

Impact Report: Activating Streets and Centres across NSW

December 2022



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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 Night Fund, Festival Of Lights, Cootamundra.
Credit: Delta Charlie Images.

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Image: Streets as Shared Spaces, Singleton Living Laneways.
Credit: Singleton Council.

From the Minister

The pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns have made us realise the importance of quality streets beyond the primary use of cars and other transport. Our streets became an extension of public space for activities like walking, exercising and playing.

During the lockdowns we became conscious of our outdoors - fresh air, natural light and safe places to meet and enjoy community. I'm determined to channel this newfound delight in our shared spaces into transformative action. We can make our streets more equitable, shaping them as public spaces offering benefits to all.

Our streets are the lifeblood of successful centres and our investment shows how great streets can improve mental and physical wellbeing, foster public life, support local economies, and allow us to connect with other people and our environment.

At the start of the pandemic, we moved rapidly to ensure our citizens had access to safe and open public space. With the creation of Streets as Shared Spaces program, councils were given the opportunity to trial projects in their streets that could expand outdoor dining, create pop-up cycleways, and create more space for communities to gather. We expanded this by creating the Your High Street program, investing in permanent changes to high streets across NSW.

With the announcement of the Alfresco Restart Package in 2021, the programs expanded to a range of different offerings, from The Festival of Place: Open Streets for those local government areas

who were most impacted by the 2021 lockdowns and Summer Night Fund which enabled councils across the state to hold free events for their communities.

This report showcases the incredible work across the state since the start of the pandemic. It shows what good partnerships between state government agencies and local councils can achieve to best serve the citizens of NSW.



The Honourable Rob Stokes
Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities,
and Minister for Active Transport

From the Deputy Secretary

Cities and Active Transport is a new division within Transport.

We create great places.

We ensure our cities and neighbourhoods are integrated with all modes of transport, making our places, streets and open spaces functional, beautiful, inclusive and inviting for us all to enjoy.

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us about the importance of green space and the positive role it plays for our mental and physical health. We know that 45% of people spent more time in public spaces than prior to COVID.

We discovered new ways to enjoy our streets and bring our communities together. It reminded us that our streets can and should be for everyone to enjoy. Our streets are for pedestrians, cyclists, visitors and businesses and are made better by hosting outdoor dining, creative activities and community events.

We also know the last few years have changed the travel habits of our customers and we need to accommodate this shift in behaviour.

That's why we have used this opportunity to explore how we can make our streets more dynamic and adaptable for a mix of uses.

- Over 170ha of public space has been bought to life through permanent infrastructure upgrades or activations.
- Over 530,000 people have attended activations across NSW.
- Over 13,500 people have been employed or engaged, including over 2,800 hospitality workers and over 3,300 creative workers across the Summer Fund, Summer Night Fund, Open Streets and Long Summer Nights programs.

The success of the programs delivered by the Cities Revitalisation and Place branch are evidence that we can and should reimagine what our places, streets and open spaces can look like. We're implementing a range of exciting initiatives for our public spaces and are investing \$100M in public space revitalisation across NSW.

I am excited to present the awesome work this branch has facilitated over the past few years and note my special thanks to the councils across NSW who partnered with us. I look forward to seeing these programs continue to evolve.



Kiersten Fishburn
Deputy Secretary, Cities and Active Transport

Our work



Open Streets, Campsie Street Festival. Credit: NSW Government

The importance of our public spaces, including streets

The impacts of the pandemic have shown us how important quality public space is for communities to thrive. The quality of a public space is reflected not only in its physical form — how it’s designed, maintained and integrated with its environment — but also through the activities it supports and the meaning it holds. It can be evaluated by asking:

- Am I able to get there?
- Am I able to play and participate?
- Am I able to stay?
- Am I able to connect?

Streets and Centres

Vibrant and activated streets can generate positive social, economic, cultural and environmental outcomes. Great streets, avenues, boulevards, squares, plazas and pavements are our towns and cities’ connectors. In our centres and urban areas, they provide places for walking, cycling and gathering. They provide a sense of character in our neighbourhoods, as well as shape the way we go about our lives.

NSW Government has delivered a suite of programs to help act as a catalyst to re-think and reshape the idea of what a street can be: a place for people to gather and dwell, not just as corridors for movement.



Studies show that investment in public realm generates economic value through visitation, foot traffic and retail spend.

—
Deloitte



More walkable centres are economically more active as people spend more time and money in these areas.

—
Heart Foundation Good for Business



A 20-minute walk built into a person’s daily routine reduces the risk of early death by 22% and increases a person’s mental health by 33%.

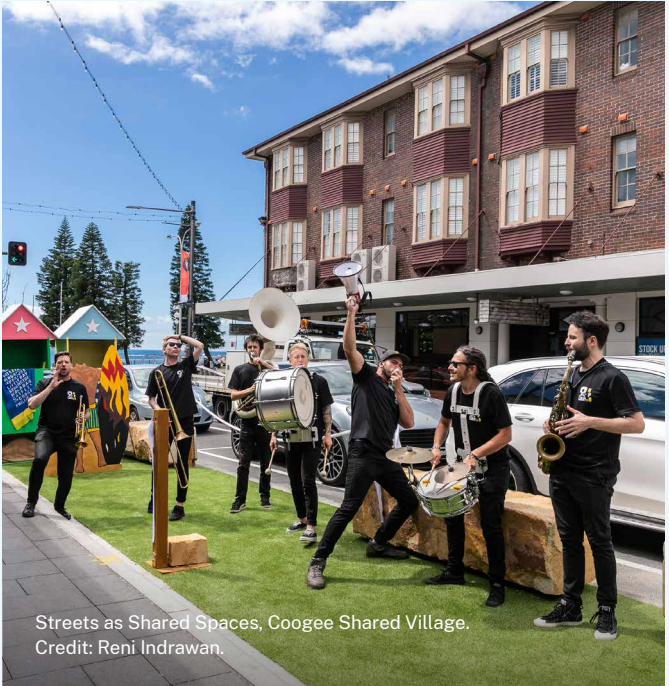
—
Greater Cities Commission

Purpose of this document

This document provides an overview of the outcomes of the programs delivered on the ground led by the Cities Revitalisation and Place branch. The purpose is to highlight the impacts generated with councils and communities across NSW through these initiatives.

