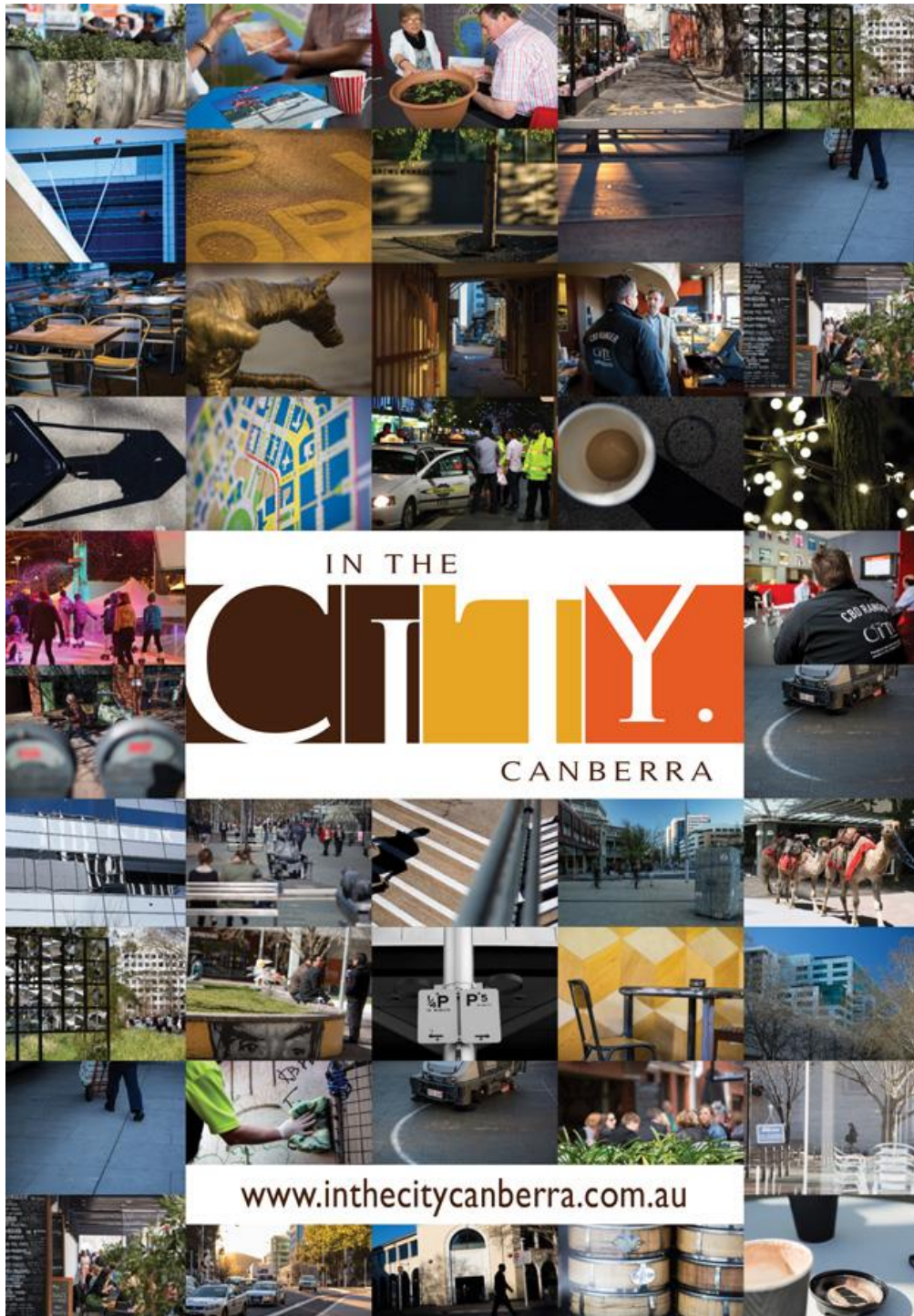


2015-16  
**PRE-BUDGET**  
SUBMISSION



Canberra CBD Limited is pleased to respond to the Treasurer's invitation to participate in the development of the 2015-16 ACT Budget.

The Treasurer requests opinions on:

- What infrastructure priority should the Government consider instigating in the next four years?
- How can the Government deliver current services more efficiently and productively?
- Are there any new ways to generate revenue and/or services you consider that the community should make a direct contribution to? and
- Could the Government stop providing particular services?

Each of these questions are answered insofar as they relate to the CBD covered by the City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy and the objectives of the property owners in the collection area that contribute. Notwithstanding our focus on the CBD, CCB Limited supports the Treasurer's commitment to four policy and spending pillars:

Growing the economy;  
Investing in urban renewal;  
Enhancing liveability and opportunity; and  
Making Canberra healthy and smart.

These have a direct impact on the performance of Canberra's CBD.

The first question relates to infrastructure priorities over the next four years.

