

SOUTHLAND

Southland has a history of strong economic performance, built around the primary sector and manufacturing. However, the region's high level of productivity, fifth highest in New Zealand, faces two key challenges for its future. The first is a static population and the second is economic reliance on a limited number of industries such as dairy and aluminium, with questions over the long-term future of the Tiwai Point smelter. Tourism has played an increasing role in the region's economy, driven by strong growth in international visitor numbers, although visitor numbers will be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The region contains a number of the less visited but notable tourism attractions such as the Catlins or the gateway to Stewart Island, and the transport system has a role in meeting the needs of the independent traveller.

As a rural-based economy, the road and rail networks are critical for moving goods to production centres and on to domestic and international markets. The movement of freight north to Dunedin/Port Chalmers and beyond, and the tourist connection to Queenstown are two key connections into and out of the region.

The Southland Regional Development Strategy Action Plan identifies two key areas where transport can support economic growth in the region. These are:

- Support the tourist industry through enhanced visitor experiences, corridor improvements and increased visitor information.
- Safe and reliable connections within the region, and north to Queenstown and Dunedin.

Our investment priority in Southland will be on the region's relatively poor safety record. We will focus our investment priorities on high-risk roads and intersections, and driver behaviour change, particularly alcohol and drug impairment, people not wearing seat belts and speeding. More widely, our activities in the region include ensuring key tourism and freight routes are safe and resilient.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

We don't expect any significant changes in the nature, scale and location of transport demand as a result of COVID-19. The 10-year outlook remains largely unchanged, although the recent announcement of the closure of the Tiwai aluminium smelter has created further uncertainty which will need to be factored in as the impact becomes clearer. Maintaining safe and reliable road and rail freight connections to Port Otago and South Port remain important to supporting the recovery.

CONTEXT TO OUR PROPOSED INVESTMENT

Improving safety

The Southland region has a relatively poor safety record with issues around run-off road and head-on crashes, crashes at intersections, speeding and crashes involving vulnerable users.

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.

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

Within the Southland region over the next three years, we are looking to invest \$10m to make 129km of state highways safer through infrastructure improvements and speed management to reduce deaths and serious injuries by 1.17%.

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

Better freight connections, travel options and climate change

The region relies on its extensive road network to support rural production. SH1 and the Main South Line are regionally significant freight connections linking Dunedin to Invercargill which remain vulnerable to surface flooding around South Port, with inland routes affected by heavy rainfall and landslides. We will continue to operate and maintain the state highway network to current levels of service for key freight connections in the region.

The availability of suitable safe alternatives to the private car is a key component of healthy, thriving communities and businesses. Over the next three years we expect to deliver a number of nationwide regulatory improvements, education and advertising campaigns, and operational policies and practices to support our partners in their efforts to drive mode shift. Further, we will deliver 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.

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 two major risks within the Southland area. The most significant of these relates to a coastal section of SH1 to the port. This is at risk from coastal inundation and sea level rise with current flooding likely to increase to extreme in the long-term.

Treefall during extreme weather is also a risk that requires ongoing management even with the extensive programme which already occurs, this is also likely to increase with climate change. The Homer Tunnel has a number of risks associated with it, including seismic, rockfall and avalanche. There is a current business case underway for strengthening of the portal and for protection structures, however further work would also be required.

WORKING TOGETHER

Maintaining strong alignment with our Southland partners is critical. We will continue to work with our partners on transport and land use matters as well as wider initiatives to support economic growth and community wellbeing as they arise.

During 2021-24 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.

