Manaaki Tāmaki Makaurau -

Auckland Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy (draft)

Proposal Document

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About the draft strategy

Open spaces and sport and recreation contribute to making Tāmaki Makaurau a healthy city. They support oranga tāngata (health of people), oranga whānau (health of families), oranga whenua (health of land), and oranga wai (health of water).

Auckland Council, together with other groups and organisations, provides open spaces and sport and recreation opportunities for Aucklanders. The draft Manaaki Tāmaki Makaurau: Auckland Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy is our collective road map to respond to Auckland's current challenges and opportunities and ensure all Aucklanders can benefit from open spaces and sport and recreation opportunities, now and in the future.

Manaakitanga is fundamental to the strategy and its implementation. This is the way we show respect, generosity, and care for resources and for others. By doing so we can foster community connection and promote unity.

We need an up-to-date road map to respond to Auckland's challenges and opportunities

The draft strategy replaces five strategies, policies and plans. While they have worked well and helped achieve some good things, we have also had lots of change: a growing and changing population, increasing urban intensification, pressure on the environment and biodiversity, and climate disruption to name a few. This means we can't stick with the status quo.

We did lots of work to figure out what the draft strategy needs to focus on. We looked at what is working well and what needs improving, best practice in New Zealand and overseas, current and future trends, legislative changes, and our strategic and financial context. We spoke with mana whenua and mataawaka, and with groups and organisations we work with who has knowledge in this space.

With this draft strategy, we are proposing a 'one stop shop' to guide planning and investment decisions in open spaces and sport and recreation in Auckland.

What we want to know from you

This is your opportunity to have your say on the draft of Manaaki Tāmaki Makaurau: Auckland Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy. A strategy informs planning and investment decisions and helps shape what happens on the ground, so it's important we get it right from the start.

We need to know what you think. Are we on the right track? Is there something missing?

There are five topics we would like your feedback on. You may want to have your say on all five or focus on the topic(s) you are most interested in.

Topic 1: Where we are heading
Topic 2: Our approach to investment
Topic 3: Making the most of our open spaces
Topic 4: Providing the right open spaces in the right places
Topic 5: Supporting Aucklanders to be more active more often

If you are short of time, please read this summary to get an understanding of the main topics that the draft strategy covers.

If you want to know more, you can start with the summary and then get into further detail on topics of interest or read the full draft strategy.

Topic 1: Where we are heading

We want to ensure that all Aucklanders can benefit from open spaces and sport and recreation opportunities, now and in the future. This will contribute to a healthier Auckland over time.

We are proposing five strategic directions. They set out what we want to achieve and shape the rest of the strategy. If we aren't clear on where we need to head and what we want to achieve over time, it makes it difficult to plan our journey to get there.

Draft strategic directions	What we want to achieve
1. Make all of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland our backyard	Aucklanders can equitably access open spaces as we improve public access to green spaces (such as conservation open spaces), blue spaces (such as along streams and the coast) and grey spaces (such as streets) for relaxation, connection, finding respite in nature, physical activity, work and more.
2. Deliver innovative open spaces in high-density areas	Aucklanders living close together with no or little backyard can enjoy nature, socialise and be active as we continue to invest in parks and make better use of spaces such streets, carparks and rooftops to green the city and host people's activities.
3. Enhance our response to climate disruption	Auckland is more resilient to climate disruption as we make our open spaces and places greener and spongier. Our responses include making parks better able to capture and absorb rainwater and improving streams to better manage stormwater.
4. Protect and enhance our environment, biodiversity and heritage	Auckland's environment is protected and enhanced as we manage our open space network in ways that increasingly benefit the environment and indigenous biodiversity, as well as Aucklanders, and protect our historic and cultural heritage.
5. Support Aucklanders to live healthy, active lives	Aucklanders have opportunities to be more active, more often their way (whether it be play, sport or recreation) as we deliver programmes, facilities and places that are welcoming and meet their needs now and in the future.

Are we on the right track? is there something missing? Remember the strategic directions guide <u>what we want to achieve</u> in open spaces and sport and recreation over time.

For more information go to pages 9-14 of the draft strategy.

Topic 2: Our approach to investment

To deliver on our five strategic directions, we need to make the most of our collective resources. This means targeting our efforts wisely and assessing projects and initiatives in a robust and consistent manner, using an investment principles approach.

The draft strategy contains four investment principles.

These are the key things we will consider when making decisions on why, what, where and how to invest in open spaces and sport and recreation.

Draft investment principles	What they mean in practice
1. Take a benefits-led approach	We decide what to invest in based on the long-term benefits to Auckland and Aucklanders, as well as how much it costs. Benefits can be anything from improved physical and mental health and wellbeing to improved water quality, climate mitigation and resilience, and better social connections.
2. Invest based on evidence of need	We target investment where it is needed most and will make the biggest impact and listen to community feedback
3. Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) obligations	We partner and co-govern with mana whenua. We ensure Māori in Tāmaki Makaurau enjoy the same opportunities as others, and support te reo Māori to be seen, heard, spoken and learned.
4. Collaborate with community, iwi, private sector, government	We collaborate with others to combine resources, be more responsive to local needs, and make the most of the funding tools that are available to us.

Are we on the right track? is there something missing? Remember the investment principles guide how we invest in open spaces and sport and recreation.

For more information go to pages 15-23 of the draft strategy (linked).

Topic 3: Making the most of our open spaces

From our regional parks, natural landscapes, and conservation areas to our sports parks and local neighbourhood parks, Auckland has a lot to offer. We have a rich and diverse network of open spaces that Aucklanders love and use a lot.

However, not all parks are well developed, welcoming, safe or accessible to all and there are still many areas that are hard to reach, notably along the coast and streams. Some of our favourite open spaces are under pressure as more people call Auckland home. Growth also impacts our ability to protect our cultural heritage and can have a negative impact on the natural environment. We also face more frequent extreme weather events.

