

Taranaki Regional Sports Facilities

A Strategic Approach to Future Planning



Prepared by Sport Taranaki for the

New Plymouth District Council

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Report Disclaimer

In preparing this report it has been necessary for Sport Taranaki to make a number of assumptions based on the information supplied to Global Leisure Group Limited who were engaged to undertake the Taranaki Regional Sports Facility Strategy.

Forward from Sport New Zealand

Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ) aims to get more young people and adults into sport and active recreation and produce more winners on the worlds sporting stage. It does this through its strategic approach for Community Sport and High Performance Sport outcomes. Spaces, places, and facilities for sport is one of five strategic priorities in the Community Sport Strategy with a goal to develop and sustain a world leading community sport system where the need of the participant and athlete is the focus.

With leadership from the network of Regional Sports Trusts, Sport NZ is actively supporting better decision making and investment for future sporting spaces and places through a collaborative regional approach with local and regional government, education, funders, national and regional sports organisations.

The drivers for taking a regional approach to facility planning can be one or more of the following:

- The desire of funders to invest wisely in identified priority projects that will make the most impact
- An ageing network of facilities needing refurbishment, re-purposing, replacement or removal
- Changing demographics within a community, such as an increase in the population.
- Changing participation trends nationally and within a region requiring new types of facilities, or a new use of an existing facility
- Increasing expectations of users and user groups
- A growing acknowledgement that there is a hierarchy of facilities – regional, sub-regional and local – and that regional collaboration is the only fair and reasonable way to build and manage regional and sub-regional facilities.
- The risks inherent in focusing on and responding to the wants rather than the priority needs within a region.

Sport Taranaki and its local government and funding partners are to be commended for collaborating to undertake a planning approach that considers a strategic region-wide view and identifying the priorities for future spaces, places and facility needs.

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APPENDIX ONE:

Memorandum of Understanding for the Implementation of a Taranaki Regional Sports Facility Strategy

1 Executive Summary

The Taranaki region faces a number of challenges that impact on the current and future provision of facilities it is essential that these challenges are clearly defined and addressed to ensure that the region has a flexible and fit for purpose network of facilities to meet the future sporting needs.

The majority of Taranaki's sports facilities were developed over 30 years ago to meet the specific needs of a number of traditional sporting codes. While many of these codes have grown and prospered some have declined over the past 30 years.

New Plymouth is where demand for more provision from population growth will occur and additional demand from population changes will primarily be for facilities suitable for older adults.

The popularity and participation in sports codes is changing reflecting the changing demographics, emergence of new sports, the growth in informal recreation pursuits and competition from sedentary activities (often digital technology based). As community needs change, sport and recreation facilities need to change with them, be adaptable and flexible to meet the changing needs. Facilities will need to be more adaptable, attractive, multi- purpose and better meet the needs of a wider range of activities and users.

Facilities (and the sports using them) that can adapt and develop will thrive where those that don't are likely to

struggle to survive. The sport and recreation sector, like many community based activities is facing other trends including:

- Increasing expectations in the standard of facilities from users and sports codes
- Decrease in volunteer culture and increased demand for 'pay for play' and the casualization of sport.
- Increased responsibilities and burden placed on volunteers to meet user expectations, health and safety and other compliance requirements.

In planning for the future requirements, the strategy identifies a hierarchy of provision from community through to International facilities and has developed robust facility planning principles and criteria to improve future decision making when investing in sporting facilities. To support the strategy an online open source regional facility data collection platform and analysis tool has been developed by Sport NZ to assist with the planning and decision making process for the regions priority projects.

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of the recommended future collaborative planning approach and an investment contribution for the implementation of the approach and proposed project assessment process outlined in Section 4 of this report but noting the approach is not a replacement for the decision making processes of each of the partners. Rather it provides evidenced based analysis and information that supports the decision making process as to what facilities are required and more importantly what are not required.

A Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix One) sets out the terms and conditions, requested contribution and terms of reference for the proposed Steering Group.

Sport NZ has enabled Sport Taranaki to lead the development of a collaborative approach to future planning and with the support of local authorities and funders will continue its support through investment, time and advice to implement the recommended planning approach. Sport NZ and Sport Taranaki believes the approach will provide a range of benefits at a local, district and regional level ensuring better decision making and investment into future sport and active recreation spaces and places.

2 Introduction

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of a Taranaki Regional Sports Facility Planning Approach is to guide the future assessment of facility needs and the priorities for the region in regard to the development of sports and active recreation facilities.

2.2 Planning Approach Benefits

Sport New Zealand will contribute annual funding via Sport Taranaki's investment initiative to support implementation of the planning approach.

Sport Taranaki provision of regional services:

- a. Provision of support in the development of feasibility assessments and business case reports to guide the successful execution of the decision making framework.
- b. Advocacy with funders and investors for facilities that reflect the principles of the strategy.
- c. Assistance with investment negotiations in facility development and utilisation. Leading the development of a regional funding policy for projects of regional significance.
- d. Sharing of knowledge - including resources specific to sports facilities.
- e. The provision of professional development, training opportunities and information sharing to increase local and regional capability for the development of facilities across the region.
- f. Increasing regional understanding and optimisation of facilities including the provision of regional sporting trend information, opportunities to benchmark facility outcomes and usage data, to understand demand and enable informed decision making.
- g. A review of the approach and project priorities in 2021 to ensure it remains relevant and in line with sporting and demographic trends

The parties to the planning approach will also receive additional benefits from Sport New Zealand including:

- Access to a free and open source Facility Audit Tool which will be a repository for all the regions facility data and information. This tool which is compatible with Sport NZ's Insights Tool will provide a comprehensive planning tool for projects at a local, district, regional and national level. Sport Taranaki in their role will support councils to keep the based facility data up to date for planning purposes and which will provide costs savings at such time it is agreed to review a regions strategy.
- Access on application to funding to support from Sport NZ for those projects as identified as being a priority from the planning project assessment process. Funding would support project needs assessments, feasibility studies, business cases and design reviews.
- Use of Sport NZ's subsidized Project Peer Review Service for independent review of project concepts and plans, feasibility studies and business cases and funding applications.
- Relevant facility automatic registration onto Sport NZ's National Facility Benchmarking Tool which, through key performance indicators provides opportunity for comparative facility conversations that improve operational efficiency.
- Free Sport NZ time and advice/support through Sport Taranaki to build the capability of those actively working into sports and recreation spaces and places provision. Regional Spaces and Places working groups will be able to share best practice between regions, facilitated by Sport NZ.

