



Communication Link

[Title]

Woden Valley District Planning Workshop

ACT Planning Review and Reform Project

29 June 2021

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Ask.
Listen.
Understand.
Achieve.



Introduction

The ACT Government is currently reviewing the ACT planning system. The ACT Planning Review and Reform Project is considering the introduction of district level planning to provide more planning guidance at a district level and allow for the distinctive character of each district to be reflected in the planning system.

The ACT Government has identified eight urban districts and a district planning workshop is being conducted in each of these districts.

Communication Link has been engaged by the ACT Government to facilitate these workshops and report to the Government on what was heard. This report summarises the key feedback gathered from the Woden Valley community.

The Woden Valley District Planning Workshop was held on 17 June and was attended by 32 people. The workshop was also offered online with participation conducted through Zoom and an interactive collaboration platform called Mural. Although some people did elect to attend online, there was no one present online on the night.

Of the attendees that completed the demographic survey, there was a range of ages represented with the most common age bracket represented being 65–74 years old followed closely by the 35–44 and 45–54 year-old brackets. nine Woden Valley suburbs were represented at the workshop, including Chifley, Curtin, Garran, Hughes, Isaacs, Lyons, Pearce, Phillip and Torrens.

What we heard

The District Planning workshop gathered community feedback related to each of the themes identified in the ACT Planning Strategy 2018.

The most common areas of feedback provided by the community of Woden Valley are identified against these themes in the following sections.

Liveable

The following questions were asked about liveability:

- What suggestions do you have for how the type of housing and where it is located could be different in your District in the future?
- Are there changes needed to recreational areas, outdoor public spaces and/or community facilities to cater for future needs of people in your District? Where should this occur?
- What community facilities (including schools) are needed to cater for the future needs of the people in your District? Where could they be located?

The most common feedback from workshop participants is summarised in Table 1.



Table 1. Community suggestions on future planning for a liveable district

 <p>Local shops Revitalise local shopping centres</p>	 <p>Traffic Traffic conditions are deteriorating and are expected to get worse with urban infill.</p>	 <p>Pools Preserve Phillip Pool and build additional swimming facilities.</p>
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Other reoccurring themes included:

- Provide more sporting facilities and prioritise the preservation of fields and open spaces.
- Provide additional community spaces.

Diverse

The following questions were asked about being diverse:

- How might future changes impact the commercial or retail areas within your District? What changes might impact on the town centre, group centres and local centres?
- Are there places that are considered significant to the community in your District that should be considered differently in the future? Where are they located?
- What characteristics and features are unique to your District that should be considered when planning the future?

The most common feedback from workshop participants is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. Community suggestions on future planning for a diverse district

 <p>Town centre Improve and enhance Woden town centre with car parking, better building design/diversity and community spaces.</p>	 <p>General planning Attractive building designs and landscaping should be applied to new developments and maintain diversity in styles.</p>	 <p>Culture and cultural diversity Accommodate people from different cultures and encourage cultural activities/events.</p>
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Other reoccurring themes included:

- Support and enhance local shopping centres.



Accessible

The following questions were asked about accessibility:

- What areas in your District should be considered to improve peoples' ability to walk and cycle?
- What are the long-term travel needs for public transport and cars for your District?
- Are there road connections to other ACT districts or regional NSW that should be considered in your District?

The most common feedback from workshop participants is summarised in Table 3.

Table 3. Community suggestions on future planning for an accessible district

 <p>Cycleways</p> <p>Improve existing paths and cycleways. Create more cycleways with links between Woden and Canberra Hospital; Woden to Tuggeranong or incorporate into shared paths</p>	 <p>Roads and traffic</p> <p>Roads are getting more congested and create barriers in and around the district</p>	 <p>Walking</p> <p>Improve paths and walking facilities and improve connections between suburbs and the town centre</p>
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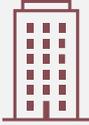
Compact and efficient

The following questions were asked about a compact and efficient city:

- When considering the additional residents that will live in your District in the future, what aspects of your District need to be considered to make sure it is a pleasant place to live?
- What areas should be priorities for open spaces and public places in your District?
- What views from outdoor public places are special in your District and should be considered in future planning?

The most common feedback from workshop participants is summarised in Table 4.

Table 4. Community suggestions on future planning for a compact and efficient district

 <p>Open/green space over compact</p> <p>Preference for preserving Woden's open spaces with concerns about the word 'compact' being used.</p>	 <p>High density development concerns</p> <p>Concerns that higher-density living and urban infill creates over shadowing and greater reliance on public and open spaces.</p>
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Other reoccurring themes included:

There was strong support from workshop participants about the following comment by another workshop participant which touches on a number of matters:



Higher densities focused in the town centre and major transport corridor. Needs great public transport, cycleways, pedestrian infrastructure. Cycleways should have priority at road crossing. Main green links between nature reserves. Greater mixed-use development in Phillip including residential.

Sustainable and resilient

The following questions were asked about sustainability and resilience:

- Consider the following areas in your District and describe what elements should be prioritised as these areas change in the future:
 - Investigation areas for potential future suburbs.
 - Government land identified for sale and private development.
 - Urban intensification areas within existing suburbs.
 - Major sites in important areas identified for development by the government.

The most common feedback from workshop participants is summarised in Table 5.

Table 5. Community suggestions on future planning for a sustainable and resilient district

 <p>Maintain trees</p> <p>Woden is recognised for its high number of trees and the community wishes to see this retained.</p>	 <p>Housing design and size</p> <p>Design efficient homes for Woden and make them smaller.</p>	 <p>Light rail</p> <p>Confusion about plans for light rail and suggestions for how it should be implemented.</p>
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Other reoccurring themes included:

- Traffic congestion is increasing in the Woden Valley.



Next steps

The Woden Valley district planning workshop is one of eight workshops that were held across Canberra during June 2020.

This report has been drafted based on a preliminary analysis of the data gathered from participants. An overarching consultation report will be prepared at the conclusion of all district planning workshops. Reporting back to the community on what was heard in the district planning workshops and how that input is informing proposed policy changes will occur later in 2021.



Figure 1. Community members from Woden Valley during the District Planning Workshop.