

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

PARKS AND RESERVES



OVERVIEW

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **PARKS AND RESERVES**

Manaaki whenua, manaaki tangata, haere whakamua.

Tihei mauri ora!

No reira, e te haukainga Rangitāne, nei rā te mihi nui ki a koutou e pupuri nei i te mauri o te whenua me ngā wai e rere atu e rere mai.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

As our community continues to grow and our lives get busier, parks and reserves become increasingly important as places where people can play, be active and connect with one another.

Climate change will bring warmer temperatures and more frequent and intense rainfall events to our city and our management of open green spaces will need to adapt. Our trees and gardens are the lungs of our city, and managed well, they will provide places for people and wildlife to escape an increasingly harsh environment.

Parks and Reserves are quite diverse

Parks and Reserves is a collection of facilities, managed by a single division of council. They range from high profile parks such Victoria Esplanade and Ashhurst Domain to remnant stands of bush such as Tutukiwi reserve. They include a vast network of walkways that enable people to move around the city easily and connect with our awa. Our sportsfields support a wide range of sports, by providing places for teams and individuals to train and play. We provide swimming pools for people to grow their water confidence, play and exercise. Our cemeteries are places to visit and celebrate the lives of our past citizens.

Our parks and reserves also play a role in the management of stormwater. They provide large areas within the city where rainfall can naturally soak into the ground and trees and other plants can absorb moisture from the soil. We undertake riparian planting to improve water quality, biodiversity and secure wetland reserves.

This Asset Management Plan outlines how we currently manage parks and reserves, what our challenges are, changing expectations, and how we’re going to prepare our city for the next 30 years to ensure that our parks and reserves support our community to be more active and connected, and support biodiversity.

Our partners

Rangitāne o Manawatū and Council work in a collaborative partnership. Since the 2016 Rangitāne o Manawatū Treaty settlement, Rangitāne have become highly involved in the development of parks and reserves of cultural significance. Rangitāne sites of significance are identified, protected, and enhanced. Current Parks and Reserves projects being developed in partnership with Rangitāne include Te Motu o Poutoa (Anzac Park) and the Manawatū River Park.

