

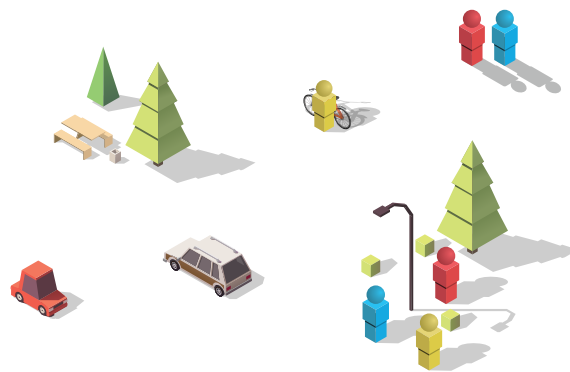
COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAME TOGETHER AT A CITIZEN'S FORUM  
TO SET A VISION AND PRIORITIES FOR CITY SERVICES



**ACT**  
Government

# BETTER SUBURBS

## PROGRESS UPDATE 2022-23



WE ARE INVESTING TO DELIVER ON THE COMMUNITY'S PRIORITIES IN LINE  
WITH THE VISION OUTLINED IN THE BETTER SUBURBS STATEMENT 2030

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We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is Ngunnawal country. The ACT Government acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the Canberra region and recognises any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region.

The region is a significant meeting place to the Ngunnawal people and other people and families who have gathered here for thousands of years.

Transport Canberra and City Services acknowledges and respects the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region, and their historic and ongoing connection to our lands, waters, and sacred sites.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



# INTRODUCTION

## VISION 2030 CANBERRA

People, place and spirit in harmony. In 2030 Canberra will be a bush city, green, vibrant and one that honours our Indigenous heritage and our history. We want it to be a place that is inclusive and that fosters community pride. Ours will be a healthy community. We want to maintain and sustain our green and clean land, side by side with a relaxed lifestyle and the diverse culture that all people bring to our city.

The Better Suburbs Statement 2030 was released in 2018, setting this shared vision for Canberra's city services.

The Better Suburbs Statement was developed through a deliberative democratic process which brought together a representative group of 54 Canberrans to make collective decisions about services for our city. Together, this group identified 14 key priorities which were detailed in the Better Suburbs Statement, along with clear guidance on how the ACT Government should focus our investment to secure the future of these services. The 14 areas are listed below in order of urgency and importance as identified by the Better Suburbs Forum.

This document provides a summary of the progress that has been made in 2022-23 to deliver services, infrastructure,

programs and initiatives that respond to the statement's directions. It shows how the ACT Government is taking action to create a more resilient and sustainable future for our city. Similar progress updates were released in 2019-20 and 2020-21 and are available on the [Better Suburbs YourSay Conversations](#) web page.

Our investments in city services through each annual ACT Budget since the statement was released have been directly informed by this feedback. This is helping to ensure Canberra remains vibrant, beautiful and liveable today and in the coming decades.

A number of initiatives identified in the Better Suburbs Statement are being delivered by the ACT Government with the financial support of the Australian Government.



# PRIORITY 1 – LAKES, PONDS AND WETLANDS, STORMWATER AND WATER QUALITY

## WE HEARD

We should future proof the stormwater system.

The ACT's stormwater system is a critical part of the city's infrastructure, particularly with the recent heavy rainfall experienced in storm events and La Nina weather patterns. Stormwater infrastructure helps to provide flood mitigation and protect the environment by improving water quality and reducing soil erosion. The ACT Government continues to invest in new and upgraded stormwater infrastructure to contribute to the sustainability and liveability of our city.

In February 2023 work commenced on improvements to stormwater infrastructure upstream of the Mawson Group Centre. This includes construction of walls to divert stormwater and address flooding issues in the vicinity of the Mawson Group Centre. This project, which is jointly funded between the ACT and Australian Governments, will be completed in late 2023.

In Narrabundah work has started on stormwater improvements at several locations. Upgrades along McKinlay Street were completed in early 2023 and work will commence later in 2023 to construct a retarding basin within the urban open space at Sprent Park. Design work is also underway for a retarding basin at the Narrabundah Playing Fields along Captain Cook Crescent and a retarding basin within the urban open space in Throsby Park behind the Griffith shops.

Additional stormwater infrastructure and road and verge upgrades have been designed for flood mitigation on Goliath Court in O'Connor. These upgrades will be delivered in 2023-24.

As part of a revitalisation of the Sydney and Melbourne buildings, stormwater upgrades were completed in June 2023 on Verity Lane and Odgers Lane. The upgrades laid the groundwork for further improvements to the historic buildings, to ensure they continue to provide retail and dining experiences in the heart of the city.

In 2023-24, \$5.3 million in funding has been committed to deliver further stormwater upgrades in the Kippax Group Centre.

A raingarden is proposed for Kippax Creek in Higgins which continues to receive poor quality stormwater from upstream urban areas. The proposed raingarden will help to improve water quality and help the government better understand the role that these nature-based filters can play across Canberra's waterways.

The raingarden is part of a \$20.5 million investment by the ACT Government under the Healthy Waterways program to help tackle the challenge of polluted stormwater leaving urban areas where it concentrates in Canberra's lakes and ponds leading to blue-green algae blooms.

A floating wetland was installed in February 2023 on Yerrabi Pond in Gungahlin. The floating wetland will help to improve water quality by reducing the growth of nuisance algae. The 500 square metre wetland platform will lower nutrient levels in the pond and directly compete with algae and ribbonweed for light.

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE



**\$11.8 million**

for new and upgraded stormwater infrastructure



**Completion of essential stormwater upgrades**

in Odgers and Verity lanes within the Sydney and Melbourne buildings



**\$8.2 million**

for Healthy Waterways

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



**\$5.3 million**

for stormwater upgrades in the Kippax Group Centre



**Major stormwater upgrades**

to start construction in the inner north and inner south

# PRIORITY 2 – STREET AND PARK TREES

## WE HEARD

We should maintain and enhance the tree canopy.

Canberra's urban forest is a key part of what makes our city the most liveable in Australia. The ACT Government continues to deliver the vision of the Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2045 for all Canberrans to enjoy the benefits of streets lined with healthy trees by providing an urban forest that is resilient, sustainable and contributes to the wellbeing of the community in a changing climate.

