
REPORT 6
(1215/52/IM)

PRIORITY SEQUENCE FOR UPGRADING COMMUNITY PARKS

1. Purpose of Report

To establish a priority sequence for upgrading existing community parks.

2. Executive Summary

This report provides an objective priority sequence for community park upgrades over the next ten years. Developing these priorities has arisen from a need to clarify alignment between projects being put forward to the Strategy and Policy Committee and the need for other park upgrades.

Community parks are key areas of suburban open space; they are important places for passive recreation, leisure and contributing to a community's sense of place. Typically community parks are located within a suburban residential area and provide for a range of informal recreation activities for all age groups. Ideally there is a community playground, seating, and a flat grass area large enough for informal ball games, running around and picnicking, and some natural green space nearby.

This report has identified all council owned community parks in Wellington City. It has scored them against guidelines for an optimally functioning community park and prioritised them according to opportunities for improvement, strategic fit, relationships with Asset Management Plans, other council projects and programmes, and community demographics.

A total of 17 community parks have been identified and eight parks have been evaluated as priorities for upgrades and have been put into a priority sequence. The sequence is as follows:

1. Central Park
2. Cog Park
3. Shorland Park
4. Johnsonville Memorial Park
5. Grasslees Reserve
6. Charles Plimmer Park-Pirie St
7. Willowbank Reserve.
8. Katherine Mansfield

This report also discusses the implementation of the priority sequence. The next three years are already committed to existing parks projects, which includes the first priorities of the sequence, (Central Park and Cog Park). For Shorland Park there may be an opportunity to improve linkages and flow and this will be progressed in 2006/07.

Implementation of the next community park upgrade project will be in 2009/10. This aligns strongly with the Plimmer Bequest forward programme and expands the Plimmer project idea of upgrading five suburban parks.

Initial planning work is required on the other community parks identified in the priority sequence. This will define the scope, engage the community, calculate cost estimates and consider funding sources (Plimmer Bequest or LTCCP). It will also identify what components of the upgrades are eligible for Plimmer Bequest funding and what needs to be calculated into the relevant AMPs and LTCCP. It is important that this initial planning work is completed within the next two years so the information can be included in the next Plimmer Bequest report due in 2008/09.

Community park upgrades need not be expensive, but should address the functionality of the park and its relevance to the immediate community.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Approve the framework for establishing a priority sequence for upgrading community parks*
3. *Approve the priority sequence for community park upgrades*

Note

- *That the next three years are already committed to implementing existing parks projects, which include the first priorities of the sequence. I.e. Central Park and Cog Park.*
- *Improving the links to and from Shorland Park will be considered through co-ordination with the safer roads programme.*
- *Implementation of the next community park upgrade will be in 2009/10. This aligns strongly with the Plimmer Bequest forward programme and Plimmer project idea of upgrading five suburban parks.*
- *Initial planning work for the community parks upgrades, identified in the sequence, will be undertaken prior to the Plimmer Bequest Report to consider the next Plimmer project(s) due in 2008/09. This initial planning work will define the scope of the upgrade and identify what components of the upgrade are eligible for Plimmer Bequest funding and what needs to be calculated into the relevant AMP's and LTCCP.*
- *It is important to acknowledge the Plimmer Bequest Criteria and Framework when considering implementation of the priority sequence.*

4. Background

Over the past twelve months a number of reports relating to park upgrades have been presented to the Strategy and Policy Committee. These included the Owhiro Bay Quarry Entrance, Shorland Park, Cog Park and the Plimmer Bequest forward programme. Many of these projects have a coastal focus and are large one off capital upgrades that require additional capital investment over and above existing asset management renewal programmes. The drivers for these projects have varied from existing management plans, community expectations and/or New Initiatives.

During these report presentations Councillors wished to know the priority alignment between these projects and other park upgrade projects.

The purpose of this report is to clarify the open space network framework, asset management planning and provide a priority sequence for upgrading community parks. It is envisaged that this study will be used as a guide when considering any future capital investment for upgrading community parks. It is seen as a flexible guide and not a blueprint requiring future financial commitment.

The scope of the study focuses on existing community parks and evaluates how each community park functions and meets the local community's needs.

The study does not include upgrades of sports fields, recreational hubs, destination parks¹, inner city parks², natural, botanic and coastal areas, or normal asset renewal maintenance e.g., rubbish bins, seating, fencing *etc* repairs and replacement.

Upgrade opportunities that are identified through this study may be capital projects that are over and above the existing Parks and Gardens asset management plans and budgets. However there is opportunity to align community park upgrade opportunities with asset management planning and other council projects and programmes (e.g., playground upgrades programme, toilet upgrades strategic Growth Spine planning work, Plimmer Bequest).

This planning study will align with the Plimmer Bequest forward programme which was approved in February 2006. It was scheduled in the Plimmer forward programme that the Committee will consider future Plimmer projects in 2008/09. The project ideas that are to remain on the list include; the upgrade of five suburban parks, Lyall Bay beach restoration and new demonstrating gardens in the Botanic Garden. This study will

¹ Inner city parks are safe, functional stimulating spaces that cater for office workers and outdoor spaces for inner city residents. These parks should be distributed through high pedestrian and high residential living areas e.g. Te Aro Park, Midland Park, Cobblestone Park. These parks are programmed within the Central City Spaces/Parks/Plazas CX409.

