

Taranaki



OVERVIEW

Taranaki's economy is built on industry and exports, meaning freight continues to be a major transport focus. The Fonterra plant at Hawera is the second largest dairy processing facility in the southern hemisphere and processes up to 14,000 litres of raw milk per day. The plant generates a significant percentage of freight in Taranaki, as it currently collects milk from most of the lower North Island.

Investment in the Taranaki region from the 2015-18 National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) is focused on freight efficiency, route resilience, inter-regional connectivity, road maintenance and public transport.

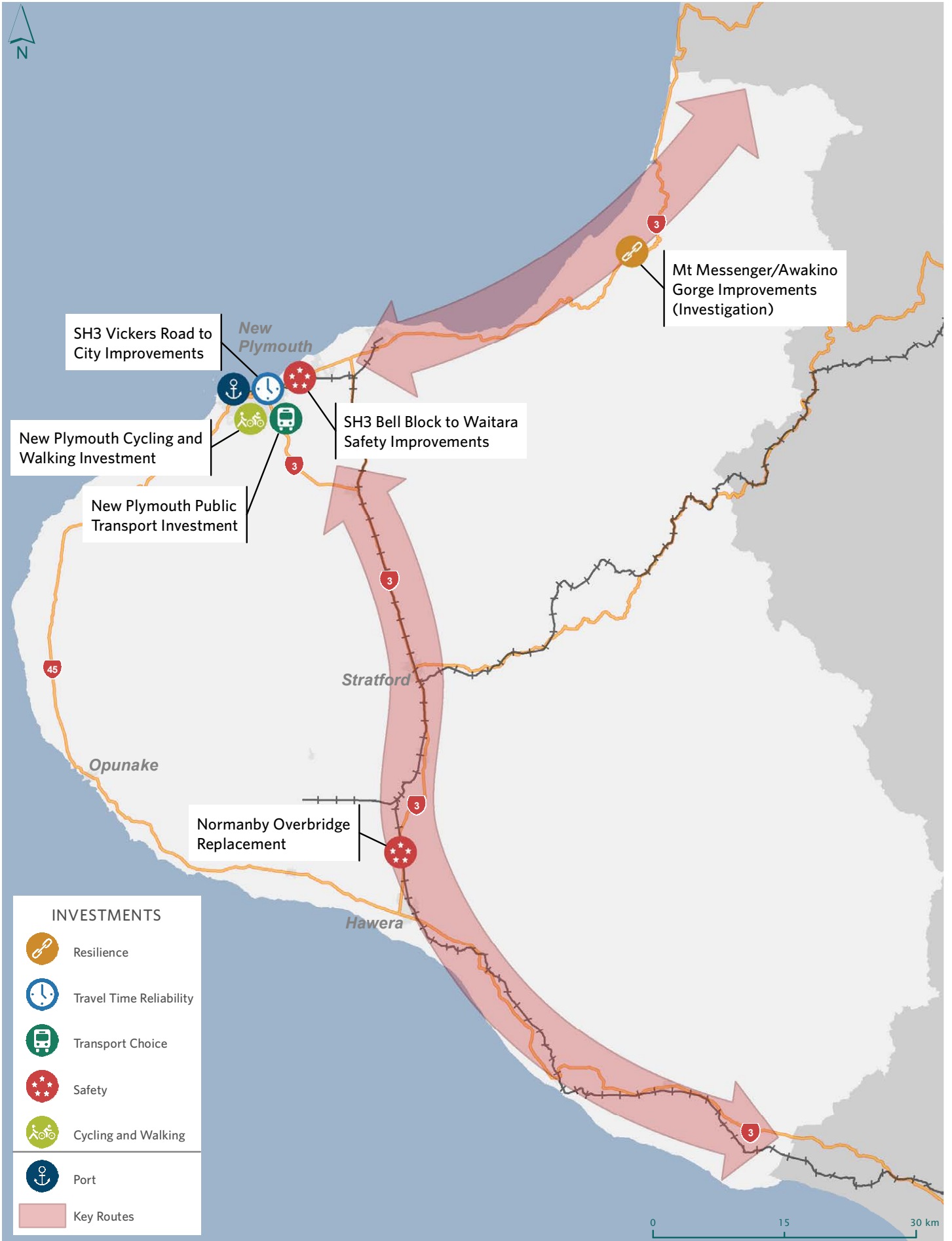
A total of around \$187 million will be invested in the region's transport during the 2015-18 NLTP period.

