



**CENTRAL
HAWKE'S BAY**
DISTRICT COUNCIL



**PLACES
AND SPACES**
FOR A THRIVING FUTURE

Play, Active Recreation, and Sport Strategy 2022



Together we Thrive! E ora ngātahi ana!

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1. Play, Active Recreation and Sport

Participating in play, active recreation and sport is a regular part of life for many people in Central Hawke's Bay. Great outdoor playgrounds, recreation facilities, reserves, community spaces and walking and cycling trails provide opportunities to be active and healthy as individuals, with friends and whānau, or with other people in the community. Events and activities also encourage our community to get out and about and connect with each other.

While this provides a good starting point, there is much more work to be done. Historically, reserves and facilities have had low levels of investment due to other infrastructure priorities so there is a lot of catching up to do. Places and spaces need to be accessible and engaging for everyone and have sufficient capacity to support the growth we are now experiencing. Events and activities need to be coordinated and promoted to make it as easy as possible to find out about what is going on, especially for newcomers to the district.

Within the last decade, there have been significant changes in people's physical activity and participation in play, active recreation and sport. Nationally, activity levels of tamariki and rangatahi continue to decline, and increasing inequalities disadvantage Māori, women and girls and disabled people's participation in play, active recreation and sporting activities. In Central Hawke's Bay, we are only just starting to build an understanding of our participation levels from recent community surveys and the Sport New Zealand Active Communities Survey. We know that the accessibility and quality of facilities are key issues and will be limiting factors in the ability to increase participation in the future.

The benefits of play, active recreation and sport on wellbeing are well known and proven. Being physically active improves mental and physical health, quality of life and individual wellbeing. COVID-19 lockdowns highlighted that play, active recreation and sport have an even greater role than ever before in the future of strong and connected communities. The opportunity to improve the quality of experiences that tamariki and rangatahi have means there is a greater chance of them establishing a life-long interest in being active.

This strategy was developed in partnership with Sport New Zealand and Sport Hawkes Bay, to have the right opportunities in the right places so that everyone can be active and participate whether it's through play, active recreation, sport or other types of activities. Health and well-being are fundamental to building strong and thriving communities. You told us what is important, and this



Play



Active Recreation



Sport

strategy helps us to respond to that, providing direction on Council's role and actions that will guide prioritisation of resources and investment over time.

This strategy expresses Council's commitment to play, active recreation and sport through:

- Our people – Getting more people in our communities moving, active and healthy for life. Growing participation in all aspects of play, sport and active recreation will benefit everyone. Recognising the hundreds of volunteers who play a crucial role in clubs and organisations and that without this input, the quality and extent of play, active recreation and sport opportunities would not exist.
- Our places and spaces - Council has an important role in influencing well-being through the interdependence of people and the physical environment they are surrounded with. Places and spaces need to be vibrant, inclusive and reflective of their location and communities. First and foremost, we need to make the most of what we already have available.
- Our partnerships - Working together, having clear priorities and each of us playing our part. By focusing our collective efforts, we will have healthier communities, stronger clubs and organisations, fit-for-purpose facilities and more opportunities for everyone. Council recognises that communities are already playing a significant role in the provision, management and operation of facilities, places and spaces, and events, activities and programmes. Continuing to work together to lead change and enhance outcomes is the shared responsibility of everyone.

The next section identifies strategic priorities specifically for play, active recreation and sport. Separating each of these activities enables us to identify Council's role and priorities for each activity. However, it is recognised that some things are relevant across all three activity areas. An example is sport and recreation parks that provide opportunities for play, active recreation **and** sport.

Other key documents that provide more detail on how we will deliver on this strategy include the Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan, Community and Civic Facilities Plan and Reserve Management Plan.

2. Central Hawke's Bay Commitment to Play (Tākaro)

2.1 What is play

Play is when we give ourselves the time, space and permission to actively follow our own ideas and interests for our own reasons. It takes us away from a structured environment and provides a sense of freedom. As adults we can reflect on our adventures as children, from flying kites to bullrush in the park, biking to friends houses or playing cops and robbers.

