

PLAYGROUNDS OF THE FUTURE

Hamilton's Playground Plan



Hamilton City Council
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

Hamilton is a city of families and playgrounds play an important role in providing fun and activity for our children.

This plan sets out a new approach for playgrounds in Hamilton – a transformational change!

What do we have?

Hamilton has 86 playgrounds including 4 destination playgrounds (Hamilton Lake Domain, Parana Park, Claudelands Park and Tauhara Park) and 82 neighbourhood playgrounds across the city.

The standard and offering varies considerably. Many of the currently playgrounds are simply a slide, swing set or sea saw. A lot of the equipment is more than 20 years old.

There are very few playgrounds in the newly developed areas of the city.

Why change?

Hamiltonians have said they want a better play experience, so we need a better way of doing things.

There are new factors emerging that will affect the way we develop and use playgrounds in the future.

The Council is not able to continue to maintain and upgrade the current number and type of playgrounds.



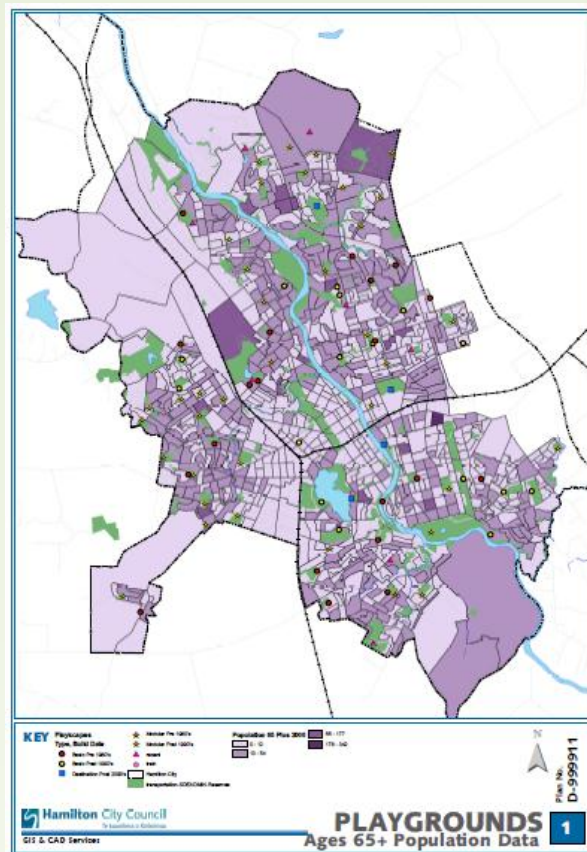
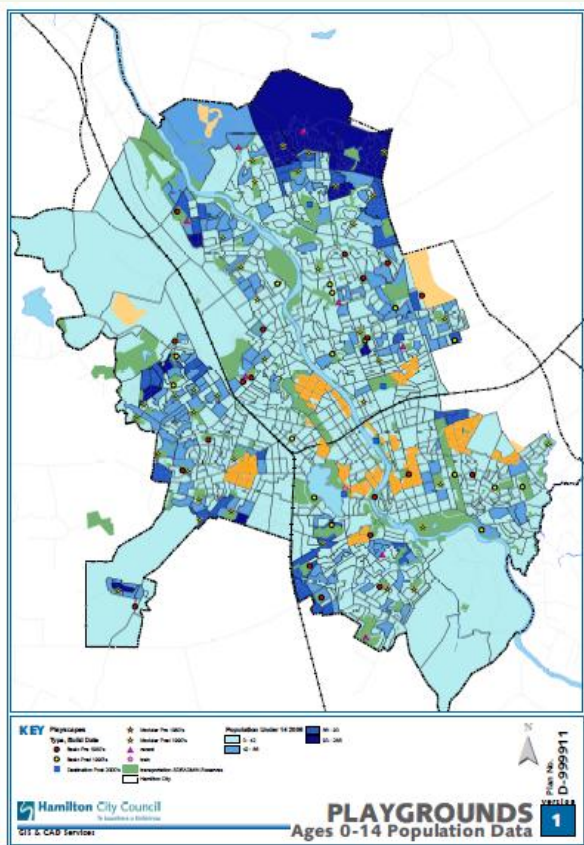
What do we know is changing?

There are emerging trends that will influence Hamilton's playgrounds in the future.

1. Demographics

Hamilton's population is growing and changing. By 2061, 230,000 people are expected to live in Hamilton¹; this is 80,000 more people than we currently have. The population of young families and young people will continue to grow, and our 65+ population is expected to double.

