

Summary Report

# ***Active Recreation and Sport Strategy***

for Whangarei District

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Background	3
1.2 Our Resident Population	4
1.3 Competitive Advantages	6
<b>2. Trends and Challenges</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Active Recreation and Sport Sector Trends	7
2.2 A lack of consistency in locally accessible and inclusive base level provision for active recreation	8
2.3 A Lack of Planning	8
2.4 An Ageing and Growing Resident Population	8
2.5 Increasing pressure on key active recreation locations from tourism	8
2.6 Changing Participation Patterns and an Ageing Stock of Facilities	8
2.7 Moving from Single Purpose Facilities to Shared Multi-purpose Hubs	9
<b>3. A Strategic Approach</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1 Gaps and Oversupply	10
3.2 Strategic Approach (Hub and Spoke)	11
3.3 Planning Principles	13
3.4 Goals of the Strategy	13
<b>4. Recommendations</b>	<b>14</b>
4.1 District-Wide Recommendations	15
4.2 Network Planning Recommendations	16
4.3 Code Specific Recommendations	18
4.4 Hub and Spoke Recommendations	18
<b>5. Appendices</b>	<b>20</b>
5.1 Northland Sports Facility Development - Good Practice Process	20
5.2 Hub Development Process	22

## Report Disclaimer

In preparing this report it has been necessary to make a number of assumptions based on the information supplied to Global Leisure Group Limited in the course of investigations for this study. The recommended actions contained in this report are subject to uncertainty and variation depending on evolving events but have been conscientiously prepared based on consultation feedback and an understanding of trends in facility provision.

The authors did not carry out an audit or verification of the information supplied during the preparation of this report, unless otherwise stated in the report. Whilst due care was taken during enquiries, Global Leisure Group Limited does not take any responsibility for any errors nor mis-statements in the report arising from information supplied to the authors during the preparation of this report.

## Authors

David Allan, Richard Hutchinson and Anna Coleman

Global Leisure Group Limited

Davea@glg.nz

**GLG** **SPORT SPACES & FACILITIES**  
STRATEGY PLANNING MANAGEMENT

# 1. Introduction

The purpose of this strategy is to provide a high-level strategic overview of the current and future active recreation and sport facility needs for the District. It is focused on the provision of spaces and places ('built facilities') for active recreation and sport and aims to assist Council, active recreation and sport stakeholders, community organisations and funding agencies with their future investment decisions. It will be updated on a regular 3 yearly cycle to inform the Council's Long Term Plan.

The strategy identifies current priorities and provides on-going and robust processes to identify, review and prioritise projects across the District. However, it is essential that detailed, site and/or activity specific investigations are undertaken to assess the feasibility and viability of individual projects identified in this report.

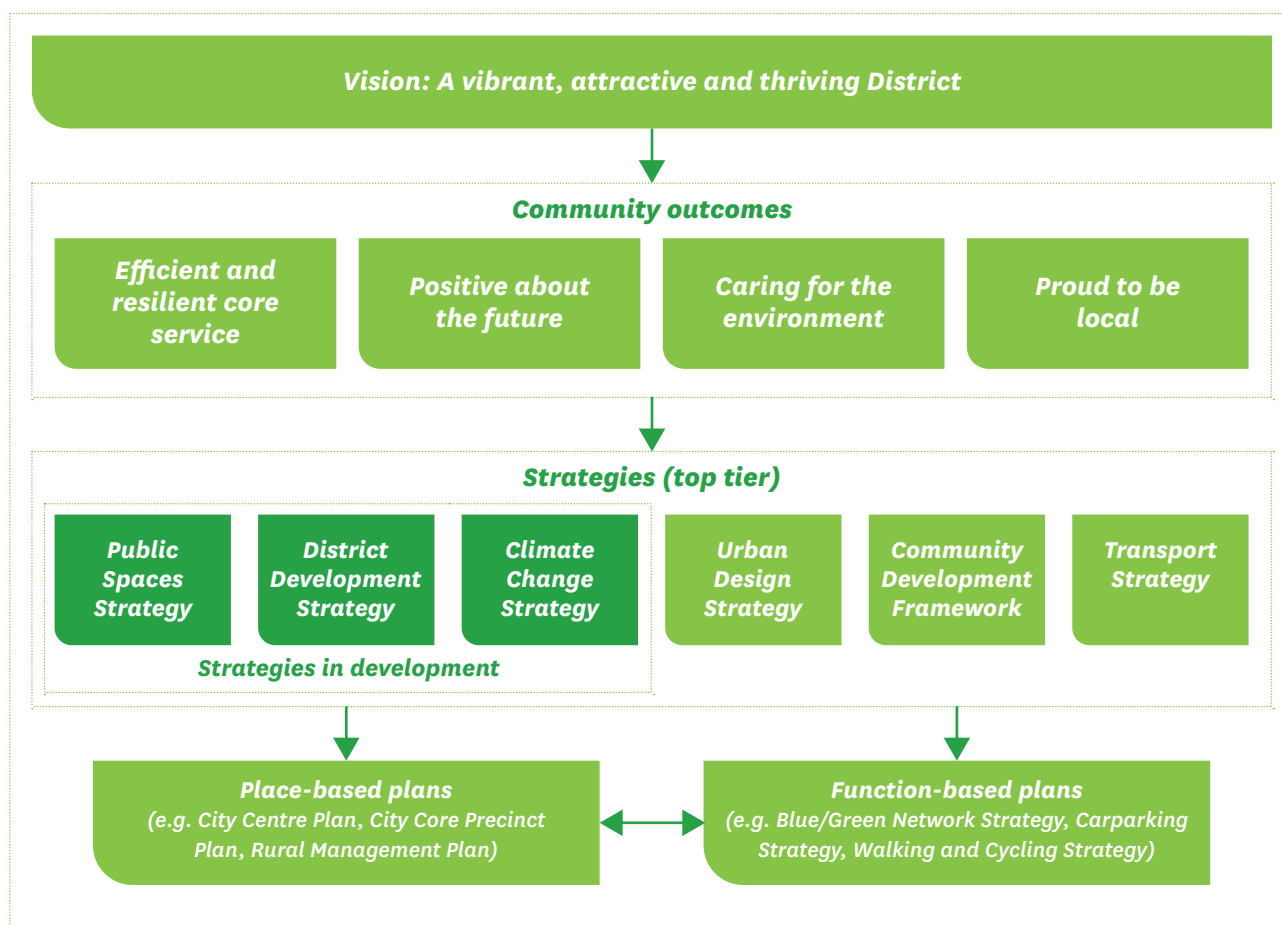
## 1.1 BACKGROUND

The strategy fits within the Strategic Framework of Council (see diagram below). The Active Recreation and Sport Strategy as a 'Function-Based Plan' contributes to the Vision and Community Outcomes of Council. It is recognised that several of the other plans and strategies impact on active recreation and sport provision as well, such as the Walking and Cycling Strategy.

