

RESPONSE TO LIGHT RAIL NETWORK PLAN 2015

The Belconnen Community Council (BCC) is pleased to present its feedback on the ACT Government's Light Rail Network Plan 2015. We ask that if a second stage of Capital Metro is constructed, that the government proceed with the proposed Civic to Kippax light rail link.

The principle of providing a heavy lift corridor that services community/business areas and centres of excellence is best realised with a Kippax to Civic via Belconnen Town Centre light rail. Access to Calvary Hospital, the AIS, the University of Canberra and CISAC would provide all day patronage.

As the largest town centre, Belconnen is the perfect option for the next stage of Capital Metro. The broad expanse and wide medians of Ginninderra Drive, Belconnen Way/Barry Drive and Southern Cross Drive, provide a fit for purpose infrastructure base regardless of the route selected.

Greater access to transport options is a key aspect to reducing traffic congestion, increasing productivity and opening up business opportunities. Light rail would open up access to residents of new and existing suburbs to the town centre, local businesses, community areas, hospitals and education facilities. Light rail could encourage large employers to remain in the town centre.

A Kippax light rail terminus integrated with Park and Ride and more frequent local bus services, provides a strong alternative to the private car for residents of existing and new areas of West Belconnen. The Kippax Draft Master Plan identifies increased public transport demand from Riverview and West Macgregor expansion increasing population. The Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan also identifies residential growth in the Town Centre. This increase in people, housing and road traffic over the next 25 years places extraordinary pressure on infrastructure, particularly in the Town Centre and the Kippax precinct. Light rail is best placed to meet this demand.

The BCC believe that the opportunities for our community to participate in jobs (through construction of light rail), better business options, access to services and centres of activity are key attractions in delivering Stage Two to Belconnen. The fact we are the largest town centre and the jewel in Canberra's crown should be the clincher in expanding the Light Rail network to Belconnen.

Stage Two of Capital Metro from Civic to Kippax via the Belconnen Town Centre, would support the community's desire for the long term viability and enjoyment of our town centre, and ease current and future transport pressures in our outer suburbs. It would also ensure the town centres continuing viability as an attractive employment and economic centre.

If Capital Metro Stage Two is built, the BCC look forward to further discussing with Government, our support for light rail being built to Kippax.