Play is spontaneous, it can happen anywhere. We can have playable streets, play trails in urban places, play on the way to school and play in our large outdoor rural areas. The natural environment is one big play opportunity for many different activities such as building huts in the bush or playing hide and seek. Play can happen in your own home and backyard or down at your local school or park and can be part of the journey to get there.

Play can be child-led – letting children 'go' to do what they need to do, to learn and grow. As adults and guardians, our job is to follow their lead, support them when required, and listen to them so that we understand what to do to get rid of the barriers to play. We can also play too!

Play can happen in a variety of ways. It's not just about the traditional playground in your local park. Play in Central Hawke's Bay can also be:

- Natural play – connecting to the great outdoors, playing in the mud, building huts and swimming in the local river.
- Cultural play – learning and experiencing culture through play, development of traditional games and play experiences and practices.
- Creative and innovative play – creative expression, developing new ways to play, doing
- things your way and that's ok!
- Guerrilla play - doing a small intervention in a public place that offers an invitation to play, without going through too much fuss to make it happen!
- Play on the way – rather than a destination, play becomes part of our everyday journey and a way of life for the whole whānau.

Figure 1 was developed by Play Aotearoa to inspire the range of play activities that could occur during COVID-19 traffic light settings and highlights how play can occur in so many different ways.

Communities across Central Hawke's Bay provide their own play opportunities. For example, hopscotch on the footpath in Pōrangahau and the popularity of jumping and swimming in the river nearby.

2.2 Why play is important

Play is one of the first physical experiences we have as humans. When our early play experiences are good ones, we are more likely to continue to engage in physical activity for life. As adults, our role is to ensure future generations get to have the same opportunity for informal physical experiences that we had, and to continue to play ourselves!

Play makes us feel excited, happy and connected. Play is now recognised as one of the most important things communities can do to support young people to lead active and healthy lives, and to help them learn and grow. In later life, play supports our health and sense of 'fun' and wider wellbeing. Ministry of Health guidelines confirm that staying active is important when getting older and that regular physical activity can improve health and wellbeing, and make it easier to perform daily tasks.

Play is a critical element in improving individual wellbeing, as well as being of benefit to our wider community. Play opportunities are almost unlimited, it can happen anywhere at any time, it can be spontaneous or organised and involve one or one hundred people.

People might think that play should come naturally, but we are losing the knack for play. In our school play survey, while most responses showed that play is regularly occurring, only 36% indicated that they played every single day. This strategy will help us all to get better at play and play more every day.

2.3 What we know about play in Central Hawke's Bay

What you told us

In 2021, 668 tamariki aged 5 to 12 years participated in a play survey through their local school. This has given us an improved understanding of play habits and barriers to play in Central Hawke's Bay.

Overall, play is occurring regularly and is undertaken independently or with friends. Most tamariki play out of school time and with their friends, followed by whānau.

The most popular place to play is at home, then at school, and then at a friend's house. Playgrounds, sports parks, recreational facilities and the natural environment all ranked low in popularity. Most tamariki told us that they don't have to travel far to get to their favourite place to play although when asked how they get there, many indicated by car. Walking, biking and scootering are also popular ways to access their favourite place to play.

The most popular play activity is ball play, then painting/colouring in, and running and playing tag.

Most feedback expressed a level of happiness with the play opportunities on offer at home or locally.



Figure 1: Play inspiration during COVID-19 traffic light settings. Source: Play Aotearoa website.

The biggest barriers to play are being too busy on devices and there being nothing to do or nowhere to play in their neighbourhood. Things that would encourage greater levels of play include events that bring people together and provide fun things to do and play within their neighbourhood. Safer ways to cross the road and play in the streets and convincing their parents to play with them were the next most popular responses.

While these results summarise all responses across the seven schools surveyed, each community has unique cultural and geographic features that shape the opportunities available and community mindsets around play. The individual school results provide a better understanding of the different play responses needed in each community. For example, Sherwood School responses had higher levels of play at a playground or local park than Takapau responses which were mainly at home, at school or at a friend's place. This tells us that investing in play is not a 'one size fits all' response. Schools included in the survey were Otane, Pōrangahau, Takapau, Terrace School, Waipawa, Waipukurau and Sherwood.

