



Mr Andrew Barr MLA  
Treasurer  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

2019-20 ACT BUDGET CONSULTATION  
Belconnen Community Council submission

Dear Treasurer

The Belconnen Community Council (BCC) thank you for the opportunity to participate in the 2019-20 Budget Consultation Process and provide views on the development of the ACT's revenue and expenditure priorities, including how the ACT's resources are allocated, what services could be enhanced, and where possible efficiencies could be made.

The BCC submission attempts to address the specific questions posed, with a distinct concentration on the infrastructure priorities the Government should consider implementing and funding in future budgets. Our recommendations are summarized in Attachment A.

We have also provided some low cost suggestions that could improve the amenity of Belconnen residents at minimal cost to Government. These could best be implemented in the 2019-20 ACT Budget.

While the BCC submission has largely viewed the questions posed through a Belconnen community lens, a number of our suggestions apply across the ACT.

As the Belconnen area straddles the electorates of Ginninderra and Yerrabi, the items suggested by the BCC are of benefit to residents of both electorates, and those who visit for work, education or recreation.

Sincerely

Glen Hyde  
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# **BELCONNEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL SUBMISSION**

## **1.1. What services do you believe are most important for the ACT?**

The most important services for the Territory include but are not limited to:

- Quality and timely healthcare;
- Quality education;
- Timely, attractive, efficient and safe public transport which caters adequately for the current and future travel needs of the public;
- High-quality, well maintained roads (including footpaths and cycleways) which reflect current and future need;
- A safe and just community;
- Management of the natural environment to ensure its sustainability;
- Emergency management; and
- Ensuring a holistic approach to investment in, promotion and enhancement of all Territory districts.
- Adequate long term infrastructure planning, with flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

## **1.2. How can the Government deliver current services more efficiently, or in ways that better meet the needs of our community?**

What underpins efficient and productive services is appropriate consultation: both before services are delivered and during their delivery. The Yoursay website is an innovative and popular way of collecting feedback but it should not be the only way.

The BCC are pleased to see the adoption of alternate community consultation programs including the citizens jury model and deliberative democracy. The Better Suburbs process was very useful and as well as generating useful feedback, assisted in engaging with sectors of the community that rarely engage in consultation.

There is still room for improvement. While the ACT Government makes some attempt to consult face to face, in some cases this is insufficient. Many public consultations are more akin to presentations and rarely is the feedback reflected in the Government decisions implemented. Some agencies are more capable than others in this area.

We would also encourage thorough research to assist in decision making. Although we are strong supporters of community consultation, we also want a balance between research based recommendations and response to community demands.

## **1.3. Are there particular services that you consider the ACT Government should stop delivering or should deliver in a different way?**

As mentioned above, community consultation efforts and engagement with stakeholders must be improved. Some ACT Government Departments

communications and stakeholder engagement areas may benefit from a formal meet and greet with community councils that would benefit all parties in disseminating government information and receiving feedback from sectors of the community that they may not normally have access to. The BCC would be happy to facilitate this.

#### **1.4. What new ideas, services or programs should the ACT consider to meet emerging or evolving community needs?**

The BCC suggests that a focus be placed on the residential expansion planned for Ginninderry and the CSIRO Field Site, and appropriate infrastructure be provided ahead of that population appearing.

The Belconnen Town Centre is increasingly filling with residential towers, and an appropriate investment in improving access to and the amenity of Belconnen Town Centre green space and community amenity is required.

The BCC also encourage the ACT Government to devise a financial model where large scale residential developers can make a meaningful contribution to infrastructure required to support their new developments. This would be particularly useful if implemented prior to the redevelopment of the CSIRO Ginninderra field site.

Public housing is an important part of Belconnen's urban form and community. The BCC recommend that the ACT Government purchase a percentage of new apartments of varying sizes in the residential towers that are being built in the town centre, and in the new residential developments at Ginninderry and the future CSIRO redevelopment. We ask that a ratio of these purchases be suitable for people with mobility issues and suitable for people to age in place.

