

Connect the Dots.



Regional Services Review

Help us create better public transport journeys so you can make connections across and beyond your region.



Regional Transport Services Review Engagement Report

November 2023

Author
Alastair Mayston

Acknowledgements to
Human Transit – Jarrett Walker
Conceptual Connect Regional Public Transport Network –
Anthonie Tonnon and Sam van der Weerden

Front Cover 'Connect the Dots'
Horizons Regional Council

ISBN:
Report No:

CONTACT 24 hr freephone 0508 800 80

Help@horizons.govt.nz

www.horizons.govt.nz

SERVICE CENTRES	Kairanga Cnr Rongotea and Kairanga-Bunnythorpe Roads Palmerston North	REGIONAL HOUSES	Palmerston North 11-15 Victoria Avenue	DEPOTS	Taihape 243 Wairanu Road Taihape
	Marton 19 Hammon Street		Whanganui 181 Guyton Street		Woodville 116 Vogel Street
	Taumarunui 34 Maata Street				

POSTAL ADDRESS Horizons Regional Council, Private Bag 11025, Manawatū Mail Centre,
Palmerston North 4442

F 06-952 2929

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INTRODUCTION

1 Purpose of this report

This Engagement Report details and summarises feedback received from the 'Connect the Dots' **Regional Services Review (RSR)**. It is the fifth in the following series of six papers:

1. Regional and Inter-regional Public Transport Services Review Scope (March 2023)
2. Regional and Inter-regional Services Review Desktop Analysis (June 2023)
3. Communications Plan for Regional Services Review (August 2023)
4. Communications Review for Regional Services Review (October 2023)
- 5. Regional Services Review Engagement Report (November 2023)**
6. Regional Services Review Outcome Report (December 2023)

1.1 Review background

The RSR is identified as an action in the **Regional Public Transport Plan 2022-2032 (RPTP)**. It arises from consultation on the RPTP and the submissions on it. It is to attend to public transport levels across the region which, currently, are poor for many communities and fail to align with the Horizons Regional Council vision for public transport as "*an attractive, integrated, and convenient public transport system that connects us, enhances our wellbeing and environment, and becomes the preferred mode of transport in and between urban areas*".

1.1.1 Objectives

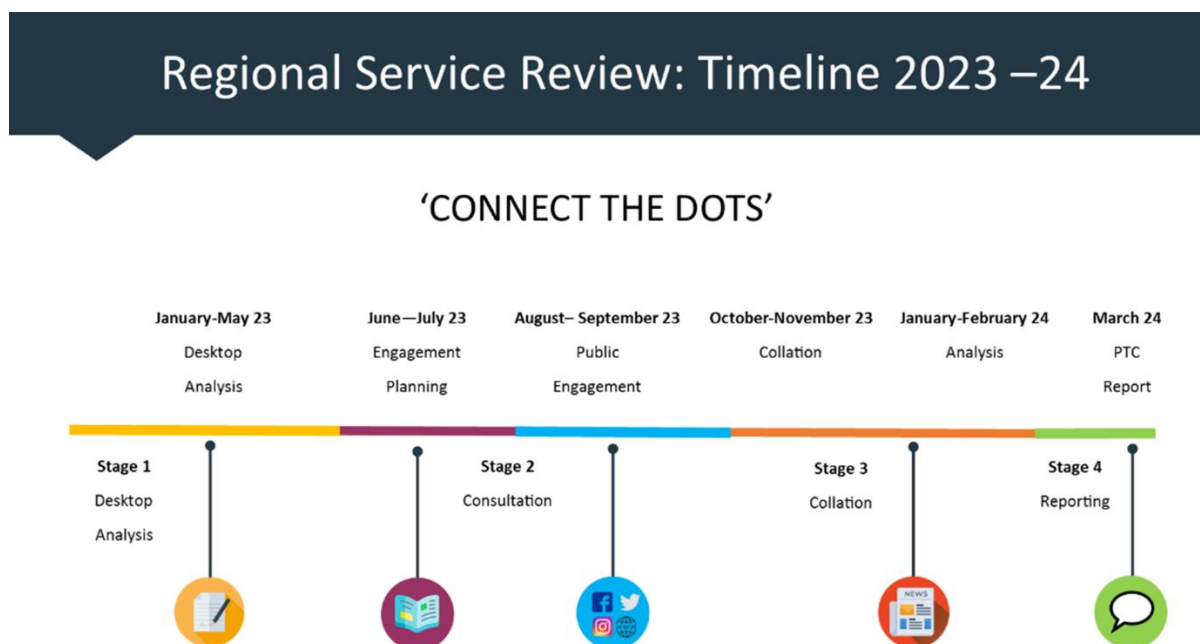
The objectives for RSR follow, they are aligned to RPTP objectives:

- a) Identify opportunities for increased public transport connections (*RPTP Objective 4: Accessible and equitable*);
- b) Encourage mode shift away from private vehicles (*RPTP Objective 1: Connected*); and
- c) Reduce carbon emissions from private vehicles (*RPTP Objective 3: Reduce emissions*).

ENGAGEMENT

2 Engagement Approach

We engaged the public in stage two of the review (see Timeline below). This was over the period 1 August to 11 September 2023. Promotion for the engagement was targeted to the districts that make up the Horizons region. We also engaged interested stakeholders from neighbouring regions to provide input on existing and potential inter-regional connections.



2.1 Communication Firsts

We used different ways to reach the public and attract them to participate, compared to previous Horizons Regional Council engagements. There are a number of firsts.

This review is the first engagement undertaken with the new Connect – Horizons Regional Transport brand.

It occurred at the time we launched new social media channels. Furthermore, it was the first engagement with a video-first and social-first focus.

We created and used a range of collateral items and methods to facilitate engagement with communities. The following pictorial shows the types of collateral, methods and forms of feedback in the review.

Regional Service Review: 'CONNECT THE DOTS'

COLLATERAL – Call to action

video, poster, banner, card, pamphlet, form, social tiles, website, media release, FAQ



METHODS – Community engagement

networks, social pinpoint, social media, partners, events, groups, on-site



FEEDBACK – Having a say

online, internet, paper form, face to face, phone



2.1.1 Engagement Success

We received more than 900 responses, making this the biggest response yet to a transport review.

Social media responses accounted for more than three quarters of the responses received, while written physical forms accounted for one in five returns. A breakdown of all responses to the review according to media type is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Response by media type

Media Type	Percentage of responses
Social Pinpoint	66%
Social Pin Map	11%
Physical Forms	20%
Transport Portal	3%

Having a digital-focused campaign using a mobile-friendly tool, Social Pinpoint, meant people across and beyond the region were easily able to give their opinions. This is shown in the geographical spread of responses received, with some coming from as far as Taranaki, Wellington and Auckland.

We achieved 8,022 views and 7,348 visits to the Social Pinpoint site with a 7.88% conversion rate (visit to contribution). Peak engagement day was on 8 September 2023 (454 views, 418 visits, 57 contributions) with an 11.72% conversion rate (visit to contribution). Most people arrived to Social Pinpoint site via social media (73.27%).

People with poor or no access to mobile tools had the option to submit via a postal paid paper version of the survey. We distributed copies of these throughout the region to service centres, public spaces and amenities, regional public transport services, partner territorial authorities and also at selected public events.

This campaign succeeded in getting feedback from across the region. Figure 1 later in this report, details the percentage of responses received from residents of the different districts.

Having multiple ways to provide feedback got a diverse range of respondents; both in terms of age and location.

Age groups from 21 years through to 65+ years provided the vast bulk of responses. The largest audience for video views on Facebook was 65+ years, while a younger audience was drawn via Instagram. Figure 2 details the percentage of responses from each of the age groups.

This review came in under budget, mainly due to the communications being focused on video produced in-house which was pushed via the new Connect social channels. This ensured good coverage for a regional campaign. We were able to tailor the approach and message to each district to encourage participation, and videos were targeted where they needed to be seen.

The campaign enabled Horizons Regional Transport to grow the newly launched Connect social media channels, gaining 351 Facebook followers and 52 Instagram followers during the time of the campaign.

Summarising campaign performance against the objectives as outlined in the communications plan:

- Gather valuable information from our community about how they want public transport to run between villages, towns, cities and regions. *Achieved*
- Stay within budget. *Achieved*
- Provide easy and accessible ways for people to share feedback, regardless of location or means. *Achieved*
- Enable the transport team to create a decision-making matrix for future public transport investigations. *In planning*
- Promote the benefits of public transport. *Achieved*
- Promote current services (e.g. commuter services, Bee Card, Transit app). *Partly Achieved*

2.1.2 Limitations of survey

Respondents are largely self-selecting for the survey in the RSR engagement. Those who voluntarily responded may have done so because they already use a service or wish to use a service in the future and/or have an interest in public transport.

To balance this staff and elected members visited public spaces and engaged with people who may not normally have provided feedback.

This report takes into consideration previous feedback provided to council from the public which also compensates for the above mentioned limitations.

FEEDBACK

3 Feedback analysis

This section provides a general overview of data collected from the survey.

Results are firstly presented as a region-wide view while, later in this report, district feedback is shown separately to convey district views and a sense of district-centric needs.

To assist with interpreting regional and district views the same colour-coding is used to allow visual comparisons more easily of the data across the following sections.

It is helpful to separate district preferences in relation to the community's willingness for change and identifying individual district trends.

3.1 Region-wide feedback

Who provided feedback? We received views from people ranging in ages and locations.

3.1.1 Quantitative

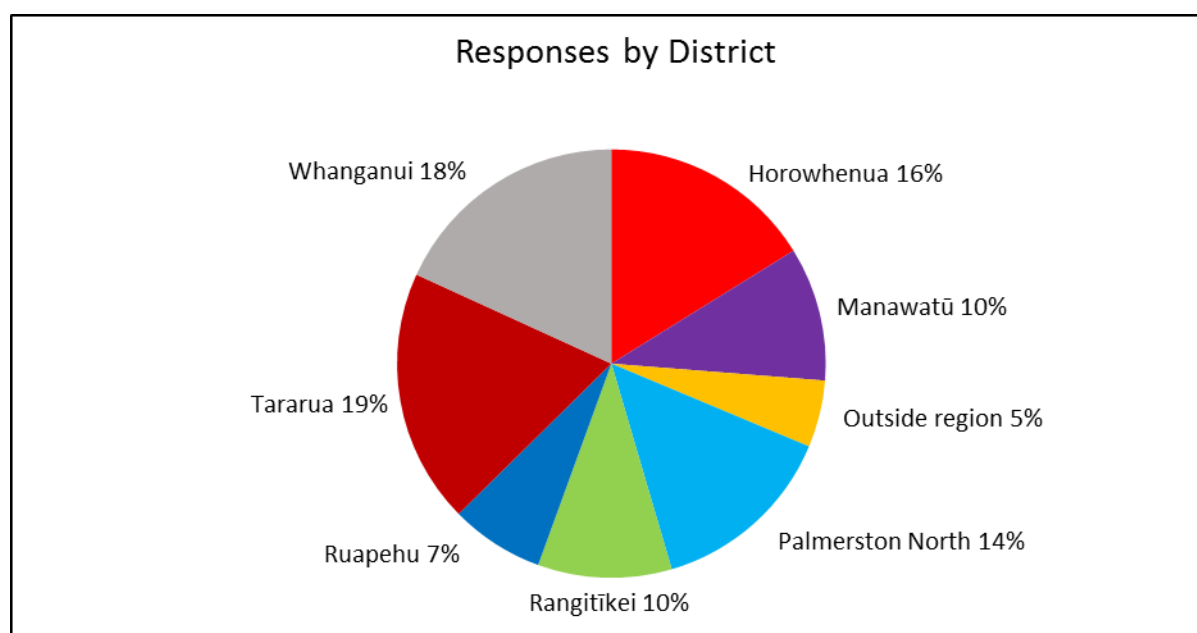
The survey asked respondents to identify the district they live in and the nearest town, city or village. Table 2 below details the locations of on-line and written survey responses only (773). Responses received by other methods such as the transport portal and map pins on behalf of organisations and individuals are not included in the table below.

Table 2 Nearest town/city or village to number of survey respondents

Ashhurst (4)	Auckland (3)	Awahuri (1)	Bulls (4)
Bunnythorpe (1)	Dannevirke (38)	Eketāhuna (12)	Feilding (32)
Foxton (15)	Foxton Beach (9)	Halcombe (1)	Hāwera (8)
Himatangi Beach (5)	Hunterville (7)	Kakahi (1)	Kerepehi (1)
Kimbolton (2)	Levin (62)	Linton (1)	Lower Hutt (3)
Makuri (2)	Manakau (5)	Mangamahu (1)	Mangamaire (2)
Manunui (2)	Marton (40)	Mataroa (1)	National Park (7)
New Plymouth (3)	Newtown (1)	Normanby (1)	Norsewood (3)
Ohakune (13)	Ōhau (1)	Ōhura (2)	Ormondville (1)
Ōtaki (2)	Ōwhango (4)	Paekākāriki (1)	Pahiatua (57)
Palmerston Nth (121)	Pātea (3)	Pipiriki (1)	Pohangina (1)
Pungarehu (1)	Raetihi (14)	Rangataua (2)	Rangiwahia (1)
Rongotea (6)	Shannon (16)	Sanson (3)	Taihape (26)
Tangimoana (1)	Taumarunui (7)	Taupō (1)	Tiakitahuna (1)
Tokomaru (2)	Turakina (2)	Waikawa Beach (1)	Waiouru (7)
Waitārere (2)	Waitārere Beach (11)	Waverley (2)	Wellington (10)
Whanganui (138)	Woodville (34)		

The graph below (Figure 1) shows responses were spread across all local districts and beyond.

Figure 1 District location of survey respondents



Tararua District resident responses were many and vocal; indicating a high level of engagement from this district considering the size of population. For a district that has 7% of the region's population Tararua provided 19% of survey responses. Rangitikei District with 10% of responses was another area providing proportionally more responses to this survey than their portion of the region's population of 6%.

Table 3 Percentage of district responses compared to proportion of regional population

District	% of total survey responses	% of total regional population*
Tararua	19%	7%
Whanganui	18%	18%
Horowhenua	16%	14%
Palmerston North	14%	35%
Manawatū	10%	13%
Rangitikei	10%	6%
Ruapehu	7%	5%
Outside of Horizons region	5%	n/a

*Based on 2023 estimated population figures

Five age categories were used in the survey questions for responders to select. Table 4 shows the age profile of survey respondents. Around half (47%) of respondents were within the 36-64 year age group, with a further thirty percent 65 years and over. One in five respondents were aged 21-35 years.

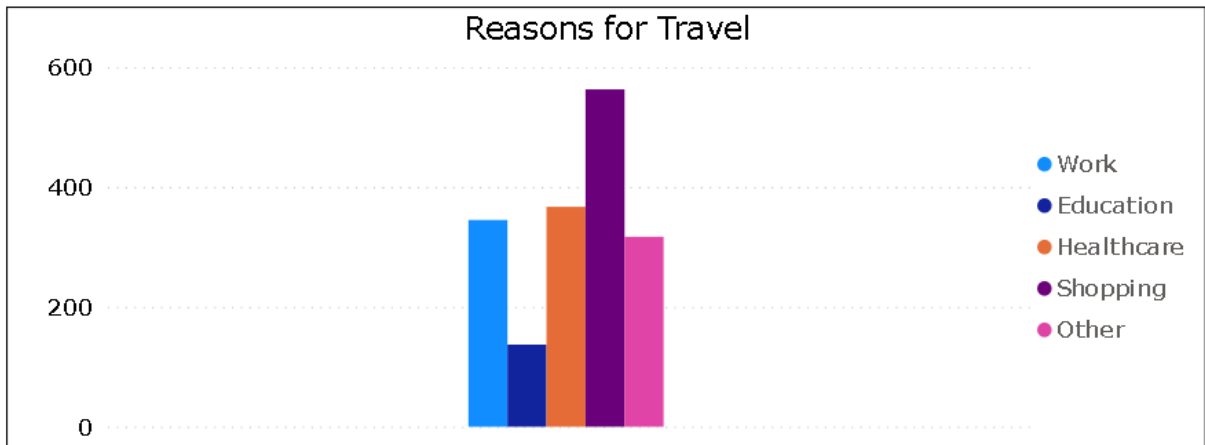
Table 4 Age group of respondents providing feedback

Age group in years	0-15	16-20	21-35	36-64	65+
% of total survey responses	0.9%	2.6%	19.8%	47.1%	29.6%

The survey asked respondents to name the location/s they regularly travel to and categorise the reason for the travel. Categories listed to select from were work, education, healthcare, shopping and other. Multiple categories could be selected.

By far the highest number of responses were for shopping type activities; followed by healthcare, work and other with similar scores. Travel for education purposes was identified the least. Reasons given for choosing 'other' were mainly social, visiting friends and relatives; and reasons such as volunteering, entertainment, sport and well-being.

Figure 2 Reasons for travel provided by respondents

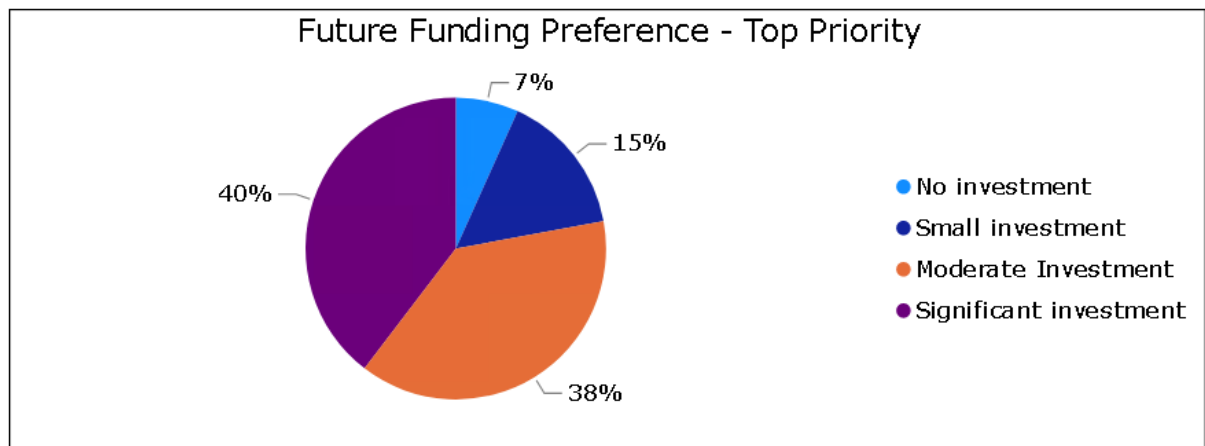


To gauge feedback on responders desire and willingness for the level of changes to new services and the funding of these; a question in the survey asked for prioritisation on the level of future funding and change sought.

