



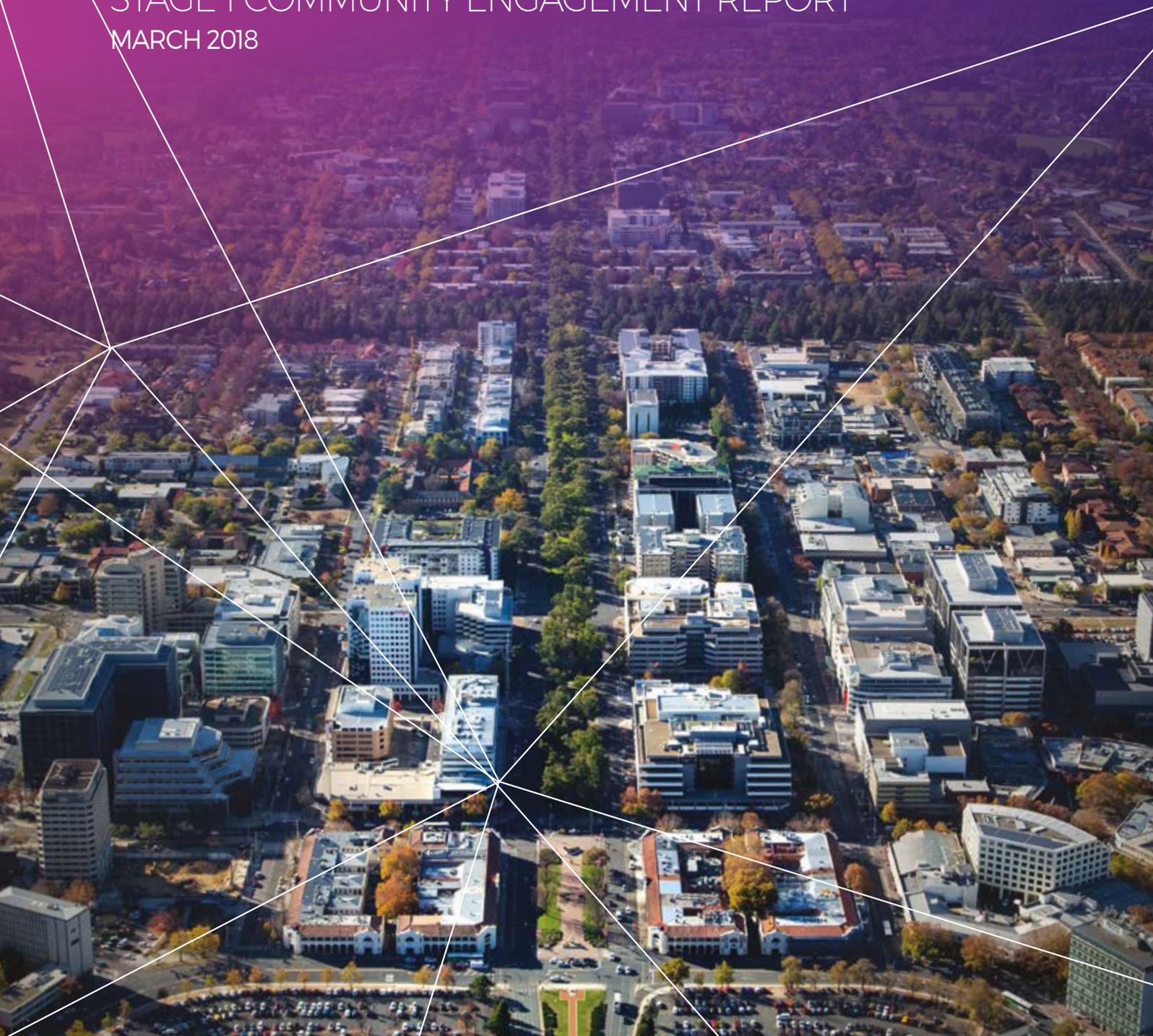
Australian Government
National Capital Authority



ACT
Government

CITY AND GATEWAY DRAFT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

STAGE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT
MARCH 2018



© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2018

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from:

Director-General, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development
Directorate, ACT Government, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601.

Telephone: 02 6207 1923

Website: www.planning.act.gov.au

Accessibility

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues as accessible as possible.

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, such as large print, please phone Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or email the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate at EPSDDComms@act.gov.au

If English is not your first language and you require a translating and interpreting service, please phone 13 14 50.

If you are deaf, or have a speech or hearing impairment, and need the teletypewriter service, please phone 13 36 77 and ask for Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

For speak and listen users, please phone 1300 555 727 and ask for Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.

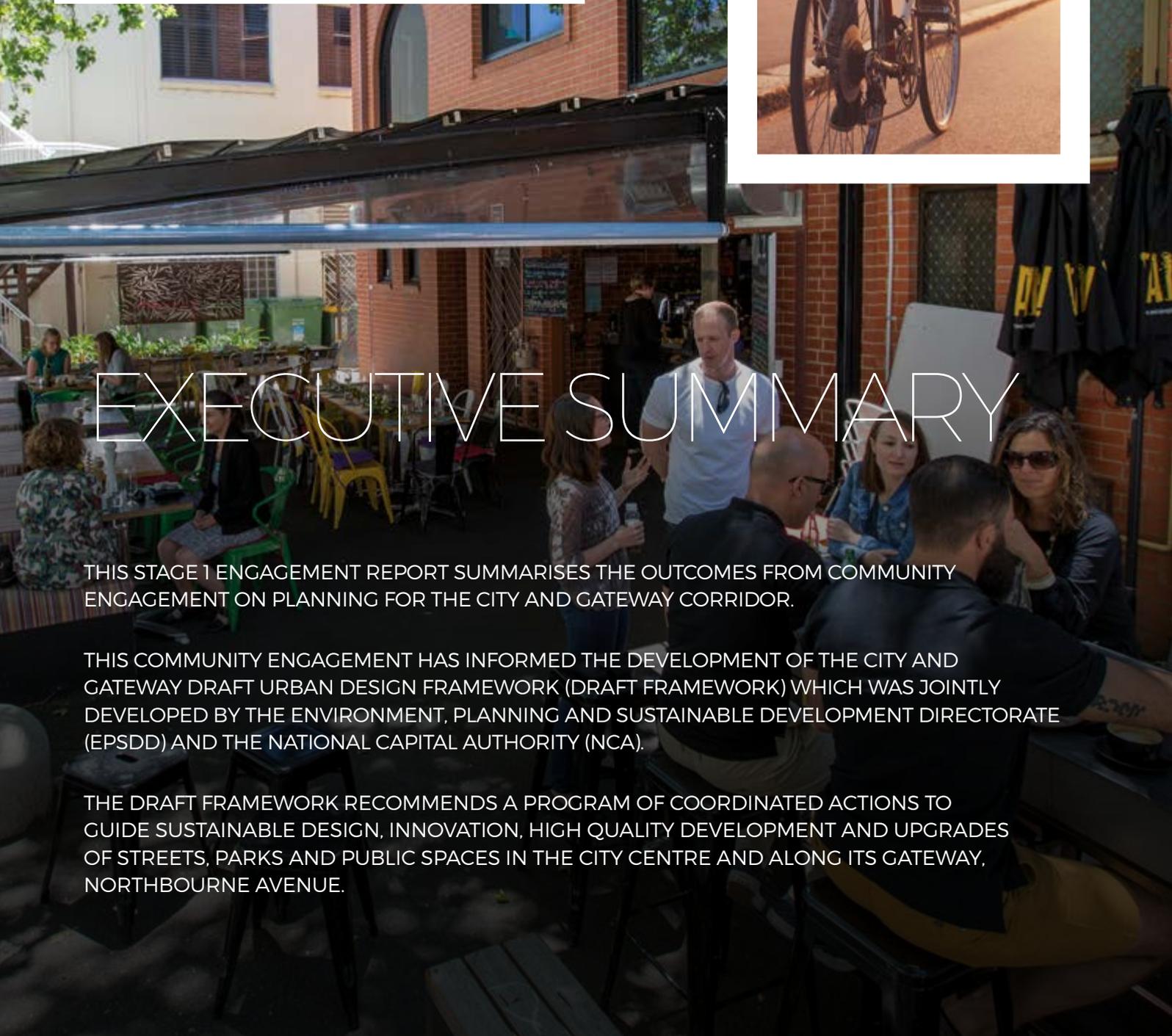
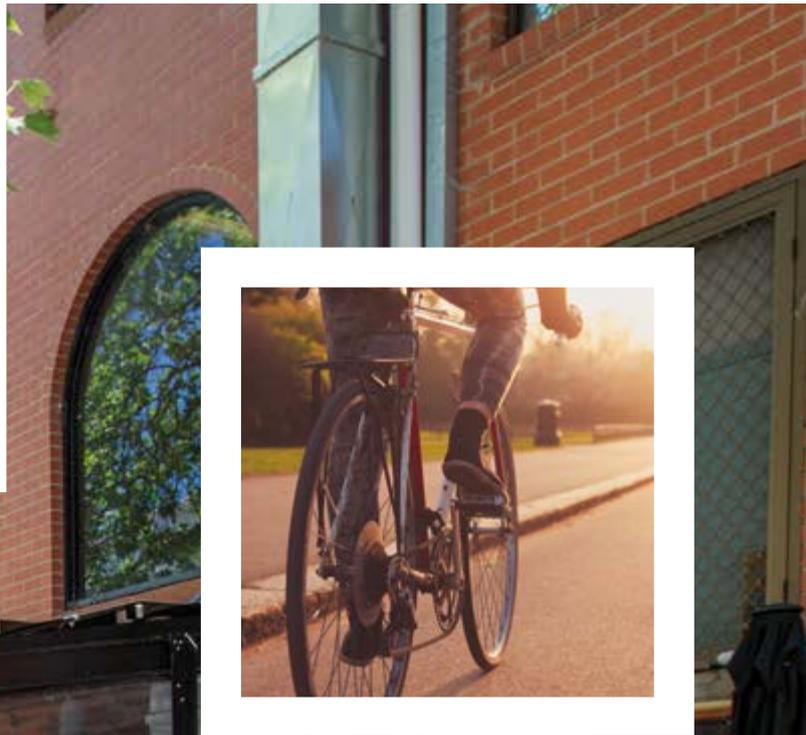
For more information on these services visit <http://www.relayservice.com.au>



