

Kāpiti Coast Open Spaces Strategy Review: Issues and Opportunities

May 2019

GreenFrame.

Kāpiti Coast Open Space Strategy
Recreation | Conservation | Identity

Toitū Kāpiti



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1.1 Setting the scene

1.1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The current Open Spaces Strategy is under review. A key part of the review is to investigate how the District is positioned currently in terms of open spaces provision. This Issues and Opportunities document is a key investigative step that will shape the draft Strategy that will come out for consultation in early 2020.

The purpose of this document is to define the open space network within the Kāpiti Coast District. on the District's open space to This document also presents the key issues and opportunities for this open space network considering the historical, current and future influences.

This document is intended as a check-in with key stakeholders and members of the community to ensure the information gathered to date has been correctly interpreted. It provides an opportunity to offer additional insights prior to the commencement of the drafting of the Open Spaces Strategy. The information within this document and feedback received will help inform the review of the Kāpiti Coast District Council Open Space Strategy.

The content of this document was informed by a review of the existing Open Space Strategy; other Kāpiti Coast District Council related policies and plans; an assessment of the existing open spaces; a survey; workshops with our iwi partners and identified stakeholder groups and meetings with internal Council teams (whose actions impact or influence open space).

Further information on the methodology and findings of this issues and opportunities report can be found in Section 2.0.

1.1.2 THE OPEN SPACES STRATEGY REVIEW, PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Council's Open Space Strategy is being reviewed due to significant changes in the district since it was produced in 2012. Significant changes since 2012 include the opening of the Mackays to Peka expressway, the construction of the Peka to Ōtaki expressways and Transmission Gully, the purchase of Otara Park and other land acquisition.

The updated Open Spaces Strategy will set out the provision and management of open space in the Kāpiti District for the next 30 years and will be utilised as a guidance document for decision making including informing the Long-Term Plan. The strategy will also provide direction for assessing and collecting contributions to fund Open Space development required for growth. It is intended as a long term strategic planning guidance document, to be delivered across decades (but with expectation that it will be regularly reviewed and updated).

While the Open Space Strategy can only influence direct decisions over land owned and/or managed by Kāpiti District Council, it also takes account of public open space owned by other agencies. Land with protection over vegetation is also relevant to ecological linkages and outcomes, and includes private land protected by QEII or Council covenants, or District Plan protections. A definition of open space is provided below.

1.2 Defining Open Space

Given this is a Kāpiti Coast District Council initiated review, it is most focused on Council administered land, however Public open space not owned by Council, such as land owned by the Department of Conservation and Greater Wellington Regional Council, and the need for coordination are also taken into account. Along with parks and reserves, the recreational trails associated with the Cycleway, Walkway and Bridleway (CWB) network are part of this strategy, as are ecological sites which are recognised through the District Plan.

Open space can serve a variety of purposes including recreation, sport, active transport, ecological linkages, visual character and amenity, protecting significant landscapes, sites and village identities, and contributing to the character and vibrancy of the local area.

The evolving open spaces network is made up of many different types of open space and the combination of these. A well planned and well managed open space network will be an integral to effectively delivering on the Local Government (Community Well-being) Amendment Act, 2019, (pending at the time of writing) which provides for local authorities to play a broad role in promoting the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being for their communities, taking a sustainable development approach.

The defining feature that differentiates open space from most kinds of private land, is that people can experience it without fear of challenge, even though there may be a level of restriction on what they can do. Under this definition, the open space network on the Kāpiti Coast can consist of both public and private land, provided that there is an agreement in place with the owners of the latter to have a level of public use and access. Where reference is made to private open space in this Strategy it is confined to private land where an access agreement is, or could be, in place with Council, or land that includes an ecological site.

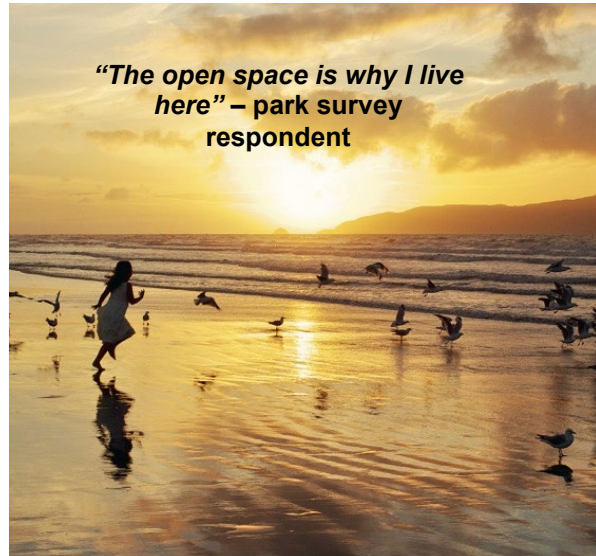


Figure 1. The following diagram is a depiction of the **types** of open spaces in the Kāpiti District as defined through this Open Spaces Strategy. It is not intended to be a detailed map of the district. (For a scaled map of open space distribution refer to Figure 2.)



1.3 Setting the Open Space Strategy Vision

The 2012 open space strategy vision was:

‘to develop a rich and diverse network of open spaces that protect the region’s ecology and support the identity, health, cohesion and resilience of the District’s communities. This vision applies to both public and private land’. The current Open Space Strategy can be found on the Council webpage.

A vision for the updated Open Spaces Strategy is yet to be developed but will be informed by the information presented through this issues and opportunities report.

1.4 Objectives of the updated Open Spaces Strategy

At the outset of this Open Spaces Strategy review project, a series of key objectives were developed to ensure the information gathered and research undertaken was relevant. The proposed objectives for the Open Spaces Strategy review are:

1. Provide a clear signal to all agencies and the public of Council and community vision for open spaces to 2050, and the intended pathway to achieve the vision.
2. To identify the core values central to all decision making around provision of open space; ecological, cultural, heritage, accessibility, and community wellbeing.
3. To provide a clear and transparent process for providers of open space to contribute to achieving the vision for open spaces to 2050.
4. To identify key projects that will be prioritised through the Long Term Plan to contribute to the vision for open spaces to 2050.
5. To identify the current open space provision and the growth targets to maintain levels of service and the required capacity of the network.

1.5 Outcomes of the Open Spaces Strategy

The outcomes sought from the Open Spaces Strategy are that it will:

- deliver on community outcomes
- inform the various other strategies and policies being developed
- complement and align rather than conflict with existing strategies and policies
- prioritise and endorse future land acquisition
- provide guidance for the development of new urban areas and the conservation of existing natural assets.

1.6 Trends Influencing Open Space

1.6.1 NATIONAL TRENDS

There are numerous national trends which are influencing how open space is used, planned for and managed. Some examples are:

- Recent release of the Living Standards Framework and a shift in thinking for Central Government.

