

**COUNCIL
ACTIVITIES:**

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- Framework of the LTCCP
- **Activity Plans**
 - Democratic and Corporate Services
 - **Parks and Community Services**
 - Transport
 - Regulatory
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 - Summary Water and Sanitary Services Assessment
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Parks

What we do

Parks and Open Spaces

The Parks and Open Spaces section is responsible for the management of the extensive park, streetscape and open space areas owned by the Waitakere City Council. Assets include active sports fields and courts, toilets, pedestrian ways, walking tracks, car parks, foot bridges, natural areas including beaches, plantings, trees and grassed areas on park land and on streetscapes especially town centres. Parks and Open Spaces also manages the citywide graffiti removal programme, legal and environmental weed programme, and cemetery landscape maintenance. The services delivered by this team can be summarised as:

- Parks asset and forward planning
- Parks asset development planning and implementation (capital and renewal programme)

Parks Planning

The Parks Planning team's focus is strategic - long term planning for the city's green network, parks and open spaces, and community projects and economic incentives that promote this. The Parks Planning section prepares Reserve Management Plans in accordance with the Reserves Act's requirements and also Conservation Plans in accordance with the Historic Places Act. The services delivered by this team can be summarised as:

- Strategic planning for parks and open space
- Green Network implementation
- Community interaction and support
- Advice and information
- Project management of park development projects

Why we do it

Green Network – He tuituitanga kakariki	Keep Waitakere Beautiful
	Revegetation programme
	Bethells Beach effluent and water supply
	Karekare Beach toilet and effluent system
	Reserve management plans
Mauri Ora – Access to Maori Resources	Ecosourced plants
	Revegetation programme
	Reserve management plans

Strong Communities – He iwi kaha	Weed and pest management
	Litter control
	Graffiti control
	Streetscape maintenance
Sustainable Environment – Kauneke Tauwhiro Taiao	Town centre maintenance
	Weed and pest management
	Litter control
	Graffiti control
Urban and Rural Villages – Nga kainga taone, tuawhenua	Planting maintenance
	Open spaces
	Litter Control
	Graffiti control
	Streetscape maintenance
Waioira – Environmental Protection	Town centre maintenance
	Parks strategy
	Asset management
	Revegetation programme
	Litter control
	Graffiti control



Strategic planning seeks to improve the quality and accessibility of parks and open space.

The Council provides parks for the enjoyment and wellbeing of residents and to provide for a healthy city. Generally the parks activity can be considered to have a positive impact on the social, cultural and environmental wellbeing of the city. Parks provide places for healthy activity and recreation, as well as community focal points and places where significant natural, historic and cultural features are protected.

Parks and greenspace also have a positive impact on air and water quality and the health of the wider global ecosystem. For example trees planted in parks provide one of the main offsets in Waitakere City against the greenhouse gas emissions produced in the city. Parks provide green relief in otherwise built up areas, and provide places where people can access and enjoy the natural environment.

Parks' projects have a strong community emphasis. A major factor in the park development programme is the increasing level of consultation undertaken on park projects.

The non regulatory and community assistance activities undertaken by the parks planning also have important environmental, social and economic benefits to landowners in the city and counter some of the perceived negative impacts of regulation.

In managing parks, the Council is bound by the statutory requirements set out in the Reserves Act, the Resource Management Act, the Local Government Act 2002 and in some instances the Historic Places Act.



Flower gardens while high maintenance, add colour to the environment.

Managing impacts of council activities

There are no significant negative effects on the social, cultural economic, environmental or cultural well-being of the local community as a result of Parks activities.

However, ensuring the recreational needs of a diverse population are met, can lead to conflicting requirements, hence the need for public consultation when planning parks facilities and maintaining these to a sustainable standard for the community.

Where there is a range of alternative solutions, for example in the use of chemicals for weed spraying, Parks will weigh up the options before making any decisions to minimise any potential negative effects on the environment or well being of the local community.

Levels of service

The Council has done much in recent years to improve its levels of service and to provide a high quality, well maintained and administered parks network.

The levels of service proposed are similar to those provided for now, however there are some areas, such as sportsfield provision, where it is recognised that the levels of service will be negatively impacted by population growth, as there is limited land available for sportsfield development. There is currently a shortage of competition fields in summer and a shortage of training fields in winter to meet the demand. The availability of fields during winter is also an issue with some winter clubs. Non asset solutions relating to promotion and education will need to be implemented to meet the demand.

There are frequent requests to increase the operational service levels and the provision of flower gardens. The maintenance costs associated with these are very high and the public are often unaware of this.

