

# Community Improvement District Pilot Program

## Guidelines

October 2023

[transport.nsw.gov.au](https://transport.nsw.gov.au)



Transport for NSW acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal people and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

Many of the transport routes we use today – from rail lines, to roads, to water crossings – follow the traditional Songlines, trade routes and ceremonial paths in Country that our nation's First Peoples followed for tens of thousands of years.

Transport for NSW is committed to honouring Aboriginal peoples' cultural and spiritual connections to the lands, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

Cover image: Summer Streets, Crown Street, Surry Hills  
Credit: NSW Government

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Paddington  
Credit: Destination NSW

# Contents

Introduction	4
Overview of Program	6
Application Process	11
Timeframes	12
Eligibility Criteria	13
Assessment Criteria	18
Assessment Process	20
Successful Projects	21
How to Apply	24
Glossary	25
Appendix A: Policy Context	27
Appendix B: Submission Requirements	29
Appendix C: Core Indicators	30

# Introduction

Transport for NSW (the department) is inviting interested parties to apply for grant funding from the \$2.75 million Community Improvement District (CID) Pilot Program (CID Pilot Program). This Program was formerly known as the Business Improvement District Pilot Program.

Quality streets and centres are vital to thriving local economies and community wellbeing. These traditional trading environments have weathered evolution and changes in transportation, competition, and consumer preferences. Through investment in streets and centres across NSW, we have seen how great streets can improve mental and physical wellbeing, foster public life and equity, support local jobs, showcase small business and local supply chains, and allow us to connect with other people and our environment.

Community Improvement Districts will follow an internationally recognised model for businesses and the community to work together to create great centres. The CIDs model is business-led, placed-based partnerships that bring businesses together to support and grow local economies, high streets, and centres. They help enhance the local trading environment, encourage economic growth, and deliver civic pride. They are a way to give businesses and communities the autonomy and liberty to create thriving local places.

The NSW Government is currently considering new policy to make it easier for CIDs to be set up in places where local businesses and the community think they would be useful. The outcomes of this CID Pilot Program will help to build an evidence base to inform any future regulations and operations of CIDs in NSW. The CID Pilot Program will fund a diverse range of trial governance models that mobilise local business partnerships to contribute to the economic vitality of the street and surrounding area.

## Context

In September 2022, the department released a white paper *Enabling Local Business Improvement Districts* which explored why NSW does not currently have Improvement Districts like other parts of the world and what can be done to make it easier for Improvement Districts to contribute to neighbourhood placemaking in NSW.

Following the white paper, in February 2023 the department released a policy paper *Next steps for Business Improvement Districts: What we've heard and principles for future policy* (the policy paper) which outlined outcomes of consultation on the white paper, and principles for future policy for Improvement Districts in NSW. Chapter five of the policy paper identified a need to test Improvement District principles through a pilot program to both harness the strong stakeholder support and enthusiasm for Improvement Districts in NSW and help generate insights on appropriate CID policy in NSW.



Auburn Road, Auburn  
Open Streets Program  
Credit: NSW Government

## Why Community Improvement Districts (CIDs)?

Our local centres and high streets are in a major state of flux. Businesses of all sizes are in a new trading environment post-pandemic with less certainty and, in some cases, less foot traffic. Online shopping, stay at home entertainment, and cost of living pressures all continue to create a challenging landscape for vibrant and enduring commercial precincts.

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us about the importance of investing in public spaces across local centres in NSW and the positive role this investment plays for building community wellbeing and stimulating local economies. The NSW Government has delivered a suite of programs to invest in local centres and high streets, acting as a catalyst to reshape and reimagine what our places, streets, and open spaces can look like to revitalise our local centres.

According to the 'Public spaces during COVID-19 survey: Adapting to the new normal' report (NSW Government, 2021), the most common reasons to visit high streets were to shop or access services (87%), visit cafés and restaurants (61%), socialise (28%), travel or commute (24%), and visit cultural or community facilities (16%). Investment in public spaces generates economic value through visitation, foot traffic, and retail spend.

Further investment in high streets and local centres are essential to create liveable, desirable places that attract, retain, and enhance human and social capital, and stimulate local economies. To prevent stagnation, stronger support and coordination for local centres is required. CIDs can help enhance the local trading environment, encourage economic growth, and deliver civic pride.

These partnerships enable collective action from businesses to address issues impacting the local economy and form a powerful tool for engaging local businesses in local activities.

Key benefits:

1. Support economic life and create vibrant urban centres
2. Encourage well-managed and maintained public spaces
3. Promote connected and resilient communities
4. Improve safety and access at all times of the day

The purpose of a CID is to complement and supplement, not replace, the responsibilities and efforts of other entities. This includes local councils.





Maitland  
Streets as Shared Spaces Program  
Credit: Maitland City Council

# Overview of Program

## Purpose of funding

The CID Pilot Program is a \$2.75 million grant program that will provide successful applicants with funding ranging from \$150,000 up to \$400,000. Successful applicants will deliver trials that test the viability of diverse governance models that strengthen local place economy - informing a consistent state-wide approach to CID policy.

The CID Pilot Program is open to:

- All local councils within NSW who can provide evidence of place-based collaboration and partnership with local business/property owners.
- Incorporated associations within NSW with core functions in place management, economic development, town improvement, tourism, or similar (e.g. chamber of commerce, high street/main street association or business association).
- Companies limited by guarantee within NSW with core functions in place management, economic development, town improvement, tourism, or similar (e.g. chamber of commerce, high street/main street association or business association).

These trials will drive collaborative placemaking, involving property owners and local businesses in curating and growing local economies, whilst accelerating public-private partnership in centres across NSW. The CID Pilot Program is aligned with NSW Government strategies (itemised in Appendix A) and will provide valuable insights and input into a future enabling environment for the operation of CIDs in NSW.