Consultation formed a key part of developing the strategy. A comprehensive process was undertaken to engage with key stakeholders and residents to collate a baseline of information on existing facilities and assist identifying current and future needs. Those engaged included:

- Meetings with Council's three Advisory groups (Positive Ageing, Youth, Disability)
- Schools, active recreation and sport organisations, marae, hapū and interested residents

**Figure 1: Strategic Framework diagram (extract)**

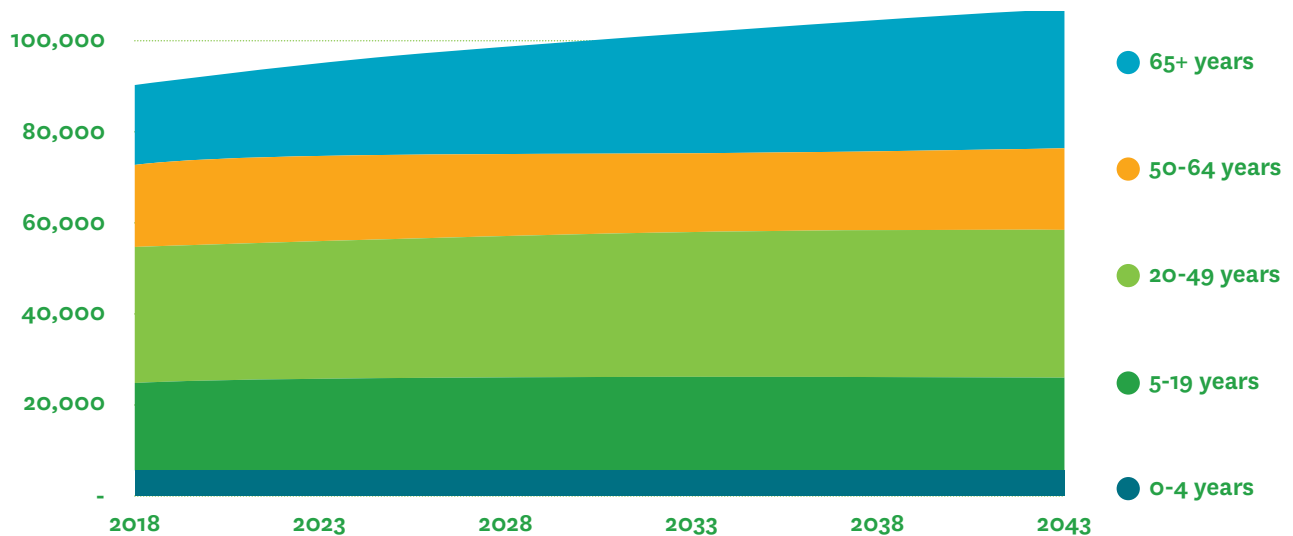


## 1.2 OUR RESIDENT POPULATION

The resident population in some communities in Whangarei District is projected to grow at a much faster rate than the rest of the District.

- The medium projection for the District sees an increase from 90,500 residents in 2018 to 102,000 in 2028, an extra 11,700 people.
- A projected 77% increase in the number of older adults (65+ year olds) in Whangarei District, from 17,300 in 2018 to 30,700 in 2043, an extra 13,400 older adults, or a third of the population. All other age cohorts remain relatively stable.
- A projected increase of 7.6% or an extra 3,600 residents by 2043 in the core playing age range for sport (5-49 years).
- The District population is less diverse but has 28% of the Whangarei District population identifying themselves as Maori (compared to 16% for New Zealand as a whole).
- The highest percentage increases in population between 2018-2028 are expected to be in Marsden Point/ Ruakaka, Port Limeburners, Waipu, Bream Bay and Te Hihi.

**Figure 2: Population Age Profile (2018- 2043)**





### 1.2.1 Lifestage

The lifestage segmentation operates on the premise that the 'life-stage' someone is in affects the decisions and choices that you make.

**Figure 3: Sport NZ Lifestages**

<b>Lifestages</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Approximate age range</b>
Older retirees	Retired singles and couples (often have grandchildren).	75+ years old
Young retirees	Recently retired singles and couples (often have grandchildren).	65-75 years old
Older adults	Employed and unemployed singles and couples without children at home (may have grandchildren).	35-64 years old
Older families (parents)	Singles and couple with children primarily in the secondary and tertiary lifestages.	35-64 years old
Young families (parents)	Singles and couples with children in the early years and primary lifestages.	(20)25-45 years old
Young adults	Employed and unemployed singles and couples without children.	16-34 years old
Tertiary	Young people in private training establishments (PTEs), institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs), wananga, universities and workplace training.	(16)18-22(25) years old
Secondary	Secondary age children.	13-17 years old
Primary	Primary school age children (including intermediate).	5-12 years old
Early years	Young children in variety of care environments including at home, day care, nursery etc.	0-5 years old

Understanding how these lifestages are changing within the resident population is essential to understanding what the potential future demand for active recreation and sport activities might be and the spaces and places needed.

Changes in the composition of the lifestages within the resident population requires consideration of the changing trends and participation patterns identified within the current population. Notably, Older Retirees and Young Retirees will increase while Older Adult, Young Families, Primary, Young Adults and Early Years will decrease.



**Figure 4: Sport NZ Lifestage Whangarei District 2018 to 2038**

NZ Lifestage	2018	2028	2038	
Older Retirees	8.4%	10.7%	12.3%	↑
Young Retirees	10.7%	13.7%	15.8%	↑
Older Adults	19.2%	18.3%	17.5%	↓
Older Families (Parents)	7%	6.9%	6.4%	↓
Young Families (Parents)	18.7%	16.5%	15.3%	↓
Young Adults	8.3%	7.8%	8%	↔
Tertiary	2.4%	2.2%	2.2%	↔
Secondary	6.6%	6.8%	6.3%	↔
Primary	12%	10.8%	10.3%	↓
Early Years	6.7%	6.3%	5.9%	↓

The growing trend towards casual / individual sporting and recreation activities is likely to continue. As such, the activities which have been considered 'suitable' for the Retirees of the past (for example bowls, tennis, golf) may not be the preferred activities for the next generation of Retirees. The challenge is for existing codes to adapt to meet the demands of an aging population (i.e. more residents in the Retiree lifestages) and / or provide spaces, places and facilities to meet new and emerging needs.

