



ACT Play Space Strategy

REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD

The ACT Government released its draft ACT Play Space Strategy for public comment from 2 November to 14 December 2021.

The ACT Play Space Strategy (the Strategy) sets the direction for the future of play spaces in the ACT. It will guide the forward planning, delivery and management of our play spaces, ensuring an equitable, inclusive, diverse and engaging mix of play opportunities across Canberra.

The Strategy was informed by the 2018 citizen-led Better Suburbs Play Spaces Forum and builds on extensive community engagement with Canberrans across a range of ACT Government play space consultations and research projects while also contributing to the objectives of the ACT Wellbeing Framework.

THE CONVERSATION

During the six-week consultation period we received over 700 pieces of feedback.

Community feedback was predominantly sought through the ACT Government's YourSay website, where participants were invited to complete a survey or provide feedback via an interactive map.

The survey invited feedback on the Strategy's vision, objectives and actions while the interactive map allowed people to provide feedback on existing play spaces as well as identify areas suitable for alternative play opportunities.

There was also an online kids' corner for children to submit comments or drawings, and people could provide feedback via email and social media.

WHO WE ENGAGED

The consultation targeted play space users including Canberra families and children as well as community groups and organisations.

In total we received 357 completed surveys, 319 pieces of feedback via the interactive map, 17 pieces of feedback via the online kids' corner, 16 submissions via email and 8 comments via social media.

80.9% of survey respondents were parents, 6.2% were young people, 4.8% were grandparents and 2.5% were carers. A further 5.6% of survey respondents were classified as 'other' including educators, community advocates, community members and early childhood psychologists.

We received feedback from all regions of Canberra with the highest number of responses from Belconnen and Tuggeranong and the lowest number of responses from Molonglo reflecting the population spread across the ACT.



WHAT WE HEARD

The key insights below represent the most common themes raised across all feedback channels.

Key insights from the community

Support for the draft ACT Play Space Strategy

- There is strong support for the Strategy overall with 90% of survey respondents on average fully supporting or mostly supporting the Strategy's vision, objectives and actions.

Maintaining and upgrading play spaces

- Many people would like to see our play spaces better maintained, their cleanliness improved, and the equipment and facilities upgraded.
- 93.6% of survey respondents fully or mostly support Action item 7 – regularly assess and maintain all play spaces to relevant safety standards.

Inclusive play spaces

- The community strongly supports inclusive play spaces for children of all abilities and ages.
- 91% of survey respondents fully or mostly support Action item 4 – ensuring our play spaces are accessible and inclusive for a diversity of users.
- There is a desire for more facilities for younger children under three years of age, teenagers, children and young people with disabilities and adults as well.

Protection from the sun

- The community would like shade, both natural and artificial, and sun resistant play equipment prioritised to combat Canberra's hot summers which are compounded by the increasing threat from climate change.
- 91.3% of survey respondents fully or mostly support Action item 6 – ensuring our play spaces are sustainable and resilient to a changing climate.

Suggestions for play space inclusions

- There is support for improved amenities at play spaces including more toilets, barbecues, seating, shade, bike facilities and car parking.
- Providing a greater variety of play opportunities is seen as a priority, in particular more water play, ball sport, skateboard and bike riding facilities.
- 90.5% of survey respondents fully or mostly support Action item 3 – strengthening the quality and diversity of play experiences for children.

Encouraging a safe level of risk taking in play spaces

- The idea of creating safe play spaces, whilst encouraging risk taking in children is a recurring theme, with many suggesting that well-maintained play spaces with modern equipment improves safety.
- Fencing around play spaces was seen as a high priority by some to help keep children safe from busy roads or getting lost. This is seen as particularly important for children with additional-needs or carers supervising multiple children.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback on the draft Strategy. Your feedback helped us refine and finalise *Better places to play: The ACT Play Space Strategy*.

Feedback provided via the interactive online map will help inform the future management and maintenance of our play spaces in conjunction with feedback received through other channels such as Fix My Street and our regular play space inspections.

Key Timings

2 November 2021 – Draft ACT Play Space Strategy consultation opens

14 December 2021 – Consultation closes

Early 2022 – Feedback reviewed and considered as the ACT Play Space Strategy is finalised

12 May 2022 – Better places to play: ACT Play Space Strategy released

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

2,209

We reached 2,209 people via YourSay

357

There were 357 YourSay surveys completed

319

The YourSay interactive map received 319 contributions

17

17 children submitted ideas via the YourSay 'kids corner'

16

We received 16 written submissions from individuals, peak groups and residents' associations

165

We sent emails to 165 key stakeholders including organisations and representative groups

24,630

We reached people via Facebook and Twitter 24,630 times

717

We received 717 pieces of feedback in total through our survey, map, 'kids' corner' and social media