



# Inner South Canberra Community Council

## ISCCC Submission in response to ACT Government Draft Integrated Transport Strategy

### Introduction

The ISCCC welcomes the opportunity to comment on the *Moving Canberra 2019-2045: Integrated Transport Strategy*. We appreciate the scope of the work that was done to prepare this document. Transport policies and strategies can be complex and pose a challenge because the outcomes affect everyone, and often in different ways, depending on the individuals' needs.

There are several issues of concern that we would like to identify.

### The Vision

In the Executive Summary the Vision is stated as:

"The ACT Government has a vision for a future transport experience that is modern, sustainable, integrated and provides real alternatives to driving."

It says nothing about the needs of the people. There could be a fully integrated transport experience, but it might take a person all day to get from point A to point B.

A better Vision would be "**A fully integrated and sustainable transport system that best meets the needs of our citizens.**"

In the main body of the text the Vision is expanded to say:

"Our integrated transport network will enable Canberrans to plan and enjoy seamless, multi-modal travel, and will capture the economic, social and environmental benefits of borderless movement of people and goods."

It says nothing about realistic alternatives to driving. People can enjoy a seamless experience but will it help them travel safely from A to B in an acceptable timeframe?

### How did the Transport for Canberra strategy 2012-2031 fare against its goals?

It would have been very useful to know whether the goals and actions outlined in the 2012-2031 document were achieved and if not, what we can learn from that to improve the likelihood of achieving the vision in *Moving Canberra 2019-2045*.

### New bus network

We are disappointed that the needs of one of the most disadvantaged suburban communities in inner south Canberra, Old Narrabundah (up to 30 percent public housing), have still not been addressed in the new bus network, despite many representations from the Old Narrabundah Community Council and the ISCCC. Aged and other residents with mobility issues used to travel to Canberra hospital and other health facilities in Woden directly by bus, but that bus route no. 5 was axed, and the new bus network requires them to change buses to travel to the hospital.

There has been a small improvement in the R2 (previously the Rapid 200), which used to terminate at the railway station after 7pm but now continues along Canberra Ave past old Narrabundah to Fyshwick.

The railway and Fyshwick markets route appears to have been cancelled. There will be a service 'close to' these areas but not directly 'to them'. This has implications for people carrying luggage (from the Railway Station) and groceries (from the Markets).

While the new bus services are aimed at more frequent, faster services, they will deliver fewer destinations to people who use them. There will be a loss of several bus stops in Forrest, Barton and the Parliamentary triangle, currently provided by the 2 and 3 buses. People from Curtin, Garran, Hughes, Deakin, who work in these areas and currently catch the 2 and 3 buses will have to change buses (onto the new Pink Rapid) to get there. Many inner south residents and those who work in Forrest and Barton have lost a direct connection to ANU and the inner north, and to health and other services from Deakin (eg John James) to Garran (Canberra Hospital). The need to change buses at least once to reach destinations will increase travel time. One solution could be to change either the new Route 57 or 58 to service the bus stops in Forrest, Barton and the Parliamentary Triangle that have been dropped.

We understand that children catching buses to Forrest Primary School and Red Hill Primary School will be disadvantaged by the new bus network. We do not have details about how many children may be affected, but clearly there are implications for child safety.

### **Distances to Bus and Light Rail Stops**

In June 2018 Transport Minister Meegan Fitzharris said that 55 per cent of Canberrans would be within an 800m walk of a rapid or light rail stop.

We contend that 800m is too far to walk during inclement weather and for people with mobility issues. Accessibility of bus and light rail stops also depends on the typography and whether people need to cross roads to get to the stops.

They will invariably take their cars. Brendan Halloran carried out a detailed analysis in Canberra of actual walking distances from every property in Canberra and found that just 36 per cent of residents will fall within that distance (<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/politics/act/most-canberrans-live-too-far-from-tram-or-rapid-bus-stops-20180917-p504c3.html>). When that figure is reduced to 400m - a distance widely regarded by town planners as the maximum most people will be prepared to walk to transport (see the guidelines for Victoria) - just 15 per cent of the population will be within reach of a stop. The data only relate to rapid and light rail stops and do not include other local bus routes, but indicate why the car is often the preferred mode of transport.

We had hoped that the *Moving Canberra* document would have contained a more rigorous analysis of distances and destinations.

### **Light rail and development along Canberra's Strategic Corridors**

The roll-out of light rail is about densification as much as it is about mass transport. In the ACT Planning Strategy 2018 the light rail corridor along Adelaide Avenue and Yarra Glen is identified as an area where land use is being investigated.

It is vital that the business case for Light Rail Stage 2, including the costs and benefits, be made public before any work is started on this very expensive project. This should include an investigation of alternative technologies for electrified transport.

It is critical that the Government commence community engagement with respect to land use along the Woden to Civic corridor as soon as possible, to avoid the situation occurring in stage 1 of the light rail, where the light rail has almost been completed but there is still no final approved master plan governing land use along that corridor.

Finally, it would be prudent to evaluate the impacts of Light Rail stage 1 after its completion in order to draw lessons for stage 2.

## **Parking**

The lack of parking is creating problems for inner south local traders, residents and visitors already and is bound to become worse as several major developments go ahead, including on the old Stuart Flats site and the old post office site in Manuka. Some developers are including on-street parking as part of their response to the requirement to provide parking. The parking review promised in the *Moving Canberra* document should take a holistic view that includes consideration of the over-allocation of non-existent street parking spaces to augment parking in blocks of apartments. This review should also investigate parking at the Canberra Hospital. This facility has grown continuously in the last 20 years and the parking has not kept pace and is completely inadequate.

## **Walking and Cycling**

Inner south residents continue to raise issues about the state of footpaths, given that many paths are old and cracked, including as a result of numerous residential redevelopments.

They have also raised the issue of safety of pedestrians on shared paths used by cyclists who sometimes travel at high speed and do not alert pedestrians of their proximity using a bell. This is especially likely to occur on busy shared paths around Lake Burley Griffin. Perhaps there should be a new publicity campaign to stress the responsibilities of both cyclists and pedestrians in the use of shared paths.

## **Speed limits in residential areas**

The ISCCC has not received sufficient community feedback to put forward a view about whether inner south residents prefer that the current default speed limit of 50 km per hour should be retained or whether we should move to the new speed limit of 40 km per hour as proposed in *Moving Canberra*.

## **Future of Canberra Train Station**

We look forward to an update on planning for the Canberra Train Station and environs. *Moving Canberra* refers to it becoming a “demonstration of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) that transforms it into a mixed-use community with multi-modal transfer opportunities,” but it is still not clear what this means in practical terms.

The ISCCC would like to ensure that the future of this area for mixed-use development is not put at risk by a heavy industrial development such as a heavy freight and waste facility being set up along the rail corridor on nearby Ipswich Street in Fyshwick.

## **New transport technologies, including drones**

It is important to plan appropriately for the introduction of new technologies such as autonomous vehicles and delivery drones.

We find it curious that ACT Government pronouncements have suggested this Government is unable to regulate the delivery drone industry, as it is a Commonwealth responsibility. However, the proposed action in *Moving Canberra* suggests that some action is possible by the ACT Government. It proposes that the Chief Minister’s directorate work with the transport and planning directorates and with the federal Civil Aviation Safety Authority “to review and update regulation, where appropriate, to allow the continued trial and expansion of delivery drones as a service.” We look forward to clarification on this issue.

Many of the other proposed actions in *Moving Canberra* seem sensible, and so we do not intend to comment on all of those.

Marea Fatseas  
Chair  
31 March 2019