



Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory

Standing Committee on Transport
and City Services

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into the effectiveness of Fix My Street

Submission number: 037

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Date authorised for publication: 28 August 2025

Inquiry into the effectiveness of Fix My Street

I would like to make the following submission to this inquiry.

Since 2021 I have submitted around 120 requests to Fix My Street. The most requests relate to litter, tree pruning, road conditions, paths, playgrounds and graffiti as shown by the following table:

Issues	
litter	29
Tree pruning	16
Road condition	10
Damaged paths	9
Playground repairs	9
Graffiti & vandalism	5
Road condition	1
toilets	2
Abandoned vehicles	3
Road signs	4
mowing	2
Streetlights	3
Picnic areas safety	1
Access feedback	3
Bus shelters inquiry	1
White spots on fire trail Mt Ainslie	1
Miscellaneous	20

I have been satisfied with the responses to most of my submissions, but there have been a few where the responses were inadequate as highlighted by the following examples.

A. Delays in responding to submissions or inadequate responses

Example 1 - Who owns the bins at [REDACTED] ?

For at least 8 years there have been two large skips bins at [REDACTED], [REDACTED], at the southern end of the oval. In 2017 there was a lot of illegal dumping of waste in these bins as they were not locked. In September 2017 I sent an email to Minister Berry raising my concerns about this. In her reply she advised that one bin was used by the SES and the other by Sports and Recreation. They were subsequently locked to prevent illegal dumping. Then from around mid 2024 these two bins were not locked, leaving them open for more illegal dumping. The SES moved out of their depot earlier this year.

On 29 December 2024 I submitted a request ([REDACTED]) to Fix my Street advising that someone has dumped an unwanted push bike and seat in one of the skip bins (photo in **Attachment A**) and that they should be locked to avoid such illegal dumping. City Services replied as follows:

*“Thank you for taking the time to submit a Fix My Street request and letting us know about an issue important to you and your local area.
Your request relating to [Litter & illegal dumping] at [REDACTED] 2602] **has been identified as private bin.** Please contact body corporate/strata to enquire further. Your request has been closed through Fix My Street.
Thank you, City Services”*

I was very surprised of their advice that they were private bins, especially given they are in a public carpark and previously they were for use by the SES and Sports and Recreation – both government agencies. Noting this reply, on 2 January 2025 I sent another a request ([REDACTED]) to Fix my Street asking that if they are private bins could they please provide me with names of their owners. Their reply simply said the case had been closed - **I suspect this could be a case that they are not private bins (perhaps still under contracts with the SES and Sports and Recreation) and TCCS is a bit embarrassed to admit this?** Since then, the bins remain unlocked and continue to receive a variety of domestic wastes – fortunately the bins seem to be emptied on Tuesdays.

Giving this poor response I sent an email to Minister Cheyne in mid-January asking for an explanation but as I had not received a reply I sent another follow-up email in mid-July.

Recommendation

That TCCS ensure they provide accurate information and not simply close off cases when there are obvious further issues to be resolved.

Example 2 - Whose rubbish is it?

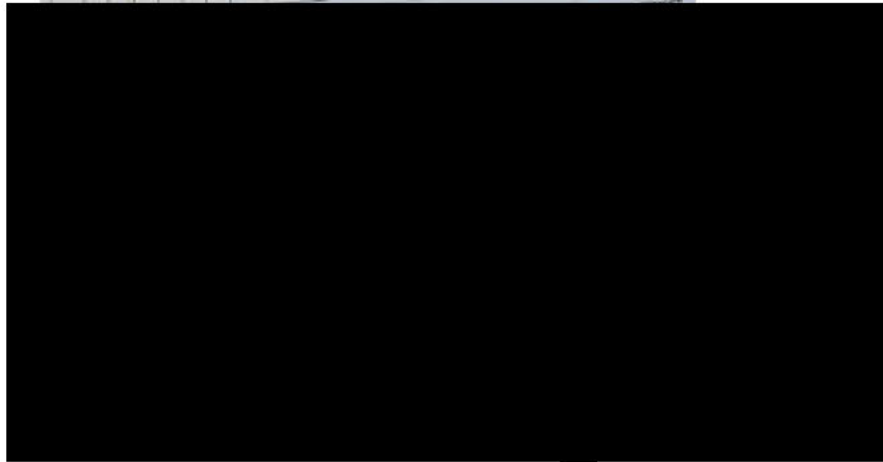
In late March this year I was cycling through [REDACTED]. I noticed rubbish scattered under bushes behind the [REDACTED] (see photos **Attachment B**). I subsequently put a request to Fix My Street on 1 April [REDACTED] asking that they collect the rubbish. They replied on the 2 April as follows:

