



Light Rail Update

August 2017

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1 Our City's Transport Future

Light Rail for Canberra

The way we travel around Canberra is changing. As our city grows, we need to ensure Canberra continues to be the most liveable city in the world.

We need an accessible, integrated and smarter transport network that will grow with our city. It is needed to support our economic development, maintain our liveability, reduce congestion and provide a reliable alternative to the car. Our transport network needs to support sustainable active transport options such as cycling, walking and public transport.

The Australian Infrastructure Audit Report prepared by Infrastructure Australia (May 2015) found that without additional investment, the cost of road congestion in the ACT will increase from \$208 million per annum in 2011 to \$703 million per annum in 2031.

We cannot leave public transport investment until traffic delays reach unacceptable levels and impose high social, environmental and economic costs to our community. Without improvements to public transport infrastructure, road congestion will continue to grow as Canberra's population increases, impacting on travel times and the overall quality of life that we enjoy in Canberra.

In late 2015, the ACT Government released the draft Light Rail Network Plan, which presented a city-wide 25-year vision for building a strong, accessible, cost effective and efficient public transport network with light rail as its backbone.

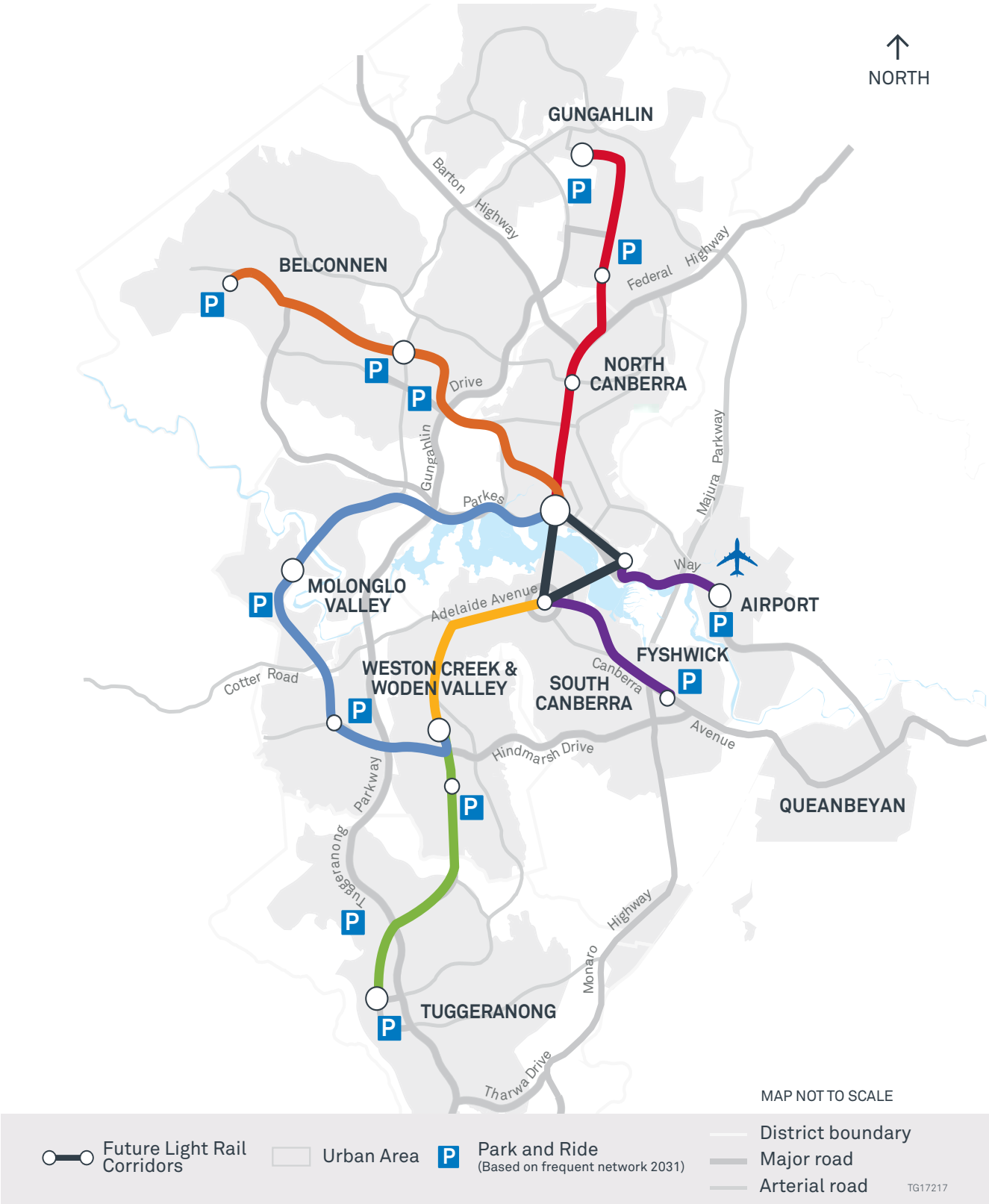
The Light Rail Network is a vital part of the Government's plan to grow our public transport system. It will boost Canberra's sustainable growth by changing and improving transport options, settlement patterns and employment opportunities.