The *Urban Forest Act 2023* was passed in March 2023. This new legislation will ensure our city's trees are protected as Canberra continues to grow and creates a sound framework to reach our ambitious target of 30% tree canopy cover or equivalent by 2045.

The ACT Government will work with community and industry in the lead-up to the commencement of the Act on 1 January 2024, to raise awareness of what is changing under the new legislation and how it affects residents and businesses.

The key changes introduced by the Act include:

- new requirements to ensure when trees are approved for removal they are replaced or, where new planting is not possible, a financial contribution is made for the planting of more trees
- the protection of more trees by reducing the size requirements for protected trees on leased land and protecting public trees under the legislation
- a tree bond system to ensure trees are not damaged during construction work as our city continues to grow

- expanding the ACT Tree Register which celebrates and protects our most significant trees
- improving the compliance provisions including introduction of penalties for people caught damaging a tree or breaching a tree protection plan or direction.

The ACT Government is responsible for over 809,000 public trees in streets and urban open spaces across the ACT. These trees are what makes our city one of the most liveable in the world. They cool our homes and streets, clean the air we breathe and provide important habitats for our wildlife. A significant investment of \$23.4 million over four years will protect and enhance our urban forest with more tree maintenance and planting across our city, and additional staff allocated to implement the *Urban Forest Act 2023*.

Across the ACT 54,000 trees will be planted by 2024 to enhance our urban forest. Tree planting focused on areas where canopy cover is low, or where there were gaps in existing plantings on residential streets, in parklands and open spaces. We've received around 900 requests for tree planting through our ongoing Where should we plant trees? survey on the YourSay website.

The Adopt-a-Park community grants program continued in 2022-23, with 27 projects provided with funding to deliver tree planting, weed control, understorey planting, landscaping improvements and other maintenance activities.

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE



**Planting 54,000**

trees by 2024



**\$2 million**

to expand the Holder depot to support the City Services tree team



**27 Adopt-a-Park**

projects funded

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



**\$23.4 million**

over four years for more tree maintenance and to plant more trees across the ACT



# PRIORITY 3 AND 4 – HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING

## WE HEARD

We should reduce our reliance on landfill for household waste and proactively address illegal dumping and littering.

The ACT Government is leading the way to a sustainable future. Key focuses include progressing the delivery of essential waste and recycling infrastructure, engaging the community on a strategy to transition to a circular economy, planning for an expansion of the Container Deposit Scheme and continuing the ban on single-use plastics.

In December 2022, the ACT's Materials Recovery Facility in Hume was destroyed by a fire caused by the incorrect disposal of one or more lithium batteries. Building a new facility to ensure we have the infrastructure to process and recycle materials in yellow bins is a priority. The ACT Government is progressing the environmental, planning and procurement processes and approvals for the project. A new facility with modern technology will improve the separation and processing of recycling streams such as paper, glass and plastic. The ACT Government will work to educate the community on the safe disposal of all types of batteries.

A new Materials Recovery Facility and Food Organics and Gardens Organics (FOGO) processing facility are a central part of the Draft ACT Circular Economy Strategy 2022-25. The circular economy aims to keep resources circulating in our economy for as long as possible, maximising the value of materials and reducing the need to use natural resources. In late 2022, the community were invited to have their say on the draft strategy and provide feedback on how government,

business and the community can take the first steps toward a more circular economy, with a focus on five key areas:

- food and organics
- built environment
- consumer goods
- emerging and problematic waste streams
- creating space to showcase our commitment to the circular economy.

The consultation showed there is support and momentum for a circular economy in the ACT and both the community and local businesses want the ACT Government to implement circular projects through the development of appropriate legislation, policy, and funding initiatives. The final ACT Circular Economy Strategy 2022-25 will be released in the second half of 2023 along with an action plan that details the commitments that will be implemented to advance a circular economy rapidly over the next few years.



The ACT's progressive approach to phasing out single-use plastics continues. From 1 July 2023 single use plastic plates and bowls, expanded polystyrene loose fill packaging and expanded polystyrene trays, and plastic microbeads in rinse-off personal care and cleaning products were banned. In addition, from 1 January 2024, heavyweight and boutique plastic bags (greater than 35 microns in thickness) will be banned. The journey to reduce the ACT's reliance on plastic items will continue with further bans to be introduced in the future.

The ACT Government has started the procurement process for the ACT's household waste collection contract. For the first time, the contract will encompass all collection services including household waste, recycling, green waste and a bulky waste collection service. It will also start the transition to zero-emissions waste vehicles and support the future city-wide FOGO collection service.

A FOGO collection pilot is now servicing around 5,000 households in Belconnen, Bruce, Cook and Macquarie. The FOGO pilot has been very successful, with more than 2,250 tonnes of material collected since it kicked off

in November 2021 and participants achieving an incredibly low waste contamination rate of less than 1%. The ACT Government is progressing planning for the construction of a FOGO processing facility to allow the service to be expanded to the rest of Canberra.

Local industry, businesses and the Canberra community were invited to provide feedback in May 2023 on an expansion of the ACT Container Deposit Scheme (CDS). The CDS was introduced in 2018 and allows people to return eligible, empty drink containers for a 10-cent refund per item. Currently the scheme accepts aluminium cans, glass bottles, plastic bottles and cartons. The ACT Government is considering the inclusion of wine, spirit, cordial, flavoured milk and other drink containers. This will support a national agreement to expand and harmonise the scope of container deposit schemes by the end of 2025. Expanding the types of eligible containers will see even more containers recycled and remanufactured through the scheme, improving resource recovery and contributing to a circular economy.

## 2022–23 AT A GLANCE



**25,612 tonnes**

of green waste collected through green waste bin collections



**Over 62 million containers**

returned through the Container Deposit Scheme



**1,317 tonnes**

of food and organic waste collected in the FOGO pilot



**35% recovery rate**

for the bulky waste collection service

## 2023–24 AT A GLANCE



**Award the contract**

for the finance, design, construction, operations and maintenance of the new Materials Recovery Facility in Hume



**\$8.7 million**

to deliver a new northside green waste facility



**Submission**

of the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Materials Recovery Facility



**Submission**

of the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the FOGO facility





# PRIORITY 5 – ROADS

## WE HEARD

The maintenance of road infrastructure is critical.