## Program objectives

We invite applications for trial CID projects that test diverse governance models that mobilise partnership for local government, local business, and property owners to strengthen place economy and meet these objectives:

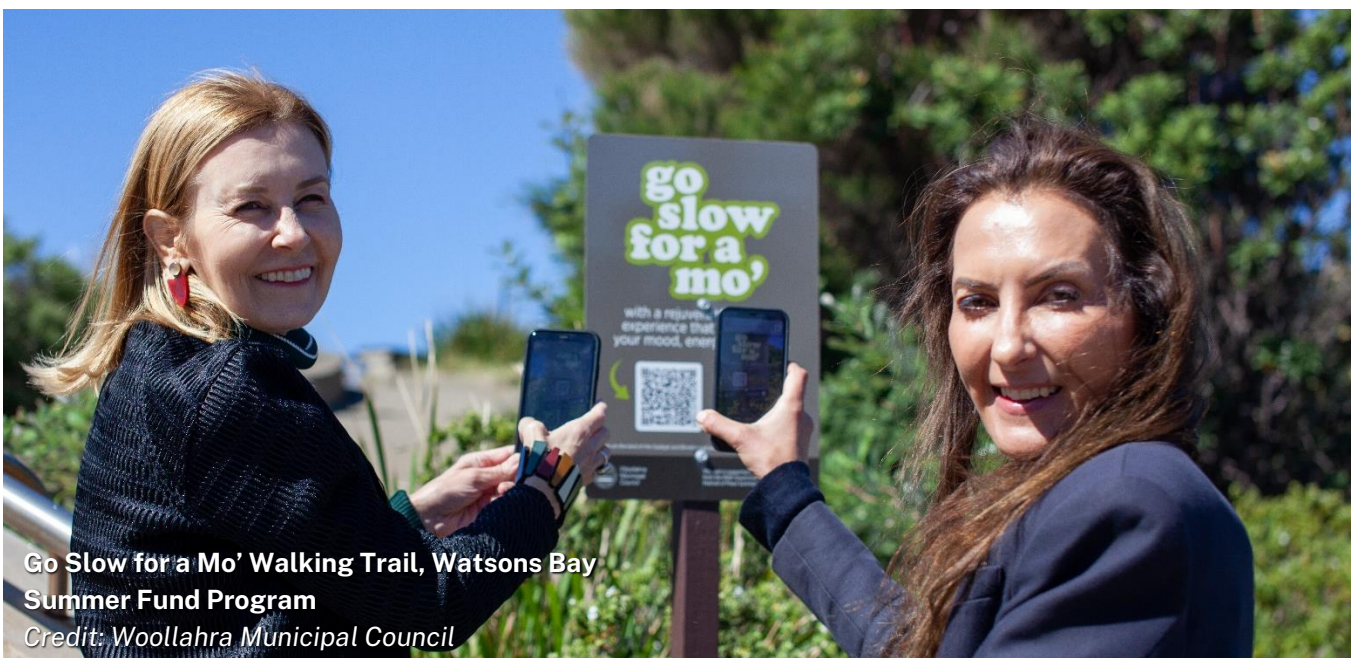
- Drive collaboration and partnerships between local government, property owners, and businesses to support and strengthen place economy.
- Stimulate day and night activity in local centres and increase visitation and dwell time through place activation, place marketing and branding activities.
- Advance the recognition, operation and regulation of CID entities in NSW.
- Trial innovative and creative placemaking interventions and encourage well-managed and maintained public spaces supported by strategic CID planning and community engagement.
- Support CID policy development for NSW through the evaluation of CID project insights and data.

# What are we looking for?

## Non-physical interventions

Non-physical interventions include governance, data, strategic, operational, digital, and relationship-based improvements that enhance the district experience, improve district decision making (including potential for district success), improve the trading environment, encourage greater attachment, more visits and repeat visits, and longer dwell times to achieve sustainable growth such as:

- Testing a diverse range of governance models:** Some governance models may be more effective than others based on the structure proposed, entity type/s, geographical location, and entity size. This program invites proposals that will help test and evaluate best governance models and spending parameters. Proposals should demonstrate strategic consideration of partnership, CID structure and operational and reporting models that will enable the delivery of great place-based outcomes.
- Strategic CID planning to seed long-term place-based outcomes:** Strategic CID planning includes defining the area the CID applies to, the activities it will undertake on behalf of potential members, the use of ballot systems or voting processes, administration systems for the organising entity, and how a self-funding finance mechanism (such as a levy) could be calculated and applied. Strategic CID planning should form part of a broader strategy to strengthen the place economy.
- Partnerships and collaboration with community, businesses, and government:** This funding seeks to advance partnerships and collaboration between businesses, communities, local government and other organisations and entities. The program invites a diversity of CID partnership structure proposals that support business and community needs.
- District visioning and branding:** Funding dedicated to innovative and customer-centric marketing which builds the reputation of the place and strengthens its identity. The place brand should narrate the story of the place and the community experience that will be both during the day and night, which in turn supports the 24-hour economy and attracts tourism to the area.
- Smart technology, data and analytics to develop district insights:** Districts are more likely to thrive when they have data and evidence to support decision making, strategic approaches and interventions. This program invites proposals that demonstrate how they will use smart technology, data and analytics to develop district insights that drive better outcomes for the district. Examples could include floorspace audits, pedestrian footfall counts, merchant data (e.g. credit card transactions), travel data, enrichment data (e.g. events or daily weather), turnover and forecast report, economic profiles and shopfront vacancy audits.



Go Slow for a Mo' Walking Trail, Watsons Bay Summer Fund Program  
Credit: Woollahra Municipal Council



Darby Street, Newcastle  
Streets as Shared Spaces Program  
Credit: NSW Government

## Physical interventions

Physical interventions include temporary, semi-permanent or permanent improvements that enhance the district experience by improving the trading environment, encouraging greater attachment, more visits and repeat visits, and longer dwell times to achieve sustainable growth such as:

- Creative placemaking interventions and well-managed and maintained public spaces:** This funding seeks to stimulate day and night activity in local centres and increase visitation and dwell time through place activation and street improvements. Transforming our streets and public spaces makes them safer and more inviting, creating a greater sense of place and connection with local communities. Examples could include public art, shade, landscaping, seating, lighting, and outdoor dining.