All data in this document has been provided by local councils and state government agency partners for the purpose of evaluating the success of each initiative. This is a point in time document (May 2020 to December 2022), with more data still to be provided on some programs.

The programs are guided by the 10 principles of the [NSW Public Spaces Charter](#) highlighted below and aligned to themes of wellbeing and place-led revitalisation.



Open and welcoming
Everyone can access public space and feel welcome, respected and included.



Healthy and active
Public space allows everyone to participate in activities that strengthen our health and wellbeing, and encourages people to walk and cycle.



Community focused
Public space brings people together and builds strong, connected and resilient communities.



Local businesses and economies
Public space supports a dynamic economic life and vibrant urban and town centres, day and night.



Culture and creativity
Public space provides a platform for culture and creative expression that makes places more colourful, animated and thought-provoking.



Safe and secure
Everyone feels safe to access and use public space at all times of the day.



Local character and identity
Public space reflects who we are and our diverse stories and histories.



Designed for place
Public space is flexible and responds to its environment to meet the needs of its community.



Green and resilient
Public space connects us to nature, enhances biodiversity and builds climate resilience into communities.



Well-managed
Well-managed and maintained public space functions better and invites people to use and care for it.

Key outcomes

The programs delivered on the ground in our streets led by the Cities Revitalisation and Place team have positively impacted councils and communities all across NSW and help to deliver on the ambition of the Future Transport Strategy. Key outcomes include:



112

councils worked with across NSW

33

Greater Sydney councils

79

Regional councils

300+

projects delivered across NSW

133

Greater Sydney projects

187

Regional projects

7

programs delivered

\$60m+

total investment across these 7 funding programs

530,000+

attendees across all activations

170ha+

of public space brought to life

13,500+

people employed or engaged across Summer Fund, Summer Night Fund, Open Streets and Long Summer Nights, including over **2,800** hospitality workers and over **3,300** creative workers.

50,000m²+

estimated amount of public space created or activated through Streets as Shared Spaces equating to 4,000+ car parking spaces

370%

estimated increase in visitation on average across Open Streets activations

Types of projects

50+

trialled parklets

25+

trialled slower speed limits or traffic calming devices

13

included cycleway upgrades

75+

provided additional public art

700+

activations delivered

Note: All data in this document has been provided by local councils and state government agency partners for the purpose of evaluating the success of each initiative. These figures are accurate at the time of writing, but are subject to change during the delivery of programs.

Strategic alignment

The programs summarised in this document align with the Future Transport Strategy providing clear pathways to work with councils and state agencies across NSW to deliver on key outcomes.

Of particular significance is the extent to which the programs provide a substantial response to Strategic Direction P2 Transport infrastructure makes a tangible improvement to places. For example:

- P2.2 Manage street space as public spaces, in particular actions
 - P2.2a Support trials of innovative and low-cost treatments to reallocate space for alternative public uses and
 - P2.2c Explore programs to revitalise streets as public spaces through programs such as Streets as Shared Spaces, Your High Street, and the Alfresco Restart Package including Open Streets.

The programs also directly respond to P2.4 Build well-designed transport infrastructure that makes places more liveable and successful.

These trial and partnership programs have proven to be successful as evidenced by positive feedback from both councils and state agencies as well as some councils using the evidence base created to support future grant opportunities for permanent changes.

What is public space?

Public spaces are our streets, open spaces and public facilities. They are publicly owned or of public use, accessible to and enjoyable by all for free.

Public spaces are the heart of our communities and can define the lived experience and wellbeing of everyday life.



Open Streets, City of Sydney's Summer Streets, Kings Cross. Credit: NSW Government

Case Study

As part of the **Streets as Shared Spaces** project in **Parramatta, Phillip Lane** was activated over 8 weekends with lighting, temporary plants, live music, and tables and chairs. Patrons could order food directly from adjacent restaurants and enjoy their meal and drinks in the lane.

Participating businesses were highly supportive of this initiative, stating that the project was contributing up to 30% of their sales and for some, allowed them to employ up to 2 extra staff on event days.

Council has been successful in obtaining an additional \$1 million in grant funding under the Your High Street program for permanent embellishments to their High Street, including an upgrade to Phillip Lane through lighting installations and public art.



Streets as Shared Spaces, Morph It, Morpheth. Credit: Maitland City Council

Enabling great streets

Our programs have enabled projects that provide real change and benefits for communities right across the state.

We do this by providing councils with the funding to carry out projects and by fostering collaborative partnerships to build capacity to deliver quality projects.

We also work closely with policymakers across state government to advocate for great public space outcomes and simplify the processes that enable public life and activation in our streets, towns and centres. The Planning Policy division at the Department of Planning and Environment have been instrumental in executing regulatory changes to support public life and activation, enabled through our funding programs.

[Great Public Spaces Toolkit](#)

The Great Public Spaces Toolkit provides a collection of free resources that anyone can use to support planning, managing and creating better and more vibrant public spaces. The toolkit includes:

- NSW Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life
- NSW Guide to Walkable Public Spaces
- NSW Guide to Activation
- Case studies and other research.

