



Inquiry into the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Clay, Jo

Addressed to: Minister for Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs

Redirected to: Treasurer

Reference: City & Environment Directorate

Hearing: 19 May 2026

In relation to: **Central coordination of Federal funding bids**

Question received: 29 May 2026

Answer Due: 9 June 2026

The Assembly agreed to my motion on 3 September 2025 for ACT Government to seek a fair share of Commonwealth funding by seeking minimum 50:50 Commonwealth funding on all ACT infrastructure projects where the total project costs exceed \$5 million and publicly report on which projects sought Commonwealth funding and how much was sought and granted.

1. Have any of your agencies applied for Commonwealth funding for projects where the total cost exceeds \$5 million since September 2025? If so, please provide details.
2. Have any of your agencies initiated projects where the total cost will exceed \$5 million since September 2025? If so, please provide details.
3. Noting that Housing ACT did not apply for any funding in Round 1 HAFF, how much funding was applied for in Round 2 and Round 3 HAFF and what is the total value of the projects that Housing ACT is running that would have been eligible for Round 2 and Round 3 HAFF funding?
4. Noting that the ACT did not receive any of the Federally Specialist Disability Accommodation funding, was there a central area of Government this issue and these decisions were reported to? If not, where were the decisions that led to no funding being received taken - were they taken by the Minister for Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs the branch, the directorate, a public official or someone else?

5. Has the ACT missed out on the almost \$10B in Federal funding since 2015 for city and regional deals? If so, is there a different source of Federal funding the ACT has received instead?

6. Which area of Government do you report information on Federal funding from all sources to and which area of Government coordinates this work?

7. How do directorate staff know what sources of Federal funding are available and how do they decide whether to apply?

CHRIS STEEL MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

This is a matter that crosses many portfolios across the Government. Generally, portfolio ministers are responsible for seeking Commonwealth funding for individual projects in their portfolio, subject to Cabinet agreement or consideration. The Treasurer has portfolio responsibilities for Federal Financial Relations, and the Chief Minister has portfolio responsibilities for Commonwealth-State relations. I am responding on behalf of the Government to provide a more fulsome answer to the Committee.

(1) and (2):

There are several ACT projects that receive Commonwealth funding, through dedicated financial arrangements and federal funding streams. Federal Financial Relations are outlined in the 2026-27 Budget papers in Chapter 3.6.

Over recent months additional funding for various projects has been secured. This includes the Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector following a direct request by the ACT Government. The Commonwealth provided an additional \$4.6 million through the 2026-27 Federal Budget, bringing the total Commonwealth contribution to \$5.0 million.

The ACT Government has also had ongoing engagement with the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments on the Canberra to Sydney rail corridor. This advocacy has resulted in a joint commitment of these Governments of \$100 million for improvements to the corridor.

More broadly, access to Commonwealth funding is considered in the annual Budget process through business case development and Treasury assessment. A range of Budget initiatives are supported by Commonwealth investment, including the initiatives *30,000 homes by 2030 – Public housing pipeline*, *Delivery of Whitlam School – Stage 2* and *Better community infrastructure – Hall Village Active Travel improvements*. The Government will seek a contribution from the Commonwealth Government for the initiative *Stormwater infrastructure improvements*.

In addition, ACT Government is currently engaging with the Commonwealth on whether a portion of the \$10 million in Commonwealth funding allocated to the Bruce Precinct Master

Plan project to enable complementary planning activities to support implementation of the Master Plan's strategic outcomes could be provided to the ACT.

These are ongoing discussions with the Commonwealth on the best approach to progress planning and key strategic Government decision-making to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to future development within the Bruce Precinct. This is not a formal "application" process, but a process of engagement with the Commonwealth.

Other projects project valued at over \$5 million have been entered into since September 2025. Funding arrangements for any of these projects will be outlined in the Budget Outlook.

(3)

I am advised that Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) round 2 had a State and Territory dwelling allocation for the ACT for 85 social housing dwellings. \$66 million in Commonwealth funding has been allocated by Housing Australia for 85 Housing ACT dwellings across four projects in the Inner South, Inner North and Gungahlin districts. The ACT Government committed \$75 million through the 2025-26 Budget to support delivery. These dwellings must be novated to Community Housing Providers (CHPs) for 25 years as a condition of the funding.

