

2025

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**Molonglo Valley - Road Network Traffic Congestion Alleviation - Assembly
Resolution of 6 March 2025 – Government Response**

Tabling Statement

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Introduction

I'm pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the Assembly Resolution passed on the 6 March 2025 titled: Molonglo Valley – Road network – Traffic congestion alleviation.

As a reminder; a key acknowledgement from this resolution calls out that *“the Molonglo Valley’s long-term needs will be best addressed by delivering a multimodal transport network, including arterial roads, dedicated bus lanes, rapid public transport and active travel connections to the surrounding districts (reference: (3)(c)).”*

The Molonglo Valley District Strategy is a key policy identified through ACT’s Territory Plan, which is guiding growth in the Molonglo Valley in a way that keeps the territory sustainable, competitive and liveable.

As part of our multimodal transport planning for the Molonglo Valley we have also been looking at the surrounding districts, to support trips to these key destinations such as between the Molonglo Valley and the City, Belconnen and Woden.

As such, corridor studies that include Drakeford Drive, Tuggeranong Parkway and Parkes Way are also of key relevance to multimodal transport planning for the Molonglo Valley and surrounding districts.

This resolution calls on the ACT Government to provide an update associated with the Molonglo River Bridge project and to develop and table a variety of plans.

Molonglo River Bridge Project

I'd like to start by providing an update on the timeline and cost of the Molonglo River Bridge construction project.

The Molonglo River Bridge project is a jointly funded initiative between the ACT and Commonwealth Governments, with a total appropriated project budget of \$226,200,000 (GST exclusive). The Commonwealth Government is contributing 50% of this funding. There is further funding of up to \$23,154,811 (GST exclusive) being provided by the SLA to support the delivery of works in the future Molonglo Town Centre area.

I'm pleased to advise that the design and construction contracts are progressing well, with the total forecast project cost at completion currently within the approved budget.

As is typical for infrastructure projects of this scale and complexity, refinements have been necessary. Since the original contract award, several scope changes and required approvals have influenced both the design parameters and construction timelines. With the design phase now complete, the associated time impacts have been fully assessed, enabling a more accurate update to the project schedule.

The Molonglo River Bridge is expected to open to the public by late Q3 2026, with remaining works, including landscaping and planting, continuing into Q1 2027.

Strategies to manage congestion while major road projects are underway

Several ACT Government funded infrastructure projects are currently underway in the Molonglo Valley, alongside significant private development activity driven by ongoing residential growth. These works can impact the road network, resulting in detours and temporary traffic arrangements.

To manage this, all traffic management plans are reviewed and approved by Roads ACT prior to implementation. Coordination between adjacent

projects such as the Molonglo River Bridge and Molonglo Town Centre developments is facilitated through the requirement that a single temporary traffic management designer be engaged across projects. This approach ensures consistency in signage and reduces confusion for road users.

To further mitigate congestion and keep the community informed, Infrastructure Canberra has implemented a comprehensive communication strategy, including, letterbox drops to nearby residents, electronic signage with real-time updates and detour information, regular project updates via the Built for CBR and Our Canberra websites, ACT Government social media posts, media releases, radio interviews and advertisements as needed.

Infrastructure Canberra maintains ongoing engagement with local resident groups and key stakeholders to provide early notice of disruptions and address concerns. The ACT Government remains committed to clear and consistent communication, improving traffic management and minimising congestion and will continue to work closely with the Molonglo Valley community throughout the delivery of these major projects.

Transport and land use planning relevant to the Molonglo Valley

Along with tabling the requested planning documents, I'd like to raise some key findings associated with transport planning undertaken by transport planning professionals from across iCBR and the City and Environment Directorate.

Along with inter-town transport from the Molonglo Valley, such as to Civic, Belconnen or Woden Town Centres, I also want to highlight that strategic transport modelling is used to inform land use planning.

Consideration continues to be made as to how trips to work can be reduced such as through providing employment opportunity, such as through commercial zoning within the Molonglo Valley.

Providing a Town Centre for the Molonglo Valley, which will also be supported by lower order centres and will aim to meet the needs for Molonglo Valley residents.

As you can imagine, numerous transport modelling scenarios have been developed and considered (i.e. through Canberra's Strategic Transport Model) to assess how different transport infrastructure treatments are inter-related and their ideal timing/sequencing. This type of assessment occurs in addition to the development of select transport corridor studies or plans that will support the Molonglo Valley.

The assessment of scenarios developed through Canberra's Strategic Transport Model are aligned with the ACT Government's broader transport priorities and includes supporting more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport and active travel.

As you're aware, master planning has been undertaken for both public transport and active travel to support growth in the Molonglo Valley. Future rapid routes from the Molonglo Valley to Belconnen, Civic and Woden will all aim to support bus priority.

A report prepared by SMEC titled 'Molonglo Valley Active Travel Master Plan' is publicly available on the web. Studies and reports such as the Molonglo Valley Active Travel Master Plan are used as key inputs to support broader strategic planning as reflected in ACT's District Strategies. For example, the Molonglo Valley District Strategy identifies what is required to support city

growth, which includes future active travel routes, proposed rapid transit corridors and other supporting infrastructure.

