July 2023

To Wellington City Council

Please find attached DPA’s submission on Frederick Street Park Upgrades

For any further inquiries, please contact:

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**Introducing Disabled Persons Assembly NZ**

**We work on systemic change for the equity of disabled people**

Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) is a not-for-profit pan-impairment Disabled People’s Organisation run by and for disabled people.

**We recognise:**

* Māori as Tangata Whenua and [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](https://www.archives.govt.nz/discover-our-stories/the-treaty-of-waitangi) as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand;
* disabled people as experts on their own lives;
* the [Social Model of Disability](https://www.odi.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/guidance-for-policy-makes/) as the guiding principle for interpreting disability and impairment;
* the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html) as the basis for disabled people’s relationship with the State;
* the [New Zealand Disability Strategy](https://www.odi.govt.nz/nz-disability-strategy/) as Government agencies’ guide on disability issues; and
* the [Enabling Good Lives Principles](https://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz/about-egl/egl-approach/principles/), [Whāia Te Ao Mārama: Māori Disability Action Plan](https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/whaia-te-ao-marama-2018-2022-maori-disability-action-plan), and [Faiva Ora: National Pasifika Disability Disability Plan](https://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/5E544A3A23BEAECDCC2580FE007F7518/%24file/faiva-ora-2016-2021-national-pasifika-disability-plan-feb17.pdf) as avenues to disabled people gaining greater choice and control over their lives and supports.

**We drive systemic change through:**

* **Leadership:** reflecting the collective voice of disabled people, locally, nationally and internationally.
* **Information and advice:** informing and advising on policies impacting on the lives of disabled people.
* **Advocacy:** supporting disabled people to have a voice, including a collective voice, in society.
* **Monitoring:** monitoring and giving feedback on existing laws, policies and practices about and relevant to disabled people.

**UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

DPA was influential in creating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD),1 a foundational document for disabled people which New Zealand has signed and ratified, confirming that disabled people must have the same human rights as everyone else. All state bodies in New Zealand, including local and regional government, have a responsibility to uphold the principles and articles of this convention. There are a number of UNCRPD articles particularly relevant to this submission, including:

* **Article 3 – General principles**
* **Article 9 – Accessibility**
* **Article 30 – Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport**

**New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026**

Since ratifying the UNCRPD, the New Zealand Government has established a Disability Strategy2 to guide the work of government agencies on disability issues. The vision is that New Zealand be a non-disabling society, where disabled people have equal opportunity to achieve their goals and aspirations, and that all of New Zealand works together to make this happen. It identifies eight outcome areas contributing to achieving this vision. There are a number of Strategy outcomes particularly relevant to this submission, including:

* **Outcome 5 – Accessibility**

# The Submission

DPA supports the proposed Frederick Street Park upgrade and the reasons behind it, including the need for more green areas in the central city.

The park’s location will also be very beneficial for disabled people, particularly those who will be living in the new social housing residential complex next door.

DPA acknowledges that the first round of consultation is just to gain preliminary ideas and we have some based on past submissions we have made around other green spaces, including in the Wellington area.

Our main hope is that the park is accessible and user friendly to all Wellingtonians and serves as a great example of what can be achieved in the development of new green spaces.

DPA believes that it is important to involve disabled people and disability organisations as well as the Council’s Accessibility Advisory Group and other stakeholders in the planning of this upgrade.

DPA believes that another effective way to do this is through the establishment of a working group involving disabled people and other community stakeholders to feed into the design work on the project.

This is important as the voices of disabled people need to be clearly heard on this development, with a view to having a park which is based on Universal Design (UD) principles.

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| **Recommendation 1:** that the voices of disabled people and disability organisations are involved, alongside other stakeholders, in the Frederick Street Park upgrade design process. |

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| **Recommendation 2:** that a project working group be established, comprised of community stakeholders including disabled people and disability organisations (amongst others) to advise on the design of the upgraded park. |

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| **Recommendation 3:** that the new Frederick Street Park Upgrade is based on Universal Design (UD) principles. |

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| **Recommendation 4:** that the following design features be considered for inclusion in the park upgrade:* Wide pathways to enable pedestrians, including disabled people, to easily navigate the space.
* Play equipment and activities which are accessible to everyone, including disabled people and aimed at both children and adults.
* Sufficient seating of all heights to enable disabled people and non-disabled to sit, rest, relax and reflect.
* Adequate shelter from all seasonal weather from the hot Summer Sun to cold Winter/autumn winds.
* Picnic and eating areas which are accessible to everyone, including disabled people.
* Accessible toilet and wet floor shower/changing facilities.
* Adequate mobility parking near the site.
* The placement of tactile strips in strategic areas to enable navigation by blind and vision impaired people.
* Accessible wayfinding signage including, for example, the inclusion of Braille and large print signage and audio description when denoting trees and plants and in toilets/changing areas.
* The placement of accessible, safe surfacing on play areas and other parts of the park – not woodchip bark.
* Quite spaces which can be retreated by which are useful for neurodivergent people and people who experience mental distress.
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