Once completed the Light Rail Network will deliver transformative outcomes linking residential development with areas of employment, retail and entertainment with high quality, fast and frequent transport options. It will revitalise our urban centres and support active lifestyles, stimulate suburban renewal and increase economic activity, while reducing Canberra's car dependency by providing an efficient environmentally responsible alternative.

Construction is well underway for the first stage of Light Rail Network – City to Gungahlin – an area where our city is already experiencing significant growth. The City to Gungahlin corridor is developing at a rapid rate. Light Rail has helped drive urban renewal and will contribute to meeting the demands of this corridor well into the future.

The plan will deliver on government policies, including Transport for Canberra, the ACT Planning Strategy and the City Plan and will build on the government's work already undertaken for integrated land use and transport planning.

Figure 1: Light Rail Network Map



2 Stage 1: Progress Update

Stage 1 will deliver high quality, reliable and frequent public transport between City and Gungahlin. Light rail will provide a competitive alternative to driving and help manage congestion as the corridor population continues to grow.

Analysis shows that by 2031, without a dedicated transit in place, residents in the north will face travel times in the morning peak of up to an hour to get to the City.

The first stage of Light Rail for Canberra is being constructed under a Public Private Partnership (PPP) between the ACT Government and The Canberra Metro consortium. The PPP will be in place for approximately 23 years. It includes the construction and operation of light rail stage one for 20 years.

The 12km corridor between Gungahlin and the City has changed rapidly over the past 12 months, with construction underway in all areas. Initial work to relocate existing utilities has almost finished and permanent works are starting to take shape.

More than two and a half kilometres of concrete track slab has now been laid along the corridor with this increasing daily.

A fleet of 14 vehicles will operate stage 1 of Light Rail and production is full steam ahead in Spain with the first of the vehicles expected to reach Canberra in late 2017.

The Depot will be the hub from which operations will be controlled, and where light rail vehicles will be maintained and stored when not in service.

Construction is well underway with the structural steel framework for the buildings erected and track slab commenced in the stabling yard.

Designs for the 13 stops and landscaping along the corridor are in the final stages. There are two types of light rail stops, an island stop and a side stop. A side stop has platforms on either side of the two tracks whereas an island stop has the platform located between the tracks.

There is still lot to be done over the next year but this is an exciting time for Canberra as we watch this vision come to life with services commencing late 2018.



Figure 2: Light Rail Stage 1 Route Map



3 Stage 2: Progress Update

What our work has told us

It's expected that more than 120,000 people will work and almost 90,000 will live or study within one kilometre of the Woden corridor by 2041¹. Planning for this growth is vital to reducing congestion on our roads and providing commuters with a convenient, efficient and reliable alternative to driving their cars.

The ACT government is committed to deliver the next phase of a city shaping transport network with the commencement of design development for Light Rail Stage 2 from the City to Woden.

With light rail linking the northern centre of Gungahlin to Woden through the heart of Canberra's city centre, Canberrans will be able to easily access major education institutions, retail and entertainment precincts and employment hubs on an integrated public transport network.

This project will make a significant contribution to the continued growth and transformation of the nation's capital. Building on the existing stage 1 route, it is an important next step in a city-wide Light Rail Network and demonstrates the ACT Government's commitment to developing a transport network that includes continuing investment in buses and active travel options across the city.

Involving the community early in the design of the route, selection of stop locations and alignment of the tracks provides key insights that contribute to the development of the business case. An ongoing program of consultation will continue to inform the project and provide opportunities to engage on broader issues identified along the new southern corridor and related transport issues for Canberra.

Technical investigations are well underway on the various route options. Constraints imposed by heritage buildings, existing sensitive landscape, radii of bends, gradient over the bridge and in other parts of the route, condition of existing assets, alteration to existing

assets, traffic volumes; all impact on the determination of the most viable route. Further investigation of the possible route to the Canberra Hospital has identified potential technical constraints to the future southern expansion of the network and potential operational and hospital access issues.

