

# Tairāwhiti/Gisborne regional transport update – August 2019

## **Overview**

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For the population of Gisborne/Tairāwhiti, having a resilient transport network is crucial. The region's isolation means it relies on the state highway network and local roads to connect its communities, to get goods from farm gates and forests to markets, and to support growth in tourism.

Reliable and efficient transport connections remain the greatest challenge for the region, with weather events and unstable ground conditions resulting in frequent slips, road closures and higher maintenance costs. Closures have a significant social and economic impact on the region's rural communities. Connections to neighbouring regions are limited.

There are also increasing community concerns about safety, with deaths and serious injuries continuing to rise.

In 2018 Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced a \$137 million Tairāwhiti Roding package from the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF), alongside the National Land Transport Fund's largest ever investment in Tairāwhiti. The full package through the PGF and National Land Transport Fund (NLTF) brings the total road investment in the region to \$312 million over the next three years.

The Transport Agency and the Gisborne District Council (GDC) continue to work together on transport projects. The below work is a combination of Transport Agency and GDC-led projects since October 2017.

GDC is leading a key piece of strategic work that will help to determine the key freight routes through Gisborne, and this will assist with forming a well-integrated and safe transport network that reduces conflict between heavy freight vehicles and more vulnerable road users.

## **In the last 18 months**

- Awapuni Road on SH35, which runs through a residential area, was upgraded in April 2019. The road was rebuilt using asphalt to ensure a stronger, more resilient road that will last longer than the previous chip seal road. To help reduce noise from heavy freight traffic, which residents had raised concerns about, service lids were also shifted outside of the driving lane. The project was fully funded by the National Land Transport Programme.
- A range of slip repair and resilience improvements have been made on rural roads including Anaura Bay, East Cape, Arakihi and Tauwhareparae Roads.
- The Tokomaru Bay sea wall has been repaired after 2017 storm damage destabilised a section of the road. Failing parts of the wall are currently being strengthened and reinforced.
- Mangaopore Road has been raised above the flood plain and culverts have been installed to remove excess water. This is because the road frequently becomes unsafe when in flood.
- Poroporo Road has also been raised to provide improved and safer access while the road is in flood.

- Tairāwhiti Roads has led a project to reduce vandalism at bus shelters and to improve safety for those who wait for the bus. Toihoukura students have designed a vibrant mural which will cover the Elgin concrete bus shelter. The design symbolises the continuous growth and coming together of the community with the use of Kaokao (weaving) and Koru.
- A new bus shelter on London Street was also constructed in 2018 by EIT students studying a NZ certificate in construction trade skills. The bus shelter was designed out of wood and designed to look like a wharekai to match the Reserve's wharekai.
- In 2018, SmartCards for school buses were rolled out; a move away from the old paper tickets. The old system was becoming obsolete, keeping up with the times by moving to SmartCards that can be topped up and scanned on the bus. In June 2019, these SmartCards were rolled out for all buses within the city.
- The Gisborne District Council is continuing to invest in a free bus service for school students living in Kaiti, to help address high truancy rates.
- The Wainui Stage II shared path was completed in December 2018; a 1.6km stretch of shared path, extending the popular Muriel Jones shared path from Sponge Bay to Kaiti. This project was fully funded by the NLTF.
- The Gladstone Road Bridge shared path was opened in April 2019. The project was funded by the Urban Cycleways Programme and the National Land Transport Fund. The historic bridge was widened, and the balustrades were replaced with modern see through railings to open up great views of the harbour.
- A shared path was constructed on the Taruheru River, between Bright Street and Grey Street. The project was completed in December 2017.
- The Transport Agency continues to invest in the Bikes in Schools programme, and Gisborne is leading the way with more uptake for Bikes in Schools than in any other part of the country.
- BikeReady courses are also running weekly for children to improve skills and gain confidence on the road. Six schools have participated so far this year, with more schools being offered the course later this year. The total cost has been allocated from ACC and the Transport Agency for a three-year period to increase the number of students trained with on-road cycling skills.
- In January 2019, work to widen the shoulders on a seven-kilometre stretch of the Motu Trail/Rere Heartland Ride was completed. Funding for this came from Crown Regional Economic Development Funds.

