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AUTHORITY**

Dickson Place Plan

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What Are You Going To Do?

Action

What are you going to do?

When

When will you act?

How

How are you going to realise your action?

Partners

Who do you need to help you?

Cost

How much do you think it will cost?



Executive Summary: Facilitating a Diverse Dickson

The Dickson Group Centre is informally known as the “Chinatown” of Canberra with its rich diversity of flavours, cultures and things to do. Outside of Civic it is the largest commercial hub and meeting point in the central inner north.

Dickson however has several different personalities related to distinct areas. There is the family friendly and shopping precinct of the Village, Eat Street in Woolley Street; a commercial business precinct located along Challis and Northbourne Avenue; and the surrounding heavily-treed neighbourhood with a mix of long-time residents and new families.

The centre is also undergoing significant change with an increase of higher-density residential, new commercial office developments and a major light rail interchange.

Dicksonians are an incredibly proud community. They have enthusiastically welcomed the opportunity to collaborate in the development of Dickson's future while understanding the need to preserve the unique qualities of their neighbourhood.

In recognition of Dickson's diversity the Place Plan has adopted the tag “Diverse Dickson”.

This is underpinned by values that unite the community, regardless of age, socio economic background and culture – family and children, games, food, and celebration. These values have been used to develop the guiding principles and actions.

To ensure the success and sustainability of the Dickson Place Action Plan it is created around these considerations:

1. A diverse Dickson represents a process of building on-going trust and believes in collaboration between residents, businesses and government.
2. The action plan is the blue tac and catalyst to bring people together.
3. The action plan is not a strategy. It represents a practical “how to” guide for building capacity, facilitating positive change and creating an even better Dickson town centre.
4. The list of actions is a live and dynamic playbook. The actions may be updated, progressed and “ticked” as completed and are to be periodically reviewed upon by the City Renewal Authority and Diverse Dickson Town Team.
5. Not all actions need to succeed and that is okay. Mistakes are an opportunity to learn and grow.
6. Now start doing!



Cities have the capability of providing something for everyone, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.

Jane Jacobs, pioneer of people-focused cities

Introduction: Our Approach

A place plan is a community-led place proposition and action plan with the purpose of developing an even better Dickson for people to live, work, play and experience.

About the action plan:

The action plan is dynamic and a practical list of actions to be undertaken in partnership with residents, business owners and government. The actions have been guided by a strong understanding of place, community consultation, guiding principles and vision for creating a “diverse Dickson”.

Aims of the action plan are to:

- Bring to life the identity, guiding principles and vision for Dickson.
- Create a culture and process of “doing”.
- Help to co-ordinate a Dickson town team.
- Support local business.
- Provide more reasons to hang out in Dickson for an even longer period of time.
- Be a live dynamic document, which requires on-going community feedback and updates.
- Continue creating an awesome place everyone is proud of!

Imagine a city filled with opportunities of play and excitement... you are overcome with feelings of freedom, chaos, creativity and trust.

– Spaced Out Placemakers



Figure 1:

The place journey: Ideas spreading at the speed of trust



Our community

The Dickson community comprises a diverse range of people from different cultural backgrounds, ages and socio-economic backgrounds. It includes residents of apartments, families, office workers, traders and people who visit Dickson from the rest of Canberra. People visit Dickson for different reasons and it is our chance to encourage them to stick around for longer and experience the different parts of Dickson. A few of the local personas include:

1. Inner-Dickson dwellers

"I am a fairly new apartment resident and have moved to Dickson because of the easy access to work, lifestyle choices in the area and convenience of daily shopping."

2. Workers + traders

Worker 1: "I work professionally in an office building on Northbourne and have plenty of meetings over coffee and quick lunch breaks around Dickson."

Worker 2: "I work as a hospitality professional and know most people in the area. The commute to work is fairly simple and I often socialise and hangout in the public spaces before and/or after my shift."

3. Surrounding suburban households

"We are long-term residents and have grown up in the suburbs with our family. We love Dickson and being part of a strong community."

4. Destination visitors (from Tripadvisor)

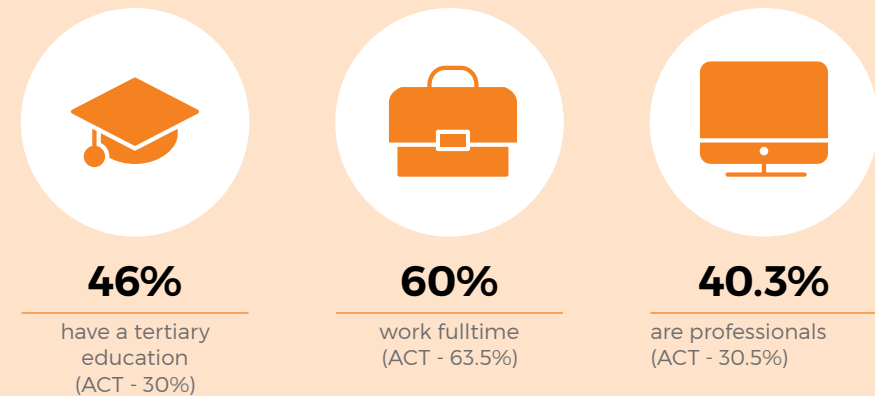
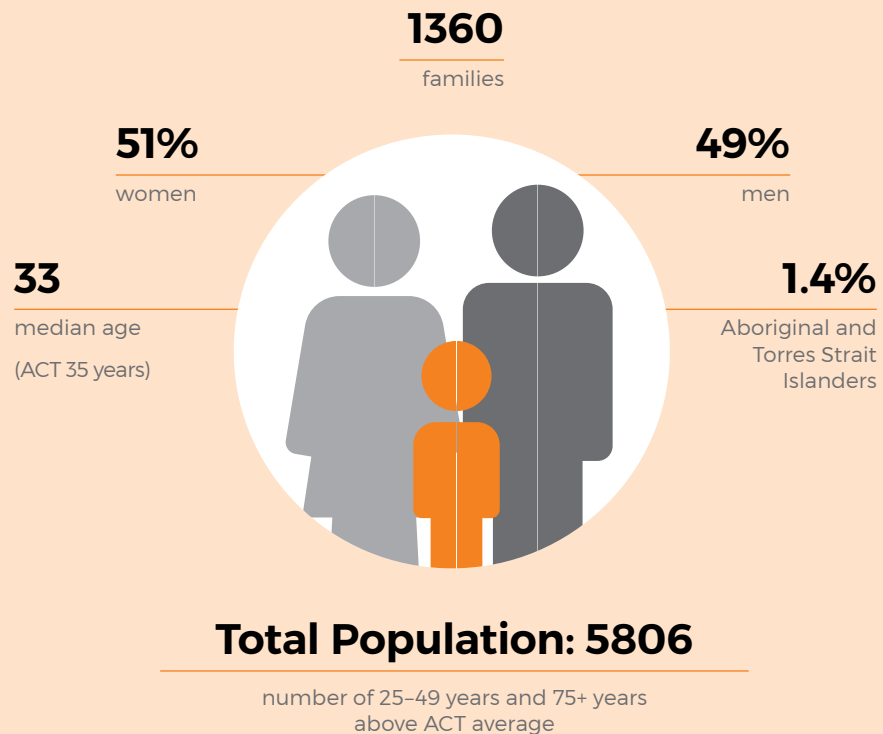
"Canberra's version of Chinatown is small by usual standards but it punches above its weight. Compact, with a great choice of Asian restaurants covering the majority of cuisines. It even includes an Asian grocery store. Found a great place for dinner in this area and would return."

Context

The focus of this action plan is bounded by Antill Street to the north, Sullivans Creek Reserve to the south, Challis Street to the west and Cowper Street to the east.

There are many anchors "pulling" people to the various parts of Dickson including:

- The multicultural "eat street" along Woolley Street.
- Day-time convenience and community facilities within the Dickson village.
- The cycling path and linear green space located within the Sullivans Creek Reserve.
- A new anchor is starting to reveal itself as future development is constructed along Challis Street, which will bring new office workers, residents and dining options; challenging existing services and the possibility of gentrification.

Figure 2:**Dickson & Downer demographics****How do people travel to work?**

Dickson % (ACT %)

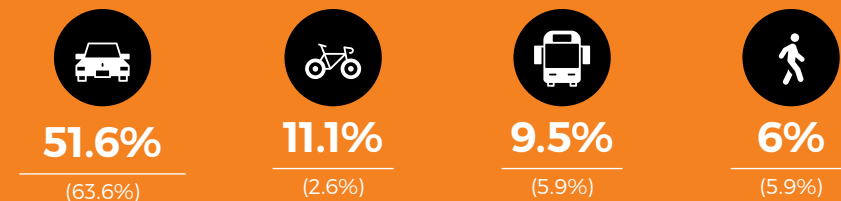


Figure 3:**Community Anchor Map****Woolley Street**

Eat street
Multicultural flavours
Night activity

Dickson village

Family friendly
Intimate spaces
Busy day time activity

Green spine

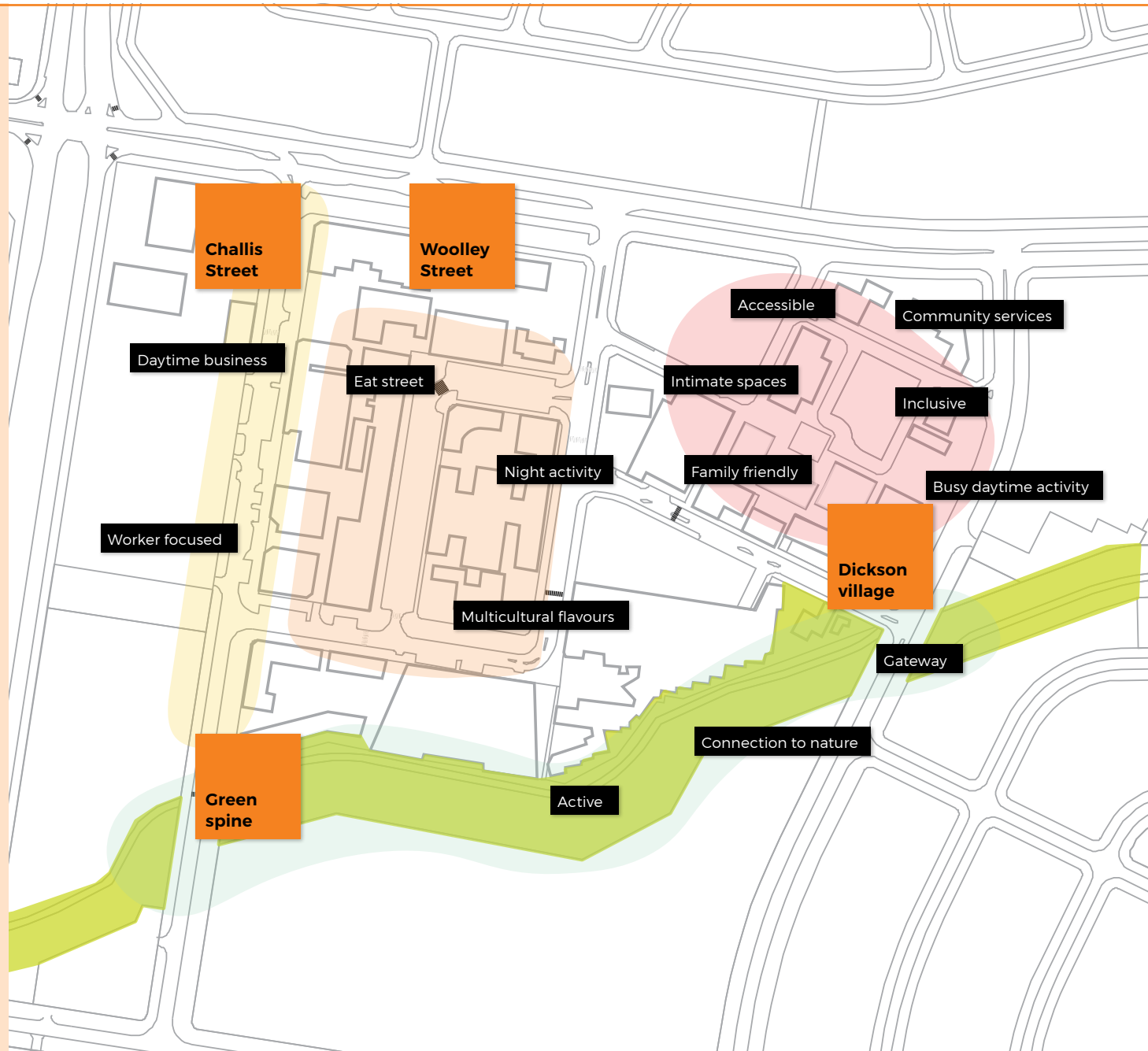
Gateway
Connection to nature
Active

Community services

Inclusive
Accessible

Challis Street

Daytime business
Worker focused



Guiding a collaborative Dickson ... the town team way!

