

Transforming streets in Canterbury-Bankstown

Great Streets, Great Public Spaces: Canterbury-Bankstown Case Study



The City of Canterbury Bankstown illustrated the value of temporary urban transformations by winning public support for its \$100 million streetscape upgrade with a successful street “activation”.

Change can be daunting, so when the Council proposed major changes to the Bankstown CBD, including converting some streets, adding cycle paths, realigning bus routes, providing more space for pedestrians and creating a new cultural trail and pedestrian activity spine, it knew there might be doubt or opposition.

So to help the community visualise what they proposed, Council brought the actual changes to them. For a week in June 2019, North Terrace and Bankstown Station were transformed with the kinds of initiatives promised in the broader streetscape upgrade, including wider footpaths, more trees and greenery, smart bins and benches and E-bikes and E-scooters.

The Future Street Activation event allowed residents to experience first-hand what a ‘complete street’ would feel like. City of Canterbury Bankstown Mayor, Khal Asfour, said after people could see and experience the changes, the response was overwhelmingly positive.

“It was a great way to consult with the community and obtain meaningful feedback on our draft plan.”

- City of Canterbury Bankstown Mayor
Cr Khal Asfour

Future Street Installation



Before



After

More than 1,000 visitors utilised the week-long demonstration and increased website views, with the most common refrain being “Can you make the installation permanent?”.

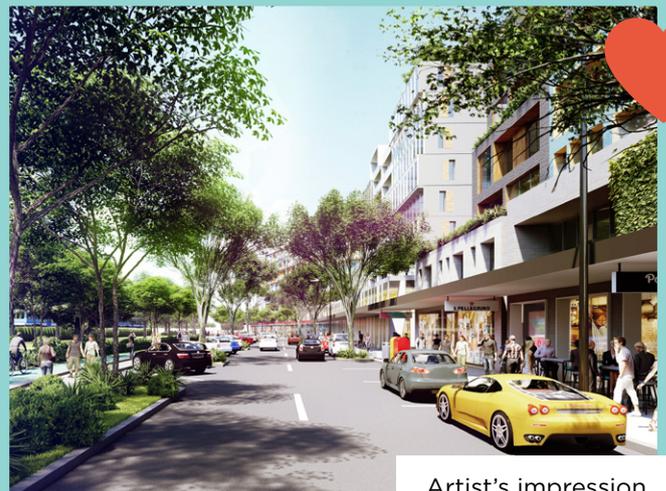
The Activation delivered on its aims to engage with the community and obtain feedback. Most importantly, it showed the local community the benefits of the Council’s Complete Streets approach.

The Plan was subsequently approved by Council unanimously.

South Terrace



Before



Artist's impression

Sydney's George Street to become a world-recognised best boulevard

Great Streets, Great Public Spaces: George Street Case Study



George Street, Sydney

Photo by Katherine Griffiths / City of Sydney



After transformation

Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, Rob Stokes said that strong urban design is transforming Sydney's George St to give an additional 7190m² of public space back to pedestrians and create a world-famous boulevard.

The opening of the Light Rail offered the NSW Government and the City of Sydney a rare opportunity to reshape Sydney's 'spine'. The first stage of the project saw the 900m area between Bathurst and Hunter St pedestrianised.

"The NSW Government and the City of Sydney have taken a people-first approach to planning public space, focusing on pedestrians and increasing foot traffic to our city's heart and its retail precinct," said Mr Stokes.

"Transforming the southern sections of George Street in the same way will be a catalyst to revitalise the city centre and help deliver Sydney's recovery," says Mr Stokes.

Redundant vehicle lanes have been converted into widened footpaths with better lighting, more seats, bubblers, and bins. The number of trees planted increased from three to 68 – helping to green and cool our city centre.

Future urban design initiatives will include widening the footpaths, more tree planting and creating more amenable space for the public to explore. Additional features such as walkways are under consideration. A people-first approach and improved urban design has a positive impact on economic activation.

"Increasing Sydney's green canopy and creating quality public spaces is a priority of the Premier and the NSW Government. We're looking at innovative ways to transform our city and the State."

- Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, Rob Stokes

Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore said the benefits of the project were obvious as more foot traffic flowed through completed parts of the city.

