



Gender Sensitive Urban Design

Summary Listening Report



ACT
Government

Gender Sensitive
Urban Design



Acknowledgment of Country

Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) acknowledge that Aboriginal people are the Traditional Owners of Australia. We acknowledge and pay respect to the Ngunnawal peoples as the custodians of the land and waters that we live and thrive on today here in the ACT.

TCCS acknowledges that Canberra's cultural and natural heritage was maintained by the Ngunnawal people for many generations before colonial settlement on Australian soil. Aboriginal people's management of the land preserved the natural balance of local plants and animals.

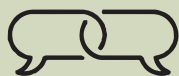
This knowledge of the environment in which we live is critical to the protection and restoration of our land today. It is our responsibility to preserve and encourage Ngunnawal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural integrity. When using this document, consider opportunities to incorporate Ngunnawal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture into the street planning and design of our suburbs within the ACT. Through incorporating culture in planning and design, Ngunnawal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and community will be present and allow opportunities for all to be united.

Gender Sensitive Urban Design Summary Listening Report

Prepared for



Project Team



Communication Link

O C U L U S



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Introduction

Project background

In accordance with Action 3.5 of the ACT Women's Plan 2016-26, the ACT Government has been working to develop Gender Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines and implementation tools that will assist in creating a safer, more inviting and inclusive Canberra.

As a part of the ACT Women's Plan 2016-26, Canberra's first Gender Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines will help the ACT Government, planners, engineers, architects, landscape designers and developers create urban spaces that help enrich the lives of women, girls, gender diverse groups and vulnerable people across Canberra.

Project Summary

To assist in the development of these Guidelines, the ACT Government engaged PLACE Laboratory – working in partnership with Oculus, Inhabit Place, and Communication Link.

Figure 1 depicts an overview of the approached used for the project overall. It shows how the overall project deliverables are underpinned by effective communication and engagement throughout.