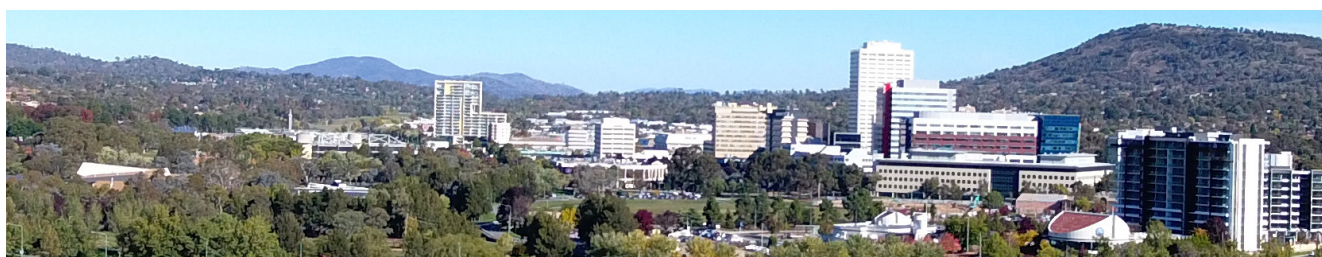
In addition to these technical engineering issues, the Light Rail Stage 2 project team and the specialist technical advisory team is now performing more detailed investigations on a range of issues relating to urban design, constructability, planning, transport, economics and land use.

Parkes Way

Significant land use planning and development commonalities have been identified for Light Rail Stage 2 and the upgrade of Parkes Way. The ACT Government is progressing the business case development and assessment of both projects in parallel to take advantage of these shared opportunities, which include:

- how potential light rail stop locations and Parkes Way changes will serve the West Basin precinct and its connectivity to the city as part of the City to the Lake concept;
- how road network changes can be designed to benefit and optimise both light rail and the progression of the City to the Lake urban renewal project; and
- planning for broader traffic and road network changes resulting from both projects and all transport modes.

Transport Canberra will work closely with the National Capital Authority, other ACT Government agencies including the City Renewal Authority, and key stakeholders such as local businesses and the community to develop both projects.



¹ Source: ACT Population Projection statistics 2015, Environment Planning Sustainable Development Directorate ACT Government

What we asked you

We want to hear from the community during all stages of the project.

The aim of this first round of consultation was to provide Canberrans with the opportunity to have input into shaping stage 2 of the light rail network from the City to Woden, and to consider the benefits of urban renewal including increased growth in centres and along transport corridors.

Consultation questions were focussed on four key themes:

1. options for the route
2. alignment of the tracks
3. potential stop locations
4. identification of any items of community, cultural or environmental importance.

In addition to the key themes, people were also encouraged to share their vision for the City to Woden corridor and their opinions about broader urban renewal issues.

The route

We have proposed four options for the Light Rail Stage 2 route. Which do you favour and why?



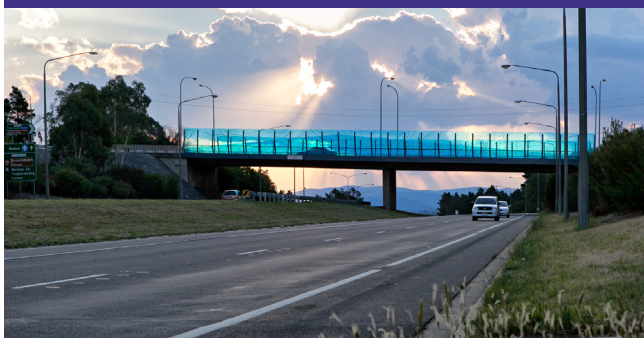
Alignment of the route

Thinking about specific sections along the route, do you have a preference for the location of the track or alignment of the light rail, for example along the verge or median?



Stop locations

Share your views about the proposed stop locations along the route – are they in the right place? Are there other stops we should be considering?



Items of community interest

Are there any items or locations along the proposed Light Rail Stage 2 route that you would like to identify? Please tell us why they are important to you.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK



4,772

We reached 4,772 people via Your Say ACT



587

We spoke to 587 individuals



8

We delivered 8 presentations to 199 people



2,990

We visited businesses and shopping centres throughout Canberra and distributed over 2,990 brochures and newsletters



150

We sent e-mails to over 150 organisations and schools



40,000

We reached a social media audience of almost 40,000



1,796

We received 1,796 items of written feedback

Public consultation took place between 1 May and 11 June 2017

MEDIA COVERAGE

Community consultation launch 1 May 2017



Media launch of the Light Rail Stage 2 project with Chief Minister, Andrew Barr and Minister for Transport and City Services, Meegan Fitzharris.

Widespread local television and newspaper coverage including nightly segments on all Canberra news bulletins and in the Canberra Times.

Media mentions and reach



21

Tweets with 17,016 impressions



5

Facebook posts with 22 shares and a reach of 22,381



63

Media mentions (print, online, radio and television)

4 What you told us

Key insights from the community

On the route options

- 1** There is strong support for Light Rail Stage 2 to travel via City West and through Barton to capitalise on education and employment hubs and proximity to cultural institutions.
- 2** Support also exists for light rail to continue to the Canberra Hospital although uncertainties were raised about how convenient it would be to the hospital entrance and the implications for the future southern extensions of the network.
- 3** A range of additional alternate routes were suggested including traveling along Melbourne Avenue or King Edward Terrace; through Deakin, and; extending to Mawson.

