

# Taranaki



The backbone to supporting Taranaki’s highly productive economy to prosper is a safe, reliable and resilient state highway network. The region’s economy is centred on dairy farming and processing, oil and gas industries and forestry. Reliable road and rail connections are critical to ensuring these industries get goods to market, as well as keeping Taranaki connected to the rest of the North Island.

The land transport system needs to be well-maintained, safe, and resilient to extreme weather events as it carries a high volume of freight every year. SH3 is critical to providing safe connections north to Waikato, there being no suitable alternative northern routes for heavy vehicles, and road and rail connections are important to the southeast to Manawatū-Whanganui.

Taranaki’s population is about 120,000 and 70 percent live in New Plymouth, the region’s only city. The population is predicted to reach 138,000 by 2048. Much of this growth is forecast to be in New Plymouth. South Taranaki is also seeing steady population growth.

## Economic growth and productivity

We’ll progress work on the New Plymouth Integrated Transport Framework to provide a whole of system view of the need for investment in New Plymouth’s wider transportation network. This will help shape how New Plymouth approaches transport investment over the next 30 years to achieve its vision for a sustainable lifestyle capital.

Major work continues to improve the Forgotten World Highway SH43, supporting the region’s economic development strategy Tapuae Roa: Make Way for Taranaki. The historic road is New Zealand’s oldest heritage trail and is expected to be fully sealed by the end of 2024. This will improve safety and attract more tourists into the region.

## 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 to be done. Maintenance of existing assets ensures our roads are safe and accessible for everyone to drive on.

**\$808 million**

Forecast total investment

**\$120 million**

Forecast maintenance operations

**\$238 million**

Forecast pothole prevention

**\$392 million**

Forecast improvements

**\$22 million**

Forecast public transport

## State highways

- \$67 million will be invested this NLTP period maintaining state highway assets.
- \$137 million is ringfenced for state highway pothole prevention.

This \$204 million investment includes 319 lane kilometres of works:

- 216km of chipseal.
- 86km of rehabilitation.
- 7km of structural asphalt.
- 10km of asphalt resurfacing.

## Local roads

With road controlling authorities in Taranaki, we'll invest a total of \$134 million over this NLTP period:

- \$53m will be invested in operations.
- \$101m is ringfenced for local road pothole prevention.

## Resilience

During the next 30 years, there is a growing risk of damage to the unstable terrain from weather events to Taranaki's state highways network, both to the north and east of the region.

### **Mt Messenger Bypass Te Ara o Te**

**Ata** will remove a steep, narrow, and winding section of SH3 along with low-cost low-risk projects and maintenance and renewal programmes along the remainder of the route. Construction will continue for both the 2024-27 and 2027-31 NLTP periods.

### **Bridges and culverts**

End-of-life replacement of **SH3 Mangapepeki No.2 Culvert** north of New Plymouth.

## 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

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 within this funding period.

## Safety

To reflect the new safety activity class and its strategic focus, we'll be targeting investment towards road policing and safety promotion with a focus on improving road safety through enforcement and behavioural change, mostly at a national level. We'll invest in safe roading infrastructure by fixing potholes and increasing the level of road maintenance on the road network.

Safety interventions will be retrofitted on high crash areas in the region, where they provide value for money and will materially improve road safety.

We'll continue work with improvements on **SH3 Waitara to Bell Block** to make the road safer and cater for population growth.

We're continuing with work to deliver a wide range of safety improvements on **SH3 between New Plymouth and Hāwera**, including flexible median barriers, wide centrelines, a roundabout and an intersection speed zone.

## 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 Taranaki 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

