

2. NORTHERN ROADING OPTIONS SCOPING STUDY

Officer responsible City Streets Manager	Author Stuart Woods, Senior Transport Planner Team Leader, DDI 941-8615
--	---

The purpose of this report is to summarise, present commentary and propose recommendations on the Northern Roading Options Scoping Study (NROSS). A copy of the Executive Summary from the consultant's completed report "Christchurch Northern Roading Options Scoping Study - Final Report", November 2002 has been tabled.

Decisions made through this report should represent the conclusion of NROSS insofar as the Council is concerned. This study has taken some four years and the community, Council and involved professionals will appreciate the ability to move this particular study to completion and to move to the next stages of project development of those projects determined to be a part of the future development of the north Christchurch transport network.

The NROSS project was a joint study with the Christchurch City Council and Transit New Zealand (Transit) as the major partners and Environment Canterbury, Waimakariri and Hurunui District Council's as the other partners. Given the nature of the partners' interests, the transport planning history of the north Christchurch area and the presence of various other policy work related to the area, NROSS was explicitly briefed from the outset to seek out a road network improvement strategy at a scoping study level, to meet the transport needs of north Christchurch over the next 25 years by addressing the deficiencies identified through the study. This strategy could then be considered alongside other proposals and policies for the area in determining how to move forward in addressing transport needs in north Christchurch.

A SCOPING STUDY

One of the ongoing issues raised throughout the later stages of this study was people's expectations of what a study of this nature (a Scoping Study) would produce. Discussions during interaction with various interested people and groups revealed a dichotomy of expectations from them. On the one hand, the community expected correctly to be involved in discussions on the development of options in their initial conceptual forms and on the other, expected that details of the proposals could be provided down to detailed design level.

A 'Scoping Study' is a strategic transport planning study that is a new 'first-cut' look at improvement options available to address network needs in a study area. This is particularly appropriate to this area where, since the uplifting of the urban Northern Arterial designation, there has been an absence of strategic transport planning and strategic plans focussed on the north Christchurch area.

Scoping studies provide a strategic level of assessment which has a low level of detail in terms of design and only broad-brush commentary and assessment on the effects of proposals. They identify the best conceptual strategies, or package of works and allow the dismissal of ideas which are not as viable or useful. The scoping study stage then leads on to more detailed project development stages starting with scheme plan assessment during which issues such as layout geometry, improved costing, social-environmental, consultation, land needs, planning requirements and ground conditions are taken to the next level of detail and certainty. The final stage is the detailed design where plans are completed in sufficient detail for construction purposes.

Therefore, the relevant and appropriate decisions that NROSS, as a Scoping Study, should focus on are which concepts or proposals to approve for scheme plan assessment and which to reject. The decisions should reflect an integrated strategy approach, ie the interdependence of projects making up a final approved strategy should be recognised.

STUDY CONCLUSIONS

There are a number of overarching conclusions reached in or related to the consultant's completed report, which the Council should bear in mind when making its final decisions on NROSS. These can be summarised as:

- Do-nothing/do-minimum strategies are inadequate: The study clearly showed that inaction or delaying indefinitely decisions relating to improvements to the north Christchurch transport network are not reasonable responses to the problems identified. Similarly, taking an approach of do-minimum in approvals of proposals will only marginally improve on the total inadequacy of a 'do-nothing' approach in decision making.

- There are separate recommendations for each project that makes up part of the recommended strategy. These include, for example, to approve the proposal, to further research the proposal, whether it is essential, important or useful and the broad timing for implementation.
- Much information has been reported to inform the consequences of any decisions: A wide range of options and the results of their analysis in the consultant's completed report provide information on the consequences of various choices or mixes of projects that could make up the final adopted strategy.
- The recommendations made in the consultant's completed report are based on a technical assessment of the issues for consideration by authorities. The study has been undertaken and fulfilled in line with a technical brief to provide technical assessments of the issues. The decision making processes of the partner authorities to the study are also able to consider a wider range of matters, as appropriate to each organisation.

The consultant makes the following series of recommendations related to the various proposals. Together these make up the Recommended Strategy outlined in their report.

PROJECT	LAND REQUIREMENTS	PROJECT TYPE	PRIORITY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	POSSIBLE TIME FRAME
Cranford Street – Main North to Edgeware	Designation at major intersections	Arterial four-laning /Intersection upgrades	Essential	Approve for project development	Short term (up to 10 years)
Hills Road – Aylesford to Whitmore	Designation west side Hills from Warrington to Aylesford	Arterial four-laning /Intersection upgrades	Essential	Approve for project development	
Marshland Road – Prestons Road	Designation required	Arterial intersection upgrade	Essential	Approve for project development	
Rutland Street Extension – Tomes to Grassmere	Designation required	New two-lane collector road /Intersection upgrade	Useful	Approve for more detailed review	
Northern Arterial – Chaney's to QE II Drive	Existing designation	New two-lane arterial	Essential	Approve for project development	Long term (10 –20 years)
Northern Arterial Extension - QEII to Cranford	Designation required	New two lane arterial	Essential	Approve for project development	
Marshland Road –Belfast Road	Designation required	Arterial intersection upgrade	Important	Approve for project development	
Hills Road Extension – Innes to QEII	Designation required (L1 zone and Walter Park)	New two-lane arterial /Intersection upgrade	Important	Approve for project development	
Grants Road Extension – Grassmere to Cranford	Designation required	New two-lane collector road /Intersection upgrade	Important	Approve for more detailed review	
QEII Drive -Northern Arterial to Hills Road extension	Designation required	Arterial four-laning	Important	Approve for project development	
Northcote Road – Main North to Sawyers Arms	Existing designation	Arterial four-laning/intersection upgrade	Important	Approve for more detailed review	

STUDY ACTIVITY SINCE NOVEMBER 2002

At the October 2002 meeting of the Sustainable Transport and Utilities committee, an agreed process for dealing with the receipt of the then pending consultant's completed report was adopted. This included a number of opportunities to brief and discuss the study's findings with the community. The agreed process has been followed and added to and is repeated below for information.

6 November 2002 - The Transit New Zealand Board meeting received a regional office submission on the NROSS completed study report and made decisions in principle, related only to Transit-related projects.

22 November 2002 - A seminar was held for the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee and members of Community Boards (Burwood/Pegasus, Fendalton/Waimairi and Shirley/Papanui) to provide a briefing on the consultant's completed report. This also provided an opportunity for Transit's position to be outlined from its Board's consideration of the report.

26 November 2002 - A report on NROSS was presented to the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee to table the completed consultant's report.

11 December 2002 - A briefing on the consultant's completed report was made to local action groups by staff.

24 February 2003 - The Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee and Community Board members held a seminar meeting with local interest groups.

12 March 2003 - A public meeting was held for members of the community who wished to express views on the completed consultant's report.

24 March 2003 - A hearing to receive oral presentations by interest and residents groups on the consultant's completed report was held by the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee.

31 March 2003 - A seminar was held for the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee and Community Board members to consider responses to community views and the completed consultant's report.

20 May 2003 - A briefing of the interest and residents groups on the content and recommendations of this report was held.

