HAWKE’S BAY

AT A GLANCE

Our focus in Hawke’s Bay is to help create a safer, more resilient land transport system. One that supports economic and regional growth, maintains critical connections, encourages increased use of public transport, walking and cycling in Napier and Hastings, and provides appropriate levels of service across all transport networks.

IMPROVE URBAN FORM

Napier and Hastings are forecast to receive moderate levels of growth over the coming decades.

TRANSFORM URBAN MOBILITY

There are significant commuter trips between Napier and Hastings daily, with 93% of journeys to work being by private vehicle. Forecast growth in freight traffic could increase this. Focus is needed on the Napier to Hastings urban areas, SH2 between Napier and Waipukurau, and high-risk rural roads. In 2019, Wairoa District had New Zealand’s highest levels of personal risk (measured as DSI/100MVKT) with particular issues around impairment and speeding.

SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE HARMs

Hawke’s Bay has a relatively poor safety record. Run-off road crashes, speeding, impairment and not wearing seat belts are primary contributors. Forecast growth in freight traffic could increase this. Focus is needed on the Napier to Hastings urban areas, SH2 between Napier and Waipukurau, and high-risk rural roads. In 2019, Wairoa District had New Zealand’s highest levels of personal risk (measured as DSI/100MVKT) with particular issues around impairment and speeding.

TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

Sea level rise and more extreme weather events will increasingly impact communities and infrastructure, particularly in low-lying coastal areas. Already a low-carbon emitter, Hawke’s Bay is well placed to focus on plans for a low-emissions economy.

SUPPORT REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The distribution of economic opportunities and growth is uneven across the region, with declining populations, high unemployment and low incomes in the north particularly.
HAWKE’S BAY TODAY

HAWKE’S BAY IS HOME TO APPROXIMATELY 166,000 PEOPLE OR 3.5% OF NEW ZEALAND’S POPULATION.17

Napier and Hastings together are home to nearly 80% of the region’s population.2 They are the main employment centres with primary production and processing jobs significant in the surrounding areas.

Primary industries such as horticulture, wine, sheep and beef farming and processing are important for the region. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism and export log volumes at Napier Port were forecast to grow, including cruise ships in summer and cycle tourism.

Hawke’s Bay is a surge region, identified by the government as needing investment to support regional economic development.

While Napier and Hastings are projected to experience some limited growth, Wairoa District in the north, and communities in the south of the region face ongoing challenges with static and declining populations. Communities in the north of the region have high unemployment and low incomes, and face challenges accessing specialist services located in Napier and Hastings.

The transport system across Hawke’s Bay is dominated by private vehicle trips. While public transport usage is low, use of walking and cycling is slightly above the national average in the urban areas.30

While the existing transport system has capacity to accommodate forecast growth, there is likely to be growing pressure on networks immediately surrounding the port because of increased heavy vehicle trips. The construction of Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua highway project, the alternate road between Manawatū and Hawke’s Bay, is important to supporting the safe, reliable and efficient movement of people and freight into the future.

The rail network connects Napier Port to distribution hubs in Palmerston North and extends north to Wairoa. At present rail services are focused on freight movements, with container movements between Palmerston North and Napier Port. The line north to Wairoa is focused on transporting logs to Napier Port.

Matariki – Hawke’s Bay Regional Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan has identified several areas where transport can help regional social and economic development: These include:

- supporting tourism – including potential improvements to SH38 through to Lake Waikaremoana to open up this key natural asset and improve the safety of tourists travelling
- driver licensing and mentoring to support access to training and jobs.
HAWKE'S BAY TOMORROW

The region’s population is projected to increase to almost 171,000 in 2043, with most of this growth in Napier and Hastings. The Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy outlines a compact development plan as the preferred neighbourhood design in Napier and Hastings, which will help reduce long distance travel to access employment and essential services. The remainder of the region is forecast to experience low, static or declining population growth.

The percentage of people under 15 and over 65 is expected to increase by 2043. By 2043, over 30% of the populations of Napier and Central Hawke’s Bay districts are projected to be older than 65 years, well ahead of the national average of 23%. This shift is driving changing patterns of housing, support services and travel needs to help ensure that seniors remain socially connected and able to actively participate in their communities.

