

MEDIA RELEASE

TRANSIT NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL OFFICE

1 July 2008

Transit New Zealand releases 2008/09 State Highway Plan

Transit New Zealand today released its 2008/09 State Highway Plan and Forecast that details planned state highway maintenance and capital improvements.

The plan sets out in detail Transit's programme of work for the current year, the remaining years covered by the Government's funding guarantee, and a forecast out to 10 years.

Transit chief executive Rick van Barneveld said the plan and forecast mark year three of the five-year plan of works made possible by Budget 2006 which provided \$1.3 billion in extra funding for a portfolio of "key deliverable" projects.

"The five-year funding guarantee added stability to transport sector investment and Transit is currently on schedule to deliver the portfolio of 100 projects. "

Mr van Barneveld said Transit planned to start construction on around 45 new road improvement projects around the country in 2008/09, ranging from large projects like the SH2 Waipukurau Overbridge Realignment (Hawke's Bay) or SH1 Akerama Curves Realignment (Northland) to new passing lanes, seal widening projects, safety improvements, walking and cycling projects and many other improvements.

"Once completed, these projects will make the journeys of thousands of motorists each day safer and easier."

The release of the final plan follows a consultation process in which the number of submissions halved from 268 last year down to 135, a reflection of the greater stability that the Government's guaranteed funding has given to Transit's long-term planning, Mr van Barneveld said.

"Common topics across this year's submissions included provision of more passing opportunities, safe walking and cycling facilities and gaps in the network of stock effluent disposal facilities.

"We have extended the former one-year programme of small and medium-sized projects to three years in response to feedback received in last year's submissions.

"Other common concerns included the number of one-way bridges remaining on state highways. This is being addressed through a draft bridge replacement programme currently in development."

The 10-Year State Highway Plan and Forecast 2008/09 to 2017/18 will be available on Transit's website from 1 July. Published copies will be available at a later date.

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