

Ref: CEO3708/BF/NF

22 June 2023



Whakatane District Council
Private Bag 1002
WHAKATANE 3158

Tēnā koe,

SUBMISSION TO WHAKATANE DISTRICT COUNCIL ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ACCESSIBLE PARKING

The Disabilities Resource Centre is devoted to providing an accessible and responsive service for people with disabilities and the elderly. We aim to encourage and support them to exercise their right to live with dignity and maximum independence in the community of their choice.

Our Strategic Vision is to assist people with disabilities to achieve their goals through leading health and disability services.

We conduct business under the organisational values of Care, Responsiveness, Respect, Accountability, Integrity and Good Employer. We achieve these values by providing the following services:

- Information and Advisory Services
- Home Care Services
- Community Services

The Disabilities Resource Centre does not request the opportunity to speak in support of this submission to the Whakatane District Council.

Yours faithfully

Bronwen Foxx
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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The Disabilities Resource Centre Trust would like to thank the Whakatane District Council for the opportunity of commenting on the Proposed Plan Change 5 to Operative District Plan Chapters 3, 5, 13 on Amendments to Accessible Parking Provisions Required as a Consequence of Implementing the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020.

Disabled and older people continue to remain our most vulnerable community members and it is the responsibility of the community to keep them safe and protected while giving them the ability to remain productive members of our community by providing them with a safe and accessible environment so they can live the life they choose.

The National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD) mandated that a minimum number of carparks were removed from the Whakatane District Plan in December 2021. And although the NPS-UD does not direct the removal of accessible parking, a consequence of this is that the District Plan no longer contains any provisions requiring accessible parking.

Accessible carparks are important for an inclusive environment:

- 1) It enables people with mobility limitations, health conditions, or other challenges to access their community, businesses and services.
- 2) The provision of mobility parking plays an important role in ensuring that the whole journey is accessible as outlined in the Bay of Plenty Regional Transport Plan (RTP).
- 3) Accessible parking spaces allow greater room for a disabled person to move around their vehicle and/or assemble and disassemble their wheelchair, walking aid, or any other mobility equipment they may have with them.

We support the proposal that will reinstate accessible parking standards in the District Plan. We believe equitable access to infrastructure such as accessible parking is crucial to a truly inclusive society.

