

Department of Planning,  
Industry and Environment

# Smart Places

## Customer Charter

October 2021



[www.dpie.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au)



# Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past, present and future. We recognise First Nations peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contribution to society.

First Nations people take a holistic view of land, water and culture and see them as one, not in isolation from each other. The draft NSW Smart Places Customer Charter is based on the premise upheld by First Nations people that if we care for Country, it will care for us.

## **Find out more:**

[www.dpie.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au)

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## **Acknowledgements**

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Cover photograph – ChillOUT Hub, Georges River Council



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# Ministerial foreword

The NSW Government has taken big strides to make NSW Australia's smart state. We have established a Smart Places Advisory Council and allocated \$45 million over three years for the Smart Places Acceleration Program so you can start seeing benefits from smart places as soon as possible.

Embedding technology into the built and natural environment can provide important insights for decision-makers and drive better services for customers. Examples include building the right infrastructure in the right place informed by people counters, saving customers time and money by improving traffic light sequences or showing available parking, giving people access to relevant health information like air quality and weather alerts, improving safety with sensor-activated street lights, reducing resource waste through detection of leaks. That's just a glimpse of what smart places can achieve; innovative ways to improve services are continually being uncovered.

We know from research around the world that smart places are most successful when customers can shape their design and can see positive results for themselves. The six principles in the Smart Places Customer Charter give customers a voice before, during and after delivery of smart place initiatives, address concerns around privacy and security and prioritise culture, equity, inclusion, resilience and sustainability.

I encourage anyone with a role in creating or managing smart places to join us and commit to embedding the charter principles in your programs and initiatives.

## **Victor Dominello**

Minister for Customer Service,  
and Minister for Digital



Victor Dominello

# Introduction

The NSW Smart Places Strategy sets the framework to position NSW as Australia's smart state. As one of the foundational steps for the strategy, the NSW Government has developed a Smart Places Customer Charter that outlines a set of principles for anyone involved in creating 'smart places' to put into practice. Customers include anyone who lives, works, visits or invests in NSW, including businesses.

Smart places bring together the physical and digital environments. Technology helps capture information about the physical and natural environment and how it is used, which drives decisions to improve the productivity, liveability, sustainability and resilience of cities, towns and communities.

Country is at the core of every First Nations person's identity and sense of belonging. Acknowledging, valuing and embedding First Nations cultural knowledge and world views into the development of smart places has the potential to promote and strengthen First Nations people's connections to Country, culture, language and identity.

The NSW Government and its agencies have committed to following the six principles in this charter. The principles can be followed by anyone in NSW to help deliver smart place outcomes that address customer concerns, have customer support and achieve great outcomes.

We encourage any organisation involved in the creation and management of smart places to join us by committing to uphold the principles of this Customer Charter, and to explore how it can be embedded into their own strategies, policies and programs.

Customers can expect that organisations who follow the principles will approach smart places initiatives in a collaborative, consultative manner that accounts for local variations and gives them a voice in the design, delivery, and ongoing management of smart places.

Visit the NSW Smart Places web page to join us in making this commitment.

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# Principles for smart places

This charter includes six principles to guide the creation and management of smart places:

1. Co-creating smart places
2. Respecting local character
3. Advancing digital inclusivity
4. Keeping information safe
5. Creating an open and fair environment
6. Delivering benefits that last



The six principles support core values that drive the development of smart places – that all smart places have a connection to Country; that smart places make communities more sustainable and resilient; and that smart places produce outcomes and benefits for people.

## Connection to Country

Following the principles in this charter will help to see Country considered at all stages of creating smart places. Respect for First Nations people's rights, obligations and roles as Traditional Custodians of the land, sea and waterways will be prioritised in a way that contributes to economic independence and self-determination for First Nations peoples.

## Sustainability and resilience

Smart places are designed to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (sustainable) and can adapt in a complex and

changing environment (resilient). Given the fast-paced nature of technological change and innovation, as well as the changing climate and growing population, resilience and sustainability considerations are a core component of the six principles.

## Benefits for people

The principles also provide the framework for smart places to focus on real benefits for customers before a technical solution is agreed. The Smart Places Strategy identifies a wide range of outcomes that smart places can achieve. By responding to the needs of the people that the place serves, including their diversity, equity and inclusion needs, smart places will be able to harness and embrace innovation and opportunity.

# Principle 1. Co-creating smart places

## Smart places are created with customers to support the vision for the place

Smart places should be created in partnership with the people and groups who experience and use the place including local communities, First Nations peoples, businesses, start-ups, schools and universities, as well as those involved in delivering solutions such as government agencies and suppliers.

