

8 October 2024

Greg Presland
fyi-request-28349-fe50a912@requests.fyi.org.nz

REF: OIA-16392

Dear Greg

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 10 September 2024 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Please provide me with the latest costings for each of the Government's roads of national significance together with the source for each of the costings.

Before I respond to your request, and to provide context, the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2024 (GPS) was released on 7 June 2024, and came into effect from 1 July 2024. Expectations for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) in the GPS, including for the Roads of National Significance, include but are not limited to a focus on the use of alternative delivery models, a broader range of funding options and financing models, more efficient business case processes, and maintaining tight control on project scope and cost by adopting a "no frills" approach.

At this time NZTA has not developed cost estimates for the following projects for a scope that aligns with the expectations set out in the GPS:

- Hope Bypass
- Second Mt Victoria Tunnel and Basin Reserve Upgrade (SH1)
- North West Alternative Highway (SH16)
- Hamilton Southern Links
- Petone to Grenada Link Road and Cross Valley Link Road
- East West Link
- Mill Road (Stage 1)
- Tauriko West SH29
- Northland Corridor

Work is well underway to determine the cost estimates for the following projects, but a final figure is yet to be confirmed:

- Hawkes Bay Expressway
- Cambridge to Piarere
- Belfast to Pegasus Motorway (and Woodend Bypass)

It is anticipated that updated estimates will be completed in the coming months once the scope of the project is refined and confirmed.

I am therefore refusing your request for this information under section 18(e) of the Act as the document alleged to contain the information does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

The cost estimate for Takitimu North Link Stage 2 is going to the NZTA board in October.

However because this figure is not yet finalised, given it is still going through the approval process, I am withholding this under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act, to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty.

Due to the current status of commercial negotiations, I am withholding the cost estimates for the Ōtaki to north of Levin project under section 9(2)(j) of the Act. This section allows for the withholding of information to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations):

The only cost estimate that has been confirmed is for the Takitimu North Link Stage 1 project. The current cost estimate is \$884 million. The funding source for this project is through Crown funding.

With respect to the information that has been withheld from this request, I do not consider there are any other factors which would render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to withhold and refuse certain information within this request. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you would like to discuss this reply with NZTA, please contact Ministerial Services, by email to official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Richard Osborne', is displayed on a light grey rectangular background.

Richard Osborne
Acting National Manager System Design