

MEDIA RELEASE

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ALL ABOARD?

The ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS) is today releasing *The Path Less Travelled: Transport and Social Inclusion in the ACT*. This report examines the barriers to people in Canberra accessing transport and puts forward suggestions for change, at both a Government and community level. The report will be provided to the Department of Territory and Municipal Services as part of their review of the Sustainable Transport Action Plan and Public Transport Strategy.

"Older people, people with disabilities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people on low incomes are those most likely to experience social exclusion through lack of access to transport. Government policies encouraging the uptake of sustainable transport options must consider the impact on people who have less choices and less ability to meet increased costs, such as a rise in parking prices," said Director of ACTCOSS Roslyn Dundas.

"People without adequate access to transport have difficulty accessing employment, education, health and other services, food shops, sporting, leisure and cultural activities. There is an established link between lack of access to transport and unemployment, education drop-out and non-attendance at health appointments."

A Path Less Travelled identifies problems in the fragmentation of transport policy across Government agencies. "Responsibility for transport planning and policy is spread across a range of Government agencies," Ms Dundas continued. "This fragmentation means no single department is responsible for improving access to work, learning, healthcare, cultural activities and other services. Unless significant change is made, recognising the important role of transport across government service provision, many will continue to be left behind by current transport options."

"ACTCOSS is calling on the ACT Government to consider more innovative approaches to transport and land-use planning - that are both environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. This is best achieved through greater cross-government coordination and communication with the community."

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