



# GREEN CORRIDORS RANGE TO RIVER

## 10 YEAR PLAN 2018/2028 SUBMISSION

**TO: PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: GREEN CORRIDORS – RANGE TO RIVER  
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Green Corridors – Range to River thanks the Palmerston North City Council for its support for the Green Corridors project over the past 17 years. We also welcome the opportunity to submit on the proposed 10 Year Plan. In addition to the written material below, we would also like to attend the upcoming hearing to support our submission and to be available to answer any questions that the councillors may have.

### **In the 10 Year Plan (TYP), Green Corridors Supports:**

- The vision of the TYP, of *small city benefits, big city ambition*.
- The Eco-City Strategy, in particular *Priority 3- Regenerate Native Biodiversity*
- The Biodiversity Plan, in particular:
  - Utilising eco-sourced plants to preserve local genetic diversity.
  - Connecting the Turitea Stream with the city through an extensive green corridor network.
  - Planting of more native-friendly species within the city, to provide year-round food sources for native wildlife.
  - Reintroduction, where possible, of locally extinct species.
  - Enhancement of the mauri of urban streams.
  - Preservation of native aquatic life in a thriving state.
  - Further suppression of pests in the Turitea Reserve and adjacent forests, so as to allow those ecosystems to continue to recover.
  - Expansion of community predator control, so as to minimise the impact of introduced predators across the city.
  - The new ongoing action of 'Predator Free Palmerston North'.
  - The new ongoing action to review the District plan in order to identify and protect more habitats of local significance.
  - Expansion of the green corridors programme to plant the riparian margins of streams linking the Turitea Reserve with the city and river.

- Increasing street tree plantings, so as to give effect to the City Wide Vegetation Framework.
- The Three Waters Plan, in particular the following goals:
  - Water sensitive design to become mandatory in new industrial and residential growth areas.
  - All urban streams to be in full public ownership.
  - Biodiversity treatments to be undertaken on all urban waterways.
  - Urban waterways to become thriving ecosystems.
  - District Plan provisions to give council the ability to require mitigation to restrict impacts of stormwater run-off from new development.
  - District Plan controls to better manage the effects of urban development on stormwater services.
- Programme ID 1145 “Green Corridors Project – Continued Development”
- Programme ID 184 “Walkways and Shared Paths – Refurbishments and Replacements”
- Programme ID 94 “Purchase of Land to extend walkways network”
- Programme ID 1077 “Biodiversity Enhancement Through Native Planting” on Council Parks and Reserves
- Programme ID 1439 “Urban Eels Project Contribution”
- Programme ID 1080 “Biodiversity Increased Plant and Animal Pest Control”
- Programme ID 1450 “Predator Free Palmerston North”
- Programme ID 1453 “Freshwater Body Improvements”
- Programme ID 268 “Arapuke Forest Park/Kahuterawa Pest Control and Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement”
- Programme ID 835 “Ashhurst Domain – Biodiversity improvements as part of Manawatū Gorge Project”

### **How Green Corridors contributes to the components of the TYP:**

#### Vision

- Green Corridors contributes to the vision of “*small city benefits, big city ambitions*” by enhancing the biodiversity and amenity strengths of a provincial city. It aims to connect nature into the urban fabric of Palmerston North without being an unreasonable constraint to the development needs of the city. Green Corridors is a nationally recognised project that is similar to other successful biodiversity projects in comparable districts, such as:
  - Hamilton Halo (Hamilton City)
  - Cape to City (Hawkes Bay)
  - Wild for Taranaki (New Plymouth)
  - Greening Taupō (Taupō).
- Green Corridors, along with biodiversity programmes in general, has a large role to play in increasing the environmental sustainability of Palmerston North, especially because of the current lack of biodiversity values in and around the city. Every small gain made by Green

Corridors (and other groups and organisations) is proportionally a large improvement in biodiversity and also good value for money.

### Green Corridors Activities

The Green Corridors group seeks continued political and fiscal support for the Green Corridors initiative and its various planting projects around the City.

The proposed increase in funding in the TYP (programme 1145) will allow the group to continue the longer-term contract arrangements with nurseries for seed collection, germination, growing on and post planting care, as well as identifying, planning, and planting new green corridor areas within the City boundary between the Tararua Range and the Manawatū River.