Information explaining how public transport is funded and noting changes come at a cost was provided. Four options were provided to select from: 1) No extra spending – i.e. no new services. 2) Small increase in spending – i.e. tweaks to services, 3) Moderate increase to spending – i.e. more services and increased coverage, and 4) Significant investment – i.e. significantly more services and coverage.

When analysing responses, three out of four people (78%) were in support of either moderate or significant investment for new regional public services. Only a very small portion, less than one in ten (7%) of people were in favour of no investment and no new services.

Figure 3 Funding preference for new services and level of changes to services



A section of the survey asked responders to prioritise the following three values - coverage, demand and population; when making decisions on changes to public transport services.

The terms used relate to the following public transport concepts:

Coverage: Apportions service regardless of density (i.e. all receive same level of service)

Population: Apportions service proportional to density (i.e. linked to population size)

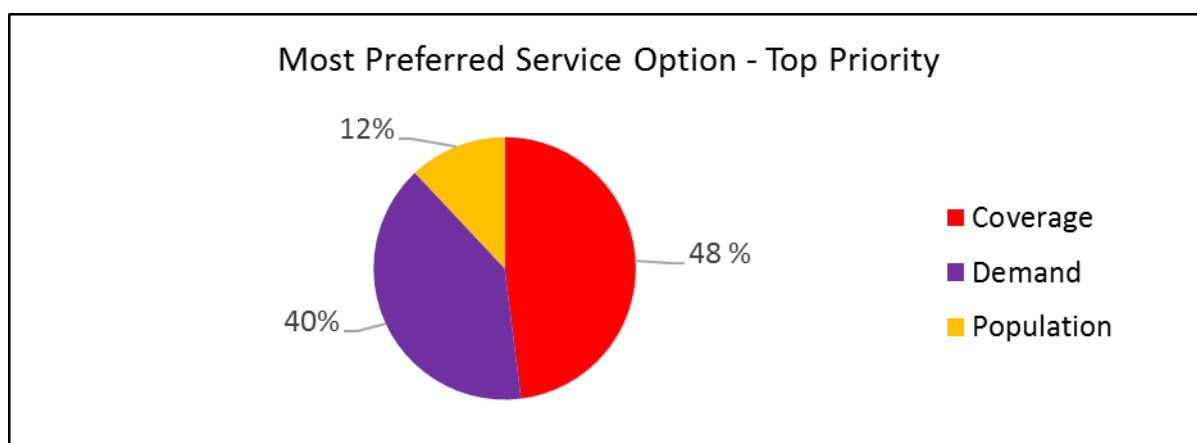
Demand: Apportions service in response to observed patterns (i.e. linked to ridership)

The feedback sought for this question in the survey infers a level of transport knowledge regarding the different models listed above.

It can be argued this brings in varying levels of interpretation and understanding by responders to the concepts.

In summary the priority response was shared largely between coverage and demand. A service model proportional to population size was least preferred as a decision making reason for new services.

Figure 4 Service option preference for new services



3.1.2 Qualitative

In addition to survey numeric feedback, there was opportunity for commentary and opinions to be shared. These were received in various forms through emails, on-line, letters and contained in surveys. This feedback provides further support and depth to the quantitative data.

Much of the qualitative feedback related specifically to a district and is recorded in the relevant district section of this report. General and regional submissions are captured in this section.

In summary, regional commentary was strongly supportive of adding public transport services; often advocating the benefits of public transport. While this review has no scope to look at rail networks, many responders took the opportunity to advocate for better passenger rail services. This review will only consider how services connect to existing and planned rail services i.e. Capital Connection.

UCOL Te Pūkenga (UCOL)

UCOL has four main campus in Palmerston North, Whanganui, Masterton and Levin with smaller satellites in Taihape and Taumarunui. Ākonga and kaimahi (workers) travel all over the region to reach these sites, ākonga also travel from Kāpiti and Wellington on a daily or regular basis. UCOL contributes financially for the commuting services from Whanganui and Feilding to Palmerston North and also pays for free services for ākonga and kaimahi on urban Whanganui and Palmerston North services.

UCOL provided views on public transport issues and routes in the Horizons area. Here is their feedback.

It was stated ākonga (students) living outside Whanganui and Palmerston North lack viable public transport to get them to campus.

Historically ākonga transport issues have been a lack of access to reliable private transport and/or public transport. Recent times have seen an increase, in the number living outside of urban areas and those unable to afford private transport due to rising costs.

Public transport on offer has been unable to fulfil the resulting need. This highlights the inaccessibility and inequity of access to education around the region due to transport options. Lack of viable public transport between Palmerston North and smaller communities' means ākonga have had to pull out of studies, have missed classes or not been able to start in the first place.

Current services

While current services and routes may be working for some ākonga, it is known that for some it is not working. This is due to the lack of frequency of services. As an example Marton to Palmerston North leaves at 7am and returns at 6pm. This is unsuitable for ākonga with family commitments and trying to study during school hours. These timings also make it difficult to hold down part-time work.

This year ākonga have been impacted trying to use the following routes connecting Palmerston North to Ōtaki/ Shannon/ Foxton Beach/ Levin/ Dannevirke/ Taihape/ Marton/ Whanganui/ Eketāhuna/ Masterton and connecting Levin to Shannon/ Ōtaki and Whanganui to Hāwera.

Examples of impacts include:

- Incurring debt for courses not completed and petrol costs.
- Lower grades due to not being on-site, or having to leave early or arrive late to fit with a bus timetable.

UCOL's desired outcome would be smaller more regular services around the region connecting into urban areas for ākonga and kaimahi.

Feedback was provided from the **Ministry of Social Development (MSD)**. Here is their feedback.

MSD provides support and services to whānau throughout the country; finding employment, providing income and housing support to all New Zealanders including students and superannuitants.

The Central Region has front-facing offices within the Horizons Region in Feilding, Foxton, Levin, Palmerston North and Dannevirke. While the Taranaki/Whanganui/King Country Region has offices in Whanganui, Marton, Taihape and Ohakune. This submission is from the Central Region only.

MSD staff provided feedback on transport from their personal view, and from the perspective of supporting their clients. Those working with whānau seeking employment or training, shared issues around transport that affected clients meeting their obligations or job-related goals. There were also challenges for clients to attend medical appointments.

As there were many references to the lack of understanding of timetables and routes, we would like to see more promotion and marketing of timetables/routes, and the mobile app.

Ministry staff feedback is recorded later in this report in the district sections they relate to.

A conceptual network plan was tabled by a **Passenger Transport Committee (PTC)** member during the 'Connect the Dots' review as an example of a regional network overview. This plan was mentioned and endorsed by another submitter.

A copy of a conceptual network frequency plan presented by a Passenger Transport Committee member is shown on the next page.

Figure 5 Conceptual network and frequency plan presented by member to PTC

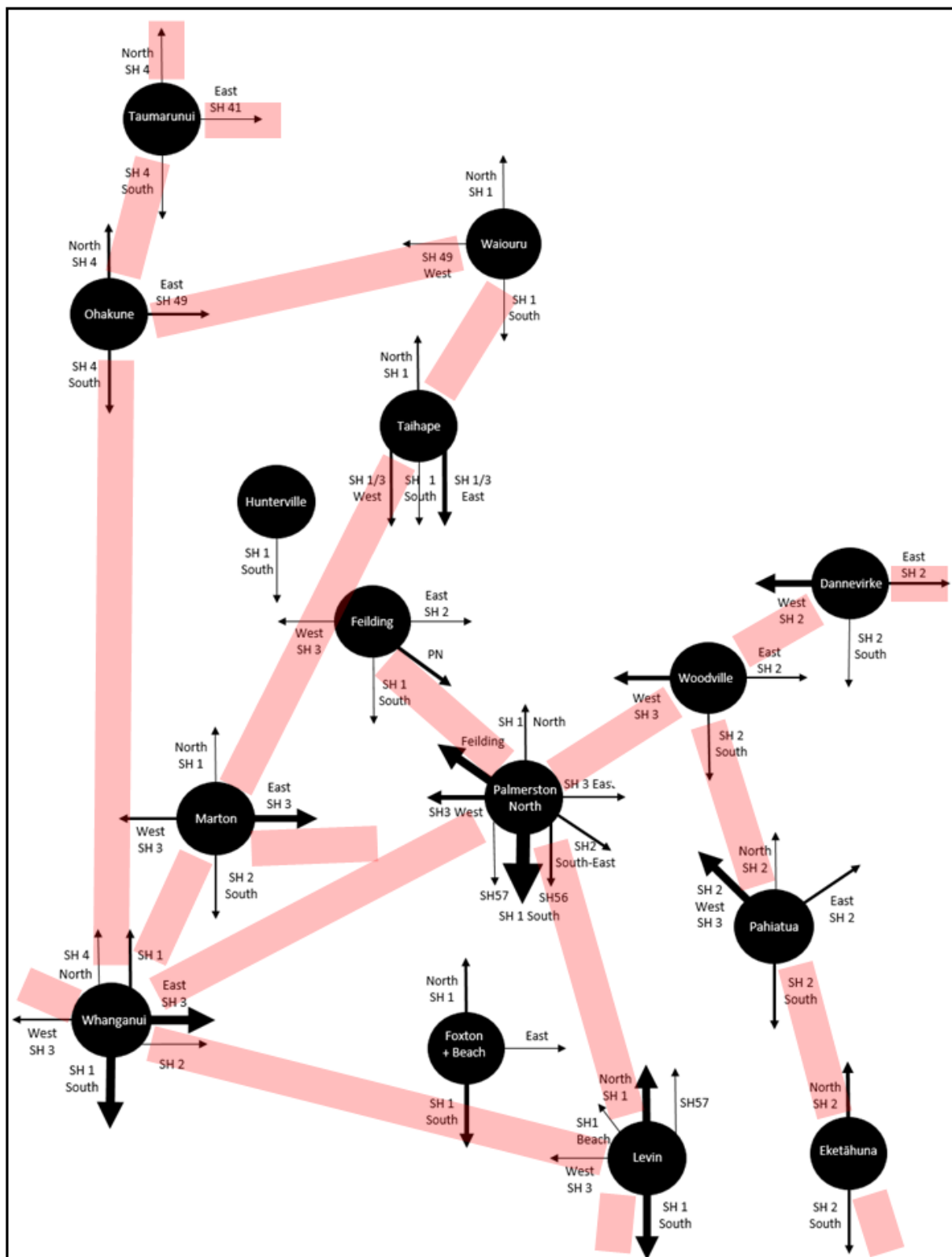


3.1.3 Further Quantitative

The diagram following (Figure 6) uses the travel destination response data from the survey and illustrates regular travel directions and needs of survey responses. The width of the arrows is proportional to the popularity of respondents' selections.

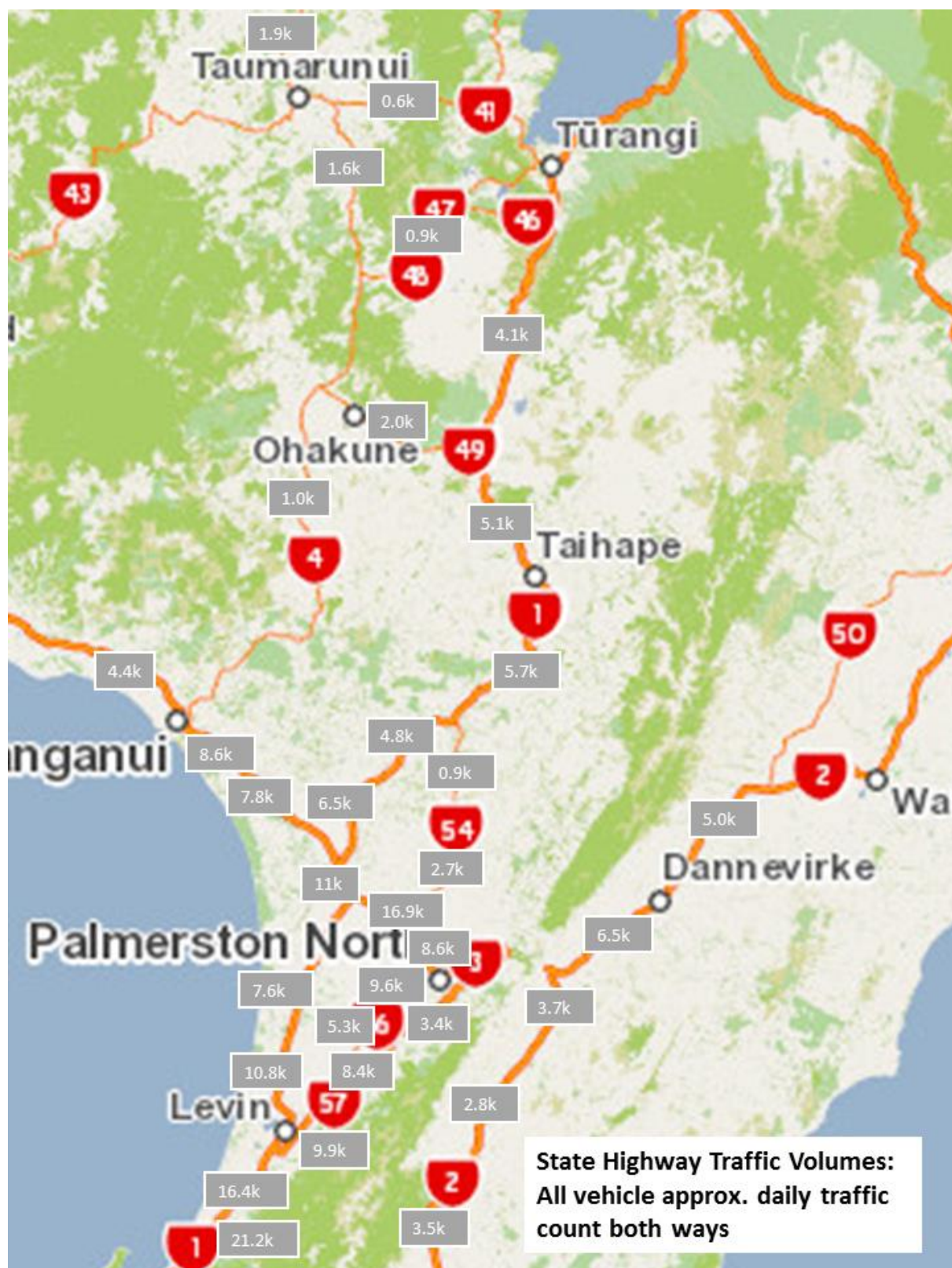
In visual terms it shows clear corridors of travel needs and helps to inform decisions on ridership and coverage.

Figure 6 Travel pattern preferences from the Connect the Dots review data



The following state highway traffic monitoring information is taken from the NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi website and shows the annual average daily traffic on the region's highways. This data has relevance to consider alongside feedback from the review. Current travel patterns on state highways across the region is shown in the following diagram chart (Figure 7).

Figure 7 State highway annual average daily traffic counts (AADT) across the region



Major road transport infrastructure projects are scheduled for parts of the region which will likely impact on future travel patterns and improve key transport corridors north to south and east to west. These projects include **Otaki to North of Levin (O2NL)** and **Te Ahu a Turanga – Manawātū (Manawātū-Tararua Highway)**.

3.2 Horowhenua feedback

3.2.1 Quantitative

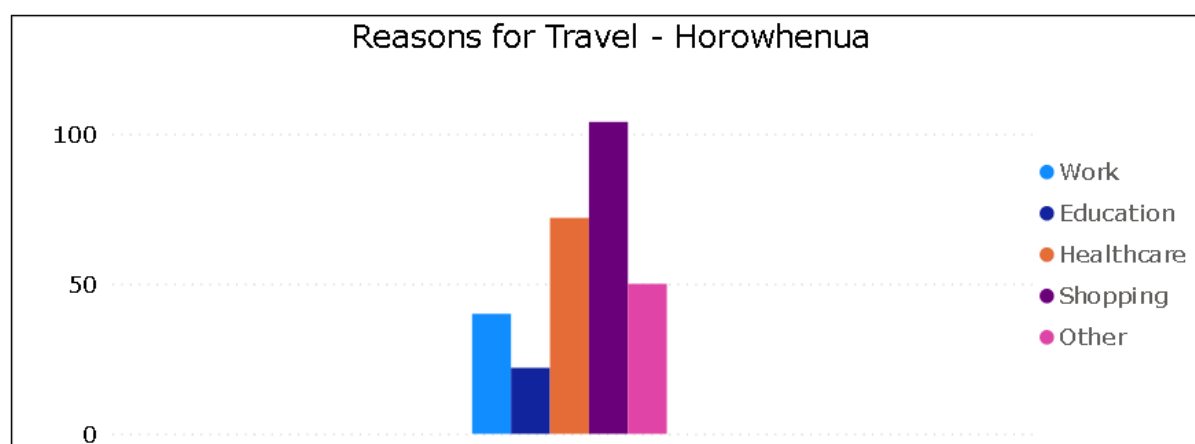
Around half of responders (49%) were 65 years and over, while a further 34% were aged 36 to 64 years. The large number of elderly respondents reflects an aging population in Horowhenua. Table 5 below shows Horowhenua respondent ages within the five age groups.