2.3 Planning Approach Limitations

As a high-level strategic approach it is ambitious in scope, both geographically and in terms of content, further planning will be required at both the regional and district level. The approach is not a replacement for the detailed planning required, nor the existing strategies that exist nationally and across the region.

This approach does not set a standard level of service for sport and recreation facilities across the region. Individual Council's and asset owners determine their own specific levels of service through strategies, policies and Long Term Plan processes. However, it is intended that this strategy provide a framework to help guide regional and district provision and individual Council's levels of investment and service for sport and recreation facilities.

Given that the approach will examine issues based on available evidence at a network wide level, some specific code aspirations may not align. There may be instances where a particular club or code have aspirations to develop facilities to a higher standard than is required or in a location where there are other facilities available.

Where this eventuates it is important to take a network based approach across the region to ensure that the regional priorities are met.

The planning approach is envisaged to be used as a tool to assist the coordination of future sport and recreation facility planning and provision, and the funding and investment needs that are required.

3 Needs and Trends

3.1 Key Issues and Challenges

The Taranaki region faces a number of challenges that impact on the current and future provision of facilities. It is essential that these challenges are clearly defined and addressed to ensure that the region has a flexible and fit for purpose network of facilities to meet the future sporting needs. The challenges identified are summarised below:

3.1.1 Changing population demographics

Data from Statistics NZ shows Taranaki's population has been growing steadily over the past twenty years, and is projected to increase steadily into the future. New Plymouth remains the dominant population centre within the region. South Taranaki has the youngest population in the region and the largest number of Māori residents.

Taranaki's population is ageing, but at a slower rate than at the previous census. The region currently has the sixth oldest age structure in New Zealand. The population of the Taranaki Region is somewhat less multi-ethnic than that of Total New Zealand, with greater proportions European and Māori (European, 75.8 per cent compared with 64.9 per cent nationally; Māori, 15.0 per cent compared with 12.8 per cent nationally) and smaller proportions Pacific Island, Asian, MELAA and 'Not Elsewhere Included'. The region's Māori and Pasifika populations are predominantly younger than the European demographic.

Taranaki generally fairs well in terms of lower levels of unemployment, and reasonably high levels of median incomes. Taranaki has a family size that is slightly larger than the national average, and two parent families account for over two thirds of families. The largest households reside in the South Taranaki and Stratford districts.

The total population is projected to increase from 109,608 in 2016 to 130,290 by 2043 however nearly all the projected growth is concentrated in New Plymouth.

In addition to the natural aging of the population, the Taranaki region experiences an on-going challenge in terms of net migration loss at 15-19 and 20-24 years of age as people leave the region for education and work opportunities.

Table 1: Current and Projected Population

	2013 (Census)	2043	Change
New Plymouth	74,757	93,800	25.5%
Stratford	9,069	9,190	1.3%
South Taranaki	26,157	27,300	4.4%
	110,079	130,290	18.4%

Table 2: Current and Projected Population (under 19 years)

	2013 (Census)	2043	Change
New Plymouth	20,640 (27.6%)	21,760 (27.9%)	+5.4%
Stratford	2,660 (29.3%)	2,270 (23.2%)	-14.7%
South Taranaki	8,120 (31.0%)	6,820 (24.8%)	-16.0%
	31,420 (28.5%)	30,850 (26.8%)	-1.8%

Table 3: Current and Projected Population (over 65 years)

	2013 (Census)	2043	Change
New Plymouth	12,480 (16.7%)	26,200 (23.2%)	+110%
Stratford	1,476 (16.2%)	2,130 (24.7%)	44%
South Taranaki	3,858 (14.7%)	6,700 (25.0%)	71%
	17,802 (16.2%)	34,930 (23.7%)	96%

The population of the region is changing and with it brings new challenges and opportunities. These changes impact differently across the region. The key demographic changes that will impact on participation and future demand for facilities over the next 30 years are:

- The Taranaki population is projected to grow by 18.4% (20,211 more residents) between 2013 and 2043. The vast majority of the projected population growth within the region is in New Plymouth with a 25.5% increase (19,043 more residents)
- The population is projected to age significantly with increase by 96% between 2013 and 2043 from 17,802 residents (16.2% of population) to 34,930 (23.7%) of the region's population being over 65 years old by 2043.
- The traditionally heaviest users of most sporting facilities are the under 19 years age group, this is projected to decrease 1.8% between 2013 and 2043 from 31,420 residents (28.5% of population) to 30,850 (26.8%). This decrease of young residents is marked in Stratford and South Taranaki with a slight increase in New Plymouth.

Taking into consideration current and projected population and demographic changes future facility provision is likely to change. e.g. an ageing population (96%) increase may influence the nature and purpose of facilities that respond to these needs.

3.2 Participation Trends

Through consultation with sports codes it is evident that the majority of Taranaki's sports facilities were developed over 30 years ago and were developed to meet the specific needs of a number of traditional sporting codes. While many of these codes have grown and prospered some have declined over the past 30 years.

Some of the traditional codes including rugby, netball, football and cricket continue to be popular and are maintaining a strong level of participation.

Some codes are declining in popularity with falling membership levels but with little or no change in the size of their facility network. Bowls, golf and tennis are examples of these codes. While not all individual clubs / facilities are the same, the decline in membership places an increased organisational and financial burden on the remaining members.

A number of codes are increasing in popularity and often need relatively low investment in infrastructure, in particular more informal or individual codes for example mountain biking, triathlon and surfing. These codes are struggling to secure access to facilities or develop facilities to enable their code to grow.

The emergence of new activities and the need to support existing infrastructure is placing significant pressures on available funding sources which reinforces the need for greater sharing and flexible spaces.