The town team model helps businesses, residents, community groups and local governments work collaboratively to create great places.

We encourage citizens to be engaged and active in their community, help activate town centres and suburbs and assist communities to be resilient and independent.

Town teams champion an entrepreneurial “do it yourself” attitude, within the parameters of a community-focused place vision.

The Diverse Dickson Town Team aims to:

- Implement parts of the Dickson place vision.
- Provide strong community leadership.
- Be a catalyst for positive change in the community.

Figure 4:
Town team diagram



Bringing Dickson to Life: Place Vision & Guiding Principles

A diverse Dickson

Dickson pulses with street life and is a blend of culture, colour and tastes. A place prioritised for people and crafted by local participation. It feels great to be unique and a part of the Dickson mix.

Guiding principles for the activation of Dickson have been tested and endorsed by community members.

The “diverse Dickson” vision and guiding principles will become increasingly important to maintain the character and desire of Dickson as an inclusive family and cultural destination.





For additional flavour add a healthy shake of celebrations, partnerships, community resources, prosperous energy, friendliness and colour!

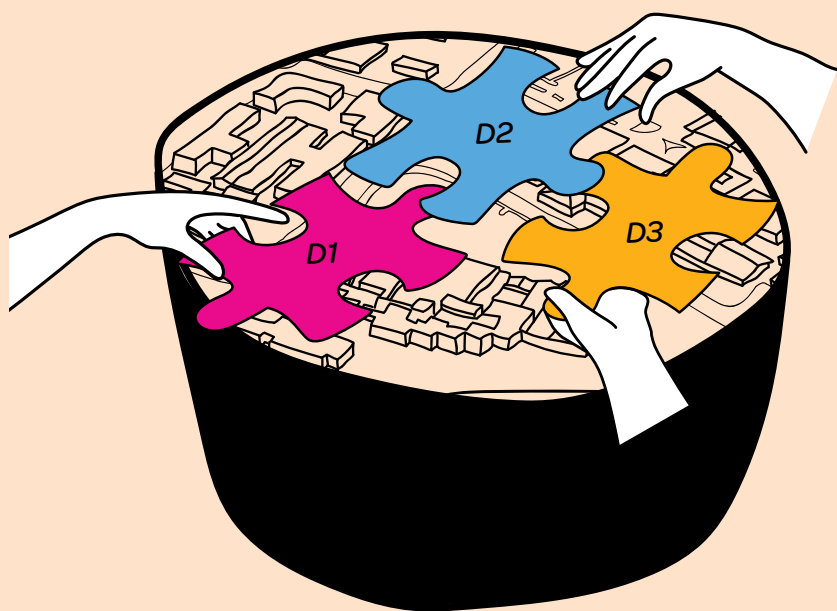


Guiding principles

The place plan and future activation of Dickson will be guided by key principles valued and informed by the community and physical landscape.

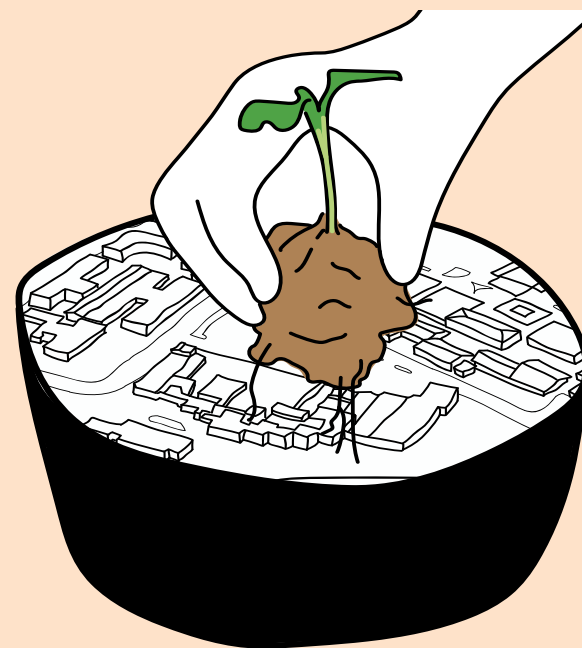
1. Acknowledge and connect
2. Every action counts
3. Fun for everyone
4. Prioritise people
5. Grey to colour
6. We are all part of the team





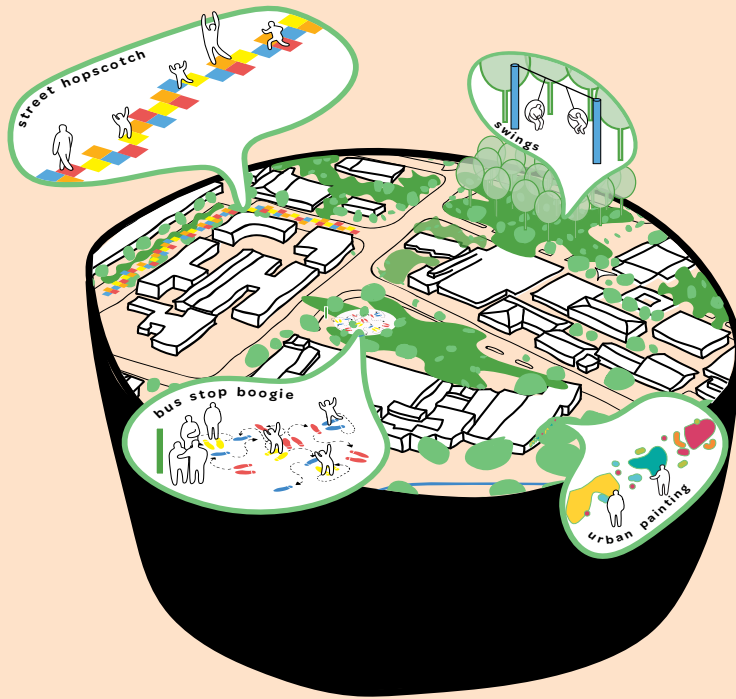
Acknowledge and connect

Dickson has a number of distinct, physically separated precincts; Woolley Street, Badham Street, Dickson village. It is important to acknowledge and respect these differences and also find new ways to better connect and integrate them.



Every action counts

Activation does not always mean big festivals and colourful murals. Everyone can be involved by just saying hello or smiling at a neighbour.



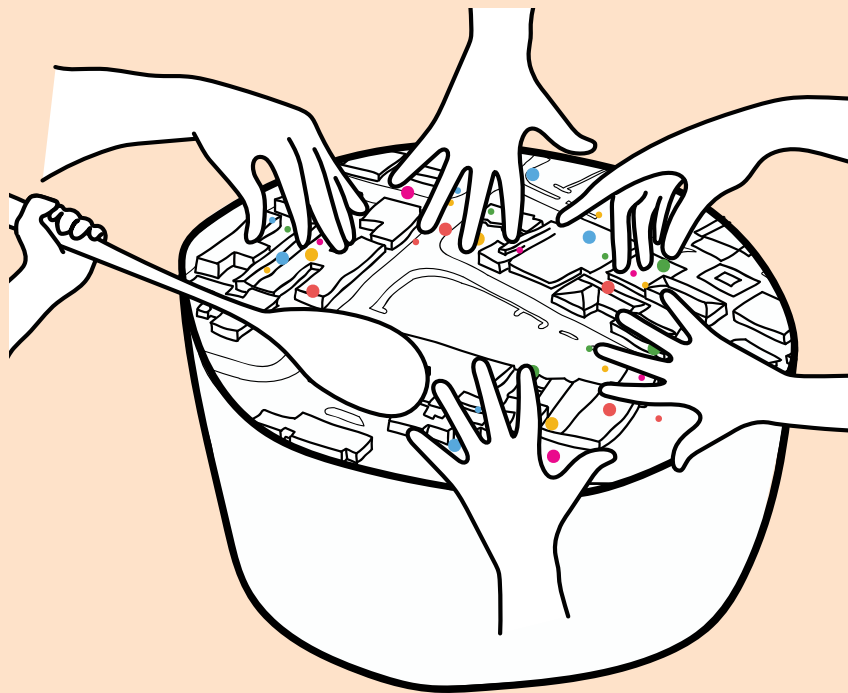
Fun for everyone

Dickson should be an inclusive environment with public spaces reflective of the entire population. Play slows people down and brings happiness and life, even in periods when shops are closed.



Prioritise people

More spaces for people will bring more people into Dickson, facilitating a stronger, safer and more prosperous community for traders and residents.

**We are all part of the team**

Working collaboratively with traders, residents and government will create a stronger community and result in increased engagement, authenticity and improved on-ground activation.

**Grey to colour**

A splash of colour and planting green spaces will provide a more comfortable and beautiful Dickson, representative of the love for our community!

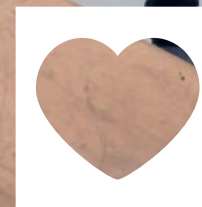
Guiding the Actions

The following actions were identified during the discovery and engagement phase and are shown to represent their relationship to the guiding principles and implementation within the action plan.



Fun for everyone

	Quick win	Medium	Long-term
Events	Action #3: Host an annual Dickson street party with an emphasis on celebrating the multicultural atmosphere.		
	Action #6: Host a series of small-scale events each year that build community capacity and bring people together.		
	Action #19: Investigate on-going larger-scale fringe events with established programs such as Design Canberra, the National Folk Festival and SummerNats.		
Play	Action #13: Install a temporary pop-up park with hangout spaces, skate facilities, games and play spaces within the Dickson village.	Action #15: Undertake an engagement program to develop a concept design for a permanent youth space.	Action #24: Construct a permanent youth space and skate park



Prioritise people

	Quick win	Medium	Long-term
Streetscape	Action #5: Undertake a trial project to create places for people along Woolley Street.	Action #17: Review trial project with traders and redevelop streetscape to extend pedestrian and alfresco environments with shade and greenery.	
	Action #12: Review current footpath and cycle path network and prepare documentation to upgrade their connections, safety, compliance and comfort.	Action #25: Improve footpaths and cycle paths to be comfortable, connected and safe.	
Public spaces		Action #18: Undertake an engagement program to locate, trial, and prepare concept plans, and supporting business case for a town square(s).	Action # 26: Construct a town square.
		Action #25: Upgrade Woolley and Badham streetscapes to prioritise people and minimise impact of traffic and parking.	
	Action #16: Prepare and implement a parking management plan.		—



We are all part of the team

	Quick win	Medium	Long-term
Diverse Dickson Town Team	Action #2: Create a Dickson town team and assist with setting up as a not for profit organisation, website, insurances, seed funding, etc.	Completing actions and continuing to develop an engaged community.	Actions # 27 & 28: Commence engagement for a second action plan and aim for a financially sustainable town team.
	Action #9: Develop a communications strategy for the town team and the "Diverse Dickson" brand.	Action # 17: Install signage at key focal points to assist with communication.	On-going review of communication strategy.
Creative Grants	Action #8: Undertake a creative micro-grants program.		



Every action counts

	Quick win	Medium	Long-term
Community	Smile at a neighbour and help out someone in need. All the small individual actions equal a collective effort to create an even better Dickson.		
	Action #7: Develop “How to” guides to improve the process for community-led initiatives.	Review and update “How to” guides where necessary.	
	Action #8: Develop a creative grants program for Dickson. Consider grant projects to increase participation such as a prototype festival.		
Social impact	Action # 21: Prepare a social impact strategy to consider disadvantaged local residents.		
Community garden	Liaise with apartment residents and consider including an action to develop a community garden at Sullivans Creek Reserve.	Maintain the community garden and encourage activities to foster positive spirit and environmental care.	



Acknowledge and connect

	Quick win	Medium	Long-term
Place facilitator	Action #1: Appoint place facilitator to be key liaison between government agencies and the community and be responsible for facilitating the completion of place actions.	The place facilitator continues to act as the liaison, building stronger government and community partnerships, administering and updating the action plan and ensures a place-led approach to all works being completed.	
Urban art	Action #10: Appoint an art consultant to work with the local community (including artists) to develop a creative narrative for Dickson.	The curatorial brief will be used to inform future public realm upgrades and urban art.	