"When the City first advocated for light rail down George Street, we imagined it would change not just how people got around the city, but how they experience the city."

- Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore

"The light rail is more than just a good transport connector – it has created more space for pedestrians and provided a calmer, more appealing environment for workers, visitors and residents.

"With new street trees, planter boxes, outdoor dining, seating and pedestrianisation, people were already taking back and enjoying George Street before Covid-19 hit. When the crisis passes, it will once again be a place to linger and gather rather than just hurrying through. This is great for people, and great for the shops, cafes, bars and restaurants along the route."

Sydney's George Street project is creating one of the truly great walking streets of the world in the heart of Australia's global city highlighting and connecting key attractions.

Wagga Wagga street art turns a lost lane into a destination

Great Streets, Great Public Spaces: Wagga Wagga Case Study



A lick of paint can spruce up any wall but Wagga Wagga City Council showed how commissioning art can reinvigorate a local community.

The Council commissioned six large murals to colour the walls of some dilapidated buildings for the arts event, Lost Lanes.

The commissions supported local artists, who would tell the stories of the city, while also combatting graffiti and beautifying an ugly urban space. The festival also wanted to attract visitors to Wagga Wagga and showcase the city as a vibrant and inclusive place. The results were better, and broader, than expected.

The Mayor of Wagga Wagga City Council, Greg Conkey OAM, said Lost Lanes became a permanent asset.

“The murals have rejuvenated a disused part of the city. We’ve seen people stop and have a look at the murals on their way past. It’s a place they connect with.”

- Wagga Wagga Mayor,
Cr Greg Conkey OAM

The unexpected benefit of this people-first approach to streetscape transformation was increased civic pride and economic activity. A hidden area has been resuscitated as a destination and co-located businesses reported a 30 per cent increase in turnover.

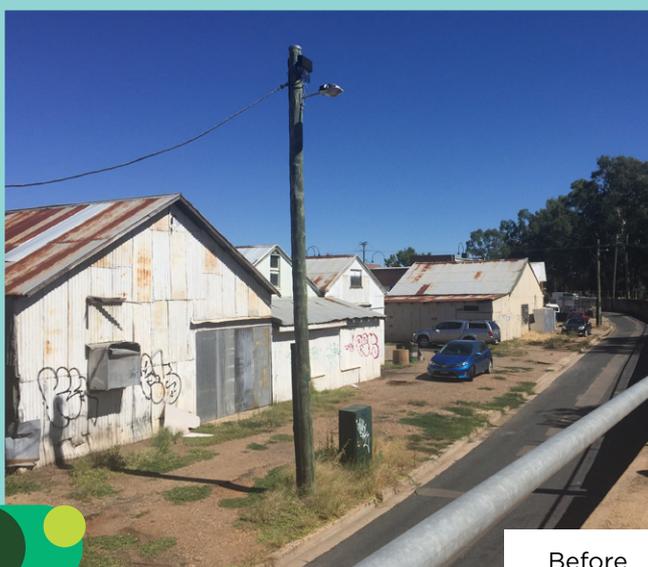
Wagga Wagga Lost Lanes



After

And the “honey-pot” effect of the murals also meant more than 20 local businesses became involved in the Lost Lanes festival, which has grown from 3,500 attendees in its inaugural 2018 event to more than 5,000 people last year.

Innovative thinking by Wagga Wagga City Council shows how an under-utilised or even ignored area can be transformed into a loved, vibrant and productive streetscape – with even just a creative lick of paint!



Before



During Event

Temporary street transformation becomes permanent success

Great Streets, Great Public Spaces: Penrith Case Study



The rejuvenation of Penrith's city centre as a vibrant social and economic hub owes much to a temporary streetscape transformation.

The much-loved Triangle Park, which is now a thriving community hub, was once a car park and redundant stretch of road.

In 2013, after a street re-direction, Penrith City Council turned the land into a public space that was promptly utilised by residents, workers and visitors. The popularity of the 16-month trial gave Council the impetus to engage landscape architects and consult the community on the park's final design.

"Triangle Park has injected new life into our community."

- Penrith Mayor, Ross Fowler OAM

The park needed to be flexible enough to accommodate a program of events, support outdoor dining and night-time activity, be safe and pedestrian friendly, and be original and exceptional.

