

**ACT**  
Government

**CITY  
RENEWAL  
AUTHORITY**

# CITY RENEWAL PRECINCT

| URBAN ART STRATEGY

| 2020 - 2025

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The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is Ngunnawal country. The ACT Government acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the Canberra region. The region is a significant meeting place to the Ngunnawal and surrounding Aboriginal Nations who have gathered here for thousands of years.

The City Renewal Authority acknowledges and respects the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

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building a state of creativity

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Cover Image: *Water Tight*, Australian Dance Party, performed for Art not Apart, 2018. Photograph by Andrew Sikorski

This page: Art, not Apart 2016.  
Photography by Cole Bennetts





*"Place is not a location,  
places are never  
complete, finished  
or bounded but are  
always becoming – in  
process."*

**TIM CRESSWELL**

PLACE, A SHORT INTRODUCTION, 2014

## PREFACE

Renewal is both a process and an outcome with physical, economic, and social dimensions and, as such, cannot occur without a city engaging its community and change makers in this renewal process. In pushing for transformation, cities need a compelling story to drive motivation and commitment. The arts, in its various forms, help to articulate these messages and stories, catalysing connections and community cohesiveness across diverse platforms.

Imaginative and innovative policies and projects can achieve successful city renewal in a holistic sense. Acknowledging that at its core, city renewal is a cultural project, it's leaders and changemakers can tailor the renewal journey through physical transformation and economic growth.

A more holistic approach, however, should foster a collective shift in the mindset of residents and visitors to consider the diverse perspectives of a place. In this way, a city's transformation or renewal becomes intrinsically connected to the continued development of its cultural and civic identity, informed in part by a thriving and diverse local arts ecology.

This Urban Art Strategy for the City Renewal Precinct provides a benchmark for the types of urban art experiences that will support and celebrate the precinct's renewal and transformation. As with all City Renewal Authority initiatives, we endeavour to link this strategy to other ACT Government action plans and policies with the understanding that culture-led innovation can make a difference to non-arts agendas.

This strategy calls for the delivery of ambitious urban art, integrating the social and physical dimensions of renewal, such as cultural participation and civic engagement to deliver sustainable and distinctive transformations for a place, which in turn will contribute to the economic growth of the precinct.

**MALCOLM SNOW**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,  
City Renewal Authority



Artists have long been integral to the creation and meaning of place, from the Traditional Custodians of the ACT, the Ngunnawal people, to the many First Nations of our region. Through the complex layers of Canberra's history, cultural activity is a continuum connecting people, past, present and future.

Inherent to the inception of Mahony and Burley Griffin's vision, the work of artists shapes our city. Good artists are unique in their capacity to be authentic to place and responsive to communities - visionaries whose imaginative and creative capacities pave the way for bricks and mortar. Their contributions humanise the work of architects, urban planners and developers.

The policy and programs of artsACT aim to enable the creative practice of artists and organisations to flourish across the Territory. The City Renewal Authority precinct is already home to many ACT Government funded arts organisations, festivals and individual activities whose offerings are deeply embedded in the fabric of the city. This is complimented by a nationally significant collection of public art works that bring colour, shape, movement and story.

artsACT is aligned with the City Renewal Authority's vision to support artists with additional resources and infrastructure to develop their work, expand their audiences and foster opportunities, acknowledging their inextricable role in the formation of place and identity. Important to the realisation of this vision is the continued collaboration between these agencies. Working together to locate great ideas in the City Renewal Precinct will encourage creativity, social inclusion, feeling, thinking and exchange, cementing Canberra's standing as a creative city while supporting an inclusive and engaged community.

**SAM TYLER**

DIRECTOR  
artsACT

## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

The City Renewal Precinct Urban Art Strategy has been developed to guide the planning, delivery and intention of all urban art activities within the precinct between 2020- 2025.

This document is to be used by the City Renewal Authority, other ACT Government agencies, developers, artists, arts workers, curators and producers and anyone who is proposing or implementing an urban art activity for the precinct.

The strategy covers five sections:

CITY RENEWAL AUTHORITY + ACT GOVERNMENT +  
NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY

COMMUNITY + DEVELOPERS

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section outlines the overall intent of the strategy and provides a definition of urban art.

### 2.0 PRECINCT URBAN ART VISION AND PRINCIPLES

This foundational section outlines the vision for the strategy, and the Guiding Principles grounding any urban art activity or initiative located within the precinct.

### 3.0 URBAN ART THEMES

These five urban art themes guide the conceptual and curatorial direction of urban art within the precinct.

### 4.0 PRECINCT OVERVIEW

This section provides a high level overview of the ten neighborhoods that make up the precinct, and provides an introduction to the types of urban art opportunities that could be proposed for each neighborhood.

### 5.0 PRECINCT OPPORTUNITIES

This section provides a framework for ten opportunities that the authority has identified for the precinct.

Detail of *Crying Dinghy*, Hanna Hoyne,  
2018. Henry Rolland Park, Canberra.  
Photograph by City Renewal Authority







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# 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Water Tight*, Australian Dance Party,  
performed for Art not Apart, 2018.  
Photograph by Andrew Sikorski







## 1.1

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City Renewal Precinct Urban Art Strategy provides a framework for a holistic approach to urban renewal in the precinct. The strategy acknowledges the critical role the arts play in sustaining the identity, wellbeing, and quality of the precinct's public space network during periods of rapid growth and transformation.

In Canberra, the City Renewal Authority (the authority) guides the revitalisation of the City Renewal Precinct (the precinct). The authority delivers and advocates for contemporary and lively spaces across the precinct with the understanding that this approach will generate creativity, innovation and diverse possibilities for anyone visiting, living or connected to the precinct.

This Urban Art Strategy (the strategy) has been developed to steer and benchmark the development and delivery of urban art, which is art in the precinct's public spaces. The strategy calls for artwork located within the public realm to employ the entire spectrum of the arts, encompassing visual arts, performing arts, literature and applied arts such as architecture and design.

The strategy sets out guiding principles and benchmarks that will underpin the commissioning of any urban art opportunity within the precinct over five years. The document outlines the parameters within which urban art should be developed and delivered and establishes themes useful in delivering outcomes authentic to the precinct and to Canberra.

The strategy is to be used as an additional tool for the holistic renewal of the precinct. It sets the parameters for how urban art outcomes should be delivered and considered when developing major capital works, activation and place plans and urban design frameworks for the precinct.

The recommendations put forward within this strategy are in line with the authority's Strategic Plan to 2025. The strategy also complements a suite of documents developed by the authority and others to direct the broader planning, placemaking and cultural/arts imperative of the precinct.

We hope that future urban art initiatives will be spearheaded not just by the authority in partnership with other ACT Government Agencies, but also by the private sector, developers and local arts and cultural organisations. As such, this five-year strategy has been developed for use by a diverse cross-section of stakeholders anticipated to be involved in delivering urban art initiatives throughout the precinct during this time.

The authority recognises the importance of artsACT as the ACT Government's arts agency. artsACT provides policy and funding advice to Government and manages the ACT Arts Fund as well as a range of other arts development and funding initiatives. artsACT also manages the ACT Government's public art collection of over 100 artworks, a significant portion of which are in the precinct.

### 1.1.1

## WHY DO WE NEED AN URBAN ART STRATEGY?

Public spaces within the precinct should be distinctive, infused with content and meaning, and should provide enduring design excellence.

Urban art is an integral part of the design of the public realm, and the delivery of quality outcomes can position the precinct (and in turn the Territory) as a premier location for the showcase of sustainable, enriching and creative urban experiences. The arts, and urban artworks in particular, contribute to well-designed public space, creating attractive, accessible places where people want to meet and create new social connections.

By delivering a diverse and sustained urban art program where talent can be developed, attracted and retained, the precinct can assist the arts and cultural sector in creating a creative ecology fundamental to arts objectives.

A precinct specific Urban Art Strategy ensures that the authority can advocate for exemplary urban art experiences that deliver multi-faceted solutions, connected to the holistic urban renewal of the precinct.

This strategy presents a opportunity for urban art to influence systemic change for the precinct and the Territory across a variety of platforms. It allows for the authority to embed urban art into any redevelopment and renewal endeavour, ensuring a best practice and holistic approach to transforming the future of the precinct's public spaces.

This strategy will:

### ENHANCE THE EVOLVING CITY IDENTITY

Existing consultation shows that there are strong community views about the role, form, and function of the city centre and the broader precinct.

One of the loudest calls from the community is for the precinct to have a stronger identity: a recognisable core or heart that people can relate to, gather in and participate in active citizenship. One way that great cities around the world showcase their cultural and civic identities is through artistic and creative programming in public spaces. The precinct will do the same, providing urban art experiences that are distinguishing, contemporary, surprising and sophisticated.

### SUPPORT PRECINCT ACTIVATION AND PLACE PLANS

The strategy has been developed to support and provide a framework for urban art recommendations within place plans and public realm strategies developed for the precinct.

There is an equally clear call for the city centre to have increased vitality: a liveliness that will draw people to it at all times of the day and night. In effect, a precinct which is the focus of civic, cultural and recreational life for the Territory.

The authority will implement and support significant urban art initiatives where necessary to complement the City Place Activation Plan and broader plans for Dickson and Braddon, so that the precinct may deliver experiences that provide innovative outcomes to its residents and visitors.

### FOCUS FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Currently, funding for art in the public realm is predominantly fuelled by public sector support, primarily through artsACT. In 2016/2017, funding was mainly allocated to the maintenance of public art assets rather than the commissioning of new work.

This five-year strategy highlights the priority focus areas for the authority and partnering ACT Government agencies to ensure urban art outcomes link to cross-portfolio impacts, mutually benefiting multiple agendas.

This strategy will provide a set of Guiding Principles and Precinct Opportunities that will help to inform future decision-making for the authority. It will assist the authority in identifying the public sector funding channels as well as private partnerships that are required to deliver priority urban art outcomes throughout the precinct.





## 1.2

### WHAT IS URBAN ART?

Urban art makes use of the entire spectrum of the Arts, including visual arts, performing and applied arts, to improve and connect with the urban experience.

It may complement or counterpoint the often chaotic atmosphere of urban environments, or celebrate the transient urban culture of the 21st Century.

Urban art is inherent to a place, free and readily accessible to the public, and may take any form or mode of artistic encounter.

Urban art can form part of the infrastructure of the physical built environment - such as a public building or open space; or encompass whole areas of precincts, or a city in its entirety. In its formation, urban art may constitute part of a community engagement process embedded within the urban renewal of an area.

Urban art outcomes may be permanent or temporary; forming part of a festival, series of events, or interventions within the public realm.

Urban art draws direct inspiration from the nature of the urban context, either physically, psychologically or historically. It is not an accessory, but rather a major contributing factor to the significance of a place. The most successful urban art projects are those that are site-specific and culturally embedded. Developed over time with a collaborative methodology, they build on the raw material of what is already there; merging social contexts with environmental contexts.

#### THE ROLE OF THE ARTIST

An artist can deliver urban artworks that suspend disbelief, that surprise, delight or disrupt an audience. Urban art is a showcase of artistic courage and imagination, providing opportunities for people to engage with a spectrum of stories that celebrate, highlight and draw upon the multiple narratives (depicted through culture, demographics, identity and history) connected to each place.

Urban art is an artwork or an art activity created by an artist. For the purposes of this Urban Art Strategy, an artist is defined as a person who meets a minimum of two of the following criteria:

- A person who has a tertiary qualification in the arts or when the brief calls for it, in other art forms such as craft, design, and architecture;
- A person who has a track record of exhibiting, performing and selling artwork at reputable art galleries and arts venues;
- A person who is represented in major public collections; and
- A person who earns more than 50% of their income from arts-related activities such as undertaking urban art commissions.

In some cases, this definition may be relaxed where it may be considered appropriate for a particular urban art opportunity. For example, an opportunity that is specifically targeted at emerging artists, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists or culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) artists who may not have the necessary qualifications listed above.





*Peak Stuff* by Goldberg Aberline Studio (2018). Photograph courtesy of City Renewal Authority, 2018





**2.0**

# URBAN ART VISION + PRINCIPLES

PUBLIC 2014, Perth,  
Photograph by Luke Shirlaw,  
2014. Image courtesy of FORM









## 2.1

### VISION

This Urban Art Strategy affirms the authority's commitment to working with artsACT as well as the Territory's various arts organisations, authorities, creative individuals and developers in making the following vision a reality:

The City Renewal Precinct is open to creativity and ingenuity in all forms of urban art.

It is a place of arts and cultural exchange, offering the page, canvas and stage for all who aspire to tell a dynamic city centre story.







Australian Dance Party, 2017,  
Photograph by Martin Ollman



## 2.2

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To support the strategy's vision, the following Guiding Principles outline how the authority will advocate for, collaborate on, develop, and implement any urban art activity or initiative within the precinct.

The Guiding Principles also present the type of ambition any collaborators and partners should have when developing urban art projects and initiatives for the precinct.

The authority requests that developers, curators, cultural producers, designers and artists champion these Principles within any activity that considers urban art outcomes for the precinct.

These strategy specific Guiding Principles have been developed through consultation with the Territory's creative and cultural sector.

#### BE A PLATFORM FOR LOCAL AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

Cement Canberra's position as a place of phenomenal innovation and ambition both on a national, but more, significantly, on a global scale through benchmark urban art outcomes.

#### SUPPORT THE LOCAL CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Support a culture of co-production and collaboration in the development of urban art initiatives through the exchange of learning and skills for and between artists, stakeholders, developers and ACT Government partners.

