



**\$1.5
billion**

Forecast total investment

 **\$781
million**

Forecast maintenance and operations

 **\$126
million**

Forecast public transport investment

 **\$54
million**

Forecast walking and cycling

**NZUP \$38
million**

Forecast NZ Upgrade Programme

 **\$224
million**

Forecast Road to Zero

Waikato

Waikato's significant contribution to the economic wellbeing of New Zealand underpins the importance of the region having a safe, accessible land transport system that is both reliable and resilient to move people and goods along inter-regional routes.

With Auckland and the Bay of Plenty, Waikato forms the 'golden triangle' – New Zealand's major growth area where 50% of our population lives and a significant proportion of our economic activity takes place.

The region has important road and rail connections to Tauranga and Auckland, connecting the three largest urban centres in the upper North Island, the two largest ports (Auckland and Tauranga) and the country's largest international airport in Auckland. A new 30ha inland port is currently under construction at Ruakura in Hamilton. Together with a 263ha industrial and logistics park, this will create New Zealand's largest integrated commercial hub. Reliable access to export markets is critical when 40% of the nation's freight movements go into, out of, or through the Waikato.

Completion of the SH1 Waikato Expressway during this 2021-24 NLTP period will not only reduce travel times between Auckland and Tirau by 35 minutes, but also help reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries along this corridor which has exceptionally high traffic volumes.

Road safety remains a significant issue in the Waikato, with more than 20% of New Zealand's annual deaths and serious injuries occurring in the region. During the 2021-24 NLTP, we'll be focusing on speed management and infrastructure improvements to make journeys safer across the region.

Through the FutureProof partnership, we're working to develop a spatial plan and an integrated land use and transport programme for the Waikato region. We're also working with partners to implement the Hamilton Mode Shift Plan to grow the city's proportion of travel by public transport, and walking and cycling.

Better travel options

Providing more travel options and responding to climate change through targeted public transport improvements, new passenger rail services and better access to walking and cycling is a focus for this NLTP period.

We will complete the \$4.5 million underpass on SH21 Airport Road in Tamahere later this year, providing a safe crossing for the Cambridge to Hamilton shared walking and cycling path. The underpass is part of the 20km Te Awa path between Cambridge and Hamilton. This is the last link in the continuous 60km cycling and walking route following the Waikato River from Karapiro to Ngāruawahia.

Working with Hamilton City Council, we will progress the business case for the Eastern Pathway School Link shared path during the 2021-24 NLTP and seek pre-implementation funding. This \$22 million investment will provide a safe cycling network for local schools and improve public transport priority.

Work will also progress on the planning phases and implementation of public transport infrastructure improvements throughout Hamilton.

Te Huia, the new Hamilton to Auckland passenger train service, which was launched in April 2021, is now offering two return services, five days a week. We're providing \$20 million for the continued investment in Te Huia inter-regional rail services between Hamilton and Auckland, with \$2 million to introduce an off-peak service.

Strengthening connections

During this NLTP period, we will see the completion of the region's biggest ever roading project - the Waikato Expressway. The \$637 million Hamilton section, the last 21.8km bypass east of Hamilton, is scheduled for completion in mid-2022. Construction is already underway on the Resolution Drive connection, a key link to the expressway from Hamilton's northern urban growth area.

South of Hamilton, the city council is developing the Peacocke growth area, with funding from the government's Housing Infrastructure Fund and \$110.1 million from the NLTF to provide for an integrated transport system.

Waikato

key projects 2021-24



Project specifically funded by:

NZUP New Zealand Upgrade Programme

Key

- Safety project
- Walking & cycling project
- Public transport project
- Access project
- Resilience project
- Port
- Key routes

Auckland

Kirikiri Stream Bridge replacement

SH2 and SH27 safety improvements

Waikato Expressway completion

Hamilton cycle network / Te Awa shared path and Eastern Pathway School link

Hamilton public transport investment

Tauranga

SH23 Hamilton to Raglan safety improvements

Hamilton

Mangawhero Stream bridge replacement

SH1/SH29 intersection upgrade **NZUP**

Peacocke arterials

SH1 Cambridge to Piarere

Rotorua

SH1 Piarere to Taupō safety improvements

SH3 Awakino to Mt Messenger safety improvements

SH5 to SH38 safety improvements

SH3 Awakino Tunnel bypass

Kopaki Bridge replacement

Taupō

SH1 SH29 Piarere to SH5 Wairākei safety improvements

SH1 East Taupō arterial safety improvements

SH1 Taupō airport to Hātepe

Construction of a new bridge over the Waikato River and improvements on the surrounding transport network are now underway. This includes the final stage of the \$45 million Hamilton Ring Road, the extension of Wairere Drive between Cambridge Road and Cobham Drive that will connect with Peacocke and extension of shared walking and cycling paths in the area.

The recent opening of the \$37.5 million Awakino Tunnel bypass has strengthened the vital corridor link between the Waikato and Taranaki. Part of the SH3 safety and resilience improvements from the Awakino Gorge to Mt Messenger, the 2.3km project involved building two new bridges over the Awakino River, putting in a passing lane and realigning a section of the highway north of the tunnel to make travel safer and provide a more reliable route.

