

City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy

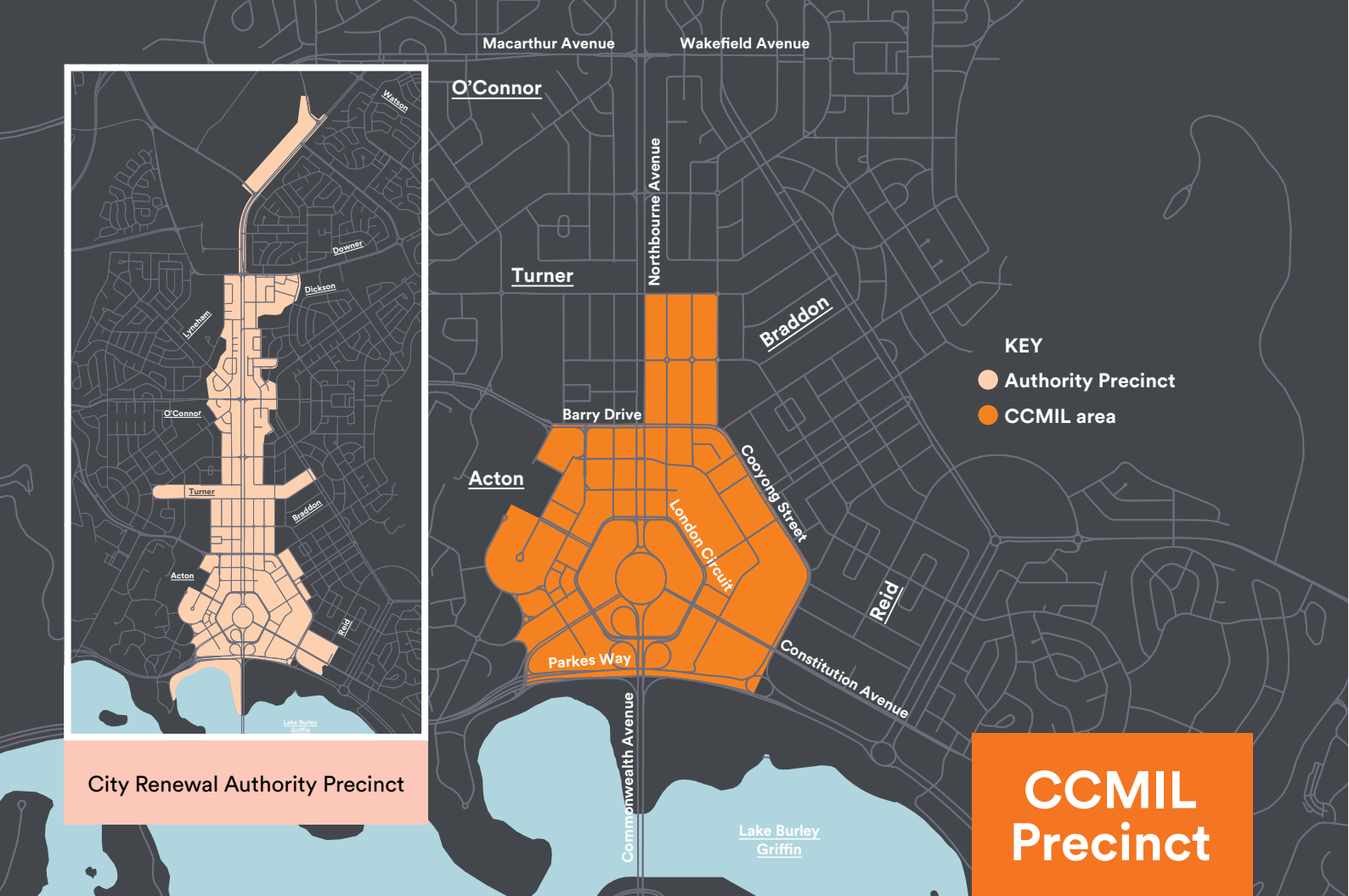
Annual Snapshot

2022–23 financial year



ACT
Government

**CITY
RENEWAL
AUTHORITY**



Overview

The City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy (CCMIL) is a partnership between CCMIL payers, the City Renewal Authority (the Authority) and the broader ACT Government. It supports actions that contribute to the long-term sustainable growth, economic prosperity, culture and beauty of the City Centre and Braddon.