Grey to colour

	Quick win	Medium	Long-term
Improve lighting	Action #4: Install festoon lighting around Woolley Street and laneway connections.	Action #17: Maintain existing lighting and investigate new areas to improve safety and create more vibrant night-time spaces. Replace lighting as part of streetscape upgrades. Include areas of feature lighting to create pockets of increased vibrancy.	
Blank walls	Action #11: Build upon the existing urban art program by engaging arts to undertake high-quality murals, street art and existing urban furniture up-cycling.	Action #20: Commission an identifiable and memorable urban artwork in the centre.	Continue urban art program.
Activate Sullivans Creek Reserve	Action #14: Set aside an area for people to exercise their dogs in Sullivans Creek. Consider some agility equipment, drinking fountain and bins.	Actions #22 & 23: Prepare a place plan, concept plan and business case for the upgrade of Sullivans Creek as a community asset.	



**“Placemaking is like turning a house
in to a home.”**

David Engwicht, Brisbane placemaker
and creative thinker



Quick wins (1-2 years) - core objectives

Cost: Low  Med  High 

Action plan checklist

(sign when completed)

1. Appoint a place facilitator (place manager)

Appoint place facilitator to be the key liaison between government agencies and the community, and be responsible for facilitating the completion of place actions.

Responsibility of
City Renewal Authority

Theme/principle
Acknowledge and connect



2. Create a Dickson town team

Bring together residents, traders, and government to create an even better Dickson.

Responsibility of
All

Theme/principle
We are all part of the team



3. Host a Dickson street party

Promote Diverse Dickson and generate momentum through a big celebration.

Responsibility of
Town team (lead), place facilitator, event organiser

Theme/principle
Fun for everyone
Acknowledge and connect
Every action counts
We are all part of the team



4. Install festoon lighting around Woolley Street and laneway connections

Improve the ambience of the public realm at night.

Responsibility of
City Renewal Authority (lead), Transport Canberra and City Services, place facilitator

Theme/principle
Grey to green
Prioritise people



5. Undertake a trial project to create places for people along Woolley Street

Develop Woolley Street as a more pedestrian friendly environment.

Responsibility of
City Renewal Authority (lead), place facilitator, local businesses

Theme/principle
Prioritise people
Fun for everyone
Grey to colour



6. Undertake a series of small scale events

Build community awareness of Diverse Dickson and engage local people.

Responsibility of
Town team (lead), place facilitator, local businesses

Theme/principle
Fun for everyone
Acknowledge and connect
Every action counts
We are all part of the team



Quick wins (1-2 years) - core objectives

Cost: Low  Med  High 

7. Review of current procedures for outdoor spaces regarding alfresco permits, events, etc. and develop "how to..." guides and offer training

Make it easier for community residents, developers and traders to be placemakers.

Responsibility of

Place facilitator (lead)

Theme/principle

Acknowledge and connect
We are all part of the team



8. Undertake a creative micro-grants program

Financially support the involvement of local businesses and residents in becoming Dickson placemakers.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority (lead),
place facilitator

Theme/principle

Incorporate all principles



9. Develop a communications and engagement strategy for Diverse Dickson

Ensure information is shared accurately and efficiently with the community. All communication is to ensure the different parts of the community, including disadvantaged people, are engaged.

Responsibility of

Place facilitator (lead), town team

Theme/principle

We are all part of the team



10. Appoint an art consultant to develop a curatorial brief (local narrative) to guide future public realm design and urban art

Strengthen the identity of Dickson.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority,
art consultant

Theme/principle

Grey to colour
Acknowledge and connect



11. Continue urban art programme and develop murals, street art and up-cycle existing infrastructure

Bring colour and interest to blank spaces and tired infrastructure (light poles, furniture, etc).

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority,
place facilitator (lead),
town team

Theme/principle

Grey to colour



12. Review current footpath and cycle network and prepare documentation to make more accessible and safe

Create stronger pedestrian and cycle connections from the surrounding areas into Dickson.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority, Transport
Canberra and City Services

Theme/principle

Prioritise people
Acknowledge and connect



13. Trial a temporary pop-up park with hangout spaces, skate facilities, games and play spaces within the Dickson village

Make families, children and youth feel welcome and give them something to do.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority (lead),
Transport Canberra and City
Services, place facilitator

Theme/principle

Incorporate all principles



14. Set aside an area in the Sullivans Creek Reserve for people to exercise their dogs off the lead. Could include dog agility equipment

Provide dog-friendly spaces and places.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority (lead),
Transport Canberra and City
Services, place facilitator

Theme/principle

Fun for everyone
Acknowledge and connect



Quick wins (1-2 years) - core objectives



Quick wins (1-2 years) - core objectives

3

"Dickson" street party (Annual event)

Woolley Street will be the venue for a well-organised street party showcasing some of Dickson's unique characteristics and local businesses.

4

Festive nights

Enrich people's night experiences of Dickson by installing festoon lighting along Woolley Street and the laneways. It will reinforce the different identities of Dickson, and improve safety and wayfinding.

5

Pavement-to-plaza

Reclaim some of the Woolley Street pavement as part of a trial project to create alfresco opportunities and places for people to sit. If the project is successful it can transition into a more permanent design.

6

Local events (Regular event)

Build upon the good work done by the Dickson Traders by hosting a series of small events specifically for local residents. This includes the Flicks in Dickson.

11

Transform the streets with colour

Identify blank walls, sections of streets and tired public infrastructure (such as the light poles in Woolley Street) that could be used as blank canvases for murals and artwork showcasing local talent.

12

Promote walking and cycling

Improve footpaths and cycle paths in and around Dickson to be comfortable, connected and safe for children, the elderly and everyone in between.

13

Play street

Reclaim some of the carpark to create a temporary play and hangout space for families, children and youth in Dickson village. If the project is successful it can transition into a more permanent design.

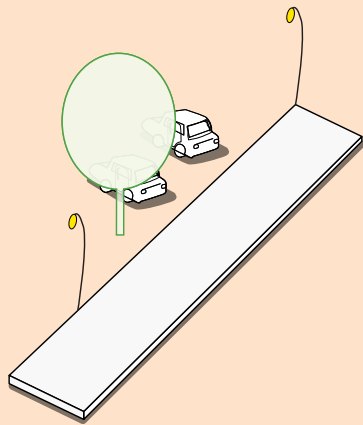
14

Dog park

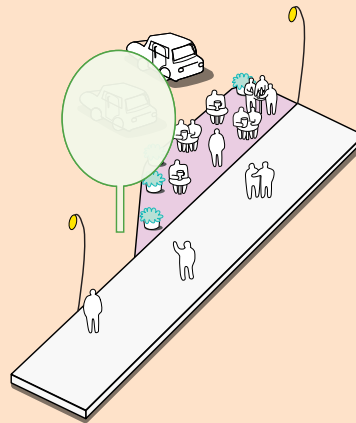
Provide a place where dogs can run around without constraint and dog owners have a chance to get some exercise and meet other dog owners. Could include a fenced area with agility equipment.

Quick wins (1-2 years) - core objectives

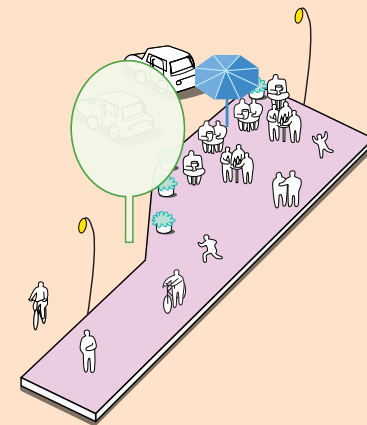
Pavement-to-plaza trial in action



Existing street with parking



Temporary corral for alfresco seating and planters



Permanent design

"If you plan cities for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places."

Fred Kent, founder and president of Project for Public Spaces



Medium-term outcomes (1-3 years)

Cost: Low  Med  High 

15. Undertake an engagement program to develop a concept design for a permanent youth space

Make youth feel welcome in Dickson and provide activities for them.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority (lead), place facilitator, Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

Theme/principle

Fun for everyone



16. Prepare and implement a parking management plan

Improve parking management and accessibility and guide changes to car parking.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority (lead)

Theme/principle

Prioritise people
Grey to colour



17. Upgrade the East-west pedestrian link between Challis street, Woolley street and the Dickson village

Create streets and spaces that prioritise people, connect precincts and minimise the impact of traffic and parking.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority (lead), Transport Canberra and City Services, place facilitator

Theme/principle

Prioritise people
Grey to colour



18. Undertake an engagement program to locate and prepare concept plans, and supporting business case for a town square

Create a heart for Dickson.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority (lead), place facilitator, Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

Theme/principle

All



19. Host annual larger-scale events

These could be fringe events associated with bigger events such as the National Folk Festival or Design Canberra.

Attract people to Dickson as a regional destination.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority (lead), place facilitator, local businesses and town team

Theme/principle

Fun for everyone
Acknowledge and connect
Every action counts



20. Commission memorable urban artwork

Adopt a curatorial approach and create artworks to strengthen the identity of Dickson public realm.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority, town team, Transport Canberra and City Services

Theme/principle

Fun for everyone
Acknowledge and connect
Grey to colour



Medium-term outcomes (1-3 years)

Cost: Low  Med   High   

21. Prepare and implement a social impact strategy to improve social outcomes for disadvantage local residents

Liaise with local social service providers to initiate positive community-led social projects.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority,
local community groups

Theme/principle

Prioritise people
Acknowledge and connect
Every action counts



22. Prepare documentation and a business case for redevelopment of Sullivans Creek Reserve

(Adjoining Daramalan College boundary)

Engage with community and provide activities that encourage people to live more sustainably and foster community spirit and cooperation.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority

Theme/principle

Fun for everyone
Acknowledge and connect
Every action counts
We are all part of the team



23. Create a sculpture walk along the Sullivans Creek Reserve connecting through to ANU/Civic

Strengthen Dickson identity and encourage people to use the open spaces more.

Responsibility of

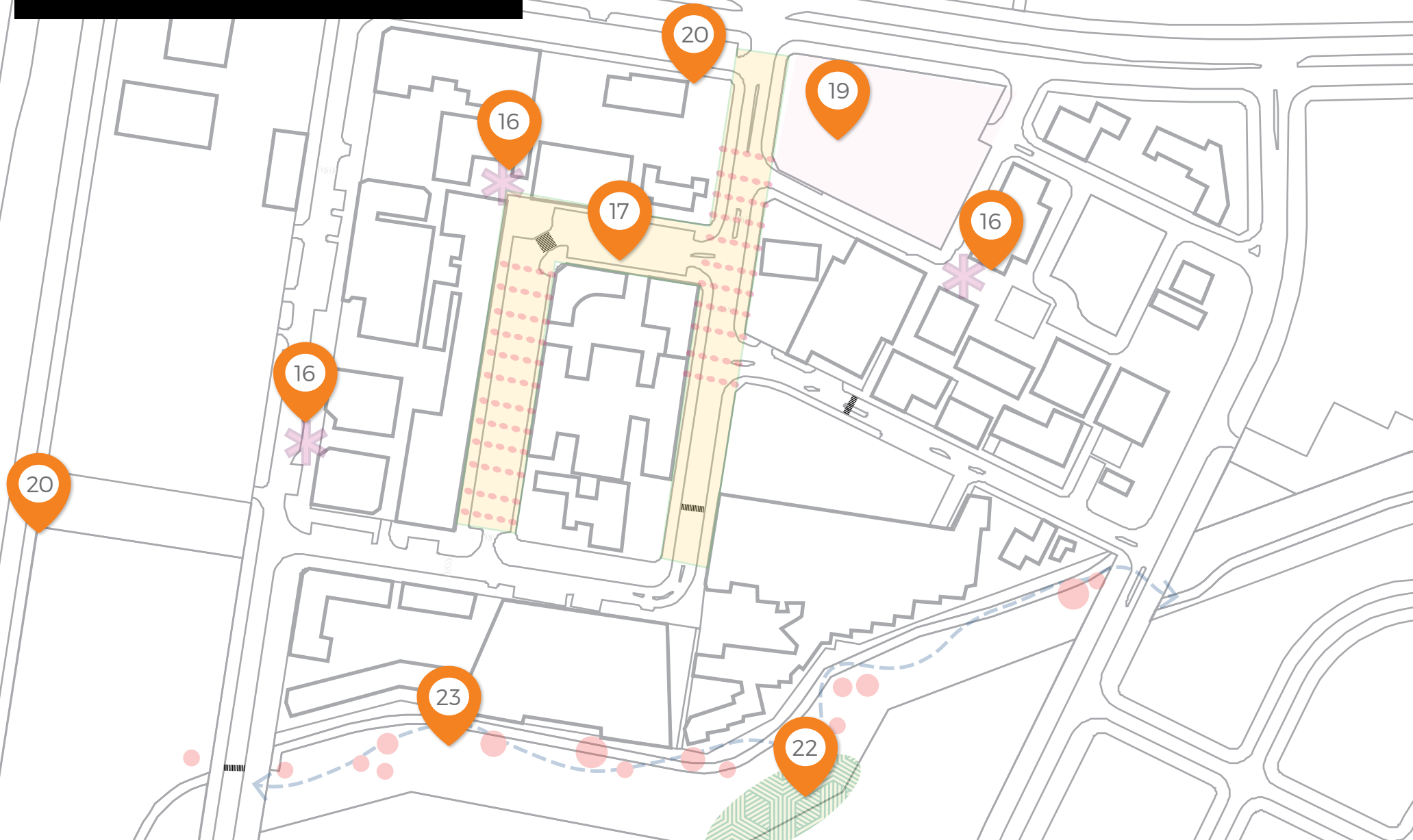
City Renewal Authority

Theme/principle

Grey to colour



Medium-term outcomes (1-3 years)



Medium-term outcomes (1-3 years)

16

Heart of Dickson

"Where is the heart of Dickson?" There is no clear answer. Locations and designs to create a town square(s) as places for people to meet will be developed through an interactive/pop-up engagement process.

