

Christchurch roads of national significance

Frequently asked questions

Q. What is a road of national significance?

The government has identified seven roads of national significance critical for ensuring access to significant markets and areas of employment and economic growth. Improving these roads will help grow the national economy by lifting productivity in New Zealand's largest cities and surrounding regions. Making these key routes more efficient and safer will improve reliability of journey times, reduce severe congestion and improve key freight and tourism routes.

Q. Where are the roads of national significance?

The roads of national significance are located around New Zealand's five largest population centres to reduce congestion and improve safety. Projects specific to these areas will be complemented by improvements to key arterial roads and urban public transport networks.

The seven key routes are:

- SH1 Puhoi to Wellsford.
- Completion of the Auckland western Ring Route (SH20, 16, 18).
- SH1 Auckland Victoria Park bottleneck.
- SH1 Waikato Expressway.
- SH2 Tauranga Eastern Corridor.
- SH1 Wellington Northern Corridor (Levin to Wellington Airport).
- Christchurch motorway projects.

Q. What roads are included in the Christchurch roads of national significance?

The Christchurch roads of national significance include various sections of state highways; SH1, the Western Corridor, from Main North Road in Belfast to Main South Road in Hornby; the Northern Arterial, a new road bypassing Belfast to connect with QE2 Drive; the Western Belfast Bypass, also bypassing Belfast and connecting with SH1 at The Groynes; and SH73, the Southern Motorway extension from Brougham Street to Halswell Junction Road (Stage 1) and then the further extension to rejoin SH1 south of Waterholes Road (Stage 2) and widening the existing highway as far south as Rolleston (Stage 3).

These roads provide access to the international airport (SH1), the Christchurch Central Business District (CBD) and to the Port of Lyttelton (SH74 and SH73).

Q. Why have these Christchurch highways been identified as roads of national significance?

The Christchurch highways require significant improvements to reduce congestion, improve safety and support economic growth. The three highways are important both nationally and regionally as they serve the South Island's largest economic centre and provide access to the Christchurch CBD, international airport and Port of Lyttelton.

Q. What makes this road building programme different from previous projects?

The roads of national significance programme represents a substantial change in planning for major national transport infrastructure in New Zealand. They are lead infrastructure, proactive improvements that encourage economic growth. In the past, improvements have tended to be reactive and focused on improving transport networks to keep pace with growth.

Q. What benefits are anticipated from investment in the Christchurch roads of national significance?

Investment in the Christchurch roads of national significance will:

- facilitate inter-regional and national economic growth and productivity
- improve access to Christchurch's CBD, international airport, Port of Lyttelton, key industrial and employment centres, and hospitals
- reduce severe congestion on the state highway and local road networks
- improve safety and journey time reliability.

Q. How will the Greater Christchurch area benefit?

Construction of the Christchurch roads of national significance will provide a range of benefits from savings in travel times and reductions in vehicle operating costs, through to productivity gains resulting from the reduction in time and costs involved with transport. This will assist the economy to function more efficiently and help achieve economic growth and improved productivity. Constructing the Christchurch roads of national significance will create both direct and indirect jobs, over and above the normal increase in employment through economic growth.

Q. What relationship do these projects have with the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS)?

The Christchurch roads of national significance are a key component of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS), the innovative plan for managing growth over the next 35 years by integrating land-use, infrastructure provision and transport. The UDS partners are the NZ Transport Agency, Christchurch City Council, Selwyn and Waimakariri District councils, and Environment Canterbury.

Planned growth in Selwyn District (the Izone industrial park particularly) and in Waimakariri District requires improved access to the Christchurch CBD and key employment centres, and to the international airport and Port of Lyttelton. The Christchurch roads of national significance are essential for the successful implementation of the strategy for expanding Christchurch's urban areas (particularly the South-west Area Plan and Belfast Area Plan) ensuring transport networks support urban and economic development.

Q. What's the expected cost of the Christchurch roads of national significance?

The cost of constructing the Christchurch roads of national significance will likely be between \$660 and \$800 million (in 2009 dollars), which includes all design and property purchase costs.

Q. What will happen to property owners affected by these plans?

Any property owners whose properties are fully or partly required as a result of the roading plans will be consulted as these projects develop. Where property must be purchased owners will be fairly compensated.

Q. Will there be opportunities for the community to provide feedback on the Christchurch roads of national significance?

Each Christchurch roads of national significance project will still have to go through the normal processes of investigation, design and consenting before progressing to construction. The affected communities will be consulted as part of the development of these projects, as is always the case for any major project the NZ Transport Agency undertakes.

Q. When will the Christchurch roads of national significance be constructed?

The Christchurch roads of national significance will be constructed as a series of individual projects over the next 10 years as designs, consents and property acquisition is finalized and construction funds allocated. A balance has been struck to get the roads constructed, while limiting disruption to motorists and freight operators using the roads, and ensuring local contractors have realistic timelines to build the roads safely and to standard.

Q. How will the roads of national significance be funded?

The government's allocation of additional funds to state highway improvements will help to accelerate the development of the roads of national significance. In addition, the NZ Transport Agency is also investigating options for alternative funding to contribute to substantially completing all the roads of national significance throughout New Zealand over the 10-year period of the National Land Transport Programme.

Q. Will there be any toll roads?

There are no plans for placing tolls on the Christchurch roads of national significance.