## **2. Investment by the ACT Government to make Belconnen more liveable**

The BCC appreciates the long-term investment by the ACT Government in health, education, arts, culture and infrastructure in the Belconnen area. For the 2019-20 Budget process, the BCC has identified the following priorities and where possible has identified which key areas they reflect. While the BCC has identified a large number of priorities, we have sought to include priorities which require short-term investment for long-term gain, as well as those which require more significant investment. All our recommendations are summarized in Attachment A

Our suggestions for ACT Government investment are in the following categories:

- A more attractive entrance to Belconnen
- Public transport that can grow with the region
- Increasing the attractiveness of the Belconnen Town Centre (BTC) from business and community perspectives
- Sustainable public and private waste disposal
- Improving Belconnen's arterial roads and local road maintenance
- Well maintained and vibrant local centres and suburbs

### **A more attractive entrance to Belconnen**

The current 'Welcome to Belconnen' that people experience travelling from Civic is a small sign, then some concrete overpasses and slightly anarchic road intersections near Calvary Hospital. The BCC recommend a small investment on some improvements to the appearance of this area, including some well designed and attractive signs welcoming people to Belconnen.

### **Public transport that can grow with the region**

#### *Making the Belconnen Community Bus Interchange more user friendly*

The main bus interchange is not user friendly. It is a significant walk from one end to the other for people trying to get off a local bus service to connect to an intertown rapid bus service.

Outside business hours it is not considered safe and although well lit, it is simply unappealing.

Although the BCC understand the interchange is between two large blocks that are awaiting urban renewal, the large amount of space could be better used now by moving to a platform model similar to that at the Westfield Belconnen Interchange, and reducing the length of the platforms by half.

We would also ask that any future development on the blocks adjacent to the bus interchange have commercial/retail space at street level.

*Upgrade the Westfield Belconnen bus interchange to improve weather protection for passengers*

The Westfield Belconnen Bus interchange is heavily used but the orientation of the platforms makes it impractical for protecting passengers waiting for buses, from rain and sun. The afternoon sun in summer is at an angle that many passengers stand behind the Civic bound platform. The rain often rains on the seating provided. It is a very poor passenger experience. Covering over the center area with a simple roof would provide much needed weather protection at a fairly low cost.

*Enhancing public transport linkages from West Belconnen to prepare for residential growth pressures*

The BCC support the recently announced expansion of rapid and local bus services to West Belconnen. Ongoing residential development in West Macgregor and the pending development of the Ginninderry project at the new suburb of Strathnairn, and the former golf course in Holt will increase traffic and impact existing road capacity in the West Belconnen region.

To improve public transport, a dedicated bus lane be constructed along Southern Cross Drive, terminating in the Kippax area. This could precede any light rail that may be constructed over the longer term.

This region of Canberra is expected to increase in population and urban density. It is best that the public transport services are planned for now, before new residents form the habit of using their private car to commute to their place of work or study.

Recommendation: A dedicated bus lane be constructed along Southern Cross Drive, terminating in the Kippax area.

*Belconnen Light Rail engineering study*

With light rail services commencing in 2018 and a second stage already proposed (to Woden), the BCC are pleased that the ACT Government have announced that a third stage of light rail will service Belconnen.

We believe that the proposed route from Civic to the BTC, and possibly to Kippax, needs proper examination. There are several alternate routes for light rail into Belconnen:

- From Northbourne Ave directly along Barry Drive/Belconnen Way and diverting to the Belconnen town centre along Benjamin Way
- From Northbourne Ave directly along Barry Drive/Belconnen Way and diverting to the Belconnen town centre along Eastern Valley Way
- From Northbourne Ave directly along Barry Drive/Belconnen Way and diverting to the Belconnen town centre along Haydon Drive and the University of Canberra
- From Northbourne Ave along Macarthur Drive across the GDE through Bruce and UC to the BTC

The BCC encourage the proposed route to service the stadiums at AIS and Bruce, and the University of Canberra as well as providing improved public transport to the large workforce and retail offerings in the Belconnen Town Centre.

Funding for community consultation on the alternate ways that light rail could enter Belconnen, transit through the BTC and terminate in Kippax, need to be explored. Holding preliminary community consultation, and performing preliminary engineering studies would best achieve this.

Recommendation: Environmental, heritage and engineering studies of proposed routes for light rail to Belconnen are funded and commence soon.

#### *Improved local and rapid bus services*

The BCC expect that the reallocation of over a million bus kilometers a year realized from the commencement of light rail service between Civic and Gungahlin, be used to extend out of hours bus services, and increase frequency of daytime services on local bus services.

The BCC encourage Transport Canberra to improve local bus routes in Belconnen, by making them shorter and more frequent. We also encourage the construction of bus stops near rapid bus routes, and advertising these interconnections.

