

Date: Thursday 15 May 2025
Time: 1:30 pm
Meeting Room: Manurewa Local Board Office
Venue: 7 Hill Road
Manurewa

Manurewa Local Board

OPEN ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENTS UNDER SEPARATE COVER

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Item 15

Attachment A

Te Māhere-ā-tākaro ō Manurewa 2025

Manurewa Play Plan 2025

May 2025

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Manurewa Play Plan 2025

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May 2025

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Attachment A

Introduction

Purpose of the Manurewa Play Plan 2024

Te Māhere-ā-tākaro o Manurewa 2025 – the Manurewa Play Plan 2025 – provides Manurewa Local Board with guidance for future investment in play, particularly beyond playgrounds and for the wider community. It reflects the belief that play should be an ‘everywhere activity’, and gives effect to the Manurewa Local Board Plan 2023. It will be refreshed as new local board plans are published¹.

The Supplementary information document contains insights from the community, the council’s Advisory Panels, and the wider play sector. These insights have helped to shape staff advice about new ways to support play in Manurewa. It also contains information about the ethnicity and age of Manurewa residents, and how this may influence play investment.

Manurewa Local Board already invests in play, and the Manurewa Play Plan 2025 complements that ongoing support. Manurewa has a large network of playgrounds, including Tāmaki Makaurau’s most inclusive and accessible destination playground at Te Pua Keith Park. There are skate parks, wheeled play, and a 15kms of mountain bike trails in Manurewa. The two local libraries also provide plenty of play, particularly for younger tamariki.

The local board also invests in the council’s Out and About Auckland programme of park- and beach-based activations, with delivery partners hosting events that encourage the community to have fun in local spaces. Elected members from Manurewa Local Board provide leadership in regional play discussions by participating in the council’s informal Play Leadership Group.

The play plan is also complementary to previous staff advice from the Special Operations team. The advice focuses on assessing the current level of playground provision and provides specific recommendations as to how the playground network can be improved². It includes a collection of project proposals for the local board to consider when planning its annual operational expenditure (OPEX) work programme. The plan sits alongside the Special Operations staff advice to help build innovative ways of improving play for all.

Most local boards have a play provision assessment or play gap analysis, and in several cases, these documents are being updated to reflect recent play investment outcomes. Play provision assessments and gap analyses focus primarily on built capital expenditure (CAPEX) play assets. They:

- Assess play space provision at a network and individual play space scale
- Evaluate the current provision and identify any current gaps (for example, gaps in age-group provision)
- Highlight the presence or absence of specialised play experiences
- Reflect the local context of changing population patterns and forecast population growth
- Identify areas of play oversupply in the network and offer guidance for optimisation
- Recommend where further investment in play is required in specific suburbs or neighbourhoods.

Local path studies and greenways plans support local boards to assess existing local path priority routes for cycling and walking, and make recommendations for future work to improve the path network.

¹ As discussed in the Supplementary Information document, this play plan also aligns with several existing strategies

² The Supplementary Information document explains how different elements of the Auckland play ecosystem work together

Why play matters

Play is self-chosen, self-directed, intrinsically motivated and enjoyable. It's 'stuff we do mostly just for fun', and it brings joy and adds value to the lives of people of all ages. For tamariki, play is a fundamental human right³. Active play helps to develop physical literacy, social play supports the building of stronger relationships with peers and the wider community, and creative play enables tamariki to explore and stretch their imaginations.

Although the importance of play to tamariki development and wellbeing is well understood, opportunities to play have declined in recent decades. Tamariki today have less time, space and permission to play than most adults enjoyed when they were growing up. This is contributing to a rise in poor physical and mental health outcomes. Since 2022 Auckland Council has worked with Sport New Zealand and the regional sports trusts to expand its approach to play. Taking a principles-based approach to support play advocacy and achieves better play outcomes for tamariki in Tāmaki Makaurau. The council is part of a thriving play sector that includes Regional Sports Trusts, Recreation Aotearoa, and membership organisations such as Play Aotearoa⁴.

