



Environment Network Manawatu
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ENM submission to the PNCC DAP 2016-17 Including comments on Proposed Parking Management Plan 2016-18

Dear Palmerston North City Councillors,

Environment Network Manawatu (ENM) thanks you for the opportunity to make a submission on the draft annual plan 2016/2017. ENM is a charitable umbrella organisation dedicated to enhancing the environment within the Manawatu River catchment area. We receive fee for service funding from PNCC and grants from Lotteries, ECCT, COGS, as well as project funding from additional organisations. We currently have forty-nine member groups (three of which are inactive). Of our active groups, forty one are based in and/or routinely active in Palmerston North. This submission has been revised in response to member group feedback.

ENM COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE LTP FOR YEAR 2

1. \$163,000 per year to increase Community engagement and communication (Programmes 1266 and 1271)

Programme 1266- Additional Administrative Support to Community Engagement:
Increasing community engagement requires an increase in administrative resources for this area.

Programme 1271-Community Engagement and Communications:
To respond to the increase in the level of service to support Council engagement in regard to media releases, articles and the Mayoral speeches. To more effectively manage major communications projects.

ENM supports additional spending on community engagement particularly to support meaningful community participation in Council consultation and pre-consultation processes. Community friendly communication is an important aspect of that. We note the importance of allowing enough time for community groups and the community in general to respond to draft documents.

2. Festivals and events (Programmes 1280, 1273 and 1272)

ENM notes that the increase in spending on new festivals and events totals \$265k – a significant amount. We ask - how can these festivals and events contribute to the city's sustainability or other community development goals?

Reel Earth Environmental Film Festival

In relation to the above spending, ENM supports ongoing and new civic partnerships for Reel Earth from Councils serving the wider Manawatu region. These partnerships may include financial but also in-kind support to help realise Reel Earth's film competition and festival's ongoing success in leveraging NZ brand elements at the national and regional level for the benefit of the community.

3. \$400,000 in 2016/17 to improve the way we plan for all road users - including pedestrians and cyclists

Programme 689 - Integrated Transportation Management Plan:
Develop an Integrated Transportation Management Plan (ITMP) arising as a project from adoption of the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) in 2015.

We have been advised that the ITMP will comprise the following plans:

- Heavy vehicle and traffic plan
- Passenger transport infrastructure plan
- Parking management plan
- Cycling plan
- Pedestrian plan
- Cross-river transport and utilities resilience plan

ENM made a submission on the draft Integrated Transport Strategy 2015-45. We support the development of the Integrated Transportation Management Plan (ITMP) as a step towards a more people-friendly and environmentally-friendly transport system. We urge the Council to continue to engage with the community to support the development of this group of plans and to continue to consider how the different transport groups interact with each other.

Re the cycling plan, we strongly support Council engagement with utility and commuter cyclists through the group known as "People on Bikes". The group's vision is to work as an advocacy group with the Palmerston North City Council to develop a well-designed and safe environment in which to cycle. ENM supports this group's goal to have the funds available used to not only create a network that is safe for people on bikes but to create a culture on our roads that recognises and supports their rights and needs as road users.

Given the recently published River Park strategy and in particular the growing popularity of Te Apiti and the pending finish of the Palmerston North to Ashhurst walking and cycling track, we would like to recommend investigation of options for a safe river crossing for walkers and cyclists at Ashhurst with some urgency.

In relation to the above, we also query the delay in completing the Palmerston North to Ashhurst pathway, which according to the 2015-25 LTP budget was to be finished in 2015-16.

4. \$25,000 in 2016/17 to improve information about public transport and school travel planning

Programme 1283 - Travel Data Analysis for Planning Bus Services and School Travel:
To enable data analysis to be undertaken to identify where, when and how people who live in different parts of the City move about it so that bus routes and schedules can be better matched to actual need rather than as has been done in the past. (Matching Horizons Regional Council \$ for \$)

ENM is pleased to see steps taken to make good, data-driven decisions around the best ways to increase the use of public transport. We note that there are important threshold effects with respect to increasing the frequency of public transport and the availability of safe and convenient active transport routes. With respect to the public transport system, there are certain threshold levels of comfort, convenience, information, and routine that must be provided before people's preferences will change. Data collected on sub-optimal service levels would be a poor indicator of demand for good service.

We note that if HRC were to match PNCC contributions to data collection (\$25,000), there would be funding available for further research should questions arise out of the first round of data collection. We submit that getting public transport right is worth the expense.

