



COMMISSIONER FOR SUSTAINABILITY
AND THE ENVIRONMENT

SUBMISSION(2019/1): DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY

March 2019

Lead author: Kirilly Dickson





COMMISSIONER
FOR SUSTAINABILITY
AND THE
ENVIRONMENT

TCCS.BDU@act.gov.au

Dear TCCS,

Submission to draft Transport Strategy

I am pleased to provide this response to the ACT government's draft strategy: *Moving Canberra Forward 2019-45: Integrated Transport Strategy*.

There is no doubt that transport is now the most challenging sector to reduce emissions in response to climate change. The draft transport strategy is facing this challenge, with intense focus on reducing private car travel through improved public transport, active travel, and vehicle sharing initiatives. This submission comments upon these challenges and also posits some opportunities which arise, specifically in respect of electronic technology.

The ACT has a number of public transport services and the draft report addresses them all in sequence. As to the structure of the strategy, for a lay reader, to more effectively communicate the services available and their accessibility, it might be useful to install all the route-maps at the head of the document.

Communicating complex spatial information with ESRI Story Maps

In my office every staff member has now received training and is producing ESRI Story maps to portray complex spatial data with engaging narrative to the community.
(www.envcomm.act.gov.au/storymaps).

ACT Government has licences for this online software and it has significant opportunity for transport from strategic planning to operations. I encourage you to leverage its potential.

There are several examples of highly effective transport story maps to which we draw your attention:

<http://esriau.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=780ce9229b1f497eb97222f410c9192c> – This striking public transport story map explores Melbourne's public transport system, with detailed time-distance modelling that shows commute times to the CBD, wait times, and even public transport access to local McDonald's stores.

<http://app01.cityofboston.gov/GreenLinks/> - This story map shows the elements of the city's green link infrastructure.

<http://ghd.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=16df94e1bdb349efbf5b02e1aa288661> - This story map was used for consultation on Melbourne's North-East link, showing how the link will interact with other transit modes such as rail and bus. It incorporates short videos to further illustrate concepts to the viewer. You can also hear from the developer of the map on a short video.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kvofc4eVios&feature=youtu.be>)

Commissioner: Professor Kate Auty (Professorial Fellow, University of Melbourne)

GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

ABN: 66 893 463 785

T: (02) 6207 2626 E: envcomm@act.gov.au W: www.envcomm.act.gov.au

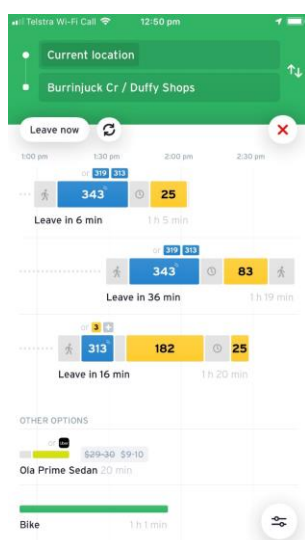
This Office is independent of, but funded by, the ACT Government.



Smart phone apps

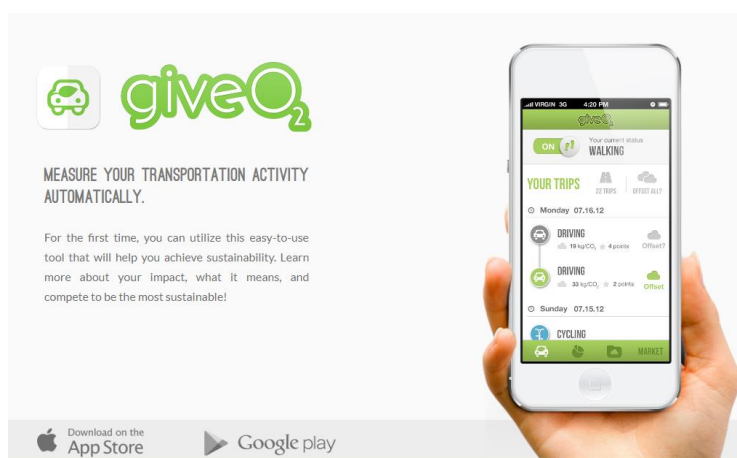
I note that you intend to release a public transport planner app at some stage in the near future. To best facilitate transport options it needs to be integrated with other options including ride share (Uber, Ola, Shebah) and active travel applications. We note that there is currently litigation being advanced in Queensland by the taxi industry (as a class action) which raises the every present issues of whether the legal sector is keeping up to date with emerging technology and whether this constitutes an ongoing risk to any proposed changes. This risk continues to be one to watch.

