



# He rā ki tua

Horizons Region Spaces and Places Plan  
for Sport and Recreation

**Summary Document**

# Document Information & Acknowledgements

Document version: Final

Date: 31 October 2023

Author: Richard Lindsay

## Acknowledgements

### Project Steering Group

<b>Sport Manawatū</b>	Brad Cassidy
<b>Palmerston North City Council</b>	Ann-Marie Mori
<b>Tararua District Council</b>	Adele Small Jess McKenzie
<b>Rangitikei District Council</b>	Jo Manuel
<b>Sport Whanganui</b>	Tania King Aidan O'Conner Whitney Cox
<b>Ruapehu District Council</b>	Candice McNaught
<b>Manawatū District Council</b>	Carl Johnstone Adie Johansen
<b>Horowhenua District Council</b>	Brent Harvey Sean Hester
<b>Sport New Zealand</b>	Zanta Jones
<b>Horizons Regional Council/Iwi Engagement</b>	Pita Savage
<b>Eastern and Central Community Trust</b>	Neil Attapattu
<b>Consultant RSL</b>	Richard Lindsay

## About RSL Consultancy

RSL Consultancy undertakes projects and offers strategic advice throughout Aotearoa to enable community well-being. We support organisations to make informed decisions when it comes to their people, facilities, places and spaces. RSL carries out a range of pre-planning work from needs assessments and feasibility reports to business cases. We also work on a range of organisational strategic and operational projects.

## Disclaimer

Information, data and general assumptions used in the compilation of this report have been obtained from sources believed to be reliable. RSL Consultancy has used this information in good faith and makes no warranties or representations, express or implied, concerning the accuracy or completeness of this information. RSL Consultancy is acting as an independent consultant. In doing so, the recommendations provided do not necessarily reflect the intentions of the client. Interested parties should perform their own investigations, analysis and projections on all issues prior to acting in any way in regard to this project.

## He Rā Ki Tua Horizons Region Spaces & Places Plan for Sport & Recreation – Foreword

He Rā Ki Tua, the refreshed Horizons Region Spaces and Places Plan for Sport and Recreation, represents a significant step forward in how partners lead, collaborate on, and advocate for the quality planning and provision of spaces and places across the Horizons region.

This Plan has been developed with key partners and presents an updated and agreed high-level approach to spaces and places provision for physical activity that is pragmatic, simplified, and based on evidence. The Plan comes at a time when councils, funders, the sport and recreation sector, and ultimately the participant are facing a challenging economic situation. Good fiscal decision-making and collaborative solutions to facility challenges are therefore more important than ever.

This iteration of the Plan considers spaces and places that support active recreation and play alongside a balanced approach to sport. It also seeks to explore mana-enhancing relationships with mana whenua and the environment. The Plan highlights that together, partners can respond to changing participant needs through a network approach to provision. This involves exploring opportunities to improve equity and optimisation through provision that is complimentary, connected, accessible, flexible, multi-use, and plays to regional strengths. It also recognises that quality spaces and places provision sit hand-in-hand with a sustainable delivery system, ensuring participants can enjoy quality experiences in spaces that are well-activated and maintained.

Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa (Sport NZ) aims to inspire New Zealanders to develop a lifelong love of play, active recreation, and sport. Above all, we want to see 'Every Body Active'. Sport NZ has long been an advocate for locally-led development of spaces and places that provide quality experiences for communities. Working alongside Regional Sport Trusts and national sport and recreation partners, we are committed to supporting everyone involved in the planning, funding, development, and provision of spaces and places to ensure they are more affordable, well-utilised, and sustainable. Because we know quality spaces and places are critical enablers of physical activity and community wellbeing.

We also know that while levels of physical activity are declining due to a range of factors, affecting some communities more than others, people do want to be more active. While some of these factors are beyond our control, providing quality experiences for communities is something we can influence together.

The ultimate goal of this Plan is to ensure all parties are better informed of community needs, have a shared vision of best practice provision, and understand how they can work together for the greater good. Through a collaborative approach, both strategically and operationally, along with a shared understanding of the evidence and system pressures, we can prioritise limited resources in a way that is consistent and transparent to help ensure the greatest impact for current and future generations.

Sport NZ acknowledges and thanks Sport Manawatū, Sport Whanganui, the councils, and other key community partners for their continued leadership and commitment with respect to this Plan. In particular, we are buoyed by the strengthened focus on understanding current provision and utilisation alongside enhancing and activating the existing network to improve access and equity. We look forward to continuing to support you all in the execution of this.



**Julie Morrison**

General Manager Strategy, Policy & Investment  
Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa (Sport NZ)

November 2023



# He rā ki tua - Horizons Region Spaces and Places Plan for Sport and Recreation 2023 - 2043

This Plan has been developed to provide direction and determine priority areas of focus for the spaces and places that enable play, active recreation and sport.

## 1.1 Introduction

It is intended that this Plan builds on the foundations and learning from the Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Sports Facility Plan that was developed in 2018 (RSFP 2018) and provides a platform for:

- Greater collaboration across the Horizons region, particularly between the project partners
- A collaborative view of the priorities for play, active recreation and sport spaces and places (facilities) across the Horizons region
- Informing the planning for future spaces and places, including providing mechanisms to support greater consistency in the planning and decision-making process used by key organisations
- Informing council LTP processes as to the identified initiatives for future consideration
- Ensuring investment decisions are evidenced-based.

## 1.2 How to use this document

This Plan is outlined in several areas and can be used to gain an understanding on the priorities for spaces and places for active recreation and sport in the Horizons region (the Manawatū – Whanganui Regional Council area). The plan is broken down as follows:

- What stakeholders have told us
- Opportunities that exist in the region
- A Vision and Principles of the region's spaces and places for recreation and sport
- The Decision Making process
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Regional Recommendations
- Council area summaries

This Plan should not be seen as a replacement for detailed local planning on a project-by-project basis. Rather it should complement, support and inform detailed planning at the local community network level.