In addition, we note there is no reference to changes to the city bus terminal in this upcoming year. We understand from Horizons Regional Council's draft annual plan that there will be an increase in bus services in the next financial year, and we question whether the existing bus terminal will be able to accommodate these increased services. Making public transport simple to use is essential to encourage uptake of this means of transport, therefore we urge Council to ensure the transition to increased bus services will happen without any disruption of the services due to limitations in the terminal area.

5. Additional \$10,000 to annual budget for improving cycle phasing at traffic lights (total annual budget would then be \$20,00)

Programme 1257 - City-wide - Cycle Phases at Intersections:

As a result of submissions and finalising the 10 Year Plan 2015-25 the Council resolved to initially investigate cycle phases at signalised intersections concentrating on those intersections that have high volumes of turning cycle movements.

Negotiating busy intersections can be a real challenge for people on bikes of all ages. ENM supports this investigation as a step towards improving the safety and cyclability of busy intersections.

6. \$40,000 to purchase 14 hectares of land adjacent to existing Council land holdings at Panieri Park

Programme 1282 - Purchase of adjacent land:
Purchase of 14 hectares of land adjacent to existing Council land holdings. Street address 200 Maxwells Line. The block is very similar in nature to the block recently purchased from Allied Concrete. It is located in a flood plain. The land is already extensively used by the public for informal recreation.

ENM supports the purchase of this land as an additional green space asset for the City and its communities

7. Update on Wastewater Treatment and River:

We note that PNCC intends to reduce Council debt to allow for spending on this and that initial steps will include investigation into treatment and disposal options + community consultation.

Improving our wastewater system is a high priority for the network. ENM agrees with the Forest & Bird submission on this matter. We strongly recommends that PNCC starts this process now, beginning with the development of “a firm timeline that clearly states milestones and deliverables” (as stated in the Forest & Bird submission.)

8. Forecasting assumptions related to Climate Change:

Under “Supporting Information” we see that forecasting assumptions in the 2015-25 Ten Year Plan (p187) assumed that “any climate changes will not be significant during the 10 Year Plan period but that there will need to be revised design approaches especially for stormwater in the longer term.”

Climate change is already underway and although it is impossible to predict exactly how and when this will impact on Palmerston North, we consider that impacts may well be significant within the next ten years. It certainly needs to be factored in to 30 year asset management plans.

We also share Forest & Bird’s concern that warming is likely to exasperate the impact of nutrient discharges from the wastewater treatment plant on algal growth, especially if we continue to get drier summers resulting in lower flows.

PROPOSED PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN 2016-18

ENM has chosen to comment on the proposed parking changes and the Proposed Parking Management Plan 2016-18 as part of our submission to the Draft Annual Plan

“Vision and the Future” statement (s1.2 pg 5)

ENM supports the proposed Parking Management Plan vision, especially in relation to better provision for and encouragement of sustainable transport (active transport and public transport). We also note our agreement with the statement within that “Less space allocated to parking will provide opportunities to better provide for pedestrians, cyclists, recreational and social facilities”. We agree that some of this parking space could also be used for commercial uses.

Appendix 1 to the proposal

The Appendix shows that too much space is taken up by parking that is not being utilised, especially metered space (on street and parking lots) which makes up the bulk of the parking stock reported on, particularly in the CBD. Our calculations show that metered spaces total 1764 but only 640 of metered spaces are utilised on average - just 36% when the target range is 75 – 90%.

Free parking

We do not support the provision of more free parking as a way to fill the spaces and therefore do not support an increase in rates to fund this. Space occupied by parking and dominated by the movement of vehicles does not add to the vibrancy or attractiveness of the inner city. Instead of encouraging people to bring their vehicles into the central city through the provision of more free parking, the amount of space allocated to parking needs to be reduced and more done to encourage people to use public and active transport as alternatives to the private motor vehicle.

Other comments

Re s2.4.1 p19: We support lengthening the time limit for metered on-street parking as long as the spaces are still paid for. This, for example, will enable people to go to a movie or attend longer meetings/appointments without risking getting a ticket.

Re S2.4.2 p20: We also support lowering of meter fees for streets just inside or on the ring road as commuter parking will be restricted in nearby residential streets

CONCLUSION

Thank you for considering the Environment Network Manawatu's submission.

We ask for an opportunity to speak to this submission. Our best available times to attend a hearing are as follows:

1st choice	Thursday, 5 May, 12-2 p.m.
2nd choice	Thursday, 5 May, 9-11 a.m.
3rd choice	Thursday, 5 May, 3.30 – 5.30 p.m.
4th choice	Wednesday 4 May 9 – 11 am or 12 – 2 p.m.

Warm regards,

Sally Pearce
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Environment Network Manawatu