## **Safety**

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### **In the last 18 months**

- In 2018, the Transport Agency and GDC redeveloped the Tairāwhiti Road Safety Action Planning (RSAP) Group. This included improving engagement with Māori, and involving a wider range of community representatives and organisations in the group, e.g. Ministry of Social Development, Te Puni Kokiri, Police, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Turanga Health and ACC. The group transformed from simply being a forum for providing updates on each organisation's individual work, to functioning as a collective with joint projects and

initiatives such as the region's 'Drive Sober' campaign and 'Fatigue stops'. The Group is currently putting together a programme to focus on the East Coast, which will implement a Warrant of Fitness service (currently not available on the East Coast). It is also involved in the development of an adult 'Restraints Compliance Programme', which is based on educating adults on the importance of wearing a seatbelt. Participants will be those who've been pulled up by Police and given the option to either complete the programme, or pay a fine. This is because the Police have identified an increase in drivers not wearing seatbelts.

- Working with the Police, the Transport Agency and GDCrun regular 'Back to school' programmes, which include checks of vehicles with children inside. Checks look to make sure children have their seatbelts on, that no child under seven years old is sitting in the front seat, and that car seats are correctly fitted (with the child correctly secured). The programme also monitors and enforces speed around schools, and the use of mobile devices while driving.
- Whakamanahia is a special programme for recidivist drink driving offenders. The free one-day programme is held at Te Poho o Rawairi Marae, which includes a powhiri and tikanga wananga. This helps connect participants with their whakapapa and gives them a place of belonging. Whakamanahia translates to 'be empowered'. Participants are referred by the Police and Corrections, and benefit from speakers who help paint a bigger picture about the impacts of drink driving. Speakers include mental health and addiction counsellors, serious crash analysts, emergency services, funeral directors and embalmers, and crash survivors. There is also a crash demonstration. Since October 2017, nine courses have successfully run (a total of 12 since February 2017) and measurements show only four people out of 174 participants have re-offended since the course began in February 2017.
- Nga Ara Pai is a community driver mentor programme that focuses on 16 to 24-year-olds from low socio-economic backgrounds, and high-needs/high-risk whānau who have limited or no support at home. They may be driving with young children, or constantly being pulled over and fined by police, or referred from social services. They don't have access to a reliable vehicle or instructor for training. Mentor drivers are volunteers who give their time for 2-3 hours a week to mentor a young driver over a 10-week period. In 2018, 89 young drivers gained their restricted driver licence after completing the programme.
- A community Whānau restraints programme has run since June 2017, organised by the Transport Agency and GDC after a need was identified by the Police when Plunket's car seat service was disestablished. The service provides education around restraints, especially child restraints, and provides car restraints for families in need. Parents can be referred by the Police or request help themselves. Parents take in their car, then a qualified technician will train them to install the car seat correctly. A bolting voucher is issued to them if they don't have one, so they can have a bolt fitted for free. The service is also used to educate parents on the importance of safety for children in a moving vehicle. Over 400 families have used the service since 2017.
- The Transport Agency and GDC work with the Police on bi-monthly roadside alcohol testing. While Police manage enforcement, the Transport Agency, GDC and RSAP members use the opportunity to educate drivers and whānau on the importance of driving sober, recognising fatigue, adhering to speed limits, and driving to the conditions.
- In June 2019, 8000 edge marker posts were installed on 250 kilometres of rural roads, in a project to improve rural delineation to reduce severe injuries and loss of life. Edge marker posts can reduce accidents by up to 18%, especially at night.

- By November 2018, work on a set of seven rest areas along State Highway 35 had been completed. The project, supported by Crown 'Regional Economic Development' funding, aimed to improve safety for drivers by giving them additional places to pull over and rest, and also contribute to the region's tourism offering by providing more places to pull over and enjoy the coastal scenery.
- In 2018 the new Motu Bridge was completed (though works on the approach alignment are still ongoing). The new bridge replaces a single lane bridge and improves the alignment for a safer journey on SH 2 between Opotiki and Gisborne. \$7 million of Crown Regional Economic Development funding was allocated for this project.
- We have completed a wide range of minor safety improvements including guardrail installations on Tiniroto, Whatatutu, Anaura, Lottin Point, Back Ormond and Tauwhareparae Roads.
- In March 2019, the Pakarae realignment on SH35 was completed. This area had a high accident rate, so funding from the NLTP was allocated to improve safety on this section of the network.

