

# TARANAKI

Taranaki's economic reliance on freight intensive sectors, together with its relative isolation from major domestic markets and urban centres, means the region relies heavily on transport connections with the rest of the North Island for its economic and social wellbeing.

Over the coming NLTP period, our primary focus will be on completing major investments currently underway, and maintaining current levels of service on the state highway network. In addition, we are proposing to target Waka Kotahi-led activities towards:

- **Improving safety** on our roads which has been further strengthened by the launch of *Road to Zero: New Zealand's road safety strategy 2020-2030*. Road to Zero has a vision of a New Zealand where no one is killed or seriously injured in road crashes. Our contribution to Road to Zero includes an Infrastructure and Speed Management Programme focusing on delivering infrastructure improvements and speed management on New Zealand's road network, targeting investment on those roads and roadsides which offer the greatest potential for reducing deaths and serious injuries.

We will work with our safety partners in Taranaki to engage and deliver the Road to Zero Infrastructure and Speed Management Programme and ensure an integrated approach across state highways and local roads across this region.

We will also be ensuring a transition to lower speed limits on state highways around schools to improve safety and encourage more children to walk and cycle to school. Safety cameras play a critical role in preventing dangerous driving that puts people's lives at risk. We'll be managing safety cameras from 2021 and adopting a new highly visible, no surprises approach to reduce excessive speeds on our highest risk roads.

We will continue to work in partnership with key agencies including NZ Police, to deliver regional enforcement and behaviour change programmes targeted at speed, alcohol and drug impairment, and seat belt use.

- **Improving freight connections** by improving the resilience and safety of key inter-regional freight routes, including completion of the Mount Messenger Bypass on SH3 and targeted safety improvements proposed as part of the Road to Zero Infrastructure and Speed Management Programme.
- **Providing better travel options and responding to climate change** by working with our local government partners to improve transport choices, particularly in the high growth area of New Plymouth and supporting the region's aspiration to transition to a low emissions economy.

## **IMPACT OF COVID-19**

We do not expect any significant changes in the nature, scale and location of transport demand as a result of COVID-19, given the relative resilience of the Taranaki economy. The 10-year outlook remains largely unchanged. However, maintaining safe and reliable connections north and south remain important to supporting the region's recovery.

## **CONTEXT TO OUR PROPOSED INVESTMENT**

### **Improving safety**

While Taranaki has relatively low levels of total death and serious injury crashes compared to other regions, the location of the crashes indicates increased risk on the networks in and around New Plymouth and Hāwera, on SH3 between these two centres, and high-risk rural roads. Addressing these safety risks will be a key focus for our activities in the 2021-24 NLTP period.

Through our Road to Zero Infrastructure and Speed Management Programme, we are focused on delivering infrastructure improvements and speed management through targeted investment on Taranaki's roads and roadsides which offer the greatest potential for reducing deaths and serious injuries.

Within the Taranaki region over the next three years we are looking to invest \$23m to make 61km of state highways safer through infrastructure improvements and speed management to reduce deaths and serious injuries by just over 2%.

### **Better freight connections**

Taranaki relies on a safe and reliable SH3 connection north to Waikato, and the road and rail connections southeast to Manawatū-Whanganui to enable the efficient movement of freight to and from the region. Investing in the maintenance and operation of the existing state highway network, to ensure key freight routes remain open and are reliable, will continue to be the primary focus.

We expect to complete the SH3 Mount Messenger Bypass, which will provide a safer and more reliable connection for freight moving between New Plymouth and upper North Island markets. In addition, we will seek to implement any recommended low-cost-low-risk activities on the state highway network that improves safety and freight efficiency.

These initiatives will complement investment in SH43, the Forgotten World Highway, as part of the government's Provincial Growth Fund. The SH43 upgrades include safety improvements and passing opportunities, which will help improve freight connections.