Through Port Taranaki the region exports high volumes of freight, particularly logs. With no container shipping services out of Port Taranaki, goods are transported to and from other ports by road and rail. Of the 9.26 million tonnes of freight that came into, or was moved within, Taranaki, 91% was transported by road.

State Highway 3 is a key connection to other regions. As the largest volume of inter-regional traffic uses the State Highway 3 route to the south, this section has been progressively improved. State Highway 3 north to the Waikato takes a smaller volume of traffic and has a number of resilience and safety issues.

To build on the \$3.7m committed in the 2012-15 NLTP, the NZ Transport Agency will continue to invest in High Productivity Motor Vehicle (HPMV) routes, which enable trucks to weigh up to 62 tonnes, meaning more freight can be carried on fewer trucks.





KEY STRATEGIC RESPONSES

MAINTAINING THE NETWORK

Keeping land transport networks available for people to get where they want to go easily, reliably and safely is a primary objective of transport investment within and beyond the Taranaki region. Over the 2015-18 NLTP period, local roads will receive \$86m, and state highways \$30m, for maintenance.

The Transport Agency is working with councils to agree how the transport network will be maintained and operated to deliver the right level of service to meet the different needs on different parts of the network.

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PLANNING

As a part of the 30-year 'blueprint planning' process the Transport Agency and New Plymouth District Council are working closely to understand the transport network impacts of residential growth north of the city between Bell Block and the airport. This process will also inform the development strategy for the whole district.

INVESTING IN INTER-REGIONAL FREIGHT EFFICIENCY

With no container shipping services out of Port Taranaki, exported and imported goods are transported inter-regionally by road and rail to and from other ports. As a result investment in HPMV routes, safety and resilience projects becomes more important to the freight task.

For example, bulk products such as palm kernels and fertiliser are imported into Port Taranaki and transported by road to Manawatu, Hawke's Bay and the Wairarapa.

Taranaki is also an important energy production area and inter-regional resilience is important for the national distribution of LPG by road and rail.

ENCOURAGING CYCLING AND WALKING

In 2010 New Plymouth was selected as one of two New Zealand communities to receive funding specifically aimed at enhancing cycling and walking. The result was the successful Let's Go programme that has helped make cycling and walking safe and attractive options for New Plymouth residents and tourists. New Plymouth is now widely regarded as one of New Zealand's leading cities for getting around by bike or on foot.

Cycling investment over the next three years is expected to concentrate on encouragement and education, with the aim of maintaining their high rates of active transport to schools, currently at 69%. Under current proposals, some of the key arterial cycling routes will also be strengthened by widening and/or improving cycle lanes.

Most of the planned cycleways include high-quality shared paths that will also benefit pedestrians.

It is expected that the total investment in cycling and walking in New Plymouth in the 2015-18 NLTP period will be around \$2m. This includes \$147,000 from the Urban Cycleways Fund.

GROWING PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Together with Taranaki Regional Council, the Transport Agency has invested in providing residents with viable alternative transport options. This has proved successful, with 21% growth recorded in public transport use over the last three years. \$9m of investment is planned to consolidate this growth. This investment will improve the overall service to the public through better facilities and integration with other transport modes and networks, such as providing bike racks on buses. It is forecast that passenger numbers in Taranaki will grow by a further 16% over the 2015-18 NLTP period, with an expected 679,000 passenger trips being made every year.