### **Underway or about to start**

- A school safety prioritisation programme to improve school safety for students coming and going from school is underway. This includes works such as road widening to increase parking space in safer locations, installation of electronic speed limit and school signs, adding 'dragon's teeth' line markings to show school zones, and improving pedestrian crossings. Three schools benefitted from improvements in 2019, with a further three schools to receive works each year for the next four years.
- We're currently completing the Safety Boost programme, which includes \$6.3 million of funding from the Safe Network Programme for improvements on SH2 between Wairoa and Gisborne and Gisborne and Matawai, and on SH35 between Gisborne and Tolaga Bay. The improvements include shoulder widening, the installation of rumble strips and new roadside safety barriers in locations where there is a risk of run-off road crashes and where such a crash would most likely result in deaths or serious injuries.
- The Makokomuka safety realignment project is in early planning and engagement stages. This project will improve safety on SH35, about 20 kilometres south of Tokomaru Bay, by realigning the road to remove two narrow bridges and road curves. This has been allocated NLTP funding.
- A footbridge renewals programme is also underway, which involves cleaning and adding a non-slip surface to the footbridges to improve access and safety for users.

### **Regional Development**

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Work on the Connecting Tairāwhiti Programme Business Case (PBC) began in February 2018, with participation from key stakeholders from the Bay of Plenty, Tairāwhiti, Wairoa and Hawke's Bay. The PBC, completed and endorsed in October 2018, identified key transport and connectivity issues for the region, and proposed several projects that, if implemented, would achieve access, resilience and safety benefits to the network.

The PBC incorporated the region’s Integrated Transport Priority Plan and the transport actions within the Tairāwhiti Economic Action Plan (TEAP). The transport initiatives outlined in the TEAP were to ‘improve our transport connections to ensure our major industries have the ability to be competitive internationally and get our products, services and offerings to customers at the right time’.

**Provincial Growth Fund (PGF) investment in Tairawhiti**

The PBC enabled the Transport Agency and the Council to take the opportunity to apply for Provincial Growth Fund (PGF) funding.

The purpose of the PGF investment is to accelerate regional development, productivity and employment in the region. In September 2018 the Prime Minister announced a funding package for both local and state highway roads. Projects identified for funding over a three-five year period include:

**Local roads**

- Improved level of service, which is an enhanced maintenance programme including bridge repairs, placement of metal on unsealed roads, and drainage and culvert repairs along heavy freight routes
- Heavy Industrial Zone upgrade
- Rakaiaatane Road upgrade
- East Coast road sealing
- Improved route security on Tiniroto, Kings and Harper Roads
- 50MAX upgrades
- Route security (structural)
- East Cape Road route security

**State highways**

- HPMV upgrades for SH2 between Napier-Gisborne and Gisborne-Opotiki
- A passing opportunities package on SH2 and SH35 between Napier, Gisborne and Opotiki
- A resilience package of traditional and environmental works on SH35
- A realignment at Waikare Gorge on State Highway 2 between Napier and Wairoa

<b>Project name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Project type</b>	<b>Total funding</b>	<b>PGF funding</b>	<b>NLTF funding</b>	<b>PGF contingency funding</b>
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) 50MAX	Local network efficiency improvements through enabling 50MAX bridge capability on economically active corridors within the region (including local road network).	Local Road	\$3m	\$0.96m	\$2.04m	
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) East Cape Road Sealing	Sealing 1.6km to provide a consistent level of service between existing sealed sections of East Cape Road to support improved access for the community.	Local Road	\$1.8m	\$1.8m		

