



# **ACT Budget: Education Support & Job Creation Key for Young People**

Analysis of the ACT Budget 2014 / 15

Part 2 of 2

Expenditure Initiatives and Capital Works

June 2014

[www.youthcoalition.net](http://www.youthcoalition.net)

The Youth Coalition of the ACT acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners and continuing custodians of the lands of the ACT and we pay our respects to the Elders, families and ancestors.

We acknowledge that the effect of forced removal of Indigenous children from their families as well as past racist policies and actions continues today.

We acknowledge that the Indigenous people hold distinctive rights as the original people of modern day Australia including the right to a distinct status and culture, self-determination and land. The Youth Coalition of the ACT celebrates Ngunnawal culture and the invaluable contribution it makes to our community.

The Youth Coalition of the ACT (Youth Coalition) is the peak youth affairs body in the Australian Capital Territory and is responsible for representing the interests of people aged between 12 and 25 years of age and those who work with them. The Youth Coalition works to actively promote the well being and aspirations of young people in the ACT with particular respect to their political, cultural, economic and social development. The Youth Coalition is represented on many ACT advisory structures and provides advice to the ACT Government on a range of issues related to young people and youth services.

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June 2014

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## Budget Analysis Overview

Overall, the 2014 / 15 ACT Budget delivered on 3 June was welcomed by the Youth Coalition.

The ACT Government announced a budget that they believe provides measures to counter the reduction of Australian Government contribution to the ACT economy (as the Australian Government cuts employment, funding and other local investment) and to provide some relief for lower income earners whose household budgets will be significantly affected by federal policies.

While this budget will see the ACT remain in deficit at the end of the financial year, the Youth Coalition supports the ACT Government decision to not make dramatic cuts to spending and we believe that the strategy of continuing to invest in projects (such as those in the infrastructure program, in order to stimulate the economy and promote jobs creation) will provide more opportunity for young people.

However, the challenges ahead for young people in Australia will be significant, and whether all young people will have access to the quality of life we have come to expect in the ACT will likely depend on the ACT community's ability to create jobs. The Youth Coalition believes that the ACT Government has taken the first steps and shown leadership in this area, and that it will be important in the coming months for government, community and business sectors to work together to identify broader and longer term strategies to ensure that young Canberrans can look to a future where they will have opportunity for full economic participation.

The Youth Coalition of the ACT's ACT Budget 2014 / 15 Analysis is divided into two parts:

- Part 1: Overview, Priorities, and Media Release
- Part 2: Expenditure Initiatives and Capital Works (this document)

Each part can be downloaded from [www.youthcoalition.net](http://www.youthcoalition.net) or accessed in hard copy by calling (02) 6247 3540.

Below is an analysis of the ACT Budget 2014 / 15 Expenditure Initiatives and Capital Works, as outlined in Budget Paper No. 3 for the following:

- Canberra Institute of Technology
- Capital Metro Agency
- Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate
- Community Services Directorate
- Commerce and Works Directorate
- Economic Development Directorate
- Education and Training Directorate
- Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate
- Health Directorate
- Housing ACT
- Justice and Community Safety Directorate
- Territory and Municipal Services Directorate
- Whole of Government initiatives

Each section outlines key aspects of the relevant Directorate's purpose and priorities, provides an introduction and context to the initiatives contained within the ACT Budget 2014 / 15, and provides commentary on Expenditure Initiatives and Capital Works that are relevant to Canberra's young people.

# Canberra Institute of Technology

→ A leader of vocational education and training

## Introduction

It is essential that the ACT Government continue to build the capacity of the ACT education system to be flexible and responsive to the needs of all students. This extends to learning beyond the legislated requirement for young people to study until 17 years old or having completed Year 12 or equivalent (AQF Certificate Level II). Attainment of a Certificate II or lower has been attributed to social exclusion in the forms of social interactions, personal safety, community and health.<sup>1</sup> With Year 12 now being regarded by many as the base level qualification for employment, TAFE settings provide an important service in providing young people with the opportunity to pursue industry or employment-oriented learning and skills development.

The Youth Coalition believes that all educational institutions in the ACT can also contribute to:

- The development and implementation of mechanisms that seek to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander to remain engaged in education and employment opportunities;
- Inclusive and more flexible educational delivery and resources to support young people with disabilities to engage meaningfully in education and employment opportunities; and,
- Alternative/flexible educational provision for young people who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging, especially young people involved in the youth justice system, low socio-economic status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and young people who have had involvement in the Care and Protection system.

Capital Works under Canberra Institute of Technology are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

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<sup>1</sup> Buddelmeyer, H., Leung, F. and Scutella, R. (2012) *Educating oneself out of Social Exclusion*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide

## Capital Works

### CIT Campus Modernisation – Tuggeranong Campus

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
122	The Government will develop a campus modernisation strategy for the Canberra Institute of Technology. The Government has included an Infrastructure Investment Provision in the Budget for developing a new CIT Campus in Tuggeranong.	2014 / 15 \$0 2015 / 16 NFP 2016 / 17 NFP 2017 / 18 NFP	The Youth Coalition believes it is important that education is available and accessible across regions. We welcome the development of a new CIT Campus in Tuggeranong and encourage the ACT Government to ensure there is affordable, safe and accessible transport and accommodation available for students coming to study in Canberra.

Note: NFP indicates not for publication.

## Capital Metro Agency

- Planning, design, delivery of first stage of light rail network
- Getting the light rail project procurement ready
  
- Engaging with the community

### Introduction

In responding to 2012 Rate Canberra Survey, young people from the ACT frequently identify limited transport accessibility as a barrier to their participation in employment, education, and recreational activities.<sup>2</sup>

The heavy reliance that many young people have on the ACT public transport system should be reflected by: developing public transport to address the needs of young people; ensuring accessibility and affordability; and including adequate evening, late night and weekend services. The Youth Coalition also advocates for public transport options that improve access for young people with disabilities.

While the Capital Metro is still some years from completion, and there is much discussion in the ACT community about the project, the Youth Coalition generally supports investment in projects that will stimulate the ACT economy.

Expense Initiatives under Capital Metro Agency are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

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<sup>2</sup> Youth Coalition of the ACT, 2012, *Rate Canberra: Findings from the Survey of Young People Aged 12-25 in the ACT*

## Expense Initiatives

### Capital Metro – Scoping and facilitation

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
82	<p>The Government will invest in the development of Capital Metro. This includes preparing Capital Metro to an investment ready stage and, subject to the full business case, commencing the procurement and delivery of the light rail service and its operation, specialised economic and financial advisory services and stakeholder engagement activities.</p> <p>Additional funding of \$0.907 million in 2014-15 will be provided to the Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate for increased staffing for work associated with operational, finance and advisory services to improve the financial and commercial impacts associated with the Capital Metro project. This amount is included in the total above.</p>	<p>2014 / 15 \$21,000,000            2015 / 16 \$0            2016 / 17 \$0            2017 / 18 \$0</p>	<p>The Youth Coalition supports initiatives that improve and increase public transport in the ACT. Public transport is often a young person's primary means of transportation. ACT public transport services need to be affordable, safe and timely in order to facilitate young people's participation in our community. We urge the ACT Government to ensure that young people are involved in the design and planning for the Capital Metro project.</p> <p>The Youth Coalition were pleased to hear the Chief Minister and Treasurer identify the intent for jobs creation initiatives to specifically address concerns about rising youth unemployment. One of the justifications for the \$21 million investment in the Capital Metro project is jobs creation and we urge the ACT Government to ensure that new jobs are targeted to groups in the community most vulnerable to unemployment, particularly young people.</p>

## Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate

- Oversight of the implementation of ACT Government priorities
- Financial/economic management strategic planning across government
- Workplace health and safety
  
- Improve access to government services
- Leading implementation of Digital Canberra Action Plan
- Coordinating red tape reduction

### Introduction

Young Canberrans' priorities for government generally echo what young people around Australia identify as key social, political, and economic issues. Prior to the 2013 federal election, the National Union of Students surveyed some 12,000 full time students and found that their top five issues for the election were:

- Quality education & funding
- Secure jobs, fair workplaces
- Humane treatment of asylum seekers
- Affordable housing
- Marriage equality

The 2014 ACT Youth Interact Forum, held during National Youth Week, saw approximately 100 young people from around the ACT come together and identify issues of priority to them, as a part of an exercise around having their voice heard. Again, education, employment, and housing featured as key issues, as well as the treatment of asylum seekers and marriage equality.

