



**ACT**  
Government

# LISTENING REPORT

## DRAFT CITY PLAN AND DRAFT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Update to the City Plan 2014  
June 2023





# Acknowledgment of Country

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognises any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

Artwork: Reconciliation through Caring for Country  
Artist: Leilani Keen Church 2018  
The three green inner circles represent the environment and country. The outer symbols represent people and community standing side by side in reconciliation and taking care of country. The pathways represent the journey.



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## The vision for the City Plan

A fair place for all. An energetic place for people to enjoy and meet. A place that is community focussed, walkable, public transport-oriented, sustainable, resilient and connected to its landscape.

The Draft City Plan is based on people. It provides a vision and framework for how land use and development can make the City Centre a better place for residents, visitors and business people. It provides a clear direction for future growth so the City Centre remains Canberra's cultural and economic hub servicing the ACT's current and growing population.

## How do the City Plan and City Centre Urban Design Framework come together?

The Draft City Plan and Draft City Centre Urban Design Framework have been prepared in the context of the current reforms to the planning system. They sit alongside the draft Inner North and City District Strategy. In recognition of the regional and national role of the City Centre, the draft plan has more detailed direction than the district strategies. Where appropriate, the plan's policy positions will be reflected in the desired policy outcomes of the Territory Plan. The urban design framework's design guidance will support the assessment provisions of the Territory's Plan for development projects in the City Centre.

## How did we engage?

### Community conversations:

Working alongside community forums for the District Strategies (as part of the Planning System Review and Reform Project), including a workshop, pop ups and listening spaces.

### Short online survey:

On the YourSay website, we asked a range of specific and open-ended questions to capture in-depth opinions and general feedback.

### Online portal:

Hosted on the YourSay platform, options for quick engagement were facilitated through comment boards and pin drops on an interactive map. There were also options for individuals to leave questions, to be answered by team members.

### Online presentations:

Two online information sessions were held where the Draft City Plan and Draft City Centre Urban Design Framework were presented.

## Engagement snapshot



**48,000+**

Our content was seen more than **48,000 times** on social media

**2**

The City Plan was on display at 2 Inner North and City listening spaces



**We received 13**  
formal submissions



**We held 2**  
online sessions



**We dropped 100+**  
postcards to businesses



**126**

**126 contributions** were made on the YourSay webpage

**3,100+**

**Visitors** to the YourSay page



**46%**

of the YourSay comment board highlighted the desire for **live music** and an **entertainment precinct**

**50%**

of YourSay comments and pins mention **pedestrian safety** and **people-focussed streets**



**38%**

of survey responses say **parking is a barrier** to enjoying the City Centre



**50%**

of survey responses mention **public transport**



## When we engaged



Documents released for awareness:

**1 December 2022**

Active consultation:

**1 February – 14 March 2023**



# What we heard

A visual summary of what we heard over the course of our community consultation.





# What we heard

## Access

- Parkes Way restricts access to Lake Burley Griffin and there is a lack of pedestrian options to navigate this. The location of a major road running parallel to the lake prohibits ease of access to the West Basin and Commonwealth Park. People were pleased to see that the City to the Lake principles are being reinforced.
- There is an appetite for transport options on and across the lake (e.g., water taxis, ferries).
- Parking in and around the City Centre is a popular topic, where conversations covered wanting less or more of it, a desire for surface or multi-storey, and how close it should be to popular areas. The cost and availability of parking is a barrier to people enjoying parts of the city.
- Balancing the needs of people and cars at the street level is important to many – Canberrans want active, vibrant, safe streets that are people-focussed.
- There is a desire to improve cycling infrastructure and associated amenities overall. Feedback supposed that an increased number of active travel paths for cyclists and e-scooters would reduce confusion and allow people to move safely on either mode.



## Entertainment

- There is strong support for an increase in entertainment options. This includes the desire for live music, busking, spaces for play, a vibrant night-time economy, and more choices for various age groups at all times of day. Responses highlight that a wider range of provisions and change of operating hours would encourage them to go to the City Centre more regularly and stay later.

