

A group of children in red school uniforms and helmets are riding colorful bicycles on a paved path in a park. The background is filled with lush green trees under a clear sky. The scene is bright and active, representing a healthy and active community.

# Active and Public 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 Creative and Liveable Strategy was developed to achieve **Goal 2: A creative and exciting city.** This plan shows how the Council will contribute to achieving this goal.

The City Development Strategy addresses the strategic transport priorities as they relate to the growth of the city. Palmerston North has an excellent track record of facilitating daily car journeys. While Council has provided additional capacity for cars via wider roads, more lanes, traffic lights, roundabouts, car-parking and slip-lanes, it has been less successful in providing modern facilities for walking, cycling and public transport. While the car will continue to be an important mode of transport, walking, cycling, and public transport are where the biggest changes are needed. Council's goal is to see more people walking, cycling, and using public transport around Palmerston North. In many cases this will mean reallocating existing street space, such as on-street parking and traffic lanes, for another purpose.

The transport system needs to cater for the lowest level of mobility and physical capability, so that all people feel comfortable walking or cycling about the city. Council has made good progress with off-road walking and cycling facilities and Palmerston North generally has good footpath coverage. However, Council needs to consider how it treats and prioritises space for pedestrians and cyclists at pinch-points, intersections, and crossings within existing transport corridors, particularly as urban areas are intensified. Council wants road design, way finding, and planning to take into consideration the space and safety needs of cyclists and pedestrians.

Good progress has been made in public transport in some areas. Like walking and cycling, public transport has many benefits. It reduces congestion, carbon emissions and can increase mobility for those citizens who are unable or unwilling to drive a car, walk, or ride a bike. Strong public transport networks make a significant contribution to city liveability scores. Good progress has been made in some areas. The free bus service for Massey University and other tertiary institutions is well-supported and has reduced congestion on the Fitzherbert Avenue corridor. The Square has been confirmed as the location for an inter-regional terminal, and having patrons dropped off in a high-quality and central public space is working well. Council needs to consider providing more shelter at this location.

Horizons Regional Council currently provides the urban bus service. Further enhancements to the service, in addition to minor improvements made in recent years, would add to the city's liveability. The benefits of investing in greater frequency on existing routes, or greater coverage, need to be carefully considered. The current urban terminal at Main Street is near capacity and the design is problematic. The City Centre Streetscape Plan includes a concept design for a new urban terminal at the current location, which would improve both functionality and the streetscape.



**The purpose of the Public and Active Transport Plan is to have a safe, efficient, and effective active and public transport system and *the most active community in New Zealand* (Priority 5, Creative and Liveable City Strategy).**

Actions to achieve this purpose are not solely the responsibility of Council and a range of other organisations will also play a significant role.



## Where we are now



- Palmerston North is relatively flat with good off-road walking and cycling facilities, footpath coverages, extensive shared path network, and urban cycle ways.
- The grid network provides flexibility and a choice of different routes to a destination. Cyclists and pedestrians can pick and choose any route to their destination. This makes it difficult to prioritise where to invest to improve safety.
- There are a high number of intersections associated with the grid network pattern that increases the risk of accidents. Motor vehicle crashes involving pedestrians have been increasing.
- People are heavily reliant on motor vehicles for transport and there is an increasing population of commuters, and larger trucks using the network. Cyclists and pedestrians are relatively unprotected and vulnerable in a collision, with truck accidents more likely to be fatal.
- School entrances at peak times are unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists, as many parents choose to drop off and pick up their children by car as close to the school gate as possible.
- Public transport patronage is low and declining. The recent introduction of new services has slowed this decline.
- The low cost parking is considered to perpetuate use of private motor vehicles.
- Pedestrians, cyclists and people waiting for buses are exposed to the weather, and this can be a disincentive to using these modes. There is a lack of street furniture and amenities for the comfort and convenience of people walking, cycling and using buses.
- Council does not promote the city's pathways, cycling programmes, and activities aimed at generating a mode shift or creating behaviour change, such as the Bikes in Schools Programme and School travel management plans aimed at developing skills and making it safe for children travelling to school.