Detail of *Light Painting*, Karim Jabbari. PUBLIC in the Great Southern, 2016. Photograph by Bewley Shaylor & Chad Peacock, 2016. Image courtesy of FORM





### **INSTILL BEST PRACTICE COMMISSIONING AND EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT**

Projects proposed within the precinct will have appropriate project timelines, budgets and best practice commissioning to empower a broad spectrum of artists to deliver outstanding urban art outcomes. In turn, urban art will engage with the entire spectrum of the community regardless of class, gender, identification, race or age.

### **BE AN ENABLER**

Champion ambitious urban art initiatives and experiences, advocating for the importance of quality urban art to the continued wellbeing and resilience of the precinct across all portfolios.

### **VALUE AND RESPECT THE ARTS AND CULTURE OF FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE**

Meaningfully engage with local Traditional Custodians, their cultural heritage and its associated rights in the development of key urban art initiatives. Showcase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artistic talent for cultural and knowledge exchange to strengthen connections between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and non-Aboriginal communities.

### **BE BOLD, BE COURAGEOUS**

Give space for artistic courage to be untethered, supporting the commissioning of urban art activities that connect with contemporary contexts in a unique and distinctively Canberran manner.





## 2.3

### WHAT SETS CANBERRA APART?

The following pages outline the Territory's point of difference. This high-level position supports the fundamental intent of this strategy; to deliver benchmark, place-specific urban art for the precinct. It should, therefore, be recognised that authentic and successful urban art outcomes will stem from these foundations.

#### 2.3.1

##### A CITY CRAFTED

Canberra is a place born out of an idea; from the process undertaken to select the optimum location for the capital, through to its model design under the vision of the Griffin's. Its planning and continued evolution is fuelled by diverse hopes and ideas to synthesise the 'ideal city of the future'<sup>1</sup>.

Canberra is built on land that was a site of making and craft for tens of thousands of years. The creation of the planned capital we see today is on the traditional lands of the Ngunnawal people, whose legacy of sovereignty and custodianship has shaped the land long before the arrival of Europeans.<sup>2</sup> Deep knowledge, ideas, craft, and design have always been embedded into Canberra's DNA.

*"The site had to be scenically attractive, and allow Australians to build a beautiful capital that they could showcase to the world...the national capital design would be a statement of its newfound unity, aspirations, capacities and, in time, its achievements."*

**GREG WOOD**

CANBERRA - MAPS AND MAKERS, 2009



### 2.3.2

#### A GLOBAL CITY

Canberra is one of Australia's most dynamic knowledge-based, and ideas focused cities. It is a place where government, business, science, education, and research intersect; resulting in an identity defined by its purpose as Australia's national capital. Within this context, Canberra becomes globally linked to avenues of tourism, cultural exchange, research and knowledge as well as diplomacy. Innovation, civic leadership and legacy are the benchmarks that naturally form the foundation for the Territory's many ambitions.

### 2.3.3

#### A DIVERSE CREATIVE ECOLOGY

The creative ecology of Canberra is bolstered by national arts and cultural institutions such as the National Museum of Australia and the National Gallery of Australia. The local creative output of the Territory is predominantly represented through a showcase of nationally leading craft, visual art, and design.

A multitude of talented artists with reputations for world-class excellence in the arts make up the local arts community. They are innovative, rich in conceptual capacity and possess diverse talents, backed by leading academic training opportunities in institutions such as the School of Art and Design, Australian National University (ANU).

In recent years focus has been placed on avenues for the performing arts, including music, with significant investments to theatre production and infrastructure by the ACT Government. More and more so, producers and artists are utilising the Territory's public spaces as their stage and Canberra's local distinctiveness as the inspiration for their set, presenting alternative and often edgy narratives to audiences.

### 2.3.4

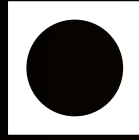
#### THE PRECINCT'S POINT OF DIFFERENCE

The precinct represents the civic and urban heart of the Territory, physically separated from the National and political institutions that dot the perimeter of Lake Burley Griffin. Arts and cultural offerings within the precinct should benefit from the quality of these national institutions and not be dwarfed by their presence. In its localised creative and cultural endeavours, the precinct is well placed to draw upon the distinctiveness of its immediate context.

To achieve the vision set out in this five year Urban Art Strategy, art activities should be inspired by local histories, narratives, and the ambition stemming from the rich context within which Canberra was founded.

By acknowledging Canberra's primary purpose, its inception and the breadth of its local talent, the precinct becomes a repository for the dreaming, testing and formalisation of ideas.

1. Kiem, Matthew & Kiem, Matthew (n.d.) (Un)making Canberra: Craft and the designing of settler-colonialism in Australia. *Craft + Design Enquiry*. 5105-124. [online]. Available from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1622045794/>.
2. Canberra and Brasília: Constructed Landscapes of Identity in Mapping South: Journeys in South-South Cultural Relations, Publisher: The South Project Inc, Editors: Anthony Gardner, pp.307-330



**3.0**

## URBAN ART THEMES

The following urban art themes should be used as a reference when developing the aims and curatorial intent of individual urban art activities within the precinct.

The five urban art themes are a conceptual guide for anyone wishing to procure, develop or implement urban art projects and initiatives within the precinct.

These themes identify specific approaches to urban art that will deliver distinctive and relevant conceptual outcomes for the precinct, intended to support the authority's vision for a bold, inspirational, sustainable and creative precinct.







## 3.1

### BEING CANBERRAN

#### 3.1.1

#### THEME OVERVIEW

Like the nation it was built to represent, Canberra is at once ancient and new. To be Canberran is to inherently acknowledge one's own place within the broader ecosystem of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Australia. It is to feel the weight of the Territory's inception; to simultaneously celebrate and subvert the built environment, which was envisioned and realised to exist at the forefront of consciousness for both locals and visitors.

The Territory's identity as an unassuming 'bushcapital' is its point of difference, with its permeable edges both curtailing and converging with bushland and sub(urban) landscapes.

This identity is drawn in part from the suburbs of Canberra, separated by nature reserves, with vistas of native trees, abundant birdlife, and stoic mountains either underfoot or glimpsed in the distance.

Canberra is also Australia's primary conduit for transformation, innovation, and leadership.

Canberrans are cultured, free-thinking, and often engaged with locally focused dialogue that diverges from the typical bureaucratic context often associated with the Territory.

A diverse range of arts and cultural festivals and public art programming has consistently celebrated and continues to add to Canberra's design innovation, local histories and narratives. Locally born and driven, these initiatives are backed by leading academic institutions, art centres and organisations that look to support and nurture the growth of the local arts sector.

Canberra's local arts sector delivers independent arts events and experiences that speak directly to the physical and social aspects of Canberran distinctiveness.

The precinct provides Canberrans with the testing grounds to portray themselves in ambitious and brazen ways. The arts have become and will continue to be, the avenue through which storylines are brought to the fore, giving voice to people of Canberra, for the people of Canberra.

Any artistic endeavour located within the precinct should continue to offer curated and alternative approaches to the national institutional backdrop that can at times define the arts and cultural scene of the Territory.





### 3.1.2

#### URBAN ART RESPONSE

Urban art developed for the precinct should celebrate and add to the many layers that make Canberra unique. Any urban art proposed for the precinct should be open to new avenues made possible through expertise in research and creative practice.

Artwork activities should push for alternative and, where needed, bold outcomes, bringing to the forefront Canberra's rich ancient heritage, pristine landscapes, and the diverse narratives that proceeded and followed the opening of Parliament House. Urban art adopting this theme is free to determine what being Canberran, being of this place, truly means.

There is an opportunity to deliver urban art initiatives that disrupt and provide a point of difference to the everyday through original and innovative experiences. Urban art within the precinct is encouraged to flourish out of the foundations that are distinct to Canberra.







*Untitled, Curiot for PUBLIC2015, Perth QV1 Building, Photograph by Jarrad Seng, 2015. Image courtesy of FORM,*



## 3.2

### URBAN MORPHOLOGY

#### 3.2.1

##### THEME OVERVIEW

The urban morphology, or makeup, of a city, is defined by its spatial structure but more significantly, by its character: patterns and processes as determined by how the urban area is used by people over time.

Canberra's urban morphology is the result of a unique layering of land-use over tens of thousands of years, extending well beyond the European settlement of last few hundred years.

Located on the ancient lands of the Ngunnawal people, Canberra continues to live up to its name as a meeting place. Strategically situated inland, the iconic capital city of Australia was favoured for its clean air, good water supply and an invigorating climate.<sup>1</sup> There are many unique land features, including peaks and hills – the most significant today known as Black Mountain and Mount Ainslie – which were, and continue to be, traditional cultural sites for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of the area.

The precinct's distinct urban morphology is set by an interplay of what was erased, what still remains, and what is hidden.

Canberra's current urban landscape first emerged as the result of an aspirational design competition launched in 1911. The Federal Capital Design Competition amassed a total of 137 entries envisioning the future of the capital. Chicagoans Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin were the successful candidates. The winning design concept was tied to the exploration of the relationship between built and natural form, and with the fundamentals in city function.

The concept of unmaking and making is a consistent narrative to many of Australia's sites and is vividly on display when assessing the urban morphology of Canberra.

Remnants of the Griffins' plan still remain, particularly the long sweeping vistas sight lines linking parts of the Territory and its landmarks. The precinct itself incorporates one of these vistas through Northbourne Avenue starting at City Hill; a remaining artefact from the original 1912 plan. City Hill was intended to function as a 'municipal hub', providing a heart for the city independent from the Federal Government structures on the other side of the lake.

Layers upon layers of built form have over time evolved the precinct's character, resulting in its unique urban morphology. This character has been erased, developed, crafted and remade, always in flux, by those who inhabit the area.

#### 3.2.2

##### URBAN ART RESPONSE

This artwork theme focusing on how the precinct is inhabited and how it serves the people who use it. There are several sites in the precinct at which this artwork approach may be explored. Namely, Northbourne Avenue, City Hill, the lake's edge, Haig Park, and the series of urban laneways across Dickson, Braddon and Civic (including the Melbourne & Sydney buildings).

Existing urban art initiatives within the precinct have already begun to consider the many narratives at play in the built form, how these have evolved over time and how an art activity can help to cement existing and new identities to the local experience of the precinct as it looks to renew.

1. <http://www.canberrayourfuture.com.au/portal/living/article/history-of-canberra/>



## 3.3

### LEGIBILITY

#### 3.3.1

#### THEME OVERVIEW

A place's legibility is defined by what is communicated to its inhabitants and visitors and by what can be read and understood by these same user groups.

There are five components that the late urbanist Kevin Lynch identified as key to assessing the legibility of urban places: 'paths', 'edges', 'districts', 'nodes' and 'landmarks'.<sup>1</sup> A city's legibility is strongly tied with wayfinding; the information systems that guide people through a physical environment. The identity of a place is realised by the resonance it holds for its inhabitants, perceptible through an understanding or experience of the place.

Successful urban realms are those that can ensure that their unique identities are clearly presented. A legible urban environment presents itself as a layered and textural patchwork, inviting multiple pathways for individual and collective engagement.

Canberra's urban environment is marked across its physical landscape, and preserved in the mental maps and images of the people who orient themselves within it. Legibility in Canberra is primarily manifested by its axial plan, highlighting built landmarks and natural features.

Beyond the anchors of City Hill, Northbourne Avenue and Haig Park, the precinct has somewhat porous legibility. Currently, the core of the precinct, where its civic heart resides, offers a counterintuitive urban experience, resulting in often unoccupied public spaces. What this missed opportunity provides, however, is a series of areas waiting to be discovered, weaving away from the typical axial plan.

A city's legibility can be supported by art presented in the public realm.

The use of art to aid legibility within the Territory has predominantly been classified by permanent sculptural forms, often through cast bronze pieces of key public figures. While serving an important purpose aiding in the collective memory of a place. These are currently not representative of the diversity of contemporary urban populations and colonised places, and serve to exalt some groups and omit others.

Other one-dimensional examples of Territory artwork in the public realm aiding legibility include fixed 'gateway artworks' that identify the threshold of arrival or departure. While such artworks are obviously functioning as markers, they provide little additional value beyond scale and grandeur and are not representative of the faculty good urban art tasked with increasing the legibility of an area can render.

1. Lynch, Kevin (1960) The image of the city. Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.





### 3.3.2

#### URBAN ART RESPONSE

Urban art can help to inform and communicate a place's identity by adding to the collective memory of a place. Its contribution can be recognised through its capacity to connect people, deliver unique experiences, and cultivate atmosphere, all critical ingredients to legibility.

Urban art motivated to increase legibility creates landmark destinations that harness art activity to certain points; grounding and anchoring people physically and psychologically to a place.

*“Canberrans don’t navigate the city by actual distance. They navigate by narrative. There are patches and corners that have been key to their lives for as long as they remember, eddies that they get pulled back into as soon as their concentration lapses...”*

**YOLANDE NORRIS**

YOU ARE HERE FESTIVAL CREATIVE DIRECTOR





## 3.4

### HIDDEN NARRATIVES

#### 3.4.1

##### THEME OVERVIEW

A city's autobiographical fabric is woven from lived, embodied or remembered threads.

Our initial understanding of a city's story is often defined by what is physically present; however cities, like any environment, are made up of a complex framework of demographics, cultures, events, identities, and stories.

Narratives beneath the surface, imprints, markers of time, undercurrents; these often remain hidden, unknown, and therefore unseen. Culture and the arts play an integral role in bringing these narratives to the surface, moulding, weaving and shaping them anew. These layers of the city are strengthened and summoned in works by sculptors, painters, writers, poets and novelists, as well as by dancers, actors, photographers, filmmakers and all types of artists.

