

Media Release

Road works viewed as sign of progress

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With the intensity of rebuild work on central Christchurch roads and underground pipes expected to drop off from July, a new survey is showing road users are adapting to the road works and seeing them as a sign of progress for the city.

The Christchurch Community Perceptions survey commissioned by SCIRT (Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team) asked 400 Christchurch people last month about their perceptions of the rebuild of the city's horizontal infrastructure, and found that although people are being impacted by it, they appreciate there is a bigger picture.

SCIRT is rebuilding the city's earthquake damaged roads, fresh water, wastewater and stormwater networks. It is an alliance between the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA), Christchurch City Council, New Zealand Transport Agency and the delivery teams City Care, Downer Construction, Fletcher Construction, Fulton Hogan and McConnell Dowell.

To date, 57 per cent of SCIRT work in central Christchurch has been completed, and the most intensive work affecting road users is scheduled to drop off from July – meaning less delays and detours. By the end of the year, 90 per cent of SCIRT's work in the central city is expected to be complete.

In the SCIRT survey, respondents were asked their views of the statement that "Road works are all part of progress", and 92 per cent of those surveyed agreed with the statement. Eighty nine per cent agreed that progress is "very visible", with works underway in many areas.

Ninety three per cent agreed that journeys were taking longer due to the road works, while 87 per cent agreed that they were allowing more time for journeys because of possible traffic changes.

"Every day I look out my window I see the effect of the road works on people driving and cycling in our city. No-one likes sitting in traffic," says CERA chief executive Roger Sutton.

"But what people are telling us in this survey is that they are adapting to it, and they understand why it has to happen and what it means for the progress of the rebuild and the future of their city."

"That is very heartening to hear. I have consistently seen since the earthquakes an incredible resilience and ability to adapt from people facing adversity. It makes me very proud to be a part of this city. What I know is that once we get beyond this hectic period of rebuild and construction, we are going to have a world-class city to enjoy."

"The good news is that the end is in sight with these road works in the central city."

Christchurch City Council Acting Chief Executive Jane Parfitt says it is great to see the results of the SCIRT research are consistent with research carried out by the Christchurch Transport Operations Centre (CTOC) this year.

"While we understand the frustration of some motorists, our research shows that 80 per cent of respondents appreciate the reason for the number of road works around Christchurch given the rebuild work."

"Seventy six per cent of respondents told us they accept the level of delay given the required rebuild work."

Customer research by both SCIRT and CTOC is designed to enable all parties to improve the way work is managed and delivered.

SCIRT's progress can be viewed at www.strongerchristchurch.govt.nz.