Triangle Park delivered on all those requirements to become a thriving community hub in Penrith and the focus of activating Council's Night Time Economy Strategy with programs such as Penrith Producers, which attracts people into the centre of Penrith after work.

Triangle Park has also hosted lunchtime and evening events involving local businesses including a pop-up record shop, a pop-up gelato cart, a local coffee roaster and food from surrounding restaurants and cafes and an Open Mic Night in March last year, showing how a quiet piece of bitumen can become something much more than just a shared streetscape.

Triangle Park, Penrith



Before, when the park was a road



After, initial Pop-up park was constructed



Triangle Park was formalised as part of a major upgrade to High Street in 2018



Temporary street closures in Waverley expanding due to popularity

Great Streets, Great Public Spaces: Waverley Case Study



Waverley Council plans to expand its trial of temporary local street closures due to the popularity of this urban revitalization once social gathering guidelines are eased.

In February this year, the Council adopted a new Street Play Policy that simplifies the processes involved in closing a local road so that residents and their children can get together and hold an event at minimum cost.

The street closures are classed as 'events' and the insurance fee is being covered by the Council until the end of the financial year.

A number of streets were nominated by Council as trial locations include St James Road, Bondi Junction, Millers St, Waverley and Busby Parade, Bronte, however, the policy allows for any resident from any street to lodge an application.

Mayor of Waverley, Paula Masselos, said there were many benefits in expanding the use of quiet streets to places of activity, such as games, sport and bike riding.

"With more and more kids growing up in apartments and houses being built on smaller blocks of land where there's no yard or outdoor space at home for play, I think the capacity to be able to play on the street is a really important option and opportunity for kids and families," Cr Masselos said.

"It'll help kids get off their electronic devices and get neighbours talking to each other. Friendships become formed that way and strong and resilient communities built."

- Mayor of Waverley,
Cr Paula Masselos

"Many streets have low traffic volumes throughout the week and weekends and would be ideal for a trial."

Around thirteen enquiries for street play events were received from residents in the first 15 days following publication of the policy. Approved street play events are run with guidance from the Council. Council provides training in traffic control as well as road closure signs, stop/go bats, and safety vests where and when required. This helps residents to maintain a safe environment during an event.

An assessment of street play in the United Kingdom found that children were outdoors more than 70% of the time during which street play events occurred. They also spent on average of 16 minutes per hour in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Play England (2016) Street Play Evaluation Report
- Why temporary street closures for play make sense for public health

Council is currently in a holding pattern for the street play initiative to continue once social isolation guidelines are eased.



WAVERLEY
COUNCIL

Example play streets



Liverpool revitalisation starts with movable seats trial

Great Streets, Great Public Spaces: Liverpool Case Study



Liverpool City Council has gained strong community backing to quickly transform a graffiti-covered alley off Liverpool station from an unattractive laneway into a vibrant hub of community life.

The council has developed plans to turn Railway Lane into a shared pedestrian zone with seating, trees and businesses such as cafés.

Before finalising the vision, the council will trial measures such as movable stools instead of fixed benches, planter boxes instead of street trees, and coloured surface treatments instead of new curbs.

Liverpool Mayor Wendy Waller said the trial will allow the council to refine aspects of the project to deliver the best results for the community.

“It’s very hard to move trees and street furniture once they’re installed,” Cr Waller said.

“With this trial we might notice that people are gathering further up the street than we expected so we can change the position of the street furniture or the shading.

“It’s a great way to make changes quickly without a big capital investment up-front.”

- Liverpool Mayor Wendy Waller

The council will turn Railway Lane, which currently has no footpath, into a shared zone by colouring the asphalt and placing seats and planter boxes on the edge of the traffic lane to create a shared public space.

“This follows Transport for NSW guidelines for the shared use of space, because once you change the road surfaces and make the lane seem smaller, cars slow right down,” Cr Waller said.

Railway Lane, which gets very little through traffic, will remain open including for delivery vehicles and early-morning garbage trucks.

