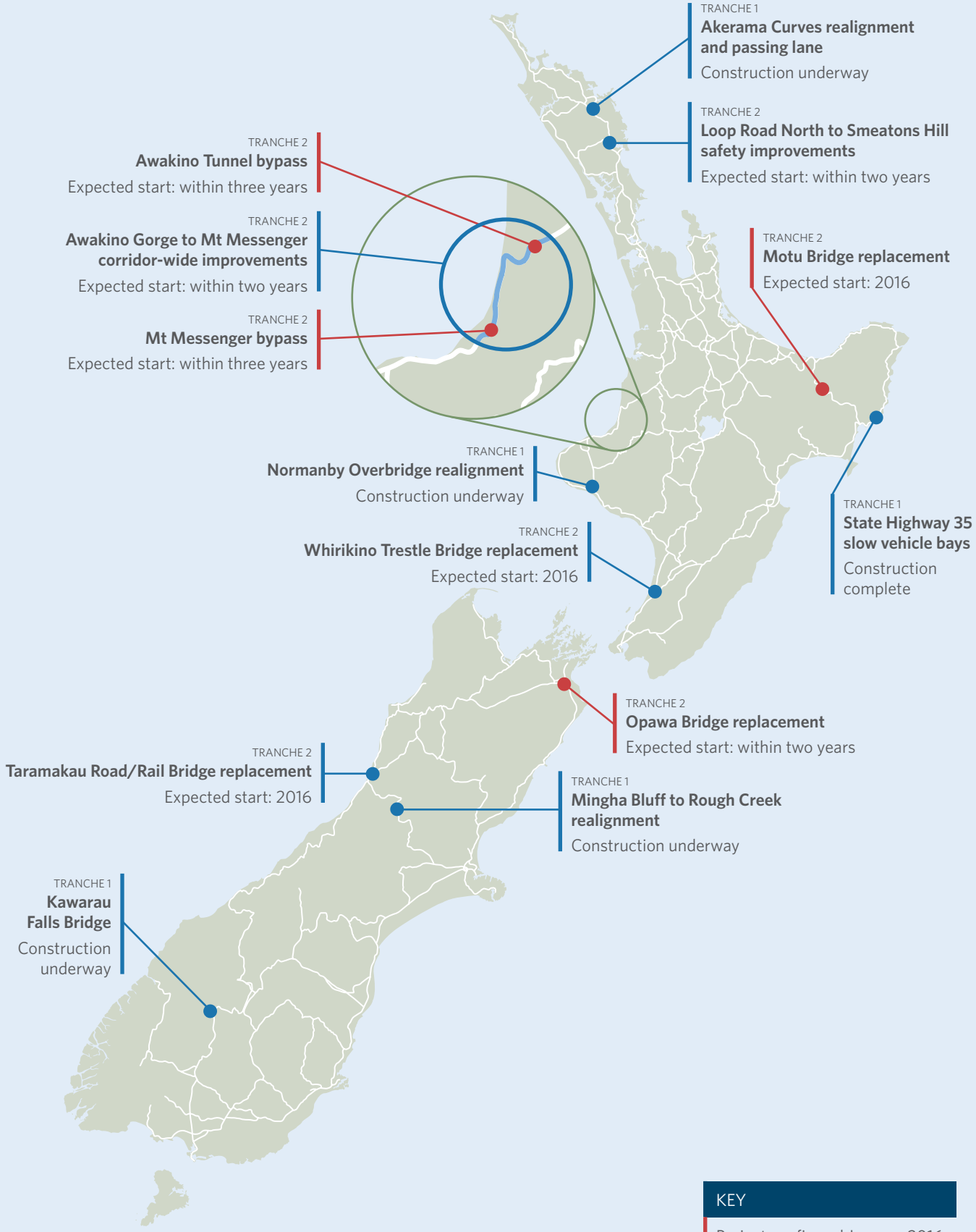
ACCELERATED REGIONAL ROADING PROGRAMME



ACCELERATED REGIONAL ROADING PROGRAMME
TRANCHE 2

Mt Messenger and Awakino Gorge corridor

BENEFITS

The project will improve safety and route availability along this key transport corridor.

The project objectives are to:

- reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries from crashes
- reduce the number and duration of road closures
- improve journey time predictability
- improve drivers' experience along the corridor.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section of SH3, Taranaki's main route north, runs through rough terrain and is winding and narrow. A number of interventions are proposed across the corridor to improve safety, route availability and travel times.

The improvements will be delivered in a number of individual projects. These are:

- safety, route availability and driver experience
- bypass of the Awakino Tunnel
- bypass of Mt Messenger.

BACKGROUND

Initial corridor investigations were carried out by the Ministry of Works and Development for the National Roads Board in the 1970s and 1980s. Since then a number of studies and investigations have been completed.

The recent business case has confirmed that there are ongoing safety, route availability and travel time issues, due to poor road layout along the corridor. Poor alignment has resulted in a number of deaths, serious injuries and road closures over recent years.