By 2061, 230,000 people are expected to live in Hamilton and 40% of our people will be 0-19 years and 65+



2. Compact living

A significant proportion of Hamilton's increasing population is expected to live in higher density housing in specific areas of the city and by residential intensification of the existing residential areas. This will provide about 8,000 households or 15,000¹ people.

3. City growth

In the coming years, new growth areas are planned. Rototuna and Peacocke Stage 1 are being developed from now to around 2030, followed by Rotokauri Stage 1, Ruakura and Peacocke Stage 2 until around 2061 and then Rotokauri Stage 2.²

4. Climate change

Hamilton is expected to face extreme weather events more frequently, and an increase in temperatures.

¹ Hamilton City Council internal estimates for 3 Waters Model, December 2013

² Hamilton City Council internal estimates for 3 Waters Model, December 2013. These areas are indicative only and will depend on uptake.

More people will live in higher density housing and in new areas of the city

5. Play type

While trends for the type of play are continually changing as new equipment is designed, increasingly children want more challenging play equipment that stimulates physical and mental activity. Hamiltonians want a diverse network of play experiences that caters for all ages and is designed to suit the location and local community needs. The 'cookie cutter' approach of applying the same playground equipment across all parks does not satisfy these future trends.

6. Vandalism and personal safety

Damage and vandalism to playgrounds is happening more and is expected to continue. Play equipment will need to be strong and resistant to damage. Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles needs greater consideration during playground development.

7. Community expectations

There is increasing expectation for playgrounds to provide a day out experience for the whole family. There are increasing expectations for high quality playgrounds that are accessible and have a range of other supporting facilities such as shade, toilets and adequate car parking.

Playgrounds will be a day out experience with equipment that stimulates physical and mental activity

8. Affordability

The Council cannot continue to maintain and upgrade the current number and type of playgrounds across the city to the high standard expect by the community, especially taking into account the new growth areas.

9. Community ownership

Communities want to be involved in the design of playgrounds in their area. Partnerships help meet local needs and enable local communities to take ownership of their playground, deterring vandalism and damage.



How are our playgrounds used?

We went out and asked people how they used playgrounds and why, to help us develop our plan. They told us:

- Children up to 6 years are the main users of playgrounds (59%).
- Existing destination playgrounds are the most popular; Hamilton Lake, Claudelands Park and Parana Park.
- The typical visit is one to two hours long (58%)
- Swings and climbing equipment are the most popular activities
- 43% of respondents visited playgrounds in their neighbourhood weekly
- 50% of respondents visited playgrounds outside of their neighbourhood weekly
- Main factors contributing to neighbourhood playground dissatisfaction were:
 - No playgrounds
 - Lack of toilets
 - Age/type of equipment
 - Results of vandalism
- While walking and driving are the most common way to travel to a playground at 70% and 74% respectively, only 19% travel by bike and an even fewer 2.4% by public transport.
- Car parking, toilets and shade are important factors in deciding whether to drive to a playground

What does all this tell us?

- Playgrounds are popular, and used at least weekly
- People visit playgrounds outside their local neighbourhood
- There will be a lot more people living in Hamilton and our younger population of children and families will continue to grow
- More people will live in the new growth areas in the city
- More people will live in compact residential living without the traditional Kiwi backyard
- It's going to get hotter and the weather is going to be more extreme
- Vandalism and damage to play equipment will continue to be an issue
- Play equipment needs to be stronger to withstand weather and damage
- Communities want more say and want more ownership of local spaces
- Playgrounds are used mostly by younger children
- Children want more physical and mental stimulation from play equipment and not just basic equipment that is the same at every playground
- Playgrounds will be a day out for families
- Playgrounds need to provide additional facilities like toilets, shade and parking
- People drive to playgrounds

What now?

Playgrounds will need to be planned and developed differently in the future to respond to the changes we have identified and respond to the community's views.

This Playgrounds of the Future plan represents a new direction, concentrating on developing destination playgrounds across Hamilton to provide quality play experiences and be a more sustainable approach for the City.

This approach will require input and assistance from the community to ensure the successful development of playgrounds are fit for location and become a treasure for the community.

This new approach means some older less used playgrounds will be retired as they come to the end of their safe life, instead of being renewed as has happened in the past. The effect of that is the total number of playgrounds will reduce over a 20 year timeframe.

The purpose of the Plan is to provide guidelines for playgrounds in Hamilton. It sets out Council's direction and priorities for the delivery of playgrounds to guide the maintenance, upgrade, removal or development of new playgrounds.



