

Strategic Transport Plan

Palmerston North

SMALL CITY BENEFITS, BIG CITY AMBITION

2018/21

Te Kaunihera o Papaioea
Palmerston North City Council



To fulfil the vision of small city benefits, big city ambition the Council has adopted five goals. The City Development Strategy was developed to achieve **Goal 1: an innovative and growing city.** This plan shows how the Council will contribute to this goal.

Council's goal is to support the growth of road, rail and air travel, and public and active transport options, to efficiently move people to where they need to be. The City Development Strategy sets out Council's commitment to delivering infrastructure in an integrated way that is efficient and focused on the future needs of the growing city. Increasing connectivity is also a key factor in Palmerston North's future prosperity.

The Regional Growth Study, commissioned by the Government in consultation with Horizons and the district and city councils in 2015, identified opportunities to help realise the region's economic potential. Accelerate25 is a joint initiative of local and central government, business and iwi that will work towards achieving economic growth in the region. This includes focusing on distribution and transport connections, to make it easier to get business done. Completing the regional freight ring road will reduce car and heavy vehicle transport flows in the main urban area and improve links to national and international markets.

Improved air service options and connectivity for passengers and freight will benefit the region, by improving economic viability for businesses in the city and wider region, increasing tourism expenditure and boosting the city's image. Airfreight volumes to and from the city continue to grow, enhanced by the introduction of Boeing Jet freighter services in the second half of 2016. Greater competition resulted in a significant increase in air service passenger volumes between Palmerston North and Auckland. Increased competition on the Palmerston North to Christchurch route, already an important link for visitors to and from the South Island, offers further potential.

Anticipated rises in fuel prices will create both opportunities and challenges for the economy. Higher prices for petrol and diesel are likely to motivate gradual but sustained shifts in travel and land use patterns, characterised by a rise in alternative transport, changes in fuel types and denser patterns of landuse. Despite significant declines in the volume of raw milk transported out of the region between 2012 and 2016, regional freight volumes remained at 1.7 million net tonnes between 2012 and 2016. Further improvements in rail and roading infrastructure are needed to provide better connectivity to the expanding North-East industrial zone and Longburn inland port.

Council wants to improve regional transport links, to optimise links between the city, the region and wider markets. It will support and enable local initiatives, such as development of the FoodHQ campus, and improvements to the city and regional bus service, as well as look for other opportunities to support better regional connections. Council wants to continue building connections to make it easier for people and businesses to get to where they need to be.

The strategic roading infrastructure needed to support the growth and development of Palmerston North is well researched and understood. Numerous strategic reports have stressed the need for a regional ring road that connects regional traffic with projected growth to the city's north-east and west, while also removing traffic from increasingly congested urban corridors. Council is making good progress, with the Government supporting investment in

the first stages of the regional ring road via the joint Accessing Central NZ project. It needs to maintain this momentum over the next 3-6 years.

The north-east industrial zone and Longburn are well located to leverage off the presence of rail within the city, but a plan is needed to make sure rail forms a key part of future freight, distribution and logistics activities in these locations.

The airport is an asset of regional significance and well located to support further growth in air freight and distribution activities, with the ability to operate around the clock. Planning is well advanced to support the growth of the airport and its operational requirements.

Planned investment in the city centre's streetscapes will help reinforce its identity, while also supporting the inner-city ring road's role in reducing the traffic that travels through the centre. Council needs to rethink central city parking to better support the aims for the city centre. While a lack of parking is often cited as holding back investment and development, an over-supply of parking discourages the use of public transport, walking and cycling, and undermines the desired identity of the city centre. Park and short-walk arrangements have helped achieve a strong sense of place in some places by reducing the need for on-street parking. Long-term leases of on-street parking should also be investigated to help fill city centre vacancies.





The purpose of the Strategic Transport Plan is to *provide infrastructure to enable growth and a transport system that links people and opportunities, and provides amenity, safety, interconnectivity, accessibility, resilience and reliability* (Priority 2: City Development Strategy and Economic Development Strategy).