² Destination Parks are high profile parks that residents and visitors are willing to travel to. The park may enjoy a particular advantageous location (such as water front) or have recreational assets of a higher quality than a local or community park. Destination Parks will service the needs of the local community, but due to their high profile and focus, are beyond the scope of the current project. A list of Destination Parks is provided in Appendix A.

expand on the project idea of upgrading five suburban parks geographically spread across the city. It was noted in the Plimmer Bequest forward programme that this study would be completed in 2006/07. This work has now been brought forward to now.

The report format includes an outline of the planning methodology, identifies and considers strategic alignment, provides a detailed assessment of each part of the process, and concludes with a priority sequential programme for upgrading existing community parks.

5. Discussion

5.1 Planning Methodology - The Process

To determine a priority sequence for existing community park upgrades an objective and robust process had to be established so decisions could be logically justified.

The process adopted is as follows;

- Step 1. Define community parks using existing strategic policy e.g. Capital Spaces – Wellington’s open space strategy, Recreation Strategy and Playground Policy.
- Step 2. Identify existing community parks.
- Step 3. Develop guidelines for an optimal functioning community park.
- Step 4. Evaluate existing community parks against guidelines for an optimal functioning community park.
- Step 5. Analyse and establish priority sequence by considering strategic fit, relationship with AMPs and other council projects and programmes, and demographic growth.

5.2 Defining Community Parks

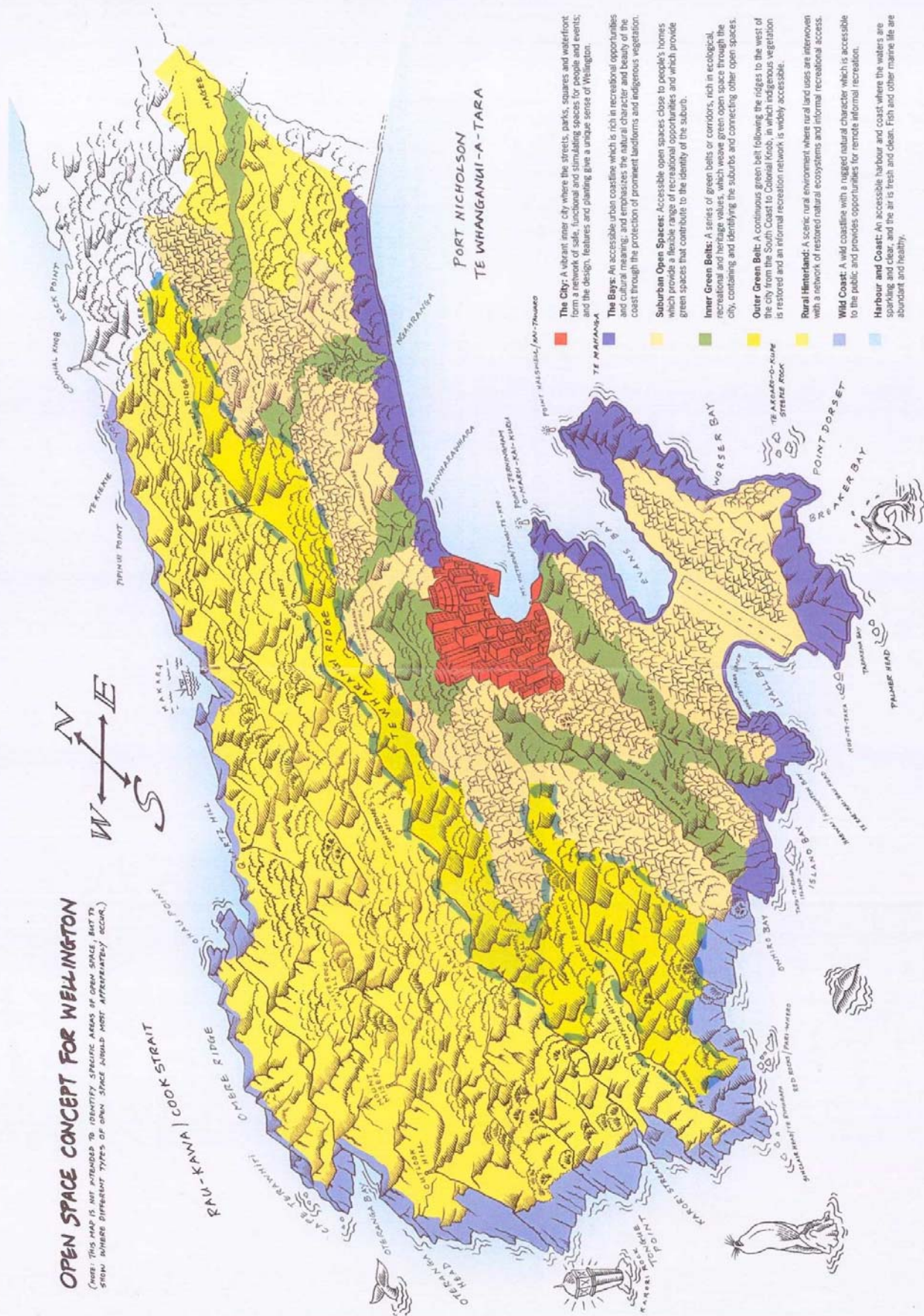
5.2.1 Capital Spaces - Open space strategy for Wellington

Capital Spaces - Open Space Strategy for Wellington identifies Wellington’s open spaces and divides the district into seven open space areas based on their key open space values and features.

The conceptual diagram and table below identifies and shows the relationship between these areas and how they fit with existing management plans and policy documents.

