

2 Waihī to Tauranga Corridor

Kura support for Road Safety Week activities

As part of Road Safety Week, Waka Kotahi teamed up with Beca to visit a number of kura (schools) across the country to talk about road safety.

Beca donated 600 copies of the children's book "My Mum is Queen of the Road—Ko Tōku Māmā te Kuini o te Rori", by Jennifer Beck and Lisa Allen.

The book highlights this year's Road Safety Week theme, celebrating road safety heroes. It's about a young boy whose mum is a traffic management worker, and her important role in keeping her whānau, colleagues, and community safe.

We joined Beca and HEB Construction at Pahoia School where the tamariki tried on high vis and hard hats, found out how traffic management works and checked out a Truck Mounted Attenuator, (or 'Transformer', according to the kids), which is a mobile crash cushion system.

They are excited about seeing a roundabout taking shape outside their school in the next few years, as part of our SH2 Waihī to Ōmokoroa safety improvements.



Go slow between the cones: Joe and John from the SH2 Waihī to Ōmokoroa safety improvements project make road safety fun at Pahoia School.

Aerial photos show progress on Takitimu North Link



Aerial photo looking towards Wairoa Road and on to Te Puna, April 2022



Aerial photo looking towards Bethlehem from the Smiths Farm area, April 2022

Archaeological investigations in progress

There's a wide range of different jobs needed to deliver transport projects. As it was New Zealand Archaeology Week recently, we caught up with the team of archaeologists and Kaitiaki (cultural monitors - Ngā Hapū o Te Paerangi, Pirirākau) on the Takitimu North Link project's site investigation mahi, ahead of construction.



Archaeologists and Kaitiaki on site at the Takitimu North Link project

Check out these pics of the team cleaning down the excavation area to look for subtle soil changes that indicate past occupations. The kūmara storage pits in the foreground have already been excavated. Some significant sites have been in the Wairoa Valley with evidence of gardening, crop storage, houses, and tools.

The Takitimu North Link project site runs through a dense archaeological landscape. Archaeology informs us about the day-to-day lives of past people, how they lived, what they ate, what and where they gardened, and how they interacted with their environments, all contributing to the unique story of Aotearoa New Zealand. When the investigations are complete, a report will be shared with tāngata whenua partners, published online, and lodged with Heritage NZ.

Takitimu North Link Stage One: Work starting on the first of eight bridges

The Takitimu North Link intersects a distinctive cross section of the Tauranga north landscape, incorporating flood plains, ridgelines and gullies, and the transition from the urban fringe through to rural landscape.

The project includes eight bridges that cross over or under the corridor totalling 1.6km of the 6.8km alignment, made up of 45 spans and approximately 12km of piles, they range in length from 20m to 360m and in height from 6m to 25m.

Work will begin on the first of eight bridges, at Wairoa Road this month. The bridge will take approximately 12 months to build and allow for the new road to be constructed below.

As with most major construction projects, there will be a certain amount of disruption as the project progresses, we will do our best to ensure we can minimise disruption and keep the community informed.



Diversion Road open at Wairoa Road

A diversion road at Wairoa Road has been built and is open ahead of work starting on the Wairoa Road Overbridge on Takitimu North Link, the road has a speed limit of 30km/h. Read more about the bridge construction below.



Work starting on the bridge at Wairoa Road



Finishing touches: the safety improvements team plant alongside SH2 after completing a retaining wall

Caring for the environment

Do you know that Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency plants more native plants and trees of any government organisation in the country?

Following completion of a retaining wall, 468 native plants and trees have been planted opposite Woodland Road on the State Highway 2 Waihi to Ōmokoroa Safety Improvements project.

A great deal of work goes into beautification and regeneration of roadsides with native plants and trees. Unfortunately, a quarter of these plants have since been stolen, including Nīkau and Pōhutukawa.

We are sad and disappointed to see what has happened here and we call on the community to please report any suspicious activity to NZ Police.

Doing the maintenance mahi

The construction season is now complete. This is when we typically repair the road surface (pavement) as the weather is more consistent, and we have more daylight hours to complete the work.

The maintenance team this season laid 17km of chip seal and 600m of asphalt on SH2 between Waihi and Tauranga.

Between now and the start of the next work season in October, contractors will focus on reactive maintenance to road conditions, drainage works and standard maintenance activities such as litter collection and signage repair and replacement.

The 2022/23 programme is currently being finalised, and we will be able to provide more detail in due course.

We understand that maintenance can be disruptive at times, and we are constantly looking for ways to improve carrying out maintenance programmes more efficiently while keeping safety as our number one priority.

Combining multiple work activities into one location is the way of the future and we have changes to how we undertake traffic management coming into effect so we are more likely to partially or fully close roads. This allows us to look at how we can bring teams together to complete more work in the same place at the same time, creating efficiencies within a safe working environment.

The maintenance team this season laid 17km of chip seal and 600m of asphalt on SH2 between Waihi and Tauranga.

SH2 Waihi to Ōmokoroa safety improvements update

A big shout out to the team for completing Section 8 (Sharp Road to Sargent Drive) three months early, as well as Section 10a (Wainui South Road to about 500m north of Pahoia Road).

All this while managing supply and resourcing challenges brought about by the challenges of COVID-19.

You will soon see early pre-construction work activities for

a roundabout due to start later this year at the SH2/Morton Road intersection. We will keep you informed regarding timing for this.

Of the six roundabouts being constructed along this corridor, we expect to build two a year.

Once two adjacent roundabouts are completed, we will start constructing the median barriers between them.



Taking shape: The roundabout at the SH2 intersections of Tetley Road and Rea Road is progressing well.