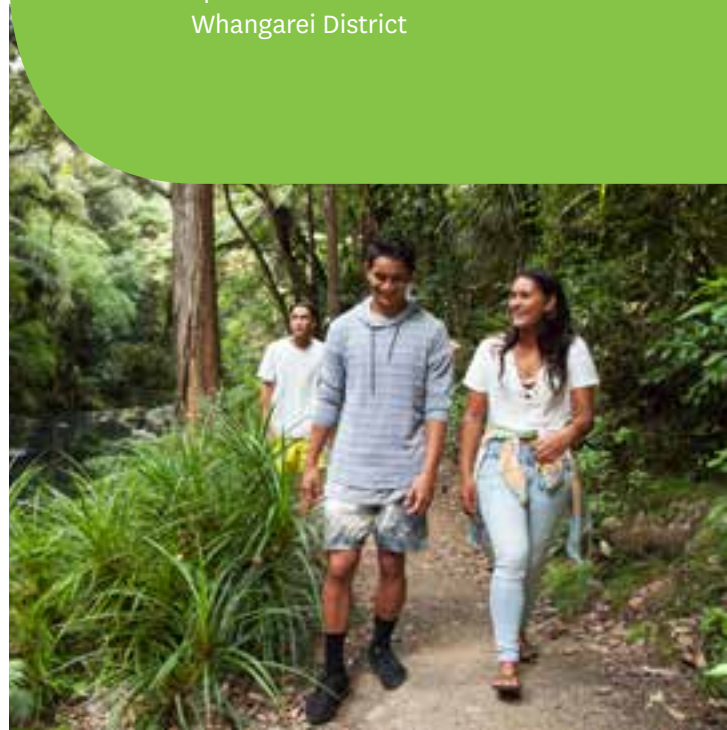
### 1.2.2 Socio-economic Profile

The socio-economic profile varies between communities and many have high levels of deprivation. This means affordability and accessibility to participate in active recreation and sport are major issues. Local provision to reduce or eliminate travel costs is a priority, particularly for informal active recreation and sport opportunities. Provision of local training facilities enables reduced travel (practice local and play away) even for sports with centralised competition hubs such as hockey and netball.

## 1.3 COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

The District has some significant competitive advantages in relation to active recreation and sport opportunities; including:

- A mild maritime climate that has warmer winters and water temperatures than the rest of New Zealand
- An abundance of natural features popular for active recreation and sport such as harbours, bays, beaches and waterways because of its extremely indented coastline.
- Tourism has driven the provision of activity and support infrastructure such as parking and toilets at key access points that benefit residents
- Several National level facilities such as Toll Stadium, Cobham Oval and facilities at Kensington Park enable hosting events and tournaments
- High levels of participation in active recreation and sport, and a strong record in supporting and developing talented athletes in a wide range of codes
- Access to funding from Northland Regional Council regional rate for regional sport facilities located within Whangarei District



## 2. Trends and Challenges

### 2.1 ACTIVE RECREATION AND SPORT SECTOR TRENDS

The way we play and/or are active is changing

- Participation in outdoor active recreation activities is growing
- The 'active retiree' population is driving new demands
- Being active is now 'cool' and the value activity has on our mental, physical and spiritual well-being is recognised
- Greater use and impact of technology (social media, websites, online booking systems, fitness apps, fit bits, etc.)
- Globalisation of active recreation and sport - new activities are appearing all the time
- Patterns of use are changing (more mid-week competitions)
- General casualisation, move away from structured traditional activities and clubs – participants just want to have a 'run around' without committing to training ahead of competition
- Lower volunteer participation and more pay to play delivery
- Participants have greater quality expectations of facility provision, delivery of activity and activity options
- Greater centralisation (or consolidation) of many activities into hubs
- Increasing awareness of the need to be multi-purpose and flexible with our built venues, whenever possible
- The ability to play more than one sport per season and participate in numerous active recreation pursuits, therefore multiple activities per year (exception is elite sport)

The active recreation and sport sector, like many community-based sectors, is experiencing other trends including:

- Increasing demand for local provision in population growth areas
- Increasing expectations in the standard of facilities and experiences from users
- A decrease in volunteer culture

- An increased demand for 'pay for play' associated with the casualisation of sport.
- Increasing responsibilities and burden placed on volunteers to meet user expectations, health and safety and other compliance requirements.
- Increasing financial pressures from maintaining ageing, often no longer fit-for-purpose facilities, and the decline/loss of traditional income streams such as sponsorship and bar profits
- Greater monitoring and accountability as funders are becoming more evidence based in their decision-making

The District faces a number of challenges that impact on the current and future provision of facilities. These are:

- A lack of consistency in locally accessible and inclusive base level provision for active recreation and sport
- A lack of sports code and network planning
- An ageing and growing resident population
- Increasing pressure on key active recreation locations from tourism
- Changing participation patterns and an ageing stock of facilities
- Moving from single purpose facilities to shared multi-purpose hubs





## 2.2 A LACK OF CONSISTENCY IN LOCALLY ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE BASE LEVEL PROVISION FOR ACTIVE RECREATION

There is a lack of consistency in the supply of local provision. Some communities are well catered for, while some communities have limited access to facilities or do not have an appropriate level of basic active recreation facilities and support amenities (such as toilets, water fountain, shade etc).

## 2.3 A LACK OF PLANNING

The lack of district/ regional network planning by key sports is a major challenge to providing definitive guidance in this strategy. Some sports also lack a 'whole of sport plan' at the district level that provide the strategic context for an investment in a facility. It is essential that the challenges faced by individual activities are further defined and addressed at a more detailed level to provide the evidence for basing investment decisions. Over time this will ensure that those in the District are better informed and have a more flexible and fit-for-purpose facilities network that meets the District's future active recreation and sport needs.

The wet and humid climate can be challenging, particularly in the winter, as it impacts heavily on outdoor active recreation and sport.

## 2.4 AN AGEING AND GROWING RESIDENT POPULATION

The largest growth in demand will be for older adults 65+ years of age who will be a third of the resident population by 2043. Compounding this growth in demand is that the retiree life stage have:

- Significantly more discretionary time for active recreation and sport than most other segments
- A larger proportion and number of residents with physical disabilities of some kind

## 2.5 INCREASING PRESSURE ON KEY ACTIVE RECREATION LOCATIONS FROM TOURISM

The growth of tourism in the District is increasingly impacting upon key active recreation locations. Shorefront locations that are popular with the resident population for active recreation are facing the greatest pressure. Most provision of amenities at these locations such as parking and toilets falls on Council to provide.

## 2.6 CHANGING PARTICIPATION PATTERNS AND AN AGEING STOCK OF FACILITIES

Active recreation and sport popularity and participation rates are changing in response to changing demographics, emerging new sports, increasing informal active recreation pursuits and increasing competition from sedentary activities (often digital technology based). As community needs change, active recreation and sport facilities need to be adaptable and flexible to respond to the changing needs. Most facilities now need to be more multi-purpose and agile to better meet the needs of a wider range of activities and users.

