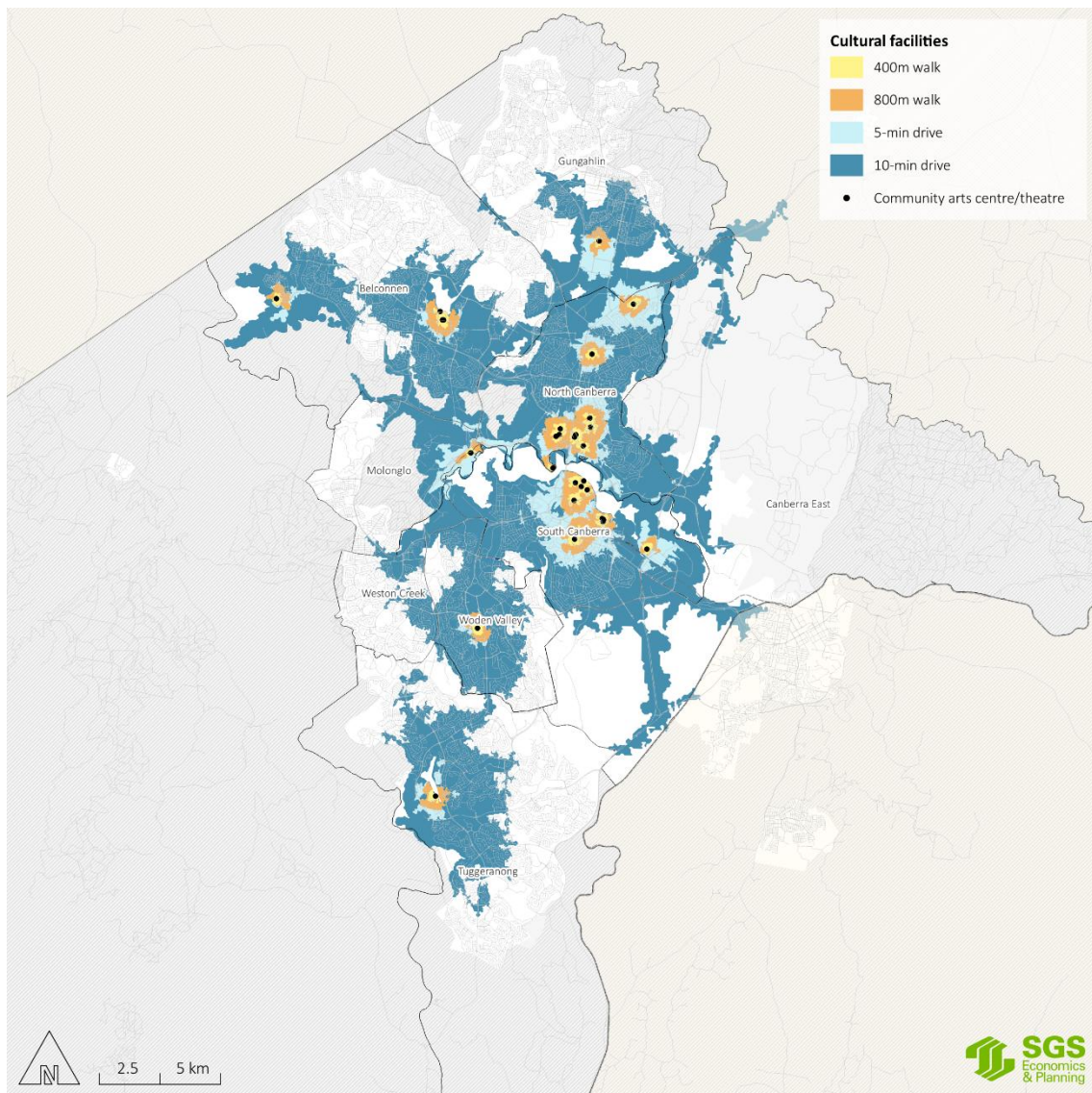


Source: SGS, 2024.

Arts and cultural facilities

Figure 7 illustrates the relative accessibility of community arts facilities in the subject districts. This shows a significant concentration of facilities, and therefore accessibility, for those living in the Inner North and City and Inner South district in particular – influenced by the concentration of national institutions in those areas. Gungahlin, Woden and Weston Creek in particular are lacking in arts facilities, with most of these districts also outside of a 10-minute driving catchment, and as such local arts infrastructure should be prioritised within these areas.

Figure 7: Accessibility – community arts centres

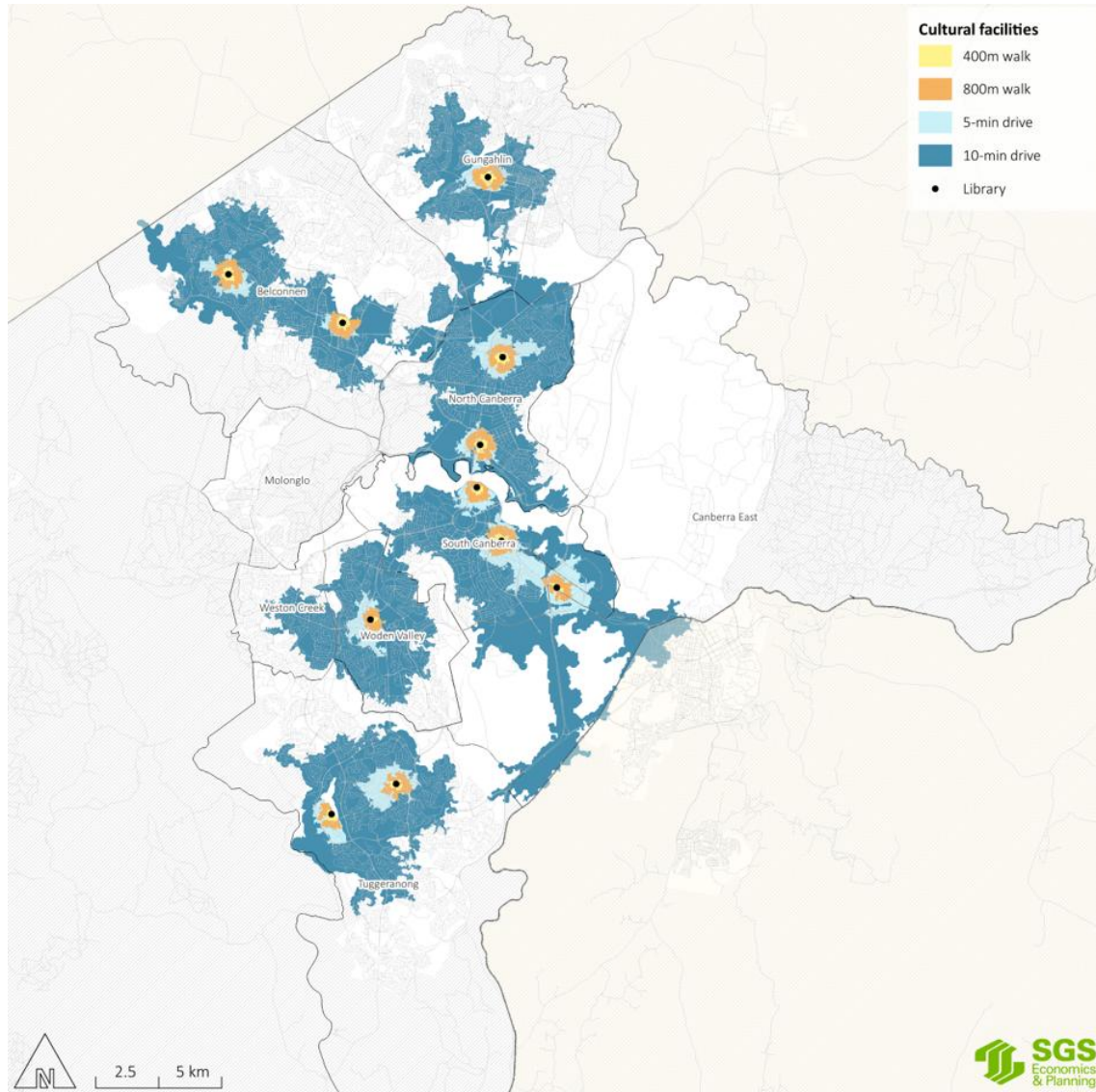


Source: SGS, 2025.

Figure 8 identifies the accessibility of the ACT’s existing libraries across the study area. With the current location of library branches, outer suburban areas are the least accessible – such as in the north of Gungahlin and Belconnen, and the south of Tuggeranong – and should be priority areas for additional

future library facilities/services. Much of Weston Creek is within driving distance to the Woden Library and will also be close by to the future library that is planned for the Molonglo Town Centre.

Figure 8: Accessibility – libraries

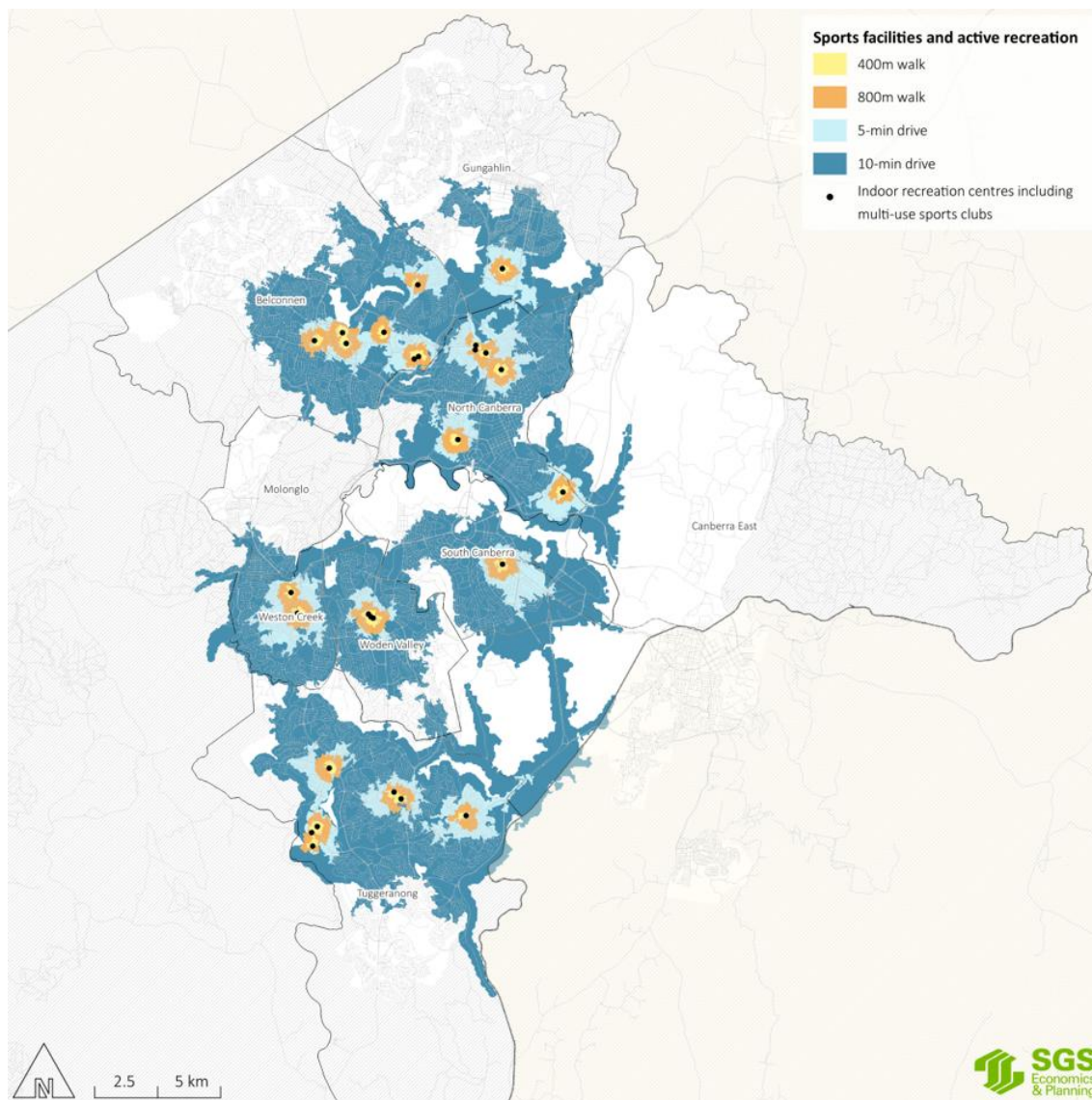


Source: SGS, 2024.

Sports facilities and active recreation

For accessibility to indoor recreation, shown in Figure 9, substantial areas of Gungahlin, Belconnen, Woden and Tuggeranong are outside of the 10-minute drive catchment to an indoor facility – noting as well that many of the facilities identified here are for specific/ niche sports and access to general multi-purpose indoor facilities is even more limited. Some of the limited accessibility is ameliorated by the availability of some indoor facilities available for use on school campuses, though the facilities available vary and there are limitations on their availability for public use.

Figure 9: Accessibility – indoor recreation

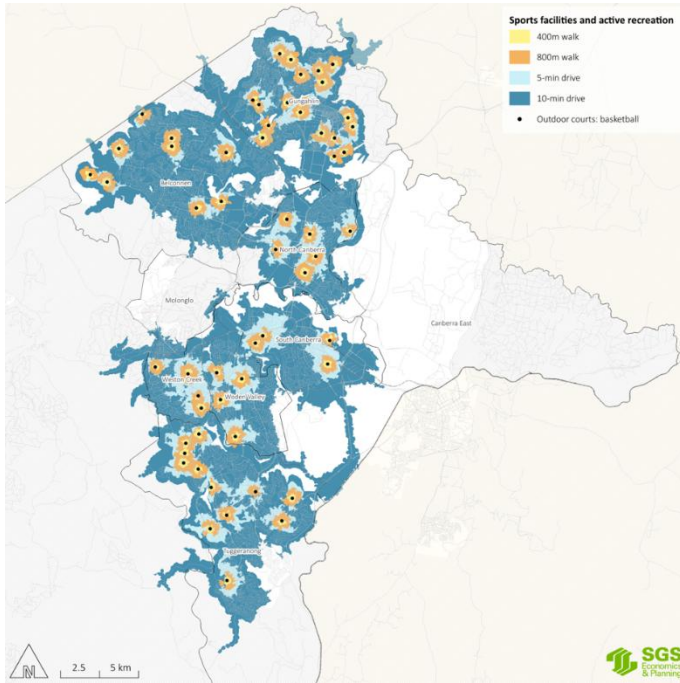


Source: SGS, 2024.

Figures 10 to 12 below identify the accessibility for outdoor courts for basketball, netball, and tennis respectively.

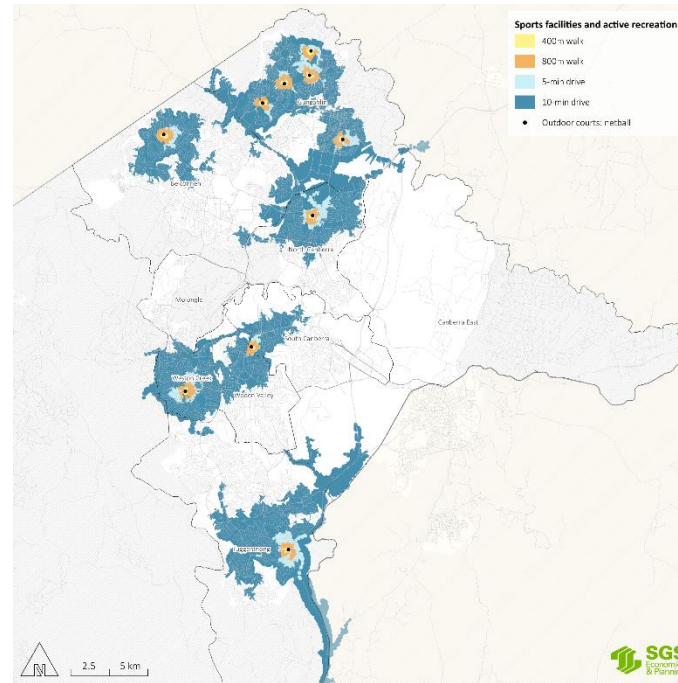
In the case of basketball, most of the study area is within the driving catchment of a court, however, the level of provision differs substantially – some of the facilities indicated may be a single court in a suburban location, while some are purpose-built facilities (e.g. Belconnen Stadium). Access to outdoor netball courts is more limited, though similarly noting that the number of courts/ level of provision in these locations varies, and as for basketball, there may be additional capacity provided by courts at ACT schools. In the case of tennis, most of the study area is within a driving catchment of a court with the exception of the outer-most parts of Gungahlin, Tuggeranong and Belconnen, but with the highest level of provision and walkable access being seen in the Inner North and City and Inner South districts.

Figure 10: Accessibility – outdoor basketball courts



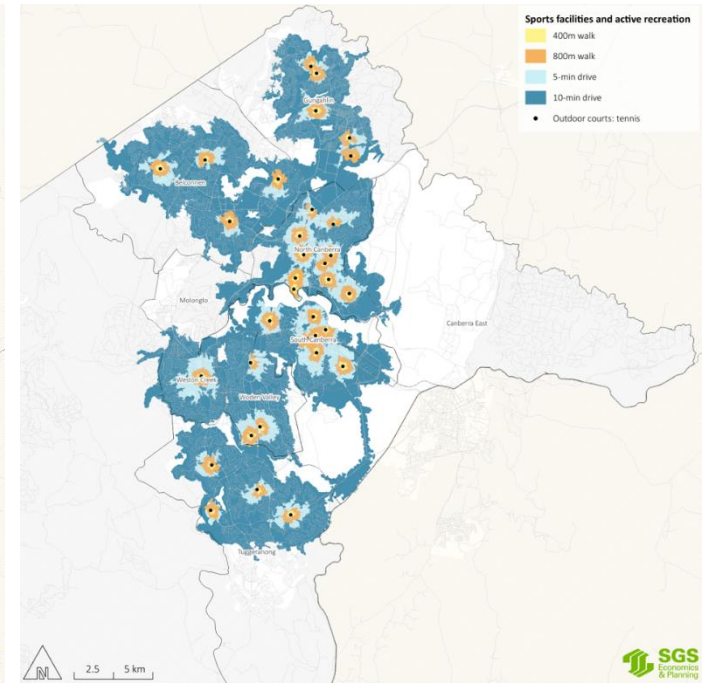
Source: SGS, 2024.

Figure 11: Accessibility – outdoor netball courts



Source: SGS, 2024.