The Youth Coalition believes that it is essential that young people's voices are heard across government, and that policy direction and investment should reflect their stake in the community.

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under the Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

## Expense Initiatives

### Healthy Weight Initiative

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
83	The Healthy Weight Action Plan funding of \$3.645 million over four years will provide for community programs and education development activities, student physical activity education programs, web based resources for general practitioners and developing nutritional information for supermarkets and shopping centres. The Government will focus on partnering with industry to improve the quality of the Territory's food environment and equip the community to make informed diet choices. These initiatives will complement other Government priorities including the Transport for Canberra walking and cycling infrastructure and the 'Ride or Walk to School' program.	2014 / 15 \$1,538,000 2015 / 16 \$1,315,000 2016 / 17 \$344,000 2017 / 18 \$448,000	The Youth Coalition welcomes initiatives aimed at addressing obesity and overweight in the Canberra population. We seek further clarification on the target age group for the Healthy Weight Action Plan, and how young people (12-25 years) have been specifically targeted as part of this plan.

## Capital Works

### iConnect

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
123	The Government will build a digital platform to transform the delivery of ACT Government services to citizens, businesses and the Government. iConnect will establish a secure online portal to provide access to core government services and payment transactions through a single sign-on for all customers. This initiative is expected to generate net savings of \$9.735 million across agencies during the forward estimates.	2014 / 15 \$1,651,000 (Capital) \$2,047,000 (Associated Expenses) 2015 / 16 \$6,061,000 (Capital) \$201,000 (Associated Expenses) 2016 / 17 \$5,196,000 (Capital) \$580,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$-2,1947,000 (Associated Expenses) 2017 / 18 \$2,967,000 (Capital) \$1,224,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$-9,036,000 (Associated Expenses)	The Youth Coalition applauds the ACT Government's investment in creating digital platforms for access to government services. We believe that the digital strategy will facilitate greater community participation for young people, and reflects the role that young people often play as early adopters of new technologies. In particular, we welcome moves for greater digital and online service delivery, as this is how many young people seek out services and information.

## Community Services Directorate

- Participation/well-being of Canberra community
- Services
- Building cultural/social capital
- Supporting marginalised/vulnerable Canberrans
  
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Out of Home Care
- Human Services Blueprint
- Red tape reduction
- Family/sexual violence
- Respite centre for children

### Introduction

The Community Services Directorate provides a range of services to young people and their families in the ACT, either through direct service delivery or the provision of funding to community service providers. The Community Services Directorate is also responsible for key statutory agencies such as Care and Protection Services and Youth Justice.

The Youth Coalition works closely with the Community Services Directorate in a range of areas, including the recent work undertaken to develop a Blueprint for Human Services across the ACT. For a number of years now the Youth Coalition has also called on the ACT Government to provide leadership and resources to a whole of government and community Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy, including commitment and shared funding from all agencies.

While this is not exactly the same as the Human Services Blueprint, the Youth Coalition believes that this work will go some of the way towards addressing early intervention and prevention. Particularly we see opportunities through planned, joined up work to:

- Ensure that community-based specialist youth services are properly resourced to be able to engage with and provide service within schools
- Support the development of additional programs, services and supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the

ACT, particularly those with an early intervention and prevention focus

- Develop and implement mechanisms that seek to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander to remain engaged in education and employment opportunities.
- Provide of high quality respite programs and services for young people and their families across the ACT
- Ensure there are cultural care plans in place for all multicultural young people in care
- Recognise that families are the first point of support for young people, and therefore provide practical support for families to ensure their child's engagement in education, training or employment
- Actively involve young people in designing, planning, implementing and evaluating youth policy and service delivery frameworks particularly for care and protection

### **ACT National Disability Insurance Scheme**

The Youth Coalition welcomes the ACT Government's commitment to the NDIS in the ACT. We also acknowledge that the transition to the NDIS is not reflected in the budget because the Commonwealth and Territory Governments have not yet reached an agreement on this. The Youth Coalition welcomes the investment in the Therapy Assistants Program and the Emergency Responses for Disability Services for people with disabilities as they transition to the NDIS. We acknowledge that the NDIS is a significant undertaking for the Commonwealth and Territory Governments, however, we are concerned about the continued uncertainty around the roll out of the NDIS in the ACT and encourage the ACT Government to clarify the details and communicate with providers, families, and people with disabilities.

Investments relating to the National Disability Insurance Scheme includes:

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ● ACT National Disability Insurance Scheme         | \$555,000 over one year (2015-16) |
| ● Disability Services Indexation                   | \$2.25 million over one year      |
| ● Emergency Responses for Disability Services      | \$2.84 million over two years     |
| ● Therapy Assistants Program – Additional services | \$1.64 million over three years   |

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under the Community Services Directorate are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

## Expense Initiatives

### Better Human Services – Blueprint Local Service Network

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
85	<p>The Government will provide funding for a Human Services Blueprint Local Service Network. The initiative will trial new ways of providing services to better integrate local service delivery to individuals and vulnerable groups. The Local Service Network will operationalise key elements of the Human Services Blueprint, including local governance, flexible funding arrangements, enhanced service coordination, and data sharing. It will ensure individuals' outcomes are tracked and evaluated. The Network trial will be located in West Belconnen.</p>	<p>2014 / 15 \$670,000            2015 / 16 \$665,000            2016 / 17 \$0            2017 / 18 \$0</p>	<p>The Youth Coalition welcomes this initiative and supports the ACT Government's investment in operationalising the <i>Human Services Blueprint</i>, better connecting existing services, placing people at the centre of service delivery to ensure that they are supported with the right service, at the right time and for the right duration.</p> <p>We also support the initial implementation of the Blueprint elements occurring in West Belconnen, utilising the opportunity to engage and support services such as the Child &amp; Family Centre and those provided by community agencies in the region.</p> <p>The evaluation and learning from this project will be used to inform the implementation of Local Service Networks in the other regions of the ACT in the future.</p>

## Better Human Services – Strengthening Families

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
85	<p>The successful Strengthening Families approach will be expanded for up to 50 families with complex needs. Each family will be supported by a trained Lead Worker who will work with the family to implement an agreed family plan, supported by tailored support packages that will aim to prevent interaction with high cost and intrusive service systems.</p>	<p>2014 / 15 \$445,000            2015 / 16 \$0            2015 / 16 \$0            2015 / 16 \$0</p>	<p>The Youth Coalition welcomes the expansion of the <i>Strengthening Families</i> project following the success of the pilot project. We strongly support the family- and person-centered approach and the co-design nature of <i>Strengthening Families</i> in resourcing and supporting families to help themselves.</p> <p>However, we note there are a number of initiatives that provide investment to implement tailored support packages or plans, such as the expansion of the <i>Throughcare</i> project, the <i>Youth Justice Blueprint</i>, the <i>Engaging Schools Framework</i> and the <i>Strengthening Families</i> project, and we are concerned about the capacity of existing community services who do the practical support to meet all of these without additional resourcing.</p> <p>The Youth Coalition is also concerned <i>Strengthening Families</i> has no funding commitment from the ACT Government beyond the upcoming financial year. We know that relationship building is key to the success of initiatives such as <i>Strengthening Families</i> and we strongly encourage the ACT Government to clarify their ongoing commitment to this promising project.</p> <p>Given that this initiative will provide a trained Lead Worker to support families, we seek clarification that this investment is providing workers who will provide practical support to families.</p>

## Family and Sexual Violence Support – Domestic Violence Crisis Service and the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
86	The Government will provide additional funding to support sexual assault counselling and crisis and court support for victims of family violence.	2014 / 15 \$153,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition welcomes the additional funding for family and sexual violence support. We believe this is important as family violence is one of the primary causes of homelessness including youth homelessness. The Youth Coalition also acknowledges the increased demand for support provision to families in which a young person has been violent towards other family members.