Major road upgrade projects are currently being delivered right across Canberra, supporting the public transport and active travel networks, and increasing capacity and safety on our roads to support growth in urban areas, service industrial and commercial hubs.

Canberra experienced high levels of rainfall due to wet weather events and La Nina weather patterns which caused damage to our roads. In response to these challenges, pothole repair has been a major focus and additional funding has been secured for road maintenance. Over the next four years, \$153 million (including Roads to Recovery funding) will be provided to repair and preserve the ACT's roads with a new strategic road maintenance program which was developed based on research undertaken by the Australian Road Research Board. The ACT Government manages more than 3,200 kilometres of sealed roads throughout the Territory, and increased investment in the annual road maintenance program will see resurfacing of the network increase to more than 1.26 million square metres a year. The funding will extend the life of our roads by 20 years through additional resealing measures as part of annual resurfacing activities, a greater focus on road rehabilitation and preventative resealing, and increased use of asphalt.

Line marking across the ACT's road network was updated throughout April and May 2023. Over time, line marking can fade, and work was undertaken to re-paint line marking on major roads to ensure it is visible to road users.

Construction is continuing to duplicate Gundaroo Drive between Ginninderra Drive and the Barton Highway. This project will deliver two lanes in each direction, 6.4 kilometres of new on-road cycle lanes and new wider underpasses with lighting and connecting paths. Once these works are complete in 2023-24, the entire length of Gundaroo Drive between Anthony Rolfe Avenue/Mirrabei Drive and Ginninderra Drive will be a dual carriageway.

Road infrastructure upgrades to support Canberra's newest public high school in the new suburb of Kenny were completed in 2022-23. Upgrades were also completed at key intersections along Kent Street and Novar Street in Yarralumla and Deakin to improve traffic flow, capacity and safety, including a new off-road cycle connection from the Adelaide Avenue off-ramp. Construction commenced to improve pedestrian and cycle

connections in Pialligo as well as upgrade Beltana Road to provide a safe and attractive streetscape.

Eight intersections had traffic lights installed in 2022-23 to improve traffic movements, ease congestion and improve safety, including for pedestrians and cyclists. These intersections include:

- Dudley Street/Novar Street/Kent Street/Adelaide Avenue on-ramp
- Adelaide Avenue off-ramp/Kent Street
- Kent Street/Denison Street
- Well Station Drive/Albatross Crescent (west) as part of the works to support the new high school
- Well Station Drive/Kings Canyon Street as part of the works to support the new high school
- Gundaroo Drive/Dumas Street as part of the duplication of Gundaroo Drive
- temporary signals at Vernon Circle/Northbourne Avenue and part-time signals at Coranderrk Street/Parkes Way to support the raising of London Circuit and the extension of light rail to Woden.

A further five intersection upgrades will be completed in 2023-24, with traffic lights to be installed at Gundaroo Drive/Owen Dixon Drive, Hindmarsh Drive/Brierly Street and Limestone Avenue/Euree Street/Treloar Crescent as well as upgrades at Isabella Drive/Benham Street and Phillip Avenue/Windeyer Street. Construction is also expected to install new traffic lights at the intersections of Heysen Street/Streeon Drive and Namatjira Drive/Streeon Drive.

Work is progressing for safety improvements along Tharwa Drive, with a focus on its intersections with Norman Lindsay Street and Lawrence Wackett Crescent. A feasibility study is progressing for the Norman Lindsay Street intersection and detailed design is nearing completion to install traffic lights at the Lawrence Wackett Crescent intersection. Construction is anticipated to commence at this intersection in 2024.

The Australian and ACT Governments are building Canberra's largest ever bridge project, with a contract awarded for the construction of the Molonglo River Bridge and detailed design work now underway. The project will include 1.7 kilometres of new arterial roads leading to the bridge, two new intersections with queue jump bus lanes, two new bus stops, as well as the capacity to support a future light rail connection. Once complete, the infrastructure will transform the region and better connect the growing suburbs of Molonglo and West Belconnen to the rest of Canberra.

Design work is underway for safety improvements and intersection upgrades at key locations along the Monaro Highway from Johnson Drive through to the access road to the Alexander Maconochie Centre. This includes the intersections with Lanyon Drive and Isabella Drive and intersections with Mugga Lane, Tralee Street and Sheppard Street into Hume. Procurement is underway for the detailed design and construction of the first major package of works including a new southbound flyover on the Monaro Highway over Lanyon Drive.

These upgrades, funded by the Australian and ACT Governments, will support the safe and efficient movement of people and freight around a growing part of our region in Southern ACT and NSW. Major construction is due to commence in early 2024.

Design work is also underway for major road rehabilitation on David Walsh Avenue in Forde including the use of more environmentally sustainable products. Construction of these repairs is expected to start in the second half of 2023.

The two remaining unduplicated sections of Athllon Drive, the northern section from Shea Street to Melrose Drive and the southern section between Sulwood Drive and Drakeford Drive, will be duplicated. Detailed design work for the southern section has commenced and community engagement on the designs will be undertaken in the first half of 2024. Provision has been made to jointly fund the construction of this project between the ACT and Australian Governments. The upgrade will improve the journey for motorists, active travel users and public transport on this important arterial road.

Planning and design work will be undertaken in 2023-24, with \$400,000 in funding to prepare a multimodal transport plan for the Gungahlin region. The plan will identify the infrastructure and service priorities required to cater to the region's growing population and transport needs, supporting a variety of transport modes.

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE



**\$153 million**

investment in road maintenance over four years (including Roads to Recovery funding)



**Over 13,000**

potholes repaired



**Over 1 million**

square metres of road resurfaced



**Annual 52% increase**

in expenditure on road maintenance (not including Roads to Recovery funding)

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



**Completion**

of the third stage of the Gundaroo Drive duplication



**Start of construction**

on the new Molonglo River Bridge



**Start of major construction**

on the Monaro Highway upgrade



**Increased**

use of asphalt and heavy patching to maintain our road network





# PRIORITY 6 – PARKS AND OPEN SPACES INCLUDING MOWING

## WE HEARD

We should make the park experience appealing.