The District is reliant on a network of facilities that are unsustainable, ageing and not fit-for-purpose facilities. A planned approach is required to ensure network is selectively upgraded, modernised to be fit-for-purpose, converted to new purposes and/ or rationalised. The majority of active recreation and sport facilities were developed over 20 years ago to meet the specific needs of a number of traditional sporting codes. Over this period population growth has been significant in the Whangarei District. While many of sports codes have grown and prospered some have had a relative decline over the past 20 years. This has led to a mis-match between current supply and demand for some codes. Key issues are:

- Significant gaps in the provision of fit-for-purpose and right-sized support amenities (toilet, storage, change, social facilities, shade, shelter and Wi-fi access) at sports parks
- Significant shortfall in the provision of fit-for-purpose winter sports fields due to poor drainage exacerbated by the wet climate and limited flood lighting for winter evening training and games are common issues



- Several codes have been identified where there is evident over-supply, where membership and participation levels have declined, and the facilities are now under-utilised. These include:
  - Bowls (clubrooms and greens)
  - Rugby (clubrooms)
  - Golf (clubrooms and courses) in smaller rural communities
- There are a number of codes where there is evident under-supply, resulting from either historic under-supply or where demands have changed. Codes with significant issues include:
  - Shooting (a long-standing need for a new location)
  - Indoor or covered all-weather courts for Netball, Futsal, Basketball
  - Well-drained sports fields and floodlit areas for training

## 2.7 MOVING FROM SINGLE PURPOSE FACILITIES TO SHARED MULTI-PURPOSE HUBS

The District has an existing network of sport hub facilities mostly operated by sports club partnerships. However, a large proportion of provision is still single sports code facilities. It is clear that more multi-code sport partnerships are required across the District to reduce duplication in provision (in particular of clubrooms) and consolidation to fewer facilities to enable higher use and occupancy. Some of the existing hubs could be enhanced significantly through partnering with adjacent schools. These measures will generate economies in scale to aid long-term sustainability for many of the current single sports code facilities.

Facilities that can adapt and develop will thrive, whereas those that don't are likely to struggle. The active recreation pursuits and sports codes that were assessed as having adequate facilities to meet demand at present need to be pro-active in their planning to maintain fit-for-purpose facilities that are sustainable. A long-term strategy for some of these codes when facilities need renewal should be to co-locate and share facilities and services such as clubrooms with others as part of larger multi codes hubs.



## 3. A Strategic Approach

### 3.1 GAPS AND OVERSUPPLY

In general, the supply and demand of provision for sport is adequate in terms of quantity. However, the quality of provision, experience and levels of deferred maintenance of facilities is often inadequate.

#### Gaps

There are several gaps in the systems that support access and provision affecting participation including:

- A lack of promotion, awareness, and accessible information (no App, limited on-line enabled bookings and 'customer interaction')
- No public transport or poorly aligned public transport (where it exists) to and from main active recreation and sport destinations
- Gaps in active transport (feeder links are lacking to main spine off-road pathways) that enable better connected communities
- Lack of communication, co-ordination and cross sector collaboration overall
- Significant safety concerns (physical and personal) inhibiting participation in active recreation, particularly at some entry points to track networks (poor safety lighting, poor parking and amenities) such as Parihaka and Abbey Caves
- Lack of good quality change and ablution amenities for sport (often in poor condition/ deferred maintenance common)
- Lack of accessible and appropriate amenities needed to support active recreation and sport (toilets, drinking fountains, shade, seating, shelter)
- Shortage of parking at key destinations for active recreation and at sports parks, Kensington Park is under the greatest parking pressure. Parking pressure acute in peak tourism season at key outdoor recreation destinations
- A hub for shooting sports
- Shortage of all-weather facilities such as covered sports courts and active recreation spaces such as for netball and kapa haka
- Inadequate quantity and quality of indoor sprung floor court space (some are non-compliant for netball)
- Lack of young family, youth, retiree and disabled friendly spaces and places
- All tide access, affecting some water-based recreation and sports at Pohe Island
- Fragmented and in some cases limited shore facilities and amenities for water-based active recreation and sport

#### Over-supply

Significant over-supply has been identified as listed below:

- General over-supply of single code clubrooms
- Too many clubs in some codes (bowls, rugby, golf)
- General duplication of club facilities on hub sites.

#### Under supply

Significant under-supply has been identified as listed below:

- Few facilities provide universal access for people with physical disabilities
- Lack of well drained sports fields and training areas able to cope with wet weather, particularly in winter
- Shortage of floodlit fields and training areas

- Disconnected, congested track network with limited variety and quality
- Lack of areas for recreational horse riding – bridle pathways
- Limited off-lead dog exercise spaces

#### Other

Jubilee Park is no longer used for rugby league. Christian Renewal School has access to the park but it is underused. It is a single field on a small and constrained site with limited utility.

## 3.2 STRATEGIC APPROACH (HUB AND SPOKE)

An approach used nationally, and by other regions and districts in New Zealand, is to consider facility needs for active recreation and sport at the different levels of participation from community/club through to international level. Generally, the higher up the facility or space hierarchy the more specialised the sport/activity specific provision required, so an International/National space or facility will usually be more exclusive and targeted in its use and less multi-use compared to a local facility or space used for a range of different activities.

It is important to recognise that levels within the hierarchy are not exclusive and a single facility or space can meet the needs of different levels, for example a regional facility or space will also likely meet district and local needs. Where possible a hub and spoke approach should be applied within the network of facilities.

**Figure 5: Hub and Spoke Approach**

	<b>Facility Hierarchy</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Facility Type</b>
<b>Hub</b>	International / National  Regional  District	Competition and events  Local participation	More exclusive use  Compliance with appropriate National / Regional code specifications
<b>Spoke</b>	District (potential)  Local	Local Participation	More multi-use  Flexibility of specifications  Focus on activation

While there are challenges to facility provision, it is clear that a partnership approach is required to reduce duplication in provision and encourage consolidation to fewer shared facilities, enabling higher use and occupancy. These measures will generate economies in scale to aid long-term sustainability.

**Figure 6: Existing Hubs**

<b>District / Regional</b>	<b>Local</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barge Park (Equestrian)</li> <li>• Cobham Oval (Cricket)</li> <li>• Kensington Park (Hockey, Netball, Athletics, Gymnastics, Junior Football, Rugby, Basketball, Volleyball, High Performance Training)</li> <li>• Pohe Island – BMX</li> <li>• Tikipunga Park - Football</li> <li>• Toll Stadium (Rugby)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hikurangi</li> <li>• Kamo Park</li> <li>• Mangakahia</li> <li>• Maungakarema</li> <li>• Ngunguru</li> <li>• Oakura</li> <li>• Onerahi</li> <li>• Otaika</li> <li>• Otangarei</li> <li>• Parua Bay</li> <li>• Ruakaka</li> <li>• Waipu</li> </ul>



## Potential New Hub Developments

Figure 7: Potential Developments of New Hubs.