Table 5 Age group of respondents providing feedback - Horowhenua

Age group in years	0-15	16-20	21-35	36-64	65+
% of total survey responses	0.8%	4.0%	11.1%	34.9%	49.2%

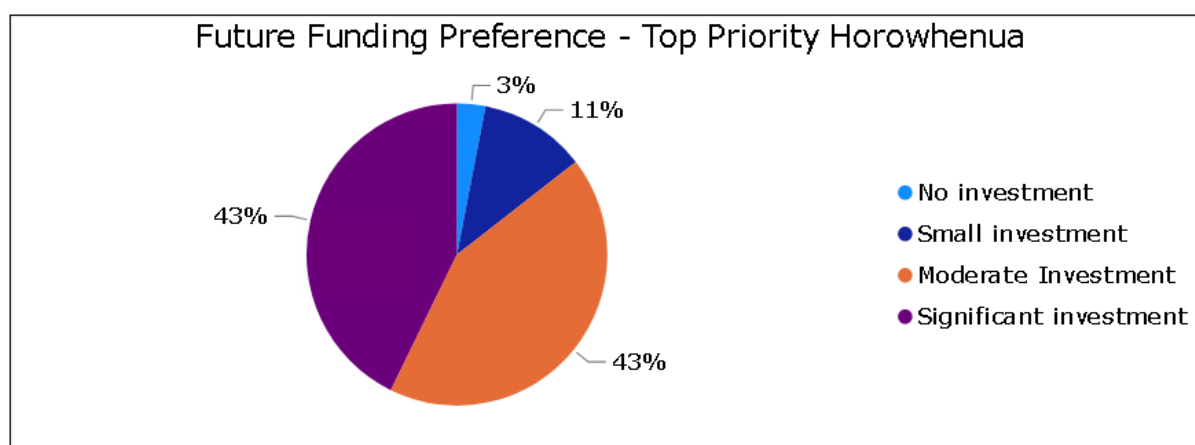
Shopping and healthcare were selected as the two main reasons for travel across and beyond the district. This may correlate to the ages of responders from the graph above. In terms of the 'Other' category, many referred to social and well-being benefits as a reason for needing to travel.

Figure 8 Reasons for travel provided by Horowhenua respondents



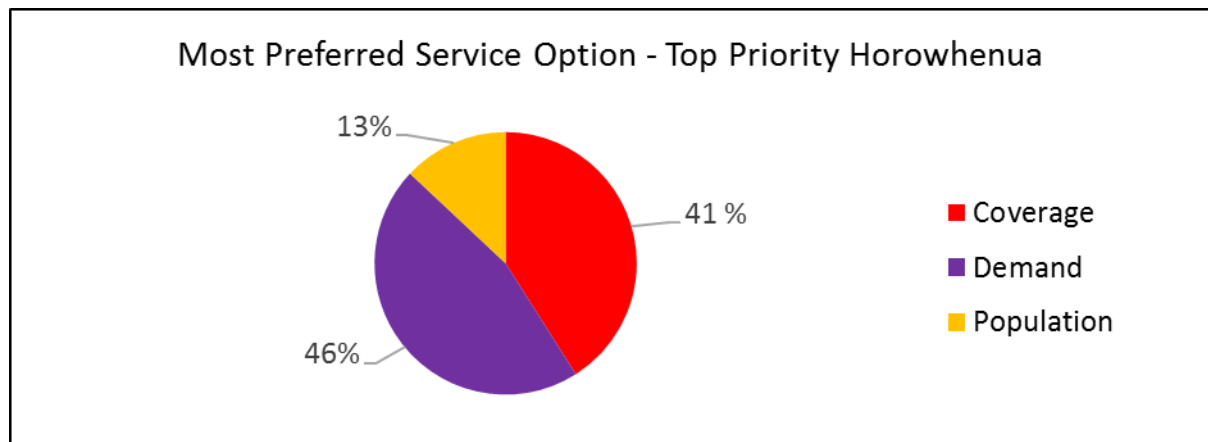
The survey asked responders for their preference on future funding levels. The graph below (Figure 9) shows strong support for increased funding with 86% in favour of moderate or significant levels of new funding for more services. Only 3% wanted no extra funding and no new services.

Figure 9 Funding preference for new services - Horowhenua



Respondents in Horowhenua indicated a shared favourability for providing services based on demand and coverage rather than on population size. When compared to all survey responses Horowhenua respondents showed a higher bias to demand over coverage.

Figure 10 Service option preference for new services - Horowhenua



As displayed by the word cloud below (Figure 11), Palmerston North is a popular destination for travel. The word cloud shows clear direction of travel to Palmerston North and south towards Wellington. It also shows a regular travel pattern from the outlying satellite populations of Horowhenua to the main centre of Levin.

Figure 11 Regular travel destinations of Horowhenua respondents



When taking a closer look at responses from Levin residents only, there are two strong destinations south of Levin on state highway 1 and north to Palmerston North (Figure 12).

Figure 12 Regular travel destinations of Levin residents



Horowhenua village respondents regularly travel into Levin and additionally have a need to travel further afield to Palmerston North and destinations south of Levin (Figure 13).

Figure 13 Regular travel destinations of Horowhenua village residents



Travel destinations of Wellington, Palmerston North and Levin featured in responses from the beach communities of Horowhenua (Figure 14).

Figure 14 Regular travel destinations of Foxton-Beach-Waitārere-Beach residents



Residents living in communities along state highway 57 between Levin and Palmerston North show support for travel connections to Levin, Wellington and Palmerston North (Figure 15).

Figure 15 Regular travel destinations of Shannon/Tokomaru residents



People living in communities south of Levin wanted access to Levin and Ōtaki as well as further south to the Kāpiti and Wellington regions, and north to Palmerston North.

Figure 16 Regular travel destinations residents south of Levin



3.2.2 Qualitative

Horowhenua District Council (HDC) supports measures intended to give residents greater access to public transport and a variety of public transport options. HDC noted the lack of current public transport services.

“Whilst the current services are appreciated they do not provide our residents with sufficient options and opportunities to access workplaces, healthcare, shopping and social opportunities. The current options are not broad or frequent enough to assist us in lowering our District’s dependence on private vehicles for transport.”

Public transport has been identified by HDC as a barrier to many activities and an issue requiring better transport links between districts. Feedback highlighted HDC’s intent to work with Horizons and neighbouring councils to plan future routes.

The following key drivers were provided by HDC to consider when planning transport connections to future proof and serve a growing district.

- Experiencing high population growth
- Completion of major roading connection infrastructure in next few years
- Iwi participation/land plan changes for the area
- Jobs opportunities
- Anticipated growth in both residential and industrial activities/ planning for an increase in people both living and working in the district
- Lowering road trauma and lowering carbon emissions
- Specific groups of people with high needs such as recent migrant refugee and the elderly
- Connections of public transport to rail services

Feedback was also received from neighbouring councils to the south of Horowhenua. All were in support of increasing transport connections south and details of their feedback is contained in section 3.9.2

MSD staff in Levin and Foxton sites had this to say:

Timing and location of bus routes

- Work opportunities are only limited to those between the hours of 8am and 5pm.
- Clients in Foxton have no regular bus service to Levin or Palmerston North. This has caused issues with securing work and attending health appointments. Options available in the weekend would also open work opportunities.

- Waitārere Beach has no public transport options to Levin. A mini-bus or shuttle was suggested.
- Lack of public transport options for school-age children in the district has hindered parents obtaining work as they need to transport their children to school.
- Many businesses on the Main Road of Levin aren't serviced by a bus, so people are put off walking along the state highway to get to work.
- Shannon clients have a need for better public transport options for commuting to work and appointments.
- With only one bus to Palmerston North people have to spend the whole day in the city if attending appointments, interviews and study.

Train service

- A desire for a more frequent commuter train that went goes to Horowhenua from Wellington.

Complexity

- More promotion or awareness of what transport options are available.

Comments from Horowhenua District residents included:

Current services:

Some pointed to a lack of weekend services and how the current services in the district are 'piece meal'. Others cited the difficulty travelling to Levin from surrounding towns with a lack of options during the week. Mention was made of no bus stops in Ōhau and no safe cycling or walking alternatives.

Supportive comments were made concerning the Levin to Shannon to Palmerston North Wednesday service and wanting the current service retained.

Feedback was complimentary about the Day Out in Town (DOIT) service and driver, and also the important support the library plays in helping with booking bus services. One responder noted the timing of current service DOIT was restrictive as it only allowed a limited time (2.5 hours) before a return journey must be made.

Comment was made there are not many services available for gold card holders as services sit outside the time period of eligibility.

Factors to consider:

One piece of feedback referred to making provision for the future need of workers and addressing car dependency. Other comments noted shopping, retirement villages, locations of large employers and also health connections as factors to consider particularly with a lack of medical services in Levin and having to go further afield. Palmerston North is the closest hospital.

Consideration was also raised around the key services in Levin for the beach communities. Mention was made of the recreational attractions of beach communities.

Accessing nearby walking and cycling tracks around Horowhenua was also raised as an opportunity for public transport services.

Travel options from Shannon, Foxton and Levin to study at UCOL in Palmerston North was mentioned as being important.

Identified challenges:

Comments were made on behalf of seniors and non-drivers that it is isolating living in Levin, with a lack of transport options.

Mention was made of choices people are making because of cheaper housing in outlying areas, however this comes with a lack of transport options.

Foxton is not well served by public transport even though it is on SH1. Maybe a feeder service could be used for more connections – Tuesday and Thursday for the Waikanae service. A possible link to connect Shannon and Foxton. As Foxton Beach grows some thoughts need to be directed to this area.

Connection to rail:

The Levin to Waikanae service was lauded. Greater frequency is requested by many for this service to access Wellington region via rail. Linking services to rail connections was a common theme and also increasing services between Waikanae – Levin and Palmerston North.

Positive comments were made about proposed Capital Connection upgrade and how this may make a difference for some. While outside this review a response was received raising rail suggestions to utilise the rail track for more than mostly freight.

Comment was made on connecting to Shannon rail station (Capital Connection) from neighbouring towns such as Foxton, Tokomaru and Opiki.

Funding considerations:

One responder noted the need for transport between Horowhenua towns but expressed concern if a rate rise would be needed to fund it.

Suggested improvements:

There were multiple references to a lack of services from Horowhenua beach communities to Levin. Requests for connections from Waitāre, Waikawa and Foxton beach communities to Levin to access services and for mental wellness were made. While sitting outside Horowhenua district Himatangi Beach was also raised as a community in need of connections.

Solutions put forward to address transport gaps included providing feeder services, shuttles, on demand or hail and ride services. One idea put forward was to have seasonal type services to beach areas where they operate in summer or holiday periods. The idea of cross regional ticketing systems was also raised as solution to a current problems when travelling between regions.

Linking Levin to Foxton and Palmerston North with a request for multiple services in a day were made.

A request to consider increasing the bus between Waikanae-Levin to Monday-Friday. Also can the bus go from Waikanae-Otaki-Levin-Foxton-Shannon to Palmy and return Monday to Friday?

An earlier bus service from Levin to Waikanae or Paraparaumu train station was suggested to make commuting to Kāpiti in the morning more feasible as the Capital Connection doesn't arrive in Paraparaumu until about 07:40 AM which makes it difficult for workplaces that begin around 08:00 AM or earlier.

Improvements to safely navigate crossing SH1 from the station to the shops was identified as necessary by one submitter.

3.2.3 Additional information

Horowhenua Transport Services Governance Group meets regularly and is undertaking investigations and planning for services within and around Levin.

3.3 Manawatū feedback

3.3.1 Quantitative

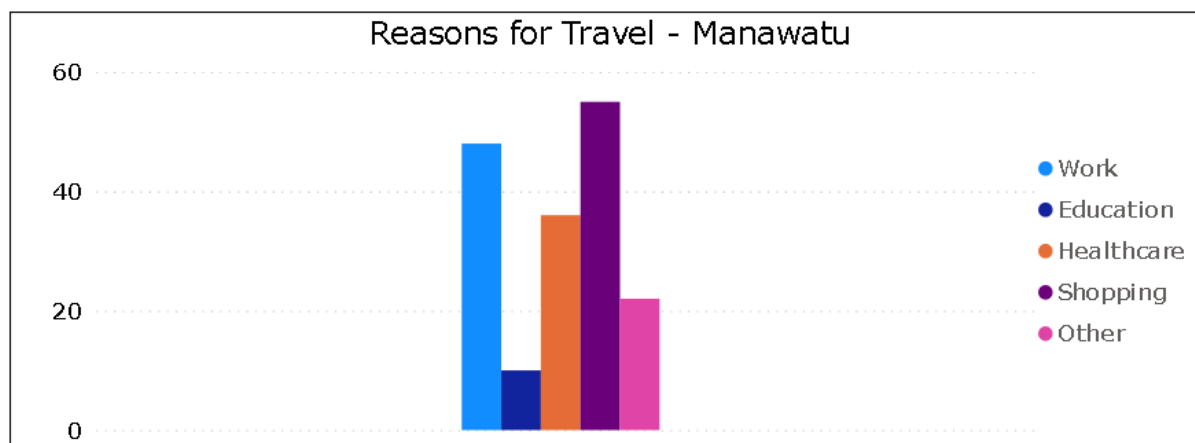
Over half of respondents in Manawatū fit within the 36-64 year age group and around a quarter were 65 years and older (see Table 6). Manawatū Youth Council provided a youth view within the local district feedback.

Table 6 Age group of respondents providing feedback - Manawatū

Age group in years	0-15	16-20	21-35	36-64	65+
% of total survey responses	1.3%	3.9%	13.0%	58.4%	23.4%

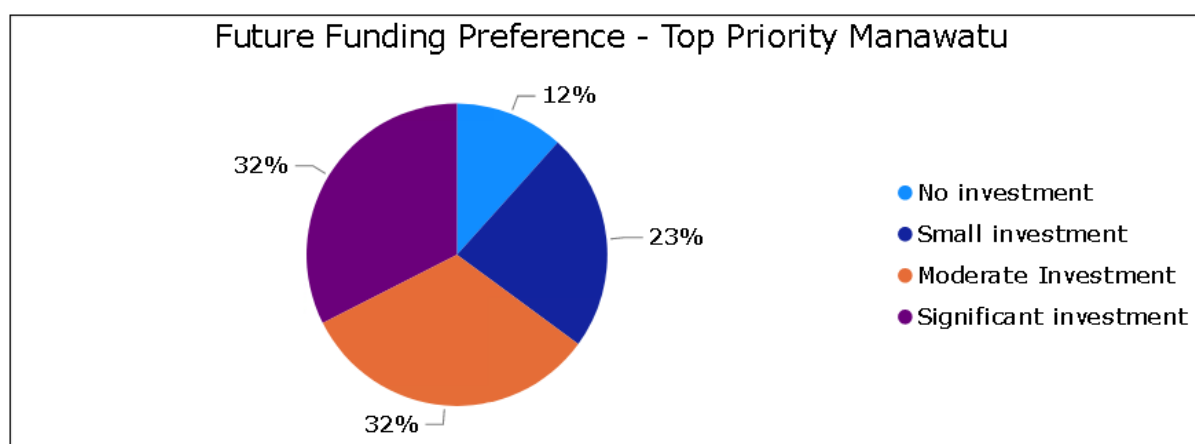
Shopping, work and healthcare were highlighted as the three main reasons for travel either to Feilding or beyond (Figure 17).

Figure 17 Reasons for travel provided by Manawatū respondents



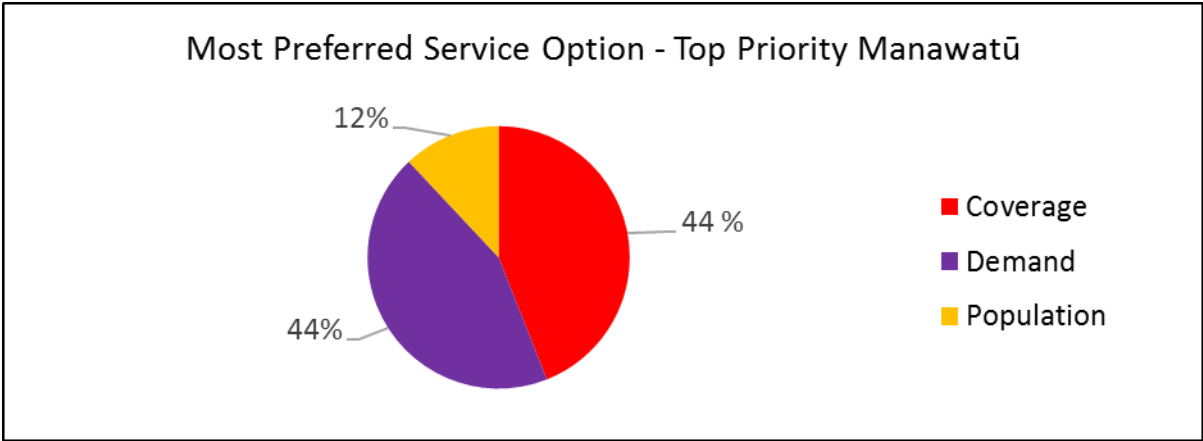
Around two thirds of feedback from Manawatū respondents indicated a preference for moderate or significant investment into new regional services. Around a quarter were happy for only small changes (Figure 18).

Figure 18 Funding preference for new services - Manawatū



Coverage and demand had equal weighting with 88% of respondents indicating a priority for either of these (Figure 19).

Figure 19 Service option preference for new services - Manawatū



For residents of Manawatū District; Palmerston North was the top destination for regular travel with Wellington and Feilding also popular (Figure 20).

Figure 20 Regular travel destinations of all Manawatū respondents



For Feilding only residents, Palmerston North remained the most travelled destination, while Wellington, Marton, Whanganui and Bulls also had demand as destinations (Figure 21).

Figure 21 Regular travel destinations of Feilding only respondents



Palmerston North and Feilding featured as the main destinations for residents of Manawatū outside of Feilding Township (Figure 22).

Figure 22 Regular travel destinations of Manawatū village and rural respondents



3.3.2 Qualitative

In their submission, **Manawatū District Council (MDC)** provided district population information and current public transport services, noting most of the population utilise their personal vehicles to transport themselves within and outside the region.

MDC recognises the key role public transport plays in community wellbeing, particularly for the transport disadvantaged. They also noted a high functioning public transport network is critical to achieving emissions reduction goals.

MDC sought feedback from the Manawatū Youth Council. The matters of greatest importance to youth include:

- Support for PT environmental benefits with reduced emissions.
- Improving accessibility by increasing points to get and off regional services.
- Affordability of services and range of payment options i.e. EFTPOS
- Having clean, modern and safe services.
- Making timetables more accessible
- Equity of access in rural communities

MDC highlighted progress on transport services to the rural villages of Manawatū. Currently there are no services provided. MDC gave funding to Neighbourhood Support Manawatū Rural Transport Initiative Steering Committee for the preparation of a business case on the provision of a regular public transport service for rural communities within the district. The steering committee presented to Horizons Regional Council their *Manawatū rural community transport service proposal* as part of the Regional Public Transport Plan consultation. MDC has provided seed funding to Neighbourhood Support Manawatū towards the establishment of rural community transport services and encourages Horizons to continue its support for a rural community transport service, by ensuring there is sufficient operational funding included within the Horizons LTP 2024-34.

