

*Do you support the Tauranga Eastern Link being
a toll road so construction can start next year?*



Tauranga Eastern Link

Tolling Consultation Briefing Document
August 2009



NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY
WAKA KOTAHI



Port of Tauranga

Bayfair

Sandhurst Interchange

New High School

New Primary School

New Town Centre

WAIRAKEI

Domain Road Interchange

Papamoa East Interchange

TE TUMU

Te Puke Industrial Expansion

Kaituna River Ecological Corridor

Kaituna Wildlife Management Reserve

TE PUKE

Proposed Toll Gantry

Stormwater Collection Area

Existing SH2

Proposed Rangioru Business Park

Tauranga Eastern Link



To Whakatane SH2

To Rotorua SH33





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Have your say!

The Tauranga Eastern Link is a very important project for the Bay of Plenty and will bring key benefits to the region. As a road of national significance it is a key piece of infrastructure that will improve connections between the Bay of Plenty, Tauranga and its port. It will reduce transport costs and help improve New Zealand's economy.

The Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Tauranga City Council, Environment Bay of Plenty and the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) are working together to progress this project and deliver the benefits of the Eastern Link.

The NZTA and the Regional Transport Committee have proposed that tolls be implemented to bring forward the project and its benefits.

Tolling the route would supplement traditional funding sources, enabling the early delivery of the road.

Without tolling, construction is most likely to start in five to 10 years time, but if tolling gets the go ahead,

construction could be brought forward to as early as next year.

We encourage you to carefully consider this proposal and have your say through written submissions and before a hearings panel if you wish. Your views will be important in determining whether to move forward with the toll proposal. The NZTA and its regional partners welcome your views on any of the ideas expressed here.

The submissions closing date is September 11, 2009.

Please send written submissions to:
Eastern Link Tolling Consultation
Private Bag 12054
TAURANGA 3143

Online submissions can be filled in at
www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/easternlink

If you need further information please call
0800 835 865 or email us at
taurangaeasternlink@nzta.govt.nz



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Tauranga City Council

The Tauranga Eastern Link - Why do we need this road now?

This consultation is about the Eastern Link project and the proposal to bring forward its construction by tolling a section of it.

The Eastern Link is proposed to be a four-lane motorway from Te Maunga to Paengaroa – without travelling through Te Puke. It comprises two sections – an upgrade of the existing State Highway 2 between Te Maunga and Domain Road at Papamoa and a new motorway from Domain Road to Paengaroa.

The problem...

There are many reasons why the Eastern Link is needed. Firstly, the Western Bay of Plenty's continued population growth will cause increasing pressure on existing infrastructure as the population doubles over the next 30 years to a predicted total of 286,335.

The Bay of Plenty region will benefit from ongoing and managed sustainable growth. This is to ensure that the consequences of unmanaged growth such as unplanned infill housing, traffic congestion and in some areas, a poorer standard of living do not happen.

The SmartGrowth partnership - Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Environment BOP, Tangata Whenua and the NZTA - has recognised that to manage growth successfully over a long period of time significant effort must go into planning and modelling growth predictions and how they will play out in the future.

It is important to understand the contribution that effective transport planning plays in managing growth. The partners in this project firmly believe the Eastern Link needs to be built before growth can occur. Indeed, some developments planned for the area east of Papamoa such as the Rangiuru Business Park, cannot be completed until the Eastern Link is constructed, due to the impact such developments would have on the existing network.

It is also important to develop more efficient transport movements from the south and the eastern Bay of Plenty to the Port of Tauranga. A more direct route will bring efficiencies including improved access to the Port of Tauranga - a major economic driver for the region through its direct and indirect employment,

economic wealth, regional exports and associated local industries.

Just as importantly, it will provide a safer route for vehicles travelling between Tauranga and Paengaroa. Currently, 21,000 vehicles use SH2 each day between Baypark Stadium at Te Maunga and Te Puke.

