

A photograph of four mountain bikers in a forest. From left to right: a woman in a red long-sleeved shirt and a light blue helmet, a man in an orange jacket and a black helmet, a woman in a black jacket with a blue plaid collar and a black helmet, and a man in a black long-sleeved shirt and a black helmet. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a dense forest with tall, thin trees. The ground is covered in brown leaves and pine needles. The text 'Bay of Plenty Spaces and Places Strategy 2024' is overlaid on the left side of the image in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below it, the text 'Summary Document' is overlaid in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. There is a decorative graphic of black wavy lines on the right side of the image.

Bay of Plenty Spaces and Places Strategy 2024

Summary Document



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Disclaimer

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About RSL Consultancy

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

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Foreword

The refreshed Bay of Plenty Spaces and Places Strategy 2024 signals a step change in how partners collaborate and work together in Bay of Plenty. It represents an updated, agreed and pragmatic approach to spaces and places provision for play, active recreation and sport that is based on evidence, and comes at a time when councils, funders, the sport and recreation sector, and ultimately the participant, are feeling the burden of an economic downturn. Fiscally prudent decisions and collaborative solutions to facility challenges are more important than ever.

This iteration of the strategy considers the participant's changing needs and the spaces and places that support active recreation and play alongside sport. It also seeks to explore mana enhancing relationships with mana whenua and reflects on the role the strategy can play in advocating for better environmental outcomes and greater inclusivity.

Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa (Sport NZ) aims to inspire New Zealanders to develop a life-long love of participating in play, active recreation, and sport. Above all, we want to see "Every Body Active". Sport NZ has long been an advocate for locally-led development of spaces and places for play, active recreation, and sport that provide quality experiences for communities. Working alongside our Regional Sport Trust and National Sport and Recreation Organisation partners, we are committed to supporting local government and others involved in the planning, funding, development, and provision of more affordable, well-utilised, and sustainable spaces and places. We know this is a critical enabler for physical activity and community wellbeing.

We also know that levels of physical activity are in decline and yet people want to be more active and have access to a broader range of physical activity experiences. This is more marked for some communities and age groups than others. The decline in physical activity levels is due to a range of social, economic, technological, political, and environmental factors, only some of which we can influence. Fortunately, providing quality experiences for people in your communities is something we can influence together.

The Bay of Plenty Spaces and Places Strategy ensures all parties are better informed of community needs and have a shared vision of best practice provision. It's encouraging to see this new strategy provides a high-level strategic approach and decision-making framework for spaces and places provision. It promotes a collaborative approach, both strategically and operationally, and a shared understanding of the system pressures, progress, and priorities to help guide councils and funding agencies in their decision making.

Sport NZ acknowledges and applauds all the councils and Sport Bay of Plenty for their continued leadership in this area and we look forward to continuing to support the strategy implementation.



Julie Morrison
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Whakataukī

Tē tōia, tē haumatia.

Nothing can be achieved without a plan,
workforce, and way of doing things.

Vision

Shaping an innovative network of play, recreation,
and sport spaces and places to empower
and uplift our community for a thriving future.

Kia auaha te taiao, kia auaha te tangata.
To shape the environment is to shape the people.



1. Executive Summary

The Bay of Plenty Spaces and Places Strategy (2024) provides a range of insights that will help guide the approach to regional planning for play, active recreation and sport spaces and places (facilities) across the region.

The Strategy is a collaboration between Sport Bay of Plenty, Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa (Sport NZ), Kawerau District Council (KDC), Ōpōtiki District Council (ODC), Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC), Tauranga City Council (TCC) (including Bay Venues Ltd), Western Bay of Plenty District Council (WBOPDC) and Whakatāne District Council (WDC).

The Bay of Plenty region has been experiencing strong population growth over a sustained period. This growth is placing increasing pressure on spaces and places that support play, active recreation and sport across the region, and is exacerbating demand for new spaces and places. There is a clear expectation that this trend of strong population growth will continue.

At the same time, the funding of spaces and places planning and development is under increasing pressure, affecting the ability of councils and community providers to develop new spaces and places as well as maintain existing ones.

Within this strategic context of growth and funding restrictions, this strategy provides a high-level strategic framework, to help guide councils, funders, and community organisations across the Bay of Plenty, in their decision-making regarding spaces and places planning and provision. It will help ensure organisations involved in play, active recreation, and sport are more informed as to the priority needs across the whole Bay of Plenty region, recognising that resources are limited and prioritisation of future investment is required.

The collaborative partners recognise the importance of the spaces and places that support play, active recreation, and sport across the region which support active lifestyles and the overall wellbeing of communities throughout the Bay of Plenty. Their vision is that the Strategy will shape an innovative network of play, recreation, and sport spaces and places to empower and uplift the Bay of Plenty community for a thriving future.

“Kia auaha te taiao, kia auaha te tangata.” - To shape the environment is to shape the people.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

This is the 3rd edition of the Bay of Plenty Spaces and Places Strategy developed through a collaboration between Sport Bay of Plenty, Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa (Sport NZ), Kawerau District Council, Ōpōtiki District Council, Rotorua Lakes Council, Tauranga City Council (TCC) (including Bay Venues Ltd), Western Bay of Plenty District Council (WBOPDC) and Whakatāne District Council.

2.2 Purpose

The Bay of Plenty Spaces and Places Strategy (2024) provides a range of insights that will help guide the approach to regional planning for play, active recreation and sport spaces and places (facilities) across the region. It is intended that this strategy will build on the foundations and learning from the 2017 and 2020 editions of the strategy.

2.3 Strategic Fit

This strategy provides a high-level strategic framework, to help guide councils, funders, and community organisations across the Bay of Plenty, in their decision-making regarding spaces and places planning and provision. It is intended to help inform the play, active recreation and sport sector of the priority needs across the whole Bay of Plenty region, recognising that resources are limited and prioritisation of future investment is required.

Current national, regional, and local planning documents have been considered during the development of this strategy.

Figure 2.1: Strategic Fit



3. Strategic Context

3.1 The Region

For the purposes of this strategy, the Bay of Plenty covers the territorial authority (council) areas of:

Kawerau District	Ōpōtiki District
Rotorua Lakes	Tauranga City
Western Bay of Plenty District	Whakatāne District

The region is 21,837 square kilometres (15,254 square kilometres of land and 9,583 square kilometres of coastal marine area)¹. It is known for its sunny climate and low wind, which complements the relatively calm and warm ocean environment to encourage many coastal and ocean based sport and recreation opportunities. There is considerable rainfall variation across the region, and while the temperatures are generally moderate there is also variability in the temperatures across the region, with inland areas typically having cooler average temperatures than coastal areas².

The geography is varied with active and extinct volcanoes, harbours, lakes and rivers, forests, bush, and farmland as well as major urban centres. Nearly half of the regional population resides in the Tauranga City area.

Figure 3.1: The Region at a Glance³



- 1 Sourced from: <https://www.boprc.govt.nz/your-council/council-and-region/about-the-region>
- 2 Sourced and summarised from <https://niwa.co.nz/our-science/climate/publications/regional-climatologies/bay-of-plenty>
- 3 Map image provided by Sport Bay of Plenty.

3.2 Demographic Overview

The demographic data in this strategy relies on a number of different data sources⁴, provided by the territorial authorities across the region. Overall, there is a clear expectation that the Bay of Plenty will continue the recent trend of strong population growth overall.

Demographic Highlight⁵

The population of the Bay of Plenty is expected to increase by about 25% (89,400 people) to reach approximately 446,000 by 2048.

The distribution of the population is expected to remain fairly similar over time. In 2048 nearly half the population is expected to be in Tauranga City, 1/5 in Rotorua District, 17% in Western and 15% in Eastern Bay of Plenty.

By 2048 it is projected the population of the Bay of Plenty will be very evenly spread across all age groups with a range of between 15% and 18% in each age band.

The population of the Bay of Plenty is ageing. The population of the 75-plus age group is expected to increase by 110% in the 25 years to 2048.

The Bay of Plenty is projected to become more ethnically diverse. Those identifying as Māori is expected to increase by 41% and European or other by 25% in the 20 years to 2043. The population of those identifying as Asian is expected to increase by 107% and of those identifying as Pacific by 81% (albeit from smaller population bases).

Impact on Sport and Active Recreation

An increase in the total number of people will require facilities and infrastructure to adapt and/or increase to meet the sport and active recreation requirements of the larger population base.

Future spaces and places developments and upgrades need to consider where the future population will be and what level of mobility people have to travel around the region to participate.

Spaces and places developments need to consider the sport and active recreation requirements of the whole population.

More demand for indoor recreation and social spaces by this cohort. More demand for warm water facilities. A requirement for facilities that are warm, accessible and with good acoustics.

The participation preferences of various ethnic groups can vary. An example is the higher proportion of people who identify as coming from Asian descent participating in badminton, or those identifying as Māori seeking opportunities to engage in traditional Māori games such as kī-o-rahi and what impact this may have on the supply of spaces and places for these sports and activities.

⁴ The data sets used were: MR Cagney (Medium Projections) for the Eastern Bay of Plenty; Statistics New Zealand (Stats NZ) Population Projections 2021, scaled to Infometrics for Rotorua Lakes District; Tauranga City Council (TCC) 2024-2034 LTP Population Projections and Western Bay of Plenty District Council (WBoPDC) 2024-2034 LTP Population Projections. For age group and ethnicity Stats NZ medium and high projections were used.

⁵ If required, further demographic detail can be found in the full reference report available from Sport Bay of Plenty.

3.3 The Value of Play, Active Recreation, and Sport

Play, active recreation, and sport have long been valued as key parts of the New Zealand and Bay of Plenty lifestyle. Participation has a range of benefits for individuals and communities including contributing to physical and mental health and wellbeing, social connection, national and local pride, and the economy. The spaces and places that support play, active recreation, and sport across the region are considered to be integral to the overall wellbeing of communities throughout the Bay of Plenty. Further information on the value of play, active recreation, and sport is provided in Appendix 4 of the full reference document.