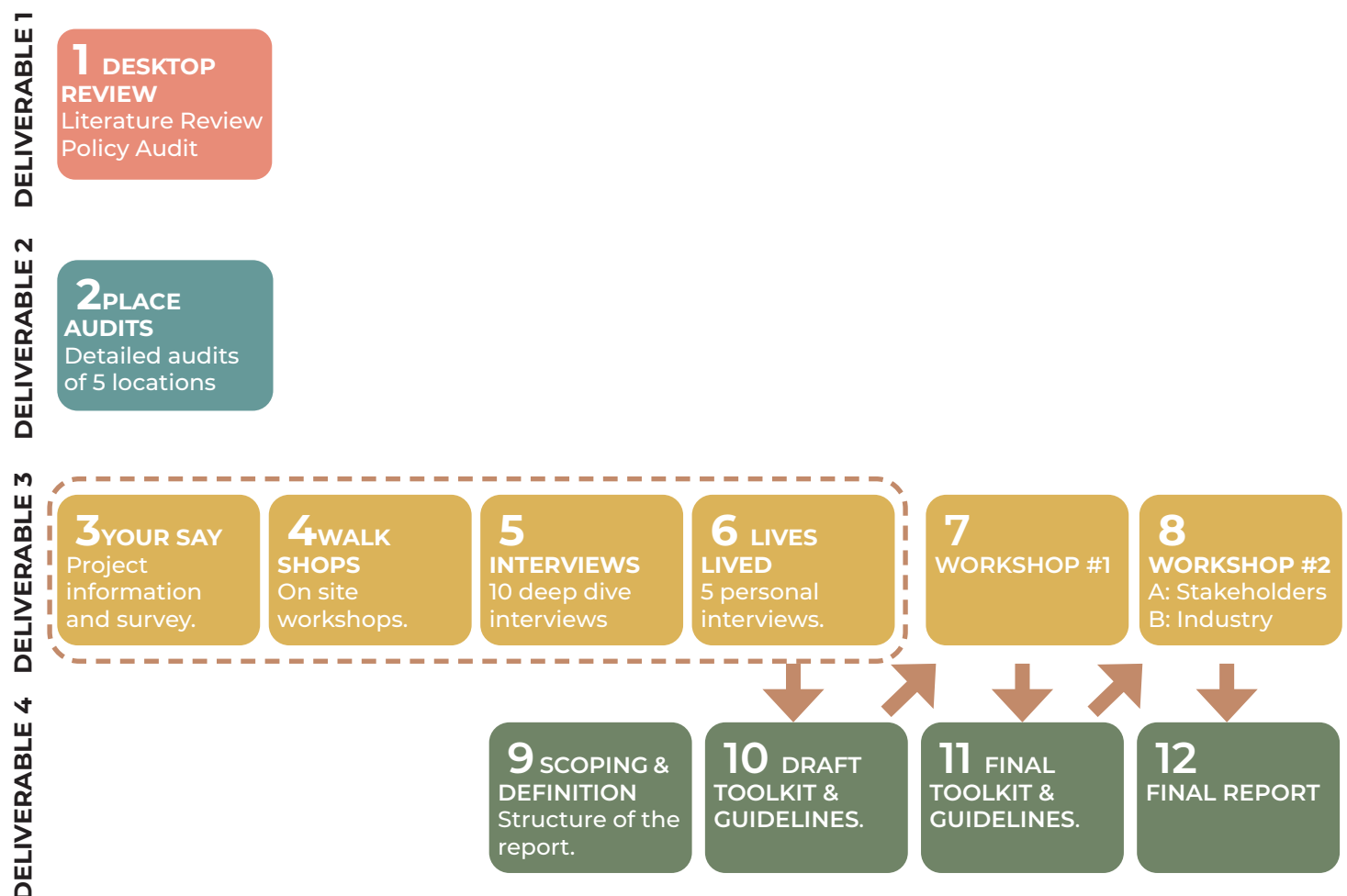


Figure 1. Project Delivery Approach

Methodology and engagement summary

Engagement purpose and principles

Data and insights were collected from engagement from February-June 2022 through stakeholder interviews, workshops, YourSay data via a crowd-sourced map and Walkshops that were held across five typical Canberra urban spaces, which included City Walk, Dickson Library, Belconnen Skatepark, Gungahlin Bus Interchange and Anketell St, Tuggeranong.

These forms of engagement and the locations included ensured that diverse voices and experiences were present in the development of the Gender Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines. Below highlights the guiding principles of data gathering for engagement:

Communication channels

To ensure a diverse representation of the Canberra community, the following channels were used for the promotion and engagement of the gender Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines project engagement activities:

- Dedicated website on YourSay
- Flyers, posters and engagement collateral
- Stakeholder emails
- E-newsletters, including ANU Gender Institute
- Social media, including, Minister Berry and Communication Link's channels
- Media, including Her Canberra
- Word of mouth.