- Coping with the potential effects of climate change.
- Treaty Settlement and iwi partnership.
- Advancement of technology that affects how people use open space; from social media, drones, electric transport options for example.
- Densified urban development.
- People oriented design and active transport.
- Importance of infrastructure (stormwater, water).
- Increased emphasis on the importance of green and wild spaces.
- Health and wellness including 2015 Healthy Parks, Healthy People approach.
- Shift toward landscape scale collaborative biodiversity protection and restoration programmes as a response to declining biodiversity.
- New Zealand's emissions reduction targets (2020, 2030, 2050).
- 2017 Predator free 2050.
- 2017 Ministry for the Environment Coastal hazards and climate change: Guidance for local government.
- Increase in informal active recreation including 'Parkruns' and social groups.
- Sports club memberships decreased and gym/fitness centre membership increased¹.
- Volunteering in traditional sport and recreation has declined but increased in other groups eg. community restoration groups, mountain biking.
- Cycling and mountain biking increase in participation amongst all adults. Cycling, 6.1% and mountain biking, 3.6% between 1997/98 - 2013/14².
- Tourism 2025 Strategy³. Domestic tourism is expected to increase as the baby boomers move into retirement. 29% of international visitors said that New Zealand's spectacular landscape and natural beauty were why they decided to visit.
- Increase in domestic tourism⁴.

1.6.2 LOCAL INFLUENCES

- Council has a partnership with local iwi through Te Whakaminenga o Kāpiti.
- The provision of park land provided to residents is 14.68 hectares/ 1,000 residents (721 hectares for a population of 49,104)
- Transmission Gully may increase regional day visitors to the District given that this road will ease congestion from Wellington to the north.
- Kāpiti District currently has 80% more retired age people as a percentage of the population than the national average⁵, however there may be future changes in community age structure associated with better regional transport links.
- Kāpiti is a key arrival point to the Wellington Region – There is an opportunity to capitalise on that.
- The District connects the mountains to sea, from the Tararua Ranges to Kāpiti Island.
- Collaborative management of public open space with other providers such as Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Department of Conservation.

¹ <https://sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/16-year-adult-participation-trends-report-1998-2014.pdf>

² <https://sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/2013-14-Sports-Profile-Cycling.pdf>

³ <http://www.tourism2025.org.nz/assets/Documents/TIA-T2025-Summ-Doc-WEB.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/domestic-tourists-lead-to-spending-increase> retrieved April 2019

⁵ Source Statistics NZ Dataset: Subnational population estimates (TA, AU), by age and sex, at 30 June 1996, 2001, 2006-18 (2017 boundaries) extracted April 2019

1.7 Kāpiti's Open Spaces and Open Space Users, at a Glance

Kāpiti Coast's open space benefits both residents and visitors providing them with a variety of opportunities and experiences particularly given the expansive ocean and foothill views and access to the Tararua Range. Whether it is the beach, parks or sports fields, riversides, native bush, the pleasure of open space for passive and active recreation, active transport linkages, it is important to everyone.

The Open Spaces Network:

As part of the information gathering for this Issues and Opportunities report, a phase of site based analysis was completed for Kāpiti's main parks using a specifically developed iAuditor tool that could be completed on site. The purpose of this analysis was to get a better understanding of the characteristics of the existing network. A total of 127 sites (out of a total of 509 sites on the Parks and Open Spaces database) were assessed and this was considered to offer a good representation of open space characteristics for informing this work.

In addition, desktop analysis of open space asset information is being undertaken and will inform the revised Open Spaces Strategy.

NOTE: The site analysis was undertaken on site by Council staff. While intended to be objective, some subjectivity was possible.

Key aspects of the open spaces network are as follows:

- Kāpiti Coast District Council, in conjunction with other open space providers provides an abundance of open space of various types. (Figure 1).
- Council manages 721.6ha of this open space, the majority of which is in proximity to residential areas. (Refer Figure 2 for distribution).
- Previous open spaces provision assessments indicate that there is an abundance of open space and that even with future population projections the national average of 4 hectares/ 1,000 residents will not be exceeded. NOTE: This will be further analysed through the 2019 Yardstick survey and when the updated census data becomes available.
- The District offers a large network of trails. Significant natural areas and trails are provided by Greater Wellington Regional Council, the Department of Conservation and NZTA in conjunction with Council.
- 'Mountains to Sea' ecological corridors are embedded in the District Plan and Council's current Open Spaces Strategy. This concept is increasingly well supported by the community and other agencies.
- The District offers a varied landform including hills and coastline providing variety in open space types.
- A legacy of good sports grounds provision will continue through the maintenance and upgrades of existing and future development of Otaraia park.
- There is a growing number of community care group's supporting environmental restoration.
- There are numerous regionally and nationally significant wetlands in the Kāpiti area.
- From the iAuditor Survey the following trends were identified:
 - 78 of 127 open spaces are planted with a good structure and healthy trees⁶.

⁶ iAuditor Open Space Assessment findings (March, 2019)

- 27 of 127 open spaces have good views (majority towards the coast, others towards the hills or rivers)⁷. This statistic does not effectively portray the Mountains to Sea concept – some more signage, maps and technology may assist with this.
- 123 of 127 open spaces are modified to some extent, and only 4 Council owned open spaces are completely natural⁸.

What the Users Think (key findings from User Survey - March 2019):

As part of the information gathering for this Issues and Opportunities report, a phase of community engagement was undertaken. The points below provide a snapshot of key trends identified through the user survey undertaken in March 2019⁹. For a full description of the consultation methodology related to this project, key assumptions and limitations, refer to attachment 1.