*“Thank you for taking the time to submit a Fix My Street request and letting us know about an issue important to you and your local area.
Your request relating to [Litter & illegal dumping] at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has been investigated and **it appears that the rubbish mentioned is located on private property.** Rubbish on private property is the responsibility of the property owner/body corporate.
As this is a private matter your request has been closed through Fix My Street.
The ACT Government only manages illegal dumping located on unleased land (public land) in the urban areas of Canberra (excluding Federal Government owned land).
You can also report untidy residential blocks by visiting the [Planning website](#).
Please do not respond to this email. If you have a new issue, please submit a new request through [Fix My Street](#). For updates on maintenance and infrastructure works scheduled in your local area each week visit the [City Services website](#).
Your request has been closed through Fix My Street.”*

Noting their advice that the rubbish may have been on private property, I dropped into [REDACTED] and asked if anyone from the ACT Government had contacted them

about this matter. At the time, [REDACTED] said she was not aware of such engagement.

As the plastic rubbish [REDACTED] was on a separate block, I visited ACTMapi Basic [REDACTED] to see if this had details of the owner of the block. While it has very precise maps of the blocks it does not have owner details.



Given the poor response to my first request, on 3 April I submitted another request [REDACTED] and asked if City Services had contacted the owners, to which TCCS replied with the following response:

*"Thank you for taking the time to submit a Fix My Street request and letting us know about an issue important to you and your local area.
Your request relating to [Litter & illegal dumping] at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] has been inspected and the issue raised does not require any further action. Your request has been closed through Fix My Street.
Thank you, City Services"*

I rode through the area again on 8 April and the rubbish was still there.

In May I contacted the Suburban Land Agency to see if they had the owner's details for these blocks. A very helpful officer advised that they did not have the details but they got the details from EPSDD who advised that the [REDACTED] I subsequently contacted their Sydney office and asked if they had been contacted by the ACT Government, but they were not aware of any correspondence. The lady said that she would arrange for staff to visit the site and remove the plastic.

Given the very poor responses from TCCS, on 9 April I sent an email to Minister Cheyne expressing my frustration in dealing with TCCS about this matter. In Minister Cheyne's reply of 14 April she advised:

*"As you have previously been advised, the land identified in your request is private lease. It is difficult for the Government to undertake any maintenance work or activities on privately owned blocks due to **officer safety and insurance considerations**. A referral, however, has been made to Transport Canberra and City*

Services (TCCS) Place Management requesting they attend and clean-up any obvious litter in the area.”

As shown in the photo in Attachment B, the rubbish is only a few metres from the edge of the road. While I understand the issue of insurance and private land, I would have thought the risk to the collectors on this site (and with the small pieces) would be very low – perhaps they could have used a rake to pull it onto the road? Perhaps I should have gone along and pushed the rubbish onto the road, where it would then be TCCS responsibility? Just leaving the rubbish there posed a risk to the local environment, notably some of it may have ended up in the nearby stormwater drain.

Recommendation

I can understand the issue of insurance and that rubbish on private land is the responsibility of the owners. However, I believe the most appropriate response for requests to remove rubbish in these situations is **for TCCS to advise that they have contacted the owners/lessee** and asked them to clean up the rubbish. This would be a far more positive response than simply saying it is on private land and not our responsibility. This would also ensure members of the public are not spending a lot of their time, like I did, trying to track down the owners. I would assume that TCCS could easily get the owner’s details given that they are now in the *City and Environment Directorate*.

Example 3 - Reporting issues in nature reserves

In 2023 there were there no obvious sites on Fix my Street for reporting issues in ACT nature reserves as highlighted by my submission [REDACTED] [REDACTED], concerning the condition of a fire trail on Mt Ainslie Nature Reserve. I selected Fix My Street, Parks & public spaces, BBQs & picnic areas, Report safety concern and provided the following information:

“There is no category for issues in Canberra Nature Park. Hancock’s Road, Mt Ainslie was badly eroded in spring due to heavy rain. If a large fire tanker has to drive through this section it will probably get stuck. Needs grading to improve access.”



Hancock’s road erosion, Mt Ainslie January 2023

Fortunately my request was accepted and on 3 February 2023 I received a reply from ACT Parks and Conservation which advised they were aware of this section but had a big back log of road works to address. I walked along this track on 2 March 2023 and was pleased to see it had been fixed.