This new approach can be summarised into seven key messages:

Play = 'stuff we do mostly just for fun'

Access to play is a human right for all children

Children need time, space and permission to play every day

Play is for everybody, of every age and every ability

Play is an everywhere activity: all places are playful

Playgrounds are the starting place for play - not the only place

We can all make Tāmaki Makaurau a playful city

³ Refer to the Supplementary Information document to learn about play's protected status under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

⁴ The Supplementary Information document includes Sport New Zealand's Principles of Play, which serve as the guiding principles of play advocacy in New Zealand

Te Māhere-ā-tākaro o Manurewa 2025 / Manurewa Play Plan 2025

Through play, tamariki develop resilience, independence and decision-making skills. Playful experiences help them to manage risk and deal with unpredictable challenges. Access to play contributes to happy childhoods and prepares tamariki to be physically and mentally healthy adults. Given the importance of play in supporting tamariki wellbeing, the goal of increasing access to play fits well with the obligations of local government to support community wellbeing in all forms⁵. Nobody should feel like they're too old to play, and we should ensure that everybody is encouraged to join in, even while we keep tamariki at the centre of play conversations.



Playgrounds are hallowed places for tamariki and whānau, and we must continue to build and maintain them, but they are the starting place for play – not the only place. Our vision is for Tāmaki Makaurau to recognise and celebrate the benefits of play by encouraging playful behaviour in nature, in our urban spaces, in our community spaces, and through events, activations, and design. Play helps tamariki to love and appreciate their region as they grow. Through play, they can learn about and celebrate te ao Māori and the many cultures that make up our city and our region. Playing in Tāmaki Makaurau's parks and reserves and at its beautiful beaches also ensures that tamariki love and treasure the outdoor world. This promotes kaitiakitanga and supports future Aucklanders to continue to take care of its wild spaces.

Auckland Council's play advocacy approach empowers elected members and staff to support play as 'an everywhere activity' and to celebrate play as an activity that should be enjoyed from early childhood and beyond.

⁵ Refer to the Supplementary Information document to learn about the Local Government Act 2002 and the obligations of councils to support community wellbeing

New play opportunities

This section of the play plan identifies projects that will increase play in Manurewa.

Work programme planning

The table below lists the proposed projects and how they align with Manurewa Local Board Plan 2023 objectives. It is for reference only, and elected members should read the following collection of one-page project proposals to better understand what is being suggested and why.

This list of projects is not prescriptive, and including these play ideas in the play plan is not confirmation that Manurewa Local Board will fund any specific project. The project list is provided to demonstrate the many ways that operational funding can support play outcomes. These play projects are all good options for the local board to consider supporting, but elected members, staff and the community will have ideas for many other possible play projects that could also be developed in due course.

Play project	Local Board Plan 2023 objective
Sidelines Play Box	2023MN3.7 – Children have lots of options for casual or informal play
Tree swings	2023MN3.7 – Children have lots of options for casual or informal play
On-site adventurous nature spaces	2023MN3.7 – Children have lots of options for casual or informal play
Installed adventurous nature spaces	2023MN3.7 – Children have lots of options for casual or informal play
Play at local board-funded events	2023MN3.1 – People can easily access free social and recreational activity
Playful street art	2023MN1.6 – People feel their neighbourhoods and public places are safe and attractive
Playful installations	2023MN1.6 – People feel their neighbourhoods and public places are safe and attractive
Play at libraries	2023MN3.3 – Facilities and open spaces are welcoming, inclusive and promote wellbeing and sustainability outcomes
Expanded play activation programme	2023MN3.1 – People can easily access free social and recreational activity
Expanded beach activation programme	2023MN3.1 – People can easily access free social and recreational activity
Loose parts play space	2023MN3.7 – Children have lots of options for casual or informal play
Local community play budget	2023MN1.5 – People know each other, feel connected in their neighbourhoods and play a key part in shaping Manurewa
Partnership funding for rangatahi play projects	2023MN3.7 – Children have lots of options for casual or informal play
Rangatahi fun at Manurewa Pool	2023MN3.7 – Children have lots of options for casual or informal play
Play on the way	2023MN3.7 – Children have lots of options for casual or informal play

Te Māhere-ā-tākaro o Manurewa 2025 / Manurewa Play Plan 2025

Play project	Local Board Plan 2023 objective
StoryWalks	2023MN1.5 – People know each other, feel connected in their neighbourhoods and play a key part in shaping Manurewa
Play advocacy general budget	2023MN3.1 – People can easily access free social and recreational activity
Play festival	2023MN3.7 – Children have lots of options for casual or informal play

Sidelines Play Box



What is it? Gifting a box of local board-branded boxes of loose parts play equipment to sports clubs, to be managed by the club and made available for tamariki to use during training sessions and games.