MDC commented on existing gaps in the current network and requests involvement in any future discussions regarding Feilding to Palmerston North services. Previous noted points raised by MDC on the 'Orbitor' service were repeated. MDC believes noted current gaps in rural village to Feilding services will be addressed through the operation of the community transport service; noting this requires establishment and successful ongoing and sustainable funding.

Enabling greater connectivity across regional boundaries would contribute to social and economic wellbeing, particularly the transport disadvantaged. MDC recommends Horizons collaborates with neighbouring regional councils to identify opportunities for inter-regional bus services to extend

existing services across boundaries to link with other bus services. Ideas offered to achieve this included shared service arrangements or cost sharing between regional councils.

MDC noted the importance of passenger rail connection between Palmerston North and Wellington. More work is required to enable greater connectivity from Feilding and Palmerston North CBD to the Palmerston North rail station, as currently no services travel to the station. It was noted there is no early commuter service to Palmerston North from Feilding to access the Capital Connection service.

Additionally request is sought from Horizons to join MDC in advocating for the re-establishment of regular passenger rail services for communities such as Feilding located on the main trunk line. MDC states better development of and use of the rail network for passenger travel would provide an attractive and convenient means of travel. However it was noted any decisions will be dependent on central government funding and support.

MSD staff in the Feilding office provided the following recommendations:

Frequency

- The frequency of travel to and from Feilding needs to improve, and extended to cover varying work hours, including those who work in weekends in the city. There is also an increased need for people to travel to Palmerston North for medical services.
- Increased frequency would assist elderly and disabled and those with anxiety issues who don't have the confidence to use a full bus.

Rural accessibility

- A need for a shuttle service to get people from rural villages to access other public transport.
- Sanson would benefit from a more frequent bus service.

Comments from Manawatū District residents included:

Current services:

I would love to see a direct bus from Feilding to CBD Palmerston North for workers. The current bus that goes via the airport doesn't make using the bus services for this travel suitable given the increase in time.

The Feilding-Palmerston North bus service received negative feedback from a regular user on the quality of the service referring to old sub-standard buses. Their choice to use the service in the future will be dependent on comfort of travel.

Factors to consider:

Palmerston North-Feilding workers service.

Identified challenges:

Would love to see greater coverage both across the Manawatū and into other regions, particularly Wellington, using both rail and buses. Public transport is a necessity for many in the community and should be more easily accessible for all to encourage transport that produces less emissions. Current access into Wellington is severely restricted due to the lack of connection from Palmerston North to Waikanae, only being available as a commuter train during the week means that weekend trips aren't a possibility unless people get to Waikanae first.

Connection to rail:

A regular user of the Capital Connection train service would like to see that service also cater to Feilding and Whanganui. Consolidation of Capital Connection with extension to Feilding, increased frequency to at least two services a day with new service departing 9am and returning 3pm. While extending rail services is outside of this review, connecting to the Capital Connection is not.

Suggested improvements:

A Rongotea resident suggested a return service to Palmerston North twice a week with one day a Saturday to assist the young and old unable to drive. Another resident wanted an affordable return shuttle service to Palmerston North to cater for people with a disability.

Development of a shuttle mini-bus service to rural residential zone, Palmerston North-Feilding-Marton-Sanson-Feilding-Palmerston North loop or similar. Also similar around Whanganui.

Someone else commented the nearest bus stop is over a kilometre away, too far even on a good day at our age. Many new houses are being built in this part of town. Nearby is the Feilding Motor Camp, home to several people who work in Feilding and need to walk over a kilometre to catch a bus.

One response noted an opportunity to have more bus stops located at 'logical' locations such as Awahuri to increase accessibility, so hitch hiking is not required.

3.3.3 Additional information

It is noted **Neighbourhood Support Manawatū** submitted to Horizons in May 2022 on the draft RTP 2022-32. This was a joint submission made on behalf of the **Manawatū Rural Community Transport steering committee** proposing transport units. Manawatu Rural Community Transport Proposal and Report 2022 has also been provided to Horizons. These documents should be considered alongside this review.

3.4 Palmerston North feedback

3.4.1 Quantitative

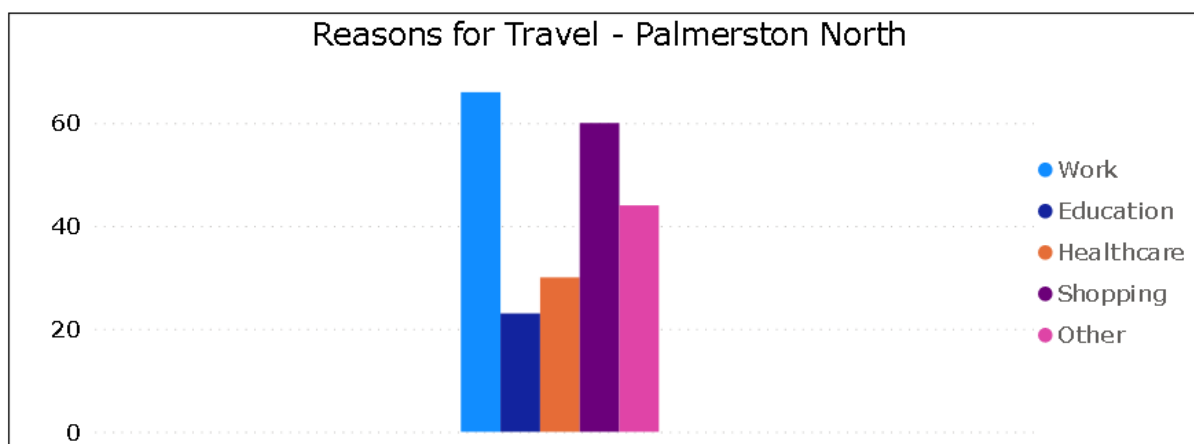
Most of the feedback from Palmerston North residents came from those aged between 21 to 64 years (Table 7). A significantly larger proportion of 21-35 year olds responded than from other districts. The proportion of 65+ year olds was significantly lower than in the other six districts.

Table 7 Age group of respondents providing feedback – Palmerston North

Age group in years	0-15	16-20	21-35	36-64	65+
% of total survey responses	0.9%	3.7%	36.5%	44.9%	14.0%

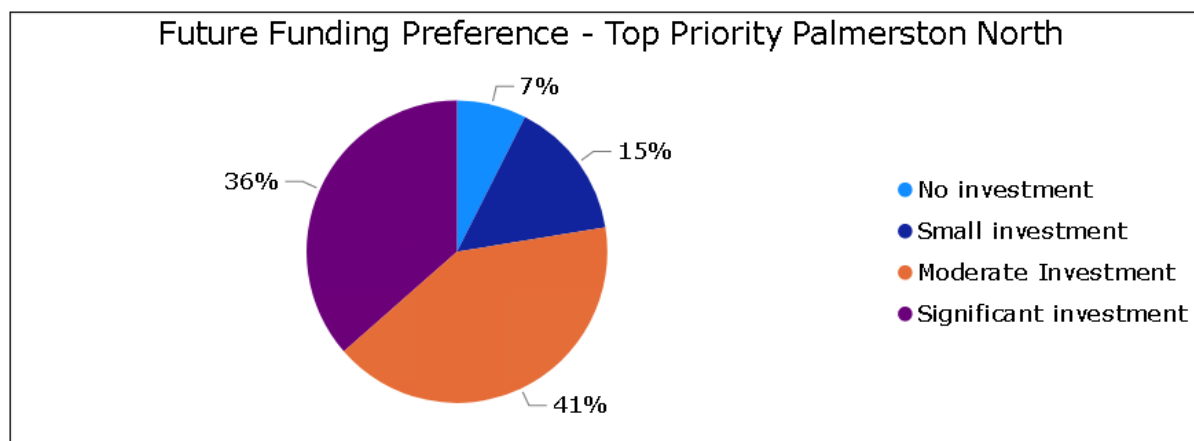
Work, shopping and other were the main three reasons given for travel by Palmerston North residents as shown in Figure 23.

Figure 23 Reasons for travel provided by Palmerston North respondents



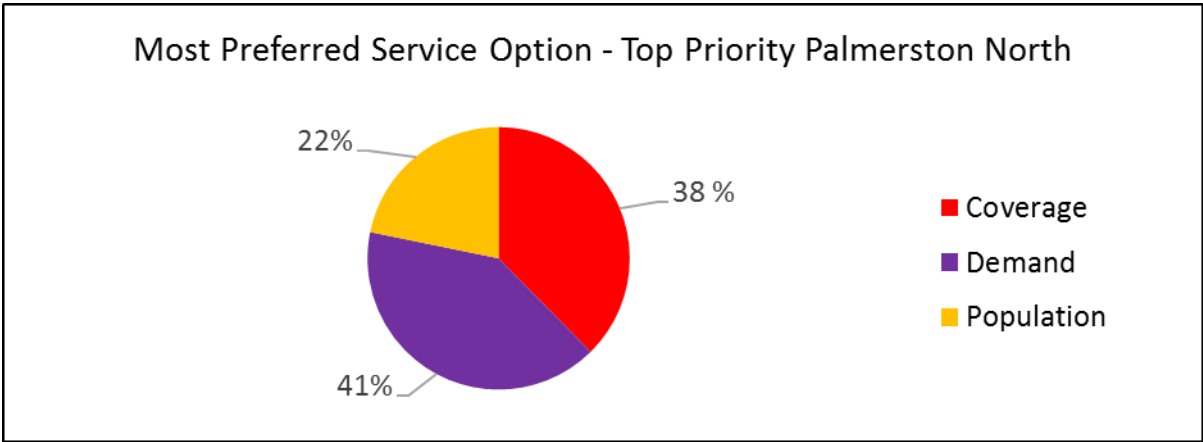
More than three quarters (77%) of surveys returned supported either moderate or significant investment (Figure 24).

Figure 24 Funding preference for new services – Palmerston North



Coverage and demand were closely preferred with 79% of responses choosing one of these (Figure 25). Basing new services on level of population was supported by 22% which is almost double of any of the other districts.

Figure 25 Service option preference for new services – Palmerston North



As displayed in Figure 26, most popular destination for travel from Palmerston North was Wellington; with Whanganui and Feilding also attracting demand.

Figure 26 Regular travel destinations of Palmerston North respondents



3.4.2 Qualitative

Palmerston North City Council (PNCC) is pleased to see an increased focus in providing alternative options to connecting the regions communities with an alternative to private vehicles. PNCC noted Land Transport is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions for the Palmerston North area. Increase options for residents and visitors will help the city reduce reliance on private vehicles and achieve the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emission (GHG) by 30% by 2030.

PNCC feedback covered the following themes:

Local connections

PNCC looks forward to the new Palmerston North urban and Ashhurst services beginning in February 2024. Outlying communities such as Linton, Longburn and Bunnythorpe were highlighted as having limited travel options and not receiving any benefits from the new urban network.

More regular and Sunday services are improvements PNCC would like to see to the Palmerston North to Feilding service which provides better connectivity for Bunnythorpe residents.

Longburn is only served by the Levin to Palmerston North commuter service which is very limited. The existing timing does not allow access for Gold card or school students. As the western side has been identified for future growth; increased options for connecting Longburn to Palmerston North with additional services is supported and also providing weekend options. An expansion of the existing urban network to include Longburn was suggested as an idea.

PNCC would like to see Horizons investigate options for providing public transport to the Linton community. It was noted, Linton community has previously expressed interest in public transport options including during the 2021 urban review. PNCC believes the military camp is interested in working with partners to provide public transport for their members and families. It would strongly encourage Horizons to reach out to Linton military camp to begin this process.

Regional connections

PNCC supports increased regional services and notes there are a large number of people travelling into and out of the city on a daily basis. Many of these trips are dependent on private vehicles. PNCC would like to see more public transport services connecting Palmerston North to the wider region reducing reliance on private vehicles.

Inter-regional connections

PNCC is supportive of increased inter-regional services. They noted the positive progress of the Capital Connection service and conveyed disappointment if any delays were to occur. They want to see wider public transport connectivity with the Capital Connection improvements. PNCC would be supportive of Horizons introducing specialised bus services that connect Palmerston North and other communities, to the Palmerston North rail station.

Feedback from **Ministry of Social Development** staff located in Palmerston North mentioned the following points:

Timing and location of bus routes.

- Current bus timetables don't meet the needs of varied working hours.
- More availability of routes with earlier starts and later finishes, and weekends as more people don't work standard office hours.
- Issues with routes from limited availability from/to Tokomaru/Linton, Woodville, Pahiatua and Ashhurst to Palmerston North.
- The Kelvin Grove/Railway Road/Airport are areas of increased business growth and there are many jobs going in the distribution/logistics sector. Clients have challenges in getting direct routes to these locations. A need for buses from Highbury/Westbrook to these areas was highlighted by staff.
- More frequency to have more options for travel to and from Palmerston North from surrounding areas, including rural areas.

Costs

- While MSD support clients to obtain a Driver Licence to assist with employment prospects, many do not own cars or can afford to run them. They are therefore dependent on using public transport and often will require multiple trips to attend appointments and interviews. Purchasing concessional tickets needs to be more accessible or easily understood.
- More cost-effectiveness for a family using public transport versus a car.

Complexity

- Understanding bus timetables and accessing the information on routes was a cause of concern for those supporting clients.
- Clients often don't have access to Wi-Fi and can lack confidence with timetables.
- Further education/marketing of routes could be considered.
- Some clients lack in confidence and have anxiety issues, and not understanding routes and timetables has them preferring non-public transport.

Shuttles

- There were some suggestions on the use of shuttle buses from smaller areas to and from Palmerston North

Wellington Train

- There was support for more frequency with this train including weekends.
- Many ministry staff use the train to attend meetings or work in Wellington and more frequency would assist with this

Comments from Palmerston North residents included:

Current services:

There are currently commuter-style services to Palmerston North from Levin and Whanganui, so people can come to Palmy for work, school, healthcare etc. Unfortunately, this doesn't go the other way around, as a resident of Palmerston North, I am unable to travel to Whanganui for the day due to the timing of the bus. Other places are connected to Palmerston North, but I do not feel this relationship goes both ways. Also, if there was a bus that serviced Himatangi Beach I would utilise this.

I am unable to drive and the bus is my main form of transport from Ashhurst to Palmerston North and Feilding. I use the buses to visit friends, keep appointments or to enable me to go on InterCity transport. Having such a regular service is marvellous. I have used bus as my main (only) form of transport since I lost my licence (medically) 35 years ago. It would be nice to go to Whanganui or Levin for the day but most people drive.

My team is Wellington based. I work remotely in Palmerston North most of the time, but we have regular team meetings every few weeks in Wellington. I catch the Capital Connection down.

Factors to consider:

Given more and more Palmy people need to go to work in Whanganui there is a need for a daily commuter bus service from Palmerston North to Whanganui enabling work obligations weekdays 8:30am and 5pm.

Many comments made mention of their need to access the greater Wellington Region for a range of events, social activities and shopping.

Tertiary student consideration was also asked for on behalf of those who often rely on public transport for their daily lives. Also amenities Palmerston North provides, such as the Library was raised as an important attraction for travel.

Comments were made mentioning the need to travel to Feilding in weekends and for health care as Palmerston North has a waiting list for GPs.

Identified challenges:

Just an observation and personal comment. The morning and evening traffic through Bulls between Whanganui and Palmerston North would suggest regular commuters. I've wondered how one could reach them, to gather feedback from them, to see if the regulars would consider acting collectively and choose a small, comfortable bus instead of their car. This would presuppose a small, comfortable bus was in use regularly. Electric to boot. Do not buy the bus first.

I drive to the Kāpiti Coast, from Palmerston North, to catch train into Wellington, for shopping, work, recreation, etc. I would take the Capital Connection instead, but it runs too early in the morning and too infrequently to be a viable option.

Connection to rail:

Bus services to link with the train timetable to and from Wellington would be very helpful.

Need more than once a day rail service between Palmy, Shannon, Levin and Wellington to enable proper commuting.

Suggested improvements:

To catch Wellington's excellent commuter train for enjoying the capital. Currently using car to get there, but would prefer to use a bus. Perhaps minibuses every 2 hours or so would be feasible?

Perhaps seasonal services to popular regional places such as a summer service to beaches etc. It would be good to have services to Foxton, Levin and Whanganui etc. Currently these services are geared to residents commuting for work. A mid-morning and late afternoon service would be great.

No bus service to the huge Roberts Line/El Prado Drive area. How about a service from Palmy Station to Feilding with new commuter stops at El Prado Drive and Bunnythorpe. Existing Feilding buses now have time to service these growing industrial areas if only at the start and finish of the workers days.

Family in Wairarapa; would be nice to be able to visit on weekends sometimes without always having to drive.

3.4.3 Additional information

During the **Palmerston North and Ashhurst Bus Network Review** conducted by Horizons in 2021, several submitters requested more services to other communities, connecting to Palmerston North. These include services for Linton, Longburn, Sanson, Pohangina and from the Tararua district.

