ACT Budget Consultation
Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate

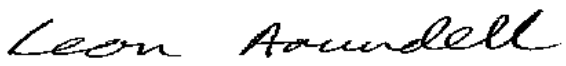
ACT Budget Submission 2016-17

Living Streets Canberra recommends that funding be provided to:

1. allocate 7% of transport funds to walking;
2. complete forty highly cost-effective walking and cycling projects;
3. review footpath costs, benefits and prioritisation;
4. footpath maintenance and connectivity;
5. employ City Rangers to manage walking obstructions on suburban streets;
6. employ traffic engineers to improve pedestrian safety;
7. make every Canberra street safe for walking;
8. improve safety and connectivity in and around Civic;
9. Commission a High Occupancy Vehicle Lane Study;
10. build a transit lane on Northbourne Avenue, from the Visitor Information Centre to the Pavilion Hotel
11. advance the construction of an additional lane on Northbourne Avenue, from the Barton Highway to Antill Street.

The following Attachments comprise our responses to the questions posed by the Chief Minister, plus further information on the above funding proposals.

With my best regards



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Attachments

Responses to questions posed by the Chief Minister

What services do we believe are most important for the Territory?

Access to schools, shops, recreational facilities and services.

How can the Government deliver current services more efficiently and productively?

By prioritising projects according to their relative value-for-money.

Are there any new ways to generate revenue and/or services you consider that the community should make a direct contribution to (a fee for service)?

No comment.

Are there particular services that you consider the Government should stop delivering or perhaps should deliver in a different way?

Free bus services should be limited to off-peak times, to avoid the cost of having to buy additional buses;

Discounted bus services should be limited to people who have limited incomes or who have limited transport options.

What are your views on the Government's taxation reforms, noting that its main objective is to replace inefficient taxes (such as conveyance duties and insurance premiums) with an efficient land-based tax?

No comment.

Is there any infrastructure that the Government should consider initiating in the next four years?

More footpaths, and strategically located high occupancy vehicle lanes.

Walking investments will reduce recurrent expenditures on health and roads, and improve mobility, access and health for all Canberrans, achieve the Government's *Transport for Canberra* walking mode share targets, and help achieve the *Weathering the Change* greenhouse emissions targets.

Funding proposals

1. allocate 7% of transport funds to walking;

Allocate 7% of transport funds to walking, to match *Transport for Canberra's* 2026 walking mode share target of 7%, and adjust the proportion every two years in order to ensure that the walking mode share remains on track to meet its target.

Published data from annual cordon counts indicate that the Government is currently achieving less than half of the walking mode share increase that is required if it is to meet its 2016 target.

2. complete forty highly cost-effective walking and cycling projects

Living Streets ranked the cost-effectiveness of 200 projects considered in the February 2011 *ACT Cycling and Pedestrian Network – Priority Network for Capital Works* report, after correcting for the report's methodological, data and calculation errors.

The Government has so far built about seventeen of the forty most cost-effective projects.

We estimate that the remaining twenty-three projects would cost $12 million and serve five times as many pedestrians and cyclists as does the City Cycle Loop.

The Territory and Municipal Services November 2011 *Walking and Cycling Trunk Infrastructure Report* stated that "*cost effectiveness … will be used* [to prioritise projects] *until more objective information on demand and demand forecasting can be established*."

Despite this recommendation, the Government has spent $6 million on the Civic Cycle Loop (ranked 90th) and $10 million on an off-road path alongside Majura Parkway (116th).

Of the forty most cost-effective projects, the remaining projects are:

Adelaide Ave off-road path	*Edinburgh Ave - on road lanes*	*Lake to War Memorial Links - off road path*
Aikman Drive cycle lanes extension - on road lanes	*Erindale Centre south link - off road path*	*Launceston Street - on road*
Athllon Drive off-road path missing link	*Fisher off-road path*	*Lawson Shoreline - off road Path*
Belconnen to Florey off-road path S1 - off road path	*Ginninderra Drive off-road path, UoC to Lake Ginninderra*	*Mawson Shops bypass route - off road path*
Brindabella Business Park off-road path	*Giralang Link - off road path*	*Menindee Drive off-road path*
Cantamessa Avenue path extension - off road path	*Hibberson Street Shared Space*	*Monaro Highway/ Newcastle Street intersection treatment*
Constitution Ave - off-road path	*Improvement of off-road path crossing at Miller Street between Macarthur*	*Thesiger Court Link - off road path*
Coulter Drive to Florey link - off road path		*University avenue - off road*

Dudley Street - off-road path *Easty Street link - off road path*	*and Quandong Streets* *Kent Street - off-road path* *Kingston Foreshore Link - off road path*	*path* *Wattle Street- off-road path* *Weston to Tuggeranong - off road path*

Note: Project costings in the February 2011 *ACT Cycling and Pedestrian Network – Priority Network for Capital Works* were typically about one-seventh of the costings that were determined based on closer examination. Therefore, priority should be given to those of the above projects whose revised costings exceed their original costing by less than seven-fold.