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
INTRODUCTION	6
OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPATION	7
Participation rates.....	8
Participation Demographics	8
Key messages.....	9
SURVEY FEEDBACK ON CITY AND GATEWAY CORRIDOR	10
Feedback on proposed principles.....	10
Feedback on proposed key actions	10
Feedback on Northbourne Avenue.....	12
Feedback on the City Centre.....	21
STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP SUMMARIES	26
Feedback from Stakeholder workshops	26
HOW PLANNING RESPONDS TO COMMUNITY MESSAGES	28



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THIS STAGE 1 ENGAGEMENT REPORT SUMMARISES THE OUTCOMES FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ON PLANNING FOR THE CITY AND GATEWAY CORRIDOR.

THIS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HAS INFORMED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY AND GATEWAY DRAFT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK (DRAFT FRAMEWORK) WHICH WAS JOINTLY DEVELOPED BY THE ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE (EPSDD) AND THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY (NCA).

THE DRAFT FRAMEWORK RECOMMENDS A PROGRAM OF COORDINATED ACTIONS TO GUIDE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, INNOVATION, HIGH QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AND UPGRADES OF STREETS, PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES IN THE CITY CENTRE AND ALONG ITS GATEWAY, NORTHBOURNE AVENUE.



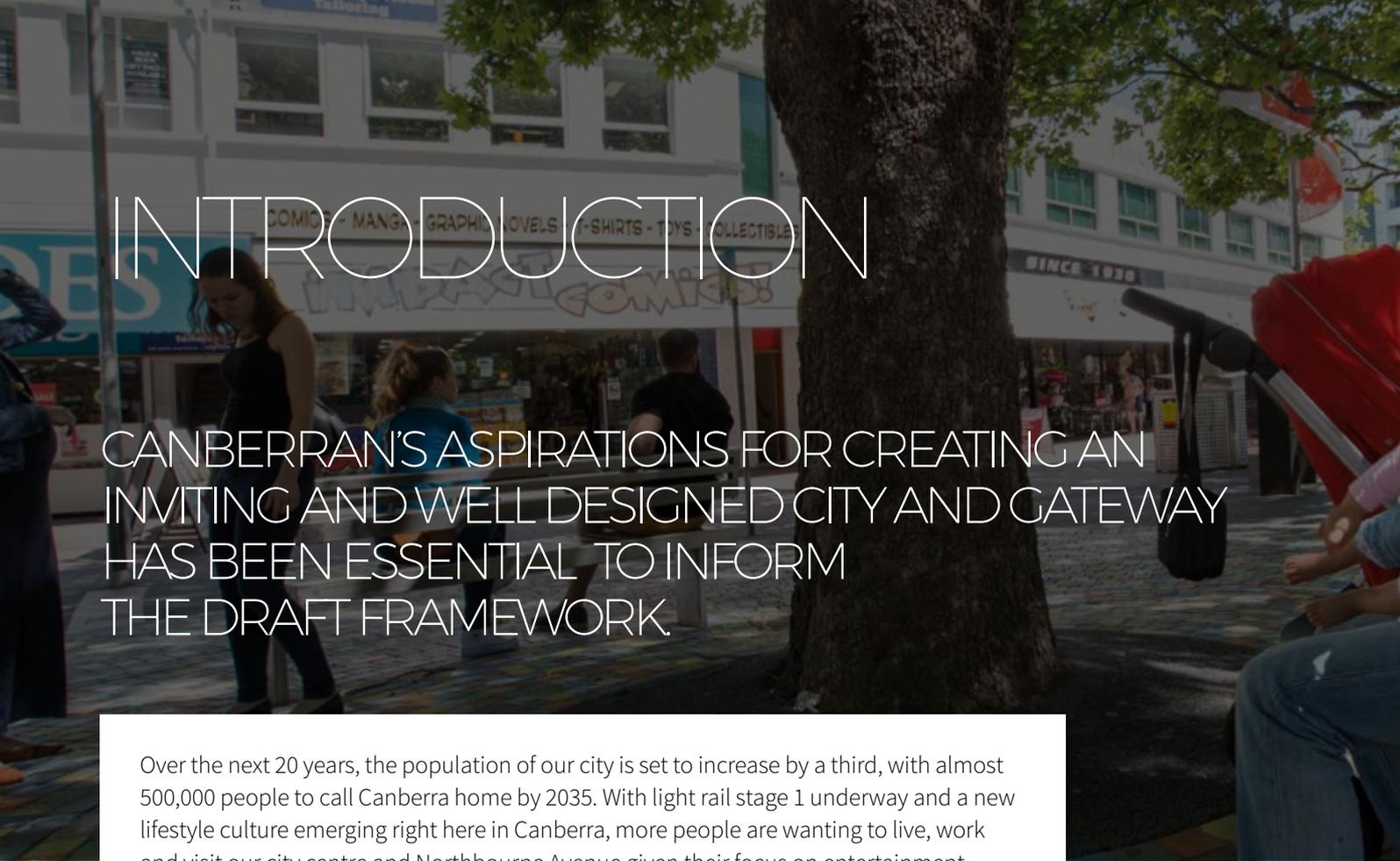
The community's input to the City and Gateway Draft Urban Design Framework (the Draft Framework) has been important and influential and is part of an ongoing conversation about how urban renewal can deliver benefits to all Canberrans. During engagement in 2015 and 2016 on the Draft Framework (then referred to as the Urban Renewal Strategy), 107 people completed a survey and 21 made a written submission, 160 people attended a 'meet the planners' session, 131 stakeholders participated in a series of community and industry workshops and 50 urban planning students provided their ideas on the project.

Key messages heard during this first stage of community engagement included:

- General support for improving the safety and convenience of walking and riding bicycles for people of all ages and abilities.
- General support for new development, if it is of high architectural quality and contributes positively to streets and public spaces—design excellence and innovation should be encouraged by the planning system.
- General support for returning Sullivans Creek to a more natural state and enhancing its recreational value.
- Mixed views about creating urban villages along the City and Gateway Corridor, with most people supportive and others unsure they could be transformed into high amenity places.
- Mixed views about Northbourne Plaza, with most people supportive of a pedestrian focus and high amenity environment for people, with some being concerned about the impact on traffic flows.

