Horowhenua DISTRICT COUNCIL

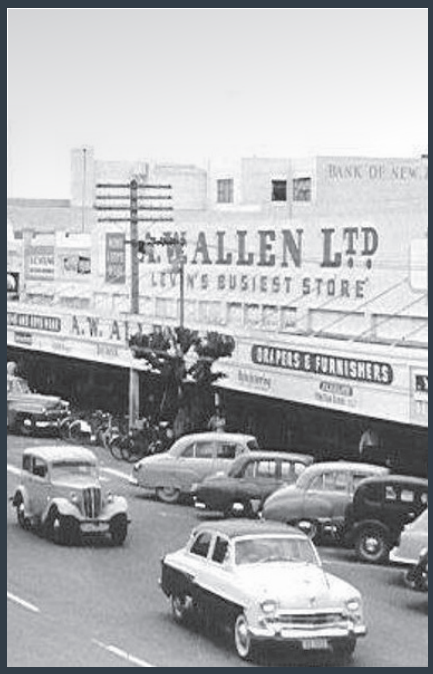
LEVIN TOWN CENTRE TRANSFORMATION



Levin Town Centre Transformation

A quick guide on how we intend to shape and deliver on the Levin Town Centre Strategy




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TRANSFORMATION

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The Levin Town Centre Transformation

The vision for the Levin Town Centre transformation is to create an attractive and vibrant urban town centre environment that supports economic growth, fosters community engagement and promotes sustainable development, ultimately enriching the quality of life for residents and visitors in Levin.

The Levin Town Centre Transformation Strategy was developed in 2018, and presented a vision for the town centre and concepts of how it can transform to be a more vibrant, resilient and sustainable place.

While some work on the town centre planning was undertaken following the adoption of the Strategy in 2018, the work was paused during the Covid period.

In 2023, this strategy was updated through various workshops with Council, enabling a refreshed focus on areas to transform. In December 2023, Council approved the implementation plan that will move the revised transformation strategy to a programme of delivery.

Levin Town Centre Strategy PDF

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES ARE:

- Become a 'destination' that does not rely on state highway traffic for success
- Consolidate the town centre and enable development on the eastern and western side of Oxford Street
- Provide a variety of activities, including quality retailing and hospitality based activities
- Improve the commercial offering and overall experience of Oxford Street
- Respond to the challenges and opportunities associated with earthquake prone buildings
- Support and encourage a range of transport options that serve the community's needs
- To respond to new opportunities that will achieve the vision of the Levin Town Centre transformation

The Levin Town Centre "Big Six" Considerations

The 'big six' are the most pressing issues for the Levin Town Centre, however they also present the greatest opportunities for ensuring a positive change, that creates a town centre.

1. TOWN CENTRE ACTIVITY

The viability of traditional 'street' shopping is declining due to the variety and convenience online shopping offers. The choice offered in nearby larger centres also means that it is difficult for Levin to compete. To remain competitive, the town centre needs to offer a wide range of activities and social experiences that online shopping cannot provide. The town needs to be seen as a quality asset to unlock wider employment potential and an evening economy.

2. SPATIAL ORIENTATION

The main commercial area in Levin stretches along Oxford Street, spreading and diluting activity and investment. However, market dynamics have tended to define a core retail area that sits between Bath Street in the south and Stanley Street in the north. Concentrating activity in this central area by providing a new focal point should aim to increase density and diversity of activity and boost vibrancy in public areas. This will also provide opportunity for further development west of Oxford Street.

3. POTENTIAL EARTHQUAKE-PRONE BUILDINGS

Many buildings in the town centre are potentially earthquake-prone. The Building (Earthquake-prone Buildings) Amendment Act 2016 has deemed Levin a 'high seismic risk area'. This means building owners of earthquake prone buildings in Oxford Street have until September 2032 to strengthen or demolish their buildings. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity to transform our town centre through new building configuration and design.