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Parks (continued)

Our levels of service to Waitakere residents

Function	Level of Service Statement	How we will measure this	Future Targets	
			To be achieved by 2009	To be achieved by 2016
Processing of resident queries and requests	To provide information and respond to requests about parks and open spaces	Response time for all queries and requests regarding parks and open spaces	95% within 48 hours per annum	95% within 48 hours per annum
Maintenance and operations in parks and open spaces	To produce management plans for reserves	Reserve Management Plans in place (to cover all reserves in the city. 34 plans in total - 24 city wide and 10 collective plans)	30 completed plans	Improvement achieved annually up to a target of 34 completed plans. 3 plans renewed each year from 2011/2012 onwards
	Ensure safety and quality standards are not compromised for playgrounds	Programmed inspections of 151 playgrounds on a fortnightly basis with the 17 high use playgrounds receiving a weekly inspection	100% compliance with inspection, safety and quality programme per annum	100% compliance with inspection, safety and quality programme per annum

Function	Level of Service Statement	How we will measure this	Future Targets	
			To be achieved by 2009	To be achieved by 2016
	Citizens have easy access to a safe and attractive local park	Residents are satisfied with the variety and location of parks within the City	80% satisfaction per annum	80% satisfaction per annum
Community Involvement	To encourage community involvement in partnership with the Council in Green Network projects	Maintain or increase the number of people working in partnership with the Council in Green Network projects involving planting and weed removal	3,250 people or more per annum	Improvement achieved annually to a target of 3,500 people or more per annum by 30 June 2016
		Maintain or increase the number of park and open space clean ups by the community	150 cleanups or more per annum	150 cleanups or more per annum
Green Network	To extend and enhance the city's natural ecosystems and biodiversity	100,000 or more eco-sourced native plants are planted in the city each year	100,000 or more per annum	100,000 or more per annum

Maintenance and operations

Maintenance

The Parks and Open Spaces section undertakes the routine maintenance of town centres, civic areas, streetscape, reserves and parks assets. The contracts take into account seasonal requirements, as well as allowing for reactive response to customer requests. Town centres and city entry areas are key areas and these have been identified as critical zones within the contracts and receive special attention.

Impact of asset creation

There is an increasing number of assets being created as part of urban development and from developments in new subdivisions. Asset creation has an immediate impact on operational and maintenance budgets. These new assets require maintenance from the day of their creation with litter collection, gardening, tree maintenance, mowing, cleaning of graffiti, repairs due to vandal damage, and playground maintenance being undertaken.

Quality audits

Quality audits follow a standard process which has been adopted for all parks maintenance contracts. This audit process produces a performance rating for the contract on a monthly basis.

In addition, condition and safety audits are undertaken at a frequency outlined in Parks' quality programme.

Community involvement

Parks' projects have a strong community emphasis, with an increasing level of consultation undertaken on park projects.

More and more members of the public are participating in park project work, and in particular, the Parks Planning section is significantly involved in working with the community on both public and private land, providing assistance in achieving the Green Network goals of the Council through private landowner restoration initiatives.

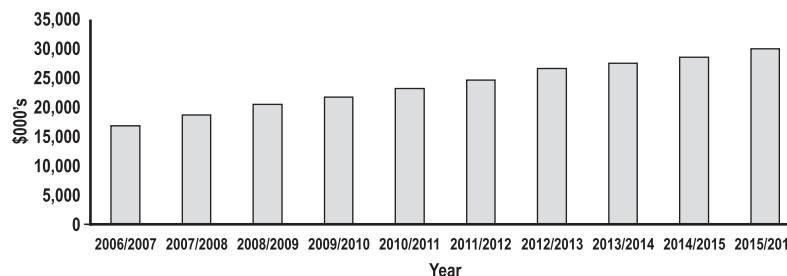
It is becoming increasingly impossible to provide quality facilities and also make them graffiti or vandal resistant. The challenge is to find new and innovative ways and introduce new construction methods to reduce possible vandalism.

Costs of Maintenance



Helping to protect the environment for their future.

Park Activity Costs



Asset information

The Council maintains 573 parks, with a total area of 1,291 hectares. There are two types of parks:

Local parks

These parks cater for the local needs of residents nearby (e.g. walking distance). They may provide areas for casual recreation, walking opportunities, landscaped areas and planting, and/or native ecosystems.

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Parks *(continued)***Citywide parks**

These parks are spacious and attract a large number of people of all ages and types and from many destinations. Because they are large there are fewer of them and one may have to drive or bus to get to them. Sometimes these parks will have a special feature such as a lake, stream, or a significant historic site or artwork. These places offer areas for active recreation as well as quiet spots for watching the activity, resting or enjoying the landscape or bush.

