

## PUBLIC TOILETS

### Description of Services Provided

Council provides a total of 67 public toilets and changing rooms throughout the city. These toilets are located in town centres, sports parks, neighbourhood parks, beaches and major city parks.

The newest toilets within the city are in Glen Eden, Archibald Park and Brains Park. The new Glen Eden toilet has proven to be a success with the toilet averaging over 1000 visits per week since it was installed in July 2004.

Currently Council provides:

- Toilets and changing rooms for use on sports fields; and
- Toilet blocks that are located predominantly at beaches and in town centres.

At present, there are 34 parks with at least one toilet, and 33 with both toilets and changing rooms. In addition to this, there are two parks with club toilet/changing room facilities.

There are several issues associated with the current provision, including:

- Inadequate level of provision across the city;
- Poor condition of some facilities;
- Closed facilities;
- High vandalism;
- Lack of provision in some city-wide parks and major Town Centres; and
- Affordability.

Wastewater from public toilets is disposed to the wastewater network within the Inner Drainage Area and to on-site systems outside the Inner Drainage Area.

### Assessment of Risks to the Community

Wastewater systems for toilets in rural areas have been upgraded in recent years to comply with environmental and public health standards and the wastewater systems are well maintained. Thus there is only a minor public health risk from these systems from failure of the on-site wastewater systems due to occasional overloading or malfunction.

There are still two public toilets that have inadequate wastewater systems and have been identified for upgrading, including:

- Karekare toilets; and
- Bethells toilets

Consultation and design for the upgrade of these facilities is currently under way.

There are also a number of public toilets provided by the Auckland Regional Council in Auckland Regional Park land and this Assessment does not cover any public health or environmental risks arising from the operation of these toilets. It is assumed that there are no public health risks associated with these toilets as the Auckland Regional Council is the organisation responsible for compliance with environmental standards.

The other risks for the community arise from improper use of public toilets and vandalism. Council has in place programmes to minimise the adverse effects of these activities, but the risks cannot be totally avoided.

### **Assessment of Quality, Quantity and Adequacy of Services Provided**

A major replacement/upgrade programme commenced in 1995/96 following a substantial audit being undertaken which identified major deficiencies of the current service to meet the needs and goals of Council Strategies. Since this time the following works have been instigated in the provision of these facilities and provide quality and safe facilities for residents and visitors.

The priority of the replacement/upgrade programme is based on the annual condition audits and the strategic needs and direction.

Major or full replacement of toilets and changing rooms have been provided at:

- **Beaches**

- Piha Beach includes new sewage disposal system
- North Piha Strand includes new sewage disposal system
- Les Waygood includes new sewage disposal system
- Armour Bay existing sewage system no change
- Huia Domain includes new sewage disposal system
- Christmas Beach
- Wood Bay
- French Bay

- **Sports Parks**

- Brains Park
  - Archibald Park
  - Starling Park
  - Parris Park
  - Moire Park
  - Harold Moody Reserve
  - Henderson Park
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- Te Pai Place
- Olympic Park
- French Bay
- **Major Parks**
  - Luckens Reserve
  - Harbour View Reserve, Te Atatu
- **Town Centres**
  - Glen Eden town centre
  - Te Atatu Peninsula - Jack Pringle Park
  - Massey West – Triangle Park
  - Te Atatu South – Lloyd Morgan Park
  - Henderson Town Centre
  - Green Bay Town Centre, Barrons Green

Minor upgrades have been carried out at Bridge Ave Reserve (Boat Club and ramp area)

The current programme has several years to continue until all existing blocks that qualify for upgrade are completed. These include:

- Titirangi Town Centre
- Zena Lake
- Glendene Town Centre
- Paremuka Lakeside
- Chapman Strand - Boat club and ramps
- The remaining toilet blocks will receive minor upgrades

It is also planned to construct new toilet blocks at the following locations:

- New Lynn Town Centre
- Swanson Town Centre

A summary of the annual condition rating of public toilets, with 1 being good condition and 5 being poor condition, is provided in table 21 below.

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**Table 21: Toilet condition rating**

Condition	Toilets with Changing Rooms	Toilets	Totals
1	4	3	7
2	11	9	20
3	6	8	14
4	12	13	25
5	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>67</b>