CCMIL funded activities aim to:

- Increase visitation and economic activity in the City Centre.
- Contribute to additional cleaning, graffiti removal, public lighting, security, crowd control, minor public works, street furniture, beautification, and high-quality events.
- Encourage the private and public sector to maintain a high standard of public/private interface.
- Administer funding for a discrete program of works that is coordinated, integrated, and complementary with the broader work of the Authority and the ACT Government.
- Encourage engagement by CCMIL payers and the community in the priority setting and reporting activities of the CCMIL.

The CCMIL applies to all rateable commercial properties in the CCMIL collection zone.

In the 2022–23 financial year, the Authority administered the CCMIL for a discrete program that was coordinated, integrated and complementary with the broader work of the Authority and the ACT Government.

The program was created with input from the CCMIL payers and community to increase visitation and economic activity and contribute to additional cleaning, graffiti removal, public lighting, safety, beautification and high-quality activations.

This snapshot includes highlights, challenges, and the Authority's ongoing program to make the City Centre livelier and more appealing for residents, businesses, visitors and the local community.

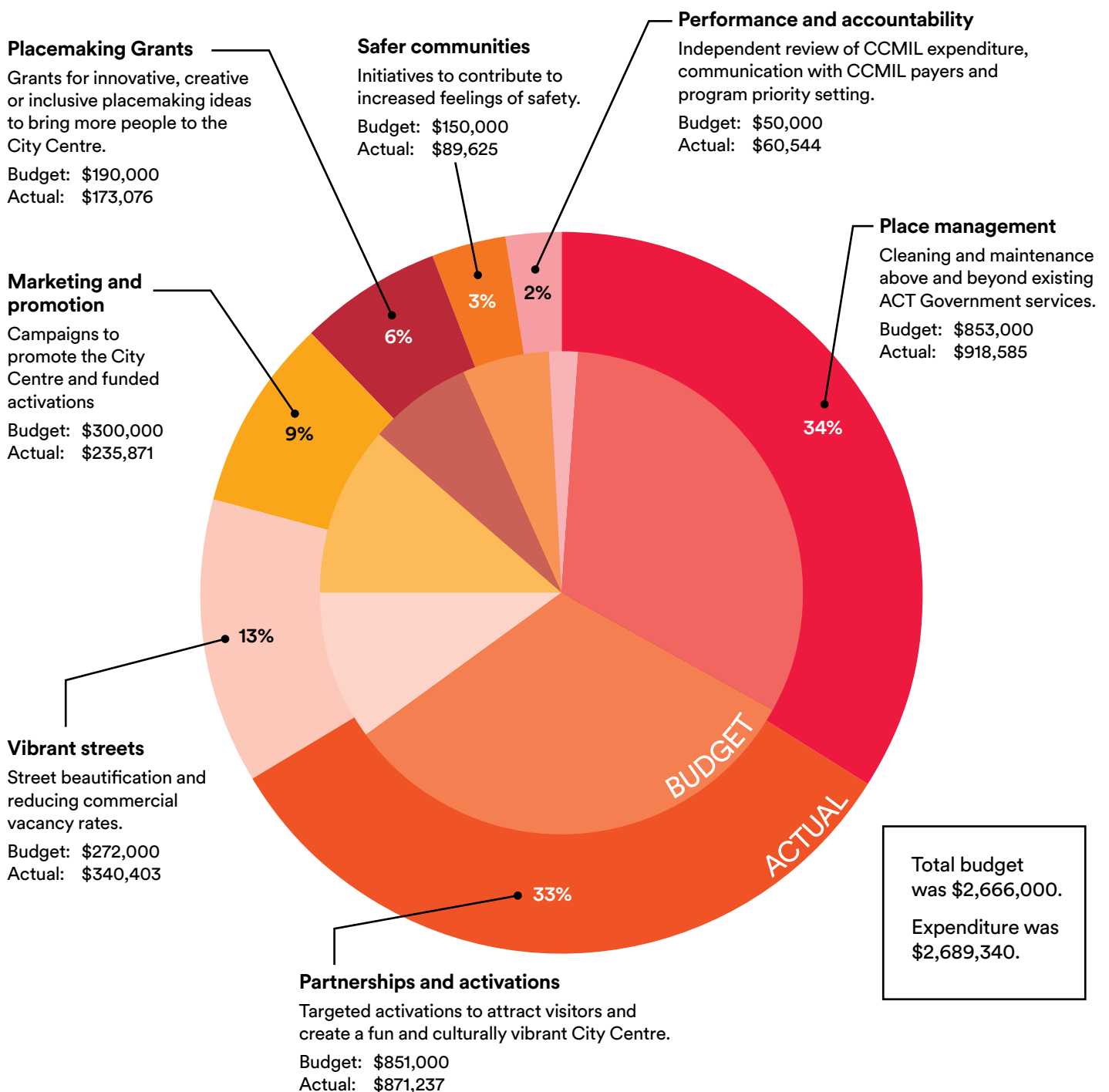
How the funds were allocated and expended