INVERCARGILL

47,625

Urban area population

93%

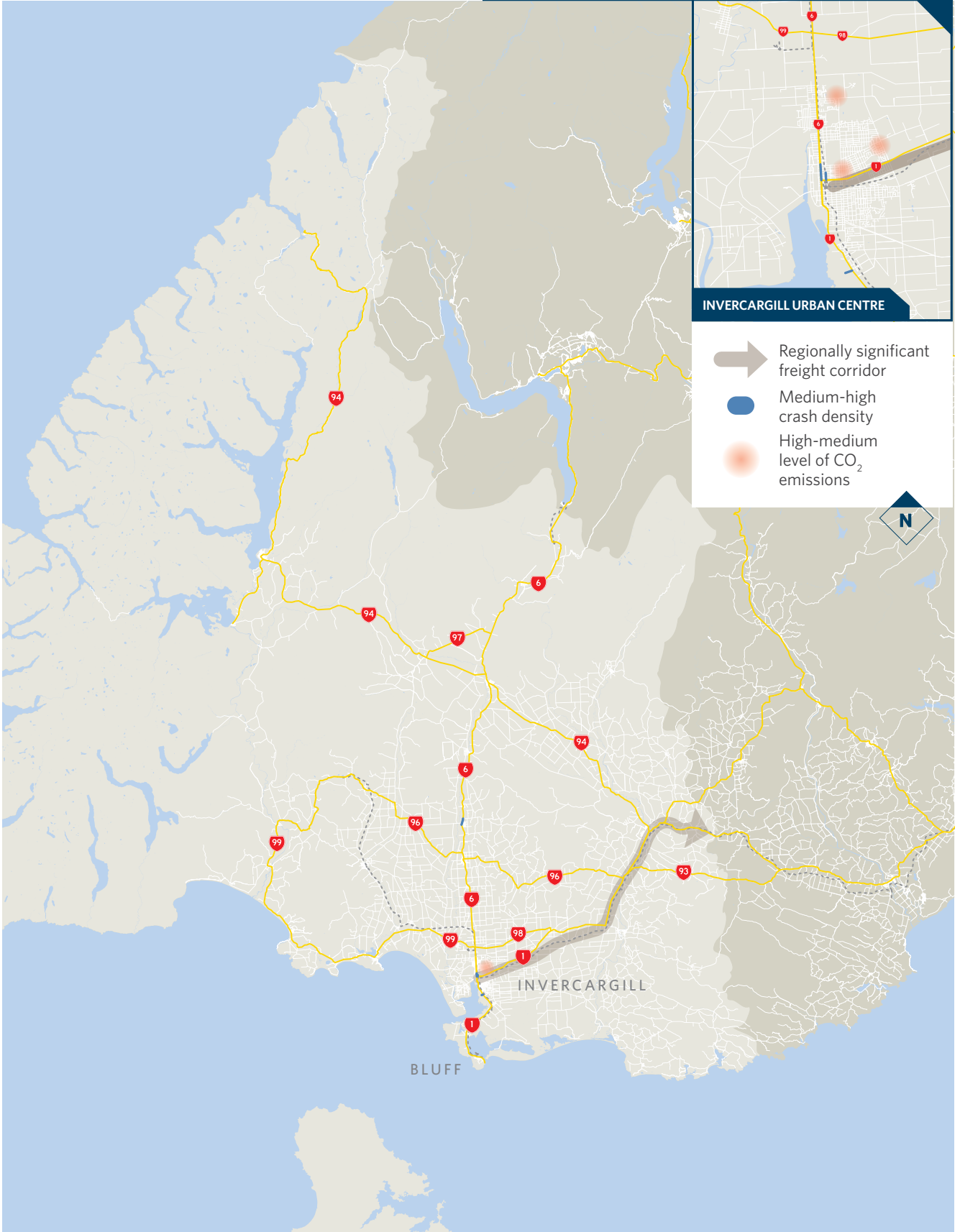
Of journeys to work by private motorised vehicle