On alignment of the line

- 4** Safety was a primary consideration for alignment selection and should be informed by the location of the stop, route and likely access for pedestrians.
- 5** Additional pedestrian infrastructure in the event of median alignment along high traffic roads like Adelaide Avenue was also identified as important.

On stop locations

- 6** There was support for additional stops in the Barton precinct to service employment hubs as well as providing better access to Manuka Oval and shopping precincts.
- 7** Appropriate services at stop locations that support active travel such as parking, shelter and bike storage is an important design consideration.

On items of community interest

- 8** Access to cultural institutions, education and employment hubs, and lakeside events were considered positive outcomes of the route through City West and Barton.
- 9** Visual amenity and heritage is valued and consideration should be given to how it will be managed along the proposed route.

On broader urban renewal and transport issues

- 10** Commuters want to know how light rail will integrate with other transport modes.
- 11** Canberrans are interested to discover how the light rail project will contribute to other key urban renewal projects and desire further consultation on these issues.

Other community feedback

We sought to capture insights, comments and ideas, and to facilitate wide-ranging conversations during the early design and development phase of the Light Rail Stage 2 project.

By using a range of tools and techniques to reach the community, we were able to access a wide and diverse audience during the consultation period. We have collated the feedback received across all forums of engagement and reported the most commonly expressed views.

Data from the online survey question related to route preference is expressed as a percentage, and other items of feedback contained in the open-ended question set have been themed together and expressed as numbers of mentions.

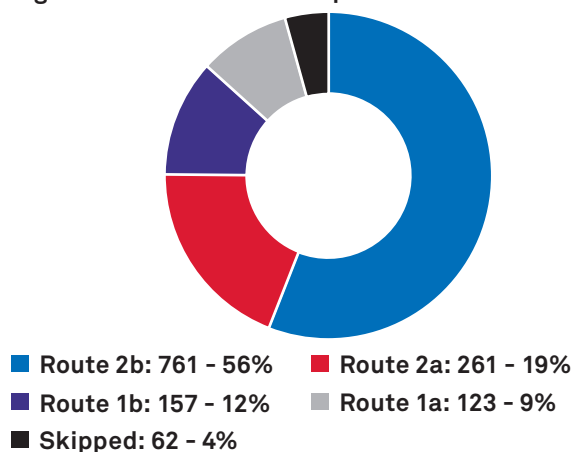
Where comments were made using the interactive online map or vision board, the most popular or commonly expressed items have been highlighted.

We also heard from people in conversations at market stalls, drop-in sessions and business and community roundtable meetings and the content of these discussions is also reflected in the below analysis. Where we received written submissions from peak or community organisations, their feedback is also incorporated here.

Route options

97% of respondents to the online survey supported light rail, and 75% supported a route that travels via City West and through Barton capitalising on education and employment hubs and proximity to cultural institutions. 56% preferred route option 2b terminating at the Canberra Hospital and 19% preferred a terminus at Woden.

Figure 3: Preferred Route Options



Responses across other forums of engagement also indicated preference for light rail to travel along the City West and through Barton. The key reasons given for support include:

- capitalising on tourism, education and employment hubs and proximity to cultural institutions
- provision of service to a large number of commuters at peak periods
- allows for future stages to continue south towards Fyshwick and Queanbeyan.

Connection to the Canberra Hospital was seen as important as it is a key public location and employment hub. The ACT Government is presently considering potential future constraints to operations and southern network expansion should the route continue to the hospital.

A total of 532 individuals who commented on access to the hospital in their survey responses and there were 12 supportive contributions to the interactive map. Some respondents also suggested not all services should continue on to the hospital but rather terminate at Woden.

There were five peak and community organisations submissions, 11 respondents to the vision board, 174 online survey respondents and the top five comments on the interactive map suggested alternate routes than those exhibited.