## Where we want to be



- Palmerston North has a strong culture of walking, cycling and using public transport for the commute to work and education.
- The city scores highly in city liveability assessments.
- There is improved access to all modes of transport.
- The transport system is designed with resilient and reliable surfaces and other conditions for people with the greatest accessibility and mobility needs.
- Safe, resilient and reliable travel routes, conditions and interconnected intermodal transportation provide priority for active and public transport users.
- Interconnected intermodal transportation links meet the specific constraints for time, distance, and mode across the region.
- Primary cycle routes are clearly defined, easy to use, and evident on the ground.
- Motor vehicle use and parking has little or no negative effect on walking, cycling and public transport.
- Trucks and heavy through-traffic predominantly use the ring roads.
- There are secure facilities and amenities available in key locations for pedestrians and cyclists to store bikes and packages, repair bikes, rest and shelter, use a toilet, call for help, and hydrate.
- There is a resilient shared pathway around the city linking to Ashhurst, Railway Road to Bunnythorpe-Feilding, Linton and Longburn with interconnections to the road network.
- All schools in Palmerston North have travel plans.
- Good passenger rail services to other centres around New Zealand e.g. Wellington, Hamilton and Auckland.

## 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 (based on road function, adjacent land use, and user routes).
- Maintain street lighting and other conditions for people with the greatest accessibility and mobility needs across the network.
- Maintain and renew active and public transport according to the Roding Efficiency Group's One Network Road Classification and Customer Levels of Service in a cost-effective way.
- Advocate for improvements to regional and urban public transport services.
- Provide support for the Bikes in Schools programme.
- Work with schools and the Ministry of Education to improve access to schools for children.
- Provide for the extension of public transport, cycling, and pedestrian facilities and services into residential and industrial growth areas, and the rural villages.

### New ongoing actions to achieve the purpose

- Collect and analyse traffic and place data to better understand how cyclists and pedestrians use the network.
- Identify and implement pedestrian and cycle focused improvements to intersection and road crossings.
- Complete a mobility audit of existing footpaths and pedestrian crossing facilities to identify deficiencies in the network and improve pedestrian facilities for people with the greatest accessibility and mobility needs.
- Incorporate context-sensitive design into all infrastructure development.
- Apply the principles of good urban design.
- Apply placemaking concepts and knowledge to pilot test city-wide pedestrian and cycling improvement.
- Upgrade, on a prioritised basis, pedestrian routes, connections, and road crossings.
- Upgrade, on a prioritised basis, cycle route interconnections and intersections.
- Improve existing bus stops in the city with bus shelters, signage, markings, concrete pads, and hard stands.
- Complete the footpath extension programme for areas without footpaths.
- Promote end of trip facilities for cyclist and pedestrians in work places.
- Complete development of the Feilding to Palmerston North shared path link.
- Complete development of the Ashhurst to Palmerston North shared path link.
- Upgrade and maintain all public transport facilities (shelters and stop access) to meet the needs of people with the greatest accessibility and mobility needs.

### Specific programmes to achieve the purpose (with timeframe)

- Review and update the Street Design Manual to address any technical gaps, and incorporate intersections and context-sensitive design (by Dec 2019).
- Review options for the phasing, or removal, of the traffic signals around The Square to give pedestrians priority (by March 2021).
- Develop a package of programmes to complete the Primary On-road Cycling and Shared Pathway Network, including higher cycle lane visibility, improved paint quality, and rearranged parking and kerb line layouts (by March 2020).

- Develop a pilot project(s) to test urban design principles and innovative context-design responses for pedestrian routes and cycle routes, e.g. UCOL and Memorial Park crossings (by end of 2020/2021).
- Develop and implement a programme to promote the city's walkways, cycling programmes, and activities aimed at generating a behaviour change for a mode shift (by March 2020).
- Develop an integrated cycle implementation plan (by the end of 2018/2019).
- Identify and implement a package of pedestrian and cyclist safety measures across the network to address identified safety concerns (by Dec 2019).
- Promote pedestrian routes to key destinations with bilingual signs designated for pedestrians and cyclists (by end of 2020/2021).
- Develop a pedestrian and cyclist amenity plan and implement projects identified in this plan (by end of 2019/20).
- Review cycle phases at traffic signals and implement changes that improve cycle priority and safety (by end of 2020/2021).
- Continue development of the shared path loop around the city and along the Manawatū River edge linking Ashhurst, Linton, Longburn, Bunnythorpe-Feilding, including:
  - Mangaone Stream Shared Path connection to Manawatū River Shared Path (by end of 2020/2021)
  - Palmerston North to Feilding Shared Path via Bunnythorpe (by end of 2021/22)
  - Manawatū River – Shared path link from Fitzherbert Bridge to Linton Military Camp and Massey University (by end 2018/2019 subject to funding)
  - Manawatū River Pedestrian He Ara Kotahi Cycle Bridge (by end 2018/2019).
- Follow-up the outcome of the feasibility study of the City to Sea shared pathway and decide whether Council will support this project (by Jan 2019).
- Develop plans for provision of Turitea Road cycleway and walkway (by end of 2020/2021).
- Complete development of the Junior Road Safety Park to provide opportunities for children to develop their cycling capability (by Jan 2018).
- Investigate options for the provision of a 'rapid bus' network at peak times with dedicated bus lanes (by end of 2020/2021).
- Redesign and upgrade bus stops to accommodate longer, larger buses (by end of 2020/2021).
- Investigate how the Council can better influence or control urban bus services (by end of 2019/2020).
- Investigate ways the Council can stimulate urban bus patronage (by end of 2019/2020).
- Work with Horizons Regional Council to implement a free bus service trial on key urban route(s). The free bus service will combine with the new electronic ticketing system (by April 2020/2021).
- Complete an accessibility audit in the CBD and around bus terminals and stops (by end of 2019/2020).