Recommendation: Construct more local bus stops near rapid bus routes

#### *Park & Ride*

Park & Ride could be an increasingly popular option to grow public transport patronage and reduce parking pressure in town centres. Increased park & ride facilities should be explored in areas with high patronage and used to enhance existing parking, particularly at local centres.

Park & Ride can be made attractive if it is near local centres and has a linkage to local businesses with other vehicle traffic coming and going throughout the day. This passive surveillance and activity will dissuade car theft or vandalism, and increase local business patronage.

As new residential areas of Belconnen are developed, it is essential that new Park & Ride space be built *before* people start moving in. Public transport options must be made available if people are to view it as viable alternative to the private car for daily driving to work.

Recommendation: A Park & Ride facility be constructed in the new Strathnairn suburb, before local residents move in.

#### *Building local bus stops near rapid bus stops*

Network 19 is a major change to the decades old local routes that have

served Belconnen residents. There is an opportunity to improve the adoption of public transport by residents by locating local service bus stops near the rapid bus routes, even if a short walk is required.

#### *Improving bus stops on arterial roads*

William Slim Drive is a major arterial road serving Belconnen and Gungahlin residents yet it has only one bus stop along its entire length, serving Giralang residents. A further bus stop could be installed at McKellar that would enable residents of McKellar and Evatt to utilize the Belconnen-Gungahlin direct buses. This low cost upgrade would increase patronage and alleviate the issues that reduced out of hours bus services have on these suburbs.

This would particularly benefit residents in Mackellar and Evatt that now face longer walks to relocated local bus services.

#### **Increasing the attractiveness of the Belconnen Town Centre (BTC) from business and community perspectives**

An ongoing Commonwealth and ACT government presence in all the Town Centre's, not least Belconnen, is critical to supporting vibrant residential and business communities throughout Canberra.

We appreciate that large departments like the Department of Immigration and Border Protection want to be in the one location and we think and hope this can be achieved in the BTC. If the proposed BTC Master Plan is implemented and facilities such as a new multi level carparking facility built, there is no reason that other government departments or commercial enterprises cannot be attracted to the BTC.

The BTC is thriving and attracting new and innovative businesses even at a time when other town centres have been struggling. Strong residential construction and associated street level retail have created an increased base of residents and an increased employment pool. These positive effects of urban renewal need to be encouraged and continued.

Some limited investment by the ACT Government in the streetscape and median strip of Benjamin Way could be performed in conjunction with long term plans by Scentre Group (owners of Westfield Belconnen) to encourage more street facing retail and enhance the out of hours amenity of the town centre.

We would like to see the funding announced for the Belconnen Bikeway also use to enhance the Benjamin Way streetscape as part of the projects aims. A walkable, bikeable town centre is attractive for everyone.

### *Construction of a multi-level car-park for full-time employees in the Belconnen Town Centre.*

In a previous budget submission the BCC proposed new multi-level parking in the BTC. This has been picked up in the Master Plan. It now needs to be funded.

Multi-level car parking for full-time employees in the BTC would free up surface parking for greater economic benefit (commercial or office space) while providing employees unable to access public transport, the option of secure parking within a sensible walking distance of their place of employment.

A further benefit of this would be to alleviate illegal parking from suburbs surrounding the BTC. The BCC recommend that if constructed, that the ground level of any structure facing a major street contain retail premises at ground level. This will avoid the dead zone created by the multi-level car parks surrounding Westfield's core buildings, and encourage further economic development in the BTC.

### *Smart parking technology in the Belconnen Town Centre*

In 2015 the BCC met with the ACT Government project team working on the Smart parking program. This was in response to our smart parking submission. We are fully appreciative of the approach taken by the smart parking team, and support the trial in Manuka. We would ask that if it is extended, that Belconnen be considered. We recommend it be trialled along Emu Bank as a priority.

Parking is at a premium in Belconnen, and a study conducted as part of the BTC Master Plan process showed that capacity approaches 90 to 100% at times. Many of the residential buildings constructed in the BTC over the last five years have empty parking space during office hours. Smart parking technology could marry this empty space with demand and resolve existing parking pressure.

