

TOP OF THE SOUTH

The Top of the South consists of the economies and communities of Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough which are highly interdependent. During the 2021-24 NLTP, we propose to primarily maintain existing levels of service across the state highway network in support of the government's desired outcomes. Our targeted activities in the Top of the South include:

- **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 the Top of the South 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 peoples' 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.

- **Providing better travel options** through improving access and reducing reliance on private vehicles. This will be achieved by proactively engaging with Top of the South partners on their urban growth challenges coupled with exploring innovative approaches to planning walking and cycling improvements and minimising the severance impacts of the state highway through communities.
- **Improving freight connections** by optimising the state highway network to reduce peak congestion and community severance on key freight routes, particularly through Picton. Targeted improvements in the resilience of the state highway network will remain a focus, given the limited availability of rail across the top of the South Island.
- **Responding to climate change** by supporting low carbon travel choices and enhancing the resilience of the state highway network.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

In the medium to long-term, we do not 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. However, maintaining safe and reliable land transport connections between the upper South Island and Canterbury will be important to supporting recovery, while providing efficient access to Picton port for Cook Strait traffic.

Domestic tourism destinations such as Kaiteriteri, Marlborough Sounds and Golden Bay may experience an increase in demand at least in the short-term.

CONTEXT TO OUR PROPOSED INVESTMENT

Improving safety

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

Within the Top of the South region over the next three years, we are looking to invest \$24m to make state highways safer through infrastructure improvements and speed management to reduce deaths and serious injuries by just over 1.5%.

We will be working with our safety partners in the Top of the South 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 travel options

Improving and maintaining the liveability of the main centres of Nelson, Richmond and Blenheim as they grow is critically important. Ensuring that there are suitable, safe alternatives to the private car, where appropriate, will be essential if communities and businesses are to thrive.

Waka Kotahi expects to deliver a number of nationwide regulatory improvements, education and advertising campaigns, and operational policies and practices that will 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.

Completion of the Nelson Future Access Programme detailed business case will be critical to informing decisions around the form and timing of walking and cycling improvements along SH6 Rocks Road. Along with the Richmond programme business case it will also identify opportunities to enhance access, reduce severance and make the transport system safer within the SH6 and SH60 corridors. It is important that the long-term packages are aligned for the Nelson urban area so that complimentary community outcomes can be realised.

While no commitment can be made to significant investment from the NLTF to implement the business cases in the next three years, we will explore opportunities to implement any recommended low cost, low risk activities on the state highway network in Nelson and Richmond that supports mode shift, public transport update and improves amenity in the SH6 and SH60 corridors.

We will also continue to work with Nelson City Council on exploring opportunities to realise the Rocks Road walking and cycling facility.

Better freight connections

Inter-island road and rail links down the east coast are critical for the movement of freight between Picton and Christchurch. KiwiRail is progressing plans to replace the current fleet of three ferries with two new, larger ferries from 2024. The current ferries need to be replaced due to their age and to plan for future growth in passenger numbers and freight volumes. The project represents a transformational investment in critical infrastructure and is expected to generate significant tourism, economic and environmental benefits for the whole of New Zealand.

We, alongside KiwiRail and Port Marlborough, will jointly investigate the transport network adjacent to the port to consider how the introduction of the larger ships will affect the traffic and the community. This includes whether further improvements are needed including access to the port, walking and cycling impacts, safety, increased wait times at level crossings and other impacts on journey times.

State highways 6 and 60 provide critical connections to Port Nelson and Nelson Airport for Nelson and Tasman's exports. It is unlikely there will be the need for, or funding available, to progress any significant infrastructure projects within the corridor in the next three years. However, we will continue to work with both councils on future transport planning and seek to implement any recommended low cost, low risk activities on the state highway network that improves safety and freight efficiency arising from the Nelson Future Access Programme's detailed business case and the Richmond programme 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.

The Nelson Future Access Programme will provide for a definitive position on the long-term proposed solution to enhance the resilience of SH6 Rocks Road, a regionally significant freight link. While there will not be any significant investment within the next NLTP period, this work, alongside the Richmond programme business case marks a milestone in setting out a clear plan for the future of the transport system, including the state highway for Nelson and Richmond.