HAFF round 3 has a State and Territory dwelling allocation for the ACT for 306 dwellings, which must be 90 per cent social housing and 10 per cent affordable housing. Applications for this stream are currently being progressed.

(4)

I am advised that Housing ACT registered to be a Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) provider. It had not sought a decision by government to operationalise the provider function following its registration.

(5)

The Australian Government's City and Regional Deals program has committed Commonwealth funding to place-based infrastructure agreements since 2015. These deals have typically been targeted at fast-growing metropolitan corridors (such as Western Sydney) or regional cities undergoing economic transition (such as Geelong or Launceston), reflecting their role in driving growth, jobs and urban renewal.

While the ACT Government advocated regularly to the Commonwealth Government for a City and Regional Deal for Canberra while they were an active Commonwealth program, City Deals were only one targeted funding vehicle rather than a measure of total Commonwealth support. The ACT continues to receive funding through other channels, including the National Capital Investment Framework

In July 2023, the Prime Minister announced the establishment of the National Capital Investment Framework (NCIF), a joint ACT-Commonwealth initiative to better coordinate shared investment in Canberra. This recognises the unique nature of Canberra as the nation's capital, seat of the Australian public service, fastest growing jurisdiction, and an inclusive and progressive regional centre. The NCIF supports existing programs and planning through the early identification of shared investment priorities for the Nation's Capital for the benefit of all Australians.

In January 2026, the ACT and Australian Governments signed a Federation Funding Agreement schedule (FFA) for the NCIF comprising \$200 million in joint funding on a 50:50 basis. This funding is for the delivery of a new Canberra Aquatic Centre (\$138.9 million total) and feasibility and design of a new Canberra Convention and Entertainment Centre Precinct (CCECP) (\$31.1 million total).

A further \$10 million has also been provided by the Commonwealth Government to work with the ACT Government to develop a Bruce Precinct Masterplan – ensuring the Bruce site is welcoming and fit for purpose for visitors, athletes and their families alike. The master planning exercise will guide decisions about optimal land use, urban renewal and mixed-use housing development in the precinct, which includes the GIO Stadium.

The Suburban Land Agency was successful in securing \$2.8 million through the Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program for Canberra Railway Urban Precinct Renewal.

(6)

As outlined above, there are many parts of Government with responsibility for seeking and securing Commonwealth funding. Reporting and agreement to federal funding arrangements is typically a Cabinet decision and considered in Budget processes. The Federal Financial Relations chapter of the ACT Budget provides the financial detail of funding received by the ACT from the Commonwealth Government. The table is produced and co-ordinated as part of the annual Budget process.

(7)

There are many avenues for ACT Directorate staff to source Federal funding, for example:

Federal Financial Agreements are negotiated periodically, for multi-year funding programs, through national processes;

- Bilateral Agreement negotiations provide an avenue to propose new opportunities to support ACT initiatives;
- Unsolicited proposals can be submitted to the Commonwealth at any time, usually directly to the most relevant Commonwealth Department or Minister;
- All current Grant Opportunities open for application are advertised on GrantConnect (www.grants.gov.au);

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- New programs are usually publicly announced by the Commonwealth and then advised to all jurisdictions via Ministerial Councils, Senior Officials groups or to the relevant Director General;
- Direct emails are sent by the Commonwealth to Directorate policy areas and previous applicants for multi-year programs.

ACT Government officials engage actively with intergovernmental forums within their policy areas and maintain close relations with Commonwealth officials. Directorate staff are therefore often aware of upcoming opportunities and can input into the early design of Commonwealth programs. Many programs are on a regular timing cycle, and Directorate staff are able to predict and prepare for future funding rounds.

CMTEDD works with agencies as required to promote opportunities as they become known, and to support the development of applications or negotiations.

The decision on whether to seek Commonwealth funding in portfolios is led by the relevant Ministers, with Cabinet authorisation as required. Many submissions for Commonwealth funding involve co-funding to be committed by the ACT and therefore involve budget processes.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT.

Signature:



By the Treasurer, Chris Steel MLA

Date:

13/7/26