The Taranaki Secondary School Sports Programme has grown considerably over recent years, as has the range of sporting activities provided with activities such as motocross, Rogaine and dressage added as well as the traditional activities such as netball, rugby and volleyball. In addition, there are a number of codes with high levels of participation at secondary schools with limited opportunities available within community to continue participation after leaving school, in particular indoor sports codes including badminton, basketball and volleyball.

Understanding the trends in secondary school sports is essential when considering the future facility requirements. As trends change, identifying sports which are in high demand at school and providing flexible facilities to enable community based participation to continue.

In addition to the individual code participation trends there are a number of other significant participation trends that are impacting more and more on demand and use of facilities. These trends are widely recognised in the sector and include:

- Increasing expectations in the standard of facilities from users and sports codes
- Decrease in volunteer culture and increased demand for 'pay for play' and the casualization of sport.
- Increased responsibilities and burden placed on volunteers to meet user expectations, health and safety and other compliance requirements.

3.2.1 Increased burden on volunteers

A significant challenge facing regional and local level sport is the increasing burden placed on a decreasing number of volunteers due to available funding, increased expectations of members/ users, demand from users to 'pay and play', responsibility for health and safety, compliance requirements and limited property management experience.

These challenges are often duplicated at the club level creating significant pressure on the volunteer network. Many of the codes recognise that some facilities are under-utilised and that there could be significant benefits to be gained from developing a multi-sport approach and partnering with others to maximise the use of the facilities. A key challenge is how this could be achieved, especially when the current volunteers are struggling with the day to day club operation workload.

3.2.2 Collaborative approaches

The region has some good examples of establishing community based multi-sport hubs including TSB Hub Hawera and TET Stadium, Stratford and Sandfords Event Centre, Opunake. These partnership approaches to integrated facilities demonstrate a willingness and track record of the community and key stakeholders working together locally to develop integrated solutions. An example is the TET Sports Hub in Stratford where the tennis courts are located next to the hockey turf to enable shared use of facilities.

While these facilities provide good examples, other clubs and facilities are struggling with day to day club management, administration and governance. These organisations are of varying size and scale, however all are facing very similar challenges regarding administration, bookings, health and safety requirements, finance, website, advertising etc.

While collaborative approaches can improve the quality of delivery and increase the use of a facility the challenge is to ensure that they are of an appropriate scale and are suitably resourced to ensure that the burden on volunteers with administration are not perpetuated. It is essential ensure quality resources are developed to ensure the effective, efficient and sustainable management of facilities.

3.2.3 Fit for purpose facilities

Community sport and recreation assets are aging with many struggling to continue to be fit for purpose. In many cases meeting the basic maintenance standards is a significant challenge as codes struggle to comply with factors such as current building codes and earthquake strengthening.

A number of codes have identified that often it is not the overall number of facilities which is a concern but the condition and suitability of those facilities to meet current needs. Clubrooms and changing facilities are aging, and access to training lights (on sports parks, artificial surfaces on school sites) is seen as a significant barrier to maximising use of existing facilities.

Pressure on indoor sport facilities and sport fields is a significant concern, particularly fields for football and rugby. While both identified that there are sufficient number of fields, the condition and quality of surface of fields and access to fields with floodlights for training were particular concerns.

3.2.4 Geographic distribution of major facilities

A number of previous regional facility development decisions have endeavoured to ensure that there is wider access and provision spread across the region and that the region as a whole can benefit from good quality facilities and events. While the reasons behind the decision are clear it has resulted in several sports, particularly hockey and athletics, having an over-supply in one area while other areas are under supplied. As a result utilisation of some of these facilities is lower as they are not located within or near the main population centre in the region. Most users of these facilities want convenience in accessing facilities (shorter travelling time and cost commuting to venues) and generally they do not recognise or care about the spread of facilities across administrative boundaries.

Greater coordination and planning is required to ensure that significant new regional facilities are located within close proximity of the majority of potential users to meet the need and to maximise use. Where this is not the case with existing facilities, a coordinated approach is required to ensure that all relevant stakeholders work collaboratively to ensure that these regional facilities are sustainable and additional provision is made to meet demand in the areas of need.

Several major regional facilities are distant from the major population centers and the largest concentration of the participation base. Despite this, there are some facilities that continue to be supported, some with a strong participation base (suggesting participants are happy to travel) notwithstanding the need for development of local capacity in New Plymouth in order to further grow and support participation is not being met. In considering the development of any new hub facilities it is important to consider the potential impact on existing facilities at a regional and district level.

Where new hub facilities are developed or created from the expansion of existing facilities these should not usually be considered as additional new but as replacement. This will enable rationalisation of the existing facilities network to provide modern high quality, multi-use and fit for purpose facilities. Where this is not the case and agreement cannot be reached to rationalise the provision, the development of new facility should be given a lower priority.

3.2.5 Gaps and duplications in provision

There are a number of codes where there is evident over-supply, where participation levels have declined and the facilities are now under-utilised including:

- Bowls
- Golf
- Tennis

There are gaps where participation is increasing and under-supply is evident with users reporting that they struggle to access suitable facilities, including:

- Access to indoor courts for sports such as badminton, basketball, netball, handball, volleyball and futsal.
- A compliant standard 25m competition swimming pool for intra and inter-regional events.
- Year-round access to indoor aquatic facilities for recreation and fitness swimming.
- Access to quality sports fields and multi-field site and provision of training lights.

3.2.6 Opportunities for regional competition

A number of codes identified that a lack of access to suitable facilities restricted the ability to host regional, national or international competitions. It will not be possible with available resources to meet the demands of every code to host national or international events in the region, but consideration should be given to ensuring each code has access to a suitable facility for their Taranaki intra-regional competition, e.g. swimming, tennis, basketball. There is a limited supply of national and international events and there is intense competition between regions to attract these events. In addition, some codes are limiting events to centres with good air travel capability and sufficient commercial accommodation.

3.2.7 The facility ‘time bomb’

There has been significant investment into the development of sporting facilities in the region which has enabled generations of the local community to be physically active and take part in a wide range of sporting activities. However, the facility network is aging; for example, 5 of the 6 community swimming pools in New Plymouth District were built before 1965. In addition, many community facilities have significant deferred maintenance issues, participation trends and participant expectations are changing. The region is sitting on a ‘time bomb’ of unsustainable, aging and not fit for purpose facilities that require a planned approach to ensure they are selectively upgraded, modernised to be fit for purpose, converted to new purposes and/ or rationalised.