A full Reference Document is available here:

[Reference Document](#)



### 1.3 What stakeholders have told us

The following diagram highlights feedback received from stakeholders during the development of this strategy.



## 1.4 Opportunities that exist across the network

### 1.4.1 Ensure Facilities are Fit for Purpose

- Prioritise the activation and maintenance of existing spaces where possible.
- Provide assistance to codes for the upgrade of existing facilities, where a need can be evidenced.
- Increase awareness of recreation facilities that are available for hire for groups to utilise.
- The current supply of facilities is generally ageing. Upgrading or renewing facilities is an important step in future-proofing facility provision.
- Look to develop spaces and places that provide a progression of opportunities to enable skill acquisition (such as a range of cycle or mountain bike trails, from beginner areas to advanced trails).

### 1.4.2 Encourage Sharing/Hubs

- Encourage and enable more shared facility use. Encourage hubs (for example racket sports or bowls/croquet/pétanque).
- Encourage and assist more schools to make facilities available for community use.
- Proposed projects should consider what other users could be involved as partners or key user groups.

### 1.4.3 Provision of better ancillary facilities

- Consider re-developing and providing more changing rooms/showers/toilets that are appropriate for use by female/gender-neutral users and people with disabilities.
- Consider providing more public toilets for use by spectators at public parks/ playground users/ public pathway/cycleway users.
- Review storage needs of clubs and organisations. Evaluate possible shared storage solutions.

### 1.4.4 Assess and improve the condition of playing fields (better meet training needs) through:

- Improved drainage and irrigation of existing fields to increase capacity if demand warrants.
- More high-capacity dedicated training fields with floodlights.
- Provision of dedicated space for traditional Māori activities, such as ki o rahi.
- Investigating whether Councils could take greater responsibility for the maintenance of floodlighting in return for greater control of field allocations.

### 1.4.5 Improve Accessibility

- Ensure facilities are accessible from use/cost/transport perspective. Review/evaluate better urban planning and car parking provision.
- Investigate the provision of more covered outdoor facilities such as courts/playgrounds/skate parks/ basketball hoops to protect users from sun/wind/ rain.

### 1.4.6 Assess equity/inclusivity of sport and recreation venues and opportunities such as:

- Affordable hire space for recreation activities
- Consider recreation needs for Māori - including gathering of kai, awa restoration. Consider marae as facility providers.
- Investigate the need for more indoor (possibly dedicated) community courts to support traditional indoor court users/winter codes seeking indoor training space.
- Offer free or low-cost opportunities for people to participate in play, active recreation and sport (such as walking trails, ½ court basketball courts, outdoor fitness trails, safe access points to the natural environment).



# VISION

Spaces and places in the Horizons region enable and inspire people to participate in play, active recreation, and sport, their way.

## 1.5 Key Planning Principles

The key planning principles that need to be considered for planned and emerging projects are outlined below:

### 1.5.1 Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi

We recognise the mana of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We will apply a framework that reflects Te Tiriti o Waitangi articles and principles and considers the cultural narrative of the area, when planning future play, active recreation and sport facility outcomes for our community.

### 1.5.2 A people-centred approach

It is acknowledged that the spaces and places developed for play, active recreation and sport are enablers to activity. Without people, these places are irrelevant.

There are significant benefits from linking people to their environment (Oranga Taiao, Oranga Tāngata). The benefits from being in the natural environment provides motivation for many to remain active and connected.

Any development should consider how it will further support people to have positive experiences in their communities. Many facilities also rely on volunteers to operate. These volunteers need to be appropriately supported.

### 1.5.3 A network approach to future planning

A network approach involves considering a needs-based approach to projects as they arise. The current and future supply and demand for spaces and places is considered. It involves ensuring there is a strategic fit based on the existing network and any strategies or plans outlining the future network. It ensures that projects do not duplicate existing spaces and places, rather they complement and enhance the network. An important aspect is that existing facilities are maximised and/or enhanced before new spaces are considered.

### 1.5.4 Shared use of spaces and places

Where possible, spaces and places need to be shared by a range of users. While this may require some compromise, shared use provides greater efficiency. Shared use creates dynamic spaces and encourages more inter-generational opportunities.

A focus should be on the development of multi-use facilities or hubs where a range of sport, recreation, play, education, social and other community infrastructure needs can be met. Over provision or unnecessary duplication of facilities should be avoided.

Partnering with others within and outside of the sector e.g., education, health, Iwi, and the private sector increases the likelihood that facilities will be used to their full potential, maximising the return on investment.

### 1.5.5 Ensuring Equitable spaces and places

Spaces and places are accessible to all. This is enabled through universal design principles and operationalised through facility operations ensuring equitable access. They are developed, maintained and operated in a way that encourages and supports inclusivity and diversity. Many older facilities were not designed to accommodate a range of user groups or genders. This creates barriers to participation for some groups.

### 1.5.6 Factoring in the sustainability of spaces and places

With finite resources, decisions need to be made that are based on ensuring social and economic sustainability and value for money for asset owners and funders. To do this it is important to understand the whole of life costs related to decisions. This means not only being able to build a facility, but also affording to operate and maintain it for the whole of its life.