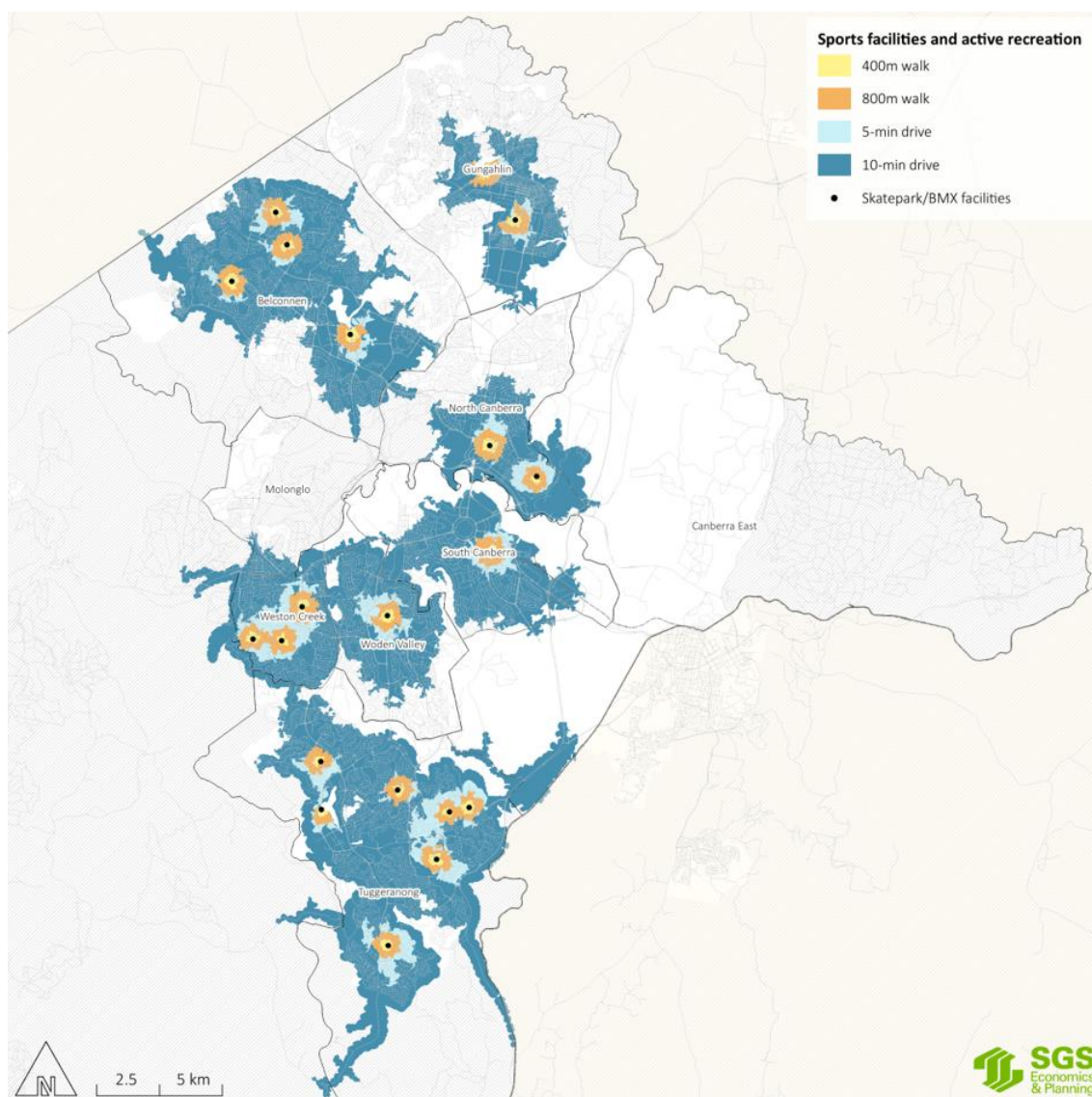
Figure 12: Accessibility – outdoor tennis courts



Source: SGS, 2024.

Figure 13 identifies the accessibility for existing skatepark and BMX facilities in the study area. There are a number of areas which are outside of a 10-minute driving catchment of a skate facility, particularly in Gungahlin, as well as part of the Inner North and City, Woden and Belconnen districts. These areas could potentially be prioritised for any additional facilities – particularly those locations which have a younger age profile.

Figure 13: Accessibility – skate park/ BMX facilities



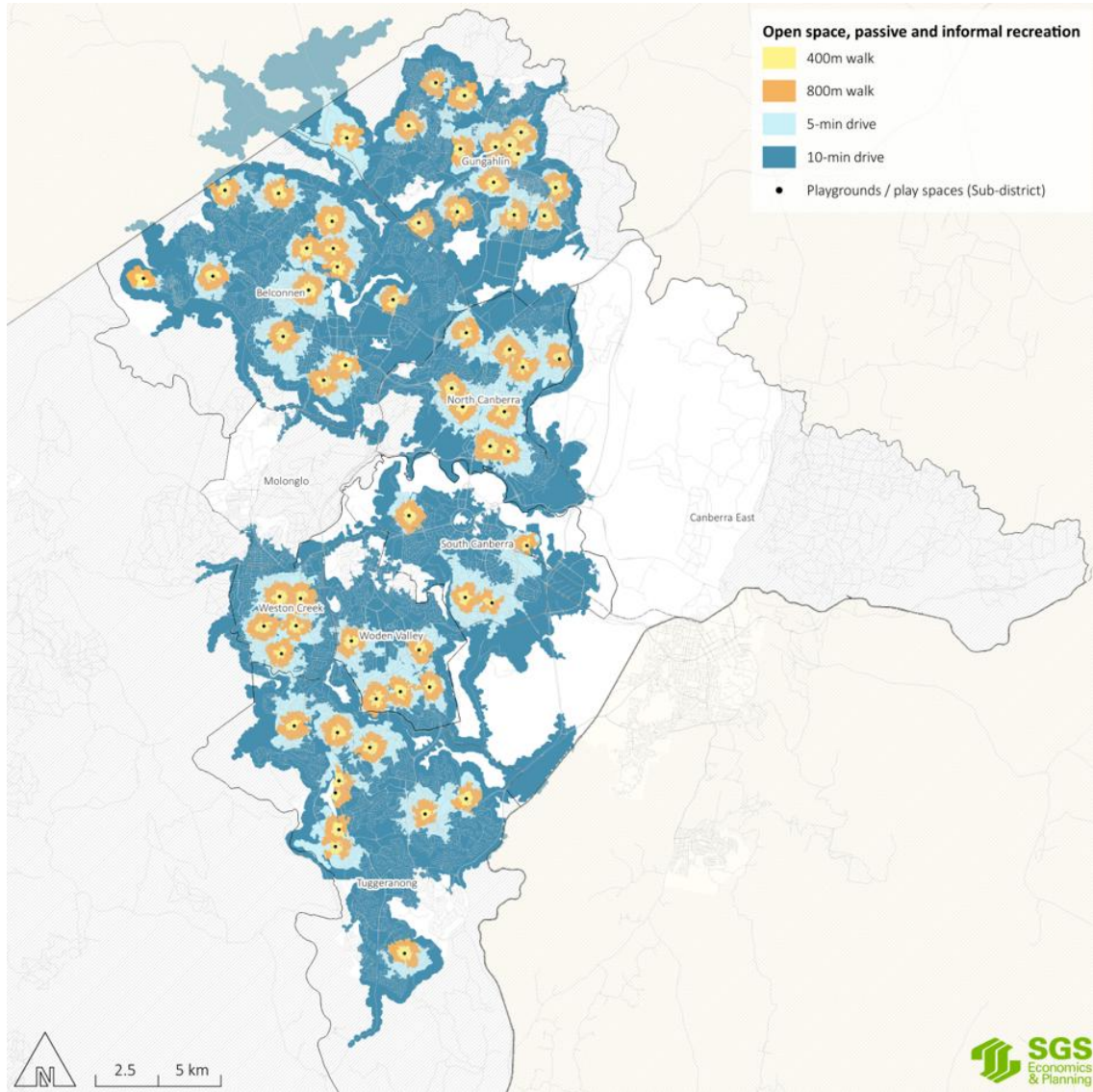
Source: SGS, 2024.

Open space, passive and informal recreation

For subdistrict playgrounds, Figure 14 identifies the relative accessibility across the study area. Much of the study area is within at the 10-minute drive catchment of these types of playgrounds, though there are some areas with more limited access in terms of the walkable catchments, generally in the outer-suburban parts of each district. These areas should be prioritised for future facilities, while noting that

subdistrict facilities are generally suitable to be outside of walking distance, while local playgrounds should be within walking distance. In the areas where there are gaps in subdistrict facility accessibility, there are a large number of local level playgrounds to provide sufficient coverage for these areas.

Figure 14: Accessibility – subdistrict playgrounds



Source: SGS, 2024.

7. District assessments

The following section details the needs assessment applied to each of the districts, including qualitative data, existing infrastructure, planned facilities, supply and demand analysis and recommendations. Findings from the stakeholder engagement have also been used to inform the recommendations for each district.

The recommendations for each district are summarised in a table using the following legend.

Legend	
x	Indicates a likely need for provision of additional facilities and/ or services.
?	Indicates further investigation is likely to be needed to better understand demand and opportunities for provision of additional facilities and/or services.
✓	Indicates existing provision of facilities and/ or services is likely to meet needs.

7.1 Belconnen

District	2021	2031	2041	2051	Change 2021-2051	% change 2021-2051	% of ACT growth 2021-2051	% of ACT in 2051
Belconnen	105,872	129,110	144,742	161,449	55,577	52.5%	22.2%	22.9%

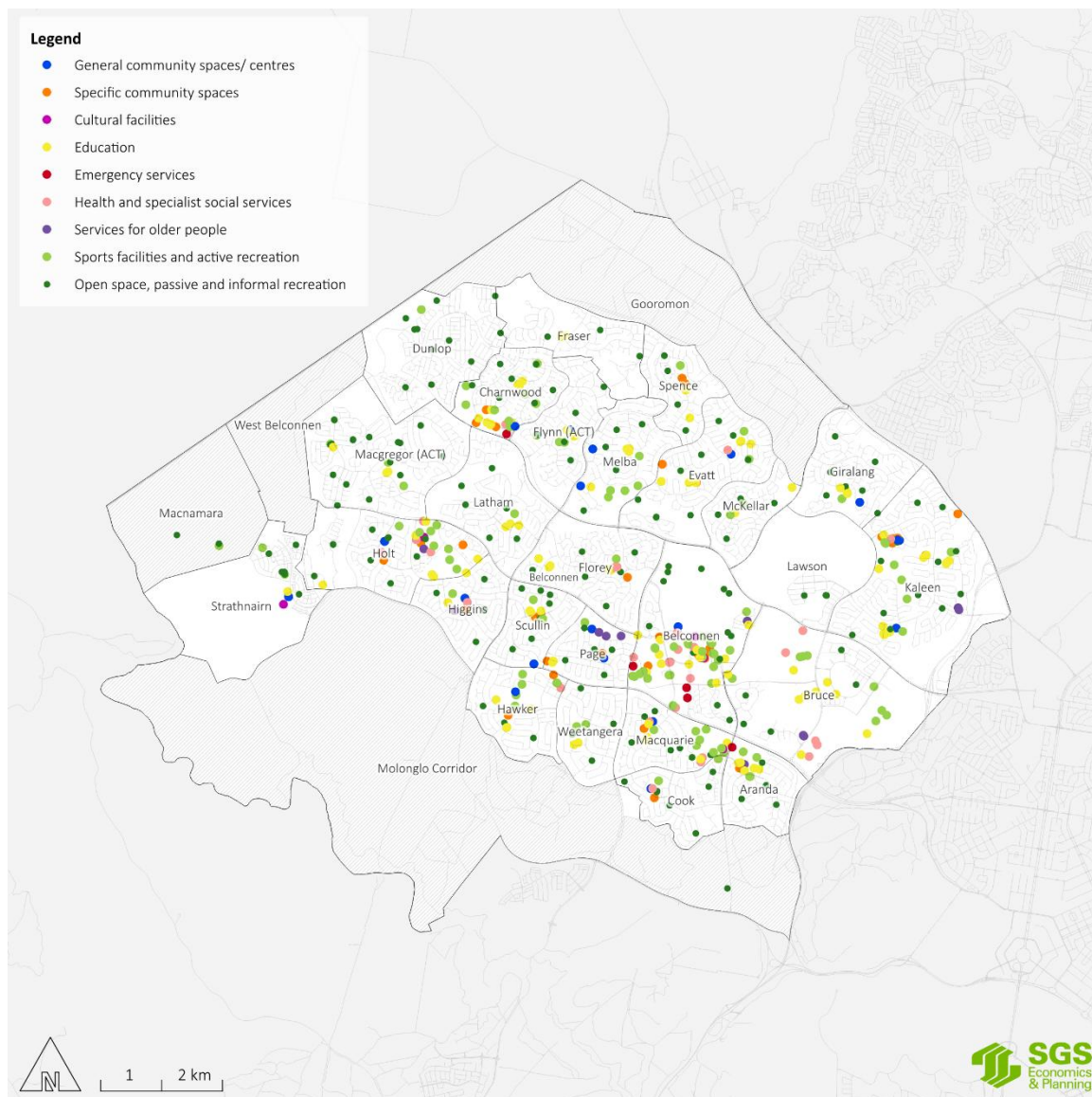
Belconnen is home to a large number and diverse range of community infrastructure assets. As shown in Figure 15, there are several concentrations of facilities and services located around the south-east portion of the district – notably in the Belconnen Town Centre, Cook, Aranda and Kaleen. In the north and west portions of the district, Holt and Charnwood provide the largest quantity of community infrastructure, with the remaining suburbs seeing lower levels of provision. Also shown in the figure, Belconnen has a large supply of sports facilities and active recreation spaces, as well as open space used for passive and informal recreation.

There are several significant, highly utilised facilities located in Belconnen, some of which serve both a district and a broader ACT-wide function. This includes the Canberra International Sports and Aquatic Centre (CISAC) and AIS campuses in Bruce, the Belconnen and Kippax Libraries, Belconnen Arts Centre and several community hubs and centres.

As one of Canberra’s older districts, with typical patterns of suburban development, Belconnen has a lot of small, standalone assets, located in the suburbs which are not necessarily well-located for broad community access and public transport routes. Many of these facilities are also old and potentially reaching the end of their usable life. At the same time, Belconnen is also seeing investment in new infrastructure, including in significant areas that are not the subject of the needs assessments, such as the Northside Hospital redevelopment, new health centre in West Belconnen, and several new and updated school campuses.

The development of Ginninderry in the coming decades will be an important spatial consideration for the Belconnen district, as this will shift the concentration of population growth to the north-west. Providing facilities in this area will be critical to meet demand from the new population as well as provide facilities and services targeted to vulnerable populations, to address the existing disadvantage that has historically been a challenge in West Belconnen.

Figure 15: Belconnen Community Infrastructure (current and planned²³)



Source: SGS, 2024.

Planned future facilities

The following projects are from the ACT Government’s Infrastructure Plan²⁴ and its subsequent updates which identifies new and upgraded infrastructure in the coming years. Further to the list below, based on conversations with stakeholders, there is also the potential to relocate the Belconnen Library, and for upgrades to the AIS campus facilities in Bruce.

²³ See Section 3 above for note regarding planned facilities - included are those listed on the Built for CBR website.

²⁴ ACT Government, 2024, ‘Infrastructure Plan,’ <https://www.builtforcbr.act.gov.au/infrastructure-plan>

In August 2024, the ACT Government also announced the release of over 23,000 square metres of land for community facilities across the ACT, intended to be delivered via an Expression of Interest (EOI) process, where potential providers will be required to demonstrate community demand for a particular facility type identified for the relevant block, and how the community will benefit from this.²⁵ One of the initial blocks identified for this process is located in Evatt – 1,872 square metres for a Place of Worship or Community Activity Centre.

District	Planned facilities/ upgrades
Belconnen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upgrades to Cranleigh School ▪ New ECEC to Year 6 school at Strathnairn ▪ Redevelopment of Fraser Primary School oval ▪ New CIT Yurauna in Bruce ▪ New Northside Hospital ▪ New West Belconnen Health Centre ▪ Upgrades to GIO stadium ▪ Expansion of Belconnen Basketball Stadium ▪ Belconnen Skate Park half pipe ▪ New Kippax Community Hub

Source: ACT Government, 2024.

²⁵ https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/chris-steel-mla-media-releases/2024/releasing-more-land-to-support-community-diversity

Supply and demand gap analysis – Belconnen

The table below distils the future demand and potential gaps by facility type for the district.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
General community spaces/centres										
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Local	16	9.4	6.6	11.5	4.5	12.9	3.1	14.4	1.6
Community centre	District	4	2.4	1.6	2.9	1.1	3.2	0.8	3.6	0.4
Meeting rooms	Local (Level 1)	3	26.5	-23.5	32.3	-29.3	36.2	-33.2	40.4	-37.4
	Subdistrict (Level 2)	6	13.2	-7.2	16.1	-10.1	18.1	-12.1	20.2	-14.2
	Subdistrict (Level 3)	1	13.2	-12.2	16.1	-15.1	18.1	-17.1	20.2	-19.2
	Subdistrict (level 4)	3	13.2	-10.2	16.1	-13.1	18.1	-15.1	20.2	-17.2
	District (Level 5)	1	5.3	-4.3	6.5	-5.5	7.2	-6.2	8.1	-7.1
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- Belconnen has a slight over supply of community centres and local neighbourhood centres both now and into the future. However based on best practice, these facilities should no longer be provided at a local level, rather integrated into other community facilities such as community centres, libraries, early years facilities. A review of these halls should be undertaken to assess if they are meeting the current needs of users, have high utilisation, and are in good asset condition. If not, consideration of future need should be assessed.
- In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved.

Specific community spaces

Youth centre	District	1	2.4	-1.4	2.9	-1.9	3.2	-2.2	3.6	-2.6
Senior citizens centre	District	1	2.1	-1.1	2.6	-1.6	2.9	-1.9	3.2	-2.2

Comments:

- The benchmarks suggest there is existing demand for an additional youth centre and senior citizens centre for the district, increasing to an additional two centres respectively 2051. These centres should be delivered as flexible spaces that are integrated into other community facilities such as community centres, libraries, and or arts facilities – i.e. they are not standalone facilities. A review of existing community infrastructure should be undertaken to identify potential opportunities for the integration of age specific spaces – particularly in facilities located in the north and west of the district which are less accessible to the existing centres in the Town centre. This should be done in consultation with young people and older people.
- Note: CED undertook consultation in 2023 to inform a future design of a community hub, which considered the inclusion of library, youth and seniors services. Since then, a community hub is being considered as part of a Direct Sale process for a Territory owned site in the Kippax group centre.

Cultural facilities

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Community arts centre/theatre	Local	1	11.8	-10.8	14.3	-13.3	16.1	-15.1	17.9	-16.9
	District	3	2.1	0.9	2.6	0.4	2.9	0.1	3.2	-0.2
Library – sqm	District	2,478 (2 libraries)	3,840	-1,362	4,393	-1,915	4,729	-2,251	5,055	-2,577

Comments:

- The existing supply of district level arts facilities are forecast to meet future population demand. At a local level there are limited flexible spaces that support arts programming. A review of existing community infrastructure should be undertaken to ensure it can support arts. This includes consideration of flooring, sinks, and access to storage.
- The existing floorspace of the Belconnen and Kippax libraries (of around 2,480 square metres) is less than the benchmark level for the current and future population, noting that the Belconnen Library is constrained by heritage controls.

Sports facilities and active recreation

Playing fields – ha	N/A	119.4	65.6	53.4	80.0	39	89.7	29.3	100.1	18.9
Aquatic centres and public pools	Subdistrict	1	2.1	-1.1	2.6	-1.6	2.9	-1.9	3.2	-2.2
	District	3	1.4	1.6	1.7	1.3	1.9	1.1	2.2	0.8
Indoor recreation centres including multi use sports club	District/local	7	2.6	4.4	3.2	3.8	3.6	3.4	4.0	3.0

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Outdoor courts: tennis	Subdistrict	24	21.2	2.8	25.8	-1.8	28.9	-4.9	32.3	-8.3
Outdoor courts: basketball	Subdistrict	10.75	35.3	-24.5	43.0	-32.3	48.2	-37.5	53.8	-43.1
Outdoor courts: netball	Subdistrict	8	21.2	-13.2	25.8	-17.8	28.9	-20.9	32.3	-24.3
Skatepark/ BMX facilities	Subdistrict	3	8.1	-5.1	9.8	-6.8	11.0	-8.0	12.3	-9.3
	District	1	6.0	-5.0	7.4	-6.4	8.3	-7.3	9.2	-8.2

Comments:

- Across the district based on the current average provision in the ACT, accounting for district playing fields, enclosed ovals, informal use ovals, and neighbourhood ovals in aggregate, Belconnen is projected to have sufficient provision in the long term, noting that additional playing field capacity is likely to be provided as part of Ginninderry in future, providing for the west of the district..
- While there is a gap for the district based on the benchmarks for subdistrict aquatic centres, Belconnen has a sufficient supply of district scale assets that can likely address much of the district’s demand. Utilisation of these facilities should be monitored over time, noting that the viability of pools is evolving.
- There are existing and projected gaps in the number of outdoor courts, most substantially for basketball and netball. The demand triggered from this benchmark however is overly high, and therefore this benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT want to provide, noting that ACT schools can also contribute to provision.
- The benchmarks also suggest a need for additional skate/BMX parks – both district level facilities and smaller elements (e.g. a ramp) that might be integrated with other open space assets. Planning for the provision of additional facilities should be done in consultation with young people and specific needs of the area. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to understand if this is the level of service that the ACT wants to provide.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Open space, passive and informal recreation (including outdoor public 'third spaces')										
Playgrounds/ play spaces	Local	139	52.9	86.1	64.6	74.4	72.4	66.6	80.7	58.3
	Subdistrict	14	11.8	2.2	14.3	-0.3	16.1	-2.1	17.9	-3.9
	District	4	2.1	1.9	2.6	1.4	2.9	1.1	3.2	0.8
Community gardens and allotments	District	4	1.8	2.2	2.2	1.8	2.4	1.6	2.7	1.3
Open space (configured for active and passive recreation) – ha	All	1,138	318	821	387	751	434	704	484	654

Comments:

- Belconnen is well provisioned for playgrounds, providing a range of options. Potentially the number of local playgrounds should be reviewed to ensure utilisation and demand is there, noting that there is an oversupply of 58.3 local playgrounds based on the benchmarks.
- With the district required approximately four additional subdistrict playgrounds, the local playgrounds should also be reviewed to understand if any of these can be upgraded to a subdistrict level.
- District is well provided for in the number of community gardens and overall quantity of open space.