Feedback through the *Thriving Places and Spaces Survey 2021* identified good levels of utilisation of playgrounds but the need for improvements including shade, regular maintenance and upgrades especially in rural areas, and a greater variety of play equipment for all ages.

What's happening locally

Council has had minimal investment in improving or maintaining existing playgrounds and developing new playgrounds. There are fewer playgrounds in Central Hawke's Bay than in other areas in New Zealand. An investment programme to raise the standards of playground provision is required. We also need to broaden our thinking to incorporate the provision of 'play features' where there is a mix of structures and play opportunities that are reflective of local community needs.

Population growth will see more tamariki and rangatahi wanting to access play opportunities and changing expectations from parents and caregivers about what is on offer. Increasingly busy urban and rural areas, because of growth and change, may mean there is less open space for play or young people don't feel as safe in public areas.

Play is deeply influenced by culture and whānau experiences and expectations of play. There is a need to gain more insights into the multi-cultural perspectives of play to better understand what the barriers and opportunities for play are, especially for young Māori and Pasifika people.

Today, many children do not experience those same simple pleasures we had 'back in our

day'. An increased focus on safety and the resulting restrictions on play activities leaves less room for children to develop fundamental skills and confidence through risk-taking. An over-emphasis on safety and general risk-aversion has impacted many childhood play experiences that previous generations took for granted. Missing out on outdoor play, risky play and physically engaging activities means children are less exposed to a wide variety of types of movements and challenges, accidents and failures where they learn from their mistakes.

2.4 What we want to achieve

Strategic Goal: We play everyday in everyday for fun, whānau, growth and development

Council values the rights of children and young people to be able to engage in age-appropriate play activities and to participate freely in the cultural life that our district offers. In the past our investment has tended to be in the provision of structured and organised activities, but equally important is the need to create time and space for children to engage in spontaneous play, recreation and creativity, and to promote societal attitudes that support and encourage this type of activity.

Council will partner with communities and organisations to ensure ample quality play opportunities for the tamariki and rangatahi of Tamatea - Central Hawke's Bay! The importance of play for young people will be prioritised due to declining levels of play and the impact this has on the social, emotional and cognitive wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi. Play is also linked to a lifelong participation in

community sport and being physically active therefore we cannot underestimate the value of play for our young people.

Over time, we will work towards creating more playful environments across our district for people of all ages so that everyone has the chance to experience play and freely engage in it.

We will know we have been successful when:

- Play is inclusive, it is something that every single person can engage in.
- Play is a vital part of our communities, and our tamariki and rangatahi experience fun, joy, challenge and laughter through play.
- All young people have access to enriched and varied playful experiences within their local environments.
- Play is the shared responsibility of everyone across our district.

2.5 Council's role in play

Council has two key roles in play:

1. Enabling play through the planning, management and development of many play settings including parks and reserves, streets, community and recreation facilities and active transport routes.

Given the extent of infrastructure provided by Council, there is an ability for Council to influence play in a broader way through a commitment to reflect a fun, playful, flexible approach in all places and spaces. This isn't just restricted to playgrounds; it can also include a variety of play features and experiences such as increased accessibility and promotion of natural play opportunities through signage and formed paths.

2. Empowering communities to increase access to play experiences. Council will continue to identify partnership opportunities and enable a locally-led approach to ensure that clubs, community groups, schools and whānau are empowered to design and deliver play at a local level. This includes advocacy and promotion of play opportunities.

The Waka Tākaro Community Play Trailor is a great example of partnership in action between Council and Sport Hawke's Bay with funding from Sport New Zealand. It has become a fantastic asset for families, schools and community groups to educate and encourage free play in the community. The Play Activator role has helped to educate adults on their important role in extending and supporting a child's play through being involved and actively participating in play with their child.

Council's partnership with Sport Hawke's Bay is important to the successful delivery of play opportunities in our district.

2.6 Strategic priorities

Strategic priorities outline Council's commitment to play delivered across five timing periods:

- Quick wins – actions that we can implement within the next 12 months within existing resources
- Short term – actions that can be implemented within the first three years of our current Long Term Plan 2021-2024
- Medium Term – actions that will be implemented in years four to seven of our current Long Term Plan 2021-2024
- Long Term – actions that will be implemented in years eight to ten of our current Long Term Plan 2021-2024
- Ongoing actions that will be implemented across a number of these timeframes.