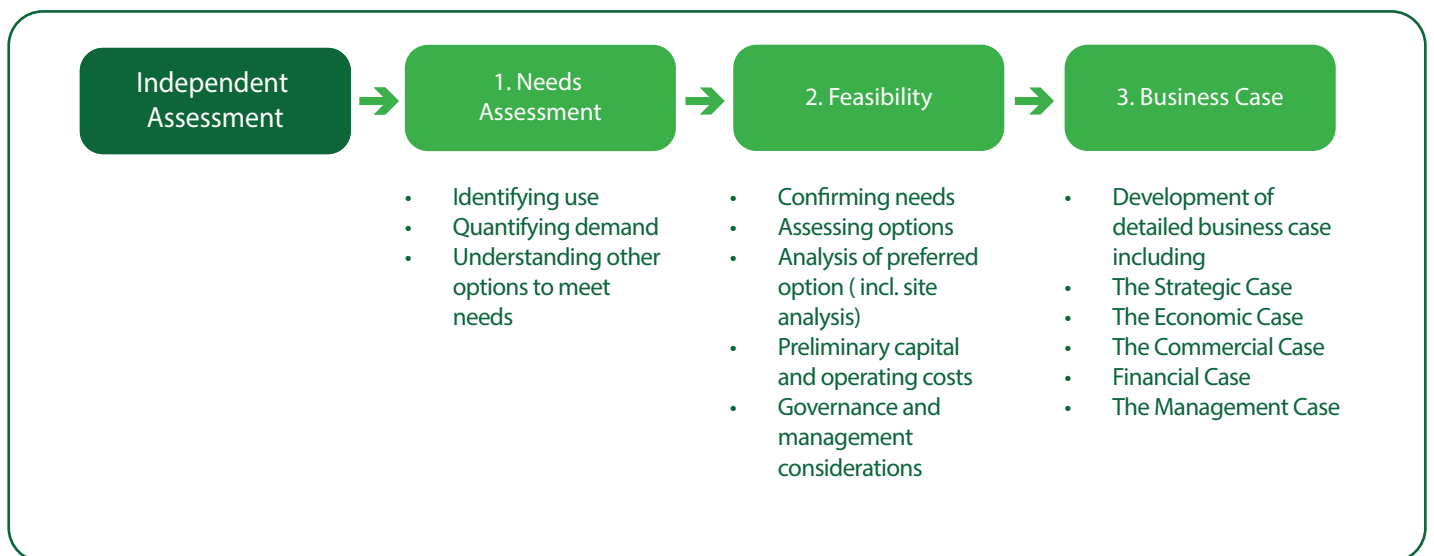
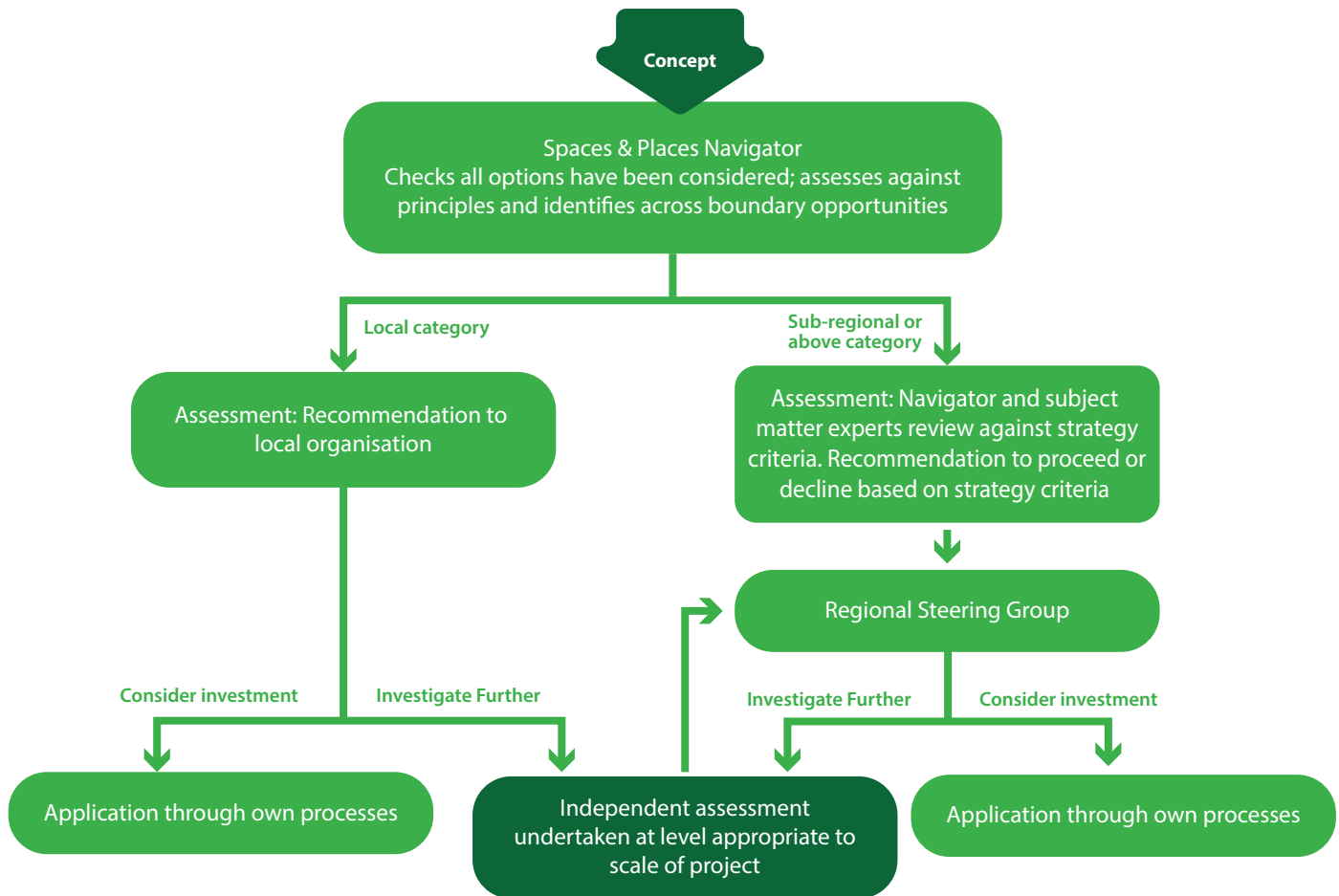
Environmental impacts and climate change need to be considered when investing in upgrades or new facilities. There is also a need to apply sustainable design and construction methods to ensure the future facility network minimises impact on the environment and is itself, protected from environmental changes.





## 1.6 The Proposed Facility Planning Approach

The following flow diagram is to help guide those with concepts. Any project concept should be run by the RST Spaces and Places Navigator. For help with an idea, concept or project contact your local Regional Sport Trust Spaces and Places lead (see roles and responsibilities in section 1.7).



