



Focus on transport

This issue of the UDS Newsletter focuses on transport. Transport is Canterbury's most significant area of infrastructure provision given its large public and private costs, contribution to the economic performance of the region, influence on urban form, and other social and environmental effects.

It is fundamental to the quality of life in greater Christchurch. It provides people with access to education, employment, services and recreational opportunities. It allows for the movement of freight, essential to economic wellbeing.

How people travel and how often affects the physical environment through emissions, noise, congestion and community severance. It affects and is affected by where people live, work and the other places they spend their time.

Our future ability to fund our transport methods and networks is about making smart travel choices as well as the prudent allocation of resources.

Travel demand management, transport funding and planning and bus standards are some of the topics covered in this issue.

Strategy looks at travel choices

The draft Greater Christchurch Travel Demand Management Strategy (TDMS), now open for public discussion, is about encouraging people to travel differently, by walking, cycling, using public transport and car pooling, in a bid to combat increasing traffic congestion.

The strategy aims to manage traffic growth by getting people to make better use of the existing transport network. It has been developed jointly by the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS) partners (the Christchurch City Council, Waimakariri and Selwyn district councils, Environment Canterbury and the New Zealand Transport Agency).

As the largest population centre in the UDS area, Christchurch and the people living, working and travelling in the city, stand to benefit greatly from TDM. Commuters into and out of the city would also benefit, particularly from reduced congestion.

Mayor Bob Parker says TDM is not about stopping people using their cars. "It is about changing our behaviour. One less trip by car each week, per household would stop traffic growth."

"While walking, cycling and using public transport are excellent ways to address congestion and a whole range of transport issues we are facing, car pooling, combining trips and reducing trip distances would also mean our roads could carry more people more efficiently.

"Changing the way we travel will take time, and the actions in the draft strategy will coincide with infrastructure improvements, including public transport, cycling and walking facilities," he said.

Public consultation on the TDMS closes on 13 March.

Copies of the full document and summary document, fact sheet and submission form are available at Christchurch City Council

service centres, offices of the Waimakariri and Selwyn district councils and Environment Canterbury, and the Christchurch office of NZTA. Feedback can also be sent through the Have-Your-Say website at www.ccc.govt.nz/HaveYourSay/ where there are links to the various documents.

Did you know?

Some facts about our travel habits

- **People in Greater Christchurch love their cars.** With the highest rate of car ownership in New Zealand (709 cars for every 1,000 residents compared to the national average of 700 per 1,000), residents make 85% of all trips in private cars.
- **Travel in solitary confinement.** 60% of residents drive to work (compared to 40% in Wellington) and in 19 out of 20 cars travelling to work there is a single occupant.
- **Car travel is growing at 2.5% per annum.** As the number of households increases so too does the number of cars per household, with many having three or more cars (often one for each inhabitant).
- **More trucks, more often.** Road-based freight is growing at 3.5% per annum and freight movements are expected to double by 2040.
- **Out of the cradle and into the car.** 34% of morning peak travel is education related, with over half the children at primary school being driven there by car, with similar numbers being driven or driving to secondary school.
- **Cars still win over buses.** 4% of residents travel to work by bus (compared to 14% Wellington and 7% Auckland). Of those people who live outside of Christchurch City and travel to work in Christchurch less than 1% travel by bus.

Figures are taken from a variety of sources including Christchurch City Council research, Statistics New Zealand, the Ministry of Transport and Ministry for the Environment.



New quality standards approved for urban buses

The New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) Board has approved new quality standards for urban buses used in public transport services.

The new standards are aimed at increasing public transport usage by improving the attractiveness and usability of urban buses, with a particular emphasis on improving accessibility.

The vehicle quality standards, outlined in the document *Requirements for urban buses in New Zealand*, will form part of the Procurement Manual used by regional councils when procuring urban bus services.

Making urban buses more accessible will improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and impairments, while at the same time making public transport a more attractive option for the general public.

The adoption of common quality standards by all regional councils will also result in benefits from greater efficiency and standardisation in bus building in New Zealand.

The new quality standards were jointly developed by NZTA and the New Zealand Bus and Coach Association. Input was also provided by Environment Canterbury, Greater Wellington Regional Council, the Auckland Regional Transport Authority and bus manufacturer Designline International Holdings (NZ).

Specific improvements covered by the new standards include minimum step heights and depths, minimum aisle width, priority seating requirements, better provision of handrails and grab handles, minimum dimensions for external destination signs on buses, new requirements for wheelchair spaces and improved lighting.

For further information or to download a copy of *Requirements for urban buses in New Zealand*, visit <http://www.landtransport.govt.nz/publications/requirements-for-urban-buses/preamble.html>



All Metro buses soon to be wheelchair-friendly

Christchurch's Metro services have been operating with user-comfort and accessibility in mind for many years, says Cr Carole Evans, chair of Environment Canterbury's passenger transport portfolio committee.