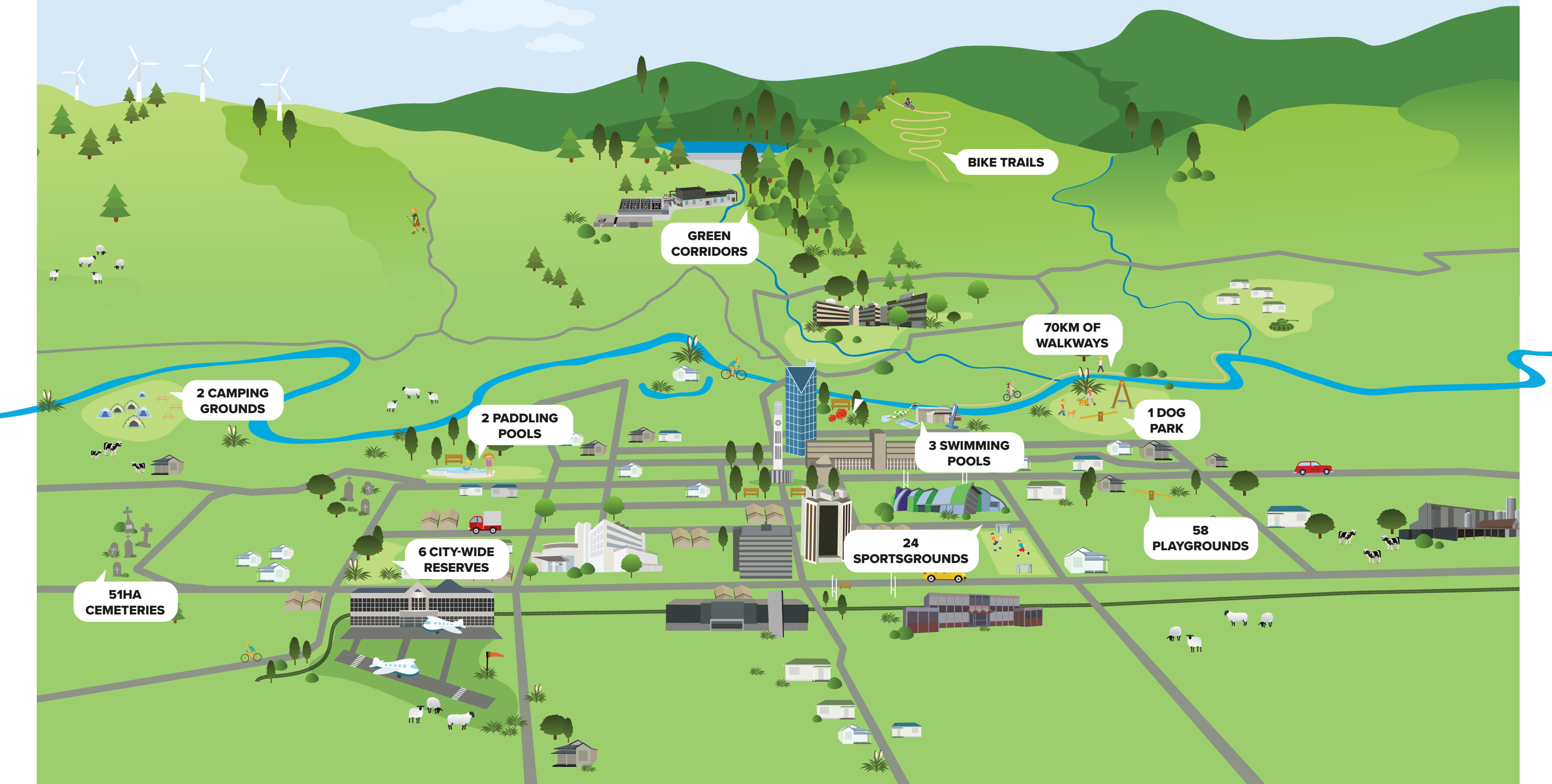
The Department of Conservation (DoC) has statutory responsibility for administering the Reserves Act. The DoC manages the Manawatū Gorge, a major ecological and recreation area, in partnership with Councils and other agencies, as part of the Te Apiti Manawatū Gorge Biodiversity Project.

WHAT WE PROVIDE



Around 6 in 10 residents visit/use parks, reserves and walkways at least once or twice a month.

Collectively parks and reserves support our community to be playful, active and connected, and help us to protect our waterways and biodiversity.



EVERYONE IS A CUSTOMER



WALKERS



BIKERS



FAMILIES



RUNNERS



SWIMMERS



SPORTS TEAMS



ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS



CAMPERS



EDUCATION

Our level of service

A diverse range of people enjoy our parks and reserves to undertake all kinds of activity. Most users expect our parks to provide a pleasant visitor experience, to be well maintained, safe to use, spread throughout the City and easy to access.

Parks, reserves, green spaces, walkways and shared pathways are the most frequently used/visited Council facilities.

We get great feedback from our community about the facilities we provide! Overall satisfaction with parks, reserves and public spaces is high when compared to other Council services and has been consistently high for many years.

Our assets are spread throughout the city and are generally in good to very good condition.

There are very few areas where the community inform us we are not delivering the level of service they expect. The levels of service gaps relate to specific sites, rather the parks and reserves collectively. These sites are usually where demand is high and people want to use them at the same time, e.g. lane swimmers, sports training, or where high usage leads to the asset condition deteriorating quickly.

WE HAVE SOME CHALLENGES + RISKS

Climate change means we need to start to do things differently

Changes to rainfall patterns will lead to issues for our sportsfields and walkways, because there will be more heavy downpours. Flooded surfaces may result in cancellation of sports events and walkways closed due to slips. In addition to more intense rainfall it is likely long dry periods, or drought events, will also occur more frequently. This will put a strain on trees and plants, restricting their growth or even causing them to die. If new parks and reserves infrastructure is not designed to cope with weather extremes, then the contribution our green assets make to our city will diminish and biodiversity will be lost.

Meeting the needs of every sport is challenging

At present some sports are well catered for, whilst others must compete with the general public, particularly for winter sports training grounds, swimming pools and indoor courts. As new sports emerge and our community grows, demand at key times of the day and week will continue to increase. It is impractical and unaffordable to provide new sports facilities, when we know they will only be used for a small proportion of the week.