## Better travel options

Taranaki is heavily reliant on private vehicles to move people around the region. Ensuring there are suitable safe alternatives to the private car, particularly in the growing urban centre of New Plymouth, will be essential if communities and businesses are to thrive and the wider region is to transition to a low emissions economy.

During 2021–24, we will continue to work with partners to improve network optimisation plans that help to improve the utilisation of all transport networks and travel modes and improve customer travel choices. Optimisation plans will be implemented largely through minor improvement investment and identified through the Network Operating Framework. Plan outcomes are the base case to identify any longer-term customer level of service gaps to be addressed through other means.

Over the next three years we expect to deliver a number of nationwide regulatory improvements, education and advertising campaigns, and operational policies and practices that will be applied to the Taranaki region, particularly New Plymouth, to support our partners in their efforts to drive mode shift. This includes supporting trials of street changes to encourage mode shift, that can be adapted quickly and implemented at low cost.

These initiatives will complement other mode shift activities currently being implemented as part of New Plymouth District Council's 'Let's Go' programme, together with ongoing multi-agency investigations to better integrate land use and transport planning and provide for future growth in New Plymouth via the 'Keep New Plymouth Moving and Growing' business case.

## Climate change

Vehicle emissions are a significant contributor to climate change – the impacts of which have a significant impact on the transport system. We have a dual responsibility to influence the reduction of vehicle emissions and improve the resilience of the transport network to climate change.

Through the Keep New Plymouth Moving and Growing business case, we will continue to work with local investment partners to develop a balanced transport system to serve the city's growing needs and reduce its reliance on private vehicles.

While there will not be any significant investment within the next NLTP period, this business case work marks a milestone in setting out a clear plan for the future of the transport system in New Plymouth, including increasing the availability of lower emission transport choices. We will also continue to engage with the 'H2 Taranaki' Hydrogen Ecosystem Development Centre in its role as land transport regulator, helping guide development of zero emission transport solutions.

A national evidence base of vulnerability and exposure of New Zealand's highway network to natural hazards was endorsed by the Waka Kotahi Board in May 2020. A regional risk assessment identified a total of 18 major risks within the Taranaki area. These relate predominantly to rockfall, landslip, erosion and flooding, primarily along SH3. All of the risks are rated major in the short term, but the majority are expected to come under increased pressure from storm intensity combined with relatively unstable terrain.

We are proposing to invest in low cost, low risk activities across the region, as well as delivering to *Toitū Te Taiao: our Sustainability Action Plan*, using various levers to galvanise a shift to a low carbon, safe and healthy land transport system.

## **WORKING TOGETHER**

We recognise the potential for growth in and around New Plymouth to support a safe and thriving city, with better travel options (access to public transport, walking and cycling options).

We will continue to work with key partners including New Plymouth District Council and Taranaki Regional Council to ensure land use development and the transport networks in and around New Plymouth are well integrated and provide people with safe and appropriate travel choices.

We will work with partners to complete network optimisation plans that help to improve the utilisation of all transport networks and travel modes and customer travel choices. Optimisation plans will be implemented largely through minor improvement investment and identified through the Network Operating Framework. Plan outcomes are the base case to identify any longer-term customer level of service gaps to be addressed through other means.

