

RoadRave@pncc

- an update from City Networks Roding staff

Volume 3, October 2007



A touch of spring welcomed motorists entering the city via Napier Road-Main Street recently

New Speed Limits for Palmerston North

The introduction of a new speed limits bylaw on 3 October will see 16 streets around the city have their speed limits reduced. The streets are generally those with large numbers of lifestyle blocks, and the changes set appropriate speeds for this type of development.

13 streets will have their speed limit reduced from 100km/hr to 70 or 80km/hr, whilst 2 streets reduce from 70-80 km/hr to 50km/hr. The section of Railway Road to just past the rail overbridge will come down to 50km/hr then return to its current 100km/hr speed limit. Roding staff believe the alterations in the speed limits within the city will improve the safety in the area.

It's an Asset?

Love it or loathe it, Roding staff are now responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the "Numbers" sculpture recently installed on the corner of Coleman Mall and The Square.



"Numbers" is the first of a series of sculptures sourced by the Public Sculptures Trust, and being placed around the city. Once they are part of the streetscape, they become part of the Roding Asset Management Plan.

The Benefits of Going Green

The section of cycle lane on College Street, between Victoria Avenue and the College Street School pedestrian crossing, has been painted green for its entire length as part of a data gathering exercise supporting a research project being conducted to determine the effects of colouring a cycle lane on driver behaviour.

The aim of the survey is to determine if vehicle speeds reduce as a result of cycle lanes being installed, thereby improving cycle safety, and whether coloured surfacing has any impact.

The study will look at three different scenarios; the roadway before cycle lanes, the improved road layout with cycle lanes marked, and the improved road layout with cycle lanes marked and coloured.

The green paint will fade over time and will not be repainted once this, or resealing, occurs.

Pahiatua Track Tree Replacement

Pine trees planted adjacent to the Pahiatua Track are being removed while they are still a manageable size, and replaced with native trees, such as Kowhai and Coprosma. The new trees are chosen for their particular growth patterns - they are species that do not grow as high or as wide as pine trees, and so don't have the same tendency to uproot and fall when they reach maturity.

If you are in the area, stop and view the slip opposite the lookout on the track – it clearly demonstrates what happens when trees don't do their part to help stabilise the land. This rejuvenation of native plantings in the city also supports the city's "Green Corridor" strategy.

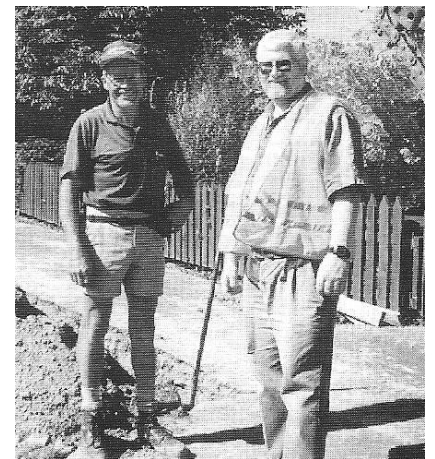


(1990)

Off to pastures new

Seventeen or so years ago, a youngish **Martin Skinner** [see left] joined PNCC and proceeded to dedicate his working hours to projects which generally involved digging up (or opening) roads [see right], all for the benefit of the people of Palmerston North – that is, of course, when he wasn't dedicating his time on behalf of the staff in his role of union rep!

Martin left City Networks late last month to take on a new role with the Department of Labour. No doubt our paths will cross again sometime.



Introducing Robin Malley Infrastructure and Projects Engineer



Robin is a relative newcomer to the City Council's Roding staff, having been employed by the unit since May of this year.

Born in Liverpool and raised in Cheshire, Robin and his wife Rhiannon came to New Zealand to live and work, taking advantage of a recruitment project

designed to entice qualified and experienced staff away from the United Kingdom to address a shortage of skilled staff working in local government throughout New Zealand.

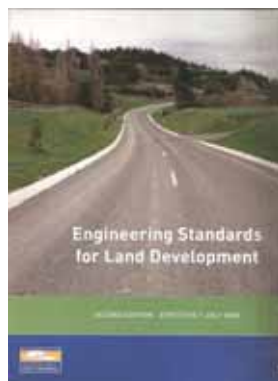
A desire to migrate to New Zealand combined with a BA in Town & Country Planning, and a Bachelor of Town Planning, Robin fit the bill nicely. He brings with him 7 years experience working for the Bristol City Council, and 2½ years as a consultant in the private sector working for private and public sector clients. Why New Zealand? The much smaller population and a belief that this country shows more respect for strangers and the community in general.

So far his role combines a mixture of many tasks as he gets to grips with working in a new environment. His role is a developing one, fitting in wherever he's needed to overcome a general lack of experience and/or manpower in the unit, "doing what needs to be done", and generally adding value to whatever projects he is assigned.

The biggest differences Robin has so far identified between working for local government in New Zealand as against the UK are the impact of legislation on the decision process. Local authorities in the UK have a lot more ability to control the built environment in respect of town planning. The UK Planning acts allow local authorities to specify how a development will look, the impact it will have, and how it will connect to other developments in the existing and future infrastructure while New Zealand's Resource Management Act does not appear to give local authorities the same level of control. NZ Highway standards and legislation are also very different from what he is used to as he is rapidly learning!

New Engineering Standards take effect

Our 'Engineering Standards for Land Development' have recently been reviewed to take note of the changes in use of materials, and national engineering standards and work practices over the past 10 years – bringing them in line with national standards.



Major changes include the need for more robust construction of vehicle crossings; increased thickness for footpaths to minimise damage during future construction; kerb and channelling requirements for rural lifestyle developments; and a requirement for all subdivisions to have all services constructed at the time of establishment.

Te Wanaka Road is horse-friendly

The Roding Unit is always looking to make the city's roading network user-friendly for all users, and has facilitated the construction of a fence by the Manawatu Racing Club on Te Wanaka Road. It is an example of taking an approach to meet the needs of two quite different means of locomotion ... It's horses to the left, and vehicles to the right, with a good stretch of fencing in between!!!



Resealing Programme

About 30 kms of city roading will be resealed over the summer months, as part of the roading renewal programme designed to ensure the continuance of a quality roading network. A chip sealed road surface generally has a life span of between 8-12 years.

Drivers will need to look out for newly sealed roads and drive slowly to allow the seal to settle down. Fast moving traffic, and heavy acceleration or breaking can rip up the new surface leading to expensive repair work. The temporary inconvenience to motorists is more than offset by the long term benefit of improved roads and reduced crash risk.

Construction Alert!



The **Pioneer Highway-Botanical Road intersection** is the centre of ongoing construction work for the next few weeks as work progresses on replacement of the stormwater pipes, followed by upgrading of the roadway. Access is sometimes limited, so if you are travelling in this direction, plan ahead, consider your options and take an alternative route where possible.

And avoid **James Line** if possible. Access routes to the cemetery may change as the roading upgrade progresses, with options including Napier highway, Brooklyn Heights or Kelvin Grove Road, being the best bet depending on the stage of the works at any given time.