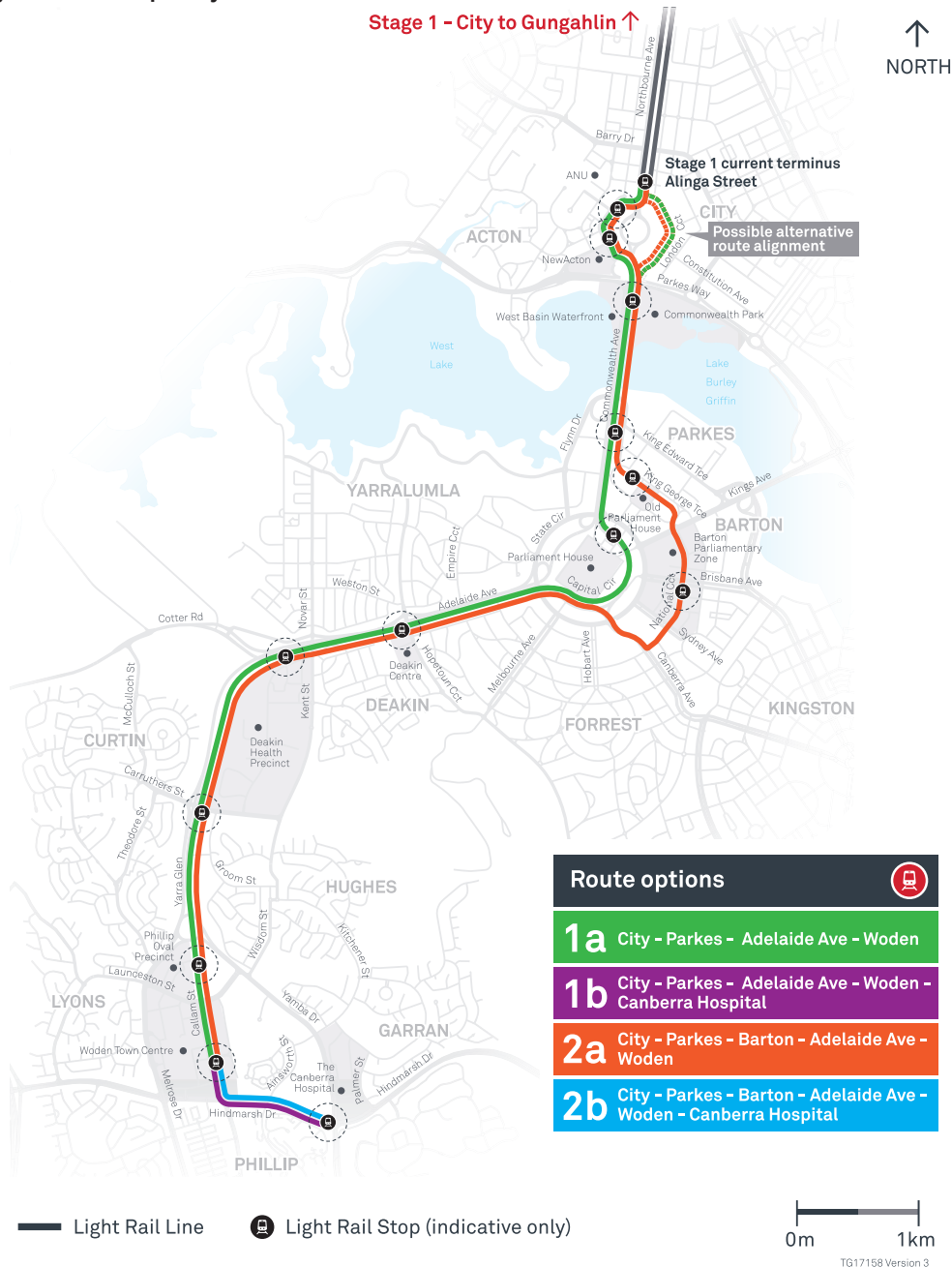
The most popular alternatives to the proposed routes include:

- alternative routes through Barton such as along King Edward Terrace and Melbourne and Sydney Avenues
- a continuation of the route along Athlon Drive towards Mawson to connect to existing Park and Ride facilities and provision for a future extension to Tuggeranong
- a route that travels past Deakin shops picking up additional schools, churches, medical facilities and Calvary John James Hospital.

Support for the City West route was mentioned in submissions from the Canberra Business Chamber and Australian Institute of Architects, noting that a City East link could be included in future light rail stages to Russell and Canberra Airport. This was also echoed in comments on the interactive map, online survey and at roundtable discussions as it provides connection to the City centre, ANU and New Acton.

On 2 May, the online blog The RIOTACT posted an article with information about the Light Rail Stage 2 project and included a map and links to the Your Say ACT consultation site. The article attracted 35 individual comments and replicated the consultation question regarding preferred route options. The site received over 700 responses. Results are very similar to those reflected in the online survey on Your Say ACT: 1a 6%, 1b 22%, 2a 9% and 2b 64%.

Figure 4: Stage 2 Route Map: City – Woden



Alignment of the tracks

Overall answers regarding alignment were expressed in the context of other important factors such as pedestrian safety, integration with existing infrastructure and the current road system. It should be noted that some of the feedback received about alignment of the line was more appropriate to the question of route option.

There was not a strong preference for universal alignment along the route. There were 462 comments regarding median alignment, 125 comments regarding verge alignment and 70 comments regarding other alignment options reported in the online survey. There were no strong alignment preferences expressed in the contributions to the interactive map.

A total of 289 survey respondents and 7 peak and community organisation submissions commented on safety and pedestrian access issues related to track alignment. Several also foreshadowed a need for additional pedestrian infrastructure along high trafficked roads such as Adelaide Avenue in the event of median alignment.

At each of the roundtable discussions and drop-in sessions questions were tabled regarding the impact on visual amenity including loss of trees, overhead wires and infrastructure along the proposed route.

There were 123 mentions of amenity and preservation of trees and landscape in the online survey and it was a feature of 5 peak and community organisations submissions. Questions were also raised on how Government is planning to work with and consult with business and building owners about alignment along the route once selected.