We are improving the amenities and recreational opportunities at popular parks and open spaces to ensure Canberrans can enjoy more time outdoors. On the southside designs were released for an upgrade of the Tuggeranong Foreshore where construction will start in 2023-24 and construction began on a new toilet at the nature play space in Farrer. On the northside construction also began on a new toilet at Florey shops, three pedestrian bridges are being replaced in Umbagog District Park, and solar lights were installed at Yerrabi Pond District Park. Further upgrades including increased car parking, picnic and toilet facilities and additional streetlighting will be delivered at Yerrabi Pond District Park with \$3.2 million in funding in 2023-24. One of Canberra's oldest parks, Telopea Park, will also see improvements with \$494,000 in funding in 2023-24 for new formalised paths, lighting and landscaping.

Investment in maintaining Canberra's parks and open spaces is continuing throughout Canberra. Extra resources were allocated in 2022-23 to pilot a rapid response mowing team of 10 people and eight additional mowers to increase mowing capacity. The team was able to move around Canberra in response to feedback about where extra maintenance was needed during the season.

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE



**\$1.2 million**

to support a rapid response mowing team



**6,800 hectares**

of public land maintained

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



**\$2.6 million**

to continue the rapid response mowing team and improve safety for staff working along roadsides



**Construction starts**

on Tuggeranong Foreshore improvements



**\$494,000**

for improvements at Telopea Park including lighting and landscaping



**\$3.2 million**

for further upgrades at Yerrabi Pond District Park

In 2022-23 the rapid response team actioned 539 mowing requests in the season with a focus on line of sight safety concerns. These additional mowing resources will continue to be provided in 2023-24, with \$2.6 million in funding committed to keep our city looking its best and improve safety for staff working along roadsides.

In addition to infrastructure improvements and maintenance work, the ACT Government has released a draft Urban Open Space Land Management Plan for community comment to help shape the future management of our urban parks, sportsgrounds and other public open spaces. The plan will ensure the public open spaces Canberrans enjoy are maintained and protected to a high standard and reflect the vital role these spaces have in our everyday lives. The ACT Government manages over 6,800 hectares of public urban open space and the plan sets out an overarching and consistent direction for the management of these spaces Canberra wide. The plan will be finalised in 2023-24 and, together with Canberra's Urban Lakes and Ponds Land Management Plan, will be used by land managers to guide the management of our urban open spaces.

The Bumps and Berms Volunteer Program was officially launched in March 2023. The Program is a way for the community to add additional play value to neighbourhood spaces across Canberra by designing and creating dirt bike tracks. These tracks are typically short, with features such as jumps and ramps (bumps) and banked turns (berms). Community-built tracks must be designed and constructed in collaboration with the ACT Government to meet safety and maintenance requirements. Funded by Abilities Unlimited Australia, a community track was completed in Evatt as part of the Program and is regularly used by students at Evatt Primary, participants of Abilities Unlimited Australia bike riding programs as well as the local community.



# PRIORITY 7 – LIBRARY SERVICES

## WE HEARD

Evolve our library services and have more accessible locations.

The ACT's nine library branches are an accessible space for inspiring, belonging, connecting and lifelong learning. In 2022-23, Libraries ACT's 211,155 members used the library branches as community meeting places, for book clubs, to participate in programs and events, and as a space to study and work. Moving into the future, Libraries ACT is looking for ways to increase their resources and services, both inside and away from library branches.

The Libraries ACT Imagine 2030 Strategy will guide the forward planning, delivery, and management of library services. In 2022-23, a community co-design was completed to inform the Strategy's development, with the community invited to suggest ways libraries of the future can look. The Strategy is currently being finalised and will be released in the second half of 2023. It will provide a firm foundation from which Libraries ACT can develop a more detailed program of activities, improvements, and innovations, which will continue to be driven by ongoing collaboration with the community.

The community will continue to be engaged in 2023-24, with a community co-design project to be undertaken to develop plans for a new library and community centre in Molonglo.

The co-design will look at the layout and features of the library and community centre, including the collections and resources available and the services, programs and activities that will be delivered. Partnering with the community on this project will ensure the new library is user-friendly, inclusive and adaptable to future needs.

Libraries ACT continue to make changes to meet the community's changing needs. In 2022-23, over 68,000 new resources were added to the in-branch collections at Libraries ACT to cater to the information and recreational needs of members. Digital resources also continued to expand and were popular among the community, with over 860,000 digital resources accessed.

Improvements were completed at the Tuggeranong Library in June 2023. The toilets, staff room and parent room were upgraded and there were minor repairs to the community room to provide staff and visitors with better amenities.

The ACT Government is currently considering options for where the Civic Library moves in future to accommodate the Canberra Theatre Centre redevelopment. In the future, the Government plans to relocate Civic Library and is currently looking at options for where the library may move to in the future and the best format to deliver library services to central Canberra. Accessibility is critical for visitation and success and this will be taken into account in the planning.

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE



**Over 68,000**

new resources for in-branch collections



**Over 860,000**

digital resources accessed



**Over \$570,000**

for Tuggeranong Library upgrades

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



**\$200,000**

for design work for a new Molonglo Library and community centre



**\$895,000**

for more support at libraries including additional staff



# PRIORITY 8 – FOOTPATHS, VERGES AND NATURE STRIPS

## WE HEARD

Prevent erosion, mitigate urban temperature effects and encourage more active travel.

Walking, cycling, riding, scooting and skating are essential parts of Canberra’s transport system. These modes of transport help to enhance fitness, health and general life enjoyment, improve traffic congestion, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The second stage of the Belconnen Bikeway was completed in June 2023 and now provides a connection from the University of Canberra to the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) and into the City. You can ride on a new 2.5-metre-wide off-road asphalt cycle path along the eastern side of Haydon Drive from College Street to Battye Street in Bruce. An off-road dedicated cycle lane on the northern side of Battye Street has also been constructed from Haydon Drive for the length of the road to the AIS. With a focus on safety, jointly funded by the ACT and Australian Governments, the project has also delivered improved lighting and three raised crossings.