## NEW PLYMOUTH

**53,964**  
Urban area  
population






**92%**  
Of journeys to work  
by private motorised  
vehicle

**56%**  
Jobs accessible within  
45 mins by private  
motorised vehicle

**40%**  
Jobs accessible  
within 45 mins by  
the next best mode  
(cycling)



NEW PLYMOUTH URBAN CENTRE

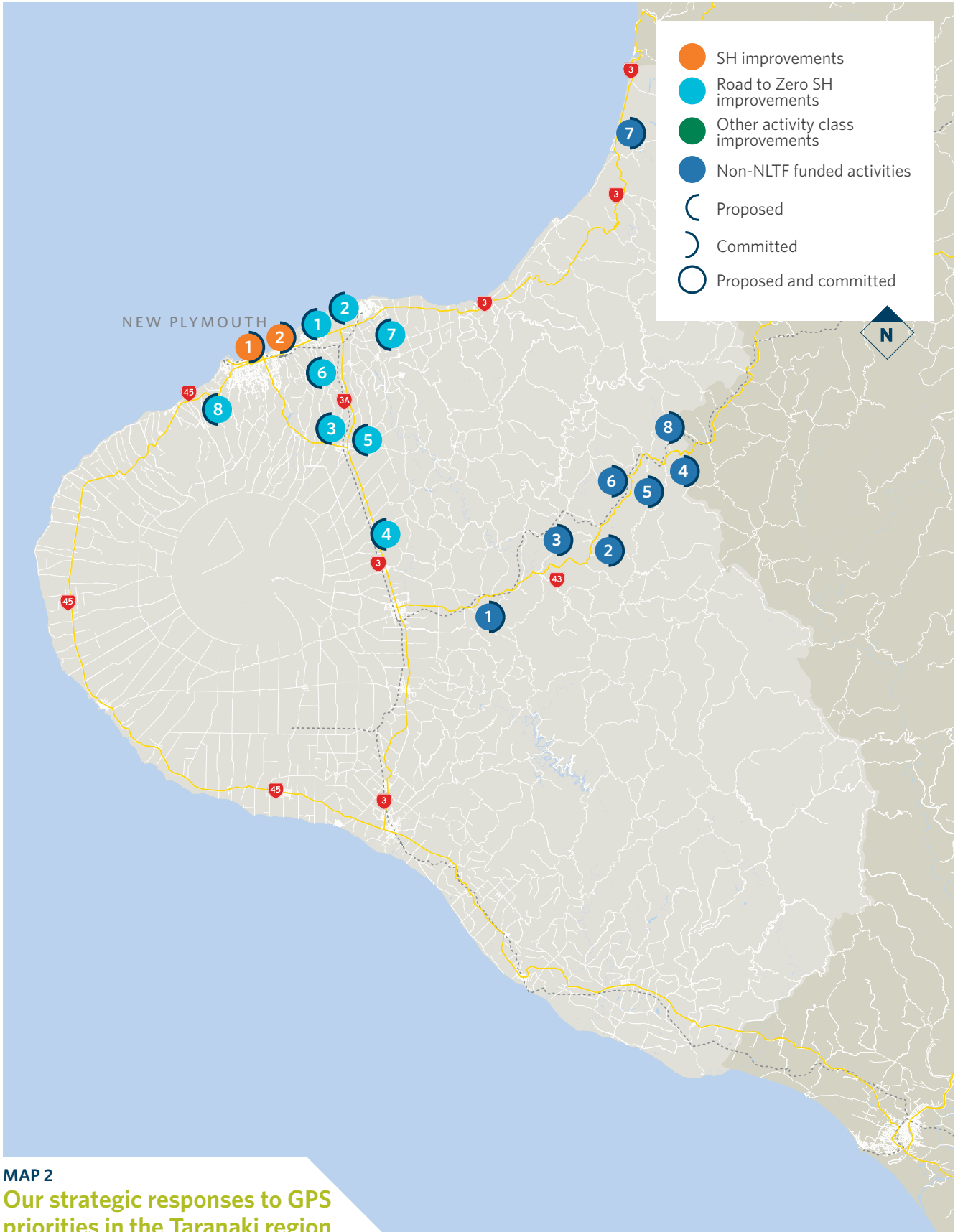
-  Regionally significant freight corridor
-  High crash density
-  Medium-high crash density
-  High level of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
-  Community with high level of road safety risk

Based on the evidence presented on the gaps across this region's transport system in terms of GPS priorities, table 1 presents our strategic responses.