All local and city wide parks are then categorised into the following:

Parks category	Number
Sports parks – area developed for formal sports (may contain one or more sports fields)	37
Multi use parks – where there is a range of informal recreational opportunities	181
Civic space – high use town centre open spaces, or open space around civic buildings e.g. libraries	13
Community facility – open space around a community hall, community centre etc	19
Walkways – parks provided access/linkage opportunities, associated with the walk/cycle network or access through esplanades, coastal or bush areas	46
Amenity areas – non recreational areas including esplanades and bush areas	277

The Parks Assets section manages the following major asset categories:

Major asset category	Number of assets
Toilets and changing rooms	70
Parks carparks	212

Fixtures and fittings ¹	48,916
Walkways (significant)	67
Plantings (Road and parks)	1860
Play facilities ²	159
Sports courts — netball and tennis	40
Sports fields (not including training fields)	76
Structures (includes bridges, boat ramps, jetties, retaining walls)	402

¹ Fixtures and fittings include seats, tables, rubbish bins, signs, lighting and barbecues together with more specialist assets such as artworks, flagpoles and clocks.

² Play facilities include play structures (e.g. swings) half courts complete with basketball or netball hoops, skateboard ramps and bowls and petanque courts.

What we are planning for the future

A key focus for the future includes the acquisition of land for open space in growth areas to ensure good quality parks for the future and the building of assets on parks to ensure equity in provision of facilities across the city.

Any new parks construction work that is to be undertaken in the future must take into account the following:

- Patterns of population growth by age and by location
- Costs to provide the services
- Service level improvements
- Increasing the opportunities for people to enjoy nature in parks
- Providing opportunities for community involvement in the design and management of parks

Proposed future works programme

(Costs include land and infrastructure)

Programme	Plan 06/07 \$000's	Plan 07/08 \$000's	Plan 08/09 \$000's
Green Network	189	194	199
Leisure projects (identified in the draft Leisure Strategy)	750	3,919	2,642
Leisure routes	80	39	604
Sports facilities	11	9,333	334
Toilets	1,040	226	95
Reserve Management Plans	130	134	137
Keep Waitakere Beautiful	189	194	199
Conservation Plans	106	21	21

Future demand

The demand for services is likely to follow the predicted increase in the population and changes in user requirements. We know the city has a need for both active and passive recreational facilities and while some of these can be met by the provision of our current parks services, leisure trends may require more purpose built facilities in the future.

An increasing trend seen in the city is the need to manage user expectations. In the past the city has been seen to have a poor provision of parks with low quality facilities. Over the last 10 years there has been significant progress in addressing this. While this has increased the level of use, safety and environmental quality of the city's park network, this increase in quality has also led to an increase in community expectations around parks provision. Associated with meeting these expectations are significantly higher costs and the need to look at a trade off between affordability and the services offered.

Funding the cost - who pays?

The Parks and Open Spaces' development programme is currently funded from a combination of rates, financial contributions and loans.

		Source of funding		
		Development Contributions and Financial Contributions	Loans	Rates
Projects due to growth	Capital expenditure	√		
	Operating costs			√
	Renewals			√
Projects due to level of service deficiency	Capital expenditure		√	
	Maintenance			√
	Renewals			√

Activity costs are funded from general rates and user charges where parks are used for commercial activities. While users can be identified, it is considered that charging for parks and sportsfields would conflict with promoting community wellbeing and would curtail the usage by individuals or groups that have been identified as having a high need. These include, children, students, older adults and special needs groups.

New capital expenditure is funded from loan as this is considered to benefit both the current and future community. Renewals are funded from the proceeds from rating for depreciation as this funding is considered appropriate as depreciation reflects reduction in service potential and expenditure on renewals is to restore service potential. As some of the capital expenditure can be attributed to growth, a portion is funded from Development Contributions. Financial Contributions are also used for reserve contributions.

All park projects are ranked on the following priorities:

- Meets the Council's strategic focus
- There is a demonstrated need for the project
- The project will improve safety
- Targets a wide range of users
- Will attract high usage
- Has high benefit/cost ratio
- Attracts a financial contribution from sources other than rates
- Has a sustainable design benefit

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Parks (continued)

