

➤ Competing interests wage typical Auckland tug of war

"Competing interests waging a tug of war on the Mangere Bridge duplication project is typical", agrees NZ Council for Infrastructure Development Chief Executive Stephen Selwood. " We CAN do better. The stimulating effect Auckland interests and transport entities have on transport planning is the number one reason Aucklanders deserve governance and planning reform."

Transit NZ are aiming to complete the top priority project in time for the Rugby World Cup in 2011.

But up to ten public agencies will have to align in order to reach a decision. These would include Transit NZ itself, the Auckland Regional Council, Manukau City Council, Auckland City Council, the Auckland Regional Transport Authority, Ontrack, Land Transport New Zealand and most likely the Ministers of Transport and Finance and other government Ministries. All with their divergent viewpoints.

"Assuming all the public agencies can find common ground on their bones of contention, their collective view will then need to be reconciled with the divergent views of the various communities affected. Onehunga town centre and Mangere Village at the very least and those interested parties like the Volcanic Cones Society, the Campaign for Better Transport, environmentalists and business groups - all before a commitment to proceed is made.

"It pays to remember that increasing the capacity of the Mangere Bridge is just one component of completion of the Western Ring Route from Manukau to Albany. A project which also requires the timely construction of the \$1 billion plus Waterview connection", adds Selwood.

"Major infrastructure projects always require difficult trade offs. But our complex administrative process makes it impossible to make effective decisions on key infrastructure projects. Yes infrastructure is the foundation on which a city thrives. Infrastructure needs are becoming more pressing by the day. We can no longer afford tortuous decision making processes.

"Ahead of more substantive local body and transport governance reform, it's time for the Government to take a leadership role and set up a task force. A task force of relevant public agencies to ensure this critical transport link, and the projects that wait in the wings with it, are completed to maximum advantage in the shortest possible time."

(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:

- | 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
- | Generating valuable debate on the quality and level of infrastructure provision to meet New Zealanders' needs
- | Encouraging the implementation of best practice infrastructure provision and management
- | Identifying the condition of New Zealand's infrastructure and the challenges facing our infrastructure providers