## 1.7 Roles and Responsibilities

The following section outlines the proposed roles that can enhance the support and decision-making for project initiatives. It is proposed that there is a spaces and places steering group that is formed to help guide those who table project initiatives/concepts. Each RST can also play a role in assisting project groups in navigating through the decision-making processes required.

### 1.7.1 Regional Steering Groups

Horizons North and South Spaces and Places Steering Groups are formed that would include Iwi, territorial authorities, Horizons Regional Council, Funders, Sport Whanganui, Sport Manawatū. These Steering Groups could be an adjunct to the already established regional Chief Executives forum.

Steering group support is coordinated by Sport Whanganui and Sport Manawatū. It is proposed that these groups be made up of senior officials, with subject matter expertise provided by appropriate people within each organisation, on a project-by-project basis. Each Steering Group would have a memorandum of understanding outlining the agreed responsibilities and way of working together.

It is recommended the Steering Groups are initiated to consider projects based on advice from subject matter experts from within the participating groups, utilising the principles and criteria of this plan to guide decisions on whether to proceed or not.

### 1.7.2 Spaces and Places Navigator

Each RST in the Horizons Region actively provides support to those who wish to progress spaces and places concepts. Each RST would assign a person (for the purposes of this Plan the role is called a Spaces and Places Navigator) to work alongside groups to help them understand the process and requirements.

The Spaces and Places Navigator also has a role to play in testing concepts against the principles of this Plan as well as looking for connections and opportunities that may not initially be apparent for those proposing an idea.

### 1.7.3 Subject Matter Experts

Each organisation has the opportunity to use internal (or external) subject matter experts (SMEs) to assess any concept against the principles and criteria of this plan. The RST Spaces and Places Navigator can coordinate the required SMEs.

SMEs play a critical role in providing advice and recommendations to the Steering Group.

### 1.7.4 Project Working Group

A project working group can be formed for each relevant project, facilitated by the Spaces and Places Navigator and is based on the project or concept being assessed. Relevant subject matter experts would come together to progress advice and recommendations for the Regional Steering Group to consider.

### 1.7.5 Independent Assessments

Where deemed appropriate by the Steering Group, an independent assessment of a concept may be required to determine whether to proceed or not. Spaces and Planning Assessments are undertaken to ensure that proposed concepts are well thought through and generally fall into the following categories: Needs Assessment, Feasibility Study, and Business Case.



## 1.8 Initial Assessment of Concept

The following checklist is recommended for new concepts that are being put forward; regardless of where the concept originates.

- It is recommended that the Spaces and Places Navigator at the relevant RST works alongside those with the concept to ensure a partnership approach.
- Concepts should be assessed as to how well they align to each planning principle (high/medium/low).

### Level 1 - Essential criteria which all projects must meet

Planning Principle	Criteria	Explanation
<b>Acknowledges Te Tiriti o Waitangi</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports principles of Partnership, Protection, Participation.</li> </ul>	Supports principles of Partnership, Protection, and Participation and considers the cultural narrative of the area. Māori participation will be positively impacted.
<b>A people-centred approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowers communities to be active their way (achieving the vision of the Plan).</li> <li>• Increases opportunities.</li> <li>• Community wellbeing will be positively impacted.</li> <li>• Supported by the community.</li> <li>• Enables newer activities to prosper</li> </ul>	<p>The degree to which the project will empower the relevant communities within the Horizons Region to be active in ways that suit them.</p> <p>The degree to which a project focuses on how it will provide increased opportunities for citizens to be engaged in play, active recreation and sport experiences.</p> <p>The degree to which community well-being and participation will be positively impacted if the proposal progresses.</p> <p>Clear evidence of involvement and support from the community and/or key stakeholders.</p> <p>Supports future growth potential. This would not exclude existing activities that that are doing well but would enable newer activities that have potential to receive support.</p>
<b>A network approach to provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment with strategic drivers, locally, regionally and nationally.</li> <li>• Clear evidence of what is trying to be solved. Identification of a range of options.</li> <li>• Divestment of not-fit-for-purpose spaces and places is an option.</li> <li>• How the concept considers future-proofing.</li> </ul>	<p>Degree of alignment a facility or proposed facility has with strategic drivers such as national and regional facility strategies and local Council strategies (where relevant).</p> <p>Recognition of the balance required between local and regional provision.</p> <p>The issue or opportunity that the proposal is intended to address is clearly defined and evidenced.</p> <p>The proposed project has clearly investigated all available options to utilise existing spaces and places.</p> <p>The ability to adapt to changing demand, sporting trends and needs has been considered (future-proofing).</p>
<b>Equitable spaces and places</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity, equity and inclusion is clearly addressed.</li> </ul>	<p>The degree to which the proposal provides benefit to a broad spectrum of the community (young and old, disabled, gender and ethnic groups).</p> <p>The degree to which the proposal will improve equity outcomes, particularly for people or groups that are/may be disadvantaged (such as people with disabilities, low socio-economic communities, Māori, young people, older adults).</p> <p>The level in which this concept enables equitable participation by ensuring that the spaces and places are inclusive and accessible.</p>



**Level 1 - Essential criteria which all projects must meet**

**Sustainability of all spaces and places**

- Sustainability, in its broadest sense, is considered.
- Capability of relevant organisation/s to implement the concept.

Sustainability is considered in terms of financial, environmental, social and cultural factors.

The degree to which the existing or proposed facility is operationally sustainable, particularly in terms of whole-of-life costs (capital, operational and maintenance costs throughout a facility's life).

The return on investment (financial and social<sup>1</sup> returns) that the facility or proposed facility can demonstrate.

**Shared Use**

- Shared use is considered.
- Partnerships, collaboration and integration are addressed.

The level in which, where practical, this concept encourages shared use, partnerships, collaboration and/or integration with other groups.

The degree to which the proposal optimises an existing facility e.g. through partnerships to increase use, enhancements to make a facility more fit-for-purpose.



<sup>1</sup> Sport NZ is currently developing tools for the sector to utilise in assessments on wider benefits of investment in spaces and places infrastructure.