More widely, we are supporting the government's climate change goals through co-investment in public transport infrastructure and services which are currently being reviewed by Nelson City Council and Tasman District Council as well as walking and cycling networks. We are also proposing investment in low cost, low risk resilience activities in the Top of the South, 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.

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 23 major and extreme network risks within the Top of the South area. These relate predominantly to rockfall, landslip, erosion and flooding, as well as extreme weather, ice/snow and wildfire. The significant number of landslip risks on SH6 and SH65 (including Dallows Bluff, Deadman's slip, Higgins Bluff, Hope Saddle and the Upper Buller Gorge) were considered to be the highest risk sections of the region's transport system (as per commentary from regional stakeholders). A significant number of the major risks are likely to increase to extreme in the long term.

WORKING TOGETHER

Maintaining strong alignment with our Top of the South partners is critical. We will continue to work closely with our partners on transport and land use matters, and particularly will:

- continue to work with Nelson city and Tasman district to develop aligned thinking on the Nelson Future Access Programme and Richmond growth studies
- 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
- work with Tasman district to determine whether to retain the state highway designation through Richmond and Hope which expires in 2023
- continue to work with the councils on urban growth issues for Nelson and Tasman, connections for freight and planning for climate change adaptation
- work with Marlborough District Council, Port Marlborough and KiwiRail on the future development of the ferry terminal at Picton.

NELSON

48,081

Urban area population

86%

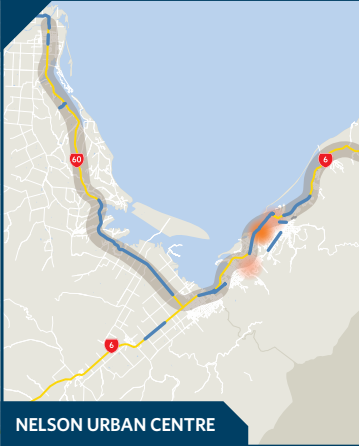
Of journeys to work by private motorised vehicle







69%

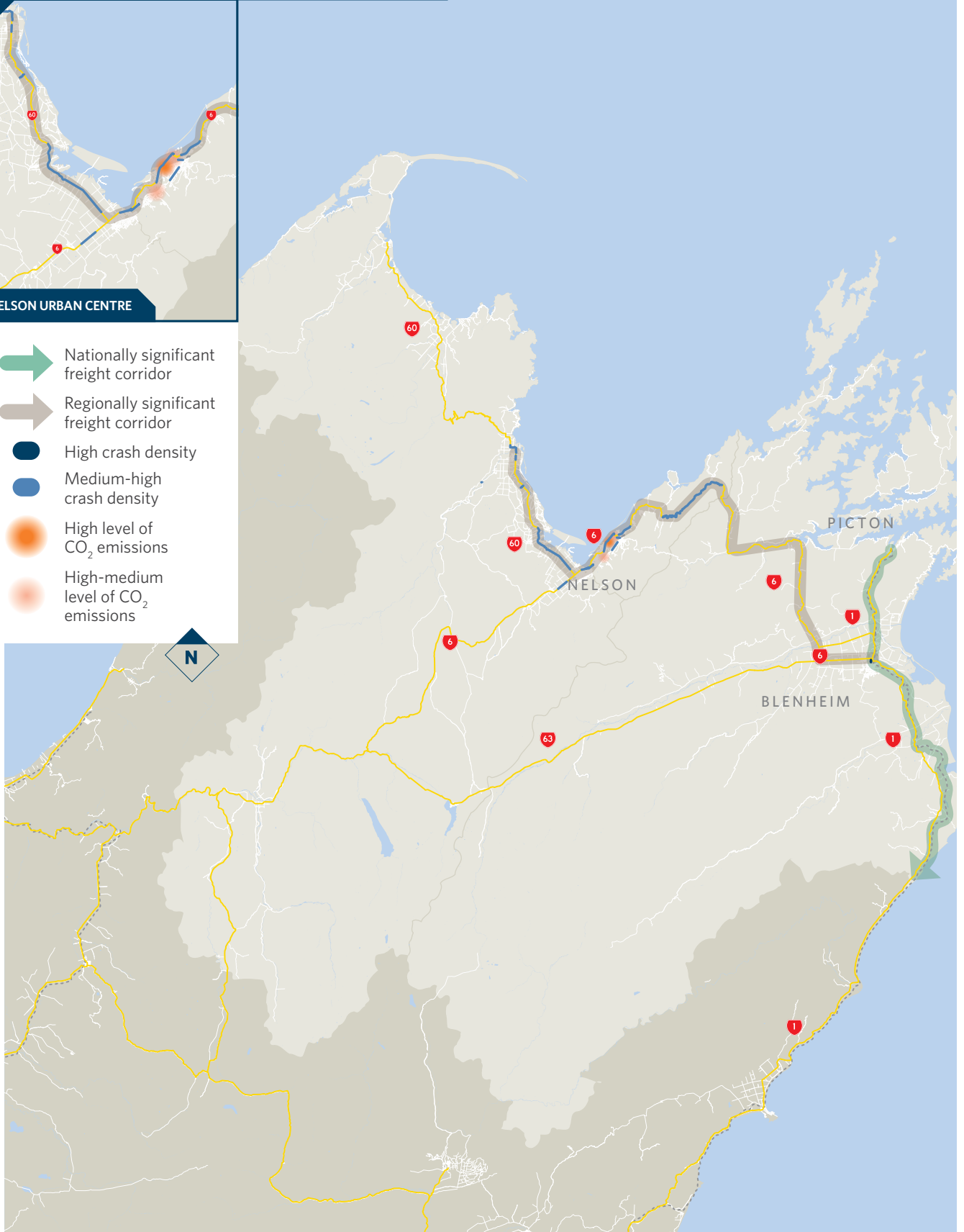
Jobs accessible within 45 mins by private motorised vehicle