**For every \$1 spent
on play, active recreation,
and sport there is a social
return of \$2.12 to New
Zealand. Meaning for every
dollar invested the return is
more than doubled.**

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) of
Recreational Physical Activity in Aotearoa
New Zealand, Sport NZ (2022)

3.4 Key Trends in Play, Active Recreation, and Sport

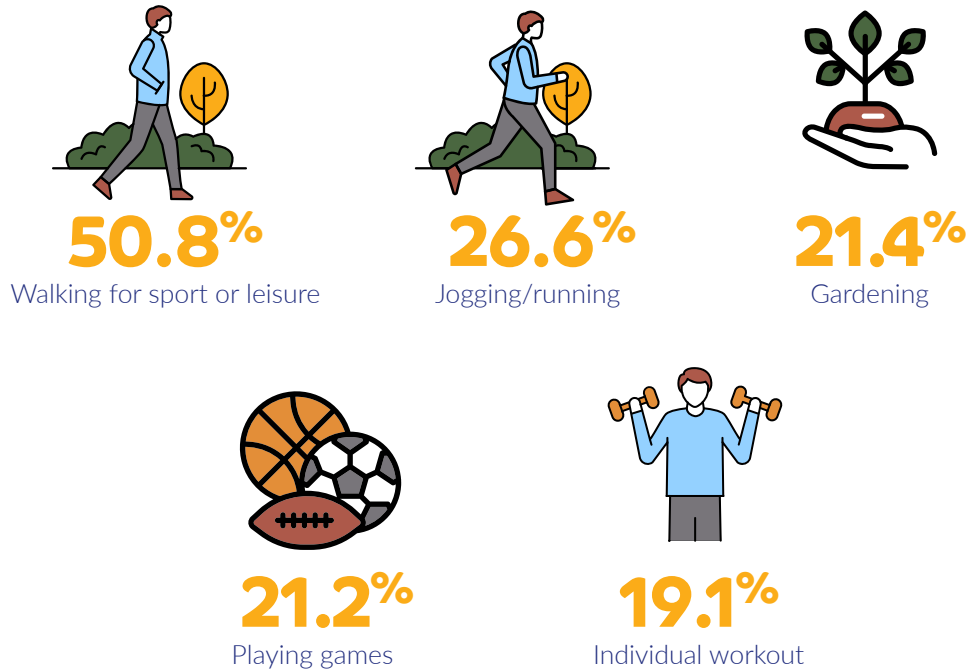
Over time several trends have emerged that challenge the structure, leadership and delivery of play, active recreation, and sport in New Zealand and therefore impact the spaces and places network that is needed to support community participation and wellbeing. Some of these trends include:

- Increasing diversity in the range of sport and recreation available.
- Increasing awareness of the value and importance of play.
- Decreasing physical activity, particularly influenced by the electronic revolution.
- Ageing built facilities, many of which are no longer fit for purpose and may not be financially viable to upgrade and/or maintain.
- The development of multi-use hubs that function as broad community facilities, providing for a range of uses rather than just one sport.
- Increasing participation in individual sport and recreation activities, a move to more casual participation and the reducing popularity of traditional team sports. Although team sports are still important, particularly for young people and some are showing recent growth trends such as volleyball.
- New technologies that benefit and encourage participation such as e-bikes, smart watches, and online tools.
- Increasing expectations of participants including the move of some outdoor sports to indoor environments and the desire for year-round participation.

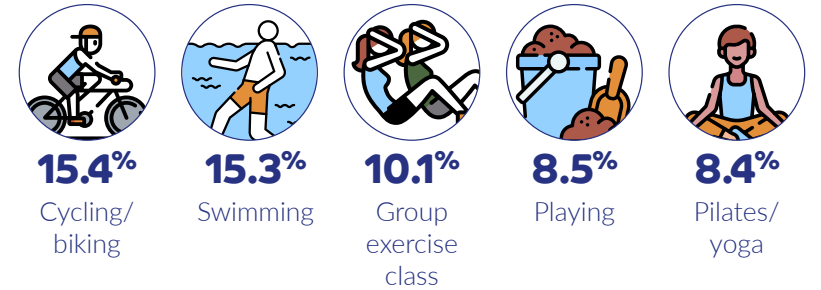
3.5 Bay of Plenty Participation Trends

The Sport NZ Insights Tool⁶ provides the ability to understand participation in the Bay of Plenty (as defined by the Sport Bay of Plenty Regional Sports Trust (RST) boundaries). It shows the following activity behaviour (interests and preferences)⁷ for the Sport Bay of Plenty Region. This information is an indication only and care should be taken with the proportions of participation that it presents.

The Top Five Activity Behaviours



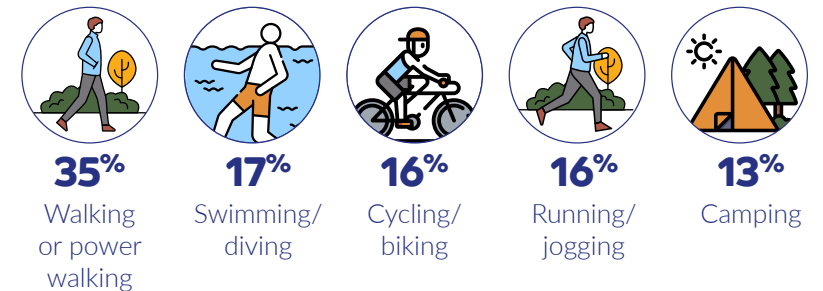
Rounding Out the Top Ten Activity Behaviours



Note: If 'inactive' was an activity it would be ranked 3rd with 25.1% of people in the Sport Bay of Plenty Region expected to be inactive.

This data shows that the majority of participation is likely to be through recreation and informal or casual participation opportunities. Often occurring in spaces and places that cater to more individualised sport and active recreation choices such as gym/exercise classes, pools, and cycling infrastructure.

When the Sport NZ Activity Trends data⁸ for activities participated in during the last year is considered the top 5 results are:



This shows most people are participating through active recreation.

⁶ This Tool sources data from Stats NZ, Active NZ Survey (Sport NZ) Secondary School Sports Council sports participation census data, Ministry of Education, Health, and Nielsen Research. See <https://sportnz.org.nz/resources/insights-tool/>

⁷ Activity behaviours is modelled participation using combined data from the 2019 and 2020 Active NZ Survey (last 7 Days participation rates) and Stats NZ Census 2018.

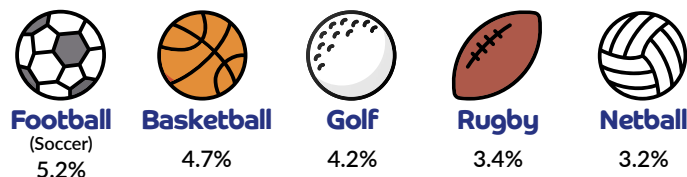
⁸ Nielsen Consumer & Media Insights report for the question: what sports and activities have you participated in the last 12 months. Data sourced for 2011-2020 Copyright 2016 the Nielsen Company.



3.5.1 Bay of Plenty Top 5 ‘organised’ sport activity behaviours

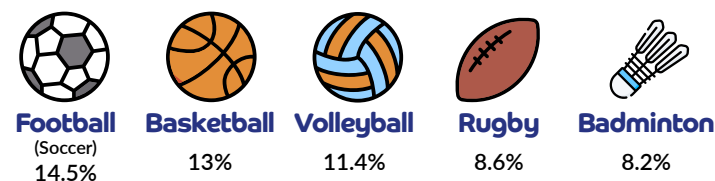
All Demographics:

When modelled data⁹ is considered for facility-based, ‘organised’ sport¹⁰ the top 5 sports in the Bay of Plenty (all demographics) are:



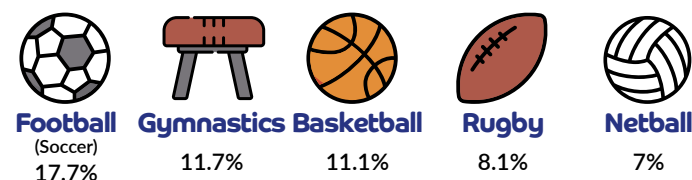
Secondary Students:

Sport NZ Insights data shows the top 5 facility-based, ‘organised’ sports¹¹ for Bay of Plenty secondary students are:



Primary Students:

The top 5 facility based, ‘organised’ sports¹² for Bay of Plenty primary students are:



This indicates that ‘traditional’, ‘organised’ sport is important for all segments of the community, but particularly for young people. It also shows that facilities such as playing fields, indoor and outdoor courts, and fit-for-purpose, sport-specific spaces and places are important to participation across the Bay of Plenty region.

⁹ Activity behaviours is modelled participation using combined data from the 2022 and 2023 Active NZ Survey (last 7 Days participation rates) and Stats NZ Census 2018.

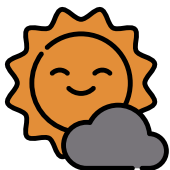
¹⁰ Some activities such as cycling, swimming, were within the data but are not included in the top 5 summary as they are expected to largely reflect recreational participation.

¹¹ & ¹² Again, a range of more recreational participation activities such as trampolining, surfing, individual workouts were excluded from this top 5 summary on the basis that they largely reflect recreational participation.

4. Advantages of the Bay of Plenty

The Bay of Plenty has many competitive advantages when considering play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places. These have changed over time as population growth and urbanisation have impacted on the region. Different parts of the region experience these advantages to differing degrees.

Competitive Advantage



Climate

The Bay of Plenty enjoys a sunny climate with low wind, mild winters, and warm ocean temperatures. This supports active lifestyles and participation in outdoor activities, including sport, active recreation, and play.



Outstanding, Diverse Natural Environment

Across the Bay of Plenty there are a myriad of different natural landscapes including water (ocean, lakes, rivers), vast open spaces, beaches, bush, and forests which enable and support a wide range of active recreation, sport, and play opportunities.



Tourism

The network of spaces and places also supports tourism, drawing people from across New Zealand and the world. Examples include international standard tracks and trails for mountain biking and cycling.

Related Considerations

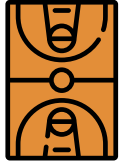
Climate change is impacting some play, active recreation, and sport assets, especially in coastal zones and flood hazard areas.

With a strong predominance of outdoor participation opportunities, weather events impact people's ability or willingness to be active, including due to weather-related impacts on the roading network.

This is also a drawback for visitors to the region, who often come to experience these natural assets, adding to the demand pressures on some play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places.

The Bay of Plenty is also a holiday destination, meaning there is infrastructure (accommodation) to support sport and recreation tournaments and events using the range of quality spaces and places available.

Competitive Advantage



Range of Quality Spaces and Places

A range of quality spaces and places (indoor and outdoor) are accessible across the region, providing a diversity of play, active recreation, and sport experiences for individuals and communities across the region.



Geographic Advantages

The Bay of Plenty is well located, in close proximity to major population centres Auckland and Waikato.



Cultural History

The Bay of Plenty benefits from a rich and diverse cultural history that is recognised and celebrated. Increasingly the region's spaces and places recognise and acknowledge the history of the rohe.



Ambassadors and Role Models

Many top sports people call the Bay of Plenty home, in part their success links back to the climatic and natural advantages, and the range of built facilities and participation opportunities provided across the region.



Council Relationships

Councils across the region already work closely together through joint planning and in some instances joint ownership of recreation assets (such as TECT Park).

Related Considerations

As assets age, the quality of the experiences provided at some spaces and places is reducing. There is also some disparity in the quality of assets provided to different communities.

This makes the Bay of Plenty easy to access, supporting strong participation numbers for a range of tournaments and events.

There is opportunity to further build and improve connections between people and place. This cultural history, combined with the range and quality of spaces and places provides an opportunity for the Bay of Plenty to be the home of indigenous sport and recreation in Aotearoa.

The opportunity to train and compete in quality spaces and places helps support local sports people to stay in the Bay of Plenty. However, with increasing use demands the balance between high performance / event and community use of spaces and places can be hard to manage.

There is an opportunity to further build on these collaborative relationships due to the relatively short distances between some Council areas and the many people who live, work, and play across Council boundaries.

5. Regional Challenges

A range of challenges and issues impact play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places across the Bay of Plenty. Again, there are sub-regional variations and differences in the challenges experienced by different sport and recreation groups and participants. The key challenges¹³ which were consistently identified from research, stakeholder surveys, workshops and project steering group discussions were:

Key Challenges



Capacity and Quantity

Many facilities in the network are at capacity, particularly during peak times with limited availability for additional bookings meaning there is a need for investment in additional facilities.



