

Gisborne/Tairāwhiti Regional Update

August 2020

Overview

This year, and over the next two, Waka Kotahi will be rolling out several large projects in the Gisborne/Tairāwhiti region as a result of the collaborative Regional Economic Development Plan. These have been prioritised in the Regional Land Transport Plan. This plan identified how important a safe and reliable transport network is for the region that can easily become isolated in the event of an earthquake or severe weather event.

The region's remote location means it relies heavily on the State highway network and local roads to connect its communities to social and economic services, to get goods from farm gates and forests to markets, and to support growth in tourism.

The projects in delivery this year include bridge strengthening for high productivity trucks, passing opportunities and resilience sites, with the bridge strengthening already underway. This important investment into the region is coming from the \$137 million Tairāwhiti Roothing 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 more than \$320 million over three years.

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, with connections to neighbouring regions also limited.

Community concerns about safety are also being addressed through speed reviews.

Resilience

In the last 12 months

- We undertook significant community engagement on the SH35 Resilience project. The business case for improvements to more than 20 preferred sites between Gisborne and Ōpōtiki has been submitted and endorsed.

Safety

In the last 12 months

- The Safety Boost programme has been completed. This included \$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, 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.
- On SH35, the Gladstone Bridge walking and cycling shared path has now been built with just some minor safety items to be finalised.
- Construction of the replacement SH2 Motu Bridge project began in 2016 and the new bridge was officially opened in 2018. Stage 2 of the works, involving safety improvements and realignment to the surrounding road, is also now completed.
- Upgrading specific sections of SH2 between Gisborne and Ōpōtiki to enable High Productivity Motor Vehicles (HPMV) weighing over 44 tonnes to travel the route is now complete. This work was part of a \$4 million project to strengthen six bridges along the route, bringing them up to HPMV standard. It has been funded by the National Land Transport Fund and Provincial Growth Fund and is part of the Tairāwhiti Roothing package.

- Aro Aro Bridge is the first site to be fully completed, with work to continue on the remaining bridges over the next three years. These bridges include:
 - Omoko Bridge
 - Owhiritoa Stream Bridge
 - Omaukora Bridge
 - Gibsons Bridge
 - Sandys Bridge
- Work on stage 2 of the SH35 Wainui Cycleway Stage 2 has been completed.

Public transport

Waka Kotahi and Ministry of Transport (MoT) have supported Gisborne District Council and operators by providing policy guidance on and additional public transport funding available for approved organisations during the COVID-19 crisis. This is to cover funding shortfalls associated with the fare free policy on services and additional costs incurred to implement COVID-19 measures to protect staff and users' health and safety. This has included additional costs to cover extra cleaning and protective equipment, plus funding to make up the fare-box shortfall, including the passenger share of Total Mobility transport (up to the regional fare cap).

Waka Kotahi has also approved funding for low cost, low risk activities in Gisborne, such as improved bus shelters at locations with high volume passenger pick up/drop off points and providing a small-scale school bus service for the Kaiti suburb.

Underway or about to start

- The SH35 Makokomuka safety realignment project is in the pre-implementation stage, with final design and consenting being worked through. This project will improve safety on SH35, about 20kms south of Tokomaru Bay, by realigning the road to remove two narrow bridges and road curves. This has NLTP funding allocated.
- SH35 Resilience work will begin on the first of more than 20 sites in September and is expected to take about two years to complete. This is funded through the PGF.
- SH35/2 Passing Opportunities business case was approved this year. Construction on more than 10 sites between Gisborne and Opōtiki, and Gisborne and Hawke's Bay, will begin in September this year. Work will continue on 15 other sites following these, and there will be additional mobile phone layby sites installed, which is a direct result of community feedback. The construction phase is expected to take two years in conjunction with the Resilience project. This project extends south to Bay View, Hawke's Bay.
- SH35 Wainui Stage 3 Cycleway – this is a Gisborne District Council (GDC) led project, however is built alongside the State highway. In stage 3, GDC have settled on a route which extends the existing Wainui shared path as far as Crawford Road, then continues down Crawford Road to the Esplanade to link up to the Gladstone Bridge widened path. Construction is planned over the next year.
- Design work is well underway for the widening of the Tahaenui Bridge on SH2 with construction expected to start later this year.; The project is funded from the NZ Upgrade Programme.
- In public transport, Waka Kotahi will support Gisborne District Council in exploring the potential use and trialling of on-demand public transport services to improve access to economic and social opportunities for Gisborne communities.

Provincial Growth Fund (PGF)

The Gisborne/Tairāwhiti transport network has received significant investment from the PGF, which will help to drive economic growth, increase tourism and improve access for communities to key services.

Three PGF-funded State highway projects totalling \$51.15m are included in the Tairāwhiti Rooding Package and are:

- SH35 Resilience
- SH2/SH35 Passing Opportunities
- SH2 Waikare Gorge.

Investment in Gisborne/Tairāwhiti

NLTP	2015–18	2018–21
Forecast total investment	\$140 million	\$273 million
Forecast maintenance and operations	\$112 million	\$159 million
Forecast public transport investment	\$1.4 million	\$1.7 million
Forecast walking and cycling	\$1 million	\$5 million
Regional network improvements	\$17 million	\$38 million

Crown funding*	
Provincial Growth Fund**	\$51.15 million

*PGF investment in Hawke's Bay that is part of the Tairāwhiti Rooding Package is included in this table and is not included in the Hawke's Bay regional summary tables.

**Waka Kotahi led projects only

Overview map