Stop locations

A total of 31% of online survey respondents and five peak and community organisations support additional stops in the Barton precinct to service employment hubs as well as providing better access to Manuka Oval and shopping strip.

The most popular stop locations include; Canberra Avenue (111 mentions), Kings Avenue (69 mentions), Barton (55 mentions), Melbourne Avenue (41 mentions) and Brisbane Avenue (36 mentions).

Additional stop locations in Barton are also reflected in four of the top five contributions submitted to the interactive map.

There were 309 mentions in the online survey in support of the proposed stops and 52 mentions supporting limiting the number of stops to maximise efficiency of travel time. 35 respondents suggested removing a stop from the proposed list, most of which were along Adelaide Avenue or proximate to the Mint where there are lower commuter densities.

Individuals, and peak and community organisations also proposed additional stop locations. Most were within the Parliamentary Triangle. Others included additional stops to service Deakin, Curtin, Manuka shopping precinct and oval, the southern side of Parliament House and proximate to Yarralumla (Novar Street or Hopetoun Circuit).

Discussion at presentations and roundtable meetings highlighted a desire for appropriate services at stop locations that support active travel such as parking, shelter and bike storage. Similar comments were also mentioned in 46 online survey responses and in 4 peak and community organisations submissions.

Once selection of stops has been refined, more discussions about detailed designs and pedestrian infrastructure such as foot bridges, lifts and escalators can take place.

Items of community interest

Access to cultural institutions and lakeside events is seen as a positive outcome of the route through Barton. There were 42 mentions in the online survey about access to cultural institutions. The importance of connectivity to visitor services including dining, entertainment and accommodation was a key matter of interest at the business roundtable meetings.

Comments received through the online survey and in submissions from peak and community organisations also expressed a desire to maintain and protect visual amenity along the route, and to minimise the number of established trees removed particularly in the Parliamentary Triangle. There were 22 mentions in the online survey, 5 mentions in the vision board, and 5 peak and community organisation submissions raised specific concerns about tree removal and maintenance of character.

The Australian Institute of Architects noted the importance for future stops and tracks to have quality landscape treatments as part of the development, and Friends of the Albert Hall requested there be limited impact to the heritage precinct.

The most popular comments in the community interest category received on the interactive map related to better links to the sporting facilities at Manuka Oval and connectivity between New Acton and the rest of the city.

Integrated transport

The theme of integration with current bus networks and other transport modes including bicycle networks was discussed at presentations, roundtable meetings and at market stalls. Comments on this issue were made 65 times regarding route selection and 37 times in other questions in the online survey and in 5 submissions from peak and community organisations.

In conversations at market stalls and shopfront walks we also heard a broader range of transport related concerns and issues. Key themes included:

- concern about the cost of the light rail network
- curiosity about routes and the connectivity of an integrated light rail and bus system
- pricing for tickets and impact on bus ticket prices
- concern over trams replacing the current rapid bus links and the impact on travel time.



Urban renewal and zoning

At presentations to the Inner South, Woden Valley and Weston Creek Community Councils, and at business and community roundtables there was extensive discussion about the overall opportunity for renewal, development and activation that the new southern corridor presents. The Woden Valley Community Council's submission identified design as a key theme for the Woden Town Centre, favouring inclusive community facilities and places where people want to be.