2020

May

- Streets as Shared Spaces program launched alongside a temporary delegation under section 115 of the *Roads Act 1993* to streamline approvals for creating temporary pedestrian and cycling areas, supporting the program.

June

- Places to Love program launched under The Festival of Place.

October

- The Festival of Place launched as a network of both virtual and on the ground activities, curated with partners across NSW.
- NSW Government trialled a streamlined approval process for outdoor dining under the *Roads Act 1993* and *Local Government Act 1993*.
- The '[Public Spaces: Streets as Shared Spaces Engagement Report](#)' was released, capturing community views on the use and value of public spaces.

November

- Your High Street program launched.

December

- Summer Fund program launched under The Festival of Place alongside a temporary amendment under the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 (Codes SEPP)* to allow temporary outdoor events and associated structures on council land for an extended period as exempt development, supporting the program.



Streets as Shared Spaces, Morph It, Morpeth. Credit: Maitland City Council

2021

October

- \$66 million Alfresco Restart Package announced, which launched 'The Festival of Place... in your streets' initiative alongside a temporary amendment under the *Codes SEPP* to remove planning approvals for outdoor dining in carparks, laneways, open space, and public land.
- Planning changes as part of the outdoor dining trial became permanent state-wide, making the [exempt development pathway for outdoor dining](#) available to all food and drink premises including small bars and pubs.

November

- A second report, '[Public Spaces during COVID-19 Adapting to the new normal](#)' was released, which showed that people's use of public spaces including local and high streets remained high even as restrictions eased.

December

- Released the final [NSW Public Spaces Charter](#).

2022

June

- Round 2 of the Places to Love program launched.
- The temporary amendment to remove planning approvals for outdoor dining on private land in carparks, laneways, open space and public land under the *Codes SEPP* was extended until December 2023.



Awards

October 2020

The Streets as Shared Spaces program won the Greater Sydney Commission Planning Awards' Chief Commissioner's Award.

May 2021

The Festival of Place initiative won the NSW/ACT Parks & Leisure Australia's Community Based Initiative of the Year Award.

November 2021

The Festival of Place initiative won the Place Leaders Asia Pacific's Centrepiece Award and Digital Placemaking Award.

October 2022

The Places to Love program won the Place Leaders Asia Pacific 2022 Large Scale Projects Award.

November 2022

The Alfresco Restart Package 'The Festival of Place... in your streets' initiative won the NSW Planning Institute of Australia Planning Excellence — Community Wellbeing & Diversity Award.

Key insights

Four overall insights have been identified in relation to the delivery of the programs.

1 Trialling ideas to inform permanent outcomes

Trial and temporary projects are a good way to test ideas and outcomes with the community before investing in permanent projects, allowing the use of inexpensive elements and sometimes faster implementation approaches to inform and refine more expensive permanent works.

For example, Ballina Council's Streets as Shared Spaces project 'A Slow Path Not a Fast Shortcut' trialled traffic calming elements and streetscape elements in Lennox Village, which helped to slow speeds and refine where and how to design permanent changes.

2 Supporting local businesses, not creating competition

Engagement with local businesses is critical, so that changes in the street environment and activations complement existing businesses. The objective should be to strengthen the economic vitality of local centres, not create competition within.

For example, for City of Sydney's Open Streets 'Summer Streets' projects in Surry Hills and Kings Cross, the City provided necessary approvals and infrastructure for the closure of the streets. Restaurants, cafes and bars could then trade out beyond the footpath, and individual businesses were able to apply for their liquor license to be extended onto a section of the street.

3 Involving the community as active participants

Successful projects create a sense of local ownership and attachment by involving the community in activating a space as a participant, rather than as an observer.

For example, Griffith Council's Streets as Shared Spaces 'Street Scapes' project cultivated community-led programming, which led to a soccer and hula-hoop workshop, a sip and paint class, and an interactive art installation that was created by local artists from the region. This project is now being permanently implemented with funding from Your High Street.

4 A multi-disciplinary approach to placemaking

A successful place-based approach brings together different skillsets across the project and encourages collaboration across those delivering the project and the community. It requires multiple disciplines working together with stakeholders, with the best results achieved by cutting across the different services within a council or state agency. This could include people from planning, economic development, place activation and events, infrastructure and asset management, and marketing and communications.

The following section describes the outcomes and insights specific to each of the programs led by the Cities Revitalisation and Place branch.



Image: Summer Fund and Places to Love, Unity Place Community Day. Credit: Burwood City Council

Streets as Shared Spaces



Streets as Shared Spaces, Healthy, Active, Cabramatta. Credit: Ken Leanfore

Overview

Streets as Shared Spaces round one was launched in May 2020 for councils across NSW to deliver temporary and demonstration projects that test and pilot innovative ideas for streets as safe, shared public spaces in response to COVID-19. There were two funding categories. The first was for short-term, temporary, and quick response projects up to \$100,000, which could be delivered between one to three months and build the case for longer-term change. The second was for medium-term demonstration projects up to \$1M, that improved or activated public space and could be delivered within a year.

A second round of the program was launched in October 2021, with the department providing grants of up to \$500,000 to councils across NSW for trial projects that test permanent changes that strengthen the amenity, accessibility and economic vitality of a high street and surrounding areas.

Big Wins

- The program pilots a range of initiatives, such as parklets, speed reduction, cycleways, and street closures. In some areas these are being attempted for the first time.
- For many councils, these trials have given them the opportunity to engage their local community to develop ideas and gain feedback on potential long terms projects.
- The Streets as Shared Spaces program won the Greater Sydney Commission Planning Awards' Chief Commissioner's Award in 2020.
- The program has been a catalyst for working with communities on how streets can be used differently. The success of Streets as Shared Spaces has led to further programs being developed.

