

Normandale Residents Association

*c/o 301 Normandale Road
Lower Hutt*

SUBMISSION

TO HUTT CITY COUNCIL

on

Proposed Annual Plan 2008/9

The Normandale Residents Association wish to make the following submission on the proposed Annual Plan.

Overall comment

We are pleased to note the prominence given to Environmental Sustainability in the introduction, and the acknowledgement that this concept applies to all aspects of city life, not just the 'natural' environment. We are concerned however that this commitment is not obviously reflected in the policies, goals and performance measures of individual activity areas. We are particularly concerned that the Council appears in many activity areas, to be following a 'business as usual' policy rather than planning for reduced or negative growth. We understand that some measures indicated are outside the Council's control, and others would raise vociferous objection (although we suspect this would be a minority however vocal, as indicated by the view of the Community engagement workshops). Nonetheless, we strongly believe that this is an area where Council must take a lead rather than follow, and should start to introduce policies and practices that lead to greater sustainability in each activity area.

Level of Service Measures

Level of Service Measure – Parks and Recreation

We note with concern that the target for the key Level of Service Measure for Parks and Recreation, of Area of Parks and Reserves / 1000 population, has been more than halved from that achieved in 2006/7. We can see no justification for this reduction, note that it appears to be the only LSM that does not seek to improve on past performance and submit that the level be changed to greater than or equal to the 2006/7 value.

Level of Service Measure – Roading and Traffic

We note and approve of the LSM for Accident Trend of a reducing trend over a 10 year period. We note with concern however that the data provided indicates a rising trend for injury accidents reported over the last seven years, and that the fall in injury accidents in the three years preceding this could be attributed to the wide spread availability of improved car safety features in that period. We are concerned that the sample data is skewed by reference only to injury accidents, and that without reference to cause it is impossible to determine what if any, measure taken by HCC are effective in accident reduction. We submit that Roading and Traffic investigate and report to council within the 2008/9 year on a more appropriate measure.

Level of Service Measure – Local Urban Design.

We note and approve of the LSM to increase the tonnes of waste recycled. We are concerned however that there is no complementary measure to achieve a reduction in land fill waste under Activity 11 Solid Waste. We submit that to meet the Council's objective of Environmental Sustainability, the reduction of solid waste is essential and that the LTCCP should have a zero waste target. The 2008/9 annual plan should include as a minimum, the development of a strategy to achieve this within an acceptable timescale.

Specific Activity areas

Activity 4 Parks and reserves.

Normandale approaches.

We wish to note that the condition of the mown areas and amenity planting at the entrance to Normandale, above the Normandale overbridge continues to deteriorate. We note that most of the amenity planting and maintenance has been carried out by local residents in the past, but that this is now problematical due to encroachment. We would ask that the operational budget include work to restore the grassed areas (please see note on weed control below), eradicate Tradescantia from the area and re-grass where necessary.

Old coach Road Horse Trough.

We would also ask that provision be made to upgrade the area of the old horse trough including the provision of a seat and hard surface adjacent to the bus stop. We note that overhanging vegetation above the horse trough is detrimental to its maintenance and access, and ask that this be removed or cut back.

Weed control

The Normandale Residents Association (NRA) is concerned at the spread of weeds around the city, many of these especially Tradescantia spread vegetatively and the indiscriminate mowing of areas infested provide a prime vector for transmission.

We recognise that use of systemic herbicides carries its own risks, but feel that this is the only practical control method in this area.

Activity 7 Roothing and Traffic.

We note with concern that there is no provision in the 2009 budget for sub standard roading. The Normandale Residents Association and its predecessor the Normandale Progressive Association has consistently advocated for the upgrade of Normandale Road to its junction with Poto Road, and we believe that this work should be scheduled for completion within the current Annual Plan.

We also note that in our submission on last year's annual plan, we asked that traffic islands be provided at the junctions of:

- Corner of Normandale Road and Bridge Street
- Corner of Normandale Road and Miromiro Road
- Corner of Normandale Road and Poto Road.

We are still of the opinion that these are necessary to improve traffic flow and improve pedestrian safety.

Walking / cycling – provision of segregated and priority areas.

We are pleased to note the commitment to the extension of the Eastern Bays Walkway, but dismayed that the allocation to the Cycleway Network Development is small and in fact the same as that for car park re-surfacing!. We do not believe that this ratio of resource allocation is consistent with the HCC's commitment to Environmental sustainability.

We would ask that this activity area should as a matter of urgency include the development of a fully interconnected pedestrian and cycle network throughout the CBD and the restriction of vehicular access, including delivery and courier vehicles to times outside primary shopping hours.

Forecast Financial Statement – Prospective Net Debt Position

We note that this budget forecast contains a line item for "Asset sales" that includes income of \$1,850,000 for the forthcoming year. We are not aware of any consultation on the potential sale of Council assets and believe that this line item should be removed until such time as the potential assets for sale have been properly identified and the public fully consulted. The inclusion of any putative amount is in our view doubly wrong, it allows council to present a supposed plan based purely on guess-work, and also sets expectations that officers could feel duty bound to achieve.

P. Matcham
President