OPEN SPACE CONCEPT FOR WELLINGTON

(NOTE: THIS MAP IS NOT INTENDED TO IDENTIFY SPECIFIC AREAS OF OPEN SPACE, BUT TO SHOW WHERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF OPEN SPACE WOULD MOST APPROPRIATELY OCCUR.)



- The City:** A vibrant inner city where the streets, parks, squares and waterfront form a network of safe, functional and stimulating spaces for people and events; and the design, features and planting give a unique sense of Wellington.
- The Bays:** An accessible urban coastline which is rich in recreational opportunities and cultural meaning; and emphasizes the natural character and beauty of the coast through the protection of prominent landforms and indigenous vegetation.
- Suburban Open Spaces:** Accessible open spaces close to people's homes which provide a flexible range of recreational opportunities and which provide green spaces that contribute to the identity of the suburb.
- Inner Green Belt:** A series of green belts or corridors, rich in ecological, recreational and heritage values, which weave green open space through the city, containing and identifying the suburbs and connecting other open spaces.
- Outer Green Belt:** A continuous green belt following the ridges to the west of the city from the South Coast to Colonial Knob, in which indigenous vegetation is restored and an informal recreation network is widely accessible.
- Rural Hinterland:** A scenic rural environment where rural land uses are interwoven with a network of restored natural ecosystems and informal recreational access.
- Wild Coast:** A wild coastline with a rugged natural character which is accessible to the public, and provides opportunities for remote informal recreation.
- Harbour and Coast:** An accessible harbour and coast where the waters are sparkling and clear, and the air is fresh and clean. Fish and other marine life are abundant and healthy.

Figure 1. *Open Space Concept for Wellington, Capital Spaces (1998)*

Table 1. Open Space Areas

Open Space Concept Area	Existing Plans and Programmes that relate to Concept Area
The City: <i>A vibrant inner city where the streets, parks, squares and waterfront form a network of safe, functional and stimulating spaces for people and events; and the design, features and planting give a unique sense of Wellington.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterfront Framework • Urban Design Strategy • Glover Park Management Plan • Key Public Places CAPEX programme (Midland Park, Te Aro Park, Cobblestone Park)
The Bays: <i>Accessible urban coastline rich in recreational opportunities and cultural meaning; and emphasizes the natural character and beauty of the coast through the protection of prominent landforms and indigenous vegetation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Coast Management Plan (2002) • Open Space Access Plan (2004)
Suburban Open Spaces: <i>Accessible open spaces close to people's homes which provide a flexible range of recreational opportunities and which provide green spaces that contribute to the identity of the suburb.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Growth Management Framework (2003); proposed Northern Reserves Management Plans • Playground Policy (2002) • Public Conveniences (Wharepaku) Policy (2002) • Recreation Strategy (2003) • Open Space Access Plan (2004)
Inner Green Belts: <i>A series of green belts or corridors, rich in ecological, recreational and heritage values, which weave green open space through the city, containing and identifying the suburbs and connecting other open spaces.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellington Town Belt Management Plan (1995) • Northern Growth Management Framework (2003) • Trelissick Park Management Plan (June 1995) • Seton Nossiter Park Management Plan (1996) • Combined Management Plan: Wellington Botanic Garden, Anderson Park, Bolton Street Memorial Park (2002) • Open Space Access Plan (2004)
Outer Green Belt: <i>A continuous green belt following the ridges to the west of the city from the South coast to Colonial Knob, in which indigenous vegetation is restored and an informal recreation network is widely accessible.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outer Green Belt Management Plan (2004) • Otari Native Botanic Garden Management Plan (1996) • Open Space Access Plan (2004)
Rural Hinterland: <i>A scenic rural environment where rural land uses are interwoven with a network of restored natural ecosystems and informal recreational access.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horokiwi Rural Community Plan • Makara Rural Community Plan • Ohariu Valley Rural Community Plan • South Karori Rural community Plan
Wild Coast: <i>A wild coastline with a rugged natural character which is accessible to the public and provides opportunities for remote informal recreation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Coast Management Plan • Rural Community Plans

The **Suburban Open Space** area is the focus of this report. *Capital Spaces* defines suburban open spaces as those close to people's homes which provide a flexible range of recreational opportunities and which provide green spaces that contribute to the identity of the suburb. Suburban Open Spaces are relatively small scale green areas in

the suburbs and include community parks, school grounds, playgrounds, sportsfields and private gardens. The types of public suburban open spaces are defined more clearly in the *Table 2*. Definitions have been developed from *Capital Spaces* (1998), the *Recreation Strategy* (2003), and the *Playgrounds Policy* (2002).

Suburban Open Spaces are a strategic priority given their influence on sense of place, health and wellbeing, liveability, inclusiveness and connectivity. Strategic policy, such as city containment and infill housing, has an impact on suburban open space where less space for private gardens means there is a greater demand for higher quality public open spaces. In addition, increasing trends such as the rise in obesity, population growth, aging population and technological advancement, all have an effect on the management of suburban open space.