The City and Environment Directorate has engaged WSP to specifically investigate options to improve public transport and traffic flow on Cotter Road from Streeton Drive to Tuggeranong Parkway. This Options Report is currently under development and is anticipated to be finalised later in 2025. Once finalised, the options report is intended to be published on the City Services website. This type of report, which will consider a variety of infrastructure solutions is considered by transport planning professionals to support delivering ACT's future multimodal transport network, between the surrounding districts.

A future rapid route between the Molonglo Valley and Civic has been investigated through the CSTM scenario modelling and the Parkes Way Corridor Plan. Whilst the Parkes Way Corridor plan identifies a combination of short term treatment to support public transport, further investigation will also need to occur to confirm the preferred route alignment for an additional rapid route from Molonglo including consideration of an alternative connection North to Belconnen. At this stage the two options to the City that have been identified are via Clunies Ross Street or via Edinburgh Avenue. For additional details, I'd like to table a copy of the Draft Parkes Way Corridor Plan ([Attachment H](#)), which includes a suite of transport initiatives that supports the Molonglo Valley.

I'd also like to table a copy of the Draft South-West Corridor Plan ([Attachment G](#)). This corridor plan considers a future Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector and its interchange with the Tuggeranong Parkway.

The Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector Design Options study, which is jointly funded with the Australian Government is underway. However, detailed costings and project timelines are not yet developed.

I'm aware that this resolution calls to develop a costed plan and timeline for the full delivery of the East-West Arterial Road (now referred to as the Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector), which I can assure you is progressing. The East-West Arterial Road Plan will be provided when the design is sufficiently developed.

In the interim, the indicative cost estimate and timeline for the project is identified in ACT's Infrastructure Plan as part of the Transport Infrastructure Project Pipeline. I'd also like to table a copy of the Molonglo East West Arterial Feasibility Study and Molonglo Strategic Traffic Study ([Attachment E](#)) as planning undertaken for this transport corridor.

However, I'd like to point out that the Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector Design Options study will review, test and challenge the findings presented in the East West Arterial Feasibility Study. This includes considering the latest land use and population projections.

The ACT Government will also advocate for co-funding to undertake the next stage of planning for the Tuggeranong Parkway to ensure its integration with the Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector project.

In relation to Bindubi Street, the Suburban Land Agency plans to progressively design and construct the Bindubi Street extension between John Gorton Drive and William Hovell Drive as it develops the suburbs of Bandler and Sulman.

The development of Bandler and Sulman will be staged to align with the ACT Government's Indicative Land Release Program, and the Bindubi Street extension will also progress in a staged manner as the suburbs are developed.

The Bindubi Street extension will be designed as a major collector road, to support traffic movement into and out of Bandler and Sulman and will operate as the intertown public transport route, initially for buses but with capability to be upgraded to Light Rail in the future.

The Suburban Land Agency is currently preparing a masterplan for Bandler, including the proposed alignment of the Bindubi Street extension. This will provide the necessary integration between the estate and the collector road. It is anticipated that the development of Bandler will commence in 2027-28.

The cost of the Bindubi Street extension, within the suburbs of Bandler and Sulman, will be integrated within the SLA's Business Plans for these suburbs.

It is estimated that the Bindubi Street extension, within the suburbs of Bandler and Sulman, will be fully constructed by the 2034-35 financial year.

As previously mentioned, the Parkes Way Corridor Plan ([Attachment H](#)), includes the suite of transport initiatives that supports the Molonglo Valley. This includes consideration of the intersection between Bindubi Street extension and William Hovell Drive. A variety of short-term interventions have been identified along Parkes Way including the Glenloch interchange to support public transport along this corridor into the future.

ACT's Infrastructure Plan includes a mix of short, medium and long term multi modal infrastructure solutions for the Molonglo Valley and other districts across the ACT. Additional details are also provided through supporting policies such as ACT's Active Travel Plan. As I'm sure you'd appreciate, ACT's Infrastructure pipeline is not static and is regularly reviewed.

As part of the updated Federation Funding Agreement Schedule for Land Transport Infrastructure Projects, the ACT Government is committed to regularly review its Infrastructure Plan to support funding requests.

For Commonwealth investment to be attained, ACT projects need to align with the Australian Governments' Infrastructure Policy Statement. This includes a focus on transport infrastructure that meets the definition of 'nationally significant'.

The Commonwealth Government is a key funding partner in several major road infrastructure projects across the ACT. This collaboration ensures that Canberrans benefit from coordinated, long-term investment in the infrastructure that supports the city's growth, safety and connectivity.

Summary

The ACT Government continues to invest in safer, more efficient and better-connected transport across Canberra. This includes key infrastructure projects that will support the Molonglo Valley. These investments will help ease congestion, improve road safety, support future growth, encourage public transport and active travel and create jobs across the region.

The planning reports to be tabled in the assembly provide information and options to inform government decision making, both current and future.

However, the ACT's Infrastructure Plan is the key policy that identifies ACT's current intended pipeline of infrastructure investment. The draft reports identified to be tabled are intended to be published on the City Services website when they have been finalised by the relevant consultants.

The ACT Government will continue to advocate for commonwealth investment into the future. This includes seeking co-investment to sustain a fit-for-purpose and well-maintained nationally significant transport network to support ACT's growing population, which is vitally important for Canberra and the broader region.

We will continue to support regional growth, road safety and efficient multimodal transport across Canberra, including the Molonglo Valley.

ENDS