Where we are now



- Palmerston North has an effective and well-developed transportation network with its excellent location a key factor in the city's prosperity.
- Palmerston North is a key focal point of road and rail movements in the Central North Island. The city provides a twelve-hour drive time to all points of the compass for heavy vehicles is a key feature of the transport system.
- The grid network provides flexibility and a choice of different routes to a destination and road users pick and choose the route to best match their destination, road conditions and constraints for time, mode and travel purpose. Designated user routes are being developed to help prioritise where to invest to better balance the needs of different road users.
- The high number of intersections associated with the grid pattern increases the risk of accidents.
- The capacity of the rail over-bridges, Fitzherbert Bridge, and lack of alternative Manawatū River crossings, force traffic to converge and create bottle necks at peak times.
- The increasing population of commuters, changes in the type and size of vehicles using the network has created pinch points at locations across the transport network, such as Ruahine Street outside the Hospital and near the Tremaine Avenue Rail terminal, and intersections linking to Main Street East (State Highway).
- There is a good supply of parking in the city. Parking is under used in some places / sometimes and there is an opportunity to better use some of this land for other purposes. Parking pricing is a key mechanism in influence behaviour.
- The road link to the Tremaine Ave rail terminal is under increasing pressure from congestion.
- Rail access at Longburn is limited to sidings only and rail is unavailable at the north east industrial area.
- The Airport is well-located to support further growth in air freight and distribution activities and is operating 24-7. Airfreight volumes to and from the city continue to grow, but the current length of the runway limits the size of aircraft. The runway is consented for lengthening and planning is well advanced to support airport growth.
- The Manawatū Gorge permanent closure is disrupting access to eastern New Zealand, increasing transport costs and travel times to the city and making connections to other regions and markets less efficient.
- Heavy State highway traffic is diverting onto city roads and creating future road maintenance issues for the City.
- The frequency and operating hours of public transport and low cost for parking are a disincentive to use public transport and heavy dependence on motor vehicles is contributing to congestion pinch points.
- Recent and future development in land use is outpacing the direction of planned strategic network leading to a transport network that is not functioning as intended.

Where we want to be

- A transport system that provides a choice of intermodal transport connections and integration of modes of transport that safely and efficiently gets freight, services, and people where they need to be.
- An adequate supply of parking to meet the needs of a business's/industry and economic growth, and for encouraging a strong culture of walking, cycling and public transport use.
- A regional ring road, with downstream bridge connection, that provides reliable and resilient interconnections for heavy vehicle traffic to the northeast and west of the city, the State Highways and the express way to Wellington.
- A State Highway Network that goes around the urban area and interconnects with the regional ring road.
- There are resilient and reliable travel routes to key destinations that meet the specific constraints for time, mode, and travel purpose of users.
- Reliable city and regional routes/connections, including alternative routes, will be accessible to all main ports of New Zealand for heavy vehicles.
- Opportunities identified in the Regional Growth Study and Accessing Central New Zealand are realised.
- There is resilient and reliable interconnected intermodal transportation of goods, services, and people.
- Reliable road - rail links for industry.
- Resilient rail and road infrastructure and interconnectivity form a key part of freight, distribution and logistics activities in the north-east industrial zone and Longburn.
- Reliable and consistent traffic conditions are experienced across the city with low or moderate levels of peak time congestion.
- Satisfaction with travel times and distribution and transport interconnections are be medium to high.
- Heavy vehicle and through traffic are directed to use the regional/inner ring roads.
- Minimal traffic travelling unnecessarily through the city centre.
- There is an improved city and regional bus and rail services, interconnectivity, facilities, and better interregional interconnections.
- Broadway Avenue and George Street pedestrian streets.
- The provision and management of central city parking better supports the aspirations for the city centre.
- Airport growth and improved air service offerings improves economic viability and improves the city's image.
- There are good relationships between the Council and Kiwi Rail, Palmerston North Airport, New Zealand Transport Authority (NZTA), Transport advocates and lobby groups and the Regional Transport Committee and other Territorial Authorities.



How we're going to get there

Day to day / ongoing actions to achieve the purpose

- Undertake remedial work in areas with high crash or safety concerns taking into consideration context sensitive design.
- Identify and implement a package of safety measures across the network.
- Review speed limits under proposed new national rules for setting speed limits.
- Maintain street lighting and energy efficiency across the network.
- Deliver roading and parking maintenance and renewal in a cost-effective way according to the Roothing Efficiency. Group's One Network Road Classification and Customer Levels of Service.
- Enforce parking rules and time limits.
- Explore ways to minimise the volume of traffic travelling unnecessarily through the city.

- Provide transport infrastructure for growth.
- Maintain car parking occupancy levels in the city centre.
- Promote local initiatives and improvements to city and regional bus services in collaboration with Horizons Regional Council and NZTA.
- Advocate for improvements to regional and urban public transport services including rail) services.
- Develop plans, in partnership with the Regional Transport Committee, to enhance regional intermodal transport links
- Work with electricity providers to enable the provision of fast-charging stations.
- Review parking management in the central city.
- Maintain road corridor environment, aesthetics and amenities e.g. trees and street furniture.