27 May 2003 - A meeting was held between representatives of the Land Transport Subcommittee and Transit's regional management to discuss the reports findings.

RECENT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A briefing on the content of the consultant's completed report was conducted in December 2002 for a number of identified key interest, residents and action groups that had been active during the consultation period earlier in the study.

A second meeting with these same groups and a small number of additional groups, was held on 24 February 2003 at the Papanui Service Centre to discuss the report, given that these groups had by that time had the chance to become familiar with the report. The key points or areas of concern discussed at that meeting were:

- What was to be the decision-making process?
- What was the extent of a possible Cranford Street designation and the possible final design?
- When would the works be implemented?
- Which Public Transport initiatives and 'Alternative to Roding' options were to be considered or integrated into the final decisions.
- The desire to not use the Marshland Road corridor.
- Concerns regarding the Rutland/Grassmere and Grants Road links; and
- Enquiring whether the possibility of an extension of an eastern one way pair up to Warrington Street had been included in assessments (it had).

Following on from that meeting, a public meeting was held at Papanui High School on 12 March 2003. This was attended by some 180 people from across the study area and from north of the Waimakariri River. Whilst the meeting was much longer in duration, it focussed on fewer key points or areas of concern, which can be summarised as:

- The proposed Rutland-Grassmere extension and the potential effects on the local community.
- Support and opposition for addressing the travel needs of those from north of the Waimakariri River.
- Considerable interest in car pooling and vehicle occupancy issues. It appeared that these appealed to many in the meeting as a golden arrow to the problem.
- Questioning why there is a need to do anything, when the benefits to travel in the network in study area were considered by the audience to be insignificant; and
- Wanting to see an integrated solutions.

The final formal public interaction to date was the provision of a hearing session on 24 March 2003 for any of the key action, residents or interest groups to make a formally presented submission on the consultant's completed report to this Committee. The key points or areas of concern presented to that meeting included (but not exclusively):

- East Papanui Residents Association: Northlands Mall is causing parking and rat running problems in their area. NROSS as proposed would likely exacerbate this.
- Cranford Action Group: They want firm decisions and quick action to implement the proposals, various potential design issues related to Cranford Street itself were raised.
- St Albans Residents Association: They accept that more roading is needed in their Association area, they also expressed concerns about any delays to construction once decisions had been made, they also made suggestions related to modified clearways and they considered that the Council should keep options simple and cheap.
- Richmond Neighbourhood Cottage and Shirley Residents Associations (jointly): They submitted that the Council should not select Marshland Road if other options were rejected; in line with this they suggested the use of other alternative routes further west (based on the Philpotts, Kensington, Flockton, Barbadoes route) and they offered support for the Northern Arterial and Hills extension proposals.
- No Way Highway: They expressed their significant concerns regarding the community impacts of a Rutland-Grassmere and/or the Grants Road extensions.

OTHER ISSUES

State Highway Review (Cranford Street and QEII Drive)

As members will be aware, Transit New Zealand has for the past year or so been reviewing the State Highway network with a view to potential amendments/changes/additions. The outcomes of this review were released on 28 April 2002 in the 2002 State Highway Review - Final Decisions Report. There are a number of alterations in the Christchurch City network, on which both the Council and the local Transit Regional Office are in agreement. The key alteration which affects the NROSS area relates to State Highway 74.

State Highway 74 will be re-directed away from its route through the centre of the city and onto the eastern ring route (ie uplifted from Cranford Street/Sherborne Street/Bealey Avenue/Madras Street/Barbadoes Street/Moorhouse Avenue/Wilsons Street, and moved to QEII Drive/Travis Road/Anzac Drive/Bexley Avenue/Dyers Road). The transfer of the roads will occur within the next 12-18 months. This has an impact on which organisation will ultimately be responsible for some of the proposed projects in NROSS, particularly those related to Cranford Street, the southern end of Main North Road and QEII Drive.

In recognition of the proposed State Highway relocation, Transit New Zealand has made no decisions about the proposals related to the south end of the Main North Road and Cranford Street, preferring to leave it to the Council as the future manager. The Council should take a similar approach to the proposals on QEII Drive which is currently the responsibility of the Council, but will become Transit's.

Transit New Zealand Draft Roding Programme

The draft Transit New Zealand ten year roading programme has received significant attention over recent months, since its release just prior to Christmas. The draft programme proposes that Christchurch would receive very little by way of major capital works funding for its State Highways over the coming ten year period.

The only NROSS project which this directly affects is the completion of the four laning of Main North Road between Redwood and Northwood. Planning for the project by the Transit New Zealand regional office was so well advanced that the project had been placed in a base network and was not even considered as a project to be debated during the final round of traffic modelling in the study. Rather than being built this year as anticipated, it is now not shown with funding within the next ten years. The Council has made clear and strong views known regarding this situation in its submission on the draft roading programme and has in fact suggested the substitution of funding from another State Highway project (on Johns Road) for this road to bring it forward again.

Given that the NROSS recommendations for which Transit New Zealand would be responsible were not identified as being needed within the coming ten years, it was to be expected that they would not appear on the draft ten year capital works programme yet. The only concern regarding these projects is the size of the overall Transit New Zealand programme that is already identified and still does not have funding anywhere in the ten year capital works programme. This does give rise to concerns about Transit New Zealand's ability to commit to the projects which are indicated in NROSS for implementation within 20 years. The Council may wish to seek an undertaking from Transit New Zealand that it will honour its responsibilities related to NROSS projects given the Council commitment to its programme.

Integration With Other Programmes and Strategies

As was noted above, NROSS was fundamentally a study looking at roading based solutions to the identified current and future deficiencies in the transport system of north Christchurch. Consequently there were sometimes criticisms of the study for being undertaken on this basis and its apparent weakness of not seeking an integrated solution to the issues or deficiencies.

The simplest response to the criticism is that the study did check the impact through sensitivity tests of significant modal shift to public transport and the effects of significantly higher urban growth scenarios affecting the study area. These sensitivity tests showed that the effect would be to alter the date whereby the individual projects should be implemented by a maximum of five years, rather than indicate that the strategy should change the projects being proposed. This indicates that even if the targets for growth of alternative modes and strategies are achieved, the NROSS projects remain a sound means of addressing the issues, sooner or later.

It is also important to note that the travel demands and underlying transport planning being addressed through NROSS are aimed at strategic travel, ie medium-long distance travel (say over 5 kms) and travel related to commerce which tends to use the strategic road network. The response of this type of travel demand to the other Council transport strategies (such as Pedestrian, Cycling etc) is relatively limited.

The interface of travel demand management (TDM) with NROSS also needs elaboration as it has been raised by members of the community in the context of peak hour vehicle occupancy. TDM is possibly the most effective option in addressing growth in travel demand in Christchurch. For example, the effect of increasing the average peak hour private passenger car occupancy from its current 1.1 towards 2 would be very significant. The Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) has policies related to TDM, including parking policies and individualised marketing/promotions which the Council is just beginning to explore. TDM proposals will be increasingly brought to Council over the coming years, and staff are currently developing a 'Green Travel Plan', a plan to minimise the transport 'footprint' of the Civic Offices. Integration of this area of transport planning with NROSS is simple. If successful, the timing to implement various proposals could be deferred; if not, there would be no change. A note of caution should, however, be sounded, in that analysis undertaken as part of the RLTS considered that optimistically such initiatives, if very successful from much resource input and uptake from the wider community, may remove some 10% of the 40% growth projected over the coming 20 years, ie trip demand (to be met by all modes) would still grow by 30%. This would represent a huge success, but is obviously not a panacea by itself.