17

A distinctive eat street

Following the "pavement-to-plaza" trials Badham and Woolley streets will be upgraded to create a more people friendly and multicultural flavoured streetscape.

5

Large events

Utilise carpark, streets and surrounding parks to host large events that attract people from right around Canberra. They could be fringe events associated with the annual Summernats and National Folk Festival.

20

Wow!

Major artwork providing a distinctive experience for people arriving in Dickson. It should deliver a strong day / night presence and celebrate Dickson's multicultural character and food destination.

22

Community garden

Create a community garden as a place for people to access healthy, affordable and seasonal food, be involved in the neighbourhood, and foster community spirit and cooperation.

23

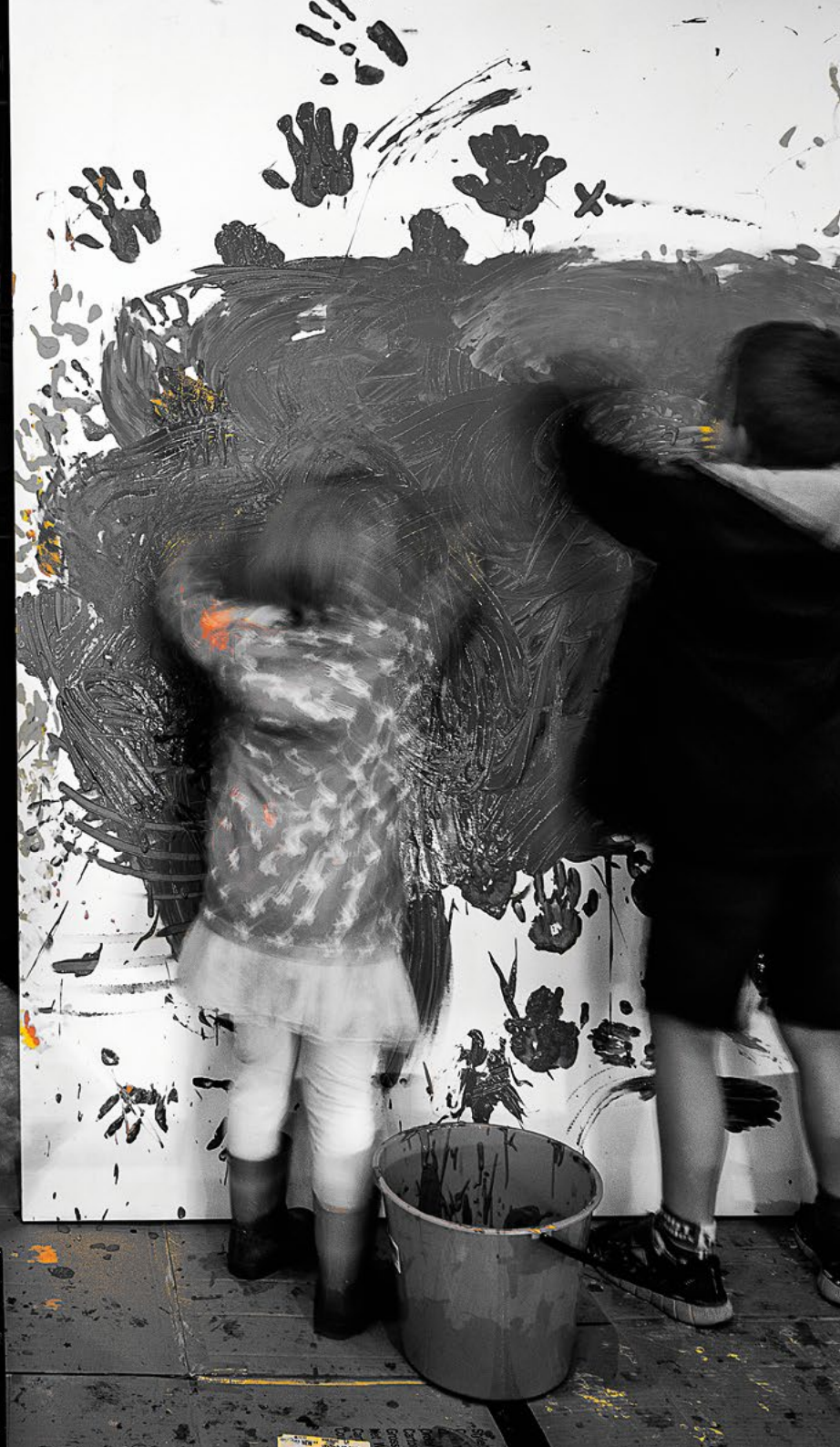
Sculpture walk

Create a sculpture walk that connects Dickson to Braddon, Civic and the lake, to encourage people to use the Sullivans Creek corridor more. Could include a range of permanent and temporary art.



I always thought someone should do something, until, one day I realised I was someone.

- John F. Kennedy



Long-term actions (3-5 years)

Cost: Low  Med   High   

24. Construct a permanent youth space and skate park

Make youth feel welcome in Dickson.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority

Theme/principle

Fun for everyone



25. Ensure all footpaths, cycle paths and infrastructure are upgraded to be of a high quality, safe, comfortable and continuous

Prioritise walking and cycling.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority

Theme/principle

Prioritise people
Grey to colour



26. Construct a town square

Create a heart for Dickson.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority

Theme/principle

Fun for everyone
Prioritise people



27. Prepare the next version of the Dickson Place Action Plan

Start engagement for the Dickson Place Action Plan Part 2.

Responsibility of

City Renewal Authority (lead), town team, place facilitator

Theme/principle

Review all principles



28. Review financial support and business plan

Aim for a financially sustainable town team.

Responsibility of

Town team (lead), place facilitators

Theme/principle

Review all principles



29. Improve the safety and amenity of Sullivans Creek with planting, landform, lookouts and more crossing points

Improve the connectivity, safety and activity of Sullivans Creek Reserve.

Responsibility of

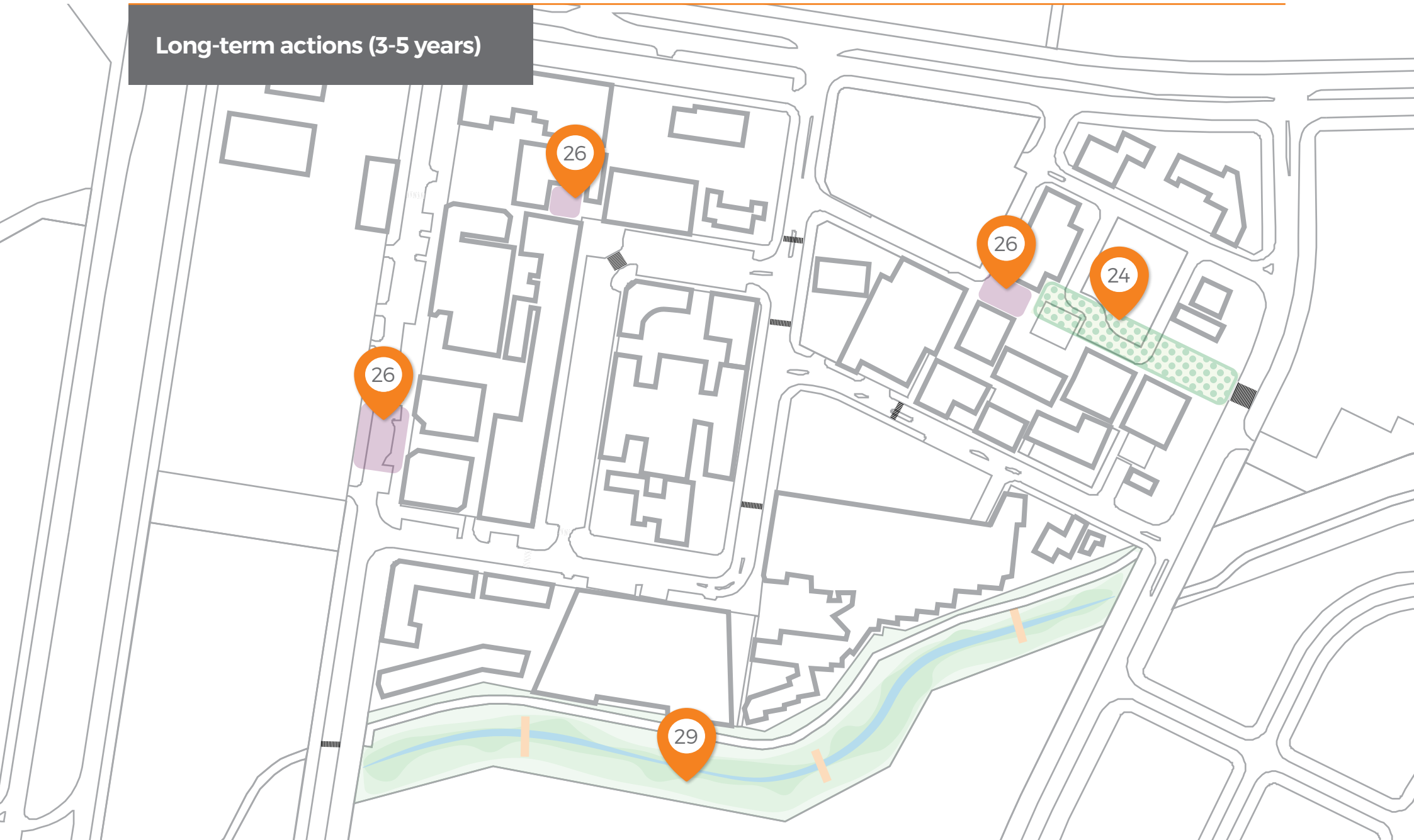
City Renewal Authority

Theme/principle

Prioritise people
Grey to colour



Long-term actions (3-5 years)

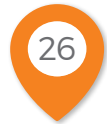


Long-term actions (3-5 years)



Play

Following the “play space” trials, deliver a permanent youth and play space to provide a place for children and youth to play and hang out within the Dickson village.



Heart of Dickson

Following the “Heart of Dickson” trials and business case approval, deliver a town square. It could be located across several sites to relate to the different precincts.



Sullivans Creek living stream

Turn the Sullivans Creek Reserve into a beautiful green space for the local community. It will incorporate the dog area, sculpture walk and possible community garden.

Sit under the festoon lighting and enjoy the ambience of the street.

Buy some food from the stalls outside the shops.

Meet friends for a casual dinner at your favourite restaurant.

Support local artists through a mural gallery.

Admire the blossom trees and garden beds in the street.

Woolley Street Festive Nights



Sit on the benches under the trees that provide summer shade and winter sun.

Chat to the entrepreneurial young woman that runs the coffee cart.

Mix it up and hold an outdoor meeting under the canopy.

Catch up with work colleagues for lunch.

