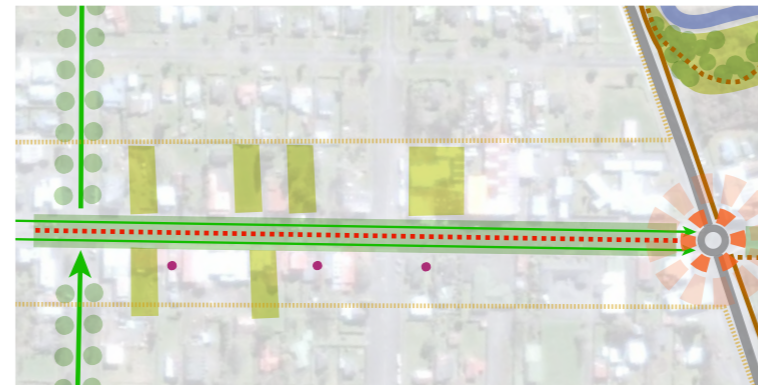


# RAETIHI TOWN CENTRE

RAETIHI, RUAPEHU DISTRICT



CONCEPT PROPOSALS

April 2017

# Ruapehu township revitalisation - Raetihi

Ruapehu communities have made it clear that they are no longer prepared to see their District and townships drift economically.

They want to see:

- Their townships thriving again with a wide variety of prosperous businesses,
- More and better paying job opportunities,
- More people choosing to live, work and play in Ruapehu.

The revitalisation of our townships is a critical part of achieving these things.

In Raetihi Council has been working with Raetihi Promotions to help them realise their township development plans 2025 Vision for the township.

Council is supporting the 2025 Vision and work programme and has engaged urban design specialists Bespoke Landscape Architects to develop concept plans for the Raetihi town centre.

On Wednesday 7 December 2016 Bespoke undertook a 'walkabout' with Council and Raetihi Promotions to gain insights to inform the concept plans.

The concept plans provide a visual representation of one possible development path.

Council now wants to know what you think about the concept plans.

Putting Raetihi and our other townships on a path to growth and prosperity will take ideas, energy and passion from the people who will benefit the most, our local communities.

It is important to note that these development plans are concept ideas only. Nothing is set in stone.

They are part of the conversation Council is having with residents, community groups and other stakeholders to narrow down what people like, don't like, feel is important, not important, the order and stages of any development, etc.

I encourage you to take part in this opportunity to have your say.



Don Cameron  
Ruapehu Mayor



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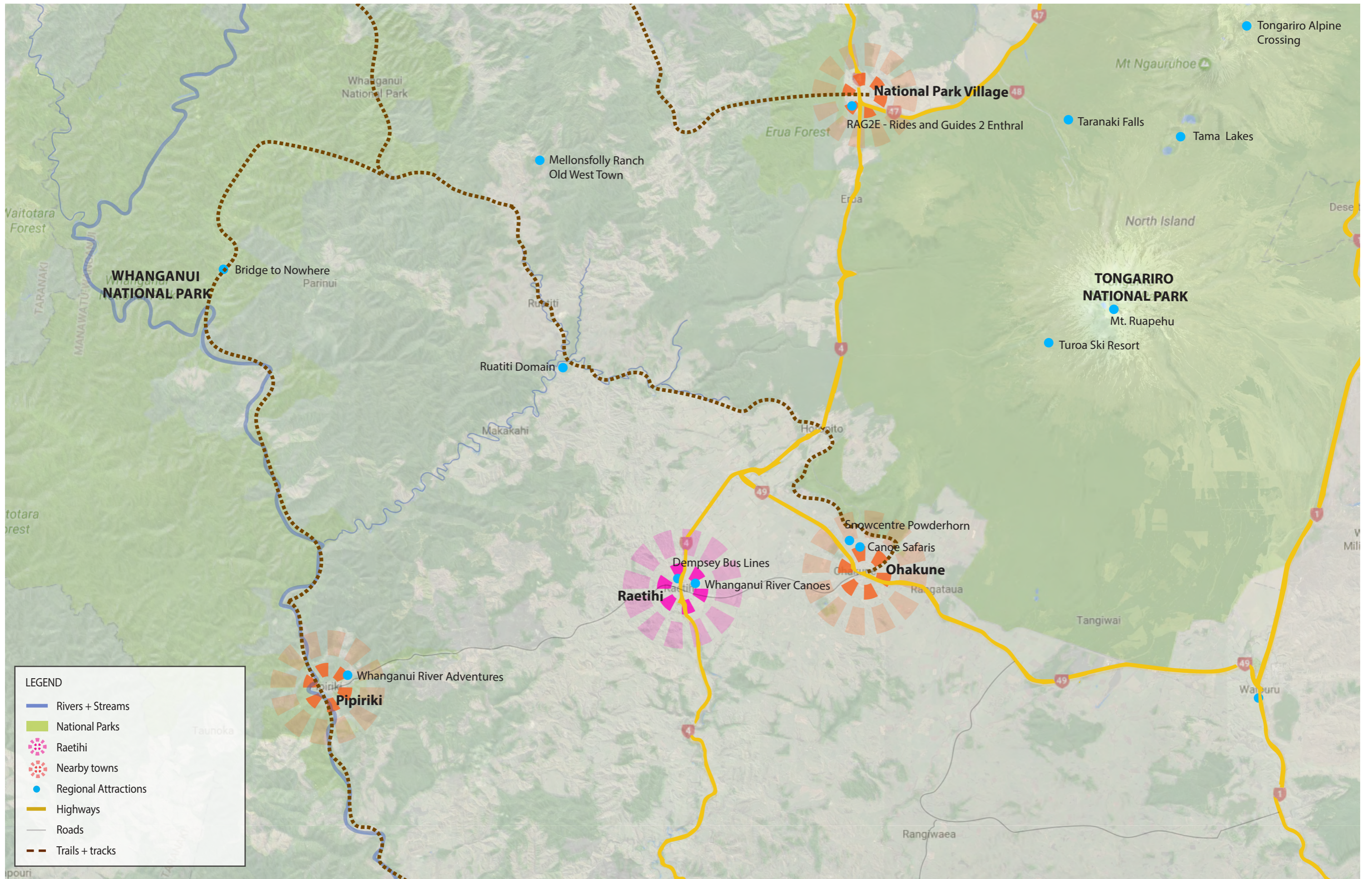
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# **SECTION 01**