3.5 Rangitikei feedback

3.5.1 Quantitative

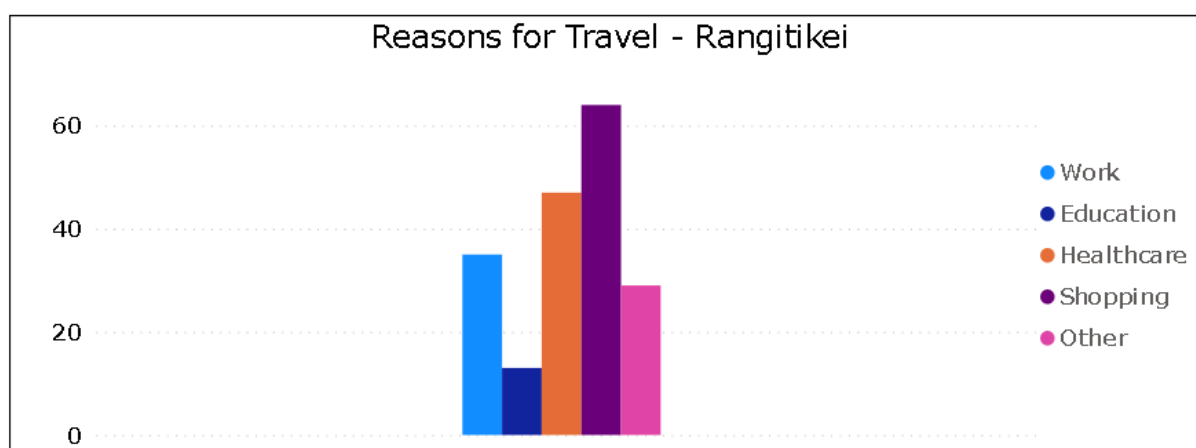
Nearly half of all Rangitikei responders identified between the ages of 36 to 64 years, while around one third identified as being older than 65 years. (see Table 8)

Table 8 Age group of respondents providing feedback - Rangitikei

Age group in years	0-15	16-20	21-35	36-64	65+
% of total survey responses	1.2%	4.9%	14.8%	49.4%	29.6%

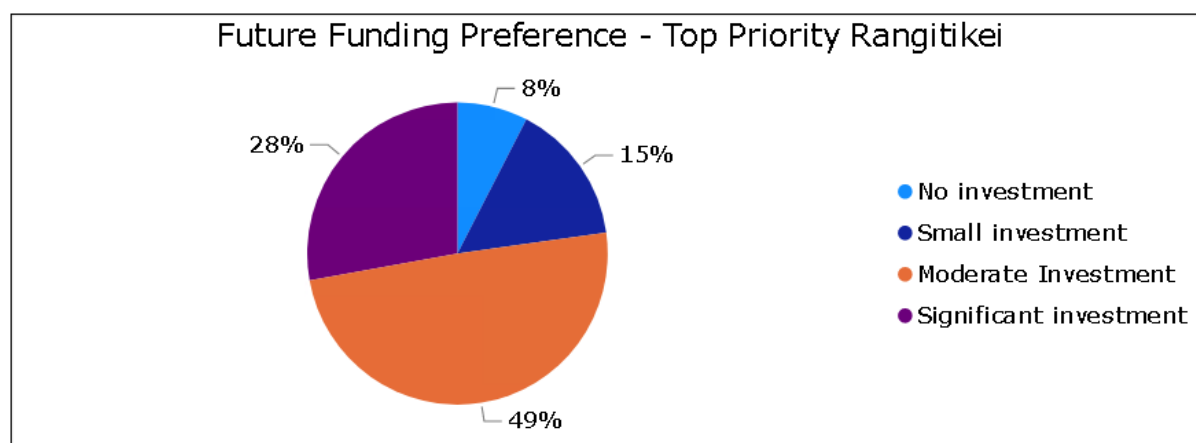
Access to shopping was given as the main reason for travel, while healthcare and work were also popular reasons given. (Figure 27)

Figure 27 Reasons for travel provided by Rangitikei respondents



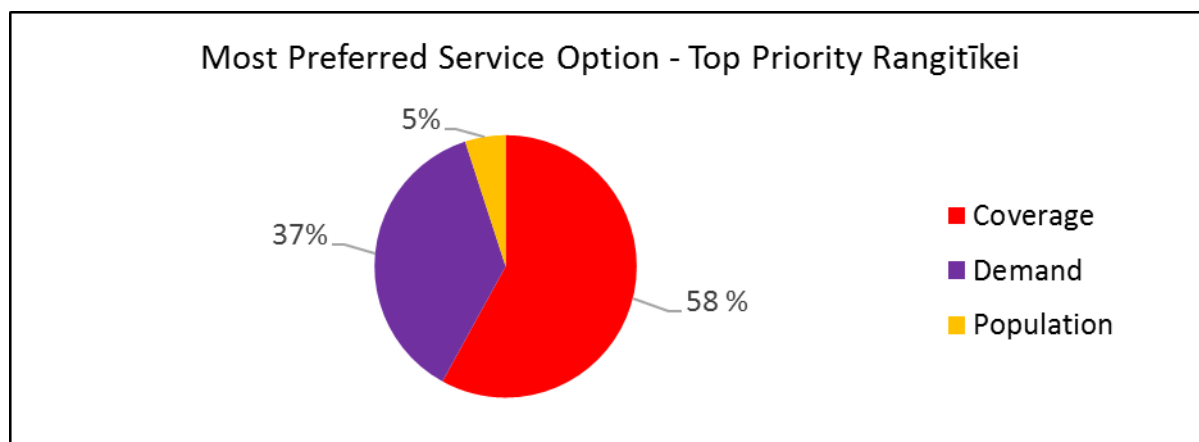
Nearly half (49%) of responders were in support of moderate changes and investment with a further 28% wanting significant investment. (Figure 28)

Figure 28 Funding preference for new services - Rangitikei



Coverage was seen as a priority for planning new services with over half (58%) wanting coverage to be prioritised when designing a regional network. Demand was supported by 37% while only 5% wanted population equity as a priority. (Figure 29)

Figure 29 Service option preference for new services - Rangitikei



Palmerston North and Whanganui shared top popularity as destinations for Rangitikei District residents. Feilding, Wellington and Marton were also identified as significant destinations. (Figure 30)

Figure 30 Regular travel destinations of Rangitikei respondents



Marton residents signalled regular travel to Palmerston North and Whanganui, with lesser demand to Feilding and Wellington. (Figure 31)

Figure 31 Regular travel destinations of Marton only respondents



Taihape residents were keen to travel to Whanganui and Palmerston North. There was also some demand to travel further afield to Wellington in the south and centres such as Auckland and Hamilton to the north. (Figure 32)

Figure 32 Regular travel destinations of Taihape only respondents



Hunternville residents indicated a demand to travel south to Whanganui, Palmerston North, Feilding and Marton. (Figure 33)

Figure 33 Regular travel destinations of Hunternville only respondents



3.5.2 Qualitative

Rangitikei District Council (RaDC) provided feedback and noted people within the Rangitikei District currently have limited public transport options available. RaDC stated “public transport is important to ensure communities have access to affordable transport options that meet their need and connect them to work, education, essential services, and amenities.” They quoted data indicating daily 111 people depart the district for Whanganui central and 144 for Palmerston North central.

Public transport is referenced in Rangitikei District Councils draft Community Spatial Plan. In priority areas identified for Rangitikei there are transport references to emissions reductions, improved transport networks and supporting high quality towns. Separate chapters covering various towns and areas of Rangitikei highlight transport outcomes and actions, both ongoing and longer term relating to advocating for improved public transport options. A quote referenced as community voice pertaining to public transport is “There really is no public transport system, what there is, is not suitable.”

Key areas Rangitikei District Council request Horizons consider:

- Passenger rail
 - Opportunities to extend Capital Connection into Rangitikei.
 - If this is not feasible then improving connections to rail by road should be a priority. (i.e. via bus/shuttle service)
 - Adding stops to Northern Explorer within Rangitikei and expansion of service.
 - Use of rail between Whanganui and Palmerston North for commuters.
- Bus/Shuttle services – recognising barriers traditional bus services have in serving smaller communities; consideration should be given to emerging methods and technologies in public transport provision.
- Connection to regional services – importance should be given to connection from Rangitikei to key locations such as hospitals in Palmerston North and Whanganui as well as tertiary institutions.

Comments from Rangitikei District residents included:

Current services

I use the bus to Whanganui and Palmerston North (Feilding). It's important to continue the monthly service.

Happy with the service. Bus service to Whanganui and Palmerston North should be free to senior citizens - travel between hours 9am and return by 3pm. Gold card isn't much use in Taihape. This would help a lot of pensioners. It would be well patronised

You cannot go to Palmerston North and back in a day. If going by bus you only have 1 hour in Palmerston North. Not enough time for an appointment.

Bus from Taihape is twice a month. First Thursday leaves 9am and back here 4:30pm. Palmerston North third Thursday. Leaves 9am and back here at 5pm. Long days. Maybe on the other two Thursdays of the month shorter days to cater for the elderly and encourage mothers to come on it when kids are at school. Maybe leave at 9am and be back by 3pm or 3:30pm.

The bus doesn't get back to Taihape until 5pm from Palmerston North and 4:30pm from Whanganui. Very late in the winter. I would prefer it shortened by an hour. Also the bus isn't fit for purpose. Very hard to get on unaided.

Bus service to Whanganui /Palmerston North. I have used bus service for 20 years counting previous service. New bus is not user friendly. A shorter day would be better as the day is too long. Shorter day might encourage young mums to use bus as they would be home for school children. No young people use this bus. Because of the long hours I no longer use the bus fortnightly. It would be nice to have a Horizons rep. get on the bus to see how the elderly get on and off bus.

I believe a twice weekly extra service from Marton to Palmerston North would be well used for shoppers, health appointments who don't want to spend all day in Palmerston North. We already have a workers bus YAY! What if say on a Tuesday and Thursday there was a bus from Palmerston North to Marton at 12 noon returning to Palmerston North at 1pm. Half day for customers.

I visit a family member almost daily for the past two months. Driving is the only option, as a once-a-month bus service is the only public transport offering. It's expensive and tiring.

Factors to consider:

With an aging population and people not able to drive it would be a good idea to meet with the cohort in communities and discuss needs - health - shopping - social. Many of the present aging group are not digitally literate. Possibly smaller and flexible transport linking Bulls residents with communities they wish to visit eg. Marton, Feilding, Sanson and able to drop off at Whanganui Hospital.

Identified challenges:

Transport is required as there's no big stores where I live.

Connection to rail:

There were a number of feedback responses lamenting the lack of a suitable passenger rail service and wanting rail services in the central north island reinstated.

Would like the train to stop in Taihape if there is someone to pick up or drop off. I would then catch it with my therapy dog to Auckland, at present we catch the bus and it's an awful trip.

Suggested improvements:

A bus service to Ohakune once a month would be nice.

3.6 Ruapehu feedback

3.6.1 Quantitative

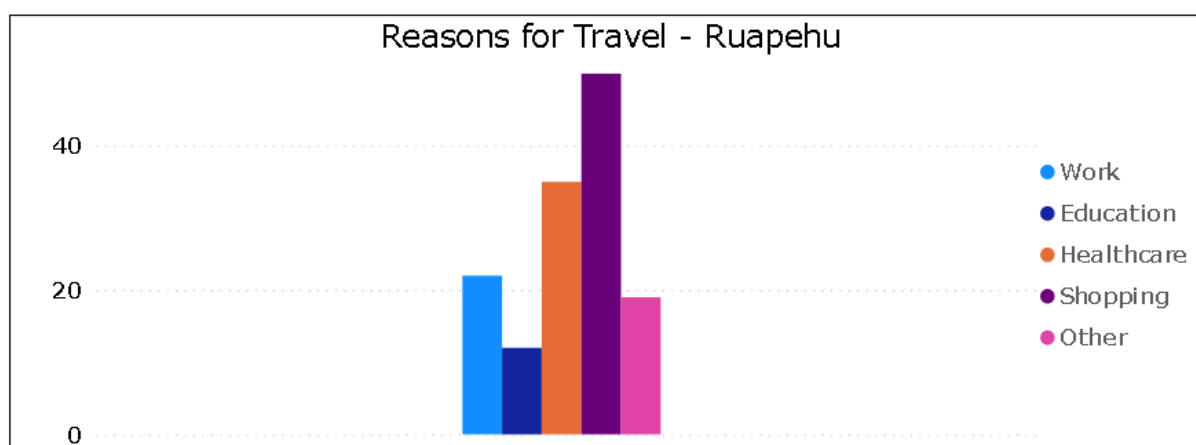
The majority (62%) of responders were in the 36 to 64 age bracket. No responses were received from anyone under 21 years old. (Table 9)

Table 9 Age group of respondents providing feedback - Ruapehu

Age group in years	0-15	16-20	21-35	36-64	65+
% of total survey responses	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	61.8%	20.0%

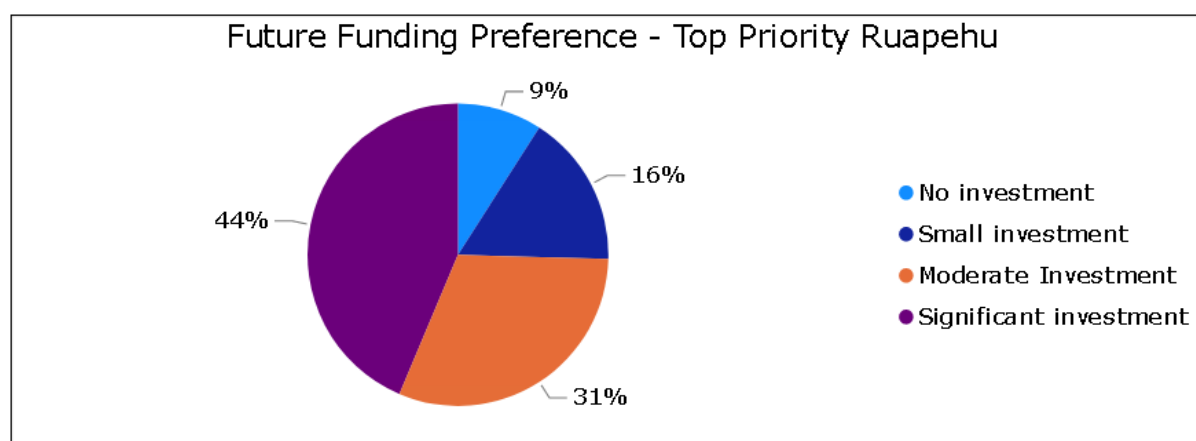
Access to shopping and healthcare were the two most common reasons given for travel needs by Ruapehu residents. (Figure 34)

Figure 34 Reasons for travel provided by Ruapehu respondents



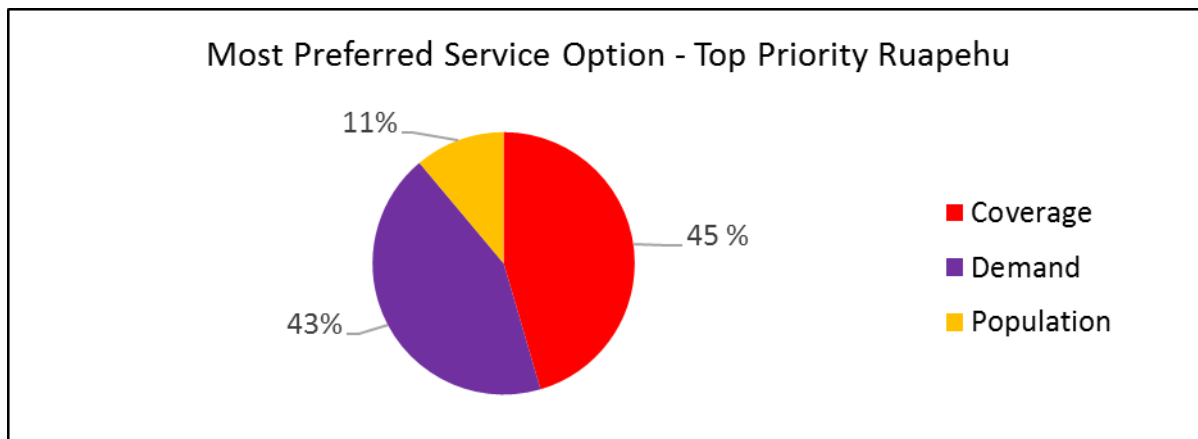
Three quarters of responses were in favour of moderate or significant investment and changes to public transport services, while only one quarter of responses want small to no investments and little to no changes in services. (Figure 35)

Figure 35 Funding preference for new services - Ruapehu



Coverage and demand were the preferred priorities of Ruapehu residents when planning a new network. (Figure 36)

Figure 36 Service option preference for new services - Ruapehu



Internal Ruapehu District connections were popular with some demand to Whanganui, Palmerston North and Taihape. (Figure 37)

Figure 37 Regular travel destinations of Ruapehu respondents



Residents living in the Ohakune area travel to a variety of destinations within the district and regionally to Whanganui, Palmerston North, Taihape and Taupō. (Figure 38)

Figure 38 Regular travel destinations of Ohakune/Raetihi/Pipiriki/Rangataua respondents



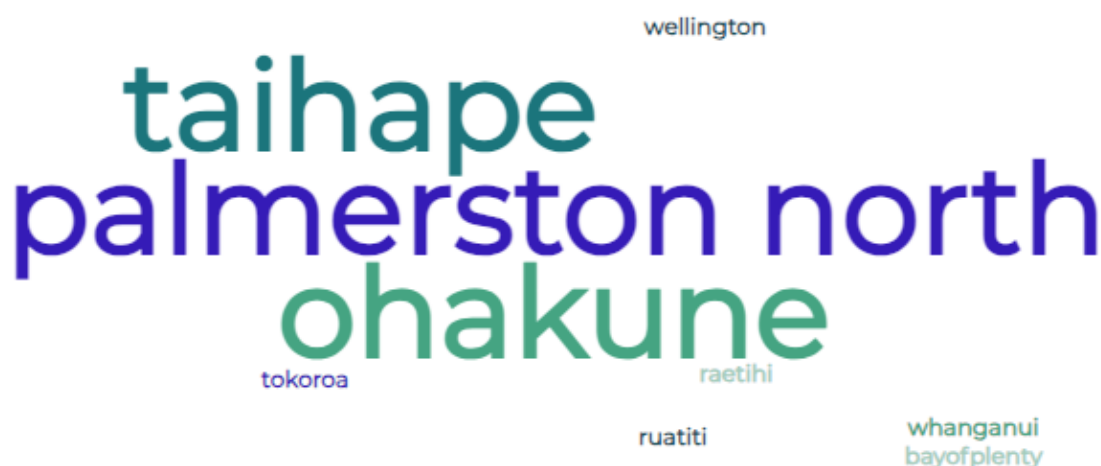
Residents in the northern section of Ruapehu district travel to Taumarunui and venture north rather than south to centres outside of the region such as Hamilton, Tūrangi and Taupō. (Figure 39)

Figure 39 Regular travel destinations of Taumarunui/National Park Ōwhango Manunui Kakahi... respondents



Waiouru residents responding to the survey indicated a travel pattern south to Taihape and Palmerston North and west to Ohakune. (Figure 40)

Figure 40 Regular travel destinations of Waiouru residents



3.6.2 Qualitative

Comments from Ruapehu District residents included:

Current services:

Emphasising the current lack of publicity and community awareness for the current monthly service between Raetihi and Ohakune.

Identified challenges:

The existing bus stop, in the middle of Raetihi is OK for school buses, but not for folk like me who need to get there. Some way of collecting bus users, (we're all on phones or internet?) from their residence, (an informal system existed previously when there were several buses in Raetihi) would get more use happening.

Comments were made mentioning the reliance on private vehicles to access places like Taumarunui, Te Kuiti and Hamilton from National Park.