The atmosphere of a city within a specific time and place can be recorded through narrative. Our visceral memories or connection shape a place.

Abundant and diverse narratives embedded within the urban environment create places that are welcoming and equitable. These places harbour authentic identities that evolve over time and echo even through moments of significant urban transformation.

The precinct provides Canberrans with an opportunity to highlight and bring to the fore lesser-known aspects of identity, history, and significance.

Within this is an opportunity to acknowledge that the precinct's most authentic and currently less-known narratives come from the deep continuing culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and specifically of the Traditional Custodians of the Territory, the Ngunnawal people.

#### 3.4.2

##### URBAN ART RESPONSE

The arts can become a vehicle for social empowerment. By re-calibrating balances of power through the types of stories that are readily accessible, we ensure that a wider demographic of voices are heard.

In addressing the future use and experience of the precinct, there is opportunity to champion the implementation of urban art that helps to acknowledge, materialise, respect, and celebrate Canberra's underrepresented or unknown narratives.

Urban art that is tailored to the hidden narratives present within the precinct and beyond its boundaries can assist in providing experiences that are inclusive, enlightening, and truly place specific.

Through the delivery of authentic and contextually enriched art activities, urban art can help to cement or articulate underrepresented narratives within the precinct to provide tangible outcomes for conciliation and acknowledgment of the rich continuing traditions of the area's first inhabitants.





Detail from *Flight of the Bogong Moths*, wall graphic, after original artwork by Uncle Jim "Boza" Williams, Ngambri Elder. Image courtesy of National Museum of Australia.



*"The playing adult steps  
sideward into another  
reality; the playing child  
advances forward to new  
stages of mastery."*

**ERIK H. ERIKSON**  
**DIMENSIONS OF A NEW IDENTITY**



## 3.5

### PLAYFULNESS

#### 3.5.1

##### THEME OVERVIEW

Play encourages engagement with one's surroundings, arguably creating innovative shared connections to places. Playfulness taps into our fundamental human capacity to learn through engagement with our environments.

In fostering and granting permission for children to inhabit urban space playfully, cities can establish places that are welcoming, engaging, and safe for people of all ages. Playful spaces often assert themselves as spaces of safety, allowing for experiences to be universal and accessible to anyone. At its core, play is a mode of engagement, a driver of creativity and innovation, and a facilitator of individual and community wellbeing.

Delight and discovery underpin the experience of playfulness.

Engaging both our physical and psychological bodies, play appeals to the human senses at a fundamental level. Tactility, visual, and aural stimuli are just a few tools at hand able to evoke sensory delights associated with play. Colour is also an essential tool for the facilitation of playfulness within urban contexts that are often defined by the monochromatic tones of concrete and steel.

As a tool, colour extends beyond the literal sense of its application to the multiplicity of reward the arts can provide in the context of the urban realm.

Colour can contribute towards the evolution of a place's identity, harmonies between places and landscapes, and our responses to these. Incorporating playfulness into the urban context aids people's connection to places, providing avenues for interaction, participation, and shared delight.

#### 3.5.2

##### URBAN ART RESPONSE

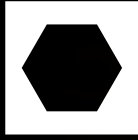
Urban art that encourages play has the ability to connect people to alternative ways of experiencing the city and its spaces.

Urban art outcomes developed for the precinct can be enriched by carving out room for surprise, delight, and playfulness, to create positive and inclusive places.

There are various organisations connected within the precinct that are actively advocating for the establishment of play in the everyday, whether this be through traditional methods of temporary intervention, or other more experimental forms.

This artwork theme easily extends beyond visual arts to consider ways that alternative arts mediums such as the performing arts can integrate play with the experience of the urban environment. Playful approaches to urban art provide participatory options to audiences, enabling a sense of ownership of space fostered opportunities to directly inform people how to engage with their surroundings.

Specific precinct sites where urban art is best suited to explore playfulness include the cultural precinct, for its linkage to the surrounding creative institutions and facilities; Haig Park, recognised as the precinct's most important pocket of green space; and Dickson for its high population of families and children, inviting authentic community driven experiences.



**4.0**

## **CITY PRECINCT URBAN ART OVERVIEW**

The precinct is one of the most exciting urban revitalisation opportunities in Australia, its renewal will deliver; greater social, economic and environmental benefits to residents and visitors to Canberra.

The following sections outline how curated and place specific urban art activities will ensure a holistic approach to renewal, ensuring the distinctiveness of each neighbourhood or area of the precinct is further enriched by impactful urban art experiences.



*"In any civilised community the arts and associated amenities must occupy a central place. Their enjoyment should not be seen as something remote from everyday life."*

**GOUGH WHITLAM, 1972**  
FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA



## 4.1

### PRECINCT OVERVIEW

The precinct is a public space network with huge potential. As the city centre and gateway to the rest of the Territory, it becomes the place where Canberrans can express themselves to their communities, visitors and to the world.

The precinct contains a dynamic exchange between public and private interests, activities and places. It spans northwards from the edge of Lake Burley Griffin, and includes the areas of Civic, Braddon, Haig Park, MacArthur Urban Village and Dickson, with the Northbourne Corridor acting as the link to the precinct's other nine neighbourhoods.

Each neighbourhood provides the context and 'stage' for potential urban art activities that will respond and contribute to the precinct's built and natural environment, living culture, and ongoing legacy.

It is the authority's ambition that the precinct is enriched by diverse urban art experiences that can activate the precinct as a whole or be located within a neighbourhood or a single space to enhance the day-to-day experience of residents and visitors.

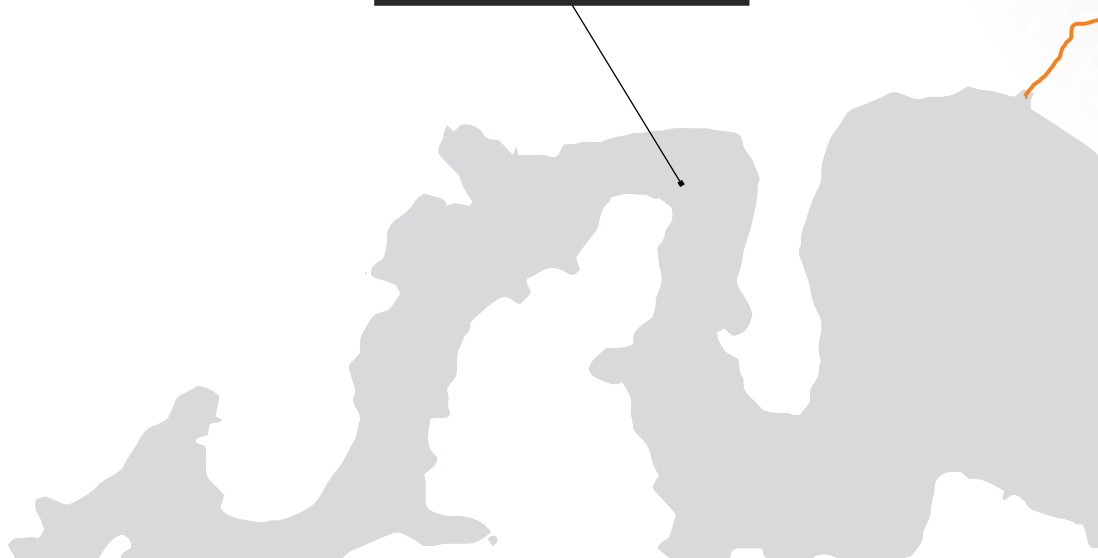
The following pages provide an overview of each of the ten neighbourhoods that make up the precinct. These form part of a short introduction to the public assets of the precinct: the places and spaces for future urban art experiences to reside, respond to and celebrate.

BRUCE R

AUS

LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN

SULLIVA  
CREEK











## 4.2

### **NORTHBOURNE CORRIDOR** **THE GATEWAY TO THE CITY**

The Northbourne Corridor (the corridor) represents both the physical and figurative spine of the precinct, acting as the central anchor and physical conduit to each of the other precinct neighbourhoods and spaces that connect to it.

In time, under the guidance of the City and Gateway Urban Design Framework (prepared by the ACT Government and the National Capital Authority) the corridor will be further formalised in its public realm treatment. This will be realised through its landscaping treatment at its bookends, becoming an extension of the “bush capital” from the north in juxtaposition to the proposed extension of hardscaping and increased density of built form at its terminus at City Hill.

#### 4.2.1

### **NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES**

Northbourne Avenue will see increased density and significant transformation. In light of this, urban art activities should be focused on providing a diverse range of amenities and arts experiences to residents, workers and visitors to the corridor, positively complimenting the perception of the precinct's character upon approach and arrival.

Urban art outcomes for this key connector can ensure that travelers are immediately aware of the symbolic function of the Avenue for the city. Permanent outcomes can enhance the clear vista's from the Avenue to Capital Hill and other significant sites across Lake Burley Griffin and beyond.



*Loaded Laneway Festival,  
Sydney Building, Canberra,  
2018. Photograph courtesy  
of City Renewal Authority*



## 4.3

### DICKSON A THRIVING URBAN CENTRE

Outside the city, Dickson Group Centre is currently the largest centre within the precinct, proposed to undertake considerable transformation with the introduction of new public transport nodes.

Dickson has a strong community focus which has resulted in a unique identity, fostered by its dining, shopping and local service activities. Currently the Dickson neighbourhood consists of four distinct spaces as defined by Goodwin Street to Northbourne Avenue, the central food and beverage hub anchored of Woolley Street, Dickson Village and the area just outside of the precinct where the community and cultural facilities are located such as the Australian National Capital Artists gallery and studio spaces.

The renewal of Dickson will be responsive to community aspirations by delivering a diverse array of community driven arts and cultural activation alongside the built form transformation, ensuring its multicultural nature is strengthened.

#### 4.3.1

#### NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES

Urban art outcomes in Dickson should aid in its transformation into a contemporary urban village at the tip of the precinct, sustained by its multicultural and community focused foundations.

Here urban art outcomes have the opportunity to respond to the filigree nature of Dickson, particularly in Dickson Village, providing opportunities to connect the Group Centre through aiding in legibility, movement and discovery.

Opportunities also exist through permanent outcomes located within the southern green spine defined by Sullivan's Creek.

## 4.4

### MACARTHUR VILLAGE A LANDMARK MIXED-USE HUB

Under the ACT Governments' City and Gateway Urban Design Framework the Macarthur Village is expected to become a distinct destination on the light rail network for the precinct. Future developers will be encouraged to deliver innovative designs, integrating principles of sustainability with world class architecture to create a renewed character at this landmark node.

Improved east-west connections will complement an enhanced public domain to transform underutilised landscaped spaces with day and night activities.

#### 4.4.1

#### NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES

There is opportunity for urban art to re-imagine the intersection of MacArthur Avenue and Northbourne Avenue as an urban plaza.

Urban art for the MacArthur Urban Village should consider ways this node can become a significant landmark for the precinct, allowing for additional public amenity whilst also celebrating the multi-modal speed of travel occurring at this juncture, juxtaposed by light rail, bus, car, bike and pedestrians.

HAIG PARK





## 4.5

### HAIG PARK A REVITALISED URBAN PARK

Initially developed in 1921, Haig Park was designed as a weather break to protect the suburbs of Braddon and Turner from Canberra's north-westerly dust and wind storms. Reading almost as a plantation, the park is landscaped with predominantly exotic trees across 14 rows, running across the 1780m length of the park, roughly spanning the distance between the feet of Black Mountain and Mount Ainslie.

Officially designated as a public park in 1987, it is now the third-largest district park in central Canberra and listed on the ACT Heritage Register. Crossing Haig Park along its short axis north and south does little to promote the park's visual distinctiveness, which is best felt by traversing its length and being immersed in its spine where an experience of an endless landscape can be had.

#### 4.5.1 NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES

While little change has occurred since the designation of Haig Park as a public park, there is now an opportunity to introduce public amenity and the experiences required to transform Haig Park into a vital public realm asset for the precinct.

Previous urban art initiatives have injected temporary vibrancy and atmosphere back into the park. The potential, however, for ongoing and extended urban art initiatives that assist in the transformation and positive perception of the park is boundless.

Sullivan Creek also cuts through Haig Park, providing another opportunity to integrate acknowledgment of local Traditional Custodian heritage and culture into the public place design of the west end of the park.



## 4.6

### BRADDON

#### A VIBRANT AND CREATIVE CLUSTER

Braddon is undeniably the cosmopolitan heart of the precinct, transitioning and benefiting from its light industry heritage to the Territory's seminal destination for dining, culture and innovative creative businesses. Braddon has established this individuality primarily through community driven initiatives spearheaded by offbeat individuals with an alternative vision.

The urban amenity of the neighbourhood provides immense cultural capital to residents and visitors of the Territory. Certain areas in the neighbourhood now play a role in promoting Canberra's liveability and attraction.

Braddon has experienced considerable change in recent years, particularly in relation to its residential housing, with an increase in multi-storey developments. With increased development and gentrification comes the risk of Braddon's unique character and grittiness being homogenised. Similar to any grungy 'inner city' area, rising costs to real estate remove the capacity for entrepreneurial start-ups to flourish in the neighbourhood, causing the area to lose its point of difference and visitor attraction.

#### 4.6.1

#### NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES

Future urban art developed within this area should celebrate Braddon's industrial foundations, whilst providing additional layers to its morphology, and new experiences that add to its unique personality.

Urban art activities and initiatives within Braddon should prioritise support of local creative industries, providing diverse opportunities for artists, makers and creatives to engage with the neighbourhood.

