

**PALMY**<sup>®</sup>  
2021-31



**HE RAUTAKI TĀONE TAUTAIAO  
ECO CITY STRATEGY**

# Ahunga rautaki



# Strategic direction



# Matawhānui Papaioea Palmerston North Vision

## He iti rā, he iti pounamu

### Small city benefits, big city ambition

Palmerston North is the heart of the Manawatū region. We are a small city with a lot to offer, and we're ambitious about where we're going.

Palmerston North has many small city advantages - a great quality of life and easy access to services. We embrace our Rangitāne o Manawatū heritage and celebrate the diversity of our communities. We know that the talents and efforts of our whole city will help create the future we want.

To fulfil the vision Council has adopted five goals and strategies.

- Whāinga 1: He tāone auaha, he tāone tiputipu  
Goal 1: An innovative growing city
- Whāinga 2: He tāone whakaihihi, tapatapahi ana  
Goal 2: A creative and exciting city
- Whāinga 3: He hapori tūhonohono, he hapori haumaru  
Goal 3: A connected and safe community
- **Whāinga 4: Te tāone tautaiiao**  
**Goal 4: An eco city**
- Whāinga 5: Te Kaunihera ahunui, whakamana i te iwi  
Goal 5: A driven and enabling Council

## Whāinga 4: Te tāone tautaiiao Goal 4: An Eco city

We understand that Palmerston North has a responsibility to respond to climate change for the benefit of everyone.

Our goal is for Palmerston North to decrease carbon emissions and reduce our ecological footprint.

We want to protect and enhance our natural and built environments, accommodate growth through intensification, and support active transport. We will work with our partners towards achieving our shared goals.

**Paetae: Kia 30% te hekenga o te tuku hauhā (CO<sub>2</sub>) i Papaioea, i mua i te tau 2031**

**Target: 30% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions in Palmerston North by 2031**

This Eco city strategy describes Council's 10-year plan vision for Goal 4.

Five plans sit beneath this strategy and describes Council's activities for the first three years of the 2021-2031 10-Year Plan: **Climate change, Environmental sustainability, Manawatū River, Resource recovery** and **Waters**.

## Kupu whakataki Introduction

### Oranga hapori Community wellbeing

The purpose of local government is to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities in the present and for the future. The Eco city strategy focuses on the environmental wellbeing of our communities, although we intend that this strategy will impact on all aspects of wellbeing.

### Āhuarangi hurihuri Climate change

The Ministry for the Environment states that "[e]missions are changing the climate, and the changing climate is affecting us and our wellbeing. The native biodiversity of New Zealand and the places where we live, enjoy recreation, and make a living are also being affected."<sup>1</sup>

The challenge of mitigating climate change is a global one, and Palmerston North needs to play its part in reducing emissions. The task of lowering the city's carbon footprint requires everybody to identify inefficiencies and improve the way we do things. This strategy sets out our seven priorities to respond to climate change and be a more environmentally sustainable city.

<sup>1</sup> Ministry for the Environment. (2020). *Our atmosphere and climate*.

## Ngā tino Priorities

1. He kauanuanu, he hapahapai i te mauri o te awa o Manawatū

Respect and enhance the mauri of the Manawatū River

The Manawatū River forms the geographic, recreational, and spiritual heart of the city and the wider region. The river is of great historical, cultural, spiritual and traditional significance to Rangitāne. The name 'Manawatū' refers to a pūrākau (story) of Hau, a significant ancestor in the region, whose heart stood still when he beheld the beauty of the river. The river's flow connects the people of Norsewood to those of Foxton Beach, linking all who live between. The tributaries of the river connect the city with its neighbours, the mountain ranges, and the sea.

The Manawatū River is the heart of the city and region, and the mauri of the river is a reflection of our values. The Manawatū River Leaders Accord sets out the commitment to working in collaboration to improve the mauri of the river. We acknowledge the significance of the entire river system to the wellbeing of the city. We will collaborate with mana whenua to develop the best practical option for wastewater discharge, plant river banks, improve the city's stormwater network, re-establish wetlands, improve public access to the river, and undertake cultural monitoring of the quality of waterways. We want all these efforts to improve the mauri of the River.

We will:

- Understand the relationship Rangitāne o Manawatū has with the Manawatū River
- Increase use of the Manawatū River environment for passive and active recreation
- Increase the health and amenity of the river environment through increased biodiversity

See the **Manawatū River plan** for more detail.

