

Summary of the Napier Mobility Parking Review

Napier City Council is on a journey to improve accessibility in Napier. In 2022, an external transportation consultancy, MRCagney (NZ) Ltd., was engaged by Council to investigate mobility parking in our city. This mahi supports the Napier City Council Disability Strategy's vision to make Napier a 'city for everyone' and the Napier Positive Aging Strategy.

The mobility parking investigation looked at on-road public car parking spaces managed by the Council. It did not include those in Council-owned facilities such as libraries, and off-road parks in parks and reserves. Mobility car parks in privately owned facilities, such as supermarkets and medical centres, were also excluded.

The investigation aimed to:

- Find the ideal number of mobility parking spaces for now and in the future.
- Determine the best location of current and future mobility parking spaces.
- Create an equitable way for the Council to assess requests for new and relocated mobility parking spaces.
- Identify ways to reduce other barriers to parking access for mobility parking permit holders.

To achieve these aims, MRCagney asked mobility permit parking holders about their experiences in a survey. Additionally, existing mobility parks were audited, and the number of future mobility parking permit holders was projected.

The Survey

A survey was developed that asked mobility permit parking holders about their experiences in Napier. The survey found that demand for mobility parking is outstripping supply, with 64% of people saying that the park they want to use is taken more than half of the time. The survey reached 540 people, and there was a good range of responses from all over Napier, with high numbers of respondents from Taradale.

The top four locations where respondents believe more mobility parking would be helpful are:

- Emerson Street
- Hastings Street
- Ahuriri
- Taradale shops.

The Audit

Sixty-five existing mobility parking spaces were assessed in an accessibility audit and rated as good, marginal, or unsuitable. The auditor, a wheelchair user, visited each parking space and collected the data using an assessment checklist, which transport engineers then interpreted. The data has informed decisions about improving mobility car parks based on the suitability of spaces and how easy they are for people to use.

Across Napier City, the mobility car parks rated most in need of improvement are located at:

- Ocean Spa Marine Parade (x3 mobility parking spaces)
- Tennyson Street parking building (x2 mobility parking spaces)
- Bower Street
- Raffles Street
- Dickens Street (lower) parking lot (x2 mobility parking spaces)
- Douglas McLean Avenue (x5 mobility parking spaces).

The Projections

There are 2,412 mobility parking holders in Napier City (CCS Disability Action), representing 3.6% of the population of an estimated 66,670 people (Stats NZ). This rate of 3.6% with a mobility parking permit is slightly higher than the nationwide proportion of 3.2%, reflecting Napier's older demographic profile. More than 80% of permit holders in Napier are over 60 years old, and 33% are over 80 years old.

People worldwide are living longer. In Napier, we will continue to see a shift in our population towards older ages. The data shows that the number of mobility parking permit holders is likely to increase between 2021 and 2033; because high numbers of people over 60 years in Napier use a permit. The investigation predicted an increase from 2,412 permits in 2022 to approximately 3,184 in 2033.

The Napier Mobility Parking Review recommends increasing the number of mobility parks from 65 to 98 by 2030.