## 4.7

### CITY HILL

#### CULTURAL AND CIVIC CORE

City Hill is an area of civic and historic importance representing the centre of Canberra and one of the three points of the Parliamentary Zone. Griffin conceived City Hill as the place that expressed 'city life' and where the national and municipal functions coalesced. Six major avenues radiate from City Hill, giving rise to the symbolic notion of it being the heart of the Capital. City Hill also demarcates the terminus of Northbourne Avenue and the light rail.

City Hill is imbued with great symbolism supporting it as Canberra's 'meeting place'. Currently, however it is underutilised due to the dominance of traffic-heavy roads and surface level car parking.

The City Hill area is defined by several significant precinct assets. Most notable are the heritage-listed Sydney and Melbourne buildings and their inner courtyards as well as the Cultural Precinct containing the Canberra Theatre Centre, Craft ACT, the Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG), the Civic Public Library, and the ACT Legislative Assembly.

The area is earmarked for significant medium-term and long-term transformation.

#### 4.7.1

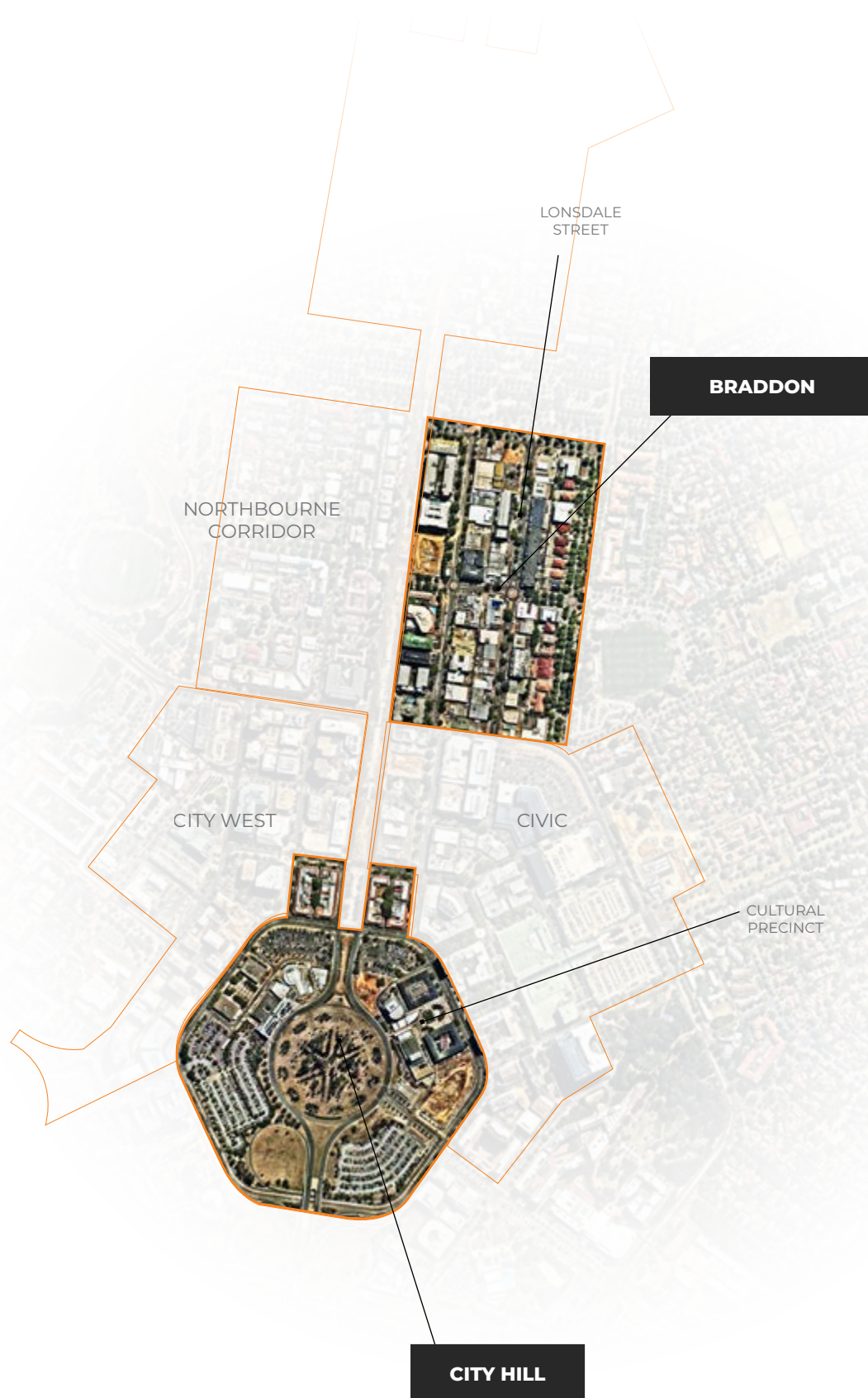
#### NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES

City Hill is the civic and cultural heart of the city, as such, bold and visionary approaches to urban art befitting this role are required.

Urban art within the neighbourhood should incorporate temporary and permanent arts activities that can celebrate the rich civic narratives at play within the neighbourhood as well as to help renew and reshape this critical city centre area.

City Hill Park has the potential to play a new role in providing space for major civic urban art events, promoting its symbolic and historical contribution to the continued evolution of Canberra's identity.







## 4.8

### **CITY WEST** **INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE** **CENTRE**

Development resulting from concerted master planning efforts and collaborations between the ANU and ACT Government has seen a significant change in the City West area over the last five years. Currently, it is the most highly developed area of the precinct, with a growing residential population often in flux due to the density of student accommodation.

City West is an area with strong connections to the ANU School of Art and Design with the precinct boundary extending to clip a portion of the School of Art gallery.

The area also features one of the Territory's largest murals, *Voyage* by Tommy Balogh, located within the Citywest Carpark. Latin American Plaza has progressively transformed into an inner-city sculptural park through the acquisition of artworks from a variety of Latin-American embassies.

#### 4.8.1

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES**

The area demonstrates a diverse character due to the presence of student communities which have allowed for complementary uses to emerge.

Urban art within this area has an opportunity to further benefit student amenity and public realm engagement, providing experiences which resonate with a largely academic, young and multicultural audience.

## 4.9

### **CIVIC** **RETAIL AND ENTERTAINMENT HEART**

Civic is the retail core of the city, surrounded by public spaces that integrate a mix of uses.

This area is dominated by retail and commercial activities with peak activation between 9am and 5pm on weekdays. It is also the entertainment area of the city centre, however this has been largely internalised due to the presence of the QIC owned Canberra Centre. The Canberra Centre does, however act as an attractor, and is causal to the increased footfall of the area.

Key pedestrian focused assets of the area include Garema Place, Petrie Plaza, and Ainslie Place with City Walk acting as a lateral connector between the three spaces. The area features a significant number of permanent, stand-alone artworks, some preserving resonance with the identity and legibility of the area and some acting as barriers to future transformation.

The character of the public realm is largely seen as cluttered and lacking in ease of physical and visual transition between each individual public space. This area is a direct benefactor of the City Grants program through the City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy which has seen a range of temporary activations that have aimed to assist with urban renewal.

#### 4.9.1

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES**

Urban art activities within this area should look to complement the temporary outcomes from the City Grants program with significant permanent legacy outcomes that directly benefit the quality of the diverse public realms of the neighbourhood. These outcomes should also look to better link the neighbourhood with adjacent City Hill and Braddon to create a tripartite urban core for the precinct.







## 4.10

### **CITY EAST**

#### **EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND TOURISM**

The City East area of the precinct is defined by a mixture of short-stay accommodation, offices and significant spaces for recreational use as defined by the casino, the Civic Pool as well as Commonwealth and Glebe Parks. A portion of the area forms part of the Parliamentary Zone with its terminus at City Hill.

The built form is defined by mega blocks with sparse street-level public amenity offerings. A lack of quality in several buildings and areas of public realm weaken the character of the area, resulting in significant need for densification and character improvement.

Juxtaposing the often blocky architectural style of the surrounding built form is Glebe Park, designed to reflect the character of a traditional English park. Like the rest of Canberra's abundance of elm trees, the park's landscape transforms with the four distinct seasons of the year.

#### **4.10.1**

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES**

City East is characterised by its open spaces, grand scale and connection to the lakeside. Permanent urban art outcomes should look to reinforce these features of the area.

Glebe Park has the opportunity to embed its identity as the precinct's preeminent urban park through complementary urban art activities and place activations. Urban art with a focus on participatory engagement and where possible, opportunities for children, and youth (persons between the ages of 15 and 24) to have meaningful involvement in the delivery and outcomes of artworks can help to sustain the significance of this important pocket park.

## 4.11

### **WEST BASIN**

#### **A VIBRANT URBAN WATERFRONT**

West Basin constitutes the only place where the precinct boundary meets Lake Burley Griffin and therefore has a critical role of connecting and extending the city centre to the lake. The New Acton precinct developed by Molongolo Group is the preeminent benchmark for curated living and working experiences delivered through consistent and diverse arts programming and cultural offerings.

Other area assets include the Shine Dome, an architectural poster-child for Canberra, completed in 1959, as well as the newly developed Henry Rolland Park, located at the most southern point of the precinct. The park is characterised by an intersection of circular geometries with rectilinear thoroughfares, drawing its inspirations from the aerial geometries of the Territory plan.

The future redevelopment plans for West Basin will result in the transformation of the area into a vibrant and spacious lakeside promenade, improving the accessibility of the area and its integration with the wider city precinct.

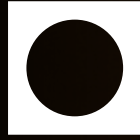
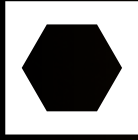
#### **4.11.1**

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ART OPPORTUNITIES**

Policies for Lake Burley Griffin and the lake foreshores envisage predominant open space parklands, with the lake and its foreshores intended to provide a range of recreational, educational and symbolic experiences. With these policy frameworks in mind, there are opportunities for urban art to offer educational and symbolic experiences for the lake edge of West Basin, including interpretive elements that incorporate the significance of the site for the local Aboriginal people of the Territory.

Urban art can also act to juxtapose the present and future geometries of West Basin, softening or referencing landscapes that existed prior to the redevelopment of the area.





**5.0**

## KEY PRECINCT OPPORTUNITIES

The following proposed projects and initiatives will assist the authority in cementing its vision for urban art within the precinct. These Precinct Opportunities provide a framework that will result in legacy urban art outcomes for the precinct.

These opportunities will deliver an environment where artists, the arts and art-making is truly valued and integral to best practice renewal, ensuring the precinct and its many neighbourhoods continue to be vibrant, have strong identities and are able to attract and retain talent.

These Precinct Opportunities present a diverse model that will support the authority's five Strategic Goals as outlined in the City Renewal Authority 2025 Strategic Plan.

*colour theory*, Emma Vickery and  
Ash Pederick, PUBLIC Platform, 2016.  
Photograph by Bewley Shaylor, 2016.







colour  
theory

MAGGIE<sup>51</sup>



## 5.1

### PRECINCT OPPORTUNITIES OVERVIEW

The following ten precinct opportunities will improve the precinct's reputation as a desirable place where people and businesses want to be. These opportunities provide a diverse and distinctive suite of art activities and initiatives that build upon the richness of Canberra's existing arts ecology to inspire experimentation, arts innovation and creativity in all endeavours within the precinct.

#### PRECINCT OPPORTUNITY

URBAN ART  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND ENGAGEMENT

CITY GRANTS  
PROCESS

URBAN ART IN  
CONSTRUCTION SITES

ARTIST CITY SPACE  
ACTIVATION FUND

OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR ABORIGINAL  
AND TORRES STRAIT  
ISLANDER PEOPLES

THE PRECINCT  
SPINE

CIVIC ARTS  
AND CULTURAL  
PRECINCT

URBAN ART IN  
HAIG PARK

CITY RENEWAL  
FESTIVAL

PRECINCT PERCENT  
FOR ART POLICY



POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS	LOCATION	TIMEFRAME	ARTS FOCUS
artsACT, EventsACT, Local Arts Organisations and Arts Centres, CMAG, ANU School of Art and Design, ANCA, and Capital Arts Patrons' Organisation	Precinct wide, online, digital, and print.	2020 - 2025	Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Applied Arts, Literature and Spoken Word
artsACT, the authority, Private Sector Developers	CCMIL Area	2022 - 2025	Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Applied Arts, Literature and Spoken Word
artsACT, EPSDD + NCA, TCCS, Private Sector Developers	Precinct wide. Stage 2 Light Rail.	2020 - 2025	Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Applied Arts, Literature and Spoken Word
artsACT, EPSDD + NCA + Private Sector	City Hill, North East, Braddon, Dickson, Northbourne Corridor, MacArthur Urban Village	2022 - 2025	Visual Arts and Performing Arts
artsACT, EPSDD, Events ACT, NCA, National Museum Australia, National Gallery of Australia	Precinct wide, Glebe Park, West Basin	2020 - 2025	Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Applied Arts, Literature and Spoken Word
artsACT, EPSDD + TCCS, NCA	Northbourne Avenue	2023 - 2025	Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Applied Arts, Literature and Spoken Word
artsACT, EPSDD, Events ACT, NCA, National Museum Australia, Cultural Facilities Corporation, CMAG, Craft ACT	City Hill, Civic, Arts and Cultural Precinct	2023 - 2025	Visual Arts
artsACT, EventsACT, TCCS, NCA, ACT Heritage Council, Local Arts Organisations and Arts Centres, Australian National University and University of Canberra	Haig Park – Braddon interface	2022	Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Applied Arts, Literature and Spoken Word
artsACT, Events ACT, EPSDD, TCCS, NCA, ACT Heritage Council, Local Arts Organisations and Arts Centres, Australian National University and University of Canberra	North West, City Hill, North East, Braddon, Northbourne Avenue, Dickson	2024	Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Applied Arts, Literature and Spoken Word
artsACT, EPSDD, TCCS, NCA, CMTEDD, Minister for the Arts and Cultural Events	Precinct-wide	2021 development for adoption by 2025	Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Applied Arts, Literature and Spoken Word





## 5.2

### URBAN ART COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

The authority will present urban art as integral to best practice renewal of the precinct. It will position the precinct as a creative city centre with surprising and energising places where everyone can experience the joy of creativity and the sense of wonder that diverse urban art activities can provide.