The Transit app already exists and can be used in the ACT region. It includes bus, ride share, bike routes in its application.



Transit app – real time transport choices and route planning

There are other apps that allow measurements of emissions savings through different transport modes. An example is GiveO2. Cultivating an ability for Government to capture these modal choices in terms of emissions would provide an opportunity to relay key outcomes back to the public.



GiveO2 app – calculates emissions savings from transport choices

Climate change policy – monitoring and evaluation opportunities

We released a report in 2017 that reviewed the Government's implementation status of climate change policy.¹

That report noted some concerns about the transport sector and provided a discussion chapter about potential opportunities in Chapter 7.

Of concern was a lapse in provision of progress reports for the *Transport for Canberra* strategy.

To maintain community engagement and community confidence in the process it is critical that open and transparent reporting is made on progress, clearly outlining Government policy. This is particularly true for policy that is potentially transformative and which relies on behavioural change – as is the case in respect of transport. To ensure community engagement and ongoing interest, a commitment to reporting progress must be made and then met.

I note the Monitoring and Evaluation section of this draft strategy identifies biannual reporting. Given the uptake of other media this will require an active social media communications strategy.

Other opportunities for improving the transport sector in the ACT outlined in the Implementation Status Report are listed overpage for your renewed consideration.

I note that some of these are well progressed.

Further climate change considerations

Whilst the draft strategy focusses on reducing emissions, it also must actively consider the implications of our changed climate. Cities across the world are committing to the Climate Emergency Declaration because climate change action is urgent and cities (like Canberra) have real potential to lead.

Communities across the country have just sweltered through the hottest month on record (January 2019) without this weather pattern being driven by an El Nino weather pattern. We are advised by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology that we can expect hotter and drier conditions through to May.

Climate change considerations in the realm of transport policy should include:

- The health and community implications of heat stress associated with walking distances to access public transport, particularly for school children, the elderly, and vulnerable members of our community. Even for those in robust good health this will continue to be an issue of concern.
- The need for planning to address anticipated urban heat island effects by providing shade cover on active travel routes.
- Heat island impacts associated with infrastructure.

¹ <https://www.envcomm.act.gov.au/investigations/implementation-status-report> accessed 31 January 2019

Excerpt from Implementation Status Report 2018, page 89

Government should give further consideration to the following:-

Continue to expand and improve Canberra's integrated transport network with a view to achieving higher public and active travel outcomes.

Develop a clear plan to transition the Government fleet to electric vehicles and invest in infrastructure to support this and facilitate private use. The proposal to provide the District Nursing Service with e-vehicles is a major contribution to this and is welcomed.

Progress bulk buy options for electric vehicles and possibly e-bikes and allow private access.

Partner with others to develop fully customised, smart digital mobility platforms that use leading edge technology to personalise communications and incorporate real time situation specific information.

Introduce or enhance financial incentives for electric vehicles.

Introduce or enhance incentives such as free parking and use of transit lanes for electric vehicles.

Consider methods of encouraging take up of electric vehicles and e-bikes by tax incentives; for example salary sacrifice or FBT concessions. The establishment of salary sacrifice for the purchase of e-bikes is welcomed.

Review the outcomes of the electric bus trial to inform potential transition of the bus fleet to electric.

Explore with industry the integration of a high proportion electric vehicle fleet and the ability to support grid stability.

Establish a target for electric vehicles in the ACT to clearly guide the market. For example 500 electric vehicles in the ACT by 2020.