Other consistent messages heard from key stakeholders and the broader community included:

- Balance the needs of people walking, riding bicycles, using public transport and driving, including reducing conflict between modes of travel and improving safety.
- Retain and enhance open spaces, public places, mature trees and greenery and better maintain them.
- Consider community needs and ensure facilities are adequate.
- Retain and respect heritage, including Griffin's Plan, the Bush Capital and Aboriginal heritage.
- Encourage innovative uses and activities, such as pop-ups, micro-businesses and festivals for social wellbeing and community cohesion.
- Continue to engage with the community to optimise planning outcomes.
- Provide a range of housing and lifestyle options to encourage a diverse demographic.
- Key concerns raised included negative impacts from new development, increased traffic volumes, impacts on traffic flows and parking, and changes to bus services following the introduction of light rail.



INTRODUCTION

CANBERRAN'S ASPIRATIONS FOR CREATING AN INVITING AND WELL DESIGNED CITY AND GATEWAY HAS BEEN ESSENTIAL TO INFORM THE DRAFT FRAMEWORK.

Over the next 20 years, the population of our city is set to increase by a third, with almost 500,000 people to call Canberra home by 2035. With light rail stage 1 underway and a new lifestyle culture emerging right here in Canberra, more people are wanting to live, work and visit our city centre and Northbourne Avenue given their focus on entertainment, services, culture and employment.

This growth and change presents an opportunity to re-imagine our city and gateway corridor. However, urban growth requires careful management of a number of issues, in particular related to traffic management and development outcomes. The Draft Framework has been co-developed by Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) and National Capital Authority (NCA). It also delivers priority projects under the 2014 City Plan, which was underpinned by extensive community consultation.

The community's input to the Draft Framework has been important and is part of an ongoing conversation about how urban renewal can deliver benefits to all Canberrans. As part of the engagement in the City and Gateway Urban Renewal Strategy, 107 people completed the survey and 21 made a written submission, 160 people attended a 'meet the planners' session, 131 stakeholders participated in a series of community and industry workshops and 50 urban planning students provided their ideas on the project.

The majority of people involved in the engagement were generally supportive of ideas presented in a series of stakeholder workshops and the 2016 Discussion Paper. A popular message was that people supported new and higher density development if it is of high architectural quality, sustainable in its performance and integrated with better designed streets and public places. People wanted to see precincts with high amenity and activity, a mix of uses and well maintained public areas. Feedback also highlighted the importance of balancing the needs of people walking, riding bicycles, using public transport and driving, including reducing conflict between modes of travel and improving safety and convenience for pedestrians and cyclists.

Findings from this engagement helped inform the development of the Draft Framework.



OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPATION

IN 2015 AND 2016 A WIDE RANGE OF THE COMMUNITY, PEAK COMMUNITY, PROFESSIONAL, INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS, HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN ENGAGEMENT EVENTS AS PART OF CONSULTATION ON THE PROJECT.

PROJECT TIMELINE

- BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS (2015)
- STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS (2015)
- PREPARATION OF THE DISCUSSION PAPER (2015)
- STAGE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS (2016)
- PREPARATION OF THE DRAFT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK (2017)
- STAGE 2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ON THE URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK
- FINAL FRAMEWORK
- AMENDMENTS TO THE NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN CONCURRENT WITH VARIATION TO THE TERRITORY PLAN INCLUDING COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

As part of the engagement, the community provided their feedback on a discussion paper launched by the Chief Minister in January 2016 for an eight-week engagement period in January 2016. 130 people completed a survey or made a written submission, 160 people attended a 'meet the planners' session, 131 stakeholders participated in a series of community and industry workshops and 50 urban planning students provided their ideas on the project.

Findings from community engagement have informed the development of the Draft Framework. These included safe and convenient walking and cycling infrastructure for all ages and abilities to create active and healthy lifestyles. New developments are expected to demonstrate high architectural quality and sustainable design and contributes positively to streets and public spaces. Canberrans highly value good public places and see urban renewal as an opportunity to up-grade the existing urban landscapes, public places and community facilities in the corridor to attract and support a diverse community.

These findings are part of an ongoing conversation about how urban renewal can deliver benefits to all Canberrans.



PARTICIPATION RATES

- 107 survey responses (online and hardcopy)
- 21 written/email submissions
- 131 people attended five 'meet the planners' sessions held in February and March 2016
- 90 people attended stakeholder and community workshops held in 2015 and 2016
- 50 university students studying city planning, aged 18–22, attended a workshop in April 2016
- Written feedback from 20 individuals and organisations
- 4366 website visits (by 26 June 2016)
- 448 downloads of the discussion paper

PARTICIPATION DEMOGRAPHICS

- Survey participants were predominately male, with most age groups and household types well represented.
- A relatively even balance of males and females, spread across different age categories, participated in the 'meet the planners' sessions and workshops.

These statistics reflect the fact that different engagement approaches suit different audiences and multiple engagement techniques are required to reach out to a broader segment of the community.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FIGURE 1 GENDER

■ MALE 63%
 ■ FEMALE 36%
 ■ UNSPECIFIED 1%



FIGURE 2 AGE

■ -20 YEARS 2%
 ■ 20-39 YEARS 42%
 ■ 40-50 YEARS 18%
 ■ 51-60 YEARS 17%
 ■ 60+ YEARS 21%



FIGURE 3 HOUSEHOLD TYPE

■ COUPLE WITH NO CHILDREN 40%
 ■ COUPLE WITH CHILDREN 33%
 ■ SINGLE PERSON 16%
 ■ GROUP HOUSEHOLD 5%
 ■ OTHER 6%

KEY MESSAGES

THE FOLLOWING SUMMARISES THE KEY MESSAGES HEARD DURING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:



IMPROVING SAFETY AND CONVENIENCE

Support for improving the safety and convenience of walking and riding bicycles for people of all ages and abilities.



HIGH ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY DEVELOPMENT

Support for new development that contributes positively to streets and public spaces, with design excellence and innovation being encouraged by the planning system.



SULLIVANS CREEK NATURALISATION

Support for returning Sullivans Creek to a more natural state and enhancing its recreational and environmental value.



URBAN VILLAGES

Some support for creating urban villages along the city and gateway corridor, with some doubts as to how they could be transformed into high-amenity places.



NORTHBOURNE PLAZA

Some support for a pedestrian focus plaza, and concerns about the impact on traffic flows from providing a high-amenity environment for people.



WALKING, RIDING, AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Broad support for the need to reduce conflict between all modes of travel and improving safety, while balancing the need for walking, bicycle riding, public transport and driving.



OPEN SPACES

Broad support to retain open spaces, public places, mature trees and greenery and better maintain them.



COMMUNITY NEEDS

Broad support for ensuring community facilities are adequate for existing and future residents.



HERITAGE

Broad support to retain and respect heritage, including Griffin's Plan, the bush capital and Aboriginal heritage.



INNOVATION

Broad support encouraging innovative uses and activities, such as pop-ups, micro-businesses and festivals.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Broad support for continued engagement with the community to optimise planning outcomes.



HOUSING OPTIONS

Broad support for the provision of a range of housing and lifestyle options to cater for a diverse demographic.



TRAFFIC, PARKING, AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Key concerns raised included poor design outcomes of new development, increased traffic congestion, impacts on traffic flows and parking, and changes to bus services following the introduction of light rail.

SURVEY FEEDBACK ON CITY AND GATEWAY CORRIDOR

FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED PRINCIPLES

The stakeholder workshops and discussion paper proposed a number of principles to guide the transformation of the city and gateway corridor. The survey asked participants to answer ‘*What principles do you think should guide the urban renewal strategy?*’ by ticking the suggested principles they thought were applicable.

Most people supported the principles proposed, as shown in Figure 4, with the highest support for creating greener and more people friendly streets and public places at 88%. The least support was for strengthening the image, role and function of the gateway, with only 42% of participants seeing this principle as important. Some people suggested amending this principle to ‘transforming Northbourne Avenue into a grand boulevard and enhancing the buildings and landscaping along it’.

FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED KEY ACTIONS

The discussion paper proposed a number of actions for enhancing the city and gateway corridor. The survey asked participants ‘*What actions do you think are important for enhancing the City and Gateway corridor?*’ and asked them to indicate how important they thought the proposed actions were on a scale from ‘not important at all’ to ‘very important’.

Most survey participants supported the proposed actions, as shown in Figure 5. The highest support was for improving walking and cycling networks to and from the urban villages, with 91% of people indicating that it was important or very important. Delivering public place improvements also ranked highly, with 88% of people indicating that they were important or very important.