The New Zealand Road Safety Assessment Programme (KiwiRAP) has ranked SH2 - Te Maunga to Paengaroa - as the second worst in New Zealand per kilometre of state highway for fatal and serious injury crashes.

Traffic through Te Puke's central business district is heavy. Regional traffic conflicts with local traffic causing safety concerns and increased waiting times at intersections. There are also significant pedestrian safety concerns at the Waitangi township, east of Te Puke.

The need to manage growth, ensure economic development and address traffic safety issues for the region are key objectives for building the Eastern Link as early as possible.



What could the solution be?

Tolling the Tauranga Eastern Link will mean it can go ahead as early as 2010.

Regional authorities and the NZTA agree that waiting for state highway funding to be allocated will constrain productivity gains and growth in the Bay of Plenty region.

The Eastern Link has been identified by the Government as a road of national significance – meaning it is a priority for action over the next ten years. A funding top-up through tolling would allow the project to start as early as next year.

The Eastern Link will help deliver growth and economic development as well as traffic safety and is needed now. The way to make this happen is by tolling a section of it.

This consultation is about the Eastern Link and to find out if the community supports the Eastern Link being a toll road so construction can start as early as next year.

Give us your feedback by making a submission through this consultation process.

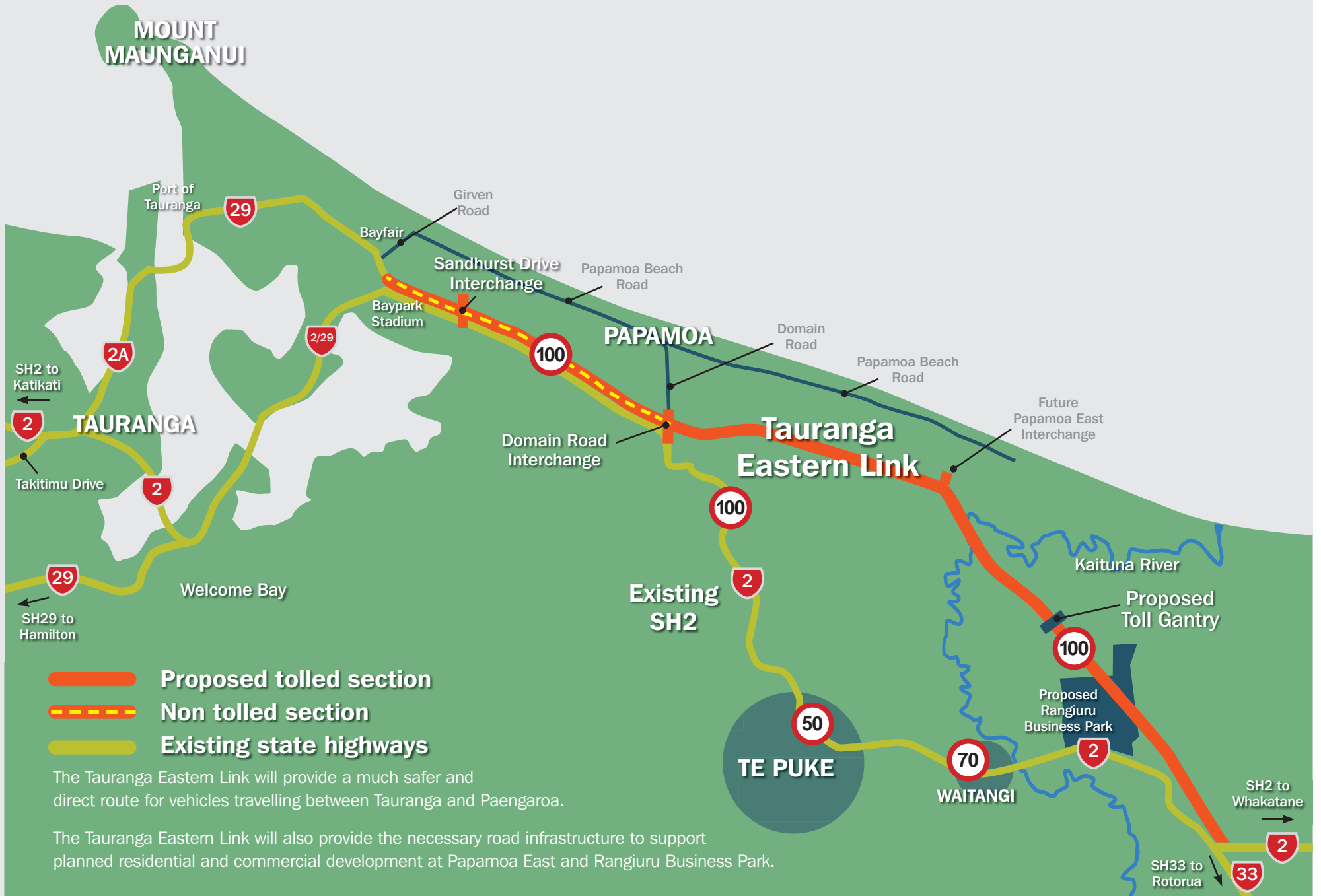
Potential 24 minute time saving for trucks