RAETIHI INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS



**LEGEND**

- Rivers + Streams
- National Parks
- ⊙ Raetihi
- ⊙ Nearby towns
- Regional Attractions
- Highways
- Roads
- - - Trails + tracks







**LEGEND**

- ⊙ Raetihi CBD gateway
- ⊙ Key intersections
- Existing commercial buildings in use
- For Lease / vacant commercial buildings
- Parks + Open Space
- Undeveloped open space
- Community focused buildings
- Underutilised / under renovation community buildings
- Essential links / CBD feeders
- Tourist Resources
- Community Resources

## **SECTION 02**

RAETIHI COMMUNITY-WIDE MASTER PLAN



# KEY POINTS: COMMUNITY-WIDE SCALE

## ANALYSIS FINDINGS

- RAETIHI sits amongst numerous remarkable natural features, with some located directly in town
- RAETIHI is a well centered orienting point, nestled between two national parks
- There is a strong quaint, rural character to RAETIHI
- Residential streets are of a comfortable width, and have reasonably low traffic volumes
- There are gaps in connectivity in and around town, both pedestrian and cycle. Particularly connections to the natural features along the Makotuku River corridor and the CBD are lacking, incomplete, or could see improvement
- Access to existing natural features in RAETIHI could improve, and work to support more recreation, for both the local community and visitors
- Strong indicative signage / gateways entering RAETIHI could be better addressed and implemented
- The intersection of Seddon Street with SH4 would benefit from the implementation of a roundabout to slow traffic and highlight the RAETIHI CBD.
- Open green spaces within town are underutilised and could be increased as a key point of the CBD character

## CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT + RECOGNITION

- We acknowledge that consultation with iwi on this project is yet to occur. We do however strongly believe that cultural engagement and recognition is a vital part of creating a holistic and meaningful identity for RAETIHI, that all residents and visitors can relate to
- It is our belief that the feedback and received during consultation is often best integrated after the initial larger spatial ideas have been tabled and can form a basis for comment. With the concept master plan acting as the framework, this may then be enlivened further with rich cultural content in the refinement of the design
- It is worthy of note that all ideas currently tabled have been documented to generate and stimulate discussion - at this stage everything is open for comments and has the ability to incorporate change