Enjoy walking along the street looking at shops. Pop into the hairdresser for a haircut after work.



Challis Street Work, Meet and Play

Learn skate etiquette
and improve your skills.

Sit back on the swing
with a friend and watch
the world go by.

Watch the kids play
while you enjoy a coffee
with friends.

Sit on the lawn with
other parents and kids
for the Dickson Library
Story Time.

Catch up with friends
after school.

Dickson Village All-Ages Play Spaces



Work with the local school and residents to maintain the community garden together.

Support local artists through a mural gallery

Contemplate the beauty of the restored Sullivans Creek.

Walk the Sullivans Creek sculpture trail between Civic and Dickson and learn about local cultural heritage and environment.

Socialise with your neighbours while your dogs exercise and play.

Join a lunchtime fitness class with local office workers using outdoor equipment and paths.



Sullivans Creek Reserve Community Garden

Place Management & Governance

The problem: Business as usual

Governance, on every scale, is not set up to create great places. Indeed, the current culture and structure of government and civic infrastructure may actually be the greatest obstacle (more than money, ideas, talent, infrastructure, etc.) to successful placemaking.

Currently, no department or community organisation is in charge of creating good places. Even when everyone is doing their job masterfully, great places generally fall outside of everyone's mission and goals. In fact, in siloed departments the desired outcomes of mobility, economic development, safety, cultural development, tourism and others are inevitably in conflict and competition, frequently undermining the public realm that determines their ultimate success.

<https://www.pps.org/article/toward-place-governance-civic-infrastructure-placemaking>

The solution: a place-led approach

A place-led approach is the best way to create great places. It involves setting a vision with the community, having a clear plan that includes actions by various parties and then implementing the actions in a timely manner.

The recommended place-led approach includes:

- 1. Placemaking:** Having a clear vision and identifying the actions to deliver on the vision.
- 2. Place management:** The place facilitator is the Dickson "Mini CEO" and tasked with being an exceptional place curator, coordinator and communicator.
- 3. Place activation:** A place must have people in order to be "active" or activated. Making places more active should be a key goal of the vision and action plan.



It's everyone's responsibility to create a great place!

Actioning the hardware and software of a place



Software

The software of a place is less tangible: the people; activity; vibrancy; the "vibe"; the personality of the place; feelings; confidence and enthusiasm. The software is provided by local businesses, landowners, residents and visitors. While critical, the software can't always paper over major hardware faults or missing pieces.



Hardware

The hardware of a place is the physical attributes. It is usually delivered by urban designers, landscape architects and engineers and includes roads, trees, footpaths, utilities, services etc.

While vital, the hardware can't give a place soul, character or feeling.

Just like a computer, a place cannot work unless the hardware and software work together and get upgraded over time. They aren't static.

How To Set Up a Town Team

Advice from the Town Team Movement - www.townteams.com.au

Strong, engaged and successful Communities

Congratulations! You are giving your time to one of the most important roles in our society.

We can create stronger communities and better places by getting organised, encouraging businesses and residents to work together and undertaking small (and big) actions to improve our places.

We established Town Team Movement to help you start a successful town team. You'll be joining hundreds of other people in this growing movement for positive change. Here are some ideas to start the process.

What is a town team?

A town team is a non-profit organisation that includes businesses, landowners and residents working collaboratively with their local government to improve a place or area, often a town centre or "main street". They are catalysts for change and run by the community, for the community. They:

- Provide vision and leadership.
- Are non-political and independent from governments.
- Are positive and proactive.
- Work for the benefit of the whole community (including future generations), rather than gains for individuals or particular agendas or sectors.

Each team has different priorities and focuses, but all share these principles.

Where do we start?

So, you may have had a few conversations with locals, maybe a few drinks and you want to find out more. Excellent! You have just completed Step 1!

Successful town teams generally have some common ingredients:

1. Find some leaders

Nothing is likely to happen without a few leaders to provide direction.

You don't have to be a leader to be a leader. Errr ... what we mean is that you may not see yourself as a leader. But others might.

You can become a leader often by just being interested and showing up.

Look for the existing leaders in your community and tell them about what you are thinking about. They might also be interested and provide suggestions. Or they could get involved and help you.

2. Where?

What's your patch? You need to roughly work out the area you will be working to improve. Is it a suburb, a town centre, a street, a neighbourhood? This will help to provide a focus and help when you are talking to other people.

3. What's the story? What's the vision?

Every place has a story. Place X is struggling because We need to act because... Our vision for the future is...

People listen to stories. Humans are hardwired to react to story-telling. You need to think about what your place's story is and your vision for the future.

There probably isn't a vision for your place (check with your local government though to make sure). If there isn't anything at the moment, working with businesses and residents to set your vision for the future of your place is probably the best thing you can do.

Doing a Survey Monkey online survey is an easy and free way to find out what people would like to see happen. Or you can throw a street party or have an event and ask for people's ideas.

4. Focus on what you can do, not on what you can't do

Town teams won't be building new railway lines anytime soon. But they can build support for those kinds of ideas in the community. Focus on the things you can do – make a list. Forget about the other stuff once you have made your list. Just do what you can do (this line won't work for the Nike marketing team, but it's fine for us).

5. Create an action plan

An action plan is basically like a "shopping list" of actions and some reasons why the actions are needed. The actions could be completed by a local government, residents, businesses, your team or other community groups. If you are listing actions for other people or organisations, you'll obviously need to talk to them and see what they think. That's part of the process.

Town teams have successfully created action plans and are working through them to try and "tick off" the actions when they are finished. We can suggest some examples if you are interested in finding out more.

Creating an action plan for your place can:

- Set your vision for the place (what do you want to see happen in the future? What kind of place will it be?)
- Engage residents and businesses. What are the priorities? What needs to happen? What do people like and not like about your place?
- A plan will help when talking with your local government.
- It can also help you to promote your team and your place.

6. Build connections with other community groups, businesses, residents and your local government

Find out about the other groups in your community. Who are they? What are their goals? Do you have things in common?

Dealing with local governments can be challenging. But you are probably going to need to speak or deal with them at some point.

Let them know about your ideas. Do they have grants available? Do they know about placemaking? Do they have economic development officers?

7. Just start on something

Just do it!

It's better to just have a go. Start small or start big. But just start. Have a social BBQ, or a street party, or a social event, or a working bee. You might be surprised with who turns up.

8. Connect people with their interests and passions

If you find people who are happy to help you, make sure you bottle them, literally preserve them as they are more valuable than gold!

Most people will be happy to help with the things that they like or are interested in. See if you can connect people with their interests and passions. Remember, this kind of community work is a fantastic way for people to try new ideas, build skills, develop confidence and add to their work resume.

If nothing else, creating a town team will be a learning experience.

9. Setting up the organisation

A few key questions once you start making some progress will be:

- Do we just stick to being an informal group?
- Do we become incorporated?

We have prepared another "How to Guide" on setting up the organisation if you would like to become incorporated.

Find Out More

Website: www.townteams.com.au

Email: hello@townteams.com.au

Call: Dean Cracknell
Chief Executive Officer
0468 38 1745

Appendix 1: Town Team Case Studies

Case study: Leederville Connect

When Subway moved out of their retail space on the corner of Oxford and Newcastle Street, 7 Eleven offered three times the average selling price for that area. However, Leederville Connect worked with neighbouring businesses to support Pinchos' (local trader) bid to take the corner retail space.

Using past case studies
Leederville Connect
demonstrated the long-
term benefits that Pinchos'
expansion would have on
the local area's foot traffic,
atmosphere and vibrancy.

- Joanne Fotakis, Leederville
Connect Chair, 2017



Retail management
and localism



Case study: Better Beaufort Action Plan

Prepared by: Beaufort Street Network in association with City of Vincent

Overview

The Beaufort Street Network created the first community-driven action plan in Perth. Cities often plan big budget projects to revitalise an area, but they are expensive and often fail to deliver on their promises. It is better to encourage smaller, creative, community-driven projects, that taken together deliver positive changes.

The Better Beaufort Action Plan:

- Was prepared and driven by the community.
- Establishes a vision for the place.
- Has five principles to guide future actions.
- Identifies short, medium and long-term actions.
- Is based on feedback from local businesses, residents and visitors.
- Includes activation ideas for local businesses and residents.
- Provides “how to guides” relevant for the local government regulations on items such as establishing an alfresco dining area, altering a shopfront, street busking, painting a mural, bringing shop wares outside on to footpaths, pop-up events and more.

Key focus

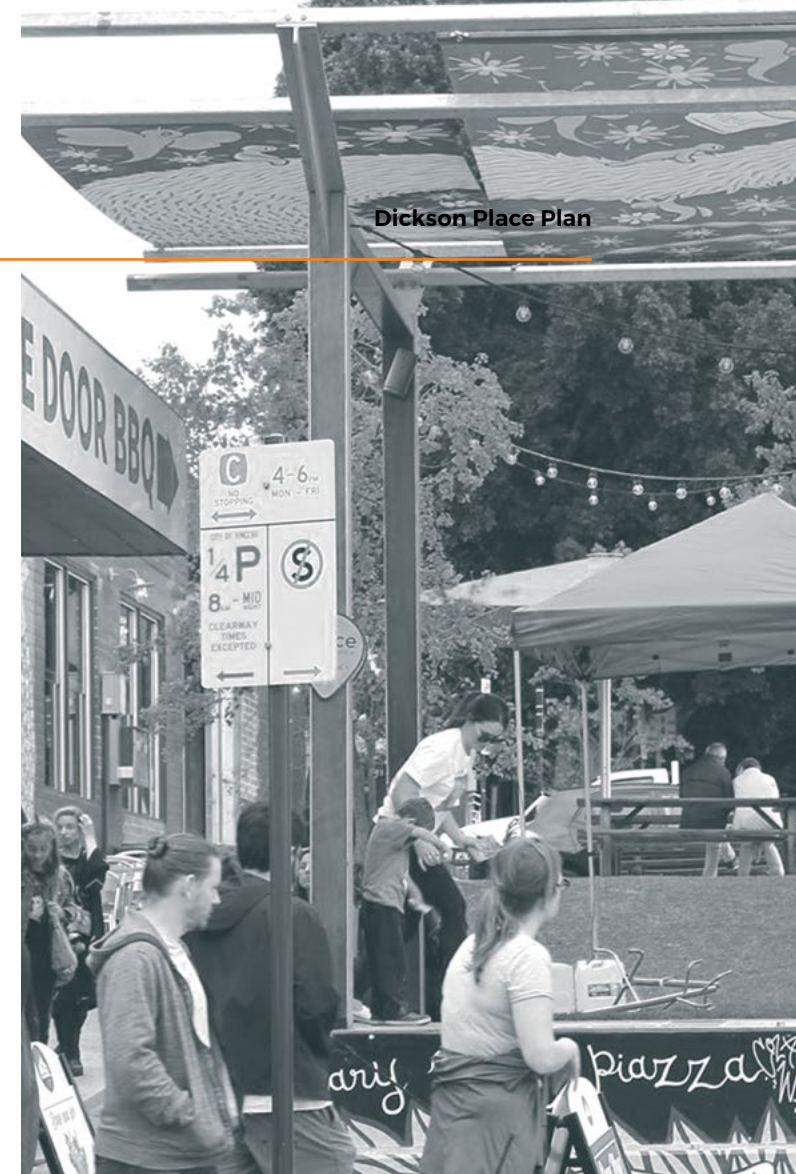
The plan aims to make people “feel at home” on the street – comfortable, relaxed and entertained. Attracting more people for longer periods is the key for creating socially and economically successful places.

The Beaufort Street Network worked with its local governments – City of Vincent and City of Stirling – to reduce red tape and make it easier to effect change.

Successes

1. Identified and completed 45 small, medium and large actions to improve the precinct over three years.
2. The plan and actions to improve Beaufort Street won the Planning Institute of Australia WA 2014 Great Place Award and Planning Institute of Australia 2015 Commendation Award.
3. The action plan created a new model of a community-driven plan that was dynamic and updatable. It helped to show that community members could be “place leaders”.
4. It also helped to create a culture of active involvement in placemaking by local businesses and residents.

More information: <https://www.beaufortstreet.com.au>



Capacity building
and actioning



Case study: Inglewood Monday Night Markets

Prepared by: Inglewood on Beaufort Town Team

Overview

Inglewood on Beaufort was created following a place charette organised by the City of Stirling and Village Well in 2014.