**TABLE 1**

**Our strategic responses to GPS priorities in the Taranaki region**

<b>ID</b>	<b>STRATEGIC RESPONSE</b>	<b>PRIMARY GPS PRIORITY</b>	<b>DELIVERY PATHWAY</b>
TS1	Continue to operate reliable state highway freight connections from New Plymouth to Hamilton and Palmerston North	IFC	Regional maintenance, operations and Renewals
TS2	Reduce drug/alcohol impairment, increase seat belt use and reduce speeding through road policing and behaviour change activities	Safety	Assessed through NLTP process
TS3	Develop and implement mode shift activities around key activity centres in New Plymouth, in particular continue to improve active mode network connections and public transport (including on-demand) networks	BTO	Assessed through NLTP process
TS4	Road to Zero Infrastructure and Speed Management Programme	Safety	Assessed through NLTP process
	Government's support for regional economic development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SH43 Beaconsfield Road Bridge improvement</li> <li>▪ SH43 Passing Opportunities and Wayfinding</li> <li>▪ SH43 Manawawiri Stream Culvert improvements</li> <li>▪ SH43 Pohokura Stream Culvert improvements</li> <li>▪ SH43 Forgotten World Highway</li> <li>▪ SH3 Mt Messenger bypass</li> <li>▪ SH43 sealing Tangariakau Gorge</li> </ul>	All	New Zealand Upgrade Programme  Provincial Growth Fund



**MAP 2**  
**Our strategic responses to GPS priorities in the Taranaki region**

TABLE 2

## Proposed state highway programme for Taranaki region

REF	ACTIVITY NAME	ACTIVITY CLASS	FUNDING SOURCE	GPS PRIORITY	2021-24 PHASE	2024-27 PHASE	2027-31 PHASE	COST
<b>Committed state highway improvement activities*</b>								
-	State Highway Low Cost Low Risk programme	SHI	NLTF	All	IMP	IMP	IMP	\$\$
1	Normanby Overbridge replacement	SHI	NLTF	BTO	PTY, IMP			\$
2	SH3 Vickers Road to City upgrade	SHI	NLTF	BTO	IMP			\$
-	Programme business case development	SHI	NLTF	All		INV	INV	\$
* Commitments made under the 2018 GPS, contributions as shown.								
<b>Proposed Road to Zero capital state highway safety activities (greater than \$2m per activity)</b>								
-	Road to Zero Low Cost Low Risk programme	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP	IMP	IMP	\$\$
-	Regional Speed Management and Safety Infrastructure activities	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP	IMP	IMP	\$\$
1	SH3/3A Waitara to Bell Block	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$\$
2	SH3 and Mangati Road intersection	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
3	SH3 Egmont Road to Ngahere Street	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
4	SH3 Egmont Road to Flint Road	R2Z	NLTF	Safety		IMP		\$
5	SH3 and SH3A intersection	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
6	SH3 Devon and Corbett Road intersection	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
7	SH3 Main North Road and Princess Street intersection	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
8	SH45 Hurford Road to Barrett Road	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
<b>Proposed investment management activities</b>								
-	Strategic business case development	IM	NLTF	All		DBC	DBC	\$



REF	ACTIVITY NAME	ACTIVITY CLASS	FUNDING SOURCE	GPS PRIORITY	2021-24 PHASE	2024-27 PHASE	2027-31 PHASE	COST
<b>Committed non-NLTF funded activities</b>								
1	SH43 Beaconsfield Road Bridge improvement Kahouri Stream	-	Regional	BTO	IMP			\$
2	SH43 Passing Opportunities and Wayfinding	-	Regional	Safety	IMP			\$
3	SH43 Manawawiri Stream Culvert improvements	-	Regional	BTO	IMP			\$
4	SH43 Pohokura Stream Culvert improvements	-	Regional	BTO	IMP			\$
5	SH43 Forgotten World Highway safety improvements	-	Regional	BTO	PRE, IMP			\$
6	SH43 Moki Tunnel	-	PGF	BTO	IMP			\$
7	SH3 Mt Messenger bypass	-	PGF	BTO	PTY, IMP	IMP		\$\$\$
8	SH43 sealing Tangariakau Gorge	-	Regional	BTO	IMP			\$