## CONCEPT DESIGN STRATEGIES

- Provide a clear image of RAETIHI as a community that stands apart from its neighbors (conveyed across various mediums of gateway signage, activities, gathering spaces, and cohesive town character)
- Utilise plant species which are inherent to the natural alpine setting
- Create places that embrace RAETIHI's cultural diversity, RAETIHI locals, potential newcomers, and tourists
- Support sustainable practice and development within RAETIHI
- Develop an interconnected series of pedestrian and cyclist links throughout town
- Integrate RAETIHI's living history into town, making it accessible to the passerby through signage, wayfinding, and cohesive RAETIHI town character
- Highlight the natural environment that surrounds RAETIHI, and provide diverse recreational opportunities that showcase those environments
- Create a stronger high street presence through continuity of streetscape elements along the full extent of the CBD strip (trees, planting, lights, crossings, etc.)
- Provide places for people to gather, to hang out, and places where town social events can occur
- Implement a gateway roundabout at the intersection of Seddon Street and SH4
- Highlight and provide greater access and engagement with the river
- Utilise materials for built elements (signage, seating, gateways) which are relevant to the local area - current, historical + cultural context



**LEGEND**

- Makotuku River
- - - CBD streetscape improvements
- Parks + Open Space
- Town Centre Greening + Street Enhancements
- ✱ Raetihi town gateways
- ✱ Central CBD gateways
- ⊙ River engagement opportunities
- ↔ Bike Boulevard
- ↔ Bike Boulevard expansion opportunities
- ↔ CBD Cycle lanes
- Makotuku River walking track
- ⊙ Prominent tourist attractions
- Tourist resources
- < Scenic river views

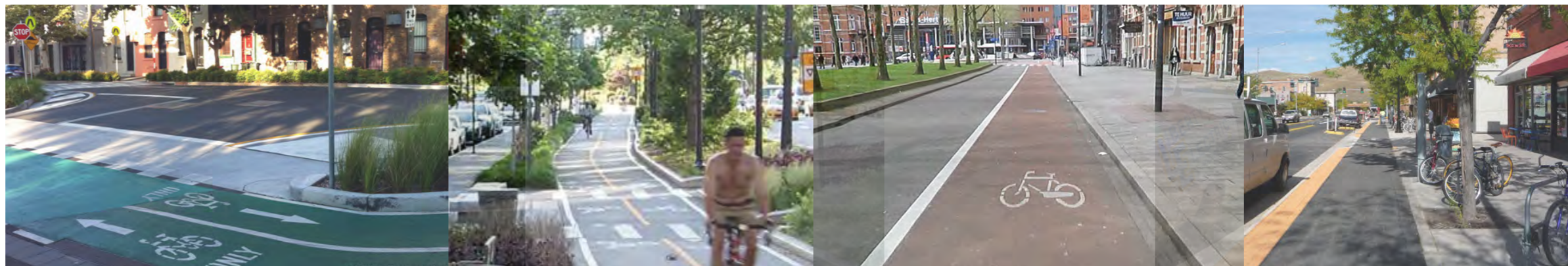
# bike boulevard

A bicycle boulevard, is a type of cycleway composed of a low-speed street which has been "optimized" for bicycle traffic. This intervention usually requires only creative interventions to show cyclist priority, rather than physical works. Cyclists are given the use of the entire lane.



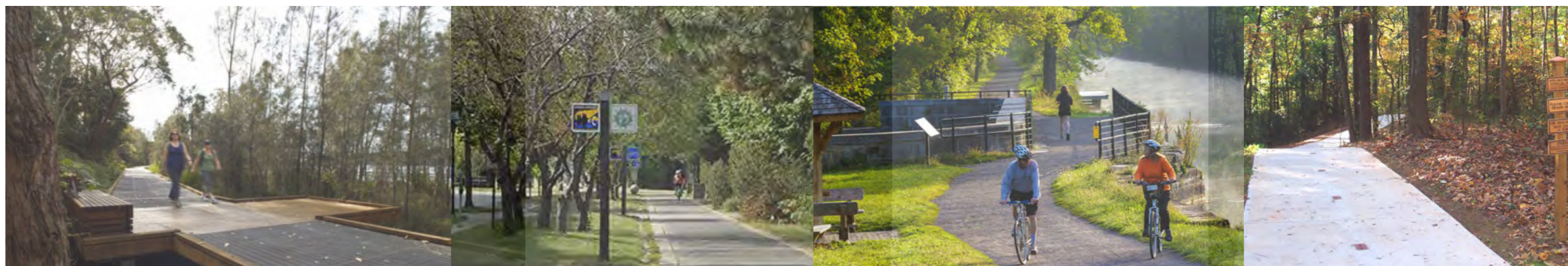
# on-street cycle

On -street cycle lanes are ideal for urban and town CBD situations, offering safe and experiential transport for both vehicles and cyclists. On-street cycle lanes can be implemented in a large range of ways and are compatible to any budget. They also serve the community as traffic calming, vibrancy, and resiliency enhancements.



