



**SUSTAINABLE  
FUTURES 30|50**  
WHANGAREI DISTRICT



# Arts, Culture and Civic Amenities

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Sustainable Futures 30 50

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose and Scope

Culture and entertainment are important to people of Whangarei's size offers a level of cultural amenities growing population, and the wider needs of the sub-region. In fact, Whangarei acts as an arts and cultural hub for the Northland Region. The Whangarei District Council (WDC) recognises that an ongoing effort to continue to build our cultural and civic amenities is an outlet for local creativity and an economic development asset.

Cultural and civic amenities in Whangarei District comprise facilities such as libraries, arts centres, conference venues, museums, theatres and cinemas, sport fields, recreation facilities, nightlife, entertainment and music facilities.

The arts – and broader cultural resources, amenities and facilities are coming to be seen as an urban asset and they have an important and strategic role to play in society. It is important that we continue to make Whangarei District an attractive place to live, work and play and we should also be encouraging visitors to stay in Whangarei rather than just pass through. We need to have a diverse range of cultural attractions of high quality for both the local residents and visitors, such as the planned Hundertwasser Museum, Whangarei Arts Museum, Maunu Heritage Park and Clapham attractions, such as our walkways, Whangarei Falls and the Poor Knights. All encourage visitors to stay in Whangarei to have a unique and integrated Whangarei experience.

## 1.2 Definitions

- **Arts** – include all forms of creative and interpretative full gamut of artistic expression, whether through our language, culture, art, music, dance, literature, media, customs, religion, work, behaviours, social interaction, recreation, sport or the way we live our daily lives.

Some art forms have developed into creative industries, which include fashion, design, textiles, music and film.

- **Culture** – is essentially about a way of life. It is an expression of what a community is, where it has come from and where it is going – its identity and memory. It is also about how the city and its community do things and what they value.
- **The Creative Industries** – create products, services and experiences based on intellectual property and can include screen production, music, live performance, design, architecture, landscape and urban design, fashion, textile, the culinary arts, publishing and digital content.

- **Museums** – a metaphor for a wide range of culture and heritage facilities and other initiatives that care for, provide access to and promote our natural and cultural heritages. Includes facilities and services delivered by organisations with titles such as museums, art galleries, whare taonga, tribal museums, cultural centres, historic places, pioneer villages, science centres, interpretive centres, exhibition centres, heritage trails, heritage arts and crafts, historical societies, and so on – *Te papa National Services Te Paerangi*.

A museum is a non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment. – *International Council of Museums Statutes of 2001, Article 2*

Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society. – *The Museum Association (United Kingdom) definition, 2002*.

- **Civic Amenities** – Facilities provided for the citizens of a municipality to improve their amenity. For example, Forum North, museums, libraries, art galleries and other arts infrastructure are included here. It is noted that this report examines cultural and sporting facilities only. Hard infrastructure provision is examined in other reports.

### 1.3 Structure of the Report

This remainder of this report is set out as follows:

**Chapter 2** looks at the value of arts, cultural and civic amenities and how these benefit the district economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally.

**Chapter 3 to 8** provide an overview of the cultural amenities inventory in the Whangarei District and look into the details of art centres, museums, conference venues, night time entertainment facilities and sport fields and recreation facilities in the district.

The report concludes with a note on the future development of cultural and civic amenities in **Chapter 9**.

### 1.4 Methodology

The intent of the report is to provide useful background information on arts, culture, civic amenities, and conference and entertainment facilities. The information, together with information provided in other background reports, will assist in formulating the WDC Sub-Regional Growth Strategy – Sustainable Futures 30/50. Development of the district over the next 30 to 50 years must, if it is to contribute to making Whangarei and its urban environments attractive to new residents and new businesses, attracting young

professionals and improving the quality of life for all residents, continue to provide and enhance a wide range of cultural and civic amenities.

This report has been prepared using existing published information and research reports provided predominantly by Whangarei District Council. No specific consultation has been undertaken as part of this report preparation.

## 2. THE VALUE OF ARTS, CULTURE AND CIVIC AMENITIES

New Zealand's export and tourism achieving global competitiveness by being grounded in a confident sense of where we stand and who we are. Northland Region promotes itself as the place for natural heritage and lifestyle values to Whang living environment. Having heritage and creativity in the district will help fulfil these aspirations and contribute to economic, social and cultural well being.

The arts, culture, heritage and creative industries sector plays an important role in creating a vibrant, diverse and interesting community for residents and visitors alike. As well as enriching the experiences of our daily lives, the sector plays an important role in economic development through employment in a range of sectors from entertainment to tourism. It also assists in creating a , s environments.

Nationally, New Zealander's participation in, and per population aged 15+, 86% is engaged in the arts, either as attendees or participants. Furthermore 65% agree that the arts in New Zealand help to define who we are as New Zealanders, and 70% agree that the arts should receive public funding (Creative New Zealand, 2008).

In Northland over a 12 month period, 75% of the population experience heritage activities, 42% visit an art gallery or museum, 35% attend a popular music performance, 33% purchase a handmade craft, 26% go to movies, 24% attend a theatrical performance and 14% attend an opera or musical theatre. Northland has the highest percentage of attendance in performing kapa haka nationally (25%). This is mainly due to high Maori populations in the region. However, we also have the lowest percentage of attendance in ethnic community activities (8%), compare to the highest percentage in Wellington (27%). This pattern reflects the fact that ethnic minorities tend to be concentrated in the larger urban areas, in particular Auckland (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2003).

Arts, cultural, heritage and civic amenities improve personal enjoyment and satisfaction. They enable individual's self expression and enjoyment. They enhance creative thinking and communication skills.

Arts, cultural, heritage and civic amenities are important in promoting community cohesion within communities. Diverse communities are brought together with the help of the arts, cultural, heritage and civic amenities, providing opportunities for residents to reflect on their shared and individual experiences.

Arts, cultural, heritage and civic amenities assist district economic development and offer employment opportunities. They help in attracting other businesses to the area, attracting and retaining residents in the district. Not only do they assist in economic development directly in creative industries, they could boost tourism by increasing domestic and international visitor numbers to the district/region.



### 3. WHANGAREI DISTRICT CIVIC AMENITIES INVENTORY

The tables below provide an overview of cultural and civic amenities inventory in the Whangarei District. Conference venues and nightlife entertainment facilities will be listed later in the report.

**Table 1. Civic Amenities Inventory in Whangarei District**

#### Museums

| Name  | Location                   |
|---|----------------------------|
| Whangarei Art Museum                        | Central, Whangarei City    |
| Whangarei Museum & Kiwi House               | Maunu, Whangarei City      |
| Claphams Clocks - The National Clock Museum | Town Basin, Whangarei City |
| Waipu Museum                                | Waipu                      |
| Hikurangi Historical Museum                 | Hikurangi                  |
| Jack Morgan Museum                          | Hukerenui                  |

#### Libraries

| Name                      | Location           |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Whangarei Central Library | Whangarei City     |
| Kamo Library              | Kamo               |
| Onerahi Library           | Onerahi            |
| Mobile Library            | Whangarei District |

#### Cinemas/Theatres

| Name                         | Location                   |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| SkyCity Cinemas              | Central, Whangarei City    |
| Northland Youth Theatre      | Central, Whangarei City    |
| Octagon Theatre              | Regent, Whangarei City     |
| Whangarei Theatre Company    | Town Basin, Whangarei City |
| Captain Bougainville Theatre | Central, Whangarei City    |



**Figure 1. Whangarei Central Library, the Art Museum, Claphams Clocks Museum and the Waipu Museum.**

## **4. MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Whangarei District has a number of museums and libraries, mostly located in Whangarei City but with small local museums and libraries located in Waipu and Hikurangi.

### **4.2 Whangarei Art Museum**

The Whangarei Art Museum opened in 1996 and is housed in a building in Cafler Park and the Rose Gardens, adjacent to the cultural amenities of Forum North Theatre and the Conservatory. The art museum is the permanent home for the city art collection, which embraces heritage and contemporary art work and several significant bequest collections. The museum is the public gallery of the district and the only public gallery in Northland.

Nationally recognised for the quality of its curatorship, the art museum is also the venue for touring and internally-curated exhibitions – designed to showcase the full diversity of creative art practice in Northland and New Zealand. The art museum fulfils a broad role through researching and documenting the artists of the region, telling the story of the district through its permanent collection, publishing catalogues, a quarterly magazine and value-added products and services, and the on-going involvement of schools and educational institutions.

Key activities of the Whangarei Art Museum are:

- To offer diverse exhibition and public programmes which are linked to the education curriculum
- To manage, care for and develop the district collection
- To provide educational programmes linked to the education system
- To develop and provide publications and value-added products and services

### **4.3 Whangarei Museum & Kiwi House**

The Whangarei Museum and Kiwi House, incorporating the Clarke Homestead and other historical buildings are located at Heritage Park in Maunu. The Museum and Kiwi House is a registered charitable trust governed by a Board of 12 Trustees. The beneficiaries of the Trust are the citizens of Whangarei.