Table 2. Types of suburban open spaces

Type	Definition
Community Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An area of public open space provided within a suburban residential area. • Provide for a range of informal recreation activities for all age groups. • Emphasis is on providing for the needs of the local community, this may include; easy pedestrian access, play equipment and seating, flat or gently undulating grass areas, and adequate space for running and informal ball games. • These areas will typically be located centrally within the geographical community, ideally within walking distance of residential dwellings. • Be safe (i.e. observable from other houses or open spaces, have safe exit and entry points). • Contain and/or capture community character and sense of place.
Local Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower profile area generally not visible or known of to non-residents. • May contain play equipment but generally with limited facilities and amenities. • These will often lie on a pedestrian/commuting route and are typically bordered on several sides by houses. • Generally have limited amount of appropriate space for development. e.g. The Crescent Play Area
Primary Sports Facility and Recreation Hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groupings of sport and recreational facilities located within main, well-accessed centres of the city. • High standard facilities such as swimming facilities, sportsfields, recreation centre, play equipment, picnic/BBQ area, walking tracks, skateparks, golf courses, civic areas and casual outdoor space. e.g. Hataitai Park, Kilbirnie Park.
Sports fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sports field is a reserve that is designed for, and used by organised sport. • The reserve will probably have formally maintained sports turf for a mixture of winter and/or summer sport. • The sports turf areas are likely to be maintained to an appropriate standard for the sports code use. • Toilets, changing facilities and car parking are likely to be available and some reserves may have resident sports club facilities.

Community Parks

Community parks are important places for passive recreation, leisure and in contributing to a community's sense of place. As places for passive recreation and

leisure, they should be easily accessed and available all year round (*Recreation Strategy*, 2003). As places important to a community's sense of place, they must provide for a range of events and recreation activities, be relatively prominent, and capture the character of the community (*Sense of Place Report*, 2003).

A well functioning community park is an essential part of a community's identity; providing for a range of activities, enhancing health, social networks and helping to build a cohesive community. Despite this, there has been no programme guiding the development and upgrade of community parks. This is likely to be due to their relatively low profile when compared with urban/inner city or destination parks along with a general lack of information on community park utilisation.

Existing community park assets are maintained in accordance with Parks and Gardens Asset Management Plans. This means that the replacement of assets is governed by condition and life cycle assessment, but that there is little capacity for overall park redevelopment or upgrade planning.

The level of park redevelopment or upgrade does not necessarily need to be set at a grandiose scale, but should consider local needs, site characteristics and restrictions, affordability, and must be deliverable.

Other suburban open spaces

Sportsfields are also a key suburban open space, and these are covered by comprehensive Sportsfield Asset Management Plan that includes programming for upgrades. Recreation hubs are similarly important, and are covered by Recreation Wellington. Local Parks – while still an important part of the suburban open space network, service a smaller proportion of the community and have less potential for upgrades beyond standard asset management plans.

5.2.2 Other Relevant Strategies

The Recreation Strategy

The Recreation Strategy (2003) is underpinned by a philosophy that quality recreation and leisure opportunities enhance the city as a place to live and visit, and contribute to the wellness and vitality of the city. The Strategy aims to offer an abundance and diverse range of sport, recreation and leisure activities that are easily accessed, affordable and available year round. It aims to enhance the contribution made by recreation and leisure events and encourage participation in a way that increases overall well-being.

There are clear linkages between the Recreation Strategy and the provision of community parks. The emphasis of the Recreation Strategy is on participation and provision of a wide variety of accessible recreational opportunities. Community parks provide a wide range of informal recreation opportunities for all ages that are accessible to people's homes. Community parks are unique and offer different experiences than those found when visiting the coast or inner or outer green belts.

Playgrounds Policy

The Playgrounds Policy (2002) was developed to provide the Council with a framework to guide the provision of playgrounds and to assist in the management of the playground asset.

Playgrounds are defined as: *An area of public open space with play equipment and play experiences that provides a range of recreation activities for children and facilities for caregivers.*

The objective of the Playgrounds Policy is: *the provision of a range of safe, enjoyable and stimulating playgrounds across the City in a way that best meets the needs of children, care-givers, communities and the City for access, safety, amenity and maintenance.*

There are clear parallels with community parks and playground standards and requirements. *Capital Spaces* refers to playgrounds as an important component of the City's suburban open space resource and a facility that can assist in promoting local centres and a sense of community. The majority of community parks contain a playground; however community parks also focus on the wider needs of the community, catering for all age groups, a range of passive recreation, and contributing to a community's identity and sense of place.

Social Strategy

The Social Strategy (April 2001) outlines outcomes and objectives the Council wishes to see achieved in the social area in order to build strong communities. Wellington City Council considers that strong communities, and the well-being of community members, are of critical importance and it has a leading role to play in fostering both. Outcomes relevant to community parks include:

- Participation (to ensure that adequate recreation, leisure and learning opportunities exist for all members of the community, and encourage participation and “bringing people together” in a wide range of activities)
- Access to resources (to enable all to function as full members of the community by maintaining access to community facilities and public services, including the natural environment).

Sense of Place Report

The Sense of Place Report (2003) identifies guidelines that underpin all of the Council's strategic policy and planning processes and documents. Ten characteristics that are key to Sense of Place are identified in the report, and those relevant to community parks are:

- The range of events and recreation activities, both outdoors and indoors;
- The high quality and diversity of public spaces, including prominent streets, park and squares;
- The distinct character of communities, neighbourhoods, urban quarters and suburban centres – their people and buildings – and the city's confident, unpretentious personality;
- The symbols, images, places and buildings that identify the people and places of Te-Whanganui—Tara and Wellington, and tell their history.

5.3 Existing Community Parks

An assessment team (comprising officers from Parks and Gardens and Open Space and Recreation Planning) reviewed all Wellington City Council parks and reserves and identified each community park in accordance with the definition provided in Section 5.2.1. A total of 17 community parks were identified and are listed in *Appendix B*. These correspond with 14 (of 18) community playgrounds. Ideally all community parks would include features of a community playground, however due to topographical limitations and community preferences this is not always the case.