Activity/ Location	Description
<b>Sport shooting</b>	A hub for shooting sports was a recommendation in the 2003 Whangarei Sport Facilities Plan and several potential solutions have been proposed since 2003. However, a solution has not been found and frustration in the sport shooting community is high. This still appears to be a valid need. An independent feasibility study is required, Council has a role in assisting with the provision of land at a suitable location. It is likely that support of Northland Regional Council will be needed.
<b>Lawn bowls</b>	A bowls hub (including a covered or indoor green, outdoor greens and pavilion) and possibly with other partners
<b>Marine Hubs</b>	Three Marine Hubs with 3 different water conditions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flat sheltered water at Pohe Island-Hatea River (primarily for waka ama, rowing, kayaking, SUP, sailing and boating),</li> <li>• Deeper water at Riverside Drive (sailing/ waka ama)</li> <li>• More reliable wind and closer access to sea at Parua Bay (sailing/ boating and waka ama)</li> </ul>
<b>Rugby League – Otaika Sports Ground Off lead dog exercise area &amp; dog clubs</b>	Otaika Sports Ground is an emerging District level hub park. It is a large park with quality fields and has a development plan in place. It will be home of Rugby League in the district. Currently some football and touch occurs at the Park. There is an off-lead dog exercise area and the Northland Canine Club is based at the Park. It has potential to become a major hub for touch alongside rugby league with a shared amenity and clubrooms facility.  There is the potential for Jubilee Park to be sold or leased to reinvest in Otaika Sports Park as the home of Rugby League.
<b>Football - Tikipunga</b>	Tikipunga has good district hub potential for football. Some use of hub by other codes with single integrated and shared clubrooms, access to High School fields, courts, and swimming pool. Consideration should be given to all users of the hub to integrate or possibly relocate rugby to another site as part of rugby consolidation. Look at bringing Te Ora Hou and Tikipunga football together to see if there is an opportunity for working together.
<b>Pohe Island Sports Precinct</b>	A very large park (56 ha) with 3 co-located developments at varying stages of development for marine, rugby and bike activities. BMX have already established an international level racing track but with very limited amenities. Bike Northland plan for a major bike park including the former recycling centre building. Northland Rugby Union is developing offices, fitness gym and clubrooms facility that will be available to other user groups on Pohe Island for meetings and functions. The Masterplan is nearing completion and incorporates the Rugby, Marine flat-water hub and bike hub in an integrated development.
<b>Hihiaua</b>	Hihiaua Cultural Centre will be a contemporary Maori precinct in Whangarei on the Hihiaua Peninsula at the Town Basin. Hihiaua Cultural Centre will provide a much needed training and competition facility for kapa haka and mau rakau as well as a shelter for waka. The centre is a natural hub for three activities within the scope of the strategy and will also be used for the Maori charter school Te Kapehu Whetu. Stage one of the development is nearly complete. which includes the renovation of the existing boatshed (whare toi) to include a workshop, learning and viewing spaces, and a specialist laboratory for marine and environmental research. It also includes a launching gantry and shelter for waka. The process to obtain regulatory consents for further stages of the development are underway.

### 3.3 PLANNING PRINCIPLES

In considering future facilities to meet sporting and active recreation needs it is essential that we learn from the past and ensure that future facilities are developed in a robust and planned way. Sport NZ's National Sport Facilities Framework identifies a set of planning principles to improve future decision making when investing in facilities. The planning principles in the Strategy are tailored to acknowledge the Whangarei District situation. They are:

- Meeting an identified need and fit for purpose to meet the need
- Sustainability – the whole of life costs have been considered
- Partnering / Collaboration / Co-ordination
- Co-location and Integration
- Future proofing – adaptability
- Accessibility
- Reflecting the community
- Activation
- Socialisation

A key overarching finding has been the need and opportunities that exists for Local, Regional and Central Government agencies and active recreation and sport sector stakeholders to collaborate more to achieve what are clearly shared outcomes for the improved health and well-being of all communities in Whangarei District.

Agencies key to success in this collaboration are Council, Sport Northland, Northland Regional Council, Ministry of Education (and Schools BoTs), Northland District Health Board, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Justice, and the hapū and marae of Whangarei District.

### 3.4 GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

The goals of the Strategy are:

1. Increase participation - *more people, more active, more often*
2. Improve the quality of the experience of the participant so they are more likely to continue participating – participants have what they need where they need it
3. Improve the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the facility network



## 4. Recommendations

The Strategy recommendations have been developed by applying the planning principles to the identified issue or opportunity to meet the goals of the Strategy. When considering each recommendation, it is suggested that the background on specific issues and the rationale behind each recommendation should be reviewed in the accompanying more detailed *Whangarei Active Recreation and Sport Strategy Information Report*.

The recommendations address:

- Only active recreation and sport activities assessed as having significant facility issues at this time
- The need for additional capacity primarily driven by population growth in the District and in growth nodes such as Ruakaka
- Renewal and consolidation/rationalisation within the existing facility District network, particularly for those active recreation and sport activities that have experienced declines in membership compared to higher historical levels when these facilities were developed
- Collaboration of key agencies. Several of these agencies feature in this section, whilst others are at a more exploratory phase and do not have readily identifiable projects at this point in time

Recommendations are directed at improving the 'fit' between existing supply and current and foreseeable active recreation and sport demand for facilities.

Prioritisation of projects is reflected in the time frame for completion of each recommendation:

- Short term (years 0-3, higher priority), 2021 - 2024 in Long Term Plan
- Medium term (years 4-10, moderate priority), 2024 – 2027 in Long Term Plan
- Long term (years 10+, lower priority) and on-going, 2027 – 2030 in Long Term Plan

These timeframes are indicative as priorities will change to adapt to new circumstances and enable workload management of key personnel, particularly where they are dependent on significant effort by volunteers to implement the recommendation.

The tables below list the recommendations by timeframe:

- Relevant to the 'Entire District' usually requiring lead or support from Council and/or Sport Northland
- Relevant to specific facility projects likely requiring leadership or support from both Council and Sport Northland
- Specific to sports code network
- Specific to potential hub and spoke approaches