Co-creation gives customers a genuine voice throughout the smart places life cycle. It means working together before project delivery, through collective agreement on the opportunities or problems to be addressed by smart places and in defining the best solution, and afterwards, through transparent communication of outcomes and feedback channels.

Where possible, deliberative or educational engagement methods should be prioritised, providing time and space for informed input. Engagement activities should be inclusive, accessible and tailored to the place and its

customers. First Nations people are pioneers for co-design thinking and approaches; as a minimum, local aboriginal land councils should be engaged early. Particular care should be given to include young people, who will inherit any benefits and effects.

Project timelines and budgets should adequately resource engagement activities and be approached in a staged manner to accommodate the role of the co-creation process in setting project scope.

### What this principle will achieve

- Potential benefits and effects are transparent and long-term success is improved.
- Customers of a place can shape the creation and ongoing management of smart places in ways designed to suit them.
- Strong community, government and industry partnerships and resources help bring smart places to life.
- Smart places are informed by a broad range of perspectives, knowledge and skills.

### Connection to Country

Acknowledging, valuing and embedding First Nations cultural knowledge and world views into the development of new smart place initiatives means First Nations people are directly involved in smart place design and, where possible, management.

### Sustainability and resilience

Smart place design and ongoing management should provide opportunities for customers to consider effects on current and future generations, as well as how changes in circumstances or technology might affect the outcomes of a project.

### Benefits for people

Anyone affected by new smart place initiatives should have the opportunity to shape the design, verify the intended benefits and confirm whether the solution meets the needs of the community.



## Principle 2. Respecting the local character

### Smart places preserve and enhance local character, function and amenity

Local character is a combination of land, people, built environment, history, culture and tradition, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Considering the local character of a place means looking at how people and places currently interact to create an area's distinctive character and consulting widely with customers to understand their sense of place. It also means supporting the community's vision for the place as documented in local strategic planning statements and community strategic plans and balancing place-based aspects such as recreation, business and social connection with the movement of people and freight.

Smart places should protect and enhance people's experience of a place and the efficiency with which it functions. In the case of public spaces, this includes a commitment to uphold the NSW Public Spaces Charter. The use of technology and infrastructure should integrate with and complement the surrounding environment, seeking to protect visual amenity and incorporating elements of a place's local character and function into design.

Opportunities should be sought to make First Nations history and culture a more visible part of NSW's built and natural environment and improve visitor understanding of it. First Nations communities should determine what is appropriate to be shared publicly.

### What this principle will achieve

- The history and culture of a place is embraced, including recognition of traditional owners and First Nations culture.
- The health of the natural and built environment is maintained or improved.
- The main functions of a place are identified, protected and, where possible, enhanced, including movement of people and freight, social connection, recreation, economic activity and education.
- Local diversity is celebrated and helps define smart places to ensure they are equitable, accessible and welcoming for all.
- Community pride and empowerment helps make places more vibrant and connected, improves social cohesion and reduces social isolation.
- People feel safer and comfortable to participate more fully in social and economic activities at all times of day.

### Connection to Country

Local character begins with Country. Opportunities should be sought for First Nations cultures and heritages to be embedded and embraced in any smart place design.

### Sustainability and resilience

Smart places should improve the natural and built environment for current and future generations, as well as supporting ongoing wellbeing and prosperity.

### Benefits for people

Smart place design should acknowledge that benefits may vary from one place to the next and validate benefits through robust consultation and understanding of the place and its community.



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# Principle 3. Advancing digital inclusivity

## Smart places are digitally inclusive and accessible, and improve access to digital services

The role of digital services, such as tele-health, online learning, remote working, and virtual social connections, is increasing. According to the Australian Digital Inclusion Index, more than 2.5 million Australians still face barriers to digital participation. People in some parts of NSW experience limited connectivity, and many NSW residents do not have a reliable internet connection at home. Access to digital services can improve quality of life, promote economic wellbeing, and improve social and education outcomes. Consultation with customers is the best way to establish how digital inclusivity can be achieved locally.

Smart places should seek to reduce the digital divide by making it easier for customers to use and benefit from technology, to access the internet and use online services. Where reliant on direct customer interaction with technology, smart places should cater to a range of digital skill levels

and should not exclude people who have limited access to, or choose not to use, digital services. Technology should be explained in plain English and community languages and, where relevant, partnerships and programs should assist people to use benefit from smart places. New smart place initiatives are also an opportunity to increase digital capability by working with local and First Nations' start-ups.

