

# TE WHANGANUI A TARA WELLINGTON

## AT A GLANCE

*Our focus in the Wellington region is to support partners to complete the Wellington Regional Growth Framework, which includes Horowhenua. Work will continue to create a safer, more resilient transport system. One that provides multiple transport options, progresses Let's Get Wellington Moving, helps improve the quality of life for our communities and supports economic growth and the COVID-19 recovery.*

## COVID-19 INSIGHTS AND IMPACTS

This section sets out the how the current pandemic might impact on land transport in Wellington. Wellington is expected to be protected from the worst effects of the slowdown because of the scale of the public sector and major professional services. This may result in an increase in internal migration because of employment opportunities in the public sector.

Significant levels of uncertainty remain regarding the scale and duration of COVID-19 impacts, particularly in the medium to long-term. We will continue to monitor and update as things change.

### POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON KEY SECTORS

- The Wellington regional economy is comparatively well-placed to recover from the pandemic. The prevalence of public sector employees in Wellington is expected to shield the region from the worst effects of the economic downturn.
- Delivery of the government's stimulus package is likely to require additional public and private sector administrative support. As a result, impacts on construction and service industries are also likely to be less severe.
- Tourism spend in the Wellington region is the fourth highest in the country, with international visitors contributing one third of total spend. The tourism sector and associated retail and hospitality industries are likely to be impacted by border restrictions.

- overall employment in the region is forecast to be ahead of BAU projections by 2031.<sup>35</sup>

The region's decline in overall employment will be relatively mild, with less negative flow-on effects for consumer spending, the housing market, and construction sector.

This economic resilience is expected to benefit areas such as Upper Hutt, Kapiti Coast, and parts of the Wairarapa. South Wairarapa District is forecast to be hit harder than the rest of the region because of its reliance on the tourism and hospitality sectors.

Māori, Pasifika and youth, are likely to experience the greatest impacts. An increase in youth not in employment, education or training (NEETs) is expected.

### POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON THE LAND TRANSPORT SYSTEM

- Given the relative resilience of the Wellington economy, no significant changes are expected in the nature, scale and location of transport demand over the medium to long-term. The 10 year outlook remains largely unchanged.
- Changes to the nature of work for professional services could see a reduction in peak trips to Wellington city centre, because of more people working remotely.

### POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITIES

- Under the slower recovery scenario:
  - Wellington region's forecast fall in employment to 2021 (relative to BAU) is -5.8%, significantly lower than the national average of -6.7%<sup>35</sup>
  - Wellington is one of only two main urban centres (Hamilton is the other) forecast to return to BAU employment levels by 2031<sup>35</sup>

- Work to ensure the effective integration of land-use and transport remains a priority, to support mode shift and reductions in GHG. This includes sequencing of development, ensuring growth areas are serviced with active mode and public transport infrastructure and services, and linking housing to employment and essential services.
- There will be an ongoing need for transport services to support COVID-19 recovery by improving access to employment and essential services for vulnerable communities.
- There will be ongoing pressure on transport revenue as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown.

## REGION STEP CHANGES

### IMPROVE URBAN FORM

Urban growth, including more affordable housing, will be supported in areas where there is access to multiple transport options.

### TRANSFORM URBAN MOBILITY

Wellington has the highest public transport usage in New Zealand, but customer satisfaction levels are relatively low, caused by capacity and reliability issues.

### SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE HARMS

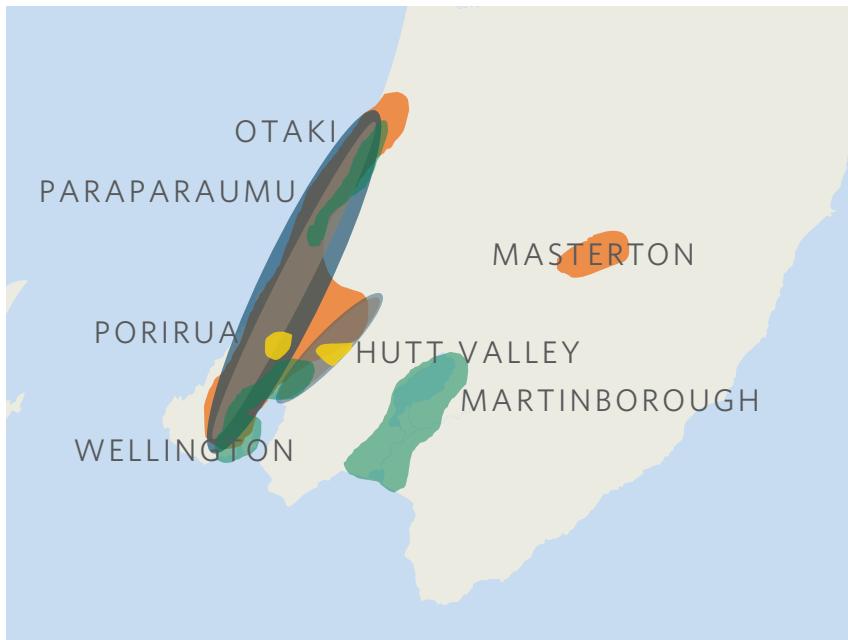
An ongoing safety focus is needed on the greater Wellington region to address high-risk rural roads, vulnerable users, motorcyclists and speeding.<sup>47</sup> Cyclists and pedestrians are vulnerable in Wellington's urban areas.

### TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

Impacts of climate change including coastal inundation and flooding are expected to be felt strongly in low-lying areas including Wellington city centre, Kilbirnie and Petone. Wellington has the fourth highest carbon emissions in New Zealand.<sup>48</sup> Regional population growth may provide new ways of transitioning to a low-carbon economy with efficient solutions.

### SUPPORT REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There are communities within Porirua and Lower Hutt that have high levels of deprivation and unemployment rates above the national average.<sup>56</sup>



 **506,814**

REGIONAL POPULATION<sup>25</sup>

**7.5%**  
REGIONAL  
POPULATION  
GROWTH  
2013-18<sup>25</sup>

**10.8%**  
OF NATIONAL  
POPULATION<sup>25</sup>  
2018

 **7.7%**  
OF NATIONAL  
DEATHS  
& SERIOUS  
INJURIES (DSI)<sup>47</sup>

**229**  
TOTAL DSI<sup>47</sup>  
ANNUAL AVERAGE  
FOR PERIOD 2016-19

 **8%**  
OF NATIONAL  
VEHICLE  
EMISSIONS<sup>48</sup>

 **13%**  
OF NATIONAL  
GROSS  
DOMESTIC  
PRODUCT  
YEAR END  
MARCH 2018<sup>26</sup>

 **4%**  
REGIONAL  
UNEMPLOYMENT  
RATE  
**4.1%**  
NATIONAL RATE  
YEAR END  
JUNE 2019<sup>49</sup>

Pre COVID-19 data

## WELLINGTON TODAY

Because of the level of uncertainty of population and economic trends, this section has not been reviewed in detail for Arataki V2.

### AS HOME TO OUR CAPITAL CITY, THE WELLINGTON REGIONAL ECONOMY IS DOMINATED BY PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICES, KNOWLEDGE-BASED BUSINESSES, SPECIALIST MANUFACTURING AND DISTRIBUTION.

Primary industries are a major focus in the Wairarapa and prior to COVID-19 tourism was increasing across the region. Forty percent of the region's jobs are in Wellington's central business district, with Wellingtonians being the highest users of public transport, despite recent capacity and reliability issues. Over 30% of all journeys to work are by public transport, walking or cycling.<sup>52</sup>