Detour for Rea Road/Tetley Road

Earthworks and drainage are nearing completion on all quadrants of the SH2/Rea Road/Tetley Road roundabout.

Although overhead power has been relocated underground on Tetley Road, COVID-19 has delayed the supply of the remainder of the power cable needed to move the power underground along SH2.

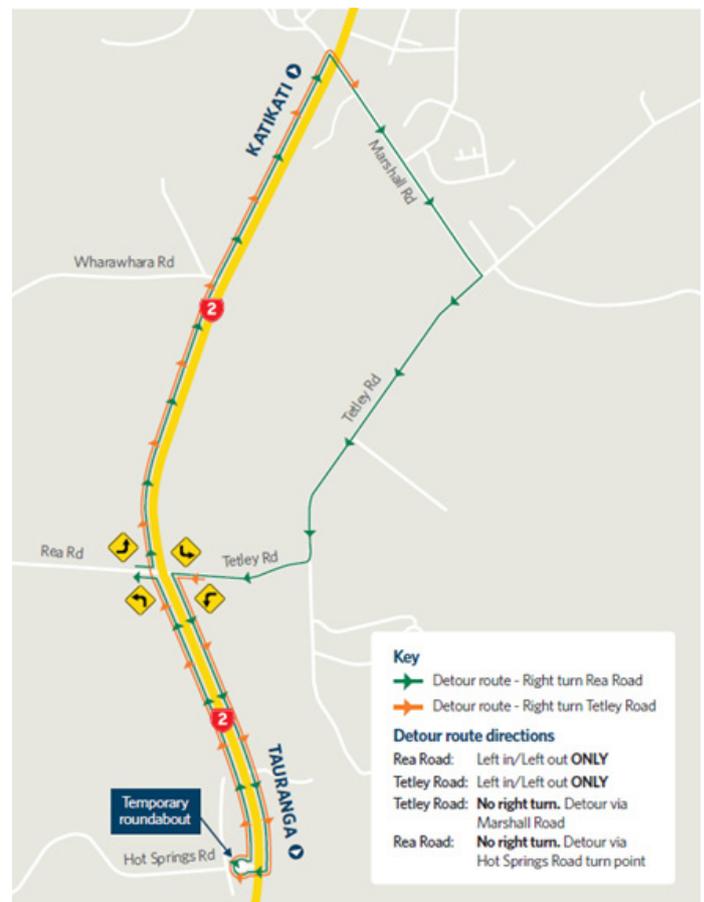
If you are driving through the area over the coming weeks, you will see surfacing laid on the lower pavement layers on the southbound lane (towards Tauranga). Once this side is completed, we will switch the traffic over and start the same work on the northbound side.

This means at both Rea Road and Tetley Road there will be left in and left out only. The detour to turn right at Tetley Road will be via Marshall Road. The detour to turn right at Rea Road will be via Hot Springs Road turn point.

There will be detours in place (see map on right).

Please note the final sealing to be undertaken at the roundabout will be asphalt, laid once the full width of the new road is completed.

Construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2022.



How flexible median barrier supports Road to Zero

Waka Kotahi is taking action to improve safety along SH2 between Waihi and Ōmokoroa as it is a high-risk section of road.

While the overall safety improvements remain on track for completion in 2024, during the next three to four years we will also install 14.1km of median barrier along 18km of highway between Rea Road/Tetley Road to Pahoia Road/Esdaile Road.

The median barrier will likely be complete in 2025/2026 and includes construction of six roundabouts along the corridor to enable safe and convenient turning areas.

To achieve the greatest safety benefit for the flexible median safety barriers, we need to have as few gaps as possible. There is no perfect solution that will suit everyone, and we must put the safety of people first, before efficiency and travel time. This does mean those entering the highway from a private access or side road with no roundabout can only turn left.

We understand this is inconvenient to some local residents so to assist with your journey we are constructing six roundabouts at carefully selected intersections between Tetley Road and Esdaile Road.

Roundabouts reduce approach speeds and help allow traffic from side roads to access the highway, but the primary purpose along this section of corridor is to provide a suitable turn around option for drivers once the flexible median barriers are installed.

We will begin installing 1.5km of the first section of flexible median barrier through the Apata Curves later this year.

The next section of barrier will be between Tetley Road and Sharp Road. While we have no firm date for this, we will let you know what to expect closer to construction.

We will also hold drop-in sessions in the coming months to keep you informed.

Why median barrier?

We know that flexible median safety barriers are life savers and can reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in crashes by 75 percent.

Flexible median barriers catch you before you hit something harder like a pole, tree or oncoming car. They absorb the impact by slowing down your vehicle and keeping it upright. We can all make mistakes, but there are changes we can make so simple mistakes don't result in us, our family members or friends being killed or seriously injured on our roads.

Did you know motorcyclist are more likely to survive an impact with a flexible safety barrier than an impact with a tree, pole or oncoming vehicle?

NZ motorcycle-barrier crash data from January 2001 to July 2013* shows 20 motorcycle fatalities sustained as a result of riders hitting a roadside or median barrier. Three of these involved flexible safety barriers, while 13 involved traditional steel barriers and other barrier types. Over the same time period there were 97 motorcyclist fatalities from collisions with posts or poles, 70 from hitting traffic signs and 93 from crashing into trees.

* (NZ Transport Agency/Ministry of Transport report, (July 2016), Flexible Barriers - Why we install wire-rope barriers on New Zealand roads)



Lifesavers: flexible median barrier can reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in crashes by 75 percent.



For more information on the SH2 Waihi to Tauranga projects, sign up for updates or contact us at:



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