KEY INSIGHTS

- It is important that forecast urban growth in Napier and Hastings is managed in a way that reduces the need to travel to jobs and essential services, supports emission reductions and reduces dependency on private vehicles.
- There are opportunities to support walking and cycling. Rates of walking and cycling to work are above average, but public transport accounts for only 1% of trips.
- Expected growth of Napier Port will place additional pressure on ‘first and last mile’ connections to the port gate, increase issues of safety, noise, dust and community relationships for areas near the port and adjacent to key access routes.
- The impacts of sea level rise are forecast to increase, while drier conditions, potentially combined with more intense storm events, could lead to increased problems with erosion and flooding. There are growing issues around stormwater management in low lying areas as a result of rising sea levels.
- Safe and reliable road and rail connections between Napier and Palmerston North are critical to supporting the region’s economy.
- Transport can support improvements in regional development by improving access to employment and essential services for remote communities in the north and south of the region, and by supporting industry growth and access to visitor destinations.
FOCUS OF EFFORT: 2018-21

Investment in the 2018-21 National Land Transport Programme is based around the importance of a transport system that is safe, well-connected and resilient, to enable the movement of goods, including to Napier Port and support growth in tourism.

In urban areas, investment is targeted to build on past walking and cycling investment in Hastings and encourage shifts from the use of private vehicles towards public transport and more active travel options. We will co-invest with our partners to provide safer and improved access to schools, employment and essential services to create cities where people of all ages want to live, work and play. Other highlights include investment in:

- Hawke’s Bay Expressway
- SH2 Wairoa to SH5
- Watchman Road Hawke’s Bay intersection upgrade
- SH5 Tarawera to SH2
- SH2 Pakipaki to Waipukurau
- SH2 College Road to Silverstream
- SH2 Tahaenui Bridge.

This map shows all projects underway during the period.
SUPPORT REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (HIGH)

Hawke’s Bay is a priority for regional development support, particularly, Wairoa and Central Hawke’s Bay. To support regional growth, improved access to education and employment, and to help raise living standards, we will:

• support the development of regeneration plans for towns and villages in Wairoa and the Central Hawke’s Bay making them a great place to live, work and play
• support transport interventions that maximise industry development
• support freight initiatives that are multi-modal, efficient and safe
• support initiatives to increase visitor numbers, particularly in the north of the region.

SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE HARMs (MEDIUM)

Support implementation of the Road to Zero Safety Strategy for New Zealand and associated Action Plan (2020-22), and regional safety strategies, with a particular emphasis on:

• safety interventions targeting run-off road and head-on crashes on high-risk rural roads (rural roads are roads with speed limits >80km/h)
• target road policing and behaviour change programmes with a focus on alcohol and drug impairment, not wearing seatbelts and speeding
• speed management to provide safe and appropriate speeds on high-risk rural roads. Targeted use of safety cameras to reduce speeding.

HEALTH

Our approach to delivering better health outcomes, particularly the reduction of harmful emissions, will primarily be through initiatives that target other step changes, including improved urban form, increasing access to and use of public transport, walking and cycling, and efforts to reduce carbon emissions. We will also continue to work to ensure that the noise impacts of transport are appropriately managed through a mix of land use planning and mitigation works.

TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE (MEDIUM)

We will continue to work to understand the opportunities to support climate change adaptation and mitigation.

ADAPTATION

We will focus on:

• engaging in local planning processes to avoid infrastructure and development in areas at increased risk of natural hazards and effects of climate change
• enabling continuous improvement in network resilience through maintenance and renewals, and ‘low cost/low risk’ investments
• enabling quick recovery following disruption to the land transport system. Investigate options for alternate routes that are less likely to be impacted by sea level rise.

MITIGATION:

We will focus on:

• engaging in local planning processes to ensure urban form and transport planning supports reductions in emissions, private vehicle travel and average trip length
• ensuring network design and operation makes the best use of existing transport systems to manage demand and reduce emissions by prioritising the move to public transport and low emission options, and actively managing speed, urban freight and congestion.

IMPROVE URBAN FORM (MEDIUM)

While our focus is on multi-agency partnerships in major urban centres, we recognise the potential for growth in and around Napier and Hastings to support safe and thriving cities, with increased access to public transport, walking and cycling options and reduced carbon emissions. We will focus on:

• supporting delivery of the Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy, particularly the target of locating 60% of growth within existing urban areas
• engaging in planning processes to ensure that new development:
  - enhances existing communities, making them a better place to work, live and play
  - supports an increase in active modes, including trips by foot, bike and e-scooter etc
  - reduces the need to travel long distances to access employment and services
  - results in lower emissions per capita
  - maintains or improves the safety and efficiency of the transport system and appropriately manages noise issues along the Hawke’s Bay Expressway.

TRANSFORM URBAN MOBILITY (MEDIUM)

Projected population growth in the region will increase travel demand on the region’s networks and provides opportunities to support increased use of public transport, walking and cycling. Our focus will be on supporting:

• improvements to walking and cycling networks, with a focus on providing safe and efficient access to and within activity centres and to schools, and linking existing infrastructure to provide connected networks
• public transport services, including on-demand services, where they give access to employment and essential services, are a more affordable transport option and help shape a more thriving city
• proposals to address the increasing need for services targeting mobility for senior residents
• exploration of opportunities for shared transport by employers and cycling because of good weather and terrain.