In 2022–23, we committed funds to beautification initiatives such as attractions, enhancements, extra touches and smartening up the city. ‘Beautification’ was a key focus for CCMIL payers, along with landscaping, planting, lighting and furniture.

Our intentions were to enrich the City Centre, create excitement and encourage potential customers for businesses. We sought to reflect the place identity to create a greater sense of belonging.

The program of CCMIL initiatives was published as part of the Authority’s Place Experience and Marketing Action Plan 2022-23.

The total 2022–23 CCMIL budget of approximately \$2.6 million was 100 per cent expended.





Outcomes

The performance of the CCMIL is assessed against the following considerations.

Operational

All CCMIL initiatives in the Authority's Place Experience and Marketing Action Plan 2022-23 were implemented.

The budget was 100 per cent expended.

Satisfaction

The CCMIL Advisory Group met with the Authority quarterly to provide advice and feedback.

A satisfaction survey was provided to all CCMIL payers to understand how well the five objectives were being met. It was promoted to levy payers and business owners via e-newsletters, door knocking, phone calls and social media.

Survey respondents indicated an improvement in how well the Authority meets all five objectives.

A summary of feedback for the survey and the CCMIL Advisory Group is provided on page 7.

Impact

Visitation

City Centre and Braddon

- Average daily visitor footfall increased by 14 per cent in the City Centre and Braddon when compared to the previous three years:
 - Evenings (5pm to 10pm), 45 per cent increase
 - Afternoons (12pm to 5pm), 28 per cent increase
 - Mornings (7am to 12pm), two per cent increase
 - Nights (10pm to 7am), 13 per cent decrease.
- Friday was the busiest day of the week in the City Centre and Braddon.
- The average dwell time of a visitor to the City Centre and Braddon was 2.1 hours.

Activity specific

- The two Friday evenings during Winter in the City (July 2022) experienced nearly a 40 per cent increase in visitation.
- The afternoon that experienced the largest increase in visitation to the City Centre was during Floriade (Friday, 25 September 2022).
- The visitation to Civic in the evening during the Authority's December Christmas campaign increased by more than 42 per cent compared to the evenings in the December period in previous years.
- Approximately 20,000 people visited Civic to ride on the free merry-go-round in December.
- Friday evenings during the Enlighten Festival and City illuminations activities were the two busiest evenings over the past four years.

