



# Inner South Canberra Community Council

## CHAIR'S REPORT – INNER SOUTH CANBERRA COMMUNITY COUNCIL Annual General Meeting 12 November 2019

### 1. Introduction

The ISCCC has been operating for nine years, since our establishment in 2010. As the peak body for suburban residents associations and groups in the Inner South, the Council focuses on matters with implications for Inner South Canberra as a whole, and especially on planning and development issues. The ISCCC complements and assists, rather than duplicates, the role of residents groups.

### 2. Progress on the ISCCC's Current Priorities

#### **PRIORITY 1: Advocate for integrated and effective urban planning in the inner south and across Canberra**

##### **Better understanding what inner south residents value**

To advocate effectively, the ISCCC needs to keep up to date with views of inner south residents on planning issues, to understand what they value and would like to see protected, and what they would like to change in the inner south. In late October 2019, the ISCCC launched an online survey titled "*What would make your life better where you live*" and promoted it through social media and a letterbox drop to every address in the inner south. We are promoting it further until at least the end of January. At this AGM, we are reporting on the initial results.

##### **Participating in the ACT Government's Housing Choices and Planning Review Processes**

The ISCCC has participated in the follow-up from the ACT Government's community engagement on Housing Choices, which looked at whether housing needs of the Canberra community were being met and how they can be better met in the future. We were given an opportunity to comment on a preview of an amendment to the Territory Plan, in particular aimed at mandating a minimum area of soft landscaping area in all residential areas. That amendment appears to have been put on hold pending the Government's current Planning Review. However, it is good to see that a requirement for at least 30 percent of plantable space and a 30 percent canopy target have been embedded in the Government's Living Infrastructure Plan.

The ISCCC participated in workshops in May 2019, organised by the Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, aimed at co-designing community engagement for the Planning Review. The ISCCC remains concerned, however, that governance of the planning system is "off the table" in this review, and that for the past six months there has been no mechanism for regular stakeholder engagement on the review.

##### **Planning for urban intensification corridors – Civic to Woden, and Manuka to Foreshore**

With the ACT Government's release of the Planning Strategy 2018, as well as the proposed route for light rail stage 2, the ISCCC organised a public forum in June 2019 to raise awareness of the strategy and the areas proposed for intense urban development. We were also keen to hear from ACT City Services how such intense development would be accompanied by improvements in amenity.

This is relevant not only to the City to Woden corridor but also to the Manuka to Kingston Foreshore corridor. In both cases, we have been disappointed that the ACT Government has not responded to calls over several years for community engagement on holistic planning for these precincts. This is despite, for example, a commitment by the Government prior to the 2016 election to establish a

community panel to develop a masterplan for the Manuka Oval and surrounding precinct. In the absence of Government action on this, the ISCCC organised a public forum in April 2019 on Planning for Manuka to the Foreshore. Over 60 residents provided considerable and valuable feedback about what they valued in the precinct, and on what they saw as opportunities and challenges. The ISCCC and member groups are keen to work with the ACT Government on initiatives to improve amenity in this area, including to follow up on suggestions from the public forum. We remain committed, however, to the need for holistic planning for this precinct.

#### **New requirement for Design Review Panels**

The ISCCC is pleased that its representations and that of many other stakeholders have borne fruit with the ACT Government's new legislated requirement for Design Review Panels to consider designs for major buildings and developments.

### **PRIORITY 2: Advocate for compliance with, and enforcement of, planning rules**

#### **Transparent, auditable Development Application (DA) processes**

The ISCCC made a submission to the Legislative Assembly Inquiry into Development Application Processes about a year ago and was hoping to participate in the follow-up this year. However, the Assembly Inquiry extended the timeframe and will not report until the end of 2019.

#### **Effective and accountable inspection and compliance system**

Similarly, the Legislative Assembly's Inquiry into Building Quality, to which the ISCCC lodged a submission in September 2018, is ongoing and has heard explosive evidence this year about appalling examples of building defects. The ISCCC continues to liaise with the Owners Corporation Network and other stakeholders in relation to building quality issues, commented on the draft Building and Construction Legislation Amendment Bill and looks forward to the Inquiry's final report and the Government's response.

