

Wellington walks the Inner City Bypass

Wellingtonians were given a unique chance to walk along the newly constructed northbound route of the Inner City Bypass just before Christmas.

Transit organised a Walk The Bypass weekend to celebrate the opening of this new link. Transport Minister Hon Annette King and Wellington Mayor Kerry Prendergast and members of the public were able to walk the length of the bypass prior to it being opened to traffic before the New Year.

The bypass, used by around 35,000 cars, trucks and buses a day, is designed to reduce congestion and create a safer, faster route between Wellington's northern gateway and its southern and eastern suburbs. By separating traffic traveling through the city, from those vehicles wanting to get around the CBD, motorists and buses will have more space and less traffic to contend with, once the project is complete.

The northbound section is a one-way, two-lane road at ground level, with dedicated turning lanes and a 50km/h speed limit until just past the Willis Street intersection. At this point, the northbound speed limit will initially be increased to 70km/h. The new road carries traffic under Vivian and Ghuznee Streets, which will ultimately be returned to two-way roads once the project is complete.

A new motorway on-ramp with traffic signals has been created at Willis and Abel Smith Streets. In addition, a brand new route between Cuba and Willis Streets, named Karo Drive, has also been provided to improve the journey.

"The completion of this important new route was something to celebrate for Wellingtonians and Transit alike, and I'd



AND THEY'RE OFF.... young Hamish Martineau (foreground) thought the new Inner City Bypass was a perfect place to challenge younger brother Haris (background) to a tricycle race. The boys were among the many adults and children who took part in the Walk the Bypass event in December. The event was held to mark the completion of the northbound route of the bypass before it was officially opened to traffic.

like to praise the construction teams for working tirelessly and completing the project ahead of schedule," says Transit project manager Jonnette Adams.

As part of the project Transit has also relocated and restored many houses of historical significance. A total of 23 heritage buildings have been preserved. Five have remained in place and 18 have

been relocated and restored. Buildings of similar age and style have been kept together.

Work is currently underway on several of Wellington's inner-city streets to change the direction of traffic flows as part of the southbound route of the bypass. The route will be finished by mid-2007. ■

All Go for Hamilton's Avalon Drive Bypass

Construction has started on the new Avalon Drive Bypass. The project is expected to take two years to complete and will provide a free-flowing route, which will bypass the congested section of Avalon Drive between Rotokauri and Forest Lake roads.

The construction contract was awarded to Brian Perry Civil just before Christmas, with the project now underway. Most of the construction activity this year will be focused on the new Rotokauri roundabout at the northern end of the bypass, with work planned to start at the nearby Waitahiriri Gully and Forest Lake Road.

Transit Regional Manager, Chris Allen says, "The Avalon Drive Bypass will improve

travel times and safety for inter-regional and inter-city traffic, and will enhance the residential and retail environment of the bypassed section of Avalon Drive. It will also provide convenient access at each end for motorists to connect with local roads."

Avalon Drive Bypass features:

- Two-lane bypass road, from Crawford Street to Norton Road, mostly to the west of the existing railway line.
- New roundabout at Rotokauri Road, to connect the bypass to Avalon Drive and Crawford Street.
- New roundabout at Norton Road to connect the bypass to Lincoln Street, Norton Road and Rifle Range Road. The new roundabout will be lowered approximately three metres below the current intersection level. Norton Road will be lowered further as it passes under the new railway bridge, before rising to reconnect with the existing carriageway. This will replace the existing railway level crossing.
- Underpasses to allow safe passage of pedestrians and cyclists away from road traffic at the roundabouts.
- Noise reduction features along the length of the bypass to minimise the effect of traffic noise on nearby residents. ■

New Plymouth's Bell Block Bypass project underway

Construction has started on New Plymouth's \$13.3m Bell Block Bypass project, which will separate traffic travelling via the town on SH3, from those trying to reach the developing Bell Block township.

The project will greatly improve road safety in Taranaki. Transit regional manager Errol Christiansen, says: "Improving this main route is of important significance for travel both within the region, and other towns and cities.

"Work has already started with felling of trees and stripping topsoil before getting into significant earthworks near Henwood Rd.

"The bypass has received strong support from the local community, and we are delighted to get things underway," he says.

The project includes the widening of the highway up Mangaone Hill to four lanes, immediately after the 50km/h zone on the northern outskirts of the city, and will enable vehicles to travel safely at the open road speed limit, uninterrupted.