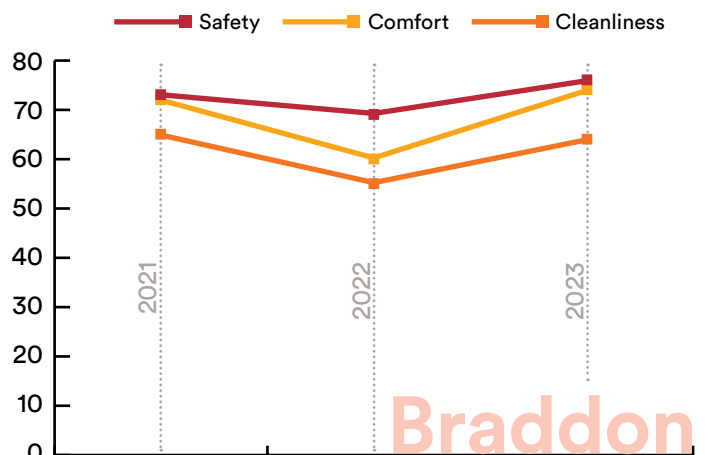
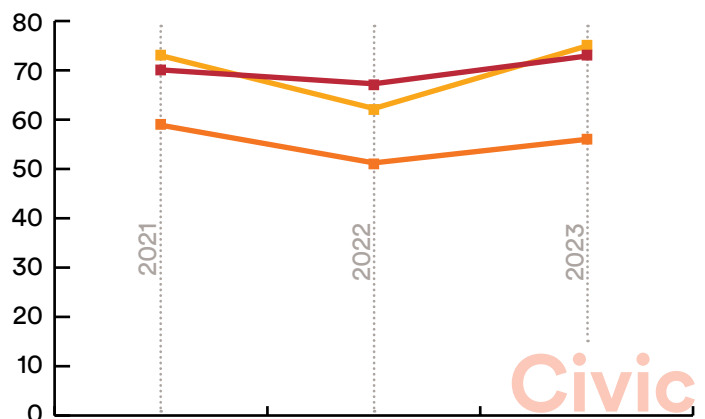
Economic benefit

- The average spend for a visitor to the City Centre is \$114.*
- Spending on a meal is one of the top spends.
- 21,000 people visited Winter in the City during the school holidays, contributing approximately \$2.4 million in expenditure in the City Centre.
- The December visitation increase represents an economic increase of \$3 million for the City Centre (in the evenings only) due to several factors, including the City Centre Christmas campaign.

Perceptions and awareness

- Perceived safety, comfort and cleanliness have broadly increased across the following locations compared to 2021 and 2022.
- More than 85 per cent of Canberrans are aware of Christmas in the City, Winter in the City and the Summernats Braddon Fringe Festival.

Perceived safety, comfort, and cleanliness



*n = 708 Canberrans, March 2023



Second Space bringing new life to vacant commercial spaces across the City Centre

Ice skating at Winter in the City



Program highlights

In 2022-23, the CCMIL supported many City Centre initiatives. The following are some highlights.

YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES

- A dedicated Place Team of eight people provided more than **12,000 hours of additional cleaning, maintenance and plantings, focusing on revitalisation, safety and repair.**
- Place managers for the City Centre and Braddon engaged with businesses and responded to their needs.
- To help people have a safer night out in the City Centre, we supported the Night Crew, a collaborative initiative between the ACT Government and St John Ambulance. The initiative uses a harm minimisation approach to help vulnerable people in Canberra City. It is staffed by volunteers and paid personnel who patrol the city on Saturday nights.
- Maintained and programmed decorative lighting in Braddon, Haig Park and City Walk to contribute to beautification and perceptions of safety.
- Haig Park hosted Play Outside Days and Paws Parties that saw roaring results, including Jurassic Haig Park and the Great Haig Park Water Fight. These events, which are highly attended by families, are just one of the many Authority initiatives making Haig Park an attractive, safe and fun filled place for people to gather.
- Brought beauty to the city with an annual flower program of seasonal flowers and plants in temporary and permanent flower beds. Every six weeks, the community was invited into the City Centre for a plant giveaway to rehome the seasonal flowers.
- Met with the CCMIL Advisory Group quarterly for advice and feedback.