Quality of Spaces and Places (not fit-for-purpose)

With an ageing network, some spaces and places are becoming outdated and no longer meet minimum standards, with a lack of ongoing maintenance also negatively impacting quality.

In some instances, such as sports fields, high utilisation is making it increasingly difficult to manage appropriate levels of maintenance, particularly as there is no longer downtime between the 'traditional' winter and summer season for codes.

Related Considerations

Existing facilities are being asked to cater to more uses -events, new sports, adaptations of traditional games, shift of some codes from outdoors to indoors.

Travel difficulties (time and cost) is contributing to demand for more local facilities.

Population growth and associated demand pressures are particularly high in the Western Bay of Plenty sub-region.

There are also increasing expectations of the basic, acceptable standard of spaces and places. Examples include the need to be accessible for people with movement impairments, and providing change and toilet facilities that are not off-putting for female or gender-diverse participants.

¹³ These are summarised here - detailed explanations are available in the full reference report if required.

Key Challenges



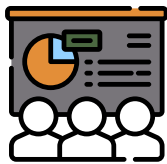
Restricted Funding Environment

There is significant pressure on funding for spaces and places. Essentially the demands for investment are so great that the spaces and places funding situation may be reaching crisis point.

Related Considerations

Restricted funding affects the ability to develop new spaces and places as well as maintain existing ones.

There are significant disparities in financial capacity across Councils in the region. There is increasing pressure on urban Councils to provide regional assets but a lack of funding also impacts access for residents in more rural areas.



Complexity of Major Projects

Many community organisations who are seeking to develop new spaces and places or undertake major redevelopment projects are finding it particularly challenging. Voluntary organisations do not necessarily have the required skills such as fundraising, project management, legislative and regulatory knowledge, and the ability to navigate Council processes.

At times, this reliance on volunteers can lead to elongated planning cycles for spaces and places (re)development projects which can have a consequence of escalating costs for community projects.



Travel Time and Cost

A rapidly growing urban population is making travel times across the region more challenging. Spaces and places that people used to consider a manageable drive, can now be difficult to access due to traffic pressures.

With some competitions operating on a regional or sub-regional basis, and with increasing time and costs for travel, some people are seeking more local participation opportunities.

Other **strategic and planning challenges** impacting play, active recreation and sport include:

- Availability of land and infrastructure in the right places
- Uneven population growth and distribution
- Complex iwi relationships and expectation and pressure on iwi and hapū to respond within tight consultation timeframes
- Changing participation preferences
- Spaces and places sustainability and service levels – with growing expectations for the level of service and user experience
- Legislative challenges

Key operational challenges facing play, active recreation and sport providers are:

- Membership retention
- Cost of participation
- Council fees and charges
- Busy lives
- Appropriate programming.

“

“We want our communities to be healthy and happy, sport provides such a lot of this (both physical and mental wellbeing) - having facilities enables sporting organisations to provide services/opportunities to the community.”

- survey respondent

“A lot of the buildings in our community are old and run down with the facilities in this state, it is hard to accommodate everyone's needs and the want of whanau to participate in activities however we are grateful to have a space to provide our services to the community.”

- Ōpōtiki based sports club

“...It is too far and expensive, out of economic reach of many families and users to travel to Tauranga.”

- survey respondent

“We also have a major issue with floodlights on fields, with a growing number of senior teams and other programmes and a desire for more midweek games, only 2 fields under lights with poor quality fields is not enough.”

- sports organisation based in Western Bay sub-region.

“Capacity - our membership is increasing annually, and we are unsure if we can meet the needs with our current number of courts...We are full to capacity on every playing evening/ Saturdays and at tournaments.”

- Rotorua based court sport

6. Snapshot of Spaces and Places Provision

6.1 Regional Provision

The Sport NZ Facility Planning Tool (FPT) provided the data for this strategy. Currently the FPT captures 511 play, sport, and active recreation sites across the region, with approximately 672 facilities across these sites¹⁴. Approximately 30% are council-owned sites, 22% are MoE-owned and 10% privately owned¹⁵. The remainder are owned by a variety of charitable trusts, clubs, and community groups. Some of the most common site types¹⁶ in the Bay of Plenty are:

- **Aquatic facilities/swimming pools** at approximately 129 sites (including 90 school pools, several private swim schools, and hot pools/spas along with council provided (including Bay Venues Ltd) public pools).
- **Sports fields** at approximately 70 sites (most providing multiple fields)¹⁷.
- **Outdoor courts** at approximately 61 sites.
- **Indoor courts** at approximately 43 sites (of which 28 are school based facilities).
- **Bowling greens** at approximately 27 sites.
- **Golf courses** with approximately 24 across the region.
- **Destination Bike parks** with 17 across the region including BMX, MTB and the Motu Trails.

Very few playgrounds or play spaces are currently recorded but there are a number of destination sites that provide for play at a sub-regional/regional level.

Key Observations

Some key observations regarding regional provision include:

- Significant disparities in spaces and places provision with limited local access in more rural communities.
- Cities such as Rotorua and Tauranga may have many spaces and places but use and demand pressures mean it is hard to get bookings for the desired times and level of use, particularly for indoor court-based activities.
- The aged network also means a lack of functionality and suitability of spaces and places for users with mobility issues or other disabilities.

¹⁴ All numbers in this section are indicative only as the Sport NZ Facility Planning Tool is known to have some data gaps. It is also a live system, regularly being updated so figures change. It is the most comprehensive facility information that is available.

¹⁵ This includes many martial arts facilities, along with commercial swim schools, hot pool/spa sites, mountain bike assets such as Skyline Rotorua and Tui Ridge Park. Some Retirement Village assets such as bowling greens are also included.

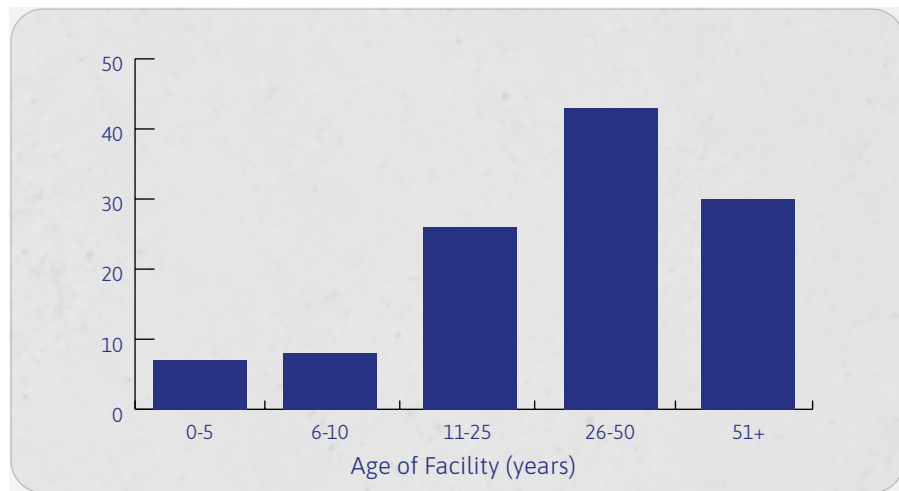
¹⁶ These numbers exclude new assets that were identified as part of this project which are yet to be loaded into the Sport NZ system. It does not include many recreation assets such as Department of Conservation land, and only some walking and cycling tracks are included.

¹⁷ This excludes school sports field sites.

6.2 Stakeholder Feedback on Key Spaces and Places Details

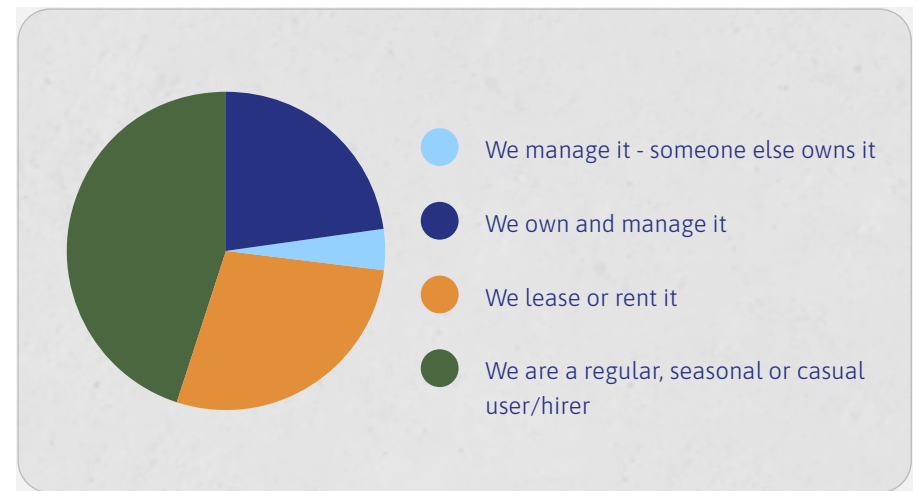
51% of facilities in the region are over 26 years old. Only 5% are between 0-5 years old.

Figure 6.1: Estimated Spaces and Places Age



Many facility owners are facing challenges with facility age, declining condition, and a lack of fit-for-purpose features. Some are proactively seeking partnerships to give them greater ability to cover maintenance costs. Some buildings are over 51+ years old and in need of significant upgrades to meet modern requirements.

Figure 6.2: Relationship of Surveyed Users to Spaces and Places Used



45% of respondents are regular seasonal hirers of facilities, 28% lease or rent their facilities, and 22% own and manage their own facility while 4% manage the facility which someone else owns.

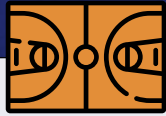
57% of organisations do not think they can afford to maintain and develop their facility.

Spaces and Places Satisfaction

Overall, based on survey responses, there is a good level of satisfaction with the location of spaces and places and reasonable levels of satisfaction with the condition of them in the region. However, many survey respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the capacity of spaces and places to meet current needs and

significantly 44% indicated they did not think the facilities they use would meet future needs (in 10 years' time) and 30% were unsure.

There were a wide range of issues contributing to dissatisfaction with the capacity of spaces and places. Some relevant survey comments include:



Indoor court related comments

"It is very difficult to find regular time slots at affordable venues in Tauranga."

"We use mainly the Whakatāne Hall. Having only 2 courts is the main issue there. And the leaky roof."

"On Monday nights we could easily fill another one or 2 courts but the hall capacity is only 6."

"Capacity has been a huge problem and has not kept up with our growth which has been signalled annually for some time now."



Specialised facilities comments

"With our club growing our space isn't big enough for the number of members. We are looking at new spaces but cannot afford the rent for the other larger facilities."

"Capacity - Limits our ability as a competitive club to promote our sport."

"Amenities - Car parking on a narrow street is not good, storage, shade and shelter do not exist."



Sports field comments

"More cricket wickets (particularly grass wickets) are required if cricket wants to grow its capacity. There are already not enough grounds to cope with demand and enable all registered teams to participate every week during the season if bad weather or other events occur."