*Note – The numbering of the recommendations do not indicate priority.*





## 4.1 DISTRICT-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

<i>Entire District Recommendations</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. That the Council adopts the Strategy and uses it to guide facility provision, including the facility hierarchy, planning principles and prioritisation criteria	Council	Short
2. Establish a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Strategy.	Council	Short
3. That additional resources are provided by Council to support Sport Northland in establishing a full-time <b>District Facility Navigator role</b> . The District Facility Navigator will support the development of the prioritised hub initiatives and sport specific facility plans. The role should act as an 'activation agent' to help drive the development of the priority projects and encourage the adoption of best practice and networking between users, codes, clubs. The role will involve stakeholder engagement, project management of needs assessments, feasibility studies, and business case development	Council & Sport Northland	Short & ongoing
4. Develop and maintain a <b>database</b> of community contacts for active recreation and sport to support effective community engagement. The database should be updated annually with groups being incentivised to provide up to date contact information	Council	Short & ongoing
5. Adopt a <b>base level of service</b> for active recreation provision that is to be provided in each identified community in the District. This could either be on Council owned land, MoE school property or marae-based with appropriate community access provided through a long-term formal partnering agreement.	Council	Short
6. That the Council incorporate <b>climate change risk and adaptation</b> assessment of new works on existing facilities and any new facilities.	Council	Short & ongoing
7. Inclusion of key local <b>mountain bike track</b> networks on Council land in the Councils assets register and develop cost sharing arrangements with the mountain bike clubs for their upkeep.	Council	Short
8. Develop a consistent approach and <b>use agreement</b> for use between community active recreation and sport organisations and schools to maximise the community use of school facilities, particularly indoor courts. Consideration should be given to investment into school facilities where significant additional long-term community access can be secured through a partnership agreement.	Sport Northland	Short
9. That the Council develop and adopt a <b>universal access policy</b> for sporting facilities that considers developing Universal Access Audits for key facilities and is incorporated into all future network planning	Council	Short
10. . That those coastal facilities that support casual <b>water-based</b> active recreation participation are reviewed, and upgraded at identified strategic locations, potentially with joint funding from other parties.	Council	Short
11. That all recognised hub parks and reserves have a <b>master or development plan</b> in place and if required, a Reserve Management Plan.	Council	Medium
12. That the Council develops a proactive <b>land acquisition, land protection and land banking strategy</b> for the future development of active recreation and sport parks, baseline provision, open space and hubs in population growth areas of the District. This is essential to ensure opportunities are not lost to create new hub parks as part of network planning.	Council	Medium

<b>Entire District Recommendations</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
13. Consider a coordinated and centralised <b>on-line booking and monitoring system</b> to aid with making facilities more accessible, particularly to new users, and to supply reliable data on occupancy and use of facilities.	Council	Medium
14. That <b>80%</b> of the District population have <b>access</b> preferably by foot (without the need to use a car) to a <b>base level</b> of active recreation provision by 2030.	Council	Long

## 4.2 NETWORK PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations reflect the general lack of network planning by sports codes with regard to the current and future provision of facilities. Network planning needs to be undertaken to establish evidence of need before Council commits funding for specific facility projects.

<b>Recommendations for Active Recreation and Sport Specific Networks</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
15. That a detailed regional <b>Aquatic facility plan</b> is developed to consider the overall network and specific works to provide increased opportunity for increased warmer water facilities, learn to swim and improved access to the 50m pool in Dargaville.	Sport Northland	Short
16. Undertake a <b>sports field demand study</b> to quantify actual sports field capacity and hours demanded for competition and training on a code by code basis as the foundation of an implementation plan for sports field improvements (mostly drainage and floodlight installation) plus location of any additional artificial turf (if/ when required)	Council	Short
17. That a <b>master plan</b> is developed for the <b>network of marine hubs that support water-based active recreation and sport</b> use of Whangarei Harbour (primarily for waka ama, rowing, kayaking, SUP, sailing and boating) at Pohe Island (flat water), Riverside Drive (sailing/ waka ama) and Parua Bay (sailing/ boating and waka ama)	Council	Short
18. That a detailed <b>facility implementation plan</b> is developed by <b>Bowls</b> to explore opportunities to maximise use of the existing facilities through partnerships with other activities, mergers of clubs and consolidation/ rationalisation of facilities and establishment of a District Bowls Hub with a covered or indoor green.	Bowls	Short
19. That a detailed <b>facility implementation plan</b> is developed by <b>Golf</b> to explore opportunities to maximise use of the existing facilities including through partnerships with other activities, mergers of clubs and rationalisation of facilities.	Golf	Short
20. That a detailed <b>facility plan</b> is developed by <b>Squash</b> to consider the overall network and specific works proposed by clubs	Squash	Short

<b>Recommendations for Active Recreation and Sport Specific Networks</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<p>21. That the Council develop a detailed <b>courts plan</b> for indoor and outdoor courts. The intent of the plan is to consolidate/ rationalise supply of courts and to maximise the use of retained courts in the future. The courts plan should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall network for courts including tennis, netball, hockey, basketball and futsal provided by Council, clubs, schools and other providers;</li> <li>• The future casual 24/7 public court provision</li> <li>• Key locations such as the Tennis Hub (Thomas Neale Family Memorial Tennis Centre) and the Netball competition hub complex at Kensington Park; and</li> </ul> <p>The plan will need to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workable shared use arrangements between codes, clubs, schools and other users of outdoor courts (including hockey, basketball and futsal);</li> <li>• Improvement, where needed, in quality of any shared use surfaces</li> <li>• On-going sustainability of the Thomas Neale Family Memorial Tennis Centre as a standalone and single purpose facility.</li> </ul> <p>The plan could identify opportunities for Council to partner with schools by providing financial support to cover their outdoor multi-use courts and develop new indoor courts. Identified opportunities must be supported by evidence of community need and securing long-term community access through a lease or license to occupy from the school and MOE.</p>	Council	Medium
<p>22. That the Council develop the following <b>facility plans</b> to inform the next review of the Whangarei District Council Walking &amp; Cycling Strategy in 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a <b>bike track and trail</b> specific facility plan. This plan will consider improvements required at existing sites and opportunities to increase the available network of tracks and trails for active recreation and sport; and</li> <li>• a <b>walking network plan</b>. This plan will identify strategic locations for provision of local walking for exercise, including dog walking opportunities in the rural areas of the District.</li> </ul>	Council via the Walking & Cycling Reference Group	Medium
<p>23. That a <b>bridle path network plan</b> is developed to identify strategic locations for provision of recreational riding opportunities in the rural areas of the District.</p>	Council	Medium
<p>24. That a <b>playground plan</b> is developed to identify strategic locations for provision of local play and informal recreation opportunities in the District.</p>	Council	Medium
<p>25. That a <b>facility implementation plan</b> by <b>Shooting Sports</b> is developed to explore opportunities to develop a hub and spoke network of facilities across the District</p>	Northland Shooting Sports	Medium



## 4.3 CODE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations reflect code specific requirements with regard to current and future provision of facilities. This needs to be undertaken to establish evidence of need before Council should commit to allocate funding for specific facility projects.

A proactive approach is required to ensure that code specific requirements are developed, where possible, as integral elements to complement the development of hub and spoke facilities.

<i>Recommendations for Active Recreation and Sport Specific Networks</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
26. <b>Netball:</b> That the Council support provision of additional multi-use covered or enclosed courts subject to evident need of court users, after reviewing the feasibility study being undertaken by Whangarei Netball Centre and the outcome of the courts plan.	Council	Short
27. <b>Croquet and Lawn Bowls:</b> Where possible codes should share facilities with adjacent clubs, e.g. central Whangarei and, Waipu.	Council	Short
28. <b>Football:</b> That subject to the sports field demand study findings and the findings of an independent needs analysis and feasibility study, support be given to Tikipunga Park becoming the 'home of football' incorporating an artificial turf field and access to a minimum of two grass fields to complement other provision in Northern Football region.	Council	Short
29. <b>Gymsports:</b> That a facility implementation plan by <b>Gymsports</b> is developed to explore opportunities to develop a hub and spoke network of facilities across the District.	Gymsports	Medium
30. <b>Equestrian:</b> That: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council support provision of improved equestrian facilities at Barge Showgrounds; and</li> <li>A management plan is developed for Barge Showgrounds and an implementation plan is developed to explore opportunities to increase the main arena and the number / quality of pens / horse yards.</li> </ul>	Council & Equestrian	Medium

## 4.4 HUB AND SPOKE RECOMMENDATIONS

A strong national trend is to co-locate and integrate provision of key facilities. Critical benefits from this approach are:

- Establishing economies of scale through sharing spaces and services
- Providing attractive and energised destinations that are a one-stop-shop for participants, particularly families.