Our community expectations are high, and our resources limited

As new families move into the city, and our community becomes more diverse, there is an increased expectation that Council will upgrade facilities at local parks. This is particularly true of playgrounds, where everyone wants something they have seen at another park. Unchecked, this has led an increase in level of service in some areas of the city and a decline in others. Overall the cost to maintain our parks is increasing as a result.

We have some other risks too

As our population is becoming more diverse, their preferences and needs are changing. Our existing network assets and services will struggle to support the needs of all members of the community in the future.

As sections get smaller, and housing more intensive, there will be increasing pressure to provide more public reserve land in the city.

Sports are changing and there is an increased need for indoor spaces and specialised sports surfaces. Our traditional sports facilities may become less desirable.

Our city is spreading in many directions – considerable investment will be needed, and new assets will place further pressure on our existing maintenance budget.

Continued pressure to further reduce chemical usage in our parks and reserves, with alternative weed and pest control measures likely to be less effective, may lead to a decline in quality and a loss of biodiversity in some areas.

Increasing conflict between the need to use parks and reserves for stormwater detention following heavy rainfall events, and the community desire to access parks.

Unstable banks throughout the gullies in Aokautere, means we may have to modify or relocate existing walkway tracks in the future.

WHAT'S OUR PLAN?

We need to make the best use of our existing assets

We have provision standards with clear levels of service for each category of park. We will use these to manage our reserves as a network, providing a range of play experiences within each suburb. City reserves will continue to be our destination parks and we will implement signature projects at these reserves to ensure they provide unique high-quality visitor experiences.

We will continue our annual assessment of the condition and performance of assets and prioritise our resources to replace assets that have reached end of life or become unsafe. We will take the opportunity when replacing assets to address any identified levels of service gaps and improve accessibility and safety as part of the project.

In the longer term, we will increase the use of our existing assets through initiatives such as draining sports fields, installing floodlights and upgrading existing fields to artificial surfaces.

We will help build the resilience of our city

We'll continue to work with our stakeholders and users to manage park assets in a manner that supports sustainable levels of service and environmental outcomes.

All new parks will include design features which will help make them more resilient to climate change. We will actively reduce our carbon footprint by choosing more sustainable materials and energy options.

We will continue to improve the resilience of our communities and the environment by planting edible trees, managing plant and animal pests and supporting community initiatives to restore our waterways and increase biodiversity.

We will only invest in new assets if there is a proven need

Where demand for new assets exists, we will explore partnerships with others to provide community access to their existing assets. The regional sports facilities investment framework will be used to ensure that needs are proven, and that a new facility is financially viable in the long-term before we commit to funding a new facility, either by ourselves, or in conjunction with others.

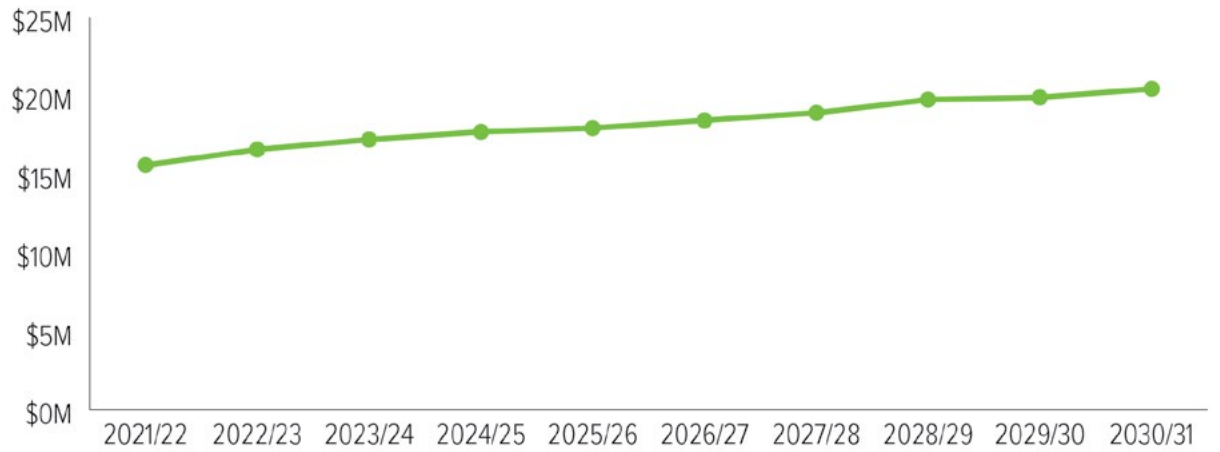
We'll work closely with landowners and our city planners to ensure new growth areas of the city make adequate provision for parks and other recreation facilities. These should meet the needs of the local neighbourhood, and support the park and walkway needs of the surrounding suburbs. The cost to buy and develop these parks in line with our provision standards needs to be fairly shared between ratepayers and owners of the new properties. There needs to be adequate funding provision in the long-term plan to maintain these parks to the agreed standard well into the future.



HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

To deliver existing levels of service and respond to city growth, we will continue to invest in the maintenance and renewal of existing assets and increase investment in new parks in growth areas. Our investment strategy is to deliver existing levels of service for the lowest lifecycle cost by managing costs and risks, and to only increase levels of service or invest in new service levels where there is clear alignment with achievement of the strategic direction of council, or in response to a changing external environment.

OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE PARKS AND RESERVES ACTIVITY



We've redeveloped our operating and maintenance budgets from a zero base, identifying the levels of staff, equipment and materials needed to deliver the agreed levels of service. This exercise revealed that whilst the annual budget needed was only slightly higher than the budget allocations in the 2018 LTP, the distribution across the activities needed to change, with more budget needed for city reserves and walkways, and less for local reserves.

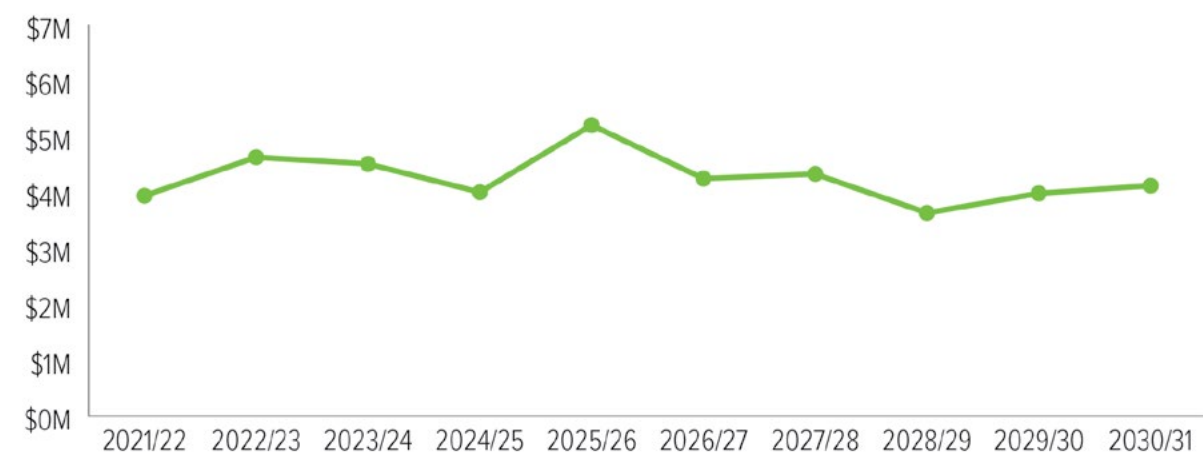
We spend more than \$11 million per year operating and maintaining the parks and reserves network. This is proposed to increase steadily as investments are made in existing assets and services to address identified level of service gaps. Overall, the largest portion of operations and maintenance costs incurred are in the maintenance of open green spaces. This includes recurring activities such as mowing lawns and maintaining gardens, trees

and furniture to ensure that parks are available for use each day and that our City Reserves are maintained to the high standard residents and visitors have come to expect.

The three council swimming pools are forecast to cost council almost \$2.5 million per annum. The largest portion of this cost is the annual payment to Community Leisure Management (CLM), who manage the pools on behalf of council, and retain the income from pool entries and programmes. The AMP assumes that council will continue to provide free swimming for supervised under five-year olds, at an annual cost to council of \$150k per annum.

