

Have your Say – Tukuna Mai O Whakaaro

The 10-year Budget and Auckland Plan 2050

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Introduction

1. The New Zealand Recreation (NZRA) is a registered charity and the organisation responsible for providing leadership, advocacy and professional development opportunities for those involved in the broader recreation sector. We work at an agency, industry and professional level to build capability, develop partnerships, and equip individuals and organisations with the skills they need to deliver high quality recreation experiences that engage participants.
2. The New Zealand Recreation Association's membership includes recreation policy makers, territorial local authorities, voluntary organisations, regional sports trusts, outdoor recreation businesses, and others involved in the delivery of recreation in New Zealand.
3. Our role is to champion high-quality recreation for the benefit of New Zealand.
4. Our vision is that in 2020 New Zealand has a strong recreation industry that meets the needs of current and future participants, so that through recreation, New Zealanders are active, healthy, and connected
5. The New Zealand Recreation Association believes recreation is vital to New Zealand society. Recreation is not just about enjoyment. It is about being healthy, engaged and stimulated, having fun, and interacting with others, whether through outdoor recreation, community recreation, or aquatic and facility-based recreation.
6. Recreation is a major contributor to the physical and mental health of individuals, and to the resilience of our communities. 90 per cent of New Zealanders believe being active keeps them physically fit and healthy, and helps relieve stress.

7. A thriving recreation industry can also help our nation prosper socially and economically. Sport and active recreation contributes \$4.9 billion or 2.3% to our annual GDP, and the sector employs more than 53,000 New Zealanders. The nation's recreation values and opportunities are fundamental to the nation's tourism industry. Approximately 50% of international visitors to New Zealand participate in one form of outdoor recreation or another.
8. Recreation is part of what it is to be a New Zealander. Many of us are members of clubs and groups that enjoy recreation for fun, health and social reasons. 84% of New Zealanders believe sport and physical activity bring people together and create a sense of belonging
9. For individuals, recreation contributes to physical and mental wellbeing and provides an opportunity to meet new people. People define themselves and their communities through their recreation opportunities. Recreation fosters community cohesion and resilience, and supports the integration of diverse ethnic and other social groups. 74% of New Zealanders agree that sport and physical activity help build vibrant and stimulating communities.
10. Investment in recreation generates tourism opportunities and supports regional development by encouraging skilled professionals and migrants to consider business options in and beyond the main centres, and in areas which offer quality lifestyle and family options.
11. Research shows that recreation makes a significant contribution to social resilience. It allows individuals to thrive, and to connect with each other. This, in turn, makes communities stronger. A society in which people are active and healthy is also more economically sound.
12. Physical inactivity is associated with loss of productivity, health costs, as well as associated costs such as pain and suffering. Healthier, happier individuals are more likely to do well in other areas of their lives, whether it is in social or professional situations. This has a positive flow-on effect for communities and society as a whole.
13. Greater understanding of these benefits and their downstream impacts, along with awareness of how laws and regulations can influence recreation delivery, are key to ensuring that New Zealand's recreation opportunities remain among the world's best.

Recreation in Auckland

14. 78% of Auckland adults take part in physical activity each week. There are also 308,880 volunteers who contribute 22.1 million hours of their time each year, organising thousands of formal and informal opportunities for hundreds of thousands of people.
15. The sport and recreation sector contributes at least \$1.9 billion to the Auckland economy, employing more than 25,000 people.
16. Inactivity is expensive. The cost of physical inactivity in the Auckland region is was \$402 million p.a. Research indicates that walking and cycling for transport helps lower the risk of being overweight and obese, and of developing type 2 diabetes.

17. Auckland Council is the major provider of our city's sport and recreation facilities. By investing in recreation, Auckland Council is helping to instil a lasting culture where active living matters. What Auckland Council does makes a real difference.
18. The Auckland Council has a critical part to play in ensuring people continue to enjoy quality recreation opportunities. These need to be available to everyone, regardless of age, fitness level or socio-economic background.
19. Council planning needs to adopt a long-term approach that takes into account factors such as urbanisation, population growth, an ageing population and the rise of tourism, to ensure recreation can continue to thrive amid change.
20. Research has found that in areas of activity decline, government and community-led interventions helped reverse the trend. When the infrastructure is in place (such as dedicated cycling lanes), people are more likely to be active.
21. Population growth and increased demographic diversity, has and will continue to place pressure on recreational infrastructure in Auckland.
22. New facilities are experiencing pent-up demand. Exacerbating this, is the closure of some Auckland beaches due to water quality and restricted access to the Waitakere and Hunua Ranges. This displacement effect places even more pressure into already stretched spaces and places.

