



General election 2008 A note for candidates

Support cycling!
Visit www.can.org.nz to find out how cycling wins votes.

Who are we?

CAN (the NZ Cycling Advocates Network) is New Zealand's national network of cycling advocates. We work with government and local authorities on behalf of day-to-day, recreational and leisure cyclists.



The facts about cycling:

There are many cyclists

- There are 1.274 million cyclists in NZ, about 30% of the population.
- More bikes than cars were sold in 2007.
- Over half of the 1.274 million cyclists are of voting age – that's 750,000 – or 26% of voters.
- About a third of cycling trips are for leisure – about the same as car trips.

Cycling is relatively safe

- Cyclists are less likely to be involved in on-road injury crashes than are other road users (1 in 1,000 cyclists each year, compared to 3 in 1,000 car drivers), including motorcyclists and pedestrians.
- Cyclists are less likely to cause crashes than other road users (only 40% of on-road cycle crashes are caused directly by the cyclist).
- Cyclist traffic offences total less than 1% of all traffic offences each year.

Cycling is practical for short journeys

- Most journeys are very short, ideal for cycling (about a third of vehicle trips are less than 2 km, and about two thirds are less than 6 km).
- Short car journeys clog the roads and hinder other traffic, such as the business traffic important to the economy.

Cycling is practical for different conditions

- Hills, weather and luggage-carrying capacity are not major deterrents to cycling, especially if road design and workplace facilities support cycling.
- We used to cycle a lot more in past decades when many facilities were lacking.

Cycling's health benefits are significant

- Car driving contributes to lack of exercise, and over one third of New Zealanders are not active enough. This inactivity contributes to nearly 10% all deaths (about 2,600 each year), and a larger proportion of health conditions (such as obesity, diabetes and cardiac diseases), at great expense to NZ.
- Cycling offers forms of easy, regular, useful exercise that all can enjoy.

Cyclists already pay their way

- Road taxes were set up to cover damage from motor traffic – damage from cycling is insignificant.
- Most adult cyclists are motorists, so paying through car-related taxes.
- Most adult cyclists also pay local body rates, which fund much local transport infrastructure.
- Only a miniscule proportion of the National Land Transport Fund (about one percent) currently goes on cycling and walking, and future funding plans show no significant increase in this proportion.
- Cycling facilities are only needed because motor traffic hinders cyclists' safety and accessibility.

Everyone benefits from cycling

Making New Zealand's cities, towns and roads cycle-friendly helps:

- Employers – less sickness and absenteeism through a fitter workforce.
- Household economy – more personal disposable income.
- Economic resilience – less vulnerable to oil price hikes.
- Traffic congestion – every bike is 'one less car' so saving on roading costs while benefiting the health and economic sectors.
- Social benefits, including crime deterrence through more 'eyes on the street'.
- Independent mobility for children – essential for their physical, social and intellectual development
- Less pollution means better air and water quality, with more health benefits

Progress on cycling

Since 2000, progress includes:

- A national walking and cycling strategy since 2005 (and implementation plan since 2006).
- Most local councils now have their own walking and cycling strategy.
- An increase in local councils encouraging cycling to work and school (such as walking school buses, mayor-led mass rides, cycle-friendly employer schemes).
- An official perception of cycling as important and useful rather than dangerous.
- Publications on cycle network and route planning, and engineering design, backed up by training courses.
- Some urban centres trialling bikes on buses and trains.

Increasing cycling

Some parts of the world have seen increases in cycling, not because they're flat (many aren't) or the weather is better (it isn't) or lifestyles are different (most trips are short in any country), but because governments have taken consistent action over time to invest seriously in cycling. Here's CAN's 9-point plan to improve cycling in New Zealand.

CAN's 9-point plan to help cycling:

1. Run a national Share the Road promotional campaign telling motorists and cyclists how to share roads safely.
2. Change transport planning and funding processes to make sure key problem areas or gaps for cyclists (e.g. Ngauranga to Petone cycleway, Auckland Harbour Bridge) get fixed – no more delays or buck-passing.
3. Spend less on road building and more on encouraging alternatives to driving: more motor vehicles on our roads only make things less safe and attractive for cycling.
4. Promote the use of lower speed zones (particularly 30km/h).
5. Change the tolerance for motor vehicle speed limit enforcement from 10km/h to a maximum of ten per cent of the posted speed limit.
6. Increase the walking and cycling budget in the National Land Transport Programme by a factor of five.
7. Change funding and audit processes to ensure that all roading projects improve the environment for cycling.
8. Change the driver licensing system and driver instruction (including bus and truck drivers) so motorists are educated about how to take care around cyclists.
9. Fund and promote nationwide roll-out of cycle skills training for children and adults.



For more information see:

www.can.org.nz