Summary of recommendations – Belconnen

The following table summarises the recommendations for Belconnen to address the potential gaps that have been identified.

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
General community spaces/centres	
Neighbourhood halls/ centres	<p>As provision of standalone halls is no longer best practice, priority should be given to the enhancement of Belconnen’s existing halls and centres (e.g. like Humpy Hall), or, if new local facilities are provided (for example around Ginninderry to ensure provision across the district spatially), these should be integrated or co-located in hubs or with other community facilities – as is planned for the potential Kippax community hub in future. They should also be designed to ensure flexibility of uses (e.g. older and younger people, arts practice (see below), different sized groups) to support their ongoing utilisation.</p>
Community centre	<p>In addition, a review of existing halls should be undertaken to assess if they are meeting the current needs of users, have high utilisation, and are in good asset condition. If not, consideration of future need should be assessed.</p> <p>ACT Property Group’s ongoing project/assessment of its assets will also be a critical input to planning for these facilities in the district.</p>
Meeting rooms	<p>There is a general undersupply across the district of meeting rooms, however this may be an undercount of actual provision. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on.</p> <p>A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved. In relation to new builds, meeting rooms should be included in all new/refurbished general community spaces delivered in the district. In addition to providing capacity for general community use, opportunities for these spaces to be used by service providers (e.g. consulting rooms for ACT Health, CSD), including through co-location with new facilities like the future West Belconnen Health Centre, should also be considered (where those co-located uses are appropriate).</p>
Specific community spaces	
Youth centres	<p>There is existing demand for an additional youth centre and senior citizens centre for the district, increasing to an additional two centres respectively 2051. Practice has moved away from standalone centres as a model for provision, so ideally these</p>

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Senior citizens centres	<p>spaces would be integrated or co-located with other community facilities like community centres or libraries.</p> <p>With the growth expected at Ginninderry, provision for the western half of the district should be the focus, given both the higher levels of socio-demographic disadvantage in that area and that both existing facilities are located in the Town Centre.</p>
Cultural facilities	
Community arts centre/ theatre: local	<p>Belconnen is already well-provisioned in larger arts facilities, which can also cater to some of the demand gap identified for local level arts spaces. artsACT indicated through the consultation that securing ongoing funding and resourcing for new facilities can be a challenge.</p>
Community arts centre/ theatre: district	<p>As such, some of the local level demand for the district could instead be considered and accommodated in general community spaces. Any new facilities (or upgrades to existing) community centres, halls, and meeting rooms in the district should be designed to allow for local arts practice as part of flexible spaces (e.g. allowing space for storage, minor features like sink traps, and so on).</p>
Libraries	<p>While the benchmarks suggest a forecast gap in library floorspace for the district, Belconnen already has two library branches, and consultation with Libraries ACT indicated that any future provision of library spaces in the ACT will likely be in a smaller and more flexible format. Given this, the benchmark used for libraries should be reviewed.</p> <p>With the expected growth for Ginninderry, any enhancements to library capacity should be concentrated on the Kippax Library, and any new spaces would ideally be located in the west of the district.</p>
Sports facilities and active recreation	
Playing fields	<p>Over the long term in aggregate there is potentially sufficient playing field space for the district based on the benchmarks – noting that this benchmark sets provision based on current per capita levels. Provision of playing fields in Belconnen will also change with the future redevelopment at the Kippax Group Centre and investment in nearby ovals and playing fields, and new space as part of the Ginninderry development. Playing fields are also being planned for the area between Belconnen and Molonglo.</p> <p>The existing fields are fairly dispersed across the district geographically. The stakeholder consultation identified that there are some ovals in the district that could be brought back into regular uses and maintenance to meet demand after being ‘switched off’ due to droughts in previous years which could be investigated to address any additional demand at a district or broader level (e.g. demand from Molonglo).</p>

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Aquatic centres and public pools: subdistrict	While there is a gap identified in the number of subdistrict aquatic centres, Belconnen has the benefit of a number of significant aquatic assets (CISAC, AIS) which are designed to service larger than district catchments and are likely to be sufficient to address the latent demand for smaller facilities. Utilisation of facilities should continue to be monitored over time.
Aquatic centres and public pools: district	
Indoor recreation centres incl. multi use sports club	No changes required.
Outdoor courts: tennis	With significant gaps identified in the benchmarking for both basketball and netball courts, and ACT Sports and Recreation indicating a preference to provide clusters of courts together (rather than single/dispersed ones), an additional district facility with mixed/multi-purpose courts should be considered. Expansions/additions to the existing facilities in the district could be considered as an alternative, noting that upgrades are proposed to the Belconnen indoor basketball stadium. Most of the Belconnen district is within a 10-minute driving catchment of at least one outdoor court. The demand triggered from this benchmark however is also overly high, and therefore this benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide, noting capacity from schools can also cater to some of the demand.
Outdoor courts: basketball	
Outdoor courts: netball	
Skate/ BMX facilities: subdistrict	The benchmarks indicate a forecast deficit in both district and subdistrict skate/BMX facilities, even though Belconnen has the benefit of access to the large skate park on Emu Bank, the BMX track in Melba, and a new skate park is expected to be delivered with the redevelopment of the Kippax Group Centre, replacing the existing ramp there. At least one additional district level facility could therefore be considered for the long term, and additional provision may also be needed as part of Ginninderry as a growth area, in line with recommendations from the recent Legislative Assembly Inquiry. ²⁶
Skate/ BMX facilities: district	Noting also the projected gap for youth-specific facilities in the district, it is recommended that skate/BMX facilities be considered for provision alongside any future spaces designated for youth and other sports activities, providing the opportunity to create youth-friendly hubs. This should be done in consultation with young people and specific needs of the area. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to understand if this is the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.

²⁶ *Inquiry into Skateboarding and Skate Parks in the ACT*, Report 12, 10th Assembly, June 2024, https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/2515270/Report-12-Inquiry-into-Skateboarding-and-Skate-Parks-in-the-ACT.pdf

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Open space, passive and informal recreation	
Playgrounds/ play spaces: local	<p>There is a forecast gap identified in the benchmarking for subdistrict level playgrounds, with around 3 needed by 2051. However, given that Belconnen also has a much larger number of local playgrounds than the benchmark level, this demand is likely to be able to be accommodated through existing facilities. City services branches within CED (formerly TCCS) also have their own processes and standards, including the Play Spaces Strategy, that guide the provision of these types of facilities.</p> <p>It is important to note however that the number of playgrounds and spaces in the district is not necessarily an indicator of their quality, which also needs to be an important consideration and subject to continued monitoring.</p> <p>Furthermore, the number of local playgrounds should be reviewed to ensure utilisation and demand is there, noting that there is an oversupply of 58.3 local playgrounds based on the benchmarks.</p>
Playgrounds/ play spaces: subdistrict	
Playgrounds/ play spaces: district	
Community gardens and allotments	No changes required.
Open space	No changes required.

7.2 Gungahlin

District	2021	2031	2041	2051	Change 2021-2051	% change 2021-2051	% of ACT growth 2021-2051	% of ACT in 2051
Gungahlin	87,843	98,450	102,418	107,653	19,810	22.6%	7.9%	15.3%

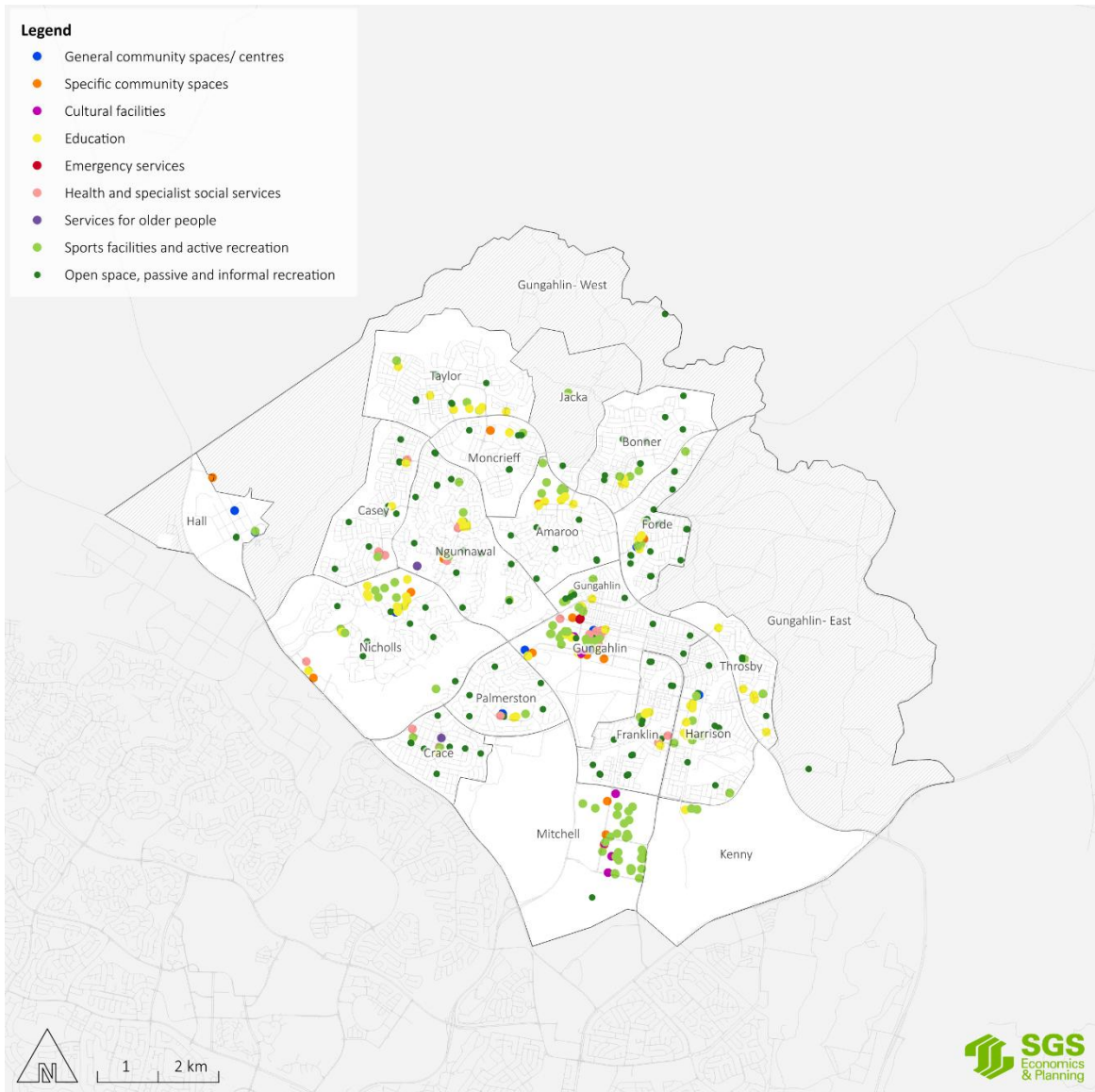
The location of Gungahlin’s community infrastructure assets is shown in Figure 16. The largest concentration and range of assets is situated within the Gungahlin Town Centre, which enables residents of the district to access numerous facilities all within close proximity of each other. Proximity to a range of facilities is more limited for residents in the northern areas of the district, such as Bonner, Casey, and Taylor, which also have no rapid bus links to the Town Centre.

The district has a number of education facilities, sports facilities, active recreation and open spaces within proximity of residential suburbs. Key existing assets include the Gungahlin Library, the Gungahlin Leisure Centre, and district-level playing fields. The proposed two-storey Gungahlin Community Centre (to be located in the Town Centre, expected to be completed in 2026) will also service the district, providing the community with a large multi-purpose room, several meeting rooms, arts spaces and the like. As Gungahlin continues to grow, there is likely to be a need for more facilities located in the Town Centre, particularly with higher density residential growth expected in the Gungahlin Town Centre East (GTCE) precinct, in addition to local facilities to service the growing population in the outer suburban and greenfield areas like Jacka and Kenny as they are completed.

Gungahlin has grown substantially since it was first established. Remaining growth for the district in the short to medium term is expected to be primarily in Kenny in the south, the GTCE precinct, and in the remainder of the northernmost suburbs as greenfield development (e.g. Taylor, Jacka, etc.). The growth in the population has necessitated several additional school campuses in the district (identified in the Infrastructure Plan), though in other types of community facilities Gungahlin has lacked the same level of provision as the ACT’s other districts, due to a range of factors. A need for additional meeting spaces in the Gungahlin district has been raised consistently by the community in the past, including the need for spaces that can cater to larger groups. Arts facilities have also been identified as a focus area for government, with plans as well for indoor sports, investment in health centres, and outdoor facilities including a new dog park in Franklin and upgrades around Yerrabi. The potential for a life-long learning hub is in the early stages of planning for the GTCE precinct.

As a growth area, there are also still some opportunities for community facilities to be provided in currently undeveloped or developing areas, however, it is critical that the need for facilities for the district is understood so that the appropriate locations can be identified and reserved – particularly in the Town Centre where there will be substantial competition from other land uses.

Figure 16: Gungahlin Community Infrastructure (current and planned)



Source: SGS, 2024.

Planned future facilities

At the time of writing this report, the ACT Government’s Infrastructure Plan and its subsequent updates identify plans for new and upgraded infrastructure in the coming years (some of which may now be underway or completed). For Gungahlin this includes:

District	Planned facilities/ upgrades
Gungahlin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shirley Smith High School in Kenny (opened 2024) ▪ Aunty Agnes Shea High School in Taylor (opened 2025) ▪ New North Gungahlin College in Nicholls ▪ New Gungahlin Tennis Centre (in Amaroo) ▪ Throsby Home of Football – <i>note: now announced will become district playing fields</i> ▪ New Casey Community Recreation Park ▪ Upgrades to Yerrabi Pond District Park ▪ New dog park in Franklin (opened 2025) ▪ New North Gungahlin Health Centre (in Casey) ▪ New Gungahlin Community Centre (in Gungahlin) ▪ Upgrades to emergency services in Gungahlin, including new ambulance and fire and rescue station in Casey

Source: ACT Government, 2024.

One of the initial six blocks identified for the EOI process announced in August 2024 is also in Gungahlin – 4,075 square metres for a Community Activity Centre or Religious Associated Use.

In addition, there are a further 8 netball courts planned alongside the existing 4 courts established in Jacka, and new playing fields to be delivered in the suburb.

Supply and demand gap analysis – Gungahlin

The table below distils the future demand and potential gaps by facility type for the district.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
General community spaces/centres										
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Local	6	7.8	-1.8	8.8	-2.8	9.1	-3.1	9.6	-3.6
Community centre	District	1	2.0	-1.0	2.2	-1.2	2.3	-1.3	2.4	-1.4
Meeting rooms	Local (Level 1)	6	22.0	-16.0	24.6	-18.6	25.6	-19.6	26.9	-20.9
	Subdistrict (Level 2)	3	11.0	-8.0	12.3	-9.3	12.8	-9.8	13.5	-10.5
	Subdistrict (Level 3)	5	11.0	-6.0	12.3	-7.3	12.8	-7.8	13.5	-8.5
	Subdistrict (level 4)	1	11.0	-10.0	12.3	-11.3	12.8	-11.8	13.5	-12.5
	District (Level 5)	0	4.4	-4.4	4.9	-4.9	5.1	-5.1	5.4	-5.4
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- District community centres will be slightly undersupplied by 2051. This includes consideration of the planned community centre in the Gungahlin Town Centre. Given this, an additional district level community centre should be provided in the future.
- There is an undersupply of local neighbourhood halls/centres, however based on best practice, these facilities should no longer be provided at a local level, rather integrated into other community facilities such as community centres, libraries, and early years facilities. A review of the existing halls should be undertaken to assess if they are meeting the current needs of users, have high utilisation, and are in good asset condition. If not, consideration of future need should be assessed.
- In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved.

Specific community spaces

Youth centre	District	1	2.0	-1.0	2.2	-1.2	2.3	-1.3	2.4	-1.4
Senior citizens centre	District	1	1.8	-0.8	2.0	-1.0	2.0	-1.0	2.2	-1.2

Comments:

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- Youth centres and senior citizen centres are flexible spaces that are integrated into other community facilities such as community centres, libraries, and or arts facilities – i.e. they are not standalone facilities.
- There is existing and future demand for a youth centre in the Gungahlin district – inclusive of the fact that one will be supplied as part of the new Community Centre. At least one additional space should be provided.
- Similarly, for senior’s citizen centres, and spaces for older people, an additional space is forecast to be required in time. Opportunities to integrate this space into future community infrastructure should be considered.
- Both of these recommendations should be done in consultation with young people and older people.

Cultural facilities

Community arts centre/theatre	Local	0	9.8	-9.8	10.9	-10.9	11.4	-11.4	12.0	-12.0
	District	0	1.8	-1.8	2.0	-2.0	2.0	-2.0	2.2	-2.2
Library – sqm	District	3,100 (1 library)	3,366	-266	3,650	-550	3,751	-651	3,885	-785

Comments:

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- There are currently no local or district community arts spaces in the Gungahlin district. There are some private facilities such as studios that can support arts practice, however for this assessment local level facilities are defined as flexible spaces that are support arts programming. A review of existing community infrastructure should be undertaken to ensure it can support arts. This includes consideration of flooring, sinks, and access to storage.
- At a district level, two dedicated arts facilities will be required. Where possible these should be co-located with other community infrastructure such as community centres and or libraries.
- The existing floorspace at Gungahlin Library is close to the benchmark level in the short to medium term, noting that some of this floorspace is currently used as a shared resource with Gungahlin College, however with the establishment of the future College in Nicholls demand pressures may be alleviated. The Town Centre East Design and Place Framework has indicated the potential for new library floorspace in that part of a life-long learning hub in the Town Centre, however this is yet to be confirmed as a committed facility.

Sports facilities and active recreation

Playing fields – ha	N/A	54.1	54.5	-0.4	61.0	-6.9	63.5	-9.4	66.7	-12.6
Aquatic centres and public pools	Subdistrict	2	1.8	0.2	2.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	2.2	-0.2
	District	1	1.2	-0.2	1.3	-0.3	1.4	-0.4	1.4	-0.4
Indoor recreation centres including multi use sports club	District/local	1	2.2	-1.2	2.5	-1.5	2.6	-1.6	2.7	-1.7
Outdoor courts: tennis	Subdistrict	21	17.6	3.4	19.7	1.3	20.5	0.5	21.5	-0.5

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Outdoor courts: basketball	Subdistrict	26.5	29.3	-2.8	32.8	-6.3	34.1	-7.6	35.9	-9.4
Outdoor courts: netball	Subdistrict	18	17.6	0.4	19.7	-1.7	20.5	-2.5	21.5	-3.5
Skatepark/ BMX facilities	Subdistrict	3	6.7	-3.7	7.5	-4.5	7.8	-4.8	8.2	-5.2
	District	0	5.0	-5.0	5.6	-5.6	5.9	-5.9	6.2	-6.2

Comments:

- The identified gap in district playing field space will be lessened by the addition of playing fields in Throsby for the community (formerly the Throsby Home of Football), and provision of fields alongside new school campuses in the district.
- Aquatic facilities are generally able to meet forecast demand however utilisation of the district facility should be monitored over time with the consideration of potentially expanding one of the local facilities to district if required.
- There is only one indoor sports facility currently in the district (which is specific to gymnastics). While some of this demand can be accommodated through school-based facilities, and potentially by residents accessing facilities in Belconnen or the Inner North, an additional multi-purpose indoor facility should be delivered to meet existing and future demand from the population.
- There are existing and projected gaps in the number of outdoor courts, most substantially for basketball, noting that some facilities on school campuses may provide additional capacity. However, as for Belconnen, the demand triggered from this benchmark is overly high, therefore this benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
- Gungahlin also has a gap in skate/BMX facilities, with a number of smaller skate park features, but none at a district level. Provision of additional facilities should be done in consultation with young people and specific needs of the area. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to understand if this is the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.

