



The Whau Pacific

PEOPLES PLAN

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Executive Summary

Purpose

“Talofa lava, Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Taloha ni, Bula vinaka, Kam na Mauri, Halo Olgeta”

The Whau Pacific plan was established to assist the Local Board with improving inclusion and support for Whau Pacific residents through:

1. Effective engagement with diverse Pacific communities;
2. To improve the awareness and understanding of the role of the Whau Local Board and access to Local Board services;
3. Increase access to facilities and parks;
4. Increase participation in Local Board programmes and events available to them.

The plan also provides recommendations for enhancing Pacific inclusion, engagement, awareness and accessibility to the Local Board, as well as access to facilities, parks, events and programmes and local services in the area.

Top-level Recommendations

Short Term Recommendations (Year 1)

- Undertake culturally responsive engagement with Pacific peoples
- Plan regular Pacific fono for the Whau
- Create a register of Pacific groups and their programmes
- Develop a Pacific youth leadership forum
- Develop a Pacific leadership forum
- Organise a grants workshop

Medium-Term Recommendations (1 – 2 Years)

- Develop a Pacific people’s open space and public facilities needs assessment
- Develop community, age and gender diverse programmes.

Long term Recommendations

- Support the implementation of a Whau Pacific festival content plan
- Conduct a post-implementation Plan review



Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our gratitude to all who contributed to the formation of this plan, specifically to the 15 Pacific community groups that were consulted;

- Whau Walking Samoans - Avondale
- Independent Samoan AOG Church New Lynn
- Grace Community Church, New Lynn
- Revelations Church, West Auckland
- Anapekapeka Niue Senior Citizens
- Avondale Youth Sports Programme
- LifeChurch West Avondale
- Taulanga U Tongan elders
- Hulanesia and Box Fit
- Fijian, Tongan, Tuvaluan, Cook Island and Kiribati families in the Whau

Your feedback and rich insight greatly informs this first ever Pacific Peoples Plan for the Whau.

Thank you

Background

Auckland is home to New Zealand's largest Pacific community, with over 194,000 people identifying as Pacific¹. Pacific peoples are a dynamic and diverse population made up of cultures from many different Pacific Islands. Samoan, Cook Islands Māori, Tongan, Niuean, Fijian, Tokelauan, Tuvalu and Kiribati comprise the eight main Pacific ethnic groups in New Zealand.

The Whau Local Board area is similarly diverse, with an estimated 14,000 Pacific people (17% of the Whau's total population) calling the Whau their home.

The Whau Local Board's 2017 Plan outlines a series of aspirations for the Whau area and the Pacific plan is a direct initiative of this plan, specifically;

OUTCOME TWO

Great neighbourhoods with strong community connections, capacity and voices. Our vision is that no matter where you come from or how old you are, there is a place for everyone in the Whau.

From the outset of the workshops, the groups discussed and agreed on the top four common values in relation to the four focus areas of the plan, which in turn, informs their way of life and interactions in their community.

We Value:

- **meaningful dialogue** through building relationship and trust
- **communal gatherings** for church;
- to **celebrate** and **practise** our **cultural and traditional** arts, crafts, music and languages, and;
- to **serve** and grow **leadership** capabilities

The workshop results resonated strongly with these key values and the subsequent recommendations show strong alignment with the objectives and initiatives of the Whau Local Board Plan 2017. Pacific people are in support of inter-ethnic and Maori collaboration except when events and programs are church specific.

¹ 2013 New Zealand census

² Whau Local Board Plan 2017, page 21

Features of the Whau Pacific Peoples Plan

Effective Engagement Process

- Face to face consultation
- Pacific Leadership forum
- Create a register of Pacific groups



Improve Awareness of the Role & Responsibilities of the Local Board

- Regular Pacific Fono
- Grants workshop

Whau Local Board Plan 2017

Outcome 1

Well planned towns, facilities and housing

Objectives

- More people are more active often
- Whau is known for its high quality developments, affordable & rental housing

Outcome 6

Celebrating our creative edge in our streets, neighborhoods & communities

Objective

- Champion architecture & landscaping that reflects our unique Maori & Pasifika influences



Whau Local Board Plan 2017

Outcome 2

Great neighborhoods with strong community connections, capacity & voices

Objectives

- Our towns and neighborhood communities are stronger.
- Our many voices contribute to making our future.
- Celebrate our diverse communities and their heritage.