Taranaki Regional Council was one of the first councils to implement the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM). PTOM is about creating a collaborative partnership between the public transport operator and the Council, in order to incentivise improved services to the community.

Funding has been earmarked to continue the connector bus service trial between Hawera, Stratford and New Plymouth. This service is unique, with multiple funding partners. It has been tracking well in terms of cost recovery and patronage, carrying approximately 2,000 passengers a month.

MAKING JOURNEYS SAFER

Across New Zealand around \$3.2 billion is expected to be invested in the transport network over the next three years to deliver improved safety outcomes. Most of this expenditure will be directed at infrastructure improvements through the capital works programme, often where safety is one of the outcomes, along with congestion relief and travel time improvements. A proportion of this investment targets specific safety improvements, including high-risk intersections, pedestrian and cycling safety initiatives, speed management and education programmes.

Working with the NZ Police and investing together in road policing and road safety promotion is at the heart of the region's investment. Together through targeted programmes the Transport Agency and the NZ Police will work to address the factors contributing to crash-related deaths and serious injuries. These factors include speed, drink and drug driving, not wearing restraints, dangerous and careless driving, and high-risk drivers.

The range of projects on State Highway 3 will improve safety on this key route, while continued investment in cycling and walking will further improve safety for these transport modes in Taranaki.



INVESTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Taranaki region has achieved 20% growth in public transport numbers over the past three years. To further encourage this trend a total of \$9m is expected to be invested in public transport during the 2015-18 NLTP period.
- Cycling and walking in New Plymouth in the 2015-18 NLTP period is expected to receive \$2m in investment. This includes \$147,000 from the Urban Cycleways Fund.
- The State Highway 3 corridor to the north has some resilience challenges and is particularly vulnerable to closures caused by crashes, resulting in unpredictable journey times. Initiatives include:
 - Priorities for State Highway 3 include safety improvement work between Bell Block and Waitara where, over a 5-year period from 2008 to 2012, there were 8 deaths and 16 serious injuries. This work aims to improve safety at two of New Zealand's most high-risk intersections.
 - The Government's Accelerated Regional State Highway Package includes investigating how improvements can be made on State Highway 3 between New Plymouth and Hamilton (Mount Messenger to Awakino Gorge) and aims to improve freight efficiency, as well as safety. A package of activities to improve safety, passing opportunities and incident management is included in the 2015-18 NLTP.
- The Government's Accelerated Regional State Highway Package will ensure the completion of the State Highway 3 Normanby Overbridge Project. As well as being suitable for HPMVs, the new bridge is forecast to deliver improvements to safety and journey time reliability.
- The State Highway 3 Vickers to City project has commenced, with expected completion in April 2016. Once completed, it will bring about a dramatic improvement in journey time reliability to and from the New Plymouth CBD, provide dedicated facilities for cyclists, and also improve safety and route security.
- The Taranaki rural road network is in a fit-for-purpose condition, with replacement of bridges at the end of their lives being a key driver for investment over the next three to six years. Investment of \$1.2m will develop a strategic business case for a second crossing of the Waiwhakaiho River, as well as replacing bridges and structures on Korito, Old Mountain and Okau Roads.
- Investment of \$8.5m along the inter-regional state highways will safeguard the regional economy by ensuring the freight transport links with the rest of New Zealand are safe and resilient.



DEVELOPING THE NATIONAL LAND TRANSPORT PROGRAMME

The NZ Transport Agency has worked with Regional Transport Committees to support development of their Regional Land Transport Plans (RLTPs), which inform the development of the NLTP.

RLTPs span six years and are produced in consultation with the community. All submitted activities must contribute to the purpose of the Land Transport Management Act 2003 and be consistent with the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS).



For more information on the NLTP in this region and nationally, go to www.nzta.govt.nz/nltp

If you have further queries, call our contact centre on 0800 699 000 or write to us: NZ Transport Agency, Private Bag 6995, Wellington 6141