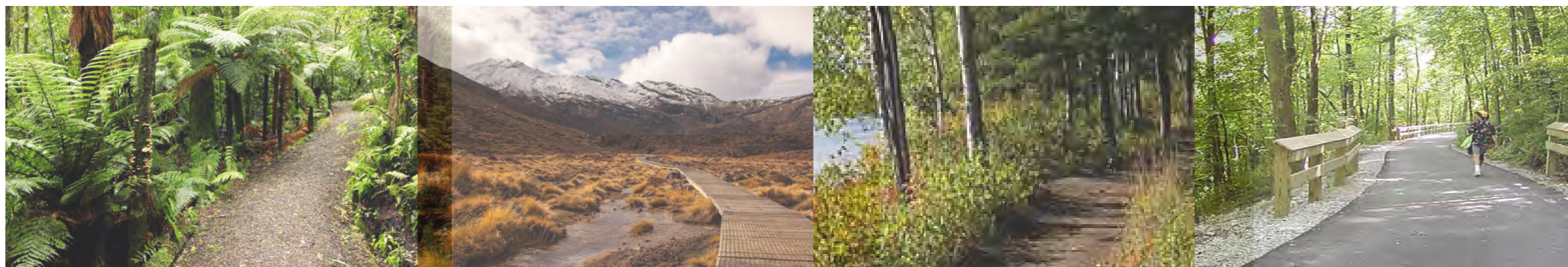
# multi-use trail

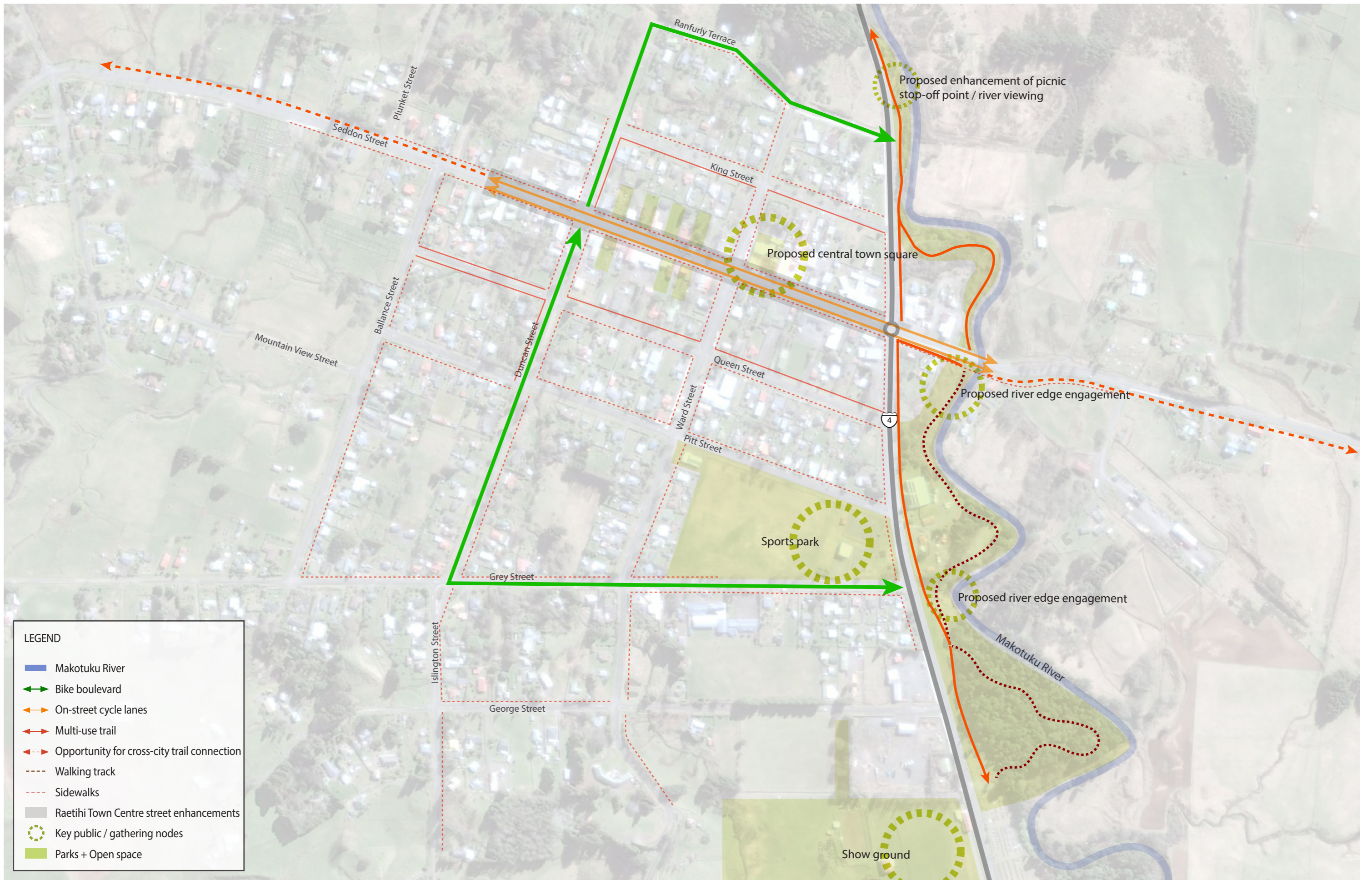
A multi-use trail is considered to be a path that is physically separated from vehicular traffic by either an open space or barrier, and can enhance a region's recreational potential greatly. They accommodate two-way traffic for non-motorised users such as pedestrians, cyclists, joggers, and skaters. They can be paved with asphalt, concrete or a crushed gravel depending on users.