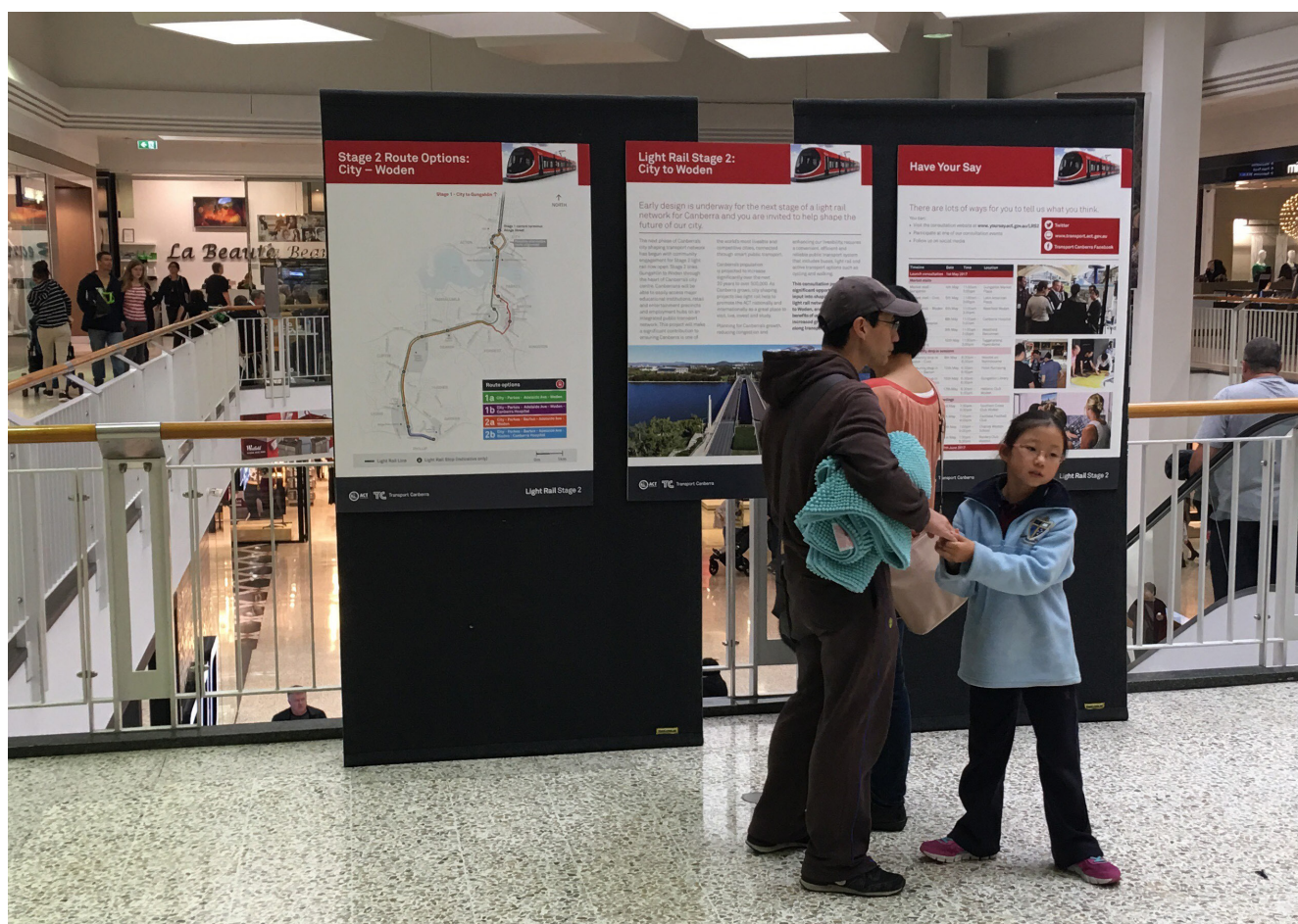
Both Deakin and Yarralumla Residents Associations noted in their submissions they did not want any loss of greenspace along the corridor, in particular in the horse paddocks along Adelaide Avenue.

The Property Council were supportive of rezoning and planning policy amendments along the corridor,

and noted the benefit of allowing a quality urban environment to be developed along the route and town centre to support light rail patronage.

Through their submission, the Inner South Canberra Community Council asked if there were plans to develop apartments on the strip of land between the Mint and Woden, which would result in increased density. The ISCCC has not reached an official position on the rezoning of land along the corridor which would be required to develop apartments on the strip of land between the Mint and Woden.

The Kingston Barton Residents Groups, via Inner South Community Council, requested additional information on whether the whole southern corridor was intended to be rezoned to CZ5.