57%

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



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

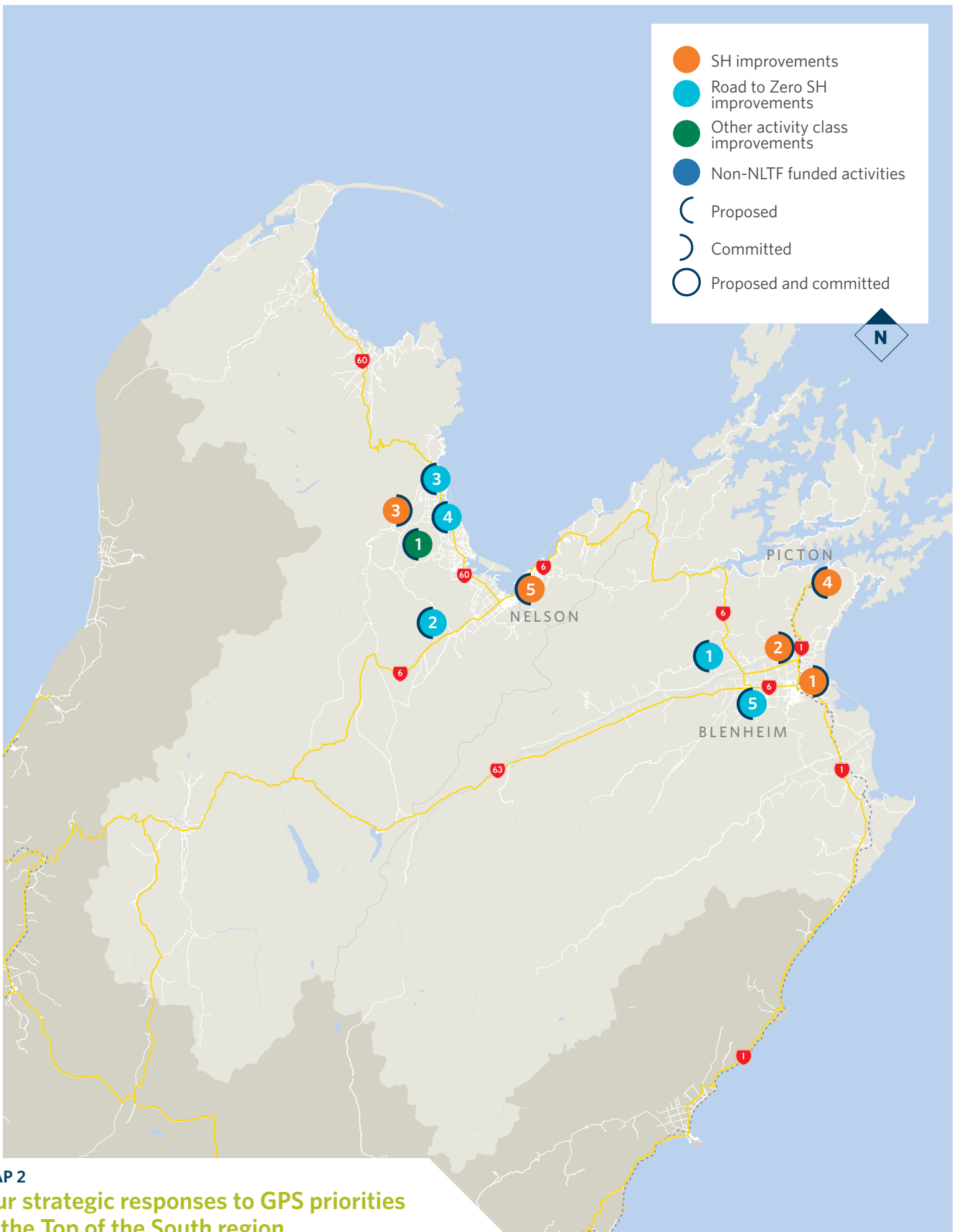


Based on the evidence presented on the gaps across this region's transport system in terms of GPS priorities, table 1 presents our strategic responses.

TABLE 1

Our strategic responses to GPS priorities in the Top of the South region

ID	STRATEGIC RESPONSE	PRIMARY GPS PRIORITY	DELIVERY PATHWAY
TotSSR1	Re-establish reliable freight connections along SH1 between Christchurch and Picton, post-Kaikōura	IFC	Regional maintenance, operations and Renewals
TotSSR2	Continue to operate a reliable state highway freight connection between Motueka and Blenheim	IFC	Regional maintenance, operations and Renewals
TotSSR3	Continue to operate reliable interchange between freight modes at Picton Port, integrated with efficient passenger access	IFC	Assessed through NLTP process
TotSSR4	Implement mode shift activities in Nelson and Richmond including better connected active mode networks and public transport (including on-demand) networks	BTO	Assessed through NLTP process
TotSSR5	Road to Zero Infrastructure and Speed Management Programme	Safety	Assessed through NLTP process
TotSSR6	Government's support for regional economic development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Motueka town centre upgrade 	All	Regional Investment Opportunities



MAP 2
Our strategic responses to GPS priorities in the Top of the South region

TABLE 2

