

News

April 2005

2	Bid to keep Port land for public use (New Zealand Herald Bernard Orsman, article also by Andrea Fox) Auckland regional Council, the majority owner of Ports of Auckland (under its Auckland regional Holdings), is making a full takeover bid for the port company and its assets, at what is considered to be a huge price at \$8 per share.
2	Auckland regional Council draft plan published (Region Wide April) Total income of 2005/6 is proposed to be \$230.1 million, with 51% from rating income, 35% from Auckland regional Holdings and 14% from other revenue. The timing of the draft plan is that it is adopted for consultation on 21st of March, after which is open for submissions until May 6, followed by hearings and the adoption of a final plan June 27.
3	Auckland City Council purchases Oracle base (City scene) Auckland city has purchased the Oracle syndicate America's Cup base at 155-161 Halsey Street, to ensure that it remains in public ownership. A 10 m wide strip along the water's edge is protected for public's access, by a covenant on land, which is owned by America's Cup Village Ltd (ACVL), a subsidiary of the Regional Council.
5	Auckland City Council proposes land purchase at Matiatia, on Waiheke (New Zealand Herald Bernard Orsman) Waitemata infrastructure Ltd (WIL) purchased the 7.1 ha property at Matiatia in 2000 for \$3.5 million. In 2002 the local authority, Auckland City Council accepted a private planning change to allow development of 2.9 ha. In 2003 on the advice of the planning commission the council rejected the plan change. WIL appealed to the environment Court. In 2004 WIL reduced the scale of its proposed development to 1.2 ha as of right, with permission for a further 1.85 ha. This year an interim decision by the environment Court allowed development of 1 ha as of right and permission for a further .85 ha. It is this land which Auckland City Council is now proposing to purchase.
5	Motorway toll to last 30 years (New Zealand Herald Audrey Young) Cabinet is to approve today the construction of a toll motorway extension from Orewa to Puhoi, even though details of the toll to be charged have not yet been worked out. This will be the first approval under the Land Transport Management Act 2003, which set out the criteria by which future approvals could be granted.
6	New Albany city delayed by paperwork (New Zealand Herald Anne Gibson) Subdivision consents hold up a project which will create a new \$3.5 billion city over 10 years on the northern fringe of North shore city. It will provide offices for 15,000 workers and homes for 6000 people. The land owners Neill group, which is Malaysian owned, have sold the 50 ha freehold block behind the North Harbour Stadium to Cornerstone group for \$250 million. Cornerstone group in turn will subdivide and sell individual sites on a perpetual leasehold basis. Other major leasehold deals elsewhere include the Auckland waterfront area, owned by Viaduct Harbour Holdings, former railway land owned by Ngati Whatua, forestry land of 30,000 ha owned by Carter Holt Harvey to be sold leasehold and Tenon, the former Fletcher Challenge Forests which has been sold to property investors Ross Green, Adrian Burr, Trevor Farmer and Mark Wyborn, most of whom are involved as lessors in viaduct Harbour.
7	New Epsom College on the cards (New Zealand Herald Stuart Dye) There have been plans in the recent past for a new secondary school in Epsom. These plans have been resurrected with the University of Auckland now considering whether to release its Epsom campus the former Auckland College of education, to the Ministry of education.
13	Tolled highways cost a lot more and provide a lot less (New Zealand Herald Hans Grueber) In response to the view of a Herald editorial that tolls are the best method of financing new roads and the best antidote to traffic congestion, this article was produced giving alternative arguments. Hans Grueber is a member of and spokesman for Highway Robbery, a local and nationwide group opposed to the concept of road tolls
20	New road layout for Esmonde road/Akoranga drive off ramp (New Zealand Herald advertisement) The new road layout off the northern motorway will become effective in the next few days.
22	Politicians divided on how to pay a \$3 billion Harbour Tunnel (New Zealand Herald Matthew Dearnaley) It appears that the Harbour Bridge has a maximum daily capacity of 180,000 vehicles and this will be reached in five to seven years. Accordingly plans are proposed for a second Harbour Crossing. National's North shore Wayne Mapp favours paying for a tunnel by way of a \$3 toll, plus tolls applied to the existing Harbour Bridge. The toll concept is supported by Auckland City Mayor Dick Hubbard, but opposed by North shore city Mayor George Wood. Transit also favours a tunnel ahead of a duplicate bridge and is proposing to appoint a project director to head a full investigation into a new Harbour Crossing. More than a year ago the Auckland regional land transport committee requested Transit to lead such an investigation and form a project team, including representatives from the regional and both of the involved local City Council's. Note: Civic Trust Auckland board members are closely over-viewing the planning and financial aspects of proposed harbour crossings, of both the Waitemata and Manukau.

30	<p>Mega-malls (New Zealand Herald Geoff Cumming) This article attempts to explain the development of predominantly Australian owned malls in Auckland, with current proposals for three more. It appears that Aucklanders spend about \$1.6 billion a year in the 10 main malls. The biggest operator is Westfield, with malls in Albany (proposed), Glenfield, Shore City, Downtown, Newmarket, Henderson St Luke's, Pakuranga and Manukau. Other operators include AMP at Westgate (proposed), Botany, and Lynmall (in conjunction with Stockland).</p>
	<p>Steel price rises suffer bad press (Property Business April) This article by senior structural engineer Charles Clifton, of the New Zealand heavy engineering research Association(HERA) notes that structural steel has increased by about 26% over the last two years, but other building materials have also increased, some to an even greater extent. Precast concrete has increased by a similar amount, but reinforcing steel has increased more. Note: Some interesting cost comparisons with a 1991 study of different steel and concrete options were quite revealing in this article.</p>