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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Simon Bridges says we need to make infrastructure the next economic success story

Simon Bridges says we need to make infrastructure the next economic success story, and he's absolutely right.

NZIER's independent research shows that the economic benefits of the proposed Cambridge to Piarere [C2P] and the Warkworth to Wellsford [W2W] expressways are just shy of \$1 billion per year to New Zealand.

That's an incredible return and sends a powerful message to bureaucrats and politicians that there is huge opportunity to unlock economic growth with infrastructure projects. New Zealand's economic outlook is decidedly gloomy; we have a multi-billion-dollar infrastructure deficit. We need solutions.

By investing more to build infrastructure, New Zealand needs to make greater use of private capital and user-pays solutions to get projects done.

The taxpayer is in a cost-of-living crisis and needs to survive. There are other solutions, we must take them. Just look at how we used tolls to help pay off the Auckland Harbour Bridge all those years ago.

The Waikato Chamber of Commerce agrees with Simon – the next government must be much bolder about investing in intergenerational infrastructure and we contend that all transport infrastructure should be assessed through the same economic development lens as we have seen in this NZIER report on C2P and W2W.

It's our view that the long-deferred Southern Links project, which circles Hamilton to the west and links the industrial northwest to Hamilton Airport, needs to be at the front of the queue. The land is designated and 75% purchased; NZTA just need the political will and thus the funding to get it underway.

We all know that commerce follows arterial routes and the Waikato Expressway with its traffic loading of 25,000 people per day has brought significant economic growth to Pokeno, Mercer, Te Kauwhata, Ohinewai, Huntly, Taupiri, Ngaruawahia, Hamilton, and Cambridge.

Projects like C2P and Southern Links create jobs, land for housing, reduce congestion, and improve prosperity and thus well-being.

Why are we waiting?

Ends

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