General Comments

23. We acknowledge and thank Auckland Council as a huge investor and delivery body of recreational opportunities in Auckland.
24. The New Zealand Recreation Association is particularly concerned that the Plan does not make adequate reference to Recreation as a stand-alone subject or pay particular regard to the ASARSAP.
25. As a member of One Voice NZRA supports ASARSAP as the blueprint for the implementation of sport and recreation in Auckland and believes it must be central to decision making over the next 10 years.
26. It has been calculated that there is a shortfall of \$1.5bn between what is required to meet demand in Auckland for Recreational Infrastructure and what is proposed as baseline for renewals and growth in the Long-term Plan
27. NZRA has been advised that there is a Capital shortfall of at least \$500m for sport and recreation facilities over the next 10 years.
28. When addressing this shortfall, NZRA urges the Auckland Council to make informed, evidenced based, and equitable decisions on investment, and look to where funds can be leveraged from elsewhere.
29. NZRA notes with concern that there is very little visibility of operating budgets in the LTP.

30. We are highly concerned that existing gaps in provision will only be entrenched and exacerbated before this current Long-term Plan period is over.

Questions relating to the 10-year Budget

31. **Question 1: Regional Fuel Tax** – NZRA supports the proposal to introduce a regional fuel tax of 10 cents per litre.
32. NZRA is particularly supportive of increased investment in walking and cycling routes. We note that according to Sport NZ data, Walking is the most popular form of Active Recreation among New Zealand Adults. Cycling is the 3rd most popular form.
33. Investment in walking routes, cycling routes and Greenways achieves the dual symbiotic benefit of easing traffic congestion and making it easier for residents to integrate healthy recreational activities into their day-to-day lives.
34. **Question 2: Targeted Rate to Accelerate Water Quality initiatives** – NZRA supports the proposed targeted rate.
35. NZRA is particularly supportive of any water quality initiative that makes it safer to recreate at beaches and on the water. We note that according to Sport NZ data, Swimming is the 2nd most popular form of Active Recreation among New Zealand Adults. Fishing is the 5th most popular and Canoeing/Kayaking is undertaken by 8% of New Zealand Adults at least annually.
36. **Question 3: Targeted Rate to protect the Environment** – NZRA supports Option B
37. NZRA is particularly supportive of any initiative or investment that mitigates the impact of Kauri Dieback. The proposed closures of tracks in the Waitakere and Hunua Ranges, while environmentally sound, will have a devastating impact on recreational opportunities for Aucklanders.
38. We note with deep concern, that recreational users of the Waitakere and Hunua Ranges have and will continue to be displaced. This displacement needs to be catered for and additional investment is required in other places to deal with the spill over effect.
39. NZRA suggests that at least part of the proposed environmental targeted rate is invested into the provision of alternative or improved facilities for those who have been displaced from the Waitakere and Hunua Ranges.
40. **Question 4: Average general rates increase** – NZRA offers no opinion on this question.
41. **Question 5: Accommodation Provider Targeted Rate** – NZRA offers no opinion on this question.
42. **Question 6: Other Feedback** – NZRA offers the following feedback.

43. Our assessment of the plan and budget we believe there is a substantial funding shortfall in funding for recreation to achieve the ideal level of provision.
44. Auckland Council needs to do more to understand where recreational opportunities need to be enhanced to meet growth, changes in demand and exogeneous constraints on supply (eg Kauri Dieback).
45. NZRA suggests that Auckland Council needs to carry out a \$600m open space acquisition programme over the 10-year period of the plan. This could be supported by development contributions.
46. Auckland Council needs to do more to activate recreational places and spaces. Rapid changes in demographics, participation trends and technology mean that a 'build it and they will come' approach doesn't always work. Simply building infrastructure is not enough. Recreational assets need to be activated and programmed to make them more appealing and to break down barriers for the hard to reach areas of the community.
47. NZRA endorses the existing work that the Council Parks, Sport and Recreation department and its partners are doing in the realm of Activation. We applaud the 'Get Active Your Way' programme and its evidence-based approach.
48. NZRA encourages Auckland Council to ensure there is sufficient operational resourcing and workforce development/capability to effectively activate recreation places and spaces.

Local Board Priorities

49. **Albert-Eden:** NZRA supports the creation of a cycling and walking connection between St Lukes and Greenlane train station. NZRA supports a replacement aquatic centre in Albert-Eden and a replacement indoor multi-sport facility at Gillies Ave, Epsom.
50. **Devonport-Takapuna:** NZRA supports focusing the transport budget on cycle and walkway projects.
51. **Franklin:** NZRA supports the delivery of local trails, including the Hunua cycle trail, Pohutukawa Coast trails, Waiuku trails and Pukekohe trails. NZRA supports improving existing community facilities, including the Karaka Sports Park as a multi-sport and community hub.
52. **Henderson-Massey:** NZRA supports the development of a Henderson-Massey wide 'connections' plan to identify alternative street routes, park paths and trails and prioritise investment areas for improving these opportunities to get around without a car. NZRA supports the establishment of a pool in the North West area and sports fields and local community facilities in the future.
53. **Howick:** NZRA supports more all-weather sports fields, such as artificial turf, and improvements to drainage and irrigation in parks to reduce the impact of weather. NZRA

supports the development of multi-use community facility and library, and an aquatic centre at Flat Bush.