The Museum contains collections of natural and human heritage reflecting the interaction between natural and human history in Northland. Interactive displays tell the story of our unique Northland landscape, our native flora and fauna and the human impact on the landscape. The collections showcase natural history material, Taonga Maori, industrial collections and early settlement material with the addition of live specimens (Whangarei Museum & Kiwi House, 2010).

The Kiwi House was opened in 1990 raising public awareness of the endangered North Island brown kiwi. Visitors have opportunities to see a kiwi foraging for food as it would in the wild. The kiwi is a nocturnal animal and the Kiwi House is kept dark so that visitors can see the bird in its natural environment.

There are a number of heritage buildings located within the Heritage Park, such as the Clarke Homestead, Oruaiti Chapel, Whangarei Women's Jail, Jane Mander St

The expansion of Whangarei Museum and Kiwi House is underway. The project, named Kiwi North, will provide a single new community facility and tourist attraction through the merger of a nocturnal Kiwi House and totally refurbished Museum with a new research facility, a new walk-through aviary containing endangered native species, special exhibition gallery, improved collection storage, meeting rooms, and enlarged shop and a quality café.



Figure 2. Illustrative concept of Whangarei Museum and Kiwi House.

#### 4.4 Claphams Clocks É the National Clock Museum

The Claphams Clocks Museum is the largest collection of clocks and clockwork items in the Southern Hemisphere, established in the 1940s by Whangarei resident Archibald Clapham. After his death in 1962, the new owner of the collection, the Whangarei District Council, built the collection up to 1,500 items and re-housed it five times, making it one of Whangarei's for

The museum is not an antique clock collection although it does include clocks dating back to 1720. The items in the collection originate from all around the world, particularly Germany, France, England and the U.S.A. There are also clocks from Austria, Japan, Netherlands, Switzerland, Russia and Australia.

The museum's emphasis is on a vast variety of clocks a to 2000 BC. The more unusual clocks are kept running and each clock tells a story about its owner and country of origin.



#### **4.5 Waipu Museum**

The Waipu Museum was established in 1953. Originally referred to as the House of Memories it is now called the Waipu Museum.

The museum tells the dramatic story of one of the most national history and one of the most famous Scottish migration sagas from Scotland to Nova Scotia in 1819, then to Australia and New Zealand from 1853 under the leadership of the Rev Norman McLeod. The museum exhibits and displays the old world collections and archives, including artefacts, photographs, genealogical information and shipping documents from the migration and early settlement period plus some documents and photographs from later periods in the c Nova Scotians were good shipbuilders, having built their own vessels to take their people from Nova Scotia to Australia and New Zealand. Many shipboard diaries, other shipping documents, ship building tools and navigational equipment are held in the museum (New Zealand Museums, 2010).

The museum offers help to explore family history records and research family genealogy, through the largest Scottish genealogy database and index of any New Zealand community. The building also houses the Waipu Information Centre.

#### **4.6 Hikurangi Historical Museum**

The Hikurangi Historical Museum presents a story of a coal mining community and is run entirely by volunteers. It has a collection of mining, dairy company and town memorabilia. The personal lives of miners and their families and the long arm of the law are key features of this museum (Whangarei NZ, 2010). The historical artefacts, the photographs and the stories are used by schools and families. The museum has a unique role to play within the network of museums in the district.

#### **4.7 Botanica Whangarei**

Botanica Whangarei is a small oasis of green in the hustle and bustle of the city. The Marge Maddren Fernery inside Botanica is one of New Zealand's large 1987 the fernery is a stunning collection that shows the huge varieties of ferns to be found in New Zealand.

Nestled in the fernery is the Filmy Fernhouse. This purpose built adobe brick structure houses a collection of filmy ferns, normally found in the cool moist recesses of New Zealand Bush. The Snow Conservatory was built in 1970 and houses a small jungle of exotic beauties from elegant orchids to graceful palms. The Cactus House recreates the hot arid conditions that cacti and succulents thrive in. The horticultural haven offers gardening advice to plant enthusiasts.

#### 4.9 Hundertwasser Museum

A Hundertwasser Museum has been proposed for the Town Basin to act as a centrepiece for arts and culture in Whangarei. The famous Austrian artist, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, sketched a design for the former Northland Regional Council building at the Town Basin in 1993. The building is now owned by Whangarei District Council. It is proposed to develop the building according to Hundertwasser's original design.



Figure 3. An original sketch for the old Northland Regional Council building by Hriedensreich Hundertwasser in 1993.

The building would house many examples of the work of the artist, including models of his buildings, stamps, flags, his various styles of art and architecture. It proposed that the Hundertwasser Museum would contribute to the cultural heritage and to the wellbeing of the people of Whangarei and attract many tourists from all over the world. The Hundertwasser Museum may act as a catalyst for the development of tourism in Whangarei.

#### 4.10 Libraries

Whangarei District Council currently has 3 libraries and 1 mobile library. They are located in Whangarei City, Onerahi and Kamo. Libraries provide a range of services to the community. Principal activities are to:

- **Educate** the community, providing lifelong learning – this includes providing access to computers and the internet, and training in how to use them
- provide **information** to the community
- provide **relaxation and enjoyment** through books, audiovisual media, technology, events at the library and the creation of a safe meeting space
- provide these services as **equitably** as possible across the district via the central library, strategically placed branch and volunteer libraries and the mobile library

The Whangarei Library also administers grants for and offers professional support to ten volunteer libraries<sup>1</sup> across the district. The Whangarei Library service is has a higher than average proportion of people under 25 and over 45 – prime users of libraries. The library service is well used with 68% of residents consistently reporting that they have visited a library in the past year (Whangarei District Council, LTCCP, 2009, p. 100).

<sup>1</sup> These ten community libraries are located in Hikurangi, Mangakahia, Matapouri, Ngunguru, Ruakaka, Tauraroa, Tikipunga, Waipu, Whananaki and Whangarei Heads.

## 5. CINEMAS, THEATRES AND OTHER SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

### 5.1 Cinemas and Theatres

There are four theatres and one cinema complex in the Whangarei District. Skycity Cinema, part of New Zealand's cinema chain, is located in central Whangarei film plus art house movies.

The Capitaine Bourgainville Theatre is located in the Forum North complex. It has capacity of 366 people and can cater to a range of events including intimate theatre, music, entertainment events and meetings.



**Figure 4. The Capitaine Bourgainville Theatre, Forum North.**

Source: [http://forumnorth.co.nz/venue/facilities/capitaine\\_bougainville](http://forumnorth.co.nz/venue/facilities/capitaine_bougainville)

The Whangarei Theatre Company was built by company members in the mid 1980s. The centre contains a main auditorium (170 seating), the smaller Hatea room (100 seating), dressing rooms, a workshop and catering facilities. It is located in the lower Town Basin vicinity.



**Figure 5. The Whangarei Theatre Company.**

Source: [www.whangareitheatrecompany.org.nz](http://www.whangareitheatrecompany.org.nz)

The Octagon Theatre is an intimate theatre seating approximately 50 patrons located in Regent, Whangarei.

The theatre offers three to four shows per year.



The Northland Youth Theatre is a Trust dedicated to benefiting the community generally, in particular by supporting, educating and training young people in Northland in theatre.

**Figure 6. The Octagon Theatre.**

Source: <http://www.octagontheatre.co.nz>

## 5.2 Other Social Infrastructure

### Visual Arts

The Geoff Wilson Gallery at Northland Polytechnic, the only purpose built gallery in Northland, has a Memorandum of Understanding with Whangarei Art Museum. It is used by students and emerging artists and is a training ground for emerging curators. Whangarei Art Museum curates some exhibitions, and facilitates both touring and collection-based exhibitions, at this site.

A number of organisations, venues and events also promote arts at community level. These include Northland Arts Society at Reyburn House, Northland Craft Trust at the Quarry Arts Centre, Te Kowhai Print Trust, the Paper Mill, summer schools, an artisans fair, community craft markets, the biennial Collaborationz event and art competitions.

Reyburn House, home to Northland Arts Society, is a historic house located on reclaimed land at the Town Basin with a lease in perpetuity. Studio spaces have also been built. Maintenance of the site requires extensive fund-raising.

The Quarry Arts Centre is a unique arts precinct set in the grounds of the former Waldrons Quarry. It is now home to a number of arts organisations including the Northland Woodturners and Woodworkers Association, the Quarry Craft Co-op, Northland Craft Trust and the Te Kowhai Print Trust. The Quarry s gallery and a range of studios and spaces for arts activities. There are over 10 working artists with studios on site. The studios are often available for hire.



c o m m u n

The Quarry Arts Centre had plans to redevelop the site. They held a public meeting in Whangarei in 2008 to find out what the community saw as important in the future redevelopment plans for the site. There was a shared vision for new, improved workshop spaces, café, upgraded artists studios and an outdoor performance area at the rear of the site where the acoustics are superb. The work will be done in stages depending on available funding (The Quarry Arts Centre, 2010).

### Performing Arts

Current clubs and organisation in this sector include: Whangarei Theatre Company, Octagon Theatre Company, Holee Cow (drama), Opera North, Jazz Society, Hardcore Dance, Northland Ballet Company, and Northland Amateur Film Society and Festival.