# walking track

A walking track is a path (1.5-2.5m wide) intended for pedestrians only and often has a more intimate experiential quality with the surrounding landscape. Walking tracks can occur in any type of landscape, from wetlands, native bush to forests. Materiality can be simple such as dirt, sawdust, or gravel; they can also be more formalised in boardwalks.





**LEGEND**

- Makotuku River
- ↔ Bike boulevard
- ↔ On-street cycle lanes
- ↔ Multi-use trail
- - - Opportunity for cross-city trail connection
- - - Walking track
- - - Sidewalks
- Raetihi Town Centre street enhancements
- Key public / gathering nodes
- Parks + Open space



**RAETIHI TOWN GATEWAYS**



RAETIHI's town gateways can benefit from the use of RAETIHI-specific, contextual materials that visually communicate the character of RAETIHI to all those entering town. People can get a flavour of what RAETIHI represents very quickly, whether it is river stone pulling from the context of the pristine Makotuku River, volcanic rock drawing from the larger Mt. Ruapehu context, steel and timber from historic industries, or an alpine focused planting palette.

**USING CONTEXTUAL MATERIALS TO STRONGLY COMMUNICATE RAETIHI IDENTITY TO LOCALS AND VISITORS**



**USING CONTEXTUAL PLANTING THAT FEATURES PLANTS OF ALPINE CHARACTER TO COMMUNICATE RAETIHI'S MOUNTAINOUS SETTING**



**RAETIHI TOWN GATEWAYS**



In addition to incorporating contextual materials to RAETIHI's town gateways, RAETIHI-specific forms can also be integrated to add another layer of meaning. Form can express many different facets of RAETIHI. It could reference the cultural diversity of RAETIHI, the natural landscape, or parts of RAETIHI's history. Artistic interpretations of these elements in gateway signage, bridge enhancements, and roundabout centres, can communicate these interesting facets of RAETIHI and make RAETIHI's identity highly accessible to locals and visitors alike.

**OPPORTUNITY TO INCORPORATE CONTEXTUAL FORMS AND MATERIALS THAT TELLS RAETIHI'S STORY IN SIGNAGE, BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS, AND THE PROPOSED ROUNDABOUT**

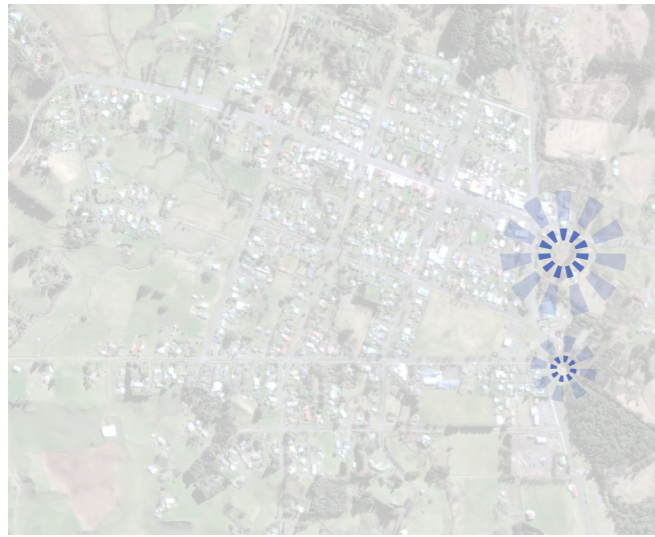


Gateway signage that incorporates contextual Raetihi materials, and also speaks to local culture, Maori heritage as well as industrial heritage. Bridge forms that reflect the alpine context of Raetihi and the nearby ranges that rise up on either side of Raetihi.