A new shared path is being built on Sulwood Drive to improve safety and access for all people who visit the popular nature reserve. The project will include a new four-kilometre long and three-metre wide asphalt off-road path on the southern side of Sulwood Drive between Drakeford Drive and Athllon Drive. In addition, raised pedestrian crossings with associated streetlighting, traffic lights at the intersection of Mannheim Street and Sulwood Drive, and a new concrete path on Mannheim Street between Mackay Crescent and Sulwood Drive will be delivered. Construction will start on the main path works in 2023-24.

Work also started on a missing link in Lawson to provide a safe connection between the suburb and Ginninderra Drive. This will improve access to the University of Canberra as well as the Belconnen Town Centre. Also in Belconnen, construction has been funded for improvements to paths around Lake Ginninderra that connect popular recreation facilities. In 2023-24, \$3 million has been committed to deliver improvements including wider paths, new path connections, paver repairs, drainage improvements and seating along Emu Bank and the shared path through John Knight Memorial Park. These were identified in a feasibility study undertaken on the Lake Ginninderra path circuit in 2021.

The ACT Government is committed to enabling a healthy community environment, ensuring community infrastructure is accessible and inclusive to people at all ages and stages of their lives. The Age Friendly Suburbs program continued in 2022-23, with community engagement undertaken to identify improvements needed in Reid, Chifley, Scullin and O’Connor.



The community asked for repairs to cracked, broken and uneven paths, wider paths, improved lighting and more seating, pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures. Work is underway to finalise the list of improvements which will be delivered in 2023-24.

The Garden City Cycle Route will use existing streets, and where possible green corridors, to link Watson, Downer, Hackett, Dickson, Ainslie and Braddon before connecting to the city and lake edge via the city cycle loop on Bunda Street and Allara Street. The route will also connect schools, local centres and green spaces. When completed, the Garden City Cycle Route will encourage more people to walk, run, ride, skate and scoot between activity hubs in the inner north, into the city and through to the broader active travel network to access other destinations, town and group centres. To deliver the first stage of this project to connect the City, Braddon and Ainslie, \$10.4 million over three years has been provided, jointly funded by the ACT and Australian Governments.

A new asphalt path will formalise the desire line from Darling Street in Barton to Gosse Street in Kingston including lighting and landscaping, with \$494,000 over two years provided in the 2023-24 ACT Budget.

A new high quality active travel route will be delivered for cyclists, micro mobility users and pedestrians between Bowen Park and Cunningham Street with \$2.6 million over three years.

This upgrade will improve safety and active travel capacity on this important link between the City and Queanbeyan, including along Eastlake Parade and at the intersections with Eastlake Parade, Printers Way and Cunningham Street.

Path maintenance is undertaken every day across Canberra. The ACT Government has a team of inspectors who review Fix My Street requests and community feedback to prioritise path maintenance. In 2021 a comprehensive path audit inspection was undertaken of the entire network. In the 2023-24 ACT Budget, an additional \$5 million over two years was committed to improve safety for path users by addressing hazards, many of those identified by the audit. This will also include paving remediation in the City. Missing links and gaps in the path network will also be completed, with \$513,000 to provide path connections where there are existing desire lines or a need identified by the community.

In September 2022, a new package of works started with a focus on 70 sites in Tuggeranong, the inner north, the inner south and Belconnen. Significant work was also undertaken in Farrer due to the volume of path maintenance requests in the suburb.

This will include paving remediation in the City. Missing links and gaps in the path network will also be completed, with \$513,000 to provide path connections where there are existing desire lines or a need identified by the community.

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE



### **\$3.8 million**

invested in new active travel infrastructure and programs to support safe active travel to school



### **More than 1,500**

blue wayfinding stencils applied to paths around 53 schools



### **Detailed design progressed**

for the Sulwood Drive shared path



### **Feasibility study completed**

on active travel in the Gungahlin Town Centre with design progressing in 2023-24



### **Belconnen Bikeway**

stage two completed



### **Consultation undertaken**

on the draft Active Travel Plan and best practice design guide for urban intersections and other active travel infrastructure

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



### **Over \$26 million**

invested in new active travel infrastructure, path maintenance and programs to support safe active travel to school



### **Feasibility and design**

of priority paths identified in the Active Travel Plan



Design and construction of Stage 1 of the

### **Garden City Cycle Route**

to better connect inner north suburbs



### **Over 40% additional funding**

to target maintenance in the existing footpath and cycle network



### **\$2.6 million**

for upgrades to the shared path between Cunningham Street and Bowen Park in Kingston



### **\$494,000**

for improvements at Telopea Park including new formalised paths

# PRIORITY 9 – GRAFFITI AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## WE HEARD

Community engagement through street art projects is important to manage graffiti.

The ACT Government has continued activities to reduce and remove illegal graffiti as well as make Canberra's streets more vibrant and colourful through street art.

In March 2022, the streets and laneways of Braddon, Civic and the National Triangle came to life in a colourful explosion of paint as part of Canberra's first urban street art festival, Surface. During the event, 35 local and interstate artists worked across 30 walls and structures transforming the built environment with street art, graffiti, portraits, stencils, Aboriginal art, geometric and abstract art. Eight community groups also received grants to carry out projects alongside the festival. Many people also participated in the festival's full calendar of events such as tours, exhibitions, performances and panel talks. It was estimated that about 5,000 people attended the festival.

In 2022-23, four street art murals have been painted across the ACT. These include a sun smart mural at Cooleman Court in Weston, a collaboration with Hughes Primary School to add colour to the tunnels near the school, and a mural at the bus stop on Beaurepaire Crescent in Holt.

Aboriginal artwork has also brightened up public spaces across the ACT. As part of the delivery of infrastructure upgrades, Aboriginal artwork now features in Gwydir Square in Kaleen and on water meter pits at sporting facilities in Rivett, Chapman, Amaroo and at the Greenway Enclosed Oval. The artwork adds vibrancy to the area and shares cultural stories.