## Out of Home Care Strategy – Additional funding

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
86	The Government will increase funding to meet growth in demand for out of home care places, and undertake preparatory work associated with implementing a new Out of Home Care Strategy in 2015-16.	2014 / 15 \$4,100,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition welcomes the further investment in the Out of Home Care Strategy. We acknowledge the Strategy is not yet finalised and therefore, the funding for implementation has not been reflected in this budget. Feedback from our stakeholders has been positive and we applaud the ACT Government for reflecting feedback from community in the draft of the Strategy. Stakeholders have raised concern, however, that the Strategy will be expensive to implement, and without adequate investment for its full implementation (without compromising any of the elements) it may not be achievable.

## Philanthropic/Institutional Investor Model

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
86	The Government will fund up to \$80,000 in 2014-15 to explore options for facilitating enhanced philanthropic links between the government, private sector and not for profit and charitable organisations that are mutually beneficial and support improved social outcomes in the Canberra community. The cost of this initiative will be met from within existing resources.	2014 / 15 \$0 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition supports exploring a range of options to diversify the sources for funding and other resources to support improved social outcomes in the Canberra Community.  We seek clarification regarding how this project will enhance the philanthropic work already going on between these sectors, and look forward to hearing more detail in general about the project.

## Capital Works

### A New Respite Property

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
124	The Government will provide up to \$1.075 million for the construction of a purpose built respite property for children, to replace an existing respite property currently operated by Disability ACT. It is expected that the Government funding will be supplemented by a contribution from a private entity.	2014 / 15 \$1,075,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition supports initiatives that help to relieve the pressures that families face in supporting their family members with disabilities. We encourage the ACT Government to consult with young people with disabilities and carers, and to promote the active involvement in designing, planning and evaluation of initiatives such as this new respite property.

## Commerce and Works Directorate

- Centralised administrative/business activities (ICT, procurement, publishing, records, HR, finance)
- Revenue office (tax collection)
  
- Cost saving/red tape reduction for the business of government
- Online services
- Updating procurement processes
- Selling ACTTAB

### Introduction

The Youth Coalition supports the reduction of red tape, and ensuring that ACT Government processes are not inefficient and outmoded.

The additional investment in the ACT Concessions Program is particularly welcome, given the challenges ahead as those with lower incomes face higher medical, educational, and general cost of living expenses.

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under the Commerce and Works Directorate are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

## Expense Initiatives

### ACT Concessions Program – Increasing funding

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
88	The Government will provide additional funding to assist households meet the costs of essential services. The Government will evaluate the program in 2014-15 to consider options to improve its effectiveness, targeting and sustainability.	2014 / 15 \$6,615,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	<p>The Youth Coalition welcomes the additional funding to assist low-income households to meet the costs of essential services and recognise the ACT Government is progressing a range of initiatives to bolster the concessions program.</p> <p>In particular, we believe the reduction of the administration fee for motor vehicle registration from \$25 to \$15 for motorists who choose to pay their motor vehicle registration quarterly or half yearly will provide relief to those who most need it. We acknowledge this is a positive initiative for young people whose financial situation may necessitate the use of quarterly or half yearly payment options. We invite the ACT Government to consider eliminating this fee altogether in the future.</p>

### Data.ACT – Open Access Platform

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
88	The Government is maintaining its open data service following a trial in 2013-14. This service will provide a range of data including educational (the census of all ACT schools), geographic (ACT population projections) and transportation data (ACTION timetables) for use by business and the community. The cost of \$85,000 per year for this initiative will be met from within existing resources.	2014 / 15 \$0 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition welcomes initiatives that enable community sector access to timely and relevant data. Access to data is important to ensure the efficient and effective planning and implementation of services.

## Taxi Subsidy Scheme

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
88	The Government will provide funding for the management and maintenance of the Taxi Subsidy Scheme (TSS) smartcard program.	2014 / 15 \$112,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition welcomes the continued support for the Taxi Subsidy Scheme.

## Capital Works

### Electronic Tendering

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
126	The Government will implement an electronic tendering (eTendering) system to replace the ACT's existing manual and paper based processes. This initiative will reduce the cost of administering procurements for both the ACT Government and organisations tendering for supply of goods and services with the ACT Government.	2014 / 15 \$110,000 (Capital) \$-42,000 (Associated Expenses) 2015 / 16 \$22,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$-165,000 (Associated Expenses) 2016 / 17 \$22,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$-165,000 (Associated Expenses) 2017 / 18 \$22,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$-165,000 (Associated Expenses)	The Youth Coalition supports the implementation of an electronic tendering system for the supply of goods and services with the ACT Government. We also encourage the ACT Government to consider the application of an electronic tendering system for all tendering processes, such as those for community service provision.

## Economic Development Directorate

- Economic/social development of the ACT (growth, jobs, infrastructure)
- Attracting investment
- ACT as a travel destination
  
- Response to Australian Government budget
- International flights
- Brand Canberra
- Northbourne Ave redevelopment
- City to the Lake, Australia Forum, Moncrieff
- Major events (sport, Floriade etc)
- Addressing housing affordability

### Introduction

The Youth Coalition submission to the 2014 / 15 ACT Budget (October 2013) acknowledged that the change of Australian Government meant that there was uncertainty regarding the direction of Australian Government funding in key areas, and called upon the ACT Government to be prepared and planned in terms of responding to any shortfall or significant change in funding levels in these key areas of service to the community, such as education, housing, legal services, and health.

The ACT Government announced a budget that they believe provides measures to counter the reduction of Australian Government contribution to the ACT economy (as the Australian Government cuts employment, funding and other local investment) and to provide some relief for lower income earners whose household budgets will be significantly affected by federal policies.

The 2014 / 15 ACT Budget makes significant investment in economic development, through infrastructure and other projects. The Youth Coalition encourages the ACT Government to consider implementing targets and strategies in all projects that anticipate creating jobs (such as the infrastructure program) to ensure that these jobs employ people from specific demographics who might be more vulnerable to unemployment.

The Youth Coalition will continue to advocate for:

- Equitable access for young people to participate in their communities, particularly in arts, sport and recreational activities.
- Provision of high quality arts, sport and recreation facilities and programs for young people.
- Provision of public space and transport services that are accessible and affordable for young people.
- Improvements in buildings and other infrastructure to support young people with disabilities to access disability-friendly community and recreational facilities, including youth services
- Workplace related supports to be developed and promoted to young people.
- Provision of facilities, including public space and transport, that are accessible and affordable for young people.