## Actions contributing to Council's strategic themes

### a) Smart city practices

- Investigate the implications of autonomous cars, electric scooters, segways and skateboards on active and public transport.
- Investigate new technology using GPS tracking (e.g. E-Roads for buses and Bluetooth for pedestrian/cyclists) to enable data to be captured and network movements to be understood.
- Optimise programmes and improve technology for counting pedestrians and cyclists on-road and on the shared path network.
- Explore technology options that assist cyclists, pedestrian, and bus safety and priority at traffic signals.
- Explore and provide technology options that meet the needs of people travelling by public transport for real-time information.
- Investigate active warning signage on active transport routes to warn drivers of vulnerable road users ahead.
- Investigate context-sensitive design solutions to identified issues.
- Collaboration and co-creating using multi-disciplinary approaches to infrastructure and context-sensitive design and planning.
- 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 that are smart e.g. timely communication with customers to bring higher levels of service.
- Provide specialised capability and capacity with the Council to promote public and active transport programmes and activities aimed at creating behaviour change which generates a mode shift.
- Work with passenger transport providers to provide integrated rail, air, and bus transport services and facilities.

### b) Sustainable practices

- Reduce ecological footprint through effective planning, protection, maintenance and enhancement of the natural and built environments.
- Investigate and provide infrastructure with lower or zero environmental impacts.
- Promote the use of public transport, higher vehicle occupancy, and less fossil fuel dependent and carbon emitting transport options.
- Implement promotional programmes that encourage commuters to shift to more environmentally sustainable transport modes.

### c) Iwi partnerships

- Collaborate on major projects and projects with land-use changes.
- Work with Rangitāne o Manawatū to incorporate Te Reo Māori and Māori design features into amenities.
- Work with Rangitāne o Manawatū on programmes designed to encourage people to be more active e.g. the Manawatū River Park.
- Collaborate on promotional programmes and messages targeted at getting more people to travel by active and public transport.

### d) Strategic partnerships

- Engage with the People on Bikes Forum to improve the cycling experience.
- Work with NZTA (National Cycling Team) to improve road safety.
- Work with Horizons Regional Council to improve public transport in the city.
- Collaborate with the Police to improve road safety.
- Collaborate with MidCentral Health to promote active transport.
- Collaborate with the Road Safety Action plan group to improve road safety.



- Engage with Community advocates to improve active and public transport use.
- Support Sport Manawatū to promote active transport.
- Work with local businesses to provide end of journey facilities for their staff (showers, secure bike storage etc.).
- Collaborate with the Ministry of Education and schools to improve school entrances.

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## Measures of success



- Increase in urban passenger transport patronage
- Increase in interregional passenger transport patronage (Whanganui, Marton, Feilding, Levin)
- Increase in cyclists
- Increase in pedestrians
- Less traffic travelling through the CBD
- City centre bus terminals are more accessible
- Increase in wayfinding signage to key destinations for pedestrians and cyclists

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## Related policies



- PNCC Street Design Manual
- One Road Network Classification
- Draft Government Policy Statement for Land Transport 2018/19-2027/28
- Ministry of Transport, Transport Outlook Current State
- Safer Journeys Action Plan 2016-2020
- NZTA Cycle Network Guidance (CNG)
- New Zealand Urban Design Protocol, Ministry of Environment
- Guidelines for off road trails and tracks – cycle
- Horizons Regional Land Transport Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- 30 Year Infrastructure Plan
- National Land Transport Programme
- Manawatū River Framework
- City Centre Framework
- Sun Protection Policy
- Smokefree Outdoor Areas Policy
- Reserve and Walkway Naming Policy
- Local Area Traffic Management Policy
- Signs and Use of Public Places Bylaw

## Long-term Plan levels of service

Council provides a safe, reliable, and interconnected transport system that provide priority for active and public transport users.