The priorities should include;

- Reactivate and fund the City Improvements Program that was not funded in 12/13 and 13/14.
- Prepare construction readiness documentation and commence the renewal of the pink paver surfaces throughout the City pedestrianized spaces and the furniture and fittings contained in the Canberra Central Design Manual; and
- Commence construction of prioritized works identified in the Braddon Mixed Use Area Public Domain Guidelines (October 2012) commencing with Lonsdale Street and pedestrian links to Genge Street.

Land servicing to bring on construction ready sites for sale which should include;

- Two multistory car parks of a minimum capacity of 800 car spaces, operating 24/7, one of which should be located close to the proposed Government Office Building and the other convenient to the mid-city precinct. This precinct is the area within the City centre that generally does not have car parking associated with the buildings such as those that face onto City Walk, Garema Place, Petrie Plaza, and the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings.
- Early release of sites for residential development along Constitution Ave and for the City to the Lake Project area commencing on the city's edge.
- Accelerate pre construction works required for the Australian Forum, Aquatic Centre and Stadium.

Public infrastructure improvements should include:

- Infrastructure improvements within the mid-city precinct to encourage owners to improve or redevelop their properties, e.g. lane way within Sydney Building, behind Bible House or within Rabaul Lane and widening and landscaping the verges to the buildings. These improvements should not exclude the broader strategies discussed elsewhere to encourage major redevelopments in the precinct.
- Infrastructure improvements to facilitate greater churn in public parking.

- Install a digital big screen in Garema Place with day night/capacity and cede operation to Canberra CBD Limited in conjunction with a broader program of events and experiences curation and programming.

The second question relates to service delivery.

CBD believes Government needs to:

- Extend the cleaning of the public realm in the CBD to include Braddon and fund cleaning so that it aligns with the standard achieved in interstate capital cities
- Delegate to CBD Limited rangers limited powers to enforce legislation relating to the public realm e.g. littering, graffiti, A frames, posters, charities and temporary leases of public spaces.

Canberra CBD Limited estimates that the rates paid by the levied property owners in the collection area contributed approximately \$70 million to total rates collected in 2014-15. This does not include other statutory charges levied.

CBD believes there is a powerful argument that Government should differentiate its expenditure on cleaning the public realm in the CBD compared to other parts of the city as it is equitable to determine the Government's expenditure on municipal responsibilities on the basis of the contribution to budget and the desirability to meet standards in our CBD that compare favourably to those achieved in interstate capitals.

City centre operations will operate more efficiently if Government;

- Streamlines online permits and payments for the use of spaces in the City, A- frames, waste bins in laneways, charity collectors, 'pop ups' informed by a Street Activity Policy supported by the appropriate legislation.
- Take up long term vacancies particularly in the mid-city precinct with functions such as a Government Shop Front, Canberra and Region Tourist shop front, digital 'shop front' for Libraries ACT and a street level shop front for Craft ACT.
- Continues to support the arts in a variety of ways such as acquisitions at CMAG, assistance to start-ups, grants to occupy empty shop fronts, management of the Art Trail App.
- Owns City Walk between Allara Street and Coranderrk Street.
- Supports the rollout of the Services Champion project.

The third question relates to generating revenue and community participation.

In the context of this submission the community is primarily the private sector including investors with property holdings within the CBD and other investors at large. Improved revenue for Government will be hugely improved from new investment in the CBD which has largely stagnated in the past 12 months.

CCBD Limited supports;

- Debt financing, PPP's such as the one recently announced to construct the new Supreme Court and Government financial instruments such as infrastructure bonds.
- Rates abatement or deferral to encourage improvements or redevelopment of buildings deemed to have heritage constraints such as the Sydney and Melbourne buildings.
- Introduction of provisions that encourages the consolidation of Crown Leases into single titles including stamp duty waivers, precinct specific planning controls and flexible purpose clauses.
- Replace the existing LVC provisions in legislation with a tax regime that ends the dearth of investment in existing stock and encourages redevelopment.
- Amendment of planning controls relative to GFA that currently act as a disincentive to the redevelopment of the moribund stock of B and C grade buildings.

The last question asks 'Could the Government stop providing particular services?'

In respect of the CBD the short answer is no, but

- Some services or parts thereof could be ceded to CBD Limited provided they are accompanied by appropriate funding. CCBD may make this concept part of proposal after the outcome of a further grant of the City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy is known.

Canberra CBD Limited is proud of the many successes it has achieved in meeting its obligations under the Deed of Grant. A big contributor to some of those successes is the partnerships the Company has forged with Government and its agencies.

Canberra CBD Limited support economic solutions free of constraints and a focused plan to stimulate investment in the mid-city CBD precinct.

Canberra CBD Limited strongly recommends the establishment of a task force with Treasury representing the whole of Government and Canberra CBD Limited representing the Levy payers with terms of reference that require it to report to Government with its (5 year?) economic plan to stimulate investment. This task force should ideally be formed as soon as possible to report before the 2015-16 budget.