A Combination of Challenges

A large number of clubs were contacted to help understand some of the key facility issues they are facing on the ground. The challenges with aging facilities and the increasing burden on volunteers were identified frequently.

Encouragingly, many saw the advantages of working collaboratively and were open to exploring future collaboration opportunities. While many were open to the idea of collaborative working and had talked about it before, many just didn’t know how this could be done or where they could go for help.

The potential barriers identified included:

- the reliance on volunteers that were often struggling to manage the day to day administration of the club;
- lack of knowledge of council processes and who to talk to;
- they had spoken to someone and club was expected to drive it forward however they didn’t have the knowledge, skills and time commitment to make it happen; and
- time and resource commitment required to establish effective collaboration arrangements.

3.3 Current Providers

There are many different organisations involved in the provision and management of facilities within the region, these include:

- Territorial authorities
- Regional Sports Organisations
- Clubs
- Facility Trusts
- MoOE / education sector
- Private / commercial providers.

While a number of partnership approaches have been developed over the years, traditionally the above owners and managers of facilities have mostly operated in isolation. It is important to understand how these roles are changing and the implications of those changes.

Table 1: Organisation and Role

Organisation	Key Roles	Key Role: Current and Future Challenges
Territorial authorities	Provider Enabler Investor	<p>Territorial authorities have the lead role in the provision of facilities through direct ownership and management and leases to clubs.</p> <p>There is an increasing move to transfer the responsibility for smaller facilities to the community sector. While this can provide short term benefits in terms of community management it raises significant long term sustainability challenges for the new owners and community funders.</p>
Regional Sports Organisations	User	<p>The majority of regional sports organisations are users of facilities. This places significant pressure to secure access for regional competition and training with access secured often at the expense of community users. RSOs are also becoming increasingly constrained by the cost of facility access and management.</p>
Clubs	User Provider	<p>Some clubs are taking an increased role in the ownership and provision of facilities, whilst others are looking to minimise their risks associated with ownership of facilities. The former can place an increased burden on volunteers to manage additional facilities without the resources (financial and people) to secure the long-term sustainability.</p>
Facility Trusts	Provider	<p>A small number of sporting facility trusts have been established to own and manage facilities on behalf of the community.</p> <p>This provides independent community ownership and access. However, establishing and maintaining sustainable income streams to fund operations and renewals to secure their long-term future is a challenge, as is the establishment of effective governance and operational support.</p>
MOE / education sector	Provider	<p>The education sector has a long track record of providing sporting facilities, many of which are made available for community use. However, there is a mixed picture; some schools are more restrictive of community use, whilst others are entering into partnerships enabling greater community use.</p> <p>Opportunities to maximise facility use with the school during the day and community at evenings and weekend provide a win-win situation. The challenge is to ensure that access is managed in such a way to maximise use and ensure the long-term viability of the facilities.</p> <p>Nationally, the MOE is now more actively supporting community-school dual use and dual provision partnerships and released a Shared-Use Policy in 2015 to support its intent</p>

Organisation	Key Roles	Key Role: Current and Future Challenges
Private / commercial providers	Provider	The commercial sector plays a significant role in providing a small range of sporting facilities, primarily learn to swim, health and fitness and indoor sport where there is potential to generate a commercial return.

Operating Challenges

A number of challenges have been identified regarding operational efficiencies and the long-term sustainability of community owned/ managed facilities. Transferring more and more facilities to community ownership does have many benefits including:

- Governance and management is closer to the activity and is likely to be better informed as to needs of users and act to remedy asset issues.
- Can be more entrepreneurial in approach to operating and sustaining the asset.
- In-kind contributions of materials and labour from local businesses should be greater as they are aligned with the owner organisation (often members).
- Ability to secure 3rd party funding for renewal and re-development of facilities.

Challenges include:

- Insufficient expertise in the governance board and management of the owner organisation.
- Lack of resources to employ experienced personnel to manage asset.
- Transfer of asset does not have realistic level of on-going funding support for asset costs (operating, maintenance and renewals).
- Vulnerability to decline in membership base and participation to sustain the asset.

A partnership approach is required to ensure the long-term sustainability of these facilities is considered from the outset and prior to any transfer of the asset. There also needs to timely support in the form of impartial expertise to help navigate to a successful transfer of ownership.

Should clubs and organisations need to set membership fees at a level to ensure that all facilities are sustainable in the long term without rate-payer and other funding support, although price is a significant barrier to participation.

While there are challenges to facility provision, it is clear that a multi-code sport partnership approach is required to reduce duplication in provision, consolidation to fewer facilities to enable higher use and occupancy. These measures will generate economies in scale to aid long-term sustainability.

4. Future Planning Approach

4.1 Facility Hierarchy

In considering the network of facilities in the region it is important to recognise that each facility has a role to play in meeting a range of different needs as part of the network.

The following hierarchy has been identified for use within this strategy and future facility planning in the region.

4.1.1 Facility Hierarchy Definitions

- **International / National**
A facility with the ability to host international competitions/events (i.e. between nations) and regional representative competitions (including professional and semi-professional franchise competitions involving teams from outside New Zealand) and/or to serve as a national high performance training hub for one or more sports codes.
- **Regional:**
A facility with the ability to host inter-regional and internal regional competitions and/or serves as a regional high performance training hub for one or more sports codes.
- **District:**
A facility with the ability to draw significant numbers of teams/competitors from across an individual or adjacent territorial authority boundaries for either competition or training purposes.
- **Local:**
A facility with the ability to serve a local catchment's basic sporting needs. This catchment will predominantly be drawn from within an individual town or cluster of suburbs within a local authority.

It is important to recognise that levels within the hierarchy are not exclusive and a single facility can meet the needs of different levels, for example a regional facility will also likely meet local needs.