How will we manage Sidelines Play Boxes? A Play Box is a one-off gift from the local board. The sports club will be responsible for looking after its Play Box.

Why gift a Sidelines Play Box? Tamariki often spend time at sports fields while family members train or compete, and these spaces don't often provide much

scope for play. Providing play equipment (large-format games, blocks, etc) will give tamariki time, space and permission to have fun while sport takes place. Gifting a Sidelines Play Box to a sports club will strengthen its relationship with the local board and activate a council-owned space for play.

Tree swings



What is it? Installing council-funded swings in trees, providing a play opportunity in parks and reserves without playgrounds. Four swings were installed in trees in elsewhere in Tāmaki Makaurau in 2024.

How will we manage tree swings? Tree swings will be inspected regularly to ensure they are safe to use. The trees in which they are installed will also be checked regularly to ensure that the swing is causing no damage.

Why install tree swings? Aucklanders often install swings into trees in council

spaces, and people of all ages enjoy them. Sometimes the community-installed swings are unsafe, or in unsuitable trees. By installing our own swings, we can ensure that they are fit-for-purpose, will not cause damage to the tree, and comply with our council benefit-risk assessment approach for non-playground play.

On-site adventurous nature spaces



What is it? Pruning or modifying a felled or fallen tree, to leave it in place as a natural play opportunity.

How will we manage an on-site adventurous nature space? By adding the space to the council maintenance schedule for the park, to be inspected regularly and modified further if required. The council will take a benefit risk assessment approach for this kind of non-playground play.

Why leave fallen trees as play spaces?

Leaving a fallen tree in place as an adventurous nature space, and using

signage to show that play is encouraged, activates a park as a location for play. Climbing fallen trees can also offer older tamariki in particular, a chance to enjoy more challenging play than is sometimes available at local playgrounds. This kind of play increases the overall play diversity for a neighbourhood.

Installed adventurous nature spaces



What is it? Bringing felled trees to a site that doesn't contain a formal playground, and using them to create a nature play opportunity.

How will we manage an installed adventurous nature space? By adding the space to the council maintenance schedule for the park, to be inspected regularly and modified further if required. The council will take a benefit risk assessment approach for this kind of non-playground play.

Why use trees to create play? We can

use this kind of play to fill gaps in play provision identified in previous staff advice, either permanently or until a traditional playground is installed. Sites that have been identified in previous play gap analysis include Greenmeadows Reserve, Totara Park, and Iwinuku Crescent. The Specialist Operations team will provide further advice about suitable sites as required. Play like this can also sit in spaces where traditional playgrounds can't fit, such as drainage reserves. As well as providing play where there was none, adventurous nature spaces like this give scope for balancing, climbing and dynamic play like 'floor is lava' games. The natural materials provide sensory play experiences, and as the materials change over time, tamariki can learn about natural processes. Creating an adventurous nature space from raw materials enables arborists to be creative and craft a play opportunity that is unique to its site.

Play at local board-funded events



What is it? Increasing budgets for events like Movies in the Park, so the Events team can book play delivery partners to provide play activations as part of the event.

How would we deliver play at events?

Funding for a play activation could be added to the Events team work programme for the event. The Events team can access play delivery partners through the register of council vendors.

Why add play to local board events?

Including play at events will entertain and occupy excited tamariki, making the

event more fun for them and giving their parents and care-givers an opportunity to relax and connect with other members of the community.

Playful street art



What is it? Commissioning professional artists to design and create playful murals in urban spaces, with input from local tamariki and rangatahi.

How would we create playful street art?

By funding a play advocacy work programme for playful murals. The programme would be commissioned and delivered with support from the council Public Art team, and according to the guidelines in the Murals Toolkit and the Public Art policy.

How can street art make urban spaces playful?