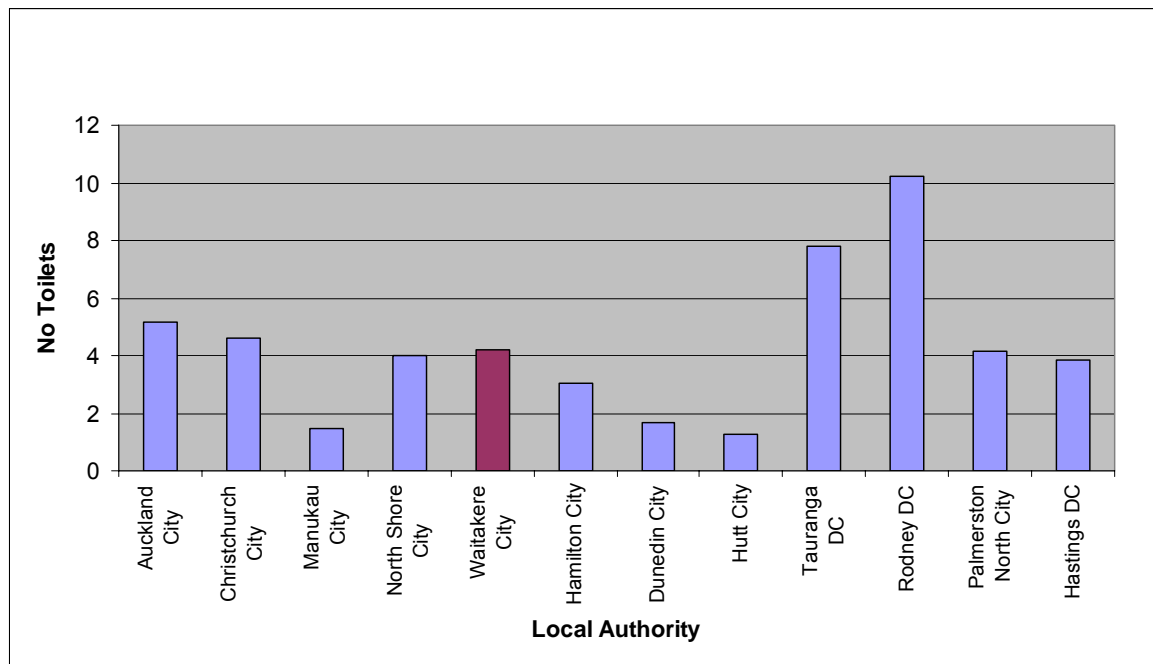
There is a hierarchy of service levels for the maintenance of toilets. Servicing of the toilets is undertaken on a frequency bases with high use and high profile sites having the highest frequency. These frequencies can vary due to seasonal demands on such areas as beaches.

The following is a guide for allocation of the service level that is applied to any toilet or changing rooms.

- High – Town Centres and high use parks, multi fields Sports Parks
- Med – Smaller town Centres and medium use parks – single or double field parks
- Low - Neighbourhood Parks
- Seasonal - Beaches

Council considers that it provides an adequate number of toilets as demonstrated in a summary of a national benchmarking survey, as showed below.

**Table 22: Number toilets per 10,000 capita for various councils**



In the past 3 years toilet blocks have been removed due to the poor sighting and improper use of the facility. The above facilities have been permanently locked for over 5 years and the response from the public for these toilets to be reopened monitored with no request being received.

**Statement of Current and Estimated Future Demands for Services**

The future provision of toilet and changing room facilities can be achieved by means of both new capital projects and the renewal of existing assets. In order to be able to determine when and to what extent they should be provided, criteria are required. These are outlined below, with toilets and changing rooms being dealt with separately.

Toilets are required where use is high and sustained, rather than just for short periods. Many parks, beaches and town centres fall into this category.

The Parks Strategy is currently under review. The criteria and priorities for new toilets and/or changing facilities will be determined through consultation for the Parks Strategy and the 2006-2016 Long Term Council Community Plan.

The existing criteria is that toilets should be provided on the following parks and reserves:

- City Wide Multi Use Parks.
- Main beach reserves and coastal reserves with a boat ramp.
- Major Town Centres
- Sports Parks where there are no club facilities that cater adequately for public use.
- Local Multi Use Parks where there are no other facilities that provide that function.
- Neighbourhood parks which receive high usage.
- For sports parks with 3 or more fields provision is made for changing rooms with attached public toilets.
- Eco Loos are provided for passive areas in major parks.
- Town Centres are to be provided with an Eco Loo in smaller centres; 1 female toilet and 1 male toilet in larger centres.
- For beaches a survey of user numbers is undertaken in order to determine the number of pans that are required.

#### Design

- All toilets should be sited so as to reduce their visual impact.
  - Toilet buildings should be of a scale, style and colour scheme that is appropriate for the setting.
  - Toilets should be designed in accordance with Council's Eco Design Guides.
  - Security lighting should be provided where toilets are required to be open after dark.
  - Toilets should comply with safety standards as outlined in the Code of Practice.
  - Appropriate sign-posting should be provided.
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## Changing Rooms

Changing rooms are required where there is a sufficient demand, in terms of numbers of users and frequency of use, from organised outdoor activities, and from beach users.

### Location

Changing room facilities should be provided:

- In association with toilets on City Wide Multi Use Parks.
- In association with toilets at main beaches.
- City Wide Sports Parks and Local Multi Use reserves where they are not adequately provided for by others.

