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## **Infrastructure New Zealand submission on the Northern Corridor Improvements proposal**

Infrastructure New Zealand (formerly the New Zealand Council for Infrastructure Development) is the peak industry body for the infrastructure sector and promotes best practice in national infrastructure development through research, advocacy and public and private sector collaboration. Infrastructure New Zealand members come from diverse sectors across New Zealand and include infrastructure service providers, investors and operators.<sup>1</sup>

We welcome this opportunity to submit on the Northern Corridor Improvements proposal (the Proposal).

### **We support the Proposal**

Infrastructure New Zealand supports the Proposal in full.

The SH18 upgrade to motorway standard will increase the capacity and productivity of the corridor, reducing travel times and shifting traffic off local roads.

The Proposal will complete the Western Ring Route, a strategic network alternative to the heavily congested SH1, and a national and regional priority.

The presence of a viable alternative to SH1 will enhance the resilience of the Auckland road network, providing redundancy, as well as capacity, in the event of incidents or otherwise congested conditions.

The extension of the Northern Busway and future proofing of the busway corridor further north provides long term capacity, reliability and efficiency for public transport in Auckland's north.

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<sup>1</sup> This submission represents the views of Infrastructure New Zealand as a collective whole, and may not necessarily represent the views of individual member organisations.

We agree that the Proposal is likely to lead to increased traffic along SH1 and SH18 (*Northern Corridor Improvements: Assessment of Transport Effects*). However, we would add that this increase will be due to the additional amenity and service provided by a superior transport connection.

The sharp increase in expected trips following completion of the Proposal is an indicator of how severely social and economic opportunity are currently suppressed in the area.

Additional trips carry value and should be viewed as a reflection of a successful investment in a service.

Additional trips resulting from completion of the Proposal are the result of travellers making decisions based on what benefit they derive from transport services:

- Improved travel times and reliability will expand the labour pool for businesses in the area as workers consider a geographically wider range of jobs. As well as delivering greater lifestyle benefits to workers, a broader labour pool will give businesses a larger number of skills from which to draw on, improving productivity (agglomeration).
- Residents in the area will increase travel in response to new social and cultural opportunities. Faster and more dependable travel will allow residents to consider activities which were previously disincentivised by travel barriers, delivering a lifestyle improvement.

On the basis of very significant transport benefits along a corridor already committed to transport services, we can see no reason why the Proposal should not proceed.

We thank the EPA for this opportunity to submit.