Outcome 7

Our heritage is known, protected & our stories are shared

Objectives:

- Record & share our heritage through film, literature, urban art, sculptures & festivals

Increase access to open spaces & public facilities

- Design open spaces for multiple use & for diverse communities, age & gender
- Build more large facilities - Pacific Fale for cultural events
- Open spaces to be elderly friendly



Increase participation in local programmes and events

- Health and Wellbeing programmes for all
- Leadership and sport events for youth
- Pacific Festival

The Pacific plan is the first ever to be commissioned by any Local Board, which is reflective of a genuine intent in acknowledging the diverse communities of the Whau.

It equally reflects the role of its diverse communities - including Pacific people - in "developing quality, well designed and vibrant town centres that balance creativity with safety"³. The plan is also aligned with the principles and intents of the Auckland Plan and with the most recently launched, Pacific People's vision by the Ministry of Pacific Peoples.

³ Tracy Mulholland Whau Local Board Chair, Whau Local Board Plan 2017, page 5



Effective Engagement Process



Pacific people of the Whau find the current process of engagement ineffective.

The lack of engagement is not unique to the Whau, it is the same across Auckland, and more so in areas with the largest Pacific population. The most common practice of engagement is online surveys, “have your say” forms placed in the libraries and Local Board offices and information booths at community events or markets, to name a few. Such approaches are used because they are pragmatic, have increased reach or coverage and are cost efficient. Unfortunately, they are not the most effective for reaching Pacific people.

Meaningful engagement from a Pacific perspective comes after the forming of relationships through talanoa or face-to-face conversations and constant interactions. This is referred to as “tausi le va” - a Samoan proverb meaning to nurture the space between us, which is conducive to fostering genuine and transparent relationships.

The use of Pacific radio stations and print media was often mentioned, as was partnering with church, sports and community groups.

Reference to the Ministry of Pacific People’s engagement framework is a good place to start for the Board in determining its own Pacific peoples engagement approach.

Language is a critical element to the engagement process, and where possible, communication should be translated or conveyed in the respective languages and in spaces of various groups, in order to have meaningful conversations and exchanges.

The Pacific Youth however, preferred more innovative online means of engagement. However, most cited that checking out council’s website for information is something that they would never do.

Connection via church youth groups was the most effective way of capturing their views.

The online survey respondents preferred online means of engagement, which is not surprising. However, the online survey had low uptake even after wide circulation for 3 months.

“ What the people told us:

- Face to face conversations is the best way to engage with Pacific peoples
- Use Pacific community radio stations
- Partner with churches to cascade information
- Our language is important, translation is encouraged
- Organise a meet and greet via Pacific fono with our elected members - do this regularly

”



Awareness of the role and responsibilities of the Whau local board and its local services

There is minimal knowledge and awareness of the Local Board's role, elected members, roles and responsibilities.

Very few participated in Local Board meetings or knew when and how to provide feedback on key issues. Similarly, there is negligible awareness about the existence of the Local Board Grants process and other services.

There is slightly better understanding of Council with some having engaged directly with Council for rates, resource consents, facility bookings, rubbish collection and dog-related matters. The majority of the Pacific people we talked to do not know of existing local board grants, or have never heard about it and felt

that the process was too cumbersome and therefore never pursued it.

An effective engagement strategy should aim to improve understanding of the Local Board and its services by Pacific people. People want to see their elected members in their community groups - attending their churches, and joining group activities - in the case of the Walking Samoans, literally walking with them. Being present, and being visible in the community is critical in getting people to listen and find out more about the Local Board and support services that are available to them.

“ What the people told us:

- We need to see them (Local Board members) more in and around the community - come to our churches and to where our groups are meeting
- Come to our local hubs or community centres
- Do letter drops with information about our Local Board members
- I know a bit about Council but none about the Local Board

”

Participation in local board programmes and events

A great majority of Pacific groups in the Whau implement programmes that are funded primarily through their own fundraising efforts.