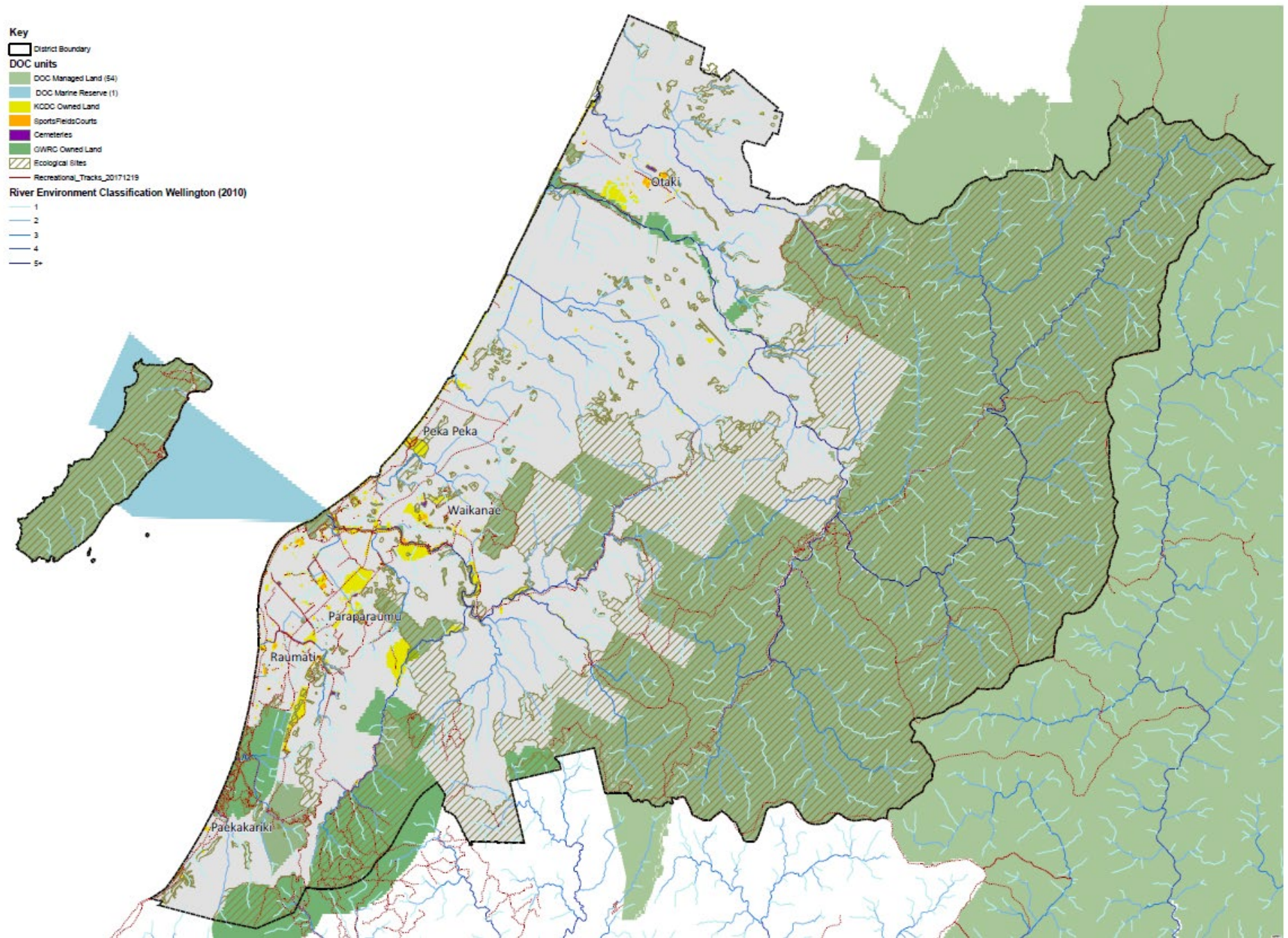
- 67% of people were satisfied with Kāpiti's open spaces and the CWB Network.
- 74% of people mostly visit Kāpiti's natural areas and trails.
- 58% of people frequently use the cycleway, walkway and bridleway network.
- 80% of open space users walk.
- 52% of open spaces users do beach activities.
- 9.8% mostly visit playgrounds.
- When asked why they liked their favourite parks and open spaces most, more than 20% of people described the park with words such as 'natural', 'wild', and 'unspoiled'.

⁷ iAuditor Open Space Assessment findings (March, 2019)

⁸ iAuditor Open Space Assessment findings (March, 2019)

⁹ 121 people responded to the survey with just under half (45.45%) identifying themselves from Waikanae. The rest were from other parts of the district. Also of note, the majority of respondents were between the ages of 45 – 75 with no responses received from those under 25.

Figure 2. Kāpiti Coast Open Space Map



1.8 The Value of Open Space

Kāpiti Coast District has an abundance of open space in proximity to its residential areas. This open space plays an important role towards making Kāpiti Coast a great place to live, work and play. Sufficient quality of open space can make a significant contribution towards wellbeing in the following ways:

Social

- Promotes connectedness and a sense of belonging
- Supports health and well-being of community by providing space to relax and enjoy the outdoors or to escape the built environment
- Provides meeting places, focal points for events and activities
- Helps to strengthen civic pride
- Helps to reduce anti-social behavior through the provision of good and relevant play, and informal sports areas
- Encourages active recreation
- Links communities

Environmental

- Contributes to landscape character and visual amenity
- Protects landscape and habitat for flora and fauna
- Provides visual contrast to the built environment
- Encourages an awareness and understanding of nature
- Can be used to help increase resilience and manage or mitigate natural hazards and the predicted impact of climate change
- Contributes to air and water quality and soil conservation
- Can model best practice. Eg. biodiversity, play, waterways
- Links communities

Economic

- Supports recreation and tourism industries
- Adds value to properties and localities
- Attracts business and investment
- Provides destinations for visitors and tourists
- Encourages food sustainability and can increase resilience to global shocks
- Provides venues for local, regional and national events.
- Links communities

Cultural

- Protects and supports tāngata whenua values such as turangawaewae and rongoa Māori*
- Helps to define urban and rural character and reinforce urban boundaries
- Supports local identity and sense of place
- Protects cultural heritage
- Links communities

*Tūrangawaewae is one of the most well known and powerful Māori concepts. Literally tūranga (standing place), waewae (feet), it is often translated as a 'place to stand'. Rongōā Māori is traditional Māori medicine.

1.9 Issues and Opportunities

Open space on the Kāpiti Coast faces a number of major challenges over the next 30 years. With challenges come opportunities. In this section, issues and opportunities relating to Open Space have been identified – with key points highlighted. The nine topic areas below have categorised the issues and opportunities. These topic areas are what has been heard to date and are discussion points to take forward into the open spaces strategy development.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Land and Linkages</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Involves the land provision, connections and linkages of land.</p>			
Issues / Challenges	Rationale	Opportunities	References
<p>There is difficulty gaining public access to strategic linkages (through private land) so that connections between open space can be made.</p> <p>Notable observations from the iAuditor Survey in relation to this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 parks (out of 127 assessed) have no pedestrian or cycle linkages to other parks 95 parks (out of 127 assessed) do not have an 	<p>Council needs to make the most of linkages – so that for example fauna can pass through, people can recreate and walk through, bird migration can occur through vegetation from mountains to sea.</p> <p>A connected network enhances biodiversity, improves amenity and provides physical links between communities¹⁰.</p>	<p>There is an opportunity to enhance the CWB linkages.</p> <p>There is a potential opportunity to connect Te Araroa through Hemi Matanga in future and this is being investigated by the Te Araroa Trust.</p> <p>The Mountains to Sea vision in the existing Open Spaces Strategy focusses on improving ecological connections and has public support. This review of the Open Space Strategy provides an opportunity to identify missing links and create corridors with improved accessibility for people as well as flora/ fauna over the long term.</p>	<p>Comments from Council staff and Friends groups / stakeholders/ community workshops (21st and 22nd March 2019).</p> <p>iAuditor Open Space Surveys (March 2019)</p> <p>Growth Strategy insights (2019)</p> <p>Stakeholder Meeting with Department of Conservation (March 2019)</p>