"We haven't experienced this much activity since pre Covid-19."

—
Local business owner, Parramatta

Key Program Outcomes

Round one (2020–2022)

\$15m

in funding

43

councils participated

27 Regional councils
16 Greater Sydney councils

51

projects

23 Category 1 projects
28 Category 2 projects

24

parklets installed

9

trials slower speed limits

30

added new public art

27

carpark conversions

10+

cycleways trialled

23

added new lighting

35

added new street furniture

Across projects that trialled cycleways, over **3km** of additional walking paths and over **5km** of cycle paths were added over the activation period.

The total estimated amount of created or activated public space is estimated at **50,000m²**, equating to **4,000+** car parking spaces, or 2 Sydney Cricket Grounds.

Over 50% of the projects incorporated urban greening and/or tree planting. These projects collectively contributed over **150** additional trees and more than **1,400** additional plants at footway level.

Over **90%** of projects retained elements beyond the trial or activation period.

Note: This data was calculated based on acquittal information supplied by participating councils.

Round two (2022–2023)

\$20m

in funding

41

councils participating

24 Regional councils
17 Greater Sydney councils

41

projects

24

trials parklets

13

trials slower speed limits

31

adding new public art

24

implementing footpath widening or extensions

14

trials street closure(s)

13

installing new pedestrian crossings or easy crossing points

33

incorporating urban greening and/or tree planting

Note: These figures are accurate based on project submission and are subject to change during program delivery.



Image: Streets as Shared Spaces, Morph It, Morpeth. Credit: Maitland City Council

Places to Love



Places to Love, Kingswood. Credit: Penrith City Council

Overview

The Places to Love Program was launched in June 2020 under The Festival of Place to enable the testing and trialling of ideas that could make public spaces more vibrant, activated, welcoming and accessible. In collaboration with local councils, the Program aimed to demonstrate safe and inclusive place-based experiences in public spaces that reflect their local character and function.

Big Wins

- Co-designing with the community led to a sense of ownership, community pride, and ultimately attachment to place. Activities such as night walks with women, workshops, co-design sessions, and renaming competitions help shape place improvements.
- Evaluation surveys conducted, during and after each of the first six projects, saw an increase in the number of people using the public space.
- The project showed temporary demonstration projects that use short-term but scalable, low-cost methods can be executed faster, cheaper, and have the potential to lay the foundation for longer-term change.
- Several partner councils have since made more permanent upgrades or increased investment to their public spaces.

Key Program Outcomes

\$2m

in funding

9

projects

6 projects delivered

3 projects underway

13,000m²+

total activated public space

12,300+

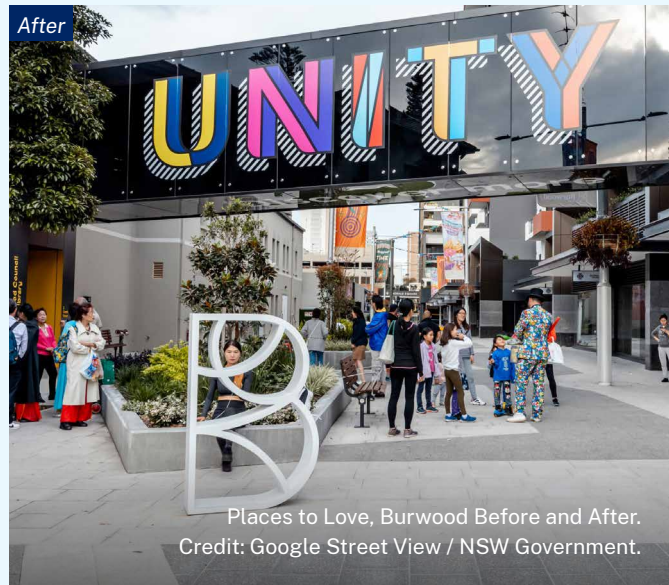
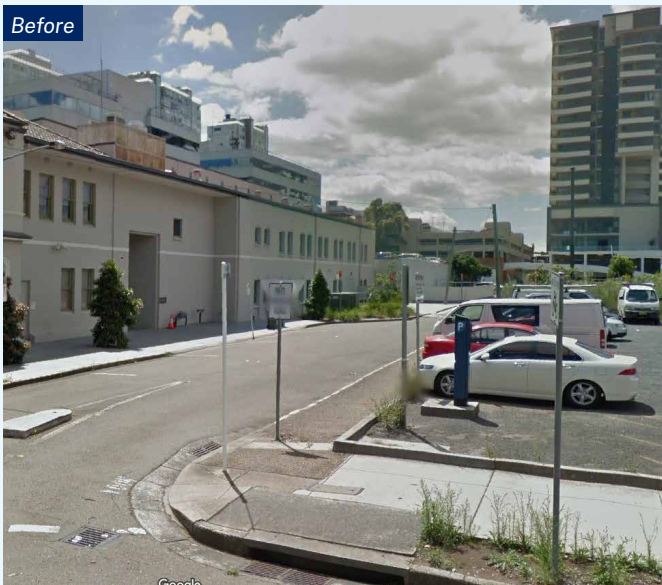
attendees across all activations