3. review footpath costs, benefits and prioritisation

Review the costs of, benefits of and priorities for building footpaths, especially along streets that currently have no footpaths.

A footpath offers a good return on investment. A recent research paper, "the cost-effectiveness of installing sidewalks to increase levels of transport-walking and health," concluded that:

- Installing more than one sidewalk represents a good return on investment.

Installing at least one sidewalk on each street is the most cost-effective intervention.

Extending the local walking and cycling network to all Canberra streets is likely to cost hundreds of millions of dollars. In order to obtain the greatest benefits most quickly from the available funding, projects that offer the greatest benefits per dollar should be prioritised.

Local walking and cycling infrastructure projects are currently prioritised, without consideration of cost, using a simple ten point scale based on desire lines, trip attractors, land uses, traffic volumes and bus usage.

They can be more effectively prioritised using cost-effectiveness estimates that include the factors considered in the February 2011 *ACT Cycling and Pedestrian Network – Priority Network for Capital Works* report:

Cost factors:

- Initial financial cost

Benefit factors:

- safety
- trip attractors
- connectivity
- barriers
- strategic importance
- number of residents served by the route
- the numbers of employees served by the route

4. footpath maintenance and connectivity

The Government recognises footpath maintenance as a funding priority.

Connectivity is affected by the presence or absence of pram ramps, especially for parents with babies, child cyclists, and the increasing numbers of old or mobility-impaired people who use mobility scooters.

At many existing intersections, pram ramps are either poorly aligned or non-existent. A mobility scooter cannot mount a ten-centimetre kerb. In the absence of a pram ramp, a person on a mobility scooter must move onto the road at the last driveway before the intersection, scoot along the road (often in the 'wrong' direction) and through the intersection, until they reach the next driveway after the intersection.

5. employ City Rangers to manage walking obstructions on suburban streets

Walking is currently discouraged, on the one in three suburban streets that have no footpaths, by illegal landscaping and by illegal parking that obstruct nature strips, force pedestrians to walk on roads into the face of oncoming vehicles, prevent them from stepping off the road when vehicles approach, and/or obstruct the view of approaching vehicles.

Living Streets Canberra has counted 150 such obstructions in one suburb alone. Three quarters of those obstructions were caused by landscaping, and one quarter by illegally parked cars.

Most residents would voluntarily remove these obstructions if City Rangers were to notify them that the obstructions were illegal, and to make them aware of the consequences that they were causing for their neighbours and for their neighbours' children.

Figure 2: A nature strip obstructed by landscaping.

6. employ traffic engineers to improve pedestrian safety;

Employ additional traffic engineers to revise traffic signal timings and improve intersection designs, in order to reduce unnecessary pedestrian wait times and thus improve compliance and safety, improve amenity and reduce time costs.

Cost: approximately $150,000 per year.

7. make every Canberra street safe for walking

Plan to make every Canberra street safe for walking by 2031, by converting suitable streets to *Woonerfs* and by constructing footpaths along other streets that currently have no footpaths.

The ACT road network directly reaches the driveways of 100% of Canberra's homes.

In contrast, the network of on-road cycle lanes, shared community paths and shared footpaths directly reaches the driveways of only 50% of Canberra's homes. Another one in five residents can reach a shared path by crossing the road. Three in ten Canberrans live on streets that have no footpaths.

People may legally walk along nature strips, but this is not possible when nature strips are obstructed (as they often are) by landscaping, parked cars or construction works. Even when they are properly maintained, nature strips offer trip hazards, are impractical in wet weather or for baby carriages and mobility scooters, and make for hard going for child cyclists.

Despite the lack of footpaths, the number of children who walk, cycle or bus to school is comparable to the number of adults who walk, cycle or bus to work.

More footpaths will enable more children to ride to school, thus reducing the number of two-way car trips that provide children's one-way trips to or from school. More footpaths will also provide all Canberrans with better access to local shops, services, jobs, bus stops and recreational facilities.

8. improve safety and connectivity in and around Civic

Northbourne Avenue accounted for seventeen of the Territory's 189 recorded pedestrian crashes in 2010-12, even though it represents only five kilometres of the Territory's 3,319 km of roads[1].

The most dangerous section of Northbourne Avenue is the 400 metres from London Circuit to Barry Drive/Cooyong Street. This short section accounted for thirteen of those pedestrian crashes.

Cooyong Street and Barry Drive are also highly dangerous. The 1.3 km of Cooyong Street accounted for nine of those pedestrian crashes. The 800 metre section of Barry Drive, from Northbourne Avenue to North Road/McCaughey Street, accounted for seven.

Note: figures for Northbourne Avenue, Barry Drive and Cooyong Street each include the four pedestrian crashes recorded at the intersection of Northbourne Avenue, Barry Drive and Cooyong Street.

