



# OPEN SPACES



# Open spaces: overview

Dedicated open spaces and reserves are found in both urban and rural locations throughout the district. The spaces vary in size, but all make an important contribution to the quality of life of Rotorua residents and visitors. They provide opportunities for active and passive recreation, social interaction, preservation and enhancement of biodiversity, landscape and amenity values, cultural heritage and in some cases provide access to lakes and waterways.

The open spaces theme monitors one environmental indicator- the area of reserves available per 1000 Rotorua residents.

## How are we going?

In Rotorua there are 12.3 hectares per 1000 residents, which compares favourably with other councils with similar sized populations. This is the first time this indicator has been reported on for State of Environment reporting purposes. Changes will be monitored and documented in the next reporting period.

## What are we doing?


Currently, three reserve management plans are in place for rural, urban and township reserves. Council also has an open spaces strategy. This lays the foundation for provision of open space in relation to land development and subdivision, parks and recreation facilities, roading and other engineering projects, strategic purchase of land, retention of view shafts, and a sustainable open space network.

The district plan is under review and will consider open space issues such as reserve contributions and public access to lake margins. Research projects relative to this topic are the landscape assessment studies and eastern and western structure plans.

The purpose of the landscape assessment studies is to identify outstanding natural features and landscapes, which are an important contributor to the aesthetic, social, cultural, and recreational experience of both residents and visitors.

Structure plans are a management tool for planning future growth and development. Good planning provides open spaces, enhancing quality of life for residents and providing associated environmental benefits such as ecosystem services and habitat connectivity.

## Open spaces indicator is:

Indicator	State
Area (ha) of council owned reserves per 1000 residents	



### Purpose of indicator

The type and number of parks and reserves is measured and monitored to ensure reserves are adequately managed and the number is increased.

### Current information and trend

Almost 80% of the total area of reserves (832.6ha) is for recreational purposes (Table 5.1). Many of these also protect waterways and access to waterways.

Other reserves are created for a variety of purposes including future roading, utilities, pre-school education, community use, accessways and drainage. They comprise 35.9 ha, or 4.3% of the total reserve area.

There are 11.3 ha of esplanade reserves, which constitute 1.4% of the total area of reserves.

They are created along the edge of lakes and streams for conservation, recreation, access and control of natural hazards.

There are only two council owned scenic reserves in the district. The main purpose of scenic reserves is to provide protection and preservation of areas of scenic interest, beauty, natural features or landscapes. There are other scenic reserves in the district which are not owned by Council.

'Unreserved' land is maintained as reserve, even though it has no legal status under the Reserves Act. This applies to many areas that were purchased by Council but never given legal reserve status, and other areas such as legal roads on streams and lake margins. This land does not have the same level of protection under the Reserves Act but is still protected under the Local Government Act and district plan.

The average area of reserves per 1000 residents for councils, shown in Table 5.2, is 9.34 hectares. Rotorua has



12.3 hectares of reserve per 1000 Rotorua residents (Tables 5.1 and 5.2) which compares favourably against other North Island councils of similar population sizes.

Table 5.1 Council owned reserves in Rotorua district, 2007

Primary purpose of reserve	Number of	Area (ha)	Area (ha) per 1000 residents
Recreation	128	660.8	9.77
Esplanade	8	11.3	0.17
Other local purpose	5	35.9	0.53
Scenic	2	1.6	0.02
Unreserved areas*	28	123.0	1.82
Total	171	832.6	12.3

Source: Rotorua District Council, 2007

\*Unreserved areas are areas without formal reserve legal status but are managed as a reserve.

Table 5.2 Comparison of area of reserves per 1000 residents, with other North Island councils

Peer council	Population	Area (ha) per 1000 residents
Rotorua	67,600	12.3
New Plymouth	66,600	11.2
Palmerston North	72,036	6.7
Napier	53,661	6.88
Hastings	67,428	9.73
Average	65,456	9.34

Source: Yardstick Report, 2006

### What the community said

Almost 90% of residents were satisfied with parks, reserves and playgrounds, and 84% were satisfied with sports fields.

## ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE



### In 15 minutes

- ✓ The best way to make a difference to Rotorua's open spaces is to enjoy them! Open spaces such as Government Gardens, your local park or sports fields, or the International Stadium, are there for the enjoyment of the public.
- ✓ Respect equipment and landscaping. The ambience of some open spaces are ruined by graffiti, removal of vegetation and the illegal dumping of rubbish.



### In 1 hour plus

- ✓ Attend events. Rotorua is becoming more popular for outdoor events such as water skiing competitions, mountain biking races and much more.

## WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION AND IDEAS



### Local clubs

Rotorua Tramping Club  
[www.rotoruatrampski.co.nz](http://www.rotoruatrampski.co.nz)

Rotorua Mountain Bike Club  
[www.rotorua.mtbclub.org.nz](http://www.rotorua.mtbclub.org.nz)

Rotorua Anglers Association  
[www.rotoruaanglers.org.nz](http://www.rotoruaanglers.org.nz)

### Information on walking tracks

Department of Conservation  
[www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)  
[www.destinationoutdoors.co.nz](http://www.destinationoutdoors.co.nz)

### Local events

Rotorua Marathon  
[www.rotorumarathon.co.nz](http://www.rotorumarathon.co.nz)

International Two Day Walk  
[www.nztwodaywalk.org.nz](http://www.nztwodaywalk.org.nz)

Cateye Moon Ride  
[www.eventpromotions.co.nz](http://www.eventpromotions.co.nz)

Rotorua Association of Triathletes and Multisport  
[www.rats.org.nz](http://www.rats.org.nz)