2. He mahitahi ki te hapori ki te whakaiti i te tukutanga o te waro

Work with the community to reduce carbon emissions

### Āhuarangi hurihuri Climate change

There is a growing international commitment to reduce carbon emissions in recognition of the threat posed by climate change. Public awareness about climate change is also growing, and in 2019 local students joined the international School Strike for Climate action. The New Zealand Government declared a climate emergency in December 2020 and committed to a carbon-neutral government and public sector by 2025. Palmerston North is a signatory of the New Zealand Local Government Leaders Climate Change Declaration. This declaration establishes our commitment to addressing climate change in decision-making in the interests of community wellbeing.

Understanding the emissions profile of our city was a critical first step to developing plans for emission reduction. The 2018 citywide emissions inventory<sup>2</sup> found that Palmerston North emits roughly 500,000tCO<sub>2</sub>e each year, or approximately 5.7 tonnes per person. We want to lead by example and respond to opportunities to reduce organisational emissions through a new low carbon fund. We will work with residents and other city partners to reduce citywide emissions. We will reduce electricity, natural gas, and fuel usage, and reduce waste. Reducing emissions will often reduce costs, while improving air quality and other environmental outcomes.

We will:

- Foster sustainable practices and behaviours so that city residents and organisations become more sustainable
- Develop policies and plans and work with city stakeholders to achieve the target of a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2031 and continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Council's own activities

See the **Climate change plan** for more detail.



3. He whakahaumanu i te kanorau koiora māori

Regenerate native biodiversity

### Te kanorau koiora Biodiversity

The Turitea Reserve is one of the most well-preserved podocarp forests in the Lower North Island. Following the announcement of the national Predator Free 2050 vision, Council became involved in trial projects supporting Rangitāne and the wider community to control introduced predators. In recent years, pest control has led to bush regeneration and a significant increase in birdlife.

Planting the gullies and rapid regeneration of the streams between the city and the Turitea Reserve improves water quality and provides corridors for native birds to move between the ranges and city. This planting also reduces erosion and provides habitats for eels and other native fish. This work has the potential to transform the way residents and visitors experience the city.

As more urban intensification occurs, we will identify other trees for protection to ensure the city's urban canopy is safeguarded for future generations. We want to build on existing community achievements by extending the green corridors programme into neighbouring gullies and streams to create a network of links from the Turitea Reserve to the Manawatū River and city.

The link could eventually extend along the Manawatū River pathway to Te Apiti and the Ruahine Ranges and provide the missing link from Wellington to East Cape – a corridor along the Central Range. We will plant more trees along streets and in city parks to ensure native birds, once down in the city, have adequate year-round food sources.

We will work with our environmental partners to achieve greater coordination of community efforts. We will plant native bird-friendly trees in urban areas and control predators, such as rats, possums and stoats. Increasing protection for the native wildlife throughout the city is an important part of our vision to have thriving native biodiversity within the city. We will also encourage native plantings where practical and provide guidance on which plants are most appropriate in different places.

We will:

- Work with iwi and community groups to re-establish bush, particularly along waterways, and to control introduced predators

See the **Biodiversity chapter** of the **Sustainable practices plan** for more detail.

4. He whakapau pūtea ki ngā momo pūnahanga e whakamarohitia ai, e whakapūmautia ai te taiao

Invest in infrastructure that services to protect, enhance and preserve the environment

<sup>2</sup> Palmerston North City Community Carbon Footprint 2016/17



5. He whakamahi i te mana ā-ture o te Kaunihera me ana kaupapahere kia toitū ai te whanaketanga o te tāone i te wātonu, ā, haere ake nei

Use Council’s legislative powers and policies to ensure urban development is sustainable now and into the future

#### Whakaaraara rawa Resource recovery

To meet its obligations under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 to “promote effective and efficient waste management and minimisation”, Council must carry out a waste assessment and then adopt a Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP). We reviewed the WMMP in 2019 and this plan forms the basis for our actions in the 10-year plan.

The 2018 waste assessment found that in 2017 the city sent around 45,000 tonnes of waste to landfill. Almost half (48%) of this waste could have been reused, recovered, recycled or composted instead. Timber is the single largest type of waste (by weight) that could be diverted from the waste stream. The next largest type of waste going to landfill is organic waste, with food waste present in all kerbside rubbish collection systems.

We have begun working with communities to minimise the waste going to landfill. For example, we provide education on how to reduce waste, run an annual Hazardous Waste Day, and support actions towards zero waste community events. We want to protect public health and minimise the harm to the environment from our resource recovery activities.