4. Ō2NL

The proposed new Ō2NL highway, scheduled to open in 2029, will see state highway traffic bypass the Levin Town Centre. A bypass will remove highway related retail spend, as well as make it easier for people to leave town to shop in Kāpiti and Wellington. However, the converse of this is improved connectivity between Levin and our southern neighbours. This potentially attracts more retail spend from these areas if the experience in Levin is better or different.

In addition, when Levin is bypassed and Oxford Street is no longer a State Highway, Council will have greater ability to alter the layout and design of Oxford Street to make it better suit the future needs of the town centre.

5. TRANSPORT OPTIONS

At present, the Levin Railway Station is located outside the town centre and lacks a clear connection with the town centre. There are currently limited public transport options servicing Levin. Cycling and walking infrastructure is also limited. Improving the variety of transport options servicing the town centre will be environmentally friendly, attract visitors and new residents to the area by improving connectivity to the north and south and make the town centre more accessible for Horowhenua residents.

6. TOWN CENTRE IDENTITY

The town centre does not currently have a distinct identity or reflect the unique history and culture of Levin. Displaying this in the design and activities offered in our town centre will help us to develop as a destination with a clear identity that can help attract visitors and investment.

How will we deliver the Levin Town Centre Transformation?

Transforming the Levin Town Centre will take a number of years, so we are proposing to take a programme approach to the work.

A programme identifies the elements of the town centre transformation and then manages the delivery of these elements project by project. This will provide a structured way and manageable approach that will maximise community involvement, financial feasibility and measurable progress. It allows for adaptability, engagement and a sense of achievement as the town centre evolves and transforms overtime.

THE PROPOSED LEVIN TOWN CENTRE PROJECTS

The project mix for delivery of the town centre core priorities to be a more vibrant, resilient and sustainable place include:

TOWN CENTRE CONSIDERATION	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Town Centre Activity	**Town Centre Activation Plan**	Levin Town Centre activation will explore and develop new events and activities that will attract residents and visitors to the town centre
	Domain Interface	Domain interface will identify ways to enhance and integrate the Levin Domain into the town centre, allowing residents and visitors to enjoy this significant green space
	Levin War Memorial Hall and Village Green and Skate Park	Develop the Levin War Memorial Hall and surrounding spaces to improve aesthetics, vibrancy and community benefits and offerings within the town centre
	Replacement Skate Park Development	This project is proposed if the existing skate park is included in redevelopment plans and funding of a replacement skate park is required
	Old Courthouse Building (in the Rose Garden)	The Levin Historic Courthouse has been restored, repurposed and is now home to the Old Courthouse Eatery, a vibrant new hospitality venue, that encourages visitors and residents to enjoy the Old Courthouse and surrounding Nola Simpson Rose Garden
	Bath/Salisbury Street Carpark Redevelopment	Develop the Bath Street/Salisbury Street Carpark to improve the vibrancy and offerings of the town centre

TOWN CENTRE CONSIDERATION	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Town Centre Spatial Orientation	**Property Acquisition**	Develop a strategy for identifying and acquiring properties that will support the development of the town centre. This project includes the acquisition of Oxford Street properties
	Oxford Street Lane Connections	Developing lane connections along Oxford Street
	Levin Town Centre Pathways and Connections	Developing lane connections within the town centre to enable visitors and residents to access aspects of the town centre in a connected way
	Central Lane Development	Development of the service lane to be more accessible, visually appealing and better integrated with the town centre
Potential Earthquake Prone Buildings	**Levin Town Centre Earthquake Prone Building Plan**	Liaise with owners of earthquake prone buildings within the Levin Town Centre and develop an engagement plan to assist and inform building owners of classified earthquake prone buildings as to their available options going forward. Consider appropriate settings and incentives to encourage progress
Ō2NL	**Revocation Planning**	Develop a plan and design for the future form and function of Oxford Street and the Levin Town Centre to ensure that when Ō2NL opens in 2029, accessing the town centre remains easy, inviting and the visual appeal of Oxford Street is enhanced
Transport	**Accessibility**	Review town centre accessibility to ensure all modes of access are catered for, and can freely and conveniently access all aspects of the town centre. This will assist in forming a carparking strategy, as well as the pathways and connections
	Access and Parking Strategy	Review carparking locations, quantities and locations to ensure carparking is fit for community needs now, and in the future
	Transport Hub	Review transport mode options and location for a transport hub
Identity	**Placemaking**	Develop and implement placemaking that will attract people to the Levin Town Centre, to spend time there and help to enhance the identity of the town centre