FIGURE 4 SURVEY PARTICIPANT SUPPORT FOR PROPOSED PRINCIPLES

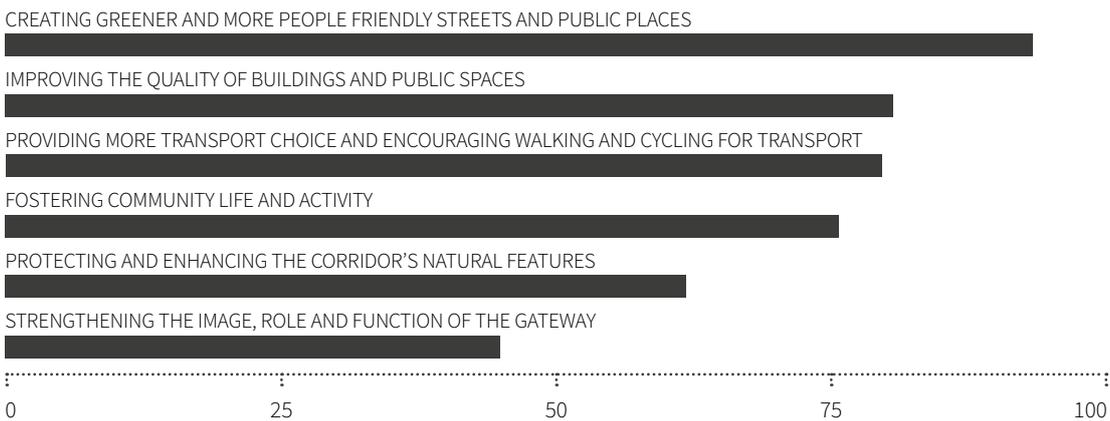
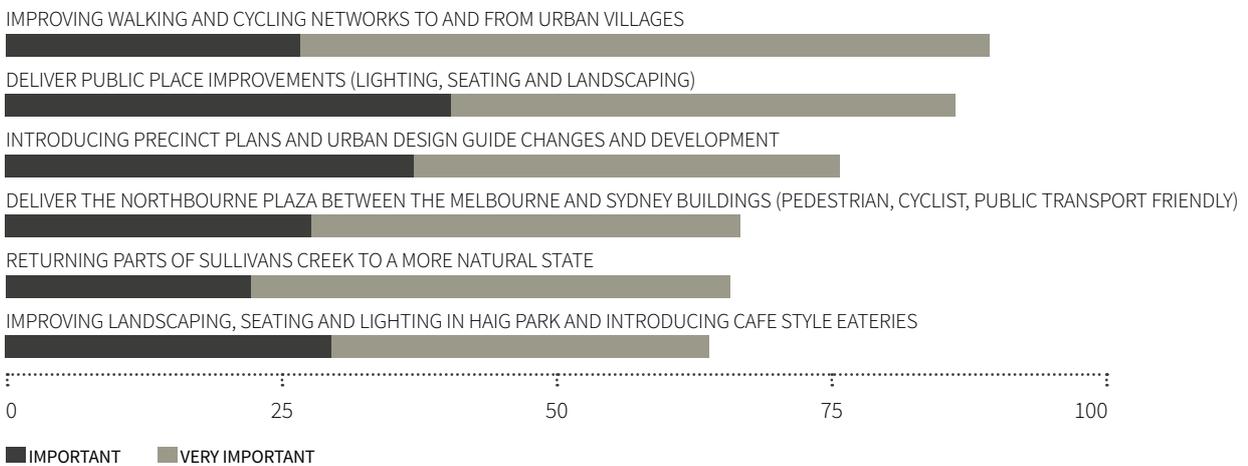


FIGURE 5 SURVEY PARTICIPANTS WHO CONSIDERED THE PROPOSED ACTIONS IMPORTANT OR VERY IMPORTANT

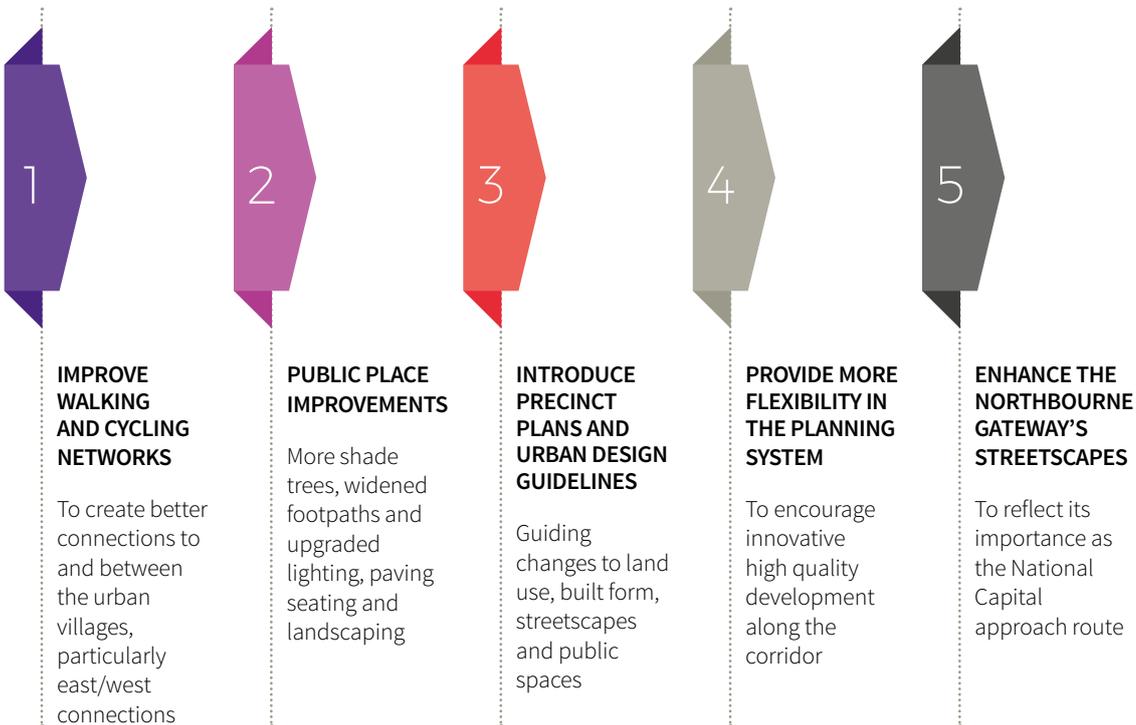


FEEDBACK ON NORTHBOURNE AVENUE

MOST PEOPLE WERE GENERALLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE DIRECTION OF URBAN RENEWAL AND SAW IT AS A POSITIVE WAY TO GUIDE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CORRIDOR.

The survey asked participants ‘What actions do you think are important for improving the City and Gateway corridor?’ They were asked to rank proposed actions in order of priority (1 for highest, 5 for lowest). The highest priorities were improving walking and cycling networks, and delivering public place improvements.

FIGURE 6 PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVING THE CITY AND GATEWAY CORRIDOR



TRANSFORMING NORTHBOURNE AVENUE

PEOPLE GENERALLY SUPPORTED TRANSFORMING NORTHBOURNE AVENUE INTO A BOULEVARD ENTRANCE – A FITTING GATEWAY FOR CANBERRA AS THE NATIONAL CAPITAL. THEY ALSO SAW THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE THE BUILDINGS ALONG NORTHBOURNE AVENUE, WITH MANY PEOPLE PERCEIVING A NUMBER OF THE EXISTING BUILDINGS TO BE TIRED AND IN NEED OF UPDATING.

The landscaping, greenery and mature trees are what people currently like most about Northbourne Avenue. There is a strong desire to retain the landscape character, mature trees and ‘green feel’ along the corridor. Many people said new development should integrate with the Avenue’s natural greenery. A number of people said the Avenue’s landscape character was an important symbol of Canberra being the bush capital.

Most people generally supported medium to high density development along Northbourne Avenue, particularly if new developments were of high architectural and landscape quality with good sustainability credentials. Suggestions to help to achieve this included design competitions, design review panels, attracting top designers and amendments to the planning system. Some people said new development would help revitalise public areas and boost the local economy.

A few people did not support medium to high density along Northbourne Avenue and wanted any new development to be low-rise. A few participants raised concerns about potential health impacts for residents living near a busy road.

Many people supported changing Northbourne Avenue from a ‘highway’ style road to a corridor that better supported public transport, walking and cycling, and business and activity. A few people suggested reducing the traffic lanes on Northbourne Avenue to transform it, with a couple of people proposing a trial of closing the outside lanes on weekends.