### *Ensuring ongoing and greater private investment and public service presence in Belconnen Town Centre – and beyond*

The ACT Government's rationale for establishing a Government office block in Gungahlin was to provide greater opportunities for residents to work closer to where they live and further develop the growing centre. The BCC requests that this approach is adopted in all Town Centres, not least Belconnen. This includes not only ensuring an ACT Government presence but also encouraging a continuing, if not increased, Commonwealth Government presence so that the liveability and opportunity for residents and businesses alike is assured.

In addition, the BCC suggests the ACT Government consider studying how to further attract private investment to the BTC (and broader region), particularly



given the location of the University of Canberra and sporting amenities. Although private investment may be viewed as investing in residential apartment construction, the BCC would prefer that this investment be focused on commercial or business space, and light industry in the services and trades area.

The Belconnen Showcase events were a very positive and well attended initiative over three days and we would like to see the Showcase concept revisited in future years.

#### *Appropriate consideration of land release timing*

At present the BTC has a significant risk of a housing oversupply with more apartment blocks already approved for the BTC and further land releases proposed in the Lathlain Street precinct. Oversupply of housing is detrimental socially and economically. The BCC strongly suggests that an ACT Government priority be to actively monitor housing supply in the BTC before approving any further release of land for residential development.

We particularly recommend that development of the BTC between Benjamin Way and the University of Canberra be allowed to proceed for several years before the proposed rezoning of the service and trades area between Lathlain Street and the ACTION Bus Depot occur. Several stalled residential developments in this area have only just recommenced and it is vital that the residential market not be flooded.

The demolition of the old Water Police building on Lake Ginninderra, and the remediation of the site was followed by an EOI that was unsuccessful. This site is now likely to be sold in the near future. The BCC request that this sale be delayed until the precinct code for the BTC is introduced.

#### *Temporary use of the Remand Centre and Emergency Services sites on Lathlain Street*

The former remand centre and emergency services sites on Lathlain Street are expected to be sold by the ACT Government for conversion to mixed use with a strong residential component. Until that time, the sites will remain vacant following demolition and remediation.

The BCC are aware that the sites lacks service provision and have other challenges, but would recommend that an EOI be released seeking ideas from business and the community. An example could be locating of food trucks similar to the Hamlet in Braddon, or the former popup site in Civic. This low cost exercise could have significant benefits in generating revenue for the ACT Government, creating business and employment in the BTC, and fostering a sense of community.

#### *Increasing the amenity of Margaret Timpson Park*

Margaret Timpson Park is a key 'green space' in the middle of the BTC.

However, despite being surrounded by businesses/office buildings and residents, it remains underutilised. The recent Belconnen Twilight Markets saw between four and five thousand people enjoy this space, but that was a once off and all too rare use of this public space.

A growing BTC residential population, especially in summer months, increasingly uses the park after hours. Better lighting is required both for safety and to make it appear friendly and inviting. Fairy lights could be placed throughout Margaret Timpson Park, and along Benjamin Way, to enhance visibility and provide visual distinction.

A public toilet facility in the Margaret Timpson Park area would also be of benefit to residents, shoppers, park users and taxi drivers.

Increased chairs and tables with appropriate shade within Margaret Timpson Park would encourage better and more frequent use of this area.

The BCC would like to see sympathetic upgrades that retain and improve the parks charm, character and value to all Belconnen residents.

#### *Increasing amenity around Lake Ginninderra*

The recent announcement of funding for the Belconnen Bikeway and associated Lake Ginninderra shared path behind the Belconnen Arts Centre is very welcome.

The lake is a much valued feature of Belconnen and heavily used for recreation by many people in the region. More and improved seating around Lake Ginninderra—particularly along Emu Bank—would only enhance this asset. New Big Belly waste bins could also be placed along Emu Bank in areas where there are no waste facilities.

The existing BBQ facilities around Lake Ginninderra are of high quality, well maintained and extremely popular with the public. The BCC propose that another public BBQ be located in the area between the Belconnen Arts Centre and Beissel Street. This would increase the amenity of this area and alleviate the demand on other public BBQ's. This space could also host a water bubbler and a public toilet.

#### *Beautification of Benjamin Way*

Benjamin Way is essentially the main entrance to the BTC, yet despite the fame of the Belconnen Owl this is not obvious. It has the potential to be a grand boulevard, walkable and inviting on both sides and in the median strip.

The results of both the BCC survey on the BTC and consultation for the BTC Master Plan, revealed that respondents found the BTC was disconnected, with some noting that there are distinct areas of activity—most notably at either end of Benjamin Way.