The Eastern Link will provide a more direct route for freight (trucks) from the east and south of Tauranga to the Port of Tauranga.

The Eastern Link is forecast to save up to 24 minutes on a return journey between Paengaroa and Te Maunga. There is at least 6.82 million tonnes of product carried per year over this section of state highway. The travel time savings may result in some trucks being able to make an additional return trip to the Port of Tauranga depending on the export product source.

This will provide significant productivity gains and a reduction in transportation costs. The increase in efficiency of these freight movements and greater accessibility to the port could help increase export volumes and in turn, economic development of the region and New Zealand.

This section of SH2 has recorded numerous serious and fatal crashes involving trucks. The Eastern Link will improve safety for drivers and reduce damage to goods.



The Tauranga Eastern Link project

The total project begins near the Baypark Stadium (Te Maunga) in Tauranga and follows its existing route to the Domain Road intersection with SH2 at Papamoa. It then leaves the current state highway route and crosses rural land parallel to Tara Road across Parton Road and along the sandhills to the Kaituna River at the end of Bell Road.

At this point the motorway crosses the river and carries on past the Kaituna Wildlife Management Reserve. It heads south east across dairy farms and orchard blocks before rising up over the railway line to join the existing junction of State Highways 2 and 33 (the Rotorua and Whakatane highways) at Paengaroa.

The proposed road will be an NZTA state highway project and is expected to cost \$455 million at today's prices. It is supported by Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty.

Construction will be in two sections:

1. The section from Te Maunga to Domain Road will be an upgrade of the existing two-lane road to a four-lane motorway and will not be tolled.

2. The completely new section from Domain Road to Paengaroa will be a four-lane motorway with a median barrier. This is the section that is proposed to be tolled. It is important to note that tolls would be used to help fund this section of new road only.

The motorway is a key element of the Tauranga eastern corridor package of works which provides access to Tauranga from the east (Kawerau, Whakatane, Opotiki, Gisborne) and south (Rotorua, Taupo).

Alongside the motorway new local roads are to be constructed to support growth in Papamoa and Rangiuru and to ensure the local road network remains effective. This includes a new access road for properties beside the highway at Te Maunga which provides access to Gloucester Road and new link roads from Pah Road to Kaituna Road and Te Tumu Road to Kaituna Road. In addition a cycleway is proposed from the Papamoa East interchange to the planned Rangiuru Business Park.

The road has a designation. The NZTA is currently working through the resource consent and land purchase stages. More than half the land required has been bought.



What are the benefits of building the Tauranga Eastern Link?

Completion of the Eastern Link will bring significant economic and social benefits to the community and to road users.