<p>ecological corridor that connects to other parks.</p> <p>Together this is representative of a general pattern of fragmentation of natural systems and landscape connectivity by development.</p>		<p>This work could be achieved by working alongside other agencies to update and create an integrated refreshed plan for priority linkages.</p> <p>It is worth acknowledging that other providers of open space across the District are also investigating better linkage opportunities, and there is a significant trend across the country toward collaborative landscape scale biodiversity protection and restoration programmes. For example, the Department of Conservation are leading an interagency approach to the Mountains to Sea for Waikanae.</p> <p>For recreational linkages, an inter-council / interagency Wellington Regional Trails Project is in its second year of implementation across the region.</p>	
<p>Developers lack the ability to forward plan because they are unable to identify where Council are looking for connections, linkages or reserves in the future. There is no current future provision planning or 'ideal scenario' available to the developers. Therefore, they come to Council with concepts that are not necessarily in line with the Council's plans.</p>	<p>Existing guidelines are not providing sufficient direction.</p> <p>At this time the majority of locations of designated greenfield development which may lead to new parks and open space development are in the Ngarara zone, on the urban fringe of Waikanae North and some limited space in Ōtaki.</p>	<p>With better guidance, Developers and Council can collaborate and forward plan together. The Council can identify open space gaps spatially which will help developers align their future plans with Council's future plans, therefore working towards the same outcome to benefit the open space network and the community.</p> <p>Landowners may need to be approached where gaps in open space are identified on their land. The conversations would happen</p>	<p>Comments from Council staff and Developers which were discussed at the workshop 22nd March, 2019.</p>

	It is also recognised that infill housing and intensification increases the use of existing assets, requiring additional investment in order to maintain levels of service in line with growth and community expectation.	as part of open spaces strategy development.	
Some linkages are provided by private landowners, especially to areas in the foothills. These linkages sometimes are provided out of good will with no formalised access arrangement .	To guarantee access to linkages for public benefit, a formalised agreement should be established.	While some private owners are allowing public access especially in foothills, but this is not assured into the future as some of the private land currently supporting open space has not been formalised. There is an opportunity to formalise access arrangements for greater linkage certainty.	
There is an uneven distribution of open space across the District . (Figure 2) shows that there is less publicly available Council managed open space in the north of the District compared to the south which is currently proportionate with development density.	<p>The majority of Council managed open space is distributed around urban areas. Generally decreasing in provision from south to north.</p> <p>Council's current approach is to focus growth within urban areas, developed within a framework of consolidation, compactness and containment</p> <p>This includes supporting the intensification and development of existing urban areas as well as the development of large greenfield sites, such as</p>	<p>The Open Space Strategy provides an opportunity to identify the local shortfalls in open space provision, especially to address the uneven distribution from south to north in relation to Council open space, and provide scenarios for how these could be addressed.</p> <p>This will help guide the District Plan processes, Long Term Planning as well as providing direction for future developments.</p> <p>Council and Developers will need to work collaboratively to mitigate shortfalls, either by reserve contributions to upgrade existing open spaces, or to establish new areas for use.</p>	Comments from staff and the decreasing open space provision from south to north can also be seen in Figure 2.

	Ngarara and Waikanae North Developments in Waikanae.	<p>When considering future open space provision, Council should remain aware of large areas of public open space in the District managed by other agencies, primarily DoC and GWRC, and associated collaboration opportunities. Private land including QEII areas can support ecological outcomes and linkages.</p> <p>Consideration should also be given to adjacent districts' and their open spaces provision.</p>	
Severance from the expressway.	The expressway affects existing land-holdings and historical informal access links. These are being remediated through the Expressway Project with improvements along the N-S corridor as well as at key E-W crossing points.	<p>Opportunities for adjusting landholdings and improved public access including possible connections.</p> <p>The Transmission Gully and expressway surplus land should also be considered in terms of how it contributes to, or has the potential to contribute to open spaces provision.</p>	Existing NZTA project and workshop discussions, March 21 st , 2019.
Some local parks on Road Reserve , i.e. long term occupation not assured.	Land used by community needs to be protected where possible.	Strategy to consider in relation to road stopping, consenting for new sub-divisions and succession planning.	Comments from Council staff.
Open space areas can be difficult to access, especially for those without access to a vehicle.	<p>Many of the open space areas require a car to access them, meaning that they are limited to those who have access to a vehicle.</p> <p>NOTE: The shared path M2PP path has made a positive contribution to addressing this issue</p>	Consider the CWB and public transport network and the role this plays in increasing recreational use of open spaces.	Stakeholder Workshops – particularly strong feedback from Youth Council members (March 2019)

Environment and Ecosystems

Managing, protecting and providing the opportunity for our biodiversity and natural environment to thrive.

Issues / Challenges	Rationale	Opportunities	References
While there is some pest management occurring through the District there is a need to increase activity especially if the goals of Predator Free 2050 are to be achieved. The community is looking to Council to lead and/or coordinate this and there is a growing gap between community expectation and Council's ability to support Predator Free 2050.	<p>Predator Free 2050 is a national target to eradicate rats, stoats and possums by 2050, and requires all parts of Aotearoa to engage in the initiative. https://predatorfreenz.org/</p> <p>Improving pest control in the District will help sustain healthy ecosystems and enhance biodiversity.</p>	There are pest control initiatives occurring throughout the District. A closer alignment with the work of Predator Free 2050 may enable further improvements to current initiatives and increased resourcing/ coordination of activities.	<p>Comments from Council staff and Friends groups / stakeholders/ community workshops (21st and 22nd March 2019).</p> <p>This was strongly felt by the community groups and volunteers during the stakeholder workshops in phase one.</p>
Pest Plants are a significant threat to biodiversity and to open space management for recreation and amenity use.	Effective control creates significant expense and risk for Council.	Collaborative landscape scale approaches to pest plant management. Education. Explore more environmentally friendly ways of controlling pest plants.	Comments from Council staff and Friends groups / stakeholders/ community workshops (21 st and 22 nd March 2019).
Pest Animal threats outside of the Scope of Predator Free 2050 are a significant issue for Council managed open spaces. Eg Canada Geese, feral rabbits and cats. Insect pests such as wasps and ants.	Pest animals disrupt ecosystems as well as recreational and amenity areas. Recent issues with Canada Geese on sports fields are an example.	Working with other agencies on effective methods of pest animal control.	Comments from Council staff and Friends groups / stakeholders/ community workshops (21 st and 22 nd March 2019).