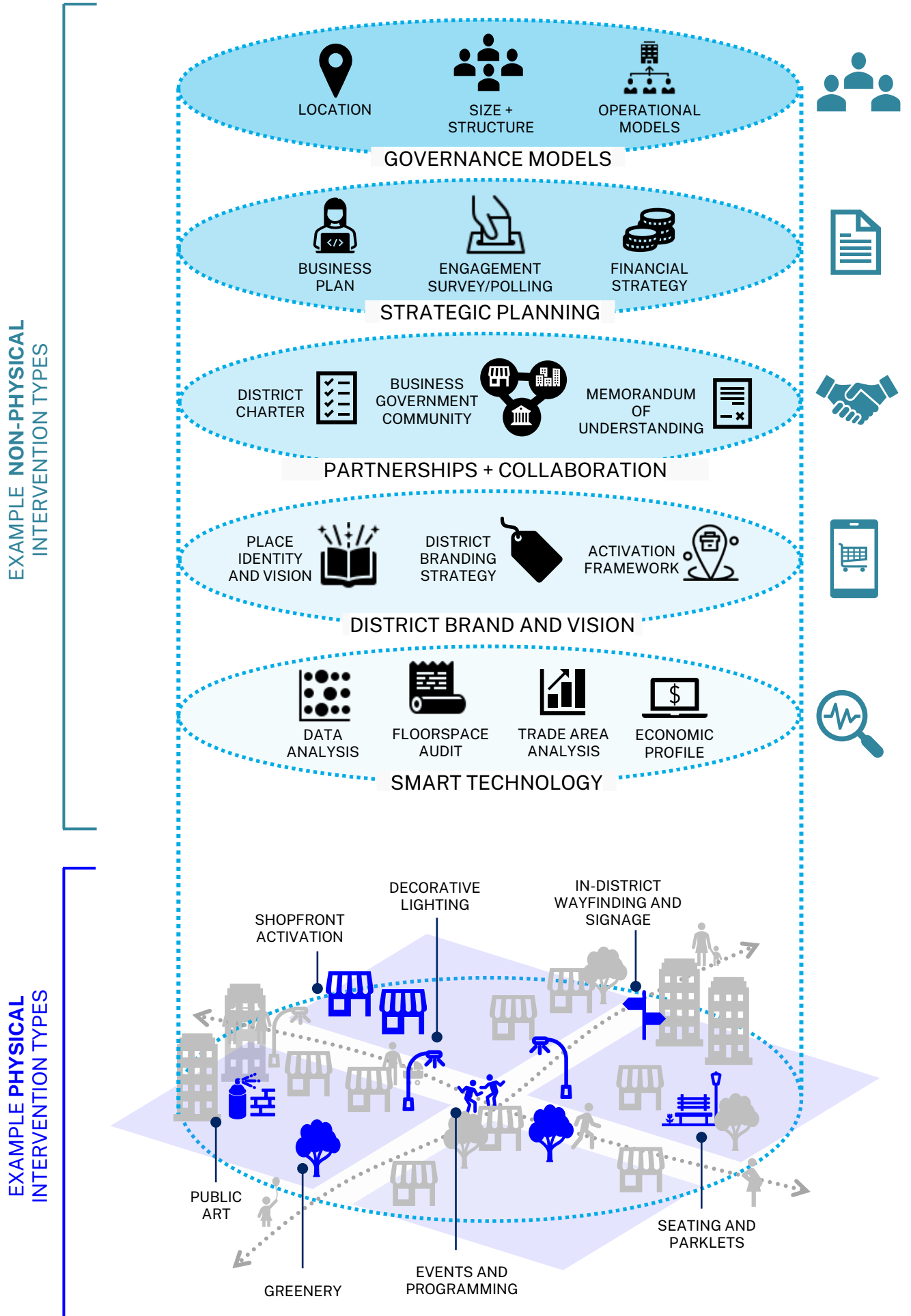
The program also invites proposals that demonstrate creative street improvements to improve safety and access to these places as well as an approach to well-managed and maintained public spaces. Examples could include engaging security services, cleaning services, and/or making environmental and amenity improvements.

- Economic vitality of local centres, high streets and surrounding areas:** The program invites proposals that demonstrate how the project will strengthen economic vitality in a way that builds on existing social, economic and cultural assets of the high street and surrounding area, contributes to the 24-hour economy, supports small business and complements other revitalisation initiatives. Examples could include marketing and branding strategies such as campaigns to encourage people to shop locally or programs to turn vacant shopfronts into creative/ pop-up retail spaces.

Further resources to support your application are available on the [Community Improvement District Pilot Program website](#). This includes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and webinars designed to help you to address the program guidelines. We will continue to add to these resources over time.



Figure 1. Examples of physical and non-physical interventions



# CASE STUDY: Cape Town Central City Improvement District

## Location: Cape Town, South Africa

The Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID) was established in November 2000 by local property owners. The ambition was for the Cape Town CBD to reinvent itself into a dynamic, safe, and clean environment. Today, it is regarded as a lively destination and a world-class place to live, work and play.

The CCID operates in the traditional downtown of Cape Town city across an area measuring 1.6km<sup>2</sup>, a specific geographical area approved by the City Council under their Property Rates Act, Section 22 and the Special Rates Area bylaw.

It is a non-profit organisation, and it operates with its own Board of Directors who liaise across the public and private sector to develop, promote, and manage the Cape Town CBD. Membership of the CCID is open to all property owners within the boundary who are encouraged to apply for membership so that they can exercise their rights to influence outcomes.

Complementary top-up services to ratepayers are provided in addition to those rendered by the CCID's primary partners (City of Cape Town and the South African Police Services) in the following areas: Social Development, Urban Management, and Safety and Security. The CCID also has Communications, Finance and Human Resources departments with paid staff members.

CCID's budget for 2023-24 is just under South African Rand R110 million (Approx. AUD \$9M). This is allocated according to the strategic objectives outlined in their 2020-2025 Business Plan - improving public safety (52%); maintaining, cleaning, and upgrading public areas (11.5%); promoting sustainable social development (9%); and promoting the CCID and economic investment in the CBD (4.5%).

## CCID Interventions

### Physical

- Planting and maintaining new trees
- Revamping CBD infrastructure and public areas (e.g. planting street benches)
- Public art
- Installing temporary public toilets
- New outdoor screens installed to promote campaigns and marketing
- Maintenance and up-keep

### Non-physical

- Monitoring and cleaning public areas
- Marketing campaigns
- Providing support to rough sleepers
- Business and residential surveys
- Property and research data
- E-newsletter and social media campaigns
- Social services directory
- Eateries maps

For more information about the Cape Town CCID, visit their [website](#).



Rainbow Tree Project in CCID

Credit: Cape Town Central Improvement District

# Application Process

The two-stage application process will involve a preliminary application stage followed by an invitation to shortlisted applicants to submit a final application to apply for funding. The two-stage process has been designed in recognition of the significant resourcing required to prepare an application.

## Preliminary Application

The preliminary application is designed to confirm eligibility (see page 13) and will ask applicants to articulate their proposal early in its development, to identify the proposed non-physical and physical interventions to be undertaken, experience of applicant, commitment to deliver, expected timeframes, and long-term strategic vision to understand how the proposal meets the program objectives.

## Final Application

Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to develop their project applications and provide all information required to address the assessment criteria (see page 18).

Refer to Appendix B for a summary of the information and documents sought at each application stage.

The assessment process (see page 20) is competitive and applications with insufficient detail will be disadvantaged during the assessment process. Applicants should ensure they provide as much relevant information as possible with their application.

Preliminary applications must be submitted online through the SmartyGrants portal available at [place.smartygrants.com.au](https://place.smartygrants.com.au) by 4pm, Tuesday 28 November 2023. For more information refer to How to Apply (see page 24).



Maitlanes, Maitland  
Streets as Shared Spaces Program  
Credit: NSW Government

# Timeframes

The application and assessment process and approximate timeframes for the program are outlined below.