Key improvements range from smoothing curves, shoulder widening, new passing opportunities, bypassing key bottlenecks, better traveller information and new pull-off and rest areas.

COST AND FUNDING SOURCE

The bypasses of the Awakino Tunnel and Mt Messenger ($89-105 million) will be funded by the Crown as part of the Government's Accelerated Regional Roading Programme.

Implementation of the corridor-wide improvements ($25-30 million) is included in the National Land Transport Programme 2015-18.

Together, the improvements on SH3 north of Taranaki will total $114-135 million.

DATES

Anticipated construction starts are:

1. Safety and resilience improvements – 2017/18 with a duration of 12 months.
2. Awakino Tunnel bypass – 2018/19 with a duration of 24 months.
3. Mt Messenger bypass – 2018/19 with a duration of 24 months.

ACCELERATED REGIONAL ROADING PROGRAMME
TRANCHE 2

Motu Bridge replacement

BENEFITS

Investment in a new bridge will improve reliability of SH2 north of Gisborne, and will make journeys more efficient for freight.

The project objectives are to:

- provide a more reliable network north of Gisborne to assist with economic growth and productivity on the East Coast
- provide predictable, consistent and reliable journeys.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Motu Bridge is a narrow, one-lane bridge with poor alignment on its approaches. Located on SH2 within the Gisborne District, it is approximately 70km north-west of Gisborne and 7.5km west of the small settlement of Matawai.

The project involves replacing the existing bridge with a new two-lane structure and improving the road alignment on the approaches to the bridge.

BACKGROUND

Constructed in 1930, the Motu Bridge supports the local farming community and the movement of goods between Opotiki and Gisborne. The 142km section of SH2 where the bridge is located includes 52 bridges. It is the only one-lane bridge on the road between Gisborne and Opotiki and requires ongoing maintenance. The bridge requires ongoing maintenance to keep it operating to capacity.

Recent investigations identified ongoing resilience issues on the route, highlighted by the 2012 slip at Waioeka Gorge (South of Opotiki). In the event that the bridge is closed, the alternative route between Gisborne and Opotiki, via the East Cape along SH35, adds an extra 185km (2.5 hours) to the jouney. This affects the movement of freight and the local farming community, which is significant given a high proportion of the vehicles using the bridge are classified as heavy vehicles, including tractors and freight trucks. In addition, minor travel time delays occur when vehicles have to wait to cross the single lane. There have also been crashes on or near the bridge resulting in minor injuries.

COST

$3-5 million.

FUNDING SOURCE

The replacement of the bridge will be funded by the Crown as part of the Government's Accelerated Regional Roading Programme.

DATES

It is anticipated construction will start in 2016, taking 12 months to complete.

ACCELERATED REGIONAL ROADING PROGRAMME
TRANCHE 2

Opawa Bridge replacement

BENEFITS

Replacing the Opawa Bridge will improve safety and reliability in the Marlborough region and provide better access for heavy vehicles on SH1 in Blenheim.

The project objectives are to:

- increase throughput of freight and light vehicles
- provide more consistent travel times
- provide greater structural resilience to natural hazard events, resulting in increased availability and access.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Two bridges (Wairau and Opawa) have been investigated for potential replacement to provide better heavy vehicle access on SH1 in Blenheim. Following investigation, the Wairau Bridge will not be replaced as it has been certified to carry heavier vehicles and can be cost-effectively maintained. The Opawa Bridge, however, has been identified for replacement.

The project involves replacing the existing bridge with a new two-lane bridge upstream of the existing structure. Due to the existing bridge's heritage status, it will be constructed in harmony with the existing bridge with careful architectural design. The existing bridge will be retained and used for improved cycle and pedestrian facilities.

BACKGROUND

The Opawa River Bridge was designed in 1912 and opened in 1917. The bridge is a Heritage NZ Category 1 heritage place, indicating a place of outstanding significance. This bridge is a legacy structure, being the first of its kind (concrete bowstring) constructed in New Zealand.

The Opawa Bridge is 170m long and carries 9,800 vehicles per day, 9% of these being heavy vehicles. The bridge is located north of Blenheim across the Opawa River, which forms a natural geographic boundary between the urban and the rural agricultural activities on the lower Wairau River Plain. As the bridge is on the northern urban fringe of Blenheim, it is an important gateway to Blenheim.

The recent investigations determined that the 5.5m-wide bridge is not suitable for current and future traffic requirements, particularly heavy vehicles and campervans. The bridge also offers low seismic resistance.

The narrowness of the bridge results in short travel time delays, but also creates significant difficulties for larger vehicles and campervans as opposing large vehicles are unable to pass on the bridge or its immediate approaches.

COST

$14-17.5 million.

FUNDING SOURCE

The replacement of the Opawa Bridge will be funded by the Crown as part of the Government's Accelerated Regional Roading Programme. The continued maintenance of the Wairau Bridge will be funded from the National Land Transport Programme 2015–18.

DATES

It is anticipated construction will start early in 2018, taking 12 months to complete.