One of their first actions was to begin Monday Night Markets on Beaufort Street in Inglewood, Perth. The sceptics said no one would turn up on a Monday night. However, the team has created a very successful activation that attracts thousands of people each week in an event which runs every Monday night between September and April. Inglewood on Beaufort has just completed its fourth markets season.

Key focus

Inglewood on Beaufort has undertaken many actions to activate Inglewood. From building and installing wooden seating units, commissioning murals designed or painted by locals, through to running progressive dinners, garden walks, history strolls, long-table dinners, the Festival in the 'Wood and Mount Lawley Christmas Festival, they're committed to making Inglewood the best place for fun things to do and lovely people to meet.

They engaged closely with the City of Stirling and state and federal politicians.

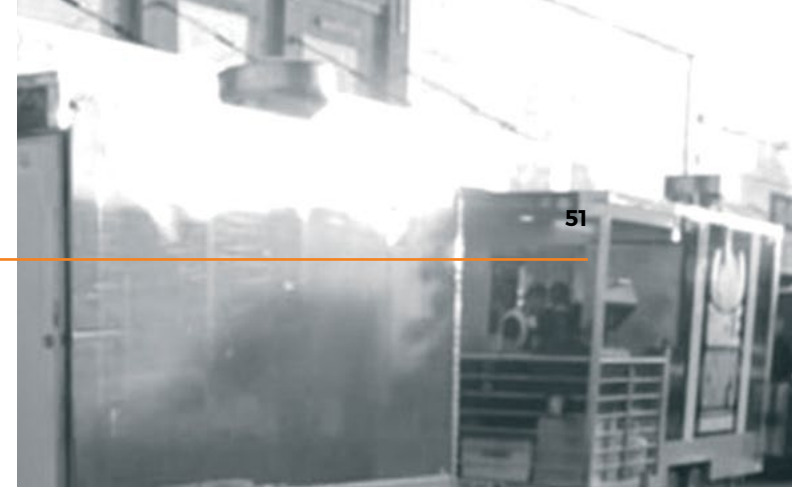
The Monday Night Markets has been the town team's most visible success. Inglewood on Beaufort employs a manager to oversee the markets, which has been a fantastic community success for the area, and generated a revenue stream to help fund other community projects.

Successes

1. Creating an event that the local businesses and community are proud of.
2. Made Monday night a very successful night for local traders.
3. Encouraged the local community to come down and participate, have a meal and meet friends.
4. Put Inglewood "on the map".
5. It also helped to create a culture of active involvement in placemaking by local businesses and residents.

Activation and
revenue raising

More information: <https://inglewoodonbeaufort.com/inglewood-night-markets/>



Case study: Shape Mandurah Prototype Festival

Prepared by: Shape Mandurah in association with City of Mandurah and Spaced Out Placemakers

Overview

Shape Mandurah facilitated a very successful creative grant-funding scheme to visualise different temporary and permanent installations. The purpose of the project was to work in partnership with the local creative industries and showcase low-cost ideas as to how residents feel the City can prosper and showcase its local identity.

Trialling, or prototype projects, often feel safer for government because they are low-cost and can easily be removed. Also referred to as “tactical urbanism” these projects are a great initiative for the community to trial new ideas and build trust with government.

How it works:

A city-trialling competition was setup with grants of \$1,000 offered to groups and/or individuals with ideas to improve the city centre. The judging panel was made up of community representatives within the Shape Mandurah Town Team who guided each project to ensure maximum benefit and communication of ideas.

Ten ideas were selected, constructed and displayed throughout the city centre over a two-week period. The general public were asked to vote on their favourite prototype project using different mechanisms including ballot boxes, Facebook voting and email notifications. The winning project was awarded a \$4,000 prize and unprecedented exposure within the community.

As a result, two of the projects, which included a brightly coloured laneway and “secret garden swing” mural were installed permanently.

A number of additional ideas and artists were exposed, which resulted in further commissions and creative works across the city. The competition itself included more than 15,000 votes and generated a social media reach of more than 100,000 people. Also, because the projects were spread throughout the city centre, it encouraged people to walk and linger around the shops and public spaces, spending more time in the city centre and generating a great user experience.

Key focus

The purpose of the project was to generate new ideas to developing the city centre, provide exposure for creative professionals and facilitate an event that attracted people into the city centre and spend more time lingering around shops and public spaces.

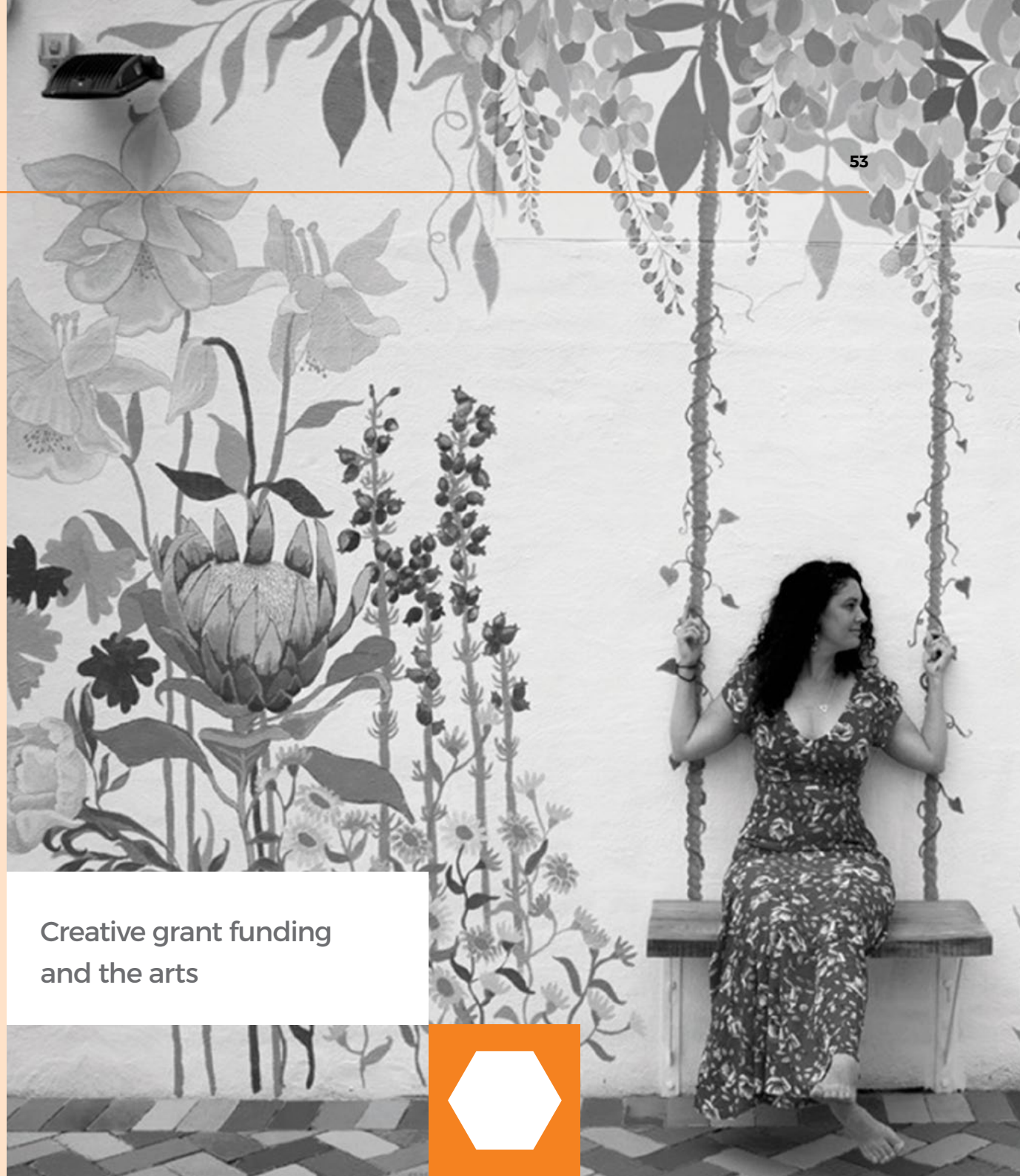
Successes

- Identified and completed 10 prototype ideas for improving the city centre.
- Generated two successful permanent installations, which are still promoted as a focal point of the city centre.
- Generate exposure for local businesses and creative professionals.
- Assisted in building a stronger partnership between residents, business and government.

More information:

<http://www.shapemandurah.com.au/events/mandurah-terrace-community-makeover-blitz/>

Creative grant funding
and the arts



Case study: Mt Hawthorn Hub Young Engagement Program

Prepared by: Mt Hawthorn Hub in association with City of Vincent, Spaced Out Placemakers, Skate Sculpture and SkateboardingWA.

Overview

The Mt Hawthorn Hub undertook a very successful community engagement program with nearly 1000 comments, which was used to generate new ideas and actions to publish within their action plan.

The town team identified the character of its community as being very family focused with a growing youth population. The problem identified was their town centre did not have enough activities or public spaces to support its youth population, which was resulting in some anti-social behaviour and limiting the use of public spaces. The local government had previously attempted to solve this problem by constructing a “teenage backyard”, which was not accepted by the youth population, although it has resulted in a very popular children’s playground.

During the engagement program, the Mt Hawthorn Hub representatives trialled several youth activities in a vacant car park including a pop-up skate park, roller hockey, hangout spaces and an arts project. The group found that although each activity had a varying degree of popularity and support, the skate park was by far the most popular example. The youth engagement workshop itself attracted approximately 400 young people, which was a huge win for the engagement program.

As a result, the Mt Hawthorn Hub in partnership with the local government is currently hosting a series of quarterly youth events, which include skateboarding (and free lessons), hangout spaces, basketball, giant board games, art projects, soccer and music.

Key focus

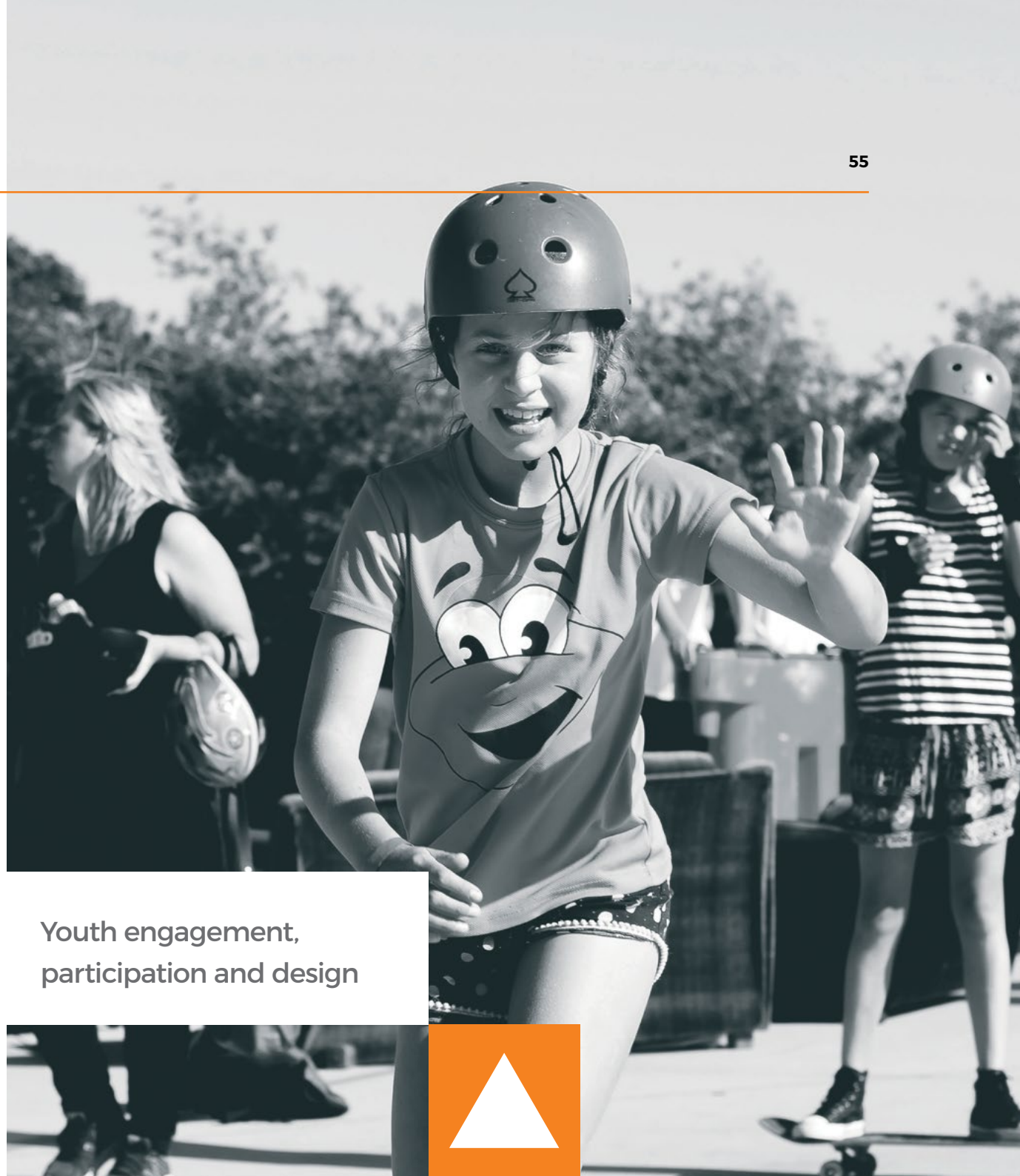
The aims of the project are to facilitate the positive development of public spaces for youth, showcase to the local government the success and popularity of youth spaces (leading to a permanent design) and bring more people into the town centre.

