

# Manawatū/Whanganui



Investment in the Manawatū/Whanganui transport network in the 2024-27 NLTP will aim to strengthen the region’s position as an important freight hub, supporting economic and population growth.

The central location of the region means its transport networks – both road and rail – carry large volumes of traffic and freight, linking through to Greater Wellington, Hawke’s Bay, Taranaki, Waikato and the upper North Island.

Roading resilience is a priority. More intense and frequent storms will impact on areas with unstable terrain north of Whanganui, while low-lying coastal communities are facing increased risk from the impacts of sea level rise. A more resilient roading system will enable the region to better withstand increased weather events and keep road users safe.

## Economic growth and productivity

### Roads of National Significance (RoNS)

The GPS proposes a RoNS as a strategic corridor to support economic growth and productivity in the region. We’ve included the following RoNS in this NLTP to be progressed as outlined below:

Construction will begin in the next 3 years on **Ōtaki to north of Levin** – a 4-lane 24km highway that will provide a new, safer and more reliable section of SH1, connecting Greater Wellington with the freight distribution centre of Palmerston North.

### Other

**Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū Tararua Highway**, which replaces the Manawatū Gorge route, will be completed this NLTP period, providing a safe, resilient and efficient route for freight between Woodville and Ashhurst.

We’ll work with local and regional councils to progress work on the **Palmerston North Integrated Transport Initiative (PNITI)** – a package of projects designed to support growth of freight distribution in the region while also improving transport safety and choice for the whole community. Subject to funding availability, we’ll look to progress the business case for the Ring Road. The first stages of capital infrastructure will be delivered in the next 6-10 years.

### Increased maintenance and resilience

#### Maintenance

Increased funding to maintain and operate the state highway and local road networks will enable significant road and drainage renewal work. Maintenance of existing assets ensures roads are safe and accessible for everyone to drive on.

**\$1.6 billion**

Forecast total investment

**\$194 million**

Forecast maintenance operations

**\$294 million**

Forecast pothole prevention

**\$987 million**

Forecast improvements

**\$63 million**

Forecast public transport

## State highways

- \$79 million will be invested this NLTP period maintaining state highway assets.
- \$87 million is ringfenced for state highway pothole prevention.

This \$166 million investment includes 277 lane kilometres of works:

- 212kms of chipseal.
- 56kms of rehabilitation.
- 9 kms of asphalt resurfacing.

## Local roads

With road controlling authorities in Manawatū/Whanganui we'll invest a total of \$322 million over this NLTP period

- \$115m will be invested in operations.
- \$207m is ringfenced for local road pothole prevention.

## Resilience

Maintaining existing assets, along with targeted improvements is the priority to improve network resilience throughout the region. We also need to expand our understanding of resilience in urban environments. We're purchasing property and starting work at **SH1 Utiku** to improve resilience in this area with longstanding land instability having worsened.

## Bridges

We'll replace the end-of-life **SH43 Kururau Stream Water Drive** with a modern structure.

## Rail

Rail network investment in this NLTP will be targeted to parts of the rail network where the most significant economic benefits and opportunities for boosting the productivity of freight movement exist.

The Rail Network Investment Programme (RNIP) sets out planned network maintenance, management, renewal, and improvement work on the national rail network over a 3-year period. The next RNIP will be approved later in 2024 following further analysis.

## Public transport

To 2030, the government has allocated more than \$800 million to upgrade the Manawatū and Wairarapa rail lines.

This will increase the number of services on the **Capital Connection** to Palmerston North and provide additional off-peak services, shortening travel times for commuters.

Implementation of the **National Ticketing Solution** allowing public transport users to tag on and off with their contactless debit or credit card will be completed in this funding period.

## Safety

During the 2024-27 NLTP period, our safety focus for the region will be completing safety projects that have already started, while beginning to design safety improvements for other key corridors where significant improvements and efficient investment would be beneficial.

We'll complete these safety works to provide more reliable journey times for road users on:

- **SH1 Bulls to Sanson**
- **SH3 Whanganui to Bulls.**

## Commercial Vehicle Regional Safety Centre (CVSC)

Construction of a CVSC at Ohakea will be completed by 2027. The CVSC will use the latest technology to check commercial vehicles for compliance with safety regulations. By targeting those who flout vehicle weight restrictions, we'll be protecting the roading network, helping to minimise the risk to key freight routes where damage could disrupt freight supply chains. This helps with maintenance and resilience of the network

## Value for money

Value for money isn't always about seeking the lowest initial cost for a project – it must also take into consideration the whole-of-life costs and benefits of a project.

We're taking steps to make sure that all our work this NLTP provides good value for taxpayers. In Manawatū/Whanganui this will include reducing expenditure on temporary traffic management, increased investment in road maintenance and a focus on whole-of-life costs.

We'll improve the productivity of maintenance and improvement works, by considering the way works are:

- scoped
- planned
- procured
- undertaken.

## Key projects 2024-27