Integration of the pedestrian strategy with NROSS is limited at the strategic level, as pedestrian travel is unlikely to replace many of the trips being addressed. The key issues to be integrated are those of mitigation of severance of existing or potential pedestrian desire lines; providing a pleasant pedestrian amenity where pedestrian activity interacts with any of the projects when developed; and providing a safe pedestrian environment in those projects. These matters are largely for consideration during the scheme design stages of the projects development.

Integration of the cycle strategy and programme with NROSS is more involved even at the strategic level. Cycle trips could replace some of the private car demand even for relatively long distances across Christchurch and it has been postulated that providing more road space as proposed by NROSS will encourage more car travel at the expense of cycling, although this is largely unproven. Other key cycling issues to be integrated are largely similar to those for pedestrians, and with the addition of seeking to maximise the opportunities for (and prevent removal of) cycle network development.

The first issue can be responded by medium-long distance cycle trips numbers, whilst valuable in the context of overall transport system development, are relatively small and would therefore have little effect on the travel demands being addressed. The second issue needs to be seen in the wider context of the whole city, as outlined in the RLTS. There is no desire or promotion of addressing the needs of commuter travel by building additional peak hour road network capacity. Rather additional road network capacity for private vehicular travel is to be targeted at a select list of corridors considered important for commerce and business travel and long distance travel across the region. The northern corridor (as expressed in NROSS by the Northern Arterial and Cranford Street) is indicated in the RLTS by inclusion in the listed 'Strategic Road Network'. The discouragement of cycling on a city-wide basis through the proposals recommended below would be comparatively minor, if at all, especially if other matters of cycle integration are satisfactorily dealt with. As with the pedestrian matters, there are opportunities with the new capital works to provide high quality integration at the scheme assessment stage. None of the NROSS proposals coincides with any cycle projects on the current five year capital works programme, excepting some improvements programmed at the Marshland Road/Prestons Road intersection in 2003/04. Other cycle projects in the study area are proposed on Papanui Road (2007/08), Bealey Avenue (2005/06), Main North Road between Cranford and Northcote (2005/06) and extending the Railway cycleway hopefully to Main North Road (about 2005/06).

Integration of the public transport strategy and programme with NROSS raises similar strategic and detail issues relevant to public transport and NROSS as with cycling, ie public transport trips could replace some private car demand and providing more road space makes car travel relatively more attractive than bus travel. This was partly tested through the sensitivity testing, checking the effect of a 500% growth in Public Transport patronage. The effect as noted above was to defer the justification date for some of the projects, which is generally a good situation to pursue although it would have to be undertaken with due assessment of comparative benefits and costs (public transport projects, as with any projects, should not receive an open cheque book in relation to other modes or projects). The same responses related to development of the 'Strategic Road Network' apply to the public transport issues as to the cycle issues. Again, the matters of detailed integration are best dealt with at the scheme assessment stage, where good opportunities can exist.

It is also important to note that the construction of the Northern Arterial and the upgrading of Cranford Street and Hills Road potentially allow public transport priority measures to be included in their detailed designs, as well as being pursued, for example on the alternative routes of Main North Road, Papanui Road and the urban section of Marshland Road. It may be that in some situations, the capacity increases sought on roads may be better provided through priority being provided for alternative modes if they can be more efficient in moving people and goods along those roads.

'Park N Ride'

'Park N Ride' has been discussed in relation to NROSS almost from its inception, as either a replacement concept or as a key adjunct to the NROSS projects proposed. It is very clear from the NROSS analysis that 'Park N Ride' is not a replacement concept to the NROSS projects by itself. Extensive experience with 'Park N Ride' overseas has shown that the very successful schemes typically will pick up a maximum of 10% of the passing traffic and the diversion of traffic from other areas to the station site can at times increase traffic around the parking station area. However, discussion on it being an adjunct proposal is merited as one tool in a package of demand management measures. It should be noted at the outset that development of a 'Park N Ride' system for Christchurch would require the co-operation of the Council (for infrastructure) and Regional (for bus services) Councils.

'Park N Ride' works best where there is a significant commute distance to travel for a dispersed population to its common destination. Initial thoughts regarding 'Park N Ride' in relation to NROSS focussed on a possible 'Park N Ride' station somewhere between QEII Drive and Cranford Street (which could also possibly be serviced by the Orbiter) and another option could be in Belfast near Radcliffe Road. This would need further exploration to find ideal locations.

Buses would operate between the sites and the city centre, probably as a combination of passing buses already servicing the area and supplementary express or limited-stops shuttles to provide sufficiently high frequency to be attractive to users. Current bus frequencies (between three and five per hour) and those proposed in the current northern routes service review (up to twice the current frequencies) on Cranford Street would be too low to be attractive to potential users and supplementary shuttle services would be required to get the frequency higher, particularly in the commuter peaks (possibly at 5-10 minute frequencies).

A key element of the success of 'Park N Ride' schemes is the ability of the service to provide users with a similar or quicker time to their ultimate destination than by car. A major part of this is some priority measures for the buses/shuttles involved, which usually pick up passengers upstream of a bottleneck or congested area and bypass this via the priorities provided. For Christchurch this would involve not only priority measures along parts of Cranford Street, but more importantly resolving the necessary priority measures in the central city where far greater delays currently exist.

Another key element required for a successful 'Park N Ride' scheme to operate is the control of parking at the destination (the central city in this case), either by way of a reduction in the quantity of parking available or through high parking charges, particularly for long stay users. This may well be a significant hurdle to successfully operating 'Park N Ride' in Christchurch, with the issue of travel re-directing away to other destinations rather than continuing to be attracted to the central city especially if the 'Park N Ride' system is only on offer from a limited number of quadrants or approaches to the central city.

In the establishment of such a service, it would be prudent to do so as a trial, but herein lies a conundrum. A trial is likely to suggest that a smaller, cheaper station be developed until confidence can be gained regarding the level of demand. However, a smaller cheaper station would perhaps deter potential users and even if well used, the numbers of users at that quantum of parking hardly justifies putting on sufficient bus/shuttle frequencies to make it attractive to potential users. Such systems overseas can end up being popular with shoppers and other users who have relatively low pressure on their time and little impact is made on the commuter peak. This would ultimately not give useful information on which to base decisions for potential future expansion or abandonment. On the other hand, if a large scheme is established from day one, then there is a risk of a white elephant despite all the best market research that could be conducted. But it would give a better set of results on which to base future 'Park N Ride' projects. Further, some caution would also be needed to ensure that if a proposal is introduced, that it is done so well and properly, as an unsuccessful 'trial' would taint any future 'Park N Ride' developments or expansion.

Initial discussions with Environment Canterbury staff has revealed a considerable enthusiasm to explore a 'Park N Ride' scheme, broadly along the lines outlined above. There is also the possibility that there would be a case for outputs based funding through the Alternatives to Rooding vote (a related project is being explored currently by Environment Canterbury). It is suggested therefore that a joint project be initiated to develop a proposal for consideration by both Councils.

