

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today.

The evidence provided in our submission is drawn from over 20 years' experience by the Yarralumla Residents Association in our suburb. Our focus is on infrastructure maintenance and provision.

Our views on the reactive nature of service delivery and the widening divergence between rates growth and service outcomes are supported by the ACT Budget Papers, ACT Revenue Office data, Auditor-General reports, ABS CPI statistics and resident case studies.

For example, the ACT Auditor-General's 2017 report into road infrastructure identified incomplete and unreliable asset condition data, limiting the Territory's ability to prioritise maintenance effectively and further observed that approximately 50% of maintenance activity was undertaken in response to asset failure or complaint rather than through structured preventative programs. This report also observed that delayed maintenance accelerates deterioration and increases long-term renewal costs.

Our experience is one of delays of 5 to 10 years for maintenance and infrastructure projects and general streetscape repairs.

The approach taken has been to outsource infrastructure maintenance to the community through Fix My Street. This shifts the onus onto the community resulting in reactive problem fixing rather than preventative maintenance.

Legislative Assembly Hearing on Municipal Services Opening Statement

The community has seen considerable residential rates growth compared with inflation over the last decade but not a commensurate increase in services related to infrastructure maintenance and provision.

ABS CPI data shows cumulative inflation over the past decade of around 30 to 35 per cent. Inner South case studies show individual residential rate notices with cumulative increases of approximately 120 to 220 per cent over the same period.

Given this rates growth, it would be reasonable to expect commensurate improvement in maintenance and upkeep of roads, footpaths, canopy replacement, parks and or local traffic management but this has not been observed leading to the perception improvement is not occurring.

Indeed, our local experience indicates the opposite to be true and maintenance remains reactive rather than preventative.

We ask the Committee to consider the need for a rebalancing to preventative maintenance, and a clear relationship between rates growth and service outcomes.

In closing, I and the Yarralumla Residents Association acknowledge and thank the many public servants and contractors who work diligently to deliver municipal services across the ACT. **Our submission is not a criticism of individual effort.** Rather, it seeks stronger transparency, measurable standards and clearer accountability within the system itself.

Thank you.