Art can contribute to a playful environment, particularly in urban spaces that could benefit from increased colour and design. Street art adds excitement and interest to spaces, attracting visitors and making town centres feel more inclusive.

Playful installations



a reserve, or allocating a space for tamariki art in a public space. Installations should ideally encourage further additions by tamariki and whānau, increasing a sense of community ownership and making dynamic, ever-changing public spaces.

What is it? Creative, playful installations to add joy to a park or an urban landscape.

How would we create playful installations? Partnering with community groups and schools, perhaps using council-run facilities such as libraries and community houses to promote the opportunity.

What's the point of playful installations? This is a low-cost way to add playfulness in parks or urban spaces. A playful installation can be community-led, with local board seed funding. Examples include creating a fairy village in

Play at libraries



tamariki, but staff at the branches have identified gaps in provision for older tamariki and rangatahi. Providing opportunities for older children – and adults – to stay and play reinforces the community value of libraries, and can address issues like social isolation for older residents. Libraries can also be a space where people can borrow outdoor games for an hour or two to use on nearby green spaces, as many library branches sit on or near council-owned parks. Both of Manurewa's library branches will be updated in major renewal projects in due course, which will create exciting opportunities for play to be designed into the fabric of the buildings.

What is it? Additional funding to library branches, so they can refresh or increase their play provision for people of all ages to play.

How would we fund play in libraries? Library staff would identify gaps in play provision and the play team would use its work programme budget to fill them.

Does play belong in libraries? Libraries aren't silent book museums anymore – increasingly, they're used by communities as important places to gather. Manurewa's two libraries already provide excellent play sessions for younger

Expanded play activation programme



What is it? Increased funding for the play activation work programme in Manurewa.

How would we provide more play? The Activation team would allocate an increased budget to its delivery partners, focusing on specific areas of play if required.

Do we need more play activations? Yes! The Out and About Auckland Activation team is skilled at developing great relationships with delivery partners and scheduling activities for local boards. The programme can also respond to specific priorities for a local board. Out and About

can also help local boards to meet Māori Outcomes with Māori play and recreation sessions. A year-round programme could be developed, using community houses for activities in the winter.

Expanded beach activation programme



What is it? Increased funding for the beach activation work programme in Manurewa.

How would we increase beach activations? The Activation team would allocate an increased budget to its delivery partners, and would promote beach activities as opportunities for rangatahi and adults to have fun.

Why run beach activations? Sites with access to the water can provide opportunities for fun through recreational activities like waka ama, kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding. Unfortunately

though, not everybody has access to the equipment required, or knows how to take part. Facilitated sessions delivered through Out and About Auckland remove barriers to participation, encouraging older tamariki, rangatahi and adults to enjoy themselves.

Loose parts play space



What is it? Creating a dedicated site for loose parts play in Manurewa.

How would we deliver a loose parts play space? By confirming a suitable site, providing storage if required (for example, a shed for an outdoor play space, or a cupboard or similar for indoor storage), and creating a partnership agreement with a delivery partner to manage the site.

Why would we support loose parts play? This kind of play – also known as ‘junk play’ – encourages tamariki to use their imaginations and create play out of unexpected items. The materials used

tend to be sourced from recycling centres and other organisations committed to diverting items from landfill and giving them a new life. At present, there isn’t a permanent site in Tāmaki Makaurau for loose parts play, although Out and About Auckland provides pop-up junk play activities.

Local community play budget



What is it? A budget to support community-led play activities.

How would we manage a play budget? The local board could call for playful funding requests in its general grant-making programme. If there is an opportunity for ongoing support for an organisation (such as a school, kindergarten, community group, or cultural group) to provide community play, a partnership agreement could be developed.

Why would we fund community play? Providing time, space and permission for

play is the responsibility of the whole community, not just the council or Manurewa Local Board. Supporting community groups to create and deliver play would help to meet the play needs of tamariki in the local area. For cultural groups, this could also support wider integration for newer residents. With schools, this can help to unlock these wonderful play sites for the rest of the community to also enjoy during weekends.

Partnership funding for rangatahi play projects



What is it? A funding partnership with a youth organisation, to learn from rangatahi about how they'd like to have fun.