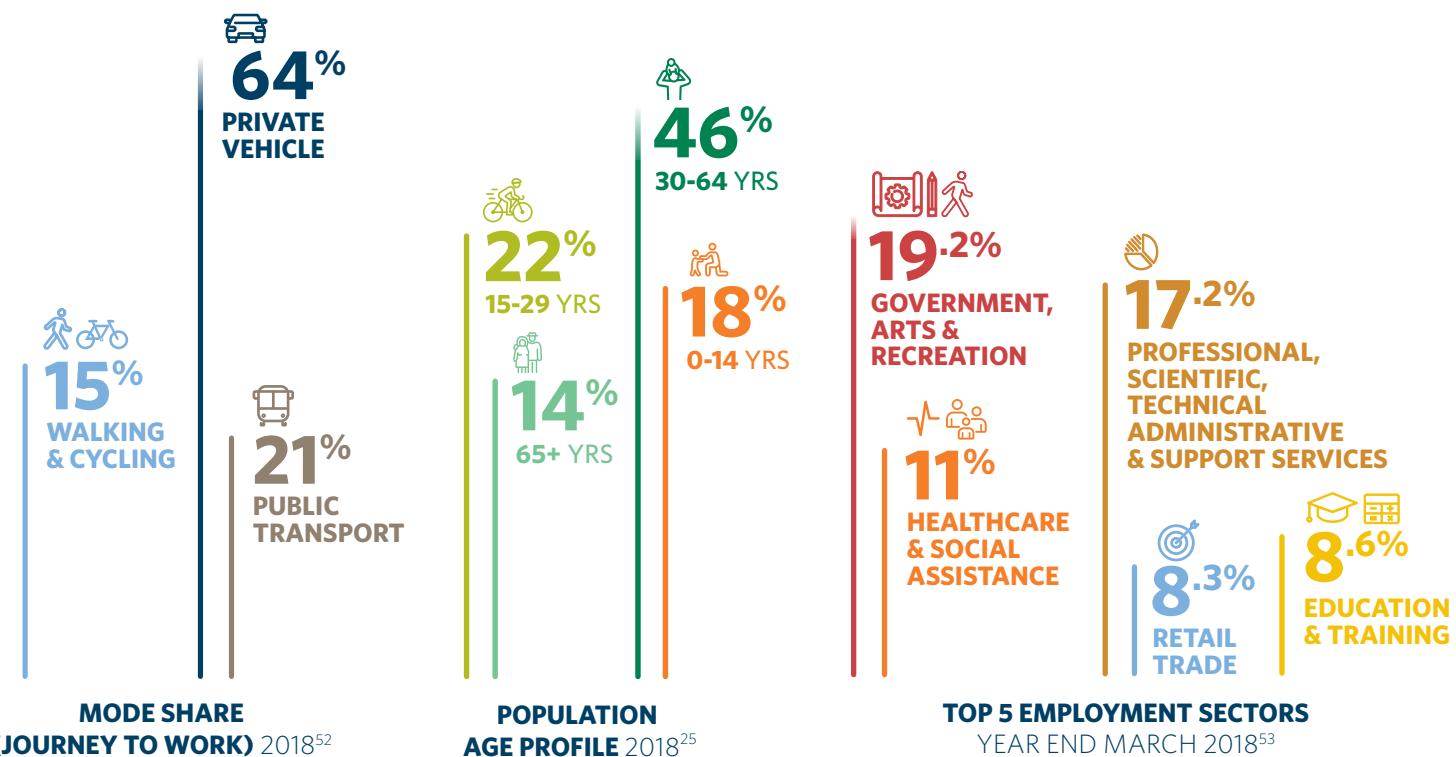
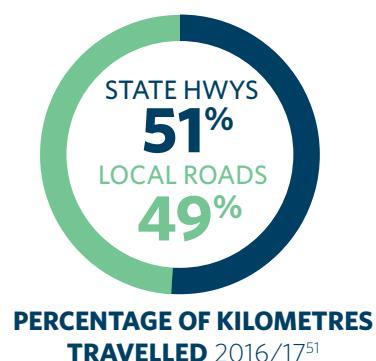
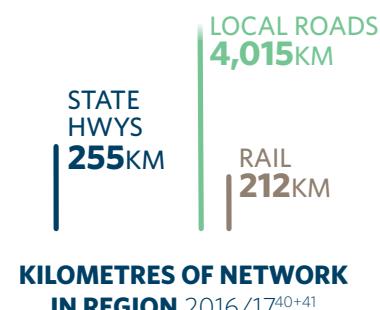
With the third largest regional economy in New Zealand, Wellington also has the highest median household income.<sup>50</sup> Despite this, the wider Wellington region has some areas of high deprivation, such

as Cannons Creek in Porirua and Taita in Lower Hutt. Unemployment rates in these areas are higher than the national average.<sup>56</sup>

In 2018 the population of the Wellington region was 506,814, 11% of New Zealand's total. People aged 65 plus made up 13% of this, however while Wellington City has a comparatively young population, areas such as the Wairarapa and Kapiti Coast have populations older than the national average.<sup>25</sup> It means transport needs differ from area to area, with demand for a greater range of transport options likely in areas with older populations.