SEPTEMBER 2022

- Visitors spent time in the City Centre before and after visiting Floriade, with the afternoon of Friday, 25 September experiencing the highest increase in visitors to the City Centre. This was encouraged by a Floriade Walking Trail, free shuttle buses between the City Centre and the festival, local performances, and **more than 27,000 tulips and annuals** planted in garden beds and wheelbarrows in front of participating businesses.
- Artists transformed vacant spaces in the City Centre with the launch of Second Space. The trial program aimed to activate and repurpose vacant tenancies and buildings to breathe new life into an otherwise unused space, increase foot traffic and dwell time, generate safety after hours, dissuade anti-social behaviour and provide increased value to property owners. Second Space locations: Thorial on Moore Street, City West; ANU School of Art and Design and Craft ACT – North Building Civic Square; Canberra University Faculty of Arts and Design – City Walk.

AUGUST 2022

- Trialed a STORYBOX initiative to bring creative knowledge of national institutions to the streets of Garema Place and City West. Centred around a giant two-square-metre digital cube in Garema Place and a series of digital wayfinding plinths throughout the City West precinct, STORYBOX invited Canberrans to reflect on different kinds of creative intelligence.

JULY 2022

- Civic Square was transformed by Winter in the City with an open-air ice rink, exhibitions, pop-up bars, ice sculpting, food vendors, marshmallow roasting over open fires and a Winter Concert. It is estimated to have attracted approximately **20,000 people to the City Centre and contributed nearly \$3 million** in expenditure.
- Shared knowledge on what consumers want from the City Centre and feedback from CCMIL payers. Please email cityrenewal@act.gov.au to receive a copy of the research report.
- Implemented a digital retail campaign for Winter in the City to encourage locals to embrace all that Canberra's frosty winter offers. This included promoting local business offerings, ice skating and live ice sculpting.

OCTOBER 2022

- Conducted a **live Q&A session** with prospective Placemaking Grant applicants. The session provided an overview of the updated grants program and was an invaluable opportunity to ensure applications met the key strategic outcomes of the program.



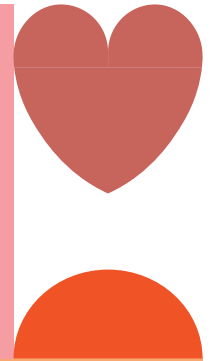
Summernats Fringe Festival in Braddon

Patrons enjoy the atmosphere in Petrie Plaza



NOVEMBER 2022

- The popular magpie sculpture officially swooped back into Garema Place. Big Swoop was designed by local artist Yanni Pounartzis and funded by a Placemaking Grant. It has become much loved by Canberrans and a must-do viewing activity on a visit to the City Centre. You can follow Big Swoop on Instagram @Big_Swoop.
- The Discover: Craft and Design Trail, as part of the Design Canberra Festival, activated City West by creating moments of discovery and delight for the public and was complemented with curatorial tours. The Authority also supported **60+ initiatives in the City Centre** as part of the festival, including city sessions, workshops for families, and the Forage food market.



JANUARY 2023

- The return of the Summernats Braddon Fringe Festival saw Lonsdale Street packed with local and interstate car lovers to admire a show-n-shine of stunning vehicles. The event more than doubled the number of people who usually attend Braddon at that time of year. With **more than \$1 million in estimated spending at local businesses**, this Authority-sponsored festival has already become an important extension of the Summernats event.