"Access to the Reserve and capacity will be an issue over the next few years in Ōmokoroa."



Aquatic comments

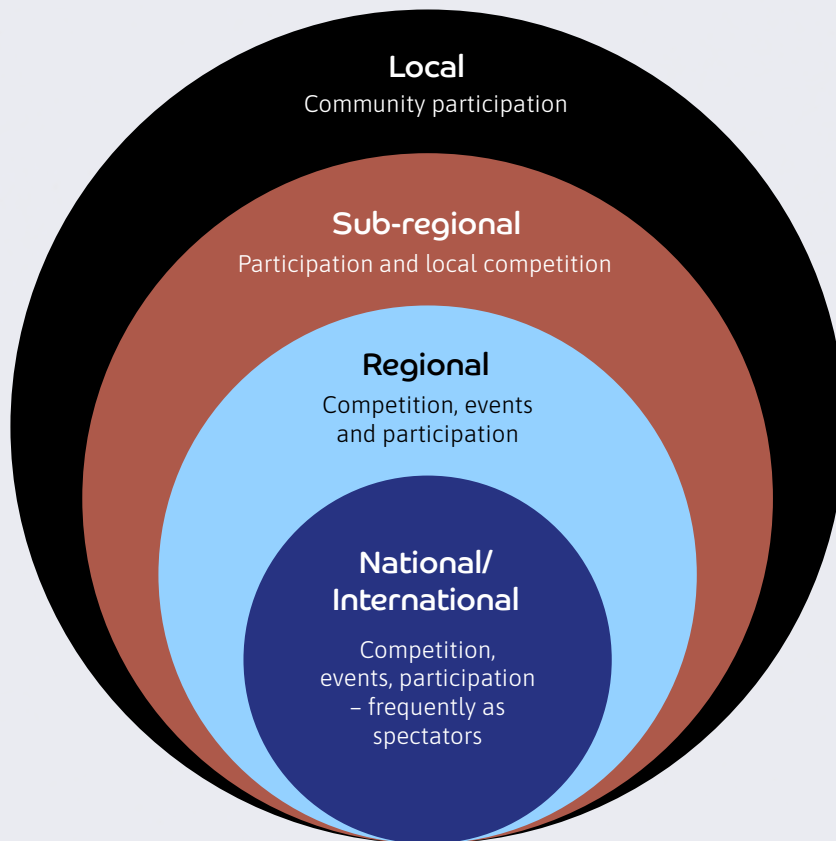
"At present lack appropriate access for those with disabilities. Also need more learn to swim for all abilities."

"Not enough space for teams to train and not hours. The cost is super expensive!"

7. Spaces and Places Categories

Categories provide a way to consider the role specific spaces and places support communities to engage in play, active recreation, and sport. All categories have an important role within the network across the region.

Figure 7.1: Spaces and Places Categories and Primary Function



Spaces and places should be categorised based on their primary use and intended purpose. Many spaces and places meet community needs across the spectrum, from local participation to international competition.

Category	Definition ¹⁸	Examples
Local	Provides community participation opportunities for a local neighbourhood, town, or city catchment.	Rangi Delamere Pavilion, Kawerau; Pongakawa Action Centre, WBOP.
Sub-regional	Provide for both training and competition. Often supporting a whole territorial authority (TA) district and drawing teams from adjacent TA areas.	Rotorua Badminton Hall; Rex Morpeth Park, Whakatāne; Warren Park – Stadium Horizon, Whakatāne.
Regional	Able to host inter-regional and Bay of Plenty wide competitions, serve as a regional high-performance training hub, or provide community participation opportunities across TA boundaries.	Mercury Arena – 6 court area, Baypark; Rotorua Aquatic Centre; Paengaroa Domain, WBOP; Papamoa Tennis Courts, Tauranga.
National	Able to host national competitions and events or to serve as a national high-performance training hub	Mercury Arena – 3 court area, Baypark; Motu Trails Great Ride, Ōpōtiki.
International	Able to host international competitions and events (i.e. between nations).	Rotorua International Stadium; Bay Oval, Tauranga.

¹⁸ See the full reference report for complete definitions.

7.1 Overview of Spaces and Places Provided Across the Region – By Category

	Central BOP		Eastern BOP		Western BOP	
International	3 MTB, Stadia		1 Bike trail		2 Cricket oval, all-terrain park	International
National	3 Indoor courts, water sports		1¹⁹ Water sports		3 Indoor courts, turfs, BMX, beach sports	National
Regional	7 Aquatics, fields/stadia, outdoor courts, bowling, golf, MTB trails, destination reserve		5 Aquatic, golf, destination reserves		21 + 6²⁰ Aquatics, indoor courts, fields/stadia, outdoor courts, bowling, golf, MTB trails, cycle trails, destination reserves	Regional
Sub-regional	17 Indoor courts, fields /turfs, outdoor courts, bowling, golf, bike, equestrian, destination playground, shared pathways		35 + 1²¹ Water sports, indoor courts, fields/ turf, outdoor courts, bowling, golf, MTB, equestrian destination reserves, shared pathways		28 + 1²² Aquatics, indoor courts, fields/stadia, outdoor courts, bowling, golf, equestrian, destination reserves, destination playgrounds, shared pathways	Sub-regional

More comprehensive information on the spaces and places provided across the region is outlined in the full reference report.

¹⁹ Note: currently closed due to flood damage.

²⁰ Proposals for new or relocated aquatics, indoor courts, stadia, outdoor courts, athletics and equestrian spaces and places.

²¹ Explore establishing a district-level equestrian park.

²² New Cameron Road Indoor Sports Centre currently under development.

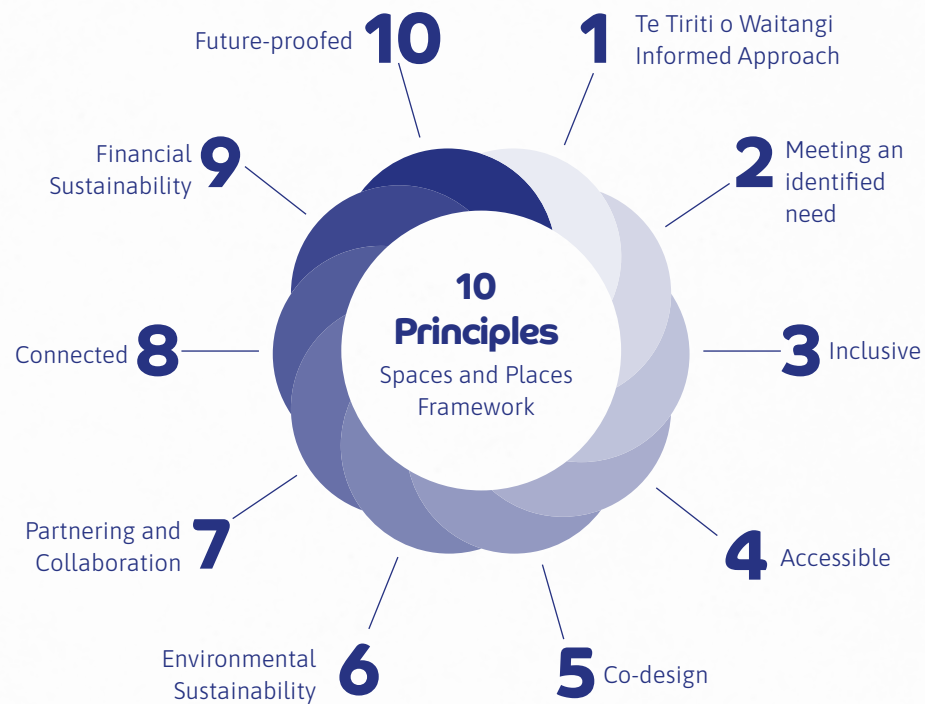




8. New Zealand Spaces and Places Framework

This Strategy aligns with the Sport New Zealand Spaces and Places Framework (2024) | Pou Tarāwaho mō ngā Takiwā me ngā Wāhi o Aotearoa which contains 10 principles to guide decision-making and investment into spaces and places for physical activity²³:

Figure 7.1: Spaces and Places Categories and Primary Function



It is noted that the principles within the framework do not work in isolation – they overlap and are interconnected.

The national framework also identifies seven stages in the lifecycle of space and places:



Top tips include:

Identify the challenge:

Take the time to interrogate the challenge or opportunity.

Proof of need:

Approach the needs analysis relative to the scale of the project.

Proof of viability:

Critically investigate and analyse options to evaluate feasibility.

Design:

Be innovative about alternative solutions.

Build:

Use the procurement method that delivers the most value.

Operate:

Balance access, affordability and quality with cost drivers.

Improve:

Evaluate performance against original goals and identify changing needs.

²³ Content sourced from Sport NZ. <https://sportnz.org.nz/resources/new-zealand-spaces-and-places-framework-2024/>

9. Regional Planning Framework

9.1 Vision

Vision:

Shaping an innovative network of play, recreation, and sport spaces and places to empower and uplift our community for a thriving future.

“Kia auaha te taiao, kia auaha te tangata.” - To shape the environment is to shape the people.

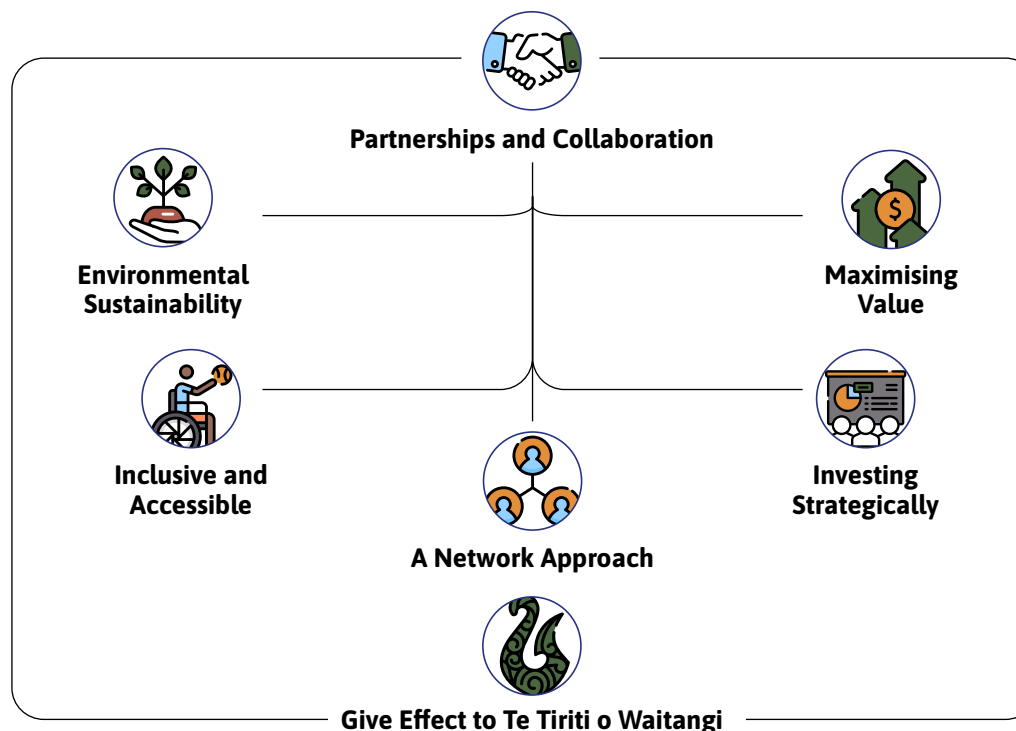
How we will get there:

By working collaboratively, using a regional planning framework to guide us in providing the right mix of spaces and places in the appropriate locations for our communities.

