Public Toilet Policy

Department:	Property and Facilities
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Approved by:	Council
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Purpose:

To provide guidance on Council's approach to the provision of public toilets, including decision making around the funding and construction of new facilities, and maintenance and cleaning standards.

Principles and objectives:

- To provide a network of public toilets that are available, accessible, clean, and appropriately maintained to service the needs of the community, tourists, and travelling public.
- To increase accessibility to town centres, community facilities, and other Council infrastructure.
- To take a consistent district-wide approach to the funding and maintenance of public toilets.

Scope:

The policy relates to public toilets owned by Central Otago District Council. Public toilets have been provided by other agencies throughout the district. These toilets are taken into account as part of the wider provision of services, however are outside of the scope of this policy.

Policy:

Council provides a network of public toilet facilities for the use of the resident and visiting public.

Council is moving toward toilet facilities composed of all-gender, single, fully enclosed, self-contained units consistent with the NZS4241:1999 New Zealand Standard for Public Toilets.

Funding

Toilets are funded through district funding sources and provided on a needs basis.

Provision of services

Services are provided based on demand. Consumable usage is monitored to ensure service standards remain adequate for the level of use.

Council ensure there is at least one 24-hour public toilet, which includes baby change facilities in each major urban area, consistent with NZS4241:1999 New Zealand Standard for Public Toilets and the Building Code.

New facilities

Additional facilities are considered as usage increases.

New facilities are located in areas that are safe, well lit, able to be serviced effectively, and meet the needs of the community.

The following factors are considered when assessing site suitability:

Determine need	Including distance from other toilets or facilities, including facilities operated by private businesses for public use (i.e. service stations). Consideration of the current level of service at nearby facilities.
Available land and site suitability	Including: • the ability to build on a suitable site • the legal status of the land • the ability to service a site with power and water • impact on traffic flow and ability to park • safety and natural surveillance at the site • any planning or other considerations and constraints.
Financial considerations	Including the cost of building on and maintaining the site, the ongoing costs relating to the provision of services, and the condition of any existing building or structure on the site.

Taking on other existing public toilets

Some government and other agencies have built public toilets on either Council or private land. At times, Council is asked to take ownership over these toilets.

Council considers these requests on a case by case basis, using the same criteria as outlined for ‘new facilities.’

Council also take the condition of the building and any anticipated cost of maintaining or servicing the facility into account.

Register of Council Owned Public Toilets

Council maintains a Register of Council Owned Public Toilets, published on the Central Otago District Council website.

The register includes the following information:

- Location of public toilets within each Central Otago ward
- Operational status and open hours for each facility
- Whether the facility is unisex
- Accessible status
- The number of pans at each site
- The accessibility of each site
- Changing facilities
- And the maintenance standard.

Accessibility and changing facilities

Accessible facilities are provided where possible. Some sites are constrained - particularly those with long drop facilities.

Council is increasing the provision of changing facilities over time. It is prohibitively expensive to fit changing facilities into existing toilets, due to size requirements. Further facilities are provided as new builds occur.

Cleaning and maintenance

Toilets are cleaned and maintained regularly, at levels set depending on use. Service standards include:

- Twice daily maintenance at highest use facilities
- Daily maintenance
- Weekly maintenance, including 1x, 2x, and 3x weekly standards
- And as required maintenance, generally applied to seasonal facilities.

Closure of a facility

An existing facility may be considered for either closure or a reduction in hours or service standard when there is a reduction in the level of use and sufficient other facilities are in place to meet community needs.

Determining the sufficiency of other facilities includes considering the accessibility and usage of the alternate sites.

Operational decision making is made by Council staff when there is no drop in the level of service, including situations where a toilet is upgraded or replaced nearby.

Decision making is taken to Council to request the closure of a facility resulting in a reduction in the level of service.

Private businesses utilising public toilets

Private businesses and commercial operators cannot use Council owned public toilets in calculating the available pans toward resource consent or liquor licence conditions.

Events

Council public toilets are provided based on regular usage. Where an event is likely to exceed this usage, Council expect organisers to provide additional facilities.

Relevant legislation:

Building Act 2004 Regulations contained in the Building Act 2004 include:

- Building Code
- Compliance Document for New Zealand Building Code Clause G1 Personal Hygiene
- NZS4241:1999 New Zealand Standard for Public Toilets

Related documents:

Register of Council Owned Public Toilets