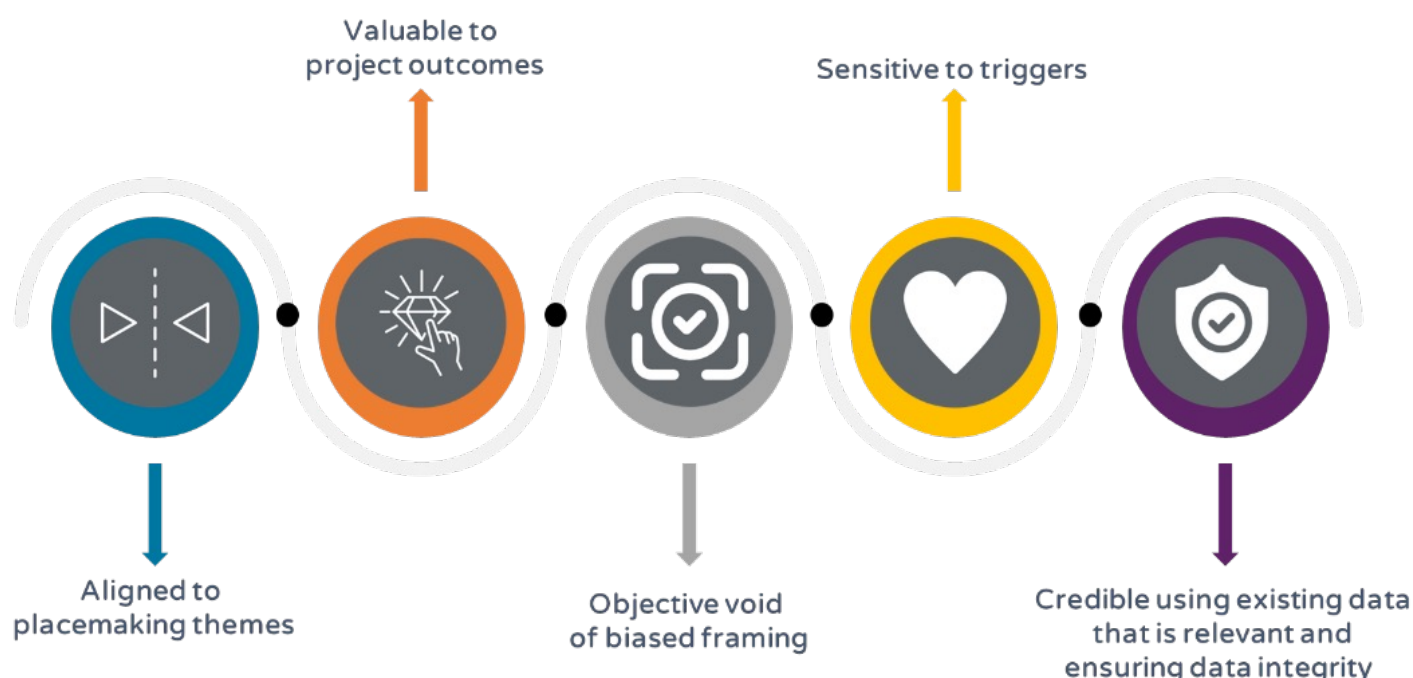


Figure 2. Guiding principles of data gathering

YourSay

The Gender Sensitive Urban Design YourSay webpage served as a platform to access information and literary reviews and provided participants with a way to join a Walkshop and populate a crowd map of the five typical Canberra locations. The page garnered a total of 50 contributions, participants used markers to share their experiences on a map of the five typical locations in relation to the following topics:

- **Sociability** – how welcomes I feel in the space
- **Uses and activities** – things I can do in the space
- **Comfort and image** – how I feel in the space
- **Access and linkages** – how I connect to the space

Table 1 provides the contribution numbers for each of the five typical locations and the scores they received for how welcoming they were, their accessibility and how safe they felt.

Stakeholder interviews

A series of deep-dive interviews were held to understand the use of public spaces by women, girls, and vulnerable community members to gather a wide range of perspectives. A total of 9 organisations were interviewed, which can be found in Section 3.2. Each interview covered the following topics/questions:

- Safety in public spaces
- Do we need to improve our public spaces?
- What are the elements within a space that help people feel safe and comfortable?
- Designing spaces for everyone
- The value of public spaces

Location	Contributions	Average frequency of visiting space	Welcoming (Average from 1-5 scale)	Accessible (Average from 1-5 scale)	Safe (Average from 1-5 scale)
City Walk	23	Once or twice a month	3.15	3.35	3.15
Dickson Library	11	A few times a week	2	3.12	1.62
Belconnen Skatepark	9	A few times a week	3.83	4.33	3.50
Gungahlin Bus Interchange	6	Once or twice a month	3.71	3.28	3.71
Anketell St Tuggeranong	11	Once or twice a month	3.4	3.6	3.5

Table 1.YourSay data for the 5 typical spaces

Walkshops

The Walkshops were delivered across three Saturdays from 18 March-2 April 2022 by the Communication Link team for each of the five locations. The participants were guided by a facilitator in an interactive tour where participants were asked to share their views and put themselves in the shoes of another to understand how the spaces would feel for vulnerable people. The Belconnen Skatepark was designed as a 'Skateshop', an interactive game for the participants who were aged from 4-25 years old.

At the Walkshops, participants were asked about how they used the area and how they typically accessed the area. They were then asked to identify key factors about the public space that made them feel safe or unsafe.



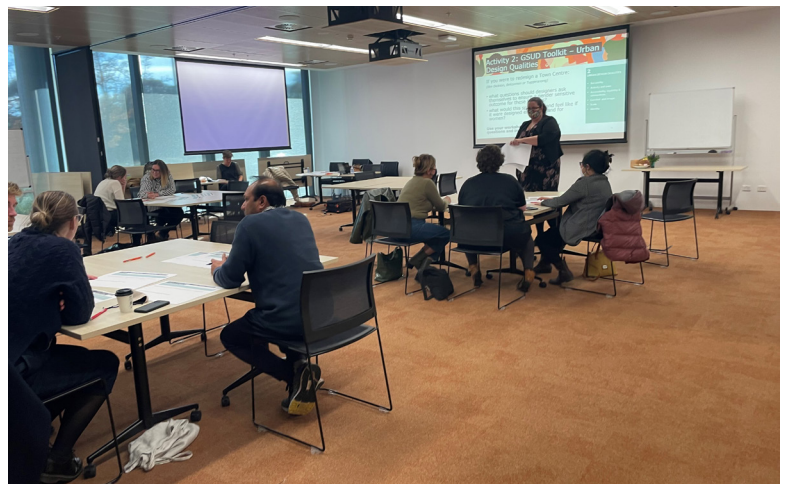
Walkshop images

Stakeholder workshop

The stakeholder workshop was held to gather further insights and validate the findings from YourSay, the Walkshops and the stakeholder interviews, with the aim of developing solutions to work towards the GSUD Guidelines. The activities asked participants to reflect on their personal experiences with the public spaces identified. They then provided feedback on the Gender mainstreaming process, and then completed the workshop by identifying their top five preferred participant contributions from the previous two activities.

Industry workshop

The industry workshop was designed to validate the draft GSUD Principles and gather further insights for the GSUD Toolkit. The first activity asked participants to validate the GSUD Principles by identifying whether they agreed with them, and if there was anything that was missing or needed to be considered. Participants then tested the Toolkit's urban Design Qualities with the example of designing a town centre.