Open space, passive and informal recreation (including outdoor public 'third spaces')

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Playgrounds/ play spaces	Local	67	43.9	23.1	49.2	17.8	51.2	15.8	53.8	13.2
	Subdistrict	14	9.8	4.2	10.9	3.1	11.4	2.6	12.0	2.0
	District	1	1.8	-0.8	2.0	-1.0	2.0	-1.0	2.2	-1.2
Community gardens and allotments	District	3	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.7	1.3	1.8	1.2
Open space (configured for active and passive recreation) – ha	All	831	264	568	295	536	307	524	323	508

Comments:

- Gungahlin is well provisioned in the number of local and subdistrict play spaces, but there is potentially a need for an additional district-level play space in future. Some of this district level demand may be able to be accommodated by the subdistrict and local facilities.
- Gungahlin has above the benchmark level provision of both community gardens and general open space.

Summary of recommendations – Gungahlin

The following table summarises the recommendations for Gungahlin to address the potential gaps that have been identified.

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
General community spaces/centres	
Neighbourhood halls/ centres	<p>Noting that there is a new community centre planned for the Gungahlin Town Centre,²⁷ there will still be demand for an additional district community centre.</p> <p>As provision of standalone halls is no longer best practice a review of existing halls should be undertaken to assess if they are meeting the current needs of users, have high utilisation, and are in good asset condition. If not, consideration of future need should be assessed.</p>
Community centres	<p>There is a general undersupply across the district of meeting rooms, however this may be an undercount of actual provision. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on.</p> <p>A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved.</p>
Meeting rooms	<p>Provision of several additional facilities will need to be considered for the district – particularly in the northern suburbs where there are very few of these facilities currently. For efficiency and recognising that the number of land release sites (and therefore opportunities for community facility provision) are diminishing, a larger district level facility, including the capacity to cater to the larger/level 5 sized groups but which can also be adapted for several smaller spaces for use at different times, should be investigated for the district.</p> <p>Opportunities to co-locate with other service providers and facilities should also be prioritised, such as providing meeting rooms with the planned health centre in Casey.</p>
Specific community spaces	
Youth centres	<p>There is demand for an additional youth centre and senior citizens centre for the district. Practice has moved away from standalone centres as a model for provision, so ideally these spaces would be integrated or co-located with other community</p>

²⁷ <https://the-riotact.com/gungahlin-to-finally-have-new-community-centre-and-youth-hub/710825>

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Senior citizens centres	<p>facilities like community centres or libraries, as is the case with the new community centre that will be delivered in the Town Centre.</p> <p>Provision for the north of the district, where much of the remaining greenfield growth will be, should be prioritised, particularly for any youth-specific facilities to ensure a geographic spread in access. Future provision of both of these facility types should be developed in consultation with user groups.</p>
Cultural facilities	
Community arts centre/ theatre: local	<p>There are currently no local and district community arts spaces in the Gungahlin district, noting that this assessment has defined and benchmarked local level facilities as flexible spaces that are support arts programming. A review of existing community infrastructure should be undertaken to ensure it can support arts. This includes consideration of flooring, sinks, and access to storage.</p> <p>Arts programs for the district are currently run in an outreach format by Belco Arts, including through pop up workshops, events, exhibitions, community projects and festivals, in collaboration with local artists and responding to local needs.²⁸</p> <p>At a district level based on the benchmarking, up to two dedicated arts facilities may be required in future. Where possible these should be collocated with other community infrastructure such as community centres and or libraries.</p>
Community arts centre/ theatre: district	<p>However, as advised by artsACT during the consultation, there is not necessarily a need for dedicated arts facilities in every district. The future Gungahlin Community Centre in the Town Centre is expected to include specific spaces for artists and arts practice as well, which will provide a more permanent facility for the district.</p> <p>Going forward, space for arts practice should ideally be integrated with general community spaces, whether as dedicated spaces as per the future Community Centre or through ensuring that flexible spaces include the appropriate features to allow for arts activities.</p>

²⁸ <https://www.belcoarts.com.au/gungahlin-arts/>

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
<p>Libraries</p>	<p>The existing Gungahlin library was designed with the intention of catering to a district-level population; however, it is not currently able to operate to its full capacity as some of its spaces are needed by Gungahlin College. There are also other challenges that have been noted with the co-location model for libraries with colleges more generally, however, demand pressures on the library may be alleviated with the future College planned for Nicholls.</p> <p>The recently released Gungahlin Town Centre East Design and Place Framework indicates the potential for new library space to be delivered in that precinct, however, the plans for this are far from certain at this stage. Resolving the future of the Gungahlin Library needs to be a priority for planning for the district, with the importance of the library as a potential anchor for other community uses, and the limited sites remaining in the district that may be suitable.</p> <p>Libraries ACT is also considering other potential delivery models for library spaces and services. The north of Gungahlin should be a priority area for consideration of this, given the distance for residents from suburbs like Moncrieff, Taylor, and Jacka to the Town Centre and the main library currently.</p>
<p>Sports facilities and active recreation</p>	
<p>Playing fields</p>	<p>The projected gap in demand for playing field space is likely to be lessened by the provision of new playing fields that will be delivered in Throsby on what was to be the Throsby Home of Football until recently, and in Taylor, as well as playing fields that will be co-located with future school campuses in the district (such as the future North Gungahlin College in Nicholls).</p>
<p>Aquatic centres and public pools: subdistrict</p>	<p>With the existing district level facility in Gungahlin this is likely to meet forecast demand, however its utilisation should be monitored over time.</p>
<p>Aquatic centres and public pools: district</p>	

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Indoor recreation centres incl. multi use sports club	<p>Noting that the Throsby Home of Football is no longer going ahead as previously planned and will instead become district playing fields, the only indoor sports facility currently identified in the district is Gungahlin Gymnastics. The need for indoor sports facilities has also been raised as an issue by the community previously.</p> <p>Current planning has earmarked sites in the Casey Group Centre as potential locations for a multi-purpose indoor sports facility, which, if delivered, would go some way to meeting the identified gap. The GTCE is also being considered for some form of indoor facility. If these projects are not realised, it should be a priority to identify another site to ensure a suitable location is available, noting that there are relatively few land release opportunities left in the district, particularly outside of the Gungahlin Town Centre East precinct.</p>
Outdoor courts: tennis	<p>There are projected long term gaps in the provision of basketball and netball courts compared to the benchmarks (though supply may be underrepresented here). The level of gap for basketball courts could potentially justify the need for a new facility with multiple courts, however, this would need further consideration with ACT Sport and Recreation, and the relative proximity of the district to some of the ACT's larger facilities (Belconnen Stadium, netball centre in Lyneham). Finding a suitably large site may also be challenging.</p> <p>Alternatively, some of the demand could be met through small-scale provision of courts alongside other facilities like playing fields, or as shared facilities with school campuses.</p> <p>Furthermore, this benchmark should be reviewed to understand if this is the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.</p>
Outdoor courts: basketball	
Outdoor courts: netball	
Skate/ BMX facilities: subdistrict	<p>Additional skate/BMX facilities will be needed in the district, given the existing provision gap identified, and that there is not an existing district-level facility for this growth area. Provision of these facilities is particularly important for Gungahlin given its younger population, and few existing facilities and activities for older children and teenagers (e.g. indoor sports facilities, community centres).</p>
Skate/ BMX facilities: district	<p>Smaller scale features could be delivered with existing parks and open space, while a district level facility may require a larger land take and therefore need a specific site. This should be delivered in consultation with young people. Furthermore, this benchmark should be reviewed to understand if this is the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.</p>
Open space, passive and informal recreation	
Playgrounds/ play spaces: local	<p>There is a potential need for an additional district-level playground in the district over the long term. Ideally this would be co-located with other outdoor facilities or a centre. Given that most of the centres and sites in the northern growth suburbs</p>

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Playgrounds/ play spaces: subdistrict	<p>are already planned, this could potentially be incorporated in Kenny subject to site suitability and other considerations including CED (formerly TCCS) standards.</p>
Playgrounds/ play spaces: district	<p>There may also be opportunities to improve the quality of existing playgrounds and spaces in the district to enhance provision (rather than just focusing on the quantity of spaces). Furthermore, the number of local playgrounds should be reviewed to ensure utilisation and demand is there, noting that there is an oversupply of 13 local playgrounds.</p>
Community gardens and allotments	<p>No changes required.</p>
Open space	<p>No changes required.</p>

7.3 Inner North and City (North Canberra)

District	2021	2031	2041	2051	Change 2021-2051	% change 2021-2051	% of ACT growth 2021-2051	% of ACT in 2051
North Canberra	61,372	75,760	88,088	161,449	42,378	69.1%	16.9%	14.7%

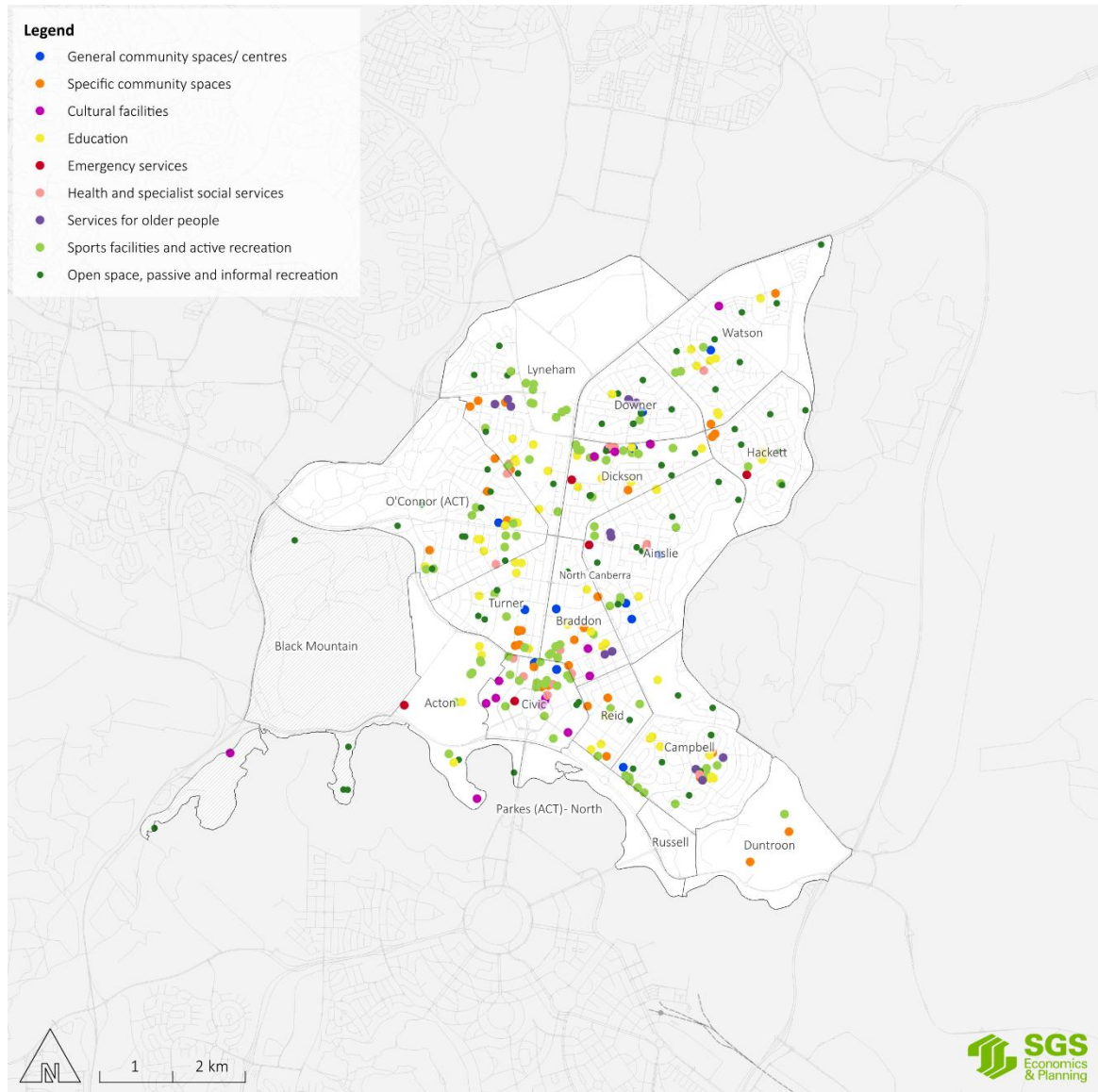
Being centrally located, residents of the Inner North and City district benefit from a greater level of accessibility to a diverse range and quantity of community infrastructure assets than some of the other districts. In particular, the city centre is home to a large provision of cultural facilities and sports facilities.

Many of the key facilities in the Inner North and City district not only cater to the immediate population but service the whole of the ACT and even wider, as well as domestic and international visitors. This includes the Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG), the Canberra Theatre precinct (soon to be redeveloped), and the Canberra Olympic Pool.

The Inner North and City is seeing substantial change, and consequently growth in the population, which is expected to continue into the future. Significant redevelopment is planned for a number of precincts within the district, including the Acton Waterfront, and privately held sites such as the Yowani Country Club and Thoroughbred Park. There has also been substantial investment in social and cultural infrastructure, which will service not only the district but Canberra more broadly and beyond, including the Civic and Culture District in the city centre, and longer term the New Commonwealth Park Civic Pool and New Canberra Convention and Entertainment Centre/ entertainment Precinct pavilion. Facilities like Boundless Playground also serve a wider than district catchment. As the district in the ACT with the highest density of housing and other development, community facilities, and urban open space in particular, become even more critical as apartments have limited private open space.

A critical challenge for Inner North will be the availability of land for additional future community facilities – both from the perspective that there are limited undeveloped sites remaining as the district urbanises (particularly those in government ownership), and that typical land values are also very high (making the prospect of acquisitions of sites for facilities more difficult).

Figure 17: Inner North and City Community Infrastructure (current and planned)



Source: SGS, 2024.

Planned future facilities

The ACT Government’s Infrastructure Plan and its subsequent updates identify plans for new and upgraded infrastructure in the coming years. For Inner North and City this includes:

District	Planned facilities/ upgrades
Inner North and City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Modernisation of Majura Primary School ▪ Upgrades to Black Mountain School ▪ New facilities in Watson Health Precinct ▪ Canberra Theatre Centre redevelopment and Civic and Culture District ▪ New Canberra Convention and Entertainment Centre/ entertainment Precinct pavilion ▪ Improvements to Gorman House and Ainslie Arts Centres ▪ New Commonwealth Park Civic Pool ▪ New Dragon Boat facility at Grevillia Park ▪ Two new play spaces in Watson (opened 2025) ▪ Civic Library re-location (TBC) ▪ Fire and Ambulance Station in Acton (opened 2025) ▪ New Policing Headquarters and Civic Police Station in Civic

Source: ACT Government, 2024.

Additional opportunities that were identified through the consultation for the district include the possible relocation of Civic Library into the Canberra Theatre Centre redevelopment and Canberra Civic and Culture District, and opportunities for facilities to be integrated into the Acton Waterfront masterplan process, including the Ngamawari Park, part of which was delivered in 2025.

Supply and demand gap analysis – Inner North and City

The table below distils the future demand and potential gaps by facility type for the district.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
General community spaces/centres										
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Local	13	5.5	7.5	6.7	6.3	7.8	5.2	9.2	3.8
Community centre	District	2	1.4	0.6	1.7	0.3	2.0	0.0	2.3	-0.3
Meeting rooms	Local (Level 1)	10	15.3	-5.3	18.9	-8.9	22.0	-12.0	25.9	-15.9
	Subdistrict (Level 2)	4	7.7	-3.7	9.5	-5.5	11.0	-7.0	13.0	-9.0
	Subdistrict (Level 3)	10	7.7	2.3	9.5	0.5	11.0	-1.0	13.0	-3.0
	Subdistrict (level 4)	1	7.7	-6.7	9.5	-8.5	11.0	-10.0	13.0	-12.0
	District (Level 5)	1	3.1	-2.1	3.8	-2.8	4.4	-3.4	5.2	-4.2
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- Inner North and City is well provided for in terms of neighbourhood and community centres. A review of local neighbourhood halls/centres should be undertaken to ensure these are fit for purpose, meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition.
- In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved.

Specific community spaces

Youth centre	District	2	1.4	0.6	1.7	0.3	2.0	0.0	2.3	-0.3
Senior citizens centre	District	1	1.2	-0.2	1.5	-0.5	1.8	-0.8	2.1	-1.1

Comments:

- The two existing youth centres located in the Inner North and City are forecast to meet demand for the district. Noting that both are in the southern half of the district, ensuring space for youth-based activities in the north of the district in general community spaces will be important.
- Over the long term there may be a need for an additional senior's centre. This should be integrated into existing community spaces such as libraries and community centres. Integration of the existing standalone site with other facilities or services should also be considered.

Cultural facilities

Community arts centre/theatre	Local	6	6.8	-0.8	8.4	-2.4	9.8	-3.8	11.5	-5.5
	District	3	1.2	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.2	2.1	0.9

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Library – sqm	District	2,144 (2 libraries)	2,600	-456	3,027	-883	3,373	-1,229	3,786	-1,642

Comments:

- Inner North and City is well-provided for in district-level community arts spaces, but less so at the local level, though noting that this demand can be absorbed through the district scale assets and potentially other flexible community spaces.
- The existing floorspace in the district (Civic and Dickson libraries) is just short of the benchmark level currently, however the potential gap is projected to increase with the growth in the population over the long term. Additional library capacity in the district may be needed in future, noting that there may be a new Civic Library as part of the Canberra Theatre Centre redevelopment and Canberra Civic and Culture District redevelopment (replacing the existing), and that the Dickson Library building is constrained by heritage controls.

Sports facilities and active recreation

Playing fields – ha	N/A	57.6	38.1	19.5	47.0	10.6	54.6	3.0	64.3	-6.7
Aquatic centres and public pools	Subdistrict	2	1.2	0.8	1.5	0.5	1.8	0.2	2.1	-0.1
	District	3	0.8	2.2	1.0	2.0	1.2	1.8	1.4	1.6
Indoor recreation centres including multi use sports club	District/local	6	1.5	4.5	1.9	4.1	2.2	3.8	2.6	3.4
Outdoor courts: tennis	Subdistrict	56	12.3	43.7	15.2	40.8	17.6	38.4	20.7	35.3

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Outdoor courts: basketball	Subdistrict	5.5	20.5	-15.0	25.3	-19.8	29.4	-23.9	34.6	-29.1
Outdoor courts: netball	Subdistrict	12	12.3	-0.3	15.2	-3.2	17.6	-5.6	20.7	-8.7
Skatepark/ BMX facilities	Subdistrict	2	4.7	-2.7	5.8	-3.8	6.7	-4.7	7.9	-5.9
	District	0	3.5	-3.5	4.3	-4.3	5.0	-5.0	5.9	-5.9

Comments:

- There is potentially a supply gap for playing fields in the district over the long term, though this is relatively small (noting that playing field complexes are typically delivered as 15 hectare areas). Some of the identified gap may be able to be accommodated through enhancing the capacity of existing facilities, and/ or through provision via co-location of fields with new schools if they are delivered in the district.
- The Inner North has a sufficient number of aquatic facilities to meet the provision benchmarks for local and district demand, also noting that there will be a New Commonwealth Park Civic Pool in the district.
- There is a surplus of indoor recreation and tennis courts across the district. Considerations should be given to how this infrastructure is currently or can in the future service potential gaps in surrounding districts, particularly for Gungahlin.
- There is a potential gap in provision of basketball courts, which may be sufficient to warrant a competition-level facility with multiple courts over the long term, and a smaller gap for netball, noting that the district is home to ACT Netball and additional indoor courts, and some ACT schools may also contribute to the supply of courts but are not captured here. As noted for the other districts. this benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
- There is also a gap in skate/BMX facilities, with a couple of smaller skate park features, but none at a district level. Future provision should be planned in consultation with young people and the specific needs of the area. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to understand if this is the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Open space, passive and informal recreation (including outdoor public 'third spaces')										
Playgrounds/ play spaces	Local	36	30.7	5.3	37.9	-1.9	44.0	-8.0	51.9	-15.9
	Subdistrict	9	6.8	2.2	8.4	0.6	9.8	-0.8	11.5	-2.5
	District	2	1.2	0.8	1.5	0.5	1.8	0.2	2.1	-0.1
Community gardens and allotments	District	4	1.0	3.0	1.3	2.7	1.5	2.5	1.7	2.3
Open space (configured for active and passive recreation) – ha	All	343	184	159	227	116	264	78.7	311	31.8

Comments:

- Over the long term there may be a need for additional playground and/or play space provision in the district at the local and subdistrict level, noting there may be some limited capacity for facilities in nearby districts to potentially accommodate additional demand.
- The district is over-supplied in the number of community gardens.
- The quantum of open space in the district meets the identified benchmark level, noting that this includes parkland associated with Haig Park and Commonwealth Park in addition to PRZ1 zoned land. The accessibility and useability of the open space is particularly important for the higher density parts of the district for which there is generally less private open space and it is difficult to deliver new open space assets.