Providing greater connectivity within the BTC will over time change Benjamin Way from a long green barrier between one half of the BTC and the other, to a welcoming connecting boulevard. Linkages between the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets, restaurants and entertainment in Weedon Close, and the businesses catering to new urban dwellers in the residential towers near Benjamin Way will all benefit from a greater sense of connectivity. A walk from Emu Bank to Belconnen Way, past thriving businesses, should be a feature of the BTC.

A simple low cost way to achieve this could be with strings of LED fairy lights in the trees and on light poles along Benjamin Way.

As well as extending the elm tree plantings, low maintenance and attractive plantings in the median strip with a well lit path and spaced seating would draw people to use this green space.

Investment in the beautification and walkability of Benjamin Way will help further after hours safety, community identity and pride in the area, as well as better connect it. Increased lighting, public artwork where/if appropriate and landscaping of the median strip from Chan Street to Lake Ginninderra would be welcomed.

#### *New elm tree plantings on Benjamin Way*

While the entire length of Benjamin Way needs attention to create a unifying boulevard, a more immediate matter is the treatment of the elm trees at the Belconnen Way end. We are pleased that the trees are receiving treatment for elm beetle and urge that this continue.

At the 2016 announcement of the BTC Master Plan, details of extra elm tree planting along Benjamin Way were made public. The BCC support this and recommend that this planting be funded in the 2019-20 budget in addition to treatment of the existing elm trees.

#### *Maintenance of historic trees in the town centre*

A historic tree outside the Belconnen Library is in a terrible state of neglect and lack of maintenance, placing its continued existence in peril. This tree dates from the original Emu Bank homestead that the area around Lake Ginninderra draws its name from. Its condition has been reported to the ACT Government, without action being taken.

#### *Lake Ginninderra weed management and removal*

The BCC have made regular representations on the control of invasive weeds around Lake Ginninderra, and are pleased that attention has been paid to our requests. We would encourage ongoing attention in this area, including an education program for the community about weed identification and reporting, to assist in the control and removal of invasive weeds.

### *Dog waste bag dispenser at Lake Ginninderra*

Left undisposed, dog waste presents health and environmental risks. While many owners carry dog waste disposal bags on them and take the necessary responsibility for their dog's waste, a bag dispenser greatly assists if an owner has forgotten or run out—while also ensuring there is no excuse for failing to pick up the waste. Dog waste disposal bag dispensers have been successfully implemented throughout Australia. (See BCC letter to Director, City Services, 28 August 2014.)

The BCC suggests that a dog waste disposal bag dispenser be implemented at Lake Ginninderra dog park, and:

- be of quality and sturdiness to protect the bags from the weather elements;
- be stocked with biodegradable bags; and
- have a locking mechanism to ensure bags cannot be pulled continuously.

The BCC do not have a view on whether these bags are provided free of charge or on a cost recovery basis.

### **Sustainable public and private waste disposal**

The introduction of green bins has been well received throughout Belconnen with high uptake by residents. Appropriate disposal of waste is a challenge and the BCC encourage the ACT Government to continue to explore ways to treat and dispose of waste, and enhancing the use of recycling options in the waste stream where appropriate.

### *Appropriate public waste receptacles throughout Belconnen*

The environmental effects of litter are obvious—namely the threat that discarded litter poses to waterways, flora and fauna. So, too, are the social effects. It seems unsurprising that people may be less likely to carry litter if a receptacle is not placed in convenient, obvious and easily accessible locations. Further, discarded litter is unattractive and creates negative impressions of an area.

The BCC has previously requested (see letter to Director-General, TAMS, dated August 2014) that consideration be given to increasing the number of convenient, obvious and easily accessible public waste receptacles (general and recyclable) in areas of high use in the Belconnen district, including:

- Belconnen Town Centre (urban area);
- around Lake Ginninderra, Belconnen (particularly near the foreshore where there are fast food restaurants); and
- near dog parks or other dog exercise areas, and Canberra Nature Parks, including but not limited to:
  - Lake Ginninderra enclosed dog park

- Mt Rogers
- Mt Painter
- The Pinnacle
- Aranda Bushland

### *Introducing smart technology to public waste receptacles*

The ACT Government has rolled out a territory wide Wi-Fi network to enable people to communicate freely. This technology has also been used for provision of government services, for example, the smart parking technology trial. It can also be used in conjunction with new technology in the public bin field.