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Plant diseases are becoming prevalent nationally and may be an issue locally. Eg Myrtle rust	Myrtle rust affects a range of species including manuka, rata and pohutukawa. (Pohutukawa, while not endemic to the region is one of the most common amenity trees used in parks, road sides and open spaces across the district.)	Diversify planting to increase resilience and development management strategies for controlling the impacts of plant diseases. Collaboration with MPI and GWRC who have statutory responsibility for biosecurity including spread of pest plant diseases.	Comments from Council staff
The community have a strong desire for natural open spaces which poses a significant issue in the medium term as available natural open space decreases close to residential areas.	Natural open space is suffering the pressure of intensification (not only from urban development but from rural development) and needs to be protected and enhanced to ensure it is sustainable into the future.	Proactive mapping of desirable natural areas for future acquisition or protection . Consider ecological restoration priority sites across existing open spaces network for future natural open space provision.	Growth Strategy insights (2019)
Potential misuse/ over use of agrichemical spray application for weeds in parks and reserves.	Differing views on agrichemical sprays to be considered.	Opportunity to consider alternative pest plant eradication methods.	Comments from Community/ Friends groups (March 2019).
Further progress towards establishing ecological corridors between strategic open spaces is possible. During an internal parks assessment 95 parks (out of 127 assessed) do not have an ecological corridor that connects to other parks.	While acknowledged that not all open spaces form a strong ecological function (i.e. sportsfields priority for sport activity) there is an opportunity for open spaces to contribute to increased ecological outcomes through greater connectivity and management.	The potential for Mountains to Sea ecological corridors is recognised through the existing Open Space Strategy. Further ecological connection could be made with future provision planning. Working with developers and private land owners could help achieve improved ecological connections across the District. Consider mechanisms to achieve	Comments from Council staff and Friends groups/ community workshops (21 st and 22 nd March 2019).

		biodiversity protection and restoration. Consider the contribution of the Billion Trees initiative.	
It was observed that 19 parks had a shade cover weakness (lack of trees), while 16 parks had no trees at all.	Tree planting makes a contribution to climate change mitigation, improved ecological connectivity and the enjoyment and amenity of open space.	Through forward planning there is an opportunity to provide appropriate shade cover and plantings in open space fit for purpose for each individual site. These trees will help sequester carbon and contribute to climate change mitigation.	This was identified throughout the Council's internal parks assessment to better understand the network (March 2019).
Stream and river water quality is sometimes an issue across the District.	Stream and river water quality is variable throughout the year. Typically, the poorest water quality is experienced in the summer months when flows are at a minimum.	Open spaces and riparian areas along waterways, where managed effectively can positively contribute to improved stream and river water quality outcomes.	Friends Groups Workshops (March 2019)
Open Space value of non-open space land such as stormwater reserves.	How land is valued if it has a mix of stormwater and open space value is unclear.	Consider a value structure to identify value of non-open space land, yet provides open space benefit. Consider secondary uses for reserves. i.e. storm water reserves have values such as wetland areas that also provide for wildlife and take account of land owned by other agencies. For example, sportsfields don't need to be just an open field – they could also play a part in providing a natural space.	

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Assets (built and natural)</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Is the physical assets within Kāpiti's open spaces.</p>			
Issues / Challenges	Rationale	Opportunities	References
Effectively maintaining and replacing assets at the end of their useful life is constrained by limited resources and limited funds especially for community led initiatives.	While many assets can be funded for construction, there is often a challenge in funding their maintenance and replacement. This is especially relevant for community led initiatives on open spaces.	Need an endorsed framework for asset development which would ideally be considered across agencies to ensure maximum use of resources/ most efficient use of funds across the district. Ensure assets are managed and (funding planned for) from the outset , to ensure appropriate replacement at end of their useful life.	Council staff (March 2019). National trend.
Responsible campers have limited facilities yet are heavily utilising open space across the District.	Facilities are limited and its popularity is increasing. This is an issue in the District but also nationally and will needs to be addressed in Kāpiti Coast.	Strategy to review and consider areas to support Responsible Camping across the district.	National and local trends. Comments from Council staff (March 2019).
Residential growth will create additional demand for new parks and reserves, but also increased maintenance requirements and expectations for existing assets.	Residential growth is expected via new subdivisions and infill of existing areas and will change the levels of service required for particular areas.	Existing subdivision rules require adequate provision of open space however the on-going maintenance requirement is dependent on the details and specifications provided.	Growth Strategy insights (2019)

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In some cases, the existing asset may not meet customer expectations or have reached the end of life and need to be renewed.			
<p>There appears to be a lack of engagement between segments of the community and open spaces in the District despite there being a desire to be part of, and return to the District for its amenity, outdoor and environmental values.</p> <p>From discussions held with youth during consultation, it appears youth do not feel empowered to explore and get involved the areas, or they cannot access them.</p> <p>Commuters to Wellington are also a segment of the community that are not as engaged in open spaces.</p>	<p>Through the engagement undertaken, the youth segment was highlighted specifically. There is a need to activate youth into open spaces and ensure open spaces and associated facilities are provided that encourage use by this demographic. This will encourage their protection and enhancement for future generations.</p> <p>Through discussion with Council staff it is evident that the issue is not only relevant to youth but across a range of segments of the community. As another example, 43% of the population commute out of Kapiti for work, and it is difficult to engage with them about their open space preferences.</p>	<p>Identifying ways to engage with different sectors of the community. Targeted engagement.</p> <p>Engage with/ reach out to schools/ students to better understand how youth could connect with open space in the future. Incorporate the ideas into future parks/ network planning across the District.</p>	<p>Comments from Youth Council Workshop, and observations of volunteer group demographic (21st and 22nd March 2019).</p>
<p>Demographics of Kāpiti District residents is distinctive, with a large proportion retired, and fewer young families than national averages.</p> <p>Accessibility to open spaces especially for older & less mobile</p>	<p>With a significant retired population and a national trend of an ageing population, the need for accessible open spaces is relevant to this district.</p> <p>While the needs of older persons is important, there is a need to</p>	<p>When developing new or retrofitting existing facilities, consider opportunities for less able, consider park facilities which are accessible and appropriate for reduced levels of physical ability, facilities which cater to recreational trends for an</p>	<p>Comments from Friends groups / community workshops, National trend (21st and 22nd March 2019).</p> <p>Kāpiti Coast District Council Community Facilities Strategy (2018)</p>