However, it is acknowledged that for the concept of a 'Park N Ride' system from north Christchurch to go ahead it would need:

- Cranford Street upgraded.
- A joint project agreed between the Council and Environment Canterbury.
- Bus priority measures at the congestion points along the bus route(s) involved (including the central city).
- Complementary parking restrictions in the central city.

UNDERLYING STRATEGY

The overall guiding principles which are key to developing the transport system in north Christchurch and are reflected in this report are that there should be a balance in the implementation and pursuing of policies and promotion of modes, generally in line with the Regional Land Transport Strategy. The most important issue is that of safety, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. For the NROSS projects and strategic network development, a basic target is that select strategic arterials should operate at a minimum Level of Service D (ie should not be congested significantly). Therefore congestion should be minimised via selected roading improvements, mode initiatives and travel demand management initiatives, especially when the latter are cost effective in deferring roading capacity improvements.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON EACH PROJECT

Northern Arterial: Chaney's - QEII Drive

The NROSS consultant's completed report recommended that the Northern Arterial from Chaney's to QEII Drive is an essential project in terms of priority ranking and that it would be a long term project economically justified under current analysis procedures for between 10 and 20 years, initially constructed as a new two lane arterial along the existing designation.

The Northern Arterial is the key element of the package of recommended roading works. It is a Transit New Zealand responsibility and would replace the Main North Road as the State Highway 74 route from Chaney's to QEII Drive. It provides the opportunity for a limited access or controlled access road with a 70 kph or 80 kph speed limit for traffic travelling between the Northern Motorway and QE Drive, the City Ring Road. This cannot be achieved along Main North Road, nor cost effectively along Marshland Road.

Junctions along the Northern Arterial at Prestons Road, Radcliffe Road, Belfast Road and Main North Road would probably be dual lane roundabouts similar to those on Russley Road which would allow the eventual four laning of the route. The intersection with QEII Drive is more likely to be signalised.

Construction of the Northern Arterial will shift a significant amount of traffic off Main North Road south of Johns Road which will also come under Council control. This will provide the Council the opportunity to consider, potentially significant, reallocation of road space to provide public transport priority along this route.

There has been modest levels of feedback on this project, with some 117 submissions received of which most (about 90%) supported the proposal. The main issues raised in the supporting submissions were: decreased traffic congestion, it was value for money and a desire to not upgrade the existing roads (especially Marshland Road). The main issues raised in the opposing submissions were: increased traffic congestion, adverse environmental effects would occur and a preference to upgrade existing roads instead.

The economic viability and earliest possible construction of this essential project by Transit New Zealand is dependent on Council constructing the Northern Arterial extension from Cranford Street to QE II Drive and also making capacity upgrades to Cranford Street. The timeline for implementing this project may also be brought forward in response to increasing land-use development in and beyond north Christchurch.

To bring construction of the Northern Arterial further forward than current Transfund processes allow, Transit New Zealand would require either a partnering process with the Council similar to that used on the Woolston/Burwood Expressway or Opawa Road or a reduction in the construction costs. The proposed Land Transport Management Bill may also open up the option of the route being investigated for funding by tolling or provided by way of Public Private Partnerships.

It is proposed in the recommendations that the Council work closely with Transit New Zealand to ensure that they maximise the opportunity for the earliest possible construction of this project.

Northern Arterial Extension: QEII Drive - Cranford Street

The consultant's completed report recommended that the Northern Arterial extension from QEII Drive to Cranford Street is an essential project in terms of priority ranking and that it would be a long term project economically justified under current analysis procedures for between 10 and 20 years, initially constructed as a new two lane arterial and requiring a new designation.

There was no feedback (supporting or opposing) recorded on this project either from groups, businesses or individuals.

The Northern Arterial extension is a key element of the package of recommended roading works and would be a Council responsibility following the proposed changes to the State Highway network. It would be a limited access road with traffic signal junctions at QEII Drive and Cranford Street and is necessary to move traffic between Cranford Street and the Northern Arterial across the Cranford Basin area. Without it, traffic would otherwise be required to travel up Cranford Street to Main North Road and then dog-leg back again along QEII Drive to the Northern Arterial.

Conversely the Northern Arterial extension by itself provides few benefits and therefore timing of its construction should be closely tied to that of the Northern Arterial.

The City Streets Unit has been working closely with the Parks and Waterways Unit and other Council staff on concepts for the Cranford Basin area to ensure the needs of each unit are met in terms of the Northern Arterial extension and potential ponding basin area.

To protect for the future construction of the Northern Arterial extension, it will be necessary to place a roading works designation in the City Plan. There is some urgency to do so as a significant part of the area has recently been put on the market for sale. The Council needs to put some certainty around its land requirements to provide better certainty for existing and new land owners.

It is proposed in the recommendations that the Council support the Northern Arterial extension and initiate a scheme assessment so that a designation can be pursued for its protection.

Marshland Road Intersection Improvements: Prestons Road and Belfast Road

The consultant's completed report recommended that the Prestons Road roundabout project on Marshland Road is essential, to be programmed within ten years and that a new roundabout at the Belfast Road/Marshland Road intersection is important and should be introduced in conjunction with the Northern Arterial.

Both of these projects are important to distribute traffic to the east of the city, particularly Belfast Road which would be an important link between the Northern Arterial and Marshland Road. The intersection upgrades would most likely be constructed as dual lane roundabouts similar to those on Russley Road.

They should help the safety record along Marshland Road (over the five year period 1998-2002, there were 15 crashes at or near Marshland Road/Prestons Road, including four injury crashes; at or near Marshland Road/Belfast Road there were ten crashes including two injury crashes). Both intersections rank in the worst 60 intersection in Christchurch based on the social cost of crashes. There is an existing minor designation at Prestons Road which allows for minor modification of the existing single lane roundabout and some funding is programmed for this in 2005/06 on the current capital works programme for minor safety improvements.

There was some feedback received on the Prestons Road roundabout improvements (40 submissions with 90% supporting), but none on the proposed Belfast Road roundabout. The main issues raised in the supporting submissions for Prestons Road were: traffic congestion, and a preference for traffic signals rather than a roundabout. The main issue raised in the opposing submissions was: decreasing road safety.

It is proposed that both these projects be adopted.

Cranford Street Upgrade

The consultant's completed report recommended that the Cranford Street upgrade between Main North Road and Edgeware Road is essential and should occur within the next 10 years; and that it should be approved for project development.

As noted previously, a key consideration with regard to this project is that the Northern Arterial would function so poorly without the Northern Arterial extension and the upgrading on Cranford Street as to make it unlikely that Transit New Zealand would pursue its construction at all.

Testing presented in the consultant's completed report also showed that without capacity increases along Cranford Street, both Papanui Road and Cranford Street would be significantly overloaded in the future and operate at a level of service much worse than the current poor level of service.

At a recent seminar, elected members queried how far south the capacity increase was required from the results of NROSS. A review of the results in the reports has indicated that in 20 years time the capacity increase would be required down to Berwick Street, but not necessarily between Berwick Street and Edgeware Road.