9.2 Planning Principles

When considering the upgrade or development of future spaces and places to meet play, active recreation, and sport needs it is fundamental that spaces and places are developed in a robust and planned way.

The following principles will be used to guide spaces and places planning and investment across the Bay of Plenty.





9.3 Planning Principles

9.3.1 Give Effect to Te Tiriti O Waitangi

We recognise the mana of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and seek to grow authentic relationships to work in partnership with whānau, hapū, and iwi. We will apply a framework that reflects Te Tiriti o Waitangi and consider the cultural narrative of the area, when planning future play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places outcomes for our community.

9.3.2 Environmental Sustainability

Given environmental impacts and climate change it is critically important to consider climate impacts and resilience when operating spaces and places or investing in upgrades or new spaces and places. Spaces and places that are resilient and environmentally sustainable will reflect the historical landscape, align with local pūrākau, and apply sustainable operational, design and construction methods. This will help ensure the future facility network minimises impact on the environment, fosters environmental connection and is itself, protected from environmental change.

9.3.3 Maximising Value

With finite resources, decisions need to be made that are based on ensuring social and economic sustainability and value for money for communities²⁴. To do this it is important to focus on development of multi-use spaces and places, hubs, partnerships, and collaborations where a range of community needs can be met²⁵. Listening to the voices of our whānau and communities across the Bay of Plenty will help maximise utilisation of spaces and places for all. It is also important to understand the whole of life costs related to decisions. This means not only being able to build a space or place, but also affording to sustainably operate and maintain it for the whole of its life.

²⁴ Including asset owners, funders, and facility users.

²⁵ Noting that viable and sustainable single use facilities will be appropriate in some circumstances.

²⁶ Including capturing and considering local knowledge, the voices of Māori, participants, and non-participants.

9.3.4 Inclusive and Accessible

Spaces and places are developed, maintained, and adapted to reflect the communities who use them, encourage community safety, inclusiveness, diversity, and accessibility for all. Social equality will be supported through spaces and places being accessible to all people regardless of income, age, ethnicity, gender, and physical ability. This is enabled through cultural inclusivity, use of local pūrākau, and applying universal design principles and accessible design. This is operationalised through spaces and places operators' policies and practice ensuring equitable access.

9.3.5 Investing Strategically

Hauora will be at the forefront of our spaces and places investment. This involves considering a need and insights-based approach to projects as they arise through listening to the diverse voice of our communities²⁶. We will also consider the current and future supply and demand for spaces and places, the need for spaces and places to be adaptable, through design, to meet community needs that may change over time, and consider sustainable operational models.

Strategic fit based on the existing network and any strategies or plans outlining the future network must also be considered. Over provision or unnecessary duplication of spaces and places should be avoided. Existing spaces and places should be maximised and/or enhanced before new spaces and places, which complement and enhance the network, are considered.

9.3.6 Partnerships and Collaboration

We recognise that our aspirations cannot be achieved by individual organisations working alone, by working together we will achieve better outcomes for our communities. Partnering with others such as education, health, iwi, and private providers increases the likelihood that spaces and places will be used to their full potential, maximising the return on investment for communities across the Bay of Plenty.

9.3.7 A Network Approach (locality concept)

When determining appropriate levels of spaces and places provision the role each space and place plays in the overall network needs to be considered. Not all communities need or can sustain the same levels of provision. We will use a locality approach to provision, with regional and sub-regional spaces and places typically provided in main population centres, supported by appropriate scale local level provision in smaller communities.

9.4 Multi-level Spaces and Places Planning Criteria

The following criteria have been developed to reflect the key principles of the strategy. The criteria will be used to help implement the strategy through guiding the assessment of both current and future proposed spaces and places investments across the sub-region, and to assist with identifying the future priorities for investment. These criteria recognise that:

- There are not enough funds to develop every play, active recreation, and sport space and place that might be desired by communities.
- There are challenges with maintaining existing spaces and places, let alone building more.
- Smarter prioritisation of future investment is needed.

At level 1, the essential criteria need to be considered and met with a high degree of certainty before a more detailed assessment of any concept is undertaken using the remaining level 2 criteria. Assessing spaces and places projects against the criteria will help inform strategy partners decision-making (Sport BOP, councils) and should also help inform key funders as to the projects that best align with the regional strategic direction and intent.



Level 1 – Essential Criteria which all projects must meet

Planning Principle	Criteria
Give Effect to Te Tiriti O Waitangi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables the principles of Partnership, Protection, and Participation through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genuine, authentic involvement of tangata whenua. Considers and reflects the cultural narrative of the area.
Environmental Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental awareness is demonstrated with planning that mitigates against climate risks and applies sustainable design principles. Reflects the historical landscape and local pūrākau.
Maximising Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates value for money, economic viability, and operational sustainability for the whole of life (both CAPEX and OPEX). A range of community voices have informed the planning, and a range of community needs will be met through the proposal.
Inclusive and Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located appropriately to benefit a broad spectrum of the community. Supports accessibility and equity for all through cultural inclusivity and the application of universal design principles.
Investing Strategically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear need has been defined and supported with appropriate evidence including community insights. Matches projected needs by addressing under or over provision and avoiding duplication. Flexibility to adapt to changing community needs means multi-generational benefits will be achieved. Community hauora (wellbeing) and participation will be positively impacted. Supported by research, consultation, stakeholders, and the wider community.
Partnerships and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed space or place includes and supports a range of organisations and activities or explores opportunities to partner or collaborate to increase use. and/or The proposal optimises an existing space or place through partnerships or collaboration to increase use.
A Network Approach (locality concept)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The space or place will complement rather than compete with other spaces and places in the network and prioritise community participation outcomes. The type and scale of the proposed space or place is appropriate for the role it will play in the regional spaces and places network.

Level 2 – High Priority Criteria. While not essential to meet all these criteria, projects should demonstrate clearly how they address these high priority criteria.

Planning Principle	Criteria
Give Effect to Te Tiriti O Waitangi	Māori participation will be positively impacted, this may include through, by Māori for Māori opportunities.
Environmental Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal will apply sustainable operational and construction methods. • The proposal fosters connection with the environment (taiao) and minimises impact on the environment (taiao). • The degree to which the proposal provides mitigation for a space or place at risk of or already experiencing climate change impacts.
Maximising Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimisation of spaces and places through clear evidence of partnerships and collaboration to increase use and enhancements to make more fit-for-purpose. Supports multi-use, multi-code, and cross sector collaboration. • The organisation involved has a history of robust asset management planning and/or has demonstrated awareness of the need for asset management planning going forward. • The scale, complexity and standard of the space or place is appropriate to the identified community need.
Inclusive and Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment will help support communities of greatest need such as low socio-economic communities, provide diverse opportunities for older adults, different ethnicities, genders, and those with disabilities. • The degree to which the proposed space or place will support and encourage community safety.
Investing Strategically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of alignment with relevant national, regional, and local strategies and strategic drivers. • Reflects good practice in location, design, and operations. • The degree to which the proposal maximises existing spaces and places (before building new). • Any national or international project will demonstrate clear benefit to the Bay of Plenty spaces and places network at a scale and standard that is appropriate in the regional and New Zealand context, avoiding unnecessary duplication.
Partnerships and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear evidence of operational and/or capital partnerships and collaboration between multiple stakeholders which will maximise the community benefit and return on investment.
A Network Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment will help create balance and spread in the regional network. • The proposal will help reduce unnecessary facility duplication while retaining appropriate local accessibility.

10. Assessment Process

When reviewing the 2020 decision-making process it has become evident that the prescribed process for assessing proposed spaces and places concepts can be perceived as daunting, particularly for community organisations who do not regularly engage in planning processes. The review has sought to streamline the planning and decision-making process and further define the roles and responsibilities of various organisations in applying the Facility Planning Framework to regional spaces and places planning.

10.1 The Facility (Spaces and Places) Planning Framework

The Framework is summarised in Figure 10.1 and further explained below and in Section 10.3 which provides an explanation of key roles and responsibilities.

The Planning Framework relies on a collaborative approach between the proponent group (that has a space or place concept), Sport Bay of Plenty, councils, other spaces and places owners (including Bay Venues Limited), and the Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group.

10.1.1 Proposed Approach

The following process is proposed to apply the principles and assessment criteria of this strategy to proposed spaces and places investments across the region. This process will inform the recommendations the Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group provides to decision-making organisations. It is proposed that this process is used for all concepts put forward for investment into play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places development, redevelopment, or major maintenance²⁷. It is noted that this process is intended to provide a high-level assessment against the strategy which will help inform and support individual organisations in their decision-making. Each decision-making organisation (such as councils and funding organisations) will still have autonomy over their own local decision-making.

This process encourages all proposed projects, big or small, to be socialised with the regional sports trust (RST), in this case Sport Bay of Plenty, for an assessment against the principles outlined in this strategy. Proponents of spaces and places ideas need to be encouraged to explore what options could be implemented to achieve the desired outcome, rather than narrowing in on a particular solution.

10.1.2 Local Projects

If seen as a local project, with no opportunities for across-boundary collaboration, then the relevant local organisation (in most instances the council, but this could also be iwi, a funding agency, or others) would proceed with its own decision-making processes, such as seeking investment through annual or long-term plans.

10.1.3 Across Boundary Projects (sub-regional or above)

If a project is deemed to have across-boundary opportunities, then the RST would facilitate an assessment of the proposed project with the relevant subject matter experts in that area. This group would then provide a recommendation to the Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group on whether they should either proceed to support or seek further independent assessments of the proposal.

10.1.4 Independent Assessments

Where deemed appropriate by the Spaces and Places Steering Group, an independent assessment of a concept may be required to determine whether to proceed or not. Spaces and places planning assessments are undertaken to ensure that proposed concepts are well thought through and generally fall into the following categories: Needs Assessment, Feasibility Study, and Business Case. See Figure 10.2.

²⁷ Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group to determine the value and type of space and place when deciding to use this framework.