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people is therefore an important consideration and many open spaces lack accessible car parking and accessible public conveniences.	ensure that expectations of all age groups are being provided for.	ageing population such as senior playgrounds for example. NOTE: Changes in the age profile of the District generally, will impact how Council provides parks and open spaces. This factor coupled with likely changes in leisure trends may produce quite different requirements from those seen in the past. These factors will continue to influence the planning, development and evolution of Council's open spaces.	
Aspects of asset management is 'asset owner' focussed management rather than 'user/visitor' focussed.	This approach can lead to outcomes that aren't as customer focussed, and have the potential to reduce overall customer satisfaction.		Comments from Council Staff, Community Groups and inter-agency stakeholders.
There are differing expectations/ methods of land management by different parts of Council , and across organisations with similar functions. For example there are different approaches between storm water, open space and ecological interests.	Differing expectations and approaches of land management lead to inefficient use and duplication of resources and inconsistent practices.	Opportunity to develop a framework across departments/ agencies for a balance between storm water and flood management / coastal protection/ ecological management / open space outcomes. Budget and process for design to get better outcomes.	Comments from Council staff, stakeholders, Friends groups / community workshops (March 2019).
There is a need to consider site design more carefully – for example taking into account cultural, heritage and ecological considerations. Public conveniences located near	Appropriate placement of assets will give greater ownership by the community.	Some toilet and shower assets are located where Maori gather kai – opportunity to create framework for decision making for asset development.	Comments from Mana Whenua (March 2019)

mahinga kai provide an example of poor planning.			
Design expertise (including public art) is brought into projects near end of project when ability to affect outcome is limited.	Good design integrated into projects at the outset can have the potential to reduce costs in the long term. And improve the overall benefit of the development for the community.	There is an opportunity to better integrate design expertise and public art at early stages in the design to create improved outcomes and better community ownership.	This was raised during the policy review with internal staff.
Due to the difficulty in obtaining suitable cemetery sites, there may need to be district wide cemetery provision in the future (as opposed to locally based). Of note, there is sufficient current capacity within the district cemeteries in the short to medium term.	At the current rate of burials, cemeteries district wide will be at capacity in: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Approximately 56 years for burials across the district. Significant open space is still available in Awa Tapu and Ōtaki cemeteries. Waikanae has limited capacity.	Investigations are being undertaken now to identify areas which may be suitable to expand cemetery capacity in the future.	Growth Strategy insights (2019)

Partnerships, Collaboration and Relationships

Managing and maintaining our partnerships with iwi and relationships with land owners, volunteers, our open space users.

Issues / Challenges	Rationale	Opportunities	References
Much of open space land in Kāpiti District owned by other agencies such as DOC and GWRC as identified in Figure 2. While this is	Different agencies may not be working towards the same outcomes and the open space network could be disjointed.	Collaboration opportunities including asset sharing with DoC, GWRC, MinEdu for shared community provision.	Council staff and stakeholder workshops (March 2019).

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not an issue in itself, there is a need for agencies to collaborate to maximise the potential of the open space network.			
Recognise and provide for expression of tangata whenua values in open space provision. Currently there is limited presence of tangata whenua expression across the open spaces network.	Mana Whenua are an important partner in land management. Council works in partnership with local iwi through Te Whakaminenga o Kāpiti.	<p>Spend time with different iwi and individual hapu to understand the tikanga values of open space and how they can be applied.</p> <p>Consider how support and resourcing can be allocated to enable expression of tangata whenua values.</p> <p>Explore co-management and cultural identity outcomes.</p>	Comments from Mana Whenua (March 2019).
<p>Lack of engagement with developers at early stage around design and ideal provision of open space through developments.</p> <p>This has been discussed previously in land/ linkages.</p>	Clear directives will guide improved outcomes.	<p>Improve process of engagement with developers at early stage around design and provide clarification of what that looks like.</p>	Comments from Council staff and Developers (March 2019).
<p>There is a growing number of Community Care Groups supporting restoration projects.</p> <p>Volunteer groups are aging and many groups do not have a clear succession plan in place.</p>	<p>It is challenging for Council to adequately support the expectation and aspirations of some groups.</p> <p>If there is no succession plan in place for the next generation of volunteers, then the work of current volunteers is at risk unless</p>	<p>Develop a Council position on the ongoing support, value and resourcing of these groups to maintain and grow their contribution</p> <p>Work with community groups to develop a succession plan for volunteer projects.</p>	Comments from Council staff/ Friends groups (March 2019).

	Council assumes an increased role across projects.	Raise awareness of the value of volunteering and harness the passion of young people to get involved in better environments. Offer any opportunity to make a contribution to their environment. This may mean that alternative approaches to the way volunteering is undertaken, may need to be considered.	
Volunteer groups are working in isolation.	Volunteers play an important role in parks management but need clear objectives and common outcomes to maximise the opportunity to efficiently utilise resources.	Practical support for existing passion and enthusiasm, co-ordinate through common objectives and desired outcomes.	Comments from Council staff, Friends groups / community workshops (March 2019).

Changes and Trends

Global, national and regional.

Issues / Challenges	Rationale	Opportunities	References
Climate change is a growing concern globally.	There are many effects that climate change could possibly have on our open space such as erosion and sea level rise. It is also recognised that some Council reserves have a flooding risk. Greater Wellington Regional	Greater recognition and profiling of open space contribution to climate change mitigation and resilience. It is recommended that Council identify key risks and undertake long term planning to reduce	The awareness of climate change is now global and Council, volunteer groups and all stakeholders felt the importance to recognise open spaces contribution to help reduce climate change.

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	Council has also stated that 1m sea level rise in 100 years would affect esplanade and other reserves.	impacts especially on assets, allow for public land near the coast to be incorporated into coastal management areas.	
Technology changes are happening globally which can result in some of our open spaces being used differently.	We have seen technology changes which has resulted in open spaces being utilised for new and different activities such as electric scooters, e-bike chargers, drones, electric cars, mobile charging stations and solar panels.	Being proactive and planning for technology changes on the horizon. However, also recognising that open space offers opportunities to escape technology and reconnect with nature.	This can already be seen and was brought to our attention by representatives of the Youth Advisory Group.
Future demographic and social changes. Measuring the open space capacity.	Changes to the roading network such as Transmission Gully will allow Wellington residents to visit the District more easily to explore the Kāpiti's open spaces.	Open space network and opportunities to provide for future changes.	Discussion with Council staff. Growth Strategy insights (2019)
Young people becoming disconnected from nature and the environment. NOTE: This may be representative of other segments of community however was specifically referenced by youth through community engagement.	As technology and urban intensification develops youth risk a disconnection with nature and the environment.	Encourage young people to interact and engage with open space. Geographical maps at schools, apps, online maps and promotion to show visitors and residents what is on offer and where in their District.	This was raised at a workshop with representatives from the youth council. It was also raised during a workshop with Ngāti Toa.
Increasing population and human use having a greater impact on the environment and altering existing value frame works	Related effects include increased pollution, erosion, habitat disturbance and conflict over driving on beaches.	Improve public education and awareness of human impact issues, develop strategies and bylaws to support community values and environmental protection	Comments from Council staff, Friends groups / community workshops (March 2019).