61%

Jobs accessible within 45 mins by private motorised vehicle

51%

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



INVERCARGILL URBAN CENTRE

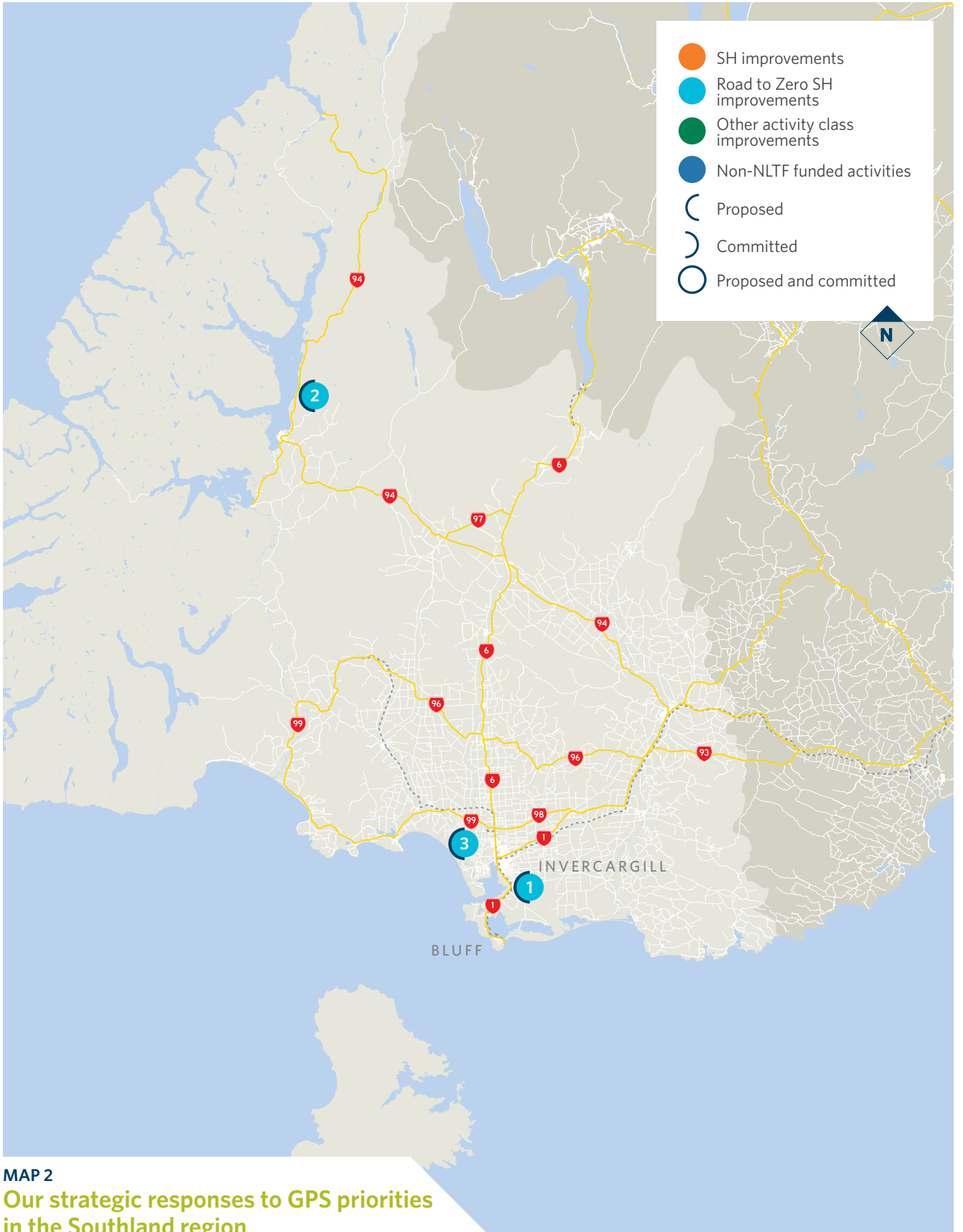
- ➔ Regionally significant freight corridor
- Medium-high crash density
- High-medium level of CO₂ emissions

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 Southland region

ID	STRATEGIC RESPONSE	PRIMARY GPS PRIORITY	DELIVERY PATHWAY
ISR1	Continue to operate a reliable state highway freight connection between Invercargill and Dunedin	IFC	Regional maintenance, operations and Renewals
ISR2	Reduce alcohol/drug impairment, increase seat belt use and reduce speeding through road policing and behaviour change activities	Safety	Assessed through NLTP process
ISR3	Road to Zero Infrastructure and Speed Management Programme	Safety	



MAP 2
Our strategic responses to GPS priorities in the Southland region

TABLE 2

Proposed state highway programme for the Southland region

REF	ACTIVITY NAME	ACTIVITY CLASS	FUNDING SOURCE	GPS PRIORITY	2021-24 PHASE	2024-27 PHASE	2027-31 PHASE	COST
Committed state highway improvement activities*								
-	State Highway Low Cost Low Risk programme	SHI	NLTF	All	IMP	IMP	IMP	\$\$
-	Programme business case development	SHI	NLTF	All		DBC	DBC	\$
* Commitments made under the 2018 GPS, contributions as shown.								
Proposed Road to Zero capital state highway safety activities								
-	Road to Zero Low Cost Low Risk programme	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP	IMP	IMP	\$\$
1	SH15 Bluff Highway and Elles Road Intersection improvement	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
2	SH94 Ewe Burn Bridge to Lower Hollyford Road	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
3	SH99 Cummock Street to Albany Street	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
-	Regional Speed Management activities	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP	IMP	IMP	\$\$
Proposed investment management activities								
-	Strategic business case development	IM	NLTF	All		DBC	DBC	\$
Proposed walking and cycling activities								
-	Walking and Cycling Low Cost Low Risk	WC	NLTF	All	IMP	IMP	IMP	\$