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Corporate Plan Output: Environmental Improvement Programmes	

The purpose of this report is to inform the Community Board of the beginning of enhancement planting on SH1 at Belfast and the roundabouts at Memorial Avenue and Sawyers Arms Road, as part of the Canterbury Highway 2000 project.

*Andrew Craig* will be in attendance at **6.30 pm** to present this project.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Many projects and events are currently being developed to celebrate and mark our entry into the new millennium. One such project aims to enhance and beautify the roadside landscape of State Highway 1 as it passes through Christchurch from Kaikoura to Waimate. Councils whose territory the highway passes through have all undertaken to contribute to its enhancement. Enhancement includes, where appropriate, the creation of avenues and parkway planting, landmark or focal point planting, and the opening up of views. Where necessary, tidying up of the highway will also be undertaken and may include the undergrounding of overhead wiring, the removal of unkempt or inappropriate planting and the removal or screening of unsightly land use activities. Implementation of the project is expected to be long term reflecting the enduring and commemorative nature of it. Work is expected to "... start vigorously in the Year 2000" to quote Sir Miles Warren, the Chairman of the Canterbury Highway 2000 Advisory Committee.

In February this year, a preliminary concept was presented to the Environment Committee who approved it and recommended that funding be allocated to begin stage one of the project. The Council's 1999/2000 budget includes funding for the implementation of this stage to begin over next year. Included in stage one is tree planting for the Belfast section of Stage Highway 1.

#### **THE CONCEPT**

A booklet detailing the concept for the Community Board has been circulated separately to Board members and will be elaborated upon in a presentation to the Committee.

In summary, the aim of the concept is to achieve the following:

- To commemorate the new millennium and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Province in an enduring way.
- To beautify State Highway One and in so doing create a pleasant experience for road users.
- To create a positive first impression of Christchurch, particularly as the 'Garden City'.

- To reinforce the identity and distinctiveness of Christchurch and, in particular, its Garden City image, its strong seasonality, and its geographical characteristics.
- To create bold and distinctive gateways into and out of the city.
- To emphasise the presence of roads that lead to the city where they intersect the Highway.
- To reinforce, where appropriate, the urban/rural boundary.
- To aid in the management and safety of traffic, and in particular, the slowing down of vehicles as they enter the urban area.

One of the characteristics that distinguishes the Christchurch stretch of the highway from the rest is the considerable diversity of environments it passes through within its relatively short 22 kilometre length. This, along with Transit New Zealand's programme of works, has meant that this stretch of highway can be divided into six distinctive development areas. These areas are illustrated in the accompanying document and comprise of:

1. The Gateways (Templeton and Belfast)
2. The Junctions (where major roads leading to the city meet the highway – Yaldhurst, Memorial, Harewood and Sawyers Arms Roads).
3. The Parkway (Russley and Johns Road between Memorial Avenue and Belfast).
4. The Grand Avenue (Russley Road between Memorial Avenue and Yaldhurst Road).
5. The southwest suburban area (between Yaldhurst Junction and the Main South Road at Islington).
6. The Countryside (between Islington and Templeton).

Each of these areas have unique characteristics that determine how they will be planted. Those characteristics that will influence the design include:

- The function of each area (already outlined as the aims of the concept)
- The road width and available land for planting. Some land will have to be acquired.
- Safety. Transit New Zealand have stringent conditions dictating the proximity of large trees to the highway, which in turn is influenced by speed limits. Other considerations include the formation of ice on the road as a result of shading by nearby trees, visibility, distractions and flickering caused by low angled sunlight filtering through trees.

- Soils and climate. Certain species of trees and shrubs are known to survive and thrive in Canterbury conditions and so will be looked upon favourably for selection.
- Maintenance which will need to be minimised therefore influencing plant selection and extent.

#### **STAGING**

Staging is proposed to correspond to the six identified areas mentioned above. A major influence on staging is Transit New Zealand's intention to eventually four lane the entire length of the section of highway that passes through Christchurch. This work will be undertaken within the next 20 years depending on traffic volumes. The road through Belfast is already four laned and so it would be logical to begin enhancement work here in the Year 2000.

Currently more detailed plans are being drawn up for the stage one areas. These will then be costed followed by implementation. These plans will be displayed at the Community Board meeting.

As a normal part of this process, the Council will distribute publicity pamphlets outlining the project and inviting the public to comment.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This highway enhancement is one of many exciting projects officially approved by Mr Ian Leggat's Turning Point 2000 Executive Committee.

The Committee's aim is to celebrate not only the new millennium but also the city's sesqui-centenary, with a view to "... uniting the community and fostering community spirit and pride in the region ...". Given their location at the critical entry and exit points of the city, the enhancement at Belfast and the roundabouts will contribute significantly to the achievement of this aim.

**Recommendation:** That the Community Board receive the information and note the proposed publicity programme.

#### **Chairperson's**

**Recommendation:** That the officer's recommendation be adopted.