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Management and Governance</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Decision making guided by strategies influences what happens in our open spaces.</p>			
Issues / Challenges	Rationale	Opportunities	References
Spiritual - ability to express Tikanga in all open spaces including cemeteries.	Express tikanga in all public spaces such as cemeteries (but all open spaces as required).	Consider increased recognition of health and social benefits of open space , iwi interests to be brought out in reserve management plans as developed or reviewed	Raised at the Ngāti Toa workshop.
Strengthening Iwi Partnership	<p>Treaty and Partnership obligations between iwi and Council.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to explore co-management options alongside iwi.</p> <p>Iwi bring strong cultural values that could enhance the experience through the open spaces network.</p>	<p>There is an opportunity to explore co-management options alongside iwi.</p> <p>Otaraua park for example provides an opportunity for co-management of a large park (as per the management and development plan).</p> <p>Increasing expression of iwi values and stories in our open space areas.</p>	<p>Through Te Whakaminenga it was confirmed that iwi would be a partner through the Strategy (March 2019).</p> <p>A workshop with iwi¹¹ was undertaken in March 2019.</p>
Continued collaboration with other agencies such as Department of Conservation	Doc and GRWC in particular are significant land owners in the District and contribute to the abundance of open space	A framework for clear and transparent leadership model across agencies.	DoC, GWRC and the Council currently have a strong relationship. It is a risk to the community and open spaces provision

¹¹ While representatives from all three iwi represented through Te Whakaminenga o Kāpiti were invited to a hui to discuss open spaces, only Ngāti Toa were available to attend. Council will continue to engage with the three iwi from the partnership over the length of the strategy review.

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(DoC) and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC).	provision as seen in Figure 2. Maintaining these relationships and collaborating is essential to achieving the best results for the community and Districts ecology.	<p>The District still has many rural areas and wild places both publicly and privately owned that with better protection and more coordinated planning and management would add considerable value to the existing open spaces network.</p> <p>Carefully managing and coordinating open space development programmes can help prioritise funding and work programmes so that community aspirations are realistically achieved in a transparent manner.</p> <p>Opportunity to consider a clear hierarchy of open space investment.</p>	if these relationships are not maintained and/or improved.
Reserve Management Plans and asset data only partially complete across the District.	To date there is a low completion of Reserve Management Plans, (approx. 10% of reserves), no management plan for cemeteries.	Opportunity to complete Reserve Management Plans . This provides an opportunity for parks staff to fill any information gaps in these areas.	Informed by Council staff. NOTE: This project will commence in 2020/21 across a three year period.
Bylaws are enforced to different standards (often due to resourcing constraints) meaning that their usefulness is degraded.	Bylaws are implemented to enable Council to regulate activities across the District. If not enforced they become less likely to be followed as they begin to be disregarded.	<p>Work closely with the compliance team to encourage active implementation of Bylaws where appropriate.</p> <p>Increased resourcing to enforce Bylaws.</p>	Discussion with Council staff (March 2019).

Encroachments are unmanaged	There are numerous instances in the district where residents have extended their boundaries and are encroaching on public open space.	Increased resourcing/ investment into managing encroachments on open space. Developing a council-wide policy for managing encroachments on public land.	Discussion with Council Staff.
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Strategic

High level policies and documents that guide what happens in Kāpiti's open spaces.

Issues / Challenges	Rationale	Opportunities	References
There is no clear hierarchy to inform how Council invests and directs resource for maximum benefit including guidelines for taking reserves on subdivision (considered under land / linkages section above).	Developers are currently unaware of the Council's provision gaps and are making assumptions on requirements through developments.	The Open Space Strategy needs to be clear up front about what is needed for the open spaces network. Develop a clear hierarchy of open space investment.	Council discussions and Developer Workshop (March 2019).
There is currently no biodiversity strategy with the Council.	It is debateable whether biodiversity strategies are worthwhile at a district level. The proposed National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity requires Regional Councils to take the lead at the regional level.	Ensuring that background biodiversity information is available. This Strategy will consider biodiversity at a high level. GWRC is currently developing a regional biodiversity framework which will include the Kāpiti District	Identified during policy reviews and discussion with Council staff.

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There are a lot of existing Council strategies and policies to be mindful of and some need reviewing such as the beach bylaw, and freedom camping policy.	There is a need to ensure that there is consistency across strategies and policies within Council.	Rationalise Council policies and strategies to make them easier to understand and implement.	Identified during policy reviews.
No cemeteries plan within the Council.		Ensuring that there is clear strategic direction to ensure appropriate cemetery provision and future capacity planning.	Identified during policy reviews.
The role that commercial activities plays in open space settings is unclear.	Council is frequently approached about the use of open space by commercial operators, in some instances this may be beneficial to the community but there is no policy framework to support this.	Develop a Commercial use policy for Reserves and update Management Plans	Council Staff

Education

Helping future generations stay connected with nature and open space.

Issues / Challenges	Rationale	Opportunities	References
Conflicting use of spaces – particularly trails/ shared use	<p>With multiple users of open space there is increased conflict potential and users.</p> <p>As a result, there is a strong desire from the community for increasing the education around appropriate</p>	Improve education about appropriate use of shared trails.	

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	use of shared paths (walkers, cyclists and horse riders).		
There is a lack of engagement and education for volunteers of the future.	How to get young people volunteering and the generation behind those currently volunteering. Majority of our volunteers are currently retired.	Consider places for tree planting by youth so they can learn about the environment, connect with nature and have a sense of ownership. This will help create a place where they want to come back to, whenua to the land.	It was identified during the community surveys and community workshops that the most common barrier to use was time rather than anything particularly missing from the network.
There is a lack of bilingual signage across the open spaces (111 of 127 open spaces assessed through iAuditor did not have bilingual signage).	Continue to educate our people and visitors about Te Reo and the Māori world view.	This is an opportunity to demonstrate cultural identity, involving iwi and individual hapu to help tell the stories about particular parks and open spaces through bilingual and interpretational signage. There is an opportunity to define what these are and how these values and stories were shared and utilised with ancestors. Opportunity to keep these alive.	iAuditor Open Space Surveys (March 2019). An opportunity which was raised during a workshop with Ngāti Toa on 22 nd March, 2019.
Current wayfinding, signage and interpretation is disjointed , and dependent on the agency responsible for the open space. Youth are unaware of parks and places.	Users of public open space are not aware of which agencies owns and administers which land. And in many instances they have little interest. A consistent approach to signage and wayfinding will help people to easily find and appropriately use open space.	Opportunity to provide effective wayfinding/ signage across the District extending across the range of open spaces and open space providers. Opportunity to provide geographical/educational maps eg, in the District's colleges.	Workshops, particularly with Youth Council.