"The wheelchair accessibility which the kneeling buses offer is not just for people in wheelchairs but any parent with a child in a buggy and anyone who can find the steps up an old-style, step-up bus a struggle. For older people using their SuperGold Cards to travel off-peak for free, the kneeling buses are great.

"Parents with children in strollers do not have to take them out before getting on board a wheelchair accessible bus.

"Environment Canterbury began implementing wheelchair-friendly buses in 1998 as part of bus companies' contracts. By November, all Metro urban services will be wheelchair-friendly with all buses able to kneel at stops," she said.

Partnership and cooperation key in transport management

Selwyn District has New Zealand's highest rate of vehicle ownership (97% of homes have a vehicle) and the second-highest rate of population growth (3% per year). Half its workers commute to Christchurch – mostly from within the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy area – and the traffic is expected to increase by 50% in the coming decades. Faced with this, the local council is pursuing a multi-pronged strategy to:

- upgrade existing roads, walkways and cycleways
- build some new ones
- improve public transport services
- use urban design plans to ensure that new subdivisions have efficient transport networks catering for different travel modes
- create local jobs so that potential commuters can "work and play" where they live – starting with 500 places at the Izone Southern Business Hub in Rolleston
- encourage residents to drive less and walk and cycle more, especially on short trips.

"Some of these projects could not be done without the partnership and cooperation of other councils and transport organisations in the Greater Christchurch area," says Transportation Manager, Andrew Mazey.

"By working together we're steering the district's transport system on to a more sustainable path."



Andrew Mazey, transportation manager



Integrated planning becoming more important

The stage is set for the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) to publish New Zealand's first three-year national land transport programme for 2009-12 (NLTP) by September.

Each region's regional transport committee* is currently providing the NZTA with the building blocks to help construct New Zealand's programme for addressing the most critical transport issues. Some regions are now preparing their draft regional land transport programmes** while others have progressed to the consultation phase.

Integrating land use and transport planning to support economic growth and productivity is becoming more important.

The Land Transport Management Act (The Act - as amended in 2008) specifies that each regional council should ensure that the relevant regional transport committee prepares a regional land transport strategy that covers a period of at least 30 years. The extent to which the land transport system can respond effectively to future demand will be strongly influenced by land-use planning decisions. Strategies developed using integrated planning and urban design principles, with appropriate provision for accessibility by a range of modes to key facilities and economic areas, are more likely to deliver the national and regional outcomes anticipated by the Act.

A balance of demand and supply side measures is needed when developing a regional land transport programme, to enable transport choices and to deliver on the social, environmental and economic agenda, while also making the most of New Zealand's existing infrastructure.

The NZTA encourages the testing of traditional economic growth and land-use assumptions, alongside those of transport planning. This is necessary to enable the development of an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system.

The key to delivering an integrated transport system is co-ordinated planning and development of the transport network whilst managing the expectations of different statutory processes, land uses, transport modes and institutions and people at local, regional and national level.

The NZTA recognises that the development of integrated strategies and processes requires good planning and clear action plans, and that not all regions may be equipped to deliver these in the first round of regional land transport programmes. However, for the second round (2012-2015) of regional land transport programmes, the NZTA will require an increased emphasis on integration.

Working collaboratively an integrated transport system can be achieved, where the different transport modes are connected and complementary to each other, making maximum use of the advantages of each mode and providing modal choice.

The NZTA's 'RLTP Guidelines' offers more detailed information: <http://www.landtransport.govt.nz/funding/nltp/ltp.html>

* Regional transport committees comprise representatives of the regional council, local councils in the region, the NZTA, iwi, and the five objectives listed in the New Zealand Transport Strategy 2008.

** The Land Transport Management Act requires regional transport committees and the Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA) to develop a regional land transport programme in consultation with their community and stakeholders every three years. The regional land transport programmes provide a statement of transport priorities for 2009 - 12 and indicative priorities for 2012-15.



Introducing...

Planning for the long term public passenger transport needs of greater Christchurch is the focus for Environment Canterbury Passenger Transport Strategic Planner Shannon Ussher. Her work in public passenger transport planning seeks to answer questions such as: 'What public transport needs to be provided to support the future growth of greater Christchurch?' Studies looking at passenger transport options for the busiest routes into the city and possible 'park and ride' options, are under way.

Shannon has a Master of Arts degree in Geography from Canterbury University and before joining Environment Canterbury almost four years ago, worked as a transport planning consultant on other sustainable transport initiatives.



Shannon Ussher, transport planner



Earlier start on Southern Motorway construction

Work will start sooner on several key state highway projects including the Christchurch Southern Motorway, NZ Transport Agency has confirmed.

