MEDIA RELEASE

1 November 2007

More funding needed for sustainable transport

The Conservation Council and Pedal Power have called for more funding for buses, cycling and walking in their review of the implementation of the ACT Government's Sustainable Transport Plan released today.

Ms Trish Harrup, Conservation Council director, said a sustainable transport system is critical for the life and vitality of a city.

'Cities that suffer from traffic congestion are less liveable and can struggle to attract skilled workers who are choosing to live in cities with quality public transport and clean air,' said Ms Harrup.

'Traffic congestion impacts on the economic heart of cities. At the moment we have property groups calling for more car parks in Civic but more car parks will mean more cars and greater traffic congestion. It makes more sense to invest in public transport, cycling and walking, to create more options for people travelling to the city'

Ms Harrup said the Sustainable Transport Plan was a good plan but critical funding had been lacking or cut. 'As a result, traffic congestion has worsened. The Sustainable Transport Plan itself predicted that traffic congestion would rise unless there was "consistent government investment over several years to achieve the plan's goals"! You can't say the Government wasn't warned.'

'What we need now is for the Government to meet its election promise to boost funding for ACTION buses, and we need them to make the Sustainable Transport Plan real by funding the measures in it' said Ms Harrup.

Tony Shields, Pedal Power advocacy director, said that there were a number of achievements for cycling but these were often 'low hanging fruit' that didn't require large budget funding.

'The ACT now has the Dickson-Woden cycle lanes, the best bicycle parking guidelines in the ACT, bike racks on buses and many kilometres of cycle lanes that were very cheaply installed when lines were remarked following road resealing. However we need to lift budget funding to fill in the remaining missing links in Canberra's cycle network. We have over 350 kilometres of cycle path in Canberra, much of it is unsigned. We should sign it so people know where they are going. We also need to build the path around the Jerrabomberra Wetlands and build cycle lanes on Cotter Rd.

For more details: Tony Shields 6262 5150, 0418 67 68 01
Trish Harrup 0412 425 665