### The Eco-City Strategy and Biodiversity Plan

The Eco-City Strategy and Biodiversity Plan identifies Green Corridors as an important contributor to planting within the city boundary. It also notes that additional planting and linking ecological areas through green corridors can enhance remaining habitats. The continued support and proposed increase in funding of Green Corridors in the TYP will help to ensure that these objectives are achieved.

Green Corridors requests that the Eco-City Strategy and Biodiversity Plan be amended to recognise that green corridors focus areas should be broader than the Turitea Stream. We consider that there is strategic benefit in also focusing future efforts on neighbouring areas, such as the Kahuterawa Valley, the Aokautere gullies, Moonshine Valley, and the land between Polson Hill and the Pahiatua Track. Limited work has already historically taken place in the likes of the Kahuterawa Valley and the Aokautere gullies. Specific reference to the additional locations would better clarify this, as well as provide Green Corridors with a stronger mandate to expand beyond the limited scope of the Turitea Stream. We also believe that this would readily align with the council's spatial plan, which identifies these locations as future biodiversity corridors. In our opinion, Green Corridors has the best capability and track record to deliver on enhancing biodiversity in the areas shown in the spatial plan.

### Purchase of Land to extend walkways network

Green Corridors supports this programme because it is often on land purchased for walkways adjacent to rivers and streams that Green Corridors focuses its planting and maintenance activities, e.g. the Turitea Stream. The programme offers multiple benefits of: walkway provision; stream quality enhancement through green corridors planting; and bird and animal habitat provision. We believe that providing access to nature helps citizens to better value our native biodiversity.

### Purchasing additional land for planting

Changes to the District Plan subdivision rules for rural land have had an unintended consequence, in that the new minimum lot size requirements of 20 ha make it unlikely that council will be able to acquire any additional esplanade strips next to the Turitea or Kahuterawa Streams. Green Corridors plantings tend to happen on esplanade reserves or strips that are acquired by Council as part of rural subdivision. Council may need to consider being more proactive by directly purchasing additional land next to waterways. Such a step would provide greater public access and enable planting to be completed along the full length of the Turitea and Kahuterawa Streams. Otherwise, council land for riparian planting will be quickly exhausted.

Acquisition of the gullies within Aokautere would also provide a logical extension of the successful work already undertaken at the Adderstone and Manga-ō-tāne Reserves. We understand council is in the process of planning for further development in Aokautere. We support council plans that

ensure that the remaining gullies are integrated into the Green Corridors network to benefit future generations and improve environmental outcomes.

### Kahuterawa Area Plans

Similar to the Turitea Stream, the Kahuterawa Stream is identified as a possible green corridor. Pest control and biodiversity enhancement in the Tararua Ranges will provide an important area for eco-sourcing seed and seedlings and also help to reduce the spread of noxious weeds down the stream corridor.

Further developing the Kahuterawa Valley as a recreation area should also help more people to appreciate nature and build support for further ecological restoration and enhancement throughout the city.

### Moonshine Valley

There are already two Reserves in the valley: Tutukiwi Reserve, which contains remnant bush, and Moonshine Reserve, which has been planted and nurtured by residents in the valley. In addition, various residents are planting natives on their properties. Many landowners in Moonshine Valley are also actively involved in a community run predator free programme. In the last 19 months active trapping has killed 233 rats, 3 weasels, 7 stoats, 54 hedgehogs and 388 possums. It would fit with the Green Corridors vision to promote these projects.

## **Introduction to Green Corridors**

The Green Corridors Group has been active in Palmerston North for 17 years. It is part of a wider initiative by city environmental groups to see a co-ordinated approach to environmental issues in Palmerston North and is working co-operatively with other groups, for instance through Environment Network Manawatū, to achieve that aim. Green Corridors is also a member of ENM's Biodiversity Cluster project – Manawatū River Source to Sea. Green Corridors sees value in being part of a much larger catchment scale vision project that links biodiversity and initiatives across council boundaries and through the larger Manawatū River catchment, to maximise the power and benefits of working together. Green Corridors embraces Agenda 21 initiatives for sustainable development at the local community level. It aims to integrate biodiversity and amenity values.