There was substantial feedback on this project either from groups, businesses or individuals, with 493 submissions received of which over were 200 supportive. The main issues raised in the supporting submissions were: decreased traffic congestion, improved road safety, increased property values and reduction in the adverse environmental effects from traffic. The main issues raised in the opposing submissions were: decreasing road safety, increasing adverse environmental effects, reduced property values and increasing congestion caused by the project.

There does seem to be a growing acceptance of the need to undertake some improvements along Cranford Street from the community, albeit not a universal or enthusiastic response. A key issue which has been raised in regard to this project by the key interest group associated with it (the Cranford Street Action Group) is the desire to see firm and quick resolution of the decisions and to not leave uncertainty over the heads of those most affected.

The key issues relating to this matter are resolution of the scheme design (which would identify the cross-sections/layout along the street, and the designations/land requirements associated with the design) and the staging of the project. During the recent public engagement on this study, involvement in working through these matters has been offered to the directly affected community/groups from an early stage.

It should 'be clear' in making a decision on this project, that despite a sketch design appearing in the study's interim report which was used for costing purposes only, the options for providing the additional capacity are broad. They range from seeking to achieve it all within the current carriageway (by simply removing all existing parking and nominal re-arrangements at key intersections), through to a major four lane median divided, generously landscaped expressway with public transport priority measures and significant property purchase, with many variations in between.

Any property purchase required through this project or any other City Council roading project follows a well established process, which is outlined in attachment 2.

It is proposed that this project be adopted with the upgrade to be as far south as Berwick Street and that a scheme assessment study be commenced immediately involving close collaboration with the local community and action groups.

QEII Drive Four Laning: Northern Arterial - Hills Road Extension

The consultant's completed report recommended that four laning of QEII Drive between the Northern Arterial and the Hills Road extension is important in terms of priority, is economically justified under current analysis procedures beyond ten years and should be approved for project development.

With the proposed changes to the State Highway network, this project will become a Transit New Zealand responsibility.

There was no feedback received (supporting or opposing) from the public on this project.

The study recommends the four laning of QEII Drive as it is necessary to cater for growth in traffic on the City Ring Road and to provide the capacity for traffic movement between the Northern Arterial and the Hills Road extension.

The section of QEII Drive from Philpotts Road to the Hills Road extension, previously Winters Road, has a 20m wide road corridor width. A designation on the rural northern side would be required to bring it up to the 40m width of the remainder of the northern section of the ring road.

With the four laning of Northcote Road from Sawyers Arms Road to Main North Road also proposed, the section of QEII Drive between Main North Road and the Northern Arterial is left with only two lanes. This is a strategic inconsistency in the report recommendations. This section of QEII Drive should be four laned near the same time as Northcote Road and QEII Drive from the Northern Arterial to the Hills Road extension.

It is proposed that this project be adopted and that the Council also recommend to Transit New Zealand that it widen the section of QEII Drive from Main North Road to the Northern Arterial to four lanes.

Hills Road Extension: Innes Road - QEII Drive

The consultant's completed report recommended that the extension of Hills Road between Innes Road and QEII Drive and associated intersection upgrades are important in terms of priority, are economically justified under current analysis procedures beyond ten years and should be approved for project development.

There was a modest level of feedback on this project, with some 39 submissions received. The main issues raised in the 30 supporting submissions were: decreased traffic congestion; and improvement to environmental and social effects from traffic. The main issues raised in the opposing submissions were: decreasing road safety, adverse environmental effects, increased traffic congestion caused by the project and the project was too expensive.

The Hills Road extension would cross a corner of Walter Park and then cross land zoned Living 1 in the City Plan. Part of this area of land has recently received subdivision approval and City Streets have negotiated a road link through this area with the developers that would be suitable for the Hills Road extension. The proposed new subdivisional road currently terminates north of Walter Park at a tee junction with the existing Hills Road. If the Hills Road extension is approved by Council, the road would be realigned across a small part of the northeast corner of Walter Park to provide a direct connection towards Innes Road. With the subdivision of the area, Walter Park increases in size overall as the developer is providing park land adjacent to Walter Park as reserve contribution. If the extension is not approved the road will stay as a tee junction and not connect to QEII Drive.

Between the Living 1 zoned land and QEII Drive is land zoned Living 1B but subject to a reference to the Environment Court. Depending on how subdivision of this area proceeds, the Council may need to designate this section of the Hills Road extension.

The purpose of the Hills Road extension is to feed traffic between Hills Road and the Northern Arterial via QEII Drive. It provides the ability to spread traffic between the Hills Road and Cranford Street routes into the City. While the extension can be constructed prior to the Northern Arterial as part of land subdivision it does not necessarily need to connect to QEII Drive until the Northern Arterial is constructed. However, an early connection would provide an opportunity to limit vehicle movements at the Philpotts Road/QEII Drive priority intersection and provide a safer connection via the roundabout at the Hills Road extension/QEII Drive intersection.

The Hills Road extension project includes two associated intersection improvements. A roundabout has been recommended by the consultant at Hills Road/Innes Road intersection. Given the close proximity of Mairehau High School a signalised intersection may be more appropriate.

Again a roundabout has been recommended by the consultant at the Hills Road/Akaroa Street intersection. The type of intersection control appropriate here would need to be considered further during project development.

It is proposed that the intersection improvements at Akaroa Street/Hills Road and Hills Road/Innes Road, and the extension of Hills Road between Innes Road and QEII Drive be adopted. Also the extension of Hills Road should proceed as early as possible in conjunction with local subdivision developments.

Hills Road Upgrade: (Whitmore – Aylesford)

The consultant's completed report recommended that increasing the capacity of Hills Road between Aylesford Street and Whitmore Street is essential, should be approved for project development and programmed to occur within the next ten years. Additional capacity is required on Hills Road to cater for the high growth of traffic resulting from urban growth both in the north and the north-east of the city. The issue of catering for this growth needs resolving irrespective of any decisions related to whether to support the connection of Hills Road to QEII Drive and use the road as part of the NROSS strategy.

There has been comparatively little feedback on this project either from groups, businesses or individuals, with some 43 submissions received. The main issues raised in the supporting submissions were: decreased traffic congestion; and improvement to environmental and social effects from traffic. The main issues raised in the opposing submissions were: decreasing road safety, degraded environmental quality, reduced property values and opposition to possible parking restrictions on street.

Other verbal comment which has been received focussed on the concerns of ensuring safe access across Hills Road and addressing current vibration issues. Both of these latter issues can be addressed through detail design.

As with Cranford Street the key issues which need addressing from the little feedback received on this project are resolution of the design (cross-section, intersections and land purchase) and the staging. A further issue to be considered is this projects relative priority for improvements relative to Cranford Street.

It is proposed that this project be adopted and that the scheme assessment stage is undertaken involving close collaboration with the local community and action groups.

Rutland Street/Grassmere Street Link

The consultant's completed report recommended that this proposed link would be useful, particularly to circulation of traffic in the local area. However, given the strong opposition to the project through the submission process, the consultant's report recommended that the project be assessed in more detail, particularly with regard to more in-depth assessment of the social and environmental effects. Should this project be approved, then it should be implemented within the next ten years.