3,500+

community members contributed ideas to the program

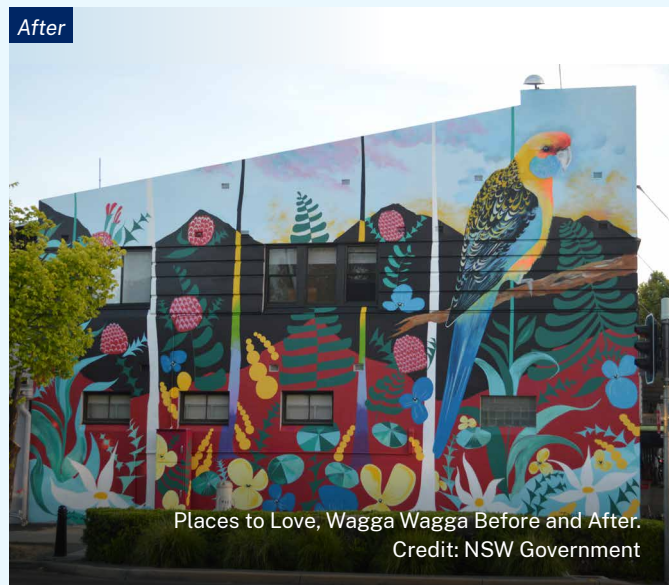
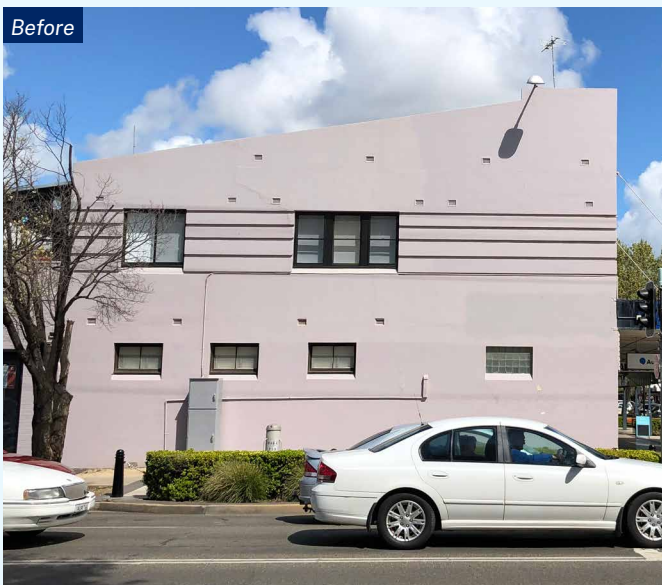
Note: This data was calculated based on acquittal information supplied by participating councils. These figures are accurate at the time of writing and are subject to change during program delivery.

Burwood



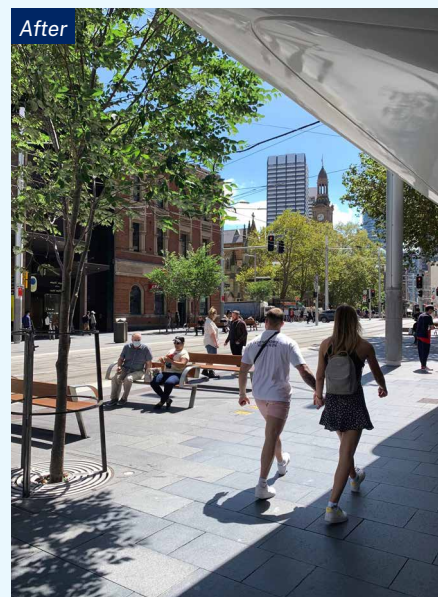
Places to Love, Burwood Before and After. Credit: Google Street View / NSW Government.

Wagga Wagga



Places to Love, Wagga Wagga Before and After. Credit: NSW Government

City of Sydney



Places to Love, George Street During and After. Credit: City of Sydney

Your High Street



Your High Street, Monaro Lanes, Queanbeyan. Credit: Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, Yanni Pounartzis and Hilary Wardhaugh

Overview

Your High Street, which launched in November 2020, is a \$15M funding program for councils across NSW to enhance high streets in strategic centres by providing grant funding for projects that improve amenity and high street functionality. These permanent changes aim to support local businesses and improve the experience for the community. All projects are expected to be completed by April 2023.

Big Wins

- 4 Your High Street projects implement Streets as Shared Spaces trial projects permanently, using evaluation and feedback of the trial to inform longer-term change and illustrating the benefits of testing changes before making them permanent.
- Fairfield City Council is delivering a demonstration project under Your High Street that aims to prioritise 'Movement and Place' across Fairfield City Centre, allowing for people to easily access, participate, connect, and socialise comfortably within the centre at all times of the day.

Key Program Outcomes

\$15m

in funding

19

councils participated

11 Regional councils

8 Greater Sydney councils

10

adding new public art

3

implementing cycling amenities upgrades

3

implementing shared zones

16

incorporating urban greening and/or tree planting

3

creating plaza spaces

2

street closures

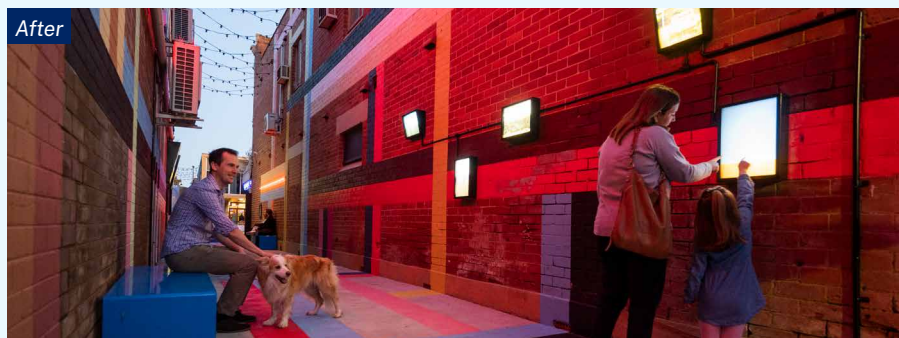
Note: This data was calculated based on acquittal information supplied by participating councils. These figures are accurate at the time of writing and are subject to change during program delivery.