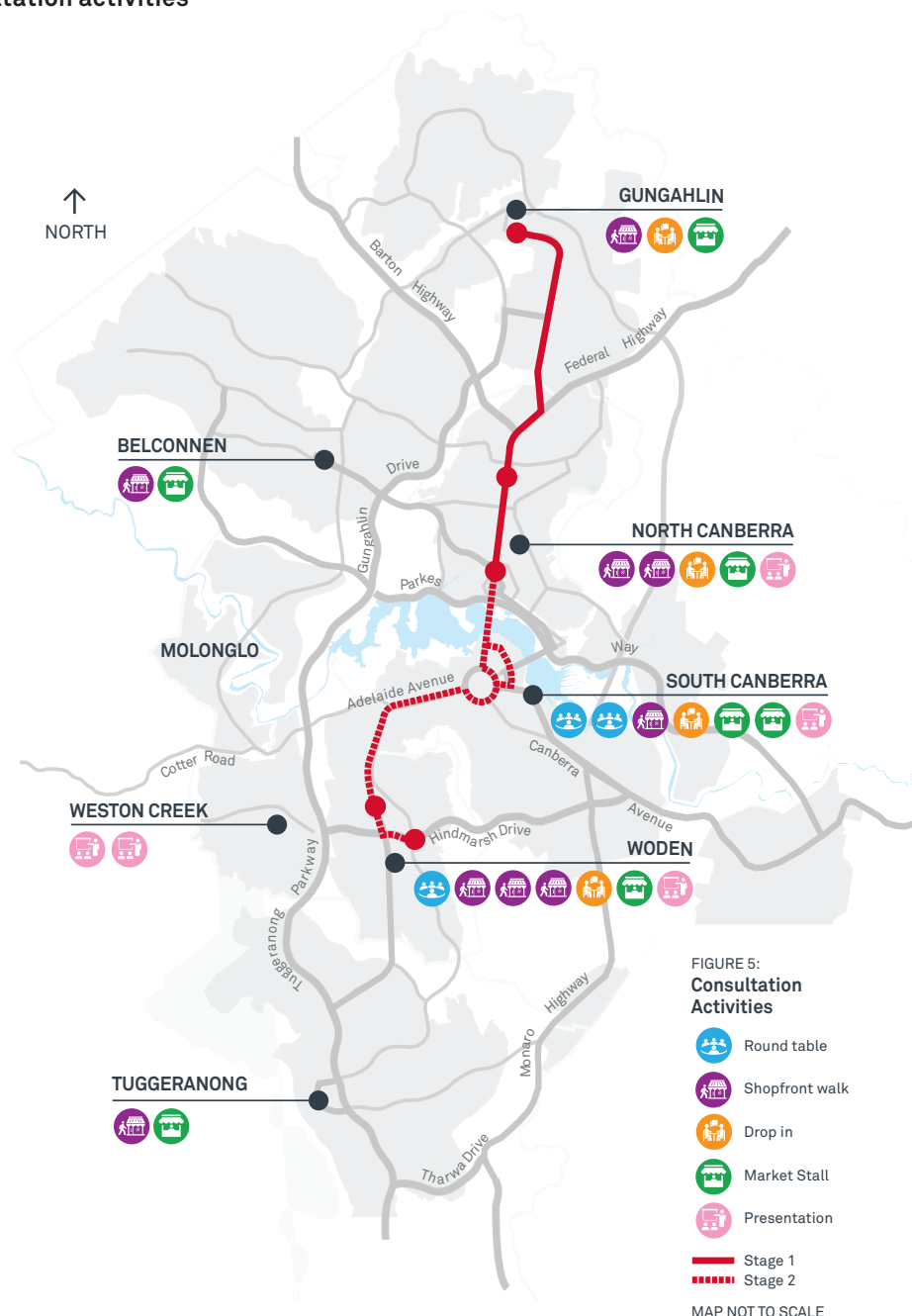


5 Consultation activities

We sought to include a diverse range of stakeholder views by working across all geographic regions of Canberra and by using multiple techniques to gather feedback. This allowed people to provide feedback in the way that most suited them and to share their views in their own words.

A combination of digital and face to face engagement activities were rolled out as part of the consultation, supported by a program of social media promotion. Overall feedback during the consultation period was constructive and lessons learned will improve the selection of channels and tools for future engagement activities.

Figure 5: Consultation activities



ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Your Say ACT

A project page was established on the Your Say ACT platform. The page included; a survey, video tool, interactive map, vision board, timeline, copies of the proposed route map, contact form and FAQs.



4,772

visits were recorded and included:



1,364

survey responses



1,704

views of the interactive map



349

contributions to the interactive map and 1,843 votes



71

contributions to the vision board



1

video

E-newsletter and invitation



150

E-newsletter and invitation to participate in consultation activities sent to over 150 organisations and schools

FACE TO FACE ACTIVITIES



MARKET STALLS

Pop-up display stands were located in public spaces with project information and opportunities for Q&A with staff

384 individual conversations took place

150 brochures and newsletters were distributed



SHOPFRONT WALKS

Drop in visits with shop owners and businesses at 7 locations across Canberra were conducted to raise awareness of the project and encourage participation in consultation

2,841 brochures and newsletters were distributed



DROP IN SESSIONS

4 community drop in sessions were held with interactive displays and opportunities for discussions, Q&A and feedback

24 people attended



PRESENTATIONS

5 presentations at Community Council and Mingle events

146 people attended



ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS

4 Roundtable meetings for business and community groups

53 people attended

6 Next steps for Light Rail Stage 2

What's next?

Technical investigations are well underway on the various route options. Constraints imposed by heritage buildings, existing sensitive landscapes, radii of bends, gradient over the bridge and in other parts of the route, condition of existing assets, alteration to existing assets, traffic volumes; all impact on the determination of the most viable route.

Further investigation of the possible route to the Canberra Hospital has identified potential technical constraints to the future southern expansion of the network and potential operational and hospital access issues.

In addition to these technical engineering issues, more detailed investigations are underway on a range of issues including urban design, constructibility, planning, transport, economics and land use.

We want to hear from Canberrans during all stages of the project. Stay tuned for more opportunities to share your feedback as the project moves forward, including feedback on the route details particularly Parkes/ Barton and input on the Woden Interchange.

You can register to receive project updates by sending an email to: lightrail@act.gov.au.

To find out more about Light Rail and other transport projects in Canberra visit: www.transport.act.gov.au or follow us on **Facebook** or and **twitter**.

Light rail master plan – 2015/16



Community consultation and expert analysis undertaken to inform Stage 2 route options



Feedback to the community regarding outcomes from consultation and expert analysis

Business case development, as well as route and procurement options presented

Business case complete

Procurement

Contract signing and construction commencement