Playgrounds Plan

This Plan provides guidelines for playgrounds in Hamilton. It sets out Council's direction and priorities for the delivery of playgrounds to guide the maintenance, upgrade, removal or development of new playgrounds.

Principles

- Playgrounds provide low-cost opportunities for families and communities to enjoy recreation together
 - Council is committed to providing high-quality, sustainable and accessible playgrounds for the benefit of the whole community
 - Council will build partnerships with local communities which value and encourage innovation and better ways of doing things
 - Council will form funding partnerships
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Our Goal

To provide a well-distributed network of high-quality, creative, sustainable destination playgrounds uniquely themed to the local context. They will be safe, accessible destinations catering for all ages.

Playground Categories

Council will provide two categories of playgrounds:

- **Destination Playgrounds:**
Premium playgrounds for the whole city that are a major attraction to residents, visitors and tourists
- **Neighbourhood Playgrounds:**
Provide items of equipment for the community in the immediate and close by neighbourhoods

Playground Priorities

- Destination playgrounds will be developed according to the demographic needs of the city as determined by the Council
- Council will maintain and upgrade a selection of existing neighbourhood playgrounds
- Council will not fund the development of any new neighbourhood playgrounds, unless developed with funding partnership with community organisations
- Neighbourhood playgrounds not selected for maintenance and upgrade will be assessed annually and those at the end of their asset life will be retired

Playground Development Requirements

- Destination playgrounds are funded through a funding partnership model of:
 - 2/3rd contribution from the Council
 - 1/3rd contribution from third parties
- The Council's funding is subject to 10-Year Plan and Annual Plan budgets and planning and resource consents
- New playgrounds developed, or upgrades by Council, will be designed in partnership with community organisations and the local community
- Council will seek formal agreements with other playground providers to secure public access, for example schools
- Council-owned playgrounds will be preferably sited on Council owned-land, preferably classified Recreation Reserve under the Reserves Act (1977). If not sited on Council owned land the playground must have assured continuity of public access
- Dogs are not permitted within 10 metres of playgrounds
- Smoking is not permitted within 10 metres of playgrounds or as determined by the Smoke-free Environments Policy
- All playgrounds are subject to NZS 5828: 2004, Playground Surfacing and Equipment

Playground Retirement Criteria

Selected playgrounds will be removed over time based on the following criteria:

- The asset condition is damaged or declining and at the end of its useful life;
- The location of the playground is considered close to a destination playground and/or
- There is more than one playground or play space within the park

Destination playgrounds will:

- Be distributed throughout the city in appropriate, inviting and accessible locations;
- Location will take into account existing support facilities such as toilets and car parking;
- Create playgrounds that cater for all ages and abilities;
- Be easily accessed by wheel chairs, prams and less mobile caregivers;
- Be connected to public transport routes and linked to pedestrian pathways and cycleways where possible;
- Be designed using creative principles to tell the story and reflect the character of the local area;
- Be designed to celebrate and use the physical landscape;
- Provide adequate shade;
- Provide appropriate supporting facilities such as toilets and car parking;
- Incorporate CPTED principles including good surveillance from the street.

What is a Destination Playground?

- You want to stay all day
- It is designed to tell a story that reflects the local area
- It uses the landscape to add a uniqueness
- The community has been involved in its design
- It for all ages and abilities
- There is shade
- There are extra facilities such as toilets and car parking
- CPTED principles apply, including good surveillance from the street

We want to make each Destination Playground different, to make different experiences for our children.

What can I expect to see?

- Upgrade and maintenance of our 4 existing destination playgrounds
- 7 new destination playgrounds
- The planning for 5 new destination playgrounds in future growth areas; Rototuna, Ruakura, Peacocke, and Rotokauri

How have the locations been decided?

The proposed locations for destination playgrounds have been identified taking into account the following criteria:

- Demographics – number of children aged between 0-14
- Road frontage/good surveillance of site
- Existing facilities such as toilets and car parking
- Accessibility
- Public transport
- Potential for partnering and funding opportunities
- Adjacent supporting facilities such as cafes

When up to date information is available (such as latest census data demographics), this will be reviewed to ensure playgrounds are developed in the right locations.

Here are some examples of Destination Playgrounds:



What is a Neighbourhood Playground?