**Table 1. Timeframes for program**

Target Date	Milestone	Action
16 October 2023	Preliminary applications open	Online applications open for entities to apply
28 November 2023	Preliminary applications close	Entities submit preliminary application in SmartyGrants by 4pm, Tuesday 28 November 2023
January 2024	Final applications open	Shortlisted applicants invited to apply
February 2024	Final applications close Assessment	Shortlisted applicants invited to submit final application by 4pm, Tuesday 27 February 2024 Independent assessment panel meets
April 2024	Announcement and notifications	Applicants formally advised of outcome of application and funding offers made Announcement of successful projects
May 2024	Projects commence	Funding agreements signed Successful applicants commence projects
From May 2024	Non-physical intervention	Establishment of CID model Commencement of non-physical interventions
August - September 2024	Co-design of physical interventions	Workshop with the department to co-design and plan for the physical intervention and activation.
September 2024 - April 2025	Physical intervention	Commence rollout of physical interventions support CID establishment
May 2025	Expected completion of CID Trial	Successful applicants conclude their CID Trial Project completion and acquittal



**Figure 2. Timeframes for CID Pilot Program**

# Eligibility Criteria

All applications will be assessed for eligibility and only eligible applications will be considered for funding. Applicants applying for funding can only submit one application for one district proposal between \$150,000 - \$400,000 in funding.

## Applicants

Applicants must identify as one of the following:

- Local council within NSW who can provide evidence of place-based collaboration and partnership with local business/property owners.
- Incorporated association within NSW with core functions in place management, economic development, town improvement, tourism, or similar (e.g. chamber of commerce, high street/main street association or business association).
- Company limited by guarantee within NSW with core functions in place management, economic development, town improvement, tourism, or similar (e.g. chamber of commerce, high street/main street association or business association).

Eligible applicants must:

- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN), Australian Company Number (ACN), or be registered with NSW Fair Trading under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 or another Act or supply a completed [ATO Statement by a Supplier Form](#) with their application.
- Be financially viable and have at least \$10 million public liability insurance or be willing to secure the insurance before entering into a Funding Agreement if the application is successful.

Applicants are not eligible for funding where:

- They are an unincorporated organisation
- They have received funding for the purpose of a CID or a Business Improvement District in the past five years. This includes businesses that have multiple ABNs and have already used one of their ABNs to claim a grant.

*Note: The Uptown Program led by the Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner and Create NSW is not considered to be a CID or a Business Improvement District program, therefore recipients are still eligible under this program.*

Eligible applicants are encouraged to work with councils, other public authorities (where applicable), private operators and industry organisations to identify potential partnership projects.

The lead applicant, if successful, will be solely responsible for the delivery of the project and must be willing to adhere to the terms and conditions outlined in the Funding Agreement.

## Applications

Applications will not be considered unless:

- They are sufficiently detailed and specific to allow consideration against the program criteria and objectives.
- They provide sufficient evidence demonstrating support or non-objection of the project proposal:
  - a memorandum of understanding (or similar) with partnering entities,
  - letters of support or letters of no objection from:
    - at least five (5) businesses and/or property owners within the CID,
    - the relevant council General Manager/s or council CEO/s and where applicable public authority/s.
- They are submitted by the deadline.

## Eligible projects

Projects must include both non-physical and physical elements in their proposal. Each project proposal may contain multiple workstreams.

Eligible projects must:

- Have a mix of non-physical and physical interventions to trial.
- Commit approximately 50% of funding to non-physical interventions.
- Commit approximately 50% of funding to physical interventions.
- Commence non-physical interventions from May 2024.
- Commence physical interventions between September 2024 and 1 April 2025.
- Provide all documentation developed throughout CID pilot to the department who may make it available for public release to support the establishment of CIDs within NSW.
- Demonstrate support from at least five (5) businesses and/or property owners within proposed CID location.
- Be located within one district location which can span more than one Local Government Area (LGA) within NSW.



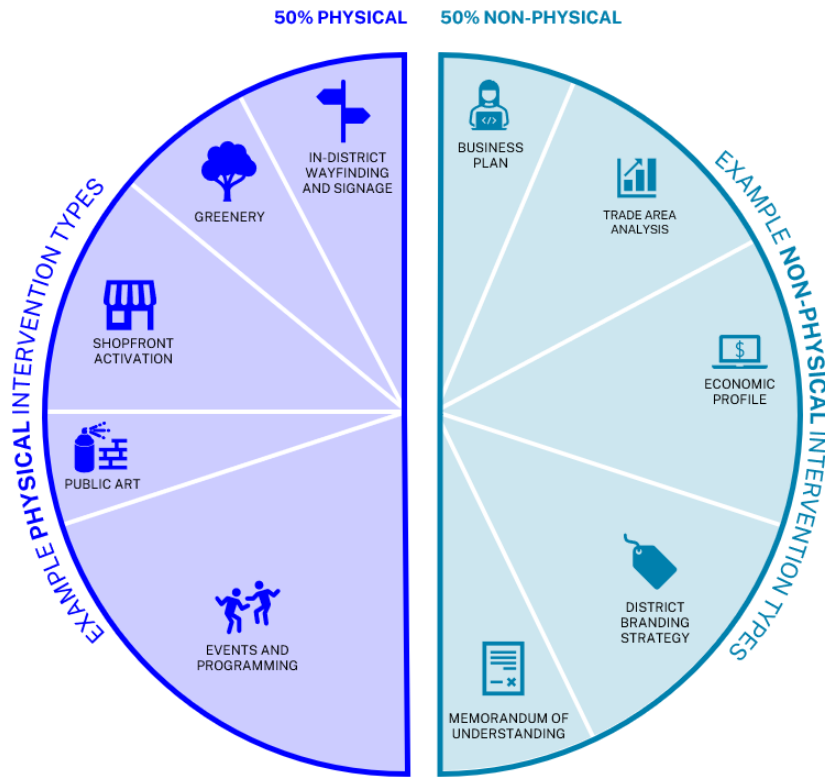
Crown Street Mall, Wollongong  
Credit: Destination NSW

#### Physical interventions must:

- Be located on publicly owned land or on private land where there is a clear public benefit. If the applicant is not the owner of the land where the project will be located, landowner's consent and access agreements will be required as part of the application.

#### Ineligible project types and costs

- Projects outside of NSW.
- Purchase or lease of land or property.
- Costs that would be considered business-as-usual activities.
- Core government activities or business operations and administrative running costs.
- Engaging or paying permanent employees.
- Activities, equipment or supplies that are already being supported through other sources.
- Financing costs, including interest and debt financing.
- Capital expenditure for the purchase of everyday business activities such as office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, computers, printers and photocopiers, with the exception of equipment specifically related to the project and essential to its success.
- Costs involved in the purchase or hire of software (including user licenses) and ICT equipment, with the exception of equipment and software specifically related to the project and essential to its success.
- Costs such as rent and utilities unless specifically related to the project.
- Staff training and development costs not specifically related to the project.
- Insurance costs (applicants must hold and maintain adequate insurance coverage for any liability arising as a result of their participation in funded activities).
- Costs related to internal human resources used on the project, including job advertising, recruiting, contract negotiations, and salaries.
- Depreciation of plant and equipment beyond the life of the project.
- Opportunity costs relating to allocating resources to the agreed grant project.
- Projects that require ongoing funding from the NSW or Australian government.
- Buying or upgrading equipment that does not specifically relate to the program objectives and is not essential for the project's success.
- Retrospective funding to cover any project component that is already complete/underway before funding offer is made.



