



# Briefing: Reserves Investment Strategy

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**16 August 2023 – 4.45pm**

## Attendees

**Elected Members:** Cr Briggs, Cr Brown, Cr Edwards, Deputy Mayor Lewis, Cr Mitchell, Cr Morgan, Cr Parkin, Cr Shaw, Cr Stallinger, M Fisher (Chair, Petone Community Board), K Yung (Deputy Chair, Petone Community Board).

**Staff:** A Blackshaw, Director Neighbourhoods and Communities and Acting Chief Executive; J Livschitz, Group Chief Financial Officer; K Puketapu-Dentice, Director Economy and Development; A Geddes, Director Environment and Sustainability; K Cradle, Head of Parks and Reserves, C Parish, Head of the Mayor's Office (via Zoom), N Peurifoy, Parks Planner; and J Randall, Committee Advisor.

## Apologies

Mayor Barry, Cr Tupou, Cr Dyer, Cr Barratt.

## Presenters

A Blackshaw, Director Neighbourhoods and Communities and Acting Chief Executive; K Cradle, Head of Parks and Reserves; N Peurifoy, Parks Planner.

## Key Objectives of the Briefing

The purpose of the briefing was to outline strategic challenges and issues that need a response as Council manages and improves its parks and open space network.

## Introduction by A Blackshaw, Director

### Neighbourhoods and Communities and Acting Chief Executive

New parks and reserves will be required to serve the needs of a higher-density and more diverse population living on smaller properties. Open spaces will support growth in Lower Hutt.

Council's Assets Review has shown a significant shortfall of funds is available for existing built and green assets for the next Long Term Plan. A fund of \$26.1M is currently available from development contributions to invest in amenities in areas where there has been growth. The Reserves Investment Strategy will guide how to invest these funds over the next 10 years.

## Presentation by K Crandle, Head of Parks and Reserves and N Peurifoy, Parks Planner

### Slide 1 (Header)

**Slide 2 – Purpose of briefing:** The Reserves Investment Strategy project has been triggered by the rate that funds have accrued in the Reserves Purchase and Development Fund (the fund) in response to the property market. Officers have 56 projects allocated to be spent against the fund for this financial year and are looking for more. A framework has been created to show how the money can be applied in suburban areas for projects that will support growth.

**Slide 3 – Timeline of milestones:** Reserves Investment Strategy timelines for 2023.

**Slide 4 – Key points from March briefing:** Points made at the March 2023 briefing to Councillors have been incorporated and a draft programme of projects and framework for investing in reserves have been created.

**Slide 5 – References.**

**Slide 6 – Today we are sharing:** Agenda for this briefing.

**Slide 7 – Where we are right now:** Lower Hutt is well served with natural spaces overall but is below the medium provision of open space for many suburban areas. As the city becomes more intensive this is becoming more of an issue.

**Slide 8 – Lower Hutt reserves:** List of reserves categorised into types.

**Slide 9 – Overview of provision framework:** The provision hierarchy sets out the type and ideal size of reserve spaces and what they will provide for the community.

**Slide 10 – Land Purchase Fund:** Officers would like to establish a Land Purchase Fund for reserves so Council can respond quickly if strategic property land becomes available and meets the criteria for reserve land. Officers are looking at processes that would allow them to do this.

**Slide 11 – Proposed projects:** The project list in the Long Term Plan needs more projects that can make use of the funds.

**Slide 12 – Focus outcomes:** Officers will focus on projects that can demonstrate a response to growth.

## Questions and discussion points

- The fund is for both new and existing reserves. Existing reserves will be enhanced to support extra growth, with the funds used for improvements such as drainage and access.

- The funds can be applied to projects where there is current growth, forecasted growth, intensification and the environmental effects of that intensification.
- Maps will be overlaid to show growth areas and ensure there is an even spread of reserve facilities.
- Parks that lack good amenities or have sports fields in poor condition will be included in the list of projects and will be brought up to standard.
- The funding must be used to support growth, so renewals will not qualify. However, officers are investigating the use of funds to enhance and better connect existing tracks that are being used more. They are also investigating ecological linkages.
- Ongoing operational costs need to be considered. Services such as toilets are expensive from an operational maintenance and asset renewal point of view and may not be included in projects.
- Officers may acquire and dispose of some reserves to get a more even spread of suitable reserve spaces across the city.
- The Lower Hutt CBD might qualify for some funding because of the expected population growth around RiverLink. Officers are considering the impact of all major projects across the city and whether a response from the fund is needed.
- Projects from previous strategies, where appropriate, have been included in the list of projects to be taken forward.
- Officers are recommending the Reserves Investment Strategy be reviewed before each Long Term Plan.

## **Next steps**

A report will be presented to the Communities Culture and Partnership Committee on 6 September 2023 and to the Long Term Plan/Annual Plan Committee in October 2023.

## **Briefing materials**

**Attachment 1** – Presentation: Development of a Reserves Investment Strategy

**The briefing closed at 5.20 pm**