## 2 Regional Recommendations

Opportunity	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeframe
	<b>Regional Enabling Recommendations</b>	<b>The lead organisation/s who oversee the recommendation</b>	<b>(Short 1-3 years, Medium 4-9 years, Long 10 years plus, Ongoing)</b>
	Consider across-boundary opportunities for increasing awareness and promoting the use of existing space and places in the Horizons region.	Horizons North PSG Horizons South PSG	Ongoing
<b>Increase awareness</b>	Each RST to publicise an inventory of bookable spaces for indoor recreation opportunities.	Sport Manawatū Sport Whanganui	Short term
	Each RST is to implement an awareness campaign to increase the understanding of the facility planning framework that assists with the decision-making process within this Plan.	Sport Manawatū Sport Whanganui	Short Term
	Ensure any developments are adaptable and resilient to climate change and maximise sustainability principles.	All PSG Organisations	Ongoing
	Work with existing sports clubs to encourage the consolidation of sporting facilities, ensuring current spaces are optimised.	All PSG Organisations	Ongoing
<b>Spaces and places development</b>	Ensure any investment in spaces and places caters for a diverse participant base, through the application of this Plan's principles.	Sport Manawatū Sport Whanganui	Ongoing
	When developing public convenience strategies look for alignment and opportunities with play, recreation and sports developments.	All councils	Ongoing
	Allocate sports field space for traditional Māori games (such as ki o rahi)	All councils	Ongoing
	Develop a Regional Indoor Courts Network Plan using guidance from the National Indoor Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy	Sport Manawatū Sport Whanganui	Short term
<b>Accessibility</b>	Advocate that for any new or upgraded walking trails developed, they allow for accessibility where practical.	Sport Manawatū Sport Whanganui	Ongoing
	Any investment in change rooms needs to address all genders' needs, in line with Sport NZ's guidance on gender-neutral change spaces.	Sport Manawatū Sport Whanganui	Ongoing

Opportunity	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeframe
	<b>Regional Enabling Recommendations</b>	<b>The lead organisation/s who oversee the recommendation</b>	<b>(Short 1-3 years, Medium 4-9 years, Long 10 years plus, Ongoing)</b>
<b>Informal Play and Recreation</b>	Consider the development of spaces that incorporate natural elements for imaginative, self-determined age-appropriate play. This could be when developing new infrastructure or upgrading existing spaces and places.	All councils	Ongoing
	Place playgrounds near complementary natural elements to maximise self-initiated, imaginative environmental play.	All councils	Ongoing
	Incorporate wider recreation and play infrastructure when upgrading or developing new sporting facilities (such as walking trails, basketball ½ courts, pump tracks and fitness trails). This will broaden the appeal of these spaces and places and offer low-cost options to participate.	All councils	Ongoing
<b>Process Recommendations</b>			
	Organisations endorse this Plan and integrate the decision-making framework into decisions about play, active recreation and sports facilities.	All PSG Organisations	Short term
	This plan is referred to as He rā ki tua - Horizons Region Spaces & Places Plan for Sport and Recreation.	All PSG Organisations	Ongoing
	Establish Te Pae Whenua ki te Raki - Horizons North Steering Group, including iwi, councils, Sport Whanganui and community funders that oversees concepts and can look for collaborative opportunities and connections with other projects.	Sport Whanganui	Short term
	Establish Te Paewhenua ki te Tonga - Horizons South Steering Group, including iwi, councils, Sport Manawatū and community funders that oversees concepts and can look for collaborative opportunities and connections with other projects.	Sport Manawatū	Short term
	Coordination of the Steering Groups is to be overseen by Sport Manawatū and Sport Whanganui.	Sport Manawatū Sport Whanganui	Short term
	Endorse the proposed decision-making process when considering project concepts and existing planned projects that are seeking further investment. Assess currently proposed actions using the decision-making process.	All PSG Organisations	Ongoing
	Promote the services of each RST as Spaces and Places Navigators available to help community groups.	Sport Manawatū Sport Whanganui	Short term
	Each participating council updates the Sport NZ Facility Planning tool on a bi-annual basis, to ensure there is an up-to-date central facility inventory for the region.	All councils	Ongoing
	Review this Plan in 3-4 years' time, with a focus on across-boundary collaboration	Sport Manawatū Sport Whanganui	Medium term



### 3 Council Area Summaries and Recommendations

#### 3.1 Te Pae Whenua ki te Raki - Horizons North

## Whanganui District



### Community Profile



# 48,954

Current population 48,954<sup>2</sup>.  
8% growth or over 4000 people expected by 2034.



Increasing ethnic diversity. The populations of those identifying as Māori, Asian and Pacific People are both expected to increase in the 12 years to 2034.

### Participation Snapshot<sup>3</sup>



# 46%

Walking for sport or leisure



# 23%

Jogging/ running



# 13%

Gardening



# 22%

Playing Games



# 15%

Individual workout

### Key Participation Facts

- Activities which are undertaken individually or on a casual basis are more popular than traditional team sports.
- Most sport and active recreation activities which require high-cost facilities<sup>4</sup> such as field and court sports fall outside the top 20 most popular activities.
- 31% of the population of Whanganui District is inactive.
- Tamariki (aged 5-11) are more active in 10 of their 20 expected activities than the national average for tamariki.
- Rangatahi (aged 12-17) are more active in 10 of their 20 expected activities than the national average for tamariki.

<sup>2</sup>Whanganui demographic data source: Infometrics high growth scenario.

<sup>3</sup>Activity and participation data sourced from Sport NZ Insights Tool.

<sup>4</sup>Such as sports fields, indoor/outdoor courts, greens, aquatic centres, specialist surfaces.

## Whanganui District Issues and Opportunities

Based on expected population growth and participation patterns, focus on re-purposing, upgrading, and sharing of facilities rather than building new ones.

A more diverse offering of spaces and places is required. Consider the needs of female, gender diverse and older participants.

The district is well served with sport and recreation facilities for a population of its size, although some are not fit for purpose and do not justify the cost charged for them.