Safe, reliable access around the Coromandel is a high priority for the region. Work is underway to improve several one-way bridges, including SH26 Onetai Bridge and SH25 Pepe Bridge. Design options for these bridges are being shared with iwi, key stakeholders and affected residents, and these are expected to be considered for funding in this NLTP period.

We're spending \$781 million on maintenance of state highways and local roads across the region to provide safe and reliable access.

Under the Rail Network Investment Programme, a business case will be completed to look at double tracking between Amokura and Te Kauwhata and on Ngāruawahia Bridge, the last remaining areas of single track line between Hamilton and Auckland on the Main North Island Trunk line. This will support growing freight and passenger flows in what is already the busiest rail freight area in the country.

To further support the resilience of the critical freight routes in this area, 27kms of track will be re-sleepered and 12kms re-railed, along with other track and civil infrastructure works to reduce derailment risks, improve drainage and stabilise slopes. Resilience works will be carried out on the bridge between Waharoa and the Kaimai Tunnel.

Summary of achievements from 2018-21

- Good progress was made on the \$637 million Hamilton section, of the 102km Waikato Expressway - the final section of the region's biggest ever roading project.
- Completed the \$37.5 million Awakino Tunnel bypass project in Taranaki, part of SH3 safety and resilience improvements from Awakino Gorge to Mt Messenger, strengthening critical freight connections through to the Waikato and upper North Island.
- Safety improvements along SH1 Cambridge and Piarere to reduce the number of serious crashes.
- The Hamilton to Auckland passenger rail service, Te Huia, was launched in April 2021,
- Improving safety at six high-risk areas in central and eastern Waikato with rumble strips, better roadside signage and long-life line markings.
- Ten railway level crossings in the Waikato were upgraded with a range of lower cost safety improvements to make crossing train tracks on or near state highways safer.
- Construction got underway to replace the 1950s pedestrian rail overbridge in Te Kuiti and connect the western side of town to the town centre.

Improving safety

Throughout Waikato during the next three years, we will invest to improve safety across 15 high-risk corridors to significantly reduce annual deaths and serious injuries in the region.

Work continues to improve safety along the existing length of SH1 between Cambridge and Piarere. We're installing flexible median barriers to reduce the number of crashes along this section of highway. More than 2.4kms of median barriers have already been installed and work continues finalising designs to extend this work to Maungatautari Road. This NLTP we'll invest \$35 million to address safety along 26.3kms of the corridor.

On 12kms of the East Taupō Arterial, \$13 million is being spent widening the roadside shoulders, and installing flexible median safety barriers and safety barriers where hazards cannot be removed.

Speed management reviews are already underway for Hamilton City (SH1, SH3 and SH26), West Waikato (SH23, SH31 and SH39) and Mangatarata to Katikati (SH2/SH25), with a number of additional routes planned for review during this NLTP period.

More than \$2 million is being spent improving safety at six high-risk areas in central and eastern Waikato, with rumble strips, better roadside signage and long-life line markings. These areas are: SH5 Waiohotu Road to Oturoa Road; SH5 Webster Road to Waiohotu Road; SH25 Waitakaruru to Kōpū; SH27 SH26 Tatuani to Waharoa; SH2 Mackaytown to Waikino; and SH29 Matamata-Piako boundary to SH28.

We're building a replacement bridge on SH27 over Mangawhero Stream and realigning the highway to make it safer and provide protection for the bridge from erosion.

NZ Upgrade Programme

Safety at one of New Zealand's most dangerous intersections – SH1/29 at Piarere – will be improved with construction of a new roundabout. This project will replace the current T-intersection with a large roundabout. This roundabout will be on the alignment that future-proofs the route for the extension of the Waikato Expressway from Cambridge to Piarere. Construction is due to get underway in 2022.

Investment highlights for 2021-24

- Completion of the underpass on SH21 Airport Road in Tamahere.
- Completion of the last section of the Waikato Expressway, the 21.8km bypass east of Hamilton, scheduled for mid-2022.
- Safety improvements to 15 high-risk Waikato roads.





Te Huia passenger train takes flight



Te Huia train service launched in April 2021 offering two return services between Hamilton and Auckland on weekdays and selected Saturdays. Te Huia can carry more than 500 people between the two cities each day – the first Saturday service was so busy there was standing room only from Rotokauri to Papakura.

It's estimated Te Huia will reduce car trips between Hamilton and Auckland by up to 73,000 each year, which will help make roads safer, reduce congestion at peak times and reduce New Zealand's carbon footprint. It also gives people a reliable, stress-free way to travel between the two cities.

Waikato Regional Council and Waka Kotahi have invested around \$98 million in this five-year project. Getting this service up and running shows what partners can achieve through collaboration. This work was led by Waikato Regional Council in partnership with Waka Kotahi, KiwiRail, Hamilton City Council, Waikato District Council, Auckland Transport and the Ministry of Transport.

Te Huia will be trialled for just over four years, which gives local people time to try it out and the regional council the opportunity to collect data and insights to help inform next steps.

Over the next three years, more than \$3.2 billion will be invested on work that improves transport options and helps reduce carbon emissions across the Waikato and Auckland regions.