



**Wellington Regional Office
Media Release**

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State Highway Forecast delivers three key projects for upper South Island

Construction of the SH60 Ruby Bay Bypass, a construction start of the SH6 Whangamoia South Realignment and development of the SH6 Hope Saddle Realignment are the key large projects for the Nelson/Marlborough/Tasman region, announced in Transit New Zealand's 10-year State Highway Forecast released today.

The design of the Ruby Bay Bypass is programmed to start in 2006/2007. Design and construction are programmed for completion within five years. The Ruby Bay Bypass will remove arterial traffic from the current winding route through the urban area of Ruby Bay.

Investigation into the Whangamoia South Realignment, which eases the tightest curves to improve safety and travel times, is programmed for completion in 2006/2007, followed by design in the first five years and construction in the second five years.

Investigation for the Hope Saddle Realignment, which also aims to improve safety and travel efficiency by easing tight curves, will finish in 2006/2007.

Transit regional manager Graham Taylor said that although there is no immediate large project construction starts for the Nelson/Tasman/Marlborough region in 2006/2007, there is a substantial amount of preliminary work to allow these large projects to progress, so that construction can commence in following years.

"There are also a number of new small and medium projects to be constructed throughout the Nelson/Tasman/Marlborough region, which will remove a number of problem spots in the region. These include intersection improvements, stock effluent facilities, walking and cycling projects, and passing lanes," he said.

Major projects/strategic studies already underway to ease congestion and address safety issues are:

- The SH1 Awatere Bridge, just north of Seddon is progressing well and on schedule to be completed in early 2008.
- The Nelson to Brightwater Corridor Study, a joint initiative with Nelson City Council and Tasman District Council, focuses on the area along SH6, between Hira and Brightwater. It also includes part of the State Highway 60 Corridor from

Richmond (Three Brothers Corner) to Pea Viner Corner in Appleby. The overall aim is to provide the basis for an integrated transportation strategy for the Corridor, which includes state highways, key arterials and important roads which facilitate local and regional traffic movements between Nelson and Richmond and beyond.

- Richmond West Development and Transportation Study, in partnership with Tasman District Council, looks at the development of the Richmond West area and what changes need to be made to transport to accommodate the urban development and vice versa.
- The Marlborough Arterial Transportation Study will model arterial road needs to cater for the strong economic growth occurring in Marlborough. The study will specifically focus on the main population centre of Blenheim and the surrounding Wairau Plains.

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

Ends

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