The District needs to work strategically to ensure it has sufficient large sized parks which can operate as hubs. A long-term planning approach (30-50 years) needs to be taken to acquire and hold sufficient land in large enough parcels to create hub parks when demand from population growth occurs. The strategic land acquisition for a 'new Kensington' is identified for purchase beyond the current Long Term Plan of Council to cope with population growth.

Well planned land allocation and use are critical at any hub park. A comprehensive master plan outlining the development pathway for each of these hub parks is needed. This should also include protection of adjacent land holdings owned by Council to future proof these key parks. The master plans should also provide context for development and refreshing of Reserve Management Plans<sup>1</sup> for each hub park.

<sup>1</sup> As prescribed and mandated under the Reserves Act 1977

## Recommendations

The following are recommendations to progress the further development of hubs.

<b>Recommendations for Development of Existing Hubs</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
31. That Sport Northland and the Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assist in establishing a <b>user forum</b> with each hub funded by Council to provide regular and structured feedback on performance of the hub and input into any proposed facility developments; and</li> <li>explore opportunities to <b>increase collaboration / partnerships</b> at an operational level between existing community sport hub facilities.</li> </ul>	Sport Northland & Council	Short
32. That Sport Northland and the Council support the <b>Ruakaka</b> community to develop an expanded hub through facilitating a holistic and integrated approach to the development of additional capacity and optimising existing facilities and subject to the findings of an independent needs analysis and business case.	Sport Northland & Council	Short
33. That Sport Northland and the Council support the <b>Parua Bay</b> community and Parua Bay School to progress their plans for development of additional capacity and optimising existing facilities through an independent needs analysis and business case.	Sport Northland & Council	Short
34. That Sport Northland and the Council support the <b>Hikurangi</b> community to develop its new hub through facilitating a holistic and integrated approach to the development of additional capacity and optimising existing facilities through an independent needs analysis and business case. This should involve investigating whether Council will consolidate the site.	Sport Northland & Council	Short
35. That the Council and Sport Northland support <b>Otangarei</b> to develop a multi-purpose sport and community facility through a multi-agency project led by Council in partnership with other agencies, e.g. MOH, MSD, MOE, Marae, Police, School to support the activation of the spaces.	Sport Northland & Council	Short
36. That the Council supports the implementation of the <b>William Fraser Memorial Park</b> on Pohe Island Master Plan for the development of the 'home' of rugby union and the bike park.	Council	Short
37. That the Council supports the provision of outdoor and covered space for <b>mau rakau, kapa haka and waka</b> .	Council	Short
38. That in <b>Waipu</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sport Northland and Council support Waipu sports clubs in optimising existing facilities before any additional capacity is considered; and</li> <li>The Council consider undertaking the maintenance of the sports grounds.</li> </ul>	Sport Northland & Council	Medium
39. That the Council to review its <b>funding policy</b> and level of support grants provided to existing hubs	Council	Medium
40. That existing hubs to have <b>asset management plans</b> in place and shared with Council to ensure programmed maintenance and renewals are planned and funding requirements identified	Hubs Council	Medium
41. Sport Northland and the Council support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The implementation of the <b>Otaika Sports Ground</b> development plan</li> <li>the sale or lease of the former league ground Jubilee Sports field with the proceeds being used for the development of the 'home' of rugby league at Otaika Sports Ground.</li> </ul>	Sport Northland & Council	Medium

# 5. Appendices

## 5.1 NORTHLAND SPORTS FACILITY DEVELOPMENT - GOOD PRACTICE PROCESS

### 5.1.1 Introduction

This brief document is a guide to the good practice steps that should at least be considered when beginning the process of facility development/re-development. It is not necessarily considered a complete process but is based on Sport Northland's past experience in successful facility development.

### 5.1.2 Planning Steps to Consider

#### 1. GROUP FORMATION AND PROJECT BRIEF

A sports facility development usually begins when a core group of people come together to address a sports facility need that has been identified in the community. This group is usually ad-hoc at this stage, although in some cases an entity may have already been formed.

It is recommended that a project brief be developed which summarises what the group is trying to achieve – this project brief will form the basis of more detailed work to come, and of course will likely change somewhat over time.

#### 2. FORMAL IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

To be considered for funding, it is very likely that the project should have been identified in a formal way through Council LTPs or one of the many facility studies/plans that have been completed over recent years in Northland – examples of these studies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Northland Sports Facilities Plan 2014
- Dargaville Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Study 2012
- Kaikohe Sports Facilities Plan 2014
- National Sports Facilities Plans (usually of individual sports codes)

#### 3. ENTITY FORMATION

It is around this time that the initial group may want to think about forming an entity to drive the project forward, if one is not already apparent. Formation of an Incorporated Society or a Charitable Trust is desirable, but it must be remembered that many funding agencies require the organisation to have been operating for 12 months prior to submitting a funding application.

If a suitable entity already exists, then a sub-committee with the explicit purpose of developing the facility should be considered.

#### 4. ESTABLISHING A PROJECT TIMELINE

Often over-looked in the early stages, this is important to complete, especially so that the application deadlines of the major funding organisations can be identified and work required prior to submitting applications can be completed in time. It should be reviewed at regular intervals, as it will change depending on the time taken for each step of the process (which will never go to your original plan).

#### 5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

If the project looks like it will gain traction, it is important that this step is started as early as possible so that momentum is gained. All proposed facility developments will have stakeholders of some kind, so they need to be identified and consultation/engagement should begin.

## **6. FUNDING SOURCES/BASE FUNDING**

Likely funding sources should also be identified as early as possible. If a base source of funding is not looking like a possibility, the project will likely not succeed. A base source of funding would usually be the local Council and any contributions from stakeholders. Discussions with the local Council need to occur as early as possible, as often the process of having this base funding can take months and often years – submissions to LTPs or Annual Plans will need to be made for the proposed development to have funding confirmed.

Funding for a feasibility study and then initial design/geotechnical/surveying work also needs to be considered at this point, as does any funding that might be accessible to appoint a paid person to undertake the bulk of the administrative work.

Major funding agencies should be approached so that they are aware of your project and to determine if the project fits their fund criteria.

## **7. FEASIBILITY STUDY**

As a matter of course, all major funding agencies now require a feasibility study to be completed for significant sports facility developments. This study will identify the need, establish a likely design and cost and identify what funding sources might be available to cover this cost. Crucially, it will also detail if the facility will be able to operate viably once constructed. Ideally this study should be completed by an independent organisation or individual and should also be peer reviewed in some form if possible.

## **8. INITIAL DESIGN/GEOTECHNICAL/SURVEYING WORK**

Upon the successful completion of the feasibility study, funding will also be needed to undertake this initial design work that is now a requirement of most funding applications.

Groups should consider appointing a Project Manager to co-ordinate this work, which although it may cost a little more, will produce a better result. Consideration of the PM's involvement during the detailed design/construction phase should also be considered at this stage, as having this expertise involved almost always leads to savings in the overall cost.

## **9. FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

These need to be started early to be able to submit on time. Experience in submitting applications of this nature is desirable, and if it is not available to the group driving the project, should be sought out from other people and organisations.

This phase may take many, many months (if not years) as often there is an Expression of Interest stage prior being given the go ahead to submit a full application. Once submitted, there is then often a long wait for the funding agency to consider and make a decision on the application (although these times are usually published and can normally be relied on).

It is also normal to need to wait until one funding application decision is made before applying to the next one (to be able to have the required amount of funding confirmed prior to applying).

## **10. FUNDING CONFIRMED**

Most projects will be considered fully funded once Foundation North, Lotteries and/or NRC Regional Rate money has been confirmed. Projects will be scored a 10 if all funding apart from the NRC funding has been confirmed

## **11. DETAILED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION**

This is another process again, but would normally be led by either the architect or the project manager (if there is one).



## 5.2 HUB DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

A Hub Development Guide will be launched by Sport NZ in 2019. The guide will outline the key concepts and steps to be considered for the development of a successful Sport and Recreation Hub. It is intended as a support for those who are the leaders and decision makers in sport, recreation and community clubs who are looking to work together.

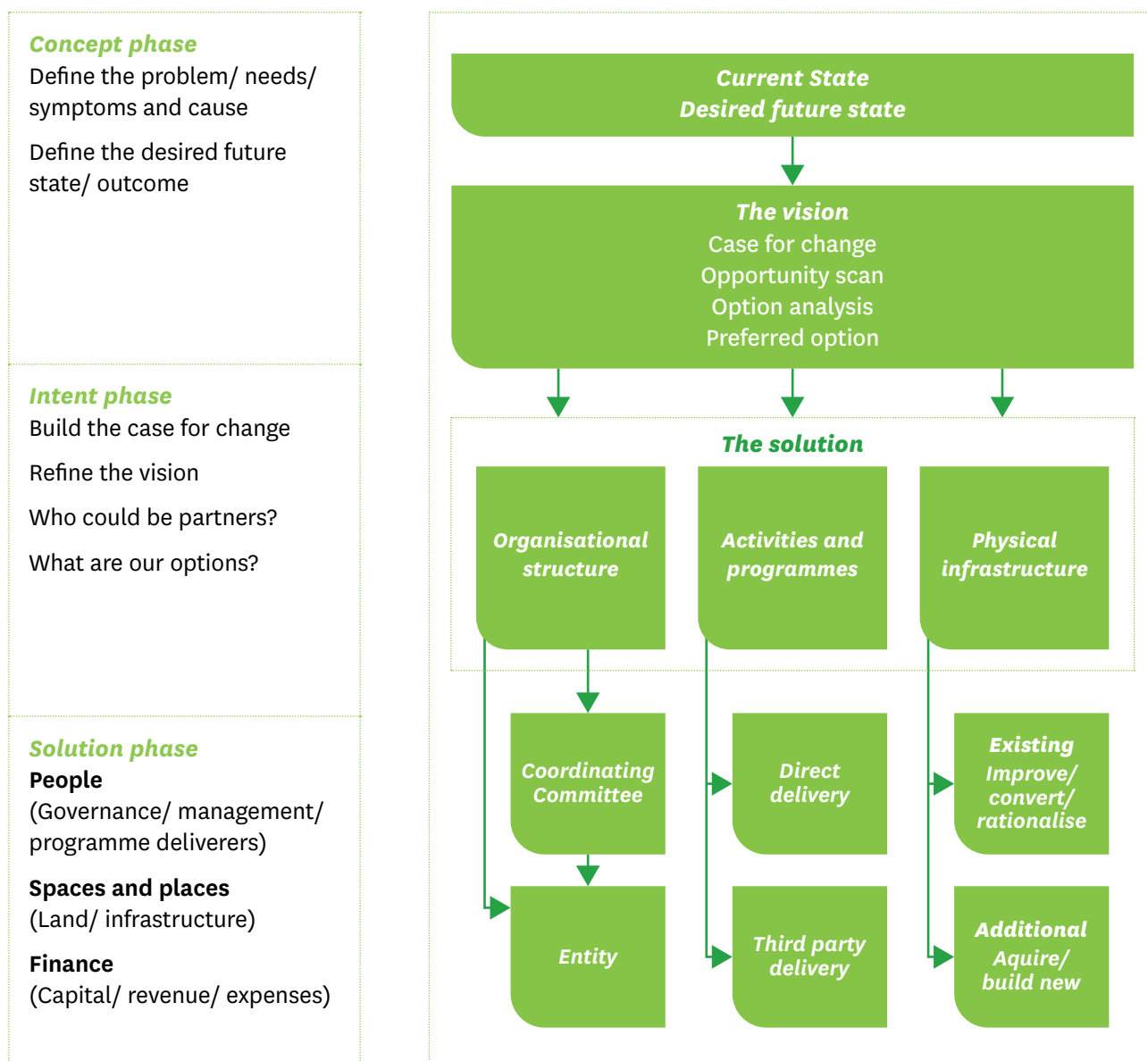
A Sport & Recreation Hub is defined as:

“A partnership where organisations’ co-locate or share facilities and/or services strategically, sometimes via an independently governed group, for a defined geographical area to provide sustainable, quality sport and recreation experiences”

There are many reasons why organisations decide to work together. Some of these are societal, others economic; and some are due to changes in the way people of all ages participate. Included among the reasons for change are: the opportunity to increase participation; the power of a collective voice; the potential for cost sharing and increased sustainability; and, improved knowledge within the group.

To achieve positive outcomes, it is necessary to widen thinking about ownership, where revenue will be generated in the future, and about how to build for affordability. This wider scope is reflected in the diagram below, along with the three main development streams of organisation, activation and spaces.

**Figure 8: Hub Development Process**







Private Bag 9023, Whangarei 0148, New Zealand  
Forum North Building, Rust Avenue, Whangarei  
Ruakaka Service Centre, Takutai Place, Ruakaka

P: +64 9 430 4200

F: +64 9 438 7632

E: [mailroom@wdc.govt.nz](mailto:mailroom@wdc.govt.nz)

W: [www.wdc.govt.nz](http://www.wdc.govt.nz)

Facebook & Twitter: WhangareiDC