

**Transit New Zealand**

**Auckland Regional Office**

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**Media Release**

## **New sculpture will become motorway feature**

A new artwork - a sculpture representing an abstraction of a pohutukawa flower - is about to become a feature of Auckland's inner motorway system. Positioned at the hub of one of the city's busiest gateways, the sculpture will be seen by tens of thousands of motorists every day.

Standing seven metres high, the sculpture will be located on a triangular piece of land facing Union Street and bounded by the Nelson Street off-ramp on the northern side and the Hobson Street on-ramp on the southern side.

It is part of the urban aesthetics applied to the city's inner motorway system by Transit New Zealand as part of the upgrade of the Central Motorway Junction.

Both ramps, which cross Union Street at signalised intersections, carry huge numbers of vehicles to and from the Southern and Northwestern Motorways and will make the sculpture a prominent part of motorists' driving experiences.

Set on a two-metre high and six-metre diameter concrete base, the sculpture comprises seven ceramic-covered pods on which 105, five metre tall red fibreglass poles, representing pohutukawa stamen, are fitted.

The spring-loaded polls, capable of individual 500 millimetre movements, have yellow elliptical tops that are lit internally with LED lights. These lights, together with up-lights at the base of the poles, will make the sculpture prominent at night.

"The overall effect will be a mildly kinetic and visually dynamic sculpture, especially when the wind blows," says Transit New Zealand's general manager of transport planning, Wayne McDonald.

"As a signatory to the Ministry of Environment's Urban Design Protocols, Transit has strived to ensure that these principles have been incorporated into the form and features of Central Motorway Junction."

Mr McDonald says the sculpture is part of a pohutukawa theme that is particularly pertinent to the motorway at this point where it sweeps down to the Waitemata Harbour. To emphasise this, precast concrete panels on retaining walls of the motorway's 'northern tie-in' - between Karangahape road and Victoria Park, have been decorated with pohutukawa flower 'bursts', while the sculpture itself will be surrounded by pohutukawa trees and other lower landscaping theme plants.

"The pohutukawa tree and its flower, which blooms at Christmas, will be reflected on the motorway and at the Nelson and Hobson Street ramps, by the pohutukawa theme. The sculpture will be the centre point at this important gateway to and from the city. Hopefully, it will help people to enjoy the Christmas spirit throughout the year."

**For further information please contact:**

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