4.2 Facility Planning Principles and Criteria

4.2.1 Planning Principles

In considering future facilities to meet the sporting needs it is essential that we learn from the past and ensure that future facilities are developed in a robust and planned way. Sport NZ identifies in the National Sport Facilities Framework¹ a set of planning principles to improve future decision making when investing in facilities. These have been reviewed and endorsed by the Taranaki Region Project Steering Group as central planning principles which should underpin all future facility developments in the region. They are:

- Meeting an identified need and fit for purpose to meet the need
- Sustainability – consideration of whole of life costs
- Partnering / Collaboration Co-location and Integration Future proofing – adaptability Accessibility

Meeting an identified need and fit for purpose to meet the need

Experience shows that there is often insufficient rigour applied to the fundamental question of need and what is the fit-for-purpose solution. The best outcomes are achieved when all of the potential users of the facility are identified and a deep understanding is gained about their needs.

Sustainability – consideration of whole of life costs

Sustainability means able to be maintained at a fit for purpose level. Experience shows that often there is insufficient consideration of the ongoing costs of a facility: what the operating costs will be and how they will be funded, and what the maintenance will cost and how that will be funded.

The best outcomes are achieved when the 'whole of life' costs of the facility are considered at the outset and how it is intended that these costs will be met. Often, investment up-front in, for example, shared reception or greater energy efficiency, can deliver huge dividends over the life of the facility.

Partnering / Collaboration

Historically sports facilities have tended to be planned and built without sufficient early identification and engagement with potential partners; experience shows the value of early consultation at the idea or concept stage.

Better outcomes are achieved when partnerships are developed with those beyond the sport and recreation sector: education, health, iwi, and the private sector. This increases the likelihood that duplication can be avoided and the facilities will be used to their full potential, maximising the return on investment in terms of participation and funding.

Co-location and Integration

Often, the best outcomes are achieved by sharing. Experience shows that an effective way of achieving these outcomes is to create integrated hub facilities, multi-use facilities, or to co-locate with other sport and recreation, community, education, or transport facilities and infrastructure. This usually means some consolidation of provision at these key hub sites.

Future proofing – adaptability

The best, long-term, outcomes are achieved by designing facilities in ways that enable them to be adapted, developed and extended in response to future demands. Experience shows that facilities should be designed to accommodate changing needs over time.

Accessibility

Most people would agree that society is more inclusive than it once was. Experience shows, however, that we still tend to associate 'accessibility' with building facilities that cater for people with disabilities. An accessible facility meets these needs as well as those of the young, the old and many other groups such as shift workers.

Given our goal of ensuring all New Zealanders have access to sport, the best outcomes are achieved when we develop facilities, and programmes within those facilities, that consider all of the demographic and cultural diversity within our communities as well as people with disabilities.

4.2.2 Facility Planning Criteria

To implement the strategy and ensure that the priorities are identified and determined in a fair and transparent way, a series of facility planning criteria have been developed based on best practice within the sector. These criteria recognise that:

- There are not enough funds to go around; we can't afford to keep building individual sport facilities for each community.
- Evidence indicates we can't afford to maintain what we have, let alone build more to meet growing and changing needs.
- We need to be smarter and prioritise the future investment.

When using these criteria care is needed to ensure that individual local needs (a smaller community facility) or a large facility that is used almost to capacity by one code are not overlooked.

To assist with identifying the future priorities and help in project development the facility planning criteria have been developed at three levels. These are:

- Level 1 – Essential Criteria which all projects must meet.
- Level 2 – High Priority Criteria. While not essential to meet all of these criteria, projects should demonstrate clearly how they address the high priority criteria.
- Level 3 – Desirable Criteria. The important factors which should be considered, but are not identified as key drivers for facility development.

Level 1 – Essential Criteria

- **Participation levels:** The numbers of participants affected now and projected into the foreseeable future.
- **Supply vs Demand:** The degree to which current demand/needs exceeds current facility provision.
- **Strategic Planning:** The degree to which the proposed development aligns with, and supports the implementation of National and/or Region wide planning processes, where these exist.

Level 2 – High Priority Criteria

- **Partnership:** The degree to which the proposed development is multi-use, multi-code, and embraces partnership, hubbing and cross sector collaboration.
- **Flexibility:** The ability to adapt to changing demand and reflect changing sporting trends and needs.
- **Evidence base:** The degree to which the proposed development is supported by informed research and consultation.
- **Impact on other facilities:** The degree to which the proposed development impacts on existing facilities or sporting hubs (positive/complementary rather than in competition).
- **Gap in Provision:** The degree to which the proposed development can only be met through additional facility provision (i.e. cannot be met without additional facility provision).
- **Sustainability:** The degree to which capital and operational costs can be met considering the whole of life costs.

Level 3 – Desirable Criteria

- **Events:** The degree to which the proposed development enhances the region's ability to host major events.
- **Pathways:** The degree to which the proposed development enhances the sporting pathways in the region as a both an incubator of talent and, where appropriate, a centre of excellence.

4.3 Planning Approach Implementation

A collaborative approach is essential to ensure the support and implementation of a collaborative planning approach. A Strategy Steering Group will:

- Oversee the implementation of the planning approach
- Review and prioritising project recommendations and priority actions.
- Promote the planning approach within the region and through key stakeholder organisations including funders
- Monitor, review and provide regular updates on the progress in implementing the planning approach and projects.
- Review and recommend on key regional facility projects based on application of the principles and assessment criteria.