Nowra



Your High Street, Junction Court Revitalisation Before and After. Credit: Shoalhaven City Council

Queanbeyan



Your High Street, Monaro Lanes Before and After. Credit: Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, Al Stark, Andy Townsend, Suzie Bleach, Micheal Warner and Yanni Pounartzis and Hilary Wardhaugh

Summer Fund



Summer Fund, Bale Out Coramba. Credit: Jay Black

Overview

Summer Fund launched in December 2020, under The Festival of Place to support councils across NSW deliver activations and events in public spaces in town centres. \$10,000 in funding was available to every council in NSW for activations to support communities and local businesses bounce back during COVID-19, with the purpose of the program to provide free activations or events to draw people to public spaces in local centres over summer.

Big Wins

- At a time when communities, the creative sector and local businesses across NSW had been impacted by bushfires, floods and then the COVID-19 pandemic, this program re-enlivened public spaces, empowering the community and economic recovery.
- The program brought immediate relief and joy to communities and local businesses across 94 local government areas in NSW through the delivery of close to 400 activations over the summer.
- 10 councils took advantage of an amendment to the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 (Codes SEPP)* to deliver their project.
- The program has left a lasting impression and uplift in wellbeing in communities across NSW, especially in regional centres, which saw significant attendance at events and meant that much of their community benefited from the program.

Key Program Outcomes

\$1m+

in funding

94

councils participated

63 Regional councils

31 Greater Sydney councils

390+

activations or
events delivered

93ha+

total estimated
activated public space

125,000+

attendees across all
activations

3,400+

people employed or
engaged

“Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. People were so happy to see some action in the area and commented how exciting it was to see things happening again.”

—
Inner West Council

Note: This data was calculated based on acquittal information supplied by participating councils.



Summer Fund, A Night Under the Gums.
Credit: Gilgandra Shire Council



Summer Fund, Dumpling DJ Nights.
Credit: City of Canada Bay Council



Summer Fund, Cabonne March Music Month.
Credit: Cabonne Council



“Who knew, that when you mention that Gilgandra’s going to host an evening of gourmet food, drink and entertainment, that over half the population of Gil would turn up? There was over 1000 in attendance. Locals and travellers were all thrilled to be able to enjoy their own backyard again with good food and company.”

Gilgandra Shire Council

Summer Fund, A Night Under the Gums.
Credit: Gilgandra Shire Council

Open Streets



Open Streets, City of Sydney's Summer Streets, Surry Hills. Credit: NSW Government

Overview

The Open Streets program, launched in October 2021 under The Festival of Place, temporarily closed streets and laneways to cars and opened them on a day or series of days for demonstration projects involving community events and activities. The program was a partnership with the 13 Greater Sydney councils most impacted by the 2021 COVID-19 lockdowns, with each council offered up to \$500,000 in funding to deliver street activations from December 2021 to May 2022.

Big Wins

- Rapidly establishing and implementing a program in partnership with 13 councils that supported communities and businesses as they re-emerged from COVID restrictions in 2021.
- Bringing life and activity to over 40 streets and laneways across 20 centres in Greater Sydney including Crown Street in Surry Hills, Beamish Street in Campsie, Phillip Street in Parramatta, and George Street in Liverpool.
- Supporting businesses by increasing visitation on average by 370%, with people staying and spending time and money in their local centres.

“It was a better atmosphere that took it away from being a commercial high street with cars, to a community space where people could bring kids and walk their dogs...We definitely want to do it again.”

—
City of Sydney Council

Key Program Outcomes

\$6.5m

in funding

6

months of free events/
activations

20 centres

40+ streets activated

90,000m²+

of road space reallocated
for people to use

370%

estimated average
increase in visitation

200,000+

attendees across
all activations

100%

estimated average
increase in sales turnover

70

minutes average increase
in dwell time

4000+

people employed
or engaged

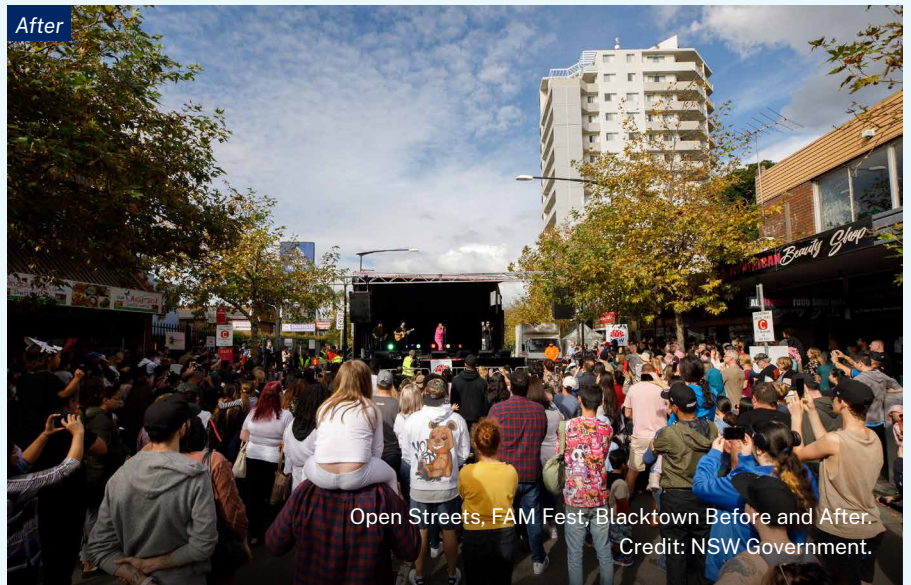
540+

delivery partners involved
across a number of
sectors including business
chambers, libraries, cultural
facilities and schools

1,100+ hospitality workers
1,500+ creative workers

Note: This data was calculated based on acquittal information supplied by participating councils.