### What this principle will achieve

- Through consultation, technology solutions are designed with consideration of the needs of First Nations peoples, people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and people of lower socio-economic status.
- Digital services become accessible for people who might not otherwise be digitally connected, and new places become available for work, study or social connectivity.
- Smart technology solutions can be used by people with a range of digital skill levels and abilities and do not exclude people.
- People can improve their digital skills and participate in the digital economy.

Connection to Country	Sustainability and resilience	Benefits for people
Smart places should create opportunities for First Nations peoples to have digital connection, to do business or access new services and business opportunities.	Digital inclusion can bring social empowerment through access to education, employment and services, with benefits that can reach across the generations.	Smart places should seek opportunities to improve digital inclusivity, by considering the different needs of customers who could experience benefits.



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## Principle 4. Keeping information safe

### **Smart places collect information with a clear purpose, manage it responsibly and use insights appropriately**

Customers are better able to trust smart places when they can see the benefits that can be generated through information and have a voice to shape what is captured and how it is treated. Data collected by smart places must be managed lawfully and according to its level of sensitivity. Anyone involved in collecting smart places data must understand legal obligations and be transparent about and accountable for what is collected, how it is managed, used, stored, secured and disposed of, and who has access. Cyber security measures are an important part of keeping information safe.

The NSW Government has developed the Smart Places Data Protection Policy which brings together legislation and policies relevant to the full lifecycle of smart places data and information. It upholds best practice from related policies and relevant laws, including the NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998. NSW Government agencies involved in smart place initiatives will adhere to the Smart Places Data Protection Policy. Organisations embedding the Customer Charter in their own strategies, policies and programs should aspire to a similar level of best practice.

Those relying on data from smart places should also consider how insights are formed to support decision-making. This means acknowledging the potential discrimination and bias in algorithms and insights generated from data and recognising that the needs of some minority groups may not be represented in trends or averages. Data protection measures should take care to respect First Nations cultural practices and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (First Nations peoples' rights to their heritage and culture) which is not always covered by copyright laws. Information security and ethical considerations should be part of any third party agreements.

### **What this principle will achieve**

- Information is collected lawfully, with customer consent, and only to provide clear insights or to drive benefits.
- Customers understand how data is used and know who to contact to report issues or make enquiries about collection and use of data from smart technology.
- Insights from smart places factor in potential discrimination bias so the needs of all in the community are considered in decision making.
- Smart places data is proactively managed to address evolving risks, including cyber security and the potential for de-personalised information to become individually identifiable (unless permitted by law).

### Connection to Country

Information will be managed and used in ways that benefit the health of Country and encourage all people's access to, and obligations to care for Country.

### Sustainability and resilience

Data collected and insights generated should not further entrench social disadvantage or increase marginalisation by basing decisions on insights that exclude certain groups of people.

### Benefits for people

Having a clear purpose for the collection of data and being transparent about its use means smart solutions are more likely to generate benefits to match the needs of customers.



# Principle 5. Creating an open and fair environment

## Information and data are shared in an open and safe manner to build a culture of innovation and benefits

Some customer benefits can only be achieved when smart systems talk to each other, infrastructure is used for multiple purposes, or information is combined from different sources. Open data fosters positive competition, can help generate insights for decision-makers, create new services and make experiences seamless for customers. Open-source software has many of the same advantages. Through open data, local communities can be empowered to take ownership of their information and innovate, particularly if supported by data literacy programs. Open data is encouraged to the extent that it is lawful and does not compromise privacy or security – keeping personal and sensitive information safe is always the priority.

Following standards for smart places technology and making non-sensitive information publicly available makes it easier for others to innovate and achieve new benefits. International and Australian Standards and Guidelines are available for all aspects of smart places, from the strategy level to technical specifications, and are continually

refined as practitioners use them and provide feedback. Smart places should draw from these standards and contribute to their ongoing improvement.

The NSW Open Data Policy commits NSW government agencies to protecting information where required (see Principle 4) and to otherwise make information open by default. Organisations embedding the principles of this charter are also encouraged to follow this practice, subject to all applicable laws. Data sharing and standards should be addressed in any third party agreements.

### What this principle will achieve

- Innovative solutions can be found through access to open data and by combining data and insights from multiple sources.
- Infrastructure, systems and data integrate seamlessly where open standards are used and common approaches adopted.
- Standards are considered in the design of all solutions and can, in turn, be informed by new information and experiences.
- Transparency is maintained by making data and insights available.

### Connection to Country

Access to open data for First Nations people can enable insights that foster improved decision-making and increase opportunities for First Nations self-determination.

### Sustainability and resilience

An open and fair environment will foster ongoing innovative responses to opportunities and challenges that are not yet understood or known.