The findings reveal that Pacific communities operate in parallel to the Local board, having little to no interaction with the Local Board at all.

Programmes that are provided by Pacific groups relate to maintaining cultural and spiritual connections and improving healthy living and wellbeing through sports, walking, and fitness classes.

Most church groups provide zumba and fitness-related programmes, social services and other community initiatives. The youth flagged the lack of programmes and events specifically for youth in the Whau such as

mental health services, sports, language, arts and cultural events and leadership programmes.

Lack of awareness about the existence of Local Board Programmes and how they can access funding for existing programmes were the main reason for the lack of engagement in this space. Awareness of events and programmes in the area does not seem to be filtering through to Pacific communities. This is evidenced by participation in two local programmes where only 1% were of Pacific that reside in the Whau area and only knew of the program through word of mouth via the program instructor.

“ What the people told us:

- We want to do programmes inline with the preservation of our languages, culture and traditional arts, crafts and music
- We need more health-related programmes and support
- Is there any funding to help us with our programmes?
- We would like to do more gardening programmes so we can grow our own vegetables, etc
- There are no programmes for the youth, such as sports, homework centres - encourage STEM programmes, leadership courses - Tulai for example, or for us to learn our languages

”



Access and use of facilities and parks

Pacific communities value communal gatherings primarily for religious purposes, and to practise and celebrate cultural activities. Unfortunately in the Whau, there are not many Council-owned facilities that cater to large group meetings for such purposes.

The venue booking system is mentioned as being restrictive especially by elderly groups. Having a resource at the centres and/or the Library to help make bookings is a recommended solution.

Cost and early closing time for some community hubs were also cited as issues. Interestingly, a majority of the groups requested to have a Pacific Fale built in a Park which can be used for cultural Pacific meetings and gatherings. These gatherings can be in the form of celebrating Pacific festivals, meeting formally with Local Boards and other formal events, an art gallery space for Pacific artists, and Pacific elderly programmes, while also being available to the community at large.

Parks should be designed for diverse use by people of all ages, genders or abilities. For example, parents and the elderly want to go with their children and grandchildren to the park, but find little to no seating or shaded area for them. The town centres and open spaces should be “elderly friendly” in design, as mentioned by the Whau Walking Samoans, their walking route is constrained due to lack of toilet facilities and resting areas.

