

23 September 2026

Hon Chris Bishop  
Minister of Transport  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

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Dear Minister

### Infrastructure Delivery Costs

At its meeting on 14 September, the Waikato Regional Transport Committee discussed the scale of funding required to deliver nationally significant transport network infrastructure in the region.

Key points raised included:

1. A lack of consistency in how the cost estimates for large projects such as SH1 Cambridge to Piarere are calculated, and the often significant difference between estimated costs, the tendered sum, and the eventual cost of full delivery. For this project, the detailed business case indicated a delivery cost of \$504m to \$721m in 2021 whereas budget 2026 allocated \$1.77bn for delivery.
2. Whether savings from a specific project could be retained within the region for allocation to another improvement. For example, should the Cambridge to Piarere project be delivered for \$721m, can the saving be reallocated to deliver Hamilton Southern Links?

The Committee noted your comments made at the Civil Contractors conference in August about needing to find ways to build infrastructure in a more cost-effective way. There was support for your initiation of an independent report on the cost drivers of major land transport projects in New Zealand, to be led by Te Waihangā Infrastructure Commission, due by Q1 2027.

Due to the scale of investment required in the Waikato region to improve transport network efficiency and enable economic growth, increase community resilience and reduce road safety fatalities, the Waikato Regional Transport Committee is keen to remain connected with you on this important topic, to ensure that every dollar is spent wisely and outcomes are achieved.

With this in mind WRTC would ask that you broaden your enquiry into the cost drivers of major land transport projects to include a more practitioner focused investigation into why costs have increased so much, including investigation of compliance and regulatory cost drivers along with industry structural issues.

Yours sincerely



**Liz Stolwyk**  
Chair, Waikato Regional Transport Committee