

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Transit's forecasts of expenditure in Manawatu/Wanganui for the next 10 years are set out in Table MW1. For forecast purposes only, Transit has anticipated an indicative level of regional distribution funding. Final allocations of regional distribution funding will be determined annually.

These forecasts of expenditure are based on a 10-year plan of maintenance and improvements, including projects for which funding is already committed. The timeframe for the development and construction of the improvements proposed in the 10-year forecast is indicative only, and is likely to change depending on the project's importance within the context of the regional land transport strategy, its national priority, the resolution of any local concerns and property issues.

The Manawatu/Wanganui 10-year state highway forecast seeks to protect and preserve the existing asset and improve the efficiency and safety of the roads into and out of the Manawatu/Wanganui region.

Major features of the forecast are:

- › passing lanes for development or construction in the next three years:
 - » eight on SH1 between Waiouru and Levin
 - » one on SH3 between Wanganui and Palmerston North
- › five rural realignments including:
 - » Hihitahi Bluffs Realignment
 - » Manawatu Hill Realignment
 - » Ohingaiti-Makohine Realignment
 - » Papatawa Realignment
 - » Foxton Curves
- › intersection improvements
- › a new cycling and walking facility, for construction in 2005/06, comprising a wider shoulder for cyclists on Old West Road on SH57 beyond the Tennant Drive project that is under construction.

KEY REGIONAL TRANSPORT ISSUES

Through Manawatu/Wanganui's regional land transport strategy, long term council community plans, and Transit's state highway forecast, local and central government is aiming for a sustainable land transport system that meets the objectives of the New Zealand Transport Strategy (NZTS) and the Land Transport Management Act (LTMA), i.e. assisting economic development, assisting safety and personal security, improving access and mobility, protecting and promoting public health, and ensuring environmental sustainability.

To achieve a sustainable land transport system we need to consider both land use and transport trends and behaviour. In this respect regional and local growth strategies (or emerging views where strategies have not been written) and planning documents are critical to supporting regional land transport strategies.

In meeting the objectives of the NZTS and LTMA the key regional transport issues for Manawatu/Wanganui include:

- › industrial and commercial developments around the Palmerston North Airport, and residential developments to the east of Palmerston North across the Manawatu River
- › secure and efficient transport corridors, particularly to the east through the Manawatu Gorge
- › road safety
- › access to Massey University from Palmerston North
- › impeded traffic flow on SH1 between Bulls and Levin – this section of SH1 suffers from severely impeded flow and a high number of crashes
- › heavy traffic “short cuts” through the Manawatu District area.

TRANSIT'S CONTRIBUTION TO TRANSPORT ISSUES

The state highway network in Manawatu/Wanganui has been improved significantly in recent years, particularly with a combination of highway realignments and passing lanes, and is now generally of a high standard. While Transit expects traffic volumes to continue to grow, particularly on SH1, it is expected that maintenance and minor safety

improvements will generally be sufficient to maintain an appropriate level of service. With the exception of additional passing lanes and a number of rural realignments, notably south of Mangaweka and between Makohine Hill and Ohingaiti on SH1, only minor improvements are required.

In the longer term, it will be necessary to upgrade SH1 to expressway standard between Levin and Waikanae, including a bypass of Levin.

The locations of possible Manawatu-Wanganui projects in the 10-year forecast are shown in Figure MW. The expected cost and possible timeframe for the development and construction of these activities is indicated in Table MW2.

The timeframe for the development and construction of the improvements proposed in the 10-year forecast is indicative only, and is likely to change, depending on the use of additional funding from central government (known as ‘regional distribution funding’) to advance activities. While Transit anticipates it will have further expenditure from regional distribution funding, this is yet to be determined. Indicative construction start dates are based on expected funding levels if 40 percent of regional distribution funding for Manawatu/Wanganui was allocated to state highways, spread evenly over 10 years.

In addition Horizons Regional Council, in conjunction with local authorities and Transit, is carrying out an Integrated Transport Study at present. The outcomes of that are not known but will be considered in future years' forecasts.

Large improvement projects (with construction costs more than \$3M) have been scheduled for 10 years and small and medium-sized projects (with construction costs of less than \$3M) have been scheduled for three years.

Efficient and Safe Transport Corridors

Further work will be undertaken to enhance Transit's management systems for the Manawatu Gorge, including providing support for limited improvements to the alternative routes such as Saddle Road and Pahiatua Track.

Passing Lanes

The following passing lanes have been included in the 10-year forecast. Some will be dependent on progress with other projects and the regional distribution funding:

- › SH1: Himatangi – Levin (one, three recently completed)
- › SH1: a further three between Himatangi and Hunterville
- › SH2: a further passing lane north of Woodville
- › SH3: between Wanganui and Palmerston North (four).

