

2026

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

ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

**3 (b)(ii) – Woden Town Centre Working Group – Assembly Resolution of 3 February 2026 –
Woden Town Centre Working Group
Quarterly Report - Government Response**

**Presented by
Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development
June 2026**

Report

Woden Town Centre Working Group – June 2026 quarterly report

Report purpose

To provide a quarterly report of the work and outputs of the Woden Town Centre Working Group (the working group) as required under the Assembly Resolution of 3 February 2026.

Type of information

A consolidated listing of work underway reflecting the Assembly resolutions of both 20 March 2025 regarding the Woden Town Centre Working Group and 3 February 2026 regarding the Woden Town Centre Integrated Land Use Plan.

About the working group

Purpose

The purpose of the Woden Town Centre Working Group is to:

- Operate in an advisory and information sharing capacity;
- Facilitate cross-government coordination to support the integrated delivery of works and initiatives within and impacting on the Woden Town Centre;
- Identify and where appropriate recommend opportunities for Town Centre improvements that are part of or consistent with existing priorities, considering the physical, business, environmental, and social dimensions of the Town Centre; and
- Consider all areas of the Woden Town Centre including Phillip Service Trades Area.

Work underway

Scope (2025 and 2026 resolutions)	Work underway
Articulate a strategic vision for future land uses, major transport networks, open space and activity centres including Phillip Service Trades Area.	• The Southern Gateway Planning and Design Framework (SGPDF) further articulates the strategic vision of the Woden District Strategy and Planning Strategy. • The working group received an update on the SGPDF at the 7 May 2026 meeting and looks forward to hearing from the community during consultation. • As per the two WTC assembly resolutions, declaration of an urban renewal precinct is being considered. The working group will assist to refine options for how to deliver such a precinct and potential location/s such as Phillip

	Service Trades Area. An update will be provided at the next meeting and working group inputs may be sought out-of-session depending on the timeframe.
Social infrastructure: • Gap analysis, including options and criteria to determine the preferred sites for the multi-purpose indoor sports stadium, the street theatre/art centre, and the 50m pool set in a green environment. • Identify suitable sites for an aquatic centre, indoor sports centre, and arts centre to meet community needs.	• Preparation of tender documentation to engage a consultant to develop a new ACT Aquatic Strategy is underway, which will incorporate the government commitment to deliver a new outdoor 50 metre pool in Woden. The working group will receive an update during the next quarter. • Early planning is exploring an option to provide an indoor sport court facility on the corner of Hindmarsh Drive and Ainsworth Street in Phillip (Section 1, Block 17), potentially collocated with a future high school. The working group will receive an update during the next quarter. • Creative Spaces Mapping project comprising an ACT wide arts assets needs analysis - including targeted community consultation and assessment of arts facilities in Woden. The working group will receive an update during the next quarter. • Government is exploring opportunities to integrate new community facilities into major proponent-led redevelopments to provide for the new and existing communities. The working group supports this initiative. • ACT Government has agreed to release the Consultant study: ACT Community, Sport and Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment and Social Infrastructure Audit (SGS). The study is a tool to inform work across ACT Government and has been provided to the working group.
Identify and recommend improvements to pedestrian, cycling, vehicle, public transport and social connectivity.	• The ACT-wide Active Travel Planning Tool identifies current and planned linkages to and through the Woden Town Centre (WTC) and surrounds to achieve the Active Travel Plan goal of 'more people walking and riding more often'. This tool informs work across ACT Government including in WTC. • The Light Rail Stage 2B final, revised Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared to be lodged for statutory approvals following a review of submissions received during community consultation in 2025. The working group discussed infrastructure and flooding along the LRS2B (Woden district) alignment on 15 October 2025 and will receive

	a general project update during the next quarter. • A future redevelopment of the Woden Westfield would provide an opportunity for connectivity improvements through the centre of the WTC. The working group met out of session for a discussion of the proposal (13 March 2026) and received an update at the 7 May 2026 meeting. The working group will be kept up to date during the process. • The working group will continue to track and discuss major plan amendment (MPA) applications and proposals in the WTC.
Tree canopy: • Enhance the tree canopy and biodiversity, especially around Yarralumla Creek. • A plan to increase the [WTC tree] canopy to 30 percent.	• The ACT Government is progressing work on the ACT Landscape Plan. This will take a long-term, strategic, spatial approach to urban growth while incorporating our nature conservation objectives across Canberra. The plan will also have a strong climate adaptation focus, alongside providing a strategic direction for urban heat mitigation. The newly appointed ACT Government Landscape Architect will be invited to attend a future working group meeting to introduce the work. • Flood studies for the Yarralumla Creek are underway and the modelling will help inform the type of vegetation suitable in different parts of the riparian corridor. The working group will receive an update on these flood studies later in the year.
Assess the social and environmental sustainability and climate adaptability of residential towers.	• Residential proposals over 5-storeys are referred to the National Capital Design Review Process (NCDRP) which includes guidance on sustainability. The working group is not directly involved in the development assessment process but are informed if a WTC proposal is referred to NCDRP. • The ACT Sustainable Buildings Pathway (2024) is to lead and support the building and construction sector to deliver sustainable and climate ready buildings now and into the future. • The working group will receive a presentation on this work later in 2026.
Review levels of homelessness and community support services and identify potential sites for new services as part of the Town Centre development.	• Woden Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) Youth Foyer opened May 2026. • The working group will review and discuss any future proposals or sites for new services.

Housing analysis of apartment size and numbers, ownership/rental mix, vacancy rates, public housing, community housing, affordable housing and unmet housing need. Plan for adequate provision of public, community and affordable housing.	• The ACT Government is developing public, community and affordable housing in the Woden Town Centre. Continuing initiatives are: ○ ACT Housing Strategy 2018 and Implementation Plan Update (February 2026) ○ Affordable Housing Project Fund ○ Growing and Renewing Public Housing ○ Housing Australia Future Fund ○ Housing Targets ○ LVC Reduction for social and affordable housing • The working group will discuss any new proposals for public, community and affordable housing in the Woden Town Centre.
Integration: • Coordinate with the development of the SGPDF. • Consider proponent (developer and/or utility authority) initiated master plans, MPAs or direct sale requests to align with the SGPDF and Woden district strategy.	• The working group met out of session on 13 March 2026 to review and discuss a proponent-initiated MPA application in the WTC. Comments and feedback were provided to the Territory Plan team directly through line areas. • The working group received an update on upcoming community consultation on the SGPDF at the 7 May 2026 meeting. • No direct sale applications in WTC received this quarter.
Entertainment precinct and identifying place-making areas: • Planning to create a destination by activating public spaces and supporting the night-time economy.	• The City and Environment Directorate is undertaking a review of the City Centre Entertainment Precinct and will provide an update to the working group once complete. • Activation of public spaces adjacent Woden CIT will be on the working group agenda for discussion later this year.
Reporting: 1. Progress report by last sitting of 2025. 2. Report back on the above analyses and land use planning by June 2026 and before public consultation on the SGPDF (to be tabled in assembly 24 February 2026). 3. "Provide quarterly reporting to the Assembly of the work and outputs of the Working Group"	1. Completed. 2. Completed. 3. Ongoing.