Summary of Recommendations – Inner North and City

The following table summarises the recommendations for the Inner North and City to address the potential gaps that have been identified.

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendation/s
General community spaces/centres	
Neighbourhood hall/centres	<p>Inner North and City is well provided for in terms of neighbourhood and community centres. A review of local neighbourhood halls/centres should be undertaken to ensure these are fit for purpose, meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition. If they are not meeting these criteria potential consolidation opportunities should be explored.</p>
Community centre	<p>If consolidation and new community centres are developed, these should be prioritised (and ideally, mandated) to be provided in areas within the district with significant redevelopment, to ensure that additional demand generated by the population growth can be met locally as much as possible. ACT Property Group’s input to this will also be critical.</p>
Meeting rooms	<p>There is a general undersupply across the district of meeting rooms, however this may be an undercount of actual provision. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on.</p> <p>A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and waitlists. Furthermore, a review of the flexibility of existing spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved (ACT Property Group’s current assessment of its assets should be utilised in this).</p> <p>It is also noted that in the city centre there are likely additional meeting room spaces available (though not necessarily affordable for community users).</p> <p>As there are a sufficient number of local and district community centres in the district, priority should be given to whether these existing facilities can be expanded or enhanced to have additional meeting room capacity to meet this demand.</p>
Specific community spaces	
Youth centre	<p>In the long term an additional seniors’ centre is forecast be required for the district. Noting that practice has moved away from the standalone format of the current facility in Turner, additional dedicated space for seniors would be best delivered through co-location with other general community spaces. Provision</p>

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendation/s
Senior citizens centres	could be considered in the Dickson Group Centre to allow for closer access to residents in the northern part of the district. The development of this space should be done in consultation with older people.
Cultural facilities	
Community arts centre/ theatre: local	No changes required.
Community arts centre/ theatre: district	
Libraries	<p>While there is a potential gap in library provision based on the benchmarks applied to the Inner North, it is one of the few districts with current access to 2 library facilities. It is therefore unlikely that additional libraries will be provided in the district, also noting that the Civic Library will be replaced with a new facility as part of the redevelopment of the cultural precinct in the city centre.</p> <p>Additional demand may also be able to be met through the other formats for provision of services that Libraries ACT is exploring.</p>
Sports facilities and active recreation	
Playing fields	<p>There is potentially a longer term gap in the provision of playing fields based on the projected population, however with the size of the gap this may be able to be addressed through enhancing the capacity of/ upgrading existing fields (e.g. with lighting to allow additional hours of use), and/ or if there are fields provided with future schools in the district.</p> <p>Given the land take required for playing field facilities, if it is determined that additional fields are required, the opportunities to retain suitable sites for playing fields need to be prioritised now, especially in areas that are seeing or will see substantial redevelopment (which is the case in this district) – it will be incredibly difficult to try and retrofit these types of facilities after redevelopment has occurred.</p>
Aquatic centres and public pools: subdistrict	No changes required.
Aquatic centres and public pools: district	

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendation/s
Outdoor courts: tennis	The projected gap of around 29 basketball courts in the long term for the district may be sufficient to warrant a standalone basketball complex. If possible, this could be designed to allow for multi-purpose uses, and in doing so could also accommodate additional capacity for netball. The benchmark for outdoor courts should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide, and noting that the current supply may be underrepresenting in the audit.
Outdoor courts: basketball	The challenge for the Inner North is likely to be finding a suitable site for court facilities, noting that there are very few remaining government owned land release sites in the district, and these are primarily earmarked for new housing. There are also practical considerations associated with siting such as facility (e.g. potential for noise impacts and so on).
Outdoor courts: netball	The district is likely to need at least a district-scale skate/BMX facility, and possibly additional skate features that can be located with parks, open space, and other facilities. Subject to a suitable site being available, a larger district facility could be designed to cater to both the district and local level demand. This should be done in consultation with young people and the specific needs of the area. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to understand if this is the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
Skate/ BMX facilities: subdistrict	The district is likely to need at least a district-scale skate/BMX facility, and possibly additional skate features that can be located with parks, open space, and other facilities. Subject to a suitable site being available, a larger district facility could be designed to cater to both the district and local level demand. This should be done in consultation with young people and the specific needs of the area. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to understand if this is the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
Skate/ BMX facilities: district	The district is likely to need at least a district-scale skate/BMX facility, and possibly additional skate features that can be located with parks, open space, and other facilities. Subject to a suitable site being available, a larger district facility could be designed to cater to both the district and local level demand. This should be done in consultation with young people and the specific needs of the area. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to understand if this is the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
Open space, passive and informal recreation	
Playgrounds/ play spaces: local	Current provision of playgrounds in the district is generally at the benchmark level. However, there are potential gaps in the medium to long term, particularly for local playgrounds.
Playgrounds/ play spaces: subdistrict	Noting that the provision of playgrounds is subject to CED (formerly TCCS) standards, additional locations for playgrounds should be investigated – particularly in and around locations that are expected to see substantial redevelopment (e.g. Yowani Country Club/Thoroughbred Park area in the north, Acton Waterfront in the south).
Playgrounds/ play spaces: district	Proximity to existing local playgrounds in the east of Belconnen and subdistrict facilities already in the Inner North and City could potentially accommodate a small amount of this demand, however, it is also important that local playgrounds can be accessed locally by residents and within walking distances.
Community gardens and allotments	No changes required.
Open space	The existing amount of open space in the district generally meets the provision benchmark. However, while the numbers suggest an overall surplus, prioritisation of the retention and delivery of new open space in the district now is still important to minimise problems with provision in the long term as the district increasingly urbanises.

7.4 Inner South (South Canberra)

District	2021	2031	2041	2051	Change 2021-2051	% change 2021-2051	% of ACT growth 2021-2051	% of ACT in 2051
South Canberra	31,591	39,519	44,350	49,956	18,365	58.1%	7.3%	7.1%

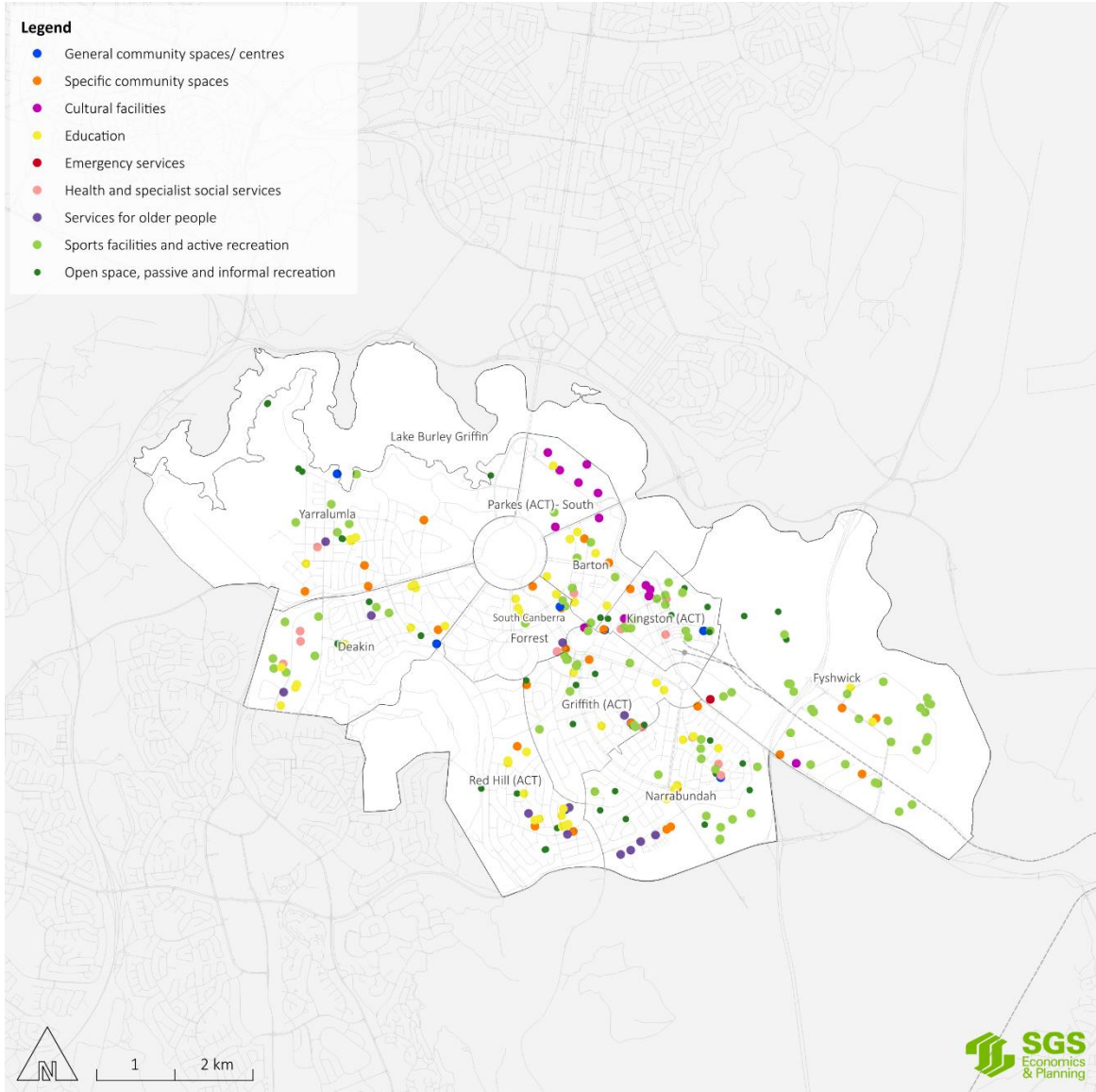
The Inner South district has a wide variety of community infrastructure assets which can cater to both the resident population's needs and to broader areas – with the presence of the National Triangle in this district and major cultural institutions like the National Gallery of Australia, National Portrait Gallery, National Library, National Archives, and Questacon.

Key community facilities in the district include the Kingston Library and Canberra Glassworks – which will be part of the wider Kingston Arts Precinct – and a number of district playing fields. While the district itself benefits from a lot of existing facilities and sports infrastructure, in the absence of its own Town Centre there is a strong inter-relationship between the Inner South and nearby districts, particularly the Inner North and Woden, in residents accessing particularly higher order facilities and services.

Similar to the Inner North and City, limited land availability in the established areas of the district is likely to create difficulties in the future provision of community facilities and services, though some new facilities may be provided as part of the East Lake precinct as it is developed. The Inner South is not projected to see as much population growth as some of the other districts.

However, it will be significantly changed by the Southern Gateway corridor, which is developing the high level planning vision to support the future light rail Stage 2B. Growth associated with the corridor could be above what is currently forecast in the ACT's population projections, which means that identifying locations for and planning new community infrastructure for the district now (i.e. before development starts happening) becomes even more important.

Figure 18: Inner South Community Infrastructure (current and planned)



Source: SGS, 2024.

Planned future facilities

The ACT Government’s Infrastructure Plan and its subsequent updates identify plans for new and upgraded infrastructure in the coming years. For the Inner South this includes:

District	Planned facilities/ upgrades
Inner South	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expansion/ modernisation of Telopea Park SchoolModernisation of Narrabundah CollegeNew Inner South Health Centre (in Griffith)Redevelopment of Kingston Arts PrecinctUpgrades to Manuka Oval

Source: ACT Government, 2024.

Supply and demand analysis – Inner South

The table below distils the future demand and potential gaps by facility type for the district.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
General community spaces/centres										
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Local	8	2.8	5.2	3.5	4.5	3.9	4.1	4.4	3.6
Community centre	District	0	0.7	-0.7	0.9	-0.9	1.0	-1.0	1.1	-1.1
Meeting rooms	Local (Level 1)	3	7.9	-4.9	9.9	-6.9	11.1	-8.1	12.5	-9.5
	Subdistrict (Level 2)	6	3.9	2.1	4.9	1.1	5.5	0.5	6.2	-0.2
	Subdistrict (Level 3)	5	3.9	1.1	4.9	0.1	5.5	-0.5	6.2	-1.2
	Subdistrict (level 4)	0	3.9	-3.9	4.9	-4.9	5.5	-5.5	6.2	-6.2
	District (Level 5)	0	1.6	-1.6	2.0	-2.0	2.2	-2.2	2.5	-2.5
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Inner South is well provisioned in terms of neighbourhood hall facilities; however, it does not currently have a district level community centre. A review of local neighbourhood halls/centres should be undertaken to ensure these are fit for purpose, meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition. If these facilities are not meeting these criteria, potential consolidation options could be considered, including the redevelopment of one of these sites into a district community centre. In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved. 										
Specific community spaces										
Youth centre	District	0	0.7	-0.7	0.9	-0.9	1.0	-1.0	1.1	-1.1
Senior citizens centre	District	0	0.6	-0.6	0.8	-0.8	0.9	-0.9	1.0	-1.0
Comments:										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no existing dedicated youth or senior citizen’s centres in the Inner South district. Over the long term the size of the population suggests a need for one of each type will be required. These spaces should be integrated into other community facilities such as community centres and libraries. 										
Cultural facilities										
	Local	6	3.5	2.5	4.4	1.6	4.9	1.1	5.6	0.4

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Community arts centre/theatre	District	2	0.6	1.4	0.8	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.0
Library – sqm	District	190 (1 library)	1,637	-1,447	1,904	-1,715	2,063	-1,873	2,244	-2,054

Comments:

- The Inner South is well-provided for in terms of local and district arts facilities, including Canberra Glassworks and the Megalo Print Studio and the Mill Theatre at Dairy Road – noting as well that provision will also be enhanced by the redevelopment of the Kingston Arts Precinct. Residents will also have access to national arts and cultural institutions (National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, Questacon) which are not counted in the benchmarking.
- The Kingston Library is the smallest in the ACT, and represents an undersupply based on the benchmarks, though noting that the district is also serviced by the much larger Woden Library being in close proximity. The Inner South is also home to the ACT Heritage Library in Fyshwick (currently relocated to the Civic Library while upgrades are undertaken), but this has a specific role.

Sports facilities and active recreation

Playing fields – ha	N/A	46.4	19.6	26.8	24.5	21.9	27.5	18.9	31.0	15.4
Aquatic centres and public pools	Subdistrict	3	0.6	2.4	0.8	2.2	0.9	2.1	1.0	2.0
	District	0	0.4	-0.4	0.5	-0.5	0.6	-0.6	0.7	-0.7
Indoor recreation centres including multi use sports club	District/local	1	0.8	0.2	1.0	0.0	1.1	-0.1	1.2	-0.2

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Outdoor courts: tennis	Subdistrict	28	6.3	21.7	7.9	20.1	8.9	19.1	10.0	18.0
Outdoor courts: basketball	Subdistrict	3	10.5	-7.5	13.2	-10.2	14.8	-11.8	16.7	-13.7
Outdoor courts: netball	Subdistrict	8	6.3	1.7	7.9	0.1	8.9	-0.9	10.0	-2.0
Skatepark/ BMX facilities	Subdistrict	1	2.4	-1.4	3.0	-2.0	3.4	-2.4	3.8	-2.8
	District	0	1.8	-1.8	2.3	-2.3	2.5	-2.5	2.9	-2.9
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- There is an existing surplus in playing field space identified for the district, while noting that the benchmark applied is based on the current level of overall provision in the ACT. While in aggregate there is likely sufficient supply for the projected population, accessibility to playing fields also needs to be accounted for, particularly as a substantial amount of the district's growth is being concentrated in specific locations like East Lake and potentially the light rail corridor.
- A district aquatics facility is currently not provided and likely to be required beyond 2051. The district currently has an oversupply of subdistrict aquatics facilities based on the benchmarks. Potential consolidation of subdistrict and development to a district aquatics facility should be considered over time, with limited proximity to facilities in other districts (noting the proposal for the 50m Phillip Pool to be replaced with a 25m facility), and noting that Manuka Pool is constrained by its heritage listing.
- The existing indoor recreation facility is the Kingston Table Tennis Centre in Griffith, which does not cater to multiple indoor sports. As such, consideration could be given to whether a more multi-purpose venue could be needed in the district over the long term, and/or whether provision could be combined with nearby districts like Woden.
- In terms of outdoor courts there is an existing gap for basketball courts, which over the long term could mean a need for a multi-court facility, while for netball, the small gap by 2051 may be able to be accommodated through individual courts or enhancement to capacity at the existing complex in Deakin. These gaps may in practice also be lessened by facilities available at ACT schools. This benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
- There is no district scale skate park/ BMX facility in the Inner South and based on the benchmarks an undersupply of skate/BMX features. Additional features may be needed to accommodate this demand, though noting that as a district with a generally older population this type of facility may not be the highest priority for provision, and future provision should be considered in discussion with the local community.

Open space, passive and informal recreation (including outdoor public 'third spaces')

Playgrounds/ play spaces	Local	16	15.8	0.2	19.8	-3.8	22.2	-6.2	25.0	-9.0
	Subdistrict	4	3.5	0.5	4.4	-0.4	4.9	-0.9	5.6	-1.6
	District	2	0.6	1.4	0.8	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.0

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Community gardens and allotments	District	2	0.5	1.5	0.7	1.3	0.7	1.3	0.8	1.2
Open space (configured for active and passive recreation) -ha	All	178	95	83.1	119	59.3	133	44.8	150	28.0

Comments:

- The benchmarks indicate there may be additional demand for local playgrounds in particular in the long term, and possibly the need for another subdistrict facility. As the district has two larger district-level play spaces some of this gap may be able to be accommodated through existing facilities, but this needs to also consider distribution and access – one being at the very edge of the district in Yarralumla and the other in Kingston, leaving the majority of the district outside of walking distance of these.
- The Inner South is well-provided for in community gardens and open space compared to the benchmarks. Additional green space including a dog park is also expected to be delivered as part of East Lake’s development.

Summary of recommendations – Inner South

The following table summarises the recommendations for the Inner South to address the potential gaps that have been identified.

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
General community spaces/centres	
Neighbourhood hall/centre	The Inner South is well provisioned in terms of neighbourhood hall facilities; however, it does not currently have a district level community centre. A review of local neighbourhood halls/centres should be undertaken to ensure these are fit for purpose, are meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition. If these facilities are not meeting these criteria, potential consolidation options could be considered, including the redevelopment of one of these sites into a district community centre.
Community centre	With the concentration of new growth associated with East Lake, the possibility of having a district-level community centre there should be investigated, noting that the East Lake Place Plan has identified land for ‘community uses’ within the precinct.
Meeting rooms	A centre like this would also be able to be designed to meet the projected gap in larger meeting room spaces identified for the district. Additional meeting room capacity could also be provided with the proposed new health centre in Griffith ²⁹ as an opportunity for co-location of health and other outreach and social services.
Specific community spaces	
Youth centre	With no existing dedicated facilities in the district, over the long term there is likely to be a need for each type, noting that some residents may also use the facilities in neighbouring districts (particularly in Woden and Civic). As for other districts and in line with best practice, these spaces would ideally be integrated into or alongside other community facilities and complementary uses. In consultation with young people and older people, these spaces could be integrated into the above-mentioned community centre.
Senior citizens centres	ACT Property Group’s ongoing project/ assessment of its assets may also inform where opportunities for these facilities may be in the district.
Cultural facilities	
Community arts centre/ theatre: local	No changes required.