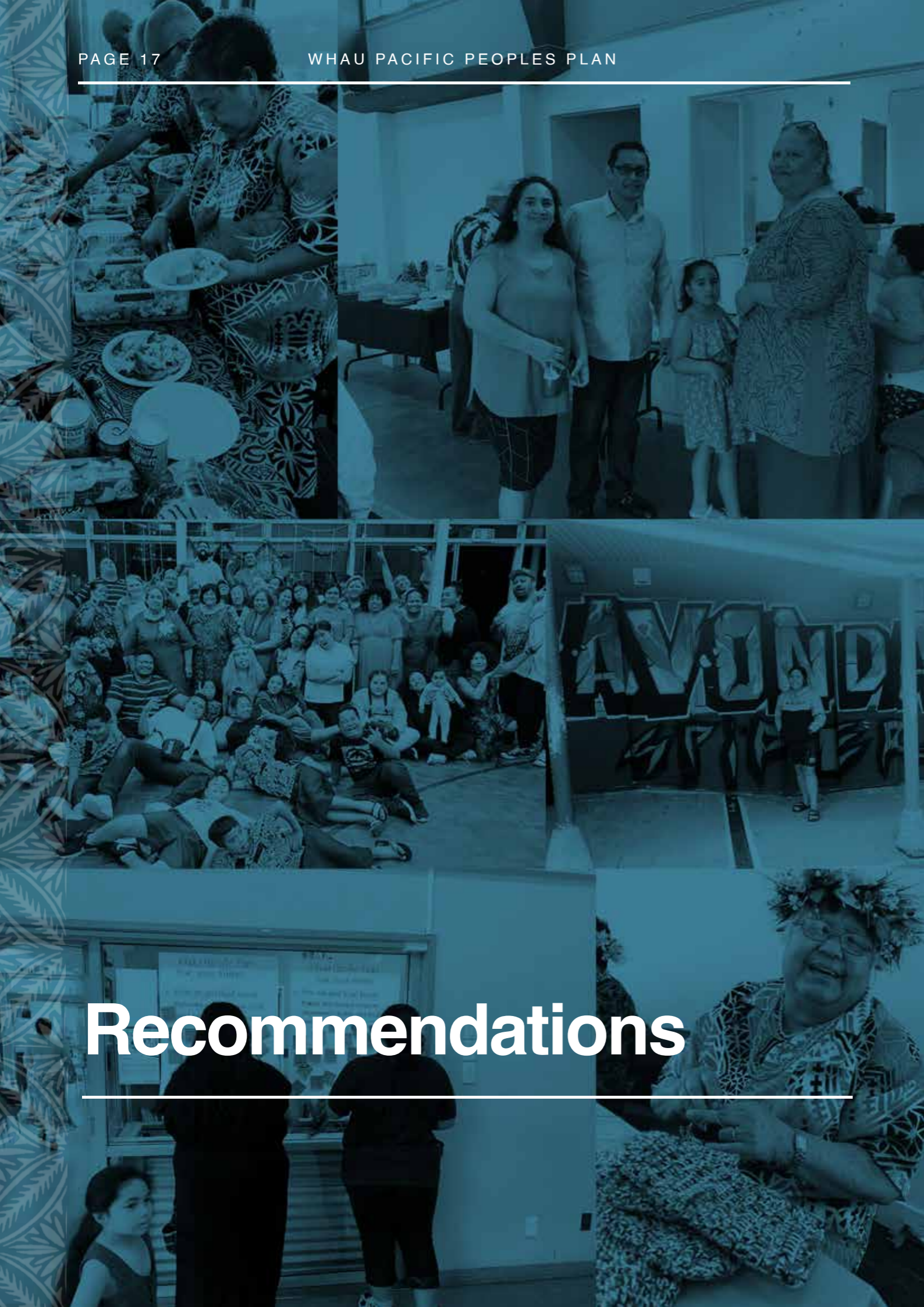
Young people felt that limited lighting at night on some parks discourages casual and longer use of parks at night. The potential for Parks to be used more regularly by Pacific communities depends largely on activities that cater to all members of the family and groups to enjoy social gatherings, such as barbecue facilities, clean bathrooms and water fountains which are essential to a positive experience.



“ What the people told us:

- There are not many large community facilities to be used by the community
- Most of the current community centres are in need of major upgrade
- The booking system is restrictive and expensive
- Our elderly groups want a space for our fellowship and cultural programmes, that is free and long term
- There are limited things we can do in the park - no basketball courts, netball rings
- We need to reflect our Pacific arts and designs on our buildings, at least have an Open design Pacific fale in a Park, where Pacific people can use for their traditional celebrations and meetings, but also by the public or matuas (seniors) to rest while children are playing
- We need to have clean toilets and access to water fountains in our parks
- We need to have seats, shade options
- We need to equip our parks for family gatherings and events such as barbecues, seating areas and appropriate shade
- Lights should be turned on at night until a certain time for safety reasons and to allow for extended casual use of the Parks

”



Recommendations

The recommendations provided will not only support the implementation of the Whau Pacific Peoples Plan but also serve as a guide for the Local Board and Council staff in meeting the growing needs of a diverse Pacific community. Whilst we did not specifically ask for Pacific leadership capability to assist with making this plan a reality, many of the participants expressed their desire to work with the Local Board.

Short term (Year 1)

Undertake culturally responsive engagement with Pacific People

Develop an engagement approach specifically for Pacific communities to support consistent dialogue between Pacific communities and the Local Board. The engagement strategy should include:

1. Face-to-face consultation process
2. Identify opportunities for Local Board members to meet with Pacific groups in the group environments
3. Community-led engagement.

Plan regular Pacific fono for the Whau

This will involve inviting groups who participated in the consultation to hear about the findings of the plan, meet the Local Board and discuss and agree on next steps. It is highly recommended that this fono be held regularly.