Te awa offers multiple cultural and recreational opportunities.

Great environment for outdoor recreation, but potentially not leveraged as well as it could be.

The level of maintenance of the sports grounds is generally poor.

There is pressure on facilities at peak times that could be alleviated by increased promotion/activation of off-peak times.

## Proposed Actions

Complete the Implementation Plan to support the delivery of the Whanganui Open Spaces and Physical Activity Strategy.

Investigate the adequacy of the current field maintenance contracts to align with the national guidelines.

In partnership with Nga Tangata Tiaki o Whanganui, consider developing protocol for recreational use of Te Awa.

Investigate the network of off-road cycling trails and create better connections.



# Rangitikei District



## Community Profile



# 16,182

Current population 16,182.  
28% population growth (4,500 people) expected<sup>5</sup>



Most population growth expected in the 0-14 and 65 plus age groups (approximately 1,600 in each group).  
Increasing ethnic diversity. The populations of those identifying as Asian and Pacific are both expected to increase by 146% while the population of those identifying as Māori is expected to increase by 74%.

## Participation Snapshot<sup>6</sup>



# 46%

Walking for sport or leisure



# 24%

Jogging/ running



# 18%

Gardening



# 16%

Playing Games



# 15%

Individual workout

## Key Participation Facts

- Activities which are undertaken individually or on a casual basis are more popular than traditional team sports.
- Most sport and active recreation activities which require high-cost facilities<sup>7</sup> such as field and court sports fall outside the top 20 most popular activities.
- 31% of the population of the Rangitikei District is inactive.
- Tamariki (aged 5-11) are more active in 9 of their 20 expected activities than the national average for tamariki, and less active in 2.
- Rangatahi (aged 12-17) are more active in 9 of their 20 expected activities compared to the national average for rangatahi, but less active in 6.

<sup>5</sup>All population projections are to 2053, source Infometrics high projections, January 2023.

<sup>6</sup>Activity and participation information sourced from Sport NZ Insights tool.

<sup>7</sup>Such as sports fields, indoor/outdoor courts, greens, aquatic centres, specialist surfaces.



## Rangitīkei District Issues and Opportunities

Based on expected population growth and participation patterns, focus on re-purposing, upgrading, and sharing of facilities.

A more diverse offering of spaces and places is required. Consider the needs of female, gender diverse and older participants in any developments or upgrades.

The district is well served with sport and recreation facilities for a population of its size, although some are not fit for purpose.

The draft local spaces and places plan can drive key recommendations.

Prioritising the maintenance and activation of existing facilities will meet many of the needs of participants in the district at a reasonable cost.

## Proposed Actions

RDC in partnership with Sport Whanganui to consider introducing more activation opportunities to encourage community use of existing assets.

Completion of the Taihape multi-purpose amenities building (hub and playing surfaces/courts).

Prioritise the maintenance of existing facilities.



# Ruapehu District



Te Pae Whenua ki te Raki  
- Horizons North

## Community Profile



# 13,123

Current population 13,123<sup>8</sup>. Moderate (12%) population growth (1,500 people) expected<sup>9</sup>.



Most population growth (44%, 1,100 people) expected in the 65 plus age group. The younger age groups (0-14 years and 15-39 years) are expected to experience very low growth or declines in population.

Increasing ethnic diversity. The population of those identifying as Asian, Pacific People and Māori are expected to increase by 68%, 83% and 30% respectively.

## Participation Snapshot



# 46%

Walking for sport or leisure



# 25%

Jogging/ running



# 18%

Gardening



# 17%

Playing Games



# 15%

Individual workout

## Key Participation Facts

- Activities which are undertaken individually or on a casual basis are more popular than traditional team sports.
- Most sport and active recreation activities which require high-cost facilities<sup>10</sup> such as field and court sports fall outside the top 20 most popular activities.
- 30% of the population of the Ruapehu District is inactive.
- Tamariki (aged 5-11) are more active in 13 of their 20 expected activities than the national average for tamariki.
- Rangatahi (aged 12-17) are more active in 12 of their 20 expected activities compared to the national average for rangatahi, but less active in 5.

<sup>8</sup> Demographic data sourced from Infometrics high projections January 2023.

<sup>9</sup> All population projections are to 2053.

<sup>10</sup> Such as sports fields, indoor/outdoor courts, greens, aquatic centres, specialist surfaces.



## Ruapehu District Issues and Opportunities

Based on expected population growth and participation patterns, focus on re-purposing, upgrading, and sharing of facilities rather than building new ones.

A more diverse offering of spaces and places is required. Consider the needs of female, gender diverse and older participants.

The district is well served with sport and recreation facilities for a population of its size, although some are not fit-for-purpose.

Enhancing existing facilities through maintenance and activation is key to meet the needs of the population of the Ruapehu District.

## Proposed Actions

Undertake business case for the redevelopment of the Raetihi Pool.

Engage with Ohakune community to progress the redevelopment of Ohakune Pool.

Investigate potential infrastructure developments at Taumarunui Domain.

- Address the indoor recreational centre requirements in Taumarunui.
- Address issues with Taumarunui grandstand.
- Maintain Taumarunui pools to meet needs of local community.

Investigate the development of cycleways connecting towns and strategic places.

Investigate extension of the Timber Trail from Ōngārue through to Taumarunui.

Finalise development of Waiouru playground.

Consider development of simple pocket playgrounds with natural elements.





# Horowhenua District



## Community Profile



# 38,431

Current population 38,431. Significant (63%) population growth (over 24,000 people) is expected by 2040<sup>11</sup>.



Population growth is expected in all age groups. By 2040/41 the population of the Horowhenua district is projected to be fairly evenly spread across age groups.

## Participation Snapshot<sup>12</sup>



# 47%

Walking for sport or leisure



# 24%

Jogging/ running



# 17%

Gardening



# 17%

Playing Games



# 17%

Individual workout

## Key Participation Facts

- Activities which are undertaken individually or on a casual basis are more popular than traditional team sports.
- Most sport and active recreation activities which require high-cost facilities<sup>13</sup> such as field and court sports fall outside the top 20 most popular activities.
- 33% of the population of the Horowhenua District is inactive.
- Tamariki (aged 5-11) are more active in 6 of their 20 expected activities than the national average for tamariki.
- Rangatahi (aged 12-17) are more active in 5 of their 20 expected activities compared to the national average for rangatahi.