Figure 10.1: The Facility (Spaces and Places) Planning Framework

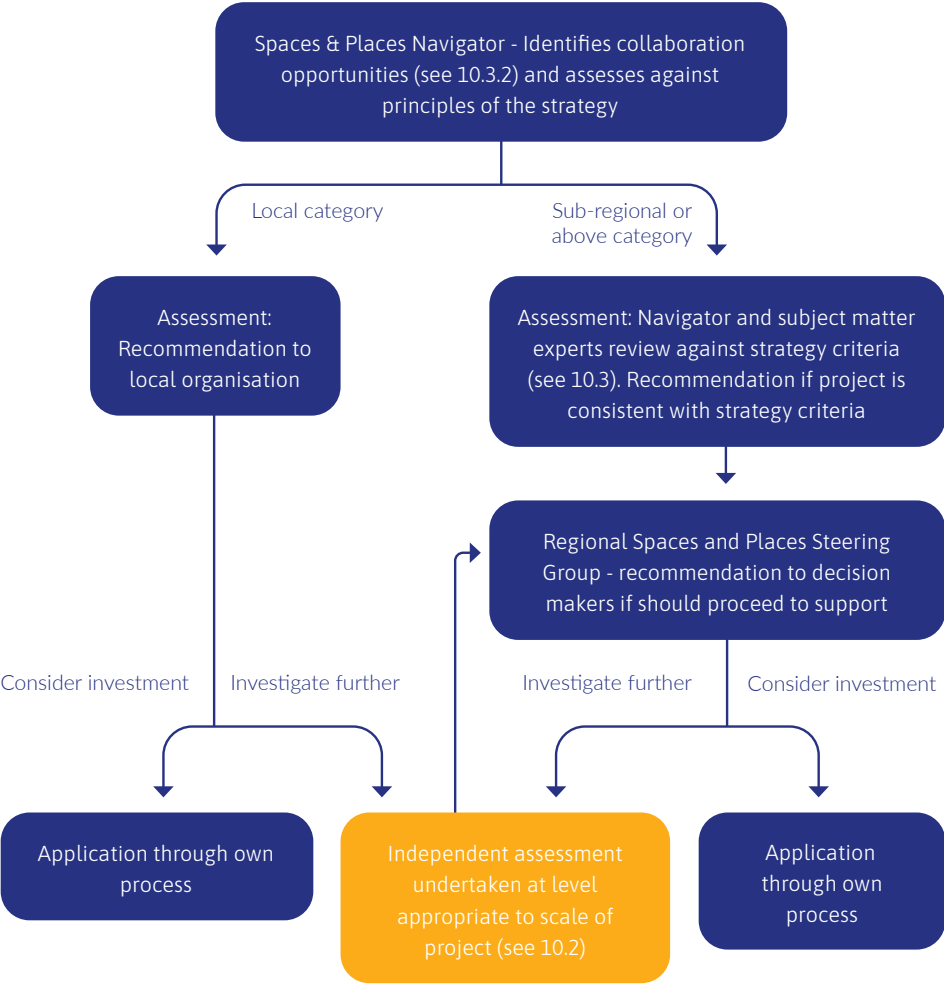
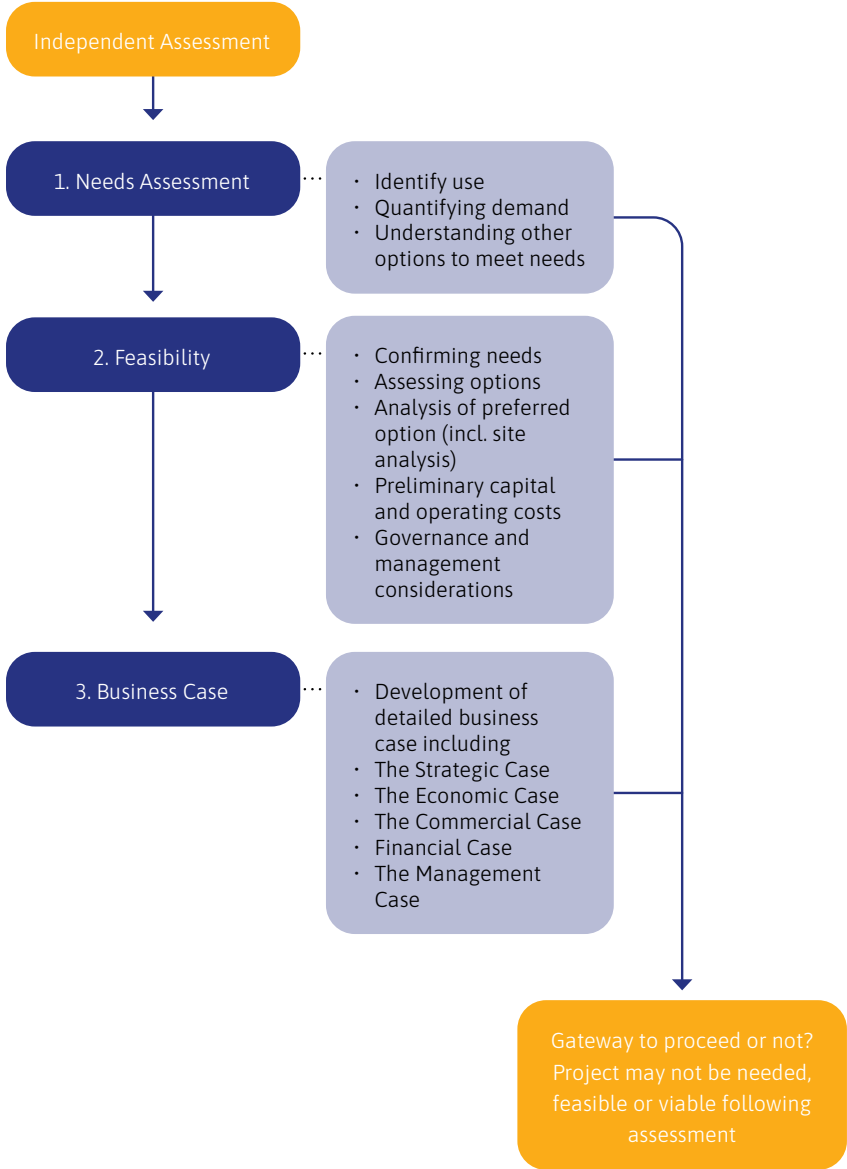


Figure 10.2: Independent Assessment



10.2 Independent Assessment Explanation

Figure 10.2 summarises the independent assessment process.

The scale of a proposed project will determine the depth of independent assessment required (if any) to provide assurances to decision makers.

The 3 independent assessment phases outlined in Figure 10.2 can be combined in some instances and there is likely to be some overlap in information gathered and utilised. For example, in many cases a Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study can occur simultaneously (for small scale projects). A project should only proceed to the next phase once the previous phase(s) has been successfully completed and need, feasibility has been confirmed.

10.3 Explanation of Roles and Responsibilities

10.3.1 Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group

The proposed decision-making process calls for the senior officials on the Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group to oversee the process. Subject matter experts would support this group, on a project-by-project basis, from within relevant organisations depending on the sub-regional area a proposed project falls within. The group will need to develop an agreed way of working together to implement the spaces and places framework process. Regular, formalised engagement needs to occur between these parties to maximise collaboration and connection opportunities.

10.3.2 Spaces and Places Navigator

A key assumption of this process is that Sport Bay of Plenty has the capacity to serve the role of “Spaces and Places Navigator”²⁸. The role is seen as a critical “go between” or connector for spaces and places owners, funders, and user groups. The Navigator will work alongside groups to help them understand the process and requirements.

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

10.3.3 Subject Matter Experts

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

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

10.3.4 Project Working Group

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

²⁸ The purpose of the RST Spaces and Places role is to encourage collaborative and informed decision making. Currently Sport NZ provides support for this role to be in place.





11. Regional Recommendations

A high-level, regional strategy such as this is not intended to provide detailed recommendations for local-level spaces and places. Therefore, recommendations in this Strategy are focussed on actions that enhance regional planning and delivery of spaces and places that play a sub-regional, regional, or national/international role²⁹. It is acknowledged that spaces and places provide a network across the region and spaces and places should not be considered in isolation. However, local planning is required to provide detailed direction on local-level spaces and places. This should occur within the context of the regional framework.

A key assumption in the development of this Strategy is that the councils across the region will continue to be key providers (either directly or indirectly) of play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places. It is also assumed they will continue to apply effective asset management and maintenance practices to the spaces and places they own. Therefore, this strategy does not provide recommendations to “continue to maintain assets” as this is considered to be business as usual (BAU). Rather, the recommendations in this strategy are focussed on providing direction where there is a gap or need for new spaces and places, duplication of existing spaces and places or where a new approach is required for spaces and places planning and provision. In some instances, further work is required to improve relationships and how organisations in the sport and recreation sector work together and support each other. These relationship-focused recommendations are identified with grey fill in the recommendations tables.

It is also assumed that the ongoing implementation of recommendations in local and regional spaces and places planning documents such as the Bay of Plenty Equestrian Facilities Plan and Water Access Inventory report, will continue.

²⁹ As defined in the facility categories in section 7.

11.1 Lead Organisation: Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group (facilitated by Sport Bay of Plenty)

Recommendation	Explanation/Rationale	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
1. For the next review of this Strategy consider broadening the approach to develop a comprehensive play, active recreation, and sport strategy.	A multi-faceted approach considering a range of interventions (such as policy and programmes) enables a range of responses to improve participation outcomes. Spaces and places direction would provide one component of the overall strategic approach. Within this future strategy it may be beneficial to provide separate Eastern and Western/ Central BOP chapters to better reflect the variations in community needs across the region.	All Partners	Short
2. Develop an opportunities paper exploring the development of regional funding mechanisms.	To help ensure sustainable levels of investment into regional spaces and places into the future. Possibilities to explore include a regional council spaces and places rate and regional or sub-regional spaces and places endowment fund(s). Refer to the Sport NZ case study on the Northland approach (and further information in the full reference document) to help inform this work.	Funders	Short
3. Provide additional guidance and technical support to community sport and recreation organisations to increase their capability and capacity through developing: a. A suite of asset management guidance resources including the provision of templates and potential access to training via technical experts. b. An options paper on ways to make additional project management expertise available to community groups planning major capital projects.	To help enable community organisations to undertake more effective and proactive project and asset management. This may also include individual councils developing incentives (such as through land lease rules or grant funding requirements) to help facilitate successful asset maintenance planning and project delivery.	All Partners	Short

Recommendation	Explanation/Rationale	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
4. Work with spaces and places owners to complete a climate risk stocktake of regional and sub-regional ³⁰ play, active recreation, and sport assets. The stocktake will identify if they have already had a climate risk assessment completed, and if so, what implications this has for future spaces and places planning.	This stocktake will assist in identifying spaces and places where climate risk assessments may have wider impacts for the regional network. This will help enhance the sustainability of existing and future spaces and places.	All Partners	Short
5. Progress key actions from the Bay of Plenty Water Access Inventory (2023) report: a. Detailed demand analysis on identified key asset classes. b. Development of a Bay of Plenty Water Sports Facility and Access Plan.	Water-based recreation and sport is a key feature across the region but there is still limited understanding of the demand and future options for spaces and places provision for these activities. It is expected there will be growing demand for spaces and places that facilitate access to water-based sport and recreation.	Water-based Sports	Medium

11.2 Lead Organisation: Sport Bay of Plenty

Recommendation	Explanation/Rationale	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
6. Continue to build relationships across and outside the sector. Initial focus areas include: a. Strengthening the relationship with regional MoE representatives and schools in the region. b. Work with community funders to increase their understanding of the role of the Regional Spaces and Places Strategy and Planning Framework.	To encourage further regional collaboration and make better use of limited resources including better leveraging school assets via advocacy for community access partnerships, and better aligning funding to priority projects.	MoE, Schools, Funders	Short

³⁰ As identified in Section 7 of the full reference document.

