



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 Wellington's Regional Land Transport Strategy, 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 Wellington region include:

- › Road safety
- › Severe congestion, particularly at peak times, on the main routes into and out of Wellington City. Key "hot points" include Paekakariki to Pukerua Bay, SH1 Ngauranga interchange, SH2 Dowse to Ngauranga and around the Terrace and Mt Victoria Tunnels
- › Route security and efficiency to the north of Wellington, both on SH1 and SH2
- › Access to the Airport and Wellington's regional hospital in Newtown
- › The need for stronger connections between Lower Hutt and Porirua.

How we plan to address these key issues

Improvements are needed to reduce congestion and address safety issues along SH1 between Ngauranga and Peka Peka, just north of Waikanae. Construction of MacKays Crossing Overbridge is well underway and on track for completion at the end of 2006. Extension of the wire rope central median barrier along Centennial Highway, between Paekakariki and Pukerua Bay, has been approved and physical works have started.

Greater Wellington Regional Council, following extensive public consultation, has adopted a Western Corridor Plan for inclusion in the draft Regional Land Transport Strategy. The plan includes travel demand measures, improvements to "park and ride" and bus-rail connections and plans to increase passenger rail transport.

The plan can be geographically split into two areas, these being to the north and south of MacKays Crossing. In the north, the Kapiti Western Link Road (yet to be confirmed) is a joint project with Kapiti Coast District Council to construct a major arterial parallel to SH1 between Peka Peka Road north of Waikanae, and Poplar Avenue at Raumatī. This is included in the 10-year State Highway Forecast. This will relieve congestion on both the state highway and local roads and provide a second crossing of the Waikanae River.

Transit continues to work with Kapiti Coast District Council on the final form of the Kapiti Western Link Road. The need for grade separation of the connections to SH1 will be investigated as part of the design.

The construction of Transmission Gully Motorway has been included in the corridor plan, but is subject to a funding plan being finalised by the region. Funding for investigation and preliminary design has been included in the 10-year forecast. Initial work on this will begin immediately but full development will be contingent on a funding plan being approved.

Although investigation into a new road linking Grenada on SH1 with the Hutt Valley is included in the Western Corridor Plan, it is not included in the current 10-year State Highway Forecast because the status of the road is yet to be determined.

The Hutt Corridor is often congested, particularly south of Upper Hutt. Planning is well advanced for the Dowse to Petone upgrade, forecast for a construction start in 2006/07. Proposed improvements include an overbridge at the Korokoro intersection (connecting the Western Hills with Hutt Road) and an interchange at the Dowse Drive intersection (connecting Dowse Drive and Hutt Road via a roundabout raised over the highway, as well as connections to the state highway). These improvements also include altering the Petone "Park and Ride" facility and minor safety improvements to the highway between the existing intersections. Investigation of options to upgrade the Melling Intersection is included in the 10-year forecast.

Other large projects forecast in the 10-year period include the Rimutaka Corner Easing project to straighten some tight curves at "Muldoon's Corner", about 500 metres south of the Rimutaka summit. Here the current alignment requires some heavy vehicles to regularly cross the centre line. Grade separation of the SH2 to SH58 intersection at Manor Park is also included. Previously identified improvements required at the Basin Reserve have been retained in the forecast but are subject to confirmation by the Ngauranga to Airport Study.

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 Wellington projects in the 10-year forecast are shown on the map.

Road Safety

Transit has identified one safety improvement project on SH1 for progress in the next three years. This is at Old Hautere Road south of Otaki. The first stage of the Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) installed in Ngauranga Gorge has been very effective in smoothing traffic flows and ensuring a faster response to incidents. Transit proposes to investigate the extension of the system incrementally to other high traffic volume sections of SH1 from Ngauranga to the Terrace Tunnel and at SH2 from Petone to Ngauranga.

In addition, variable message signs are to be located at various sites within the Wellington region to assist with safety by providing information to road users, particularly for more extreme events causing road closures. Further work on the management or removal of roadside hazards will continue.

Secure and Efficient Transport Corridors

Two new roundabouts are proposed for SH2 in Carterton; at the Pembroke Street intersection and the Park Road/Belvedere Road intersection. A larger Otaki roundabout is proposed at the intersection of SH1 and Rahui/Mill Roads. The Rugby St/Adelaide Rd intersection at the Basin Reserve is to be improved to assist in reducing congestion.

Heavy Vehicle Weigh Station

With the completion of the Mana upgrade there is no southbound weighing facility. A replacement is required to ensure that the Police can manage their safety and compliance responsibilities. Sites at Plimmerton and further north on the Kapiti Coast have been identified as potential sites. The SH1 Waikanae weigh station project is forecast to be completed within the next five years.

Passing Lanes

Limited passing opportunities in some parts of the region's road network lead to driver frustration and accidents. In Wellington a number of passing lane projects have been identified for progress in the next three years, subject to \$R funding, including SH1 between Otaki and Waikanae, and SH2 in the Wairarapa, with north and southbound lanes between Featherston and Greytown and between Masterton and Carterton, and Judgeford on SH58.

Walking and Cycling

The extension of the SH2 cycleway to the Petone interchange from its current position has been identified for improvements in the next three years.

Strategic Studies

A number of strategic studies for the Wellington region are proposed including SH58, (as part of the investigation of the Transmission Gully Motorway), the SH2 Petone to Hayward Safety Review, the Wellington Cycle Strategy Audit and the SH2 Wairarapa (Mt Bruce to Featherston) Study. The Ngauranga to Airport Study, a joint study between Transit, Greater Wellington Regional Council, and Wellington City Council has started with the first stage of consultation having been undertaken.

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 Wellington region. In addition to preserving the highway network and undertaking maintenance and improvements to meet future levels of service, we propose to:

- › Resurface 35km of highway, including 16km of low noise surfacing
- › Apply high skid resistant surfacing on approaches to high speed intersections
- › Continue to maintain and improve the SH58 Pauatahanui inlet seawall
- › Continue with flood mitigation works on SH1 at Paekakariki
- › Work with local authorities to optimise traffic operations on both local arterials and state highways
- › Improve coordination with Police and Emergency Services in the management of incidents that affect the operation of the network
- › Continue to work with Civil Defence and Emergency Management to refine emergency response plans in and around Wellington
- › Monitor traffic and levels of congestion
- › Continue with a programme of improvements to tunnels to more closely meet international standards.