Wellington relies heavily on two north-south corridors, both road and rail, for the movement of people and freight. This shapes the transport system and current work is committed to addressing safety, resilience and capacity issues. The Wellington region provides the northern

port for road and rail trips between the North and South Islands, via the Cook Strait ferries. Access to CentrePort, and the safety and reliability of road and rail corridors north of Wellington, are critical to supporting these journeys.



## WELLINGTON TOMORROW

Pre-COVID-19, growth was expected throughout the region with the population increasing 17% by 2043 to 571,300.<sup>27</sup> Recent growth has placed pressure on housing supply and rental affordability, resulting in some lower income residents relocating to regional towns in the Wairarapa and Horowhenua where rents and house prices are more affordable. While growth is expected to slow in the short to medium-term because of reductions in migration, future growth should be encouraged in existing communities and areas with good transport options, to reduce average journey lengths and reliance on private vehicles.

The Wellington regional economy is forecast to perform better than many other regions during the COVID-19 slowdown, supported by the scale of the public sector and associated professional services. Public services are forecast to continue to be a significant employment sector in the region with service industries and health expected to grow employment share over the medium to long-term. The expected decline of manufacturing and wholesale trade may impact on employment opportunities in Porirua and the Hutt Valley, contributing to already high levels of deprivation in some local communities.

Wellington is a major tourist destination, with one third of tourism income coming from international visitors. While international visitor numbers have dropped sharply (and are forecast to remain below pre-COVID-19 levels for the foreseeable future), the impact on the Wellington economy may be offset to a degree by an increase in domestic tourism, at least in the short-term.

Wellington has the fourth highest carbon emissions in New Zealand.<sup>48</sup> Wellington is relatively well placed to reduce emissions given existing levels of public transport use, but the location of future growth needs to support reduction in private vehicle usage.

Impacts of climate change such as flooding are expected to be felt strongly in low-lying areas including Lower Hutt and Petone. Erosion to coastal roads and infrastructure is likely to increase with storms, storm surges and sea level rise, threatening beaches and low-lying communities. More frequent and intense weather is expected to increase the risk of erosion and landslides. Wellington also faces significant seismic risks, with the impacts of a major event compounded by reliance on a limited number of key corridors (road and rail) to connect communities and key destinations.

Technological changes expected during the next decade will offer new travel choices that may reduce carbon emissions, the reliance on private transport and improve network management. These include Mobility as a Service, on-demand travel options and intelligent transport systems.

There will also continue to be increasing demand to plan, book and pay digitally for journeys. The growing popularity of online purchasing and home delivery will impact on-demand travel, including the movement of freight.

Wellington will continue to play an important role in linking freight and people movements between the North and South Islands, but there could be changes in the pattern of freight movements as Wellington transitions to a low-emissions economy. Wellington International Airport is also a significant transport hub, providing a hub for many domestic flights as well as regular international services pre-COVID-19.

## KEY SYSTEM INSIGHTS

- Future growth needs to build on high levels of public transport use, walking and cycling to create stronger communities and connect people to employment, education and essential services, including supporting social outcomes for struggling communities in Porirua and the Hutt Valley.
- There is a need to shift more people away from private vehicle travel to lower emission transport options, including through the delivery of the Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM) programme.
- Access to Wellington's port, ferry terminals and airport and the safe, reliable road and rail corridors north of Wellington, are critical to supporting journeys for people and freight.
- We need to focus on extracting more benefit from Wellington's existing transport system, through making the most of existing networks, services and demand management.
- Investment is needed to improve capacity, reliability and resilience for both regional and inter-regional rail journeys.
- Wellington is particularly vulnerable to seismic risk and other natural hazards, and sea level rise and more severe storms will increasingly impact on coastal communities, roads and rail infrastructure.
- The region's safety record indicates the need to focus on vulnerable users such as cyclists and pedestrians in the Wellington urban areas, high-risk motorcycle routes and speed on high-risk rural roads.

## FOCUS OF EFFORT: 2018-21

This section represents the existing commitments (eg the NLTP and NZUP). V2 has not been updated to include economic stimulus packages as that space continues to evolve.

