



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: 078

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Social Connectivity - What would make Woden Town Centre a more welcoming place to meet and socialise with friends and family?

Social Connectivity - What types of events or activities would you like to see more of in Woden?

The town centre was designed to be the hub for facilities and services for the town centre and surrounding suburbs of Woden and Weston Creek.

We need shops, cafe's and facilities around the town square and the CIT plaza making it a destination rather than a thoroughfare including:

- Develop and encourage business around the town square and plaza west of the new CIT
- A basketball court in the plaza especially for CIT students, Woden Youth Centre and workers in the town centre to let of steam and socialise
- Facilities to host an art exhibitions and art festival for local and visiting artists
- Facilities to host markets including the farmers markets and festivals including power
- A regular repair cafe
- Keep the building heights low (2-3 levels) on the immediate north and east of the square and plaza to allow plenty of solar access to these important outdoor spaces, reduce wind tunnelling and allow flourishing trees and gardens

We need more community facilities for social, creative and recreational activities that create community. These facilities need to be in easy walking distance to the town centre to enable access for residents, workers, CIT students and Youth Centre visitors. These include:

- Acquire and upgrade the Phillip Pool and Ice rink. Initially ensuring the heat exchange is switched on and installing a bubble similar to Civic pool to allow the pool to be used all year. If/when a new ice rink is built build an indoor pool on the site. The pool is important social and recreational facility for residents. The growing population of Woden and Weston Creek especially in the town centre is more than enough to justify the cost an publicly owned aquatic centre with a 50m pool. A 50m pool for recreation, water sports and a place for the community to meet and connect. Most importantly provide a local, public, accessible aquatic centre with enough capacity, length and depth to enable the residents to build swimming, water safety and survival skills. In turn reversing the upward trend in drownings.
- Build a new basketball stadium creating a home for the Weston Creek Woden Dodgers so they can train and play in one place allowing them to become a community. Include both indoor and some outdoor courts that are accessible 24/7 so players don't have to drive to UC to practice and play
- Build an arts centre to support visual and performance art that is easily accessible. To support performance, exhibitions and festivals for local and visiting artists

Housing - Do you think there is enough social and public housing in Woden to meet community needs? Why or why not?

Housing - What improvements or changes would you suggest for housing in the Woden Town Centre?

1. There is not enough social and public housing in the town centre. As per the report linked below the level of public and social housing across Australia does not meet the demand. Compared with countries with similar GDP we fall well short. For example Sweden has 17% social housing and the Netherlands 29.1 (world leader) compared to Australia 3.8%. The ACT should be setting the example for the rest of the country and investing in maintenance of current public housing and working with developers to include social and public housing spread across all suburbs including the Woden Town Centre. Initially increasing to 6-10% to meet demand as of 2021.
(<https://www.ahuri.edu.au/analysis/brief/what-right-level-social-housing-australia>)
2. Provide emergency housing for the homeless and vulnerable with services and support to help these people get on their feet
3. Minimise the number of 1 bedroom units that can isolate their occupants.
4. Improve planning so that all apartments have natural light, increase the distances between towers to facilitate natural light and reduce overlooking. Require developers to plan for environmental sustainability increasing greenspace and reducing heat

Employment and Economic Activity - What types of businesses or services would you like to see more of in the Woden Town Centre?

Employment and Economic Activity - How could the dining and entertainment options in Woden be improved?

1. More local business especially those that encourage sustainability, reuse, upcycling and creativity.
2. A hardware store.
3. More dining and entertainment venues around the town square and CIT Plaza
4. Easy connection/flow from the public transport, Woden square, CIT plaza, Canberra College, Westfield and apartments to Eddison park and other recreation/social facilities

Health, Education and Community Services - Are health, education, and community services in Woden accessible and sufficient for your needs?

Health, Education and Community Services - What additional services would you find valuable in the area?

1. Regular public transport connections to the Canberra Hospital at least every half hour. Parking at the hospital even for accessible parking makes for a long walk to/from the main entrance to the hospital. This walk is not possible for many visitors and patients.
2. Community education short courses at CIT

Public Spaces - How could Woden's public spaces be improved to ensure they are inviting and safe for everyone?

1. Maintain and increase the green spaces available for residents of the town centre especially trees and gardens
2. Close the cemetery to new burials and plan for it to be converted to parkland longer term. Many towns across the country create memorial walls containing headstones and turn old cemetery into a park.

Community Facilities - What recreational or cultural facilities do you think are missing in the Woden Town Centre?

1. As mentioned above: an outdoor basketball court at CIT, an indoor stadium for basketball and other sports, a 50 metre pool that is available all year, and an arts centre.
2. Build the long promised community centre to house the Woden Community Service and the important programs they run supporting our community instead of making do with the current unsuitable, disconnected locations. Provide a place for social and community groups and clubs to meet.

Transport and Accessibility - What would you do to improve access to and around the Woden Town Centre?

1. Bring back the more direct suburban buses that ran every 30 minutes in peak times
2. I am very concerned about the tram to Woden taking twice as long as the bus and being very inflexible. Only having one track in and one out and not servicing Molonglo Valley and Weston Creek. When we had the bus network that included the 31x series of buses commute times were short and buses through the town centre were frequent. These services allowed people in outer suburbs of Tuggeranong and Belconnen to catch 1 bus to Tuggeranong, Woden, Civic and Belconnen.

Other Comments - Do you have any other ideas or comments about the future of Woden Town Centre?

1. Woden Town Centre services Woden Valley, Weston Creek, north part of Tuggeranong, and parts of south Canberra such as Yarralumla, Deakin.