Errol adds: "Strong growth at Bell Block itself is predicted to continue, particularly at the industrial area. Additional lanes and a bypass are the best solution to accommodate this growth."

A significant feature of the bypass is a full diamond-shaped interchange at Henwood



Road, which allows for a single direct access to Bell Block township.

Transit is working with the New Plymouth District Council to integrate the local roading network with the upgraded section of highway, and to ensure safer journeys on the surrounding roads. The project will be finished in 2010. ■

FROM LEFT: Minister of Transport Safety Hon Harry Duynhoven, and local children Nicholas (2), Kate (4), Transit Wanganui regional manager Errol Christiansen and Simon (6) join in celebrations at the turning of the first sod at Bell Block in December.

Auckland's largest motorway junction upgrade complete

Following years of design, planning and intensive construction in live traffic conditions, Auckland congestion was given some welcome relief with the opening of the Central Motorway Junction (CMJ) in December.

The extensive long-term solution to some of Auckland's traffic woes means motorists can now, for the first time, travel their whole journey across the city without leaving the motorway.

The final stage of the upgrade was completed in late December, when Transit opened the last of the new motorway-to-motorway links in central Auckland. These vital new links will take motorists to their destinations via new elevated and widened sections of motorway.

"We've delivered on our biggest and most complex project to help resolve Auckland's traffic congestion, by creating direct connections between all three motorways converging at the central motorway junction – the Southern, Northern, and Northwestern motorways," says Transit New Zealand chief executive, Rick van Barneveld.

"Aucklanders are now able to make safer, faster and more enjoyable journeys, as the city gets the infrastructure and



Aerial view of Central Motorway Junction as the project nears completion.



Transit New Zealand's construction team joined Auckland Mayor Dick Hubbard, Minister for Auckland Issues Hon Judith Tizard, Transit Board member James Hill and Transit Chief Executive Rick van Barneveld at the green ribbon cut to celebrate the \$200M upgrade of the Central Motorway Junction.

technological improvements it needs to take it towards a modern and sustainable future. It makes it easier for people, freight and public transport to move around the city," he says.

The upgrade improves the driving experience of the more than 200,000 motorists who use the junction (more commonly known as Spaghetti Junction) each day, who can now complete their journeys between any of Auckland's central city motorways without using local roads.

The new links are interwoven to complete the connections between New Zealand's busiest motorways. Traffic was kept flowing on the city's motorways throughout the extensive construction project.

A key feature of CMJ to help it operate efficiently and safely is ramp signals; traffic lights installed at on-ramps which manage the rate at which vehicles move down the ramp and onto the motorway. Transit is progressively installing these across the Auckland motorway network to improve traffic flows and safety, and provide more consistent speeds and travel times.

In addition to the traffic lights, the system includes sensors in the road, and electronic signs to advise motorists when it is in operation. The signals operate when they are needed, such as during busy peak times, and in conjunction with new electronic signs, which manage speed limits and lane control. ■

SH2 Dowse to Petone Upgrade – ready for action

The sound of buildings being demolished this month marks the start of the Dowse to Petone Upgrade Project.

The demolition of several vacant industrial buildings on Hutt Road prepares the site for the upgrade's construction in mid 2007.

The project brings a host of benefits to road users, and is designed to reduce congestion and further enhance safety on this stretch of highway. Included in the upgrade is a new interchange with

a raised roundabout over the highway, a new overbridge at Korokoro and an upgrade of the section of State Highway 2 between Korokoro and Petone. The widening and rearranging of the Petone Railway Station's park and ride carpark and a new access bridge to the station is also included in the project.

The project is expected to take two-and-a-half years to complete and, in terms of scale, will be the Wellington region's next largest project following the Inner City Bypass.

Transit regional projects manager Peter Martineau says it's a big project with considerable local support: "Both Transit New Zealand, Lower Hutt residents and motorists using State Highway 2 are eager to see this get underway because of the benefits it will provide."

State Highway 2 was designed and built in the 1970s, and the upgrade addresses the needs of today's traffic volumes. ■

Traffic flows on MacKays Crossing Overbridge

Motorists are experiencing smoother journeys in and out of Wellington from the Kapiti coast, thanks to a new overbridge at MacKays Crossing on SH1 north of Paekakariki.

The crossing was partly opened to traffic before Christmas.

