



**For Immediate Release
MEDIA RELEASE**

12 November 2009

Good Community Input gained on Walking and Cycling

Photo Opportunity

When – 9.45am on Friday 13 November

Where – Castlemaine Cycles

Presentation of prize to David Tuck from Cr Philip Schier, Mayor

More than 350 Mount Alexander Shire residents have responded to the public consultation phase of the Walking and Cycling Strategy. In addition to completing questions that will provide Mount Alexander Shire Council with relevant data, these community members have provided many well-informed suggestions and ideas to improve walking and cycling across the Shire.

The development of a Walking and Cycling Strategy aims to improve walking and cycling infrastructure and to encourage behaviour change. The strategy will identify the key areas where Council can most effectively work to make walking and cycling opportunities better for all in this community.

To provide a framework for the strategy, conceptual walking and cycling zones were placed around nine of the key townships in Mount Alexander Shire. The walking zones applied to a 2.5km radius around each town centre and the cycling zone applied to a 5km radius around each. The survey responses indicated that 74.6% of respondents live in a walking zone, 15.3% live in a cycling zone and the remaining 10.1% live outside both zone types.

When the data was tallied, the response that received the highest rate of 21.7% was “I really enjoy walking”, followed by “I mainly drive my car” at 20.7%, “I walk to get around” at 18.4%, “I ride my bike for transport” at 14.8%, “Bike riding is one of my favourite activities” at 14.7% and “I walk or ride to school and/or around town” at 9.6%.

Community suggestions were varied and touched on a range of topics including improved bike lanes in Maldon and Castlemaine, more off-road tracks for walking and cycling, speed limit concerns in some built up areas and suggested footpath improvements to some areas outside of business centres.

“This level of community engagement is very encouraging. It will assist us to develop an effective strategy”, said Cr Philip Schier, Mayor of Mount Alexander Shire Council. “We now have valuable information to assist us to improve walking and cycling in our Shire and for that I thank residents who participated by completing a survey.”

A prize of a \$300 bike or shoe voucher was offered as an incentive to residents who participated in the survey. The winner has been chosen and it is David Tuck who lives outside of the cycling zone of Newstead.

It is anticipated that the completed Walking and Cycling Strategy will be presented to Council in the near future.

Ends....

Media enquiries:

Aileen Walsh
Communications Officer
Mount Alexander Shire Council
Tel: 5471 1810 or 0407 706769
Email: a.walsh@mountalexander.vic.gov.au