Green Corridors is a group of community representatives who are supported by key staff in two units of Palmerston North City Council, City Future and City Networks.

The group comprises:

Selwyn Yorke (Chairperson), Community representative  
Stephen Hamilton, Community representative  
Russell Poole, Community representative  
Rosemary Gear, Community representative  
Ant Gear, Community representative  
Lucy Ferguson, Horizons representative  
Sally Pearce, Environment Network Manawatū

Brian Way (Leisure Assets Officer, City Networks), Michael Duindam (Policy Planner, City Future), Adam Jarvis (Policy Analyst – Environmental Sustainability), Viv McGlynn (Ecologist) and Courtney Rudman and Eddie Welsh (Starter Plants Ltd) also work with the Group. Viv provides eco-sourcing and propagation services to the group. Courtney and Eddie provide horticultural advice and services to the Group.

Green Corridors' vision is to create a network of "green corridors" that support and enhance biodiversity and extend both the City's existing heritage planting and its public parks and green spaces.

## **Green Corridors Projects**

### *Turitea Stream Green Corridor*

The first major green corridor in the City follows the Turitea Stream from the Tararua Ranges down to the Manawatū River. Extensive planting has already occurred along the existing riparian strips. Green Corridors seeks funding for the on-going development of this green corridor, as well as for the development of other areas within the City boundary.

The council already owns or administers large tracts of land in the Turitea Valley over a natural corridor of about 8 kilometres in length. This land is not linked and as such has much less ecological and recreational value than it would have if there were continuous planting. Large parts of this corridor run through land owned by Massey University and the Crown Research Institutes.

Over the past four years, Green Corridors has worked with City Networks and City Enterprise and Horizons Regional Council to prioritise areas where fencing, weed spraying (e.g. gorse), willow removal and rubbish clearance needs to be done to create sites ready for planting, and to enable the continued care and maintenance of these areas.

### *Green Corridors Planting*

Since 2001, over 100,000 native eco-sourced plants have been planted as part of the Green Corridors project in the Turitea Stream Corridor and the Summerhill Reserves (Pari, Te Motu ō Poutoa, Manga-ō-tāne, Adderstone and Titoki).

The Green Corridors project was the winner of the 2017 Local Government New Zealand Excellence Award in environment impact. This award reaffirms the success we've been able to achieve with the Council over a sustained period of time.

## **Philosophies and Protocols**

Green Corridors' projects are of a long-term nature. In 2000/2001 the Green Corridors group developed, and now applies, a set of philosophies and protocols, as follows:

- Plantings will involve plant and seed collected from the "local area" (i.e. ecosourcing). For example, in relation to the Turitea Stream Green Corridor the "local area" constitutes the catchment of the Turitea Valley, Kahuterawa Valley, and Keebles Bush;
- Work will be done co-operatively with the local (affected) community;
- Emphasis will be given to green corridor projects that the community is willing and able to sustain long-term (50+ years).

In the Turitea Valley, this has meant the development of a long-term plan that presupposes a succession of plantings. "Pioneer" plants to provide cover for slower growing species and existing bush remnants will be extended first. Green Corridors is working with local nurseries and has sourced all seeds and plant material from the Turitea Valley, Tutukiwi Reserve (Moonshine Valley) and Kahuterawa areas.

## **Property Owner Involvement**

Any planting along a green corridor involves close liaison with each landowner to protect vistas that are valued by homeowners. Some landowners have offered to care for and maintain areas of

esplanade reserve that make up part of the green corridor adjacent to their properties (“Friends of the Corridor”). Green Corridors have also signed memoranda of understanding with private property owners adjacent to green corridors. Plants are given to these parties with the expectation that they will be planted and cared for by the property owners. This increases the size of green corridors over the long term without the need for land acquisition.

The Green Corridors group has held workshops with residents on issues such as the development of a concept plan for the Rock Farm Reserve. It also runs educational sessions on eco-sourcing and how to propagate and maintain plants.