The Rutland Street - Grassmere Street link would provide a collector standard link, particularly between the proposed Grants Road extension and the portion of Rutland Street already classified as a collector road (south of Mays Road). Grassmere Street is currently classified as a local road. If implemented some traffic relief would occur on Papanui Road, although Papanui Road would remain very busy and congested.

The Rutland Street - Grassmere Street link would open up a secondary route running completely and reasonably directly between Northlands/Main North Road and Bealey Avenue/western one way pair in the central city. This route would be quite attractive particularly to local traffic and if Cranford Street was not widened would attract further traffic. It would also attract traffic away from local streets which is currently rat-running through the area, which the Community Board and East Papanui Residents Association report as increasing significantly with recent developments at Northlands.

The further traffic modelling assessments undertaken for the consultant's completed report tested the impact of this link and results showed that from perspectives of the strategic network and arterial congestion, little direct value could be appreciated. The benefits of the proposal do not affect the key congestion and network development issues raised through this study.

In terms of feedback received on NROSS, this was the key project. There was a large response on this project from groups and individuals, with some 643 submissions received, nearly all opposing the proposal. The main issues raised in the supporting submissions were: improved road safety and local accessibility. The main issues raised in the opposing submissions were: decreasing road safety, adverse social effects and degraded environmental quality.

A cycleway designation currently exists on the alignment of this proposed link. It is currently subject to a reference to the Environment Court and consequently no detailed programming has been undertaken for it to date. There are also alternative alignments for this connection which are not quite so direct for through traffic, but which could provide a reasonable standard collector route for this area. An example could be connecting Grassmere Street to Kenwyn Avenue. As noted above, the Cranford Basin area is likely to be urbanised in some form perhaps in ten years or so and through that process a collector road network would be developed albeit not necessarily in the form proposed by NROSS, but fulfilling the needs of local access and circulation.

It is proposed that this project be rejected in the recommendations and not taken any further. However, support for the cycleway between Rutland Street and Grassmere Street should be reaffirmed.

Grants Road Extension: Grassmere Street - Cranford Street

The consultant's completed report recommended that construction of the Grants Road extension between Grassmere Street and Cranford Street is important, should be approved for more detailed review and would be a long term project.

Grants Road is currently a local street. Construction of the extension would see it become one of the city's arterial routes gathering and dispersing traffic from the Northern Arterial south of QEII Drive.

This would be a significant change in the use of Grants Road and would very noticeable to the local community in terms of social and environmental effects. This is the main issue raised against providing the extension.

It also links the Northern Arterial directly with the already busy Blighs Road/Ildris Road/Straven Road/Clarence Street minor arterial route which is likely to increase the attractiveness of this route relative to the western section of the City Ring Road (QEII Drive, Northcote Road, Greers Road, Grahams Road etc) or the Johns Road bypass for those vehicles which have the choice between them. Strategically, the western section of the City Ring Road and the bypass are the preferable routes to upgrade. The study does propose upgrading Northcote Road using the existing designation, see below, however, if the Council decides against the Grants Road extension, future Councils may have to give further consideration to upgrading further sections of the western part of the City Ring Road to compensate.

Without the Grants Road extension, the main effects are the additional congestion on Papanui Road and Main North Road between Blighs Road and QEII Drive and the associated less efficient routing for vehicles trying to access the Northern Arterial from the Straven Road/Ildris Road/Blighs Road route.

Main North Road and Papanui Road are currently carrying around 26,000 vehicles per day, which is beyond the limit of what a two lane road can comfortably carry. The Northlands Mall expansion will also add to this. Projected growth rates will see some 32,700 - 34,500 vehicles per day on these roads by 2021. Without the Grants Road extension, some traffic travelling between south-western areas and the Northern Arterial would have the option of using Innes Road to access the Northern Arterial via Cranford Street. Others would have to travel via a more congested Papanui Road and Main North Road with northbound traffic having to turn right at the Main North Road/Northcote Road/QEII Drive intersection to access the Northern Arterial. Given delays to make this right turn, some would continue up Main North Road all the way or make right turns at other access roads to the Northern Arterial such as Prestons Road. If Council decides against the Grants Road extension, future Councils may have to give consideration to upgrading Main North Road between Harewood Road and QEII Drive, and Papanui Road between Blighs Road and Harewood Road instead.

Another issue is the large local area 'room' that the arterials of Papanui Road, Innes Road, Cranford Street and Main North Road bound. The only collector roads in this 'room' are at the southern end.

The Cranford Basin area through which the Grants Road extension would run is now a potential future urban growth area for Christchurch. The major constraints are the current lack of sewer capacity for about ten years and the low lying nature of the basin which makes part of it suitable for a stormwater ponding basin. Should the Council in the future decide to zone this area for urban growth or a private plan change is initiated then a commitment one way or other to the extension would be required. Until such a rezoning, a non complying resource consent to develop an area through which the extension passes would remain a risk.

Given the above it would be sensible for Council to delay any decision on the Grants Road extension until either the Cranford Basin is rezoned for urban use or until after Northern Arterial is constructed by Transit New Zealand.

One potential issue with a delayed decision is the Cranford Street/Northern Arterial extension/Grants Road extension intersection. The consultant has recommended a cross junction with the Grants Road extension opposite the Northern Arterial extension. However, without a decision on the Grants Road extension it would be preferable to realign the northern section of Cranford Street to run directly into the Northern Arterial extension and Cranford Street north of the intersection tee into this. This would allow any future Grants Road extension to tee into the northern section of Cranford Street further north providing a collector connection, but one that is less direct and accessible and which may provide a more balanced outcome.

There has been significant feedback on this project either from groups, businesses or individuals, with some 155 submissions received. Feedback was often tied to the associated Rutland Street/Grassmere Street link proposal and mostly in opposition to the project. The main issues raised in the supporting submissions were: decreased traffic congestion, a value for money project, improved road safety, positive effects on Blighs Road and improvement to social effects from traffic. The main issues raised in the opposing submissions were: decreasing road safety, adverse environmental and social effects and increased traffic congestion caused by the project.

It is proposed in the recommendations that Council rejects the extension of Grants Road from Grassmere Street to Cranford Street as a part of the NROSS strategy and that the Council delay any decision on the Grants Road extension as part of the local collector road network until either the Cranford Basin is rezoned for urban use or until after Northern Arterial is constructed by Transit New Zealand. In rejecting this proposal, the Council recognises that arterial improvements elsewhere will be needed (or have further justification) to address some consequential issues raised above.

Northcote Road Four Laning

The consultant's completed report recommended that four laning Northcote Road between Main North Road and Sawyers Arms Road is important in terms of priority, should be approved for more detailed review and would be a long term project.

The Northcote Road four laning as an NROSS issue only appeared in the last traffic modelling round between the release of the Interim Assessment Report and the NROSS - final Report. Therefore there has been no chance for public consultation on it as part of NROSS. However, the designation has been through the City Plan submission process and there are no references against it. This designation is one of five major road widening designations left in the City Plan.

Northcote Road is part of the Ring Road and is carrying 23,400 vehicles per day and strategically is the most important of the remaining Council controlled designations. The need to upgrade Northcote Road is mainly to cater for traffic growth on the Ring Road, only some of which will come from the Northern Arterial.