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under the Economic Development Directorate are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

## Expense Initiatives

### Active Kids Challenge

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
90	The Government will support the Physical Activity Foundation to deliver the Active Kids Challenge. The program aims to reduce the impact of childhood inactivity and promote healthy lifestyle habits to primary school children. The Government is investing \$0.330 million in this initiative over three years until 2016-17; that cost will be met from within existing resources.	2014 / 15 \$0 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition recognises this initiative as an early intervention strategy, however, we are concerned that this initiative, or an equivalent investment, does not include young people in later school years.

### Young Business Connect

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
93	The Government will provide funding to help young people develop ideas for establishing local businesses. This initiative will include business planning and market development advice, connection to specialist advisors and business mentors and assistance in attracting capital investment. Young Business Connect will link closely with existing entrepreneurship programs in the higher education sector and the CBR Innovation Network.	2014 / 15 \$300,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	<p>The Youth Coalition strongly supports this initiative. With predictions of rising unemployment, and the proposed withdrawal of income support for young job seekers for 6 months of each year, young people are really concerned about jobs and employment pathways. We acknowledge that initiatives such as Young Business Connect shows that the ACT Government has listened to the concerns of young people following the federal budget.</p> <p>The Youth Coalition commends the ACT Government for demonstrating leadership in this first step in addressing the employment concerns of young people in the current fiscal environment, but there is still more work to be done to ensure that all young Canberrans have access to and are supported to engage in education, skills development, and career pathways. We seek clarification on how this program will be evaluated and urge the ACT Government to commit to identifying additional funding for programs of this nature with proven outcomes.</p>

## Capital Works

### Tuggeranong Lakeside Leisure Centre – Water play park

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
131	The Government will provide \$500,000 in 2015-16 for the construction of a Water Play Park at the Lakeside Leisure Centre to improve public amenity and encourage community participation in aquatic activities. Design works of \$100,000 in 2014-15 will be met from within existing resources.	2014 / 15 \$0 2015 / 16 \$500,000 (Capital) 2016 / 17 \$20,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2017 / 18 \$20,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$5,000 (Associated Expenses)	The Youth Coalition supports this initiative. One of the top five personal concerns for young people is finding things to do in Canberra. <sup>3</sup> We encourage the ACT Government to ensure the Water Play Park is affordable and accessible for young people.

### Woden Bus Interchange Redevelopment Stage 1

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
132	The Government will invest \$3.250 million over two years for works to deliver public safety and public realm improvements to the Woden Bus Interchange. The works include the construction of stairs, ramps and lighting, as well as the demolition of redundant structures.	2014 / 15 \$1,250,000 (Capital) 2015 / 16 \$2,000,000 (Capital) 2016 / 17 \$110,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2017 / 18 \$110,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation)	The Youth Coalition supports this initiative. Access to affordable, safe and reliable public transport is essential to participate economically and a key socio-economic determinant of health and well-being for young people. Ensuring safety and access in public spaces is particularly crucial given the important role public space plays in the lives of young people.

<sup>3</sup> Youth Coalition of the ACT (2012) *Rate Canberra 2012: Findings from the survey of Young People aged 12-25 in the ACT*, Youth Coalition of the ACT, Canberra, p. 24.

## Education and Training Directorate

- Every child has access to excellent education
- Deliver public education
- Regulation
- Registration of schools
- Vocational education
- Early intervention
  
- Curriculum
- Learning outcomes
- Quality
- Workforce
- Leadership
- Teaching and learning
- Student-centered work
- Close the attainment gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

### Introduction

For most young people, their engagement with education and positive or negative experience doing so will be one of the most significant determinants of their longer term capability to fully participate, economically, politically, culturally, and socially, in our community.

The Youth Coalition believes that educational engagement is not only a key part of supporting young people to develop employment pathways, but is an important factor in addressing health, reducing engagement in crime and entry into the youth justice system, and preventing youth homelessness.

While the ACT has continued to achieve the highest rates of attainment for Year 12 or equivalent school or non-school qualification in the country, the Youth Coalition also remains concerned that the gap for those students not achieving this level of attainment is significant.

Programs such as the federally-funded Youth Connections have demonstrated that specialist youth services and practitioners can achieve good outcomes in delivering supports for students who have disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from education. However there will be a enormous gap in service supporting vulnerable young people to engage in education and employment pathways at the end of this year due to the cessation of this program. Experience indicates that expectation that generalist services will fill this gap, without investment in staff to up-skill workers and program development to target support, is rarely realised.

The Youth Coalition believes it is essential for ACT Government to continue build the capacity of the ACT education system to be flexible and responsive to the needs of all students. Additionally we remain concerned that the gap in retention rates and educational attainment between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the rest of the population is still significant, and continues to advocate for increased investment in programs targeting support and educational outcomes for this cohort.

The Youth Coalition welcomes the modest increase in health and mental health investment within the ACT Budget. However, we are concerned that preventative and front-line health is not clearly integrated in schools. The Youth Coalition highlights that ACT community based children, youth, and family support services are also well positioned to integrate and provide response with and across the education, youth justice, care and protection, adult corrections and health systems. However, many of these programs and services are small, and demand exceeds current capacity.

Unprecedented changes in federal policy direction and investment in young Australians means that ensuring the mobilisation and integration of effective, targeted, and resourced preventative health and social supports in schools has increased in urgency. The ACT has a number of key elements in place working towards ensuring schools are accessible and responsive to young people and families in local networks and communities, however the Youth Coalition continues to highlight the need for greater engagement and coordination between the community services and education sectors. We believe that there is strong support for this across both sectors, reflected in the *ACT Engaging Schools Framework*; however, the expectation that we will arrive at effective integrated service provision without increased and targeted resourcing is unrealistic.

The Youth Coalition will continue to advocate for:

- Evidence-based curriculum that reflects the current educational and cultural needs of the diversity of young people
- More flexible programs for all students within mainstream schools. Alternative education programs should not be seen as a 'dumping ground' for all students who have support needs or behavioural issues
- Increased alternative educational provision for young people who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging, especially young people involved in the youth justice system, low socio-economic status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and young people involved in the

### Care and Protection system

- Initiatives that aim to close the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous education attainment
- Recognition of the role of families in their child's educational engagement, and for supports to be provided to families if required to achieve this objective
- support of the ACT Youth Commitment to ensure that no young person is lost to education, training or employment
- Evidence-based approach to school suspension, and increasing the support to those young people who are suspended to maintain positive engagement with educational providers
- Active involvement of young people in designing, planning and evaluating youth education policy and service delivery frameworks
- Increased capacity of schools, youth services, and other health services, to be able to:
  - Identify mental health issues,
  - Respond in an effective and efficient manner,
  - Make appropriate referrals to specialist services where needed, and
  - Provide mental health promotion and prevention activities
- Development and implementation of mechanisms that support young people with mental health issues to meaningfully engage in education, employment and the community
- Inclusive and more flexible educational delivery and resources to support young people with disabilities to engage meaningfully in education and employment opportunities
- Improved transitional supports and educational pathways for all multicultural, newly arrived, or refugee young people in the ACT
- Recognition that families are the first point of support for young people, advocating for the provision of practical support for families to ensure their child's engagement in education, training or employment

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under the Education and Training Directorate are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

## Capital Works

### Belconnen Region Schools – Modernisation

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
133	The Government will invest in improvements to Belconnen High School and will build on the master planning work initiated in the 2013-14 Budget. Stage 1 works (funded in 2013-14 and 2014-15) include building demolition, facilities upgrades and completion of the master planning in consultation with south Belconnen public school communities.	2014 / 15 \$250,000 (Capital) 2015 / 16 \$5,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2016 / 17 \$5,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2017 / 18 \$5,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation)	The Youth Coalition supports investment in improvements in school infrastructure. Infrastructure investment in schools is another opportunity for the ACT Government to progress its commitment to a Child and Youth Friendly City as outlined in both the <i>ACT Children's Plan</i> <sup>4</sup> and the <i>ACT Young People's Plan</i> . <sup>5</sup>

### Sustaining Smart Schools – Digital Infrastructure for our schools

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
134	The Government is investing in the upgrade and ongoing maintenance of school Information and Communication Technology infrastructure. It includes the expansion of wireless access points in ACT public schools as part of the 'Digital Canberra' initiative.	2014 / 15 \$9,201,000 (Capital) 2015 / 16 \$2,300,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2016 / 17 \$2,300,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2017 / 18 \$2,300,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation)	The Youth Coalition supports investment in the upgrade and ongoing maintenance of school ICT infrastructure.

