



Cycle Aware Palmerston North

PO Box 961

Palmerston North

Submission on

Palmerston North City Council's Draft Annual Plan 2008/09

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Cycle Aware Palmerston North is a cycling advocacy group. The current membership is approximately 40. Our aim is to bring about improvements for cyclists and an increase in numbers cycling especially for every day transport. Cycle Aware is a member of Cycle Advocates' Network (CAN), the umbrella organization of cycling advocacy groups in New Zealand. We encourage you to find out more about cycling advocacy by visiting the CAN website: www.can.org.nz
- 1.2 Cycle Aware is making a significant contribution to World Environment day event in Palmerston North (June 5-7) as transport is one of the key areas of focus for this year's World Environment Day, the theme of which is Kick the Carbon Habit.

2. MAJOR VARIANCES FROM THE 10 YEAR PLAN

- 2.1 Cycle Aware does not support the reduction in the Active Transport implementation (Programme 705.02) from \$5450,00 to \$200,000. We understand that there are two factors behind this significant funding cut: (i) the need for all activities and programmes to identify savings because of the Council's financial position; and (ii) delays in progressing a particular project in the Summerhill Drive area.

- 2.2 If there is a need to defer a particular project we consider that some, if not all, of the expenditure budgeted in the LTCCP 2006/16 should be reallocated to other Active Transport initiatives. A forum organised by Cycle Aware that took place in November 2006 highlighted a number of areas of cycling infrastructure which are seen as priorities for improving cyclist safety and encouraging more people to cycle for short trips. Soon after that forum the government released for consultation the Discussion Paper *Sustainable Transport – Update of the New Zealand Transport Strategy*. This document proposes a series of specific targets for the New Zealand Transport Strategy. Already the strategy has resulted in a significant funding boost for walking and cycling projects and future funding will be more closely aligned with the new targets. The Discussion Paper has a proposed target of 30% of total trips in urban areas being by walking and cycling by 2040 (up from 17% at present).
- 2.3 Even in the absence of government targets there is likely to be increasing use of walking and cycling as a result of fuel price increases. With the introduction of the Emissions Trading Scheme (and the application of this to the energy sector – which includes transport as of 2009), there will be greater use of cycling for everyday transport.
- 2.4 Already there has been growing interest in recreational cycling as evidenced by the increased numbers of imported bicycles. In the Manawatu there is evidence of substantial increase in recreational cycling. The Manawatu Masters Cycling Club membership has reached 160 - the highest in its 15 year existence. In addition, there is the Marist Cycling Club with approximately 60 members, and other clubs/groups with approximately 30 members. We expect that membership is now at an all-time high but also will increase given the popularity of cycling across a wide range of age groups and with both males and females

- 2.5 With more emphasis on cycling and more interest in cycling it is vital that the road environment cater more adequately for cyclists. Additional capital projects should be allocated the funding not required in 2008/09 for Summerhill Drive. The Cycling Forum and our previous submissions have identified a number of project that do not involve significant planning, and/or which address cycling infrastructure concerns that have existed for many years. The priorities reiterated at the November Cycling Forum were: more on-road cycle lanes and new off-road cycle paths. Many other local authorities have significant projects underway for expanded off-road cycling routes (e.g. the district councils in Taranaki, Taupo District Council). Participants at the Cycling Forum noted, in particular, the value of routes between PN and Longburn, PN and Ashhurst, and - as a top priority - PN to Feilding. We are aware the Manawatu District Council and community groups are keen to progress a sealed path between PN and Feilding.
- 2.6 For urban cyclists, **green slurry and advance stop boxes, cycle sensors and plentiful secure cycle parking facilities** are seen as vital for cyclist safety and perceptions of safety. Green slurry is used in Palmerston North generally only in short patches and more continuous marking is needed. Many councils now regard cycle parking as a key element of their urban design and cycle stands are very easy to identify and are stylish. In Palmerston North there are a number of key destinations in the city where convenient cycle parking is not available – for examples, immediately outside the new Council Customer Service Centre there is an ideal location for a sheltered cycle stand. In other places, especially in the CBD, the amount of parking is very limited and demand is outstripping supply. In several key areas where people want to leave cycles (airport, railway station, Transit, Main St bus terminus) there is no suitable storage. A further area for funding is **lighting** for the riverbank cycle path – in particular, the sealed path from the Fitzherbert Bridge to Dittmer Drive but also the mainly unsealed path

from the Fitzherbert Bridge to Te Matai Road. We are very pleased to see the small bit of seal that was recently added near Ruahine St and regard the sealing of the whole length to be a matter of high priority to allow for commuter cycling rather than confining it to mainly recreational cycling). We would also recommend sealing a path from Buick Crescent to Dittmer Drive so commuters in that area also have a suitable link to the Esplanade cycling path.

- 2.7 In our experience in recent years development of cycling infrastructure has often been hampered by **lack of data on cycling (numbers, trends, cyclist perceptions, non-cyclist perceptions)**. The full Active Transport implementation programme funding in the LTCCP for 2008/09 can be used for more research and data-gathering, as well as monitoring of implementation (all of which are currently under-resourced) if infrastructure has to be delayed and funds are not spent. In addition funds could be used to assist private businesses and community organisations to provide cycle parking.
- 2.8 Cycle Aware does not support deferral of the Railway Road Cycleway to 2009/10 (Partnership with Te Araroa) (p9). Cyclists have no suitable alternative to Railway Road which is an important route for cycling to and from Bunnythorpe and further north. With the North East Industrial Zone this area is experiencing increasing volumes of traffic. The Draft Annual Plan states on p9 that the Railway Road Cycling is deferred to 2009/2010 but on p69 it states that Railway Road Cycleway Programme 705.19 is amalgamated in Minor safety. A wide continuous cycle lane or path is urgently needed.
- 2.9 Cycle Aware notes that PNCC intends to develop a Council Climate Change strategy. We support this and highlight the very significant impact of transport emissions on NZ's greenhouse gas emissions. In order to support a transition to a low carbon economy, Cycle Aware recommends that PNCC

reconsider a number of areas of proposed increased expenditure such as \$1.4 m for the Ring Road Development (Programme 701.47, p69) and funding capital for PN Airport which appear to assume current patterns of transport use and which do not take into account significant increases in fuel from 2009 with the introduction of the Emissions Trading Scheme.

We thank Council for the opportunity to make a submission and we would like to present this submission at a Hearing Committee. Our preferred time is Thursday 15 May, 4.30-6.30pm.

Christine Cheyne

CAPN Co-secretary

27 April 2008

Contact details:

C.M.Cheyne@massey.ac.nz

Ph 3569099 ext 2816