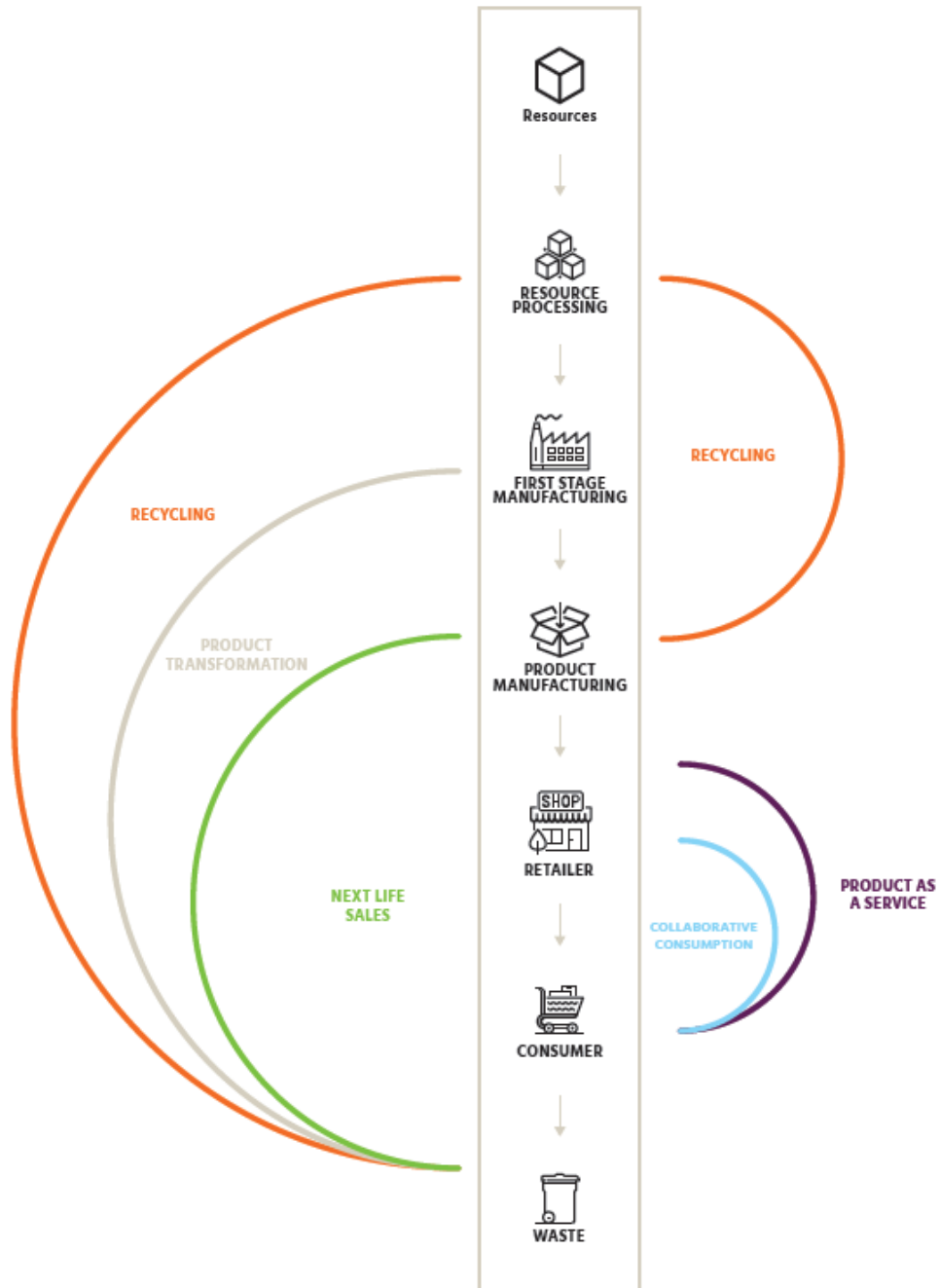
Develop procurement with industry to ensure that end of life battery issues are addressed.