Funding considerations:

As a resident in Taumarunui, much of the overview has suggestions that pertain to lower Horizons boundary. To connect the dots, I think more data and clarity is needed. 1) What is the financial realm, I'm sure many would suggest ideas that would need a huge financial input? 2) What regions would be on your priority list to implement any potential opportunities? 3) All rail services including intercity needs an overhaul, catching connecting buses/trains, is ok for the young and energetic. 4) This mode of travel is unsatisfactory for parents with children, the elderly and those with a disability. 5) I agree to user pays absolutely on the condition that Social Development, Education & Health Sector and Service provider's offer funding support, for beneficiaries, students and Senior Citizens. 6) The communities need to be consulted, not all are tech educated, so face to face engagement is a must.

Suggested improvements:

Other comments included increasing services between Raetihi and Palmerston North - Whanganui. For shopping purposes there are no shoe, linen or dress shops at Raetihi. People have to shop elsewhere for certain things so public transport would be very handy.

I would like to see a public transport service from Raetihi to Whanganui; either a weekly or fortnightly service. Public transport services from Raetihi to Ohakune and on to Palmerston North on a monthly basis. Need for travel to bigger cities to get supplies for children to go to schools and or UCOL studies.

One bus a week. That'd do.

I'm 78, no longer drive, and use the service from Raetihi to Ohakune and would like a weekly bus.

Need to put on a skiers/bikers service (maybe go up on a Friday night, back on Sunday night) so that people from the rest of the region can get to the ski fields/trails without requiring a car.

3.6.3 Additional information

Below is an excerpt from a submission received in 2022 to the RPTP consultation.

Ruapehu District Council (RuDC) welcomes the investigation of options to reach, or better reach, parts of the region such as the Ruapehu District. It is essential smaller communities are considered by incorporating them into regional and inter-regional routes that connect to multiple urban areas. RuDC strongly supports the investigation and exploration of public transport needs and demands across the region. There is an existing train line running through or near (within 5 minutes' drive of) most of the towns and villages in our district. If properly utilised, this train line could be a great mechanism to provide our communities with access to regional and interregional train routes that connect multiple urban areas.

We acknowledge that serving the wide geographical spread of the region could be considered difficult, but the Ruapehu District has an extremely low level of accessible public transport. The only public transport we have available is the tourism focused Northern Explorer train service, one off-peak service between Ohakune and Raetihi, and a Health Shuttle from Taumarunui to Waikato Hospital. This level of service is inadequate to provide for our community's needs. We have a population of approximately 12,800 people and would greatly benefit from more widely available public transport. Unless our residents need to attend a hospital and can board the Health Shuttle, there is no option but to use a private vehicle for their transport needs.

In addition to rail services, RuDC is of the view that our district has the potential to develop bus services. RuDC encourages Horizons to work collaboratively with partner agencies when considering and exploring trial services to test viability of new services and technology, including specialist on-demand services.

3.7 Tararua feedback

3.7.1 Quantitative

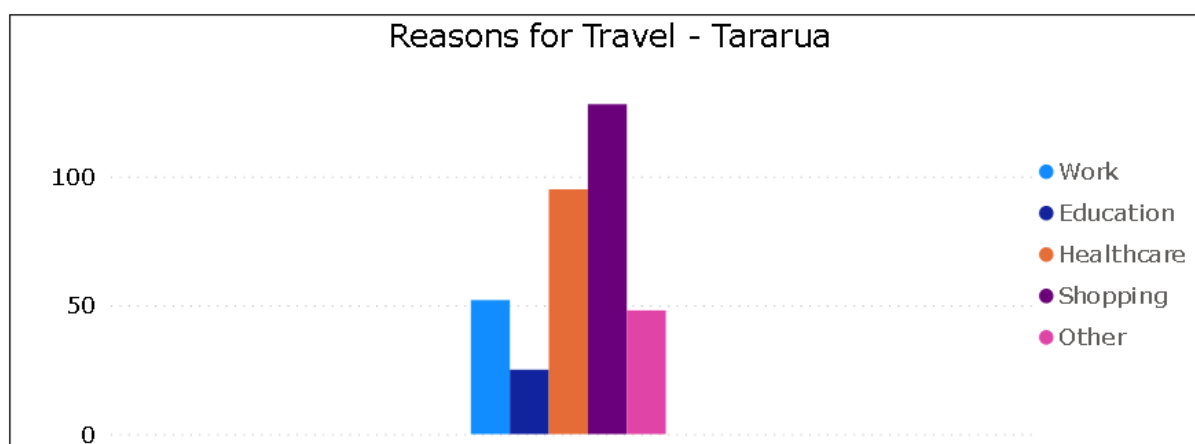
The largest proportion of responses to the survey came from the age bracket of 36-64 years with 44%. Forty percent of responders were aged 65 years or over. (Table 10)

Table 10 Age group of respondents providing feedback - Tararua

Age group in years	0-15	16-20	21-35	36-64	65+
% of total survey responses	0.7%	0.0%	15.7%	43.5%	40.1%

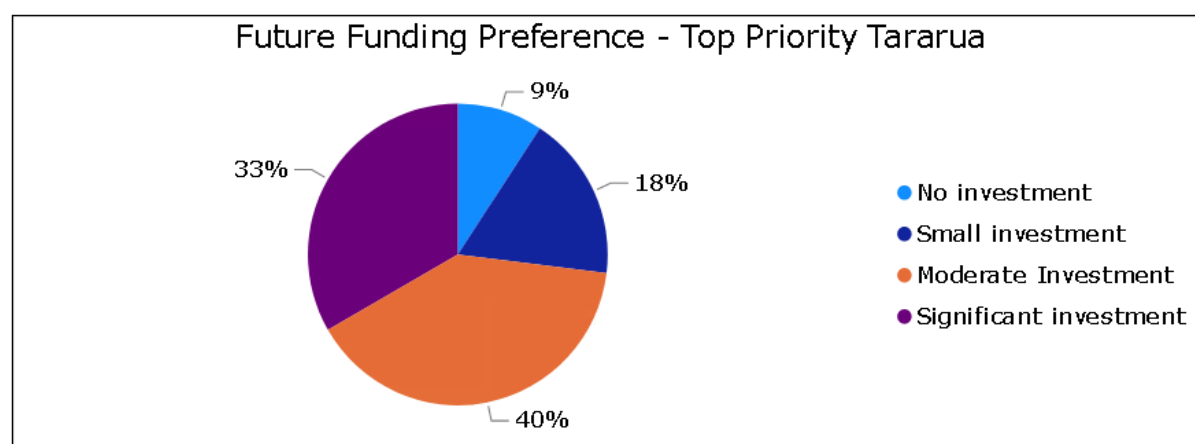
Shopping and healthcare were provided as the two main reasons Tararua residents have for needing to travel. (Figure 41)

Figure 41 Reasons for travel provided by Tararua respondents



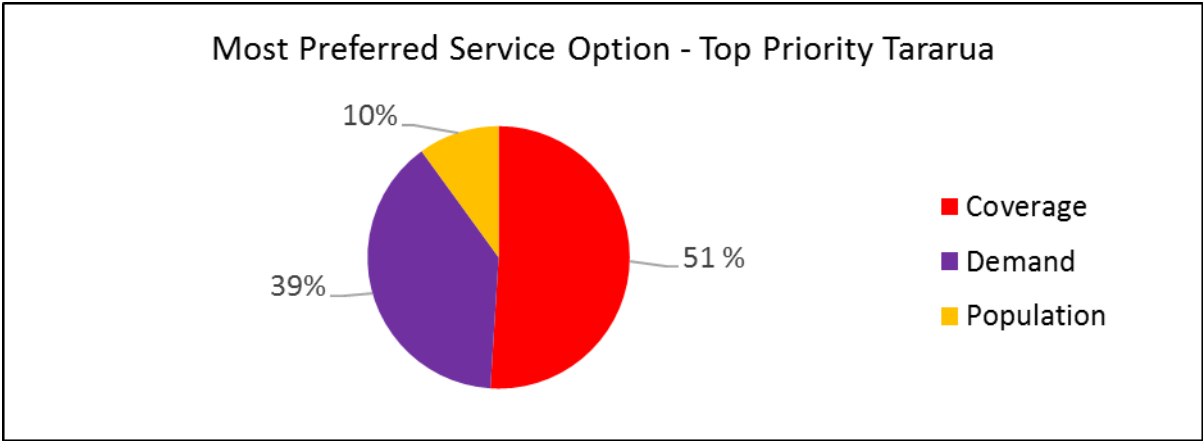
When asked to rank future funding and level of change needed for regional public transport, 73% of responders indicated a desire for moderate or significant investment and changes. (Figure 42)

Figure 42 Funding preference for new services - Tararua



Coverage was prioritised by around half of responders. Demand was identified as the most important criteria for planning future services by a further 39%. (Figure 43)

Figure 43 Service option preference for new services - Tararua



For Tararua District respondents Palmerston North is the most popular destination. Internal Tararua district travel to main centres such as Dannevirke, Pahiatua and Masterton was also prominent. (Figure 44)

Figure 44 Regular travel destinations of Tararua respondents



Dannevirke residents expressed a need to travel to Palmerston North. Hawkes Bay centres were also identified as desirable destinations for regular travel. (Figure 45)

Figure 45 Regular travel destinations of Dannevirke only respondents



Woodville residents are drawn to Palmerston North with some needing to travel east to Dannevirke and south to Pahiatua and Masterton. (Figure 46)

Figure 46 Regular travel destinations of Woodville only respondents



Pahiatua responders indicated a preference to travel to Palmerston North. (Figure 47)

Figure 47 Regular travel destinations of Pahiatua only respondents



Both Palmerston North and Masterton are the main destinations for Eketāhuna residents. (Figure 48)

Figure 48 Regular travel destinations of Eketahuna-



3.7.2 Qualitative

MSD staff in the Dannevirke office provided the following recommendations:

Lack of options

- Lack of transport options limits employment and training opportunities for those without vehicles living in Tararua. It is of a major concern to those supporting people.
- Private bus transport is the only option for Palmerston North to Tararua and with a cost that is prohibitive. (\$120 per week for a school student)
- Transport options between the towns in Tararua don't exist. A suggestion for some options, even on limited number of days so people can attend appointments, interviews, receive support and shop within the district.

Many comments were received from Tararua District residents particularly Woodville, Pahiatua and Eketāhuna residents. To convey the level of feeling given by responses here is a large selection of comments provided through the survey.

Comments from Tararua District residents included:

Current services:

We don't have any.

Lack of options.

There is nothing from Dannevirke to Palmerston North except a late afternoon InterCity bus from 4:25pm arriving at 5:20pm when everything is closed. Weekend there is Intercity arriving after 12:25pm when everything is closed.

Really no public transport available to go to and from in same day.

We only have one bus (Masterton - Palmerston North) on a Tuesday.

What services? Pahiatua has none. Would love some.

It is frustrating to have to drive to Palmerston North and see buses travelling around the city. We have no bus service available from Horizons in the Tararua District.

You have plenty in the cities but none in the little towns. We don't have a taxi service here in Pahiatua.

Nothing in Pahiatua. Have to ask people for a ride.

What transport services? At least the shuttle is a great help. Would love buses or such like around this area.

Factors to consider:

As a council you don't cater for elderly people. You will never meet the ETS as you don't aspire to.

Bus to Woodville is needed to connect with InterCity buses...When my daughter got a part-time job aged 16 years there was no transport available. I had to spend a lot of time with transport and cost. I was grateful when she got her restricted licence. Public transport is necessary as our population grows and petrol is expensive.

There is no consideration for us with a gold card here in Woodville.

Identified challenges:

Most comments referred to the lack of any suitable public transport options, reinforcing the specific needs of the community particularly as community services diminish and also a feeling of transport neglect for this area and referencing rates paid.

Seniors and the transport disadvantaged were referred to a lot. Other feedback noted the recent reduction in commercial transport operator services particularly post COVID, limited availability of a community vehicle service.

I know first-hand, how hard it is for many people in Woodville who have not been able to access Health Services due to a lack of buses. Especially for the elderly and those who don't own a car or have a licence.

The St John Health Shuttles cater for health appointments by donation and volunteer personnel. But there is no other community public service available paid or volunteer within the financial reach of our community here in Woodville.

There's no public transport in the Tararua area. This makes it difficult for the elderly or people that don't drive or have a car.

There are people in our community with no car so no way of getting out of town. Plus no family in the town also. Fixed income so find the money to pay for a person to take them to where they can get the service they need. They try and spend money in the Tararua District so the towns can survive. No bus service on our side of the Tararuas. What happens to the older population when they no longer drive but would like to go to PN or Masterton?

As we have no public transport and have an aging population with many unable to drive it would be helpful to have a public transport service.

Funding considerations:

We seem to be disadvantaged as we don't have access to public transport in Tararua, seems very unfair, it's like we are the poor cousins over the hill, forgotten again??

A daily service isn't affordable as much as we would like this freedom. Maybe once a week if it is patronised. Our rates are too high now. No more cost to the rate payers. (Who's going to pay?)

We have been paying rates for years. Part of those rates paid to HRC has gone to transport planning. Looking at your current services map, there is no bus service on the eastern side of the Manawātū Gorge, so we have been subsidising bus services for the western side for years. We deserve a reasonably priced service on the eastern side.

Suggested improvements:

I live in Pahiatua and there a lot of people that don't drive or own a vehicle would be brilliant to see bus services re-established to Palmerston North through Woodville and back again for those that do like to travel out of town.

A very extensive response was received from a Pahiatua senior resident outlining the inadequate service and the difficulties he has faced trying to access Palmerston North and Masterton. He requests a bus service – perhaps three times a week – Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Many suggestions were provided such as bus size, EV, timings, routes, promotions, booking system, collaborations between regional and local councils, connecting with other services and thinking outside the square by combining with courier deliveries.

Other feedback included: Another bus from Woodville to Palmy... A bus service once a day - or even 3 or 4 weekdays from Pahiatua to Palmerston North would be great. From the map there are no services for the entire Tararua District!!... It would be great to see public transport across the Tararua District...It seems unreasonable to have to over-night in neighbouring towns just to get back to Eketāhuna. Even some sort of hitch-hiking or carpooling App, supported by Horizons would be a step in the correct direction... Would be great to have a bus service that does a loop out Makomako to Mangamaire via Nikau, onto SH2 then onto Bridge road and Scarborough road back into town. Maybe 4 times a day ideally... At the moment a bus to Masterton is only Tuesday, Friday and Sunday. Should be Saturday as well. I would love to see the rail link to both Palmerston North and Wairarapa especially. I would commute to Wellington by train if I could... I am living in Pahiatua and need to

get train at Masterton. If I lived in Dannevirke, Woodville or PN I could easily get to my family but there is no connection other than a weekly bus to Palmerston North from Masterton. Elderly people who no longer drive or are not very mobile need a casual car or van periodically. We are not asking for a bus, surely you have the money from the rates...The new highway connecting Dannevirke to PN will be great. I frequently get visitors from overseas and live 8 kms outside of Dannevirke on SH2. My guests would love to have some sort of PT or cycle path into Dannevirke (as sides of SH2 are too dangerous) Also a big fan of passenger trains from Dannevirke both north and south to make getting to larger urban areas easier... A response suggested a shopper's service twice a week from Dannevirke to Palmerston North leaving at 9am and returning at 5pm would be popular.

3.7.3 Additional information

In 2022 **Tararua District Council (TDC)** submitted the following points on the draft RPTP:

- Request connector services to Palmerston North from Tararua
- Support a review being undertaken in-line with the construction of the new Manawatu-Tararua Highway and that Pahiatua and Eketāhuna are included in considerations in addition to Woodville, Dannevirke and Norsewood
- Encourage Horizons looks into demand for inter-regional public transport with **Hawkes Bay Regional Council**

3.8 Whanganui feedback

3.8.1 Quantitative

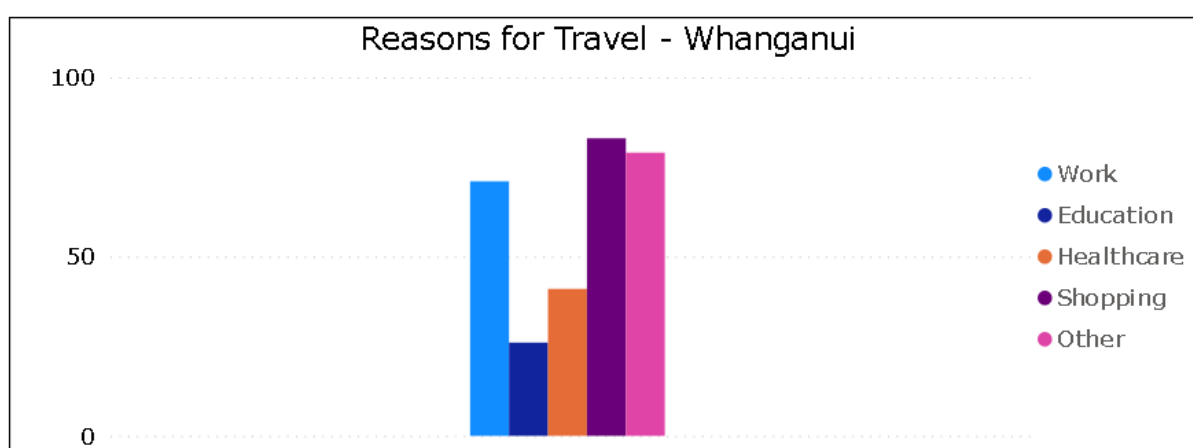
Whanganui had responses from all of the age groups. The 36-64 year age group made close to half (48%) of respondents while the remaining responses came largely from 21-35 year olds, and 65 years and over. (see Table 11)

Table 11 Age group of respondents providing feedback - Whanganui

Age group in years	0-15	16-20	21-35	36-64	65+
% of total survey responses	1.4%	2.8%	22.0%	48.2%	25.5%

