

# Deb Foskey MLA

## Member for Molonglo

The Chair  
Planning and Environment Committee  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
London Circuit  
Canberra

July 9, 2008

Dear Mr Gentleman

I am writing to make a submission to the Inquiry into the new town of Molonglo which your committee is currently conducting. I attach the submission I made to ACTPLA on the topic but in this letter I wish to add my concern about the lack of integration of public transport into early planning.

I recently attended a briefing with ACTPLA officials and was pleased to hear that the new town will begin with denser residential development around the proposed town centre. I was very concerned however to be told that at this stage new roads will be limited to two lanes with no provision for light rail or rapid bus transit lanes, which we were told would be added later when critical population density is reached.. This despite the rhetoric that people are to be encouraged to live in Molonglo because access to the city will be made easier and more ecologically sound through excellent public transport services.

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It is worrying that residents will be reliant on their cars for at least the first years they live in Molonglo, as it is unlikely that this will not encourage people who wish to live in a location where choices to the car are abundant. Such people will still have to choose the inner north and inner south option, thus increasing pressure on accommodation in those suburbs and decreasing affordability.

It is also disappointing that, while an ecologically inappropriate lake on the Molonglo River is seen as desirable because it will increase returns to the government from sale of land, the financial benefits to government of selling land which has its value enhanced by access to good rapid transit systems are being overlooked yet again.

In relation to this point, I refer the committee to the study, Valuation Advice for Canberra Public Transport Futures ACT conducted by Colliers International in June 2003, included as Appendix C in the final report of the Economic and financial Implications of Transport Options of the Canberra Public Transport Futures Study (January 2004) prepared by Kellogg Brown and Root P/L.



Much overseas experience has shown that with the introduction of a light rail system, urban consolidation and new development has started almost immediately after designated routes are identified. ...

The ramifications of urban sprawl are well known and with the Territories land holdings diminishing and opportunities restricted by environmental issues, it is imperative for the efficient development of the ACT that something is done now to create the stimulus for a change in direction.

Urban consolidation along public transport routes and corridors has many obvious benefits but the main drivers for the Territory are an increase (sic) value of its land holdings and opportunities to unlock some of these assets.

The report goes on to estimate the increased value of land sales where light rail is available (I think we could add rapid bus transit system as well) for the locations it surveyed. More than a 10% increase is estimated where the infrastructure is available.

It is crucial that the ACT Government has the vision to integrated planning and sustainable transport from the first. I believe that we need both portfolios to be under the same Minister at least, and suggest that the Committee make that recommendation.

Good luck with the Inquiry

Best wishes

Deb Foskey