(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Emergency Repairs	Funding assistance to cover Gisborne Distrct Council's local share of funding for emergency repairs to their network	Local Road	\$2.2m	\$2.2m		
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Heavy industry zone upgrade (MacDonald, Aerodrome, Dunstan)	Improvements to surface condition and level of service in response to current and future demands associated with intensified economic activity (including a proposed timber mill).	Local Road	\$3.2m	\$3.2m		
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Improved Network Resilience	Seeks to provide a minimum level of service in line with future economic activity whilst improving access to key destinations identified by local communities.	Local Road	\$10m	\$10m		
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Kings Road/ Harper Road upgrade	Business case to respond to stakeholder concerns relating to efficiency and conflicts between community and commercial activities within the region.	Local Road	\$0.35m	\$0.12m		\$4.26m
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Rakaiaatane Road	Strengthening the road to support increasing freight volumes to the Port, responding to current and future demands associated with intensified economic activity. Key linkage to Tairāwhiti Navigations project and Te Ha Sestercentennial Celebrations.	Local Road	\$4.5m	\$4.5m		
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Route Security Structural	Resilience improvements targeted at structural issues that could be progressed now.	Local Road	\$6.7m	\$2.144m		
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Tiniroto Rd	Business case to address network availability issues on the local road network.	Local Road	\$0.2m	\$0.064m	\$0.86m	
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Route Security: East Cape	Resilience improvements targeted at route security and network availability issues on East Cape Road	Local Road	\$1m	\$0.32m	\$0.68m	\$10.32m
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) SH35 Route Security	Interventions to improve route security and resilience at selected sites on SH35.	State Highway	\$2m	\$2m		
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Makokomuku single lane bridge*	Realignment of the Makokomuku bridge	State Highway			\$1.2m*	
(Tairāwhiti Rooding Package) Full	Upgrading SH2 Napier to Gisborne to be HPMV capable	State Highway			\$1.3m*	

HPMV Napier to Gisborne*						
(Tairāwhiti Roothing Package) Full HPMV Gisborne to Opotiki*	Upgrading SH2 and SH35 Gisborne to Opotiki be HPMV capable	State Highway			\$2.2m*	
(Tairāwhiti Roothing Package) Route Security State Highway 35	Investigating resilience improvements targeted at route security and network availability issues on State Highway 35.	State Highway	\$1m		\$1m	\$11.5m
(Tairāwhiti Roothing Package) Passing Opportunities	Investigating passing opportunities on: • State Highway 2 Gisborne to Opotiki • State Highway 2 Gisborne to Napier • State Highway 35 Gisborne to Opotiki	State Highway	\$0.35m		\$0.35m	\$32.65m
(Tairāwhiti Roothing Package) Waikare Gorge	Investigating realignment at the Waikare Gorge.	State Highway	\$1m		\$1m	\$49m
Gisborne Inner Harbour Redevelopment: Esplanade Upgrade	Redeveloping the Gisborne Inner Harbour as one part of six projects of a wider tourism investment programme.	Local Road	\$2.3m	\$2.3m		
Gisborne to Wairoa Rail Line Feasibility Study	Feasibility study to examine the potential reinstatement of part or all of the Gisborne to Wairoa Line	Rail	\$0.6m	\$0.6m		
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$43m</b>	<b>\$28.3m</b>	<b>\$14.7m</b>	<b>\$108.59m</b>

\*These projects are fully NLTF funded but were included in the PGF Roothing Package and are mentioned elsewhere in this regional update.

The Tairāwhiti Roothing Package has a total of \$137 million PGF investment, which includes funding envelopes for physical works that first are to undergo business cases. Some of these investigations are entirely NLTF funded.

In addition to the Package, there has also been PGF funded investment into the Gisborne Inner Harbour Redevelopment, which included roading improvements, as well as investment into the Gisborne to Wairoa rail line in the form of a feasibility study to examine potential for reinstatement for freight and cycle tourism.

### **In the last 18 months**

- Business-as-usual work continues alongside PGF's huge investment into the region.
- By late 2018, Arakihi, Mangaone and Hokoroa Roads were widened to allow more room for heavy freight vehicles, which were struggling on the narrow roads. The local share for the project cost was provided by the forestry companies benefitting.

