

From TCC Website

<http://www.tauranga.govt.nz/>

News

NZTA appoints contractor to build Tauranga Eastern Link and announces early construction start

The NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) has appointed the contracting team to design and build the Tauranga Eastern Link and announced that construction of the road of national significance is to begin later this month – more than six months earlier than anticipated.

The appointment of a consortium led by Fulton Hogan and including HEB Construction, Opus International Consultants, URS Corporation New Zealand, Peters and Cheung, and Bartley Consultants marks a major milestone in the development of the Bay of Plenty's largest roading project and a key strategic transport corridor for the region.

Harry Wilson, the NZTA's Bay of Plenty Regional Director says the consortium was selected after a rigorous three month evaluation. Mr Wilson said the Fulton Hogan-led consortium won the contract due to its submissions on several features including price, innovation and their proposed construction programme.

"We are committed to achieving value for money in delivering this project, and the tendered price for construction of \$335m represents a savings of \$15million or 4% on estimates. These cost savings are due to innovations including using light weight foundations to raise the four lane highway over the Domain Road roundabout. The reduction in the weight of the foundations will minimise long term settlement in the area and remove the need to relocate an electricity substation, thereby saving time and money.

"Another exciting feature of the winning bid is that construction will begin sooner than anticipated. We were originally planning for construction to begin mid-2011, but the Fulton Hogan consortium expects to get initial works underway later this month. A sod-turning ceremony will be held to mark the occasion," says Mr Wilson.

At a total cost of \$455m in today's dollars, the Tauranga Eastern Link is to the date one of the largest, by dollar value, single project the NZTA, or its predecessor Transit New Zealand, has ever built. The \$120m difference between the total project cost and the construction cost relates to parts of the project not included in the main construction contract. This includes costs for the enabling works projects, the purchase of outstanding property, development of the toll system, project management, and contingency funds.

The four-lane Tauranga Eastern Link will run from Te Maunga (near Baypark Stadium)

in Tauranga to the existing junction of State Highways 2 and 33 (the Rotorua and Whakatane highways) near Paengaroa. It will be made up of 17km of new road and an upgrade of six kilometres of existing highway. As well as reducing travel time by up to 24 minutes on a return trip through this area, the Tauranga Eastern Link will improve safety for residents along the current route of State Highway 2 and open up access to new developments planned for Papamoa.

Keep up-to-date with developments at www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/tel/index.html