#### 5.2.1 RECOMMENDATION

The authority will use this strategy as the foundation for the key messages and positioning of any marketing and communications campaign related to urban art for the precinct. The authority will ensure urban art engagement objectives are integrated and revised annually within any communications plan developed to present a multi-faceted and innovative approach to the renewal of the precinct.

#### Key recommendations:

##### PRESENTATION AND PROMOTION OF URBAN ART

- Clear and tailored position statements and recognition of urban art activities, artists and the broader sector included in public events as appropriate.
- Promoting the precinct's existing and future urban art projects, to increase public awareness and engagement with these projects (i.e. through City Art Walks).
- Online, print or in-person promotion of urban art that clearly relays the conceptual narratives developed by artists for urban art to increase public resonance and understanding.
- Public alerts for upcoming, precinct wide urban art events delivered by any organisation regardless of whether it is a City Renewal Authority supported initiative.

##### PROMOTING THE PRECINCT'S CREATIVE STORY

- Cultural tourism focused promotion to share the precinct's creative story through the targeted development of marketing collateral (both traditional and digital e.g. phone applications) to highlight the precinct's cultural assets, art collection, events program, creative hubs and arts organisations.

##### INTERNAL CULTURAL CHANGE

Capacity building opportunities for City Renewal Authority personnel to develop understanding of where urban arts can add value to future projects and programs such as through:

- Capital Works projects delivered within the precinct;
- Staff training on best practice artist engagement;
- Developing partnerships with the NMA, NGA and other arts and cultural institutions to extend their programming into the precinct;
- Internal programs and initiatives not directly related to urban art outcomes; and
- Private developer engagement opportunities.

##### SECTOR SUPPORT

- Active promotion of Territory-wide and precinct specific support and development programs for artists including mentoring initiatives that are provided by the artsACT, other ACT Governments agencies, industry peak bodies and others through Authority led marketing and communication channels.
- A dedicated communications program to highlight the creative people who live, work and practice their craft in and around the precinct. "Canberra's Creative Capital" will document local artists, musicians and people involved in the cultural and creative industries who have had direct engagement with the precinct previously, currently or in the future.

### 5.2.2 REASONING

As a Strategy of this scale and purpose is a new venture for the authority, it is vital that City Renewal Authority personnel are fully conversant with the benefits of urban art in all of its forms and able to present these to the wider public.

Internal capacity building will provide the authority with the tools to deliver the aims and integrate the vision and principles of the strategy into all relevant Authority initiatives.

Having this foundation will ensure that the authority can effectively engage and consult with other ACT Government agencies, businesses, the general public, as well as the arts and cultural sector in the active promotion, development and delivery of urban art.

### 5.2.3 OUTCOMES

- A sense of anticipation and excitement for the renewal and growth of the precinct;
- Confidence and understanding among the authority, the creative and cultural sector and the general community with regard to the purpose and benefits of an Urban Art Strategy;
- Encouragement of buy-in, and a sense of ownership among all stakeholders once outcomes of the strategy or any new urban art activity are being delivered within the precinct;
- A greater understanding of the relevance and also ambitions for urban art initiatives within the precinct; and
- Promotion of the authority as the primary supporter of urban art activities and initiatives throughout the precinct.



Henry Roland Park Opening  
Image courtesy City  
Renewal Authority



## 5.3

### CITY GRANTS PROCESS

The authority will annually review the City Grants Guidelines to ensure its program priorities are connected to the community's renewal aspirations for the precinct as well as the recommendations of the supporting precinct place plans.

#### 5.3.1

#### RECOMMENDATION

To support the recommendations of the various strategies and place plans for the precinct, City Grant rounds held from 2020 to 2025 will aid urban renewal through community development driven urban art and placemaking outcomes.

##### PROPOSED CITY GRANTS PRIORITIES 2022-2025

- Involve professional practicing artists to deliver multi-disciplinary projects that enhance the public realm experience of the city centre;
- Encourage residents and community groups to actively participate in the renewal of the precinct through community oriented projects that focus on investigating, activating and remediating the city centre;
- Identify key empty or underutilised sites and spaces for artistic responses that will provide short and medium term benefits to the renewal of precinct; and
- Focus one city grants round specifically to urban art activities to ensure consistent pathway to achieving this strategy's Vision.

##### PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY GRANTS PROGRAM

1. To ensure City Grant applications incorporate artistic and curatorial merit, the selection process will require applicants to connect any art related project proposal to at least one Urban Art Theme from section 2.0 of this strategy and with reference to section 4.0 of this strategy.
2. Applicants will be required to budget a portion of the grant total to the evaluation and documentation of the project.
3. The authority will annually review each successful grant recipient for Tier 1 and Tier 2 grants, culminating in an end of year annual award for the outcome with the highest level of impact for the precinct as well as a People's Choice Award determined by the residents of the precinct.
4. The authority will conduct an internal annual review of the City Grants program to ensure the program is positively contributing to the Vision and Guiding Principles of this strategy.

In time, the authority will establish additional levy areas that extend the City Grants program to include key areas of the precinct such as Dickson, allowing grants program benefits to be seen precinct-wide.





### 5.3.2 REASONING

The primary objective of City Grants should be to develop and support the vitality of Canberra's city centre through urban art and placemaking initiatives that seek to directly aid in the renewal of the precinct. The proposed ongoing evaluation and forward planning of the City Grants program will support intentional, sustainable and innovative renewal of the precinct. One that is supported and supportive of the artists, practitioners and communities who invest in the precinct.

Creative placemaking initiatives can utilise urban art, culture, creativity, and design to improve the social, economic and physical vitality of city centre. The City Grants program will work to activate places that are underutilised, generate interaction and buy in, increase community pride and connectedness, and spur the local economy with a focus to support the long-term wellbeing of residents and visitors to the precinct.

As independent observers and creative thinkers, artists are uniquely placed to propose and experiment with solutions to some of the most critical issues that confront the precinct in its moment of renewal. Through a requirement for projects to actively include professional artists in a multi-disciplinary fashion, the City Grants program will be able to deliver innovative solutions to aid in the renewal of the City Centre.

### 5.3.3 OUTCOMES

- An award applied to the City Grants program will position it as a seminal opportunity for the creative ambitions of artists, designers and makers of the Territory whilst also providing additional support to artists and creatives.
- The authority will annually review the impact and future direction of the City Grants program to ensure the City Grants are providing tangible benefits to the economic development of the CCMIL area.
- The active evaluation, documentation, promotion and forward planning of the City Grants program will position the authority as a leader in community development programs.

*Sound and Fury*, Glitoris, Art, not Apart, 2016.  
Photograph by Dayna Ransley, 2016.



## 5.4

### URBAN ARTS IN CONSTRUCTION SITES

The authority will lead by example, providing diverse opportunities for urban art interventions applied or integral to construction sites throughout the precinct.

#### 5.4.1 RECOMMENDATION

To provide a level of visual amenity and reprieve from the many sites up for construction throughout the precinct, partnering ACT Government agencies are encouraged to consider ways that sites foreclosed for demolition or temporary structures within capital works construction sites can incorporate urban artwork.

These temporary artworks will show the community that the authority and in turn the ACT Government cares about delivering safe and beautiful city streets and spaces during this period of mass construction and development.

1. Seeking a repository of licenced bespoke artwork from local and national artists for use by ACT Government agencies for any site within the precinct. This program will result in a suite of 2D printable art and designs for project officers to utilise. This can be supplemented with historical imagery from the National Archives of Australia and National Film and Sound Archive.
2. Identifying urban art commissioning opportunities for ACT Government sites that are earmarked for demolition, challenging artists to deliver temporary urban art activities that focus on highlighting hidden narratives and celebrating transformation within a confined budget of \$50,000.

#### 5.4.2 REASONING

With precinct renewal will come an influx of construction sites causing visual chaos and a perception of urban decay, reducing the appeal for people to linger in key areas of the precinct.

ACT Government redevelopment sites offer huge opportunities for creative treatments and other designs redefining these spaces as temporary landmarks until the eventual development is realised.

#### 5.4.3 OUTCOMES

- Urban art in construction sites will aid the visual amenity of the precinct and where feasible, provide opportunities for places undergoing immense transformation to be honoured, providing artists additional canvasses to celebrate Canberra's distinctiveness.
- An opportunity for the authority to set the example for the visual presentation of the precinct.
- Opportunities for artists to showcase their talent.
- Ways to showcase to developers how sites can be maintained in a safe and community conscious manner.
- Instilling considerate redevelopment and renewal of major sites within the precinct through the acknowledgment of past land use and community connection to spaces.

*NB. The hoardings initiative has been developed based on the City of Sydney Creative Hoardings Policy.*





*"The Wrinkles of the City La Havana,  
Rafael Lorenzo y Obdulia Manzano,  
Cuba, 2012, © JR and José Parlá*







## 5.5

### ARTIST CITY SPACE ACTIVATION FUND

The City Space Activation Fund will connect developers, businesses and building managers with professional artists and arts organisations who are seeking spaces to make/develop urban art.

#### 5.5.1 RECOMMENDATION

To assist in the animation of empty shop-fronts and spaces up for lease within the precinct, the authority will offer a dedicated City Space Activation Fund (the Fund). The initiative seeks to make accessible new spaces for artists within the city centre to increase the footprint of urban art making, as well as urban art participation.

##### PROPOSED SELECTION CRITERIA

1. Applicants should be required to nominate a site that is not already funded by artsACT or the authority for arts activities. Identified sites should be fit for project purpose.
2. Applications will be open to any art form covering literature, music, performing arts, community arts, curatorial and visual arts, design, digital arts, history and heritage.
3. The applicant's ability to demonstrate the engagement and participation outcomes of the activities proposed. Engagement with surrounding businesses is crucial to the ongoing viability of any proposed ventures.
4. The level of reach to the wider community as co-creators, participants and audience.
5. The capacity for the activities to deliver positive public, community and social outcomes connected to the effective urban renewal of the precinct.
6. The inclusion and engagement of communities that reflect the diversity of Canberra; the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD), people with disability and youth.

#### 5.5.2 REASONING

Building an artistic and creative city requires a grassroots approach in which everyone plays a role to safeguard sector sustainability and growth. Artists have always been quick to respond to communities' need to reconnect in the face of change, to share and re-establish a sense of place, often penetrating the interstitial spaces of cities with pop-up and participatory projects.

With such an initiative the authority will provide additional support for artists to actively respond to the needs of the community, whilst providing the added benefit of activating vacant spaces across the precinct.

#### 5.5.3 OUTCOMES

- An important civic investment to support the longterm development of creative economies within the city centre.
- Provide 'quick wins' to developers, building managers and owners seeking to fill underutilised leasable spaces;
- To increase the attraction and point of difference of development sites offering increased sales and return of investment to developers and building managers;
- Enliven spaces or venues within the precinct through increased urban art activity;
- Provide additional opportunities for artists to work within the precinct area;
- Facilitate additional avenues for skills development and sector growth for professional artists in Canberra;
- Increase the visibility of Canberra's creative capacity and in turn, the precinct's profile.



*colour theory*, temporary installation by Emma Vickery and Ash Pederick, PUBLIC Platform, 2016. Photograph by Bewley Shaylor, 2016. Image courtesy of FORM.





## 5.6

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES

Diverse urban art opportunities will showcase the breadth of talent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. The precincts identity will be enriched by urban art delivered by Ngannawal, Ngannawal, Ngambri and Ngarrigu artists.

#### 5.6.1

##### RECOMMENDATION

To complement Principle 4 of the 2015 ACT Government's Arts Policy: to engage with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures, the authority will commit to advocating and making readily available commissioning opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and Traditional Custodians of the Territory who attended workshops in September and October 2019 helped to define the below recommendations.*

##### PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

###### ROTATING PUBLIC GALLERY

Showcase of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork within the precinct through an EOI process requesting single use licences of artworks for public display.

The artworks will be rotated quarterly through regular programming and positioned in key public spaces within the precinct. Interpretive resources made accessible online to the public will supplement these artworks. Artworks may be collaborative and provide mentoring opportunities between established artists and emerging artists or youth artists.

###### LOCAL NARRATIVES AND SITES OF SIGNIFICANCE

Key sites of significance within the precinct, as well as appropriate local Traditional Custodian narratives within the Territory will be prioritised within urban art outcomes for the precinct.

##### GOVERNANCE

###### CITY GRANTS OBJECTIVE

The authority will provide support to application proposals from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, and seek application proposals that include mentorships, cultural reconnection activities and activities focused on young people.

##### GENERAL INITIATIVES

###### artsACT: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTS NETWORK

Where needed, the Arts Network will be invited to contribute to the development and steering of precinct urban art projects.