Theatre and music events include: the Subway Stage Challenge, Rockquest, Jazz Festival, Waipu Highland Games, Opera in the Garden and others. There are also recording studios in Whangarei District.

### **Maori Culture and Arts**

There is a sizeable Maori population engaged in creative activities in the Whangarei District. Local talent and knowledge is considered to be of a high standard and practitioners are represented in all parts of the sector. The district is where a number of leading practitioners in literature, visual arts, craft and performing arts grew up and/or received early professional development.

There are a number of organisations supporting Maori arts. Whangarei Art Museum plays a significant role in presenting work by Maori artists. Whangarei Museum has an important collection and a strong Maori advisory committee. Arts Promotion Trust has a commitment to working with Maori practitioners. Northland Polytechnic is playing a significant role in ongoing Maori education; and, schools and Maori organisations play a key role, including the kapa haka regional competitions. Destination Northland, Tai Tokerau Tourism and Arts Promotion Trust are helping to develop Matariki celebrations.

### **Arts Promotion Trust Northland (APT)**

The Arts Promotion Trust (Northland) is a charitable trust, established in May 2000. It is the creative/arts sector development body for the Northland Region. The Trust produces high-quality special events, festivals (i.e. Northland Art Trail, Art Beat) and arts programming that stimulate communities economically, artistically and culturally. It addresses the needs of the artistic community through arts and cultural activities, advocacy, support and help with funding. The Trust is located in the Old Library building on Rust Avenue.

APT currently receives funding from the Northland Regional Council to support a regional arts role. This funding was last agreed in the 2009 LTCCP process for a period of 3 years from the 2009/10 year, subject to annual plan support and meeting of specified measures (Whangarei District Council, 2010). More details on the roles of APT at regional and district levels are discussed in Chapter 9.

### **Whangarei Quarry Gardens**

The Whangarei Quarry Gardens is a voluntary community project assisted and supported by Whangarei District Council, Community Employment Groups and many loyal sponsors and friends from Whangarei and the wider community.

In the late 1940s a quarry was established and began operating to produce aggregate for local roading projects. Following a severe flood in 1974, their quarry operations were moved to Otaika at the southern end of the city. Winstone Aggregates Ltd, who took over the quarry, donated the 25 hectare site to the Council in 1976 to become part of the City's park. In 1980, Friends of the Park approached the Council to negotiate the formation of a public garden on the site. Then in 1997, the Council purchased 2.5 hectares of adjoining land to form a link to the top north-west border. A group of enthusiasts began clearing the overgrown site. The



A building was installed in 1998 to provide facilities for hard-working volunteers and this remains on the site today. In the same year, work began on a trust deed to form a Charitable Trust to develop the project.

Establishment of the Whangarei Quarry Garden Trust in 2000 allowed the Council to pass responsibility for development of the Gardens to the members of the Trust. Today, the transformed site exposes a myriad of streams and waterfalls as well the potential for a lake at the foot of a spectacular 40m waterfall (Whangarei Quarry Gardens, 2010).

### **Other Cultural Groups**

Groups that choose to get together because of their ethnic/cultural connections seek to keep their heritage and creative expression alive and available to their children while sharing it with the wider community. Cultural organisations like NZ Celtic Trust, Pacific Islands Charitable Trust, Caledonian Society, and Tibetan Monastery are examples of cultural communities addressing their individual needs. There are also a number of migrant community groups in the district, such as:

- Northland Muslim Association
- Whangarei Korean Group
- Northland Indian Association
- Whangarei Filipino Society
- Northland Filipino Community Association
- Whangarei Chinese Association
- WINGS - Women's International Newcomers Group Social
- Sri Lankan Community
- Alliance Frances
- Dutch Community
- Hindu Group

In addition to the above cultural organisations and migrant community groups, events like Gaidhealtachd Summer School, the Waipu Games and Winter Festival in Waipu offer lively cultural experiences for the whole community.

## 6. CONFERENCE VENUES/CONVENTION CENTRE

### 6.1 Conference Facilities in Whangarei

Often conceived to support economic growth and development, convention centres serve to provide a location for meetings, conferences, conventions, trade shows, public shows, the arts, and local interests. The conference market is a diverse market ranging from small local meetings for a dozen people lasting just a day to major conferences attracting thousands of delegates from around the country for a few days or more. Conference facilities will attract out-of-town delegates and exhibitors to Whangarei, and generate economic benefits to the district. There is potential to develop Whangarei as a conference destination.

At present, the conference facilities across Whangarei are limited in size. The table below shows that there are five venues<sup>2</sup> in Whangarei with a capacity of 300 to 1,000 people. There are many other venues most having a capacity of less than 300.

**Table 2. Conference Venues with Capacity of 45 People and Above**

| Conference Venues   | Capacity (people) |
|---|-------------------|
| <b>Northland Events Centre<sup>3</sup></b>                                | 1,000             |
| <b>Forum North - Te Kotahitanga Expo Hall</b>                             | 603 – 800         |
| <b>ASB Leisure Centre - Advocate Stadium</b>                              | 800               |
| <b>Thirty3 Event and Conference Centre</b>                                | 700               |
| <b>Forum North - Capitaine Bougainville Theatre</b>                       | 366               |
| <b>Ruakaka Racecourse</b>   | 280               |
| <b>Barge Showground and Event Centre Function Room</b>                    | 200               |
| <b>Oceans Resort</b>  | 200               |
| <b>ASB Leisure Centre Ē ASB Lounge</b>                                    | 180               |
| <b>Kingsgate Hotel Whangarei Ē Conference Rooms (privately owned)</b>     | 160               |
| <b>Forum North - conference suits</b>                                     | 50 – 160          |
| <b>Flames International Hotel &amp; Conference Centre (private owned)</b> | 150               |
| <b>Whangarei RSA Club</b>   | 120               |
| <b>Dickens Inn Ē Pickwick/Copperfield Suite (private owned)</b>           | 85                |
| <b>Cafler Park Conservatory and Fernery</b>                               | 50                |
| <b>Dickens Inn Ē Pickwick Room (private owned)</b>                        | 45                |

Source: Venuehire.co.nz

### 6.2 Competitor Analysis

In the large conference and sport event market Whangarei is likely to compete with other cities/towns having a similar size and demographic profile. The following table considers Whangarei in comparison to the G9 group of councils, being Palmerston North, New Plymouth, Napier, Hastings, Rotorua, Tauranga,

<sup>2</sup> Okara Park Rugby Stadium did not have capacity for conferences. The recently opened Northland Events Centre has upgraded facilities with capacity to hold conferences of up to 1,000 people.

<sup>3</sup> The Northland Events Centre opened in June 2010.

Gisborne and Wanganui. These G9 councils are those identified as being closest to Whangarei on a range of indicators (including total population size, demographic profile and population density). This analysis allows Whangarei to gauge its provision of conference and event facilities relative to other comparable cities.

**Table 3. Competing Destination Offers Ē G9 Group of Councils**

|                         | <b>Max Venue Capacity</b> | <b>Venue</b>                                   | <b>Type of</b>                           | <b>Max Exhibition space (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Whangarei</b>        | 25,000                    | Northland Events Centre                        | Show/sports events/conference/exhibition | 1,380m <sup>2</sup><br>(4 separate lounge spaces) |
| <b>Palmerston North</b> | 15,000                    | FMG Stadium                                    | Show/sports events                       | 3,400m <sup>2</sup><br>(Arena 2)                  |
| <b>New Plymouth</b>     | 25,000                    | Yarrow Stadium                                 | Show/sports events                       | 1,100m <sup>2</sup>                               |
| <b>Napier</b>           | 1,500                     | Rodney Green Centennial Event Centre           | Social function/seated dining            | N/A <sup>4</sup>                                  |
| <b>Rotorua</b>          | 35,000                    | Rotorua International Stadium                  | Show/sports events                       | N/A   |
| <b>Tauranga</b>         | 3,615                     | Mount Action Centre                            | Show/sports event                        | N/A   |
| <b>Gisbone</b>          | 1,000                     | Gisborne Showgrounds Event Centre              | Conference/exhibition/fair               | 1,200m <sup>2</sup>                               |
| <b>Hasting</b>          | 1,000                     | H a w k e s B a y House Theatre                | Meeting/show                             | N/A   |
| <b>Wanganui</b>         | 21,000                    | Cooks Garden Westpac Trust Stadium & Velodrome | Show/sports events                       | N/A   |

**Sources: venuehire; Tauranga Leisure; Arena Manawatu; New Plymouth District Council; Napier City Council; Events and Venues Rotorua; Gisborne Show; Wikepedia.**

Most destinations above offer multi-purpose entertainment venues for sport events, shows and expos. The former Okara Park Rugby Stadium has a capacity of 25,000 people. The Park has undergone a \$16 million redevelopment with a new stadium know as Northland Events Centre replacing Okara Park.

A number of facilities will be contained within the Events Centre, such as:

- An international standard playing surface for rugby union, rugby league, soccer, concerts, and other outdoor events;
- 2,000m<sup>2</sup> conference centre which holds 1,000 people (the conference facilities are divided over four separate lounge spaces on two levels);

<sup>4</sup> N/A – Data currently not available.