**Figure 3. Example of grant funding allocation**



**Figure 4. Example of locations of physical and non-physical interventions**

## Approvals

Endorsement/provision of a grant under this program does not negate the need for successful applicants to obtain all necessary/required approvals such as road changes and/or traffic facilities under the Roads Act, Transport Administration Act, and Local Government Act and any relevant planning approvals under the Environment Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act and associated Environmental Planning Instruments. Development applications may also be required.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to ensure they are aware of all approvals required and can demonstrate they have consulted with relevant parties such as local council, local Transport for NSW representatives, property owners, the local Chamber of Commerce and affected businesses.

Proposed projects are not required to have received approvals prior to applying. However, they must demonstrate an approach to achieving approvals in the project plan, and proposals with existing approvals will be ranked higher for their deliverability.

## Other funding

Applicants must disclose whether any aspect of the proposal for this funding program has either:

- Received funding through another NSW Government funding program, or
- Applied for funding through another NSW Government funding program that may currently be in consideration.

Applications will be reviewed to ensure that the applicant is not seeking or receiving multiple sources of funding for the same works.



Rochester Street, Homebush  
Open Streets Program  
Credit: NSW Government



## CASE STUDY: Falmouth Business Improvement District

### Location: Falmouth, Cornwall, United Kingdom

Falmouth is a popular tourist town and occasional port for passing cruise ships. The Falmouth Business Improvement District (BID) was formed in 2009 by local businesses. It seeks to deliver a range of innovative projects that would support a high volume of tourists during peak visitor periods and improve the trading environment on the off-season.

The Falmouth BID is a not-for-profit business-led initiative with over 400 members. The Local Authority, Cornwall Council, reviews all documentation and approves proposals in line with the UK's BID legislation and regulation. A BID manager is employed full-time, who is responsible for the Board and drives the delivery of projects and services outlined in their business plan.

The BID projects, costs, timescales and budgets can be altered subject to Board approval, providing the changes fall within the income of the BID and meet BID objectives. This enables the BID to operate flexibly to respond to changing demands of levy payers, the economic landscape and potential opportunities. Any change to the BID boundary or to the levy rate would require an alteration ballot.

At least £800,000 – in BID levies and Council contributions – were secured as part of the Falmouth BID over four years between 2019-2023, with an annual average of around £159,000. Members with a rateable property value of £7,500 or over contribute 1.25% in levies. This equates to 70% of businesses in the BID paying less than £6 per week.

### BID Interventions

#### Physical

- Public realm improvements
- Free public wi-fi
- Parking management
- Visitor signage and wayfinding
- Public seating
- Revitalisation of vacant spaces
- Events and programming

#### Non-physical

- Destination marketing
- Website and phone app
- Business training programs
- Shop local campaigns

For more information about the Falmouth BID, visit their [website](#).



Falmouth BID destination marketing campaign  
Credit: Falmouth Town Council

# Assessment Criteria

**Table 3. Assessment criteria**

Criteria	Key considerations
<b>Trial Merit 45%</b>	
<p><b>Non-physical intervention</b> Project trials CID governance model that drives collaboration between local government, property owners, and business to strengthen place economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear identification of CID governance system/model to be trialled</li> <li>• Outline how CID trial will go above and beyond the current support provided by local/state government</li> <li>• Inclusive approach to engaging stakeholders</li> <li>• Letters of support from stakeholders and partners, including local government, property owners, and businesses</li> </ul>
<p><b>Non-physical intervention</b> Project has strategic plan and clear district vision to seed long-term place-based outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear strategic plan for CID that proposes to test typical components of CID regulatory frameworks (e.g. ballot processes, self-funding models etc)</li> <li>• Clear identification of a long-term vision for the CID that will benefit the local community and economy</li> <li>• Clear place marketing and branding concept for the CID</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical intervention</b> Project delivers creative place-making interventions to stimulate day and night activity and boost economic vitality in local centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear concept of physical interventions to deliver in the project area such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Placemaking intervention</li> <li>○ Business/retail curation for public benefit</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Identify how the proposed intervention will stimulate day and night activity, increase visitation and dwell time, and enhance the local experience in the CID location</li> </ul>
<b>Trial Deliverability 30%</b>	
<p><b>Risk mitigation, timeframes, and approvals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of approvals required</li> <li>• Demonstrates clear schedule for CID establishment and delivery of project scope, allowing contingency for identified approvals</li> <li>• Risks have been identified and mitigation measures considered</li> </ul>
<p><b>Experience of applicant and commitment to deliver</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline experience in delivering similar projects</li> <li>• Clear capability statement and governance structure</li> <li>• Approach for adapting trial in response to feedback during delivery</li> <li>• Letter of support from General Manager, CEO or equivalent</li> </ul>
<p><b>Financial viability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear and detailed project budget</li> </ul>

Criteria	Key considerations
<b>Value for Money 25%</b>	
<p><b>Return on investment for the advancement of CIDs in NSW</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline an evaluation plan to collect project insights and data, and share information</li> <li>• Pilot incorporates interventions that can be replicated with ease by emerging CID entities in NSW</li> <li>• Identify value proposition and expected key insights to support the future enabling environment for the operation of CIDs in NSW</li> </ul>
<p><b>Project contributes to the economic vitality of the CID district and surrounding area</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates rich mix of economic, social, and cultural activities in the area and how the project supports local businesses</li> <li>• Concurrent and complementary initiatives planned in the area</li> <li>• Outlines beneficial outcomes anticipated, that will address challenges and improve experience of local businesses and community</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainability of CID model</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates how the CID model is sustainable and may be delivered again in future without the need for further government funding</li> </ul>



Railway Street, Liverpool  
Credit: NSW Government

# Assessment Process

Departmental staff will complete an eligibility check of all preliminary applications that are received. Departmental staff will prepare a summary of preliminary applications for assessment by an expert panel of NSW government representatives against the program objectives and deliverability in relation to timeframes and capacity, experience of applicant and commitment to deliver. Applicants will be advised if they have been shortlisted and only shortlisted applicants will be able to apply for funding.

Final applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria to determine the suitability of each project for funding. Applications will be assessed by an expert assessment panel of NSW Government representatives that may include:

- Transport for NSW
- Department of Planning and Environment
- Treasury NSW
- Office of Local Government

The assessment panel may recommend part-funding for projects if there is insufficient funding available for the whole project or where only a component of the project is considered suitable/eligible.