A company called 'Big Belly' has designed solar powered waste bins that compact waste as it is received, and then send an alert using Wi-Fi, when the bin is full. This technology allows waste to be compacted, reducing its size and saving landfill space and transportation costs. It also reduces costs to the waste collection company by not requiring waste bins to be emptied, until they are actually full.

A new lower cost model of this bin without the compaction technology, but retaining the ability to notify the operator when it is full, is now available for use in areas that are not heavily trafficked.

These bins have been trialed in several locations in Canberra by the ACT Government. The BCC request that the trial be extended to the Belconnen area, and propose Lake Ginninderra and Emu Bank as a natural and highly visible location.

### **Improving Belconnen's Arterial roads and local road maintenance**

#### *William Slim Drive duplication*

The ACT Government announced duplication of William Slim Drive during the 2016 election campaign. The BCC encourage this duplication, and propose that funding be made available for it to occur as the duplication of Gundaroo Drive finishes.

#### *Kuringa Drive intersections*

During the 2016 election campaign the ACT Government announced upgrades to the Kuringa Drive intersection at Owen Dixon Drive. The BCC support this and recommend that the funding for this occur in the 2019-20 Budget.

We also recommend that the Southern Cross Drive intersection be upgraded. These Kuringa Drive intersections are accident black spots and subjected to increasing road congestion from the upgraded Barton Highway intersection, with more traffic coming in from Gungahlin.

It is essential that these intersections be upgraded ahead of any work undertaken at the CSIRO Field Site, which is unlikely to occur until 2022 at the earliest.

### *Connections between the University of Canberra and the Town Centre*

The University of Canberra are about to introduce their new Master Plan, that will clarify the areas in which residential development will occur (a mix of student and private accommodation). The BCC recommend that the ACT Government and the University of Canberra liaise closely on how appropriate access to the Town Centre is introduced for new roads accommodating this development.

These roads must be walkable and wide enough to accommodate the future introduction of light rail between Civic and Belconnen. As the University's entrance to the Town Centre, we would expect it to be of high quality.

### *Car and pedestrian traffic flow around the Town Centre*

As our population increases, increasing pressure is being placed on the Town Centre road network. New residential developments have also altered traffic patterns. The BCC ask that a new traffic study be conducted with a view to finding ways to improve traffic flow and walkability around the town centre and improving pedestrian safety.

### *Parking*

The BCC suggests that in areas where there is—or could be more—pay parking, the ACT Government could explore whether the community would be satisfied if the revenue generated was directly invested in that area. The community—and businesses—may be more likely to accept pay parking fees if they know that their money is being directly invested in the area they are frequenting. A sign saying 'improvements in this area paid for by parking revenue generated in this area' would ease community concerns that revenue raised by enforcement was equitably shared.

## **Well maintained and vibrant local centres and suburbs**

Our suburbs are highly valued and appreciated, and local centres are community and economic hubs. It is important that investment and maintenance is ongoing in both roads, footpaths, streetscape and parks, and commensurate with the use that they receive.

### *Footpaths and cycleway maintenance*

Active transport is government policy, and walking is the primary mode of active transport. The existing footpath and cycleway (or shared path) network in Belconnen suburbs and around Lake Ginninderra is ageing and in need of urgent attention. Footpaths are essential to connect the community and encourage outdoor activity; their disrepair is increasingly dangerous,

particularly with an ageing population. Many footpaths and cycleways could benefit from widening, particularly in areas of high activity such as around Lake Ginninderra.

As a priority, footpaths near schools and bus stops must be repaired and maintained.

The BCC also suggests there should be greater publicity to inform the public that parking on footpaths is illegal, and that penalties should be enforced. Parking on footpaths blocks foot traffic and cracks pavements, resulting in increased maintenance, which may otherwise be unnecessary.

#### *New cycleway/shared path linking Lawson to the Town Centre*

Significant residential building activity in Lawson in the last three years has seen this area transformed with new residents moving in. The only way in and out of Lawson at present is by new roads connecting to Ginninderra Drive and Baldwin Drive. While there is an existing cycleway around Lake Ginninderra, it does not continue along the lakeshore on the Lawson side of Lake Ginninderra.

