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COMMUNITY READY FOR A CONVERSATION THAT MATTERS

Queanbeyan region transport needs, now and into the future

Queanbeyan, NSW, August 20, 2014 – Meeting Queanbeyan region’s transport needs will be the subject of a Community Conversation on Sunday 24 August 2014 at a forum organised by local groups seeking a better solution to city transport planning.

The forum is in response to community concerns about the proposal to build the Ellerton Drive Extension (EDE), for which the NSW and Australian Governments have pledged a combined \$50 million in public grant funds.

Community groups sponsoring the forum are dismayed that residents’ concerns about the EDE have not been heard by decision-makers, in particular Queanbeyan City Council which is driving the project.

Queanbeyan-based Labyrinth Consulting Services has been asked to host a *Facilitated Community Conversation* on Sunday 24 August 2014, from 2-4:30pm at the Jerrabomberra Community Hall.

The forum will provide an opportunity to hear different perspectives on the community’s varied transport needs and work towards a consensus on the best way to meet those needs.

Mr Dave Lavers, Principal of Labyrinth Consulting Services, is an International Association of Facilitators (IAF) Certified™ Professional Facilitator (CPF) and will host the purpose-designed conversation. A Facilitated Community Conversation will create a safe environment for inclusive discussions and allow the community to better understand the transport problems confronting it.

“Contentious and emotive issues often delay progress because the real issues are not explored in a way that satisfies all stakeholders,” Mr Lavers said. “Traditional consultation methods are often not well received and leave participants dissatisfied. Members of the community are left with a feeling that they have not been listened to whilst decision makers are equally frustrated as they feel the public are not listening.”

The conversation involves a number of different activities designed to draw out relevant issues related to transport; it is not a single issue topic on the EDE or similar.

The initial activity will see issues groups (environment; road users; business; public transport; schools; residents groups; etc) deliver a 2min pitch on what they think is important about transport for the community. This will be followed by a 'community café' activity with tables set up to hold conversations on thematic areas (resident issues; commuting issues; environmental issues; etc).

A Decision Makers Panel will be conducted, following a format similar to *ABC's Q&A*. The questions put to the Panel will have been developed by participants during the community café, with the Panel moderated by Mr Lavers. The Panel will consist of Cr Tim Overall, John Barilaro MP, Steve Whan MLC, Peter Hendy MP and Minister Mick Gentleman, MLA (subject to commitments).

During the conversation, images will be captured to enable a mini documentary to be produced as a record of the event.

"This Facilitated Community Conversation is an exciting opportunity for the Queanbeyan community to examine transport issues in a constructive way. The approach will separate the emotion from the issues and this will result in a genuinely effective consultation process. This is about turning consultation into conversation in the interest of a more engaged community" Mr Lavers said.

A list of participating interest groups and decision-makers is attached.

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The Community Conversation is sponsored by the Jerrabomberra Residents' Association (Michael Ziebell at 0415 858 202 or MZiebell@acsmail.net.au) and the Queanbeyan Conservation Alliance (Katrina Willis at (0431 184 717 or katrinawillis@iinet.net.au).

For more information about the *Facilitated Community Conversation* contact Dave Lavers at 0422 880 707 or email at dave.lavers@labyrinthcs.com.au.

Attached: List of participating interest groups and decision-makers

Interest Groups and Decision Makers – Facilitated Community Conversation

In terms of attendance, the following are confirmed:

- Cr Tim Overall
- John Barilaro MP
- Steve Whan MLC
- Peter Hendy MP
- Cr Brian Brown
- Cr Judith Burfoot
- Cr Sue Whelan
- Cr Kendrick Winchester
- Cr Jamie Cregan
- Ngambri Local Aboriginal Lands Council
- Queanbeyan Business Council
- Queanbeyan Sustainability Group
- Queanbeyan Conservation Alliance
- Queanbeyan Landcare
- Greenleigh Residents
- Jerrabomberra Residents
- Oaks Estate Progress Association
- Queanbeyan Bicycle Users Group
- Wildcare Queanbeyan
- Palerang Local Action Network for Sustainability
- Jerrabomberra Public School
- Dr Mike Kelly (as a member of the public)

Still to be confirmed:

- Minister Mick Gentleman, ACT Government
- Qcity Transit
- Holcim Quarry
- Su McCluskey (Regional Australia Institute)