- The grades of 50 pram crossings in urban Gisborne have been corrected to make them more accessible for more users, including installing tactile domes for the visually impaired. More crossings will be improved over the following year.
- A new footpath was constructed on Barkers Hill in December 2018 - an area that gets a lot of recreational use (that didn't have any footpath previously). There is now a safe footpath area for pedestrians climbing up and down the hill.
- In 2018 we constructed new slow vehicle passing bays SH2 on Kopua Hill in the Wharerata ranges, and on SH35 on Panikau Hill.
- In May 2019 the Waimata Valley Road was sealed, enabled by funding from the PGF. The challenging two kilometre-stretch of dirt road hosts increasing forestry activity and suffers regular washouts and road damage during winter weather events. Forestry companies and residents were increasingly frustrated. Dust in dry periods would cause hazardous driving conditions. Now, the newly sealed road has become even more popular with cyclists.
- In 2019 a CBD upgrade package was completed for a selection of the city centre's roads and intersections that were particularly damaged and/or hadn't had an upgrade for many years. This includes Gisborne's main street Gladstone Road. The chip seal roads were replaced with asphalt to ensure longer lasting, stronger, smoother and quieter roads. This work was enabled by the PGF.
- Upgrades for streetlights have been completed on both state highways and local roads. This involves converting old sodium bulbs to LEDs which is more energy efficient and cost effective.
- Rural townships have been upgraded: new footpaths, street lighting and kerb and channel installation for Tokomaru Bay and new speed humps for Muriwai.

### **Underway or about to start**

- We are in the early planning stages of a SH35 resilience package, which has \$11.5 million from the PGF allocated over a five-year period. This project will use environmental methods to stabilise the road, with support from traditional engineering works as well.
- A package of passing opportunities has been allocated \$39 million from the PGF. This will allow for multiple passing opportunities on SH2 between Napier and Opotiki, and on SH35. The project is in early planning stages. Key stakeholders, Maori and the community will be engaged prior to delivery.
- We're currently delivering a culvert renewals package with funding from the PGF. The investment will see over 30 culverts on the local road network renewed or replaced to improve storm water management and road resilience.
- Investigations and designs are underway for a Potae Road extension to create a connection with Nelson Road. This will provide efficiency via another link out of the residential area and will allow for subdivision growth in the area. Property developers will contribute towards the project cost.
- We're managing an emergency works package in response to a series of weather events that caused significant damage on the roading network - at the peak, 600km of road was closed. The repair bill is \$26.4 million, with 8% of PGF funding and 92% Transport Agency funding.



The significant damage is a result of the June 2018 flood event and from 2017 storms Debbie and Cook. The recovery process will take at least 3 years to complete.

- Mangaopore Bridge is currently being strengthened. The wooden deck is being replaced with prefabricated concrete slabs to repair years of damage worsened by recent storm events. The bridge will also be High Productivity Motor Vehicle (HPMV) capable to support increasing heavy freight movements.
- Both Waitahaia Road and McIlroy Road emergency works are in final stages. Two major slips from 2017 storm damage have been cleared, the water flow at these sites has been controlled, and both roads have been realigned to more stable ground. The McIlroy Road works also include establishment of a new rock wall to minimise erosion.
- An art competition with school students has recently closed with a winner announced in June 2019. The winning child's art will be displayed on the rear panels of each bus shelter around the city. Competition criteria was that the art must display the students' journey to school, and demonstrate road safety whether that be, cycling, walking or using the bus. The idea behind the art competition was to not only educate people on road safety but to also help minimise the vandalism issue we have now.
- A six-month trial will start on 1 July 2019 with Beetham Retirement Village and the Kiri Te Kanawa Retirement Village. The trial will give residents in these homes an improved bus service. Currently, the retirement homes have a private service which offers one two-hour trip to town per week. The trial will see the bus route extended to the retirement homes, with an hourly service between 9am and 3pm.
- A Cycling Tairāwhiti consultation is currently being planned, which will ask the public and key stakeholders for their thoughts on a set of potential routes to create an 'east to west' link for the city. Five key routes have been identified to connect the existing Wainui shared path with the Gladstone Road Bridge path and then onwards to the west of the city to reach Campion College and St Mary's Catholic School. This project is part of the Urban Cycleways Programme.
- SH2 between Napier and Gisborne and Gisborne and Opotiki has NLTP funding allocated for strengthening and upgrades to allow for High Performance Motor Vehicles.
- PGF funding has also been allocated for a set of upgrades at industrial zones in Gisborne: Aerodrome, Dunstan and McDonald Roads in Gisborne will be widened and strengthened by 2020. Drainage improvements will also be made. These roads are expected to take increasing pressure as heavy freight movements increase.
- Heavy metalling on rural roads is underway with PGF investment. Replacing heavy metal on unsealed rural roads is essential to prepare for winter weather events and intense logging traffic. Gisborne's rural roads are supporting unprecedented logging activity as the forestry industry grows.
- The Rakaiatane Road (or 'Port Road') upgrade is near complete. The upgrade is fully funded by the PGF to support the movement of freight in and out of Eastland Port. The upgrade includes drainage improvements, new shared paths and new line markings for safer vehicle movement. The upgrade also helps connect Gisborne's Inner Harbour and CBD with Cook's Landing site and Titirangi Kaiti Hill. The upgrade will be complete before the Tuia 250 Sestercentennial commemorations.