#	Approach	Action	Timing
1.	Advocacy and promotion	Advocate for and actively promote play to provide for greater awareness of the benefits of play and ensure opportunities for the space, time and permission for play to occur are maximised. Support a sustainable approach to improving the quality of and access to play so that tamariki develop a life-long love for play and being physically active.	Ongoing
2.	Integrating play	Council has responsibility for the planning, management and development of many play settings including reserves, streets, community and recreation facilities and active transport routes. Council will influence play more broadly through a commitment to reflect a fun, playful, flexible approach in all places and spaces and across all areas of the Council. This isn't just restricted to playgrounds; it can also include a variety of play features and experiences such as increased accessibility and promotion of natural play opportunities through signage and formed paths, as well as influencing child-friendly solutions within the built environment.	Quick wins and ongoing
3.	Play activation	Include fun, playful and creative elements into public space activation and development. Review uptake and participation outcomes of Waka Tākaro. Continue activator role to educate on the importance of play and adult involvement in this, and promote access to the trailer.	Quick wins and ongoing Short term

#	Approach	Action	Timing
4.	Local play solutions	<p>Support community play champions and initiatives to access external funding for play resources in communities that need more assistance to play and be active.</p> <p>Work with communities and local stakeholders to maximise the opportunity for play to occur within neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Utilise school play survey results to understand local play opportunities. Align with community plan processes where possible. This doesn't always have to be about providing permanent facilities, it could also be access to events and activities in different settings.</p> <p>Consider opportunities for how play can be used to understand and reflect identity and place including our history, culture, natural environment and the built environment.</p>	Quick wins and ongoing
5.	Inclusive play spaces	<p>Provide play spaces that are safe, inclusive, accessible and comply with the Council's health-related policies. Design to engage people of different ages, stages, abilities and needs.</p> <p>Work with the Regional Advisory Group for disability to identify opportunities for the development of an accessible playground (identified in the Regional Disability Strategy).</p>	<p>Quick wins and ongoing</p> <p>Short term</p>
6.	Diverse play spaces	<p>Increase the variety of play experiences. Provide play spaces for a wide range of play types that challenge, allow for discovery, creative expression and movement, and offer an element of surprise. Include how we can better connect to the outdoors for this experience.</p>	Quick wins and ongoing
7.	Play streets	<p>Continue to implement play streets to enable and encourage people to play in their streets and neighbourhoods. This recognises the play survey outcomes of the most popular place to play being at home and wanting more activities and things to do in their local neighbourhood to encourage more play. Utilise Sport New Zealand tools and guidelines for play streets.</p> <p>Increase safety and reduce barriers to play in our streets and public spaces, and create safer journeys to play opportunities.</p>	Quick wins and ongoing
8.	Multi-cultural play perspectives	<p>Gain more insights into the multi-cultural perspectives of play to better understand what the barriers and opportunities for play are, especially for young Māori.</p>	Short term
9.	Management, development and use of parks, reserves and facilities	<p>Include provision of play opportunities as integral to the delivery of the Reserves Management Plan, Community and Civic Facilities Plan and Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan.</p> <p>Ensure investment in the wider play experience as identified from feedback to the Thriving Places and Spaces Survey 2021. This includes the provision of shade, seating and tree planting and consideration of natural play opportunities.</p> <p>Incorporate direction from this strategy in the playground renewal and upgrade plan for the 2024-2034 LTP.</p> <p>Apply cultural play perspectives into new play developments to enhance play for young Māori.</p>	<p>Quick wins and ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

3. Active Recreation in Central Hawke's Bay

3.1 What is active recreation

Active recreation describes the way we participate in physical activity, connecting with each other and our environment, regardless of our age, life stage, income, culture, or physical ability. The term 'active recreation' generally captures all the non-sport physical activities we participate in for enjoyment and wellbeing.

3.2 Why active recreation is important

We are fortunate to have a wide range of choices when it comes to active recreation; walking, swimming, cycling, equipment-based exercise, fishing, running, scootering, skating and more. It is a popular way in which our community connect with each other and connects with the natural environment. Indoor facilities such as community halls, the Centralines Stadium and indoor and outdoor swimming pools are also used for active recreation purposes.