A basic visual analysis shows that community parks are fairly well distributed throughout the City (refer to map in *Appendix C*). There are some differences in allocations of suburban open space, for example some areas have beaches, sportsfields, or the outer green belt. These differences reflect the evolution of Wellington's development as well as topographical limitations. In addition, in the north, development is now at a critical stage for laying the future of suburban open spaces through reserve contributions.

5.4 Evaluation of Functionality of Existing Community Parks

5.4.1 Optimum Community Parks

Characteristics of an optimum community park are presented in *Table 3* below. These have been developed from the Playgrounds Policy, information from New Zealand Recreation Association, and best practise from other Councils. The optimum will not necessarily be appropriate in every situation, and it is important to consider how well each community park serves local needs and how it fits in with the local setting.

Table 3. Characteristics of an optimum Community Park

Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located within 10-15 mins walking distance of residential dwellings. • Accessible via safe and convenient walking and cycling routes - access should not include the need to cross arterial roads, railways or other major physical barriers. • Accessible for all • Car parking space available. • Connectivity to public access ways, recreation networks and other recreation facilities.
Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observable from neighbouring houses and/or other public areas. • A number of safe entry/exit points. • Follow best practise in safety design.
Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enough flat or gently undulating space for running and informal ball games/kick-abouts.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheltered from wind with good aspect • Shade available • Natural green space • Heritage or local character enhanced
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets • Play equipment • Infrastructure to support community events • Picnic area

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space for multiple informal recreation activities
Functionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good flow and user-friendly • Follow best practise landscape design principles

5.4.2 Evaluating community park function

The guidelines for an optimum community park provide a framework against which the City's current community parks can be compared. This comparison gives an indication of how well the parks are functioning. This exercise does not rate the parks condition (covered by asset management plans) nor does it rate its use (which may be misleading e.g. a park may not be highly used because it is in need of an upgrade).

Park function is summarised by scoring existing Community Parks from 1-3, where 1 indicates low conformity with the optimum community park guidelines, and 3 indicates high conformity with optimum guidelines. Parks that scored the highest are those closest to the optimum community park, those that scored the lowest present the greatest opportunity for development.

The guidelines for an optimum community park include six criteria, and the City's community parks have been scored against each of these criteria. For some criteria, constraints such as topography were taken into consideration (e.g., size will be relative). Community Parks were scored using the weightings described in *Table 4* below.

Table 4. Scoring guidelines for community park function

Guidelines	Score = 1	Score = 2	Score = 3
Accessible	Poor accessibility	Moderately accessible	Highly accessible to all, with car parking, good connectivity, and within community walking and cycling distance.
Safe	Perceived as unsafe	Some safety aspects	Very safe i.e. observable from neighbouring houses, safe entry/exit points
Size	Not enough room for informal recreation but potential for development.	Limited space for informal recreation	Adequate size for a range of informal recreation e.g. ball games/kick-about
Environment	Has less than two of the criteria of an optimum environment.	Has two or more criteria of an optimum environment.	Optimum environment i.e. is sheltered with good aspect, has natural green space, and contributes to sense of place.
Facilities	Has few facilities.	Has average facilities that mostly meet the needs of the community.	Has good facilities meeting/reflecting needs of community that are appropriate for place.
Functionality	Has poor flow and usability.	Has average flow and usability.	Has good flow and usability that enhances sense of place

From a possible score range of 6 to 18(excellent fit with optimum community park guidelines), Wellington City Council's Community Parks scored from 11 to 18. A full list of the scoring is provided in Appendix D.

5.4 *Prioritising Community Parks for upgrade*

In order to begin prioritising community parks for upgrades, the mean score of existing community park function was calculated, which was 14. All parks scoring the mean (14) and below were listed. These community parks are:

- Central Park
- Cog Park
- Shorland Park
- Pirie Street Play area through to Charles Plimmer Park, Mt Victoria
- Johnsonville Memorial Park
- Grassless Park, Tawa
- Willowbank Park, Tawa
- Katherine Mansfield Park, Thorndon

Each of these community parks was then evaluated against its relationship with the Growth Spine (Draft Urban Development Strategy, 2006), other activities (e.g. infrastructure works, Safer Roads programmes, toilet upgrades), strategic fit with the City's priorities, relevant management plans, and number of residents that the community park potentially services. This information is outlined in Appendix E and is discussed below.

The nine community parks which scored above the mean are either an excellent or above average fit with the optimal community park guidelines. Therefore any major upgrade work in these parks would be difficult to justify.

5.5 *Recommended priority sequence for upgrading Community Parks*

Officers recommend to Committee the following priority sequence for upgrading community parks;

1. Central Park
2. Cog Park
3. Improving links to & from Shorland Park
4. Johnsonville Memorial Park
5. Grasslees Park
6. Pirie St/ Charles Plimmer Park
7. Willowbank Park
8. Katherine Mansfield Park

Central Park and Cog Park have already been identified as high priorities and have funding allocated for their upgrades in the LTCCP.

The next priority for community park upgrades is Shorland Park. In the Shorland Park in Context paper, presented to Committee in December 2005, it was identified that Shorland Park was not only a community park with a coastal flavour, but a destination hub for both locals and visitors to the coast. Use of Shorland Park is likely to increase due to new initiatives attracting more people to the South Coast. Good links from the coast to the park are therefore important. When evaluated against the optimal community park guidelines, Shorland Park scored relatively well against most of the criteria except in the area of functionality (poor flow & usability).