## Long-term Plan KPIs

Note: these KPIs are also in the Strategic Transport Plan.



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.

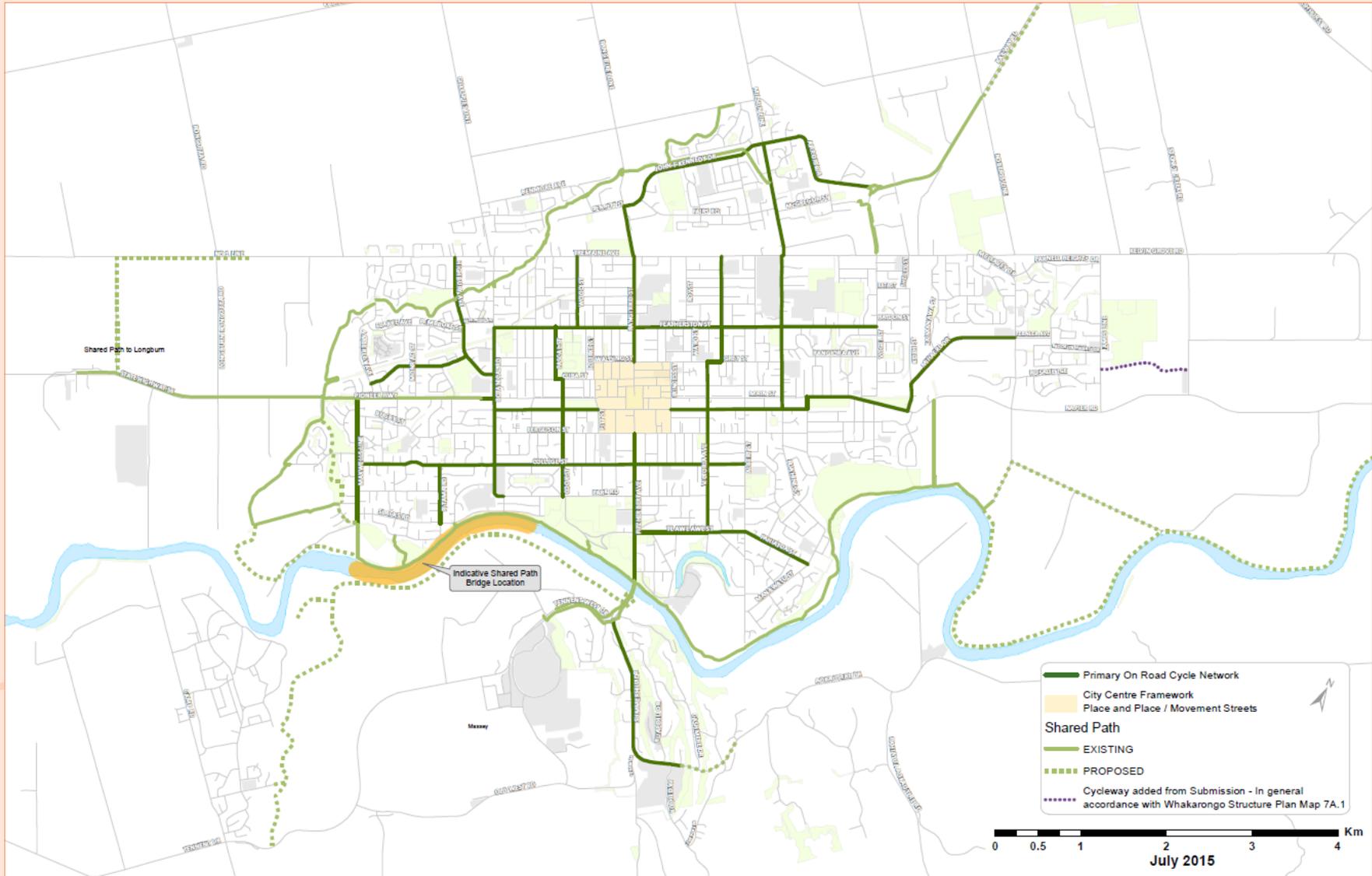
Mandatory: The percentage of footpaths receiving a grade 4 or 5 condition rating on a 1 (best) to 5 (worst) scale.

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

- Work with school communities to develop and review travel plans for children to school.
- Shared pathways renewed using chip seal rather than limestone.
- Support city-wide Ridepro Carpool initiative.

Palmerston North - Primary On Road Cycling and Shared Path Network





**Palmerston North City Council**

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