

WEST COAST



Building resilience into the state highway network remains the focus for investment in the West Coast's transport system to ensure the region's main economic driver, tourism, continues to flourish. Tourism is now the fastest growing economy for the region and relies on safe, reliable access.

SH6, running the length of the region, forms a critical lifeline link between the region's communities, as well as providing access to the key tourism attractions, such as Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers, Punakaiki and various walking and cycling trails. However, the highway is prone to closures from slips, rock falls, flooding and crashes. These closures not only disrupt the travel of customers but also have a significant impact on the economy.

There are no viable alternative routes when SH6 is closed; and where there are detours, these are lengthy and often on unsealed local roads. Almost half the local roads on the West Coast are unsealed.

With the West Coast's relative isolation, the result of its few connections to neighbouring regions and its challenging geographical environment, a resilient network is vital to support economic and social opportunities within the region. Safe, reliable routes are required to the north, south and east of the West Coast as tourists often travel around the South Island and come into the region from each of three access points.

Throughout the next three years, the Transport Agency will continue to work with local government and the Franz Josef community to improve resilience of the town and the transport network that provides a vital link for West Coast tourism. Both SH6 and the town of Franz Josef are located on the Alpine Fault and are prone to flooding by the Waiho River during significant weather events. This is the result of continual changes in the water channels of the heavily braided riverbed, running along the southern edge of the tourist town.

ACCESS

Resilience work is planned for the highway network on the West Coast during this three-year NLTP period to help reduce the number of closures and minimise disruption for customers from unplanned events, in particular weather-related incidents. On SH6, SH7 and SH73, work is focused on helping prevent slips and rock fall at a number of known susceptible locations.