The Highway 4 roundabout has the potential to be a strong welcome feature for Raetihi and also provides an opportunity to tell Raetihi's story in a meaningful, visual display of public art and planting. Themes that could be represented may be local ecosystems, geology, landscape typologies, previous / current industries, cultural identity, etc.

**RAETIHI RIVER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**



RAETIHI is incredibly fortunate to have fantastic and diverse natural features in and around town. From mountains, to forests, to streams, to pasture. There are many landscape typologies that locals and tourists both seek to experience. Developing the infrastructure and accessibility to experience these landscapes brings amenity to locals already living in RAETIHI and also creates a strong magnet for newcomers and tourists alike. Looking towards the future of Eco-tourism and the immense growth still occurring in the industry, providing for such experiences as river edge engagement, fishing, forest tramps and cycling can have a huge impact on economics.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR VARIOUS RIVER EDGE ENGAGEMENT / GATHERING SPACE ENHANCEMENTS**



Small viewing structures to capture river views; soft, informal paths; picnic areas and potential integration of picnic shelters; river edge walking / sitting opportunities; pulling river into gathering space for safe and dynamic play value.



Soft, informal paths between river edge experiences; more informal picnic areas; open lawn space to allow flexible use for events; small decks / piers along river edge.

## **SECTION 03**

RAETIHI CBD MASTER PLAN



# KEY POINTS: CBD SCALE

## ANALYSIS FINDINGS

- There is a strong quaint, rural character to RAETIHI
- RAETIHI has a surplus of commercial space available on Seddon Street. There are various properties that are underutilised and / or visually vacant. Innovative solutions need to be implemented that provide positive occupation of these buildings or potentially look at removal of some of the buildings
- Some commercial buildings may not be equitable to be retained long term
- There are gaps in connectivity in and around town, both pedestrian and cycle. Connection into the CBD are incomplete, or could use improvement
- "Boutique" experiences are on the rise in RAETIHI, from art galleries to cafes and gardens
- The main street (Seddon Street) lacks visual continuity along its length, with variable components and disconnects in experience, impacting the strength of identity within the CBD (seating, lighting, planting, etc.)
- The current Seddon Street carriageway has substantial width, which contributes to the CBD corridor's feeling of emptiness
- The CBD lacks a central hub / square that could be of benefit for community use in a civic function and also for wider events
- The intersection of Seddon Street and SH4 would benefit from the implementation of a roundabout to slow traffic and highlight the RAETIHI CBD
- Open green spaces within town are underutilised and could be increased as a key point of character

## CONCEPT DESIGN STRATEGIES

- Develop the rural character and identity of RAETIHI, pulling the natural context into the CBD through a series of garden-like gathering spaces that create a strong point of difference to other CBD's in the region
- Utilise plant species which are inherent to the natural alpine setting
- Allow for flexible use of spaces and easy transformation of the CBD for special events / large gatherings
- Create a stronger high street presence with improved continuity and rhythm of lighting, street trees, planting, and crossings
- Additionally, improve character of Seddon Street to be more RAETIHI - specific and contextual in materials to assist RAETIHI in standing apart as a unique town
- Use vertical elements, such as street lights and trees, to visually compress Seddon Street's corridor
- Incorporate a central town centre square, with supportive gathering spaces through parklets + open space
- Provide CBD amenities, such as places to eat, rest, refresh. Include opportunities for outdoor cafe seating / garden spaces associated with businesses to be used for events, etc.
- Work with building owners, council and the community to regenerate use of commercial buildings in the CBD or remove some where feasible
- Implement a gateway roundabout at the intersection of Seddon Street and SH4
- Utilise materials for built elements (signage, seating, gateways) which are relevant to the local area - current, historical + cultural context

# sense of place

A strong 'sense of place' contributes greatly to creating a captivating place. Establishing Raetihi as an individual, beautiful and unique, is essential in attracting visitors to stop and explore, as well as rallying the community together. This is often done with consistency of themes throughout town that show contextual flair and community spirit, whether the application is lighting, public art, or streetscape structures and elements.



adaptive re-use of large industrial sheds

streetscape planting rhythm

public art that tells a passerby part of Raetihi's story

memorable places to stop at and spend time at

# a garden vibe

Moving the RAETIHI Community Gardens back into the core of town is a great way to encourage gathering in the CBD and contribute to a feeling of vibrancy and activity in town. It is also very effective for creating easy logistics to incorporate farmer's markets, educational events, or youth programs. Raetihi could also use gardens in a more general sense to develop a quiet and cozy vibe in town and a point of difference.