- One lounge caters for up to 500 people banquet style, another lounge caters for up to 200 banquet style at the same time; and there are two other lounges that cater for up to 80 banquet style each;
- Two lounges that can cater for 80 persons;
- Under cover concourse or “gallery” that can be used for markets, tradeshow etc);
- Fifteen corporate suites; and,
- Changing rooms and other service and officials rooms.



**Figure 7. Northland Events Centre.**

The new Events Centre will have the positive effect of providing a regional sporting and community facility which will be of benefit to the whole of Northland. It will also provide a conference facility for up to 1,000 people.

### **6.3 Constraints and Opportunities**

Given Whangarei is in close proximity to Auckland where major conventions or exhibitions are held; it will compete with Auckland for conferences and conventions. Bay of Islands is also an alternative destination for conferences, and Whangarei will need to develop point of differences to be competitive. To be competitive a number of elements must be addressed. Of importance is the lack of suitable accommodation including hotels:

- They must be of sufficient quality;
- There must be a sufficient quantity, e.g. number of rooms in total, number of rooms that can be booked for convention business;
- They must be in close proximity to the meeting facilities and to transportation and airport access.

Overnight hotel business is predominantly driven by air travellers in most locations. The day-use market for short meetings, on the other hand, is often composed of drive-in traffic. To boost the conference and convention market in Whangarei requires convenient air access, with greater facilities (e.g. bigger airplanes) available for larger groups.

Whangarei Airport has been identified as a regional airport, while Kerikeri has been identified as an international airport in the draft *30 Year Transport Strategy for Northland* (Northland Regional Council, 2010). Although Whangarei Airport has the capacity for 50 seater planes, the majority of aircraft are 19 seater.

Notwithstanding, Whangarei has some real strengths. A city with unique natural and cultural heritage and distinctive landscapes could be attractive to certain conference markets. Organisations with an interest in heritage, tourism or culture could find Whangarei an appealing destination where delegates can attend a conference in a distinctive coastal environment.

To develop Whangarei as a conference destination, a quality hotel of adequate size is required. This needs to be a 4 star hotel and large enough to accommodate a medium to large sized conference. It needs to be located in central Whangarei with good transport linkages to either the Northland Events Centre or the ASB Leisure Centre – Advocate Stadium. Ideally, the hotel itself could incorporate conference facilities or a new conference centre could be developed separately.

Over the medium term Whangarei is likely to see the development of a 4 star hotel for the business and tourism market.

## **7. ENTERTAINMENT AND NIGHTLIFE**

### **7.1 Introduction**

When people picture New York City, they often perceive the Empire State Building, Times Square, Central Park, the United Nations, the Statue of Liberty. But those are not really the main characteristics that make the city so attractive to many of us. New York has a certain creative buzz. It is where things happen. Cinemas, galleries, museums, nightclubs, bars, art spaces and concert venues dominate the urban landscape. Many cities around the world would love to see that same creative environment in their own cities.

Entertainment and night-time activities play an important role in many cities around the world. Cities that offer multiple and thrilling options for nocturnal entertainment are often viewed as attractive places to live or to visit. Nightclubs, bars, restaurants are central to the night time economy and signifiers of the urban cool. They are also a crucial part of urban planning and consumption (George, 2008).

The night-time economy is a concept that refers to the range of leisure activities and experiences associated with patterns of collective night-time socialising and entertainment, including drinking, eating and creative practice (Hannigan, 1998 as cited in University of Western Sydney, 2008). Night time attractions include restaurants, bars, taverns, hotels, nightclubs, theatres, cinemas, shops and other culture and entertainment facilities, which appeal to different gender, age and cultural groups (Hatterton & Hollands, 2002 as cited in University of Western Sydney, 2008).

The concept of the night-time economy has gained increasing currency since the 1990s in seeking to encapsulate changes to the organisation and practice of after-dark life, especially in urban settings. Different rhythms of work and leisure, and of the uses of city spaces, as well as the increased economic significance of the services sector (especially of tourism), has promoted the idea of a 24-hour city with more fluid and diverse leisure pursuits in the past decade (2007 as cited in University of Western Sydney, 2008). Therefore, developing and managing the night-time economy, is a key imperative for any city that is looking to integrate effectively the various dimensions of working, domestic and leisure life.

### **7.2 The Whangarei Context**

According to 2006 Census figures, 15% of the people in Whangarei District were born overseas, and 8% of residents speak another language other than English and Maori. For New Zealand as a whole, about 19% of the population speak another language other than English and Maori. Whangarei is characterised by a higher proportion of older aged groups (45-64 years and 65 years and over) than the national figure, with 36% of residents now aged 45 years and over. The young labour force age groups, 15-24 years (14%) and 25-44 years age (28%), are relatively smaller. The low representation in these age brackets indicate a high number of this age group are moving out of the region to pursue either further tertiary education, job opportunities in the bigger centres, or travel overseas.

To secure our economic future, our district must be successful in attracting and retaining young people, especially the knowledge-based young talents. Young people tend to look for a package of services and amenities that make up a comprehensive scene that is drawn to the arts, culture, nightlife offered in urban centres. Because of this, it is important for Whangarei to offer these urban style amenities such as a thriving nightlife and entertainment facilities to help make the district more attractive to young people as a place to live and work.

On the other hand, people in slightly older age groups with family and household responsibilities for whom time is often scarce still want to go out in the evening but their favoured entertainment and leisure activities may be different, particularly when taking account of the needs of children. The leisure demands of older and retired people are less likely to be restricted to evenings and weekends, and when expressed may be more oriented towards provision closer to home than more distant, strategic clusters of activities.

A vibrant night-time economy is an important part of a city's identity. As Whangarei's city policies have been largely day-centric in focus and application, there is no mention of such concepts as the night-time economy or the concept of the 24-hour city. It is timely to consider the development and sustainability of its night-time cultures and spaces. Night-time activities that take place in the CBD influence the image and liveability of the city, and can also make valuable contributions to the local economy. These places should be safe, welcoming and vibrant, and accessible to a diverse range of people in a variety of different ways. Whangarei District Council has a role to play in creating a climate for a dynamic, diverse and multi-purpose night-time economy in which public culture and commercial culture intersect.

#### Time Economy Constraints and Opportunities

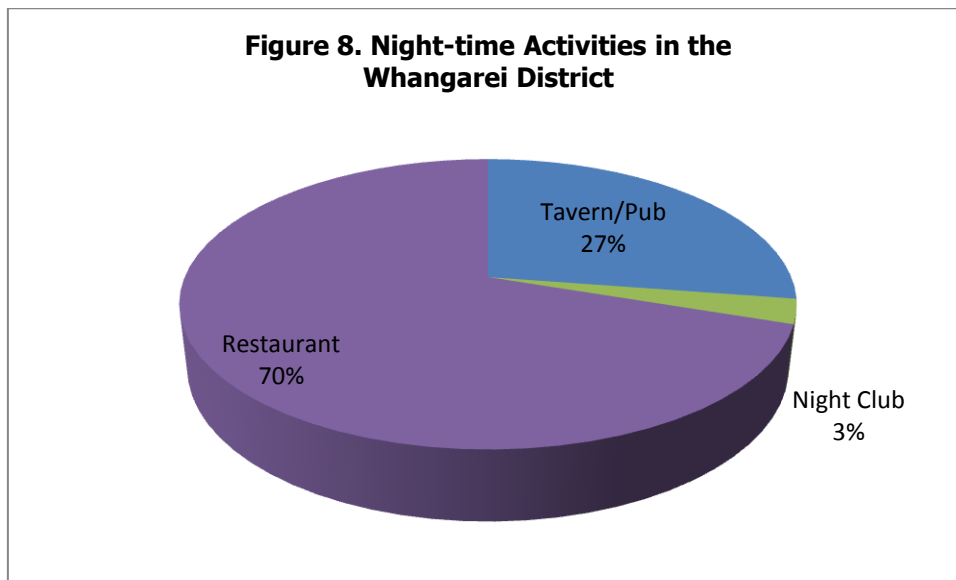
Whangarei has a limited night-time economy. The spatial organisation of the nightlife precinct is predominantly organised around Vine, Quality and Bank Streets in the CBD. These areas host the majority of cafes, restaurants and bars. Figure 8 provides an overview of what percentage<sup>5</sup> of these activities are taking place in Whangarei.

The evening time restaurant economy tends to wane at 10-11pm, with the younger participants involved in alcohol-based leisure activities dominating the late-night economy. There is, however, a major drop-off in night-time activity beyond Vine, Quality and Bank Streets.

There is an absence of a night-specific place-making strategy in place. Street furniture and lighting in those areas are clearly day-centric in design. A night life precinct as a uniquely branded and unified leisure site has yet to be established. Civic spaces, such as the Cameron Street Mall, and Cafler Park, mainly become thoroughfares at night, with people seeking to pass through them rather than spend time within them.

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<sup>5</sup> Although nearly all taverns/pubs are open till late, not all restaurants and cafes do so. The data simply represents the total number of these premises in the district.



Source: Whangarei District Council, 2010.