The completed project will form a 120M-long four-lane overbridge with tight bends removed and no railway crossing to contend with. Delays for the 24,000 motorists who travel this route each day have already reduced.

"Vehicles no longer have to wait for trains to pass at the level crossing, which has really improved the traffic flow," says Transit's Regional Projects Manager, Peter Martineau.



The new roundabout at MacKays Crossing, also constructed as part of the project, with the old road in the background.

The overbridge is currently restricted to one lane in either direction while the remaining work is completed. However, despite the bad weather conditions experienced by the construction team last year, the project is on track for completion in mid March 2007. ■

2007/08 Draft Land Transport Programme to be released

Transit New Zealand's Draft 2007/08 Land Transport Programme and 10-year Financial Forecast (previously known as the draft State Highway Forecast) will be released on 28 February, signalling the start of a public consultation period that will run until 30 March 2007.

The final 2007/08 - 2016/17 State Highway Forecast will be published in June 2007.

As part of the consultation process, public hearings will be held at 16 locations throughout New Zealand, attended by a Transit Regional Manager and a member of the General Management Team. They run from 16 to 20 April. ■

what's on

For information contact Transit training and education manager Stuart Fraser unless otherwise specified. Tel (04) 496 6698, email: stuart.fraser@transit.govt.nz

Train the Trainers - Refresher Courses for Level 1 Roads

For Level 1 trainers to conduct refresher training they must attend either a trainers' refresher course or the full course where they will receive updated information. Contact Kimberley Ph 04 496 6688, email: copptm.qual@transit.govt.nz

Level 1 - STMS Trainers Refresher - (also may be used as a refresher for Level 1 TC Trainers), Christchurch Monday 26 March

Level 1 - STMS Train the Trainer Course - restricted entry, applicants must be qualified STMS, Christchurch 28 to 30 March

Road Safety Engineering Workshop

The 2007 Road Safety Engineering Workshop will be run in the Auckland region. Dates are 7-12 May.

The workshop is designed to train people to carry out Safety Audits and Crash Reduction Studies. To register interest, please email: stuart.fraser@transit.govt.nz

Temporary Traffic Management Update Briefing

A Transit New Zealand team will carry out an update briefing on the Code of Practice and the Local Roads Supplement. Details of the venues and timings will be published on the Transit website: www.transit.govt.nz. Briefings will take approximately 2 hours.

14 February	Nelson - am	Blenheim - pm
15 February	Christchurch - am	Greymouth - pm
22 February	Dunedin - am	Timaru - pm
28 February	Queenstown -am	Invercargill - pm

Annual Roadshow on Transit's Documents and Policy 2007

The 2007 round of this annual event to bring industry up to date on the latest versions of Transit's standard documentation, and current thinking on some technical issues, will take place as follows:

Wellington - 27 March	Hamilton - 2 April	Auckland - 3 April
Whangarei - 4 April	Palmerston North - 11 April	Christchurch - 17 April
Dunedin - 18 April	Napier - 13 April	

Morning Session: Procurement update for Transit staff, consultants and contractors on the following recently amended manuals for 2007/08:

- SM021 Contract Procedures Manual
- SM030 Professional Services Proforma Manual
- SM031 State Highway Construction Contract Proforma Manual
- SM032 State Highway Maintenance Contract Proforma Manual (SOMAC)

Afternoon Session: Latest Developments in Pavements and Asphalt Specifications from the Engineering Policy Section, in conjunction with Roding New Zealand.

For programme information and registration contact: Annie.Rudkin@transit.govt.nz phone 04 499 6600

SH1 Otago Realignment Update

A \$7m realignment of SH1 immediately north of Waikouaiti, Otago, is well on the way to its target completion date of December this year.

The priority project, which started late 2005, involves a 3.4 kilometre realignment of the highway, designed to address the high crash rate on this stretch of road. Tight bends, and a narrow crossing over the Tumai rail overbridge will be bypassed with the new layout.

Earthworks are already complete with pavement construction underway. ■

Urban Design

The Urban Design page on the Transit website has now been updated. Check out the 'Register' which identifies a list of urban design consultants for Transit projects, and the Professional Services Guide. The web page is particularly useful for consultants and contractors in providing direction on the implementation of urban design in Transit projects. Visit <http://www.transit.govt.nz/planning/urban.jsp>. ■

Board Meetings

The next board meeting is at Transit New Zealand, National Office, at 9.30am on Wednesday 7 March (open agenda from 2.30pm).

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