Recommendation	Explanation/Rationale	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
<p>7. Provide regional collaboration and learning and development opportunities to community sport, recreation, and play organisations with an initial focus on:</p> <p>a. Exploring options for regional sports (RSOs) and regional recreation (RROs) groups to come together to improve collective planning and sharing.</p> <p>b. Maximising community funding opportunities.</p>	<p>To encourage further regional collaboration, enabling collective planning, advocacy, and sharing of resources, and good practice. (Refer to the case study on the Northland Sports Coalition in Appendix 2 of the full reference document as an example of regional collaboration)</p> <p>To help connect community organisations with funding opportunities and upskill them to enable better access to and use of limited resources.</p>	<p>RSOs & RROs, Funders</p>	<p>Short</p>
<p>8. Work with tangata whenua to explore ways to better involve them in planning regional spaces and places for play, active recreation, and sport. This may lead to the inclusion of Māori representatives (who have been selected by Māori) on the Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group.</p>	<p>To strengthen engagement and partnerships with Māori in the planning and development of regional spaces and places.</p>	<p>Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>9. Support Te Papa Tākaro, Mataatua Sports Trust and Māori activity providers to develop a plan to identify the space and place requirements and priorities for Tāonga Tākaro traditional Māori sports such as kī-o-rahi, mau rākau and other activities across the Bay of Plenty.</p>	<p>This plan should identify where opportunities exist for providing access to more traditional Māori sports opportunities within existing spaces and places or within proposed redevelopments and new assets.</p>	<p>Councils, Funders</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>10. Work with Parafed, Special Olympics, Halberg, older adult, and other relevant advisory groups to identify a prioritised list of sub-regional and regional spaces and places where physical accessibility issues are creating use barriers.</p>	<p>This work should identify where investment in enhancements to improve physical accessibility will secure the most benefit for users with mobility constraints. The prioritised list can then be used to help inform and advocate for changes with facility owners.</p>	<p>Councils, Facility owners, Funders</p>	<p>Medium</p>

11.3 Lead Organisation(s): All Councils

Recommendation	Explanation/Rationale	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
11. Endorse this Strategy as a high-level strategic document to support their planning for play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places provision including use of the principles, facility categories, criteria, and assessment process.	To ensure consistency and alignment across the region.	Sport BOP, Sport NZ	Short
12. Encourage existing single-use spaces and places owners/leaseholders to partner with others to increase play, active recreation, sport, and wider community use outcomes wherever possible.	A range of methods could be applied, including leasing rules and restricting investment into spaces and places where there is no evidence of regular shared use ³¹ .	Sport BOP, Funders, Sport NZ	Ongoing
13. Work with tangata whenua to help enable Māori culture, with naming and signage including local pūrākau to be incorporated into spaces and places (existing and new).	To help create an improved sense of connection to the whenua, recognising that the connection of people and place is integral to providing meaningful participation opportunities.	Facility Owners, Funders, Sport BOP	Ongoing
14. Continue the staged implementation of regional cycle projects on priority routes as outlined in the Bay of Plenty Regional Cycle Network report (2022).	Supports cycling as a key participation choice for many residents and visitors to the region. To ensure ongoing enhancement to the regional network in alignment with previously agreed strategic direction.	Funders, Sport BOP	Ongoing
15. When upgrading playgrounds, work with local communities to consider trends in play, and alternative provision options before replacing existing play equipment with new equipment of the same type.	There is a growing focus on play as a foundational activity for young people and increased understanding of the benefits of providing a range of play opportunities through more flexible play spaces and natural play opportunities. Simply replacing like with like may not meet current community needs.	Sport BOP, Funders	Ongoing

³¹ It is noted that some specialist playing surfaces may not be conducive to sharing with other activities, such as bowling greens, however, often there are other facilities such as clubrooms associated with these spaces that can be successfully shared.

11.4 Regional Spaces and Places – Capital Development Priorities

Depending on funding, the spaces and places capital development project priorities for the Bay of Plenty over the 10-year strategy period are outlined in Table 11.1. The recommendations provided in this section are summaries, with the recommendation number provided for reference, with full, detailed recommendations provided in section 12.

Proposed Capital Development	Lead	Support	Recommendation number
Short Term (Years 1-3):			
Prioritise the completion of key regional / sub-regional aquatic and indoor court projects – Memorial Park Aquatic Centre and new indoor courts ³¹ to replace the Queen Elizabeth Youth Centre.	TCC	Funders, Sport BOP	40
Prioritise the implementation of the Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub Master Plan (once finalised).	WDC	Funders, Sport BOP	22
Prioritise implementation of the first stages of the Baypark and Blake Park Masterplan, particularly the relocation of netball to Baypark as the key first steps to unlock the Masterplan at Blake Park.	TCC, Bay Venues	Sports, Sport BOP, Funders	41
Commence the development of the Tatua Reserve Regional Badminton Facility (including multiuse courts).	Bay of Plenty Badminton	TCC, Funders	42
Complete the final stages of the following projects in Rotorua: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rotorua Aquatic Centre redevelopment. The new clubrooms build at Lakeview Golf and Country Club. 	RLC and Lakeview Golf and Country Club	Funders, Sport BOP	16
Implement sports field enhancement and provision projects in Rotorua and continue investigations into increasing capacity across the network.	RLC	Sport BOP, Funders	20
Continue to progress plans for the development of the proposed Te Puke Gymsports (BOP Movement HQ) facility.	Te Puke Gymsports	Sport BOP, WBOPDC, Funders	49
Continue working with the community to progress the development of an inner city skate park in Kuirau Park, Rotorua (to replace the existing skate park).	Rotorua Action Sports Charitable Trust	RLC / Funders	18

31 Cameron Road Indoor Sports Centre.

Proposed Capital Development	Lead	Support	Recommendation number
Years 4 -10			
Complete the planned development of the new Te Puke Swimming Pool.	WBOPDC	Aquatic users, Funders	50
Undertake staged enhancements to existing sport and recreation sites - Ohui Domain and Memorial Park (in line with the Ōpōtiki Spaces and Places Strategy).	ODC	Funders, Sport BOP	25
Upgrade the netball facilities at Eve Rimmer Park (subject to outcomes of needs and feasibility assessment in years 1-3)	WDC	Whakatāne Netball Centre, Sport BOP	27

A young man with dark hair, wearing a black and red wetsuit, is leaning over the side of a boat. He is focused on adjusting or working on a white outboard motor. The boat has a blue steering wheel and a wooden oar. In the background, there is a calm body of water, a rocky shoreline with some vegetation, and distant hills under a clear sky. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

12. Sub-regional Recommendations

This section of the Strategy is presented in alphabetical order by sub-region and council. The recommendation numbering is not the indicator of priority, this is shown by the timeframe associated with each recommendation. Relationship-focused recommendations are identified with grey fill in the tables.

12.1 Central Bay of Plenty Sub-regional Priorities

Recommendation	Lead	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years , Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
Rotorua Lakes			
16. Complete the final stages of the following projects in Rotorua: a. The Rotorua Aquatic Centre redevelopment. b. The new clubrooms build at Lakeview Golf and Country Club.	RLC and Lakeview Golf and Country Club	Funders, Sport BOP	Short
17. Undertake a feasibility study to consider the best future offering at Springfield Golf Club as outlined in the Rotorua Golf Strategy (2023).	Golf NZ, Springfield Golf Club	Sport BOP, RLC	Short
18. Continue working with the community to progress the development of an Inner City Skate Park in Kuirau Park, Rotorua (to replace the existing skate park).	RLC	Sport BOP, Funders	Short
19. Undertake staged implementation of key Rotorua-based actions from the Bay of Plenty Equestrian Facilities Plan (2023)	Equestrian Sports, Facility Owners	Funders, Sport BOP, RLC	Medium-Long
20.. Complete a detailed study to investigate potential expansion and collaboration across existing squash facilities in line with the Squash NZ National Facility Strategy (2022).	Squash BOP	Sport BOP, Rotorua Squash Clubs	Long
21. Use the Pārekareka: Play, Active Recreation, and Sport Strategy and the Rotorua Open Space Network Strategy as the key guidance documents for planning play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places. Key planning recommendations related to potential sub-regional level spaces and places from Pārekareka section 10 Ngā takiwā me ngā taiwhanga Spaces and Places are: a. Undertake a feasibility assessment to identify the potential of improving indoor court provision. b. Investigate surface and site options for additional sports field provision.	RLC	Sport BOP, Funders	Ongoing
22. Continue Whakarewarewa Forest Trail development in conjunction with the Rotorua Destination Management Plan.	RLC	Sport BOP, Funders	Ongoing

12.2 Eastern Bay of Plenty Sub-regional Priorities

Recommendation	Lead	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years, Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
Sub-regional			
23. When finalising the Master Plan for the Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub ensure the site is positioned as a key sub-regional sport and recreation asset, with the priority focus on supporting Whakatāne and Eastern Bay of Plenty residents' participation opportunities, particularly for indoor court access. Care should be taken to avoid over-specifying the site and facilities as this will result in additional costs which may not deliver the most appropriate standard solutions for the community. For example, ideas to develop an artificial athletics track should be very carefully considered, in regard to the wider sub-regional and regional context and the priority for enhancing the aged Whakatāne War Memorial Hall indoor court space	Whakatāne District Council (WDC)	Sport BOP, Kawerau District Council (KDC), Ōpōtiki District Council (ODC)	Short
24. Prioritise the implementation of the Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub Master Plan (once finalised).	WDC	Funders, Sport BOP	Short

12.2.1 Recommendations by Territorial Authority Area

Recommendation	Lead	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years , Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
Kawerau District			
25. Complete a needs and options assessment to address the future of the Ron Hardie Recreation Centre. Consider the priority uses and the appropriate type of provision such as indoor court space, covered and lit outdoor court space, multi-use community space (meetings, non-sporting events). Ensure that the role, function, and potential of the new Rangi Delemere pavilion, and outdoor courts hub is carefully considered as part of this planning.	KDC	Sport BOP	Short
26. Explore the development of additional play space within the grass area of the Maurie Kjar Aquatic Centre site to replace the nearby town centre playground (Glasgow Street) which is deteriorating due to geothermal impacts.	KDC	Funders	Short
Ōpōtiki District			
27. Undertake staged enhancements to existing sport and recreation sites in line with the Ōpōtiki Spaces and Places Strategy. Early initiatives include: a. Ohui Domain enhancements – fencing, security, and safety improvements. b. Field and court lighting projects (Memorial Park).	ODC	Funders, Sport BOP	Short
28. Use the Ōpōtiki Spaces and Places Strategy as the key guidance document for planning play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places. Key planning recommendations in that strategy, with a potential sub-regional or district wide role include: a. Establish a community sports forum to collaborate with Council on further investigations and implementation of the strategy. b. Investigate options to enhance aquatic provision and access in the district.	ODC	Sport BOP, Funders	Ongoing

Recommendation	Lead	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years , Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
Whakatāne District			
29. Undertake a needs and feasibility assessment to identify options to upgrade the netball facilities at Eve Rimmer Park to ensure they are suitable to continue to act as the sub-regional centre for EBOP Netball. Some key considerations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enhancements to the club building/facilities such as toilets and storage. b. Court surfacing. c. Use of underutilised grass areas. d. Provision of adequate car parking and public amenities to also support the playing field areas of the reserve. 	WDC	Sport BOP, Whakatāne Netball Centre	Short
30. Work with MoE to gain clarity on the long-term future of the Warren Park lease(s) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Stadium Horizon Hockey Turf lease. If required, commence planning for long-term relocation of the turf to ensure ongoing local and sub-regional provision and accessibility for hockey. b. The Council lease for football fields, dog park, and open space 	WDC, Relevant Sports Codes	Sport BOP	Short
31. Identify an appropriate site/facility for relocation of Eastern Bay Gymnastics should the Whakatāne High School plan to end their lease be confirmed.	Eastern Bay Gymnastics	Sport BOP, WDC	Short
32. Explore establishment of a district level equestrian park at Te Teko racecourse, including development of a site Master Plan.	Equestrian Sports / Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group	WDC	Medium

12.3 Western Bay of Plenty Sub-regional Priorities

Recommendation	Lead	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years , Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
Sub-regional			
33. Explore working together to jointly develop an agreed, sub-regional funding priority identification and advocacy approach to Tauranga Energy Consumer Trust (TECT) on a Long Term Plan / Annual Plan review cycle. This approach should align with the aligned proposed subregional spaces and places network plans (once developed) ³³ .	TCC, WBOPDC, Bay Venues	Sport BOP	Short
34. Explore creating a joint task force, including Bay Venues, to investigate operational models and funding approaches to the operation and development of key sub-regional and regional spaces and places. Initial priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Investigating potential operational models that would allow residents to seamlessly use aquatic facilities in either Tauranga or Western Bay areas (such as a joint swim pass/ membership options). b. Review the ratepayer contributions (cross council) to the operations of key spaces and places such as Mercury Arena/Baypark, Memorial Park Aquatic Centre, and Regional Parks (TECT Park, Huharua). c. Explore the potential approaches to cross council investment supporting the development of new sub-regional or regional sport and recreation spaces and places such as the potential Equestrian Hub and other future strategic spaces and places.. 	TCC, WBOPDC, Bay Venues	Sport BOP	Short
35. Explore working together to jointly develop sub-regional spaces and places network plans (including agreed roles) for the WBOP Sub-region to respond to current and future population growth impacts for key spaces and places types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Indoor Courts. b. Aquatic Facilities, specifically considering the options for provision of complementary facilities in Eastern areas (Te Puke and Wairakei/Te Tumu) and Western areas (Otūmoetai/ Bethlehem/The Lakes and Te Puna/Ōmokoroa. c. Sports Fields. d. Regional Parks – including investigation of park sites which may need to have their status elevated such as McLaren Falls Park and Omanawa Falls. 	TCC, WBOPDC	Sport BOP, Bay Venues, BOP Regional Council (BOPRC)	Short-Medium

33 It is noted that each council will still have local priority projects. The intent is to develop agreed sub-regional priorities while still allowing for some local projects to be supported to TECT.

Recommendation	Lead	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years, Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
Sub-regional			
36. Jointly explore establishing a Regional Equestrian Park in the Western Bay area with further consideration of the suitability, functionality, project viability, and sustainability of potential sites of McLaren Falls Park and Merricks Farm (as identified in the Bay of Plenty Equestrian Facilities Plan – TCC Addendum).	TCC, WBOPDC	Equestrian Groups, Sport BOP	Short
37. Work with Squash Bay of Plenty, Mount Maunganui, and Te Puke squash clubs to investigate potential court expansion in line with the Squash NZ National Facility Strategy (2022).	Sport BOP, Squash BOP	TCC, WBOPDC	Long
38. Continue investigations into the Coastal Park Network project in line with the Kaituna Strategy and Action Plan.	TCC, WBOPDC	Iwi, Doc, BOPRC	Long
39. Continue the staged implementation of sub-regional priority walkway and cycleway connections as outlined in the Walking and Cycling Action Plan 202-21 and Bay of Plenty Regional Cycle Network report (2022).	TCC, WBOPDC	Sport BOP, Funders	Ongoing
40. Continue with regular sub-regional winter and summer sports supply and demand assessment studies to monitor and plan for addressing demand shortfalls. Based on the 2022 reports, current priorities should be to: a. Implement actions to address sports field supply issues, particularly for lit training fields, and to address imbalances between sports codes. b. Plan for anticipated shortage in cricket nets for training and wicket provision.	TCC, WBOPDC	Sport BOP, Sports Groups, Funders	Ongoing
41. Continue the staged implementation of the TECT Park Strategic Plan.	WBOPDC, TCC	Sport BOP, Funders	Ongoing

12.3.1 Recommendations by Territorial Authority Area

Recommendation	Lead	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years, Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
Tauranga City			
42. Prioritise the completion of key regional / sub-regional aquatic and indoor court projects that are in the detailed design/delivery phase:			
a. Memorial Park Aquatic Centre project	TCC	Funders, Sport BOP, WBOPDC	Short
b. New community indoor courts to replace the Queen Elizabeth Youth Centre (in accordance with the Memorial Park Project).			
43. Prioritise implementation of the first stages of the Baypark and Blake Park Masterplan, particularly the relocation of netball to Baypark as the key first step to unlock the Masterplan at Blake Park.	TCC, Bay Venues	Sports, Sport BOP, Funders	Short
44. Commence the development of the Tatua Reserve Regional Badminton Facility (including multiuse courts) as a priority regional indoor courts project.	BOP Badminton	TCC, Funders	Short
45. Continue to progress planning and implementation of the:			
a. Gordon Spratt Reserve and Alice Johnson Oval Master Plan.			
b. Pōteriwahi (future active reserve in Bethlehem).	TCC, Bay Venues	Sports, Sport BOP, Funders	Short
c. Other active reserve / sports field upgrades including Links Avenue.			
46. Continue planning for the creation of further indoor courts to provide additional capacity across the city including in areas such as Greerton, the Western Corridor/Tauriko, and in accordance with the Mercury Baypark Master Plan. It is noted many of these assets will provide a sub-regional function and also play a role in the regional network of indoor courts.	TCC, Bay Venues	Sport BOP, Funders	Medium
47. Work with community sport organisations to plan for the relocation of assets off Tauranga Domain to support the eventual implementation of the (deferred) Tauranga Domain Master Plan, initial focus on working with athletics in line with the Baypark Masterplan.	TCC, Bay Venues	Sport BOP, Funders	Medium
48. Complete the extension to the Bay Oval Pavilion in accordance with the Blake Park Master Plan.	Bay Oval Trust	TCC, Funders	Medium
49. Continue the staged replacement of key destination play spaces at the Waterfront (Strand), Hopukiore and Memorial Park. It is known these assets provide a sub-regional function as key destination play sites.	TCC	Funders, Sport BOP	Ongoing

Recommendation	Lead	Support	Timeframe (Short 1-3 years, Medium 4-6 years, Long 7+ years)
Western Bay of Plenty District			
50. Confirm the Community Facilities Investment Framework and Funding Approach as currently proposed through the 2024-2034 LTP. The historic case by case approach means there is no specific funding in place and creates a lack of clarity and barriers for community organisations wanting to progress strategic community facility development projects in the district.	WBOPDC	Sport BOP	Short
51. Continue to progress plans for the development of the proposed Te Puke Gymsports (BOP Movement HQ) facility. Gymsports across the region are experiencing facility access constraints, and this facility will serve as the key, regional gymsports facility, supported by the existing network of sub-regional and local gymsports facilities.	Te Puke Gymsports	Sport BOP, WBOPDC, Funders,	Short
52. Complete the planned development of the new Te Puke Swimming Pool. This is a key local pool within the sub-regional aquatic network, serving communities in the eastern part of the sub-region.	WBOPDC	Aquatic users, Funders	Medium
53. Prioritise the planning and development of sport and recreation facilities to provide local access in the Ōmokoroa and Te Puna areas with initial priority on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The delivery of replacement facilities at Maramatanga Park due to issues associated with the Te Puna Community Centre and Te Puna Rugby Club buildings. b. Staged delivery of the Ōmokoroa Active Reserve Concept Masterplan 	WBOPDC	Funders, Sport BOP	Short-Medium
54. Complete the planned development of a new sports field at Paengaroa Domain.	WBOPDC	Funders, Sport BOP	Medium
55. Continue planning and delivery of other key actions as outlined in the Building Communities: Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2021-2031.	WBOPDC	Funders, Sport BOP	Ongoing

13. Future Opportunities Through Sharing Good Practice

Going forward there are many opportunities to continue to build on across the region, both for individual play, active recreation, and sport organisations and at council and RST level. To help inspire continued success the full reference document contains a range of case studies on collaboration.

13.1.1 Lakeview Golf and Country Club and Rotorua Archery Club³⁴

This collaborative partnership evolved out of needs for both organisations. The Rotorua Archery Club operated from a leased site with no option to renew the lease. Lakeview Golf and Country Club had lost their clubrooms due to a fire in 2020. Working on their rebuild plan, Lakeview wanted to create a multi-use clubroom facility that other groups in the community could benefit from. They were motivated by a number of factors including:

- Increased sustainability - another club helping to pay the bills.
- Improved ability to obtain funding - with funders more likely to support multi-use facilities.
- Potential to introduce golf to a new and wider audience.

Sport Bay of Plenty facilitated a conversation between the 2 clubs, who quickly saw the potential of working together. Since 2022 Rotorua Archery has used the Lakeview driving range area on a Sunday for their club day. This has minimal impact on golfers at the club. A further space has been allocated for “anytime practice” which can be used with no impact on golfers and no need to close the range. Archery is also looking to establish a field archery layout on the golf course in some of the bush gullies. Once the new clubhouse is complete the building will be shared by both clubs for events, meetings, and activities.

So far both clubs are seeing benefits including:

- Securing a \$200,000 contribution from Lotteries to support the new clubhouse build and a further \$86,000 from various other funders.
- An increase in golf membership with new people and communities being introduced to golf.
- Increased public exposure for archery and potential new members.
- Better security for archery due to the location, more people about and people living on site.

Lakeview is also developing other partnerships and collaborations to extend the community reach and benefit of the facilities at their site including:

- Partnership with Civil Defence Rotorua and Progress Ngongotahā to plan for and position the golf club as a future civil defence emergency evacuation facility.
- A learn to play golf programme collaboration with local schools.

³⁴ Thanks to Lakeview Golf and Country Club (specifically Sue Falconer) and the Rotorua Archery Club for providing the information, images, and quotes contained in this case study.

Figure 13.1: Images of the Rotorua Archery Club at Lakeview Golf Course



Images provided by Lakeview Golf and Country Club and Rotorua Archery Club.

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For archery there are many benefits of the partnership with Lakeview, including “the beautiful grounds with the amazing view – maintained by the golf club” and they also now have access to “facilities such as toilets/power/ water and the club house which allows for indoor activities such as meetings and workshops.”

– Rotorua Archery Club

“ This collaboration while in the very early stages has been nothing but positive for Lakeview. It has realised our vision of sharing our facilities with other groups and sports and shown other clubs what can be achieved. It has opened the club to a new audience and helped to encourage that community interest we are keen to foster.”

– Lakeview Golf and Country Club