A significant opportunity therefore exists for a more complex, dynamic and diverse nightscape in Whangarei encompassing economic-based consumption, but also a more broadly conceived social and cultural economy. Whangarei after dark for communities to actively and safely co-exist. Shops, cafes, galleries, libraries, museums and other culture venues might be encouraged to stay open longer. Evening events could be organised and marketed. Encouraging the diversification of the evening and late night economies, will contribute to a more dynamic nightlife. There is recognised potential in the Lower Dent Street vicinity to encourage a mix of residential apartments and commercial development to revitalise this light industrial area. This has potential to contribute (Whangarei District Council, 2007 & 2010).

The city needs to achieve a better balance of evening and night-time activities and a better distribution throughout the city. The key late-night entertainment venues are sometimes perceived as dangerous by people passing through them. No doubt there are problems with drinking-related disputes and assaults in Whangarei CBD, but these are not widespread. A significant opportunity therefore exists for night-time place making exercises to increase perceptions of safety in certain sites. The section of Vine and Bank Streets would produce greater benefits if they were established as night-specific civic spaces for the experience of nightlife.

Some parts of the city currently suffer from lack of activity in the evenings and at weekends. The city centre in particular would benefit from the vitality that restaurants, cafes, bars and clubs would bring, as long as these are provided in the right quantity and in the right locations.

The Town Basin area offers opportunities for balanced increased socially inclusive leisure and evening/late night uses such as cafes, restaurants and bars. It is important that within these areas uses are carefully balanced so that evening/night-time activities are complementary, rather than opposed to existing businesses.



To take full advantage of both the CBD and the Town Basin these two areas need strong and safe pedestrian linkages so that people can walk safely and easily between the two precincts. The *20/20 CBD Development Plan* looks at this issue as does the *Sense of Place Report*.

In the absence of regular, local arts/culture based activities there will be greater focus on the commercial spaces such as bars, taverns and night clubs, and an associated increase in alcohol consumption around these venues. There is a great opportunity to make more creative use of civic spaces for diverse uses with an arts/cultural emphasis and hence enhance the night-time activities in the area.

#### **7.4 Conclusions**

Activities that take place after dark in the CBD of any city play a significant role in shaping the image and liveability of that city. They can also have a major impact on the local economy. It is clear that the night-time economy is principally envisaged as consumption-based. The consumption of a range of leisure, entertainment and cultural activities and experiences in the night-time economy will be an expression of lifestyle and identity. It is thus important that the land/night-time spaces are developed wisely, so that these night-time precincts can be enjoyed by a diverse range of people in a variety of different ways.

As mentioned earlier, Whangarei has a limited night-time economy which operates within tight spatial constraints. This means that there are many areas within the CBD which become deserted at night. Important to opening up Whangarei's night-time economy would be encouraging higher population density in the area and diversifying the range of after-hours venues and activities that are located there.

The establishment of precincts can be a major initiative in providing the necessary infrastructure for the night-time city. The night-time precinct concept together with the identified precincts in the *Tapapa Toi The Cultural Seedbed - A Heritage, Culture, Arts and Creative Industries Strategy for Whangarei District*, allows a range of activities, including performance, galleries, restaurants and retail shops, and locations for street entertainment. Night-time activities in Whangarei can develop into a significant civic asset that is inclusive, distinctive and sustainable for residents and a major attraction for visitors.

## **8. SPORT FACILITIES**

This chapter compiles an inventory of sport facilities in the Whangarei District. Whangarei District Council commissioned a District Sport Facilities Plan from Strategic Leisure (NZ) Limited which was adopted in 2003. The main objectives were to develop an inventory that identifies the existing supply of district and local sport facilities and, to identify gaps and opportunities in the current and future provision of district and local facilities through a comparison of the existing supply situation and identified needs/demands.

The role of sport facilities in enhancing community well-being is widely accepted and their contribution towards achieving desired outcomes is widely recognised by local government in New Zealand and overseas. The main benefits include improved health, community development, attracting visitors and new residents, economic development, and contributing to the social and cultural well-being of the community.

### **8.1. Benefits of Sport Facilities**

#### **Health**

Physical activity is fundamental to improve health. Local authorities (city, district and regional councils) fund almost 60% of the nation's total investment in recreation, and they take the main responsibility for enabling physical activity by creating facilities where residents are drawn to use sport and other community facilities within their immediate community and within the region. Without the provision of appropriate facilities the promotion and delivery of physical activity for health will be severely hindered. Therefore, it is necessary to support the well-being by making physical activity opportunities accessible, attractive and affordable.

#### **Community Development**

Council recognises that it needs to provide community facilities which support community development (including those for recreation, sport, art and cultural activities), but they must also work with the community to maximise the use of those facilities and to encourage the realisation of individual needs for community involvement, achievement and creativity. A network of appropriate and significant district and regional facilities is also needed to experience the excitement and involvement in gathering in large numbers for a shared interest or passion, and to collectively (as a community) celebrate creativity and excellence.

#### **Attract Visitors and New Residents**

Sport facilities attract more visitors into the district, through competitions, events and expos. They could make it easier for local businesses and service providers to attract skilled workers by offering the kinds of facilities people have come to expect. Moreover, sport facilities would make Whangarei more attractive to both existing and new residents. Good outdoor recreation activities are a major draw card for people moving to the area.

#### **Economic Development**

Sport facilities can be a major economic asset to the community in which they are located. Visitors attracted by a new sports facility spend money locally on accommodation, food and other services. For example,

major sport events attract many visitors to Whangarei and inject substantial amounts of money into the local economy. It is important to recognise the role sport facilities play in the economic activity of the district, by their value as visitor/tourism assets, and by their role in making the district an attractive place to live.

### **Social and Cultural Well-being**

Community facilities that provide for recreation, sport, arts and cultural activity, are key components of the district's social and economic development, and will continue to play their part in the district's social and cultural well-being.

The following two tables show the list of sports fields and recreation facilities on council parks and reserves in the Whangarei District. This does not include a number of recreational facilities or clubs that are located outside of council parks and reserves.

**Table 4. Sports Fields and Recreation Facilities on Council Parks and Reserves in Whangarei City**

| <b>WHANGAREI CITY</b>                    |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Northland Event Centre</b>            | Multi-purpose Event Centre   |
| <b>Cobham Oval</b>                       | Cricket  |
| <b>Rosvall ITM Stadium</b>               | Hockey Stadium   |
| <b>Old Boys Rugby Fields</b>             | Rugby  |
| <b>Kensington Sportspark</b>             | Athletics, Cricket, Netball, Junior Rugby, Soccer, Fitness Centre, Table Tennis Centre |
| <b>Genesis Energy Kensington Stadium</b> | Indoor Netball, Basketball, Badminton, Volleyball                                      |
| <b>Kamo Sportspark</b>                   | Cricket, Rugby, Soccer, Tennis, Bowls, Summer Rugby, Baseball                          |
| <b>Tikipunga Sportspark</b>              | Cricket, Rugby, Soccer, Touch, Five Aside Soccer                                       |
| <b>Otangarei Sportspark</b>              | Rugby  |
| <b>William Fraser Memorial Park</b>      | Soccer, BMX Track, Skate Park, Rowing, Sea Scouts, Young Mariners                      |
| <b>Onerahi Domain</b>                    | Rugby, Bowls, Baseball, Parahaki Pony Club   |
| <b>Onerahi Airport Sportsfields</b>      | Soccer, Cricket  |
| <b>Hora Hora Sportspark</b>              | Rugby, Touch, Baseball   |
| <b>Morningside Sportspark</b>            | Soccer, Five Aside Soccer  |
| <b>Otaika Reserve</b>                    | Rugby League, Soccer, Dog Shows  |
| <b>Barge Showgrounds</b>                 | Showgrounds, Indoor Stables Arena  |

Source: Whangarei District Council, 2010.

**Table 5. Sports Fields and Recreation Facilities on Council Parks and Reserves  
in Rural Areas**

| RURAL AREAS                      |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Hukerenui Domain</b>          | Rugby, Tennis                                  |
| <b>Oakura Recreation Reserve</b> | Rugby, Touch                                   |
| <b>Hikurangi Sportspark</b>      | Rugby, Rugby League, Whakapara Pony Club       |
| <b>Mangakahia Sports Complex</b> | Rugby, Soccer, Squash                          |
| <b>Maungakaramea Domain</b>      | Rugby, Cricket, Hockey, Tennis Bowls, Netball  |
| <b>Ngunguru</b>                  | Recreation Centre                              |
| <b>Ormiston Road Reserve</b>     | Tennis   |
| <b>Portland Reserve</b>          | Rugby League, Bowls, Gymnasium, Model Aircraft |
| <b>Ruakaka Recreation Centre</b> | Soccer, Squash, Five Aside Soccer, Volleyball  |
| <b>Takahiwai Reserve</b>         | Rugby League                                   |

Source: Whangarei District Council, 2010.