The ACT Government has also partnered with the Australian National University on the development of an online street art journal and mural projects, and with the University of Canberra to create an online street artist platform. The artist platform is expected to be finalised in 2023-24. The street artist platform will provide a profile of Canberra's street artists including their different styles and themes.

An additional legal graffiti practice site was introduced in Conder to bring the total number of sites to 31. These sites are located on ACT Government assets in public places like underpasses and toilet blocks and are available to graffiti artists on an ongoing basis with no permits required. They have proven effective in diverting graffiti from surrounding areas.

The ACT Government has re-established its graffiti removal volunteer program and members of the public can now sign up to volunteer to remove unauthorised graffiti on private assets. Individuals and community groups are encouraged to come forward and support the program. It is hoped that this volunteer program will provide some assistance to residents who are impacted by illegal graffiti and help keep our city looking beautiful.

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE



**5,000**

in attendance at the Surface Festival



**Four new**  
street art murals

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



**New street art murals**

at the Farrer and Florey public toilets



# PRIORITY 10 – STREETLIGHTS

## WE HEARD

That streetlights are important to maintain public and traffic safety.

New and upgraded streetlight infrastructure has been delivered with a focus on improving safety for motorists and vulnerable road users, increasing security, improving visibility and reducing energy consumption.

The ACT Government continues to improve the quality and efficiency of lighting throughout the city. In 2022-23, approximately 2,359 streetlights were upgraded as part of the 'dull light' program, maintenance activities and various infill programs. Approximately 130 new LED lights were installed across the Territory, improving brightness and safety while making our city more sustainable. At the end of 2022-23, around 47,000 out of Canberra's 83,000 streetlights will have been upgraded to energy efficient LED technology.

Streetlight upgrades were also included in infrastructure delivery projects and improvements to our parks and open spaces. These included solar lighting around Yerrabi Pond in Gungahlin and lighting improvements in Gwydir Square in Kaleen and at Duffy and Campbell shops as part of the upgrades there. Improved streetlighting will also be part of the Tuggeranong Foreshore upgrades and the Mawson placemaking improvements.

Concrete bus shelters were made brighter than ever with solar lighting improvements to help commuters feel safer after dark. Following a successful lighting trial at five concrete bus shelters in Mitchell, solar lighting was installed at another 31 shelters across Canberra including in Amaroo, Dunlop, Kaleen, Hackett, Watson, Dickson, Tuggeranong, Woden and Weston Creek.

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE



**2,359**  
streetlights received  
LED upgrades



**31 bus shelters**  
received solar lighting

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



**\$513,000**  
will improve streetlighting  
across the ACT



# PRIORITY 11 – PLAY SPACES

## WE HEARD

The quality of the play spaces is more important than the number of them.

After school, on the weekend or whenever a bit of rest and recreation is needed, the 523 play spaces across the ACT are the go-to for Canberra families. The ACT Government recognises the importance of play spaces among Canberrans and is delivering new and improved play spaces to allow the community to spend more active time outside with their families. Canberrans told us they want to see more nature play and diverse play elements and these opportunities are being delivered in line with the ACT Play Space Strategy which highlights the need to deliver equitable and sustainable playgrounds.

In October 2022 the new Ruth Park play space in Coombs was opened to the public. Following community feedback, the play space caters for all ages and features modern play equipment including a bird's nest tower, pod structures, swings, slides, shade structures as well as a BBQ and picnic area.

Final designs have been released for significant upgrades to play spaces in Ngunnawal, Aranda, Chisholm and Gordon following community feedback on the preliminary designs in late 2022. The Burrumarra Avenue play space in Ngunnawal will receive a range of new equipment including climbing structures and slides. The Banambila Street play space in Aranda will feature a new fitness station for all ages, a junior fort and central nature play area. The Alston Street play space in Chisholm will receive a new nature play area and nest swing. The Point Hut Pond play space in Gordon will be upgraded with a new nature play area with boulders, scramble nets and balance elements. These upgraded play spaces will cater to people of different ages and abilities with engaging and fun experiences that support physical health and wellbeing. Construction will start before the end of 2023.

Significant upgrades will also be delivered at the Lyons Oval play space and the Wakool Crescent play space in Kaleen with the second phase of engagement completed in June 2023. Final designs will be released in the second half of 2023 with construction to commence in 2024.

The ACT Government is also progressing work to deliver a new destination play space for the inner north. Feedback received from the community during the first stage of engagement identified key priorities including inclusive and accessible play, a variety of play opportunities for all ages, a special focus on nature play and climbing structures, and the need for well-connected

active travel links and parking. In mid-2023 the second phase of engagement got underway, bringing together a diverse group of representative stakeholders to test and refine design concepts arising from the community engagement. Once this phase of the design process has been completed, a preliminary design will be prepared in the second half of 2023 and construction is expected to commence in 2024.

As part of the Tuggeranong Foreshore upgrade the play space at the Tuggeranong Town Park will receive additional equipment to provide more play opportunities and places to picnic. This will include sand diggers, balance equipment, climbing challenges and a flying fox. Construction is expected to commence before the end of 2023.

The ACT Government is building a new recreation park in Casey to provide a wider range of outdoor recreation opportunities for local residents and contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community. Engagement was undertaken with both community and stakeholders with feedback invited on indicative designs and elements for inclusion. The designs include toilet facilities, shade structures, a barbecue and picnic tables, all abilities play equipment, a multi-purpose court, nature play and a flying fox as well as a grassed amphitheatre.

New and upgraded play spaces will also be delivered as part of our shopping centre and stormwater projects. Local shop improvements at Calwell and Macquarie will see their respective play spaces upgrades with new playgrounds to be constructed in Griffith and Narrabundah due to the need to remove the existing ones for stormwater upgrades and associated community safety reasons.

A further 45 play spaces across the ACT were refreshed in 2022-23, receiving minor improvements such as additional mulch and softfall, raising of swings to ensure safe clearance to the ground when in use, general landscaping improvements or rearrangement of equipment to meet standards.

For the skaters, scooters and BMX bikers, safety improvements at the Tuggeranong skate park and a new competition standard half-pipe at the Belconnen skate park will be delivered in 2023-24. Planning is also underway for a future skate park in the Kippax Group Centre.