###### REFERENCE GROUP

A reference group of local Traditional Custodians should be created for the authority to advise on projects that may be working with local Traditional Custodian cultural material, heritage, or practices.

#### 5.6.2

##### REASONING

The Ngannawal people are the Traditional Custodians of Canberra. Canberra is country that has been home to Aboriginal people for thousands of years. The engagement and commissioning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists who hold a connection to the area brings intangible value and will build an authentic identity for the precinct.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are an important part of Australia's diverse contemporary culture and national identity. Urban art is a natural avenue to celebrate and represent these narratives to benefit ongoing reconciliation and foster an authentic sense of place.





### 5.6.3

#### OUTCOMES

- Understand the unique role of the Traditional Custodians as integral to the identity of Canberra by supporting and promoting their talent and culture.
- Encourage relationships, advocate for and acknowledge the important cultural role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to the continued wellbeing of Canberra.
- Engage and promote Canberra's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, arts and culture
- Increase the diversity of the narratives presented through urban art within the precinct.
- Provide new avenues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to explore and express their cultural identities within the public realm.

*“Our culture is a living culture that’s still developing and growing within itself. We’re learning every day still. As time progresses things are changing. We’re always learning to be adaptable to those changes ... Aboriginal culture is not stagnant like most people think it is.”*

**WALLY BELL**

NGUNNAWAL ELDER, 2015

*Bangarra: 30 years of sixty five thousand, Bangarra Dance Theatre, 2019. Presented at Canberra Theatre July, 2019. Photograph by Jamila Toderas*



## 5.7

### THE PRECINCT SPINE

Movement is a major contributor to the respiratory system of a city. Through urban art interventions Northbourne Avenue will become the preeminent space to celebrate this element of Canberra's urban experience.

#### 5.7.1 RECOMMENDATION

Northbourne Avenue is the primary point of arrival for the precinct, acting as the axial funnel to the rest of the neighbourhoods and areas that make up both the precinct and the rest of the Territory. Due to its transport and connector focus, the experience of the Avenue is fleeting.

The Avenue has become a place focused on passing exchanges and is symptomatic of the physical and psychological detachment that occurs in transit corridors.

With this characteristic in mind, the authority encourages artists to respond to the Avenue, in its moment of evolution, and to connect or shatter the preconceptions of what the Avenue inherently is: the spine of the precinct. Artists are called upon to suggest urban art outcomes that will intervene with the status quo: requesting travellers of the Avenue to be conscious and aware of their surroundings, each other and the types of urban experiences they wish to have.

#### 5.7.2 REASONING

The City and Gateway Urban Design Framework (December 2018) outlines the proposed planning framework for built form running parallel to Northbourne Avenue which will transform its character, emphasising its axial nature and filtering an increased number of people into the precinct's central corridor. The future redevelopment of the Avenue will transform it into a safer and more attractive space for active travel through cycling and walking, as well as an increased emphasis on public transport options.

Over time, Northbourne Avenue will become a multi-modal transit boulevard with a greater public transport and local traffic distribution function. Its transformation however, can translate into negative public realm outcomes for residents and visitors. Our lives are wrapped in and through the spaces, textures, and possibilities of our urban experience. By creating productive and mindful movements through the spaces of the precinct, we can become inherently more connected to each other, our urban environment and in turn provide intrinsic social and physical benefits to our urban experiences.

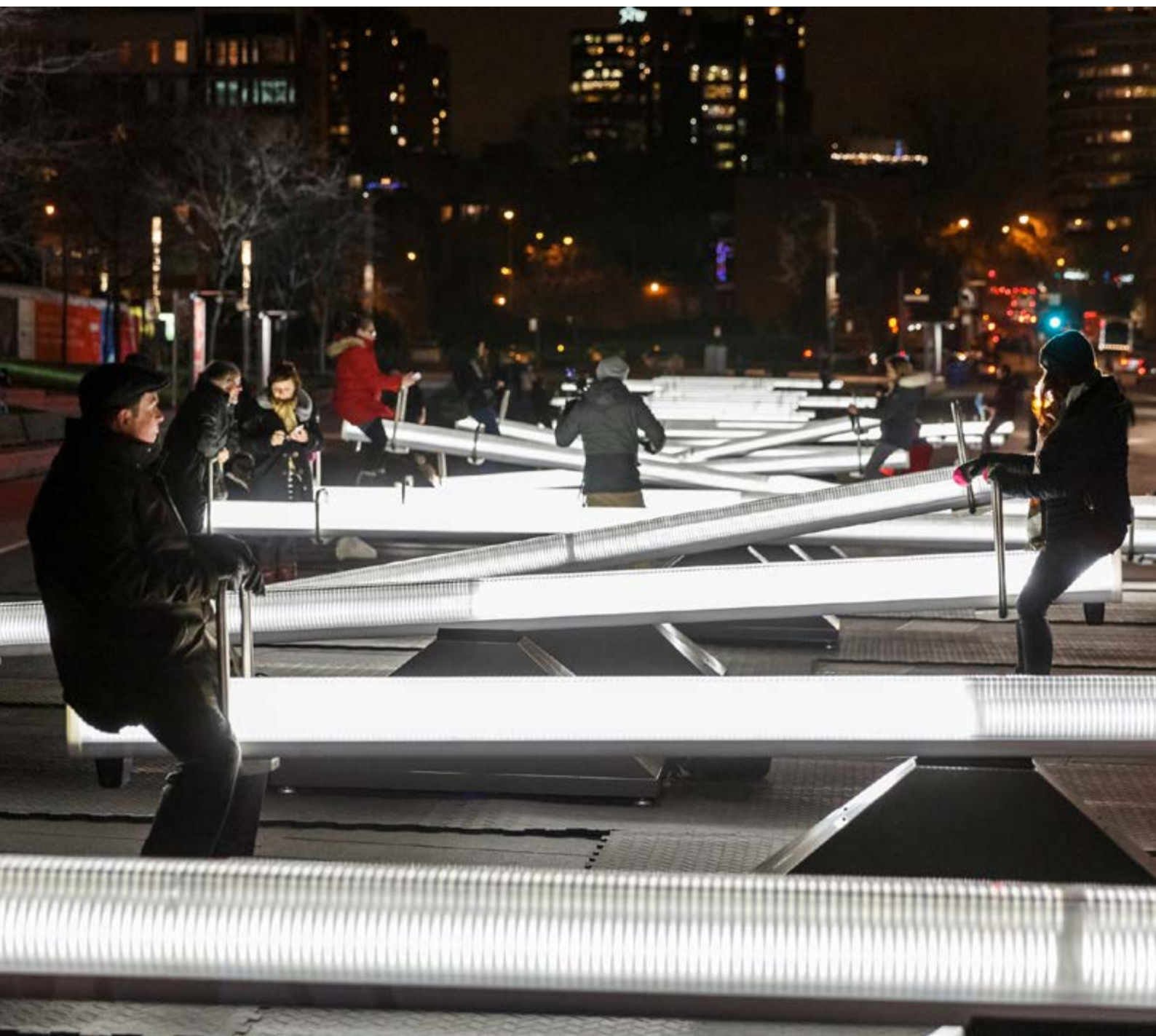
#### 5.7.3 OUTCOMES

- Accentuate the significance of Northbourne Avenue both to the precinct and to the image of Canberra as a model urban place.
- Provide tangible social wellbeing outcomes to residents and visitors, translating to places along the Avenue transitioning from thoroughfare to destination.
- Provide landmark places along the Avenue that connect Northbourne Corridor to the rest of the precinct.



*Impulse\_Luminothérapie*, Lateral Office, Place des Arts, Montreal, QC, 2016. Photography by Ulysse Lemerise/OSA, 2016.

30 see-saws of varying lengths invite visitors to engage with and activate the public realm. The speed and rhythm of the see-saw's motion generates light intensity and triggers a series of tones.







## 5.8

### THE CIVIC, ARTS AND CULTURAL PRECINCT

An annual urban art intervention will coincide with the evolution of the Civic, Arts and Cultural Precinct speaking to its current dormant state and to its crafted future.

#### 5.8.1 RECOMMENDATION

Acknowledging the significance of the Civic, Arts and Cultural Precinct (the Cultural Precinct) for the broader precinct and also the Territory, the authority will commission an annual urban art intervention for Civic Square to coincide with its physical evolution during redevelopment.

Each year a selected urban art commission will respond to the state of Civic Square. Responses should be evocative rather than representational, playful rather than grand, imaginative rather than literary and be truly useful, acting not to merely decorate the spaces but to invite public participation in the evolution of the Cultural Precinct.

The urban art competition will showcase local creative talent, and become a tangible symbol of the complex narratives that make up the many stories within the precinct's urban landscape. The competition will ask artists to form multi-disciplinary teams to deliver a temporary destination artwork which acts as the participatory platform for a six week program. Following the four years of urban art intervention, a cumulative exhibition should be hosted at Canberra's Museum and Gallery to record and evaluate the outcomes of the program.

#### 5.8.2 REASONING

The Civic, Arts and Cultural Precinct needs to be a national and international drawcard for Canberra, but first of all it needs to be a place embraced by Canberrans. It needs to be a benchmark for civic space. The best civic spaces are those where things happen, rather than where things are consumed, although consumption can be part of the mix. They invite walking, staying, resting and playing. They offer sensory experiences and a sense of wonder.

The future redevelopment of the Civic, Arts and Cultural Precinct is a significant step in redefining the civic, arts and cultural core of Canberra. To supplement and support the future redevelopment of the Cultural Precinct, an annual urban art program will echo the ACT Government's commitment to present the Cultural Precinct as the preeminent site to showcase Canberra's wider creative aspirations and local capacity.

#### 5.8.3 OUTCOMES

- Urban art will become the catalyst for proposals and outcomes within the Cultural Precinct to respond to change, to reflect and to evolve.
- Through a consistent program the space will be ingrained into the collective memory of Canberra's residents and visitors.
- The urban art interventions will transform the precinct's cultural heart into a space for free activity that attracts people of all ages, levels of mobility and demographics.





*Equilibri Universal*, Okuda  
San Miguel, Valencia, 2018.  
Photography by Quique Rico, 2018.



## 5.9

### URBAN ART IN HAIG PARK

Haig Park will become the canvas for a cultural laboratory that celebrates the landscape design foundations of the Territory and the ambition of the local creative and cultural sector.

#### 5.9.1 RECOMMENDATION

The authority will advocate for a range of urban art interventions across Haig Park which will support the broader objectives of the Haig Park Place Plan (2017) by inspiring the city to reconnect, take stewardship of the park's development, and share in its growth.

#### PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

##### PAVILION DESIGN COMPETITION

A design competition targeted to landscape architects. Built outcomes should be delivered through a participatory process that seeks community engagement.

The Haig Park design competition will be supported by a curated program that includes local, national and international leaders in the arts, design disciplines, technology and philanthropy, who will be invited to share a range of perspectives on the needs of the precinct, and the community as it looks to transform and renew.

##### HAIG PARK COMMONS

The authority will work with project partners to develop a program that includes leading thinkers and makers that will deliver a multi-week program of talks, workshops, and performances, bookended by commissioned temporary urban art outcomes.

#### 5.9.2 REASONING

In its current state, Haig Park is underused, perceived as unsafe and doesn't meet the needs of the Canberra community. Increased activity in Haig Park will result in improved safety whilst also demonstrating the case for ongoing investment into permanent amenity improvement within the Park.

Directly supporting the Haig Park Place Plan and its proposition of:

*"Haig Park for all of us. Haig Park is a place of rest and reconnection. It is a space to create community."*

This recommendation further enhances Haig Park's physical capacity to bind the northern and southern spaces of the precinct through a sustained urban art program.

#### 5.9.3 OUTCOMES

- Haig Park will become a space to gather and collaborate, a place for the community to actively participate in the renewal of the precinct
- Haig Park will become a commons space for the local creative and cultural sector to engage with the community through a suite of participatory urban art initiatives and offerings.
- The precinct will provide a designated urban space for the showcase of the Territory's design and artistic capacity, development and creation.







*(urban art) “...is a form of street life, a means to articulate the implicit values of a city when its users occupy the place of determining what the city is.”*

**MALCOM MILES  
ART, SPACE AND THE CITY:  
PUBLIC ART AND URBAN FUTURES**



*Serpentine Gallery Pavilion,  
Sou Fujimoto, London, 2013.  
Photograph by George Rex, 2013.*



## 5.10

### CITY RENEWAL FESTIVAL

The precinct will come alive through a biennale urban art and thought leadership festival spearheaded by the City Renewal Authority. Urban art will investigate what is critical for consideration as the precinct continues to evolve and develop.

#### 5.10.1

##### RECOMMENDATION

Ephemeral artistic urban art will reveal the potentialities of public spaces, acting as transitory creations, presented through diverse situations and experiments to support the renewal of the precinct. Participatory artworks will provide opportunities for residents and visitors to the precinct to actively engage in the production and evolution of artworks.

Workshops and design challenges will request leading local and national creatives to investigate just how Canberra can make its city centre (the precinct) better. This will be combined with speaker events featuring leading international specialists in arts-led city transformation and growth.

Exhibitions within the precinct's public spaces will showcase the work of a range of local artists and creatives, inverting the typical gallery experience. To showcase the transformative power of quality street art murals by leading international, national, and local artists will splash colour, adding new layers of narrative to key sites across the precinct.

#### 5.10.2

##### REASONING

A consistent public interface for the arts is commonly acknowledged to be an important component of urban renewal and gentrification. Art and culture can address community needs helping communities to understand their problems and facilitating their solutions.