Other people commented that they highly value Northbourne Avenue for the convenient vehicle access it provides to the city centre and through to the south of the city. They wanted to see the urban renewal of the city and gateway to include improved vehicle travel times.

WHAT YOU SAID

“I like how the city steadily emerges from the bush entering from the north.”

“I love the width of Northbourne and the trees down the middle.”

“The urban renewal strategy should deliver a gateway corridor that people want to be in. It needs to be able to be updated and upgraded as people’s expectations and desires change over time.”

“At the moment people can drive into Canberra, travel 10 min, and be out the other side of the CBD without even knowing they are in the nation’s capital...The corridor/entry to Canberra should tell people where they have arrived and should communicate all that is good about the city.”

“There are serious problems with creating activity and community life along the corridor when it is bisected by a 6 lane arterial road; we need better traffic management for peak times.”

“I think this corridor needs a major ‘renovation’ to bring it up to a standard befitting the National Capital.”



ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PEOPLE WALKING AND CYCLING

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS RATED IMPROVING WALKING AND CYCLING NETWORKS TO CREATE BETTER CONNECTIONS TO AND BETWEEN THE URBAN VILLAGES, PARTICULARLY EAST/WEST CONNECTIONS, AS THE HIGHEST PRIORITY. 91% OF RESPONDENTS SUPPORTED THIS.

There was general support for improving bicycle infrastructure in the corridor, including introducing new Garden City Cycle Routes proposed to the east of Northbourne Avenue. These cycling routes would connect Watson, Downer, Dickson, Ainslie and Braddon with the city centre.

Conflict between motor vehicles and cyclists was raised as an issue and a key concern for the safety of cyclists. Some less confident cyclists said they did not feel safe riding unless there was a physical divide between a bicycle lane and vehicular traffic. Cyclists of all abilities feel safe on paths such as Sullivans Creek shared path.

Other people raised concerns about the conflict between people walking and cycling in high use areas, including Sullivans Creek, and called for a separation between pedestrians and cyclists. It was noted that pedestrians can feel unsafe on shared paths when cyclists travelled at high speeds.

People also commented that they felt the pedestrian crossings on Northbourne Avenue did not cater appropriately for them, with long wait times and people not being able to cross east/west in one set of lights. Suggestions to address this ranged from changing traffic light phasing to better cater for pedestrians, adding pedestrian bridges or underpasses and undergrounding roads such as Northbourne Avenue at Vernon Circle.

A few people suggested providing dedicated end of trip centres at key destinations for people walking and riding bicycles that provide showers, change rooms, lockers and secure bicycle parking.

Another suggestion made by a few people, was to provide free or cheaper parking at the edge of the city to encourage people to walk from their vehicle and get exercise in their day, while reducing parking costs.

WHAT YOU SAID

“My partner and I can’t walk side by side plus we have to share with bikes; you need to widen paths and provide room for all the users.”

“The pedestrian crossings all across Northbourne are not catering for pedestrians—they cater for cars.”

“Riding a bike on Northbourne is intimidating. The bike path that follows the drain through the suburbs on the western side of Northbourne is great, but there is no alternative on the eastern side.”

“Link Henty Street and Mort Street with a paved bike lane through Haig Park, and turn Henty Street and Lowanna Street into a shared zone with a low speed limit for cars and bike access to the entire roadway. This would create a safe alternative to the Northbourne bike lane at least between the city and Wakefield Avenue.”



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

75% of survey participants thought that providing more transport choice should be a guiding principle of urban renewal in the gateway corridor.

Most people were supportive of improving public transport. Many people enthusiastically supported light rail, however others raised concerns.

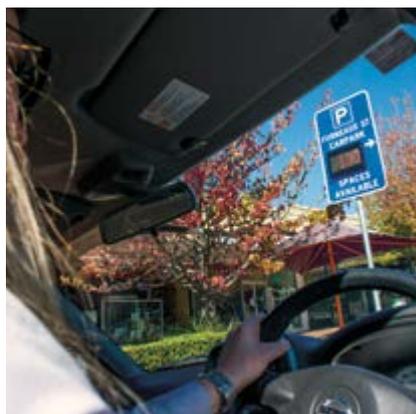
There was interest in how the bus network will operate once light rail starts operation, with many people commenting that they value the bus services on the east and west of Northbourne Avenue. Some people called for better bus services, such as more night-time services.

TRAFFIC AND CAR PARKING

Many participants said they disliked the traffic congestion in the corridor, particularly the quantity and speed of vehicles. 'Rat running' in suburban streets was a particular concern, with some people suggesting traffic calming measures to address this. Some people said that they liked that Canberra had less traffic congestion than other cities and they would like to see traffic continue to be free flowing.

Some people suggested that slowing down and/or diverting traffic from Northbourne Avenue would make the avenue a more public transport and people-friendly boulevard. Other people raised concerns that this might result in more traffic on local streets and/or increase travel times for people travelling in vehicles.

Some people said they would like to see more and cheaper parking.



WHAT YOU SAID

“Multiple transport modes and housing types offer the most equitable form of urban development and the best protection against homogeneity.”

“Many and perhaps most people need to drive—and cannot or will not use public transport. Maintain the idea of a corridor—allow through traffic, which cannot simply be public transport.”

“Have traffic calming measures in rat run areas around Northbourne Avenue.”

“Improve night-time bus services.”

“If rapid transit is the goal, I would suggest not developing stops along the way, which would decrease travel time.”

“I think we should have a wider, more flexible network of electric buses with better shelters for unkind weather, more frequent stops, cheaper fares and better routes.”

“More emphasis on public transport and active travel options.”

URBAN VILLAGES

MANY PEOPLE WERE SUPPORTIVE OF THE PROPOSED URBAN VILLAGES AT DICKSON (ALONG NORTHBOURNE AVENUE) AND MACARTHUR (CORNER OF WAKEFIELD, MACARTHUR AND NORTHBOURNE AVENUES). OTHER PEOPLE RAISED CONCERNS OVER DENSITY AND THE IMPACT ON LOCAL CENTRES.

Respondents saw the proposed urban villages as a great opportunity to improve the visual amenity of the corridor and update the current building stock, which they perceived as tired and not aesthetically pleasing.

Many people said the urban villages would add to the diversity of lifestyle and housing choices on offer, providing more opportunities for people to live close to jobs, services and good public transport connections.

Some concerns were raised about the impact the urban villages might have on other nearby local centres, and about the potential health and amenity impacts of people living in apartments near major roads. Other people said the urban villages would negatively affect the landscape character of the corridor by increasing building heights and density.



WHAT YOU SAID

“By having genuine urban villages along the light rail track, the ACT Government has an opportunity of weaving light rail into the social fabric of Canberra.”

“Macarthur Ave is really just an intersection of several major roads. It doesn’t really need to be a ‘village.’”

“I particularly support development of the Northbourne/Macarthur intersection, which is at the centre of several important axes and its current state does not realise its potential.”

“Macarthur Avenue seems ideally sited for major redevelopment especially given its location between Sullivans Creek and Ainslie’s parks, while it remains a comfortable separation from the Civic area.”

“Dickson already is a lovely village where it is, just not on Northbourne Ave. To encourage connection between the current Dickson shops and the Dickson light rail stop, I would suggest a wide park linking Northbourne to the current Dickson shops.”

FOSTERING GREAT PLACES AND PUBLIC LIFE

MANY PEOPLE SAID THEY WANTED TO SEE BETTER PUBLIC PLACES AND MORE ACTIVITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES.

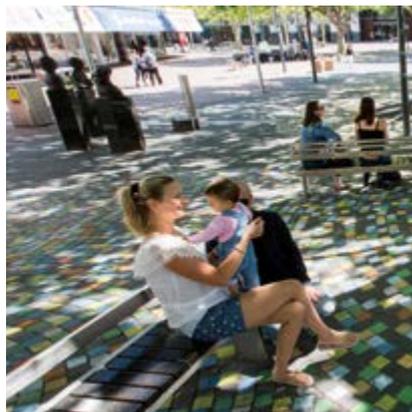
Many people were interested in seeing more activity and exciting destinations in the corridor. They wanted places for people to come together and experience the city life.

Of the survey participants, 88% supported actions to create greener and more people friendly streets and public places and 87% rated public place improvements—such as upgraded seating, lighting and landscaping—as important or very important. These survey results indicate that the community values improvements to public places as an important aspect of urban infill.