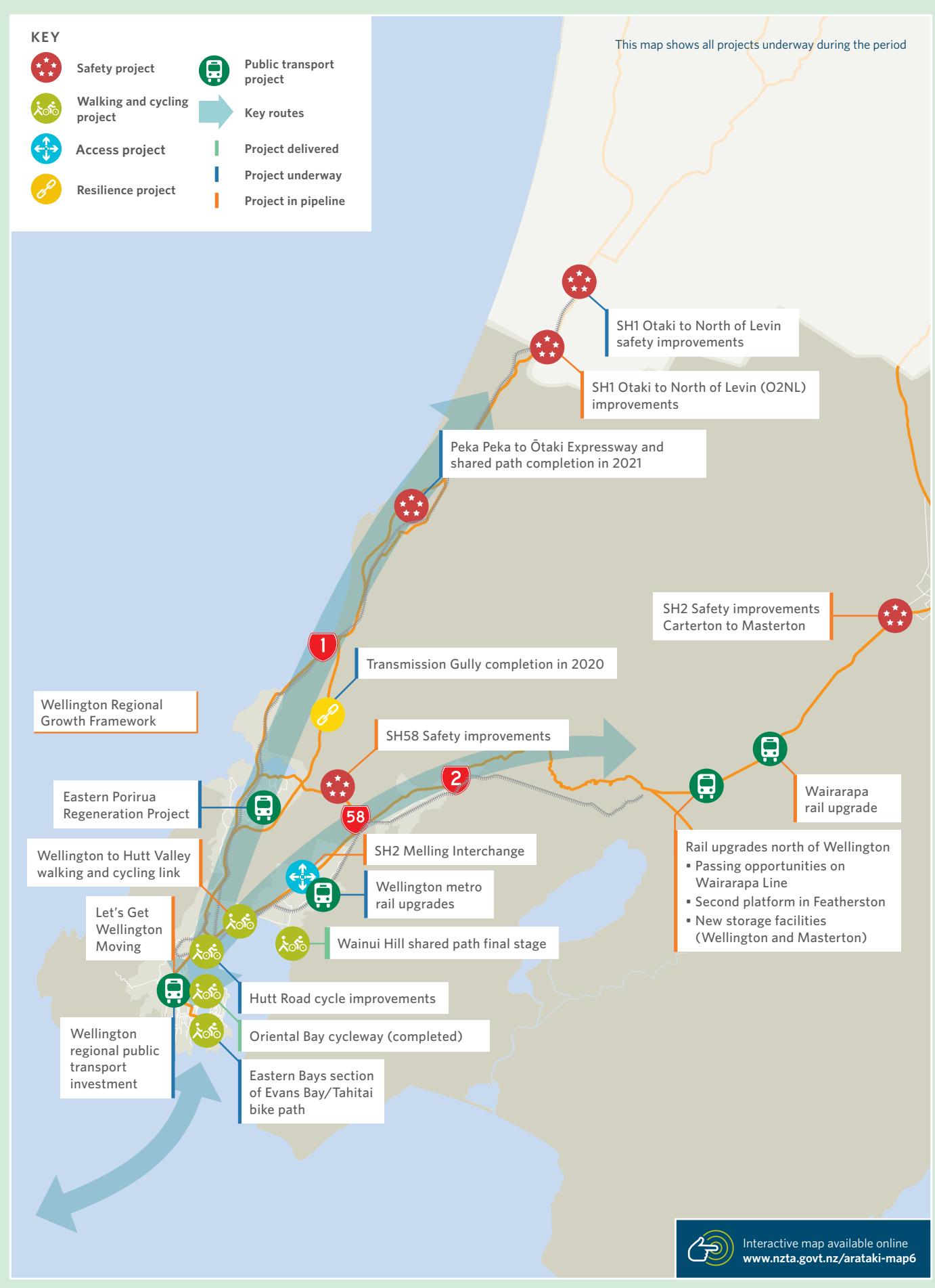
Significant investment has been committed through the Wellington Northern Corridor improvements, most notably Transmission Gully, to address safety, resilience and efficiency issues from the west of the region. Delivery of the urban cycleway programme is continuing across the region. LGWM is a joint initiative between Wellington City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council, and Waka Kotahi. Its focus is the area from Ngauranga Gorge to the airport, encompassing the Wellington urban motorway and connections to the central city, hospital, and the eastern and southern suburbs.

The LGWM programme seeks to deliver a transport system with multiple options that moves more people, goods and services reliably with fewer vehicles. While mass transit is a core element of the programme, there is also a focus on road space reallocation to support public transport, walking, cycling and placemaking. Outcomes from this work, together

with ongoing discussions about future port developments and light rail are expected to significantly shape the region's future transport system.