<sup>4</sup> ACT Children's Plan <http://www.children.act.gov.au/> Accessed 17 May 2013.

<sup>5</sup> ACT Young People's Plan <http://www.youth.act.gov.au/index.php/publications> Accessed 17 May 2013.

## Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate

- Sustainable development
- Address climate change
- Environmental protection
  
- Waterways
- Planning strategy

### Introduction

Young people generally rate environmental protection very highly in issues of importance to them. As such the Youth Coalition believes that while specific resource towards implementing the *'Child and Youth Friendly City'* approach, a commitment of both the ACT Children's Plan 2009-2014, and ACT Young People's Plan 2009-2014, was not invested in this period, there have been a number of opportunities to involve children and young people in the planning, design, and implementation of development in the ACT.

A number of Expense and Capital Works Initiatives, related to public space and transport, have been identified in this ACT Budget, and could easily involve children and young people in design and implementation.

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

## Capital Works

### City Plan Implementation

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
136	The Government will commission studies to deliver change and growth in the city through the City Plan. These studies will include the development of transport and movement plans.	2014 / 15 \$150,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	<p>The Youth Coalition welcomes this initiative. Access to affordable, safe and reliable public transport is essential to participate economically and a key socio-economic determinant of health and wellbeing for young people. Ensuring safety and access in public spaces is particularly crucial given the important role public space plays in the lives of young people.</p> <p>Young people need to be involved in the full range of planning and decisions in the development of transport and movement plans. We urge the ACT Government to take the opportunity to fulfill their commitment to a Child and Youth Friendly City as outlined in both the <i>ACT Children's Plan</i><sup>6</sup> and the <i>ACT Young People's Plan</i>.<sup>7</sup></p>

<sup>6</sup> ACT Children's Plan <http://www.children.act.gov.au/> Accessed 17 May 2013.

<sup>7</sup> ACT Young People's Plan <http://www.youth.act.gov.au/index.php/publications> Accessed 17 May 2013.

## Health Directorate

- Better health outcomes for community and consumers
- Research & innovation
  
- Meeting demand
- Infrastructure
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- Cancer centre
- Walk ins
- Accreditation

### Introduction

Access to health services is of vital importance to young people. In the 2012 Rate Canberra survey conducted by the Youth Coalition, access to health services was rated by young people (aged 12-25) as one of the top five issues of most importance<sup>8</sup>.

Mental health continues to be the primary health concern for young people, and the Youth Coalition has been calling for: an increase support for preventative and frontline health, mental health and social support programs in schools such as the work undertaken by:

- School nurses
- School based youth workers, and,
- Pastoral care teams.

The Youth Coalition welcomes the modest increase in health and mental health investment within the ACT Budget. However, we are concerned that preventative and front-line health is not clearly integrated in schools. Schools are recognised as ‘first-to-know’ agencies regarding many aspects of young people’s lives. The embedding of supports such as health professionals, youth workers, social workers, and psychologists within schools can deliver more integrated, efficient and effective services. Further, the successful deployment of these disciplines assists schools to be the dynamic, successful communities that improve the life opportunities for all Canberrans, as the *ACT Youth Commitment* aspires.

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<sup>8</sup> Youth Coalition of the ACT, 2012, *Rate Canberra 2012: Findings from the survey of Young People aged 12-25 in the ACT*

The ACT Budget includes welcome investment in improving services for suicide prevention, however this is only a small investment for early intervention strategies and so the Youth Coalition will also continue to advocate for:

- Equitable distribution of resources and services to support groups of young people who are at greater risk of poor health outcomes, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, young people in rural and remote areas, and young people experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage
- Sexual health and relationship education in schools that is inclusive of diverse cultural backgrounds, genders and sexual orientations
- Removal of barriers experienced by young people in accessing health services, such as cost, discrimination, lack of transport options, unawareness of services, confidentiality concerns, stigma, and a limited number of 'youth-friendly' general practitioners and other health professionals
- Development and implementation of mechanisms that support young people with mental health issues to meaningfully engage in education, employment and the community

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under the Health Directorate are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

## Expense Initiatives

### Community Mental Health - Expanding services

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
98	The Government will increase staffing for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services with an emphasis on perinatal and infant consultation services and an expansion of the Eating Disorders Program. In addition, funding will be provided to support psychosocial step-up step-down outreach services.	2014 / 15 \$1,000,000 2015 / 16 \$1,038,000 2016 / 17 \$1,076,000 2017 / 18 \$1,116,000	<p>The Youth Coalition welcomes additional investment in mental health services.</p> <p>The Youth Coalition notes the difficulties that young people can face in accessing treatment and support for eating disorders and, therefore, advocate that the expanded Eating Disorders Program specifically address the access and treatment needs for young people.</p> <p>The Youth Coalition requests clarification on how the funding allocation will be distributed across these mental health initiatives, and whether young people (12-25 years) will have access to the psychosocial step-up step-down outreach services.</p>

### Belconnen Community Health Centre and Walk-in Centre - More services, more staff

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
97	The Government will provide staffing to support an increased range of services, including breast screening, aged care and rehabilitation, pathology collection, community mental health and medical outpatient services. Staff will also be provided for a Walk-in Centre at the Belconnen Community Health Centre.	2014 / 15 \$2 280 000 2015 / 16 \$2 328 000 2016 / 17 \$2 377 000 2017 / 18 \$2 427 000	<p>The Youth Coalition welcomes the additional funding for services and staff at the Belconnen Community Health Centre. We are particularly pleased to see extra investment in the Belconnen district, which has the highest total number of children and young people aged 0-24.</p> <p>The Youth Coalition asserts that walk-in centres need to remain free of charge, and youth friendly, in order to improve access for vulnerable young people.</p>

## Suicide Prevention - Improving Services

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
100	The Government will provide a range of services to assist in suicide prevention, including promotion of community awareness of suicide and means of prevention.	2014 / 15 \$500 000 2015 / 16 \$519 000 2016 / 17 \$538 000 2017 / 18 \$558 000	The Youth Coalition strongly supports an increase in the funding for suicide prevention services. We seek clarification as to whether any youth-specific programs or services will be funded as part of this initiative.

## Tuggeranong Health Centre - More services, more staff

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
100	The Government will increase staffing to improve access to the services available from the newly refurbished and expanded Health Centre.	2014 / 15 \$560 000 2015 / 16 \$572 000 2016 / 17 \$584 000 2017 / 18 \$596 000	<p>The Youth Coalition welcomes the additional funding for staff at the Tuggeranong Health Centre. We are particularly pleased to see extra investment in the Tuggeranong district, which has the second highest total number of children and young people aged 0-24.</p> <p>As outlined in our comments regarding increased funding to the Belconnen Community Health Centre, the Youth Coalition asserts that walk-in centres need to remain free of charge, and youth friendly, in order to improve access for vulnerable young people.</p>

## Capital Works

The Youth Coalition welcomes initiatives to increase the capacity of ACT hospitals and the provision of additional beds, and associated health infrastructure projects. We acknowledge that improved and increased access to essential health services is beneficial for the whole community.