\$177 MILLION

FORECAST TOTAL
WEST COAST
INVESTMENT

**\$134
MILLION**

FORECAST
MAINTENANCE
AND OPERATIONS

**\$542
THOUSAND**

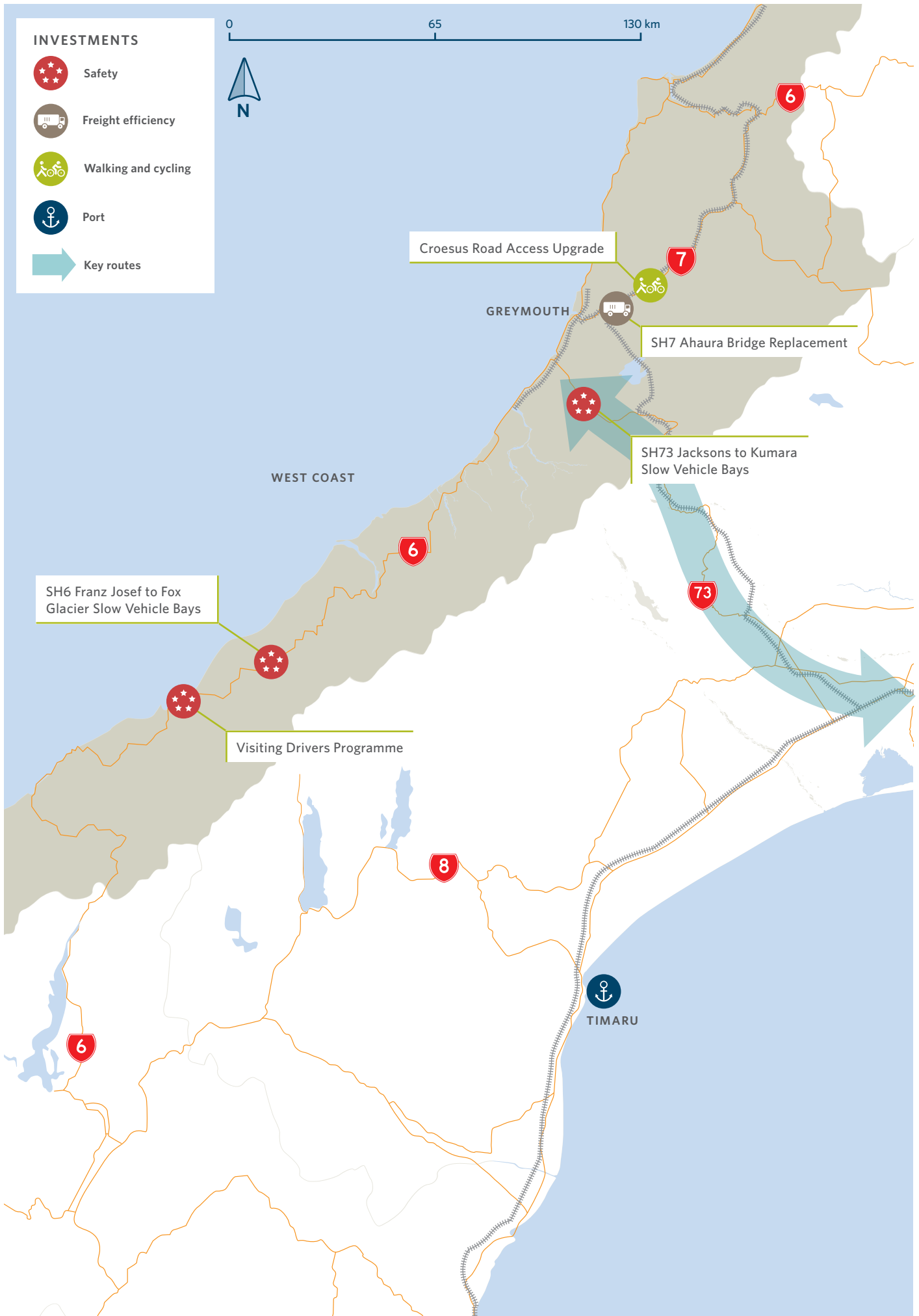
FORECAST
PUBLIC
TRANSPORT
INVESTMENT

**\$42
MILLION**






REGIONAL
NETWORK
IMPROVEMENTS

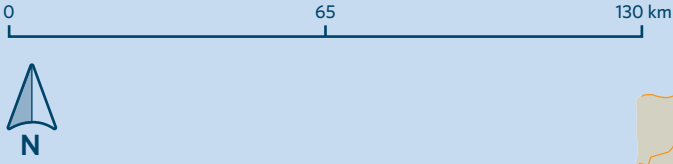
26%

SPEND
TARGETING
SAFETY



INVESTMENTS

-  Safety
-  Freight efficiency
-  Walking and cycling
-  Port
-  Key routes



SH6 Franz Josef to Fox Glacier Slow Vehicle Bays

Visiting Drivers Programme

Croesus Road Access Upgrade

SH7 Ahaura Bridge Replacement

SH73 Jacksons to Kumara Slow Vehicle Bays

GREYMOUTH

WEST COAST

TIMARU

On SH7, a key freight route from the north, it is proposed to replace the single-lane wooden Ahaura Bridge with a new two-lane bridge and realign the highway.

Upgrading this bridge is part of an overall programme of work to improve freight connections to enable HPMV and 50MAX vehicles to access the region's primary produce and get goods to markets in the most cost-effective and efficient way.

With the Department of Conservation and Buller District Council, the Transport Agency is developing a plan to improve parking and pedestrian access to the iconic pancake rocks and blowhole at Punakaiki, and with the Grey District Council, Development West Coast and MBIE to improve the transport link between Blackball township and the start of the Paparoa Track.

SAFETY

In this NLTP period, \$134 million will be spent on maintenance and renewals along West Coast highways to improve both resilience and safety to support economic development.

Much of the work is focused on improving roads and roadsides at high-risk locations throughout the region.

Work will also focus on progressing the region's speed management plan to improve safety for both residents and visiting drivers.

WALKING AND CYCLING

Support will continue for regional walking and cycling trails where there are opportunities to grow tourism and support the visitor economy.

This includes the Croesus Trail, 10kms of which forms part of the 55km track through the Paparoa mountain range, linking the villages of Blackball and Punakaiki. The Paparoa Track has been given Great Walk status, making it one of the premier outdoor experiences in New Zealand. It is the first new track to be added to the Great Walk network since it was setup in 1993 and the first to be built for both walkers and mountain bikers.

INVESTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Replacement of the Ahaura Bridge to improve resilience of SH7 as a key freight route.
- \$134 million on maintenance of the local road and state highway network.
- Upgrade of connections to the Croesus Trail that links with the Paparoa Track.
- Almost \$1 million on LED lights in Buller and Grey districts to reduce energy and maintenance costs.
- Working with the Westland District Council to find a better resilience option for Franz Josef.

CASE STUDY

SEEING THE LIGHT

Some sections of the West Coast's roading network are getting a brighter makeover due to investments being made by the Buller and Grey District Councils.

Together the two councils are investing a total of almost \$1 million in LEDs, the latest innovation in lighting technology.

Nationwide, the transition from traditional sodium lighting to LEDs involves some 360,000 road lights. The benefits of LEDs include:

- energy savings - they are cheaper to run
- extended life/reduced maintenance costs
- better light quality to improve safety.

LEDs used in New Zealand emit a neutral white light. Current research into light and road safety indicates this is the best and safest colour temperature for object recognition for road users.

Councils are being encouraged to switch to LEDs because of the long-term maintenance and energy savings through an 85 percent funding assistance rate (FAR).

