



MITCHELL TRADERS ASSOCIATION

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PO Box 440, Mitchell ACT 2911

Mr Andrew Barr, MLA
Chief Minister and Treasurer
GPO Box 1020
Canberra, ACT 2601

2018-2019 Budget Consultation

Dear Andrew,

The Mitchell Traders Association (MTA) welcomes and thank you for the opportunity to participate in the 2018-2019 Budget Consultation process. The MTA comprise of 250 business owners and represent various trades from building and construction through to digital technology. The last time our precinct had formal representation and a working relationship with the government was more than 20 years ago with the then Mitchell-Gungahlin Chamber of Commerce. The recent formation of the MTA seeks to re-establish this relationship and work cooperatively with the government to communicate and resolve the various challenges and needs of our business community.

This is our first budget submission and we would like to emphasise the importance of building the light rail stop in Mitchell and have it operational as soon as possible. The MTA submission addresses the specific questions posed and although our input is related to Mitchell, they are relevant and applicable to the various trade areas in Canberra.

The MTA committee is available to further discuss our proposal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Manning', is written over the typed name.

Anthony Manning
President
Mitchell Traders Association
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MITCHELL TRADERS ASSOCIATION 2018-2019 BUDGET SUBMISSION

1. What Services do you believe are most important for the Territory?

The most important services for the Territory includes protecting, preserving and enhancing its economic, health, social, cultural, environmental and aesthetic values.

Integral to the city's long-term prosperity is its economic growth, which will affect the livelihood of people across all sectors of our community. This is why it is crucial to support and invest in local businesses and the areas where they operate. To achieve this requires ongoing investment and maintenance of the following:

- Urban renewal for industrial/commercial areas
- Public transportation network integration that includes light rail to industrial/commercial areas
- Active travel networks in industrial/commercial areas, such as footpaths and cycleways that link to public transportation nodes (bus interchange, light rail stops, bicycle stations, parking)
- Sustainable renewable energy for industrial/commercial areas

2. How can the government deliver current services more efficiently and productively or to better meet the needs of Canberrans?

Build the light rail stop in Mitchell

A light rail stop in Mitchell should be prioritised as soon as possible. Preferably in Stage 1 Gungahlin to Civic. A functional stop in Mitchell would provide the opportunity for workers and the community to use public transportation to and from the area for work and leisure. A light rail stop in Mitchell would attract new and innovative investments into Mitchell. With the recent Mitchell Motion tabled in the Legislative Assembly (MOP033 – 20 September 2017), there appears to be bi-partisan support for a light rail stop for Mitchell. The MTA seeks to have the stop built and functional in Stage 1 of construction as it would be more cost effective to have the stop completed now rather than in the future.

It should be noted that during the initial light rail consultation in 2011-2014, much of the buildings along Flemington Road were only just being built. Since then there have been a multitude of small businesses and government offices that have taken up residence in these buildings. The MTA urge the government to take this development into consideration.

Furthermore, the MTA requests a formal confirmation of when the light rail stop would be operational in Mitchell.

Integrated transportation network

The existing bus services to and from Mitchell especially during peak times (mornings and late afternoons) needs to be extended and re-routed to feed into the future Mitchell light rail stop. It is also important to have the bus services and their route (and route number) remain consistent throughout the week without it being changed on the weekend. Such changes cause a lot of confusion and frustration amongst bus users to Mitchell.

There is a need to identify and establish both footpath and cycleways in Mitchell that connects the various areas of the precinct to the bus interchange and future light rail stop along Flemington Road. We believe a bicycle sharing facility in Mitchell would be of significant benefit for the workers and community members that work and visit the area. Key strategic bicycle sharing stations that connects to the transit nodes will allow people to use bicycles to get around Mitchell without having to rely on cars. This bicycle sharing facility has the potential of extending to Epic and Gungahlin town centre.

A Park and Ride facility close to the transit nodes (light rail, bus interchange, bicycle station) should also be built in Mitchell to allow workers and community members to make greater use of public transportation. It would also ease the current parking problem in the area.

Urban renewal for Mitchell

It is not only important to keep our city centre clean and visibly appealing, but also other districts in Canberra as well. Since the 1970s, the industrial-commercial area of Mitchell has not had many of its aging amenities and facilities upgraded. Some areas are very neglected and the removal of problematic trees in the area without having them replaced have left the precinct drab and unappealing. Furthermore, the problem is exacerbated by damaged pavement left unrepaired from the problematic trees and insufficient street lights makes the area unsafe at night. The MTA would like to see signage to Mitchell being made more prominent and the streetscape in Mitchell improved together with its outdated amenities.

We propose working closely with Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) on a Mitchell Masterplan identifying key areas to improve in the precinct. A clear Mitchell Masterplan would clarify for the Mitchell business community a timeline of expected capital works and improvements.

Furthermore, there is scope for lease-variation to allow more diverse businesses to operate in Mitchell.

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

Energy efficiency program

The recent LED Tube lighting program for Canberra businesses is an excellent scheme that have benefited many small businesses. However, the program can be improved in its delivery and eligibility criteria. In terms of delivery, industrial-commercial areas such as Mitchell (also

Fyshwick, Phillip, Belconnen and Hume) could benefit greatly from switching to LEDs if the program was better promoted. Not all businesses are aware of this program that could lead to lower energy consumption. The current eligibility criteria should include recreational centres and gyms into the program.

Early consultation and feedback

The MTA requests that any future development that may affect the Mitchell precinct, whether it be changes to laws affecting the operation of businesses in our area, land release, light rail, transportation, infrastructure or urban streetscape changes that the respective government departments provide us with an opportunity to be consulted and allow input.

4. Are there any new ways to generate revenue and/or services you consider that the community should make a direct contribution to (a fee for service)?

Renewable energy for Mitchell and other industrial/commercial areas

The unused roof spaces of buildings in Mitchell has great potential for solar generating capacity. If Canberra wants to transition to renewable energy by 2020, then exploring avenues to utilise the roof spaces of industrial/commercial areas should be considered. With continued advances in solar and energy storage readily available, the transition towards increased solar contribution would greatly reduce the demand on the electricity network.

Bicycle sharing facility

A bicycle sharing facility in Mitchell could generate revenue for the government and members of the community working or visiting the area would certainly pay to use the bikes as another form of public transportation. This scheme could be trialled in Mitchell and later expanded to other areas of Canberra and the payment to use the bicycles can be integrated into the existing MyWay ticketing system. The use of bicycles would contribute to a cleaner and greener city.

5. What can the Government do to make Canberra even more liveable?

The MTA supports the efforts that the government has placed on delivering better education, healthcare, infrastructure, and socio-economic conditions for Canberrans. The MTA as business oriented members of the community quite often find our daily lives revolving around our workplace. Thus, what would make Canberra more liveable according to the MTA would be to re-evaluate what type of urban renewal can assist in making industrial-commercial areas

adjoining residential suburbs more attractive to the wider community to work and visit. Some suggestions would be to encourage mix-use re/developments, enhancing the environmental and recreational amenities in Mitchell and not just along the light rail corridor.

We would like the government to consider utilising some of the unattended nature strips in Mitchell as social spaces to allow the business community to use as meeting places whereby urban gardens could be established.