<sup>11</sup> Population projections for Horowhenua are to 2040/41. Data sourced from Sense Partner Projections, 95 percentile.

<sup>12</sup> Activity and participation information sourced from Sport NZ Insights Tool.

<sup>13</sup> Such as sports fields, indoor/outdoor courts, greens, aquatic centres, specialist surfaces.

## Horowhenua District Issues and Opportunities

Based on expected population growth and participation patterns, focus on re-purposing, upgrading, and sharing of facilities rather than building new ones.

A more diverse offering of spaces and places is required. Consider the needs of female, gender diverse and older participants.

The impact projected population increases will have on existing resources was identified as both an issue and an opportunity.

The willingness of clubs to work together and share resources was seen as a key opportunity in the district.

## Proposed Actions

Investigate the demand for indoor court space to retain and grow participation.

Consideration of long-term development options for Levin Aquatic Centre given population growth and the pressures on this facility (hub concepts).

Investigate the recreational potential at the Foxton River Loop.

Consider the participation trends of sporting codes in Foxton and whether a network delivery approach for sporting delivery will meet the needs of the community.

Commence initial stage 1 upgrade at Manakau Domain and work with the community around future delivery, utilising "Better off" funding.

Consider the concept plan for Donnelly Park to address cross code pressures. Define and implement in a staged approach.

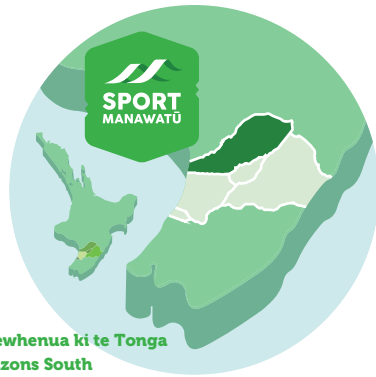
Progress the implementation of the Shared Pathway Strategy.

Consider approaches to address pressure being placed on local grounds by out-of-town teams being forced north and south.

Consider development of neighbourhood pocket parks incorporating natural elements, simple skate ramps and basketball hoops.



# Manawatū District



## Community Profile



# 34,345

Current population 34,345. Moderate (39%) population growth (nearly 13,500 people) expected<sup>14</sup>.



33% of population growth (4,500 people) expected in those aged 65 years or over.

Increasing ethnic diversity. The populations of those identifying as Asian, Pacific People and Māori are expected to increase by 151%, 149% and 96% respectively.

## Participation Snapshot<sup>15</sup>



# 48%

Walking for sport or leisure



# 27%

Jogging/running



# 18%

Gardening



# 20%

Playing Games



# 19%

Individual workout

## Key Participation Facts

- Activities which are undertaken individually or on a casual basis are more popular than traditional team sports.
- Most sport and active recreation activities which require high-cost facilities<sup>16</sup> such as field and court sports fall outside the top 20 most popular activities.
- 31% of the population of the Manawatū District is inactive.
- Tamariki (aged 5-11) are more active in 5 of their 20 expected activities than the national average for tamariki and less active in 3.
- Rangatahi (aged 12-17) are more active in 6 of their 20 expected activities compared to the national average for rangatahi, and less active in 1.

<sup>14</sup> All population projections are to 2053. Demographic data sourced from Infometrics High Projections, January 2023.

<sup>15</sup> Activity and participation information sourced from Sport NZ Insights tool.

<sup>16</sup> Such as sports fields, indoor/outdoor courts, greens, aquatic centres, specialist surfaces.



## Manawatū District Issues and Opportunities

Based on expected population growth and participation patterns, focus on re-purposing, upgrading, and sharing of facilities rather than building new ones.

A more diverse offering of spaces and places is required. Consider the needs of female, gender diverse and older participants.

The Manawatū District is reasonably well catered for with sport and recreation facilities although there are a number of ageing facilities.

Inaccessibility to Manfield as a local resource is an identified issue.

Declining membership in some key team sports needs to be considered in any requests for investment.

## Proposed Actions

Consider the development of a dedicated youth space.

Complete investigations for additional indoor court space for local use.

Consider provision of a larger/affordable/fit for purpose facility for Feilding Gymnastics.

Optimise use of Manfield as a site for sport and active recreation for both local and regional use.

Investigate need for additional lighting to increase training capacity.

Investigate development of trails/pathways, including a loop around Feilding.

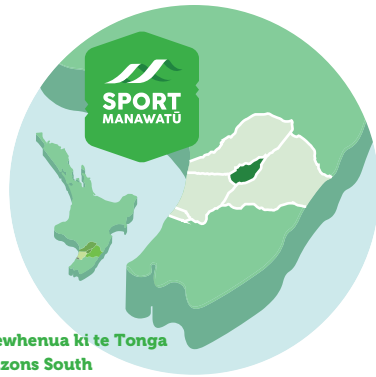
Consider need of hydrotherapy pool to meet the needs of the ageing population.

Enhance village play spaces by providing guidance to increase investment.

Allow for provision of unstructured play when developing playgrounds.



# Palmerston North City



## Community Profile



# 94,400

Current population 94,400. Moderate (24%) population growth (over 22,000 people) expected<sup>17</sup>.



30% of population growth in the 40–64-year age group. Lower growth in younger age groups.

52% of population growth (over 11,500 people) expected in those aged 65 years or over. Increasing ethnic diversity. The populations of those identifying as Asian, Pacific People and Māori are expected to increase by 97%, 69% and 65% respectively.

