



KEY TRANSPORT ISSUES

Transit, along with local and central government are working together to achieve a sustainable land transport system in new ways.

Transit will work closely with regional and district councils to ensure that any substantial upgrading in the next 10 to 20 years is properly considered and planned, in order to relieve congestion and support regional growth strategies. This requires agreement on amendments to road and public transport plans and shared funding responsibilities for both local and national infrastructure and services.

Planning activities such as Nelson/Marlborough/Tasman Regional Land Transport Strategies, Long-Term Council Community Plans, and Transit's State Highway Forecast all help in this process.

In meeting the objectives of the NZTS and LTMA the key regional transport issues for the Nelson/Marlborough/Tasman region include:

- › Road safety
- › Delays at some key intersections during peak periods
- › Poor air quality in some parts of Nelson
- › Traffic growth within and beyond Blenheim.
Traffic growth is continuing on arterial roads in the Blenheim/Wairau Plains environs. Ferry traffic is a relatively unique issue with "tidal" flows throughout the day
- › Route security and efficiency to the east, including the Awatere Bridge, and south of Nelson, including SH6 Hope Saddle
- › Forestry traffic: Marlborough is anticipating a significant increase in forestry to around one million tonnes per year, of which two-thirds is expected to be exported through Port Shakespeare at Picton. Nelson and Tasman are similarly expecting a significant growth to two million tonnes, much of which will be exported through the Port of Nelson
- › Tourist traffic: particularly to Nelson Lakes National Park, Marlborough Sounds, Abel Tasman Park and Kahurangi National Park.

How we plan to address these key issues

While there is a significant emphasis for Transit in Marlborough, Nelson and Tasman on maintaining the existing state highway network, there are a number of activities in the 10-year State Highway Forecast to improve road safety as well as route security and efficiency in the Nelson/Marlborough/Tasman region. In addition, a strategic study is in progress to determine the future transport needs for the Nelson to Brightwater Corridor. The outcomes of this study will be considered in future forecasts.

A further priority is managing the connections between state highways and local roads, as well as access to state highways from adjacent land, to support the medium to long distance travel function of key arterial roads.

Substantial improvements have been made to the state highway network recently, especially in Nelson City, the Tasman District and Blenheim. State highways in Marlborough, Nelson and Tasman are now generally of a high standard. To ensure this standard is maintained, the Awatere Bridge Replacement project on SH1, south of Blenheim, was funded for construction in 2005/2006 and is underway. Additionally, the SH6 Whangamoia South and SH60 Ruby Bay projects are included for construction, subject to confirmation of project scope.

Large improvement projects, with construction costs of more than \$3.4M have been indicated for 10 years while projects with construction costs of less than \$3.4M are proposed over the next three years and are shown in the table. The locations of Nelson/Marlborough/Tasman projects in the 10-year forecast are shown on the map.

Road Safety

Transit has identified a number of small and medium sized projects to improve the safety and efficiency of sections of state highway and to improve safety at intersections, for progress in the next three years. Projects include: SH60 Flush Median and Research Orchard Corner Realignment in Appleby and SH62 seal widening of Rapaura Road from Jefferies to Wratts, and Wratts to SH1. Further work on the management or removal of roadside hazards will continue.

Secure and Efficient Transport Corridors

The following intersection improvements are aimed at reducing congestion and contributing to more efficient transport corridors: constructing the Tahunanui traffic signals in Nelson and the McGlashen Avenue intersection in Richmond, both on SH6.

Passing Opportunities

Limited passing opportunities in some parts of the region's road network lead to driver frustration and accidents. Two passing lane projects have been identified for progress in the next three years on SH1 at Para and Grovetown, both north of Blenheim.

Walking and Cycling

Three projects that are part of Nelson City's Atawhai Walking and Cycling project, have been identified for construction on SH6 to the north of Nelson: Bayview Road to Atawhai Drive, Marybank to Tui Glen Road, and Tui Glen Road to Bayview Road.

Stock Effluent Disposal Facilities

As part of a national programme to provide a safe and convenient network of stock effluent disposal facilities Transit proposes to progress a facility at Murchison and at one other location on SH6 yet to be determined.

Strategic Studies

The Nelson to Brightwater Corridor Study is a joint study being carried out by Transit, Nelson City Council and Tasman District Council. The purpose of the study is to develop a long-term transport strategy for the greater Nelson and Richmond areas, including the SH6 corridor from Hira to Brightwater and the SH60 corridor from SH6 to Pea Viner Corner. In early 2005 the first stage of public consultation was undertaken and a strategic transport model was built to assess a range of transportation packages. The second stage of public consultation was completed in November 2005. Feedback was received on four different transportation improvement packages. That feedback is now being used to develop a long-term transportation strategy for the region. Completion of the study is expected in mid 2006 and the outcomes will be considered in future State Highway Forecasts.

Strategic studies for the Tasman region include the Tasman Passing Lane Investigation Study and the Richmond Development and Transportation Study, in partnership with Tasman District Council.

A study of the Blenheim and Wairau Plains is also proposed in conjunction with Marlborough District Council.

Maintenance and Operations

The safe operation of the state highway network is a key function for Transit. Processes are in place to manage traffic efficiently, provide consistent and reliable information for road users, undertake maintenance work on the highway in the safest and least disruptive way, monitor locations where crashes occur and, where appropriate, take corrective action.

The state highway network is a \$15 billion transport infrastructure asset that demands sophisticated and effective management. Transit has systems in place to do this, ranging from infrastructure and traffic databases to natural features inventories, long-term deterioration modelling tools, and annual condition data collection supported by advanced contract delivery methods and regular performance reporting.

Further, improvements to the way traffic is managed at incidents and in congested urban areas are being investigated and implemented.

Maintenance and operations activities make up the majority of the forecast expenditure in the Marlborough/Nelson/Tasman region. In addition to preserving the highway network and undertaking maintenance and improvements to meet future levels of service, we propose to:

- › Resurface 105 kilometres of highway, including 6 kilometres with low noise surfacing
- › Strengthen 7 kilometres of highway
- › Continue to improve the prediction of winter road conditions in order to improve emergency responses to snow and ice, and continue to trial the use of the anti-icer calcium magnesium acetate
- › Continue to manage local roads in Marlborough (under contract to Marlborough District Council).