Active recreation contributes to our local identity and is a part of where we have come from and who we are today. Some of our favourite active recreation assets like The Tukituki Trails have put us on the map, providing awesome experiences for our local community and visitors to the district, amongst a depth and breadth of outstanding local opportunities we have in our patch of Central Hawke's Bay paradise.

Regular active recreation participation impacts the physical, mental and emotional health across all ages, but particularly those older adults who may no longer be in active work environments. It keeps them well for longer and allows them to stay connected to their communities and age in place. Walking is the most preferred activity by older people followed by gardening. Physical well-being is the biggest motivation to participate in active recreation for older people.

Active recreation is where our community participate in physical activity that best meets their needs without the pressure of a competitive or structured environment. This contributes to creating a strong and thriving Central Hawke's Bay.

3.3 What we know about active recreation in Central Hawke's Bay

What you told us

Through the *Thriving Places and Spaces Survey 2021*, we asked how Council can support you and your whānau, and others in the community to partake in active recreation. We also asked questions specific to community halls and swimming pools which we have included under the umbrella of active recreation, but also contribute significantly to play and other social outcomes.

Most people identified the importance of the walking and cycling network for active recreation and the need to maintain, extend and continue to support this. This went hand in hand with ensuring education programmes are in place for young people to benefit from the funding invested into these trails. There was also support for increased bridle trails, equestrian facilities, basketball courts, skate parks, and dog parks.

Feedback on community halls favoured all ratepayers contributing equally to funding community halls over those who live locally to the community hall covering the costs. It also supported Council providing assistance to community halls not owned and operated by Council through things like rates subsidies or partnership grants.

A key theme from the *Thriving Places and Spaces Survey 2021* was the importance of learn to swim and creating opportunities for more people to access existing facilities to increase confidence in the water. This supported making the most of what we have through the upgrade of existing swimming pool facilities.

What's happening locally

Participation in active recreation is growing. Sport New Zealand's Active New Zealand survey consistently shows that the most popular activities undertaken by New Zealanders are 'recreational' in nature: walking, swimming, cycling, equipment-based exercise, fishing, jogging/running and pilates/yoga. This is reflected in the survey outcomes for Central Hawke's Bay where walking, running, playing games and gardening are the top four activity preferences.

We have a good starting point to build on active recreation opportunities. This is helped by a growing population, an active ageing population with more time to participate in recreational activities, facilities that increase accessibility to recreation opportunities and societal trends of preferring to participate in non-competitive, unstructured and flexible forms of physical activity.

The increasing popularity of cycle trails is likely to see the number of cyclists increase in coming years. Central Hawke's Bay is in a strong position to enhance its position for recreational cyclists due to The Tukituki River Trails and planned extensions and the Gumtree Mountain Bike Park. The opportunity exists to develop a suite of on and off-road cycling trails between towns and out to key points of interest including coastal and inland towns and villages. Council invested \$2.3 million in the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan for the implementation of walking and cycling initiatives. The recent completion of the Waipawa to Waipukurau off-road cycle track highlights the role of these active transport routes in providing a safe alternative for commuters. Cycle skills and on-road cycle safety education are important and have a strong connection to active recreation.

Our rivers and coastline provide numerous opportunities for swimming, fishing and having fun in the water. Feedback on swimming pools identified the importance of providing water safety skills and growing confidence in

the water, particularly for tamariki. Hawkes Bay Regional Council has a focus on developing additional access points to rivers which aligns well with feedback received through the *Thriving Places and Spaces Survey 2021*. River areas are great places for water sports and activities, picnics, horse-riding, trail biking, mountain biking and fishing. They can also provide camping areas to reduce pressure in coastal locations and connect or extend existing walking and cycling trails. The protection of environmental values will be a key consideration in formalising additional river access points.

Many indoor and outdoor facilities provide for active recreation activities such as the Centralines Sports Complex, Centralines Swimming Pool, and Waipawa Swimming Pool. Council and the community collectively own, fund and operate 13 community halls that provide a range of benefits and opportunities to their respective communities. There are other community spaces such as the Waipawa Senior Citizens Hall and Takapau Scouts that are available for use and funded by the community rather than Council.