Investment in infrastructure and capital works to improve health services includes:

- Construction of a 700 space car park at Calvary Hospital \$19,692,000 over four years
- Refurbishment of Calvary hospital, providing 15 additional beds \$1,605,000 over one year
- Project management support for the Health Infrastructure Plan \$30,012,000 over four years
- Construction of 25 bed Secure Mental Health Unit \$46,089,000 over four years
- Upgrade of infrastructure to The Canberra Hospital \$6,005,000 over four years
- Redevelopment of The Canberra Hospital to relocate & provide additional beds \$24,939,000 over four years
- Development of University of Canberra Public Hospital Not available for publication

## Housing ACT

- Safe/affordable/appropriate housing that meets needs of low income and disadvantaged families
- Community participation
  
- Improving services
- Human Services Gateway
- Updating housing stock
- Energy efficiency

## Introduction

Many young people in the ACT experience severe financial hardship associated with the high cost of living.<sup>9</sup> As young people are often working casually or still completing training, they struggle to compete in the private rental market.

The Youth Coalition submission to the 2014 / 15 ACT Budget called on the ACT Government to:

- Address housing affordability, particularly for young people in the ACT
- Offset any funding cuts to Homelessness Services and commit to ensuring that services funded under the NPAH are maintained
- Create youth-specific referral/intake capacity within the youth homelessness service system

This last recommendation was included in the Youth Coalition's budget submission in response to our members and stakeholders continuing to raise concern about young people's experience in being able to access support services.

The Youth Coalition welcomes the effort to simplify access to the human services system by establishing a single *Human Services Gateway*. The Youth Coalition recommends that as the three existing intake services are consolidated, the skills and knowledge of the youth sector, and help seeking patterns of young people, are reflected in the design and implementation of intake, assessment and referral services.

The Youth Coalition also welcomes the ACT Government's continued support to homelessness services in providing additional funding consistent with the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. However we note that this funding is only for the next financial year, and

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<sup>9</sup> The Salvation Army, 2010, *Perceptions of Poverty: An Insight into the Nature and Impact of Poverty in Australia*

while acknowledging that there is no clarity regarding where the Australian Government is heading with regard to homelessness policy or funding, we urge the ACT Government to proactively take measures that will ensure the level of current service delivery is maintained.

We advocate for the provision of a range of flexible, independent housing options, including short term housing for young people to support them to remain connected to their families.

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under Housing ACT are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

## Expense Initiatives

### Better Human Services – Human Services Gateway

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
101	The Government will establish a single Human Services Gateway by consolidating three existing services – Disability Information Service Hub, Children, Youth and Family Services Gateway and Housing Central Access Point. The Gateway will bring together a range of government and community services and will include a common assessment and referral system to reduce duplication and ensure government services are provided in a timely and responsive manner.	2014 / 15 \$322,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	<p>The Youth Coalition understands that the single Human Services Gateway is funded by pooling the existing funds for the three services together, and this initiative is additional funding in 2014/15 to cover a manager and data collection.</p> <p>In the implementation of the Human Services Gateway, the Youth Coalition would like to see a clear strategy for ensuring that the service is youth friendly. In particular, it is necessary that all staff have the relevant skills and knowledge (including an understanding of the barriers faced by young people when accessing services, and relationships with the youth services) to make it easier for young people to find the support they need.</p>

## Common Ground – Providing services

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
101	The Government will provide additional support to people experiencing chronic homelessness, people with high, multiple and complex needs, through support of the Common Ground facility. This facility offers affordable housing combined with on-site support for people experiencing homelessness.	2014 / 15 \$156,000 2015 / 16 \$321,000 2016 / 17 \$331,000 2017 / 18 \$341,000	<p>The Youth Coalition welcomes recurrent funding for initiatives that support those experiencing chronic homelessness, and people with high, multiple, and complex needs.</p> <p>While young people are not excluded from Common Ground, the Youth Coalition acknowledges that this is not a specifically youth-focused initiative. There is not clear evidence from other jurisdictions where Common Ground is in place that is is the most effective model for young people experiencing homelessness.</p>

## Continued Support for Homelessness Services

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
101	The Government will provide additional funding for homelessness services consistent with the Commonwealth commitment to extend the National Partnership Agreement for one year.	2014 / 15 \$1,520,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	<p>The Youth Coalition acknowledges the ACT Government matched federal funding as per the terms of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH). The NPAH funds services such as Our Place, which provides supported accommodation for young people who are either studying or employed.</p> <p>We urge the ACT Government to plan for the cessation of the NPAH, and to ensure that the current level of service can be maintained without Commonwealth funds.</p>

## Homelessness Sector Reform – Evaluation

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
101	The Government is providing \$150,000 in 2014-15 to commission an independent evaluation of the homelessness sector reform process to review the work undertaken by the community sector and the Government during recent reform processes. The cost of this initiative will be met from within existing resources.	2014 / 15 \$0 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition welcomes the allocation of funds for the evaluation of the homelessness sector reform process. The Youth Coalition supports strong monitoring and evaluation processes, and opportunity for reflection on the reform process.

## Capital Works

### Common Ground Supporting Housing

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
139	The Government has invested a total of \$2.5 million as additional funding to complete the construction of the Common Ground supportive housing complex, providing a model of housing targeting singles and couples, without children, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.  This initiative was included by the Government in the Appropriation Act 2013-14 (No 2).	2014 / 15 * 2015 / 16 * 2016 / 17 * 2017 / 18 *	See comments about funding for the Common Ground initiative above (p. 37).

Note: \* indicates included in the *Appropriation Act 2013-14 (No 2)*.

## Justice and Community Safety Directorate

- Fair/safe/peaceful community
- Rights/interests respected and projected
  
- Justice reform strategy (sentencing, reduce recidivism)
- Public private partnerships (court facilities)
- Expansion of the Alexander Maconochie Centre
- Emergency station upgrade
- Throughcare project
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access to justice
- Working with vulnerable people checks

### Introduction

The Youth Coalition believes that a systematic, evidence based and whole of government approach to the issues of throughcare for young people detained in the ACT, both in the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre and Alexander Maconochie Centre, is more likely to have an impact on recidivism, and restoration of people who have committed crimes to family and community.

Increased funding and resources needs to be allocated to crime prevention strategies, particularly programs that address the underlying causes of behaviors deemed criminal by society.

The Youth Coalition noted a modest investment in Aboriginal Legal Services in this Budget, particularly important in light of the well-documented over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young offenders in detention and community-based supervision.

Of particular interest, the Youth Coalition is pleased to see some investment in exploring justice reinvestment research and strategy, which we have been calling for over a number of years. This sits alongside significant investment in capital works and staffing to expand the capacity of Alexander Maconochie Centre, highlighting the need to better understand the balance of investment in immediate needs with investment in preventative and early intervention measures that will reduce cost over time.

## Alexander Maconochie Centre

The Youth Coalition acknowledges the difficulty ACT Government faces in addressing the overcrowding at the Alexander Maconochie Centre and ensuring the safety of all people incarcerated and human rights continue to be a priority. We recognise that it is challenging for any government to balance investment in immediate needs with investment in preventative and early intervention measures that will reduce investment over time. The Youth Coalition continues to encourage the ACT Government to also provide further investment in preventative and early intervention measures.