Shaping and Leading the Levin Town Centre Transformation

As the town centre transforms, it is important to align ideas, interests and expectations as the programme progresses. A programme governance and operational management structure has been adopted that will help share information to enable engagement and decision making.

The Levin Town Centre programme will be delivered using the above programme governance and operational management structure, with the following functions and groups:

GOVERNANCE AND DECISION MAKING

- Elected Members provide governance to advise and steer the Levin Town Centre programme. The Elected members support the programme to make decisions by providing oversight, guidance and direction to the Levin Town Centre Transformation programme.

SHAPING AND LEADING

- Community Steering Group: Contribute and inform details of the Levin Town Centre projects. They represent the interests of people, places and businesses that will use, visit, live and play in the town centre. The Community Steering Group will include representation from local youth, community groups, iwi and business, as well as two appointed Councillors and one Māori Ward Councillor.
- Operational Programme Assurance Group: This group consists of the Chief Executive, Group Manager Community Vision and Delivery and the Programme Delivery Team who will provide management oversight, and two independent specialists who will provide independent commercial advice and oversight.

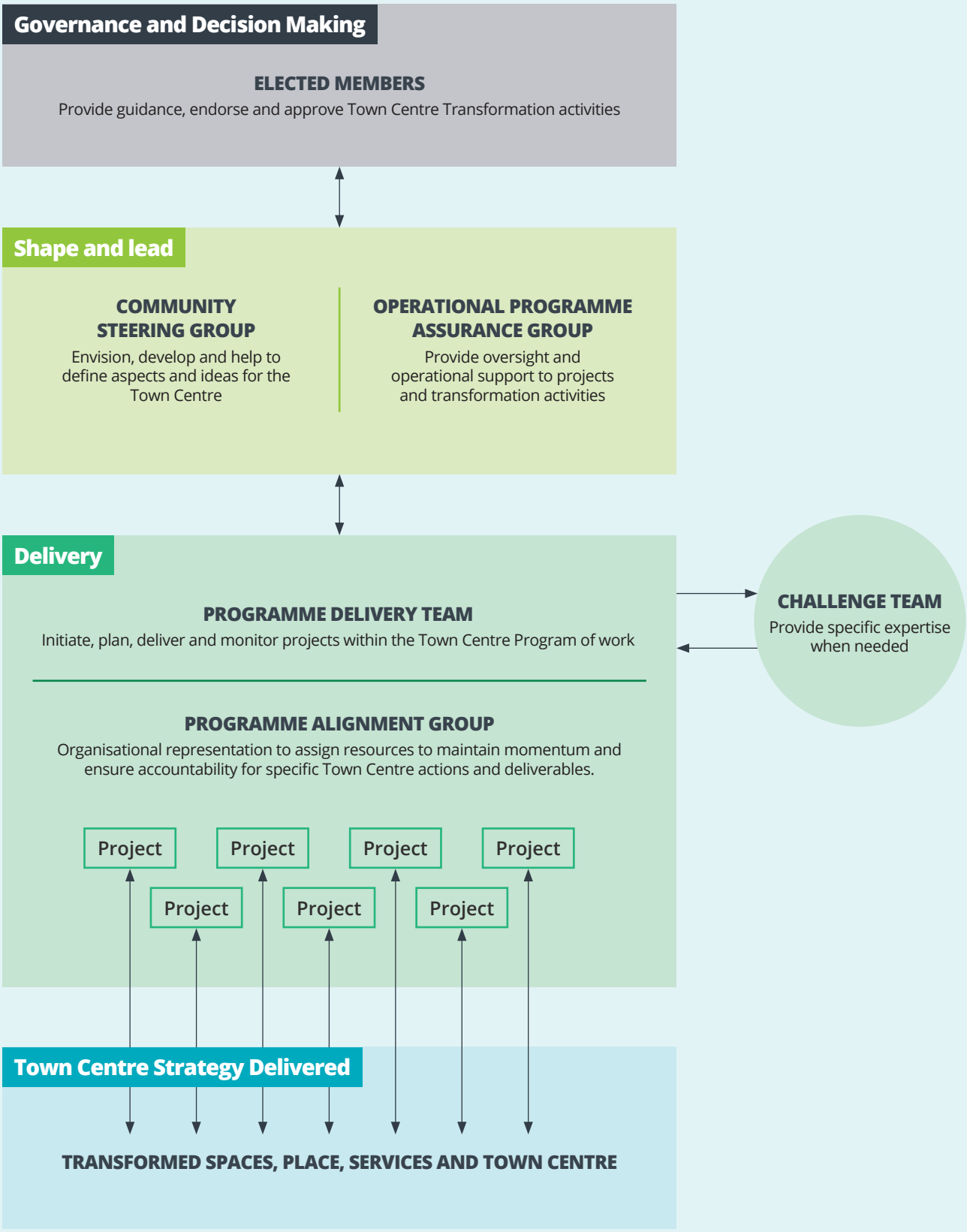
DELIVERY

- Programme Delivery Team: Programme delivery refers to the organising and sequencing of multiple projects that will be required to transform the Levin Town Centre, and seeks to manage the interdependencies and interconnectedness of each. Programme management includes the identification of projects, planning and sequencing as well as monitoring and managing project delivery where appropriate.
- Challenge Team: Offers expertise and experience of key minds and previous contributors. They will incorporate new and existing expertise and ideas to bring a refreshed approach and thinking to the Levin Town Centre Transformation. The Challenge Team include members who bring external technical and specialist expertise not currently held within Council. These members bring ideas and experience that compliments the needs of the Levin Town Centre programme.
- Programme Alignment Group: Ensures internal organisational alignment and representation across the Council to assign resources, maintain momentum and ensure accountability for specific Levin Town Centre actions and deliverables. The structure of this group may change slightly depending on what projects are in flight and the relevant parts of the organisation involved. There is the opportunity to also include external partners if there is the desire to be involved in the regular operations of delivering the programme.