Urban Art, and art activity generally, is able to address the aesthetic improvement of environments, contribute to the environmental renewal of cities, and offer a possibility of economic recovery. Urban art-led regeneration is also often connected to an increase in design-led regeneration, cultural regeneration and to the promoting and marketing of a city.

Public Art can be a valuable participatory tool for increasing the emotional ties of residents to an area, provided that the art connects to their local identity and people's desire for betterment. This not only strengthens local identity, but also increases the attractiveness of the area to external investors and visitors.

#### 5.10.3

##### OUTCOMES

- Strengthen local capacity by involving and pairing local artists and makers with leading national and internationals in the cultural animation and the designing of the precinct's public spaces.
- Artists are invited to shine a light on the intimate, hidden and also troubled aspects of the precinct, and to work with the local community to re imagine solutions.
- Provides a multiplicity of dialogue through strong relationships and an intense collaboration between urban designers, architects and artists.





*PUBLIC 2015, Perth.*  
Photograph by Jarred Seng, 2015.





## 5.11

### PRECINCT PERCENT FOR ART POLICY

A Percent for Art contribution policy tailored for the precinct to set out the parameters for contributions from private developers and Capital Works projects to deliver legacy urban art outcomes for the precinct.

#### 5.11.1

##### RECOMMENDATION

The authority will develop a framework for a bespoke Percent for Art Policy for the precinct.

Items that will be considered for a precinct specific Percent for Art contribution policy include:

- The principles and standards to which all parties will adhere (as defined by this Urban Art Strategy).
- Involving art professionals with curatorial and management expertise to develop tailored art strategies to outline the opportunities and selection process for commissioning.
- A requirement for any precinct specific development to consider new, entrepreneurial approaches to addressing urban art requirements.
- Clear definition of the role of developers in the process and the terms of their contribution.
- The threshold of development cost upon which the policy becomes active. This approach needs to balance the desire to support economic growth within the precinct whilst maintaining appropriate funding for contributions to support impactful urban art outcomes for the precinct.
- The option to offer percent for art contributions to a cash-in-lieu reserve fund for the authority to draw from for urban art outcomes within the precinct.
- The requirement to include artists as members of consultant teams for planning studies and/or the design of capital works projects within the precinct. This allows artists to have a significant role in the overall shape of buildings, landscape, and infrastructure for the precinct, and ensures the design, implementation and integration of art in public projects is embedded from the outset.
- The capacity to extend developer contributions to include ongoing programming and/or temporary artworks rather than only permanent sculptural outcomes.
- A requirement that a percentage of the urban art contribution be assigned to an ongoing maintenance fund.

#### 5.11.2

##### REASONING

Percent for Art policies provide tangible ongoing outcomes for the delivery of artworks within the public realm. The shortcomings of these policies are in the narrow definition of what constitutes public art and in the misuse of these policies by developers, quite often resulting in a monotonous built form.

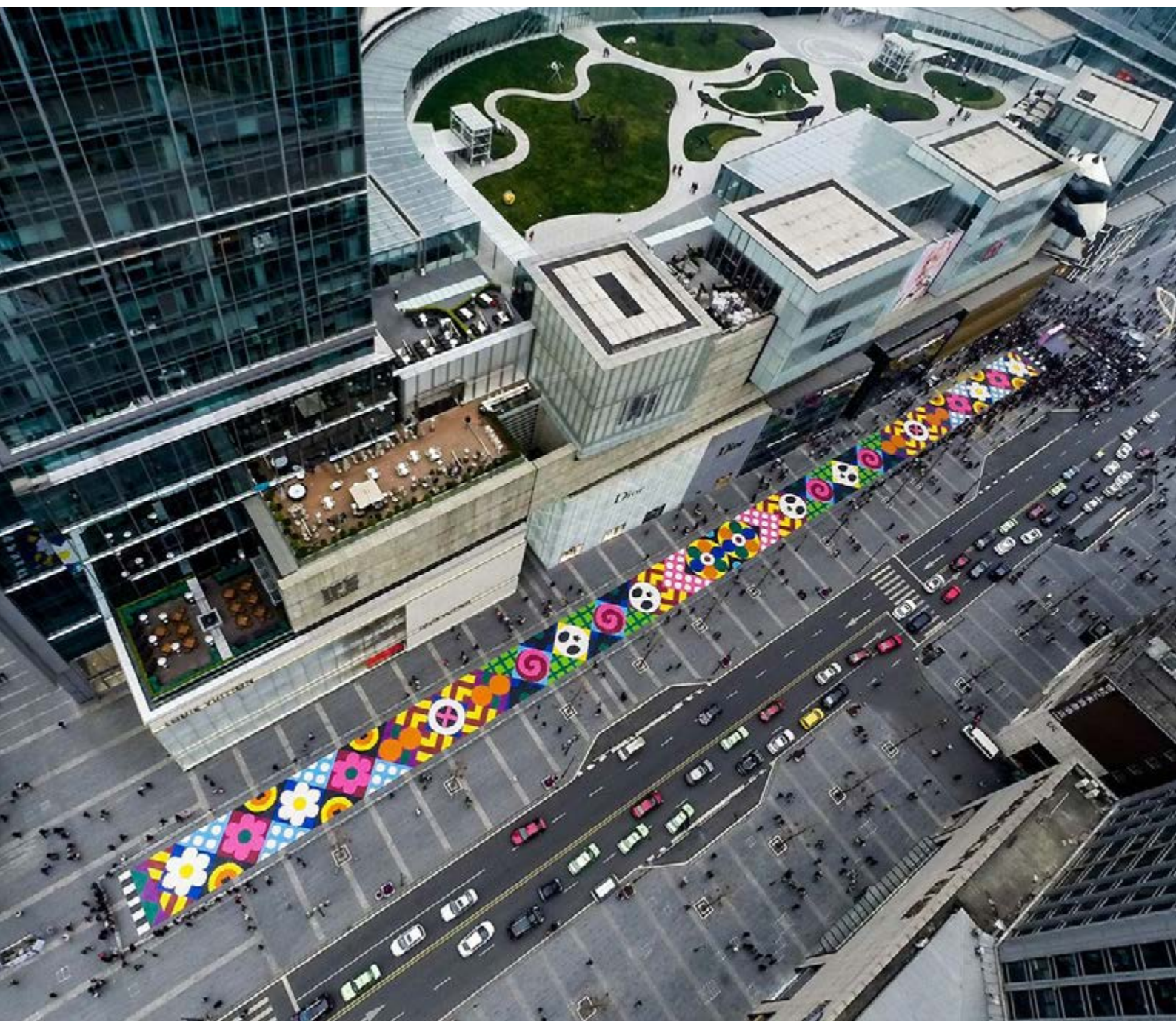
Urban Art, and art activity generally, can address the aesthetic improvement of environments, contribute to the environmental renewal of cities, and offer a possibility of economic recovery. Urban art-led regeneration is also often connected to an increase in design-led regeneration, cultural regeneration and to the promoting and marketing of a city. A bespoke percent for art policy for the precinct will ensure any developer or Capital Works contributions to urban art are inherently connected to the Vision and Guiding Principles of this strategy and the authority's Strategic Plan.

Within this policy should be an understanding that urban art is not just an art form. It is a mindset, a mindset of improving the changing environment through the arts. This policy should instill the practice of involving artists in the conception, development and transformation of any place to ensure systemic transformation and renewal across the precinct.

#### 5.11.3

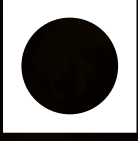
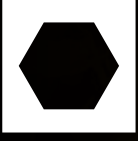
##### OUTCOMES

- Strengthen local capacity by involving and pairing local artists and makers with developers, designers and ACT Government agencies in the cultural animation and the designing of the precinct's public spaces.
- Set a benchmark for percent for art policy for the nation.
- Provides a multiplicity of dialogue and legacy urban art outcomes through an intense collaboration between urban designers, architects and artists.



*Sweet as One*, Craig and Karl, Chengdu, China, 2015. Photograph by Craig and Karl Studio, 2015.





6.0

## APPENDIX

West End Markets, 2018  
Photograph by Taryn Hayes.  
Image courtesy of FORM







## 6.1

### WHAT HAS THE COMMUNITY SAID?

The recommendations outlined in this Strategy are based on a range of existing data collated by the authority as well as through consultation with individuals and organisations from the creative and cultural sector across the precinct and Territory.

#### 6.1.1

#### COMMUNITY PRECINCT RENEWAL ASPIRATIONS

In early 2018, the authority requested contribution from the community to help improve the growing precinct. This consultation was focused on community and stakeholder feedback received over the last 15 years, plus 23 planning reports, totaling more than 32,000 pieces of community input.

The findings were distilled into six key points which identified the community's aspirations for the direction of renewal within the precinct. These six points inform the authority's yearly Strategic Plan which outlines the implementation of a comprehensive program of projects and actions.

##### A CITY OF PEOPLE

Placing **people at the centre** of decision making.

##### A CREATIVE CITY

Supporting and promoting the Canberra creative sector by **including art and culture in major projects**.

##### AN ACTIVE CITY

Activating the city precinct through best-practice placemaking that embraces a **community focused** approach.

##### A SUSTAINABLE CITY

Commitment to positive economic, social and environmentally **sustainable outcomes** for Canberra.

##### A CONNECTED CITY

Design and development that puts the **amenity** of people at the centre.

##### A PROGRESSIVE CITY

Building a city that achieves its full **potential**.



*The cushion and the wedge, Matthew Harding, 2001, Garema Place, Canberra. Photograph by Matthew Harding.*

### 6.1.2

#### SECTOR CONSULTATION

Throughout the development of this Strategy the authority have engaged and consulted with the local creative and cultural sector as well as informed a variety of partnering ACT Government agencies on the anticipated content and outcomes of the strategy.

In August 2018, the authority delivered a series of workshops to assist in the development of the strategy. Across a week of dedicated sector consultation, approximately 47 individuals were consulted with representation from:

- Ainslie + Gorman Art Centre
- ANU School of Art and Design
- Art Not Apart
- Arts ACT
- Belconnen Arts Centre
- Canberra Youth Theatre
- CFC + CMAG
- Childer's Group
- Contour 556
- Craft ACT
- EPSDD
- Events ACT
- Independent, Cross Sector
- NCA
- New Museum of Australia
- Play Activation Network
- Social Repair Service
- TCCS
- Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
- University of Canberra

With apologies from Rebus Theatre and Canberra Contemporary Art Space

A full report on the outcomes of the Visioning and Opportunities and Collaborations workshops is available upon request from the authority.

### 6.1.3

#### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

An EOI was sent out to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to gather participants. Three ROA's were engaged with information sent to the United Ngunawal Elders Council and the Elected Body. In late 2019 three workshops were held over a period of two months to co-develop Section 5.6, an additional Guiding Principle and test the strategy vision.

*"(The strategy needs to consider)...how we value them (artists) – what they need to be able to work with government and businesses – who else needs to be considered to assist in this space?"*

CRA UAS Visioning workshop participant

*"There is no place (for artists and makers) to collectively gather without requiring or feeling like you need to seek permission."*

CRA UAS Visioning workshop participant

*"The city is the most progressive and bold politically but that is not always manifested in (the city's) design or art initiatives."*

CRA UAS Visioning workshop participant

*"The precinct should have a sense of being 'our backyard' to discover new things."*

CRA UAs opportunities and collaborations workshop





## 6.2

### CURRENT URBAN ART COMMISSIONING CONTEXT

The following observations can be made about the status and health of urban art commissioning in the precinct in 2019. This Strategy acknowledges this context and has provided options to translate these learnings into opportunities.

#### 6.2.1 CHALLENGES IN URBAN ART INTEGRATION

While there is a clear desire for artworks to be integrated in to public projects, the practicalities of making this happen are challenging. Project officers across the ACT Government have supported the delivery of art in the public realm but as there is no requirement for this to occur, initiatives are often value managed out, resulting in missed opportunities or outcomes that resonate negatively.

This is often attributed to a lack of dedicated human resources for the advocacy, procurement and delivery of artworks from project inception to completion. Projects that do proceed are often developed in isolation and there is little cross-over between events, programming and artworks, often reducing the breadth of impact possible.

Project teams for key capital works projects within the precinct benefit from being multi-disciplinary to meet the demands and have the skills required for integrated urban art outcomes. Where appropriate, specialists could be engaged to deliver curated urban art outcomes, working with artists and the project team to assist in artwork delivery. This approach will aid in ensuring urban art outcomes are integrated within a project, setting a benchmark for the continued investment to integrate urban art into capital works projects.

#### 6.2.2 SECTOR INVESTMENT

Past projects have shown the capacity of the Territory and the Territory's artists to produce ambitious work. These local initiatives are in part due to the efforts of a small number of visionary individuals, and require continued investment and development opportunities for sustainable delivery. Without government and private sector support there is considerable risk that this knowledge and vision will be lost, adversely affecting a local urban art ecology that is still developing.

The Territory is home to a number of tertiary education providers with world class creative programs. Retain these creatives can be challenging, particularly when the diversity and extent of opportunity to deliver artworks in the public realm is not excessive. Retention of talent occurs when artists, producers and creatives are given the opportunity to showcase and develop their talent and capacity. The precinct and therefore the authority's greatest successes, will result from longer-term investment without forgetting the value in short-term interventions

#### 6.2.3 WHO HAS PERMISSION ANYWAY?

Community consultation as well as observation of the precinct's urban spaces shows that they are not always seen as holistically public or able to be used freely and flexibly.

The ability to inform and transform public spaces can lead to a positive sense of ownership by the community. Canberra's public spaces, while possessing the potential to have the most progressive civic identity and presence, are quite often vacant and stripped of character or vibrancy.