An analysis of clubrooms on Council parks shows that there are a total 27 clubrooms and 3 pavilions, 5 recreation centres/indoor stadiums, 9 tennis courts and 12 netball courts on council parks and reserves<sup>6</sup> (Whangarei District Council, 2003). There are other clubrooms on land owned by sports clubs such as bowls, golf, tennis, rugby league and soccer. Several parks have more than one clubroom located on the park or adjoining the park, these include:

- Hikurangi Sportspark (2)
- Kamo Sportspark (5)
- Kensington Park (6 plus stadium)
- Onerahi Sportspark (2)
- Portland Reserve (2)
- Tikipunga Sportspark (2)
- William Fraser Memorial Park (2 plus Navy Room)

Other types of recreation and sport facilities include indoor facilities (pool and gyms), outdoor recreational facilities (i.e. skateboard parks), and natural facilities (trails, paths, etc) are listed in Table 6.

<sup>6</sup> These figures do not represent the total number of sport clubs and associations in the Whangarei District. There are over 400 clubs and associations in the district and as such this report is not intended to list each individual clubs and associations. Further information on clubs and association could be found on [www.2cu.co.nz](http://www.2cu.co.nz)

**Table 6. Other Types of Recreation and Sport Facilities**

| Other Types of Recreation and Sport Facilities | Structures               | Quantity |
|--|--------------------------|----------|
| <b>Indoor Facilities</b>                       | Whangarei Aquatic Centre | 1        |
|  | Gyms                     | 7        |
| <b>Outdoor Recreation Facilities</b>           | Skateboard Parks         | 4        |
|  | Children's Playgrounds   | 36       |
|  | Golf Course              | 8        |
| <b>Natural Facilities</b>                      | Trails and Paths         | 36.6km   |

Source: Whangarei District Council. 2009.

**Table 7. Golf Clubs in the District**

| Clubs                              | Location  | Clubs                      | Location  |
|------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Hikurangi Golf Club</b>         | Hikurangi | <b>The Pines Golf Club</b> | Parua Bay |
| <b>Northland Golf Club</b>         | Kamo      | <b>Whangarei Golf Club</b> | Tikipunga |
| <b>Pitch Putt &amp; Drive</b>      | Drive     | <b>Waipu Golf Club</b>     | Waipu     |
| <b>Sherwood Park Driving Range</b> | Maunu     | <b>Waiotira Golf Club</b>  | Waiotira  |

Source: 2CU. 2010.

### **Genesis Energy Kensington Stadium (GEKS) and Whangarei Aquatic Centre (WAC)**

GEKS is one of the major indoor sport and recreation facilities in the Whangarei District. It offers an area in excess of 1,700sq metre indoor stadium arena which includes court space for netball, basketball, badminton and volleyball but provides space for many more community groups. Facilities also include an indoor climbing wall, three community meeting spaces of varying sizes and services such as a café, childcare and physio rooms (Sport Northland, 2010).

The WAC recently underwent a major upgrade which saw the addition of an indoor wave pool, hydro-slides, tot's pool, hydrotherapy pool, sports complex (25m competition pool, é to learner's pool and dive pool more than 350,000 visits annually. e facilities

## **8.2 Trends**

This section summaries trends impacting on leisure with relevance to sport facilities. Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC, 2006) has initiated a Northland Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. The report shows that almost all adults living in Northland (97%) enjoy some form of sport or active leisure over a year. On average, adults in Northland take part in 4.8 different sports and activities over a year which is similar to the national average of 5.0. Young adults in Northland (those aged 18-24 years) participate in a higher number of sports than all young adults in New Zealand (4.4 compared with the national figure of 3.4). The top five sports and leisure activities for adults in Northland are shown in the tables 8 and 9:

Northland has a different pattern of recreation participation than the New Zealand averages, and Whangarei District no doubt differs from the Northland average. For example, nationally, walking remains the top form of physical exercise, with a much greater level of participation by women. Note that only 52% of men went on walks, compared with 77% of women. Conversely, men feature a higher level of participation in sport than woman. Rugby union has higher participation than the national average, and golfing is lower.

**Table 8. Top Five Sport Activities for Adults in Northland**

| SPORTS              |           |     |                   |           |     |
|---------------------|-----------|-----|-------------------|-----------|-----|
| Men                 | Northland | NZ  | Women             | Northland | NZ  |
| <b>Golf</b>         | 20%       | 28% | <b>Golf</b>       | 9%        | 10% |
| <b>Rugby Union</b>  | 13%       | 11% | <b>Netball</b>    | 8%        | 10% |
| <b>Shooting</b>     | 13%       | 11% | <b>Tennis</b>     | 6%        | 10% |
| <b>Motor Sports</b> | 12%       | 10% | <b>Equestrian</b> | 5%        | 6%  |
| <b>Touch Rugby</b>  | 11%       | 14% | <b>Badminton</b>  | 5%        | 4%  |

Source: SPARC, 2006.

**Table 9. Top Five Active Leisure Activities for Adults in Northland**

| ACTIVE LEISURE ACTIVITIES |           |     |                      |           |     |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----|----------------------|-----------|-----|
| Men                       | Northland | NZ  | Women                | Northland | NZ  |
| <b>Gardening</b>          | 59%       | 52% | <b>Walking</b>       | 77%       | 81% |
| <b>Fishing</b>            | 59%       | 36% | <b>Gardening</b>     | 76%       | 67% |
| <b>Walking</b>            | 52%       | 61% | <b>Swimming</b>      | 35%       | 38% |
| <b>Swimming</b>           | 32%       | 34% | <b>Home Exercise</b> | 33%       | 35% |
| <b>Home Exercise</b>      | 19%       | 27% | <b>Fishing</b>       | 31%       | 14% |

Source: SPARC, 2006.

The report also pointed out that Northland adults are less likely than all adults in New Zealand to be a member of a club or gym, take part in organised competition or receive coaching. Around two in ten adults in Northland (18%) received some coaching or instruction to help them improve their performance in their chosen sports and activities. This proportion is lower than in the country as a whole (23%).

**Table 10. Club Membership, Competition and Coaching**

|   | Men | Women | All adults Northland | All adults NZ |
|---|-----|-------|----------------------|---------------|
| <b>Active member of a club or gym</b>     | 34% | 24%   | 29%                  | 36%           |
| <b>Take part in organised competition</b> | 30% | 17%   | 23%                  | 26%           |
| <b>Receiving coaching</b>                 | 19% | 16%   | 18%                  | 23%           |

Less than one third of all adults (29%) in Northland were active members of a club or gym. The figure for men is higher than it is for women (34% compared to 24%). Adults in the region are, however, less likely to be club members than people in the country as a whole (29% versus a national average of 36%).

These trends impact on leisure services in various specific ways:

1. Providing ready access to quality open space for diverse activities – especially fishing and walking – will remain a very important form of support for recreation.
2. The quality of many open space recreation activities will be closely linked to the quality of the environment in which they takes place.
3. Increasing options in scheduling of sport opportunities to suit consumer demand has resulted in a decline in Saturday afternoon adult participation, with an increase in weekday evening activity. However Saturday remains the peak participation day for junior players, particularly in the traditional outdoor sports (rugby, netball, soccer, and hockey).
4. There is an increase in participation in pay-to-play activities for both adults and children, especially in urban areas. It is likely that the demand for these options will continue to grow and require appropriate scale and quality of facilities to maintain financial viability.
5. Sport and cultural events will become even more important in the future as an option for promoting regions and capitalise on the positive economic impacts derived from such events.
6. Consumer demand for enhanced leisure facilities that offer a range of opportunities concurrently will increase. This has seen increasing development of leisure pools, theme playgrounds and multi-use recreation centres in urban areas. Where finances permit, people are also showing a willingness to travel to these facilities rather than use more limited local facilities.

### **8.3 Current Issues and Future Provision of Sport Facilities**

This section identifies gaps in the current and future provision of district and local facilities through a comparison of the existing supply situation and identified need/demand.

#### Venue for Noisy Sports (Shooting and Motor Sports)

Noisy sports are under increasing pressure at current sites from growth of urban residential and lifestyle developments and there is a need for proactive planning for suitable land for these activities. For example, karting has been established in Whangarei since the 1960s and is often the starting point in developing drivers for other motor sports such as stockcars (speedway) and V8 Supercars. However, the noise generated by motor sport activity is commonly a problem when residential development advances towards motor sport venues. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a long-term planning approach to ensure a suitable site within reasonable distance of the city is secured for activities such as stockcar, karting and shooting.

#### Easy Access to Hockey Fields

Kensington Park will remain the main location for hockey in the district. However, in the future it may be more prudent to develop practice turf areas at schools around the district so that students can gain easy access to hockey surfaces without having to travel to the Kensington Park facility. These types of

developments are becoming increasingly popular in schools as they provide an outdoor classroom area for physical education as well as for hockey, tennis and netball.

#### Netball at Kensington Park

Northland Netball has a centralised venue at Kensington Park with 8 of the 12 courts fenced for exclusive use by netball of which 5 are currently floodlit. Indoor social netball has experienced rapid growth during weekdays at Kensington Stadium. Northland Netball, unlike most regional associations, does not see a need for the high performance teams to play indoors in the short to medium term.