We will focus on waste-reduction in Council purchasing, support community-led resource recovery initiatives, and provide new resource recovery services.

We will:

- Ensure the city’s solid waste is adequately and affordably managed
- Maximise the proportion of waste diverted from landfill (e.g. through recycling and composting)
- Manage hazardous waste in an environmentally responsible manner

See the **Resource recovery plan** for more detail.

#### Te wai para Wastewater

As a member of the Manawatū River Leaders Accord, we recognise its role in improving the health and mauri of the Manawatū River. Palmerston North and its surrounding villages discharge treated wastewater into the Manawatū River via the Totara Road Wastewater Treatment Plant. In recent years we have reduced the environmental impact of wastewater by following regional policy and complying with resource consents. The number of council wastewater discharge points into the river has reduced to one.

We have brought forward the wastewater resource consent review by five years to consider how the city can contribute to improving the health and mauri of the Manawatū River. The upcoming review will identify ways to improve the city’s wastewater management. We will consider what improvements are needed to

the current system and where the cities discharge will go. Options include either going to land, the River or the coast. We need to consider the long-term effects of putting treated wastewater on these environments. We will actively engage with the community in the lead-up to the decision-making process to help identify possible future treatment options.

Significant parts of the city’s wastewater network are at capacity during major wet weather events due to infiltration from the stormwater network. The primary causes of this are damaged infrastructure and private property owners either accidentally, or deliberately, diverting their stormwater into the wastewater network. Renewals will need to be prioritised to target critical trunk sewers. The leakiest parts of the network also need to be targeted to exclude stormwater infiltration.

The city’s wastewater consent review is taking into account the city’s growth over the next 30 years. New growth areas may need a different approach to managing wastewater. Extending the network as it currently exists in parts of the city could create problems at the treatment plant. New pressurised sewer technologies could provide cost-effective reticulated services with increased storage control.

We will:

- provide wastewater services for the safe collection, treatment and disposal of the city’s wastewater
- provide water services for the provision of safe and readily available water

See the **Wastewater chapter** of the **Water plan** for more detail.

#### Te ratonga wai māori Water supply

Palmerston North City Council owns and operates four water supplies: Palmerston North, Ashhurst, Bunnythorpe and Longburn. A safe and reliable water supply is essential for everyone in our city and Palmerston North’s water quality is currently very high. Recent amendments to the Health Act mean more emphasis on water safety and a significant change in expectations for managing drinking water supplies.

The Government is implementing a package of

reforms to the three waters regulatory system, including the establishment of Taumata Arowai, the new Water Services Regulator. For now, our strategic documents assume that we will remain responsible for water assets and the delivery of services. However, the service delivery model for water supply is likely to change in future.

Water for Palmerston North is primarily sourced from the Turitea Dam and supplemented by bores. Daily water use has declined in recent years, and city residents have lower daily water consumption than in New Zealand overall. While the city has a generally good water supply, summer droughts mean we need to conserve water.

In recent years some other councils have faced critical water system failures. A 2019 review found we don’t have good information about the condition and capacity of the city’s pipe networks. We want to improve our resilience and ability to recover from a significant natural disaster. We will increase ability to deal with potential seismic event failures or mechanical faults. We will also increase resilience by providing a second pipeline across the Manawatū River and strengthening the trunk main network across the city.

We will

- provide water services for the provision of safe and readily available water

See the **Water supply chapter** of the **Water plan** for more detail.

#### Te wai ua Stormwater

Urban development has increased the amount and speed of rainwater that goes into urban waterways. This means there are greater peak flow rates and more soils and other contaminants going into the Manawatū River system. Horizons Regional Council is the lead agency for managing flood hazards, and the Council manages localised stormwater ponding issues and drains.

Intensification of development in the existing urban area and more urban development on the fringe of the city will generate even more stormwater for pipes and streams to cope with. Climate change will also bring higher intensity rainfall events, which will increase the frequency of nuisance flooding on roads and properties and the flooding of habitable dwellings.

In recent years we have taken a more naturalised

approach to managing stormwater. This is apparent in Norton Park, where a trial wetland has been established, as well as the nearby Edwards Pit Park, where wetlands have been developed to reduce pollution, illegal dumping, and damage to critical assets and habitats. The District Plan includes water-sensitive design principles, and is now required in the North East Industrial Zone and the Whakarongo Residential Area. Water-sensitive design principles will be applied to other parts of the city when the District Plan is reviewed or new growth areas are proposed. We will look for more opportunities to transform drainage corridors and urban waterways, to improve biodiversity, and more sustainably manage stormwater.