Community expectations continue to increase, making many community halls not fit for purpose or relevant to the needs of today's community. Like most sports clubs, they have a heavy reliance on volunteers for their operations. Community halls have varying levels of

utilisation across the network and varying levels of asset condition with most requiring some form of minor or major upgrade work. It is not currently clear what Council's role is in the upgrade of these halls or in determining at what point the ability to continue to operate a hall is no longer viable.

3.4 What we want to achieve

Strategic goal: *Our landscape and our community facilities provide a great place to get out and about, be active, explore our wonderful home and connect with others.*

We will know we have been successful when:

- Our places and spaces get more people, more active, more often, for life.
- We have a wide range of active recreation opportunities for everyone, regardless of their age, income, culture, ability, or geographical location.
- We are working together with a diverse network of individuals, groups and organisations to effectively meet the active recreation needs of our community.
- We have safe and accessible active recreation opportunities.
- Programmes are in place to grow skills and experience in cycling and water safety.

3.5 Council's role in active recreation

Council's role in active recreation is as an enabler and partner, working together to create a difference. This includes providing places and spaces that enable opportunities for more people to be active in their daily lives.

Council will continue to identify partnership opportunities and enable a locally-led approach to ensure that clubs, community groups, schools and whānau are empowered to design and deliver active recreation at a local level. Council's partnership with Sport Hawkes Bay is important to the successful delivery of active recreation in our district.

Council's role and objectives specific to community facilities (including rural community halls) and swimming pools are outlined in the Community and Civic Facilities Plan and Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan.

3.6 Strategic priorities

Strategic priorities outline Council's commitment to action recreation delivered across five timing periods:

1. Quick wins – actions that we can implement within the next 12 months within existing resources
2. Short term – actions that can be implemented within the first three years of our current Long Term Plan 2021 -2024
3. Medium Term – actions that will be implemented in years four to seven of our current Long Term Plan 2021 -2024
4. Long Term – actions that will be implemented in years eight to ten of our current Long Term Plan 2021 -2024
5. Ongoing actions that will be implemented across a number of these timeframes

#	Approach	Action	Timing
1.	Support the provision of a network of quality play, sport and active recreation facilities and experiences.	Implement the Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan, Community and Civic Facilities Plan and Reserves Management Plan.	Refer network plans
2.	Access to water	<p>Partner with Hawkes Bay Regional Council to identify opportunities to develop swimming areas in rivers and other water bodies. Potential areas to consider include the Makaretu River, Pōrangahau River, Tukituki River and Ōtaia/ Lindsay Bush.</p> <p>Use this as an opportunity to balance access with improving the protection of environmental values in these areas.</p> <p>Continue to identify and secure esplanade reserves to provide access to the water and to protect ecological values and water quality.</p> <p>Work with the Regional Advisory Group for disability to identify opportunities for the development of an accessible pathway to the beach.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Short to Medium Term</p>
3.	Rural community halls	<p>Clarify the current policy position on community hall funding for issues such as weather tightness of buildings and earthquake strengthening.</p> <p>Determine community facility principles to guide investment and prioritisation. Apply the matrix approach to the network to understand how each hall aligns with the principles.</p> <p>Complete analysis and consultation with hall committees.</p> <p>Include rural halls as a specific topic for engagement in the 2024-2034 LTP.</p> <p>Consider including a contestable fund to contribute to capital investment in rural community halls.</p>	<p>Quick wins</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p>
4.	Cycleways and walkways	<p>Continue to develop the network of walking and cycling paths and trails for active recreation, also recognise the role of this network in providing active transport routes for children getting to school and for our communities to access places where they live, work and play on a daily basis.</p> <p>Advocate and support for ensuring all Central Hawke's Bay children are provided with the opportunity to learn and develop age and stage appropriate cycle skills, including on-road safety knowledge and learning experiences in safe and appropriate spaces and places.</p> <p>Ensure the provision of safe streets and cycle paths for children to use as part of a linked network.</p> <p>Develop wayfinding signage which also includes connections to the stories of the area.</p>	Ongoing
5.	Explore opportunities for providing bridle trails and basketball facilities on Council reserves and other public reserve lands.	<p>These were gaps in provision identified through the Thriving Places and Places process.</p> <p>Consider through the Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan and Reserves Management Plan.</p>	Ongoing