Investments relating to the Alexander Maconochie Centre include:

- Alexander Maconochie Centre – Additional staffing \$13,600,000 over four years
- Alexander Maconochie Centre – Additional facilities \$84,266,000 over two years
- Alexander Maconochie Centre – Additional facilities design \* Included in the *Appropriation Act 2013-14 (No 2)*

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under the Justice and Community Safety Directorate are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

## Expense Initiatives

### Aboriginal Legal Service Assistance – Additional services

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
102	The Government is providing additional funding to the Commonwealth funded Canberra office of the Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT) to undertake a duty lawyer role in the ACT Courts. This will help ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have adequate legal representation if they are summoned before the Court.	2014 / 15 \$100,000 2015 / 16 \$103,000 2016 / 17 \$105,000 2017 / 18 \$108,000	The Youth Coalition strongly supports the additional funding to the Canberra office of the Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT) to undertake a duty lawyer role in the ACT Courts. The Parliamentary Agreement included a promise of \$100,000 for Aboriginal Legal Services, and we welcome this investment. Further investment into Aboriginal Legal Services is particularly important in light of the well-documented over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young offenders in detention and community-based supervision.

### Alexander Maconochie Centre – Additional staffing

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
102	The Government is providing additional funding to meet the increase in costs associated with an increase in average detainee numbers at the Alexander Maconochie Centre. As part of this Budget, the Government is also funding the construction of additional facilities at the Alexander Maconochie Centre to address the increasing detainee population.	2014 / 15 \$3,280,000 2015 / 16 \$3,360,000 2016 / 17 \$3,440,000 2017 / 18 \$3,520,000	See comments above (Alexander Maconochie Centre, p. 40).

### Improving Access to Justice – Addressing Supreme Court backlog

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
103	The Government will provide additional funding to reduce the backlog of matters in the ACT Supreme Court.	2014 / 15 \$255,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	We welcome the additional funding to address the backlog in the ACT Supreme Court.

### Justice Reform Strategy

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
104	The Government is providing funding to develop and consult on evidence-based reforms to sentencing and restorative justice arrangements. This includes sentencing alternatives for ACT Courts as a result of the Government's decision to repeal periodic detention as a sentencing option from 2016-17.	2014 / 15 \$367,000 2015 / 16 \$367,000 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition believes it is important for the development and consultation of reforms to sentencing and restorative justice to consult a broad range of community, including young people and their families.

## Justice Reinvestment – Australian Research Council linkage grant

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
104	The Government is contributing to research to examine measures to reduce serious crime that results in imprisonment primarily relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This initiative is being supported by a proposed Australian Research Council Linkage Grant between the National Centre for Indigenous Studies, the Australian National University and the ACT Government.	2014 / 15 \$0 2015 / 16 \$50,000 2016 / 17 \$50,000 2017 / 18 \$50,000	The Youth Coalition strongly supports the principles of justice reinvestment as a preventative and early intervention measure. We encourage the research project to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who are involved or have a history of involvement with the youth justice system, in recognition of the well-documented link between the youth justice system and the adult justice system.

## Justice Reinvestment Strategy

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
104	The Government is funding development of a whole of government justice reinvestment strategy aimed at reducing recidivism and diverting offenders, and those at risk of becoming offenders from the justice system. The cost of \$689,000 over four years will be met from within existing resources.	2014 / 15 \$0 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	As mentioned in the previous box comments on the <i>Justice Reinvestment – Australian Research Council linkage grant</i> initiative also under the Justice and Community Safety Directorate (p.42), the Youth Coalition strongly supports the principles of justice reinvestment as a preventative and early intervention measure. We recognise the importance of developing a robust strategy for justice reinvestment and encourage the ACT Government to ensure the strategy complements the <i>Youth Justice Blueprint</i> and the <i>Out of Home Care Strategy</i> . We recognise the well-documented link between the youth justice system, the out of home care system and the adult justice system.

## Throughcare

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
105	The Government is continuing the Throughcare program, which provides support beyond the end of an offender's custodial sentence to assist their transition to the community and help to reduce rates of recidivism.	2014 / 15 \$1,074,000 2015 / 16 \$1,102,000 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	<p>The Youth Coalition welcomes the continued investment in the Throughcare program for a further two years, which includes funding for increased staffing capacity, brokerage and program evaluation to engage more people in the program. We acknowledge the success of the program in reducing rates of recidivism among those people exiting the Alexander Maconochie Centre.</p> <p>As mentioned in our comments on the <i>Better Human Services – Strengthening Families</i> initiative funded under the Community Services Directorate (p.14), the Youth Coalition recognises there are a number of initiatives that provide investment to implement tailored support packages or plans, such as the expansion of the Throughcare project, the Youth Justice Blueprint, the Engaging Schools Framework and the Strengthening Families project, and we are concerned about the capacity of existing community support services to meet all of these without additional resourcing.</p>

### Working with Vulnerable People Checks – Supplementation

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
105	The Government is providing additional funding to ensure the timely processing of the higher than expected demand for Working with Vulnerable People registrations. The Government is also undertaking a review to develop policy options to decrease the number and processing time of these applications to reduce the cost of this scheme.	2014 / 15 \$634,000 (Expenses) \$74,000 (Associated Revenue) 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition is reluctant to support the review to develop policy options to decrease the number and processing time of the Working with Vulnerable People applications as we believe this inherently undermines the premise of the Working with Vulnerable People Checks. We implore the ACT Government to maintain their commitment to those most vulnerable in our community, particularly children and young people. The Youth Coalition believe the Working with Vulnerable People registration system is an essential part of a range of measures essential for the protection of vulnerable groups.

### Capital Works

### Alexander Maconochie Centre – Additional facilities

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
140	The Government is funding the construction of a new 30 cell Special Care Centre and a new 56 cell flexible accommodation block inside the existing Alexander Maconochie Centre in response to increasing detainee numbers. Funding is also being provided for the operating costs of the new facilities including staffing and detainee related costs.	2014 / 15 \$24,304,000 (Capital) 2015 / 16 \$29,786,000 (Capital) \$7,557,000 (Associated Expenses) 2016 / 17 \$2,352,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$8,061,000 (Associated Expenses) 2017 / 18 \$2,352,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$9,854,000 (Associated Expenses)	See comments above (Alexander Maconochie Centre, p. 40)

### Alexander Maconochie Centre – Additional facilities – Design

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
140	The Government has invested a total of \$2.777 million as funding for tender ready documentation for additional facilities at the Alexander Maconochie Centre in preparation for construction.  This initiative was included by the Government in the <i>Appropriation Act 2013-14 (No 2)</i> .	2014 / 15 * 2015 / 16 * 2016 / 17 * 2017 / 18 *	See comments above (Alexander Maconochie Centre, p.40)

Note: \* indicates included in the *Appropriation Act 2013-14 (No 2)*.

## Territory and Municipal Services Directorate

- Building/maintaining environment/social/cultural/economic capital
- Transport
- Libraries
- Waste
- Canberra Connect
- Online services
- Roads
  
- Urban upgrades
- Walking/cycling/bus upgrades
- Roads
- Shopfront
- Recreational infrastructure
- Nature parks

### Introduction

#### Public Transport

In responding to the 2012 Rate Canberra Survey, young people from the ACT frequently identify limited transport accessibility as a barrier to their participation in employment, education, and recreational activities.<sup>10</sup>

Public transport is often a young person's primary means of transportation. ACT public transport services need to be affordable, safe and timely in order to facilitate young people's participation in their community through employment, education, recreation and social activities. Access to affordable, safe and reliable public transport is essential to participate economically and a key socio-economic determinant of health and wellbeing for young people.

The Youth Coalition welcomes initiatives that improve and increase public transport services in the ACT. We applaud the ACT Government for

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<sup>10</sup> Youth Coalition of the ACT, 2012, *Rate Canberra: Findings from the Survey of Young People Aged 12-25 in the ACT*

the delivery of additional weekend bus services in new suburbs, but continue to call for further investment to improve and increase public transport services to the whole of Canberra. We also welcome the construction of a new bus station at Erindale and encourage the ACT Government to ensure the needs of young people are considered in the design of the station.