Some people suggested encouraging entrepreneurship, such as through low rent start-up spaces and pop-up activities, to foster more street activity and public life. A number of people suggested more pop-up markets and food stalls. Others liked the idea of more cafes, restaurants and nightlife. Some also suggested more community and cultural facilities in the corridor, such as halls, art studios, community gardens and sports facilities. Higher quality green spaces and parks was another popular suggestion to improve the quality of urban places.

In a workshop in May 2016 (see page 27) participants nominated ideas, to reimagine or reactivate underused parts of the city/corridor and to test possible uses for the future. Participants submitted eleven ideas, of which nine further developed at the workshop:

1. Haig Park activation
2. Off-road cycle connections
3. Lane closure on Northbourne Plaza
4. Canberra courtyards activation
5. Sullivans Creek recreation park
6. Ageing in place in Downer
7. Community garden in Dickson
8. Garema Place activation
9. Enliven Dickson commercial centre



WHAT YOU SAID

“I love the liveliness of Braddon.”

“Encourage entrepreneurship and vibrant commercial culture that enlivens the city spaces.”

“It’s the little things which turn a space into a place, that is what makes an area exciting, vibrant and a destination in its own right.”

“A greater nightlife, otherwise all [of] us young people will be leaving for the cities like Sydney and Melbourne.”

“Introduce community related events or activities.”

“Facilities and public spaces should cater for all age groups and members of the community.”

“Destinations where the community enjoy using a shared space - see European small soccer squares and volleyball/table tennis. Natural play spaces for families. Markets and pop-ups on weekends.”

“Canberrans love getting outdoors and being active, and there is a lively café culture.”



NEW DEVELOPMENT

PARTICIPANTS FELT STRONGLY ABOUT THE DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT. MANY FELT THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE OF HIGH ARCHITECTURAL AND LANDSCAPE QUALITY. THEY WANTED TO SEE DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTE TO STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACES, PROVIDE GREENERY AND BE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE.

Participants had varying views about building heights and mixed-use developments. A significant number of people supported well-designed mixed-use precincts and mixed-use developments, with commercial or retail uses on ground floors and housing above. Some people saw mixed-use precincts as an opportunity to add to the diversity of lifestyle and housing choices available within the corridor. Some people mentioned they would like to see more affordable housing within these precincts.

Some residents wanted to see the existing street character retained, particularly in low-density, leafy suburbs. They wanted to see building heights limited, which they said was needed to protect street amenity and landscape character. A few participants wanted new development in the corridor minimised. Others were concerned that new development would result in more vehicular traffic, congestion and car parking pressures.

Introducing precinct plans and urban design guidelines to guide change and development was viewed as important or very important by 77% of survey participants. Other suggestions to improve the architectural design of new developments included design competitions, input from industry experts, offering incentives and awards, and recognising successful developments. Suggestions to improve the landscape design of new developments included mandating better landscaping; ensuring a good proportion of a building block is garden and tree space; and incorporating greenery into developments such as through green walls and roofs.

Many people confirmed they wanted to see urban renewal and new development in the city centre and along Northbourne Avenue.

WHAT YOU SAID

“Keep buildings to a human scale and do not overpower the natural effects of the trees.”

“Set high quality design standards so that only high quality architecture is allowed.”

“Set high sustainability targets from the beginning.”

“DO NOT MAKE THE CITY AND GATEWAY CORRIDOR A CONCRETE WIND TUNNEL (capitals intended).”

“Northbourne Avenue has a sense of greenness that is nice but (has a) lack of beautiful buildings or vibrant, public art and interesting areas.”

PARKS, TREES AND GREEN SPACES

MANY RESIDENTS VALUED THE UNIQUENESS OF HAVING LOTS OF GREEN OPEN SPACE AND MATURE TREES ALONG NORTHBOURNE AVENUE AND IN THE CORRIDOR MORE BROADLY. THERE WAS A HIGH LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THE GREEN LANDSCAPING AND BUSH CAPITAL CHARACTER OF THE CORRIDOR.

There were mixed views about how to best maintain and enhance the corridor's bush capital character. Some people saw limiting development and maintaining low-density as the key to preserving the bush capital and 'city in a landscape' character. They wanted to maintain the leafy suburban character of the corridor and did not want it to feel too metropolitan.

Many others did not see the bush capital and new development as mutually exclusive. They saw new development as an opportunity to invest in more trees, greenery and natural features in the corridor, while at the same time providing new amenities and opportunities for metropolitan lifestyles. Some suggested that building heights be limited to below the tree line of the urban forest to preserve the landscape character.

Generally, people wanted to see more greenery, trees and improved maintenance and amenity in urban parks. Mature trees were particularly highly valued.

Of survey participants, 58% supported a guiding urban renewal principle of protecting and enhancing the corridor's natural features.

There were mixed views as to whether new plant and tree species should be native or exotic. Some people said native species were most appropriate in the corridor to reflect the bush capital character and support local birds and wildlife. Others preferred exotic species to add more colour to the urban environment and to ensure that trees provide shade in summer and sunlight during winter.

Some people suggested more facilities in parks and green open spaces along the corridor, including barbecues, tables, playgrounds, bubblers and outdoor gyms. Another suggestion was introducing small-scale cafes or kiosks in parks, such as near children's playgrounds, where parents could sit while watching their children.

It was clear from the discussion that some people view green spaces as places of tranquillity within the urban area, while others value green spaces more as places to congregate and recreate. Green spaces in the corridor will therefore need to cater for these diverse users of parks and green spaces.

WHAT YOU SAID

"Encourage people to utilise open spaces—this was to be done through providing workable adequate open space and not 'concrete empty open space.'"

"Trees, natural landscapes [and] wildlife reflect and enhance our natural bush capital environment."

"More small to medium sized events within open spaces."

"RETAIN LOTS OF GREEN AND TREES!!!!!"

"I would like to see the plan incorporate an urban food forest or an urban orchard."

"We need better cleaning of our living environment, street cleaning more often, more cleaning in parks, more rubbish bins in parks and not just near BBQ areas and children's playgrounds."

"Maintain community facilities including green space."

HAIG PARK

Improving landscaping, seating and lighting in Haig Park and introducing cafe style eateries was rated as important or very important by 65% of survey participants. Many people wanted to see the usability and amenity of Haig Park improved.

People currently see the park as poorly maintained, dark and having limited facilities. A number of people said they felt unsafe walking through Haig Park at night.

Suggestions to improve the park included upgraded pathways, a separated east/west cycleway, better lighting, pruning or removing some trees, adding playgrounds, shaded picnic areas and more recreation facilities. People said changes are needed to make Haig Park safer and more usable and cater to a broader range of user groups such as families and young people.

SULLIVANS CREEK

Returning parts of Sullivans Creek to a more natural state, making it a more pleasant and greener space, was generally supported, with 67% of survey participants identifying this as an important or very important action for the city and gateway.

Many individual comments identified the opportunity to improve Sullivans Creek's environmental value and its value as urban linear parkland, and to improve walking and cycling links along the creek.

Some people wanted to see improved facilities along Sullivans Creek for people walking and riding bicycles, such as wider footpaths, additional bridge crossings and more seating. Others saw the opportunity to transform the creek line into a linear green parkland running through the corridor, with picnic areas, recreational areas and new tree plantings. People suggested reflecting Aboriginal heritage in any improvements, such as by including new interpretive signage explaining the aboriginal importance of the creek.



WHAT YOU SAID

"I think it's fantastic that Haig Park will be used in a multi-use way. At the moment, it's primarily used as a passing through point."

"I think the Haig Park development is key to linking the city to the inner north. I think an outdoor free gym would be well used as Canberra's people love to be active. I think more social and recreational green spaces would help."

"A different strategy for revitalising Haig Park than just adding a cafe. A playground for adults for example."

"Revitalisation of Haig Park as a hub for children (to encourage families to live in the city centre, and as an attraction for tourists), for example interesting playgrounds, a skate park, a miniature train, kiosks, a maze."

"Improving Sullivan's Creek through and PAST Dickson would be a winner."

"I like the idea for bringing Sullivan's Creek back to a 'natural' state."