This is in part caused by the level of 'red tape' between an idea and gaining permission to test this idea. While efforts have been made to reduce this, greater communication and clarity about who to talk to and where to go for information would aid these efforts.

#### 6.2.4

### EXTENDING THE TYPOLOGY OF URBAN ART

Canberra has a rich history of urban art commissioning, however this has been predominantly focused on stand-alone permanent sculptural pieces that are occasionally lacking the level of impact required to resonate across generations.

Value in art commissioning for capital works projects is often attributed to the longevity and durability of an artwork, resulting in static outcomes. This is in part due to limited education on the cultural and social impact of alternative opportunities such as temporary art activities and urban art programming.

This Strategy advocates for temporary artworks (that have a fixed, short-term timescale but which have long-term impact on collective memory and cultural well-being) and durational artworks (that unfold and change over time and allow for participation and engagement over a longer period of time) that add significant value to a project even when compared to permanent outcomes.

The precinct has over 82 public artworks, with the majority located within the Civic area. Arguably the most successful of these artworks are those that reference local narratives, significant sites, and local social and cultural histories or were commissioned to artists with a direct connection to Canberra.

The existing collection consists mainly of standalone sculptural artworks and therefore requires consistent and regular management of their presentation. This includes maintenance and repair as well as deaccessioning where necessary or amending the artwork placement on occasion.

There are cases within the precinct's existing collection where an artwork's placement is no longer complementary to its surrounding built form, or is sited or scaled in ways that negatively affect the public's ability to engage with the artwork, and work has had to be undertaken to rectify this.

Stand-alone sculptural artworks often require additional and ongoing dialogue with the community to ensure they continue to be relevant, appreciated and engaged with.





## 6.3

### URBAN ART COMMISSIONING PROCESS

The following commissioning approaches outline the best practice approach for the authority to adopt when seeking to engage artists for any urban art opportunity within the precinct. Under each approach is a general outline to be followed by the authority and its partners in realising urban artworks for the precinct.

#### 6.3.1 INTRODUCTION

These high level guidelines have been adopted based on the recommendations of ACT Government Public Art Guidelines developed by artsACT.

The authority will seek and advocate for the engagement of artists as early as possible, to ensure artists are able to work closely with project staff to realise individual projects in ways that are not at the detriment of artistic ambition.

These commissioning approaches do not negate the engagement of artists through the City Grants program.

It is recommended that curators and art consultants are engaged to ensure the appropriate artistic foundations are set at project inception and maintained through to delivery.

#### 6.3.2 PROCUREMENT METHODS

Project timelines should consider the following guidelines.

EOI Advertising (minimum):	4 weeks
EOI Development:	4 weeks
Concept Design Development:	8-12 weeks
Design Development	8-10 weeks
Construction Documentation:	12-16 weeks
Fabrication (minimum):	16 weeks
Installation:	case by case

*NB. These do not incorporate timelines required to prepare artwork strategies, artist briefs and artist agreements.*

#### 6.3.3 PROCUREMENT METHODS

The different ACT Government procurement methods the authority will utilise include:

##### UNDER \$200,000

**DIRECT SOURCING OR SINGLE SELECT TENDERING:**  
This is when the authority approaches a single artist or artist team directly to provide a quote or tender for the goods, services or works. This procurement method generally does not require the same amount of regulation as open tendering and select tendering.

**SELECT SOURCING OR SELECT TENDERING:**  
This is when the authority approaches a number of potential artists or artist teams directly to provide a quote or tender for the goods, services or works. In some cases, an open expression of interest may be advertised before this, allowing the agency to refine their specifications to suit the market and to provide a list of potential suppliers.

##### OVER \$200,000

##### OPEN TENDERS:

This is when the authority openly invites artists or artist teams to quote or tender for the goods, services or works. Interested suppliers are evaluated against their responses to the assessment criteria outlined in the Request for Tender. A preferred supplier is then identified and engaged by contract.

The authority will follow the below procurement methods for urban art initiatives developed or supported by the authority. These procurement methods can also be adopted by external commissioning bodies when commissioning urban art for the precinct.



### OPEN CALLS FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI)

An EOI brief will provide:

- a brief background or context on the authority, the site and the wider project (if applicable).
- Set out the urban art objectives for the wider project (where applicable)
- An outline of the various art opportunities available for the project.
- Outline the artwork budget range
- Outline the artist selection process following EOI submission and an overview of the commission deliverable dates
- Outline the artist selection criteria
- Outline the submission requirements for the EOI

Submission requirements for EOI's should include:

- A short response to the EOI by the submitting artist, detailing interest in the project;
- A short description of the artist's current practice;
- A curriculum vitae;
- A minimum of one letter of reference from a previous client (commissioner or gallerist); and
- Relevant examples of the artist's work.

An EOI should not request a concept design or proposal from a submitting artist. The selection process may result in the authority inviting a longlist or shortlist of artists into a limited competition to develop preliminary concepts for a nominal fee in response to an artist brief. The successful artist/s will then be selected and contracted.

### REQUEST FOR TENDER (RFT)

The RFT is required following a shortlist process from EOI.

The Urban Art and Place Activation Project Coordinator should prepare a standard RFT in consultation with the authority and other ACT Government agencies as appropriate (i.e. artsACT, NCA, EPSDD). The RFT will incorporate a full artist brief. The RFT will request a preliminary concepts designs or proposals and project methodology from submitting artists or artist teams.

The authority will review all submitted RFT's and invite the artists/artist teams to present their proposed approach. The authority will adopt a standard matrix to assess submissions and presentations, to ensure an equitable and transparent process. The successful artist/artist teams will then be selected and contracted.

### COMPETITION BY INVITATION:

A short list of artists, recommended by the authority may be invited and paid to develop a concept in response to an artist brief. Submitting artists will then present their concepts to the authority.

### DIRECT COMMISSION

An artist is directly commissioned for an identified urban art opportunity from the recommendation of the Committee. The artist is briefed on the opportunity and asked to submit a detailed concept design proposal, for which they are paid a fee. If the concept design is approved by the Committee the artwork.



## 6.3

### URBAN ART COMMISSIONING PROCESS

#### 6.3.2

##### URBAN ART AND PLACE ACTIVATION PROJECT COORDINATOR

It is recommended that the authority seek a dedicated Project Coordinator overseeing the implementation of the Committee's identified urban art and city place activation initiatives throughout the precinct will further aid in the successful and best practice commissioning and procurement of artists and delivery of exemplary projects and initiatives throughout the precinct.

Committee reports should be submitted to the authority Board and artsACT by the Urban Art and Place Activation Project Coordinator. Where required and as outlined in the ACT Government Public Art Guidelines, the development and delivery of any proposed permanent urban art project (including variations to the approved artist procurement or project delivery processes) will need artsACT liaison and Ministerial approval prior to the engagement of the preferred artist/s.

In some instances, it is recommended that the Project Coordinator work with an art consultant, allowing the authority to take advantage of the specialised expertise art consultants have in working with design professionals, artists and artworks through all stages of a commissioning process.

#### 6.3.3

##### PROJECT SPECIFIC ART STRATEGY AND ARTIST BRIEF:

To ensure identified urban art opportunities are developed in a curated manner and that an excellent standard of urban art is achieved, a project specific artwork strategy will be developed for all priority and significant urban art opportunities within the precinct. The artwork strategy should be developed by the Urban Art and Place Activation Project Coordinator in collaboration with the Committee and any engaged curator or art consultant as required.

The project specific art strategy will use this Urban Art Strategy as a foundation for the development of curatorial themes. It will set out the artwork opportunities available for a project or area of the precinct, and the proposed project methodology, timeline and budget. The artwork strategy will inform the development of an artist brief which will form part of any commissioning package presented to the market.

Artist briefs will indicate in detail the scope of the artwork opportunity, budget, and timeframe for delivery, the artist's responsibilities, the draft contractual arrangement, and the schedules to be completed by the artist to make a confirming submission. Most significantly the artist brief will include the curatorial themes identified by the project specific art strategy for the artist to draw inspiration from.

Where required the artist brief will be circulated to other ACT Government agencies for review to ensure that the identified artwork opportunities align and integrate with wider project priorities and requirements.

#### 6.3.4

### COLLABORATING WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTISTS

Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories are the heart of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity and as such non-Indigenous artists should not publish and circulate stories without consent, without attribution and where the authenticity of the story has been compromised.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and advisors can contribute to projects in alternative capacities, including through mentorship of, or collaboration with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creatives or non-Indigenous artists. It is important that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a significant involvement in any work that deals with Aboriginal cultural material, heritage, or practices.

Non-Indigenous artists seeking to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists are required to adhere to the Australian Council Indigenous Cultural protocols.

See:

<http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/about/protocols-for-working-with-indigenous-artists/>

*Moving Lounges*, PUBLIC2015,  
Filipa Matos and Romina Triboli Pisi.  
Photograph by Douglas Mark  
Black. Image courtesy of FORM







## 6.4

### FUTURE URBAN ART FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

#### 6.4.1

##### CITY CENTRE MARKETING AND IMPROVEMENTS LEVY:

The City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy (CCMIL) funds marketing and improvements in Canberra's City Centre. The levy applies to all rateable commercial properties in the City and some selected areas of benefit in Braddon and Turner that are in close proximity to the City Centre.

The CCMIL is returned to the private sector through the City Grants initiative. As a result, all projects funded through the initiative must occur within the CCMIL area. The authority will investigate how this levy or a similar approach can extend to benefit other key neighbourhoods in the precinct.

A full set of suggested amendments to the City Grants initiative can be found in Section 5.3.

#### 6.4.2

##### PERCENTAGE OF RATES:

Some local governments levy a percentage of property owner rates to go towards the project management and commission fees for the creation and installation of urban art. This increases the resourcing capacity for urban art commissioning, alleviating the pressure on individual project officers to deliver urban art outcomes. Current practice has set this sort of levy in the vicinity of 0.75 per cent to 1.0 per cent.

The authority will investigate ways in which a suggested levy from the rates provided by property owner rates within the precinct can be pooled to fund key precinct wide urban art initiatives.

The following section outlines identified options for urban art funding within the precinct that will be explored by the authority.

#### 6.4.3

##### INTERIM PERCENT FOR ART OPTIONS

In lieu of a Percent for Art contribution policy the City Renewal Authority will need to work closely with Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS), Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate - Environment (EPSDD) and the National Capital Authority (NCA) to ensure precinct specific urban art outcomes are considered and resourced in the development phase of capital works projects, and their subsequent RFT documentation, as well as within contracts prepared for land release for future development sites.

Interim options for the authority to consider in lieu of a Percent for Art contribution policy include:

##### VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS:

Voluntary contributions via planning and development incentives can be encouraged by the authority and its partnering ACT Government agencies to offer planning incentives in return for developers to deliver urban art in developments. These planning incentives may include offsets for provision of parking spaces, building height, plot ratios or other design excellence focused planning considerations.

##### CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT

Where feasible land released within the precinct should have a requirement to include urban art outcomes as a development condition. This should be considered as a whole of development approach where conditions of contract for key sites may also require place activation and urban art programming when a development spans multiple years.

This can also extend to the hoardings used for key developments, requiring developers to commission artworks for a significant percentage of the hoardings for a sites development. See Section 5.4 for additional details on a proposed hoardings program.

Relevant procurement methods for these measures will be provided by the Urban Art and Place Activation Project Coordinator.

#### 6.4.4

### OTHER EXTERNAL FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

The authority will encourage the national and local institutions, the private sector, crowdsourced do-it-yourself initiatives, and arts non-profits to propose and deliver urban art initiatives within the precinct. These partnerships will result in an ever-expanding range of tactics for involving artists in public-realm projects.

#### PUBLIC/PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATIONS:

On existing sites that are not up for development the authority will partner with local not-for-profit organisations who are able to leverage this public sector funding with private sector support.

#### COLLABORATIONS WITH OTHER ACT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES:

Partnerships with other agencies such as eventsACT will enable the authority to expand their resources when identifying and developing key urban art outcomes within the precinct, resulting in urban art experiences that will reach a much broader audience when paired with additional cultural events.

#### PRIVATE DEVELOPER PARTNERSHIPS

Opportunities will arise where the authority is able to work with an entrepreneurial developer who acknowledges the impact urban art outcomes have on the desirability of property. The authority will be open to support these developer lead initiatives, ensuring urban art outcomes result in a balance of artistic integrity and best practice commissioning as well as commercial gain for the developer.

#### MARKETING TOOLS

This strategy is a marketing tool for the authority to advocate to potential funders, garnering support and understanding of the authority's creative city priority and the benchmarks it sets against this priority.

#### INTEGRATION INTO TERRITORY PLAN – PRECINCT CODES

The authority will work with EPSDD to investigate the feasibility for urban art integration incorporated as a definitive and/or qualitative control in the relevant sections of the EPSDD precinct map and codes in the Territory Plan.

The following Territory Plan Precinct Codes for the precinct that should incorporate urban art controls:

- City Precinct Map and Code
- Northbourne Avenue Precinct Code
- Braddon Precinct Map and Code
- Dickson Precinct Map and Code

Currently the Precinct Codes (the Codes) incorporate rules for height, and some aspects of streetscape amenity including paving design.

The Codes should extend to incorporate urban art requirements that enhance the public realm interfaces.

*“...my house, eye house,  
here house, there  
house... huff house,  
puff house, bring the  
house down house...”*

**HOUSE PROUD, NEIL ROBERTS,**

NEON TUBING, 1998, CANBERRA THEATRE CENTRE







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