## Participation Snapshot<sup>18</sup>



# 48%

Walking for sport or leisure



# 29%

Jogging/running



# 16%

Gardening



# 19%

Playing Games



# 20%

Individual workout

## Key Participation Facts

- Activities which are undertaken individually or on a casual basis are more popular than traditional team sports.
- Most sport and active recreation activities which require high-cost facilities<sup>19</sup> such as field and court sports fall outside the top 20 most popular activities.
- 30% of the population of the population of Palmerston North City is inactive.
- Tamariki (aged 5-11) are more active in 9 of their 20 expected activities than the national average for tamariki and less active in 1.
- Rangatahi (aged 12-17) are more active in 5 of their 20 expected activities compared to the national average for rangatahi, and less active in 1.

<sup>17</sup> All population projections are to 2053. Demographic data sourced from Palmerston North City final population and household projections May 2023.

<sup>18</sup> Activity and Participation information sourced from Sport NZ Insights tool.

<sup>19</sup> Such as sports fields, indoor/outdoor courts, greens, aquatic centres, specialist surfaces.

## Palmerston North City Issues and Opportunities

Based on expected population growth and participation patterns, focus on re-purposing, upgrading, and sharing of facilities rather than building new ones.

A more diverse offering of spaces and places is required. Consider the needs of female, gender diverse and older participants.

Lack of consistently available and affordable indoor space reported by many indoor court sports.

High demand pressures on indoor aquatics space. No deep-water pool for activities such as water polo.

Lack of consistent participation data to help inform decisions.

Opportunities to promote partnerships and optimise existing relationships.

Willingness of schools to make facilities available for community use.

Attractive natural environments close to the city and existing parks.

The facilities at Massey University compliment the network of community facilities in Palmerston North.

## Proposed Actions

Complete review of CET Arena Masterplan.

Implement the recommendations of the Palmerston North City Aquatic Facilities and Water-based Recreation Needs Assessment.

Proceed with community indoor sports facility study, including investigation of covered outdoor courts.

Implement recommendations from the covered bowls facility feasibility study.

Support Gymsports with planning for a gymnastics facility.

Support the provision of an additional artificial turf.

Consider enhancement of existing sports field network.

Continue development of walkways/shared pathways.

Continue development of cycle trails and supporting amenities like toilets and parking.

Ensure recreational needs are considered in urban growth areas.

Support provision of dedicated space for traditional Māori activities e.g. Ki o rahi.

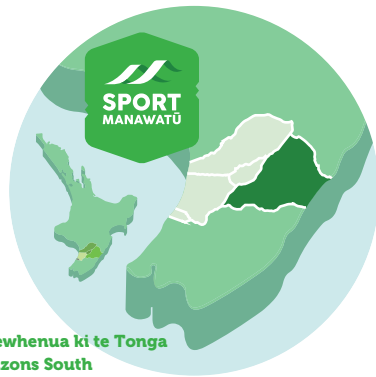
Proceed with Te Motu o Poutoa development to enhance recreational/cultural experiences.

Consider further development of small pocket parks incorporating natural elements as well as simple skate ramps and basketball hoops.





# Tararua District



Te Paewhenua ki te Tonga  
- Horizons South

## Community Profile



# 19,153

Current population 19,153. Moderate (17% population growth (3,000 people) expected<sup>20</sup>.



Declining population expected in the 15-39 age group and a small increase in 0-14-year age group.

76% of population growth (over 2,000 people) expected in those aged 65 years or over. Increasing ethnic diversity. The populations of those identifying as Asian, Pacific People and Māori are expected to increase by 91%, 75% and 67% respectively.

## Participation Snapshot<sup>21</sup>



# 47%

Walking for sport or leisure



# 27%

Jogging/running



# 17%

Gardening



# 20%

Playing Games



# 19%

Individual workout

## Key Participation Facts

- Activities which are undertaken individually or on a casual basis are more popular than traditional team sports.
- Most sport and active recreation activities which require high-cost facilities<sup>22</sup> such as field and court sports fall outside the top 20 most popular activities.
- 32% of the population of the Tararua District is inactive.
- Tamariki (aged 5-11) are more active in 5 of their 20 expected activities than the national average for tamariki and less active in 2.
- Rangatahi (aged 12-17) are more active in 6 of their 20 expected activities compared to the national average for rangatahi, and less active in 1.

<sup>20</sup> All population projections are to 2053. Demographic data sourced from Infometrics high projections, January 2023.

<sup>21</sup> Activity and participation information sourced from Sport NZ Insights tool.

<sup>22</sup> Such as sports fields, indoor/outdoor courts, greens, aquatic centres, specialist surfaces.

## Tararua District Issues and Opportunities

Based on expected population growth and participation patterns, focus on re-purposing, upgrading, and sharing of facilities rather than building new ones.

A more diverse offering of spaces and places is required. Consider the needs of female, gender diverse, older participants and people with disabilities.

Optimisation of existing facilities will keep costs down, ensure greater use of existing facilities, and reduce need for new facilities.

Some facilities are no longer fit-for-purpose as participation trends have changed over time.

School community partnerships are an opportunity to address duplication.

Declining numbers of volunteers.

## Proposed Actions

Implement the recommendations from the Tararua Play, Active Recreation, and Sport Strategy.

Continue to support the philosophy of hubbing for community sport facilities.

Continue to support community pools to meet local needs.

Consider development of pocket parks incorporating natural elements to ensure equity and accessibility for all.

Identify opportunities for track/walkways/cycleways development.



## For more information contact

### Te Pae Whenua ki te Raki - Horizons North

Tania King – Corporate Business Manager,  
Sport Whanganui  
[tania@sportwhanganui.co.nz](mailto:tania@sportwhanganui.co.nz)

Sport Whanganui Office  
Springvale Park, 226 London Street, Whanganui 4501  
<https://sportwhanganui.co.nz/>

### Te Paewhenua ki te Tonga - Horizons South

Contact Brad Cassidy – General Manager Partnerships, Māori and Environments,  
Sport Manawatū  
[bradc@sportmanawatu.org.nz](mailto:bradc@sportmanawatu.org.nz)

Sport Manawatū Office  
40 Te Marae o Hine (the Square)  
Palmerston North Central, Palmerston North 4410  
<https://www.sportmanawatu.org.nz/>