Construction of these passing lanes will complete the implementation of passing lane strategies for SH1 between Waiouru and Bulls, SH1 between Bulls and Levin, SH3 between Wanganui and Palmerston North and SH2 in the Tararua/southern Hawke's Bay area.

Road Safety

Transit plans to continue removing 'out of context' sections of state highway, roadside hazards, provide a network of stock truck effluent disposal facilities, and improving walking and cycling facilities. A number of small and medium-sized safety improvements throughout the region have been identified, focusing on rural and urban intersection improvements, bridge replacements and realignments. The number of projects constructed will be dependent upon the allocation of regional distribution funding.

Rural Highways

On SH1, the Hihitahi Bluffs realignment is progressing well.

Rural realignments proposed for construction in the 10-year forecast are:

- › SH2: Manawatu Hill Realignment
- › SH1: Ohingaiti-Makohine Realignment
- › SH2: Papatawa Realignment
- › SH1: Foxton South Curves.

The Waiauti Bridge, (SH1, south of Manakau) project is dependent on progress with other projects and the regional distribution funding.

Improvements proposed to intersections in the next three years include:

- › SH3: Awahuri Intersection
- › SH56/57: Makerua Intersection
- › SH54: Newbury Line, west of Palmerston North
- › SH56: Opiki T Junction
- › SH3: Stewart Road Intersection and Seal Widening
- › SH1: Makomako Intersection (Levin South).

The project to widen seal and remove trees alongside SH3 at McHardies Road just north of Bulls, has been completed.

Construction is underway to upgrade intersections on SH57 at Tavistock Road and Tennent Drive/Old West Road.

Stock Effluent Disposal

To complete the North Island stock effluent disposal facilities strategy in Manawatu/Wanganui the construction of facilities on SH4 at Horopito, SH2 north of Dannevirke and SH1 between Taihape and the Vinegar Hill turnoff are planned.

Access to Massey University

In recent years consideration has been given to additional roading capacity crossing the Manawatu River near to the Fitzherbert Bridge to provide access to Massey University and expanding residential development to address local network demands. Transit supports the promotion of passenger transport, cycling and the charging for parking at the university (which applied from March 2005) as part of the wider transport solution. Transit will therefore continue to support development of these travel demand measures. It is understood further implementation of second bridge options will be assessed once the results of the Horizons Integrated Transport Study are known.

Walking and Cycling

Recently the SH3: St Johns Hill Pathway in Wanganui City has been completed. This pathway integrates with the development of Wanganui's walking and cycling network.

The cycling and walking facility at SH57: Old West Road (North), near Massey University is proposed for construction.

MAINTENANCE and OPERATIONS

In addition to undertaking maintenance and improvements in Transit's East Wanganui network to meet current and future levels of service, and to preserve the asset, Transit proposes to:

- › complete a reseal programme comprising 55 kilometres of highway in 2005/06
- › continue to monitor slope stability in the Manawatu Gorge
- › continue emergency recovery and enhance Transit's management systems to reduce risks to safety and route security
- › continue to improve the ability to forecast ice conditions that occur in critical locations by further developing the existing weather stations in the Rangitikei and Ruapehu districts.

Table MWI

Forecasts of Expenditure on Maintenance and Improvements

Manawatu/Wanganui Region

	05/06 (\$M)	06/07 (\$M)	07/08 (\$M)	08/09 (\$M)	09/10 (\$M)	10/11 (\$M)	11/12 (\$M)	12/13 (\$M)	13/14 (\$M)	14/15 (\$M)	Total (\$M)
Maintenance											
Structural	5.1	5.3	5.8	6.0	6.3	6.6	6.9	7.2	7.5	7.8	64.5
Corridor	2.7	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.8	4.0	4.2	34.2
Professional Services	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.9	15.7
Property Management	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	1.3
Preventive Maintenance	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	4.2
Emergency Works	2.3	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	8.3
Sub-total	11.9	10.5	11.3	11.8	12.3	12.9	13.5	14.1	14.7	15.3	128.2
Improvements											
Minor Safety Projects	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	9.2
Committed Projects	7.8	6.5	0.0	0.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.3
New Projects	7.1	4.2	4.7	5.8	8.9	16.8	13.8	16.0	12.5	7.3	97.0
Property Purchase	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	24.7
Walking & Cycling	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	1.0
Sub-total	17.8	13.7	7.8	9.0	12.3	20.3	17.4	19.8	16.5	11.4	146.2
Total	29.7	24.2	19.1	20.9	24.7	33.2	30.9	33.9	31.1	26.7	274.4

Note: regional distribution funding for state highways forecast to be \$46M over 10 years