- It will support planned residential, commercial, and industrial development at Te Puke, Papamoa East and Rangiuru Business Park. This enables growth and productivity gains along the eastern corridor in a sustainable and managed way benefiting the western Bay of Plenty as a whole.
- Our traffic modelling tells us the Eastern Link, once complete, may reduce the time of a return trip between Paengaroa and Te Maunga by up to 24 minutes, driving down the cost of transport.
- It will improve export effectiveness and access to the Bay of Plenty.
- The road will be a four-lane motorway with a median barrier which will provide safer traffic flow, thus reducing the number of serious and fatal crashes.
- With the Eastern Link built, the existing section of SH2 through Te Puke will function as a local arterial and be much easier and safer for local traffic movements.
- It is predicted to take regional traffic, particularly heavy traffic, out of main street Te Puke and Waitangi which will mean less noise and pollution and safer access for pedestrians and other users wanting to conduct their business or community activities in the main streets.
- It will greatly improve the safety and efficiency of traffic movements from the east and south of Tauranga including access to the Port of Tauranga.
- The new suburb of Papamoa East will have both state highway and local road access to ensure, as far as possible, that neither option is congested with too many cars. In other words creating a balanced road network.





Funding plan

Tolling the Eastern Link

Tolling has been identified as a potential supplementary funding source in addition to the National Land Transport Fund to enable the acceleration of this important project. It could enable construction to commence as early as next year.

The toll can be used to fund planning, design,

construction, maintenance or operation of the new road as provided in the Land Transport Management Act.

The tolling proposal's main objective is to raise money to supplement traditional funding sources. This will enable the earlier delivery of the road. At the same time it will ensure the performance of the network is not detrimentally affected.

Tolling Snapshot

- A toll collection point is proposed between the proposed Papamoa East interchange and the future Rangiuru Business Park.
- A proposed maximum toll charge of \$2 (in 2008 dollars indexed to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) until opening) for light vehicles with flexibility to vary the toll at different times of the day.
- Toll tariffs for heavy commercial vehicles would be a maximum of \$4 (in 2008 dollars indexed to CPI until opening).
- After opening, toll charges could be increased by
- The untolled alternative route would be through Te Puke via the existing SH2.
- A fully electronic toll collection system is proposed ensuring users don't have to stop to pay the toll. Customers will be able to open an account or make one off payments.
- In January 2009 the NZTA opened its first fully electronic toll collection system. We propose employing a similar system on Eastern Link. As collection methods and technology are always evolving, a final evaluation of the system will be made closer to the road opening date.
- As soon as debt and financing costs are repaid, the tolls will be removed. This is anticipated to be a maximum of 35 years after opening.

Toll proposal

Toll tariffs and financial implications

A range of toll options has been used to predict traffic volumes at various points on the network and at expected revenues. It is envisaged the toll would be a maximum of \$2 for cars, motorcycles and light vehicles and \$4 for larger vehicles and trucks (toll tariff in 2008 dollars adjusted by CPI).

When setting the exact toll tariff for opening day we take account of many factors such as:

- The toll needs to be low enough to encourage people to use the toll road.
- The toll needs to raise sufficient revenue to repay the debt and interest charges.
- The term of the debt repayment will depend on the toll tariff, the number of people using the toll road and the size of the debt.
- As soon as debt and financing costs are repaid, the tolls will be removed. This is anticipated to be a maximum of 35 years after opening.
- The exact toll tariff cannot be confirmed until the final funding package has been agreed between the Regional Transport Committee, the NZTA and other government agencies. The Minister of Transport may recommend a toll tariff different to what NZTA requests.

Alternative routes

One of the requirements for establishing a toll road is that there is a feasible untolled alternative route for road users who do not want to pay a toll. Since the new motorway would only be tolled between Domain Road and Paengaroa, the alternative route would be the existing SH2 through Te Puke.

The toll road will offer motorists another choice, but those people choosing to use the alternative route will also benefit as some traffic will have been removed from this route.

Toll collection system

The NZTA intends to use an electronic toll system for the Eastern Link similar to that used on the Northern Gateway Toll Road.

On the Northern Gateway Toll Road sensors detect a vehicle as it approaches the toll point at normal speed. This triggers a system to measure the vehicle's dimensions which are used to differentiate between vehicle types, identify the licence plate number and assign the correct toll charge.