Proposed state highway programme for the Top of the South 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	\$\$
1	SH1 Ōpaoa River Bridge implementation	SHI	NLTF	BTO	IMP			\$
2	SH1 SH62 Spring Creek intersection	SHI	NLTF	BTO	IMP			\$
3	Motueka River Bridge replacement	SHI	NLTF	BTO			IMP	\$\$
-	Programme business case development	SHI	NLTF	All		DBC	DBC	\$
* Commitments made under the 2018 GPS, contributions as shown.								
Proposed state highway improvement activities								
4	SH1 Picton Port Access improvements	SHI	NLTF	All	SSBC	IMP	IMP	\$\$
5	Nelson Future Access	SHI	NLTF	All	PRE	PTY		\$
-	VMS Network enhancement	SHI	NLTF	All		DBC		\$
Proposed Road to Zero capital state highway safety activities (greater than \$2m per activity)								
-	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	SH6/62 Blenheim to Nelson	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
2	SH6 Ranzau Road to Clover Road	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$\$
3	SH60 King Edward Street to Parker Street	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
4	SH60 School Road to Parker Street	R2Z	NLTF	Safety		IMP		\$
5	SH6 and St Leonards Road intersection	R2Z	NLTF	Safety	IMP			\$
Proposed investment management activities								
1	Motueka town centre upgrade	IM	NLTF	Safety	DBC			\$
-	Strategic business case development (including Hope Bypass designation)	IM	NLTF	All		DBC	DBC	\$
Proposed walking and cycling activities								
-	Walking and Cycling Low Cost Low Risk	WC	NLTF	All	IMP	IMP	IMP	\$