Stakeholder and industry workshop images

Participants

Engagement figures

Across the six different forms of engagement, there were over 400 contributions, including stakeholders from at least 20 different organisations.



Engaged stakeholder organisations

Group included in the stakeholder interviews, stakeholder workshops and the industry workshop were chosen to ensure that a wide variety of relevant perspectives were included in the validation process and drafting of the GSUD Guidelines. Participating organisations include:

- ACT Policing
- Canberra Multicultural Community Forum
- Women's Health Matters
- Meridian ACT
- ACT Council of Social Services
- Youth Advisory Council
- Women with Disabilities ACT
- ACT Ministerial Advisory Council of Ageing
- Gulanga Program
- ACT Government – Major Projects Canberra (MPC)
- ACT Government – Office of LGBTIQ+ Affairs, Chief Minister, Treasury, Economic Development Directorate
- ACT Government – Suburban Land Agency
- ACT Government – Transport Canberra and City Services - Libraries ACT
- LGBTIQ+ Ministerial Advisory Council
- Oculus
- Australia Institute of Architects (AIA)
- CIA Landscapes
- AMA Architecture

What we heard

Across all engagement methods seven key themes emerged. These are described in Table 2.

When we explored how the community uses spaces and what makes a public area feel safe or unsafe, participants shared that the following were the key areas that contributed to their experience:

Safe Factors	Unsafe Factors
Open spaces and open shops and businesses that interface with the street	Lack of lighting
Daylight or good lighting at night	Closed shop fronts
Other people around	Lots of obstacles (e.g. uneven pavement)
Nature	Homelessness
Clear navigation and signage	High car traffic

“Not many people around makes me worried about being attacked” - Walkshop participant

“Plenty of lighting and security help me feel safe.” – YourSay participant

“I think public spaces are bigger than the spaces you can use – there are lots of in between spaces that help us walk to and from areas. Our pathways and footpaths can also make us feel a sense of community, belonging, welcoming.” – Walkshop participants

“Women play multiple roles and need to move through cities and suburbs at different times, for many different reasons and where a public space does not support this movement – it fails women and a key cohort of our citizens” - Interviewee

“What’s the gendered experience of the journey to that space?” - Workshop participant

“How do you create shared ownership with the community?” –Workshop participant

Across all engagement methods the key themes identified:

Feedback theme	Overview
Personal safety & lighting	<p>Personal safety was a major theme raised. This theme covers all aspects of personal safety such as personal injury by accident or harm/theft/assault by others. Key suggestions or concerns included, reducing shadows at night with more lighting, safe pedestrian access, or simply designing to improve general safety.</p> <p>People feel safer in numbers and with easy access to resources to support safety. Having sufficient lighting, particularly at night, is a big contributor to feeling safe. It's also important to have quiet spaces to support sensory sensitive people.</p>
Access & accessibility	<p>Improving access to transport, facilities, resources and maintain pathways. Ensuring that everyone can use the space, no matter their ability, cultural backgrounds, gender, or age.</p> <p>Participants noted the importance of access and accessibility from a gender sensitive perspective. There was a particular interest in better pedestrian access and connectivity between highly trafficked areas such as car parks and shops. Pram, bike and wheelchair access were also highlighted as being important. Car parking in Dickson was noted for being difficult to navigate safely, does not connect well with the shopping centre and is difficult for local community members to access for regular/basic shopping needs noting the tension between locals accessing services and those visiting the area for dining and other activities.</p>
Public space design & amenity	<p>Participants provided a number of various public space design ideas and suggestions to improve general amenity or for potential inclusions for public spaces. Suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make places people can be proud of, with their own identity. • Highlighting First Nations cultural significance in public spaces. • Intersectional and LGBTQIA art to be included. • Use design to improve community behaviour. • Equipment for both adults and children.
Improve the sense of community, culture & environment	<p>Participants identified the need to make spaces and places more inclusive, encourage people to connect with one another and foster a sense of community. Participants saw that making places more welcoming for all types of people will make them busier and will naturally activate spaces, which in turn builds a sense of community. Design and activation ideas were both put forward as ways to achieve the above.</p>
Signage & navigation	<p>Improved wayfinding and implementing better sight lines were identified as priorities for many people. Broadly participants wanted to see more signage that is easier to understand, particularly for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and points to key facilities, such as toilets.</p>
Events & activities for public spaces	<p>Some participants prioritised events and activities as a way to assist in improving gender sensitive urban design. Activities for children, public, history walks, running events and hosting events that are free to the public were all suggestions.</p>
Managing crime, homelessness, & undesirable behaviour	<p>Some participants prioritised the need to make places safer by managing the root cause of homelessness, crime, and antisocial behaviour. Many felt that added support services and greater government intervention was required.</p>

Table 2. Key Themes