a place to hangout

community garden space

educational + event opportunities

# place to gather

Positive gathering space can bring a tremendous amount of vitality and liveliness to a central business district. Whether catered to locals or visitors, Raetihi can harness some of the retired, or underutilized, properties in town to establish a mix of gathering spaces such as parklets and cafe spill-out areas. In any urban environment, big or small, places for people to "hangout" is essential.



potential for a central town square

pop-up placemaking interventions

empty to engaging: using simple elements to make a empty space more interesting

street activation through outdoor cafe seating

# the central hub

Establishing RAETIHI's CBD as a central hub in town and a magnet to visitors, is about harnessing what is successful along Seddon Street and transitioning currently static areas into dynamic features that can serve Raetihi better. Creating strong street frontage and pedestrian experience helps businesses. Additionally, false storefronts and strategic demolition for green open space can fill in missing links.

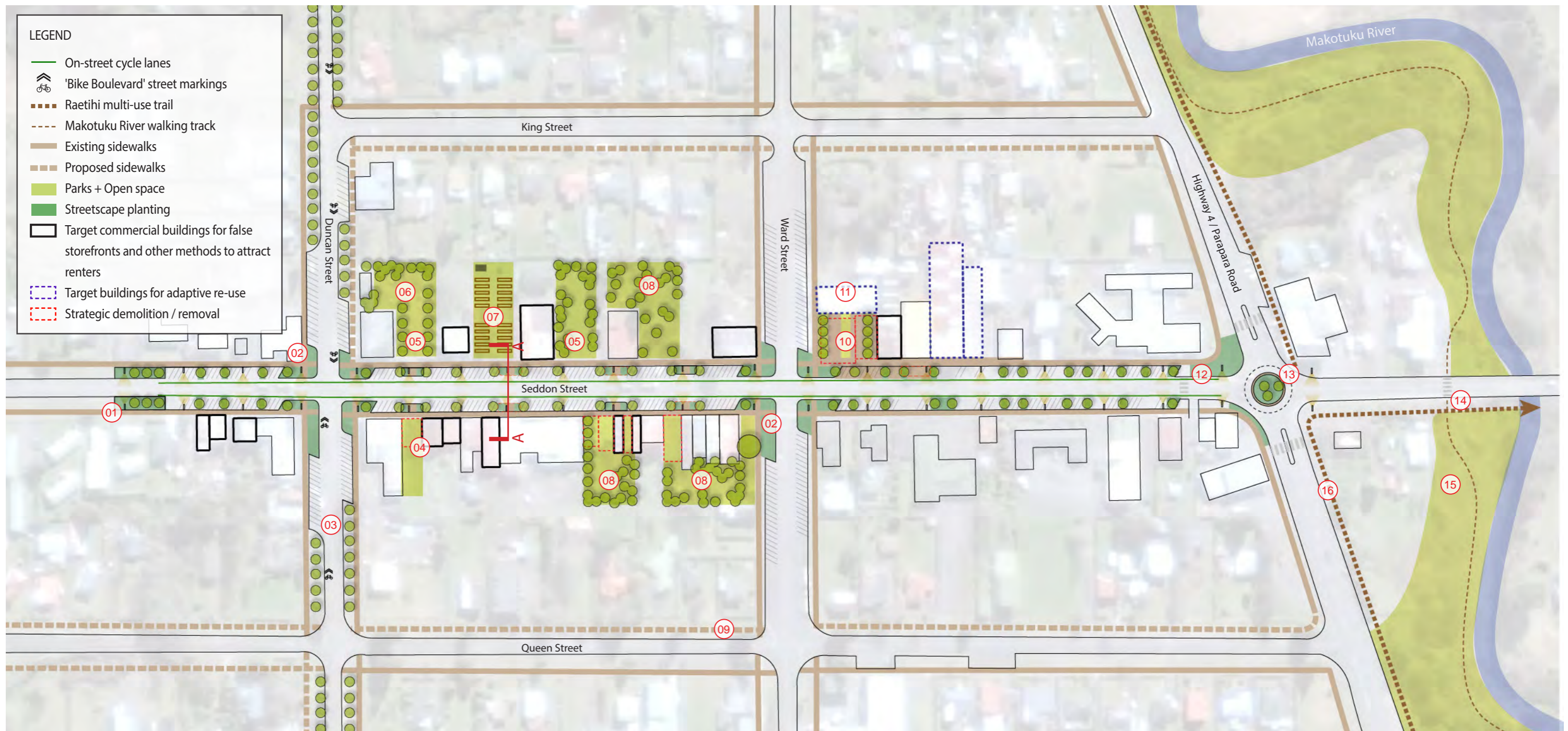


false storefronts

green alleyways + garden connections

false storefront / novelty attraction

flexibility for large events and town gatherings



- 01 West CBD gateway and planting, start of Seddon Street streetscape
- 02 Improved CBD corner treatment, offering better coherence, and incorporating planting and potential bench seating
- 03 'Bike Boulevard' interventions
- 04 Strategic removal of commercial buildings to lessen the degree of vacant shops and create new open space and garden connections.