#	Approach	Action	Timing
6.	Support the development of cultural pathways for active recreation.	Support culturally distinctive pathways that enable Māori to participate in active recreation opportunities. For example, MaraeFit is a marae- centric initiative that provides opportunities for sport and recreation organisations, whānau, hapū and marae to increase their physical activities and capability in an ‘as Māori’ context. This initiative was undertaken by Sport Hawke’s Bay and included marae located in Central Hawke’s Bay.	Ongoing
7.	Support opportunities for a broader range of activities for rangatahi	Work with local organisations to support and promote active recreation opportunities for rangatahi.	Ongoing

4. Central Hawkes Bay’s Thriving Sports Scene (Hākinakina)

4.1 What is sport

Sport is organised activity where there are formal rules, competitions and conditions of play. People who participate in sport generally compete against another or others for enjoyment and wellbeing. Sport activities undertaken in Central Hawke’s Bay include (but are not limited to) rugby, netball, tennis, cricket, football, squash, bowls and hockey.

Sport can take place through clubs, events and national or international competitions and pay- for-play programmes such as indoor hockey at the stadium, business house tennis or squash. Both types of sport participation use similar facilities and often have similar benefits.

4.2 Why sport is important

Participation in sport has many health benefits for all ages and is key to the development of physical, social, and intellectual capabilities in children. Sport and physical activity can lead to happy, healthier people, and improved mental and physical health outcomes. It can also help to develop important life skills, including teamwork, self-confidence and leadership.

Sport contributes to building strong, self-sufficient communities and community pride as evident in many places across Central Hawke’s Bay. Sport has the potential to strengthen social networks, curb anti-social behaviour and build a sense of belonging for participants.

Tamatea – Central Hawke’s Bay is well known for its outstanding sportspeople across the spectrum of sport – from rugby to cycling and bowls. Some of our sports clubs have been around for over 100 years creating an incredible legacy and source of pride for our communities.

4.3 What we know about sport in Central Hawke’s Bay

What you told us

The *Thriving Places and Spaces Survey 2021* had mixed views on whether it’s better to have more, smaller sports facilities spread across the townships or fewer large sports facilities for the district. Most of the feedback did however support the need to upgrade existing facilities and create opportunities for more people to access existing sports facilities.

A survey of sports clubs undertaken in 2021 identified three key issues:

1. Facilities - Many sports facilities (Council owned and Club owned) require investment with kitchen, storage, changing and toilet facilities being the main issue
2. Capability and capacity - Clubs need access to tools and assistance to improve the capability and capacity of their organisation and membership, including training programmes for coaches and knowledge of available funding avenues.
3. Youth - Clubs are keen to increase youth involvement and strengthen their links to schools. They recognise the need for succession planning with many older volunteers having responsibility for running the clubs and limited people coming through to take over these responsibilities.

What's happening locally

Active New Zealand survey trends for Central Hawke's Bay indicate that secondary school student involvement in sport has plateaued over the last few years, with higher participation trends in lower decile schools. Rugby and touch rugby have had significant losses in participation but sport participation rates in codes like basketball and softball have increased. Netball participation levels have fluctuated over the last 10 years with a significant increase in 2015, followed by a decline and now growth in participation. The data seems to indicate that overall participation levels are remaining static but are being spread over a wider range of sports rather than just the 'traditional' sports like rugby and netball.

Many of our sports facilities are no longer fit for purpose due to growth, ageing assets and changing sport preferences and demand. There is increasing demand for storage, changing and toilet facilities and improved field quality across the network. Often sports teams will travel if there is a lack of good quality and accessible facilities available for them to use in their local area. Ageing buildings and structures create health and safety issues and/or no longer meet the needs of the sports clubs that use them and often own them. There is limited access to funding to improve these conditions. Council investment in sports and support for clubs has not always been equitable in the past.

Difficulties in getting to or accessing facilities and events/competitions lead to reduced levels of activity or enjoyment. *Thriving Places and Spaces Survey 2021* feedback indicated travel was not a major issue for most however it is a known issue, particularly for smaller rural communities and those needing to access regional facilities.

Due to the mix of Council and non-Council provision, ownership, management and funding models for sports facilities, there is limited complete information on sport participation and facility utilisation other than from the Active New Zealand survey and insights information. The significant contribution that the community has made to sport in the past cannot always be relied on as people get busier in their day-to-day lives, key personalities move on, and funding avenues start to diminish. There is also no clarity on the role of the Council when community-funded facilities require support and investment from the Council to enable them to continue to operate.

What's happening nationally

Levels of participation in traditional sports continue to be under pressure. Nationally, there is a move away from structured traditional sports and the 'pay-for-play' market is increasing along with a greater choice of sporting activities on offer.

Sport NZ is focused on addressing declining activity levels in tamariki and rangatahi. Sport NZ has prioritised rangatahi as a key focus group for active recreation and sport and seeks to reduce the drop-off in activity levels from age 12-18 and increase levels of activity for those who are less active.

Volunteer levels and family involvement in sport have also declined as this base of support is ageing, has increased accountability requirements and is under the pressure of time commitments elsewhere.

Those less able or on lower incomes continue to experience impediments in getting to or accessing facilities, events, or places. The cost of participation remains a significant barrier for some people. Costs for maintaining or building facilities are substantial and securing funding has become increasingly challenging.

4.4 What we want to achieve

Strategic goal: Focus on improving what we already have and how we work together, to get more people into sport early, keep them there and support the wide range of volunteers that make sport possible.

We will know we have been successful when:

- A wide range of sport opportunities are available across the district.
- Sport is inclusive and flexible to cater to different and changing needs over time.
- Pathways are created to enable clubs and individuals to be sustainable and to reach their full potential whether they are players, coaches, administrators, or volunteers.
- Our community and volunteers are recognised for the critical role they have in the provision of sporting opportunities in our district.

4.5 Council's role in sport

Council's role in sport is as an enabler and partner, working together to create a difference. This includes providing sport and recreation parks that enable opportunities for more people to be active in their daily lives. Further detail on Council's role, responsibilities, and levels of service for sport and recreation facilities are specified in the Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan.

Council will continue to identify partnership opportunities and enable a locally-led approach to ensure that clubs, community groups, schools and whānau are empowered to design and deliver sport at a local level.

Council will continue to work in partnership with Sport Hawke's Bay to promote and support sporting opportunities and participation within Central Hawke's Bay District. The role of Regional Sports Associations is also important to the successful delivery of sport in our district.

4.6 Strategic priorities

Strategic priorities outline Council's commitment to sport delivered across five timing periods:

1. Quick wins – actions that we can implement within the next 12 months within existing resources
2. Short term – actions that can be implemented within the first three years of our current Long Term Plan 2021 -2024
3. Medium Term – actions that will be implemented in years four to seven of our current Long Term Plan 2021 -2024
4. Long Term – actions that will be implemented in years eight to ten of our current Long Term Plan 2021 -2024
5. Ongoing actions that will be implemented across a number of these timeframes

#	Approach	Action	Timing
1.	Make the most of what we have by supporting the provision of a network of quality and accessible sport and recreation facilities and experiences.	<p>Implement the Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan.</p> <p>Continue to advocate for the importance of the Rural Travel Fund and the need to increase funding to align with increasing inflation, transport costs and growth. Utilise uptake and demand to date to help build a picture to support this.</p>	<p>Refer network plans</p> <p>Quick wins and ongoing actions</p>
2.	Support the development of a strong and sustainable sports sector	<p>Continue to partner with Sport Hawkes Bay and utilise Regional Sports Organisations to increase people's capability and capacity within the sports sector. Include tools to assist clubs to be future-focused and sustainable.</p> <p>Promote and encourage increased participation in sport</p> <p>Explore opportunities for increasing youth involvement in sport. Need to have flexibility outside of a structured membership approach. Work with clubs to strengthen their link with schools.</p> <p>Continue to partner with Sport Hawkes Bay to ensure that sport is celebrated, and our local volunteer network recognised and valued.</p>	<p>Quick wins and ongoing actions</p>