



**Legislative Assembly** for the  
**Australian Capital Territory**

Standing Committee on Environment,  
and Planning

# Submission Cover Sheet

## **Inquiry into the Role and Future of the Woden Town Centre in the context of a compact city**

Submission number: 019

Submitter: Lachlan Taylor

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**From:** LACommitteeEnvironment@parliament.act.gov.au

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**Sent:** Friday, 15 August 2025 12:53 PM

**To:** LA Committee - Environment <LACommitteeEnvironment@act.gov.au>

**Subject:** Inquiry submission - Role and Future of the Woden Town Centre - Lachlan Taylor

Full Name and/or Organisation:	Lachlan Taylor
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I understand that I cannot share my submission until the Committee publishes it.:	Yes
Consent for Publication - please select one:	I accept that the Committee may publish my submission, including my name, on the Assembly website.
If you want your name removed, or your submission to remain confidential, please tell us why:	
Social Connectivity - What would make Woden Town Centre a more welcoming place to meet and socialise with friends and family? :	Woden needs to evolve into a true mixed-use hub, where residential, commercial, cultural, and recreational uses are interwoven. Right now, its building height restrictions and underutilised spaces limit the density needed to create a critical mass of people. There is also a lack of designed pedestrian pathways and the Woden town square is abandoned due to a lack of after hour activity and amenity.
Social Connectivity - What types of events or activities would you like to see more of in Woden? :	More regular and diverse programming is needed: Night markets and street food festivals to activate evenings. Seasonal events (e.g., ice-skating in winter, outdoor cinema in summer). Community (government operated) infrastructure. Night clubs, restaurants, and more bars.
Housing - Do you think there is enough social and public housing in Woden to meet community needs? Why or why not?:	There is a critical lack of social and public housing anywhere in the ACT. That said if you look at the census for where the distribution of individuals are located in Canberra you will notice that Woden contains a variety of incomes and a relatively even distribution of wealth. This is not showed in the inner south, or in Gungahlin. Public housing should be evenly spread out across Canberra.

<p>Housing - What improvements or changes would you suggest for housing in the Woden Town Centre?:</p>	<p>The Woden valley contains lots of low density housing, and old (70s era) apartments. In Canberra you require 100% owner approval before a strata building can be 'fully sold' or 'redeveloped'. In NSW you only need 50% permission. This has restricted any redevelopment of old strata buildings in Canberra. Within the town centre itself, additional height is required to improve housing availability.</p>
<p>Employment and Economic Activity - What types of businesses or services would you like to see more of in the Woden Town Centre?:</p>	<p>The Woden mall is nearing the end of its operational life, and is the only real activating portion of the town centre. The entire centre requires urban renewal to provide activation. I would like to see night life uses (clubs, bars, restaurants...). Currently Woden is primarily a office district filled with large Government offices which at nighttime become baren.</p>
<p>Employment and Economic Activity - How could the dining and entertainment options in Woden be improved?:</p>	<p>Providing urban renewal and allowing outdoor dining (similar to city walk in Civic). Also incentivising new development so that there is a higher density of people within Woden to support dining and entertainment uses.</p>
<p>Health, Education and Community Services - Are health, education, and community services in Woden accessible and sufficient for your needs?:</p>	<p>No. Phillip needs a walk in centre within the Town Centre boundary. This will stop individuals from going to the hospital for minor injuries. Currently the hospital is not within an accessible distance from the town centre, and people are expected to drive or wait for a bus.</p>
<p>Health, Education and Community Services - What additional services would you find valuable in the area?:</p>	<p>A walk in centre within the Town Centre.</p>
<p>Public Spaces - How could Woden's public spaces be improved to ensure they are inviting and safe for everyone?:</p>	<p>Upgrade lighting across the entire district along key pedestrian areas and parks. Add more shade, greenery, and water features to create comfortable microclimates. Incorporate interactive public art and play elements for all ages. Incorporate unique ground materiality and texture to create a sense of journey and adventure. Open Phillip Oval to the public outside of training times.</p>
<p>Community Facilities - What recreational or cultural facilities do you think are missing in the Woden Town Centre? :</p>	<p>A Government run modern indoor aquatic and leisure centre. A designed park or botanic gardens - currently the park is located next to the cemetery and it would be argued that it is part of the cemetery and disconnected from the group centre. The public parks are also rundown. More schools. Use of Callum Offices for a public use (school), indoor recreation, etc.</p>

<p>Transport and Accessibility - What would you do to improve access to and around the Woden Town Centre? :</p>	<p>Increase frequency and reliability of public transport, especially in evenings. Bring the light rail to the Town Centre sooner than later and extend the route to the Mawson Group Centre. Urban renewal is needed to revitalise most pedestrian pathways within the town centre, and parkland. Integrate retail and active uses adjacent public walkways.</p>
<p>Other Comments - Do you have any other ideas or comments about the future of Woden Town Centre?:</p>	<p>Woden's potential is constrained by outdated planning settings. Increasing permissible building heights in appropriate areas would unlock mixed-use development that supports social, cultural, and economic life. A lively, safe, and diverse night-time economy, supported by a resident population living in well-designed, higher-density housing, is essential to making Woden a truly vibrant and inclusive</p>
<p>Would you be interested in speaking to the Committee about your experience at a public hearing?:</p>	<p>No</p>