

Open Streets

Vibrant Streets Package

April 2024



What is the Open Streets program?

The Open Streets Program is a grant program open to all NSW councils to temporarily close streets to vehicles and open them on a day, or series of days, for demonstration projects involving community events and activations.

The program supports the [Vibrant Streets Package](#), helping to transform our streets into vibrant local places.

How much funding is available?

Open Streets is a \$4.5 million grant program that will provide successful NSW councils with funding of up to \$150,000.

How are applications assessed?

The program is a non-competitive, demand-driven/'first-in, first-served' grant program. This means that applications will be assessed in the order they are received and those that satisfy the eligibility criteria will be approved up to the limit of available funding.

When do applications close?

Grants will close once the total program funding of \$4.5 million has been allocated, or by the application close date of 30 April 2024, whichever is first.

What kinds of streets should we consider closing?

Projects must be located on one or more streets that are: in council or NSW Government ownership, that are primarily use for vehicles, and at the heart of one or more local centre/s. Events and activations may be held across multiple streets.

Councils are encouraged to consider streets that already have support from the community and Transport for NSW for full or partial closures. Considerations for closures may include, but are not limited to:

- impacts on the road and transport network,
- property access,
- road safety,
- notification periods,
- any temporary adjustments to Opal Card or bus stops for the event,
- other events happening the same day, and
- suitable detours for the community to move around on the network.

The Open Streets Program Guidelines describes streets as any main street, local street and civic space, as defined by [Movement and Place – Design of roads and streets](#), that is used primarily by vehicles.

Are councils required to provide contributing funds for their project?

No, but seeking other sources of funding is encouraged. When submitting an application, councils will need to nominate whether they will co-contribute funding.

When will activities take place and for how long?

Community events and activities can run for a day or a series of days. Activities can occur as soon as an agreement is in place between council and Transport for NSW and once all necessary applications are approved and are obtained by council. Activities must be delivered by January 2025.

What kinds of events and activities will be supported?

The Open Streets Program is for community events and activities that are free and inclusive to all.

We want to see streets reimagined as places for people, whether that's turning asphalt into art, providing pop-up parklets, or trialling a street closure to make more room for more safe and vibrant street play.

Project examples could include:

- Converting a street/s into a space for an outdoor dining experience, allowing local bars, restaurants, and cafes to expand into the street.
- Transforming the experience of a street through low-cost and passive activations e.g. markets or play street, bringing creativity and colour through painted streets.
- Opening a street for a community mural, and a space for play and activities.
- Creating a series of regular events/activations that transform the street e.g. outdoor street dining and performances.

Can we apply for multiple events under the program?

Proposed projects may include events and activities across multiple streets and over a series of days. Cohesive programming is encouraged between events.

Each council may only submit a single application for the program, meaning that all events will need to be proposed in the single application.

Can we apply for the funding of existing or planned events?

Funding can be used to support events and activities already in planning, provided that councils demonstrate how the funding will expand the scope and amplify what is already planned. Examples include extending a day-time event into the night-time or temporarily closing and activating a street not previously planned for closure.

Funding cannot be used to offset expenses of an existing or planned activation or event, but can be used to extend the scope of an event. Council will need to provide evidence of how the funding will build on or add to the existing event as part of their application.

What do you mean by demonstration projects?

Demonstration projects are short-term projects that promote innovative and new approaches and help to build an evidence base. These projects are usually short-term, quick response projects that test existing practices.

In this program, demonstration projects will take the form of community events and activities that will allow people to take over a street or streets. Evaluation of the process, implementation and outcomes of the activations will contribute to an evidence base for longer term place management strategies, particularly strategies that help to reduce the cost and complexity associated with delivering street-based events.

How has this program been funded?

This program is being funded as part of the NSW Government's Vibrant Streets Package.

What is the Vibrant Streets Package?

The Vibrant Streets Package is a \$15 million investment to help restore vibrancy in NSW by supporting the activation of outdoor public spaces such as streets.

The Vibrant Streets Package will be delivered through two program streams to transform streets into vibrant public spaces with creative and cultural activations in the short term, and trial place management strategies to support sustainable street-based activation in the long term.

For more information on the Package, visit the [Vibrant Streets Package](#) webpage.

Why is Transport for NSW championing streets and delivering a funding program that closes streets temporarily to vehicles?

Our streets are key public spaces that play a critical role in supporting public life, including in transport hub precincts and local centres. Previous streets and centres programs have demonstrated that great streets can help improve mental and physical wellbeing; foster public life and equity; support local jobs; showcase local content, small business, and local supply chains; and allow us to connect with other people and our environment.

Opening streets for people can bring new energy to places and can allow people to engage with these public spaces in new ways. Temporarily closing streets for events and activations allows for more room for safe street play, more opportunities to socialise and connect, and more vibrancy in business and retail offerings.

Who do we contact if we have questions?

Contact the team via email: PublicSpace@planning.nsw.gov.au.