

WESTON CREEK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

- Your Local Voice -

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Established 1991

18 November 2005

Mr Simon Corbell MLA
Minister for Planning
ACT Legislative Assembly
GPO Box 1020
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Minister

2006-2007 Budget Consultation

Thank you for the invitation to the Weston Creek Community Council (WCCC) to contribute to the consultation process for the ACT Government's 2006-2007 Budget.

The WCCC has contributed to the ACT Government Budget each year since our inception in 1991. We again submit on behalf of the residents of Weston Creek the attached submission for consideration and debate. The preparation of this submission has involved a great deal of work by our small band of volunteers including recording what residents had to say at our regular monthly meetings held throughout 2005, meeting people at our suburban shopfront visits held last Autumn and at our 'Make a Wish for Weston Creek' stand set up at the Weston Creek Spring Fair held at Cooleman Court in September 2005.

The WCCC prides itself on canvassing community opinion and will introduce new ways of doing this in 2006. Over coming months the WCCC plans to considerably improve its web site by developing a cyberspace presence that will allow community opinion to be more frequently and easily canvassed. The WCCC views the budget consultation process as an important channel through which garnered community opinion should be directed. Any erosion of the budget consultation process without development of alternative formal channels could jeopardise community participation and equally deny Government and Legislative Assembly members a forum in which to seek opinion and put issues before the community that citizens may not have anticipated.

The WCCC is disappointed to learn that the ACT Government that the Council's submission is not to be considered as a whole. However we hope this new approach of making submissions to individual portfolio ministers will provide greater consideration of the issues raised or some feedback to the community as to why requests for funding were unsuccessful.

While the Council appreciates the pressures on the budget (and also appreciates the Government's direction of budgeting to overcome and rectify matters arising from the 2003 bushfire) it must be said that there are many projects in our list of capital expenditure requests that have been made before. As we have already noted these requests have come from the Council's extensive public consultation process and the Council would be failing in its duty to act as an honest broker between Weston Creek residents and the ACT Government if it did not raise them again. As long as residents continue to raise these issues with the Council, the Council will in turn continue to raise them with the ACT Government.

The attachment to this letter details works the WCCC feels should be undertaken in the short to medium term and that have a potential to impact the ACT budget and which affect your portfolio.

One emerging contextual issue that is yet to be factored in to the WCCC submission is the development of the Molonglo Valley, the nature of that development and its proximity to Weston Creek This could have a big impact on the 'big ticket items' such as a swimming pool and a library.

Subsets of the whole list are, of course, being forwarded to relevant portfolio ministers.

Members of the WCCC committee are available to discuss any of the issues included in our submission at a mutually convenient time.

Yours sincerely

(signed)

Jeff Carl
Chairperson
Weston Creek Community Council

Weston Creek Community Council

BUDGET SUBMISSION – 2006-2007

Weston Creek Community Council

Planning

Restoration of the Molonglo River Corridor from Scrivener Dam to the Murrumbidgee River – initiate a project to commence restoration work together with provision of walking and hiking trails. This work would provide a readily accessible high-class recreational amenity and would not seem to be dependent on any planning decisions. Furthermore it would complement any future decisions on zoo expansion and arboretum establishment, could attract funding from non ACT government sources and could involve grass-root community organisations.

Cotter Recreational Area – redevelopment of Cotter Hotel – WCCC would welcome early actions by government to re-establish family friendly facilities such as the Cotter Hotel or even a small motel. Government may like to consider promoting private sector eco-tourism ventures that complement the forestry, nature reserve, space exploration and water catchment activities undertaken throughout the area.

The Weston Creek community has long called for a **public swimming pool**. Given the ageing of the community that has occurred while waiting for a pool to be built, any such facility would now need to come with heated facilities for elderly/disabled residents.

The other community facility sought most often by the residents of Weston Creek is a **public library**. WCCC feels that the ageing of the community and the growth in aged care facilities in the area strengthens the case for the establishment of a local public library.