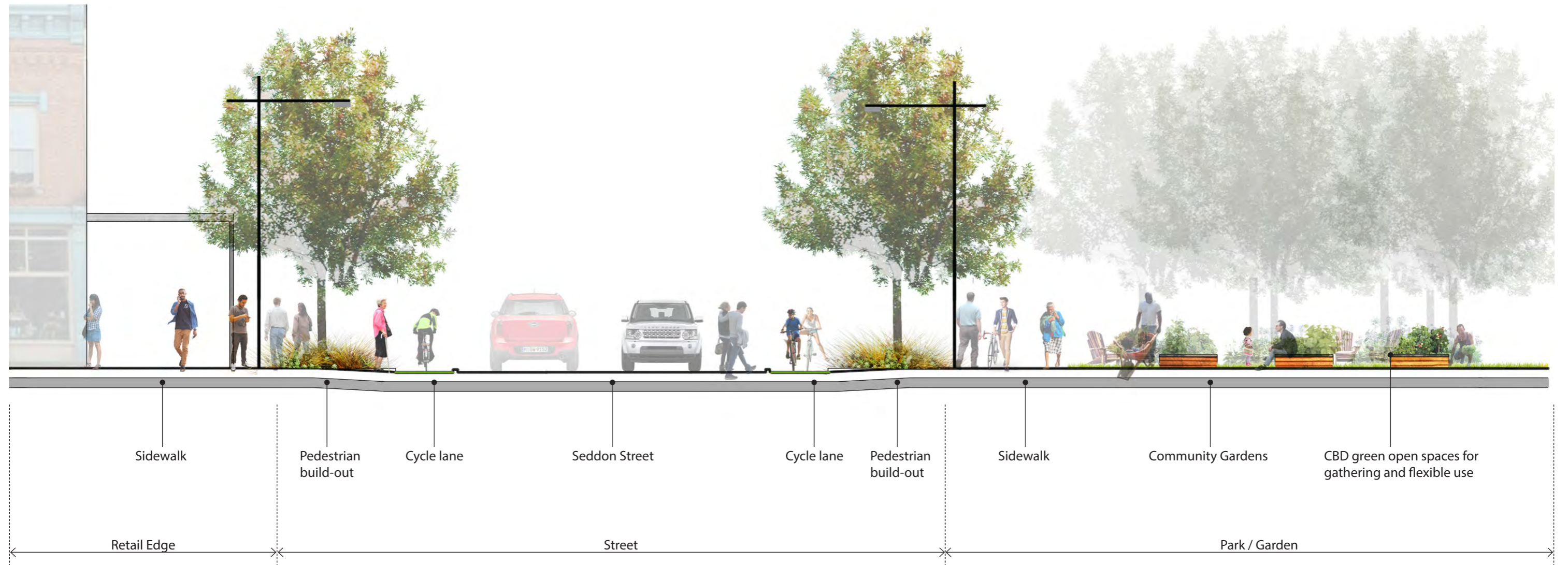
- 05 Adaptation of currently underutilized / undeveloped land into positive gathering space, through creation of a small parklet, with rural garden feel.
- 06 Encourage event spill out space in relation to future art gallery and adjacent parklet
- 07 Community Garden space relocated to CBD
- 08 Additional positive gathering space with a rural, garden feel as an extension of local businesses, such as outdoor cafe seating, with access to / from the street. Can be utilised for flexible event space also.

- 09 Potential sidewalk connections from CBD feeder streets, giving people safe and easy access to Seddon Street.
- 10 Strategic removal of commercial buildings to create a central town square
- 11 Adaptive reuse of shed steel structure to become public square pavilion and 'all seasons' gathering space for events
- 12 East CBD gateway and planting, start of Seddon Street streetscape

- 13 Establish a roundabout for traffic calming and improved wayfinding
- 14 Makotuku River Trail connection / crossing
- 15 Makotuku Riverside Park
- 16 Raetihi cross-city multi-use trail



TYPICAL SEDDON STREET SECTION ELEVATION



Incorporation of street rhythm of elements, utilisation of build-outs between parking sections (which can be planted and offer seating), encouragement of cafes to have outdoor seating and signage, integration of RAETIHI-specific alpine planting along the street corridor.