When will the Levin Town Centre Transformation start?

The Levin Town Centre Transformation has begun with several projects identified for delivery between 2024 and the end of 2026. The programme of work is expected to continue beyond the opening of Ō2NL at the end of 2029.

Levin Town Centre Programme Governance and Operational Management



What does an Operational Programme Assurance Group member do?

Our Operational Programme Assurance Group members provide oversight and operational support to the Levin Town Centre programme of work and transformation activities by providing guidance and direction to the Programme Delivery Team.

They attend regular Operational Programme Assurance Group Meetings, but may also come together more frequently as required by the Programme Delivery Team, where information is required to be shared or decisions are needed.

Operational Programme Assurance Group Members:

- Understand the context— what the Levin Town Centre Transformation needs to achieve to be successful
- Understand how the objectives will be met through the Levin Town Centre Transformation projects
- Bring insights from relevant broader context to the Levin Town Centre Transformation
- Evaluate any risks and the mitigations escalated to them by the Programme Delivery Team
- Question the thinking and assumptions behind the programme deliverables
- Act objectively and independently
- Make timely decisions that are in the best interest of the Levin Town Centre Transformation programme of work

CHECKLIST FOR OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME ASSURANCE GROUP MEMBERS

- ☑ Understand the context of Levin Town Centre, why projects are being undertaken and what needs to be achieved to be successful
- ☑ Understand how the Levin Town Centre Strategy will be met through the programme objectives and activities
- ☑ Stay engaged in the progress and direction of the programme
- ☑ Bring insights, viewpoints and potential opportunities from relevant broader contexts to the programme
- ☑ Ensure the project remains aligned with the town centre's strategic direction
- ☑ Understand the risks and proposed mitigations
- ☑ Question the thinking and assumptions behind project management deliverables
- ☑ Make timely decisions that are in the best interests of the Levin Town Centre Strategy and community
- ☑ Ask "Are we comfortable that the programme is delivering as expected, and is aligned with the outcomes we require?"