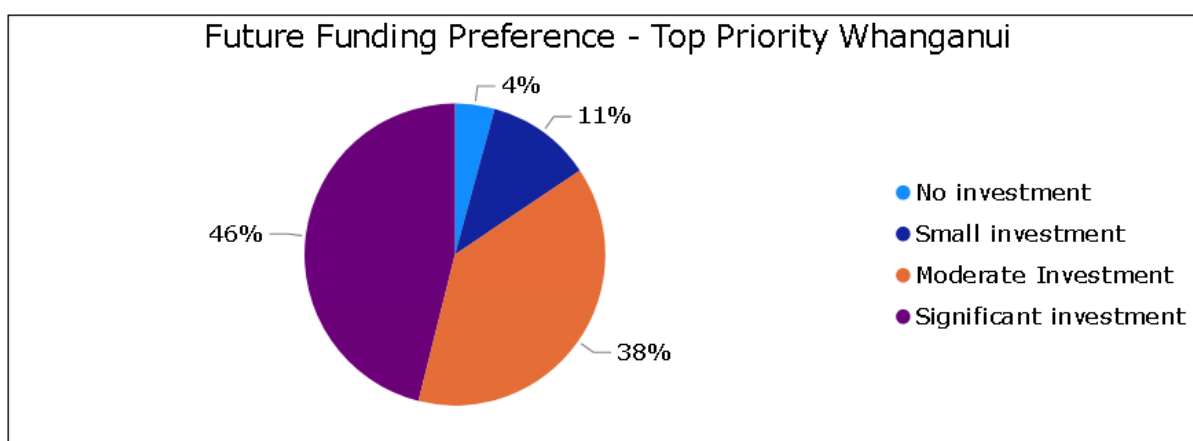
Shopping, other and work were the main reasons given for regular travel needs. Other was chosen more than across other districts. Visiting family was a popular reason provided, travel needs for entertainment and leisure were also common. (Figure 49)

Figure 49 Reasons for travel provided by Whanganui respondents



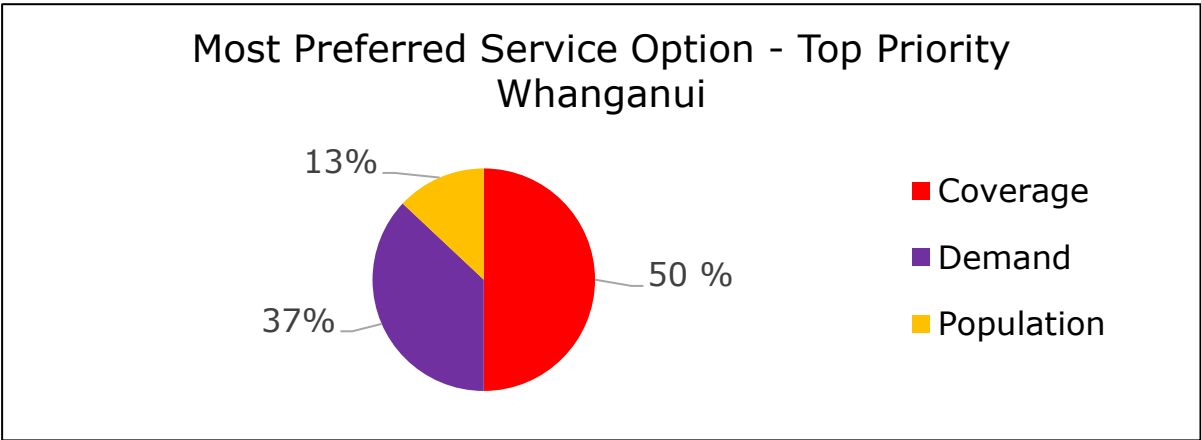
Whanganui residents had a similarly strong desire as Horowhenua for future funding preferences for public transport. When asked to prioritise future funding and level of change needed for regional public transport, 84% of responders indicated a desire for moderate or significant investment and changes. (Figure 50)

Figure 50 Funding preference for new services - Whanganui



Coverage was prioritised by half of responders, while demand was identified as the most important criteria for planning future services by 37%. (Figure 51)

Figure 51 Service option preference for new services - Whanganui



For Whanganui respondents Wellington and Palmerston North stand out as the most popular destination. Other popular centres include New Plymouth, Auckland and Marton. (Figure 52)

Figure 52 Regular travel destinations of Whanganui respondents



3.8.2 Qualitative

Whanganui District Council (WDC) officer feedback supports an increase in frequency of buses between Whanganui and Palmerston North for a number of reasons, including reducing emissions from travel and providing alternative commuter options which don't rely on private car ownership and use. Also supported was Horizons' position to improve the model investigation of new routes at both regional and inter-regional levels.

Comments from Whanganui District residents included:

Current services:

Used the bus almost daily as a student in Palmerston North. Now do not have access to public transport so don't use it...Love the public transport service, (as is) encouraging more people out of their cars into the bus is always going to be a challenge...

Factors to consider:

Being able to connect to current rail services using the existing rail network in Whanganui would be excellent and a more environmental mode of transport than more buses and cars on the roads unless they are electric vehicles.

Identified challenges:

I am a pensioner. I am very fortunate that I am able to travel on the Whanganui bus routes using the Bee Card at no cost between 9am and 3pm on weekdays. Please consider allowing pensioners to travel at no cost over a longer period of the day and on each day that the buses operate. By broadening the opportunity for beneficiaries to travel at no cost at all times every day, those people will no longer be disadvantaged by time constraints. They will be able to get to appointments at 9am rather than catch the first bus into town after 9am. When appointments or commitments in town go beyond 3pm, they will be able to return home without incurring the payment of a fare because they were delayed by things beyond their control.

Connection to rail:

The Metlink bus and train services in Wellington are a great example of a wide-reaching while also high-speed public transport network. There are almost always multiple ways to get to places, whether that's multiple bus routes or a train and bus route, and it would be incredible to have that same capability within our region.

Please prioritise passenger rail service connecting wellington, Palmerston North and Whanganui. Also on demand minibuses connections from Whanganui airport to town.

Would like bus from Whanganui to Palmerston North railway to meet train to and from Wellington (Capital Connection) or train to come this way. So we can go in day trips to Wellington for family, shopping and work courses or study.

Funding considerations:

While the following comments relate to an urban service they represent two diverging views. Keep Te Ngaru! Pay drivers well!!! I would prefer electric buses. I mainly use the Te Ngaru service. I appreciate the regularity of service and commend all the drivers. They are very professional and courteous. What an amazing team. I believe the drivers deserve a living wage. As petrol costs rise everyone will use this service. Well done!!!

The Tide in Whanganui is a waste of rate money. It is not well patronised. I think this service is an unrealistic plan for a city of this small size and also not good for the environment. Decrease a service where there is no demand i.e. The Tide

I have no objection to a bus service here in Whanganui, however I STRONGLY OBJECT TO SUBSIDISING IT WITH RATES MONEY. I will never ever use a bus, and so they must be self-supporting.

Suggested improvements:

More frequency weekdays and weekends from Whanganui to Palmerston North was suggested. Connecting Whanganui with Palmerston North Airport and connecting to services such as the Whanganui and Palmerston North hospitals was also advocated in the comments.

Currently drive to Palmerston North, Feilding and Wellington but aged 76 can see a time when will need public transport for these trips. So better, more regular options would be great to see. Bike carriers, room for prams, kneeling buses all great and appreciated by folks we see on buses. Being able to go to Feilding, Palmerston North for day trips and Wellington for longer stays would be brilliant.

It is excellent to have high frequency public transport in Whanganui. Thank you for this, though it is also important to invest in our future. Please electrify all public transport and reopen a medium frequency train line that runs between New Plymouth - Whanganui - Palmerston North - Wellington.

One response commented travelling outside Whanganui has become more difficult. The Intercity bus meanders all through the district and is quite slow. The road route to Palmerston North has become increasingly busy with a lot more trucks. I would like to see regular electric bus connections for direct routes from Whanganui to Palmerston North and Marton. Horizons could look at adding a direct

'shoppers' bus to daily services. Leaving Whanganui at 8am, returning at 3pm, students and workers would also use this service to commute. Both centres would also benefit commercially.

Rail was also offered as a solution to linking Marton, Whanganui and Ohakune and also Hāwera and New Plymouth into the future.

3.9 Outside the region

3.9.1 Quantitative

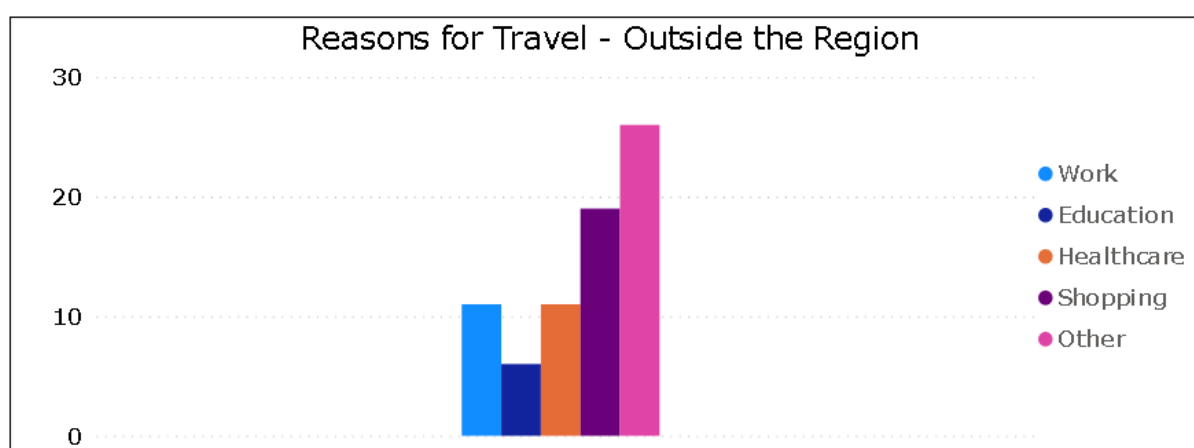
Around 90% of the responses from outside the region came from people aged 21-64 years.

Table 12 Age group of respondents providing feedback – Outside the region

Age group in years	0-15	16-20	21-35	36-64	65+
% of total survey responses	0.0%	0.0%	35.9%	53.9%	10.3%

The main reason provided for travel into the region from areas outside Horizons was given as other. This mainly described visiting family and friends, and holidaying.

Figure 53 Reasons for travel provided by respondents from outside the Horizons region



3.9.2 Qualitative

General comments from respondents:

An interested Auckland resident who regularly travels to and through Manawatū-Whanganui region provided the following suggestions for consideration:

- Creating a dense network – connecting all towns at the very least daily
- Revenue sources – Targeted rates/Third party funding i.e. employers, corporations, trusts/ parking revenue
- Engagement for future steps – Deliberate democracy/ use of personal stories
- Proving demand – establishing a service that moves from one area to the next leaving in its wake ridership and healthy business case
- Leveraging from other sources – similarly to proving demand, coordination with other services such as health shuttles, education services, work shuttles etc. as a way to illustrate demand and pathway to a successful business case
- Integration with walking and biking
- Integration with urban transport
- Advocating to Government – i.e. KiwiRail/ Intercity have service requirements

I applaud Horizons approach of seeking the public's vision for the future in this consultation and for being more aspirational and focused on people. Thank you.

A recently retired, 35 year transport career professional provided the following insights. "I would argue that one of the most important questions to be asked is "how do we design a network of services that will be useful to the greatest number of people? As an example increasing frequency between Palmerston North and Whanganui using existing bus may be more useful to more people.

By applying "network thinking" the same basic transport planning principles applying to metropolitan areas also apply to a large area like Horizons. Finding the most appropriate balance between accessibility, equity, patronage, frequency, coverage and connectivity; which provide for the most efficient use of available resources.

This response also endorsed the schematic concept maps produced as shown in Figure 5. The response also outlined the complexity of the task to match attractiveness of services along with treating each route as part of a network that otherwise may not justify direct services. Another point made was the need to connect with services in neighbouring regions in order to create a national network, which could prompt central government to address the situation with a national strategy for sustainable and reliable funding for bus and rail services.

Another consideration made was the use of local targeted rates specifically for transport projects, with Auckland's Rodney Local Board provided as an example.

Southern boundary

Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC) provided feedback to this review which was also supported by the Chairs of the Ōtaki and Waikanae Community Boards.

Feedback covered the challenges and pressures faced by Ōtaki and Te Horo communities, impacts limited access and connection has on the local communities' wellbeing, and the ability for public transport to improve Ōtaki and Te Horo's access to services and community outcomes.

The feedback was thorough and provided clear evidence supporting the need to address public transport network gaps for the two areas.

KCDC stated public transport provides a key function connecting people and places. These networks are particularly important for rural centres where they support access to core services and opportunities for communities. They noted this discussion is timely with the current challenges faced by Ōtaki Township and surrounding Te Horo area.

For context Ōtaki sits on the boundary between the Wellington and Horizons region. While Ōtaki sits in Wellington Regional Council area, with its bus and train networks looking southwards, most of its core community services are based in the Manawātū area. The lack of regular and reliable public transport connections, both north and south, means residents don't have the same level of access to services available elsewhere.

A disconnect has been created across the two regions. Residents who need to access health, courts, police and social support services look northwards to Levin for their closest service centre, or further afield to Palmerston North for higher level services. Recently the Ministry of Social Development has recently relocated the administrative centre for Ōtaki residents to Manawātū, further increasing the need to travel north.

Limited current services

- Ōtaki residents currently have few transport options. The Capital Connection is the only train that serves the station. Wellington commuter trains don't go as far as Ōtaki with Metlink services ending in Waikanae. The only public transport option to and from Waikanae is a local Ōtaki bus. Frequency of the 11 times a day service means wait times of between 50 minutes to two hours. A one trip return bus service from Levin to Waikanae runs across regional boundaries twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays only.

Recognising the gap

- KCDC has identified the lack of public transport connection north is a significant issue. Effectively there are no services north to access services. The impacts of limited public transport options mean there is a heavy reliance on cars, compounding housing stresses and contributing to poor wellbeing outcomes. This also creates a barrier to employment, education and other critical services with residents requiring a car. Te Horo faces similar challenges to Ōtaki.
- As well as residents needing access north there is also need for access from Levin to Ōtaki with a significant education precinct consisting of Te Wānanga Te Raukawa and number of kura in and around Ōtaki. A lack of options for people to move between Levin and Ōtaki impact the community, schools, and whanau from maintaining connections and support.

Growth is further increasing the needs for public transport.

- While acknowledging the work of the two regional councils to secure improvements to Capital Connection services for the future this is not enough and does not address current needs and future growth of the northern corridor. Ōtaki is experiencing growth and will require both connections within and across and outside the area. A key part of the future growth aspirations for the district is to achieve better carbon and low emissions outcomes.

Te Horo has similar challenges

- There is an opportunity to solve Te Horo challenges when addressing Ōtaki.

Working together to explore short and longer-term options

- Horowhenua and Kāpiti Coast District Councils are currently undertaking work to identify the current and future needs of their districts.
- The transport challenges faced by Kāpiti Coast and Horowhenua District Councils provide an opportunity for collaborative work with central government agencies, regional and local councils, iwi and local community to address identified needs. KCDC are keen to discuss further and invite Horizons to be involved.
- Recent changes to the Land Transport Amendment Act remove previous impediments to inter-regional transport solutions, which could support a sub-regional approach across Kāpiti-Horowhenua area.
- Interested in exploring with Horizons extending existing transport arrangements or support for connectivity across regional boundaries and mechanisms to meet current needs in Ōtaki.

In summary

1. Both Ōtaki and Te Horo currently have poor public transport connections limiting their communities' access to core services. This need is only increasing as growth occurs across the Kāpiti and Horowhenua areas, exacerbating issues of access to services.
2. The Regional Services Review provides an opportunity for government agencies, regional and local councils, Ngā hapū o Ōtaki and local communities to work together to identify shared public transport solutions across regional boundaries to help address these needs – over the short, medium and longer-term.
3. KCDC look forward to further engagement to help understand and address needs across Kāpiti/Horowhenua areas.

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) provided feedback to the review. Their feedback included the following four key summary points.

GWRC supports:

1. New inter-regional services through the Lower North Island Rail Integrated Mobility project.
2. The connection objectives, We strongly agree with connecting places to rail services alongside the “Capital Connection” upgrade
3. Horizons’ targets to reduce congestion, travel times and carbon emissions.
4. Horizons’ initiative to provide a coordinated approach toward public transport services and planning, promoting equity and accessibility.

Western boundary

Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) are highly supportive of Horizons initiating the Regional Services Review committed to in the RPTP.

To reiterate key related points in TRC May 2022 submission on Horizons draft RPTP are set out below:

- TRC strongly supports Horizons seeking to explore and improve our regional public transport connections.
- TRC believes there to be strong support in Taranaki for better linking our two regions with public transport. From New Plymouth to Whanganui and further afield, with particular emphasis on the Hāwera to Whanganui section of the route, which will also provide for Pātea, Waverley and Waitōtara.
- The three territorial authorities within Taranaki have also indicated their support for introducing better cross-regional public transport.
- TRC wishes to work with the Horizons Regional Council to investigate and develop better inter-regional public transport connections for the benefit of both our regional communities, and national emission-reduction goals.

We note that:

The restricted provision of public transport to being within local government regional boundaries, which are based primarily on water catchments, is arbitrarily limiting for transport services and does not serve our regional communities optimally.

There are currently no cross-regional public transport services between our two regions. InterCity operates a commercial inter-regional coach service along State Highway 3, which is limited to one service, four days per week (Tuesday/Wednesday/Saturday/Sunday). Understandably, the coach business model is largely based around recreation, where travellers have flexibility about arrival times. This is clearly not conducive to commuting for work or education, and is very limiting and expensive for even targeted day trips — for example accessing medical appointments, sporting and cultural events, or visiting Whanganui Prison or Whanganui Hospital.

The town of Waverley is between the town of Hāwera and Whanganui city at around 44km in each direction. Currently, the only public services supporting the around 2,500 residents are to Hāwera twice-weekly.

Many people cross the regional border in either direction for work, either into Whanganui from Taranaki, or from Whanganui into South Taranaki – in particular to the Silver Fern Farms processing site near Waitōtara.

Additionally, iwi tribal boundaries/affiliations do not correlate to local government boundaries, which is another reason to ensure that broader public transport options are considered. In the context of RPTPs, this particularly affects one of Taranaki’s eight iwi, Ngā Rauru Kītahi, which is located largely in South Taranaki but have a number of their marae and other cultural affiliations in the Whanganui district.

We look forward to working with Horizons on this important co-development area, and will ensure that the Taranaki RLTP makes suitable reference to these investigations.

Northern boundary

Responses received requesting travel which has no connection with the region so has not been included as this falls outside of the region and is not interconnected with neighbouring districts.

3.9.3 Additional information

A social pin-point inter-regional public transport survey in Taranaki - 'I Love Public Transport' was undertaken in October 2022. A spreadsheet of the results from this survey was shared by a submitter. Below are relevant findings from the survey that relate to public opinion of Taranaki residents views on inter-regional travel to Manawatū-Whanganui.