There is a strong community interest in Shorland Park and although the community have been made aware that future improvements will occur if funding is made available, the extensive consultation and preparation of the long term development framework has raised expectation that there will be some level of upgrade. The current evaluation confirms that improving the links to and from the park and the greatest priority for upgrade at Shorland Park. There may be an opportunity to begin this through co-ordination with the safer roads programme.

The next priority is Johnsonville Memorial Park. Johnsonville Memorial Park is a priority because of its location in the growth spine. Johnsonville has been identified as a future major destination hub for both suburban centre and high density housing use. An upgrade of this park must align with the Johnsonville town centre long term overall concept and action plan, which is due to be completed in early 2007. There may be an opportunity to co-ordinate the upgrade with upgrade the Keith Spry Pool extension project which is programmed for 2008/09.

The upgrade of Grasslees Reserve is a priority given the high proportion of youth in Tawa and the need to upgrade the skating rink and create a better connection through to the pool. Its central Tawa location is ideal to serve the Tawa community as a whole.

Preparing an overall development plan for the Pirie St/ Charles Plimmer Park is the next priority. There are a number of small isolated projects occurring within this park which need to be integrated. (For example, Commemorative Tree Programme, future use of ex-bandoliers club area, future of the petanque court, accessible easy grade walkway circuit). An overall development plan will guide decisions and provide a long term framework for implementation.

Although this park is part of the Wellington Town Belt it is used as a community park (i.e. play area, informal recreation kick about space). However, there are no facilities (e.g. toilets, power and car parking), effectively limiting its performance as a community park. The growing elderly population both in this area and city wide puts a greater demand on the need for additional accessible circular walkways. As stated in the Town Belt Management Plan, this park would be suitable for such a facility. Given the central city context of this park, any upgrade will complement existing surrounding facilities such as Oriental Bay beach, Waitangi Park (considered to be a destination park) and Mount Victoria Lookout.

Willowbank Park is also a priority but considered as a lower priority against the parks identified above. This is due to its location and the limited number of residential homes surrounding the park.

Upgrading Katherine Mansfield Park is considered a longer term priority because the likely demographic growth and increase of infill housing in the Thorndon area. Further research into land ownership will be required prior to any upgrade project.

5.6 Recommended Action Plan – Where to from here?

The recommended priority sequence for upgrading community parks provides a guide for future decision making and managing expectations. The next step is to consider how this priority sequence is implemented in context with other parks projects.

The recent review of budgets, future CAPEX capping, existing parks projects and the capacity to deliver are important factors that influence the programme.

The next three years are already committed to implementing existing parks projects such as Cog Park, Owhiro Bay Quarry entrance, and Plimmer projects (Scorching Bay and Central Park upgrades). Therefore, implementation of the next community park upgrade project will be in 2009/10. This aligns strongly with the Plimmer Bequest forward programme and expands the Plimmer project idea of upgrading five suburban parks.

Before these community park upgrade projects can be considered as potential Plimmer Bequest projects, planning work is required and the Plimmer Bequest criteria and framework acknowledged. The first step will be to determine the scope of the upgrade. This will be guided by the evaluation of functionality of community parks, (i.e. where is the greatest potential for improvement; accessibility, size, environment, flow etc).

Once the scope of the upgrade has been determined, preliminary cost estimates can be calculated and funding sources determined. (E.g. Plimmer Bequest or LTCCP). This planning work will identify what components of the upgrades are eligible for Plimmer Bequest funding and what needs to be calculated into the relevant AMPs and LTCCP. It is important that this planning work is completed within the next two years so the information can be included in the next Plimmer Bequest report due in 2008/09.

This planning work must also consider opportunities and constraints, affordability, and community engagement.

6. Conclusion

This planning study has established a priority sequence for upgrading community parks by following an objective and robust evaluation process. Evaluating community parks against guidelines for an optimal community park not only guides priorities but can help define the scope of the upgrade required.

Overall community parks in Wellington are fairly well distributed throughout the city and most are above average when scored against the optimal community park guidelines.

It is important to undertake further supplementary planning work on the community parks identified in the priority sequence to define what's needs to be done, how much it will cost and what funding is available.

Contact Officer: *Joanna Gillanders, Open space Planning Team Leader and Amber Bill, Planner; Biodiversity and Ecology*

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

This planning study has been based on existing policy such as Capital Spaces, Recreation Strategy and the Playgrounds policy, and fully supports the principles and aims identified in these strategic documents.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

The supplementary planning work identified in this study will be able to be funded through A004 Parks & Open Space planning. However the results of this planning work may lead to some future increase in capital expenditure in coming years.

3) Treaty of Waitangi consideration

This planning study is based on existing policy. Treaty of Waitangi considerations will be considered in further detailed during the detail design stages

4) Decision-Making

The report outlines the objective and robust process which has been followed to make the recommendations. It reflects the views and preferences of those internally with an interest in this matter who have been consulted with.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

This planning study is based on existing policy. Community consultation will occur during the detail design stages.

6) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report is consistent with existing policy.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	List of Destination Parks
Appendix B	List of Community Parks
Appendix C	Map showing location of Destination and Community Parks
Appendix D	Evaluation of Community park function
Appendix E	Priority Sequence evaluation

APPENDIX A – List of Destination Parks

Destination Parks

Park	Justification
Botanical Gardens of Wellington	Primarily a destination park (botanic garden) however does fulfil function of community park. Managed under separate Management Plan and AMP - - <i>not included in evaluation of existing community park function</i>
Otari – Wilton’s Bush	Primarily a destination park (botanic garden) however does fulfil function of community park. Managed under separate Management Plan and AMP - - <i>not included in evaluation of existing community park function</i>
Scorching Bay	Primarily a coastal destination, but with potential to fulfil function of a community park. - - <i>not included in evaluation of existing community park function</i>
Waitangi Park	Waterfront destination (not suburban) - <i>not included in evaluation of existing community park function</i>
Frank Kitts	Waterfront destination (not suburban) - <i>not included in evaluation of existing community park function</i>
Shorland Park	Primarily a Community Park, but at coastal destination – <i>included in evaluation of existing community park function</i>
Khandallah Park	Primarily a Community Park, but at Outer Green Belt and summer pool destination - <i>included in evaluation of existing community park function</i>
Makara Peak	Outer Green Belt Mountain Biking destination – no function as community park <i>not included in evaluation of existing community park function</i>

APPENDIX B – List of Community Parks

Park	Location
Grasslees Reserve	Tawa
Willowbank Park	Tawa
Churton Park & play area / Lakewood Reserve	Churton Park
Johnsonville Memorial Park and Play area	Johnsonville
Khandallah Park & play area	Khandallah
Nairnville Park & play area	Ngaio
Cummings Park	Ngaio
Wadestown Plunket & play area	Wadestown
Katherine Mansfield Park	Thorndon
Aro St Park	Aro Valley
Central Park	Te Aro/ Brooklyn
Pirie St play area to Charles Plimmer Park	Mt Victoria
Carrara Park	Newtown
Cog Park	Hataitai
Shorland Park	Island Bay
Churchill Park	Seatoun

APPENDIX C – Map of destination and community parks

APPENDIX D – Evaluation of Community Park Function

NB. Scores: 1 = poor fit with optimum park guidelines; 2 = average fit with optimum guidelines; 3 = good fit with optimum park guidelines

ID No.	Community Park Name	Suburb	Existing Community Playground? Yes/No	Accessible: safe walking and cycling distance, accessible to people of limited mobility, car parking, connected to public access ways	Safe: Perceived as safe, safe entry/exit points, observable	Size: large enough for range of informal rec	Environment: sheltered, sun, natural green space, sense of place	Facilities: toilets, play, events, picnic, reflect comm. needs	Functionality: good flow & usability, landscaped	Total Score	Comments
P0449	Central Park / Play Area & Surrounds	Brooklyn	Y	2	1	2	3	2	1	11	
P0450/P1628	Churton Park & Play Area / Lakewood Reserve	Churton Park	Y	3	3	3	2	2	2	15	Scored on current state (upgrade planned)
P1749	Cog Park	Hataitai	N	2	3	3	2	1	1	12	
P0567	Shorland Park & Play Area	Island Bay	Y	2	3	3	2	3	1	14	
P2307/P0493/PP0166	Johnsonville Memorial Park & Play Area / 2 Wanaka St / Wanaka St Garden Park	Johnsonville	Y	3	3	2	2	2	2	14	Facilities available at the adjacent Keith Spry pool
P0522	Karori Park & Play Area	Karori	Y	3	3	3	3	3	3	18	Scored on upgraded state (upgrade in progress)
P1623	Nairville Park and Play Area	Khandallah	N	3	3	3	3	2	3	17	Requires access to public toilets (currently in Rec Centre only)
P0592	Khandallah Park & Play Area	Khandallah	Y	3	2	3	3	3	2	16	Future of pool is key issue for this area. Toilets are due to be upgraded 06/07. Dense veg impacts safety perception as do entry/exit points. Interpretation signage/map boards need improving - will happen with existing budgets.

Appendix E – Priority Sequence Evaluation

Community Park	Score	Growth Spine	Strategic Fit	Relationship with other activities	Population (2001 Census)	Comments
Central Park / Play Area & Surrounds	11	yes	<p>The upgrade of this park fits with 8 of the Council's strategic outcomes. These include; more liveable, stronger sense of place, more eventful, better connected, safer, healthier, more sustainable and more actively engaged.</p> <p>This community park is managed under the Town Belt Management Plan (TBMP) & the planned upgrade is in accordance with the TBMP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community playground upgrade 2005/06 ○ Plimmer Bequest forward programme 	<p>Brooklyn: Total = 3,684 Under 15 years = 606 (16.4%). Over 65 years = 261 (7.1%)</p> <p>Mt Cook Wallace St: Total = 3522 Under 15 years = 336 (9.5 %) Over 65 years = 159 (4.5%)</p> <p>Aro Nairn St: Total = 3318 Under 15 years = 279 (8.4%) Over 65 years = 240 (7.4 %)</p>	<p>The upgrade of Central Park has already been identified as a high priority and considered the best fit for Plimmer Bequest funding in 2007/08 and 08/09.</p>
Pirie St Play area/Majoribanks Reserve/Charles Plimmer Park	11	yes	<p>The upgrade of this park fits with 7 of the Council's strategic outcomes. These include; more liveable, stronger sense of place, more eventful, better connected, safer, healthier, and more actively engaged.</p> <p>The series of these parks also is managed in accordance with the TBMP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is stated in the TBMP that council is to investigate a course for a circular walk accessible for people with disabilities. ○ The Bandoliers marching club have relinquished their lease of their club house and site. An options study is required for this site to assist future decision making about its future use or lessee. ○ Charles Plimmer Park has been 	<p>Mt Victoria West: Total = 5,013 Under 15 years = 378 (7.5 %) Over 65 years = 273 (5.4%)</p> <p>Oriental Bay Total = 1059 Under 15 years = 78 (7.4 %) Over 65 years = 192 (18.1 %)</p>	<p>Prepare an overall concept plan or long term development framework for this park to ensure integration of projects.</p> <p>This is a priority as it will avoid ad hoc decisions, has a central city context, growing elderly population, and provide for the growing demand for additional easy grade accessible walkway circuits.</p>