### Benefits for people

Data that is open gives everyone the ability to develop insights from it and nurtures an ecosystem of innovation where new solutions produce ongoing benefits for people.



## Principle 6. Delivering benefits that last

### Smart technology is managed with a long-term view for continuing innovation and benefits

Everything that makes up smart places has specific management needs. The life-cycle of each component begins even before the creation or installation of an asset, with its planning and design, continues through ongoing maintenance over its service life and eventually ends in disposal. This is true for physical infrastructure just as much as digital connectivity, sensors, software, and data. Benefits from smart places depend on these assets all working together over time - infrastructure and equipment require physical maintenance, software needs to be updated and data quality and security needs to be monitored.

Smart places should be transparent about whether benefits are being achieved over time, including any new benefits that arise when circumstances change. Customer needs can evolve, and the pace of change is increasing for technology, software, data formats, cybersecurity risks and infrastructure. Smart places should be adaptable, have budget for immediate and ongoing costs, clearly identify asset owners, allocate responsibility for maintenance of assets,

and provide for proactive management of evolving risk profiles.

Customers should be able to trust that networks are secure and managed in accordance with NSW cyber security policies, and that data is treated as an asset and managed in accordance with relevant laws and policies. Future connectivity needs should be factored into the planning and design of infrastructure to get the most benefit from investment in smart places - a requirement for NSW government agencies under the Smart Infrastructure Policy.

### What this principle will achieve

- Systems, networks, supporting infrastructure and data follow shared and understood formats, can evolve with emerging technology, become multi-functional and integrate with other systems to maximise benefits.
- Customers know who to contact to report issues or make enquiries about smart technology and have visibility of the benefits delivered by smart places.
- Installation of technology, connectivity and related infrastructure is coordinated to minimise cost and disruption to customers.

#### Connection to Country

The design, installation and maintenance of physical infrastructure, and any data that is collected, is managed with respect for First Nations communities' cultural practices, through direct engagement with local First Nations communities.

#### Sustainability and resilience

The efficient use of, and comprehensive, adaptive planning for smart infrastructure and data will deliver the best possible value for customers and continued benefits now and into the future.

#### Benefits for people

Smart places will continue to improve, delivering ever greater benefits by anticipating and keeping pace with changing community needs.



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## Resources to support customer charter

Foundations	Resources
Connection to Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The OCHRE Plan</a> NSW Government Aboriginal Affairs Strategy</li> <li>• DPIE Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy <a href="#">Our Place on Country</a></li> <li>• NSW Government Architect's <a href="#">draft Connecting with Country framework</a> and <a href="#">Designing for Country</a> discussion paper.</li> </ul>
Sustainability and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Nations <a href="#">Sustainable Development Goals</a></li> <li>• ISO series 37100 - <a href="#">Smart cities and communities</a></li> </ul>
Benefits for people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ISO 37122 - <a href="#">Indicators for smart cities</a></li> <li>• NSW Customer Strategy - Towards a customer-centric government</li> </ul>
Principles	Resources
Co-creating smart solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Information Privacy Commissioner's <a href="#">Charter for Public Participation</a></li> <li>• International Association for Public Participation <a href="#">Spectrum of Public Participation</a></li> </ul>
Respecting local character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW <a href="#">Local Character and Place Guideline</a> (including the Character Assessment Toolkit)</li> <li>• NSW draft <a href="#">Public Spaces Charter</a></li> <li>• NSW Government Architect Design Policy - <a href="#">Better Placed</a></li> <li>• Transport for NSW and NSW Government Architect's <a href="#">Movement and Place Framework</a></li> </ul>
Advancing digital inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Guidelines</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act 1992</a> (Cth)</li> <li>• Understand the <a href="#">Australian Digital Inclusion Index</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Australia's Tech Future</a> - Inclusion Chapter (p18)</li> </ul>
Managing the collection and use of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Data Protection Policy</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information protection principles</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Privacy impact assessments</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NSW Internet of Things Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NSW Smart Infrastructure Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NSW Artificial Intelligence Ethics Policy</a></li> </ul>
Creating an open and fair environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical and Strategic standards from <a href="#">Standards Australia</a> and the <a href="#">International Organization for Standardization</a></li> <li>• NSW <a href="#">Open Data Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Open Data Hub</a> (Transport for NSW)</li> </ul>
Delivering benefits that last	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">NSW Cyber Security Policy</a> and <a href="#">NSW Cyber Security Strategy</a></li> <li>• Technical and Strategic standards from <a href="#">Standards Australia</a> and the <a href="#">International Organization for Standardization</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Dial before you dig</a></li> </ul>



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