

Papakura Local Board Input into Takaro – Investing in Play Discussion Document

The draft Papakura Local Board Plan 2017, outcome 2 relates to “People in Papakura lead active, healthy and connected lives” and the statement “We have great parks and places to play and do the things that we enjoy”.

The Papakura Local Board provides the following response to the Takaro – investment in play discussion document:

1. The board notes with concern that the programming of local board engagement is occurring at the same time as the public consultation.
2. The board reaffirms that in Auckland Council’s shared governance model, local boards have governance responsibility for playgrounds in local parks including decision-making on design, oversight and renewals spending.
3. The board notes that if an investment plan for play for the region is endorsed, each local board should be supported to develop their own guidelines for investment decisions, using the region-wide plan as a base.
4. The board notes that if new funds are to be made available for play, it is the governing body’s role to allocate these according to strategic priorities. Once allocated the local boards are the decision-makers with regards to the type of play they wish to support in their local area.
5. The board recommends addressing the disparity of existing asset provision and distribution of play provision across Auckland and that council investment in play is allocated between local boards in proportion to the number of young Aucklanders living in each local board area, noting that Papakura has one of the lower percentages of play infrastructure versus the percentage of the population under the age of 25.
6. Council needs to plan ahead for the provision of recreation spaces in developing areas to ensure the infrastructure is in place before the development begins. There will be issues with parks being developed on one side of a board boundary that will be catering to the residences from another board’s area.
7. The board provides the following response to the questions posed in the Takaro – Investment in Play discussion document:

No.	Questions	Papakura Local Board response
i.	Which benefits of play are the most important?	Physical and mental health benefits. The type of play has changed from kids getting outside and playing, to kids sitting in front of a screen.
ii.	Should council investment continue to target a particular demographic group, such as young children, or should it seek to cater to all ages,	The emphasis should be on young people, up to 12 years old. However groups like teenagers, senior citizens, ethnic minorities should be looked at

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	abilities and backgrounds equally?	as well, eg: walkways around parks, adult exercise equipment in some parks, petanque areas.
iii.	Should the council prioritise investment in areas of high socio-economic deprivation over other areas?	The board believes council should prioritise investment in area of high socio-economic deprivation over other areas. They believe the poorer communities need all the help they can get for their children.
iv.	What is an acceptable level of risk in play?	<p>Children like challenges.</p> <p>Risk is part of learning.</p> <p>Learning to climb trees is important. Health and Safety has limited play opportunities for children.</p> <p>Schools have restrictive policies regarding play, this also affects opportunities for children to learn.</p>
v.	Where does the council's responsibility to manage risk end and personal responsibility begin?	<p>Council's responsibility is to have safe well maintained equipment.</p> <p>It is a parent's responsibility to ensure the children are using the equipment appropriately and are supervised.</p> <p>Rather than saying too dangerous, say let's see what we can do.</p>
vi.	What happens if something goes wrong? How should the council respond?	<p>If the equipment fails the Health and Safety Act provisions come into play.</p> <p>If a child hurts themselves while playing – it is the parent's responsibility to take the appropriate action.</p> <p>If there is a pattern of the same type of accident then Council should look at it.</p> <p>Accidents happen, it's a part of life.</p> <p>Playground equipment should not be put in secluded parts of a park.</p> <p>The CPTED provisions should be enforced when designing or reviewing play areas.</p> <p>The board believes the council's current approach is too risk adverse resulting in the dumbing down of play areas. What evidence is there to support tighter rules around play?</p> <p>The board agrees that a greater degree of personal responsibility should be permitted.</p>
Vii	<p>How can the council provide a play network that welcomes and accommodates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth? • Adults? 	<p>Council should be prepared to trial equipment to see who it appeals to, eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness circuit • Skateparks

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families? • Seniors? • The disabled? • Culturally diverse communities? 	<p>Some playgrounds are very close to busy roads without fencing. Council could look at whether fences are required at some play areas to protect children running on to busy roads.</p> <p>Design playgrounds for the different age groups and needs of people, eg: make sure the paths are wide enough.</p> <p>Identifying areas where play equipment could be placed.</p> <p>Council needs to be aware of what the local people want, eg: installation of memorial seats should be a simple process.</p>
viii.	What opportunities do you see for partnerships between the council and private providers of play?	<p>There could be opportunities for council to work with schools to open up those playgrounds to the public. The schools and communities would benefit.</p> <p>Papakura Local Board want to know the success stories and are open to work with private providers. The board is conscious of costs of private providers, eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rock climbing – health and safety has to be supervised and is costly. • Gymnastics – now a days not a lot of children do gymnastics. So they don't learn balance. <p>If kids do go to gymnastics – there is nowhere for them to practice.</p> <p>Benches with different levels, parallel bars could be installed in parks to help develop balancing and climbing skills.</p>
ix.	What criteria should underpin Auckland's investment in play?	<p>The board believes the criteria for investment in play should allow for areas for the different age groups to have opportunities for play especially given the impacts of growth and infill housing.</p> <p>Contributing to the physical and mental well being of the population should be an underlying principle.</p>
x.	Should we encourage and provide for nature play?	The board supports the provision of nature play opportunities.
xi.	Where should we provide for nature play?	Nature play areas around our estuaries, streams and bush areas and native forests would be ideal.
xii.	How accepting do you think the wider community would be to	Nature play should not be an excuse for not maintaining parks.

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	lowering maintenance standards to provide for nature play in some parks?	<p>However there are areas that could be suitable for allowing nature to take over.</p> <p>Generally people want their parks well maintained.</p> <p>People would need to understand that the area is being left for nature play.</p>
xiii.	Should we encourage and provide more opportunities for water play? If so, in what form?	<p>People like to play in water, eg: Mission Bay Fountain. Water play could also be a focus for enhancing the streams and foreshore areas.</p> <p>Splash pads are great, however, there is still a need for public padding pools, eg: Totara Park pool.</p>
xiv.	<p>In what situations should the council prioritise play activation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonally? • To promote existing play spaces? • Where there are no other play opportunities? • To activate underutilized spaces? 	<p>The board believes all these situations are priorities.</p> <p>Council should be taking every opportunity to encourage its population to be active, both young and old.</p>
xv.	What priority should be given to investment provision of temporary play experiences over permanent play assets?	Parks should be used more for celebrating various festivals. We should provide play opportunities that preserve ethnic differences, eg: kite days.
xvi.	Does Auckland need an adventure playground?	<p>Utilise cost effective opportunities for adventure playgrounds. Use things that encourage people to balance, climb jump etc. These can double as fitness stations.</p> <p>Adventure playgrounds should be targeted to where the predominant young population is situated.</p> <p>Council should consider natural adventure playgrounds, water quality will need to improve.</p>
xvii.	Which are the most important supporting facilities which council should provide at play spaces?	Seats, a little shade, pathway to the playground, toilets and fencing to protect children running on to the road.



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