Successes

1. Two events have been successfully implemented with more than 200 youth and additional kids and parents also participating. Two additional events are planned for the next six months.
2. Trialling new uses for youth within the town centre.
3. Supporting local businesses with more people visiting the town centre.
4. Providing evidence and support for the future development of a youth space, including grant funding.

More information:

<https://mthawthornhub.com.au/about-the-hub/>



Youth engagement,
participation and design



Appendix 2: Background Analysis

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Part 1

Introduction



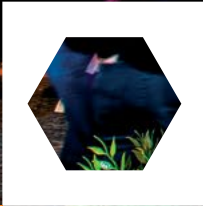
The City Renewal Authority is preparing a **Dickson Place Plan** and accompanying design services. Stage one includes the preparation of a place proposition, the introduction of placemaking to Dickson, and a document review.

The subject area is bounded by Antill Street to the north, a drainage easement to the south, Challis Street to the west and Cowper Street to the east.

A photograph of an outdoor evening event, possibly a market or festival. The scene is illuminated by warm, glowing string lights hanging from above. In the background, a dark building with several white-framed windows is visible. People are walking around, and there are tables set up, some with red tablecloths. A woman with white hair is seated at a table in the foreground, looking towards the event. The overall atmosphere is festive and social.

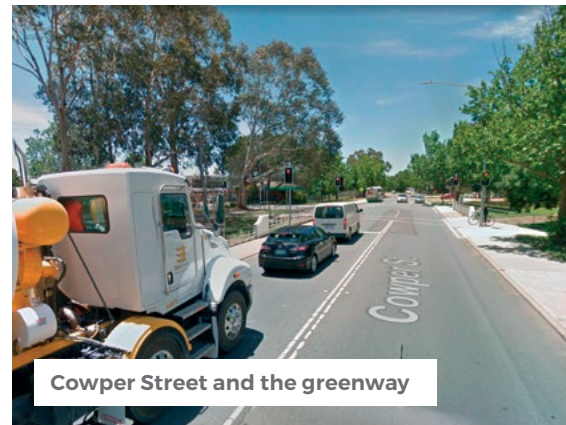
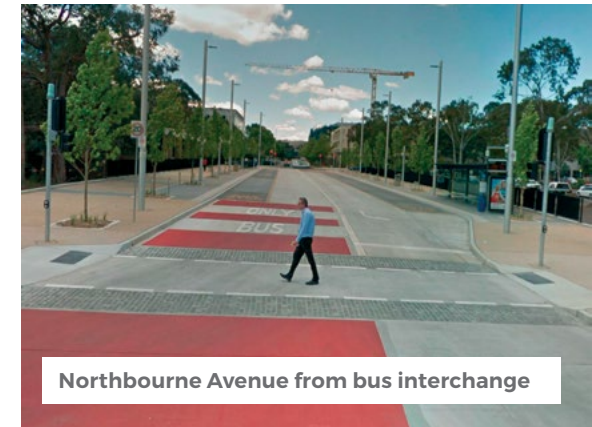
You can design and create, and build the most wonderful place in the world. But it takes people to make the dream a reality.

– Walt Disney

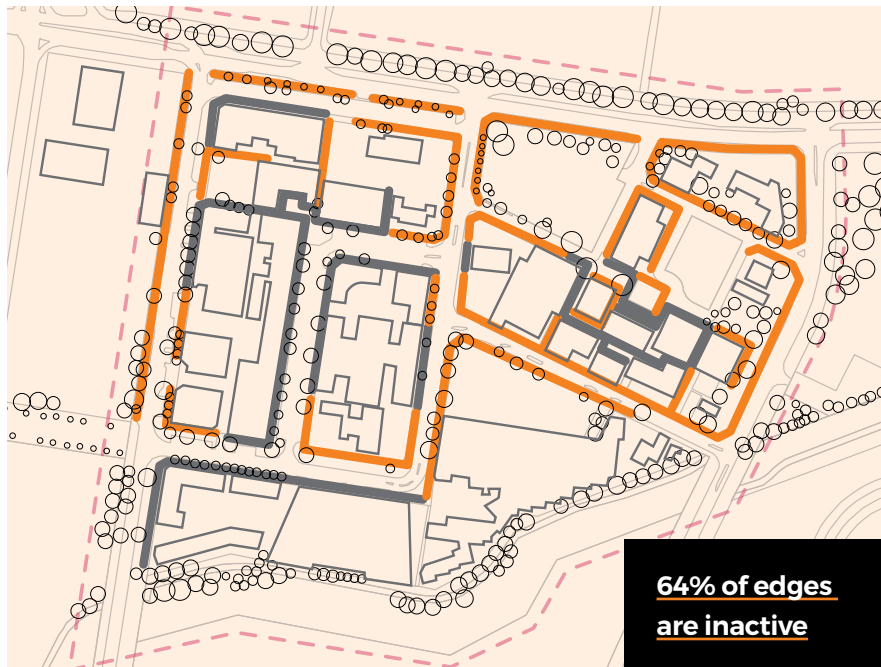


Part 2

Place Audit



Diversity of pedestrian experience



- Inactive edges
- Active edges
- Street trees

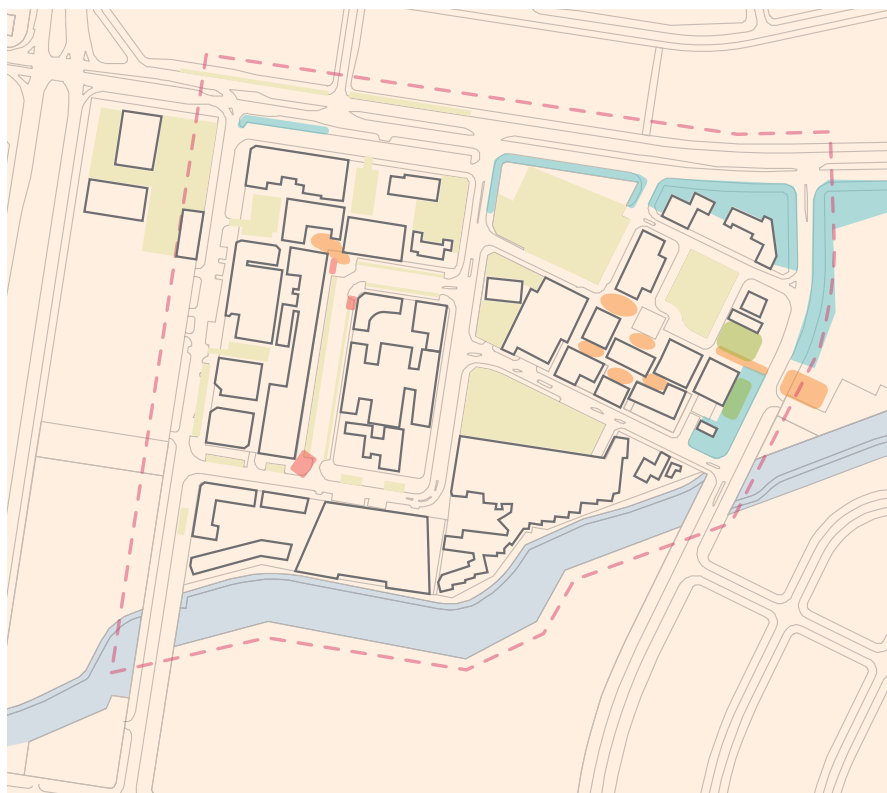
Highlights

- Active edges are made up of a wide range of varied and small shops, restaurants and cafés.
- Some streets and courtyards have a good street tree canopy.
- Active facades have awnings for shade and shelter.
- Public art.
- Pedestrian crossings.

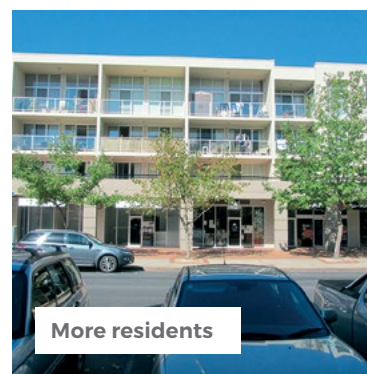
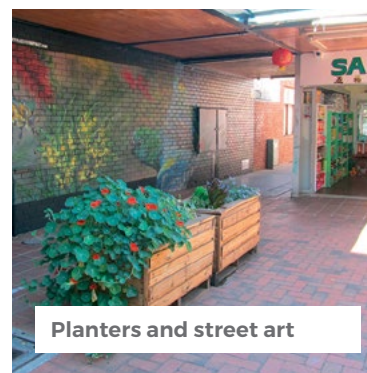
Lowlights

- Long stretches of blank walls and carparks are adjoining footpaths.
- Incomplete and poor-quality footpaths.

Quality of streets and spaces



- Street alfresco
- Urban plaza
- Stormwater easement
- Greenspace
- Unmaintained verge
- At-grade car parking





Highlights

- Active group of traders in the Dickson village
- Dickson village urban plazas have a good scale and a friendly vibe
- Quick wins as part of the Seven Day Make Over
- More residential in the town centre

Lowlights

- Inconsistent pavements
- Neglected and poor quality street furniture and lighting
- Empty spaces
- Missing street trees
- Wide car dominated streets
- Characterless open drain
- Limited space for alfresco area in the streets
- Poor maintenance

Ground-level land use Activity



Highlights

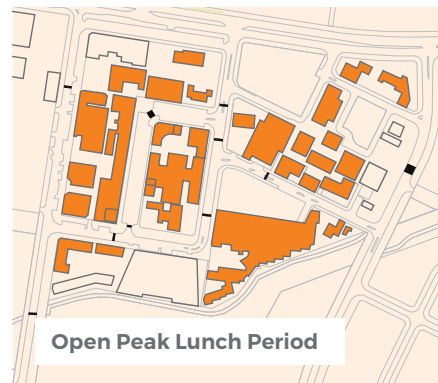
- Anchor tenants include High Road, Woolworths, Tradies and the library.
- Woolley Street includes a strong cluster of food and beverage uses and dominant use of the centre. People visit Dickson to eat.
- Some immediate office and residential uses to support commercial uses.

Lowlights

- Car dominated uses at entry from Antill Street.
- The precinct requires more offices and residential uses to support commercial uses.
- The Dickson village needs to encourage an anchor tenant within the pedestrian-only area.
- Each anchor (except High Road) has a self-serving car park in front of its venue.
- Not enough ancillary activity outside buildings (except car parking) to support lingering around the town centre.

Ground-level land use

Opening times



Highlights

- All anchor tenants (except for library) open throughout the day and evening and attract people from Dickson and the wider area.
- Dickson town centre is most alive during lunch periods.
- Woolley Street is also alive in the evening peak period.

Lowlights

- Low level of uses open throughout day and night.
- Woolley Street only alive during peak periods of day and night.
- Dickson village is mostly dead during the evening.

Land ownership



- Private land
- Public land
- Subject to sale (private)

General observations

- A majority of land is publicly owned and can be an opportunity to facilitate landscape and infrastructure improvements.
- However, the public land is managed by different internal agencies including the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate and Transport Canberra and City Services.
- Some public spaces are also privately owned, which require strong partnership and communications.
- The centre may require a place management position to better coordinate public works and connect with private landowners.

