

Regional Indoor Court Project – Project Brief

Introduction

During the development of the Regional Spaces and Places Plan it was identified that in general, facility supply was meeting facility demand. However, indoor court facilities were shown to be at or over capacity at peak times and this warranted a deeper dive to understand the challenges and opportunities associated with their use.

The National Facilities Strategy for Indoor Sports 2013 identified an oversupply of indoor court facilities in the Wellington region. However, since that time there has been noticeable growth in sports codes that use indoor courts, notably basketball and emerging codes such as futsal and floorball. The facility of national sport organisations are also important sources of information

A lot of other things are changing or have already and are impacting on facility use generally.

Population growth and ageing

Across the region there is a focus on understanding how to meet the needs of a growing population. All council areas are experiencing rapid population growth and are planning for this across many aspects of their work including around the proper provision of community facilities as each TA plans for this growth. At the same time the population is ageing and physical activity patterns are changing as a result. This may reduce the demand for some facility types and increase it for others. There is a need to carefully consider the investment required to meet need in the future and plan for this alongside all the other infrastructure required in new and changing local communities.

There is already a need for regional planning with formal sports being delivered and played across the region and delivered across multiple TA's.

Changing costs

We have seen the impact of Covid on construction costs and supply. Costs continue to rise significantly in the construction industry, and this impacts the delivery of indoor court upgrade and development projects. We must get creative to find solutions, not all of which will result in new builds. We need to learn from each other as well as understanding the need and opportunity for partnership with others – in particular with schools.

Changing participation patterns and demand

Participation patterns are also changing which impacts participant numbers for a range of traditional sports (e.g. some participants only want to commit to say a 6-8 week programme, instead of joining a club). Codes are developing new versions of their sport to keep demand high and meet changing participant need and this may often lead to different sports field requirements.

There is greater emphasis on physical activity generally across all four of its domains – play, active recreation, active transport, and sport and this may require us to consider different uses and other physical activity opportunities alongside sport. At the same time formal/structured use of indoor court space faces increasing pressure from casual/informal users.

Regional Spaces and Places Plan

We have undertaken a large piece of work to develop the Regional Spaces and Places (Facilities) Plan. The plan sets out a vision for a one-region approach to spaces and places planning and the optimisation of the regional network. This plan provides a strategic framework for considering regional facility needs and a set of principles that are nationally held and drive decisions around facility development

Planning and investment requirements

All TA's need to prepare business cases for Long Term Plans and understand the long-term investment planning for the various assets that each manages. Investment in infrastructure is under significant pressure across the region prior

to and because of Covid so it will be important to include community infrastructure in the broader discussion around how to fund this infrastructure over time. The information collected during this project and any recommendations made from the completed work will provide the necessary evidence of need and outcomes associated with any investment proposals.

Finally, across the region there is ongoing pressure on Councils to provide higher quality associated facilities for the various sports codes and clubs. Allocation of spaces to different user groups (e.g. professional sports) also remains a complex issue, particularly in the face of changing patterns of participation in sport.

The project will provide a foundation for thinking about the future and require regional stakeholders to:

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this project is to provide a regional picture of the demand and supply of indoor courts and provide clear direction on the priorities for future indoor court provision. While the focus of this initial project is indoor courts there is a need to follow this up with a wider view of indoor facilities more broadly.

The objectives are to:

- Understand indoor courts current demand and current supply
- Project future demand (use population growth, popularity of codes, known development plans)
- Match future demand with future supply and identify surpluses and shortfalls
- Consider options and make specific recommendations to meet current and future demand based on partnerships with schools, development of multiuse courts, court improvements (covers and lights), new or redevelopment of existing facilities and on-going sustainability.
- Analyse the demand for indoor courts now and into the future recognising population growth, demographic changes and trends in participation
- Identify the potential opportunities to respond to the greatest needs for indoor courts
- Prioritise recommendations for future provision of indoor courts
- Engage and achieve endorsement from all key stakeholders

Scope

The project is focused on the provision of indoor court facilities which typically involve a wooden or sprung floor in an indoor environment used by the following core indoor sports:

- Basketball
- Badminton
- Volleyball
- Table-tennis
- Futsal
- Netball
- Tennis
- Floorball
- Disability sports

Consideration of other users, including but not limited to:

- Handball
- Korfball
- Fencing

Out of scope for the project is the provision of bespoke or multi-purpose indoor sport facilities such as gymnastics, squash, martial arts and indoor training facilities for cricket, rugby etc. However, bespoke facilities are often

compatible with indoor courts and therefore there may be opportunities for collaboration between codes and these should be identified where appropriate.

We will need to recognise the provision of all types of indoor court facilities including those within the education institutions, religious settings, community halls and commercial facilities, where the information is readily available.

Stakeholders

The key stakeholders for this plan are the core indoor sports who are interested in the need for greater provision of indoor courts, including:

- Basketball
- Badminton
- Volleyball
- Table-tennis
- Futsal
- Netball
- Tennis
- Floorball
- Disability sports

Key stakeholders also include organisations with a significant interest in the provision of indoor courts including:

- The region's councils
- Nuku Ora
- Sport New Zealand
- Significant facility providers including YMCA, Tertiary Institutions
- Ministry of Education

A Project Working Group will be established with representatives from key stakeholders (although this representation may not be exhaustive). This group will be responsible for developing the recommendations for future approaches to indoor court provision.