We are working with Horizons Regional Council to develop a stormwater management framework that identifies effective and sustainable stormwater solutions. We will continue to explore alternative approaches to ensure there is a more sustainable response to growth. These approaches will include water-sensitive design approaches to development and a wider use of tools such as water tanks, green roofs, swales, rain gardens and detention ponds.

We will:

- provide stormwater services to protect buildings from inundation from flooding in major events

See the **Stormwater chapter** of the **Water plan** for more detail.

6. He whakaako i te hapori, mātua rā ko ngā kaupuri whare, ki te whaihua o te whakapau moni kia hoahoaina ai he whare toitū, whare kākāriki hoki

Educate the community, and in particular, property owners, on the benefits of investing in sustainable building design and green buildings

7. He whakaatu i te hautūtanga me te mahi tika, mā te whakawhanake me te whakatinana i tētahi mahere taiao toitū mō te Kaunihera me ōna takunetanga, taiwhanga anō hoki

Demonstrate leadership and best practice by developing and implementing an environmental sustainability plan for the Council, Council-run events, and facilities

## Ngā ritenga mahi toitū

### Sustainable practices

There are opportunities for individuals and organisations to incorporate more sustainable practices into the way we live. Our homes and businesses can be warmer, drier, and more efficient. We can minimise the use of resources and reduce waste generation. We can choose more energy efficient transport and services. The Council can make these choices alongside the Palmerston North community.

In recent years we have made progress in encouraging more sustainable practices throughout the city. We support environmental education in schools and early childhood centres that are centred around living landscapes, zero waste, energy, water, and the ecological design of buildings. We have also done our own stocktake and used this information to improve Council practices. For example, we work with event organisers to ensure that events held on Council land or funded by Council are “zero waste”. We facilitated the provision of electric vehicle charging stations in the city centre. The District Plan promotes energy-efficient design for major new commercial buildings and multi-unit residential developments, and enables more renewable energy generation.

For the city to be successful and sustainable, Council must lead the way in sustainability. We also want to educate the community alongside our service delivery, to make sure people understand how to make more environmentally responsible decisions. We will develop a culture of sustainability within our organisation. We recognise the value that mātauranga Māori adds to sustainability efforts. We will improve our own practices and share the lessons we learn with the community.

We will:

- Foster sustainable practices and behaviours so that city residents and organisations become more sustainable

See the **Sustainable practices chapter** of the **Environmental sustainability plan** for more detail.



## Te mahitahi me Rangitāne o Manawatū

### Rangitāne o Manawatū partnership

Council will work in partnership with Rangitāne o Manawatū and:

- provide support to Rangitāne o Manawatū to achieve their own climate change aspirations
- work with Rangitāne o Manawatū to understand the impacts climate change may have on Māori
- support Rangitāne o Manawatū in the retention and expression of mātauranga Māori and Rangitānenuiarawa<sup>3</sup>
- identify and pursue shared environmental aspirations
- strengthen Māori community involvement in biodiversity projects
- acknowledge the River is a significant cultural feature in the rōhe of Rangitāne o Manawatū
- collaborate and partner with Rangitāne o Manawatū on activities along and within the River
- provide opportunities for Rangitāne o Manawatū to be involved in project delivery to achieve the best outcomes for the River
- support Rangitāne o Manawatū in the retention and expression of mātauranga Māori and Rangitānenuiarawa

- reflect mātauranga Māori and Rangitānenuiarawa in resource recovery
- collaborate with Rangitāne o Manawatū on the wastewater Best Practicable Option review [note – this will expand to include other iwi as the selection of the preferred option progresses]
- collaborate on urban waterway improvement projects
- reflect Rangitānenuiarawa in the city's approach to water management

These commitments will guide the implementation of all aspects of this strategy.

## Te ine i te angitutanga

### Measures of success

Council will monitor these measures of success and report on these through the City Dashboards:

- Citywide CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions
- Council CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions
- Citywide electricity consumption
- Native bird numbers
- Water consumption
- Water quality
- Waste sent to landfill
- Waste diverted from landfill

<sup>3</sup> Rāngitanenuiarawa is the Rangitāne expression of kaitiakitanga, or customary authority and guardianship, and affirms their customary leadership in ensuring the health and regeneration of their tribal rohe.

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Our north arrow draws directly from “North” in our city’s name. An upward arrow perfectly symbolises our ambition for a city that’s smarter, continually growing and evolving, innovating, collaborating and finding enlightened ways to work with nature.