Parks Activity Costs

Details	2006/2007 Budget \$000's	2007/2008 Forecast \$000's	2008/2009 Forecast \$000's	2009/2010 Forecast \$000's	2010/2011 Forecast \$000's	2011/2012 Forecast \$000's	2012/2013 Forecast \$000's	2013/2014 Forecast \$000's	2014/2015 Forecast \$000's	2015/2016 Forecast \$000's
Activity Costs										
<i>Parks Maintenance Allocated to:</i>										
Urban and Rural Villages	3,484	3,891	4,156	4,425	4,660	4,951	5,407	5,774	5,987	6,376
Active Democracy	59	65	67	68	69	71	71	73	74	75
Green Network	2,941	3,684	3,646	3,650	3,816	3,988	4,167	4,328	4,490	4,665
<i>Streetscape Maintenance Allocated to:</i>										
Urban and Rural Villages	227	408	643	782	906	996	1,033	1,067	1,093	1,120
Green Network	1,752	1,918	2,003	2,096	2,182	2,276	2,371	2,457	2,541	2,632
<i>Town Centre Maintenance Allocated to:</i>										
Urban and Rural Villages	430	581	644	684	715	742	769	793	830	875
Green Network	1,136	1,216	1,276	1,342	1,408	1,478	1,547	1,618	1,685	1,757
<i>Parks Planning Maintenance Allocated to:</i>										
Urban and Rural Villages	1,242	464	456	445	454	465	449	457	462	460
Active Democracy	41	45	42	43	44	45	46	47	47	48
Green Network	581	670	670	688	707	724	740	756	771	783
Parks Depreciation	3,289	3,485	3,740	4,013	4,327	4,591	4,944	5,168	5,362	5,634
Parks Interest	1,699	1,961	2,752	3,418	3,864	4,294	4,652	4,966	5,232	5,479
Total	16,881	18,388	20,095	21,654	23,152	24,621	26,196	27,504	28,574	29,904
Activity Revenue										
<i>Parks Maintenance Allocated to:</i>										
Urban and Rural Villages	30	30	32	32	34	34	36	36	36	36
<i>Streetscape Maintenance Allocated to:</i>										
Green Network	164	172	180	188	196	205	213	220	228	236
<i>Town Centre Maintenance Allocated to:</i>										
Green Network	12	12	13	13	14	14	15	16	16	17
<i>Parks Planning Maintenance Allocated to:</i>										
Urban and Rural Villages	15	15	16	16	17	17	17	18	18	18

Parks (continued)

Details	2006/2007 Budget \$000's	2007/2008 Forecast \$000's	2008/2009 Forecast \$000's	2009/2010 Forecast \$000's	2010/2011 Forecast \$000's	2011/2012 Forecast \$000's	2012/2013 Forecast \$000's	2013/2014 Forecast \$000's	2014/2015 Forecast \$000's	2015/2016 Forecast \$000's
Land Subdivision Reserve Fund Contributions	1,140	1,735	1,705	1,440	1,434	1,286	398	902	1,050	1,080
Development Contributions	175	175	175	445	445	445	445	445	445	445
General Rates	15,807	18,159	19,854	21,405	22,891	24,351	25,915	27,214	28,276	29,597
Accumulated Funds	853	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	18,196	20,298	21,975	23,539	25,031	26,352	27,039	28,851	30,069	31,429
Net Activity Surplus (Deficit)	1,315	1,910	1,880	1,885	1,879	1,731	843	1,347	1,495	1,525
Capital Expenditure										
<i>Parks</i>										
Urban and Rural Villages	6,022	15,479	6,555	7,187	6,490	7,423	8,792	9,038	6,523	9,540
Green Network	2,187	1,269	1,181	1,419	589	661	1,059	1,615	1,250	1,447
<i>Streetscape</i>										
Urban and Rural Villages	170	797	74	76	78	79	81	82	679	85
Green Network	23	23	23	24	20	21	21	960	22	22
<i>Town Centres</i>										
Green Network	297	135	-	-	-	-	-	1,295	753	240
<i>Parks Planning</i>										
Urban and Rural Villages	1,343	339	336	281	351	270	391	292	267	259
Total	10,042	18,042	8,169	8,987	7,528	8,454	10,344	13,282	9,494	11,593
Funded by:										
Development Contributions	175	175	175	445	445	445	445	445	445	445
Land Subdivision Reserve Fund	1,140	1,735	1,705	1,440	1,434	1,286	398	902	1,050	1,080
Depreciation Reserve	4,217	4,893	5,319	5,920	4,928	5,754	5,834	6,066	4,937	6,291
Other External Recoveries	-	4,576	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accumulated Funds	66	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vested Assets	-	62	-	65	41	342	2,482	5,227	2,455	2,924
Loan	4,444	6,601	970	1,117	680	627	1,185	642	607	853
Total	10,042	18,042	8,169	8,987	7,528	8,454	10,344	13,282	9,494	11,593

Conclusion

The key focus for the Parks and Open Spaces section is in managing people's increasing expectations, affordability, and safety, in planning for and delivering sustainable solutions for open space in the city.

In addition to the management of council-owned land, the Parks Planning section undertakes substantial work with the community, supporting initiatives to protect and enhance the Green Network.

Together these programmes play a key role in providing a high quality environment for the city and its community.

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