What does a Community Steering Group member do?

The Levin Town Centre Community Steering Group helps determine concepts and elements for the programme of work in the Levin Town Centre. They represent the interests of people, places and businesses that will use, visit, live and play in the town centre.

They attend workshops as arranged by the Programme Delivery Team, and may be sent information to read and consider prior to attending workshops.



CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNITY STEERING GROUP MEMBERS

- Are direct links to the community and represent those affected by the Levin Town Centre Transformation
- Give a voice to visitors, communities and business expectations and needs
- Are important and effective advocates for the changes
- Help to envision, develop and define the desirable components for projects
- Help to articulate the benefits, opportunities and challenges
- Help to develop plans for engaging and communicating changes
- Identify and connect resources who may be available to work with the projects
- Ask "Will the proposed project bring positive change and fulfil current and future needs?"

What does a Challenge Team member do?



The Levin Town Centre Challenge team offers expertise and experience of key minds and previous contributors, by incorporating new and existing expertise and ideas that will bring refreshed thinking and approaches to the Levin Town Centre Transformation.

They attend meetings and workshops as arranged by the Programme Delivery Team, and may be engaged as required to provide specific advice on their areas of expertise.

CHALLENGE TEAM MEMBERS

- Are external to the programme and to Levin who offer experience and expertise in relation to urban planning or have been previously involved in shaping the Levin Town Centre Strategy.
- Introduce people and ideas that could help contribute to the Levin Town Centre Strategy
- Provide insights from a New Zealand and international perspective
- Add an external context to enhance or challenge thinking.

CHECKLIST FOR CHALLENGE TEAM MEMBERS

- ☑ **Offer specific expertise and experience to the Levin Town Centre Transformation**
- ☑ **Help understand correct strategic sequences to proceed**
- ☑ **Identify relevant good practice exemplars**
- ☑ **Help to challenge concepts and provide new ideas and approaches to the Levin Town Centre**
- ☑ **Can robustly test the perceived benefits, opportunities and challenges**
- ☑ **Understand the different perception of visitors, communities and business expectations and needs, and offers suggestions or new opportunities to satisfy these**
- ☑ **Ask "Given what I know, is this the best way to proceed, or can I offer different ideas?"**


Whispers
Stirling Sport

What does a Programme Delivery Team do?

The Programme Delivery Team is responsible for the successful delivery of the projects within the Levin Town Centre Programme and report to the Operational Programme Assurance Group.

This internal team of Council Officers are responsible for managing and ensuring the projects produce the required outcomes within the agreed time, cost, quality, benefits, scope and risk. They also will facilitate the required meetings and engagement with the Levin Town Centre governance and programme leadership groups.

PROGRAMME DELIVERY TEAM MEMBERS

- Manage and deliver the projects within the programme of work
- Communication and stakeholder engagement
- Manage project schedules and budgets
- Monitor and manage risks, issues, conflicts and dependencies

CHECKLIST FOR PROGRAMME DELIVERY MEMBERS

- ✓ **Manage the day-to-day running of the programme of work**
- ✓ **Plan and design the projects required by the programme and gain the approval from the Operational Assurance Group group to deliver the projects**
- ✓ **Monitor and report on project status**
- ✓ **Coordinate resources to deliver outcomes defined in the project scope**
- ✓ **Facilitate and attend programme leadership meetings and workshops, supplying the relevant information and context to members**
- ✓ **Identify risks and issues to resolve or initiate appropriate corrective actions**

Horowhenua
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