Support initiatives with meaningful and effective communication.

Circular economy - Embedding a Circular Economy through Infrastructure Delivery

As with everything we undertake as a community, given limited resources, the limits of growth and climate change realities, we need to be mindful of waste and seek to apply the principles of circular economy.

A circular economy keeps resources
in use for as long as possible.



Source: [theguardian.com/sustainable-business](https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business)

Experts in the field – most notably the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in its CE100 (Circular Economy) project – have identified collaboration as a foundational element of the successful transition to a circular economy.² A circular economy does not just address traditional economic considerations but also all the ancillary and aligned sectors – the theory and practice of a circular economy has direct implications for *transport planning*, infrastructure (built and green), and operations.

I urge the ACT Government to take a leadership role in this regard in all operations, particularly through procurement. This requires both policy and regulatory commitment.

Transport infrastructure provides a significant development opportunity in the ACT and procurement should be delivered with circular economy principles highly featured. A specific section focused on the circular economy should be included in the strategy to ensure that sustainable procurement is embedded into all initiatives.

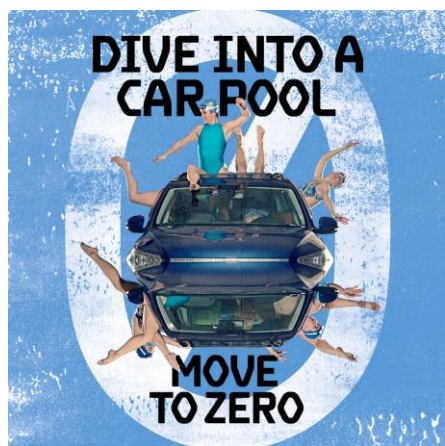
Principles of the circular economy – sharing transport services

I note the recent developments in car share initiatives and the potential for local start-ups such as *Office Pool* (awarded the Transurban Transport Challenge prize by the Banksia Foundation Ltd in 2018).³

These initiatives demonstrate the principles of a circular economy and the potential for a sharing economy even in such an individualised sector as private transport. I am supportive of your actions to bring Mobility as a Service to Canberra as it will maximise our efforts towards a circular economy.

The Australian Dance Party developed a short video to promote car-pooling, funded under the ACT Government Community Zero Emissions Grants Program.⁴ Initiatives such as these need to be very actively encouraged.

Government should continue to support community driven initiatives to increase ride sharing and bring in *mobility as a service* including actions to increase the uptake of car-pooling.



Community developed video to promote Car-pooling, Australian Dance Party

² <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/ce100> accessed 28 November 2018

³ <https://www.transurban.com/news/carpool-challenge-winner> accessed 28 February 2019

⁴ <https://youtu.be/jfZYtgCaiJs> and <http://australiandance.party/event/moving-to-zero/>

Personalised responses - motorised devices including E-bikes and E-scooters

The rise of use of e-bikes has been well supported to date by the ACT Government. This is commended. A campaign to encourage the adoption of this mode of transport is an important element of any success.

Further opportunity exists to encourage small scale electrified transport by advancing the uptake of personal motorised scooters. This would be facilitated by changing regulations to allow for use of other personal motorised devices such as scooters⁵ (*Road Transport Legislation Amendment Act 2015*).

A recent trial of e-scooters in Brisbane has demonstrated success and could and should be leveraged in the ACT.⁶

My office will be taking a keen interest in a sharing economy in respect of transport, and the reduction of the impacts of the apparently preferred, highly individualised mode of transport – the use of the private car - in the ACT over the coming year, particularly in the production of the 2019 State of Environment Report.

Please don't hesitate to contact my office on 6207 2626 if you have any questions.

Kirilly Dickson, Senior Manager Investigations is my contact officer.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Auty'.

Professor Kate Auty
Commissioner for Sustainability
and the Environment
8 March 2019

⁵ https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/4228 accessed 1 February 2019

⁶ <https://imovecrc.com/news-articles/personal-public-mobility/brisbane-lime-scooter-trial/>