FEBRUARY 2023

- **More than 380,000 people** visited the city for the National Multicultural Festival over three days. Thirty local businesses offered attendees single-use deals and discounts throughout the festival as part of an initiative by the Authority. This made cafes, bars and restaurants part of the celebrations and encouraged spending across the three days, with more than 250 deals redeemed.

MARCH 2023

- Thousands of Canberrans and visitors experienced a prehistoric world in Civic Square and City Walk over two weeks with City Illuminations @ Enlighten Festival. Before Us: A Night Walk Through Time was part of the festival and featured giant illuminations, roving dinosaur puppets and enthralling soundscapes. The event saw more people in the City Centre on the opening night of the Enlighten Festival than New Year's Eve, which had important flow-on impacts for local businesses.
- **Three Placemaking Grants** were awarded to drive visitation and strengthen the community's connection to public spaces in the City Centre and Braddon. Grants were awarded to Public Art Treasure Hunts, Poetic City and Jazida Productions Pop-up Parties.

JUNE 2023

- Developed a digital retail campaign for Winter in the City to encourage locals to embrace all that Canberra's frosty winter offers. This included promoting local business offerings, ice-skating and live ice sculpting.
- EOI opened for Placemaking Grants.

DECEMBER 2022

- The Celebrate Christmas in the City campaign positioned the City Centre as the go-to destination for high-quality shopping and dining experiences. Locals and visitors enjoyed all the trimmings of a traditional festive season with installations, performances, free merry-go-round rides and a digital advent calendar of fantastic offers from local businesses.
- City Walk was transformed into a 'Christmas Walk' with the immersive experience featuring a giant and renewed Christmas tree, uniquely Canberran Christmas installations, a canopy of magical fairy lights, and plenty of photo opportunities.
- The Christmas campaign contributed to a **42 per cent increase** in evening visitation to the City Centre compared with previous years, and **\$3 million more spent on local businesses**. More than 1,500 offers for city businesses were claimed, and more than 20,000 people took part in free merry-go-round rides in City Walk.
- The Authority collaborated with ACT Policing to deliver enhanced police presence in the City Centre during the Christmas period.

APRIL 2023

- Delivered Playful Endeavour in Glebe Park during the autumn school holidays.



MAY 2023

- Bring the VibeZ attracted visitors to Garema Place during the cooler months, celebrating Canberra's positive, vibrant and diverse youth culture every Friday in Garema Place. The event featured DJs and performances, including hip-hop, house, K-pop and Afro beats.
- Engagement with property and business owners.

Our priorities for 2023–24

The Authority commissioned an independent agency to assist in understanding the attitudes and perceptions of the CCMIL payers, businesses and people who use the City Centre. We used this feedback to help align priorities and expectations for the CCMIL for 2023–24 and to gauge how the Authority can align priorities and expectations.

What we heard

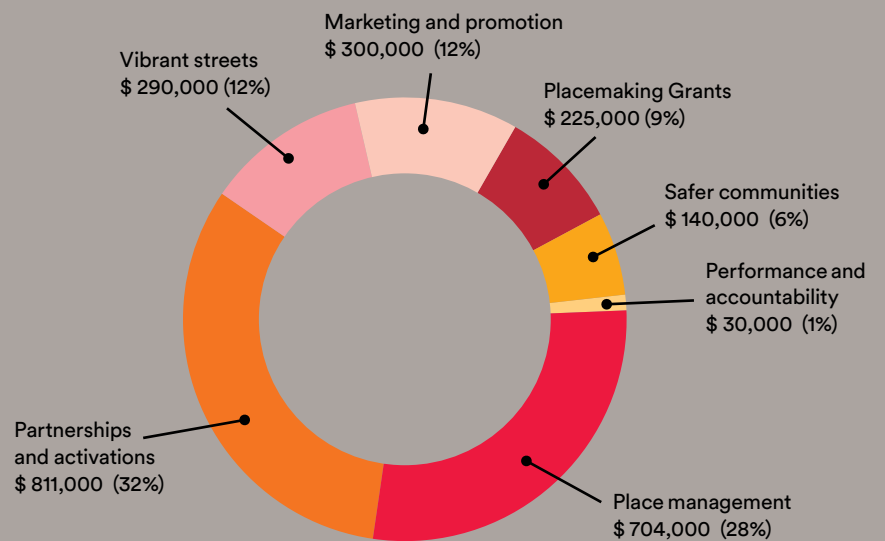
We invited all CCMIL payers to provide feedback. We interviewed and surveyed 74 property and business owners throughout the CCMIL area.