Blacktown



Open Streets, FAM Fest, Blacktown Before and After. Credit: NSW Government.

Cumberland



Open Streets, Ramadan Street Food Festival, Auburn Before and After. Credit: NSW Government.

Strathfield



Open Streets, Street Festival 2140, Homebush Before and After. Credit: NSW Government

Summer Night Fund



Summer Night Fund, Endless Summer Markets & Music, Coffs Harbour. Credit: And the Trees Photography

Overview

Summer Night Fund, which launched under The Festival of Place, saw close to 90 councils across NSW offered up to \$15,000 for free activations or events that enliven public spaces in and around local centres and high streets. This program ran from January until the end of April 2022 and aimed to support the community by providing opportunities to safely return to public spaces, as well as activating the night-time economy across the state.

Big Wins

- Showcased the ability to activate public space on a low budget with high-impact events.
- An initiative that significantly supported the creative and cultural sector in a particularly turbulent period for these industries.
- For many communities, these projects provided an opportunity for people to safely return to their public spaces, with some being the first activations since the beginning of the pandemic.

“Burradise Live Music in Culburra Beach - Vibe the Village attracted 2,105 people and employed 62 people in the hospitality and creative sectors. Onsite local business food vendors reported a strong sales revenue, many running out of menu items due to a considerable turnout. Direct sales turnover saw a 60%+ increase on normal trade”

—
City of Shoalhaven Council

Key Program Outcomes

\$1.8m+

in funding

88

councils participated

60 Regional councils

28 Greater Sydney councils

250+

activations or events delivered

137,000+

attendees across all activations

640,000m²+

total activated public space

5,000+

people employed or engaged

Note: This data was calculated based on acquittal information supplied by participating councils.



“What is normally a very small and inactive CBD after 5pm became a vibrant centre that attracted both locals and visitors to the region, making the township a positive and safe environment for all to enjoy”

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

Summer Night Fund, Laurieton Alive Markets. Credit: Matt Gilligan



Summer Night Fund, Dance on Forum on Q, Campbelltown. Credit: Infinite Images Photography

Long Summer Nights



Rollerama Learn to Skate Class, Darling Harbour. Credit: NSW Government

Overview

The Rocks, Darling Harbour, The Domain and Wynyard Park celebrated a long summer with re-imagined and newly created areas with outdoor dance floors, live music, theatre, and comedy shows under the stars. Cities Revitalisation and Place partnered with Place Management NSW, The Royal Botanic Garden and Domain Trust and Property and Development NSW to deliver Long Summer Nights, a series of activations under The Festival of Place from November 2021 to June 2022.

Big Wins

- Collaboration between the main state government place and precinct managers resulted in a series of coordinated, free and publicly accessible activations across The Rocks, Darling Harbour, The Domain and Wynyard Park that attracted families, visitors and business workers to visit and spend time in public spaces.
- Public activation at Wynyard Park catalysed a pilot for place activation and experience that brought together a mix of private organisations, local government and state government representatives, who are willing to invest in the future of Wynyard Park as a micro-district.
- Front page media coverage emphasising the role of the private sector in CBD revival and public space investment - [‘Where the magic can happen’: Stokes pushes for business to take lead in CBD revival.](#)

Key Program Outcomes

4

CBD precincts activated

22,000m²+

of public space improved or made accessible

65,000+

attendees across the activations

25+

participating local retailers

\$41

average spend for visitors across all activations

35%

increase in sales turnover in The Rocks between Jan-Apr 2022 compared to 2021

225+

artists and local suppliers supported through The Garden Social, including 135 student artists from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

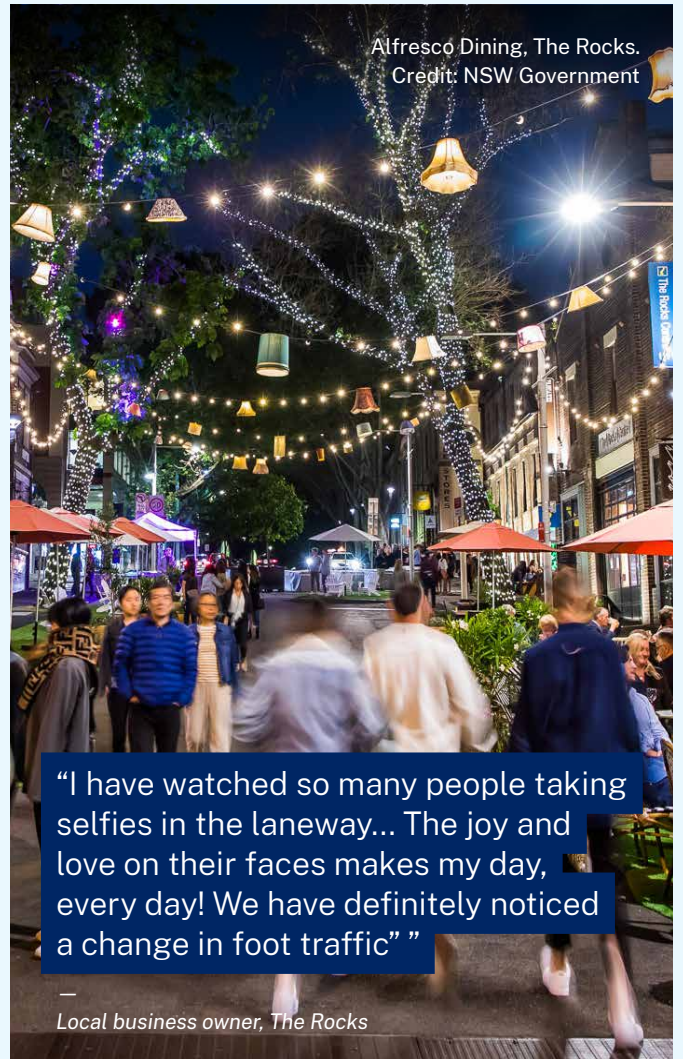
Note: This data was calculated based on acquittal information supplied by state agency partners.