4.4 Project Assessment Process

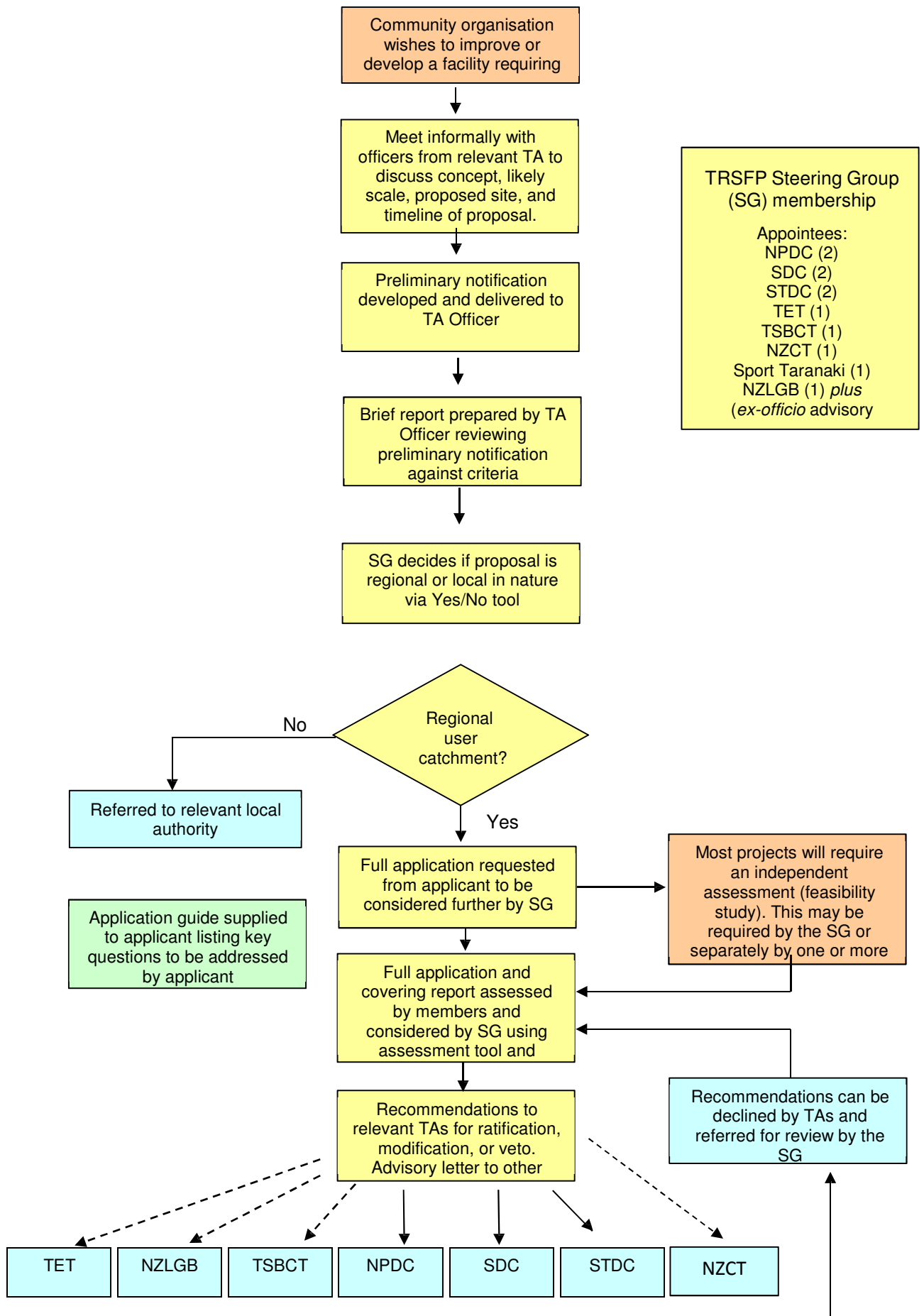
A project evaluation process has been developed to support and promote the collaborative engagement of key stakeholders including community funders, territorial authorities, Sport Taranaki, regional sports organisations, facility trusts, clubs and education providers.

The process is not intended to replace the decision-making processes for individual stakeholders but to inform and make recommendations to assist in the prioritisation of key regional facility projects.

Key Stakeholders include:

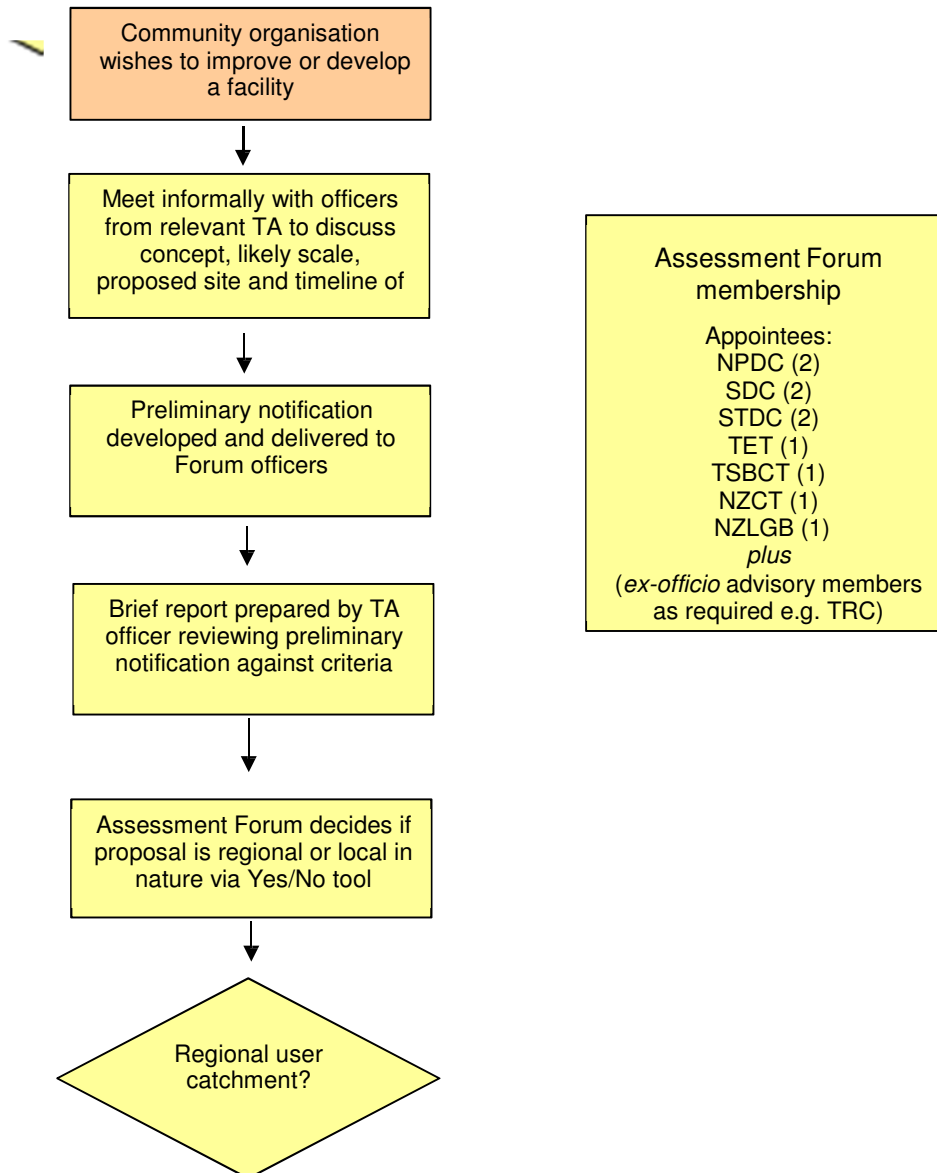
- Sport Taranaki
- New Plymouth District Council (NPDC)
- South Taranaki District Council (STDC)
- Stratford District Council (SDC)
- Taranaki Electricity Trust (TET)
- TSB Community Trust (TSBCT)
- Taranaki Regional Council (TRC)
- New Zealand Lottery Grants Board (NZLGB).New Zealand Community Trust (NZCT)