1 ACT State of the Environment Report, 2011: http://www.envcomm.act.gov.au/actsoe2011/people_transport.html

Priority actions to improve safety and connectivity in Civic and along Northbourne Avenue include:

1. Complete the implementation of the 40 km/h speed limit in Civic, by including Northbourne Avenue in the 40 km/h zone;
2. Re-program the traffic signals at the intersections of Northbourne Avenue and London Circuit, Alinga Street, Rudd and Bunda Streets, and Barry Drive and Cooyong Streets, to (a) synchronise at 40 km/h with other traffic signals along Northbourne Avenue at times of peak road traffic, and (b) synchronise the eastern side pedestrian signals with the western side pedestrian signals at times of peak pedestrian traffic;
3. Extend the 40 km/h zone to include Barry Drive (from North Road/McCaughey Street to Northbourne Avenue), Cooyong Street and Coranderrk Street, to provide can safe access to Civic for residents in existing and new developments in Turner and Reid;
4. Investigate the road safety and congestion reduction benefits of reducing the width of the median at the intersection of Northbourne Avenue with Barry Drive and Cooyong Street, so that traffic signals can be programmed to:
   (a) increase green time in each phase by up to two seconds; and
   (b) allow pedestrians to cross Northbourne Avenue without an additional ninety second delay on the median. This will give them a reason to detour to the intersection rather than risk a mid-block crossing, and will reduce their temptation to make risky crossings against red pedestrian signals.

Figure 2: Inadequate walking infrastructure, only one block from Canberra's CBD.

9. commission a High Occupancy Vehicle Lane Study

Commission a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane Study, to update the 2012 Transit Lane Study and address:
(a) impacts of HOV lanes on HOV and general traffic congestion delays;
(b) impacts of HOV lanes on total intersection throughput;
(c) impacts of “Bus” signal operation on total intersection throughput;
(d) changes of the above impacts since 2012;
(e) the effect of varying the distance between the end of the HOV lane and the intersection to which the HOV lane leads;
(f) the extent to which transit lanes can contribute towards the achievement of *Transport for Canberra*'s mode share targets
(g) specific case studies including:
* Northbourne Avenue: Visitor Information Centre to Pavilion Hotel.
* Flemington Road (Sandford St to Federal Highway)
* Callam St, approaching Hindmarsh Drive)
* Northbourne Avenue: Barton Highway to Antill St.

The 1.3 km Bus Lane along Flemington Road, from Sandford St in Mitchell to the Federal Highway, currently reduces bus travel time by about ten minutes, compared with traffic in the adjacent general traffic lane.

Gungahlin-Civic car travel time in uncongested conditions is about 17 minutes. In 2014 this time increased by 18 minutes to 35 minutes during the AM peak (Capital Metro Business Case).

Scheduled Gungahlin-Civic bus travel time in 2014 was 22 minutes in uncongested conditions (except for one very early service which probably made very few stops), increasing by only six minutes to 28 minutes in the AM peak. This indicates that the 1.3 km Flemington Road bus lane, and the short bus lane at the approach to the Barton Highway, combined to reduce the congestion impact by 12 minutes. Most of this benefit is attributable to the Flemington Rd section.

10. build a transit lane on Northbourne Avenue, from the Visitor Information Centre to the Pavilion Hotel

A 600 metre T2 lane, from the Visitor Information Centre to the Pavilion Hotel, would reduce AM peak Gungahiln-to-City and Dickson-to-City bus travel times by two to three minutes, by allowing buses, and cars carrying passengers, to bypass several hundred metres of congested traffic. It would deliver buses close enough to Wentworth Avenue that they would be able to pass through that intersection in the next available green phase of the traffic lights.

It would also reduce traffic congestion by encouraging car drivers to travel as passengers either in buses or in other cars. The *Transport Demand Elasticities Study* showed that reducing public transport travel times is the most effective way to increase public transport patronage.

This T2 lane would reverse the adverse impact of the 3 minutes that were added to scheduled Gungahlin-Civic bus travel times in early 2015, and thus would contribute to the Government's commitment to a 10.5% public transport journey-to-work mode share.

It would have no or negligible adverse effect on general traffic throughput at the intersection, because it would allow general traffic to queue in the left lane for 160 metres, from the intersection back towards the Hotel.

Cost: around $0.5 million.

11. advance the construction of an additional lane on Northbourne Avenue, from the Barton Highway to Antill Street

This section of road is fully congested in the AM peak, adding several minutes to Gungahlin-Civic bus travel times and thus, according to the *Transport Demand Elasticities Study*, reducing patronage.

A recent Capital Metro report says that an additional lane will be needed on this section.

Advancing the construction of this lane, and using it as a transit lane, will help the Government to achieve its commitment to a 10.5% public transport journey-to-work mode share.

Adverse impacts on general traffic throughput at the Antill St intersection can be minimised by terminating the transit lane before the intersection, so that general traffic can also queue in the transit lane.