Lack of smoke free signage in Kāpiti's parks. During an internal parks assessment it was observed that 113 (out of 127) did not have smoke free signage.	Kāpiti has a smoke free outdoor public policy. Signage to help enforce this policy and educate people of the change.	Better promote smoke free across open spaces through signage and promotion.	iAuditor Open Space Surveys (March 2019)
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Experience

The physical, spiritual, social and emotional benefits that occur during connections with open space.

Issues / Challenges	Rationale	Opportunities	References
Changing needs and competing demands for park areas , especially sportsfields needs to be considered.	Organised sport nationally is constantly changing with some codes experiencing decline while others are increasing. This trend is consistent with what is being experienced in Kāpiti. Notably football, tennis and netball are experiencing increasing numbers in Kāpiti.	Reassess sports provision taking into account Otaraua Park development. Provision to be based on identified need.	Community Facilities Strategy, 2018
The need to protect the natural environment and the Kāpiti Coast identity.	The amount of open space and natural environment is a key reason as to why people decide to live on the Kāpiti Coast. The natural environment is a large part of their identity.	Continued protection of the natural environment which is strongly associated with the Kāpiti Coast identity.	This was identified as an issue in the current Open Space Strategy 2012. The importance of the continued protection has been evident through the consultation process (phase one) of this review too as GWRC and DoC hold a large amount of natural environment in the District.

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Incompatibility of some uses leads to conflict in the open space environments.		When planning for future provision of shared spaces consider the compatibility of uses for different recreation communities and how these should be best managed in a way that results in positive experiences for all users.	The issues in the rationale section were raised at the stakeholder workshops.
The need for a cohesive, legible and easily navigable network	There is lots of open space but it is hard to find, many space currently lack a narrative that supports sense of place and experience	Landscape design, communications, historical research, technology and signage	
Need areas to experience nature in urban areas.	Open space provides opportunities for people to experience and connect with nature	Improve urban open spaces through the incorporation and expression of natural patterns and systems. Eg. Wharemauku Stream	
Maximising the potential of the District as a Visitor Attraction	The District has a lot to offer to visitors. Often visitors pass through the District unaware of its offering.	Consider how the open spaces network contributes to the overall visitor attraction for the District. Work with tourism agencies to ensure the open spaces network features as part of the visitor offering.	
Supporting identity, sense of place and supporting the “Kāpiti Story” (linking to economic development)	Open Space qualities are a defining characteristics of the district.	Enhance natural advantages to guide, align and support economic development	
Tension regarding motorised activity along Kāpiti Coast beaches.	Clear that there is tension relating to this topic as both sides were heard during phase one of consultation. Specific areas of tension were raised, particularly Queen	This issue is being addressed through the Beach Bylaw review that is being undertaken in the near future.	This was identified as various work shop groups (March 2019).

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	Elizabeth Park and the Northern end of Kāpiti beach.		
The consequence of using open space for events.	Event use of open space can be beneficial in supporting the use and community value of open space. However there can also be adverse effects on assets eg. Damage to sports fields.	Develop and maintain a range of open space types suited for events in coordination with other providers of open space. Consider the potential for legacy events to be supported through councils events programme.	Council Staff Workshops
Kāpiti's open space identity tends to be focused on the beach environment.	The Kāpiti story is much more than the beach environment. There are many more "strings to the bow" which many residents and visitors are not aware of.	There is an opportunity to celebrate other aspects of the open space network beyond the beach in telling the story of the district and supporting economic development and quality of life for residents.	Council Staff Workshops

1.10 Next Steps

This Issues and Opportunities document and the feedback we receive from circulating it, provides key information that will be used to draft the Open Spaces Strategy. Essentially we are checking in to make sure we have understood what we have heard so far, and have identified key issues, opportunities and gaps.

Council is seeking comment and feedback on the content of this document from interested parties to ensure the issues and opportunities identified are correct.

This document will be made available for community comment, emailed to stakeholders and other interested parties and presented at targeted meetings until the 30th June 2019.

This feedback will inform the development of a draft Open Spaces Strategy. Formal community consultation on the draft Open Spaces Strategy will be available undertaken in early 2020.



Attachment 1: Methods for Capturing Community Views

Consulting the community and key stakeholders is important to identify issues and opportunities, assist with decision making and to help ensure any new ideas will work effectively in practice. We understand that our parks and open spaces are an important component to the Kāpiti community therefore we believe it is essential that the community has an opportunity to have a say. We are working with our iwi partners throughout this strategy review.

The consultation of this project is being undertaken in three phases.

Phase one, was an information gathering phase which is now complete. Information was gathered from the sources described below:

- **March – April 2019 - An online survey** of the parks network was developed by Council staff and the Consulting team to this project. This was made available to the public. This was a self-selecting survey where people with an interest/ desire to participate, were able to do so. There was no specific targeted requests for survey participants. There were 123 respondents of the survey which while a small percentage of the population, was considered to be suitably representative for the purposes of informing this phase of information gathering for the open spaces strategy. This information was used alongside Council officers own knowledge of trending issues for the District.
- **February 2019 - Council Staff Workshops** were held with Council staff involved with parks, bylaws, public art, town centres, sustainable transport, stormwater, water, coastal management and biodiversity.
- **March 2019 - Stakeholder Workshops** were held with Kāpiti Coast developers, staff from Greater Wellington Regional Council and DoC, and with representatives of Council partners including the Older Person's Council, Kāpiti Coast Youth Council, Cycleway, Walkway, Bridleway Advisory Group, Kāpiti Accessibility Advisory Group and restoration volunteer groups. A list of stakeholders for each workshop group was developed by Council staff and based on their knowledge of respective user groups in the community. Stakeholders were placed into relevant interest group workshop groups to enable discussions to be as relevant as possible for those attending.

Collectively the information above could provide information about the user and provider impressions of open space use and provision.

- **March 2019 - Council staff undertook park analysis and desktop information gathering** to get a stronger understanding of the open space network.

The park analysis was undertaken via a web based tool through iAuditor, and comprised of a number of specific questions pertaining to quality, experience, setting characteristics of the park. This was undertaken by suitability qualified Council staff however it is recognised some of the information gathered was subjective. To minimise subjectivity, the Council staff were taken through a trial exercise to best ensure the information captured was standardised.

The desktop information gathering considered factors about the parks that could be analysed from existing database information and general knowledge of the areas such as classification, land area, surrounding land use and location for example.

Collectively this information could provide useful park management trend information.

We are currently in phase two. Further feedback from interested parties will be sought on the issues and opportunities identified through this report. To obtain feedback this document will be made available for community comment, emailed to stakeholders and other interested parties and presented at targeted meetings. A survey is available for people to provide feedback.

In phase three (early 2020) a draft Open Spaces Strategy will be available for formal consultation from all interested parties including stakeholders and the community.