

➤ Budget transport package an investment in growth

The New Zealand Council for Infrastructure Development welcomes today's transport budget package as an investment in growth and productivity. Chief Executive Stephen Selwood says "applied across the whole of New Zealand, the proposed regional fuel tax will make much needed investment in transport infrastructure possible. The tax will allow debt servicing for vital projects previously far beyond our funding reach. This will drive productivity growth, advance safer roads and contribute to sustainability goals through improved public transport".

"Increased fuel taxes leave a bad taste in many people's mouths, but the reality is that this much needed investment will improve transport services and all New Zealanders will benefit. We should commend the Government for its brave commitment to lifting progress and look forward to the positive benefits that will result. The additional funding will enable key projects across the country to be advanced, including:

- | Development of public transport in the main centres including electrification of Auckland's rail network and upgrades to Wellington's rail infrastructure and rolling stock
- | Underwriting funding for completion of the Western Ring Route, the Penlink toll road and other key routes in the Auckland region
- | Advancing construction of the Waikato Expressway
- | Advancing in the Tauranga strategic roading network
- | Advancing Transmission Gully in Wellington
- | Investing in national safety upgrades

Pleasingly the government is also investigating the dedication of all of the monies raised through petrol tax being committed to the transport system. This has previously not been the case.

Increased fuel tax alone will be insufficient to advance all of the major projects in New Zealand. But permanent allocation of all of the petrol tax combined with tolls on some new roads will provide the necessary revenue to support borrowing to fund the major projects.

"Today's budget announcement is a much needed and positive step forward for transport, the economy and the environment."

(ends)



I Notes to editors

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NZ Council for Infrastructure Development

NZCID (www.nzcid.org.nz) is an authority at the forefront of infrastructure development issues. Our numerous members stem from sectors across New Zealand, including: equity owners, service providers, public sector agencies, major infrastructure users. Together we share a clear purpose: world class infrastructure for the benefit of all New Zealanders. A goal we are committed to achieving by:

- I Raising awareness of the fact that infrastructure underpins our community's quality of life and that inadequate infrastructure holds back New Zealand's economic and social growth
- I Generating valuable debate on the quality and level of infrastructure provision to meet New Zealanders' needs
- I Encouraging the implementation of best practice infrastructure provision and management
- I Identifying the condition of New Zealand's infrastructure and the challenges facing our infrastructure providers