



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Recreation Strategy identifies with the philosophy that quality recreation and leisure opportunities enhance the city as a place to live and visit. Recreation and leisure activities also contribute to the wellness and vitality of the city.

The strategy aims to:

- Offer an abundance and a diverse range of sport, recreation and leisure activities;
- Ensure these activities are easily accessed, affordable and available year round;
- Enhance the contribution of sport, recreation and leisure events to the city's economic prosperity;
- Encourage participation in a way that increases overall well-being.

The Recreation Strategy provides a map for how these aims will be achieved. It sets out a range of desired outcomes and objectives, with the actions needed to achieve them. The Council will use measures (city outcome indicators) for recreation and leisure to measure the impact of the actions.

The provision of facilities currently supported by the Council such as pools, sportsfields and indoor recreation facilities will remain a high priority. Currently these facilities tend to be grouped together in a series of sport and recreation hubs.

The Council understands that the provision of sport, recreation and leisure is provided for across a wide variety of organisations and communities. The Council plays a central role in this provision and will develop formal and informal partnerships with organisations and communities that add to the recreation and leisure opportunities.

Internally the Council will develop strong working relationships across business units so that recreation and leisure provision is considered when strategies, plans, initiatives and programmes are developed. Areas of particular focus will be open space, parks and gardens and urban design.

Providing recreation and leisure opportunities for all sectors of the community will continue to provide a major challenge for the recreation industry and territorial authorities. Not only technology and an aging population will need to be considered but also possible barriers to participation, which may include risk awareness (such as personal safety and litigation against event organisers). Future consideration for the recreational use of the natural environment versus the needs for conservation will also need to be addressed. Social change has also had a major impact on leisure time and "traditional" weekend recreation has been supplanted as a more consumer-driven society demands 24/7 access to goods and services. This has major impacts on families, in particular parents' leisure time and their ability to provide for their children's recreational needs.

Participation figures for Wellington, taken from 'Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) Facts: 1997 – 2001', indicate that 70% of all young people and 65% of all adults take part in sport and active leisure for at least 2.5hrs per week. One of the more disturbing statistics that has risen between 1997 and 2001 is the percentage of young people who are classified as sedentary, this figure has increased from 7% to 31% respectively. Globally New Zealand is still a relatively active nation but as we have seen in the United States of America, Australia and now in New Zealand, sedentary diseases are starting to have major financial consequences on governments. These trends require action now in the context of social change and perceived barriers to participation if the potential negative effects are to be avoided.