²⁹ https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/barr/2024/new-inner-south-health-centre-confirmed-for-griffith

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Community arts centre/ theatre: district	
Libraries	<p>While the benchmarks indicate a potential gap in library floorspace, with the smaller Kingston Library in the district and the close proximity of Woden Library, it is unlikely that a new library would be provided in the Inner South. However, the district could be considered as a location for smaller and more flexible models of provision that are being considered by Libraries ACT in its library network in future.</p>
Sports facilities and active recreation	
Playing fields	<p>Based on current overall provision of playing field space, there is a surplus in the district, however, this need to also consider spatial distribution and access given that future growth is likely to be concentrated in particular areas like East Lake and around the light rail corridor. Any additional space needed for these growth areas will need to be identified quickly, given the size of the land take that would be required.</p> <p>Ideally, any new playing field spaces will be co-located with future school facilities (e.g. the potential school at East Lake).</p>
Aquatic centres and public pools: subdistrict	No changes required.
Aquatic centres and public pools: district	
Indoor recreation centres incl. multi use sports club	<p>While the Inner South has one existing indoor sports facility (for table tennis), there are currently no multi-purpose indoor court facilities in the district. Over the long term, provision of this type of facility could be considered, and could be designed as a combined facility for the ACT's south, also catering to demand across Woden and Weston Creek.</p>
Outdoor courts: tennis	<p>There is a gap in provision of outdoor basketball courts in the district compared to the benchmarks, of around 13 over the long term, which could warrant the need for a new district level facility (the preferred provision model for ACT Sports and Recreation). Similar to indoor sports, a larger combined facility for basketball – that can cater to the demand from the Inner South, Woden, and Weston Creek – may be a more efficient form of provision.</p>
Outdoor courts: basketball	

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Outdoor courts: netball	<p>The small provision gap in netball courts over the long term (two by 2051) should be accommodated through enhancements to existing facilities to increase utilisation e.g. through lighting. Some facilities may also be provided by ACT schools.</p> <p>In addition, the outdoor courts benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.</p>
Skate/ BMX facilities: subdistrict	<p>The Inner South is under-provided for compared to the benchmarks for skate/BMX facilities, with only one subdistrict facility currently. As noted for other districts, these facilities may be able to be accommodated alongside other outdoor facilities and open space. The older demographic of the district suggests a district-scale facility may not be best located here and could be prioritised for other districts first where there is a more obvious need. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.</p>
Skate/ BMX facilities: district	
Open space, passive and informal recreation	
Playgrounds/ play spaces: local	The benchmarks identify a potential gap in the provision of local and subdistrict scale playgrounds in the long term.
Playgrounds/ play spaces: subdistrict	<p>Some of this demand can be catered to through the district playgrounds, but in the long-term additional playgrounds should be considered and to ensure there is local/walkable access to them, noting that CED (formerly TCCS) has specific standards and criteria for their provision. The older demographic of the district also needs to be considered and whether these facilities could be prioritised for other districts first where there is a more obvious need.</p>
Playgrounds/ play spaces: district	
Community gardens and allotments	No changes required.
Open space	No changes required.

7.5 Woden

District	2021	2031	2041	2051	Change 2021-2051	% change 2021-2051	% of ACT growth 2021-2051	% of ACT in 2051
Woden Valley	39,178	44,513	53,298	68,552	29,374	75.0%	11.7%	9.7%

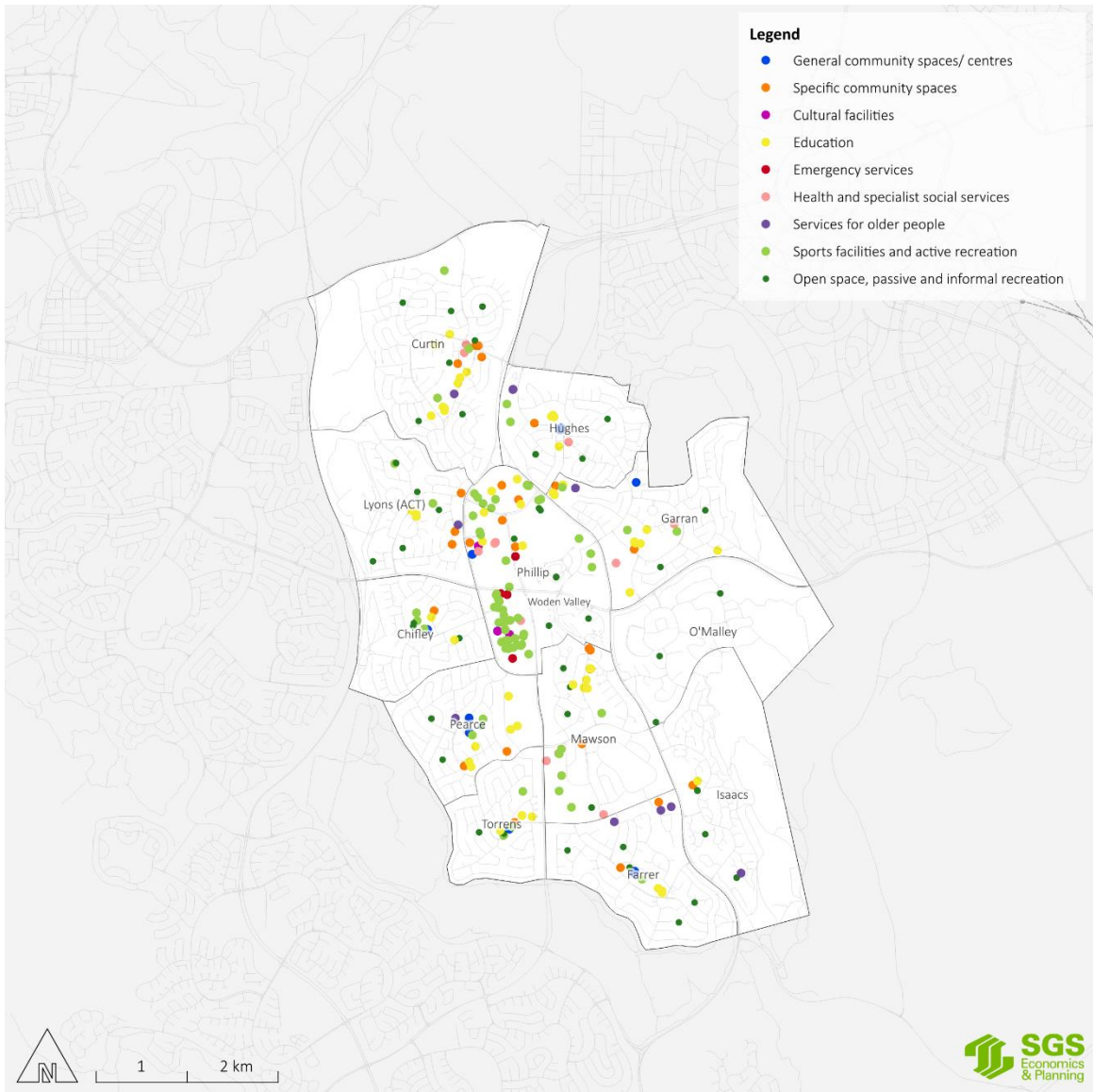
The Woden district has a variety of community infrastructure assets, primarily concentrated in and around the Woden Town Centre. Some suburbs (such as Isaacs, O'Malley and Garran) have fewer existing facilities in comparison to the suburbs in the west of the district.

Key existing assets include the Woden Library and a number of district playing fields. The Phillip Swimming and Ice-Skating Centre is also an important facility, however, it has been privately owned and operated, and is now identified as a future development site proposed to include a 25m pool. Due to the district's central-south location, community facilities in Woden are able to service some residents from other districts, particularly Weston Creek and the Inner South. Stage 2B of light rail is likely to change the urban footprint of the district, with higher density housing potentially further concentrated in the Town Centre and along the light rail route.

The provision of adequate facilities and addressing existing gaps in provision is even more critical for Woden in the lead up to the establishment of light rail, as there will be significant demand pressures and competition for site from other land uses that may compromise the ability to deliver the needed community and sports facilities in the appropriate locations. The growth associated with development in that corridor may also be above what is currently identified in the ACT projections.

Existing gaps in provision of community facilities, particularly in arts facilities and indoor sports, has been raised as an issue by the community for some time. The ACT Infrastructure Plan has identified several initiatives that are planned for the district, including a new community centre, and ongoing expansions to Canberra Hospital and school campuses.

Figure 19: Woden Community Infrastructure (current and planned)



Source: SGS, 2024.

Planned future facilities

The ACT Government’s Infrastructure Plan and its subsequent updates identify plans for new and upgraded infrastructure in the coming years. For Woden this includes:

District	Planned facilities/ upgrades
Woden Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expansion/ modernisation of Garran Primary schoolNew CIT Woden campusCanberra Hospital expansion and associated servicesNew Woden Community CentreUpgrades to Phillip District Enclosed Oval

Source: ACT Government, 2024.

Supply and demand gap analysis – Woden

The table below distils the future demand and potential gaps by facility type for the district.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
General community spaces/centres										
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Local	7	3.5	3.5	4.0	3.0	4.7	2.3	6.1	0.9
Community centre	District	3	0.9	2.1	1.0	2.0	1.2	1.8	1.5	1.5
Meeting rooms	Local (Level 1)	5	9.8	-4.8	11.1	-6.1	13.3	-8.3	17.1	-12.1
	Subdistrict (Level 2)	4	4.9	-0.9	5.6	-1.6	6.7	-2.7	8.6	-4.6
	Subdistrict (Level 3)	4	4.9	-0.9	5.6	-1.6	6.7	-2.7	8.6	-4.6
	Subdistrict (level 4)	1	4.9	-3.9	5.6	-4.6	6.7	-5.7	8.6	-7.6
	District (Level 5)	0	2.0	-2.0	2.2	-2.2	2.7	-2.7	3.4	-3.4
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- Woden currently has three community centres that provide programming and services that fit with the description of these facilities as described above, but not all of these serve a ‘district’ function as the Woden Community Centre does. A new community centre in the Town Centre is also proposed for delivery in the coming years associated with the redevelopment of the transport interchange. Furthermore, a review of these facilities and the local neighbourhood halls/centres should be undertaken to ensure these are fit for purpose, meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition.
- In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design, e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists, and a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved.

Specific community spaces

Youth centre	District	1	0.9	0.1	1.0	0.0	1.2	-0.2	1.5	-0.5
Senior citizens centre	District	1	0.8	0.2	0.9	0.1	1.1	-0.1	1.4	-0.4

Comments:

- Generally, the demand for youth centres and seniors’ centres will be met through the existing supply. This should be monitored over time. In addition, the review of these spaces should be undertaken to ensure they are meeting the current needs of young people and seniors.

Cultural facilities

Community arts centre/theatre	Local	0	4.4	-4.4	4.9	-4.9	5.9	-5.9	7.6	-7.6
	District	0	0.8	-0.8	0.9	-0.9	1.1	-1.1	1.4	-1.4

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Library – sqm	District	2,234 (1 library)	1,893	341	2,068	166	2,350	-116	2,816	-582

Comments:

- Woden does not currently have any local or district arts facilities (though there are some private facilities such as studios which sit outside the definition for this needs assessment), with the benchmarks indicating a need for at least one district level facility and several flexible spaces located in existing community facilities that arts programs can be delivered from. The review of local neighbourhood halls/centres should include an assessment on the ability for these centres to be able to cater for the delivery of arts programs.
- The existing floorspace at the Woden Library is generally in line with the population benchmarks, though over the long term some additional capacity could potentially be considered (though not a whole new library).

Sports facilities and active recreation

Playing fields – ha	N/A	56.5	24.3	32.2	27.6	28.9	33.0	23.5	42.5	14.0
Aquatic centres and public pools	Subdistrict	2	0.8	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.4	0.6
	District	1	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.9	0.1
Indoor recreation centres including multi use sports club	District/local	3	1.0	2.0	1.1	1.9	1.3	1.7	1.7	1.3
Outdoor courts: tennis	Subdistrict	16	7.8	8.2	8.9	7.1	10.7	5.3	13.7	2.3

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Outdoor courts: basketball	Subdistrict	1.75	13.1	-11.3	14.8	-13.1	17.8	-16.0	22.9	-21.1
Outdoor courts: netball	Subdistrict	0	7.8	-7.8	8.9	-8.9	10.7	-10.7	13.7	-13.7
Skatepark/ BMX facilities	Subdistrict	0	3.0	-3.0	3.4	-3.4	4.1	-4.1	5.2	-5.2
	District	1	2.2	-1.2	2.5	-1.5	3.0	-2.0	3.9	-2.9
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- Woden is generally well-provided for in playing fields with its existing facilities.
- There is some uncertainty around the future of the Phillip Pool. It has been proposed that a 25m pool would be included as part of a redevelopment of the existing site. The proposed 25m pool can also function as a district-level pool, therefore continuing to meet the benchmark. The viability of a 50m pool for the district in the long term could be explored given the potential additional growth of its catchment and that the other pools in the district are not used for recreational swimming (being a swim school and hydrotherapy pool respectively). District facilities in Woden are expected to service its own catchment as well as part of the populations of nearby districts that do not have a town centre (Weston Creek, Inner South), however other facilities within driving distance will also cater to some of that demand (including the future pool in Civic and the Stromlo Leisure Centre which sits outside the study area for this report). Potential issues with the overall viability of 50m pools have also been highlighted by recent analysis from Royal Life Saving Australia.³⁰
- The district has three sport-specific indoor facilities (Cricket ACT centre, squash centre, and the ice-skating/ice hockey rink), but no multipurpose indoor court facilities. Whether the existing niche indoor sports centres are meeting community demands should be tested through community consultation. A new combined multi-purpose indoor sports facility should be considered for Woden, which could be used to address demand from multiple districts in the south for the long term.
- There is a slight surplus in tennis courts, and this capacity is also likely used by residents in nearby districts.
- There is a gap identified for both basketball and netball courts, which could warrant investigation of (potentially shared) additional facilities, noting that these types of courts have overlap with servicing demand from Weston Creek as well. This benchmark should also be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide, and that the current count may be underestimating the supply with some facilities available through ACT schools.
- There is also an identified gap for skate/BMX facilities, with Eddison Park in the Town Centre being the only one in the district, suggesting a potential need for several smaller facilities/features over the long term. This should be done in consultation with young people. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.

Open space, passive and informal recreation (including outdoor public 'third spaces')

³⁰ See <https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/about/news-and-updates/news/2025/feb/state-of-aquatic-facilities-2025>

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Playgrounds/ play spaces	Local	36	19.6	16.4	22.3	13.7	26.6	9.4	34.3	1.7
	Subdistrict	5	4.4	0.6	4.9	0.1	5.9	-0.9	7.6	-2.6
	District	1	0.8	0.2	0.9	0.1	1.1	-0.1	1.4	-0.4
Community gardens and allotments	District	0	0.7	-0.7	0.7	-0.7	0.9	-0.9	1.1	-1.1
Open space (configured for active and passive recreation) – ha	All	343	118	225	134	209	160	183	206	137

Comments:

- The district is well-provisioned in terms of local playground spaces, but over the long term may need a larger number of subdistrict and district level facilities.
- Woden does not currently have a community garden, with an identified need for one based on the benchmarks in the medium to long term – noting however that there is an existing community garden technically located in Weston Creek which is in very close proximity to residents in the north of the district.
- As with the other districts, Woden is also well-provisioned in term of open space.

Summary of recommendations – Woden

The following table summarises the recommendations for the Woden to address the potential gaps that have been identified.

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
General community spaces/centres	
Neighbourhood hall/ centre	<p>Woden has a number of existing community centres; however, further investigation is needed to understand whether these centres are meeting community needs, noting that a future community centre is also planned for the Town Centre. Furthermore, a review of local neighbourhood halls/centres should be undertaken to ensure these are fit for purpose, meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition.</p>
Community centre	<p>In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved (the ACT Property Group’s current assessment work will assist in this).</p>
Meeting rooms	<p>As there are a number of existing community facilities, in the first instance the capacity of these for enhancement/expansion to meet this demand should be explored. If any additional facilities are delivered, this should be prioritised for the north of the district such as Curtin, which does not currently have a local facility, and will see substantial population growth with light rail, including the North Curtin Residential Area which will be developed in the next few years.</p>
Specific community spaces	
Youth centres	<p>Generally, the demand for youth centres and seniors’ centres will be met through the existing supply, though this should be monitored over time. In addition, the review of these spaces should be undertaken to ensure they are meeting the current needs of young people and seniors.</p>
Senior citizens centres	
Cultural facilities	
Community arts centre/ theatre: local	<p>The Woden district does not currently have any local or district level community arts facilities. This existing gap has been acknowledged by the ACT Government in identifying this as an area for investigation in the ACT Infrastructure Plan.</p>

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Community arts centre/ theatre: district	The benchmarks suggest a need for at least one district level facility, and several local level arts spaces for the district in the long term, noting that, as per artsACT advice, what types of uses might go in these would depend highly on local demand and other considerations. The review of local neighbourhood halls/centres should include an assessment on the ability for these centres to be able to cater for the delivery of arts programs.
Library	No changes required.
Sports facilities and active recreation	
Playing fields	No changes required.
Aquatic centres and public pools: subdistrict	With the proposed replacement of the existing Phillip Pool with a 25m facility, this would continue to meet the quantitative benchmark for district facilities, however, the viability of a 50m facility could be explored for the long term in the context of additional growth in the district, Woden’s role in servicing nearby districts, and availability of other district facilities within driving distance (Civic, Stromlo pools).
Aquatic centres and public pools: district	
Indoor recreation centres incl. multi use sports club	While there are some indoor sports facilities in Woden, these are sport specific, and there are currently no multi-purpose indoor court facilities. A new combined multi-purpose indoor sports facility could be considered for Woden that can address demand from multiple districts in the south for the long term.
Outdoor courts: tennis	There is a substantial gap in the number of outdoor basketball and netball courts compared to the benchmarks for provision. The level of the gap (around 21 and 13 courts respectively) may warrant consideration of a new multi-court facility, that could be used for both sports. As above, this could take the form of a combined facility for the southern ACT districts, or alternatively, would be best co-located with other outdoor sports or complementary uses. This benchmark should also be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide. Some provision may also be addressed through facilities at ACT schools.
Outdoor courts: basketball	
Outdoor courts: netball	
Skate/ BMX facilities: subdistrict	The large Eddison Park facility is the only skate park currently in the Woden district. Based on the benchmarks, there is a potential long-term gap particularly for smaller facilities/features. Provision of additional skate/BMX infrastructure

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendations
Skate/ BMX facilities: district	would be best located with other outdoor sports infrastructure or could take the form of additional capacity/enhancements to Eddison Park where appropriate. This should be done in consultation with young people. In addition, this benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
Open space, passive and informal recreation	
Playgrounds/ play spaces: local	The district has a potential gap in the number of subdistrict playgrounds in the long term, and a small gap for district level facilities.
Playgrounds/ play spaces: subdistrict	Additional provision of these for the district should be considered (subject to CED (formerly TCCS) standards), and particularly to ensure that parts of the district that will see substantial population growth as a result of the light rail corridor have sufficient play spaces incorporated into their planning from the start.
Playgrounds/ play spaces: district	
Community gardens	While there are community gardens close by to some parts of the district, Woden currently lacks a community garden, and investigation of the provision of such a facility is recommended for the long term to be accessible to the central and southern suburbs. The ACT has an existing policy and site selection criteria ³¹ that will need to be followed to identify suitable locations, which in contrast to the other types of facilities considered in this assessment, are not typically co-located with other uses or centres. In addition, the maintenance of community gardens is heavily reliant on the level of support and use of the local community, which should be consulted in planning for any future facility.
Open space	No changes required.