Rollerama Learn to Skate Class, Darling Harbour. Credit: NSW Government



The Garden Social, Royal Botanic Gardens. Credit: NSW Government



Alfresco Dining, The Rocks. Credit: NSW Government

“I have watched so many people taking selfies in the laneway... The joy and love on their faces makes my day, every day! We have definitely noticed a change in foot traffic”

—
Local business owner, The Rocks



“The next few months are packed with some really strong activities... this feels like it will be one of the strongest Summer boosters we have had for a while!”

—
Local business owner, The Rocks

The Garden Social, Royal Botanic Gardens. Credit: NSW Government

Case Studies

Tweed Shire Council, Tweed's Green Parklet, Public Art and Activation Project, Streets as Shared Spaces

Tweed Shire Council transformed car parking spaces with 2 pop-up parklets in Murwillumbah, to increase public space, incorporating public art, greening and a community activation program to improve the amenity and beautification of the local streetscape. 92% of community and businesses surveyed were supportive of seeing the streetscape changes made permanent. As a result, council resolved to permanently retain the parklets, art seats and planter boxes, with some adjustments to ensure they were appropriate for longer-term use.

Penrith City Council, Open Streets Penrith and St Marys Light Up, Open Streets

A number of activations took place throughout May 2022 in the Penrith and St Marys Town Centres. Woodriff Street, Masters Place and Masters Place Carpark in Penrith were closed to cars and opened to people to host a street party style program of drinks, food, DJs, and world-class comedy acts. West Lane and Crana Street, surrounding Kokoda Carpark in St Marys, were transformed into an ambient festival environment, which included an alfresco dining area, outdoor public bar, pop-up green space and main stage for headline performers. The events attracted up to 24,000 attendees and provided the community and visitors a place to enjoy an inclusive, relaxed, and celebratory event. In total, 7747m² of road space was reallocated for public use. Sales turnover increased by 52% in Penrith and by 100% in St Marys.

Inner West Council, Light Up the Town Halls, Summer Fund

Light Up the Town Halls featured projections and audio on the Balmain Town Hall Facades in celebration of the local Aboriginal community. The project supported engagement and employment of creative workers and producers. Over 2,000 visitors across 10 days gathered to hear the stories



Summer Fund, Light Up the Town Halls - Baludarra Launch. Credit: Inner West Council

of Baludarra (Balmain)'s local Aboriginal narratives projected onto the Town Hall in a truth-telling project. The project provided an opportunity for people to safely return to their public spaces, with some of the community commenting on the excitement around seeing public activations occurring again.



Cities Revitalisation and Place

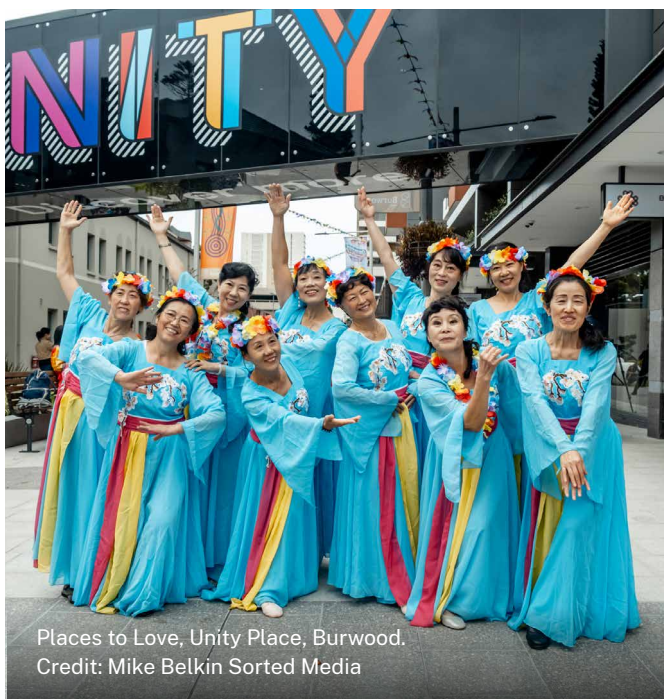
The Cities Revitalisation and Place branch leads over \$100M of investment in public space revitalisation across NSW and helps create great places for community through systems change and demonstration projects.

Contact Us

PublicSpace@planning.nsw.gov.au

Media Coverage

[‘Where the magic can happen’: Stokes pushes for business to take lead in CBD revival](#)



Places to Love, Unity Place, Burwood.
Credit: Mike Belkin Sorted Media

[Shutting Sydney’s high streets brings communities back together](#)



Open Streets, Crown Street, Surry Hills.
Credit: NSW Government

[The ‘easiest way’ to revive Sydney’s cherished high streets](#)



Open Streets, Beamish Street, Campsie.
Credit: NSW Government

[More outdoor dining at beaches, train stations to make ‘better places for people’ in Sydney](#)



Open Streets, Crown Street, Surry Hills.
Credit: NSW Government



Disclaimer

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