#### **Greater transparency and accountability in deconcessionalisation of concessional leases**

The ISCCC was pleased that advocacy by ourselves, member residents groups and other stakeholders has led to a positive outcome, with the ACT Government rejecting the deconcessionalisation bid by the Canberra Services Club in Griffith and Barton. In the ISCCC's view, the deconcessionalisation bid had failed to meet the public interest requirement laid out in legislation.

In a separate development, the ACT Government decided not to reduce the Lease Variation Charge following a Lease Variation Charge Review (Feb 2019). The Government's detailed Consultation Report referred several times to ISCCC advocacy calling for the LVC not to be reduced.

### **PRIORITY 3: Advocate for an integrated and effective transport, traffic management and parking system**

At the ISCCC's last AGM, and at subsequent ISCCC and Old Narrabundah Community Council public forums, concerns were expressed about the proposed new bus network, including that the elderly and less mobile would be disadvantaged by the new network, as they need to change buses to go to Canberra Hospital and other medical facilities in Woden for treatment. We followed up with submissions, but unfortunately, several concerns of inner south residents were not taken on board in the changes to the bus network introduced in April 2019. We look forward to working with the Government on future changes to the bus network to address the issues raised.

The ISCCC has continued to engage in Government processes associated with the proposed Light Rail Stage 2 from Civic to Woden, including at our public forums. We also lodged a submission recently

to the federal Government calling for a public inquiry into impacts under the EPBC Act of Light Rail Stage 2 (b) from Commonwealth Park to Woden.

**PRIORITY 4: Advocate for effective community engagement in relation to local planning, development and heritage**

The ISCCC undertook to produce a hardcopy newsletter for distribution to inner south households, with a link to an online survey to determine what the community values, what they would like to preserve, or else what they would like to see change, in the inner south, including in relation to local planning, development and heritage. We have fulfilled that commitment with a newsletter distributed by the end of the first week in November 2019.

The ISCCC has organised regular public forums, kept its website up to date, increased significantly our followers on Facebook and Twitter (see further details below).

**PRIORITY 5: Advocate for waste management strategies that minimise health and other risks to inner south residents**

A continuing major issue for the ISCCC is proposals for waste facilities in Fyshwick, including within a few hundred metres of inner south residents' homes. This has occurred within the broader context of the ACT Government's development of its waste management and waste to energy policies. The ISCCC has been calling on the ACT Government to adopt waste policies consistent with those in other jurisdictions aimed at preventing the ACT becoming a destination for other jurisdictions' waste.

The ISCCC has made submissions on:

- Waste Feasibility Study Roadmap and Recommendations (2 July 2018)
- Waste to Energy Policy (18 December 2018)
- Proposed Fyshwick rail freight terminal (Response to DA201835108, 1 April 2019)
- Metal recycling facility in Fyshwick (Response to DA 201935337, 14 June 2019)

The Chair contributed an opinion piece published on 11 July this year in Riot-ACT on "Could Canberra become a new dumping ground for Sydney's waste".

The Chair would like to pay tribute to the fantastic work being done by member residents groups to stay on top of this issue, including Peter and Barbara Moore in the Kingston and Barton Residents Group, the Griffith Narrabundah Community Association and the Old Narrabundah Community Council. These issues will no doubt keep us all busy in the coming year.

**PRIORITY 6: Strengthen ISCCC and member group capacity and capability**

Given that the ISCCC and member residents groups all rely on the goodwill of volunteers, it is amazing what we manage to achieve each year.

The ISCCC contributes financially towards the communication activities of member residents groups, and will continue to work with our member groups to enhance our communication and other capacity to engage with inner south residents and the broader community.