Broader factors that may be considered during the assessment process include the following:

- Total amount of funding available
- Importance of a project to the local economy and community
- Diversity of Community Improvement District governance model
- Geographical distribution of projects across NSW
- Suitability of a project for other government funding opportunities
- Alignment with existing NSW Government policies and strategies

During the assessment process, the department may ask applicants to provide additional information to assist in the assessment process. Advice may be sought from other NSW Government agencies or other sources to assist in the assessment of projects. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process.

The department, at its sole discretion, can take other factors into account that may make an application ineligible for funding, such as any person, business or organisation that could cause reputational or other risk to the NSW Government.

All projects may be referred to other NSW or Australian government funding programs for consideration.

## Eligibility assessment

The department will perform a pre-eligibility check of applications received and will assess and, where appropriate, seek to remedy eligibility issues with the applicant. Where an application is still deemed ineligible or if the applicant has not provided further information requested, the department will notify the applicant within 21 days of applications closing.

Any late or incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible. It is at the department's discretion to accept late applications if there are extenuating circumstances.

## Decision making

The department will provide the assessment panel's advice and recommendations to the Minister for Roads for consideration and approval.

## Probity advice

An independent probity advisor will provide guidance to the department and the assessment panel on any issues concerning integrity, fairness and accountability that may arise throughout the application, assessment, and decision-making process. This will ensure decisions are made with integrity, fairness and accountability, while delivering value for money for NSW.

# Successful Projects – Funding Conditions

## Funding agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Transport for NSW. The funding agreement will set out the obligations of the recipient of the funding, including but not limited to monitoring and reporting, project completion, and milestones and payment.

The NSW Government makes no binding funding commitment to an applicant unless and until both parties sign a funding agreement.

The funding agreement will require the successful applicant to provide a copy of all relevant insurances, project approvals and other supporting documentation relevant to the project or as requested by Transport for NSW. A funding agreement will have clauses, including but not limited to, non-disclosure and non-disparagement.

## Project management

Grant recipients will be responsible for delivering and meeting the project milestones.

Grant recipients will need to supply an overview of CID financial management structure, governance model/organisational structure and project plan to be included in the funding agreement that set out the works and deliverables, costs and schedule, and must carry out the project in accordance with the project plan.

## Consultation with the community and other key stakeholders

The grant recipient will be responsible for monitoring the project during the trial and may be required to make adjustments to aspects of the project as needed in response to feedback from the community and other key stakeholders.

## Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

Successful applicants will be required to submit project progress reports to the NSW Government as outlined in the funding agreement. Examples of measures to be included in the report are outlined in the Appendix B: Core Indicators.

Grant recipients are required to:

1. Collect data both before and after using the [Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life](#), and analyse the results.
2. Provide before and after reporting against Appendix C: Core Indicators.
3. Provide high quality before and after images of physical interventions.
4. Provide milestone reports and a final acquittal report via [SmartyGrants](#) at the completion of project including a procurement certificate.

## Project promotion and opening event

A communication pack will be provided to grant recipients to provide approved key messages, branding, logos and multimedia to help promote the project and acknowledge the funding contribution.

Grant recipients must acknowledge the funding contribution from the NSW Government in all communications and media for the project as per the requirements outlined at the [Sponsorship and Funding Acknowledgement](#) webpage.

If holding a formal launch event, the recipient must:

- Invite the Minister for Roads or a departmental representative on the Minister's behalf to attend any formal launch event (including commencement and completion ceremonies with prior consultation on available dates where practicable); and
- Provide no less than 30 business days' notice prior to any formal event.

To make the invitation, the recipient should access the Minister's [web form](#). It is for the recipient to decide if there is to be an opening event. Recipients should invite the Minister, the department and other dignitaries and consult on a preferred date. If the invitation is accepted, a department media officer will work with the recipient on the arrangements and media protocols.

## Payment of grants

Payment of funding will be conditional on the funding being used only for the project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding agreement. Payment of funding will be made in accordance with the milestones and payment schedule set out in the funding agreement and will be subject to compliance with the recipient's obligations. A final acquittal and project report will be required following completion of the project. Timing and requirements will vary at NSW Government's discretion, depending on the scope and risk of the project.

Unless expressly stated, all sums payable or consideration to be provided under a funding agreement for the CID Pilot Program are exclusive of GST. If GST is payable in respect to a supply made under a funding agreement for the CID Pilot Program, the recipient will pay to the supplier any amount equal to the GST payable on the supply.

## Project responsibility

The recipient will be required to acknowledge and agree that it is solely responsible for delivering and completing the project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding agreement, and will not be relieved of that responsibility because of any governance model issues or partnerships.

## Insurance requirements

Recipients will be required to maintain a minimum Public Liability Insurance cover of at least \$10 million, workers compensation insurance for people involved in delivery of the project and insurance over assets used in connection with the project.



Lunar New Year, Cabramatta  
Summer Fund  
Credit: Fairfield City Council

## CASE STUDY: Duke Heights Business Improvement Area

### Location: Duke Heights, Toronto, Canada

Located within one of Toronto's largest employment districts, Duke Heights Business Improvement Area (BIA) has a vision to create growth, invite investment and development to the district as well as promote, support and advocate for their local business community.

Duke Heights BIA is home to 2,500 businesses. It has an elected Board of Directors, dedicated BIA business professionals, and property owners who volunteer their time to the future advancement, development, and success of the BIA. There is also a team of staff, including an Executive Director, Project Manager and a Communications Coordinator, who work closely with the Board of Directors and the City of Toronto to deliver projects and initiatives.

Duke Heights is Toronto's largest BIA in terms of activity and financial capacity, with an annual budget of \$4.1 million CAN (approximately AUD\$4.5 million). It is the responsibility of the Board to prepare a proposed annual budget for each fiscal year and hold a general meeting to discuss and adopt the annual budget.

The proposal is submitted to Council, who may approve it in whole or in part but may not add expenditures to it.

### BIA Interventions

#### Physical

- Signage with precinct branding
- Cycleways
- Resurfaced roads
- Improved footpaths
- New trees and landscaping
- Traffic signals

#### Non-physical

- Business toolkits
- Events calendar
- Marketing and advertising services
- Branding campaign
- Accounting services
- HR and workforce development
- Planning and development (e.g. public realm strategy, submissions to major development and transport proposals)

For more information about the Duke Heights BIA, visit their [website](#).



**Duke Heights Branding Campaign**  
Credit: Duke Heights BIA

# How to Apply

1. Familiarise yourself with the grant requirements set out in these guidelines and determine if you are eligible.
2. Complete and submit your Preliminary Application via the SmartyGrants portal available at [place.smartygrants.com.au](https://place.smartygrants.com.au) by 4pm, Tuesday 28 November 2023.
3. If shortlisted, the department will invite shortlisted applicants to submit a final application. Final applications are due for submission by 27 February 2024.