The preference for midweek indoor sport is a reasonably consistent trend and is placing increasing pressure on indoor facilities and is reflected in the significant number of recent indoor facility developments in New Zealand, including Whangarei. If there is continued growth in indoor social netball or a change in policy regarding high performance netball then Kensington Stadium will come under increasing pressure for court time and meeting the needs of all users.

#### Over-supply Situation in Croquet

The average age of croquet players is increasingly consistent with trend in other parts of New Zealand and club membership is declining. An over-supply situation in both clubrooms and lawns is impending if trends continue.

#### Additional Squash Courts

Growth is now being experienced by squash in junior player numbers with a decline in inter-club competition activity where a scale in inter-club competition has been maintained for an additional court at Manaia Bay Club in the medium term to cater for growth in juniors. Possibly additional courts are needed at other clubs facilities in the long-term.

#### Development of a Sports House

Sport Northland proposed the development of a sports house facility back in 2003. The concept was to use bring together sports organisations so their administration and sport development personnel could share support services and resources such as office technologies to achieve both cost savings and improve the quality of service provided to their members. Sport Northland estimated that approximately 15 sports organisations could be accommodated in the facility.

The sports house facility has now been established and will be located above Table Tennis next to Kensington Fitness. The building is currently still under construction and this will be completed at the end of June 2010 according to plan.

#### Land for Sport Purposes

The need for major hub parks is a trend that has emerged to have most activity within one park or locality with a single clubroom complex. Kensington Park and



Tikipunga Park perform a hub function as they are of sufficient size. However, most of the current parks are too small to accommodate this preference. Long term planning of the acquisition of large blocks of land on the edges of the city area and where growth is projected to occur is the only economically viable option. The need for additional land for sport purposes should be considered within the broader context of the provision for recreation open space. This is outside the scope of this study and details on future provision of sport facilities will be dealt in another background report – Works and Services Infrastructure Report.

## 9. CURRENT INITIATIVES

### 9.1 Creative Communities

Creative New Zealand is the national arts development agency. The aim of Creative New Zealand is to be a catalyst in the development of a flourishing arts environment in New Zealand by investing in artists and arts organisations through a number of programmes, such as Independent Filmmakers Fund, Contestable Funding and Creative Communities Scheme.

The Creative Communities Scheme is a relationship between Creative New Zealand and local authorities. It supports and encourages local communities to create and present diverse opportunities for accessing and participating in arts activities within their specific geographic area as well as for defined communities of interest (Creative NZ, 2010).

Whangarei District Council supports various community organisations, clubs and groups. As part of that support, the Councilive Communities Assessment Committee is convened for the purpose of allocating Creative New Zealand funds to any groups, organisation or individual who demonstrates their project s eligibility and is considered by Creative New Zealand. The vision, mission and values of the Committee is to promote and develop a range of creative sector events enabling increased participation in the arts by the residents, or visitors to, the Whangarei District.

Creative New Zealand provides council with approximately \$46,000 per year for these grants. There are two funding rounds each year that are assessed by the Creative Communities Assessment Committee. The funding criteria for projects or activities must:

- Increase participation in the arts and/or;
- Increase the range and diversity of the arts available to communities, and/or;
- Enhance and strengthen the local arts sector within the various communities that make up the Whangarei District.

Some examples of funded applications in 2008/2009 Creative Communities Scheme include:

- Arts Promotion Trust - Art Beat 09;
- Whangarei Museum - Matariki 2009 Maori Arts Programme;
- Northland Craft Trust - 2010 Summer Do;
- Northland Indian Association - Diwali Festival 2009;
- SMAC Dance Incorporated - , Carnival stage production; and,
- Whangarei Community Circus - 2010 Northland Buskers Festival.

### 9.2 CHART Proposal

In addition to the Creative Communities Scheme, Whangarei District Council wishes to foster the development of an organisation to represent the arts, cultural and heritage sector. The Council prefers to focus engagements with that organisation, or representative district to enable effective planning and

consultation with the overall arts, cultural and heritage sector. This will enable large scale infrastructure development to proceed as the sector works cohesively along an agreed development pathway with agreed funding and timelines towards developing the sorts of venues and organisations which this city and district requires.

The arts, cultural and heritage sector and creative community of Whangarei called for an organisation - CHART (Cultural, Heritage and Arts Resource Trust), which would deliver resources, services, strategic leadership and cohesive, and a collaborative approach to sector development. The founding concept of CHART was that such an organisation working with the sector in a collaborative, cooperative and forward thinking way could (and would) deliver high levels of momentum, strategic thinking and, above all, a programme of action for the sector.

Ten organisations were selected to represent a cross section of the arts, cultural and heritage sector. They were: Whangarei Art Museum, Whangarei Museum and Kiwi house, Whangarei Youth Music, Northland Youth Theatre, Waipu Museum, SMAC Dance, the Quarry Arts Centre, Northland Society of Authors, Reyburn House (Northland Society of Arts) and the Hihiaua Project.

CHART's **vision is:** o r a t i v e

*" Wh a n g - a f a m o u s a r t s a n d c u l t u r a l d e s t i n a t i o n w i t h g l o b a l l y r e n o w n e d m u s e u m s , c u l t u r a l c e n t r e s a n d p e r f o r m e r s a n d a b o o m i n g e c o n o m y f o s t e r e d b y l o c a l p a r t i c i p a t i o n , n a t i o n a l a n d i n t e r n a t i o n a l "* (Whangarei District Council, 2010)

The objectives of CHART are:

- Deliver, through collaborative programming of key infrastructure and development projects, a ten year plan for the sector, including a timeline for major (and minor) projects.
- Deliver those projects by supporting each organisation with funding applications, governance and management support, key relationship development and community liaison.

Key strategic objectives of CHART will include:

- **Economic development** - for sector-g r o w i n g t h e , p i e b y s t i m u l a t i n g community funding resources (outside of WDC);
- **Economic development** - for district-branding, promoting and marketing to put Whangarei on the map for visitors from within the region, around New Zealand and the world, stimulating the local economy and bringing career and job opportunities to the people of the district;
- **Market** - delivering a marketing plan to exploit the brand and transform Whangarei District as a p l a c e t o l i v e a n d a s a , m u s t s e e d e s t i n a t i o n ;
- **Grow capacity** - work with sector organisations to raise the bar across governance, organisational performance, product development and delivery of robust, agreed outcomes.

It is recommended using the existing Arts Promotion Trust as the organisation for CHART as it offers the advantages of:

- An existing Trust with systems, policies and governance in place; and,
- An organisation recognised by the sector as a promoter and enabler of arts development in the District.

CHART will be an independent charitable trust and not a Council Controlled Organisation. A representative councillor of the Council will automatically have a place on the Board, without voting rights.

The Arts Promotion Trust has already set up a separate entity for the Old Library and has clearly identified the need and the methodology for ring fencing regional monies for regional arts development. The APT has taken the lead in research, and reporting on the CHART process to date; building a considerable amount of trust and rapport with sector organisations along the way. The APT has also appointed a manager and an arts administrator on six month contracts (from January 2010 to June 2010) to ensure that new roles can be well developed and advertised free from the constraints. These roles are ready and willing to act as stipulated within this plan (Whangarei District Council, 2010).

The WDC has agreed to assist the establishment of CHART and will provide some funding. Additional funding will come from external sources. It is expected that CHART will begin operation in 2010.

## 10. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

### 10.1 Introduction

A project to develop an arts strategy for Whangarei District Council and the Whangarei Art Museum in late 2005. Consultants were engaged to implement a robust and extensive research and sector-based consultation programme and their findings were reviewed and discussed by a Steering Committee comprising Council staff, Councillors and representatives of various stakeholder organisations from within the sector. After several drafts a final version of *Tapapa Toi - the Cultural Seedbed - A Heritage, Culture, Arts and Creative Industries Strategy for Whangarei District* was presented to Council for adoption. However, it was considered more appropriate to retain the integrity of *Tapapa Toi* as the voice and utilise it as a comprehensive backdrop for a policy position for Council around each of its recommendations. Council has formally received the Strategy and now formed its own Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy and an integrated Action Plan for implementation that is informed by *Tapapa Toi* (Whangarei District Council, 2009). The following sections draw on both documents.

### 10.2 What is Lacking?

The *Whangarei Cultural Centre Feasibility Study* (APR Consultants, 2005) identified cultural centres that need to be enhanced". Included are (Forum North and Cafler Park), Water Street, Rust Avenue through to Selwyn Avenue and the Quarry, the Town Basin, and Whangarei Terenga Paraoa Marae in Porowini Avenue. Comments regarding what are missing in the Whangarei District include:

- There is no cultural venue that holds at least 1,000 people in Whangarei;
- Forum North has shortcomings as a cultural hub; and
- There is no cultural coordinator.

**There is no cultural venue that holds at least 1,000 people in Whangarei.** There is a need for a venue that is suitable for large multi-genre performance and offers a "one stop" facility. The venue could integrate with a conference/convention/exhibition centre, with easy access to/from hotel/motel accommodation. The new Northland Event Centre will provide outdoor space for 25,000 people and indoor facilities for 1,000 people, but a dedicated multi-purpose performance venue for arts, music, shows, etc could complement this facility.