54. **Kaipatiki:** NZRA supports the redevelopment of central Northcote which includes quality parks and public open spaces and safe and easy walking and cycling connections. NZRA supports the delivery of priority walking and cycling projects identified within the Kaipātiki Connections Network Plan including a coastal walking and cycling link
55. **Mangere-Otahuhu:** NZRA supports new toilets, pathway and fitness equipment in Boggust Park, as well as free access to swimming pools. NZRA supports the improvement of local parks and playgrounds so that they are safe, attractive and well-used, such as the green areas near Māngere Bridge, Favona and Centre Park.
56. **Manurewa:** NZRA supports an upgrade of the playing fields and community facilities at Manurewa War Memorial Park.
57. **Orakei:** NZRA supports a walking and cycling linkage from Gowing Drive in Meadowbank to the Glen Innes to Tamaki Drive Shared Path and across to Kohimarama/Mission Bay, providing a safe alternative route for school students. NZRA supports a north-south connection from Stonefields to St Johns/Glen Innes as a shared space for walkers, cyclists and vehicles through Colin Maiden Park. NZRA also supports improved walking routes for Kapa Bush and the Pourewa Valley environs.
58. **Otara-Papatoetoe:** NZRA supports investment in improved sports field playing surfaces and lighting in Ōtara and Papatoetoe parks, to meet growing demand for sports fields in Ōtara-Papatoetoe. NZRA supports free adult entry to swimming pools and a targeted rate to pay for it. NZRA supports recognition of Colin Dale Park as a regional facility and for it to become a Regional Park.
59. **Papakura:** NZRA supports investment in solar panels and a cover for the Massey Park Pool to extend the swimming season and usage of the Massey Park external pool.
60. **Puketapapa:** NZRA supports improvements to community facilities, such as Waikowhai Coastal walkway, Keith Hay Park and Harold Long/ Fearon Park.
61. **Rodney:** NZRA supports a local indoor court facility at the Huapai Domain and a multisport building at the Warkworth Showgrounds.
62. **Upper Harbour:** NZRA supports the provision of a sub-regional, multi-use, multi-sport indoor court facility for the north-west. NZRA supports the connection of local parks and reserves through "street to street" cycling and pedestrian crossings to improve accessibility and user experience. NZRA supports a coastal walkway between Limeburners Reserve and Marina View Drive.
63. **Waiheke:** NZRA supports plans for a community swimming pool.
64. **Waitakere Ranges:** NZRA supports a Waitākere Ranges 'greenways' plan', that will identify a network of local walking and cycling connections, and prioritising investment areas for improving these opportunities to get around without a car.

65. **Waitemata:** NZRA supports safe and high amenity walking and cycling options as set out in the Waitematā Greenways Plan 2013.
66. **Whau:** NZRA supports funding for a pool and recreation centre for the Whau in the 10-year Budget

Questions relating to the Auckland Plan 2050

67. **Question 1: An inclusive Auckland.** NZRA that the existing plan will only partially achieve this. NZRA suggests that Recreation needs to play a far greater role in the plan to achieve an inclusive Auckland.
68. Recreation provides an opportunity to meet new people. People define themselves and their communities through their recreation opportunities. Recreation fosters community cohesion and resilience, and supports the integration of diverse ethnic and other social groups. 74% of New Zealanders agree that sport and physical activity help build vibrant and stimulating communities.
69. Research shows that recreation makes a significant contribution to social resilience. It allows individuals to thrive, and to connect with each other. Healthier, happier individuals are more likely to do well in other areas of their lives, whether it is in social or professional situations. This has a positive flow-on effect for communities and society as a whole. 84% of New Zealanders believe sport and physical activity bring people together and create a sense of belonging.
70. **Questions 2-7:** NZRA offers no opinion on these questions.
71. **Question 8: Any other feedback.** The New Zealand Recreation Association is particularly concerned that the Auckland Plan 2050 does not make adequate reference to Recreation as a stand-alone subject or pay particular regard to the ASARSAP.
72. As a member of One Voice NZRA supports ASARSAP as the blueprint for the implementation of sport and recreation in Auckland and believes it must be central to Council decision making and planning.