### **Corporate Sector Partnerships**

Ricoh have been a valuable Green Corridors partner for the past 10 years. Ricoh have contributed staff time to planting days and made financial contributions that have allowed the green corridors to be extended further than they otherwise would have been. Ricoh have also donated seating for the public in the green corridors, made from Ricoh’s recycled printer cartridges.

Additionally FMG volunteered staff time for corporate planting days during the 2017 planting season. Manāki Whenua Landcare Research sponsored a volunteer planting day in 2017, which included financial contributions.

Fonterra, ANZ and Toyota are planning to hold volunteer planting days in winter 2018.

Volunteer support is also contributed by schools, YMCA and other community groups.

Changes in the structure of Green Corridors may allow for further sponsorship partners, which a council-only structure may not be able to readily access.

### **Funding**

An increased level of continued funding is needed now to enable the Green Corridors project to continue as a successful and viable biodiversity project.

Many similar projects, nationwide, face a hurdle of needing substantial investment around the 25-year mark to ensure that existing efforts are not compromised by weeds, herbivorous fauna (such as possums), and adverse weather (e.g., droughts) and to ensure succession of one generation of planting to the next.

There is an opportunity to leverage current council investment in green corridors, which is limited in scope to public land, to encourage the investment of private capital into purchasing additional land that might currently be in private ownership. Alternatively, private investment could be targeted into neighbouring private land to. Such an initiative would have the effect of expanding the scale of the overall project.

The community members of Green Corridors are currently investigating the formation of an Incorporated Society or Trust, in the belief that this initiative will help to secure a portion of the increased funding required. Formalising the structure will create opportunities for expanded community and corporate involvement and potential sponsorship. At the same time, the intention is to maintain the current close and highly productive partnership with PNCC.

Our objectives in use of the increased funding are as follows:

- To increase planting numbers to at least 10,000 per year.
- To expand the Green Corridors project to include plantings in areas not yet included in the programme.

- To maintain the Green Corridors commitment to take care of areas planted in trees once they are planted for their first 5-10 years of life in the ground. This is to give the trees the best opportunity to survive, take hold and eventually succeed into second and third generations. The number of trees in the ground in Green Corridors areas is increasing at an average rate of 8000 per year. This means an increasing amount of spraying and maintenance. Green Corridors has consistently had a high survival rate that averages over 80% and our goal would be maintain that rate in future years.
- Secure sources of support that might be more readily accessed if Green Corridors were to form a Trust or Incorporated Society. This includes corporate sponsorship, landowner investment, and cash and in-kind contributions from service organisations such as Rotary and Lions.



# GREEN CORRIDORS RANGE TO RIVER

## BACKGROUND

### What Is a Green Corridor?

- Essentially a green corridor is “a protected open space that is managed for conservation and/or recreation.”
- Such corridors often follow natural land or water features like ridges or rivers.
- They link natural reserves, parks, cultural and historic sites with each other and in some cases with populated areas.
- They not only protect environmentally sensitive lands and wildlife but also provide people with access to outdoor recreation and enjoyment close to home.

The value of green corridors is that long-term the environmental health of a city does not depend solely on its public parks. They provide richer, more diverse and more useful urban spaces and they bring ecological objectives to the fore in the management of open space. Development of green corridors is in fact a prime example of a local community Agenda 21 initiative. Development of such corridors has both local and global benefits.

### Green Corridors can comprise

- Waterway planting and development
- Paths and trails of considerable distance based on natural corridors and other rights of way
- Ecological corridors developed along rivers, streams, and valley floors that provide for wildlife migration. An example is flight corridors for native birds that extend food sources and therefore native bird populations
- Scenic and historic corridors that follow existing tracks, roads or waterways
- Integrated networks such as the Wellington Town Belt

Green Corridors is an inclusive concept that involves private as well as public land-owners. Private property can play a significant role in green corridor development.

### Green Corridors longer term aims include

- creating green linkages to all major areas of bush and open space within the city boundary
- creating native bird feeding corridors from the ranges down to the city's urban areas
- developing a broad green buffer zone around the outskirts of the city's urban development on the Tararua Range side of the Manawatu River
- contributing to plantings along the Tararua Range side of the Manawātū River banks
- educating our local community on issues of biodiversity