The only feedback on Northcote Road was received through discussions at recent public meetings and was supportive of the basis of the proposal.

It is proposed in the recommendations that Council confirms support for the four laning of Northcote Road using the existing road widening designation that is in place.

Western Belfast By-Pass

The consultant's completed report recommended that there should be no further investigation of the Western Belfast Bypass and that no designation should be pursued at this stage.

A bypass of Belfast in some form has existed in all transport plans for Christchurch since the first Master Transport Plan (MTP) in the 1960's through to the 1993-98 Regional Land Transport Strategy (RTLTS).

The 1960's MTP included the Western Belfast Bypass which would run directly between Johns Road and the Northern Motorway to the west of Belfast. Subsequent transport plans replaced this with the Radcliffe Road extension linking the Northern Arterial to Johns Road though what is now Northwood.

The opportunity to build a Radcliffe Road extension was removed when Council rezoned the Northwood area for urban development before any outcomes from the NROSS were known. The only remaining option now is the Western Belfast Bypass.

The Court has recently issued a Section 293 decision potentially allowing a large area of land northwest of Johns Road and Main North Road to be considered for urban development.

In response to this the Council is preparing an Area Plan for the future development of Belfast. If the Council supports the concept of a long term bypass of Belfast it is imperative that the Council voices its support now so that the area plan can be prepared on that basis and that the Environment Court can be informed of Council's position.

NROSS shows that the Western Belfast (WB) Bypass is not economic until the end of the 20 year planning period, as is the case for the Northern Arterial. Given this, Transit New Zealand have been reluctant to pursue it further due to the difficulty of designating for long periods. Also, in line with the Government's transport policy statement, Transit New Zealand have moved congestion-relief to the top of their list of priorities. The WB Bypass provides a shorter faster route but relieves only a limited amount of congestion.

NROSS also showed that it is important the Northern Arterial be constructed before the WB Bypass otherwise the economics of the Northern Arterial are adversely affected. Strategically both are needed, but the Northern Arterial more so.

The WB Bypass is the last opportunity to remove State Highway and heavy vehicle flows out of the Belfast area from Johns Road northward. There are both environmentally and socially adverse effects to have such flows through this area. These are the main reasons why a bypass has always been promoted in previous transport plans.

The WB Bypass will shift a significant amount of traffic off Main North Road north of Johns Road which would potentially come under Council control if the Northern Arterial is in place. This would provide the Council the opportunity to consider, potentially significant, reallocation of road space.

There was feedback received on this project mostly from individuals or groups, with 97 submissions received. Whilst over 80 submissions supported the proposal during the consultation period of the study, as it did not receive support in the consultant's completed report there has been no significant comment regarding it during the recent community engagement. The main issues raised in the earlier supporting submissions were: decreased traffic congestion and the positive impacts of diverting heavy traffic out of central Belfast. The main issues raised in the earlier opposing submissions were: adverse environmental effects, reduced property values and opposition to the proposed alignments.

It is proposed in the recommendations that the concept of a long term Western Belfast Bypass is supported and will be promoted through mechanisms such as urban growth policies or area plans for Belfast, but that this strategic network link not be constructed before the Northern Arterial.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

There are some items in the draft Annual Plan which relate to funding of projects identified in NROSS. However, to date there has not been wholesale introduction of funding for these projects, as it would have been pre-emptive of the decision making process on this study. The current situation can be summarised as per the table below.

Table of current CCC budgets related to NROSS projects.

Item	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07
NROSS		\$175,000	\$762,000	\$230,000
Marshland/Prestons			\$250,000	

The 'NROSS' item has been included primarily to address initial estimated costs associated with the Hills Road extension in a currently developing subdivision.

The NROSS reports provided broad brush estimates of the project costs and general timing of works, as shown in the table below. The costs do make provision for construction, land costs, fees and contingencies. It should be emphasised, however, that these are first cut costs based on generic rates and conceptual proposals and should be treated with care as indicative only.

Project	CCC Cost	TNZ Cost
Marshland/Preston Roundabout	\$1,250,000	
Cranford Street upgrade (Main North – Berwick) ^{1,4}	\$9,050,000	
Hills Road upgrade (Aylesford – Whitmore) ⁴	\$2,100,000	
Hills Road (QEII – Akaroa) ⁵	\$4,000,000	
Northern Arterial (Chaney's – QEII) ²		\$19,850,000
Northern Arterial extension (QEII – Cranford)	\$3,900,000	
QEII Drive four laning ³		\$3,050,000
Marshland/Belfast Roundabout	\$600,000	
Northcote Road (Main North – Greers) widening ⁶		\$6,900,000
Totals	\$20,900,000	\$29,800,000

Notes:

¹ State Highway, becoming CCC road.

² Transit New Zealand project.

³ CCC road, becoming State Highway.

⁴ The costs were based on a proposal requiring land only at key intersections. If the road reserves were widened to 30 m from 20 m and depending upon final design elements, about an additional \$5-10M could be required for Cranford Street and about an additional \$4M for Hills Road.

⁵ The costs associated with the Hills Road extension may be considerably less (perhaps as low as \$1M) if the link can be provided as part of the sub-division development in this area.

⁶ Allocated as a Transit cost on the assumption of the western section of the Ring Road becoming State Highway within ten years.

It is interesting to note that all the projects most likely in the first ten years would be CCC projects. If the recommendations of this report are adopted, it is estimated that the Council would need to consider provision for at least \$12.4M-26.4M in the coming ten years capital works programme for these projects. The overall financial cost to the Council based on the above figures and recommendations below would be \$20.9M-33.9M over 20 years. It is currently too soon to produce details for funding in this year's Annual Plan, as the staging and costs are still very preliminary.

PROPOSED FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME AND DESIGNATIONS

As indicated in the comments on recent public engagement, there is a desire in the community that as much certainty as possible is provided to affected people and businesses. Also a number of projects would require land acquisition. Protecting required land for projects (probably via designations and possibly through direct purchase) at the earliest stage is advantageous to the Council in minimising additional costs for the land and to the property owner in terms of providing certainty. With this in mind, it would be preferable to take the adopted projects for which the Council is responsible through to the scheme assessment stage as soon as possible.

Reviewing the proposed projects in NROSS, all the projects are likely to require designations/land acquisition to some degree. The City Plan contains numerous roading designations which indicate the Council's intention to undertake roading improvements involving that land within the stated timeframe/life of the designation. Typically these designations are assigned either a five or ten year life.

The table below outlines a proposed prioritised work programme for developing the projects, based on adoption of the proposed recommendations related to individual projects. It should be noted that this does not intend to indicate the preferred order of construction, rather that the planning of these projects is undertaken with this priority order.

Project	CCC planning work priority (1 = highest priority)	TNZ planning work priority
Marshland/Preston Roundabout	4	
Cranford Street upgrade (Main North – Berwick)	2	
Hills Road upgrade (Aylesford – Whitmore)	3	
Hills Road (QEII – Akaroa)	1	
Northern Arterial extension (QEII – Cranford)	1	
Marshland/Belfast Roundabout	5	
Northcote Road widening	6	
Northern Arterial		1
QEII Drive widening		2

Whilst it is considered important to initiate scheme assessment work on both Cranford Street and Hills Road, the above table places highest priority on the Hills Road extension and the Northern Arterial extension as these projects are both involved with land development opportunities that should not be missed. The Hills Road extension is proposed through an area currently in the process of subdivision, and the Northern Arterial extension would likely traverse land currently up for sale with potential investors/purchasers interested in knowing the Council's wishes and plans for this land.