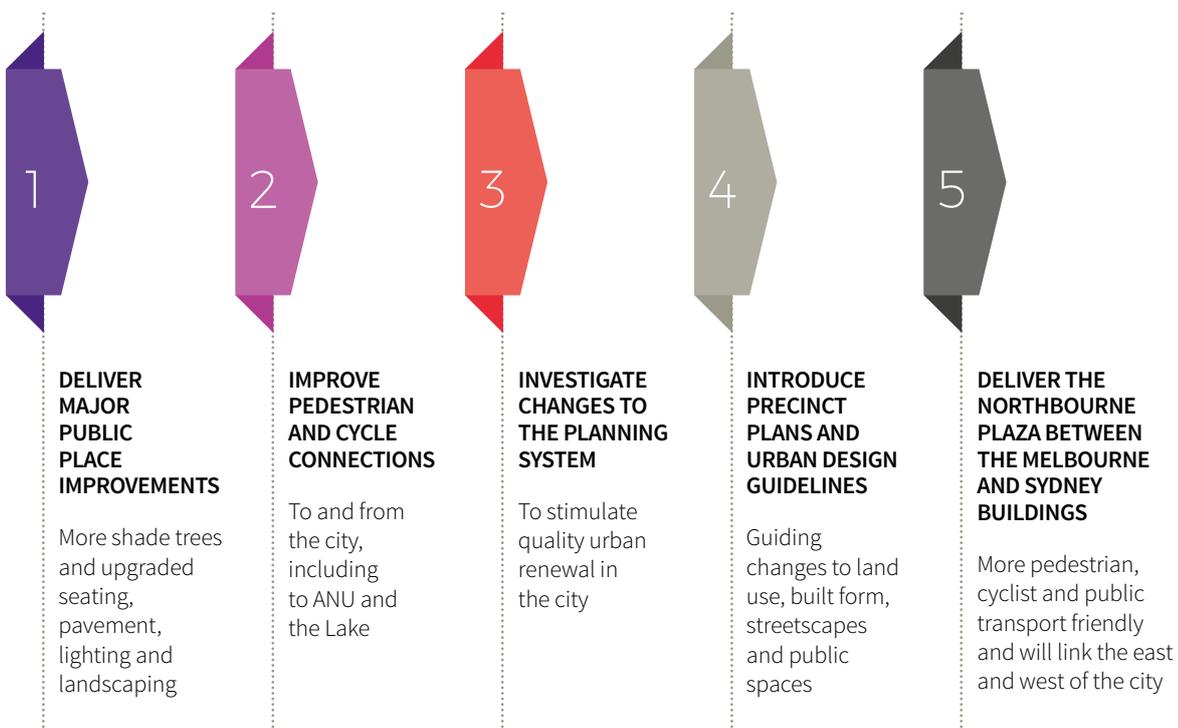
FEEDBACK ON THE CITY CENTRE

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SHOWS STRONG SUPPORT FOR IMPROVING STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACES TO BETTER ACCOMMODATE PEOPLE AND ACTIVITY IN THE CITY CENTRE.

One of the survey questions asked participants ‘Thinking about the future, what actions do you think are most important for making the city centre a better place?’ They were asked to rank the actions in order of priority (1 for highest, 5 for lowest).

The answers indicated that the highest priorities were delivering major public place improvements and improving pedestrian and cycle connections to and from the city centre.

FIGURE 7 PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVING THE CITY CENTRE



TRANSFORMING THE CITY CENTRE

MANY PEOPLE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE AMENITY OF THE CITY CENTRE AND WERE KEEN TO SEE IMPROVEMENTS. A NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS SAID THEY WANTED TO SEE MORE ACTIVITY, MORE EVENTS AND MORE NIGHTLIFE IN THE CITY CENTRE. SIMILAR FEEDBACK WAS PROVIDED DURING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ON THE CITY PLAN IN 2014.

Many people also expressed a desire to update and improve buildings in the city centre and wanted to ensure new development is of high quality. Some people suggested that the planning rules should facilitate creativity, sustainable design and buildings that contribute to streetscapes and public places. Others were keen to see redevelopment happen and wanted the planning system to facilitate redevelopment of key sites.

Suggestions for improving the city centre included:

- Add more temporary events and activities in the city centre such as night markets and festivals.
- Improve lighting and security and add more seating and public art.
- Introduce more greenery and shade, such as providing more mature trees, gardens and green patches.
- Make rents more affordable where there are areas with lots of vacant shops.
- Improve City Walk by encouraging, for example, restaurants and landmark/high-end shops to locate there and have artist designed light displays.
- Encourage more activity outside normal trading hours to better cater for a range of lifestyles and work commitments.
- Encourage more external shopfronts, alfresco dining options and live entertainment.
- Repurpose vacant office spaces and underused buildings.
- Add more medium to high density development, including apartments.

Some people raised concerns about the conflict between residents living in the city centre and urban noise, such as traffic, trucks, construction and entertainment venues.

WHAT YOU SAID

“Don’t let the opportunity pass to achieve a real positive, lasting change to Canberra at its urban heart.”

“I like how the city is starting to feel a little more cosmopolitan. It’s nice to see activity after 6pm on a week night.”

“Civic lacks a heart, it lacks a central focus point. There is not really a central point where people congregate, where events can be held, where life can transpire.”

“[The city centre] needs a ‘wow’ factor; more life in the city area, more shape, colour, shade and greenery.”

“Mix things. A Civic where every building has a level of shops on the street, four levels of office space and then apartments above that would be one where there were always people around. The streets would be buzzing, it’d be the sort of place we’re aiming for.”

“More availability to live in the city. No commercial only areas that create after hour ‘dead zones.’”



NORTHBOURNE PLAZA

MANY PEOPLE WERE SUPPORTIVE OF THE PROPOSAL FOR NORTHBOURNE PLAZA BETWEEN THE SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE BUILDINGS. THE PLAZA WOULD HAVE WIDER FOOTPATHS, NEW OUTDOOR SEATING, ADDITIONAL LANDSCAPING, TREES AND BETTER CONNECTIONS FOR WALKING AND CYCLING. THE DELIVERY OF NORTHBOURNE PLAZA WAS IMPORTANT OR VERY IMPORTANT TO 68% OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS.

Many people suggested reducing the number and speed of vehicles in the area, and some were supportive of reducing the number of traffic lanes along this section of Northbourne Avenue to make the Plaza a better place for people to use.

Another popular suggestion was to add more mature trees, greenery and natural shade. Many people wanted to see improvements to the appearance and quality of retail experiences in the Sydney and Melbourne buildings adjacent to the plaza. Many participants saw them as iconic heritage buildings for Canberra.

Some people said heavy traffic on Northbourne Avenue made the area unsuitable for a plaza. Others did not support the Plaza because it may negatively affect traffic flows. Some said they did not want to see any traffic lanes removed or additional delays to traffic on Northbourne Avenue.

Some people suggested alternatives of an underground road tunnel or a pedestrian bridge or underpass to address the east/west divide created by this area for people walking and cycling in the city centre. Others suggested changing traffic light phasing to allow pedestrians to cross the road without having to wait twice for the traffic lights.

An additional concern was how Northbourne Plaza could compete with the popular cafe and alfresco dining experiences at nearby Bunda Street and Lonsdale Street.

WHAT YOU SAID

“With the light rail and the inherent foot traffic that Northbourne Plaza will receive, being the link between the two sides of the city, it will probably evolve to a significant extent on its own.”

“I really like the idea of the Plaza. I think the Plaza needs to have high quality, high impact public art, something like the Chicago Bean.”

“The emphasis should [be] on connecting the two sides but not making those strips the main focal point—instead focusing on laneways (which are a quiet, protected space) would be better.”

“People in cities want to eat and drink and socialise in pleasant surroundings, they want to sit and watch people, they do not want to suck in exhaust fumes and battle to hear over the roar of traffic.”

“Either tunnel under it or provide footbridges over it but just ‘prettying up the two sides’ does nothing.”

“It will never be a plaza whilst there are 6 lanes of traffic.”



CITY WALK AND GAREMA PLACE

MANY PEOPLE SAW CITY WALK AND GAREMA PLACE AS IMPORTANT PUBLIC PLACES AND WANTED TO SEE THEM IMPROVED. MANY PEOPLE THOUGHT THAT THEY CURRENTLY LOOKED TIRED AND LACKED PEOPLE, ACTIVITY AND ENERGY.

Some people suggested making the area more family friendly, for example, by introducing a children's play area. Others suggested more trees, grass and public art to make it an inviting place to sit, linger and enjoy. Others wanted to see the redevelopment of adjacent sites encouraged and external shopfronts required. Another popular suggestion was more festivals and markets.

A few participants suggested including smaller kiosks and cafes with outdoor seating in the middle of City Walk to provide a more comfortable scale given it is a wide space, and introduce more people, activity and colour.

WHAT YOU SAID

"I think more effort should be put into supporting existing public spaces, such as Garema Place and City Walk."