The Wellington Regional Growth Framework is being developed in partnership with central government, local government and iwi throughout 2019/20 to provide an overarching plan that identifies development opportunities and transport investment priorities for Wellington, including Horowhenua, over the next 30 years.

In addition, several of the larger councils have either already completed or are developing growth strategies for their districts, for example Porirua and Wellington cities. Eastern Porirua regeneration presents an opportunity to improve the urban design and transport system to achieve a range of outcomes and improve travel options and the wellbeing of the local community.



## AREAS OF FOCUS: WELLINGTON 2021-31

### IMPROVE URBAN FORM (HIGH)

We will support a well-integrated and well-designed land-use and transport system to make Wellington a better place to live, work and play, in particular:

- continue to support the development and delivery of the Wellington Regional Growth Framework, and support opportunities to align the planning and delivery of other core infrastructure such as water
- support the Eastern Porirua Regeneration programme
- work to ensure that new urban development supports the significant investment being made through LGWM and rail
- we will advocate for land-use change that reduces car trips and engage in planning processes to ensure new development enhances existing communities while supporting an increase in the safety and uptake of sustainable modes of transport.

### TRANSFORM URBAN MOBILITY (HIGH)

Projected population growth in Wellington will increase travel demand on the region's networks over the medium to long-term and provides opportunities to support increased use of public transport, walking and cycling. Our focus will be on:

- LGWM as our primary means of shifting people to sustainable transport options. This includes improved walking and cycling access, investment in mass transit, improving ferry access and access to the port. Diverse age profiles across the region require different responses to ensure access for all users
- supporting improved rail capacity and resilience to enable more people to access social and economic opportunities and support economic prosperity
- improving railway station access and support development of housing and businesses around public transport hubs
- working with Wellington councils to encourage actively managed carparking in the city centre, city fringe area and other key centres to increase uptake of public transport, walking and cycling for trips to these locations
- identifying opportunities for smaller projects, including optimising the current network and trialling innovative solutions, that can improve transport system outcomes while more significant projects are planned and built
- progressing the preferred option for a multi-user ferry terminal to improve efficiency of movements to and from the port/ferry terminal.

### TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE (HIGH)

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
- working with our partners and communities to prioritise interventions and responses to natural hazards in high-risk areas
- enabling continuous improvement in network resilience through maintenance and renewals, and 'low cost/low risk' investments
- enabling quick recovery following disruption of the transport system
- continuing to engage on The Wellington Lifelines Regional Resilience Project to ensure we are taking a transport systems view to improving community resilience which includes critical transport and lifeline infrastructure
- building overall transport system resilience, including managing seismic risk and improved east-west system connectivity.

#### 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
- creating compact and connected land-use development and maximise Wellington's existing transport system to reduce carbon emissions
- identifying low carbon transport options, infrastructure and services in high growth urban areas to support shift from cars to low emission options.



## SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE HARMS (MEDIUM)

### SAFETY

Support implementation of *Road to Zero: New Zealand's road safety strategy 2020–2030* and associated *Action plan 2020–22*, and regional strategies with a particular emphasis on:

- intersection improvements and safety infrastructure, including on high volume urban roads with high risk
- infrastructure improvements to provide safe walking and cycle trips
- safety treatments on high-risk motorcycle routes
- speed management to provide safe and appropriate speeds at high-risk urban intersections, in urban areas with high numbers of vulnerable users and on high-risk rural roads (rural roads are roads with speed limits >80km/h).

### 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 support future pandemic planning by drawing our COVID-19 experience and initiative such as low-cost and temporary street calming and active transport projects that enable social distance while bringing health benefits from increased physical activity and reduced air 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.



## SUPPORT REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (LOW)

Lower socio-economic communities in Porirua and Lower Hutt will continue to face challenges without smartly planned and executed land-use and transport interventions to improve access to education, employment and essential services in their communities. To support this, we will:

- work with partners to support major rapid transit, walking and cycling, affordable public transport as well as providing access to essential services
- support compact, connected, land-use development with access to transport options, primarily through LGWM
- expand public transport services and urban cycleways, and explore opportunities to improve the affordability of public transport
- explore opportunities to support the mobile delivery of education and essential services.



Number references can be accessed here  
[www.nzta.govt.nz/arataki-references](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/arataki-references)