- It's for the immediate and adjoining neighbourhoods
- It's a small playground with less play equipment
- The play equipment might be older
- It will probably not have supporting facilities

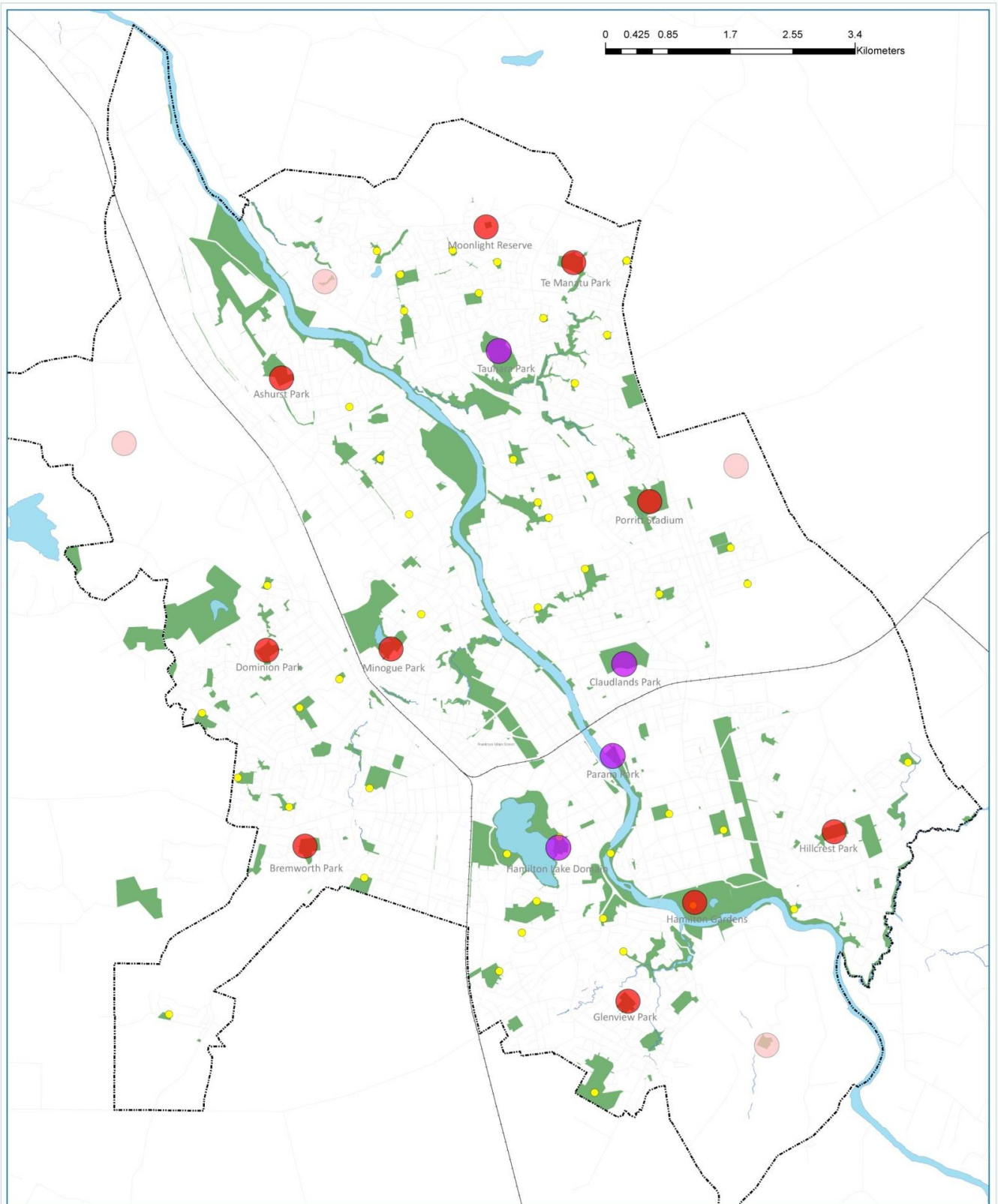
What can I expect to see?

We are committed to maintaining existing neighbourhood playgrounds in key locations, so they keep delivering what you expect at a neighbourhood level. This includes:

- Maintenance and upgrading of 44 of our existing neighbourhood playgrounds
- No new neighbourhood playgrounds will be developed, unless there are funding and community partnerships
- Retirement of 29 existing. These playgrounds will be retired due to condition, safety and playability

Here are some examples of Neighbourhood Playgrounds:





KEY

- Existing Neighbourhood
- Existing Destination
- Proposed Destination
- Proposed Growth Area Destination
- Parks & Open Spaces
- City Boundary