The benefit of electronic toll collection is to enable users to pay without slowing down or stopping,

thus improving travel times and reducing noise and emissions.

The NZTA will refine the toll system to meet the needs of the Western Bay community and road users, however toll collection methods and technology are developing all the time and we will finalise details closer to the opening date.

Further information on the electronic toll system used for the Northern Gateway Toll Road is available on www.tollroad.govt.nz

Toll collection point

The Eastern Link project proposes a toll collection point between Domain Road and Paengaroa. The proposed location of an electronic toll collection gantry will be between the proposed Papamoa East interchange and the future Rangiuru Business Park.

This location would ensure that the majority of people choosing to use the new motorway would pay a toll and that road use is optimised, encouraging a balanced road network and sustainability of the entire project.

Additional toll points were considered but discounted because they diverted traffic to local roads resulting in low toll revenues and extra cost to the project.



Further information

Tolling and the legislative context

The Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA), as amended by the LTMA Amendment Act 2008, emphasises an “affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system”.

It provides for alternative funding, including tolling of new roads, subject to approval by an Order in Council on the recommendation of the Minister of Transport.

In considering whether to recommend to the Governor General that an Order in Council be made, the Minister has to be satisfied that a feasible untolled alternative route is available and that tolling the road will contribute to the purposes of the LTMA by:

- Assisting economic development.
- Assisting safety and personal security.
- Improving access and mobility.
- Protecting and promoting public health.
- Ensuring environmental sustainability.

The process requires that account has been taken of a range of strategies, options and alternatives, and that comprehensive consultation with a wide range of parties has taken place.

If the proposed toll road has not been included in the National Land Transport Programme, the Minister must also be satisfied there is a high degree of support for the toll road from affected communities. Those who work, live, or study in close proximity to the proposed toll road are defined to be the affected community.

SmartGrowth and SmartTransport

SmartGrowth is a collaboration of Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Tangata Whenua and Environment Bay of Plenty. The parties joined together to commission the 50 year SmartGrowth strategy and they continue to plan and prepare for continued growth in the sub region.

SmartTransport is a part of SmartGrowth that includes the NZTA as a partner. The partnership has been integral to ensuring roading projects in the SmartTransport corridors provide for expected growth, economic development and the industrial requirements that come with expansion.

The SmartTransport partnership has been focused on the Eastern Link as a key strategy to manage growth in the eastern corridor – from Te Maunga to Paengaroa.

Project programme



SmartTransport aims to encourage land use changes (such as allowing more densely populated urban areas) that enable shorter trips and encourage walking, cycling and passenger transport.

infrastructure and some is dependent on the Eastern Link being in place first.

There is a need to take an integrated approach and look at the relationship between land use and transportation along the eastern corridor.

The Eastern Corridor Strategy

The eastern corridor includes all land use and transport elements from SH2 to the coast and from the Given Road and Te Maunga intersections to Paengaroa junction (SH2 and SH33) south east of Te Puke.

Once fully developed Papamoa East could be a city the size of Nelson with approximately 40,000 people.

It will have 300 hectares of business land spread between Papamoa and Rangiuuru. Te Puke and Paengaroa will be home to 24,000 people between them and the rural hinterland will continue to grow as post harvest facilities are developed.

It is not a matter of simply grafting on to what is already there. Much of the development occurring along the eastern corridor will require new services, amenities and

Management of key environmental factors

Many alignment options have been considered since 1992 for the Eastern Link. In 1997-98 the designation project team analysed six options and considered potential effects on residents across a whole variety of issues including noise, visual affects and other community issues.

Issues around stormwater, the continued use of the Kaituna Land Drainage Scheme for agriculture and management of flood flows from the Mangatawa catchment were worked through.

Other issues included the use of the Kaituna Wildlife Management Reserve for game shooting and recreation, pastoral and horticultural block management, Maori cultural and archaeological sites, ecological values particularly about the

Kaituna River and other waterways and traffic flows on the old highway through Te Puke and Waitangi and consequential economic effects.