In the face of these challenges, we can make better use of our open spaces. This is what we are proposing:

What we will do	Examples of what this could look like
Increase the benefits that our parks and other open spaces provide while ensuring that they can still work well for their intended purpose	Designing a sports park to help capture and absorb excess water during heavy rain to better manage flooding, while ensuring it still can be used as a sports park outside of these times. Or delivering pathways and other recreation opportunities alongside our streams as we improve their water flow.
Improve the quality of our open spaces so they are enjoyable, safe and accessible	Encouraging good visibility into a park by removing vegetation and relocating obstacles that block access.
Provide a range of recreation opportunities	Providing different types of opportunities for play and recreation across a network of open spaces, opportunities to spend time in natural areas and to play sport competitively or socially that meet the varying needs of our communities.
Prioritise the delivery of local paths to improve open spaces' accessibility and functionality	Providing new pathways so we can walk, run or bike alongside waterways and the coast, in nature, and connect between different parks, or simply use them for our daily commute.

Are we on the right track? Is there something missing? Remember this guides how we can achieve more from the open spaces we already have in our community.

For more information go to pages 28-41 of the draft strategy (linked).

Topic 4: Providing the right open spaces in the right places

We will plan and deliver new parks so that Aucklanders can play, be active and enjoy nature. Population growth is a considerable driver for our parks provision. An additional half a million people will be calling Auckland home in the next 30 years, some in new suburbs and some in existing areas. We may also need to deliver new parks and increase a park's size because an area is not well served already.

We also need to plan and deliver open spaces to protect and enhance the environment and to mitigate climate disruption. This is what we are proposing:

What we will do	Examples of what this could look like
Plan for the provision of high-quality parks across Auckland that keeps pace with needs and celebrates cultural landscapes that are unique to Auckland (such as Tūpuna Maunga – ancestral mountains/volcanic cones)	**We have two options for how we do this in high-density and medium-density areas that we would like your feedback on – see below this table.** Provision targets and key requirements for new open spaces are outlined. These help to ensure all Aucklanders have access to open space. They also help to provide more open space in areas where people live closer together with no or little backyard.
Ensure the acquisition of fit for purpose open space land that provides value for money and is sustainable in the long-term	We have identified mandatory standards that set the 'bottom line' for acquisition of land for open space. For example, land management cost and practicality. We have identified site assessment considerations that help to ensure the land meets our requirements and wider objectives. For example, quality standards like road frontage and accessibility. We have an emphasis on reconfiguring, redistributing or redeveloping open spaces rather than disposing of them to help cater for growth.

Options for how we might provide open space in medium and high-density areas

When we talk about high-density and medium-density areas, the images below show what we mean.

*Image 1: What **high**-density could look like*



*Image 2: What **medium**-density could look like*



Our current policy is to deliver quality parks that Aucklanders can access easily. We have the same level of provision in both high-density and medium-density areas. However, we know that:

- Aucklanders living in high-density areas, often in multi-storey apartment buildings with no garden, share their local parks with lots of other people.
- Aucklanders in Auckland's new suburbs are projected to have a lower provision of recreation parks per person than other Aucklanders when fully developed, e.g. Whenuapai, Milldale, and Drury West. These new suburbs are mainly medium-density areas.

We propose to change our current policy to provide more open space than we have currently allowed for. We have two options for this, and we would like to know which option you prefer.

Option	Description	What this would mean
Option 1	We could prioritise creating larger and more parks in high-density areas, such as neighbourhoods with many apartment buildings and limited private open space.	• This would give Aucklanders in high-density areas with more public open space to enjoy, as they don't have access to private open space/garden. • However, this approach might mean fewer resources are allocated to medium-density areas, even if they lack open space.
Option 2	We could plan the delivery of parks based on the current availability of open space in both high and medium-density areas.	• Larger and more parks would be provided in areas with the greatest need, while smaller parks might be created in areas that already have good access to open space. • This approach balances resources and ensures a broader range of Aucklanders benefit.

Are we on the right track? is there something missing? Which option do you prefer? Remember this guides the location, amount and type of open space we plan for current and future Aucklanders.

For more information go to pages 42-76 of the draft strategy (linked).

Topic 5: Supporting Aucklanders to be more active more often

Regular physical activity, whether it be through play, sport or recreation, provides significant health and wellbeing benefits. While many Aucklanders are physically active, some in new suburbs and existing areas are missing out as they face barriers to participation.

We want to direct our investment in play, sport and recreation to support all Aucklanders to live healthy, active lives. There are many different organisations that deliver these opportunities, so it is essential we work together to target those most in need and maximise the impact we can collectively make. This is what we are proposing:

What we will do	Examples of what this could look like
Target some of our investment to low-participating communities and addressing disparities	We use Auckland Council's regional sport and recreation grants to partner with others and invest where it is needed the most.
Deliver a fit for purpose, future proofed facility network that makes the most of what we have	We develop a regional sport and recreation facilities plan with our sport and recreation partners Sport New Zealand and Aktive (Auckland Sport and Recreation), and the wider sector. We support both existing and new facilities with spare capacity catering for several sport clubs, so more people can access the facility and the clubs can share costs.
Strengthen partnerships with mana whenua and mataawaka, local communities and other sport and recreation providers	We take a proactive approach to identifying partners and working together to improve public access to non-council spaces and places. We support the revitalisation of traditional Māori play, sport and recreation opportunities.

Are we on the right track? is there something missing? Remember this guides Auckland Council's investment in play, sport and recreation and how we will work together with other organisations delivering these opportunities.

For more information go to pages 77-88 of the draft strategy (linked).

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