## 2022-23 AT A GLANCE



**\$2.6 million**  
for a destination style play space in the inner north



**45 play spaces**  
refreshed to improve safety

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



**New and upgraded**  
play spaces in Aranda, Calwell, Casey, Chisholm, Griffith, Gordon, Kaleen, Lyons, Macquarie, Narrabundah and Ngunnawal



An ongoing investment from 20-21 of  
**\$17.5 million** in shopping centre and other improvements



# PRIORITY 12 – SHOPPING CENTRE EXPERIENCE

## WE HEARD

Future improvements should be made after considering changing demographics and commercial circumstances.

The ACT Government is helping make popular local shops even better, with upgrades completed at three locations in 2022-23.

In December 2022 construction was completed on major upgrades to the local shops at Gwydir Square in Kaleen. The upgrade included new seating and shade structures, a new toilet, landscaping, community artwork, refreshed softfall at the playground, upgraded lighting and parking improvements.

An upgrade at Duffy shops was completed in June 2023, providing a new playground with shade sails, a bike track, new toilet, accessible paths, and better landscaping including native trees. These works were informed by community feedback and help make it easier to stay longer and enjoy time with family and friends.

Also in July 2023, major works on upgrades to the local shops in Campbell were completed providing better parking arrangements, new seating and shade structures, accessible paths and landscaping.

Construction has also started, or will commence soon, to upgrade a further three locations and these works will be completed in 2023-24.

The ACT Government is improving pedestrian and traffic infrastructure within Pialligo, upgrading Beltana Road to provide a safe and attractive streetscape. Work is underway to maximise opportunities for people to walk and cycle, reduce the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles and incorporate signage and other elements that define entries to businesses and help people find their way around. This project is jointly funded between the ACT and Australian Governments.

The second location is Brierly Street, adjacent to Cooleman Court in Weston, where a second stage of improvements is being delivered following community engagement on the draft designs in mid 2022. Brierly Street is a flourishing café and restaurant strip and these improvements will provide more inviting spaces for the community and businesses to enjoy. Upgrades include trees and landscaping, better pedestrian connectivity between the various commercial centres with two new raised crossings, increased and improved lighting, and more bicycle parking, rubbish bins and spaces for alfresco dining for restaurants to consider expanding into.

The community also provided feedback on preliminary designs for public space improvements at Charnwood shops. This upgrade, which will start soon, will deliver repaved surfaces, new trees, drainage improvements, increased shade, safer crossings and parking improvements. In early 2023 early works were completed to formalise the one-way traffic flow through the carpark and replace existing signage.

The ACT Government is committed to upgrading local shopping centre precincts across the city and improvements will be delivered from 2023-24 at a further six centres. Preliminary designs for minor improvements in Macquarie, Narrabundah and Monash were released in June 2023 and the community has been invited to provide feedback on proposed upgrades in Calwell, Lanyon and Evatt. Public space improvements will also be delivered at the Kippax Group Centre to improve pedestrian access, lighting and landscaping.

## 2022–23 AT A GLANCE



**\$1 million**

for refurbishments at the Charnwood shops



**Completion**

of Kaleen, Duffy and Campbell shop upgrades

## 2023–24 AT A GLANCE



**Construction underway**

for nine shopping centre upgrades in Calwell, Charnwood, Evatt, Lanyon Valley, Macquarie, Monash, Narrabundah, Pialligo and Weston



**\$17.5 million**

for ongoing investment from 20-21 on shopping centre and other improvements



**\$25 million**

on upgrades at Dickson shops to support local businesses as part of a package to transform the City Centre and Dickson



# PRIORITY 13 – RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP

## WE HEARD

It's important to educate the community about responsible pet ownership and keep better pet records.

Almost 90,000 dogs and 15,000 cats are registered in the ACT as of the end of June 2023. On 1 July 2022 it became a requirement that all cats in the ACT be registered, with details to be updated annually. This is in addition to the requirement already in place for a dog's registration details to be updated annually. The new laws also expanded cat containment across Canberra for cats born from 1 July 2022 to help Canberra's cats live longer and healthier lives, while better protecting native wildlife.

Pet owners will soon be able to complete a new pet registration form, renew or update pet registration details through the ACT Government's Digital Account. Pet registration services will be included in this online platform in the second half of 2023 to streamline the process for pet owners. Pet owners will be able to register multiple pets easily and view all their details at once via a personal dashboard. The ACT Digital Account will provide real time data to Domestic Animal Services (DAS) to allow them to target resources and education activities.

In April 2022, DAS began delivering an education and awareness program to preschools and kindergarten in ACT Government schools. The purpose of this program is to teach children under eight years' of age how to interact safely with dogs. The program has been a big success, helping educate over 2,525 students since it started. DAS has begun a pilot to expand the program to students in other year levels.

The Yellow Dog initiative was launched in February 2023 to improve safety by clearly and easily identifying dogs who need space and prefer to be left alone. They may still be in training, have a nervous or anxious temperament, be old and grumpy, recovering post-operation, or a rescue dog being rehabilitated. Owners of these dogs are encouraged

to use a yellow bandana, lead or ribbon to let others know, at a glance, their dog shouldn't be approached. DAS raised awareness of the initiative and handed out yellow bandanas at key community events in addition to paid advertising, posters and postcards at dog parks, vets, pet stores, cafes, shopping centres and schools.

The ACT Government is committed to improving animal welfare outcomes in the ACT. To contribute towards this objective, design work will continue on a new home for the RSPCA at the corner of Fairbairn Avenue and Addison Road in Pialligo. The new facility will house the RSPCA's animal management, veterinary and education services, allowing them to better care for animals and strengthen their engagement with the Canberra community about animal welfare.

The Animal Welfare (Private Keeping of Native Reptiles) Mandatory Code of Practice 2022 was released in early 2022. The code provides minimum standards of care for private keepers that have reptiles in captivity in the ACT. It applies to all privately owned native reptiles including turtles, lizards and snakes and is the first of its kind in the ACT.

Canberra dog owners and their furry friends will also benefit from more and improved recreation opportunities. The Casey dog park on Springbank Rise will receive new grass and mulch and the O'Connor dog park will have new shade structures installed in both the small and large dog parks as well as new bench seats. New dog parks will also be built in Lanyon and Franklin. In late 2022 the community provided feedback on the draft concept plans for these. The final design plans for the new dog parks will be shared ahead of construction starting in 2023-24.