³¹ https://www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/2361200/guide-to-community-gardens-in-the-act-policy-and-site-selection-criteria.pdf

7.6 Tuggeranong

District	2021	2031	2041	2051	Change 2021-2051	% change 2021-2051	% of ACT growth 2021-2051	% of ACT in 2051
Tuggeranong	89,245	88,620	94,935	108,178	18,933	21.2%	7.6%	15.4%

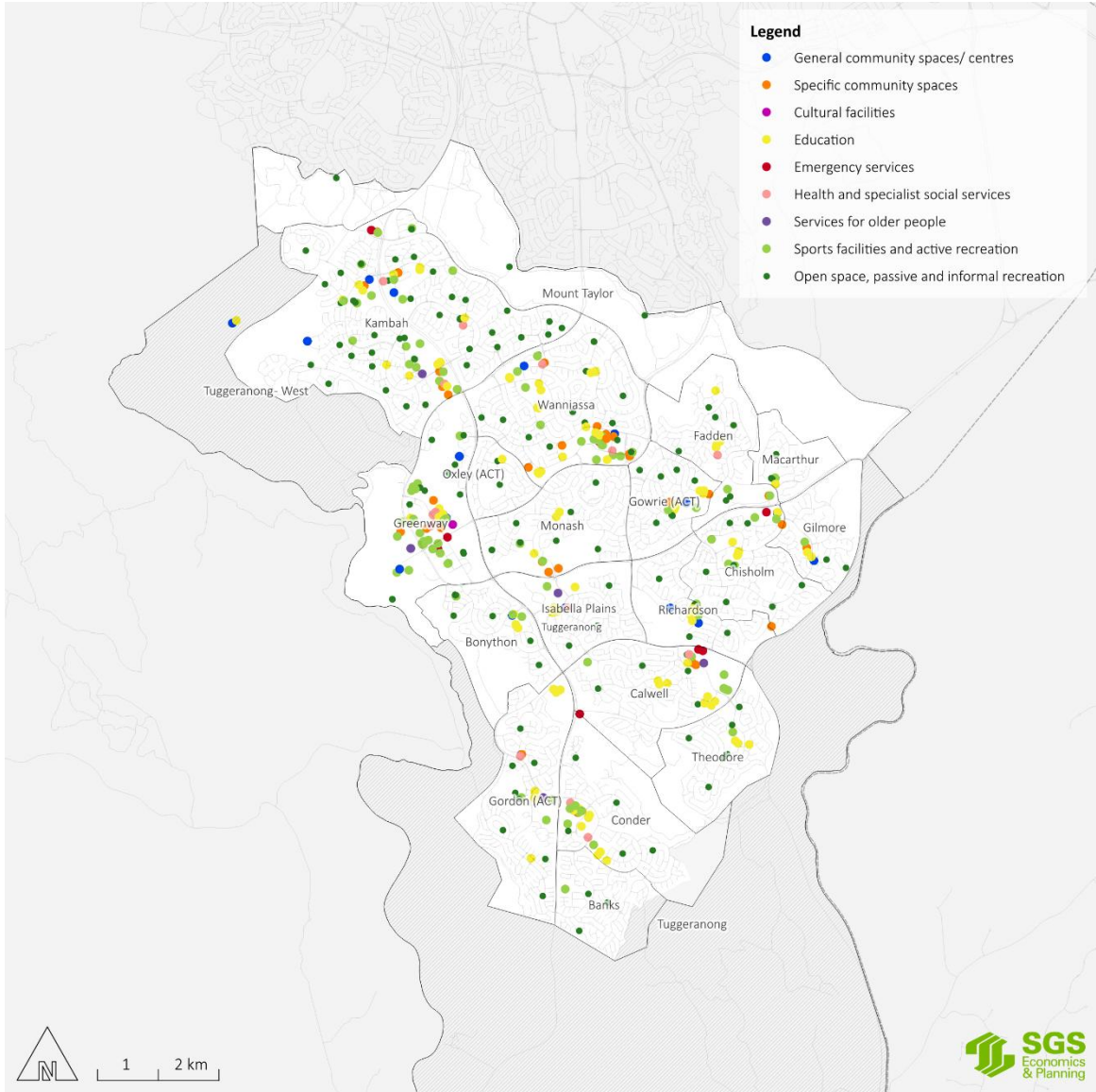
Tuggeranong has a large range of community infrastructure, with, like other districts, facilities concentrated around the Town Centre, as well as in some of the Group Centres like Erindale. Physical accessibility is a significant factor for the district in considering the need and potential location for facilities, given its size and the number of centres across the district.

Key infrastructure for the district includes the Tuggeranong Arts Centre, Lakeside Leisure Centre, the Erindale and Tuggeranong Libraries, and the Kambah, Wanniasa and Calwell district playing fields.

The Tuggeranong district is not expected to see significant population growth compared to the ACT's other districts, but still has one of the largest overall populations. As an older district with typically suburban layouts, the district has a lot of existing smaller facilities, which are not necessarily well-located. Like Belconnen, Tuggeranong also has substantial pockets of disadvantage which are a focus for social service providers.

The district has been identified for some new community infrastructure, including the South Tuggeranong Health Centre, and the ice sports facility proposed for Greenway (which is also proposed to cater to indoor rock climbing). The district is well-provided for in terms of green space and playing fields, with ACT Sports and Recreation noting that there may be additional capacity able to be brought online through changes to the maintenance of some existing ovals.

Figure 20: Tuggeranong Community Infrastructure (current and planned)



Source: SGS, 2024.

Planned future facilities

The ACT Government’s Infrastructure Plan and its subsequent updates identify plans for new and upgraded infrastructure in the coming years. For Tuggeranong this includes:

District	Planned facilities/ upgrades
Tuggeranong	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Upgrades to Calwell High SchoolNew South Tuggeranong Health Centre (in Conder)Southside hydrotherapy pool (next to Lakeside Leisure Centre, opened 2025)Improvements at Tuggeranong Arts Centre Theatre and Lanyon HomesteadNew Ice Sports facility with indoor rock climbingNew dog park in Lanyon

Source: ACT Government, 2024.

Of the initial six blocks identified for the EOI process announced in August 2024, three of these are in Tuggeranong:

- Chisholm, 12,284 square metres for a Place of Worship, Community Activity Centre, Indoor Recreation Centre or Outdoor Activity Centre
- Kambah, 1,523 square metres for Community Activity Centre
- Gowrie, 1,692 square metres for a Place of Worship, Community Activity Centre or Residential Aged Care.

Supply and demand gap analysis – Tuggeranong

The table below distils the future demand and potential gaps by facility type for the district.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
General community spaces/centres										
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Local	15	7.9	7.1	7.9	7.1	8.4	6.6	9.6	5.4
Community centre	District	3	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.1	0.9	2.4	0.6
Meeting rooms	Local (Level 1)	7	22.3	-15.3	22.2	-15.2	23.7	-16.7	27.0	-20.0
	Subdistrict (Level 2)	9	11.2	-2.2	11.1	-2.1	11.9	-2.9	13.5	-4.5
	Subdistrict (Level 3)	1	11.2	-10.2	11.1	-10.1	11.9	-10.9	13.5	-12.5
	Subdistrict (level 4)	1	11.2	-10.2	11.1	-10.1	11.9	-10.9	13.5	-12.5
	District (Level 5)	0	4.5	-4.5	4.4	-4.4	4.7	-4.7	5.4	-5.4
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- The Tuggeranong district has an oversupply of local neighbourhood halls/centres compared to the benchmarks. A review of these should be undertaken to ensure they are fit for purpose, meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition. If these facilities are not meeting these criteria, potential consolidation options could be considered, including the redevelopment of one of these sites into a district community centre in time.
- In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved.

Specific community spaces

Youth centre	District	4	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	1.9	2.4	1.6
Senior citizens centre	District	1	1.8	-0.8	1.8	-0.8	1.9	-0.9	2.2	-1.2

Comments:

- The Tuggeranong district has four existing youth-specific spaces, slightly above the benchmark level. These spaces should be monitored to ensure they are meeting the needs of young people and service providers.
- There is a forecast demand for an additional senior citizen's centre over the long term. This space should be integrated into other community facilities such as community centres and libraries.

Cultural facilities

	Local	0	9.9	-9.9	9.8	-9.8	10.5	-10.5	12.0	-12.0
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Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Community arts centre/theatre	District	1	1.8	-0.8	1.8	-0.8	1.9	-0.9	2.2	-1.2
Library – sqm	District	3,801 (2 libraries)	3,405	396	3,387	414	3,557	244	3,898	-97

Comments:

- The district currently has one district level arts centre (Tuggeranong Arts Centre). There is a forecast demand for another dedicated arts space over time. The district is also lacking local flexible arts spaces – such as meeting room spaces in community centres that can deliver arts programs. A review of existing community centres to consider flooring, access to sinks, and storage should be undertaken to support the delivery of arts programs.
- The existing library floorspace provided in the district (Tuggeranong and Erindale libraries) is forecast to be sufficient for the projected population over the long term.

Sports facilities and active recreation

Playing fields – ha	N/A	95.6	55.3	40.3	54.9	40.7	58.9	36.7	67.1	28.5
Aquatic centres and public pools	Subdistrict	4	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.2	1.9	2.1	2.2	1.8
	District	1	1.2	-0.2	1.2	-0.2	1.3	-0.3	1.4	-0.4
Indoor recreation centres including multi use sports club	District/local	7	2.2	4.8	2.2	4.8	2.4	4.6	2.7	4.3

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Outdoor courts: tennis	Subdistrict	16	17.8	-1.8	17.7	-1.7	19.0	-3.0	21.6	-5.6
Outdoor courts: basketball	Subdistrict	6	29.7	-23.7	29.5	-23.5	31.6	-25.6	36.1	-30.1
Outdoor courts: netball	Subdistrict	18	17.8	0.2	17.7	0.3	19.0	-1.0	21.6	-3.6
Skatepark/ BMX facilities	Subdistrict	5	6.8	-1.8	6.8	-1.8	7.2	-2.2	8.2	-3.2
	District	2	5.1	-3.1	5.1	-3.1	5.4	-3.4	6.2	-4.2
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- The district is generally well-provisioned in terms of playing fields and ovals.
- Tuggeranong has a number of smaller aquatic facilities, as well as the district-level Lakeside Leisure Centre, which is likely to be sufficient to meet demand over the long term. The district is also now home to a new hydrotherapy pool. The district currently has an oversupply of subdistrict aquatics facilities. Potential consolidation of subdistrict and development to a district aquatics facility should be considered over time.
- There are a number of indoor sports facilities in the district, some of which cater to individual sports (such as the archery facility, gymnastics club, and the proposed ice sports facility). The existing facilities that support multi-purpose uses are likely to be sufficient to meet demand.
- For outdoor courts, there is currently a significant gap in the provision of basketball courts and could warrant a new facility with multiple courts. There is projected to be a smaller gap in tennis and netball courts, which could be accommodated through enhancements to existing facilities or individual courts (rather than needing a larger complex). Some of the gaps may be addressed through facilities available through ACT schools, however, the benchmarks for outdoor courts should also be reviewed to ensure they align with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
- The district has a number of skate/BMX features as well as the two district level skate parks (Tuggeranong and Erindale), however provision is still below the benchmark levels for both given the population. This benchmark should be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.

Open space, passive and informal recreation (including outdoor public 'third spaces')

Playgrounds/ play spaces	Local	108	44.6	63.4	44.3	63.7	47.5	60.5	54.1	53.9
	Subdistrict	10	9.9	0.1	9.8	0.2	10.5	-0.5	12.0	-2.0
	District	4	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.2	1.9	2.1	2.2	1.8
Community gardens and allotments	District	2	1.5	0.5	1.5	0.5	1.6	0.4	1.8	0.2

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Open space (configured for active and passive recreation) – ha	All	886	268	618	266	620	285	601	325	562

Comments:

- Tuggeranong is well provided for compared to the benchmarks in terms of the number of playgrounds and play spaces, with only a small gap identified over the long term for subdistrict spaces, demand for which could potentially be met through the other facilities in the hierarchy. There is an oversupply of local playgrounds (53.9 additional) based on the benchmarks. The utilisation and need for these facilities should be reviewed with the potential consolidation of some to develop as subdistrict play spaces.
- The two existing community gardens meet the benchmark level for the long-term population, as does the quantum of open space.

Summary of recommendations – Tuggeranong

The following table summarises the recommendations for Tuggeranong to address the potential gaps that have been identified.

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendation/s
General community spaces/centres	
Neighbourhood hall/centre	The Tuggeranong district has an oversupply of local neighbourhood halls/centres. A review of these should be undertaken to ensure they are fit for purpose, meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition. If these facilities are not meeting these criteria, potential consolidation options could be considered, including the redevelopment of one of these sites into a district community centre in time.
Community centre	In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved.
Meeting rooms	As for Belconnen, to help address pockets of disadvantage in the Tuggeranong community, general community spaces and meeting rooms, particularly any new supply, should be designed to provide the capacity for use by a range of social service providers, including through co-location with facilities such as the proposed South Tuggeranong Health Centre in Condor.
Specific community spaces	
Youth centre	The Tuggeranong district has four existing youth-specific spaces, slightly above the benchmark level. These spaces should be monitored to ensure they are meeting the needs of young people and service providers.
Senior citizens centres	There is a forecast demand for an additional senior citizens' centre over the long term. This space should be integrated into other community facilities such as community centres and libraries. This provision should also consider spatial accessibility, to better service the suburbs in the southern half of Tuggeranong which are further from the existing site in the Town Centre.
Cultural facilities	

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendation/s
Community arts centre/ theatre: local	The district currently has one district level arts centre (Tuggeranong Arts Centre). There is a forecast demand for another dedicated arts space over time. The district is also lacking local flexible arts spaces in community centres that can deliver arts programs. A review of existing community centres to consider flooring, access to sinks, and storage should be undertaken to support the delivery of arts programs. Provision of these spaces should also be prioritised for outer suburban locations as many of these areas are outside of a 10-minute drive of the existing arts facility.
Community arts centre/ theatre: district	
Libraries	No changes required.
Sports facilities and active recreation	
Playing fields	No changes required.
Aquatic centres and public pools: subdistrict	No changes required.
Aquatic centres and public pools: district	
Indoor recreation centres incl. multi use sports club	No changes required.
Outdoor courts: tennis	There is a significant gap identified for the district in the provision of outdoor basketball courts, however, some of this may be addressed by facilities available through ACT schools, and the outdoor courts benchmarks should be reviewed to ensure they align with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide. The projected size of the gap (around 30 courts in the long term) suggests a new district level facility with multiple courts may be required – this could also be a venue for competition and would provide an opportunity to co-locate complementary facilities. The smaller gaps in provision identified for tennis and netball courts may be able to be addressed through enhancements to the district’s existing facilities.
Outdoor courts: basketball	
Outdoor courts: netball	
Skate/ BMX facilities: subdistrict	While the provision of facilities in Tuggeranong is below the identified benchmark for the population, it already has two district level facilities, and five subdistrict facilities, which compares favourably with the other districts.

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendation/s
Skate/ BMX facilities: district	<p>Provision of new facilities could be considered for the long term based on a more detailed understanding of local demand. Any new skate and BMX facilities could also benefit from being co-located with a future district level basketball complex (if that was found to be warranted).</p> <p>This benchmark should also be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.</p>
Open space, passive and informal recreation	
Playgrounds/ play spaces: local	<p>There is a small provision gap (2) identified over the long term in subdistrict playgrounds for the district. Tuggeranong has well above the number of local playgrounds suggested by the benchmarks, and above the number of district-level playgrounds, which would likely be able to accommodate the identified gap.</p>
Playgrounds/ play spaces: subdistrict	
Playgrounds/ play spaces: district	<p>The utilisation and need for the local facilities should be reviewed with the potential consolidation of some to develop the subdistrict play spaces.</p>
Community gardens and allotments	<p>No changes required.</p>
Open space	<p>No changes required.</p>

7.7 Weston Creek

District	2021	2031	2041	2051	Change 2021-2051	% change 2021-2051	% of ACT growth 2021-2051	% of ACT in 2051
Weston Creek	24,522	25,847	28,133	31,536	7,014	28.6%	2.8%	4.5%

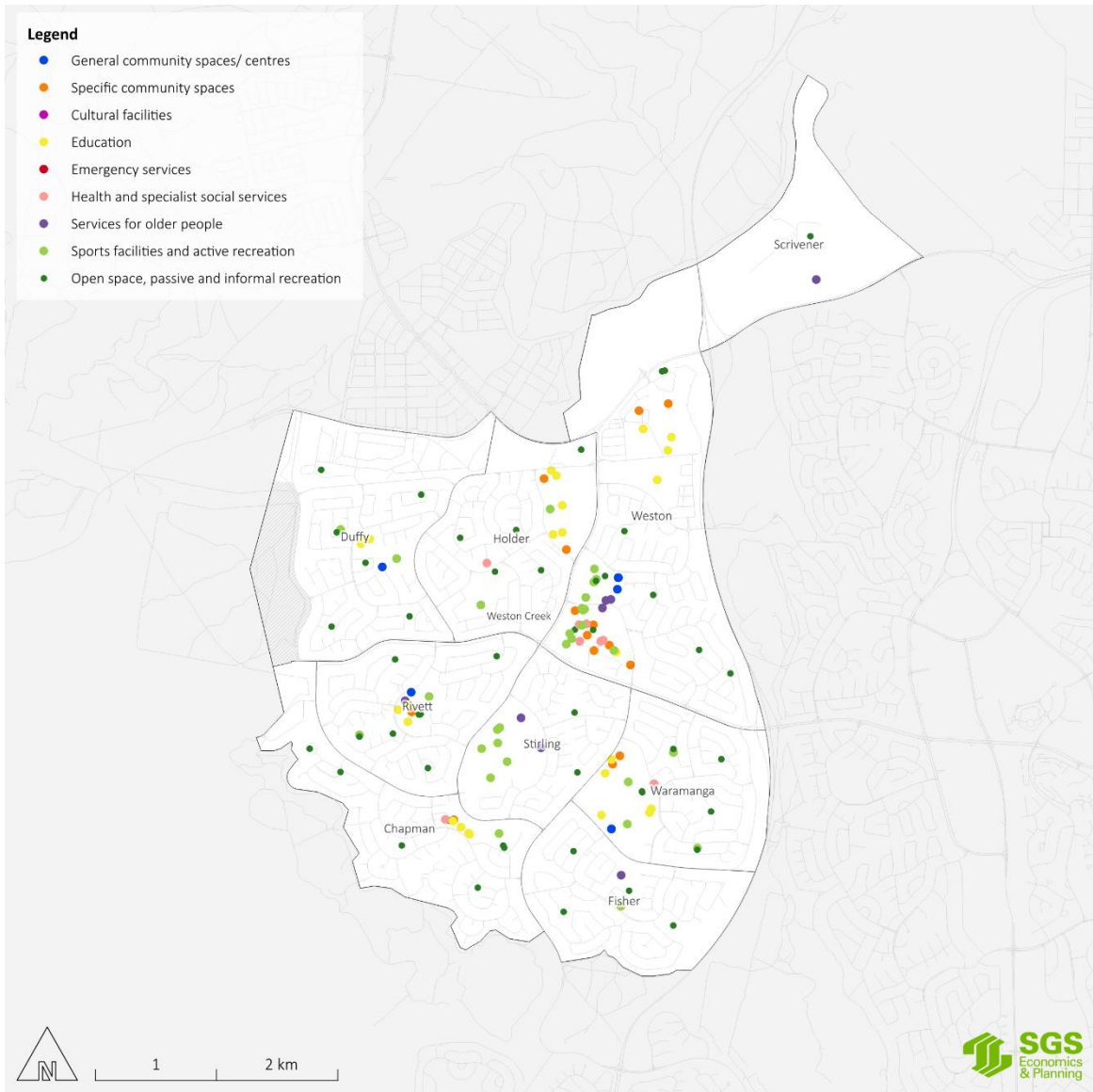
As a smaller district, Weston Creek has fewer community facilities than the other districts, with these largely being concentrated around the Weston Group Centre. The district's proximity also means that residents utilise higher order services and facilities in the Woden Town Centre. Influenced by its older population, Weston Creek has a number of aged care and other facilities that service older age groups, as well as a number of religious facilities.

Key community infrastructure in the district includes the Weston Community Centre, the Health Centre and Walk-in Centre, as well as recreation facilities including the Weston Creek Skate Park, and the district playing fields at Waramanga.