New ongoing actions to achieve the purpose

- Collect and analyse traffic data to better understand travel times and how traffic moves around the regional network.
- Improve intersection safety, structural integrity, and traffic flow on primary freight, over-dimension, overweight and emergency service routes with context sensitive design.
- Apply a multi-disciplinary and integrated approach to the network safety, planning, and delivery that considers context-sensitive design.
- Collaborate with the airport to develop and improve its customer service, operations, air service offerings, and interconnectivity for passengers and freight.
- Implement the Proposed Parking Management Plan.

Specific programmes to achieve the purpose (with timeframe)

- Develop a plan and business case for the completion of the regional ring road and its interconnections, including direct links between Linton Military Camp and State Highway 3, north of the city (by end of 2019/2020).
- Provide better intermodal interconnections across the city, including to Linton Military Camp, Massey University and Food HQ via a downstream bridge (by end of 2020/2021).
- Develop a plan, in collaboration with Kiwi Rail and businesses, to ensure rail forms a key part of future freight, distribution and logistics activities and interconnections in the north-east industrial zone and Longburn (by end of 2020/2021).
- Develop a plan to provide resilient and reliable intermodal, road and rail connectivity for industry (by end of 2020/2021).
- Investigate and recommend options for re-location of the rail terminal on Tremaine Avenue (by end of 2020/2021).
- Develop a plan to enhance reliability, resilience, safety, and travel times on the primary freight routes for freight, heavy, over dimension and overweight vehicles, defence, and emergency services (by end of 2021/2022).
- Develop a plan to improve traffic flow reliability and consistency and reduce travel times on the inner ring road in conjunction with pedestrian priority within the CBD (by end of 2021/2022).
- Investigate and implement options to increase speed limits on key arterial routes and the ring roads with initial focus being on four lane divided carriage ways (by March 2020).



Actions contributing to Council's strategic themes

a) Smart city practices

- Use Blip Trac monitoring of key routes to monitor and analyse the movement of people and vehicles.
- Develop a system for monitoring and modelling travel times and how traffic moves around the regional network.
- Review software systems that support the transport activities to improve the efficient business processes.
- Investigate options and make recommendations for technology suitable to staff and customer needs e.g. hardware and software packages e.g. kbase relationship to RAMM, provide staff laptops.
- Investigate options and make recommendations for the delivery of forward works programmes for maintenance and renewal online so residents can look up what's happening and when around the network.

b) Sustainable practices

- Develop plans to mitigate or minimise the negative effects of runoff from roads and houses.

c) Iwi partnerships

- Continue proactive engagement with Rangitāne o Manawatū on major city transport and roading developments including the Bimonthly Forums.
- Identify whether new Mana Whakahono-a-Rohe provisions in the RMA might provide a mechanism for Council and iwi to enhance Rangitāne o Manawatū participation in RMA decision-making processes.

d) Strategic partnerships

- Work with regional transport committee, Horizons Regional Council and other local authorities to achieve the best transport outcomes for the region.
- Work in collaboration with NZTA, the Regional Transport Committee members, and Accelerate25 partners to progress the programme of options and alternatives for delivering solutions to identified issues in Accessing Central New Zealand with strategic transport links in the region.
- Work with Horizons Regional Council to meet consent conditions for storm water management and infrastructure development.
- Work with the Airport Council Controlled Trading Organisation to ensure the Airports Strategic Intent aligns with the city's aspirations.
- Work in collaboration with NZTA, as funding partner, for programme delivery.
- Work with Utility authorities to coordinate infrastructure activities.
- Work with Utility Authorities and industry to coordinate infrastructure requirements for electric vehicles.
- Work with the Otaki to North Levin Governance Group to ensure the wider strategic connectivity to Palmerston North.



Measures of success

- Decrease in CBD through-traffic
- Decrease in the number of fatalities and serious injury crashes on local roads

Related policies



- Speed Limits Bylaw
- Traffic and Parking Bylaw
- Street Design Manual 2013
- One Road Network Classification
- Accelerate 25 (Regional Growth Study plus Accessing Central NZ Strategic case)
- Draft Government Policy Statement for Land Transport 2018/19-2027/28 (GPS due for release November 2017, Draft status will disappear)
- Horizons Regional Land Transport Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- Local area traffic management policy
- Sun protection policy
- 30 Year Infrastructure Plan

Long-term Plan levels of service

Council provides an interconnected transport system to safely, reliably and efficiently get freight, services, and people where they need to be.
Council provides an adequate supply of parking for economic growth and to encourage a strong culture of walking, cycling and public transport use.