How would we manage this engagement? By forming a partnership agreement with a youth organisation for engagement focused on rangatahi play and recreation.

Why do we need to engage with rangatahi about play? Nearly all local boards recognise that rangatahi are often overlooked in local board work

programmes. In most cases, a youth council is the sole way that local boards can hear the views of rangatahi. We need insights to better understand what rangatahi would like to do for play. This would also help Manurewa Local Board to give effect to Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: that children have the right to express views freely on matters that affect them, and that their views will be given appropriate weight according to the age and maturity of the child.

Rangatahi fun at Manurewa Pool



What is it? Programming activities at Manurewa Pool for older tamariki and rangatahi.

How would we create pool play? By working with the Pools and Leisure team and staff at the pool to provide space for activities and promote them effectively. If necessary, delivery partners could be used to manage activations. One idea could be a manu competition in the deep-water pool, sponsored by the local board.

What's good about pool play?

Manurewa Pool is an amazing community facility, popular with people of all ages. Delivering water-based activities and events for older tamariki and rangatahi – perhaps late in the afternoon or early in the evening – could provide an opportunity for this demographic to have fun with their peers.

Play on the way



What is it? Playful activities or installations to make walking and cycling more fun.

How would we deliver play on the way?

By partnering with Community Leisure Management (CLM) Community Sport, or a community house or community group, and involving local schools in projects.

What's the point of play on the way?

The Manurewa Local Paths Plan 2019 identified several walking and cycling routes. With elements like pavement stencilling or installing decorative

markers, certain routes could be enhanced to encourage whānau to use them. Tamariki are always more motivated to walk or cycle if the journey is fun. An iwi-led approach to this work could also support Māori outcomes by sharing local iwi narratives. Play on the way could also link local playgrounds and other play spaces, creating play trails. This could support greater use of local playgrounds, ensuring that lesser-known spaces are also enjoyed.

StoryWalks



What is it? A series of child-height signs in a park or reserve, containing the pages of a picture book.

How would we deliver StoryWalks?

By working with a publisher to access rights to a suitable book (which is likely to be provided free of charge in many cases), and by asking for support from a community organisation to build the frames. We would then approach council colleagues to support the installation the StoryWalk frames. This is the kind of project that could appeal to a Men's Shed or a Rotary Club, with a project grant from the local board to cover the costs.

What's good about StoryWalks? StoryWalks bring children's literacy to life by sharing a picture book in an outdoor setting. This will encourage young readers and their whānau to be active while enjoying the tale. Stories can be printed in different languages, acknowledging the cultural diversity of an area and celebrating Te Ao Māori by providing te reo versions.

Play advocacy general budget



What is it? A small annual operational expenditure (OPEX) budget to enable staff to respond to ad-hoc play opportunities as they arise.

How would we deliver a general play budget? By allocating a small budget to a general play advocacy work programme.

How would we spend a general play budget? An ad-hoc play budget will enable staff to respond to new project opportunities as they arise. It would be useful for local Play Week celebrations, for example, or to respond quickly to projects resulting from CLM Community Sport's school engagement.

Play festival



What is it? A one-day event to celebrate play.

How can we put on a play festival? By hiring an external project team with experience in delivering this type of event. The team would work with the council events team to coordinate arrangements.

What's the point of a play festival? A play festival would be an opportunity for a local board to celebrate the value of play and fun in the local community. A previous local board-funded play festival elsewhere in the city applied a cultural

lens to the project, and used it as a way to celebrate different cultures' play traditions, with many different communities taking part. These events included free play opportunities and interactive musical performances, and themed stalls and food trucks. They were a big success and attracted thousands of participants. Given how big Auckland is, we could easily hold more than one annual play festival. This kind of event would really demonstrate how much a local board cares about supporting the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi.

Integrating play into work programmes

Play outcomes can also be achieved by partnering with council colleagues to find opportunities for play to form part of broader work programmes funded by the local board. Many of these opportunities will flow from the local board's own guiding documents.

Play can also help to give effect to local board-specific plans regarding increased community engagement, and support for ethnic communities. During the work programme planning process for future financial years, the Play, Sport and Recreation team will work with colleagues to identify projects that have potential to include play.