## Built form

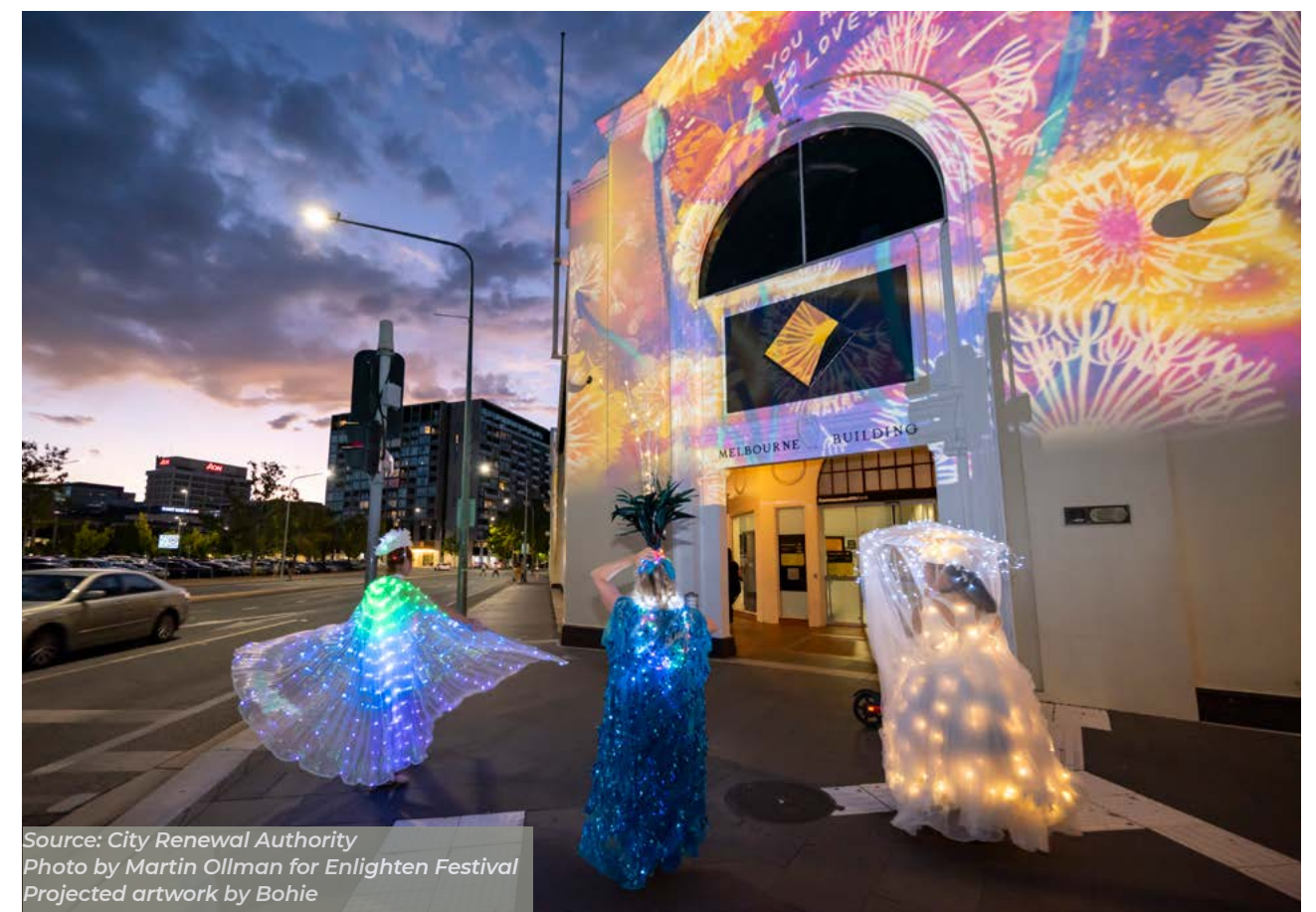
- There is a desire to reduce the appearance of 'monolithic' structures in the City Centre, and support exists for smaller-scale, people-focussed design that enhances the pedestrian experiences at street level.
- We heard that appropriate measures should be in place for the sale of block sizes and design of buildings to promote permeability between and through building sites.

## Diverse City Centre

- We've heard that the City North-West precinct needs more consideration. There is a large residential population alongside commercial tenants, underpinned by students, arts and theatre communities, which could be better connected to other precincts in the City Centre.
- There is support for different experiences across the City Centre with places for noise, and places for contemplation. These experiences should cater to different age groups and have access to social provisions where appropriate.
- We heard ideas and thoughts about a sports stadium and where it could be located. Many were supportive of a stadium, but also had concerns around what that would mean for existing popular sites.

## Character

- Protecting heritage buildings is important to Canberrans. This includes upkeep and maintenance of the sites and surrounding business areas in the City Centre. Several pieces of feedback mention cleanliness as a deterrent to enjoying parts of the city.
- Maintaining the 'City within the landscape' and 'garden city' concepts are important to many Canberrans, and increasing places to enjoy green space, trees and shade would be welcomed.



Source: City Renewal Authority  
Photo by Martin Ollman for Enlighten Festival  
Projected artwork by Bohie



# Next steps

Feedback received through community engagement is valuable and will substantially enhance the Draft City Plan and Draft City Centre Urban Design Framework documents as we finalise them. These planning and design documents play an important role in guiding development in the City Centre and achieving the vision for the City Centre. We are also working to align the Draft City Plan and Draft City Centre Urban Design Framework with the Planning System Review and Reform Project which is currently underway, and to provide clarity on how these place focused documents align with and support the reforms, and connect with the District Strategies and Territory Plan and Design Guides.

Several of the ongoing actions identified in the Draft City Plan are being implemented and coordinated across ACT Government Directorates to continually aim for orderly and coordinated development in the City Centre. This work will continue to be shaped as feedback is progressed and integrated.

If you would like to know more about the related work, documents, and the project timeline, please visit the website below:

[www.planning.act.gov.au](http://www.planning.act.gov.au)