Investments relating to public transport also included:

- ACTION – Improved public transport \$2,000,000 over one year
- Transport for Canberra – Upgrading the Erindale bus station \$981,000 over one year

## Public Space

Public space has a particularly important significance to the lives of young people. Young people use public space for a variety of reasons, such as: to sustain friendships, to socialise, to entertain themselves, to act as an alternative to paid events and places, to make new friends and social contacts, and to act as an escape.<sup>11</sup>

Young people do not always possess their own private spaces, therefore they seek to use public spaces for a majority of their activities. A 2007 report on public space issues for young people in shopping centres highlighted initial responses to young people gathering in shopping centres were predominantly coercive approaches in the form of tighter security, increased policing powers, loitering / trespass provisions and the introduction of banning notices. It identified the need to move towards problem-solving approaches that include young people in the consultation and planning process of their local public spaces.<sup>12</sup>

The Youth Coalition supports initiatives and strategies that aim to make public spaces more accessible and safe for young people in the ACT. A number of Expense and Capital Works Initiatives have been identified in the ACT Budget, related to public space and transport options. While specific resource towards implementing the ‘Child and Youth Friendly City’ approach (a commitment of both the ACT Children’s Plan 2009-2014, and ACT Young People’s Plan 2009-2014).

Expense Initiatives and Capital Works under the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

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<sup>11</sup> Hatzopoulos and Clancey, 2007, *Where People and Places Meet Approaches to Public Space Management*, Youth Action and Policy Association, NSW

<sup>12</sup> Clancey, G; Usien, O, 2007, *Considering Youth Issues in Shopping Centre Development Applications*, Youth Action and Policy Association and the Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme of the Department of Community Services, NSW

## Expense Initiatives

### ACTION – Improved public transport

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
109	The Government will deliver additional weekend bus services in new suburbs including Wright, Casey, Harrison and West Macgregor.	2014 / 15 \$500,000 2015 / 16 \$500,000 2016 / 17 \$500,000 2017 / 18 \$500,000	See comments above (Public Transport, p. 45).

### Canberra Connect – New services in Gungahlin

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
109	The Government is establishing a new Canberra Connect Shopfront in the Gungahlin Office Building, which is scheduled to open in 2015. Services available at the shopfront will include payment of Government bills, drivers' licences and MyWay card services.	2014 / 15 \$331,000 (Expenses) \$230,000 (Associated Capital) 2015 / 16 \$1,169,000 (Expenses) \$32,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2016 / 17 \$1,172,000 (Expenses) \$32,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2017 / 18 \$1,197,000 (Expenses) \$32,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation)	The Youth Coalition welcomes this initiative. The establishment of a new Canberra Connect Shopfront in Gungahlin improves the physical accessibility to services.

## Parks and Open Spaces – Maintaining amenity

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
110	The Government is committed to protecting our natural environment and providing a high quality of urban amenity that is within our means. An additional \$15.2 million will be provided over four years to manage our national parks and reserves, and maintain urban parks, trees, shopping centres and other community open space areas.	2014 / 15 \$4,500,000 2015 / 16 \$3,600,000 2016 / 17 \$3,600,000 2017 / 18 \$3,500,000	The Youth Coalition welcomes investment in providing a high quality of urban amenity. Public space plays an important role in the lives of young people and we urge the ACT Government to ensure young people are involved in the full range of planning and decisions in the management and maintenance of urban amenity. This is an opportunity for the ACT Government to fulfill their commitment to a Child and Youth Friendly City as outlined in both the <i>ACT Children's Plan</i> <sup>13</sup> and the <i>ACT Young People's Plan</i> . <sup>14</sup>

## Transport for Canberra – Improved community transport coordination

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
111	The Government will improve the coordination of community transport services, including the development of an enhanced booking system. The booking system will allow for a demand responsive model to maximise use of existing ACTION special needs transport buses for community transport. This will improve community transport in Belconnen, the Inner North and Inner South to better meet the needs of the aged and transport disadvantaged.	2014 / 15 \$500,000 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$0 2017 / 18 \$0	The Youth Coalition welcomes this initiative. We support improvements to the coordination of community transport services to better meet the needs of the transport disadvantaged in our community. Access to public transport is a key socio-economic determinant of health and wellbeing for many groups in our society, particularly young people, and is often essential for economic participation.

<sup>13</sup> ACT Children's Plan <http://www.children.act.gov.au/> Accessed 17 May 2013.

<sup>14</sup> ACT Young People's Plan <http://www.youth.act.gov.au/index.php/publications> Accessed 17 May 2013.

## Capital Works

### Local Shopping Centre Upgrades Program

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
146	The Government will continue to support local shopping centres by providing \$2 million over two years for upgrades at various locations in the Territory. These upgrades will improve safety and amenity and help ensure the commercial viability of the centres.	2014 / 15 \$350,000 (Capital) 2015 / 16 \$1,650,000 (Capital) 2016 / 17 \$35,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2017 / 18 \$35,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation)	The Youth Coalition welcomes the investment in upgrades of local shopping centres. Shopping centres are important public spaces for young people and we encourage the ACT Government to ensure the needs of young people are taken into account in every upgrade process.

### Transport for Canberra – Upgrading Erindale bus station

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
148	The Government will construct a new bus station at Erindale, which will improve passenger amenity and safety. The proposed works are in keeping with the targets set in <i>Transport for Canberra</i> to increase public transport mode share.	2014 / 15 \$900,000 (Capital) 2015 / 16 \$18,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2016 / 17 \$18,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$9,000 (Associated Expenses) 2017 / 18 \$18,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$18,000 (Associated Expenses)	See comments above (Public Transport, p. 45).

## Transport for Canberra – Walking and cycling infrastructure – Stage 4

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
148	The Government will deliver a number of walking and cycling projects across the ACT. This builds on existing walking and cycling infrastructure programs funded in previous budgets. The works undertaken will include implementing the Strategic Cycle Network, improving path links to public transport, improving the age friendliness of suburbs and increasing cycle lanes through the reseal program and road pavement line marking changes.	2014 / 15 \$1,250,000 (Capital) 2015 / 16 \$1,250,000 (Capital) \$25,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) 2016 / 17 \$50,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$13,000 (Associated Expenses) 2017 / 18 \$50,000 (Associated Expenses - Depreciation) \$38,000 (Associated Expenses)	The Youth Coalition welcomes this initiative to improve cycling and walking infrastructure across the Territory. Young people often have less access to more expensive forms of transportation. Improving cycling and walking infrastructure will make these modes of transportation easier and safer for young people.

## Whole of Government

Expense Initiatives under Whole of Government are outlined below. Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification are raised.

### Expense Initiatives

#### Digital Dividend Investment Strategy and Transformational Service Delivery

Page	Description in Budget	Funding Allocation	Comments, concerns, questions and calls for clarification
113	The Government will provide funding to improve the efficiency of service delivery across government through greater application of electronic or online technologies. Through the use of seed funding, Government entities will develop projects which will promote greater digital/online service delivery, facilitate better management of digital information, rationalise ICT assets, and construct strategic ICT investment programs.	2014 / 15 \$0 2015 / 16 \$0 2016 / 17 \$-10,000 2017 / 18 \$-15,000	The Youth Coalition applauds the ACT Government's vision within the Digital Canberra Action Plan. We believe that the digital strategy will facilitate greater community participation for young people, and reflects the role that young people often play as early adopters of new technologies. In particular, we welcome moves for greater digital and online service delivery, as this is how many young people seek out services and information.