Feedback theme	What you told us	Support through CCMIL funds	Broader Authority initiatives
Increase maintenance and amenity	You desire more furniture, outdoor dining, lighting, toilets, safer paths, and signage.	In the upcoming financial year, we will commit a portion of Authority funding for new furniture while also delivering the usual beautification, enhancements and maintenance to keep the City Centre clean and tidy.	Capital works projects in Garema Place, Odgers and Verity lanes, Braddon, and Haig Park will also include improved furniture, outdoor dining, lighting, paths, and signage.
Precinct-wide activation	Some of you felt that activities from the levy don't benefit the whole precinct, instead it is too focussed on certain parts of the City Centre.	Our annual program includes a variety of activities, events and activations and are carefully targeted to leverage footfall and visitation and benefit areas across the CCMIL precinct.	The Place Experience and Marketing Action Plan for 2023-24 outlines all the initiatives, events, activations, and happenings within each place. You can view this on the Authority's website .
More events	Desire was expressed for more events, particularly those that bring people to the City Centre.	The events focus in 2023-2024 and beyond is about bringing people back in and staying longer. We continue to work alongside business and community to curate high quality places and experiences that enhance our public spaces.	The Authority will continue to collaborate with Events ACT and industry organisations to create a variety of lively events in our City Centre to draw people in and bring life, energy and economic benefit.
Improve safety	Areas of the City Centre feel unsafe, particularly at night. There is a need for more activation, lighting, and security to address this.	We will continue to improve feelings of safety and security in the City Centre using lighting, additional security, and increasing awareness through safety campaigns.	We have capital works in key areas such as Garema Place, Odgers and Verity lanes, and Braddon which will further improve safety.
Communication and collaboration	While some of you feel more informed than in previous years, there is still room for more communication or engagement, especially to support business owners to plan and improve their area.	We will continue being more collaborative, not just communicative. If you haven't heard from us and want to chat, reach out to us anytime. Our City Centre Place Manager, is available at cityrenewal@act.gov.au . You can also reach out to members of the CCMIL Advisory Group .	Communication and engagement is a priority for all our projects. We encourage you to sign up to our newsletter and follow us on social media to keep up to date with the latest news from the Authority. We will also reach out directly. Please email cityrenewal@act.gov.au if you think your details might need updating.

How the levy will be spent in 2023-24

The 2023–24 financial year budget of \$2.5 million has been allocated based on CCMIL payer feedback and consumer research.

If you didn't see the survey, please get in touch so we can work with you and keep you informed: CityPlaceManager@act.gov.au.



Plant giveaway in the City Centre



CCMIL Advisory Group

The Authority established and convenes the CCMIL Advisory Group meetings quarterly. Consisting of selected CCMIL payers and city businesses, the group functions as an advisory body to the Authority in supporting the management of the CCMIL and the associated program of CCMIL funded initiatives. The members represent a broad and representative range of interests from across the CCMIL collection area.

Membership:

JULY 2022 to JUNE 2023:

- Michael Sparks
- Steve Kartsonas
- Chris Antos
- Eleni Notaras
- Garrett Purtill
- Gary Stewart
- Gianni Guglielmin
- Lisa McPherson
- Mitch Tilbrook
- Philip Kier
- Stavro Dascarolis
- Steve Kartsonas
- Damien Maher



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