

Scmp 9 SEPT 84

# \$430m bid to beat the jams

By JACK SPACKMAN

A major road-works plan costing \$430 million has been devised to remove traffic bottlenecks from Connaught Road in Central.

The four-phase project has been designed to provide motorists with a clear run all the way from Admiralty to Western.

Work on the first phase is expected to start within two years and will involve reconstruction of the existing Harcourt Road flyover near HMS Tamar.

The second phase, which could also start in 1986, will involve the construction of a two-lane, 300-metre tunnel under the intersection of Pedder Street and Connaught Road.

The tunnel will be built in the middle of Connaught Road, using the existing nature strip between the traffic lanes for the entrances, one near Swire House and the other near Exchange Square.

Further west, another flyover will start near the International Building in Gilman Street and run above Connaught Road to Sutherland Street, near the new Macau ferry terminal.

At the same time, the section of the road between Sutherland Street and West-

ern will be widened.

The new scheme, already into the final design stage, replaces earlier plans to improve traffic flow in Connaught Road, according to the Secretary for Lands and Works, Dr Nicky Chan.

One of the earlier proposals was a controversial elevated road running past some of the most expensive real estate in Hongkong.

That plan was scrapped after strong protests from owners and operators of buildings and businesses in the area.

The Harcourt Road flyover will be rebuilt and widened to allow three lanes of traffic in each direction, said Dr Chan.

The cost of that part of the scheme has been estimated at

\$70 million.

The Pedder Street underpass will cost \$140 million, while the Gilman Street to Sutherland Street flyover and the road-widening work further west will cost another \$220 million.

Dr Chan, in a review of public works coming on stream in the next few years, also revealed that relief is in sight for both motorists and pedestrians in Wanchai North, the area between Gloucester Road and the waterfront.

The solution being planned involves the construction of a new road, Gloucester Road, (Billions lined up - Hongkong builds its future - Page 9)