

SECURING NEW ZEALAND'S FUTURE



**BUDGET
2026**

**Hon Nicola Willis
Minister of Finance**

**Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister of Transport**

28 May 2026

Preparing before disaster strikes

Communities vulnerable to severe weather and natural hazards will benefit from major new investments in Budget 2026, Finance Minister Nicola Willis and Infrastructure and Transport Minister Chris Bishop says.

“The Budget invests in stronger infrastructure, better hazard information, smarter emergency management systems, and improved financial preparedness,” Nicola Willis says.

“We can’t stop severe weather events from happening, but we can be much better prepared for them.

“Budget 2026 backs practical measures to keep communities connected, protect important roads and infrastructure, improve our understanding of natural hazards, and reduce long-term costs to taxpayers.”

Chris Bishop says funding of \$400 million has been set aside for state highway resilience projects to help keep critical routes open during and after severe weather events.

“We know where many of the weak points on the network are. This investment allows us to strengthen them before roads fail, rather than repeatedly paying to rebuild them afterwards.

“Projects funded through the package include resilience improvements on SH2 through the Waioweka Gorge, SH3 through the Awakino Gorge, SH25 around the Coromandel, SH60 over Tākaka Hill, SH6 between Cromwell and Kingston and between Haast and Hāwea, and SH94 between Milford and Te Anau, among others.

“These are roads that communities, freight operators and tourists rely on every day. When they close, the impacts are felt far beyond the immediate area.

“The Government is also investing in better hazard information across the country, including the development of the first New Zealand Flood Map.

“Over time, this will provide property-level flood risk information to help councils, communities, infrastructure providers and property owners better understand flood risk and make smarter long-term decisions.”

Nicola Willis says new funding will also modernise emergency management systems so emergency responders and decision-makers can access the same real-time information during emergencies, helping them respond faster and coordinate more effectively.

“That includes live information such as hazard maps, evacuation information, infrastructure outages and available emergency resources.

“The package also includes funding to investigate smarter and more cost-effective ways for the Crown to insure infrastructure risks and reduce long-term costs to taxpayers.

“That work will look at how the Government better understands risks to public infrastructure, including where insurance, resilience upgrades, or other approaches offer the best long-term value.

“Too often, governments end up paying more after disasters because risks weren’t properly understood or investments weren’t made early enough. Better planning and smarter risk management can reduce those costs over time.

“Building resilience into our infrastructure and planning systems now will help New Zealand recover faster, reduce disruption, and lower costs over the long term. That’s part of fixing the basics and building the future.”

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Note to editors:

Transport resilience projects

Final scopes and delivery timelines for individual transport resilience projects will be confirmed following further investigation, design and procurement work. Proposed works may be refined as projects progress.

North Island

- **SH2 Waioweka Gorge resilience**
Likely to include slope stabilisation, rockfall protection, drainage improvements, and targeted works at critical sites through the gorge.
- **SH3 Awakino Gorge resilience programme**
Expected to include slope stabilisation, improved drainage and culverts, small retaining walls, and works to reduce river erosion alongside the road corridor.
- **SH26 Kirikiri Stream bridge replacement**
Replacement of the existing bridge with a higher, more resilient structure, alongside raising the highway approaches and upgrading the nearby SH26/SH25A intersection.
- **SH25 corridor targeted resilience**
Resilience improvements at multiple high-risk sites around the Coromandel, likely including retaining works, drainage upgrades, slope stabilisation and road protection works.

South Island

- **SH60 Tākaka Hill resilience**
Likely to include retaining wall upgrades, landslide monitoring, and improved stormwater and groundwater management at key risk sites.
- **SH6 Cromwell to Frankton resilience**
Works across multiple sites including rock scaling and bolting, drainage improvements, retaining wall strengthening, localised widening, and reinforced road shoulders.
- **SH6 Frankton to Kingston resilience**
Proactive slope stabilisation works including rock bolting, mesh protection, soil nailing, and targeted drainage improvements.
- **SH6 Haast to Hāwea resilience**
Improvements across high-risk sites vulnerable to landslides, rockfall, river erosion, debris flows and road dropouts.
- **SH94 Milford to Te Anau resilience**
Likely to include rockfall protection, slope stabilisation, rock armouring, and culvert and drainage improvements at key sites along the corridor.