TRANSIT NEW ZEALAND VIEWS

At the meeting between Transit New Zealand staff and the Land Transport Subcommittee on 27 May 2003, Transit New Zealand expressed its general support for the strategy as recommended in this report, commenting that the various recommendations did not in their view jeopardise the overall strategy to address the needs of the road network in north Christchurch for the next 20 years. Following the Transit New Zealand board deliberation of the consultant's completed report last November, Transit New Zealand sent a letter to the Council indicating their support for the overall strategy and the retention of the Northern Arterial designation. However, the letter also expressed a view that the projects for which Transit New Zealand would be responsible were strongly reliant upon the prior or simultaneous implementation of most of the projects for which the Council is responsible.

Hence as can be seen, the success of the overall strategy relies on both organisations co-operating and integrating their roading improvement programmes.

Following adoption of a strategy, Transit New Zealand are very keen to undertake further study of the appropriate timing/order of the various projects within the strategy and possibly some key staging within some projects. This would allow prioritising and (bids for) allocation of funding into long term funding programmes.

WHERE TO FROM HERE

Following adoption of projects with this report, they will be allocated to a work programme, and scheme assessment processes will be undertaken. It is desirable to pursue the Cranford Street scheme assessment first, with a view to its completion in the 2003/04 financial year, and all other projects be started in the scheme assessment processes before the end of 2004. Special consultative procedures will apply to each individual project as it is developed. These special consultative procedures will require the setting out of all options assessed in each project along with reasons why each option is preferred or discarded. Thereafter projects would be confirmed through the future LTCCP process for establishing and confirming the funding for the projects. Special consideration should be given to project scheme assessment processes to involve local interest groups and individuals throughout.

CONCLUSIONS

The Northern Roding Options Scoping Study was a long needed study to address the question about what should occur after the uplifting of the urban Northern Arterial designation and its removal as the lynch pin of the development of the north Christchurch transport system.

It has been a long study, drawn out beyond its original timeline for a wide variety of reasons. This has been both to the benefit and frustration of those involved with the study, with the increased analysis and dialogue that this has entailed or enabled. Many of the questions that have been asked of this study have sought answers that are typically well beyond the ambit of scoping studies, but additional work and effort has sought to address them as well as the studies limitations would allow.

The consultant's completed report (formally both the NROSS Interim Assessment Report – November 2001 and the NROSS Final Report – November 2002) presents a significant volume of information, which is summarised in this report and the Executive Summary. It should allow elected members to make well informed decisions regarding this study.

It can not be strongly enough emphasised that a key issue is the need to provide the community certainty in the outcomes of this study. The community appears to accept the need to plan for the future and recognises that for roading improvements this sensibly means more than five years hence.

The study has raised a number of proposals which have ranged from being well supported through to vigorously opposed; and a number of issues which have generated strong discussion. The staff recommendations presented below are based on professional assessment of the information provided through the study and various discussions, internal and external to the Council. They represent a realistic set of proposals to deal with the issues raised at the start of the study to be addressed.

As has been noted in various public meetings, the projects which are adopted from this study are still to go through a variety of public processes (including designation requirement processes, the Long Term Council Community Plan consultation and standard Council roading project development consultation). There is much work to be done to achieve implementation and the complete implementation will serve the city for the next 20 years and will commence as soon as practical. The full strategy is likely to be fully completed in stages which could take up to a 20 year period, as intimated by the original study brief to address the issues that would arise over that period.

The proposed recommendations given below are sufficient to allow the conclusion of NROSS as a project, and allow the process to address the north Christchurch transport system to move on.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the strategy as outlined in this report for addressing the roading network improvements in north Christchurch be adopted, and the following recommendations be adopted to give it effect.
 2. That the following projects, as proposed in NROSS, be adopted for further development:

- Marshland Road intersection improvements at Prestons Road and Belfast Road.
 - Hills Road extension.
 - Hills Road upgrading (Aylesford – Whitmore).
 - Cranford Street upgrading between Main North Road and Berwick Street.
 - Northern Arterial extension between Cranford Street and QEII Drive.
3. That support for the Northcote Road widening project (possibly constructed by Transit New Zealand) as indicated by the road widening designation be reconfirmed.
 4. That the Rutland - Grassmere roading link be abandoned; and that support for the cycleway proposal on the existing designation be reaffirmed.
 5. That the extension of Grants Road between Grassmere and Cranford Streets be rejected as part of this strategy. However, the Council may review the possibility of a Grants Road extension being part of any future local collector road network after either the Cranford Basin is rezoned for urban use or after the Northern Arterial is constructed by Transit New Zealand.
 6. That the concept of a Western Belfast Bypass be supported for the long term, and promoted through mechanisms such as urban growth policies or area plans for Belfast, but that this strategic network link not be constructed by Transit New Zealand before the Northern Arterial.
 7. That the Council strongly support construction of the Northern Arterial by Transit New Zealand at the earliest possible time and seek urgent confirmation from Transit New Zealand of its commitment to complete construction of the Northern Arterial within the next 10 years (ie by 2013).
 8. That the Council strongly support Transit New Zealand to undertake the widening of QEII Drive to four lanes between the Northern Arterial and the Hills Road extension in conjunction with construction of the Northern Arterial and at the earliest possible time.
 9. That the planning priority and general timelines for moving forward on City Council projects as outlined in the body of the report be adopted, especially with regard to identifying City Plan designation requirements for which the Council would be responsible as soon as possible.
 10. That opportunities to integrate and construct any of the above adopted projects with subdivisional or other development work be pursued to the greatest extent, wherever possible
 11. That funding proposals for the adopted CCC projects above be developed for introduction in the CCC LTCCP 2004/06.
 12. That a study be initiated to explore opportunities for bus priority measures and develop a proposal for 'Park N Ride' in the study area, in conjunction with Environment Canterbury, and reported back to both Councils.
 13. That acknowledgement be given to the considerable input and activity of a number of community groups involved during this study.

14. That during the special consultative procedures the Council indicate its willingness to incorporate high quality design factors into future major arterial roads including:
 - (a) Wide solid medians, where appropriate and other facilities to optimise the safety of users.
 - (b) Pedestrian facilities to minimise community severance.
 - (c) Features to priorities and facilitate modes other than single occupancy private motor cars, while still offering a high standard of service for them.
 - (d) A high standard of landscaping and other such enhancements to be identified through 'living streets' methods.
15. That the Council take early action to communicate this strategy, its rationale and supporting information (including a description of the designation process and property purchase procedure) to residents who could be directly affected.
16. That the Council express its appreciation for the work of Mr Stuart Woods and other Council officers and consultants and partner organisations involved in the development of this strategy.

(Councillors Megan Evans and Ingrid Stonhill requested that their vote against the above recommendation be recorded).