

Media Statement
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If a Road is Worth Building, It's Worth Paying For

"If we say no to tolls, we're saying no to new highways, because infrastructure doesn't come free, and someone has to pay," says Infrastructure New Zealand Chief Executive Nick Leggett. "Therefore, it's disappointing to see local mayors lining up to oppose tolling the proposed Woodend Bypass."

"We all need to face facts; if we want safer, faster, better highways, the users of those roads need to be willing to pay something for them. As a nation, we naturally want the best of everything, but that doesn't come for free."

"The fairest and most sustainable approach is for those who use the road to contribute to its upkeep and operation. Having a charge for each user also properly tests demand. It is not fair to ask all taxpayers, many of whom will never use the road, to foot the bill," Leggett says.

"International experience proves the point. User charging in the form of tolling or congestion charging delivers safer, less-congested and better-managed roads all over the world because other countries understand that asking users to contribute directly is both fair and effective."

"Roads will last longer with less traffic and there will be a direct revenue stream that will mean users can expect the road to be maintained properly," Leggett says.

"The National Infrastructure Plan makes clear that without sustainable, affordable funding mechanisms, our infrastructure deficit will keep growing. Communities like those in North Canterbury deserve the safe roads they've been demanding, but users should be expected to pay towards the cost."

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Infrastructure New Zealand is Aotearoa's peak membership organisation for the infrastructure sector. We promote best practice in national infrastructure development through research, advocacy, and public and private sector collaboration. We promote public and media discussion on issues of importance to the infrastructure sector. Our membership is comprised of around 140 organisations, including government agencies, consultants, contractors, financiers, utilities, and academics. These organisations employ approximately 150,000 people in infrastructure-

related roles and are united in their commitment to creating a better New Zealand through outstanding infrastructure.

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