Develop a Pacific Leadership Fono/forum

Developing a Pacific leadership fono would greatly assist the efforts of the Local Board in implementing the Pacific plan engaging and cascading information with the Pacific communities.

Groups that were engaged as part of this project voiced their willingness to be part of such a

forum, as they see the need for Pacific people to drive initiatives that will benefit their communities in conjunction with the Local Board and other interest groups of the Whau. Similar groups exist within the Whau area, such as the Avondale Collaboration group.

Organise a grants workshop for workshop participants

A majority of groups and individuals consulted have not heard of nor submitted a grant application before. It is recommended that regular workshops be held in the future to improve awareness and understanding with regards to the process.

Develop a Pacific youth leadership forum

The youth expressed the need for leadership, arts and sports programmes in the Whau. It is recommended that the youth take the lead in their own initiatives whilst still being connected to the main Pacific leadership forum to ensure alignment in focus.

Create a register of Pacific community groups in the Whau

Create a register of all Pacific groups in the Whau, their leaders and the programmes they offer, will greatly enhance the delivery of the plan as well as improving the engagement process for the Whau with Pacific communities. The register will give visibility to the various programmes that individual groups are hosting and enables more connection and support by the Local Board.



Mid term (1 – 2 years)

Develop a Pacific People's open space & public facilities needs assessment

Health and wellbeing was quite prominent in the feedback, so there is definitely an interest in activities or opportunities to exercise and enjoy the environment. Unfortunately, there is limited

use of the parks primarily because of the current state of facilities in the parks, and design which is not conducive to group or family gatherings. Parks need to be designed for use by diverse ages and gender making it more accessible for the whole family to enjoy their experience at the park. The elderly also mentioned the need for town centres or open spaces to be "elderly friendly", Walking Samoans for example have limited walking routes due to the lack of toilet facilities and resting areas. A lot of data has been captured so far in this space, which will go towards producing a needs assessment for Pacific peoples of the Whau.

The Whau needs to design and build large facilities that can draw multiple users and diverse communities to access and participate. A request was to have a Pacific Fale which can be used for not only Pacific events and activities but for use by the public at large.

Develop more community, age and gender diverse programmes.

The participants raised the need for more health and wellbeing related programmes as well as

cultural and traditional events and programmes. An equally important component is the design of programmes and events that the whole family can attend and enjoy. This can also include availability of facilities for the elderly throughout the year.

Long term (2 – 5 years)

Support the production of Whau Pacific festival and content plan

The celebration of Pacific cultures, language and traditional dances, music, arts and crafts is very important to Pacific people. It is therefore important to review the current format of the Whau Pacific festival to ensure relevance and participation by Pacific people.

In addition, it is worth incorporating some cultural and traditional programmes such as language, dance, arts and music into the yearly programmes within the Whau.

Conduct a post-implementation review of the Plan

A post-implementation review is necessary in assessing whether the recommendations and initiatives stemming from the Plan have been achieved. A post-implementation review framework must be produced and agreed on in consultation with the Local Board and the Pacific Leadership forum before an evaluation is carried out.



Summary

The Whau Pacific Peoples Plan is born out of the Whau Local Board 2017 plan. Based on the results of the consultation, Pacific people value face to face discussions in their own languages and interactions which occur in places of significance to them.

Building relationships through face-to-face consultation is a start to building the bridge between Pacific people and the Whau Local Board which then leads on to more access and knowledge of the Local board services.

The practice and celebration of Pacific arts, crafts, songs, stories and language is held in high esteem, and is the main reason Pacific people will gather together aside from church purposes.

Health and wellbeing, celebration of cultural practices and church gathering influences why and how Pacific people access and use Council facilities and participate in programmes, events and local services.

The recommendations provided during the consultation provide useful information on which to build the next step of partnership between the Whau Local Board and Pacific people.

The Pacific residents of the Whau express their appreciation for the opportunity to voice their views and aspirations, and they look forward to collaborating with the Local Board in implementing the Whau Pacific Peoples Plan.

“Gauna ni toso i liu vata”, a Fijian phrase which means, time to move forward together.

Tofa soifua, Moce, Ofa atu, Vinaka, Mua kia, Tofa manuia, Ti a boo, Aere ra.

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