A new cycleway along the lakeshore connecting to the existing cycleway near Ginninderra Drive could easily and quickly be constructed. Although it may not be able to continue along Ginninderra Creek, it could be connected to the McKellar side of the lake by construction of a small footbridge. This would lead to walking and cycling by Lawson residents, greater activation of the entire lakeshore area, and complete a cycle loop of the lake. This could be promoted for tourism purposes.

#### *Improved the amenity of local centers and fund regular community events*

The BCC is aware that some local centres within the Belconnen region are struggling, but many are vibrant hubs of community activity. The success of the 'Parties at the Shops' events in 2013 - 2015 demonstrate that these areas—struggling or not—are seen as community hubs, and should have the appropriate amenity to reflect this, including lighting and access.

The BCC have been encouraged by the ACT Governments local center upgrade funding program that has seen some local centers upgraded, and encourage this to continue in a planned manner independent of the electoral cycle. All local shops must have a good quality public toilet and we urge that an audit of local centers in Belconnen occur and the local shops without toilet facilities have them installed.

We also encourage private landlords and business owners to contribute to the amenity of the local centres. We do not believe the entire cost of improvements to local centres be borne by the community when business benefits significantly from the community investment.

A cooperative arrangement between government and business can bring

about tremendous community amenity. The Aranda Shops have benefitted from private investment and community support, and are a model for other local shops that are struggling. The Cook Shops have seen both the ACT Government and local shop owners invest in upgrades that have seen this area prosper.

The ACT Government should also explore ways to encourage 'pop-up' or 'exhibition' spaces in local centres, which are ailing (and thus have significant free space).

Funding an ongoing program of local centre events would also assist in bringing the community together, and provide a focus for other community groups in a local area to come together.

We would also request that regulatory or legislative changes be made which would allow empty retail space at small local centres to be used for office space. Although this is not an optimal use, it would prevent these centres from being totally empty and preserve the utility of spaces by dissuading vandalism.

#### *Ginninderra MLA offices in Belconnen*

The BCC encourage Ginninderra MLA's to relocate their offices to Belconnen from the ACT Assembly, to either the Belconnen Town Centre, or a local centre. Not only would our representatives presence be better appreciated, this would make access by local residents to their elected representatives easier and their roles much more effective in the electorate.



## **Attachment A**

### **Recommendations of the Belconnen Community Council from the 2019-20 Budget Submission:**

- The ACT Government devise a financial model where large scale residential developers can make a meaningful contribution to infrastructure required to support their new developments.
- The ACT Government acquire apartments in new residential towers in Belconnen and other new developments in the Belconnen region
- Improve the signage welcoming people to Belconnen
- Make the Belconnen Community Bus Interchange more user friendly
- A dedicated bus lane be constructed along Southern Cross Drive, terminating in the Kippax area
- Environmental, heritage and engineering studies of proposed routes for light rail to Belconnen are funded and commence soon.
- Construct more local bus stops near rapid bus routes
- A Park & Ride facility be constructed in the new Strathnairn suburb
- Build local bus stops near rapid bus stops
- Improve bus stops on arterial roads
- Construction of a multi-level car-park for full-time employees in the Belconnen Town Centre.
- A new traffic study be conducted to improve traffic flow and walkability around the town centre
- Smart parking technology that can share residential apartment parking spaces with town centre workers
- The ACT Government consider studying how to further attract private investment to Belconnen
- Hold the Belconnen Showcase again.
- ACT Government priority be to actively monitor housing supply in the BTC before approving any further release of land for residential development.
- An EOI be released seeking ideas for popup markets and events on the Lathlain remand centre site
- Margaret Timpson Park upgraded with a public toilet facility, new chairs, tables and fairy lights
- Extra public seating around Lake Ginninderra,
- A public toilet, water bubbler and public BBQ be located in the area between the Belconnen Arts Centre and Beissel Street.
- Improve walkability and safety of Benjamin Way with better lighting and footpath treatment.
- Dog waste disposal bags be provided at off leash dog parks
- Big Belly solar powered waste bins be installed at Lake Ginninderra and Emu Bank
- Kuringa Drive intersections at Owen Dixon and Southern Cross Drive are upgraded this financial year.
- The ACT Government and the University of Canberra collaborate on appropriate road linkages with the Town Centre

- New cycleway/shared path linking Lawson to the Town Centre
- All local shops have public toilet facilities
- Establishing Ginninderra MLA offices in Belconnen