Long-term Plan KPIs



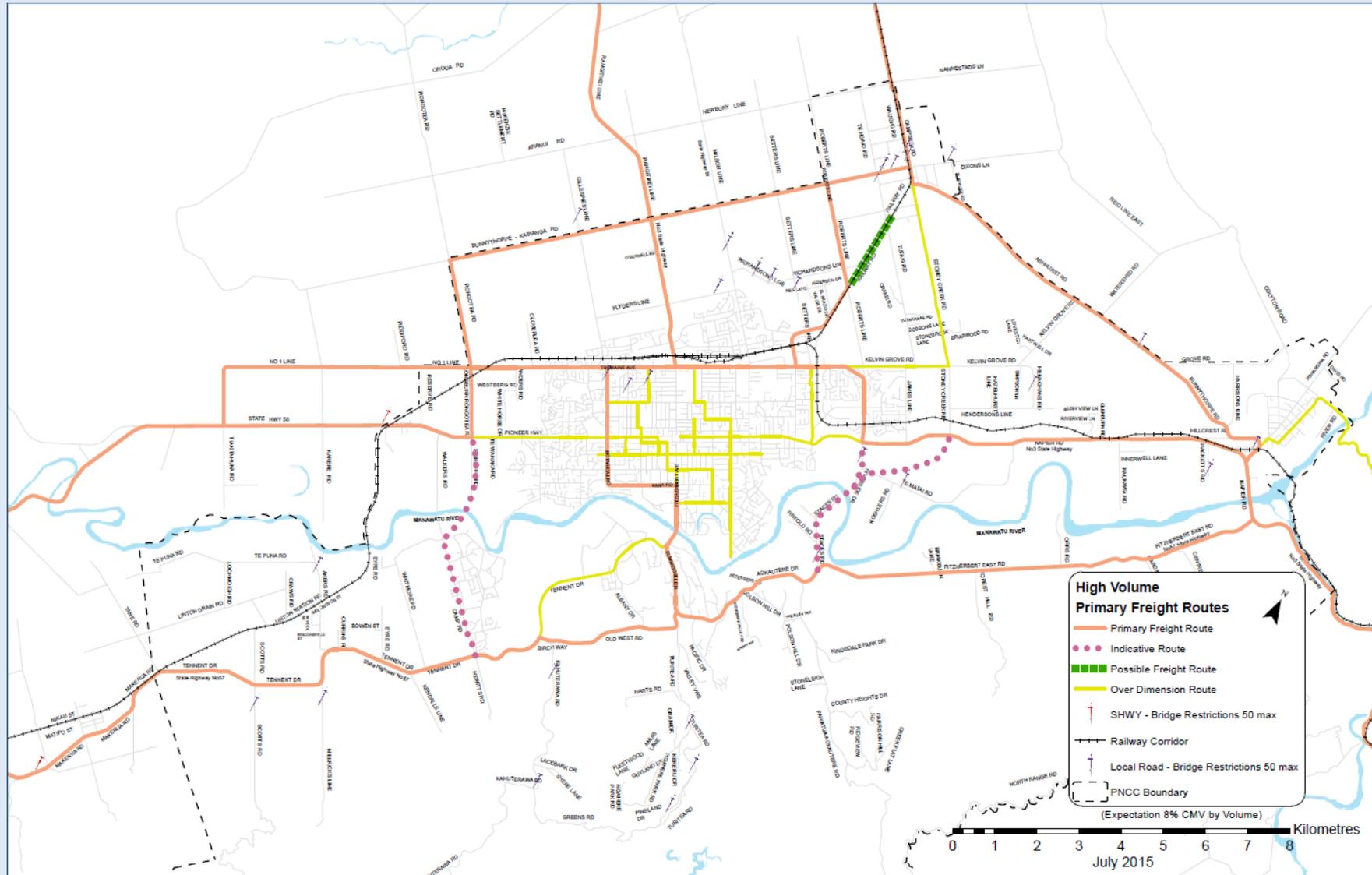
Mandatory: Percentage of requests for service relating to roads and footpaths responded to (with at least an initial formal response) within three working days.
Mandatory: The average quality of ride on the sealed local road network, measured by smooth travel exposure.
Mandatory: The change in the number of fatal and serious injury crashes from the previous financial year on the city's local roading network.
Mandatory: Percentage of sealed roads that are resurfaced each year.
Mandatory: The percentage of footpaths receiving a grade 4 or 5 condition rating on a 1 (best) to 5 (worst) scale.
A 30 year Asset Management Plan is in place and major AMP projects approved in the 10 year plan are achieved.

