



**Napier Regional Office
Media Release**

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Transit forecast delivers three major projects for Hawke's Bay

The Hawke's Bay has gained two new projects in Transit New Zealand's 10-year State Highway Forecast 2006/07 released today.

Investigation for the SH50A Hawke's Bay Expressway Southern Extension is planned for 2006/07 followed by design and a construction start within five years. Design and construction is also scheduled within five years for the Waipukurau Overbridge realignment SH2.

The third major project for the region, the Matahoura Gorge realignment SH2, has been brought forward five years from the August 2005 State Highway Forecast, with investigation planned for 2006/07 and design and construction start in the next five years. This is as a result of consultation and the changes in priorities.

"These projects deliver a balanced package, bringing safety and congestion improvements and minimising the risk of road closures across the region," regional manager Hilton Netterville says.

"The Southern Extension is the last section of the Hawke's Bay Expressway, bringing the traffic to the southern side of Hastings. It has significant safety and efficiency benefits as the Maraekakaho Rd and York Rd intersection is bypassed," Mr Netterville says.

The Waipukurau Railway Overbridge safety realignment, will remove a potentially dangerous, curving section of highway which crosses over the railway line.

The Matahorua Gorge realignment will increase the route security, safety and efficiency of the narrow section of state highway between Napier and Gisborne which is often closed during periods of adverse weather.

Today's announcements also include safety improvements for the local state highway network. There are a significant number of projects for passing lanes on SH2 over the next three years. The sites are Airport to Bay View, Gisborne to Napier and six passing lanes south of Hastings. Included in these projects are Otane Intersection and passing lanes.

As part of Transit's commitment to achieve a sustainable land transport system, walking and cycling projects are planned at Waitangi Washout Bridge SH2, Karamu Stream Bridge SH2 and Bay View SH2

Transit's national programme to provide a safe and convenient network of stock effluent disposal facilities includes a new facility to be constructed near Bay View Stock Effluent Site SH5.

Changes to projects since last year's State Highway Forecast are a result of updated priorities, nationwide consultation and Transit's latest risk assessments of large projects.

Work will continue on stage two of the \$6.75 million SH50 Meeanee Rd Interchange early this summer following the settling of the initial earthworks and construction of embankments.

Information with a national focus is included in a separate media statement.

Transit's 10-year State Highway Forecast 2006/07 and a media kit will be available at 6pm today on our website at www.transit.govt.nz

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For further information please contact:

Hilton Netterville, regional manager

Ph 06 835 0283 or 021 861 715

Or communications advisors Anthony Frith 04 496 5479,

And Marie Watson 04 496 6639

www.transit.govt.nz