The earlier start dates on these projects has been made possible by an extra \$142.5 million in funding across New Zealand announced recently as part of the Government's Jobs and Growth plan. NZTA is anticipating that it can resolve the purchase of the remaining properties and obtain the necessary resource consents in order to ensure construction of the Southern Motorway project can start in March 2010, four months earlier than scheduled. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$180m.

"We're delighted that Government has provided this extra funding to allow us to make an early start on important work all around the country. This is great news for New Zealand, as it provides the opportunity to make immediate improvements to our state highway network," said NZTA Regional Director Canterbury West Coast Mark Yaxley.

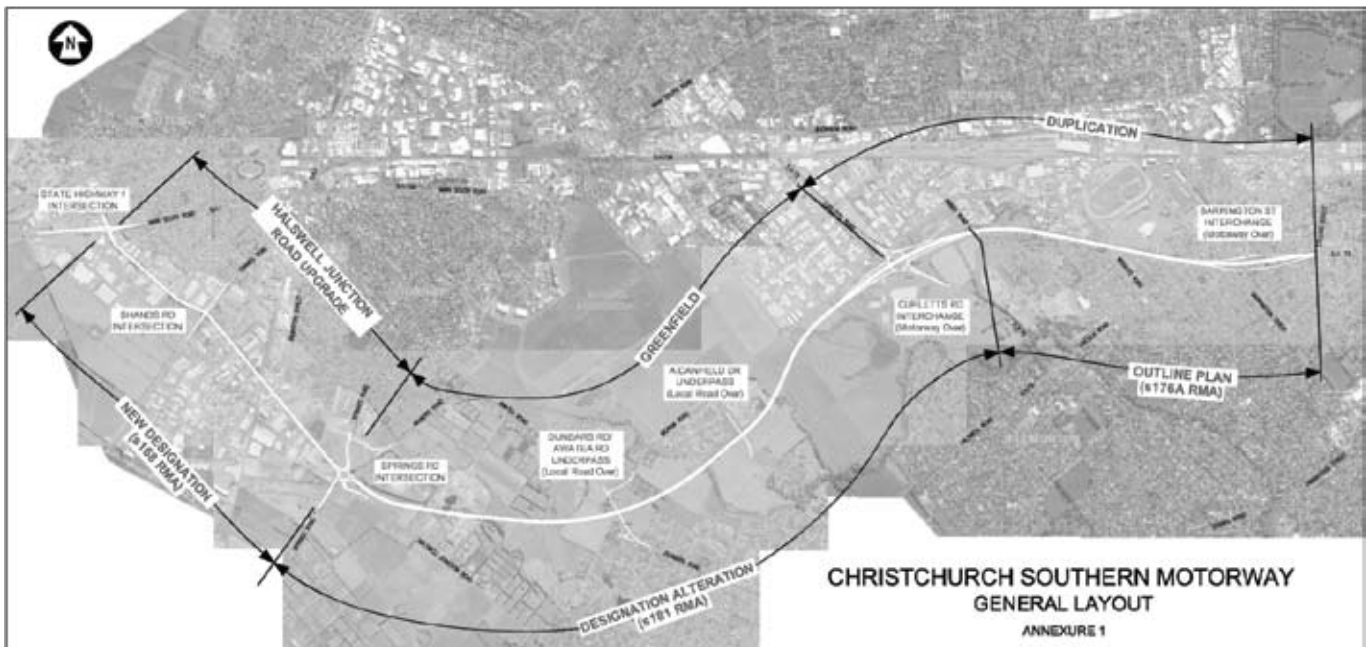
Mr Yaxley said the additional funding announced by the Government would bring forward the construction of five regionally significant state highway projects as well as accelerating a large number of small and medium sized projects and pavement renewals around the country.

"NZTA recommended these projects for advancement because they are ready to go now, and most will have a construction start this year, providing immediate benefits across the country."

The 10.5km extension of the Christchurch Southern Motorway (SH73) will improve access from the south-west to the Christchurch CBD and to the Port of Lyttelton, easing congestion and improving road safety.

The project involves the duplication of the existing two-lane Christchurch Southern Motorway (Collins St to Curletts Rd), a four-lane extension of the motorway to Halswell Junction Road, and improvements along Halswell Junction Road until it rejoins SH1 where new traffic signals are currently being installed at Main South Road.

The project includes interchanges at Barrington Street and Curletts Road, with an upgraded roundabout at Springs Road/Halswell Junction Road and traffic signals at Shands Road. Motorway underpasses will be built at Awatea/Dunbars Road and Aidenfield Drive, along with various walk/cycle crossing points. An off-road cycle way alongside the motorway corridor for much of its route is also planned.



A 35-year plan

The Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy is a 35-year plan for growth in greater Christchurch. The theme of *integrated land use, infrastructure and funding* underpins much of the strategy and associated implementation actions.

The UDS partners are the Christchurch City Council, Environment Canterbury, Waimakariri District Council, Selwyn District Council, and the New Zealand Transport Agency.

For more information go to www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz/