

2.0 PART TWO: STRATEGIC GOALS AND PLANNING ISSUES

2.1 NATIONAL STRATEGIC GOALS

At a national level, Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC)'s vision is:

“All New Zealanders have a right to enjoy participating and reaching their potential in sport and physical recreation, are proud of their own active, healthy lifestyles and are proud of their achievements as a nation in sport”.

2.2 LINK TO COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

The strongest links to Hauraki District's Community Outcomes for this Reserve Management Plan are:

Management of our natural and physical environment in a sustainable manner -

- We encourage a balance between economic growth and environmental protection and enhancement.
- We support protecting our significant habitats and ecosystems.

Vibrant and sustainable businesses and business economies in our District-

- We encourage further development of tourism opportunities and facilities focusing on our heritage and eco-tourism.

We encourage increased opportunities to participate in recreational, sporting and cultural activities -

- Our recreational, cultural and heritage groups work together to identify issues that lead to better efficiencies, access and sustainable solutions.
- We encourage better utilisation of existing infrastructure and resources.

Integrated provision of quality health and social services throughout our District -

- We support the development of new initiatives that address well-being of those in need and of our community in general.

Long term planning to ensure that our future infrastructure requirements meet the growth and development opportunities of our District -

- We value the provision of well-managed infrastructural services in our District.

Cultural values of tangata whenua throughout the District be respected and supported through further development of consultation, participation and partnerships -

- We encourage the development of culturally appropriate programmes and processes.

2.3 HAURAKI/THAMES-COROMANDEL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

This strategy for the sub-region identifies a plan to address deficiencies in the provision of sport and recreation facilities. Many of these facilities are on Council reserves. The Strategy was adopted by Council in 2005.

The desired outcome for the Strategy is:

“Effective collaboration and efficient provision of physical activity services and facilities at sub-regional level”.

The goal for the Strategy is:

“Targeted resourcing of physical activity facilities and services by the District Councils and other partners, maximising physical activity uptake and community support”.

The Plan is focused on actions at a local level to allow residents to access opportunities for physical activity within the constraints of geography, isolated townships and a relatively small rating base.

The central location of the townships in the Hauraki District was seen as a distinct advantage when being able to access leisure opportunities and facilities across the greater Waikato region. Hub facilities such as Hugh Hayward Domain, Paeroa Domain and the proposed Waihi Recreation Precinct provide centralised facilities such as catering for a number of sports in one location.

The Council is seen as supporting or supplying the key public recreation and active leisure opportunities and facilities in the District, however has a relatively low level of direct provision of organised sport facilities, reflecting the tradition of self-reliance of rural communities. Council sees its responsibility to provide only a minimum level of facility.

The natural environment was found to be of high importance and the area’s natural features – bush, trails, beaches and rivers – are a major advantage in the provision of physical activity opportunities. Non-resident ratepayers were far more likely to use these natural features for passive or sedentary physical activity, and walkways and cycle ways rather than sport facilities.

The main opportunities and services for Council were seen as:

- provision, management and open space for casual recreation, including recreational walkways, boat ramps and other harbour facilities;
- informal and formal play areas;
- beach and river access;

- toilets and information;
- the provision and maintenance of many sports fields and some field facilities;
- the management of leases to clubs for the construction of club rooms, pavilions and change facilities on public land;
- the provision and management of indoor facilities and halls.
- Recognising and supporting where appropriate, the endeavours of the Waihi Walkways organisation which plans to construct walkways on esplanade reserves/road for public use

The Strategy recommended that the Council focus primarily on (amongst others):

- effective and targeted facility, open space and transport planning, provision, management and maintenance;
- ensuring efficiency of use and provision (including developing partnerships for provision of assets);
- maintaining effective partnerships with other agencies and communities to ensure key assets are appropriately delivered and used.

The Strategy also recommended that:

- Waihi continues to aim at providing a centralised indoor/outdoor sport and recreation precinct for community use.
- Ngatea continues with development plans for a recreation precinct at the Hugh Hayward Domain.
- Positive Paeroa and Sport Waikato investigate the best use of the Paeroa Domain to 'draw' a greater critical mass of users.
- The community consider the most equitable model for school and community use of local facilities.
- Minimum levels of facilities for BMX, playgrounds, skate parks, sports fields, netball/tennis courts, walking and cycling circuits are recommended.

2.4 DISTRICT PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

In managing reserves a local authority has two quite different roles. Under the Reserves Act, a local authority is the manager of an asset that is owned by the community. As a manager, the local authority needs to consult with the community to determine its aspirations for the reserve. Essentially the Management Plan is a planning tool that captures and embraces acceptable community desires and needs

Under the Resource Management Act, the local authority has the role of ensuring the sustainable management of all natural and physical resources in the district. The authority must manage in a way so as to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on the environment. Essentially the District Plan is a regulatory tool.

Any proposals for reserves need to be considered in terms of the Reserve Management Plan and the District Plan.

The Hauraki District Plan provides for two zones for reserves: active and passive. Permitted, controlled and discretionary, non-complying and prohibited activities are listed for each zone. Resource consent applications are required for any activities other than permitted activities. For discretionary and non-complying activities, consent may be granted or refused.

“In establishing the Reserve Zones...Council’s major aim has been to give due recognition to the importance that reserve areas play in people’s lives and the valuable contribution they make to the health and well-being of the natural environment and of the community.” (District Plan, section 5.14 ‘Reserve Zones’)

2.4.1 PASSIVE RESERVES

Council provides, maintains and administers large areas of land throughout the district for passive recreational use. The District Plan defines passive recreation as any recreation that does not involve the use of vehicles (including bicycles), motorised equipment and also excludes any organised sport.

The Reserve (Passive) zone provides for recreation such as walking, kite flying, picnic facilities and playgrounds. In general, structures and buildings are limited.

Objective 1

To provide for passive recreation and reserve activities that enhances the function of the reserve itself and contributes to its amenity.

Policies

1. Identifying, protecting and conserving all trees, bush, landscape, scientific, wildlife, botanical, historic or scenic features of value.
2. Protecting the topography and landforms within the reserve from inappropriate modification.

Objective 2

To limit physical structures to those which either add to the public's enjoyment of the reserve or enhance the environment of the reserve.

Policies

1. Controlling the design, appearance, number and location of buildings and structures on the reserves.
2. Ensuring that buildings do not dominate the open space function of the reserve.

Objective 3

Land use activities in the zone will not detract from the enjoyment of the environmental qualities of the reserve.

Policies

1. Providing a listing of activities and performance standards, which are considered to be suitable within a passive reserve.
2. Using the resource consent process to assess the effects of activities on the reserve.

2.4.2 ACTIVE RESERVES

The Reserve (Active) zone provides for active recreation and social needs of the local and wider community. These areas are more developed than passive reserves and are usually multi-functional. They provide a community focal point, as well as a range of organised indoor/outdoor team and individual sports. Some reserves also serve a regional function and act as tourist attractions. The social and commercial aspects of some recreation activities need to be provided for as these are an integral component of many recreation activities.

Objective 1

To provide for a variety of active recreational and social uses compatible with both the functions of the reserve, and the amenities of the reserve and adjoining areas.

Policies

1. Providing for buildings or structures to be used for multiple use recreation activities where that is possible and practicable.
2. Recognising that social and commercial activities are an integral part of larger scale recreation activities.
3. Encouraging both active and passive reserve activities.

Objective 2

To conserve those natural features which contribute significantly to the amenities of the reserve.

Policies

1. Identifying, protecting and conserving all trees, bush, landscape, scientific, wildlife, botanical, historic or scenic features of value.
2. Protecting the topography and landforms within the reserve from detrimental modification.

Objective 3

To ensure the reserve activities do not detrimentally affect other activities within the zone or within adjoining zones.

Policies

1. Providing assessment criteria, which allow consideration of and give effect to protecting the function and amenity of the reserve.
2. Ensuring that buildings, activities and structures do not dominate the open space function that reserves also have.

3. Ensuring building development is compatible in scale with the particular amenities of the reserve and adjoining land activities.
4. Providing a listing of activities and performance standards which are suitable for the zone.

2.5 HAURAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL RESIDENTS' SURVEY

The 2004 Survey noted that largely residents were satisfied with the quality of parks and reserves (78%). There was relatively strong support for the enhancement of community facilities, services and activities. Significant proportions of respondents also suggested that enhancing tourism facilities and services would generate improvements in the economic wellbeing of the community. The main reason for any dissatisfaction was the level of maintenance on facilities.

2.6 TRENDS IN RESERVE USE

The Hauraki/Thames-Coromandel Physical Activity Strategy and Community Facilities Plan notes that participation in sports and/or active leisure activities has remained fairly constant amongst adults in the Waikato region overall, and the proportion of young people participating has increased slightly. Walking featured highly for adults and outdoor games for young people.

The population is predicted to continue to be static overall. Changes are predicted to the make-up of communities within the district, and there are increasing numbers of visitors travelling through the District which will impact on future demand. For example, Ngatea has an increasing population, and it is also a popular half-way stopping point for travellers between Auckland and the Coromandel peninsula, a major holiday destination. As with Paeroa's Ohinemuri Park, travellers take advantage of roadside reserves and accessible parks to take a rest. There are no rest areas specifically provided. Future Councils or more importantly Transit NZ may consider this matter where warranted. Although Councils are not obliged to provide formal rest areas for the travelling public, some rest area provision is made where unique natural features are located but where such features are not present for example where SH 25 crosses Hauraki from Auckland/Pokeno to the Coromandel Peninsula. More people will pass through the district on the way to the peninsula, and more will stop and use facilities when they do.

It is expected that a similar effect will occur in Waihi, as more people travel between Auckland and the Bay of Plenty. Some reserves in Waihi, i.e. Victoria Park, situated on State Highway 2, are already heavily used by travellers, with holiday weekends creating additional demand on facilities. It is expected that the population in some rural areas will continue to decrease while other areas such as Turua will increase.

The population is also ageing, affecting the type of facilities needed for the future. For example, there will be less need for playgrounds, and more need for walking tracks and attractive gardens.

District and regional events, ie the annual 'Paeroa Highland Games & Tattoo' held in the Paeroa Domain each year, place one-off demands on parks and reserves. These events, while stimulating the local economy, create additional strain on capacity. Consideration of the impact of events needs to be addressed when assets on parks and reserves come up for replacement/renewal.

At the time of preparation of this Plan, there is little data available to Council on the use of parks and reserves by residents and travellers. Some facilities on parks and reserves have reached the end of their useful life and/or have also been vandalised. These facilities will need to be demolished or upgraded according to demand and the ability and willingness of the community to pay for them.

Generally and in keeping with the information provided by the Hauraki/Thames Coromandel Physical Activity and Community Facilities Plan, Council's community infrastructural assets have sufficient capacity to cater for current levels of service and a medium level of population growth without needing to provide significant additional capacity. Council will continue to monitor the demand on, and the demand for its community infrastructural services networks.