Example 4 - another case of “Not our responsibility”

On 3 March 2024 I reported a similar eroded track access track from Rivett St to the Hackett water reservoir (at base of Mount Majura Nature Reserve), making it very dangerous for emergency vehicles to access e.g during a bushfire. [REDACTED]. The reply from ACT Parks and Conservation on 16 March advised it was:

“Icon Water's responsibility to maintain for access to their reservoir, and they are the ones that built the track with the blue metal top. PCS would not have done this as we use the base material that is present and do not introduce new material where it is not needed. We have other access points for emergency responses that are better suited to fire or ambulance access.”

Given that ACTPCS said this track was not their responsibility I contacted ICON Water on 16 March who responded on 28 March 2024 and advise that they would organise rectification.



Eroded track from Rivett St to the Hackett water reservoir

Recommendation

While I understand that different bodies may have responsibility for areas, this example again highlights the need for the responsible Directorate to contact the relevant body rather than passing it back to members of the public who have spent their time and effort to raise their concerns.

Example 5 - Which website to report issues in nature reserves?

I recently visited the website for Mount Majura Nature and noticed at the bottom of the webpage [mount-majura-nature-reserve](#) it states that to “report maintenance issues go to [Access Canberra](#)” as shown by this screenshot. I wanted to report an exotic shrub on the reserve:

More information

If you notice any issues during your visit:

- report maintenance issues to [Access Canberra](#)
- report vandalism or other illegal activities to the police on [131 444](#)
- in an emergency, call 000

Find out about:

- [Friends of Mount Majura ParkCare](#)
- [Majura Pines](#)
- [Canberra Nature Park](#)
- [volunteering](#)
- [Reserve Management Plans](#)
- [nature conservation in the ACT](#)
- [bushfire management in the ACT](#)
- [biosecurity](#)

[Contact us](#) for more information.

I clicked on this link and it took me to *Fix My Street*. There is no specific page for *Nature Reserves*, so in the box “What is the issue” I selected “report weed infestation”, then public land and then reserve. It then advised the following:

“Did you know: You can request a service for a Reserve through feedback via [Access Canberra's online feedback form](#).”

I clicked on this link and it opened up the **Online Feedback page** which I have not previously come across. I entered Nature Park and it gave me “Environment & Heritage – Nature Parks. I did not proceed any further. I scanned through the over 100 plus categories on this site and came across the following environment and heritage topics:

Environment & Heritage > Heritage

Environment & Heritage > Lakes/Ponds

Environment & Heritage > Loose-Fill Asbestos Insulation

Environment & Heritage > Nature Parks

Environment & Heritage > Other

It would appear that the Canberra Online Feedback page may have issues that could also be covered by Fix My Street. The fact that the link on the bottom of the Mt Majura page directed people to the Fix My Street site appears contradictory to the online feedback page.

Recommendation

For matters related to ACT Nature Reserves – any links should take people to the Canberra online feedback page and not Fix My Street. Noting this disconnect, it would be highly desirable to ensure ACT Government websites have links to the most relevant pages.

Online Feedback

Details

Category*

Type of feedback*

Subject*

Please provide more information*

Details

Location of issue (optional)

Attachments (optional)

Complete

B. Broader issues with Fix my Street

I would also like to make the following suggestions to help improve Fix My Street.

500 character limit

While you don't want people writing lengthy tomes about an issue, extending it to 600 characters would assist provide a bit more space to include details. It would be good to also show the number of characters as one enters details – it currently just stops when it reaches 500 characters, therefore you need to go back and edit the text to reduce the length.

Recommendation

Have the number of characters shown as people enter information and expand it to 600 characters.

Accessing previous submissions

After logging into “my account” it gives you the following three options:



Submissions are actually listed under “Feedback and complaints”. This title is not obvious to first time users that this is where previous Fix My Street submissions are located. These words imply issues broader than Fix my Street.

Recommendation

Reword Feedback and Complaints to read as “My Fix My Street submissions” or include a specific section for Fix my Street under My Access Canberra Services.

I look forward to seeing the report of the inquiry and most importantly ensuring that improvements are made to this reporting tool and that the relevant areas of the Government provide better responses.

Regards

Chris Mobbs



1 August 2025

Attachment A - Rubbish bins [REDACTED], December 2024 and January 2025



Bike and metal seat December 2024



Wood panels 27 January 2025



15 March 2025



22 March 2025

Attachment B - Rubbish [REDACTED]



Rubbish in [REDACTED] 8 April 2025



Plastic rubbish behind [REDACTED] 15 May 2025