**Forum North shortcomings as a cultural hub.** Some community groups consider the venue too expensive for community use (although there is a sliding scale of rates and bookings are on a first-come-first-served basis) and there is no longer access to what were rehearsal spaces. Promoters of major shows tend to bypass Forum North, consequently Whangarei misses out. In addition, there is no large theatre in Whangarei. The only other auditorium venue in Northland is The Centre, recently opened at Kerikeri (350-410 seats, fly-tower, orchestra pit, etc). Community and church halls are used for some amateur performances but are inadequate for any sophisticated production.

**There is no cultural coordinator.** The establishment of CHART and its facilitator/officer should rectify this situation. CHART is intended to act as coordinating body and help improve the cultural network in the district. CHART would meet with representatives from various cultural groups and address issues between these groups. A holistic approach towards developing cultural and civic amenities in a coordinated fashion would then be possible.

### 10.3 Future Approach

The Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy and the *Tapapo Toi*, both recognise that the arts, culture, heritage and creative industries sector plays an important role in creating a vibrant, diverse and interesting community for residents and visitors alike. As well as enriching the experiences of our daily life, the sector plays an important role in economic development through employment, entertainment, and tourism.

According to the 2006 Census, around 447 people were employed directly in arts and recreation services<sup>7</sup>, but this figure has likely increased from the last census.

According to the Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy, Council will focus on oral capital filling and heritage region. Proposals from the Policy include the following:

- The **Town Basin** as a heritage and culture **experience precinct**. The Town Basin already is a , must see component of the city. It acts as a cultural Museum and Reyburn House. There is a proposal to develop a Hundertwasser Museum which could be a compelling experiential building and could be supported with other Town Basin buildings for the Museum and Heritage Park exhibits and those of the Whangarei Arts Museum.
- **Iwi Input and Participation in the Sector** is important – Council supports development with iwi to ensure Maori art, culture, heritage and taonga are recognised, promoted and enhanced. An independent project has begun planning for a Cultural Centre on Council-owned land on Hihiaua Peninsula at the end of Lower Dent Street.

The Hihiaua Cultural Centre Trust has been in collaboration with Moller Architects and Boffa Miskell Landscape Architects on the concept design for a new cultural centre to display, demonstrate and promote Maori culture and arts. The project consists of a controlled environment display space for artifacts, arts and crafts and carvings, a multi-use conference centre and theatre complex, and a workshop for waka carving. The three functional areas are grouped around a central arrival space. This space also includes a café and eating area, ticketing and a retail shop with access to common service areas. The space allows for formal occasions to be welcomed onto the site. The existing boatshed on-site could be refurbished to house the waka carving areas and linked into the new

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<sup>7</sup> The arts and recreation services including heritage activities, museum operation, artistic activities, performing arts operation, creative artists, musicians, writers, and performers, performance arts venue operation, parks and gardens operations, sports and physical recreation activities.

building complex. The centre if developed would provide for cultural as well as educational facilities for Whangarei and the Northland Region (Moller Architects, 2010).



**Figure 9. Artist impression of the Culture Centre - view from the north.**



**Figure 10. Artist impression of the Culture Centre - entry from the North West**

Source: Moller Architects, 2010.

Once again, this precinct could be enhanced by improving heritage links between the Town Basin and the CBD.

- Investigating the establishment of a **multi-purpose performance space** in the district. The Council acknowledges the district lacks a venue of adequate size and supports the development of a multi-purpose 1000 seat-plus performance space. The development of a multi-events centre at Okara Park will provide some additional conference/event space, but will not satisfy the outcome outlined above. The Exhibition Hall at Forum North could potentially be converted into a venue of approximately 850 tiered seats. This could be achieved by replacing the mezzanine floor with tiered retractable seating. However, due to other priorities, it has

not been possible to make provision for this project, which is estimated to cost around \$1.5 million, in the draft 2009 – 19 LTCCP.

- **Forum North** as a heritage and culture **generator precinct**. Based upon a cultural centre encompassing the new library, the old library building (currently occupied by the Arts Promotion Trust), the Capitaine Bougainville Theatre, the Exhibition Hall, and the Whangarei Art Museum building (in Cafler Park) all under the Forum North Generator banner. The proposed new Council building adjacent to the Northland Regional Council is expected to adjoin the offices and Council Chamber, which will remain in Forum North. The proposal to relocate the Art Museum to the Old Library Building has been rejected by this Council. The Arts Promotion Trust has converted the Old Library into a Community Arts Centre via external funding. This would further reinforce the establishment of a generator in the Forum North precinct.
- **Whangarei Museum and Heritage Park** as a heritage and culture **recreational precinct/experience precinct**. It is suggested to move some of the Museum exhibits and the Art Museum exhibits to a high profile site in the Experience Precinct at the Town Basin within or adjacent to the Hundertwasser Museum, creating the logical nucleus of a heritage/arts centre at the Town Basin in conjunction with a parallel Cultural Centre development on Hihiaua Peninsula. Whangarei Museum has expressed support for this concept, with a centrally-based exhibition space having the potential to raise development expenditure venue.
- Council supports the concept of **CHART – Culture, Heritage and Arts Resource Trust** as an umbrella organisation for the sector. It would provide opportunities for shared services, such as administration, accommodation, etc. It would provide a single forum to request with various stakeholders.
- Community based not for profit organisations. A number of organisations are faced with problematic issues relating to governance, capacity, capability and sustainability. Whilst the Council notes and acknowledges the problems these very valuable volunteer based organisations face, it cautions organisations to rationalise their operations and utilise shared services where available.

Council is concerned that there are too many organisations and they are spreading their resources too thinly to remain effective and functional into the future. These bodies also have different governance structures and varying relationships with Council and each other. Their future sustainability will best be realised if they work towards a common long term visions together. While Council can facilitate this process, it cannot force any specific actions, other than through funding conditions, which is not a preferred path.

It is important that all of these developments identified above should be of a high quality design, add to Whangarei's vibrancy and development of the district. Civic amenity is a key



part of the city's renaissance, to create a vibrant and attractive environment that will attract visitors to come and improve their stay in Whangarei.

## 11. CONCLUSIONS

- Arts, culture, heritage and civic amenities contribute to the economic, cultural, environmental and social well-beings of the district. Arts and culture-related industries, also industries" provide direct economic benefits to t attract investment, stimulate local economies through tourism and consumer purchases, and enrich people s life.
- The arts, culture and civic amenities are an important complement to community development, enriching local amenities, attracting new residents, attracting other businesses to the area, attracting young professionals to an area, and improving the quality of life for all residents.
- Performing arts, art museums, arts festivals, and other destinations contribute significantly to quality of life – that quality of vibrancy, leisure time outlets, and economic stimulus that helps communities grow and thrive.
- Tourism centred on arts and culture can contribute to local economic growth by providing a diversified and sustainable means for creating jobs and attracting revenue.
- Whangarei District Council increasingly recognises the importance of the creative sector to the district s economy and ability to compete in the ma
- Council can adopt strategies that support and strengthen the arts, culture and creative industries and improve civic amenities for the local community. This includes offering grants and recognition for outstanding organisations or groups, establishing cultural enterprise zones, and creating public spaces for art, among others.
- The *Arts and Culture, Heritage and Creative Industries Policy*, and *Heritage, Culture, Arts and Creative Industries Strategy – the Tapapo Toi the Cultural Seedbed* recognise the arts, culture, heritage and creative industries sector plays an important role in creating a vibrant, diverse and interesting community for residents and visitors alike. The sector also plays an important role in our economic development through employment, entertainment, and tourism.
- According to the *Arts and Culture, Heritage and Creative Industries Policy*, and *Heritage, Culture, Arts and Creative industries Strategy* Whangarei should focus on fulfilling and heritage hub of the region in the following ar
  - The Town Basin as a heritage and culture experience precinct;
  - Forum North as a heritage and culture generator precinct; and,
  - Whangarei Museums and Heritage Park as a heritage and culture recreational precinct.

- Conference venue facilities across Whangarei are limited in size. The new Northland Events Centre will have the positive effect of providing a regional sporting and community facility which will be of benefit to the whole of Northland, and conference space for 1,000 people.
- Night-time activities play an important role in many cities around the world. The activities that take place after dark in the CBD of any city play a significant role in shaping the image and liveability of that city. Whangarei has a limited night-time economy which could be addressed by a coherent and integrated night-specific place-making strategy.
- There are opportunities for Council to open up its night-time economy by establishing night-time precincts in the CBD. Night-time activities in Whangarei can develop into a significant civic asset that is inclusive, distinctive and sustainable for residents and as major attraction for visitors.
- The main benefits of sport facilities include improved health, community development, attracting visitors and new residents, economic development and contributing to the social and cultural well-being of the community.
- Galleries, libraries, museums, conference venues, theatres/cinemas, nightlife entertainment, as well as sport facilities, are considered essential facilities for a vibrant community. Such community facilities provide a broad range of activities, which are particularly important in developing and enhancing social and cultural well-being.
- For Whangarei District to develop in a sustainable way – economically, environmentally, socially and culturally – there must be on-going and adequate provision for the arts, cultural and creative industries as well as for entertainment, recreational, and sporting activities.

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