### Level of Provision

For sports fields, as shown in table 23 below.

**Table 23: Level of changing rooms provision for sports fields**

Number of Fields	Provision
One field only.	None.
Two fields for local games	Council to provide up to two changing rooms – depending on usage and provision by others.
Two fields for regional games.	Where no club facilities, Council to provide four change rooms – subject to contributions from user groups.

Beaches:

Provide one female changing room and one male changing room.

### Design

- All changing rooms should be sited to reduce their visual impact.
- Changing room buildings should be of a scale, style and colour scheme that is appropriate for the setting.
- Changing rooms should be designed in accordance with Council's Eco Design Guides.
- Changing rooms should comply with safety standards as outlined in the Code of Practice.
- Appropriate sign posting should be provided.

## Hours of Use

Currently, the hours of use of toilets/changing rooms fall into the following categories:

Toilets:

- Open full time – in town centres, and those on main roads and which get a lot of use, for example Waima Reserve.
- Open for fixed hours – where there are problems with vandalism and behaviour.

Changing Rooms:

- Open for games or events only.
- These arrangements are subject to review and will be reduced if vandalism or misuse becomes excessive.

## Prioritising

Criteria are required in order to be able to prioritise both renewals and capital projects.

The Parks and Open Space Asset Management Plan includes a toilet renewal programme for completion by 2009/2010. This is based on major improvements in safety, health and reduced maintenance costs. For example:

- Making toilets more open and inviting.
- Reducing impact of graffiti.
- Use of tiling on internal walls and surfaces.
- Increased ventilation.

The renewal and upgrading programmes includes sustainable building initiatives, for example the use of environmental-friendly paint, recycled water use, discharge of effluent, reuse of rainwater and solar lighting.

## **Statement of Options Available to Meet Current and Future Demands**

Council considers that it has provided sufficient toilets to meet current demand.

The criteria for providing toilets to meet futures demands is as follows:

- City wide multi use parks;
  - Main beach reserves and coastal reserves with a boat ramp;
  - Major Town Centres
  - Sports parks where there are no club facilities that cater adequately for public use;
  - Local multi use parks where there are no other facilities that provide that function; and
  - Neighbourhood parks which receive high usage.
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Toilets and changing room facilities require funds for their maintenance and upgrading. Where the cost of this work exceeds the benefits, Council should investigate the issue of removal.

Therefore, toilets/changing rooms could be removed where they are:

- Located on neighbourhood parks;
- In need of upgrading and occur on Green Network parks and parks with only one sports field; and
- Where there are instances of low use and vandalism.

There are four toilets which are located on neighbourhood parks and are locked permanently, due to low use and high vandalism. These blocks are located at Roberts Field, Te Atatu South park, Manuka Park and Riverpark and have been identified as surplus to current and future requirements based on the current policies and criteria. It is proposed that these blocks will be removed in 2005-2006.

Options for the future provision of toilets include the following:

- Encouraging businesses to provide and maintain facilities in town centres. This is currently being carried out by the large mall operators at Henderson and New Lynn.
- Requiring sports clubs to supply toilets and changing rooms at sports parks in exchange for Council providing other park facilities. This has been trialled with a soccer club where Council contributed to improving a training area and the club was to upgrade the toilets for public use. The success of this option is still unrealised as the club has yet to install new toilets whereas the Council completed its works in 2004.

Currently at many of the sports grounds where there are club rooms the clubs toilets are often open for public use. This mainly occurs where clubs are based on grounds with less than 3 fields and Council does not provide toilet/changing room facilities.

The provision of portaloos has also been considered as an alternative to permanent facilities. This is currently used in several locations in the city during peak summer periods but accessibility, safety and child use is an issue with these facilities. The cost of using the standard portaloos against a single unit toilet has a 20 year break even point in favour of the portaloos and hence these are generally only used as back up or for short term use.

The new single and double unit toilets currently being provided are removable and can be relocated when required. This has occurred in Henderson when the two toilet blocks were removed, refurbished and placed in new locations.

The current upgrade programme has 5 years to continue until the goals of the present programme have been achieved. At this stage it is not planned to build any more new toilets beyond the 5 year period.

#### **Statement of Council's Intended Role**

With regard to public toilets, Council will continue to carry out planning, maintain and upgrade existing toilets.

Council will also complete the currently approved 5 year work programme (to 2010) for the provision of new toilets.

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Council's intended role for the provision of toilets beyond 2010 will be determined through the revised Parks Strategy and the 2006-2016 Long Term Council Community Plan. However, Council has a number of concerns with regard to the long term affordability of ongoing provision of public toilets and will actively pursue the provision of toilets by public and private entities to meet future demand.

**Statement of Councils Proposals for Meeting Current and Future Demand**

At this stage it is not proposed to provide any new toilets beyond the current work programme. The location of any other new toilets will be established through consultation as part of the 2006-2016 Long Term Council Community Plan.

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