Audience

Destination visitors

Families
Groups of friends
Couples
Tourists

Surrounding suburban households

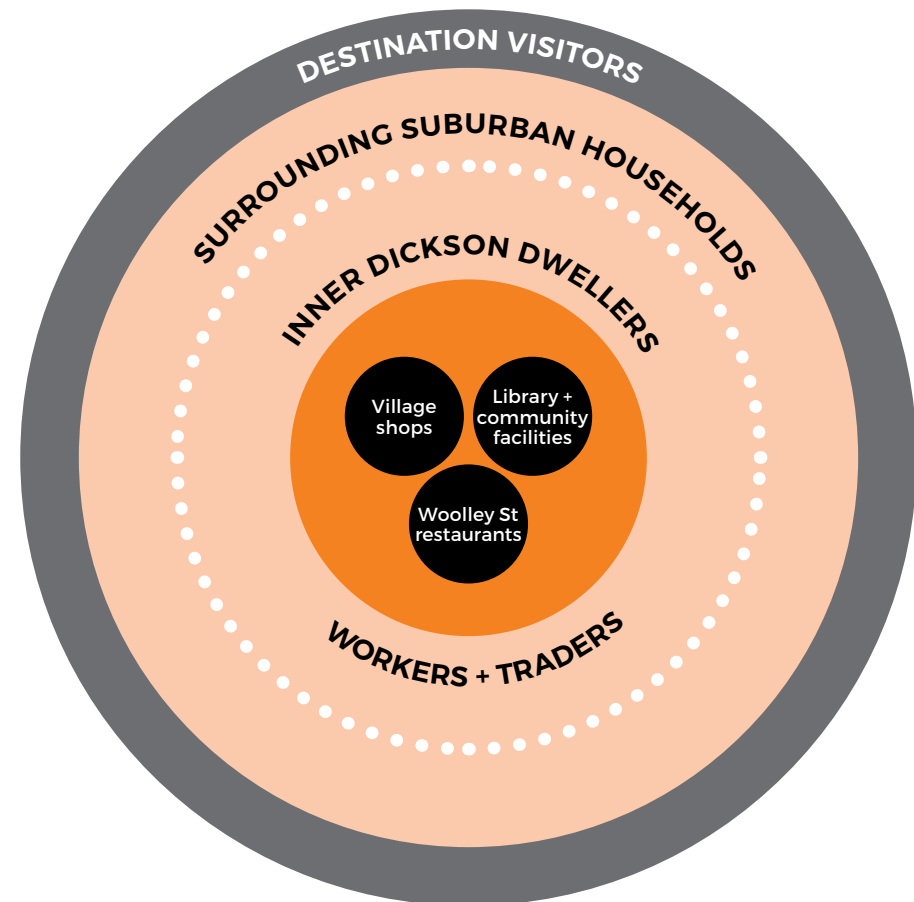
Families with young children and teenagers
Longtime residents

Inner Dickson dwellers

Young couples and singles
Empty nesters – downsizers
Homeless

Workers and traders

Family operated retail
Government workers
Wotso entrepreneurs
Construction workers
Food and beverage and retail staff



Part 3

Public Engagement Snapshot

Workshop #1 –

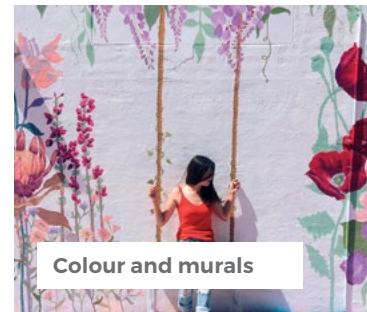
Dickson street party

- Community street party considered a great success with approximately 350 people in attendance and 12 businesses participating in activities.
- 147 comments received as part of the open engagement workshop relating to the following themes: permanent people spaces, play, party, and colour and innovation.
- The positive outcomes have resulted in a strong optimism of community led activation in Dickson and the potential of developing a Dickson town team.

Workshop #2 –

Ideas and actions speed dating

- Main actions consisted of creating permanent games in public spaces, folk festival and busking, food events, Chinese New Year, improved lighting.
- A few of the key resources available in the community are project management, writing and strategy, events and organisation, photography and video.
- Spaces in need of attention include blank walls, public spaces and a general upgrade to the commercial streets in Dickson.
- Creating spaces for families and kids was a consistent theme and improved representation of diverse cultural groups is a great idea.



Colour and murals



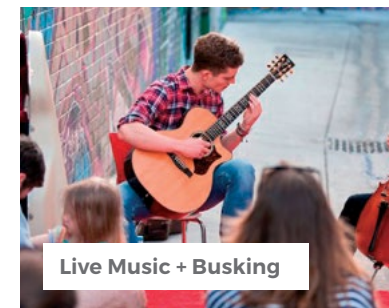
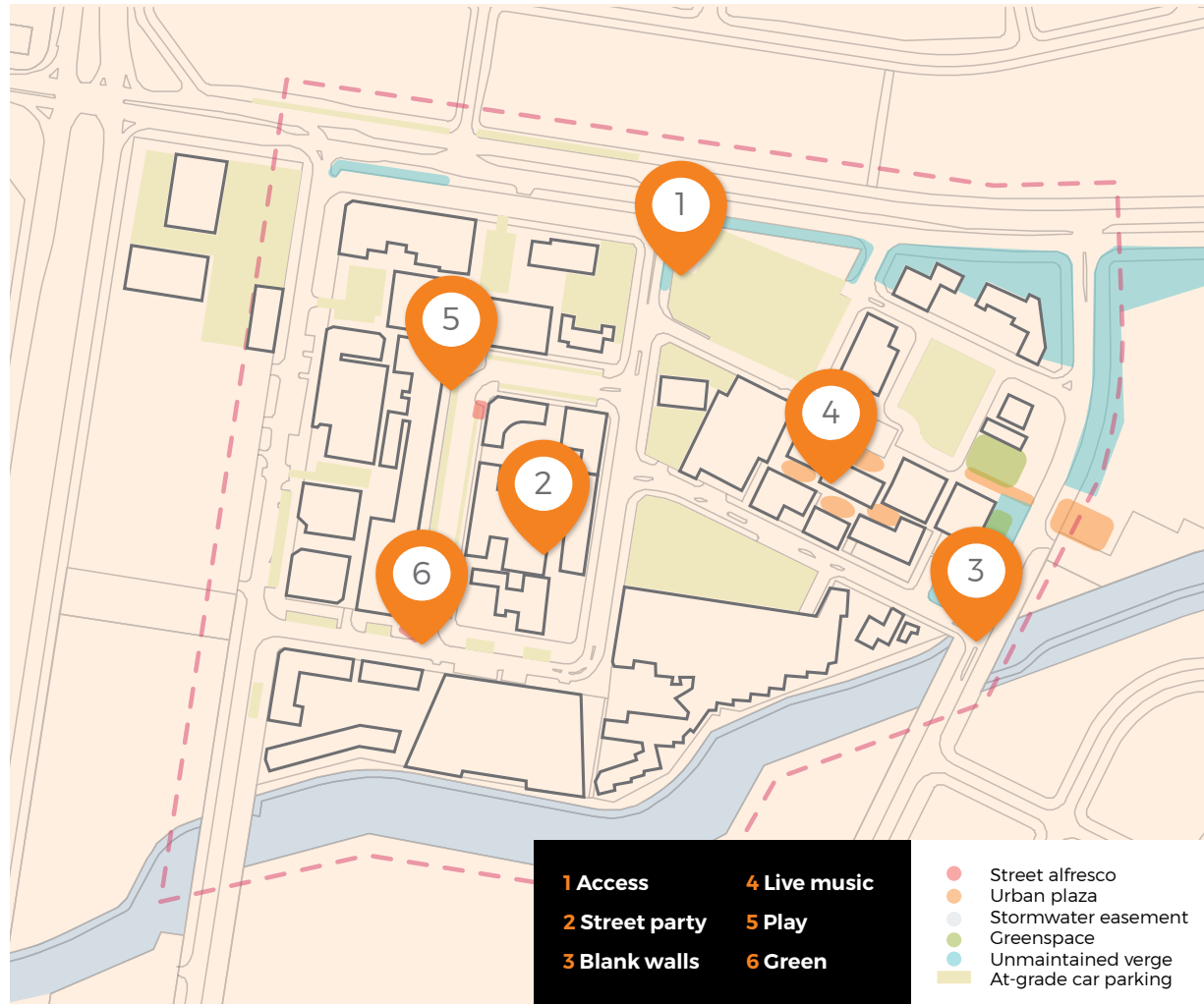
Improved pedestrian access



Festivals and markets



Cultural celebrations



Part 4

Opportunities & Constraints – Document Review

A list of the main documents reviewed included:

- Dickson Centre Planning Project – Stage 1 Vision Workshop Outcomes 2009
- Dickson Centre Master Plan (May 2011)
- Dickson Precinct Traffic and Parking Study (25 July 2012)
- City and Gateway Draft Urban Design Framework (March 2018)
- CBRarts Forum: Creative Spaces Creative Places (2016)
- MyDickson.com.au (2018)
- CURF Annual Forum 2016: People + Prosperity + Place
- ACT Planning Strategy 2012
- Dickson Neighbourhood Plan (2003)
- Place-Based Sustainable Urban Renewal (2016)
- Informing the ACT Planning Strategy Review
- Canberra's Night Time Economy (2011)

Dickson should enhance its cohesive community where people of mixed age, income and cultural backgrounds will value its history and will be safe and settled. Dickson will provide a range of quality, environmentally sustainable residential areas that will retain a tranquil leafy ambience. The business, government and community sectors will be vibrant and progressive, providing a variety of employment, education, shopping and leisure choices, serving as a hub, both for locals and people from the surrounding region.

– Dickson Neighbourhood Plan, 2013

Canberra is perhaps hamstrung by planning decisions of the past, including the prioritisation of the private vehicle (Gordon 2010) and in maintaining the “National Significance of Canberra and the Territory” (Australia 2016) leading to the continuation of the status quo of the imagined ideal low-scale city structure. As a result, Canberra has arguably spread out to form extensive suburban monocultures reachable primarily by long travel car journeys (Jacobs and Appleyard 1987). It is perhaps the city epitome of the modernist city that Jane Jacobs (1961) identified where land uses were separated and dominated by car travel, where the emphasis is on individual buildings rather than neighbourhoods and a city that is in some senses devoid of life, spontaneity and surprise (Jacobs 1961).

– Place-Based Sustainable Urban Renewal, 2016

Summary of key findings relevant to the Dickson Place Plan

Opportunity and vision

- Creating a more compact, efficient city by focusing urban intensification in town centres, around group centres and along the major public transport routes (ACT Planning Strategy).
- Dickson shopping centre is a gateway to Canberra as it is the first large centre reached as one drives south along Northbourne Avenue entering into the ACT (Dickson Neighbourhood Plan (2003).
- The number of cafes, bars and restaurants in Dickson is an opportunity for a vibrant day and night-time economy (Canberra's Night Time Economy).
- Address the conflict between pedestrian areas and vehicles (Dickson entire Planning Project – Stage 1 Vision Outcomes).
- Many parts of Canberra to showcase more to our local, national and international community (CBRarts Forum).
- Preservation of culture and promotion of festivals as well as education for the environment and adaptive reuse of buildings (2016 Curf Annual Report: Tourism).
- A desire for authenticity and immersion in a different culture is offset by a desire to see natural icons and participate in local cultural events (2016 Curf Annual Report: Tourism).
- The city should contain spaces that have a sense of mystery and discovery where people of all ages and abilities can be creators. (2016 Curf Annual Report: Social Inclusion).
- Our communities should provide a degree of self-regulation, low community costs, safety, level of comfort and better access (2016 Curf Annual Report: Social Inclusion).

Constraints + community shortfalls

- Many great suggestions listed in previous consultation workshops for various planning strategies. If the suggestions are not being implemented there is a risk of community distrust / apathy (General Observation – Dickson Centre Planning Project – Stage 1 Vision Workshop Outcomes).
- Dickson Centre Master Plan (2011) did not act on some important community concerns including parking, noise, activation of shop frontages, impact to residents and connections to surrounding suburbs.
- High number of drinking establishments may lead to perceived issues with anti-social behaviour as future residential density continues to increase (Canberra's Night Time Economy).
- Building an arts and cultural community requires improved program funding and sustainability of facilities (CBRarts Forum).

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