Cemeteries are forecast to cost \$1.3 million per annum and generate \$700K through burial and cremation fees and the sale of plots. The main drivers of cost in this activity are grounds and gardens maintenance, the provision of burial and cremation services, and energy costs.

RENEWAL
PARKS AND RESERVES ACTIVITY



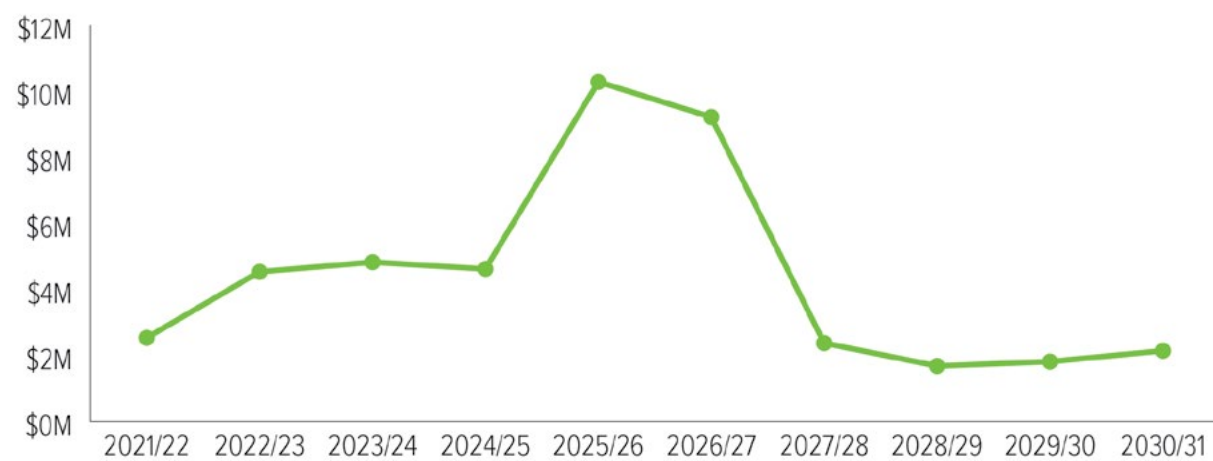
Overall existing Parks and Reserves assets are generally in good to very good condition. The annual condition assessment has identified however that some assets in our City Reserves are nearing end of life. These parks experience higher numbers of visitors than local reserves, which shortens the life of the assets, and an increase in investment is required over the next ten years.

The assessed condition and performance of Parks assets is used to assess the useful remaining life, and therefore the forecast timing of their replacement. The renewal programme is then amended to enable replacement of individual assets to occur at the same time the renewal of associated assets or as part of a capital development project.

Significant renewals during the period include:

- Building, pools and plant at the Lido Aquatic facility
- Ongoing renewal of playgrounds, hard surfaces and furniture at Local Reserves (increasing from \$647k to \$828k per annum over the next 10 years as the network continues to expand)
- Renewal of artificial hockey turf surface (\$670K in 2027/28)

CAPITAL NEW EXPENDITURE
PARKS AND RESERVES ACTIVITY



To respond to growth of the city and to increase levels of service in some locations, we’re planning to invest in parks in new areas of the city and to continue with development of the Manawatu River Park and Victoria Esplanade as destination parks for both residents and visitors to enjoy.

Significant investment is expected over the next ten years to provide new parks and reserves in growth areas of the city. More than \$11million is planned to be spent. It is currently assumed that a large portion of these costs will be met through development contributions. A challenge is forecasting the price of land, which is has been rising rapidly during the preparation of this AMP.

More than \$15million is planned to be spent enhancing assets in City Reserves. The continuing development of the Manawatu River Park will see the largest investment (\$9.3m), followed by implementation of the Esplanade masterplan (\$4.3m).

Other areas of planned improvements to the Parks and Reserves network include:

- Expansion of facilities at the Kelvin Grove Cemetery (\$2.5 million)
- Artificial football turf (\$1.8 million) – subject to external funding
- Closing existing levels of service gaps in Parks (\$0.6 million)
- Accessibility and safety improvements to reserves (\$1.0 million)