Weston Creek is expected to account for only a small share of Canberra's future population growth. The district has not been identified for any significant upgrades or new facilities to date. Nevertheless, its proximity to the Molonglo Valley as it further develops (as well as Woden) has the potential to both be a benefit in terms of access to higher order uses including community facilities, but may also increase pressures on the facilities already in the district.

Its existing cluster of community, health and aged care services in and around the Weston Group Centre provides opportunities to potentially co-locate complementary uses.

Figure 21: Weston Creek Community Infrastructure (current and planned)



Source: SGS, 2024.

Planned future facilities

The ACT Government’s Infrastructure Plan and its subsequent updates identify plans for new and upgraded infrastructure in the coming years. For Weston Creek this includes:

District	Planned facilities/ upgrades
Weston Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbishment of Hedley Beare Centre in Stirling

Source: ACT Government, 2024.

Supply and demand analysis – Weston Creek

The table below distils the future demand and potential gaps by facility type for the district.

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
General community spaces/centres										
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Local	3	2.2	0.8	2.3	0.7	2.5	0.5	2.8	0.2
Community centre	District	1	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.3
Meeting rooms	Local (Level 1)	1	6.1	-5.1	6.5	-5.5	7.0	-6.0	7.9	-6.9
	Subdistrict (Level 2)	1	3.1	-2.1	3.2	-2.2	3.5	-2.5	3.9	-2.9
	Subdistrict (Level 3)	1	3.1	-2.1	3.2	-2.2	3.5	-2.5	3.9	-2.9
	Subdistrict (level 4)	1	3.1	-2.1	3.2	-2.2	3.5	-2.5	3.9	-2.9
	District (Level 5)	0	1.2	-1.2	1.3	-1.3	1.4	-1.4	1.6	-1.6
Comments:										

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap

- Weston Creek is well provisioned for community centres, with the vast majority of the district within a 10-minute drive of the existing facility. While the calculated demand is approaching the benchmark for local facilities, these are generally no longer provided at a local level. Instead, the current local facilities should be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose, meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition.
- In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Weston Creek residents would also utilise facilities in Woden and potentially Molonglo in future. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists. Furthermore, a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved.

Specific community spaces

Youth centre	District	0	0.5	-0.5	0.6	-0.6	0.6	-0.6	0.7	-0.7
Senior citizens centre	District	0	0.5	-0.5	0.5	-0.5	0.6	-0.6	0.6	-0.6

Comments:

- There are currently no youth or senior citizens centres in the Weston Creek district, noting that Weston Creek residents also rely to some extent on facilities provided in Woden (and in future potentially Molonglo).
- In consultation with young people and older people, consideration of a flexible youth spaces and a flexible senior’s space within community facilities should be considered into the future.

Cultural facilities

	Local	0	2.7	-2.7	2.9	-2.9	3.1	-3.1	3.5	-3.5
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Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Community arts centre/theatre	District	0	0.5	-0.5	0.5	-0.5	0.6	-0.6	0.6	-0.6
Library – sqm	District	0 (0 libraries)	1,393	-1,393	1,440	-1,440	1,519	-1,519	1,636	-1,636

Comments:

- There are no dedicated community arts centres in the district, with demand in the long term for up to three local community arts spaces but less than one district level space. Existing community centres and local halls should be reviewed to ensure they can cater for local arts programming. In addition, a dedicated arts space should be considered in the future.
- Weston Creek does not have any existing libraries and as such there may be demand for a library into the future, though residents in the district are withing driving distance of the Woden Library, and also close to the future the library that is planned for the Molonglo Town Centre.

Sports facilities and active recreation

Playing fields – ha	N/A	35.4	15.2	20.2	16.0	19.4	17.4	18.0	19.6	15.8
Aquatic centres and public pools	Subdistrict	0	0.5	-0.5	0.5	-0.5	0.6	-0.6	0.6	-0.6
	District	0	0.3	-0.3	0.3	-0.3	0.4	-0.4	0.4	-0.4
Indoor recreation centres including multi use sports club	District/local	2	0.6	1.4	0.6	1.4	0.7	1.3	0.8	1.2

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Outdoor courts: tennis	Subdistrict	12	4.9	7.1	5.2	6.8	5.6	6.4	6.3	5.7
Outdoor courts: basketball	Subdistrict	2	8.2	-6.2	8.6	-6.6	9.4	-7.4	10.5	-8.5
Outdoor courts: netball	Subdistrict	13	4.9	8.1	5.2	7.8	5.6	7.4	6.3	6.7
Skatepark/ BMX facilities	Subdistrict	2	1.9	0.1	2.0	0.0	2.1	-0.1	2.4	-0.4
	District	1	1.4	-0.4	1.5	-0.5	1.6	-0.6	1.8	-0.8

Comments:

- The district is well-provisioned in terms of playing fields and ovals.
- There are currently no aquatics facilities in the district, however, Weston Creek residents are in close proximity to both facilities in Woden and the Stromlo Leisure Centre which caters to a district and even wider catchment.
- There is an existing gap in provision for outdoor basketball courts, but only a smaller gap in skate and BMX facilities over the long term that would not warrant the provision of additional facilities (noting as per the Inner South, with a generally older population the latter may be less of a focus for the district too). Both of these benchmarks should also be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide, and additional supply may be available through ACT schools. Outdoor facilities in Weston Creek for netball are also intended to service part of the demand from the Woden district.

Open space, passive and informal recreation (including outdoor public 'third spaces')

Facility type	Hierarchy	Existing/ known supply	2021		2031		2041		2051	
			Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap	Demand	Gap
Playgrounds/ play spaces	Local	33	12.3	20.7	12.9	20.1	14.1	18.9	15.8	17.2
	Subdistrict	5	2.7	2.3	2.9	2.1	3.1	1.9	3.5	1.5
	District	0	0.5	-0.5	0.5	-0.5	0.6	-0.6	0.6	-0.6
Community gardens and allotments	District	2	0.4	1.6	0.4	1.6	0.5	1.5	0.5	1.5
Open space (configured for active and passive recreation) – ha	All	155	74	82	78	78	84	71	95	61

Comments:

- Weston Creek does not have any district level playgrounds, but has additional subdistrict and local play spaces in the network above the benchmark level which may be able to cater to that district level demand in the long term. As there is an oversupply of local playgrounds (17.2 additional), the utilisation and need for these facilities should be reviewed with the potential consolidation of some to develop to function as a district play space.
- The district has an oversupply of community gardens and is well supplied with open space.

Summary of recommendations – Weston Creek

The following table summarises the recommendations for Weston Creek to address the potential gaps that have been identified.

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendation/s
General community spaces/centres	
Neighbourhood hall/centre	Weston Creek is well provisioned for community centres. The current local centres in the district should be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose, meeting community needs, and of appropriate asset condition.
Community centre	In relation to meeting rooms, there is a general undersupply across the district, however this only counts meeting rooms located in community centres and libraries. Based on best practice, meeting rooms should be flexible in design e.g. a level 5 meeting room (200+ ppl) should be able to be divided into two level 4 meeting rooms (101-200ppl) and so on. A further analysis of demand for spaces should be undertaken through understanding utilisation and potential waitlists, and a review of flexibility of spaces should be undertaken to ensure greatest utilisation can be achieved.
Meeting rooms	
Specific community spaces	
Youth centres	There are currently no youth or seniors' centres in the district. In consultation with young people and older people, consideration of flexible youth spaces and a flexible seniors' space within community facilities should be considered into the future.
Senior citizens centres	Noting the older age profile of Weston Creek, an assessment of existing spaces and facilities should be undertaken to ensure that general spaces (e.g. community centres and halls) are physically accessible and have appropriate features to support use by older people.
Cultural facilities	
Community arts centre/theatre: local	There are no dedicated community arts centres in the district, with demand in the long term for up to three local community arts spaces but less than one district level space. Existing community centres and local halls should be reviewed to ensure they can cater for local arts programming. In addition, a dedicated arts space should be considered in the future.
Community arts centre/theatre: district	

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendation/s
Libraries	<p>There is currently no library branch in Weston Creek. Demand for library services will be accommodated somewhat with the district's proximity to both the Woden Library and the future library facility planned for the Molonglo Town Centre.</p> <p>Libraries ACT have also indicated they are considering smaller and more flexible provision models in future, which should be considered to service Weston Creek.</p>
Sports facilities and active recreation	
Playing fields	No changes required.
Aquatic centres and public pools: subdistrict	<p>There are currently no aquatics facilities in the district, however, Weston Creek residents are in close proximity to both facilities in Woden and the Stromlo Leisure Centre which caters to a district and even wider-level catchment.</p>
Aquatic centres and public pools: district	
Indoor recreation centres incl. multi use sports club	No changes required.
Outdoor courts: tennis	<p>There is a projected gap for outdoor basketball courts in the district, reaching a gap of around eight courts in the long term. Provision of additional basketball courts should be prioritised for co-location with other outdoor sports facilities ideally, noting that some facilities may also be available through ACT schools. The potential gap could warrant the need for a full facility over the long term (e.g. eight or more courts in one complex), however, this would be subject to ACT Sports and Recreation considerations. As noted above, a combined facility for the southern ACT districts should also be considered for efficiency.</p> <p>This benchmark should also be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.</p>
Outdoor courts: basketball	
Outdoor courts: netball	
Skate/ BMX facilities: subdistrict	<p>There is an identified gap of up to two smaller skate facilities in the long term for the district. Rather than requiring a full district facility, this could potentially be delivered through provision of skate/BMX features with open space and parks. This benchmark should also be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.</p>
Skate/ BMX facilities: district	
Open space, passive and informal recreation	
Playgrounds/ play spaces: local	

Facilities with a gap identified in benchmarking	Recommendation/s
Playgrounds/ play spaces: subdistrict	Weston Creek does not have any district level playgrounds, but has additional subdistrict and local play spaces in the network above the benchmark level which may be able to cater to that district level demand in the long term.
Playgrounds/ play spaces: district	As there is an oversupply of local playgrounds (17.2 additional), the utilisation and need for these facilities should be reviewed with the potential consolidation of some to develop as a district play space.
Community gardens and allotments	No changes required.
Open space	No changes required.

8. Recommendations

This section provides a summary of the recommendations from the study.

8.1 Overall findings

In the course of the study, some consistent themes have emerged in relation to the provision of community, recreation and sports facilities in the ACT context. These have been distilled into the following general recommendations.

- **Importance of improved co-ordination between Directorates.** Consultation with ACT Directorates highlighted in particular that there is room to improve the co-ordination across government to better understand, plan for, and deliver community infrastructure. It is critical that there is a focus on co-ordination across government going forward to be able to make the most of available government development sites, identify and act on possibilities for the co-location of facilities, reduce the duplication/complexity of work within government, identify cost savings, and ultimately see better outcomes on the ground.
- **Planning for provision has to include the long-term.** It was also reinforced through consultation that the planning for any future facilities needs to consider not just the capital costs and challenges associated with delivery of the buildings, but also the ongoing operational costs and challenges for delivering services over the long-term. Similarly, opportunities for the co-location of facilities and services should be considered in early planning stages. Planning for facilities without this lens runs the risk of delivering spaces that cannot be used to their full potential, resulting in low utilisation and reduced community benefits.
- **Flexibility in facilities provision needs to be prioritised.** In a rapidly changing world, the delivery of stand-alone community infrastructure is now outdated, and instead, the planning and delivery of facilities needs to build in flexibility and adaptability to be able to cater to all ages, abilities, and a range of services. This is beneficial from both a community point of view, but also for government with efficiencies in investment and the utilisation of scarce land. Future facilities should consider adaptability through design, such as movable walls, high levels of storage, access to sinks, and flooring that can support a range of uses. In addition, facilities should be designed using universal design principles and Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) standards.
- **Quality and diversity of open space.** Existing planning standards include requirements for the provision of open space within certain catchments of residential areas. While this is important, it is also important that the open space delivered is of a suitable quality and includes a diversity of open space types that can be used for different activities (e.g. parks vs sports fields, vs playgrounds etc.). This is critical to ensuring that open space can be efficiently utilised by the community. There should also be consideration of opportunities to foster incidental recreation and everyday use of open space and other facilities.

8.2 Summary of recommendations by district

Table 6 provides a summary of the recommendations for each district in relation to the facilities considered in the needs assessment to 2051, using the legend below.

Legend	
x	Indicates a likely need for provision of additional facilities and/ or services.
?	Indicates further investigation is likely to be needed to better understand demand and opportunities for provision of additional facilities and/or services.
✓	Indicates existing provision of facilities and/ or services is likely to meet needs.

Table 6: Recommendations by district – summary

Facility type	Belconnen	Gungahlin	Inner North and City	Inner South	Woden	Tuggeranong	Weston Creek
General community spaces/ centres							
Neighbourhood hall/ centre	✓	✗	?	✓	?	✓	✓
Community centre	✓	✗	✓	✗	?	✓	✓
Meeting rooms	?	✗	?	✗	?	?	?
Specific community spaces							
Youth centre	✗	✗	✓	?	✓	✓	?
Senior citizens centre	✗	✗	?	?	✓	✗	✗
Cultural facilities							
Community arts centre/ theatre: local	✗	?	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Community arts centre/ theatre: district	✓	?	✓	✓	✗	?	✓
Library	?	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sports facilities and active recreation							
Playing fields	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓	✓

Facility type	Belconnen	Gungahlin	Inner North and City	Inner South	Woden	Tuggeranong	Weston Creek
Aquatic centres and public pools: subdistrict	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aquatic centres and public pools: district	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓
Indoor recreation centres incl. multi use sports club	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
Outdoor courts: tennis	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓
Outdoor courts: basketball	?	?	?	✗	✗	✗	✗
Outdoor courts: netball	?	?	?	✗	✗	?	✓
Skate/ BMX facilities: subdistrict	✗	✗	?	?	?	?	?
Skate/ BMX facilities: district	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Open space, passive and informal recreation							
Playgrounds/ play spaces: local	✓	✓	?	✗	✓	✓	✓
Playgrounds/ play spaces: subdistrict	?	✓	?	?	?	✓	✓
Playgrounds/ play spaces: district	✗	✗	?	✓	?	✓	?
Community gardens and allotments	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓

Facility type	Belconnen	Gungahlin	Inner North and City	Inner South	Woden	Tuggeranong	Weston Creek
Open space	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: SGS, 2024.

8.3 Size requirements

As well as understanding the types of facilities required and where, planning for additional facilities in the future requires an understanding of potential size.

Table 7 provides indicative facility size for each of the facility types considered in the needs assessment and that have typical size requirements. These are based on what is generally provided elsewhere, as well as standards for the ACT. These should be used as the initial size requirements and further adjusted in relation to site and service needs.

The land area required for these facilities will vary depending on services. This includes outdoor space, carparking, and landscaping requirements.

Table 7: Indicative size requirements

Facility type	Typical GFA (sqm)	Integration and Co location
Local neighbourhood centre (includes flexible spaces)	1,000sqm to 1,500sqm	This should include a range of integrated services including spaces for young people, older people, and local art programs. Facility bookings should be accessible and affordable to a wide range of people.
Community centre (includes youth and seniors spaces)	1,500sqm to 2,000sqm	This should include a range of integrated services including spaces for young people, older people, local art programs and could include library services or health focussed services. Facility bookings should be accessible and affordable to a wide range of people and be available during business and after hours, including a concierge available during business hours to assist in room bookings, coordinate a program of activities, and provide information on local services.
Community arts centres	Varies depending on types of arts practice included Community-level centres in ACT in the range of 2,800sqm to 3,700 sqm ³²	Local level provision best integrated with general community space. Co-location of dedicated facilities with other community uses is also beneficial.
Library	Varies depending on function – 194sqm to 3,100sqm across current ACT branches	Should be integrated under the same roofline as other community services and infrastructure therefore decreasing overall size through the use of shared spaces

³² Based on Tuggeranong Arts Centre and Manuka Community Arts Centre respectively.

Facility type	Typical GFA (sqm)	Integration and Co location
Playing fields and enclosed ovals	Approx. 15 hectares for multiple fields (subject to site conditions) ³³ 4 hectares for enclosed ovals	Best co-located with school campuses to allow for shared use and to maximise efficiency.
Indoor recreation centre	5,000 sqm ³⁴	Based on a typical 3-4 mixed use courts per venue, with ancillary spaces for storage, café, office, reception, changing rooms and gym/fitness components. Can be co-located with aquatic facilities or event venues.
Outdoor tennis courts	Min. 593sqm (34.77m x 17.07m) per court, plus additional space for run-off ³⁵	Best delivered as multi-court facilities of a minimum 8-10 courts.
Outdoor basketball courts	Min. 608sqm (32m x 19m) per court, including boundary line ³⁶	Best delivered as multi-court facilities. Potential to integrate with other sports facilities/ open space and school campuses.
Outdoor netball courts	Min. 781sqm (21.4m x 36.6m) per court, including run off space ³⁷	Best delivered as multi-court facilities. Potential to integrate with other sports facilities/ open space and school campuses.

Source: Compiled by SGS, 2024.

There is also an increasing focus on community spaces supporting wellbeing and healthy communities. It will be important that the design of facilities, including fit outs and the activities that they accommodate, can enable a care, share and repair culture, in line with broader ACT Government policies and initiatives, such as the Wellbeing Framework and Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan. Similarly, provision should also be in line with the ACT's Gender Sensitive Urban Design Framework, helping to rebalance existing gender imbalances, particularly in sports facilities, and ensure that facilities are suitable for multi-cultural activities and people with disabilities.

³³ Based on advice from ACT Sport and Recreation.

³⁴ City of Gold Coast City Plan Part 4 Local government infrastructure plan, <https://cityplan.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/eplan/rules/0/59/0/3014/0/210>

³⁵ Based on Tennis Australia, 'Court and Enclosure Dimensions' for club/ recreation use, <https://www.tennis.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Court-and-Enclosure-Dimensions-2012.pdf>

³⁶ Based on WA Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport, <https://www.cits.wa.gov.au/sport-and-recreation/sports-dimensions-guide/basketball>.

³⁷ Based on Netball Victoria, 'Facilities Manual,' <https://vic.netball.com.au/sites/vic/files/2020-01/NV-Facilities-Manual.pdf>

8.4 Next steps and implementation

Based on the above it is recommended that the following is actioned:

- Continue to review and refine benchmarks for arts and culture, indoor courts, netball and basketball courts, and BMX/ skate facilities to ensure these align with the level of service that the ACT Government wants to provide.
- Integrate the findings of the Molonglo Valley Community Needs Assessment into the findings of this assessment and identify any potential overlap.
- Establish a CED cross-directorate steering committee to coordinate the provision of facilities, including:
 - Enhancement of existing process within government for the identification of community needs and allocation of sites for those uses in land release/ development processes, to ensure that needs are understood up front and are integrated in planning effectively.
 - Collaboration with other Directorates/Agencies on the findings of this report as a starting point, to align the findings from upcoming studies (e.g. assessments being done by ACT Property Group, ACT Health, artsACT), including where there may be opportunities for co-location and the utilisation of currently underutilised land, and/ or better utilisation of existing assets. This is particularly the case for sports grounds/ fields, where some facilities could increase the quality and carrying capacity of fields. This could include interventions such as lighting, surface improvements, improved drainage, and integration of multiple sports on the one field.
 - Continued collaboration between relevant stakeholders in the design of both schools and sports and recreation facilities, with processes in place to ensure that these facilities can complement each other and provide for more efficient use of land through co-location (noting that some facilities with sensitive uses and/ or servicing vulnerable groups may may not be appropriate for co-location).
 - Continue to improve community infrastructure data, including asset data and utilisation data.
 - Investigate whether there is the opportunity for the permitted uses for open space and non-urban zones in the Territory Plan to be expanded or made more flexible.
- Undertake a prioritisation process to identify infrastructure to be delivered within the next 5, 10, and 15 years, to include:
 - Identifying relevant sites (land and or integration opportunities within existing infrastructure) for the new services and infrastructure to be located (based on the above prioritisation process).
 - Community engagement and co-design to understand specific services and delivery models for new community infrastructure.
- Investigate potential federal government funding opportunities to overcome funding barriers.
- Review the findings of the ACT needs assessment at a minimum of every four years, including the Molonglo district and other districts as appropriate.

Appendix A: Ground truthing of audit

Appendix B: Demographic analysis

Appendix C: Engagement report

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