### **3. Participation in other recent initiatives and meetings**

ISCCC committee members have participated in other recent initiatives and meetings, including:

- Meetings of the [Combined Community Councils](#) and the [ACT Environment and Planning Forum \(subsequently abolished in August 2019\)](#), and between Community Councils and the ACT Government on ways of working together to enhance community engagement strategies.
- ACT Government stakeholder workshops and meetings, including on Housing Choices and the Planning Review.

### **4. Council Meetings**

The Council meetings have been open to the public and have been variously advertised by broadcast emails, on Twitter, on Facebook, on radio, in newspaper articles, on the ISCCC website and in the ISCCC newsletter. The number listed below of guests attending our public forums is likely to understate actual numbers as many attendees chose not to sign the attendance registers.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Total guests</b>	<b>Key Agenda Item</b>
10/7/18	78	Council Forum on Public Transport: light rail stage 2 and new bus network.
14/8/18	13	Committee meeting - General business
10/9/18	450+	Institute of Governance & Policy Analysis ISCCC forum, co-sponsored by ISCCC: "Impact of Planning Decisions on Canberra's Heritage Values and Urban Form".
9/10/18	47	Council Forum on Creating a neighbourhood in Dairy Flat Road, Fyshwick, and proposed Crematorium and funeral home in Symonston.
9/10/18	15	Committee meeting - General business
13/11/18	20-30	Council Forum and AGM: waste and waste to energy policy; and new integrated transport network.
11/12/18	16	Committee meeting - General business
12/2/19	38	Council Forum on <i>Moving Canberra: Integrated Transport Strategy</i> , and drones.
12/3/19	15	Committee meeting - General business
9/4/19	60	Council Forum on Future Planning for Manuka to the Foreshore.
5/5/19	176	Council Forum 'Politics in the Pub' Program; informal one-on-one chats with candidates, candidates Forum with 13 candidates and Q&A session.
14/5/19	11	Committee meeting - General business
11/6/19	84	Joint ISCCC/YRA Forum on Urban Renewal and intensification, and update on proposed Fyshwick freight and waste facilities.
9/7/19	43	Joint ISCCC/GNCA forum on Single Use Plastics and Redevelopment of former Gowrie Court site in McIntyre Street, Narrabundah.
10/9/19	14	Committee meeting – General business
22/9/19	84	Joint ISCCC/KBRG Forum on Kingston Arts Precinct
8/10/19	47	New Climate Change and Living Infrastructure Strategies, National Capital Authority's Tree Management Policy Issues Paper, and independent perspective on these issues.

In addition, member Residents Groups have held suburban meetings as and when required. The ISCCC provides some funding, sourced from its government grant, to assist them promote these meetings and undertake relevant communication activities.

#### **5. Representations to the ACT government or other ACT entities in 2018-19 included:**

- Waste Feasibility Study Roadmap and Recommendations (2 July 2018)
- ACT Legislative Assembly Inquiry into Development Application Processes (submission on 3 August 2018, and gave evidence on 13 September 2018)
- Proposed changes to Community Contributions Scheme (13 August 2018)
- New Bus Network (15 August 2018)
- ACT Legislative Assembly Inquiry into the Quality of Building Construction in the ACT (30 September 2018).
- Lease Variation Charge (17 October 2018)
- Waste to Energy Policy (18 December 2018)
- Design Review Panels (15 January 2019)
- Deconcessionalisation of the concessional lease of the Canberra Services Club in Griffith (adjacent to Manuka Oval - 5 November 2018 and 21 February 2019)
- Evidence before ACT Legislative Assembly Inquiry into Nature in the City (13 March 2019)
- Draft Integrated Transport Strategy (31 March 2019)
- Proposed Fyshwick rail freight terminal (Response to DA201835108, 1 April 2019)
- Metal recycling facility in Fyshwick (Response to DA 201935337, 14 June 2019)
- Changes to ACT Electoral Boundaries (ACT Electoral Commission – 18 March and 3 June 2019)
- Canberra Brickworks Precinct Access Road and Dudley Street Upgrade (DA201935514 – 18 June 2019)