Particular attention has been paid to fences and planted mounds for noise attenuation. There will be extensive landscaping particularly at the interchanges and the northern oxbow at the end of Bell Road will be restored.

There will be erosion protection around the new Kaituna bridge and protocols have been established with tangata whenua for the first phases of earthworks. Comprehensive construction management plans will have to be adhered to throughout the project construction phase.

Consultation key dates

The consultation period runs from August 7 to September 11, 2009.

Information will be displayed at the following locations for four weeks from Friday August 7, 2009 to Friday August 28, 2009.

Tauranga	Tauranga Library, Greerton Library, Papamoa Library
Rotorua	Rotorua District Council
Whakatane	Whakatane District Council
Kawerau	Kawerau Library
Te Puke	WBOP District Council Te Puke Area Office
Opotiki	Opotiki District Council
Gisborne	Gisborne District Council
Taupo	Taupo District Council

Information will also be available at the following.

Phone: 0800 835 865
Email: taurangaeasternlink@nzta.govt.nz
Website: www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/easternlink

Public Information Days

NZTA representatives will be available at these times to discuss the proposal.

WBOP District Council Te Puke Area Office

Monday	August 10	9am-5pm
Tuesday	August 11	9am-5pm
Wednesday	August 12	9am-8pm
Thursday	August 13	9am-5pm
Friday	August 14	9am-5pm

Whakatane District Council Service Centre

Monday	August 17	9am-12pm
Tuesday	August 18	2pm-5pm

Rotorua District Council

Monday	August 17	2pm-5pm
Tuesday	August 18	9am-12pm

Papamoa Library

Wednesday	August 19	10am-6pm
Thursday	August 20	10am-6pm
Friday	August 21	10am-6pm

Mount Maunganui Bayfair Shopping Centre

Saturday	August 22	9am-5pm
Sunday	August 23	9am-5pm
Monday	August 24	9am-5pm
Tuesday	August 25	9am-5pm
Wednesday	August 26	9am-5pm

Submissions

What happens to submissions?

Letters acknowledging receipt of submissions will be sent. All submissions will be collated into a report and provided to the hearings panel. People who wish to speak in support of their submission in person will present to a hearings panel between October 12-15 2009.

Tips on making submissions

The hearings panel will want to understand your thoughts before it reports on the hearings to the NZTA. To make your submission as effective as possible you may like to consider the following:

- Make it clear if you are supporting or opposing the tolling option and why.
- Bullet points are good as they help you form your ideas clearly and are easy to read.
- Consider speaking in support of your submission – it is a good opportunity to highlight your main points and ensure the hearings panel understands your view.

- Remember your submission is part of a public process and will be placed in public areas for people to read.
- The hearings are also open to the public and the media.

Hearings

Hearings will be held in Tauranga or other venues between October 12, 2009 and October 15, 2009.

The hearings panel will:

- Hear public submissions on the proposal.
- Provide a submissions and hearings report for the NZTA to consider.

The submissions and hearings report will assist the NZTA board deliberations on whether to progress a toll proposal and the report will inform the Minister of Transport in making a decision.

The Minister of Transport will then take the proposal to Cabinet and following discussions with Cabinet colleagues will decide whether to recommend to the Governor-General that an Order in Council (OIC) be established to toll the road.

The OIC sets out the parameters of the road tolling

scheme, including any conditions that must be met in advance, the location of the toll road, when tolling can start, toll tariffs and how the scheme will generally operate.

Have your say

Your views will be taken into account by the NZTA, as well as the Minister of Transport prior to any approval to toll the road.

The process to have your say is through written submissions and hearings before a hearings panel.

Written submissions may be made on the form provided or in another format.

The submissions closing date is September 11, 2009.

Please send written submissions to:
Eastern Link Tolling Consultation
Private Bag 12054, TAURANGA 3143

Online submissions can be filled in at
www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/easternlink

If you have any questions please call us on
0800 835 865 or email us at
taurangaeasternlink@nzta.govt.nz