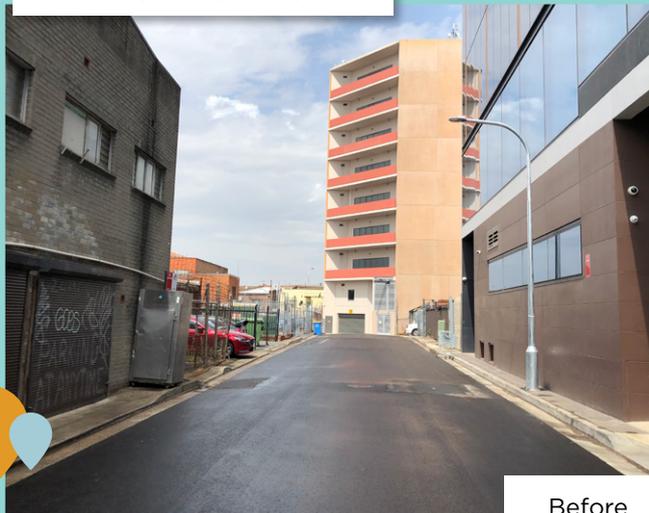
Changes to the lane are part of a larger \$9 million council project that will also transform a 200-metre section of Railway Street. There will be wider footpaths, garden beds, street trees, and guttering that will divert rainwater into small underground pits where it can seep into the soil to keep trees healthy during dry spells.

Liverpool City Council gained overwhelming public support to change Railway Lane and Railway Street when it exhibited its plans in December, with 96 per cent of respondents to an online survey saying they liked or loved the plan.

The council found similarly strong support in face-to-face interviews with shopkeepers and building owners who were excited that the laneway, earmarked for revitalisation in the city’s masterplan, would soon provide improved opportunities for retailers.

**LIVERPOOL
CITY
COUNCIL**

Railway Lane, Liverpool



Before



Artist's impression

Reimagining spaces in Blacktown CBD

Great Streets, Great Public Spaces: Blacktown Case Study



Blacktown is a city going through significant transformation. Blacktown City Council aims to reinforce the city as a place of quality public spaces for a growing and diverse community.

Blacktown City Council, with funding support from the Australian Government, is leading an upgrade of the Patrick Street Precinct that will reinforce public spaces as activated spaces for their growing community.

The project will utilise place-activation and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to support local businesses and community service agencies, disperse anti-social behaviour and reinforce this space as a place for people.

Specifically, Council will:

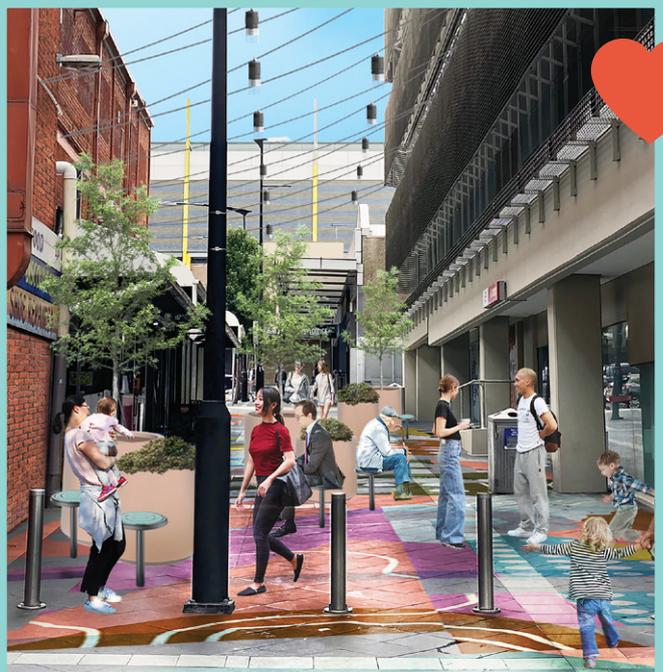
- understand the current and future needs of the adjacent cafes, retail and community and youth service agencies to have the interventions support and expand their activation activities.
- install under-awning lighting and unmask blank shopfronts.
- provide positive reasons for people to use the space by installing street furniture, pause points and recreation equipment.
- change access to the site through pedestrianisation of vehicle dominant zones.
- hosting and supporting others to host place activation, youth, arts and cultural programs.
- create an attractive, inviting and easily maintained public space.
- increase surveillance by installing some CCTV.

A key element of this overall precinct upgrade is the transformation of Jim Simpson Lane to create a vibrant and welcoming space for the community.

Jim Simpson Lane



Before



Artist's impression