- A local road 50MAX programme is upgrading local bridges' load capacity to provide access to HPMVs. This is ongoing over a seven-year period.
- A footpath renewals programme is currently underway. All the district's footpaths have been assessed for possible defects, with 800 footpaths identified for repair or improvement. The highest hazards/risks have been addressed. Work continues on the ranked list and any new defects are being addressed as they are identified.
- A safety review for a Childers Road upgrade has taken place, with tenders for procurement going out after Tuia 250 commemorations in October. The upgrade will improve the condition of the road and will also help with traffic calming on the key CBD corridor. NLTP funding has been allocated.

### **Completed projects**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
Taruheru shared path (Bright to Grey Street)	December 2017	NLTP
Pakarae Road realignment SH35	March 2018	NLTP
Arakihi, Mangaone and Hokoroa Road widening	December 2018	NLTP and Forestry companies
Barkers Hill foot path	December 2018	GDC
SH35 rest area upgrades	November 2018	Regional Economic Development funds
Wainui Stage 2 shared path	December 2018	NLTF
Motu Trail/Rere Heartland Ride safety improvements	January 2019	Regional Economic Development
Gladstone Road Bridge shared path	April 2019	NLTF and UCP
Awapuni Road upgrade	April 2019	NLTF
Waimata Valley Road sealing	May 2019	Provincial Growth Fund and NLTP
New SH2 Motu Bridge	June 2018	\$6 million Regional Economic Development funds
Gisborne CBD roads upgrade	June 2019	Provincial Growth Fund

## Projects underway

<b>What</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
Potae Road extension	Investigation and design underway	GDC with Developer contributions
Childers Road upgrade (Grey to Customhouse St)	Safety review complete	NLTP
Safety Boost programme, SH2 and SH35	Underway	\$6.3 million Safe Network Programme
Cycling Tairāwhiti consultation	Planning stages	Urban Cycleway Programme
Rakaiatane Road upgrade	Underway	Provincial Growth Fund
Heavy metalling on rural roads	Underway	Provincial Growth Fund
Heavy industry zone upgrades	Procurement for delivery	Provincial Growth Fund
SH2 / SH35 passing opportunities package	Planning and investigation	\$39 million Provincial Growth Fund
Makokomuka safety realignment	Planning and engagement	National Land Transport Fund
SH2 Napier – Gisborne HPMV upgrades	Safety review	N/A
SH35 resilience improvements	Early planning	\$11.5 million Provincial Growth Fund
Culvert renewals on local roads	Underway	Provincial Growth Fund

## Investment in Tairawhiti-Gisborne

<b>NLTP</b>	<b>2015-18</b>	<b>2018-21</b>
<b>Forecast total investment</b>	\$140 million	\$227 million
<b>Forecast maintenance and operations</b>	\$112 million	\$157 million
<b>Forecast public transport investment</b>	\$1.4 million	\$1.9 million
<b>Forecast walking and cycling</b>	\$1 million	\$4.5 million
<b>Regional network improvements</b>	\$17 million	\$44 million
<b>Total Provincial Growth Fund</b>		\$30 million