"Garema Place needs to become a beautiful green space with trees, grass, potted flowers, sculptures etc. This will draw people to it to sit at lunch time and throughout the day."

"Community life in the city centre can be encouraged by reducing concrete."

"Please do not 'upgrade' City Walk any more. It is perfect as it is. It is the type of businesses there that holds back the area."

"The area [City Walk] is actually too wide. The shops and restaurants feel miles apart... boulevards could be activated by smaller cafes in the middle parts of the wide expanse with outdoor seating areas (think the Piazzas of Rome!). This creates tighter flow of people, more energy and more enjoyment for those passing through."

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PEOPLE WALKING AND CYCLING

Many people wanted walking and riding a bicycle to feel safer and more comfortable in the city centre. Some people wanted to see greater separation between motorists, cyclists and pedestrians to reduce conflict between the three groups and improve safety for everyone. Other people suggested smoother paths, more seating and more shade.

Another suggestion was introducing an end of trip walking and cycling facility in the city centre with lockers, showers, change rooms and bicycle maintenance facilities to support people walking and cycling.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Many people wanted to see high quality, frequent public transport services with good connections. Some people wanted to see the city bus interchange upgraded so it feels safer and provides better weather protection. Others wanted to see public transport better cater for the needs of people with mobility issues.

TRAFFIC AND CAR PARKING

Many people were concerned about the dominance of traffic and parking in the city centre. They said it was affecting amenity and undermining the experience of being in the city centre. Suggestions for addressing this included:

- Create a city bypass route for cross-city through traffic.
- Redirect traffic elsewhere.
- Reduce speed limits on city streets.
- Encourage new carparks at the periphery of the city centre.

Other people were concerned about the availability and expense of parking in the city centre. They wanted to see more and cheaper parking.

WHAT YOU SAID

“Place people first in planning and transport.”

“[We need] separated cycle and pedestrian paths in high traffic areas.”

“Reduce the number of cars in the CBD and encourage the use of pushbikes and public transport.”

“Make more connected cycle paths to keep the cyclists off the road.”

“[Allow] higher population density near the city centre and major public transport routes, thus encouraging active transport options and improving people’s health and giving people a new experience of their own city.”

“Subsidise parking, not in the city but within walking distance to encourage physical activity.”

“Every new development should have significantly more car parks required.”

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP SUMMARIES



FEEDBACK FROM STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

A series of three workshops were aimed at collaborating with key stakeholders on three areas:

- to set the strategic directions for the project;
- discuss public spaces and precincts, and
- to test place initiatives to re-imagine the future of the city centre and Northbourne Avenue.

WORKSHOP 1

Workshop 1, conducted on 26 February 2015, was designed to seek input into the development of the framework, to provide participants with an opportunity to provide feedback on the direction of the project, and for ACT Government to understand various views and ideas about the project.

The workshop was attended by 22 stakeholder representatives from a range of sectors, including professional and industry associations, the Canberra business and arts sector and local community groups. Minister for Planning and Land Management, Mick Gentleman, welcomed participants and noted the commitment of the ACT Government for the project as a key initiative to realise the potential of the city.

Participants worked collaboratively in groups to respond to a series of lead questions related to the city shape model options and to propose potential emerging innovative interventions. The group's responses were varied, with some similar themes communicated. Amongst other things, participants wanted future development to consider services close by so that people can walk and cycle safely to those destinations; housing to be affordable; heritage and green spaces to be respected and the urban renewal to be considered within the greater context of Canberra.

WORKSHOP 2

Workshop 2 was a design charette, conducted on 10 April 2015, and was attended by 22 stakeholder representatives, the majority of whom had also attended the first workshop. Prior to the workshop, stakeholders were emailed a ‘homework’ exercise designed to draw out the key drivers (‘levers’) - and barriers- (‘spanners’) - to delivering successful urban outcomes for the renewal of the city centre and Northbourne Avenue corridor. ACT Government representatives from the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate and the Economic Development Directorate attended as observers and responded to any questions from participants.

The workshop commenced with a brief ‘recap’ of the first workshop and an update on project progress, including how the first workshop had influenced the emerging preferred city form model. The new preferred hybrid model strengthened the east/west villages as well as the Northbourne Avenue corridor and supported the activation of parks while still achieving increased density in the city centre.

Participants expressed that they wanted, amongst other things, to see a clear vision for the city, a commitment to design excellence, a balance between people and cars, and the development of ‘social’ and ‘public realm’ plans.

Each participant was given the opportunity to address the group summarising their views in response to the ‘levers’ and spanners’ homework. This discussion provided useful insight into the key challenges and opportunities associated with developing a comprehensive and sustainable strategy for the Inner-North from the stakeholder’s perspective.

Many of the participants saw a strategic vision, positive planning context, meaningful communication and respect for heritage as the ‘levers’ of the project. They also saw the ‘spanners’ to the project as having a lack of vision, restrictive planning system and limitations to innovation.

WORKSHOP 3

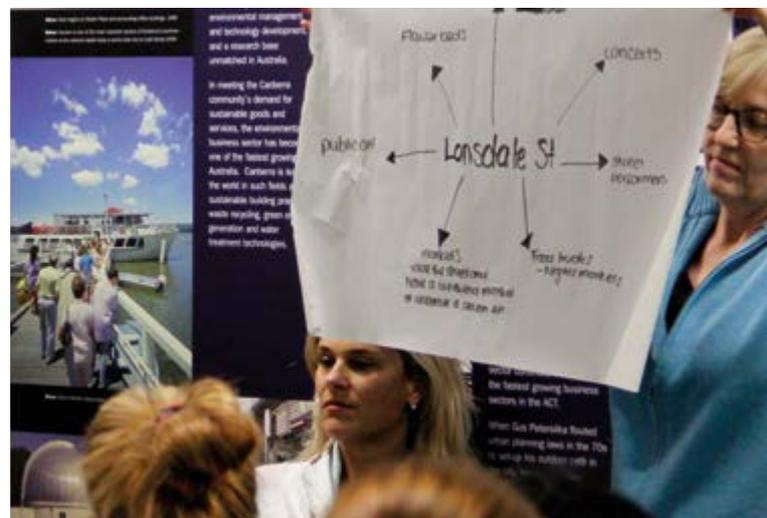
The first phase of Workshop 3 occurred on 26 April 2016 as an inform session, where the latest directions and strategies of the project were presented to 18 participants. The participants were also provided with a template to nominate Tactical Urbanism projects, typically community-led or ‘grass roots’ initiatives to re-imagine and animate underused parts of the city and gateway corridor and to test possible uses for the future.

The second phase of Workshop 3 occurred on 10 May 2016 with 69 participants including high school and college students attending. The workshop included discussions on the strategic risks, and the detail and delivery of projects; and working on the detail of the nine Tactical Urbanism projects.

Participants nominated ideas to re-imagine or reactivate underused parts of the city and gateway corridor and to test possible uses for the future. Participants submitted eleven ideas, of which nine were further developed.

1. Haig Park activation
2. Off-road cycle connections
3. Lane closure in Northbourne Plaza
4. Canberra courtyards activation
5. Sullivan’s Creek recreation park
6. Ageing in place in Downer
7. Community garden in Dickson
8. Garema Place activation
9. Enliven Dickson commercial centre

The ideas collected helped inform some of the actions in the Draft Framework.



HOW PLANNING RESPONDS TO COMMUNITY MESSAGES

THE ACT GOVERNMENT THANKS ALL PARTICIPANTS WHO ATTENDED WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS AND PROVIDED THEIR FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS.

The Draft Framework has been informed by stakeholder and community views and the following key directions have been pursued in response to consistent messages from stakeholders and the community:

- A people-first approach to the planning and design of the Northbourne corridor, with priority for walking and cycling, good quality public spaces and social infrastructure to foster active and healthy communities
- A placemaking approach to create public places and streets as people-friendly destinations with high amenity, supported by investment in the open space networks and urban parks
- A 'city in the landscape' approach ensuring development contributes to the landscape setting with most building heights sitting below the tree line of the urban forest
- A planning and design framework guiding development to incentivise design quality and innovation in sustainability
- A city and gateway movement network boosting the overall efficiency, effectiveness and safety for all travel uses, including walking, cycling, public transport and vehicles.

© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2017

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from:

Director-General, Environment and Planning Directorate,
ACT Government, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601.

Telephone: 02 6207 1923

Website: www.planning.act.gov.au