Acknowledgement of receipt of application will be via return email.

## Available Support

To help applicants prepare their application, additional information and resources are available on the [Community Improvement District Pilot Program](#) webpage, including FAQs and webinars.

Transport for NSW is available to provide information to potential applicants on interpretation of these guidelines or application, including eligible entity types and projects eligible for funding.

For inquiries or more information email: [CommunityImprovementDistricts@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:CommunityImprovementDistricts@transport.nsw.gov.au)

Applicants are encouraged to seek advice from their legal, business and financial advisors to determine the suitability of the funding before applying.

## Need advice?

Transport for NSW is available to provide information to potential applicants on interpretation of these guidelines, including types of projects eligible for funding. Transport for NSW can also provide advice on the online application process.

For further information, contact [CommunityImprovementDistricts@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:CommunityImprovementDistricts@transport.nsw.gov.au)

## Complaints Procedure

Any complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing. Any questions you have about grant decisions for this opportunity, send to [CommunityImprovementDistricts@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:CommunityImprovementDistricts@transport.nsw.gov.au). If you do not agree with the way Transport for NSW has handled your complaint, you may complain to the NSW Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the relevant department. Visit the NSW Ombudsman at [www.ombo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au).

## Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)

Applicants should be aware that information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW). Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive will be withheld. The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) makes government information accessible to the public by:

- Requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely available
- Encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible
- Giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information
- Restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

## Privacy Policy

Transport for NSW is required to comply with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1988. Transport for NSW collects the minimum personal information you voluntarily provide to enable it to contact an organisation and to assess the merits of an application.

Any information provided by you will be stored on a database that will only be accessed by authorised personnel and is subject to privacy restrictions. The information will only be used for the purpose for which it was collected.

Applicants must ensure that people whose personal details are supplied with applications are aware that Transport for NSW is being supplied with this information and how this information will be used.

## Disclaimer

Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. The costs of preparing an application are borne by the applicant.



# Glossary

For the purpose of the grant program the following terms have been provided to be drawn upon when applying:

**Ballot system/voting process** are formal, documented processes used to gather opinions, preferences, or choices from district participants to inform decision making.

**Business Improvement District (BID)**

A BID is an internationally known governance model on which the CID is based. It is also the former name of this program.

**Community Improvement District (CID)** is a partnership between business, government, and community, with the aim to enhance local centres and encourage economic growth, complementing investment in public spaces. They only operate in defined area, usually a high street or town centre. They have a clear role and a defined set of objectives they are trying to achieve. They also have a properly constituted governance arrangement to coordinate their activities and hold monies raised - usually a not-for-profit corporation or company. CIDs are usually funded through an additional levy on local commercial properties or a fee on participating businesses.

**CID model/governance structure** refers to a formal organisational structure required to coordinate CID activities, hold and dispense any monies raised, and provide a mechanism for members to have input into decision making. In other jurisdictions, this structure is legally recognised and regulated, with formalised reporting to members and stakeholders, and some oversight by a government agency, non-profit board, or a combination of the two.

**Company limited by guarantee** is a distinct legal entity from its owners and is responsible for its own debts. Limited by guarantee companies are most often formed by non-profit organisations. A company limited by guarantee does not have any shares or shareholders but is owned by guarantors who agree to pay a set amount of money towards company debts.

**District** is a geographically distinct micro-area (e.g., a high street or block of streets) that has a unique identity and diverse cultural and entertainment offerings across multiple venues within short walking or biking distance. A district is not an entire suburb.

**Incorporated association** is an organisation incorporated under state or territory law, that is usually not-for-profit. Its structure establishes it as a legal entity separate from its individual members.

**Local centres** provide for a range of retail, business, entertainment and community uses for the people who live, work or visit the area. Your local centre is where you find your local café, barber shop or dentist, a place for local communities to meet and take care of their daily needs.

**Local character** means the character of what makes the neighbourhood distinctive and is the identity of a place. It encompasses the way it looks and feels. It is created by a combination of land, people, the built environment, history, culture and tradition including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, and looks at how they interact to make a distinctive character of an area. Local character is distinctive, it differentiates one area apart from another. It includes the sense of belonging a person feels to that place, the way people respond to the atmosphere, how it impacts their mood, their emotional response to that place and the stories that come out of people's relationship with that place. Refer to the [NSW Public Spaces Charter](#).

**Non-physical interventions** means interventions including governance, strategic, operational, digital, and relationship-based improvements that enhance the district experience, improving the trading environment, encouraging greater attachment, more visits and repeat visits, and longer dwell times to achieve sustainable growth.

**Outdoor dining** means the use of public space to allow the community to dine outdoors, including additional public space to enjoy takeaway, and extending the services of premises whose main function is for the provision of food and beverages to the public.

**Physical intervention** means temporary, semi-permanent or permanent improvements that enhance the district experience, improving the trading environment, encouraging greater attachment, more visits and repeat visits, and longer dwell times to achieve sustainable growth.

**Placemaking resource** means a role committed to delivering and embedding a place-based approach within council, developing partnerships with the local community and stakeholders to take an integrated approach to initiatives that shape the public realm and build community capacity to deliver placemaking projects.

**Place-based** describes an approach that targets the specific circumstances of a place and engages local people as active participants in development and implementation. This approach focuses on how specific places work and collaborative processes that recognise the value and need for local expertise, knowledge, responsibility and investment, allowing development of a shared vision and values.

**Place activation** refers to the planning, development and change delivered to encourage and increase diverse human activity in a place. An activated public space entices people to visit, use, stay and enjoy the space. It is typically associated with terms like 'vibrancy', 'animation', 'liveliness' and 'programming'.

**Placemaking** means the reimagination and rejuvenation of public spaces so they have long-term social, cultural, environmental and economic value for customers and communities.

**Public benefit** refers to the improvement of conditions for local communities and/or society at large.

**Property owner** for the purposes of this document, refers to owners of commercial land only.

**Public space** means all places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all for free and without a profit motive. This includes:

- Open spaces: active and passive (parks, gardens, playgrounds, public beaches, riverbanks and waterfronts, outdoor playing fields and courts, bushland)
- Public facilities: libraries, museums, galleries, civic/community centres, showgrounds and indoor public sports facilities
- Streets: streets, avenues and boulevards; squares and plazas; pavements, passages and lanes, and bicycle paths.

**Urban centre** means a location with a mix of uses and an agglomeration of businesses and services. An urban centre has a concentration of local employment opportunities, shops and services.