Questions posed in the survey were:

Do you think Taranaki would benefit from better public transport links with other regions such as Horizons? *Responses – Yes 92, Maybe 2, No 1, Blank 2.*

Would you use a bus between Te Hāwera and Whanganui? *Responses – Yes 42, Maybe 25, No 18, Don't Know 4.*

Would you use a bus between New Plymouth and Taumarunui? *Responses – Yes 20, Maybe 32, No 33, Don't Know 8.*

Would you use a bus between New Plymouth and Whanganui? *Responses – Yes 46, Maybe 25, No 14, Don't Know 3.*

Thoughts were also provided by responders on specific operational details for a successful bus service. These comments can help inform future investigations into any inter-regional services.

4 Conclusions

The Regional Services Review has successfully shown a snapshot of the needs and aspirations of transport interested individuals and groups for better regional public transport connections across the region. The data from the review provides a clear perspective across the region and enables transport planning conclusions to be drawn. Informed conclusions will be further socialised in a detailed manner with local communities so operational matters such as style, funding and frequency can be investigated further.

4.1 We saw

The following broad conclusions are drawn from data detailed throughout this report.

4.1.1 Aspiration

It is clear there is an appetite and demand for new and improved services to better connect villages, towns and cities with public transport services. While demand was evident in responses across all seven districts, some districts were more vocal and activated in their responses.

Support was for moderate or significant changes to services and changes to funding levels required to achieve this. The level of funding required to meet the level of ambition voiced by the feedback is unknown at this early stage. Once details are socialised this will give a clear signal on the actual level of willingness of the public to pay for change.

4.1.2 The reasons

As expected people have told us they make regular trips for a number of reasons. These reasons vary according to age and location of respondents. The reason for travel helps to inform the style of services required. Smaller populations indicated a greater demand for travel to access services such as shopping and healthcare. Larger centres such as Palmerston North, Whanganui and Feilding indicated higher demand arising from travel for work reasons.

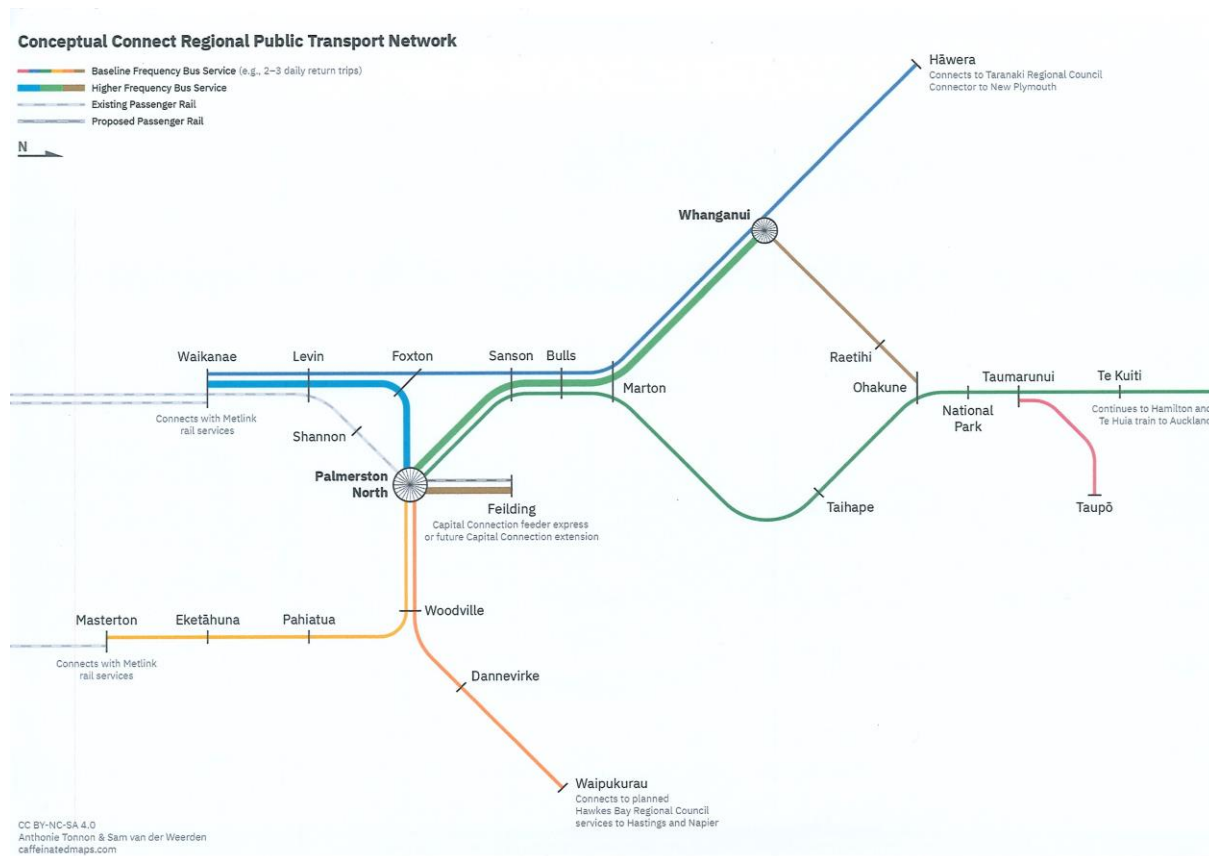
4.1.3 Travel directions

The patterns of travel indicated from responses to the review showed nothing unexpected. Largely small communities need travel to larger centres for a range of needs and large centres need to connect to other large centres. There is a strong directional pull to the main urban centres of Palmerston North and Whanganui; a strong demand south to the Wellington region and in particular to access rail at Waikanae. Internal travel within the region showed demands for new services in areas with transport gaps such as Taranaki to Palmerston North and requests for feeder services from outlying populations in Horowhenua, Palmerston North, Manawatu and Rangitikei. Ruapehu shows differing demands with the southern areas travelling south while the northern parts are aligned more to the central North Island.

When looking at inter-regional travel outside of Horizons region there is a high demand south with some demand east and west. North of the region showed the least demand.

4.1.4 A network example

The following **Conceptual Connect Regional Public Transport Network** document supplied by Anthonie Tonnon and Sam van der Weerden is ambitious and aligns with many of the findings from the review and is a sound starting point to providing recommendations to PTC.



In the Outcomes report a recommended draft network map will be provided taking into account the many considerations contained and mentioned in this report.

5 Next steps

The Connect the Dots public engagement on regional and inter-regional public transport services has provided officers with strong evidence to proceed with recommendations to take further to the PTC to discuss and make decisions on the future shape of a regional public transport network.

5.1 Outcome report

The **Regional Services Review Outcome Report** will be prepared by officers and presented to PTC for discussion. This will help to inform inputs in to the **Horizons Long Term Plan (LTP)** and **Waka Kotahi National Land Transport Programme (NLTP)** processes.

Appendix 1: Public Transport Units integral to the network

Public transport units in the Horizons region that are integral to our public transport network are split into a layered network as follows:

Table 5a Public transport units

CORE
Core services create efficient routes and networks of routes around urban areas. Ability to transfer and the use of cross town Operate at higher frequencies and aim to be competitive with the private car, integrated with active and other transport modes. Could have a higher level of service peak times and lower off-peak.
LOCAL
Local services provide coverage to areas of PT network not well served by core services. Include lower frequency urban services linking lower density areas to destinations and key nodes on the core network. Integration with core networks provide multiple choices for the final destination.
REGIONAL
Regional and inter-regional services link core urban networks to other core urban networks, and/or link two or more urban areas of varying sizes. Reach smaller rural destinations where they sit along the route. They include rail services. Generally have more limited operational hours and lower frequencies to meet the needs of the community.
TARGETED
Targeted services which aim to provide services to areas or link destinations where there is not a core or local service, or where normal services cannot meet peak demand. Targeted services include 'feeder services' that connect to regional or inter-regional services, school bus services, on-demand/demand responsive services, community vans and health shuttles, and special event services. Targeted services should aim to link with core, local and regional services.

The table below lists the integral public transport regional service units with contractual obligations currently in operation. Any decisions on future services need to take consideration of this.

Table 13b Table of integral regional public transport units for the Horizons region

Service Unit	Service Area/Route	Expiry
Ashhurst to Palmerston North	Ashhurst to Palmerston North (return)	Feb 2033
Whanganui to Palmerston North Commuter	Whanganui to Palmerston North (return)	Oct 2028
Marton to Palmerston North Commuter	Marton to Palmerston North via Bulls, Sanson and Awahuri (return)	Jan 2025
Taihape to Palmerston North	Taihape to Palmerston North via Hunterville, Ohingaiti, Marton, Bulls, Sanson, and Feilding (return)	Jul 2025
Taihape to Whanganui	Taihape to Whanganui via Hunterville, Ohingaiti, Marton and Turakina (return)	

Raetihi to Ohakune bus service	Raetihi to Ohakune (return)	Jul 2025
Feilding to Palmerston North	Feilding to Palmerston North (return)	Jan 2025
Levin to Palmerston North Commuter	Levin to Palmerston North (return)	Mar 2025
Levin to Waikanae	Levin to Waikanae (return)	Mar 2025
Day Out in Town	Levin to Shannon, Foxton, Foxton Beach and Waitāre Beach, Levin loop (return)	Mar 2025

Community vans, health shuttles and other services

There are a number of community vans, health shuttles and other services operating within the Horizons Region. While these services are partly funded by Horizons, they don't form part of the 'integral' services managed by Council. They are however an important service for communities who need access to health services and other services. The table below outlines the current services running in the region.

Table 14c Table of targeted non-integral public transport units operating in the Horizons Region

Service Unit	Service Area/Route
Tongariro National Park Public Transport Service	Ohakune and National Park
Durie Hill Elevator	Durie Hill, Whanganui
Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation Services	Around Palmerston North and districts
Order of St John South Whanganui	Around Whanganui and districts/ Whanganui and districts to Palmerston North
Order of St John Marton Health Shuttle	Marton to Whanganui
Taumarunui Mobility Van	Around Taumarunui and districts
Order of St John Waimarino Health Shuttle	Waimarino district to Whanganui
Order of St John Dannevirke Health Shuttle	Around Dannevirke/ Dannevirke and districts to Palmerston North
Order of St John South Tararua (Bush) Health Shuttle	Around Pahiatua and districts/ Pahiatua and districts to Palmerston North
Dannevirke Community Vehicle Trust	Around Dannevirke
Pahiatua Community Vehicle Trust	Around Pahiatua
Foxton Beach Community Services	Foxton Beach to Foxton, Levin, Shannon and Palmerston North
Horowhenua Health Shuttle	Around Levin/ Levin to Palmerston North
Order of St John Feilding Health Shuttle	Around Feilding and districts/ Feilding and districts to Palmerston North

New / Proposed Public Transport Units

This section outlines new or proposed public transport units to be implemented over the duration of the RPTP. The following information is taken from the RPTP 2022-32.

The units identified as a **high** priority should be undertaken by 2024.

The units identified as a **medium-high** priority should be undertaken by 2026.

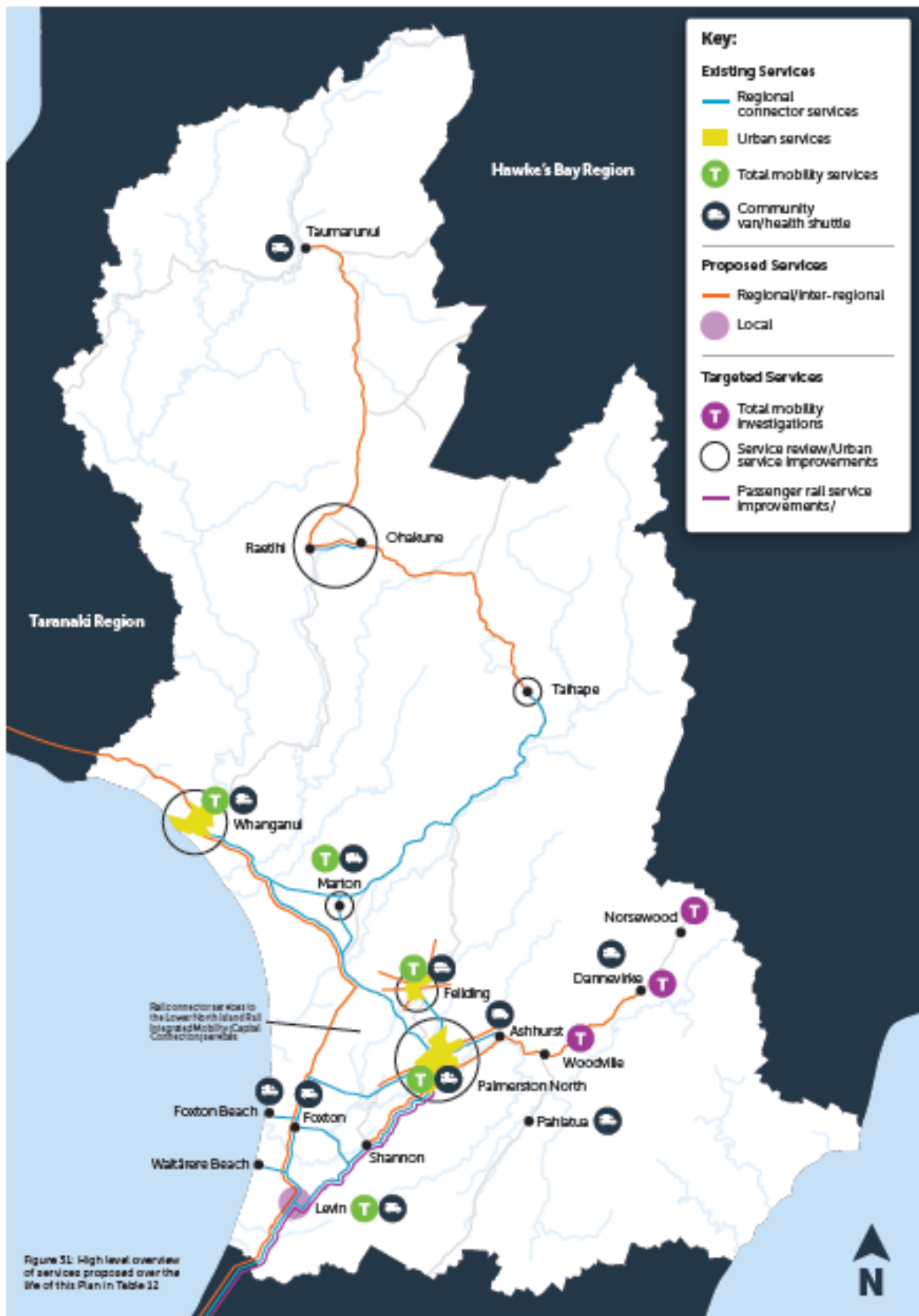
The units identified as a **medium** priority should be undertaken by 2028.

All remaining units should be undertaken by 2030.

Table 15d Proposed Public Transport Units as stated in RLTP 2022-32 (inc. regional references only)

Service Unit	Service area/route	Proposed changes / investigations	Service type proposed	Start	Priority
Regional services for Manawatū district	Kimbolton, Colyton, Halcombe, Rongotea, Cheltenham, Āpiti	Investigate demand for and feasibility of services in line with Regional Review for small communities surrounding Feilding. Either to connect to Feilding township or Palmerston North	Regional and inter-regional	2023	High
Feilding service review	Feilding to Palmerston North	Express services between Palmerston North and Feilding	Regional / inter-regional	2023	Medium-High
Horowhenua inter-regional public transport	Whanganui to Levin (return) Palmerston North / Levin to Wellington	Investigate demand for and feasibility of services in line with Regional Review. Enable access from Whanganui to Levin and Palmerston North and Levin to Wellington to enable access and alternative travel options to additional services.	Regional and inter-regional	2024-25	Medium-High
Dannevirke to Woodville & Palmerston North connector	Dannevirke Woodville	Investigate demand and feasibility for introducing a connector service between Dannevirke and Woodville	Regional / inter-regional	2024-25 *possibly in line with new highway opening	Medium-High
Improved regional connections to/from Palmerston North	Linton Longburn Pohangina Shannon	Investigate demand and feasibility for introducing regional connector services for these areas in line with Regional Review	Regional and inter-regional and local (TBC)	2024-25	Medium – High

Service Unit	Service area/route	Proposed changes / investigations	Service type proposed	Start	Priority
Raetihi to Ohakune public transport unit review. Ruapehu District Services	Raetihi Ohakune	Review existing service to assess demand and identify any operational efficiencies or opportunities in line with Regional review. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leveraging off tourism opportunities Incorporating services for Taumarunui, National Park, Waiohuru infrastructure & marketing improvements use low emission technology, particularly for services in the National Park area 	Regional and inter-regional	2026	Medium
Taihape-Palmerston North / Whanganui service review Rangitikei District connections	Taihape to Palmerston North / Whanganui	Review existing service to assess demand and identify any operational efficiencies or opportunities in line with Regional Review. Determine any connection gaps and assess demand for local services between these small communities for access to health services and employment.	Regional and inter-regional	2026-27	Medium
Marton to Palmerston North commuter	Marton to Palmerston North via Bulls, Sanson and Awahuri	Review existing service to assess demand and identify any operational efficiencies or opportunities in line with Regional Review.	Regional / inter-regional	2026-27	Medium



Other longer term projects

There are a number of other possible projects which will be considered over the lifetime of the RPTP 2022-32. They are of low priority and therefore are identified as longer-term projects. The projects are broken down by district and listed below:

Whanganui

- Inter-regional Public Transport between Whanganui and surrounding towns and villages e.g.
 - Waverley, Whanganui airport, Turakina, Ūpokongaro, Whangaehu, Fordell, Kaitoke, MaryBank, Kai Iwi, Rātana

Rangitikei

- Explore need for a Marton to Whanganui commuter (for employment or health service access);
- Consider whether a regional connector service is needed between Mangaweka and Taihape to provide access to shopping and health services;
- Consider whether a regional connector service is needed between Hunterville and Marton or Bulls to provide access to shopping and health services.

Ruapehu

- North Island Connector Rail: explore and possibly advocate for possible inter-regional rail connections for access to health, education or employment services;
- Explore demand and feasibility of a connector service from small towns to Taumarunui;
- Taupō/Tūrangi mountain connection: work with Waikato Regional Council to establish if there is demand for an inter-regional tourism opportunity for services between Taupō and Mount Ruapehu.



horizons.govt.nz

24 hour freephone 0508 800 800

fax 06 952 2929 | email help@horizons.govt.nz

Private Bag 11025, Manawatu Mail Centre, Palmerston North 4442