Actions, and contributing programmes, considered but not funded in this plan

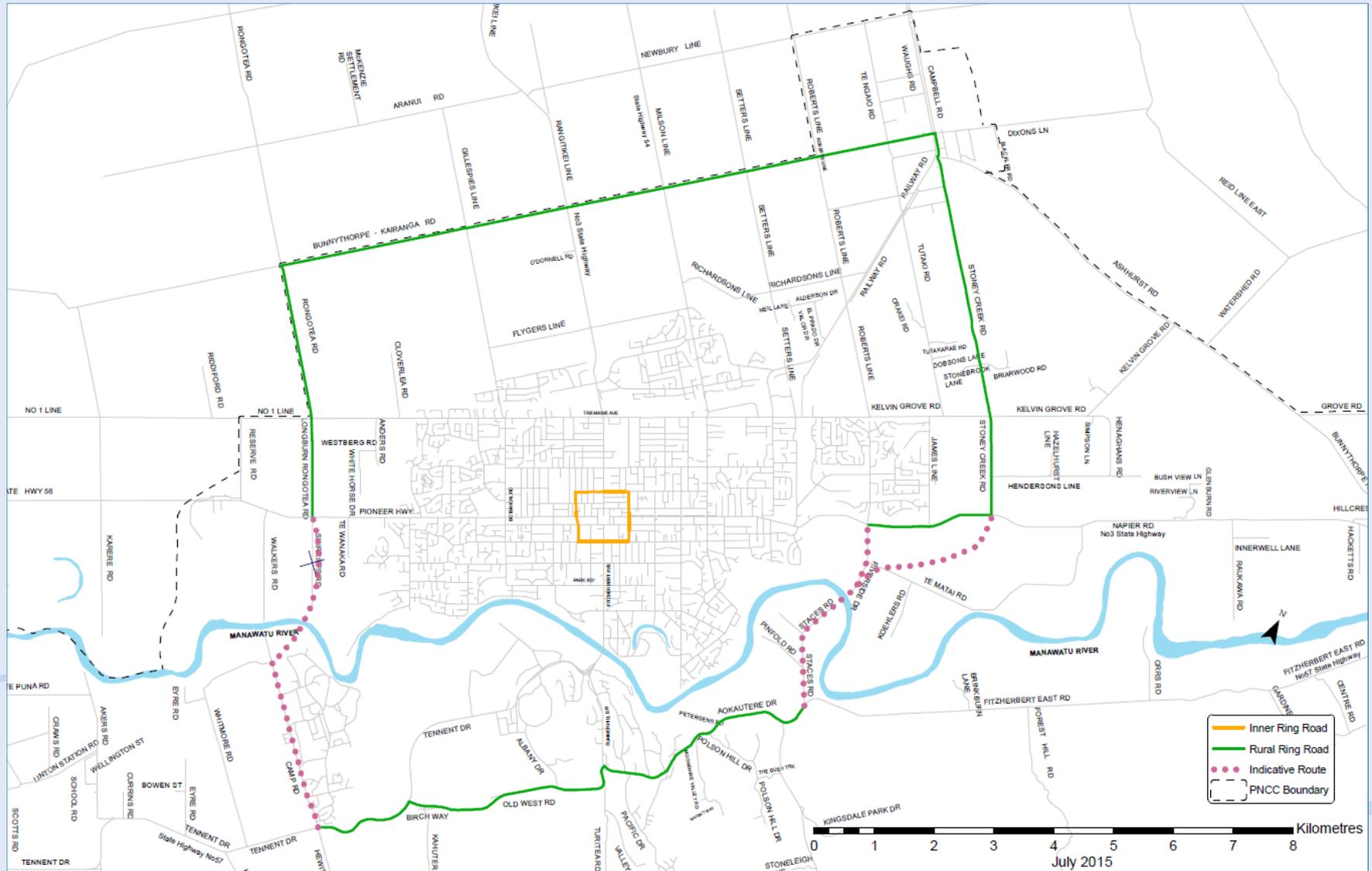
- Explore the establishment of voluntary groups interested in supporting partner city relations through community-led activities.
- Establish active digital channels to communicate and collaborate with our key international partner cities.
- Kelvin Grove Road/Henaghans Road intersection and bend Improvements.
- Milson Line Mangaone Stream Bridge.
- City Entrance Corridors – Streetscape improvements.
- Kelvin Grove Road (Stoney Creek Road to Henaghans Road) – Safety Improvements of 5 Dips.

Designated user routes are being developed to help prioritise where to invest to better balance the needs of different road users.

Primary Freight Routes - Palmerston North



Rings Roads - Palmerston North





Palmerston North City Council

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