Project Assessment Process



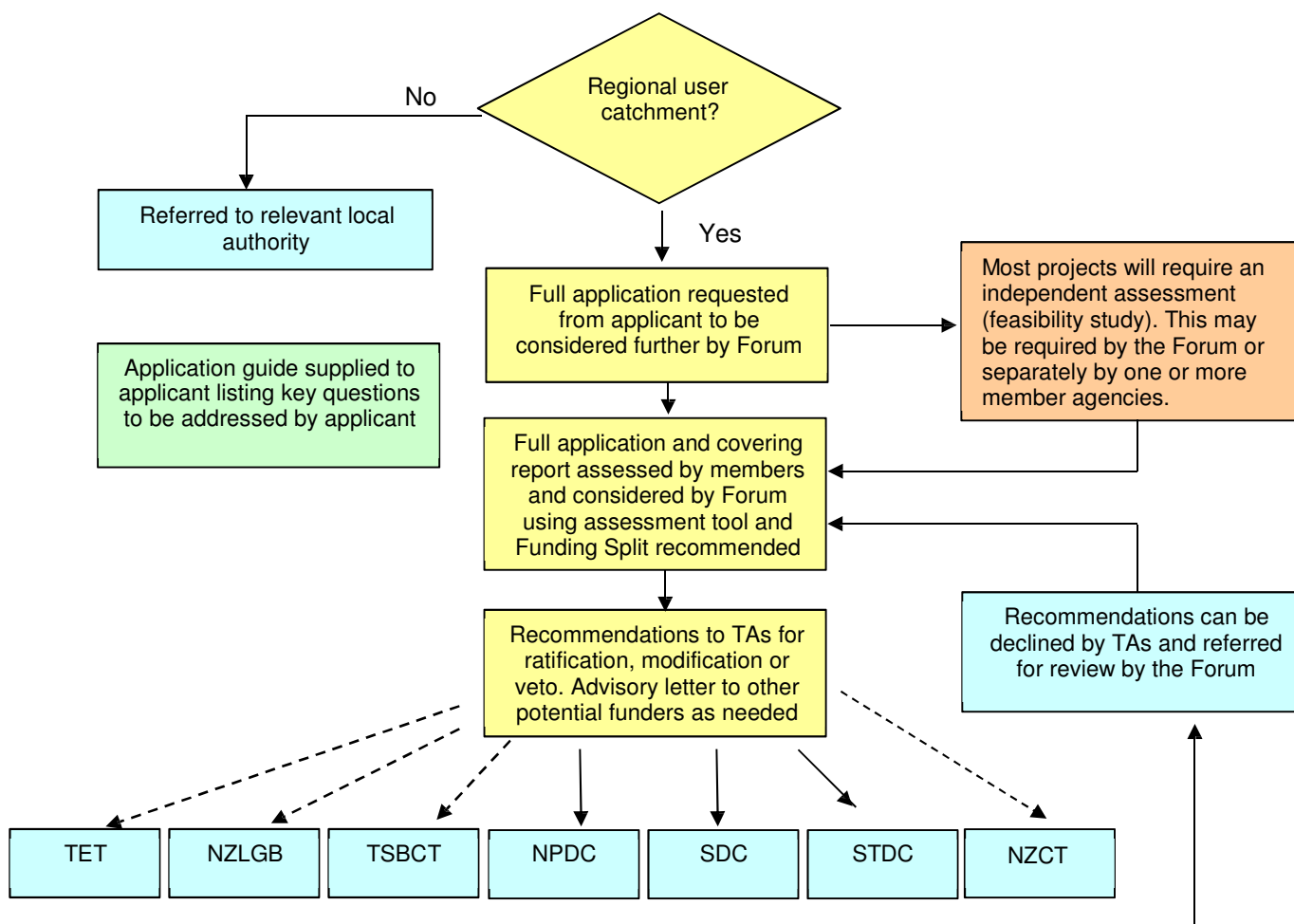
Step 1 Preliminary Phase

The initial stage in the process is a pre-notification stage to consider the facility concept and identify if it is of Regional or Local scale.



Step 2 Application Phase

Where a project has been identified to be of a Regional scale a full application is considered. The outcome of this process will be a recommendation for support to the relevant territorial authorities and advisory information to the local funding bodies.



All proposed facilities, whether new build or redevelopments, should go through this process. However, the scale of the proposed project and its likely ongoing operational costs will dictate how detailed the analysis in each stage of the process will need to be. For some smaller projects the process can likely be truncated. For example, a small, local level facility development proposal may require less detailed analysis than a District, Regional or National level facility development proposal. Sport Taranaki, as the process facilitator, can provide guidance on this.

4.4.1 Funding Approach

Implementation of the planning approach also will require an agreed funding approach. The approach will need to outline each facility level (from international to local facilities) and the potential funders which align best with each level. Certain potential funders, such as the Ministry of Education, are likely to be more active at the regional, district local facility category levels (via facility partnerships on Ministry land) while others, such as central government, are more likely to be focused on international and national facilities. The remaining funders have the potential to operate over all facility category levels.

A funding approach would need to enable cross boundary facility partnerships between local authorities (and other partners). This approach will likely require both capital and operational investment by more than one local authority.