Paddington  
Credit: Destination NSW

# Appendix A: Policy Context

**Table 4. Alignment with NSW Government strategies and policies**

Policy area and agency	Goals, Strategies and Plans	Description
<b>Transport</b> Transport for NSW	<a href="#">Future Transport Strategy</a>	Future Transport Strategy is the long-term strategy for planning transport in NSW. The Strategy recognises the critical role that transport plays in enabling – or inhibiting – successful places.
	<a href="#">Enabling Local Business Improvement Districts White Paper</a>	The white paper outlines policy options to support Improvement Districts in NSW and includes case studies showing how Improvement Districts have contributed to place revitalisation in various communities.
	<a href="#">Next steps for Business Improvement Districts Policy Paper</a>	The policy paper responds to feedback and ideas heard during the stakeholder consultation process in late 2022 following the first white paper on Business Improvement Districts, “Enabling Local Business Improvement Districts” (September 2022) and sets out principles and next steps in the development of NSW Government’s CID policy.
	<a href="#">NSW Public Spaces Charter</a>	The NSW Public Spaces Charter is a formal statement describing the rights of NSW communities to have access to quality public space and a NSW Government commitment to principles guiding planning, delivery and management of public space
	<a href="#">NSW Guide to Public Space Activation</a>	The NSW Guide to Public Space Activation is designed to help councils, place managers, communities and government agencies take a place-based approach to public space activation. It provides case studies, options for governance and management, and models of funding and enabling infrastructure.
	<a href="#">Great Public Spaces Toolkit</a>	The Great Public Spaces Toolkit helps bring the principles of the draft NSW Public Spaces Charter to life through a collection of free resources to support local government, state agencies, industry and the community, including the Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life and the Great Public Spaces Guide.
	<a href="#">Movement and Place</a>	Movement and Place is a cross-government framework for planning and managing our roads and streets across NSW. The framework delivers on NSW policy and strategy directions to create successful streets and roads by balancing the movement of people and goods with the amenity and quality of places.
	<a href="#">Smart Places Customer Charter</a>	The Smart Places Customer Charter has been developed by the department to guide the creation and management of smart places across NSW. Under the charter, the NSW Government and its agencies will make sure data is collected, managed and stored securely to protect privacy.

Policy area and agency	Goals, Strategies and Plans	Description
<b>24-hour Economy Strategy</b> NSW Treasury	<a href="#">Greater Sydney 24-hour Economy Strategy</a>	The 24-hour Economy Strategy supports the recovery and growth of the night-time economy sectors to realise its social and economic potential.
<b>Planning and Design</b> Department of Planning and Environment; Greater Cities Commission; NSW Government Architect's Office	<a href="#">6 Cities Region Discussion Paper</a>	The discussion paper was released in September 2022 to stimulate conversation about the best way to plan a Six Cities Region that benefits people and captures global economic opportunities, as GCC develops the Six Cities Region Plan.  Three of the six 'region shapers' identified in the discussion paper were focused on jobs and economies, inclusive places and greening.
	<a href="#">Regional Plans</a>	NSW Regional Plans set the framework, vision and direction for strategic planning and land use across NSW's regions, as well as plan for the future housing, environmental, infrastructure and community needs.
	<a href="#">District Plans</a>	District Plans are a guide for implementing the Greater Sydney Region Plan at a district level and are a bridge between regional and local planning. The District Plans help councils to plan and deliver for growth and change and to align their local planning strategies to place-based outcomes.
	<a href="#">Better Placed: An integrated design policy for NSW Greener Places Guides relating to streets, incl: Aligning Movement and Place Urban Design for Regional NSW</a>	Government Architect NSW has produced policies and a range of guidance, manuals and advisory notes – some relevant guides are listed here. Better Placed sets out the five characteristics of a well-designed built environment – Healthy, Responsive, Integrated, Equitable and Resilient and 7 objectives for assessing good design including Better Fit, Better Performance, Better for People, Better for Community, Better Working, Better Value and Better Look and Feel.
	<a href="#">Connecting with Country Framework</a>	A guide for good practice to help respond to Country to inform the planning, design, and delivery of built environment projects in NSW. It describes practical ways for responding to changes and new directions in planning policy relating to Aboriginal culture and heritage, including place-led design approaches. It also aims to help better support a strong and vibrant Aboriginal culture in our built environment.
<b>Alfresco and outdoor dining</b> NSW Government	<a href="#">Alfresco and outdoor dining</a>	In 2020, the NSW Government made changes as part of an Alfresco Dining Trial to streamline the approval process for licensed venues applying for outdoor dining. These changes have now been made permanent. The NSW Government are now supporting temporary approvals on land other than footpaths and public spaces to be used in a similar way until 31 December 2023.

# Appendix B: Application Submission Requirements

**Table 5. Documents applicants are required to submit at Preliminary and Formal application stages.**

Preliminary Application	Formal Application
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Aerial map showing extent of CID non-physical and physical intervention boundaries and location of key elements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Analysis of selected district</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of experience delivering projects of similar size and scope, or demonstrated capability to deliver the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of at least \$10 million in public liability insurance, or evidence that the applicant is willing to secure at least \$10 million in public liability insurance if successful</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> High quality images of project location for physical interventions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Risk assessment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Project budget breakdown</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Project plan that outlines the scope of non-physical and physical interventions to be trialled and the expected delivery timeline</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of the readiness of the project, including the understanding of approvals, costings, landowner's consent where required</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of support for the project proposal such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> memorandum of understanding (or similar) with partnering entities,</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> letters of support or letter of no objection from at least five (5) participating entities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> letter of support or no objection from relevant General Manager/s, CEO/s or equivalent and where relevant public authority/s for the project</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> evidence of consultation (e.g. detailed plans or processes that demonstrate how community support for projects has been captured, recent consultation carried out as part of a planning process, community consultation committees or surveys)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Appendix C: Core Indicators

**Table 6. Core indicators for evaluation**

Indicator	Measure	Evidence
No. of partners involved	Quantity	Self-reported
No. of industry sectors involved	Quantity	Self-reported
Type of land ownership	Category	Self-reported
Workers employed or engaged	Additional employees engaged / Additional hours worked	Self-reported
Increase in footfall	Visitation / footfall	Counters / Observation
Increase in dwell time	Visitation / footfall	Counters / Observation
Increase in sales turnover in commercial adjacencies	Amount	Self-reported
Increase in community engagement	Qualitative	Self-reported
Type of physical and non-physical interventions	Category	Self-reported
Area of public space improved / made accessible	Area in m2	Self-reported
Street trees planted	Quantity	Self-reported
Additional planting at footway level	Quantity	Self-reported
Additional public art	Quantity	Self-reported
Additional lighting	Quantity	Self-reported
Stakeholder satisfaction	Qualitative	Self-reported
Long term outcomes	Qualitative	Self-reported
CID policy development	Qualitative	Self-reported

#### **Disclaimer**

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