				<p>identified as a site for memorial tree planting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hazardous tree management programme 		
Cog Park	12	No	The upgrade of this park fits with 5 of the Council's strategic outcomes. These include; more liveable, stronger sense of place, more eventful, healthier, more actively engaged.		<p>Hataitai: Total = 4,104 Under 15 years = 741 (18.1%) Over 65 years = 258 (6.3 %)</p> <p>Kilbirnie west Total = 2937 Under 15 years = 474 (16.1%) Over 65 years = 288 (9.8%)</p>	The SP Committee has already approved the concept plan of Cog Park in Feb 2006 and funding allocated in the LTCCP.
Katherine Mansfield Park	12	yes	The upgrade of this park fits with 5 of the Council's strategic outcomes. These include; more liveable, stronger sense of place, better connected, healthier and more actively engaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A new community playground is proposed for the Thorndon area in 2007/08. ○ There are opportunities to link this park with the motorway walkway linkages which are currently progressing. ○ The future of the Blind Garden needs to be reviewed some time. ○ There may be a requirement for a new public park in the Thorndon area. 	<p>Thorndon: Total = 3,153 Under 15 years = 261 (8.3%) Over 65 years = 249 (7.9%)</p>	Consideration needs to be given to the wider context of this park and what future new open space areas may develop. This is a longer term priority and demographic trends should be monitored.

Willowbank Reserve & Play Area	12	No	<p>The upgrade of this park fits with 6 of the Council's strategic outcomes. These include; more liveable, stronger sense of place, more eventful, better connected, safer, healthier.</p> <p>This park fits under the Northern Growth Management Framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Draft Northern Reserves Management Plan is currently being prepared. ○ This park is used for the commemorative tree programme and historic apple trees. ○ The Glenside to Linden walkway link has been proposed as part of the track sector upgrades. ○ The Porirua Stream Catchment study is proposed in 2007/08. ○ The Redwood Scout group has relinquished their lease and trying to sell & relocate their building of the park. ○ The toilets are due to be upgraded in 2014/15 	<p>Tawa South: Total = 3,510 Under 15 years = 813 (23 %) Over 65 years = 420 (12 %)</p>	<p>Prepare an overall concept plan or long term development framework for this park to ensure integration of projects.</p> <p>Given the less central location of this park it is a relatively lower priority.</p>
Grasslees Reserve	13	No	<p>The upgrade of this park fits with 6 of the Council's strategic outcomes. These include; more liveable, stronger sense of place, better connected, safer, healthier and more actively engaged.</p> <p>This park fits under the Northern Growth Management Framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Draft Northern Reserves Management Plan is currently being prepared. ○ The Glenside to Linden walkway link has been proposed as part of the track sector upgrades. ○ The Porirua Stream Catchment study is proposed in 	<p>Central Tawa: Total = 4,095 Under 15 years = 1005 (24.6 %) Over 65 years = 438 (10.7 %)</p> <p>Linden Total = 3795 Under 15 years = 912 (24 %) Over 65 years = 402 (10.6 %)</p> <p>Greenacres Total = 1218</p>	<p>Given the high proportion of youth in Tawa, and its central Tawa location, upgrading this park is a priority.</p>

				<p>2007/08.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The toilets are due to be upgraded in 2013/14. ○ The future of the roller skating rink needs to be reviewed some stage. 	<p>Under 15 years = 336 (27%) Over 65 years = 87 (7.1%)</p>	
Johnsonville Memorial Park & Play Area / 2 Wanaka St / Wanaka St Garden Park	14	yes	The upgrade of this park fits with 6 of the Council's strategic outcomes. These include; more liveable, stronger sense of place, better connected, safer, healthier and more actively engaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategic planning study for Johnsonville is currently being done. A long term concept plan & action plan will be completed by early 2007. ○ Keith Spry Pool extension programme ○ Clubs/ lease issues??? 	<p>Johnsonville South: Total =2703 Under 15 years = 585 (21 %) Over 65 years = 327 (12%)</p> <p>Johnsonville North Total = 1830 Under 15 years = 375 (20 %) Over 65 years = 177 (9.7%)</p> <p>Johnsonville east Total = 1914 Under 15 years = 375 (19.6%) Over 65 years = 213 (11%)</p>	Opportunities to coordinate this upgrade with the Keith Spry Pool extension Programme (2008/09). Further planning is required and must be aligned with town centre long term overall concept and action plan (2007)
Shorland Park	14	No	The upgrade of this park fits with 6 of the Council's strategic outcomes. These include; more liveable, stronger sense of place, better connected, safer, healthier and more actively engaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shorland Park open space development framework ○ Potential safer roads project ○ Seawall heritage restoration 	<p>Island Bay west Total = 3138 Under 15 years = 681 (21.7%) Over 65 years =300 (9.6%)</p>	Planning work has already been carried out for this park. The current process has identified 'flow and functionality' as a key concern and is a priority to address.