## 2022–23 AT A GLANCE



**2,525 students**

participated in the dog education program at schools



**Refresh works**

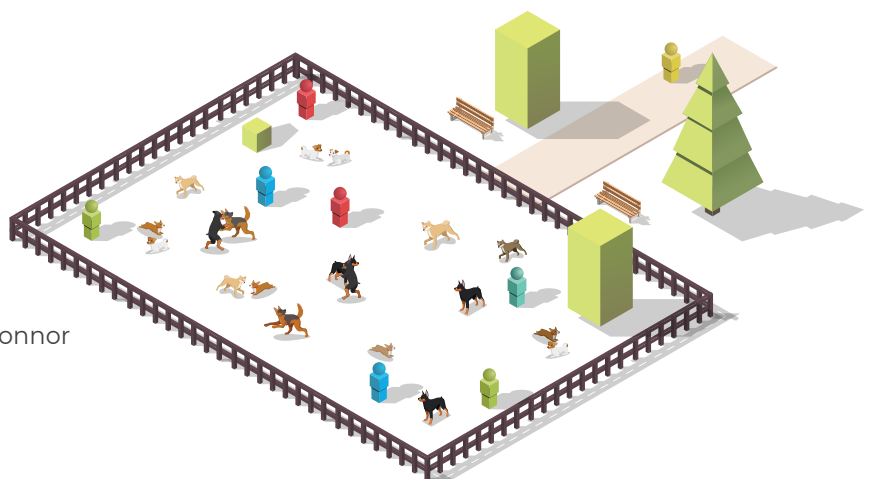
at the dogs parks in Casey and O'Connor

## 2023–24 AT A GLANCE



**Start of work**

to deliver new dog parks in Franklin and the Lanyon Valley



# PRIORITY 14 – COMMUNITY OVALS AND FITNESS STATIONS

## WE HEARD

Repurpose unused ovals and improve ovals with complementary amenity.

Canberra's ovals and sporting facilities contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community. The ACT Government has invested in new and improved community sport infrastructure and facilities for use by sporting teams and for recreational enjoyment.

Improvements were delivered right across the ACT. There were drainage improvements at Hawker District Softball Fields, fencing was replaced at Kaleen Enclosed Oval and Boomanulla Oval, cricket nets were upgraded at Taylor District Playing Fields and Campbell Oval, shade structures were installed over seating areas at Phillip Enclosed Oval and irrigation upgrades were undertaken at Bonner Neighbourhood Oval, Chapman Oval and Rivett Neighbourhood Oval. In addition, Holt Oval is being returned to an irrigated sportsground. The new playing surface will allow sport for future competition, standard training, and match play. It will be a place for all Canberrans to keep active or progress from grassroots to elite sport.

Changerooms have been upgraded at sportsgrounds across Canberra to ensure our facilities are female friendly and to improve community access to training and match play. In 2022-23, female friendly improvements were completed at:

- Nicholls District Playing Fields
- Kambah 1 District Playing Fields
- Rivett Neighbourhood Oval
- Holt District Playing Fields (as part of the pavilion upgrade)
- Kingston Oval (as part of the pavilion upgrade).

The ACT Government's first solar powered shipping container canteen was turned on in April 2023 for players and spectators of Australian rules football at the Gordon District Playing Fields. The solar powered canteen is part of an exciting new way to provide sportsgrounds users with dedicated temporary facilities following vandalism of the permanent facilities in December 2022. Two similar temporary facilities were introduced to ACT Government sportsgrounds as solar powered change rooms. In February 2023 a solar powered shipping container changeroom was installed for players at Gordon with a second installed in June 2023 and in April 2023 a container was installed at Hall sportsground for the Hall Bushrangers Rugby Union team.

To ensure local sport teams can play and train into the night, LED lighting upgrades were completed at Watson Neighbourhood Oval and Holt Oval (as part of the reactivation project). The new lighting has improved visibility for our athletes on the field, as well as friends, family, and fans on the sidelines. In 2023-24, further LED lighting upgrades will be completed at:

- Deakin District Playing Fields
- Gowrie District Playing Fields
- Higgins Neighbourhood Oval
- Scullin Neighbourhood Oval.

Hawker District Playing Fields will receive an upgrade, with \$1.3 million committed in 2023-24 for new lighting, upgraded toilet and changeroom facilities, and parking improvements. The ACT Government is also working with Basketball ACT to support the expansion of, and upgrades to, the Belconnen Basketball Stadium to help meet growing participation rates. Upgrades will be made to netball courts across the ACT including in Lyneham, Deakin, Charnwood and Calwell.

Work progressed on the Throsby Home of Football in 2022-23, with an Estate Development Plan finalised for the project. The facility will include multiple outdoor football fields, indoor futsal courts, office space for Capital Football staff and associated amenities. It has been designed to support a range of community and high performance programs for Capital Football and its affiliated clubs and provide valuable open space for the community to enjoy.

Design work is underway to upgrade the Ngunnawal Neighbourhood Oval, with works to start in the second half of 2023. Key features of the upgrade include an asphalt carpark to formalise the existing parking arrangements, a new unisex toilet and new LED lighting. Improvements to the existing irrigation were completed in July 2023.

As part of a play space upgrade on Banambila Street in Aranda, a new fitness station for all ages will be delivered in 2023-24.

Regular maintenance activities were also undertaken at sportsgrounds cross the ACT. In addition to the biannual maintenance period between the summer and winter sport seasons, ongoing maintenance work kept the grounds in great condition. Ten new moisture content sensors were installed in November 2022 at various sportsgrounds to provide real-time data of what is happening underground. The data provides useful information on how wet sportsgrounds are and if they should be open.

## 2022–23 AT A GLANCE



**\$796,000**

invested in sportsgrounds



**Five changerooms**

received female friendly upgrades

## 2023–24 AT A GLANCE



**\$1.3 million**

for upgrades at Hawker District Playing Fields



**New and upgraded**

LED lighting at five sportsgrounds



