

Top of the South regional transport update – August 2019

Overview

Population growth is putting pressure on the Nelson and Tasman urban transport network. Our focus is on delivering better transport choice in Nelson and Richmond with improvements to both cycling and the public transport network.

A key piece of this work will be progressing the Nelson Future Access project detailed business case. Broadly, this work will look at the Rocks Road and Waimea Road corridors and access across all transport modes to get people and freight, safely and efficiently, in and out of Nelson. The business case will also look to better link the land transport network with Nelson Port, ensure there are safe and accessible walking and cycling facilities, and review public transport improvements to maximise the efficiency of the existing network.

Work will continue on integrating the high growth areas around Richmond and Stoke by managing growth to make more efficient use of the existing network.

We will focus on safety improvements on the transport links between Richmond and Mapua and Nelson and Blenheim.

Nelson

The Nelson City Council plans to substantially complete its cycleway, linking the network from Tahunanui to the city centre.

The Council will also focus on improving its public transport service, with a new Stoke loop route to improve accessibility within the Stoke area and improve connections to the growth area in Saxton. It is also planned to introduce electronic bus ticketing to make it easier for people to use the service.

The Nelson Future Access project will consider the opportunities to better link the transport network between Nelson Port and Annesbrook for all transport modes, including the Rocks Road shared pathway.

Investment in public transport in Nelson and Richmond will improve services both within and between Nelson and Richmond, while extension of the Nelson cycleway network will complete a key link between Annesbrook and the beach at Tahunanui and provide better access for those who cycle.

In the last 18 months

- The Tahunanui shared pathway was completed, in conjunction with Nelson City Council
- The Haven Road section of the Maitai to Rocks Rd cycle facility was completed
- LED Streetlight upgrade was completed
- Contributions were made to public transport ticketing solutions

Underway or about to start

- The Nelson Future Access project is underway, looking at ways to develop a multi-modal transport system, a thriving CBD; a world-class waterfront; and a safe, accessible and resilient transport system.
- The Saltwater Creek bridge replacement is underway in conjunction with Nelson City Council - the second stage of the Maitai to Rocks Road cycle facility.
- SH6 Blenheim to Nelson speed and short-term safety improvement review taking place over 2019.

Tasman

Managing growth, improving safety and developing alternative transport choices, in particular cycling and public transport facilities, are the focus for the Tasman district.

A Detailed Business Case is being completed for Motueka Town Centre, to ensure it is ready for funding consideration in the next National Land Transport Programme.

In the last 18 months

- Ongoing emergency works on SH60 Takaka Hill following damage caused by Cyclone Gita in February 2018 is providing the opportunity to replace previous infrastructure with new infrastructure that utilises the latest construction techniques and technology. This project has a budget of \$20 million.

Underway or about to start:

- SH6 Hope to Wakefield speed review

Marlborough

Construction of the new \$21 million bridge over the Ōpaoa River began in 2019, enabling better access for trucks on SH1. This is a critical transport link between Picton and Christchurch, particularly for freight, and for people in Marlborough to access Blenheim. The new bridge will make SH1 more resilient and secure as New Zealand's key strategic road freight route connecting the North and South Islands.

In the last 18 months

- The Grovetown to Spring Creek shared pathway was completed (assisted by funding from the Urban Cycleways Fund)
- Local road improvements, including the Tyntesfield No 1 Bridge replacement, converting street lighting to LEDs, and improvements on the Waihopai HPMV route.

Underway or about to start

- Construction of new bridge over the Ōpaoa River is underway and expected to be completed by mid-2020.
- Following the opening of the new Ōpaoa River bridge, the old bridge will be converted into a walking and cycling facility.

Safety

Together with our partners, we are improving safety for all road users, including visiting drivers, in the Top of the South.

The SH6 Blenheim to Nelson safety review will create a safer network, reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries along this stretch of state highway.

A speed review of Marlborough local roads will get underway later this year. The Transport Agency is providing a 51% subsidy of the cost.

A detailed business case is being completed for safety improvements to Weld Pass on SH1.

Underway or about to start

- Ōpaoa SH1S speed review
- SH6 Blenheim to Nelson speed and short-term safety improvement review
- SH6 Hope to Wakefield speed review

Regional Development

Keeping the land transport system well maintained and safe is a large part of the annual investment from the National Land Transport Fund in the Top of the South area. This money ensures the transport system is safe, reliable and easy to use, helping to keep communities connected and supporting economic growth.

In response to concerns about increasing congestion around growth areas such as Richmond, the Transport Agency is continuing to work with Nelson City and Tasman Councils to identify more efficient ways of using the transport network. A 2016 investigation did not support a proposed bypass around Hope in the short term. It did support the development of the Richmond Network Operating Framework to make sure we know when to intervene and if it is appropriate to retain the designation for a future Hope bypass. The operating framework should provide greater clarity prior to the Hope Bypass designation expiry in 2023.

Construction of the new bridge over the Ōpaoa River will make SH1 more resilient and secure as New Zealand's key strategic road freight route connecting the North and South Islands.

To the south, the Kaikoura rebuild, led by North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Recovery (NCTIR) alliance, is continuing. In addition to the repair works, this includes resilience work as well as upgrades such as walking and cycling tracks, and improved amenities and stopping areas such as at Ohau Point. This work will will make SH1 more resilient and secure as New Zealand's key strategic road freight route connecting the North and South Islands.

The rebuild is a massive undertaking, with widespread damage throughout the Hurunui, Marlborough and Kaikōura districts. The scale and complexity of the damage to SH1, the Main North Line railway and the Kaikōura marina was unprecedented.

The work by NCTIR included reopening the road, rail and harbour but also involves repairing and rebuilding the transport networks to be safer and more resilient, helping keep everyone better connected in the future.

Over 7,500 people from 350 organisations from across New Zealand and around the world have helped to restore the transport corridor along the Kaikōura coastline. NCTIR maintain a commitment to support locals where possible and around 100 people are based in our Kaikōura office.

Environment

Climate change is affecting the resilience of the region's land transport system as a freight corridor and reliable connectivity of its communities.

On Takaka Hill, the \$20 million recovery works following the damage from Cyclone Gita will continue over the next year, with work scheduled to be completed by mid-2020. This work is to restore services on Takaka Hill and, as a result, will be improving infrastructure such as retaining walls, and drainage by replacing that infrastructure using up-to-date construction techniques and technology.

Continued investment in walking, cycling and public transport across the Top of the South is helping to provide alternative transport options within the region, while contributing to improved environmental outcomes.

Investment in the Top of the South

NLTP	2015-18	2018-21
Forecast Total Top of the South investment	\$290 million	\$294 million
Forecast maintenance and operations	\$170 million	\$200 million
Forecast public transport investment	\$5 million	\$7 million
Forecast walking and cycling	\$2 million	\$6 million
Regional network improvements	\$100 million	\$73 million