#### **6. Representations to the Federal government in 2018-19 on:**

- Works Approval application to National Capital Authority by ACT Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) Directorate for Dudley Street upgrade (off Cotter Road) in Yarralumla (5 April 2019)

#### **7. Other engagement**

- Provided a speaker, the Chair, to address a session at the annual conference of the Canberra Urban and Regional Futures (CURF) on case studies of community engagement, 29 Nov 2018.
- Participated in the Connect and Participate (CAP) Expo on 4 May 2019.
- Provided information of interest to Inner South Canberra residents on the ISCCC website [isccc.org.au](http://isccc.org.au).
- Reached out through our member residents groups to promote our events through their e-newsletters, social media and noticeboards. eg Kingston and Barton Residents Group has more than 600 Instagram followers.
- Continued to use ISCCC e-newsletters to promote ISCCC events and activities.
- Continued Facebook and Twitter Accounts which link to the ISCCC website. The ISCCC now has over 1000 followers on Twitter, and will continue its efforts to increase its reach through Facebook, with the number of followers increasing from about 200 a year ago to over 400 at time of writing.
- Engaged further with the Inner South Canberra community by supporting and contributing to member resident groups' newsletters and events.

- Promoted better public awareness of ISCCC activities, public attendance at ISCCC events, and other participation, through interviews for print, radio and television.
- The Chair contributed an opinion piece about waste management issues, including proposed Fyshwick facilities, to Riot-ACT: <https://the-riotact.com/could-canberra-become-a-new-dumping-ground-for-sydneys-waste/309924>
- Representation on Community Panels for Canberra Brickworks and Kingston Arts Precinct

ISCCC member groups have organised and promoted community activities such as heritage-related events and community festivals.

## **8. Future Directions**

The results of the ISCCC's online survey will help to steer our future direction.

It is clear already that inner south residents value highly the treescapes and open green spaces in their suburbs. That suggests future ISCCC advocacy on our urban forest and public realm and collaboration with the Government and other stakeholders with respect to implementation of the Government's Living Infrastructure Plan.

It is also clear that inner south residents want to be consulted on new development or redevelopment that occurs on neighbouring or nearby properties. This and other findings from our survey will guide the ISCCC's advocacy in response to the current Planning Review.

The ISCCC will also continue to engage with the ACT Government in relation to the proposed Fyshwick waste facilities, which have generated major community concern, and in relation to Light Rail Stage 2, bus network and other transport issues.

We will continue to seek good outcomes in urban renewal in cooperation with member groups in particular precincts, for example through participation in the Canberra Brickworks and Kingston Arts Precinct community panels.

It is also critical that the ISCCC works actively with member residents groups to build capacity to reach out and engage with inner south residents and the broader community, including the more disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community.

## **9. Thanks**

I would like to thank my fellow ISCCC committee members for their support and valuable contributions to our work over the past year, and over many years. Often people don't realise how much time and effort committee members put into our activities. It is immense, especially at busy times. Many of our committee members also have responsibilities as officeholders in residents groups and I thank those residents' groups also for their continuing support. Their active and ongoing participation is critical to the success of the ISCCC.

We were very sad that a Committee member, Austin Lynch, who had been on our committee since our formation in 2010, died a few months ago. Austin was a representative of the Old Narrabundah Community Council on our Committee, and I would like to acknowledge his contribution to the ISCCC, the ONCC, and the inner south community.

I would like to thank also other volunteers who have assisted the ISCCC in the past year, including Sonia Owens, who has been a great support in event management, most notably the *Politics at the Pub* event in May that involved 13 candidates as speakers and about 180 participants prior to the

federal election. As mentioned earlier, Barbara Moore and other volunteers have done an enormous amount of work on Fyshwick waste issues and I thank them for their hard work and commitment.

Thanks finally to Eastlake Football Club for providing the ISCCC with free access to functions rooms for our committee meetings and public forums. We have appreciated that support greatly.

Marea Fatseas  
Chair  
Inner South Canberra Community Council  
12 November 2019