Determining how this is done would need to be negotiated between the parties involved on a case by case basis (most likely aligned with catchment population and anticipated utilisation levels).

Determining the level of interest in such partnerships would initially begin to be assessed at the preliminary phase in the project evaluation process and continue throughout the full application and decision making phase.

Coordinating the funding approach would be assisted by both:

- A regional facility partnership funding policy which has the support of local authorities, community funders, and Sport New Zealand.
- A coordinated funding MOU / accord between local authorities, Sport Taranaki, community funders, and Sport New Zealand, which sets out funding priorities for a set period (and which should be regularly reviewed).

The Ministry of Education, School Boards, community and other funders would also be able to allocate funding as they desired across all facility levels. Ideally this funding would be guided by the proposed funding MOU / accord between all potential funders which in turn would be based on the principles, criteria, priorities and recommendations from the planning approach.

4.5 Regional Competitive Advantage

The Taranaki region is unique and has a number of competitive advantages that impact on sporting and recreational opportunities. In considering these it is essential that the region plays to its strengths as well as recognising some of the limitations. The regional competitive advantages include:

- **A Partnership Approach**

The region has led the way in establishing community based multi-sport hubs. These partnership approaches to integrated facilities demonstrate willingness and track record of the community and key stakeholders to work together to develop local solutions.

Opportunities existing to learn from, support and further develop the existing partnerships as well as develop new ones to ensure that community delivery of sport is supported in a sustainable way.

- **Natural Environment**

The region is supported by an abundance of natural features which provide for a range of activities including surfing, surf lifesaving, running, walking, triathlon, mountain biking and horse riding.

Many of these activities are in growth and opportunities to maximise access to suitable facilities can significantly increase participation for community and events.

- **Major Facilities**

There are a number of major facilities which are significant at a National level. Both the Yarrow Stadium (rugby, football), TET Hockey Stadium (Hockey) regularly host national and international events and act as a significant draw to the region. In addition, other major facilities include, TSB Stadium (indoor sports) in New Plymouth, TET Stadium (Athletics) in Inglewood, Egmont A&P Showground (Equestrian) and Hicks Park (rugby, rugby league) in Hāwera.

While future facility development may enable a wider range of major events to be facilitated in the region, a targeted approach to maximise the profile and utilisation of existing facilities for major events and acknowledgement that not all codes /events can be supported at the same level within the region provides a regional advantage.

- **Regional Funding Support**

Sport and recreation in the region is supported by a strong and mixed funding base of philanthropic Trusts, Local Government and commercial sponsors. A coordinated approach to funding has the significant potential to drive and enable regional priorities to be developed and implemented as investment requests can be based on evidenced based needs assessment, feasibility and business cases.

- **World class participation and development pathways**

The region has a high level of participation in sport and recreation and a strong track record in supporting and developing talented athletes in a wide range of codes.

Opportunities exist to build on these and ensure the region is recognised for world class participation opportunities and as an incubator of talent.

While it may be desirable for the region to aspire to provide facilities and opportunities for all codes, at all levels, it is recognised that providing high performance training facilities or International / National level facilities for major events is not supported in terms of the level of demand and is not economically sustainable for a region of Taranaki's size.

4.6 Conclusion and Recommended Implementation Approach

A collaborative planning approach provides a high level strategic framework for regional sport and recreation spaces and places (facility) planning in a region.

By working in a collaborative way the Regional Sports Trust, Sport New Zealand and the region's territorial authorities can develop a strategic view that provides guidance for Councils, Funders and Sport Codes to identify the regional priorities for future sport and recreation spaces and places at a local, district, sub-regional and regional level.

With the limited resources available it is not possible to meet all the communities' sport and recreation facility expectations. Therefore, an approach that can provide direction on what should be done and crucially, what should not be done in a region is desirable. It is intended that this will provide a consistent approach to strategic decision making and ensure greater collaboration regarding sport and recreation facility planning and provision in a region.

To help achieve consistent, strategic and informed decision making the planning approach is based on the principles of Sport NZ's National Sporting Facilities Framework, includes the development of agreed Decision Criteria and a Facility Investment Decision Making Process.

The criteria and process are considered vital to determine the types of facilities required and regional and local investment priorities. This also helps funding organisations and charitable trusts align investment with identified priorities in a region and where than can gain best value from their support.

The approach also enables the identification of priority projects across the region (over a ten-year period) along with actions to support and inform Council Long Term Planning processes.

Sport NZ will continue its support through the Regional Sports Trust to take a leadership role alongside its local authority partners to work with community funders, Regional and National Sports Organisations, Iwi, Education sports and recreation clubs to the region's strategic sport and recreation priorities in the short, medium and long-term.

A collaborative approach is recommended as follows:

- Sport Taranaki is lead agency responsible for providing facilitation and administrative support to the Regional Planning Approach and Steering Group and in reporting to a Planning Governance Group. Sport Taranaki on behalf of the Steering Group coordinates the process (calling of meetings, agendas, reports on applications)
- Sport NZ will support implementation of the approach through enabling Sport Taranaki with targeted funding and advice
- All member organisations of the Steering group provide a suitably experienced and senior person or persons as its representative members
- All applications received by Steering Group members are forwarded to Sport Taranaki for registering with the Steering Group. The reporting officer is appointed by the Steering Group (usually from the Council where the facility project is located)
- The reporting officers use the agreed project template to prepare reports on individual applications for the Steering Group.
- The Steering Group recommendations are based on application of the principles and assessment criteria which are then considered by the Governance Group before consideration by the relevant local authorities through their annual and long-term planning processes.

Recommendations

1. That the New Plymouth District Council (the Council) adopts the proposed recommended collaborative approach to planning for future sport and active recreation spaces and places as outlined in Section 4.0.
2. That the Council notes that this includes:
 - A Facility Hierarchy
 - Planning Principles and Criteria
 - Projects Assessment Process
 - Representation on a regional planning steering group
3. That the Council provides its support and investment contribution through the MoU (Appendix 1) for personnel resource within Sport Taranaki to provide a key point of contact for engagement with all relevant stakeholders and to oversee the implementation of the collaborative planning approach.