



PLAY SPACES FORUM 2018: SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

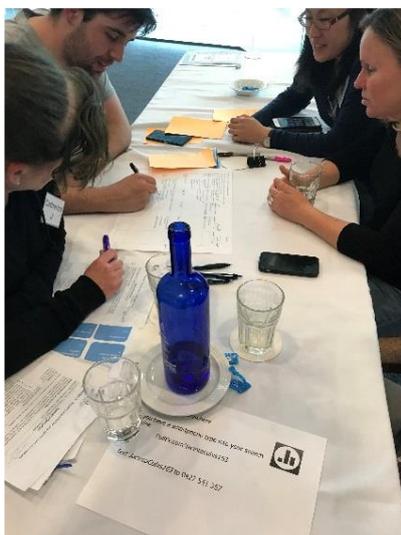
The Better Suburbs Play Spaces Forum was part of the Better Suburbs program. Forum participants were community members, including the randomly selected Better Suburbs forum members and 10 additional community members that responded to promotion by the ACT Playgroups Association and the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens.

The forum met on six occasions, with various forum members participating at each.

The aims were:

1. To develop a priorities framework for play spaces.
2. To allocate \$1.9 million in expenditure on play spaces through a trial of participatory budgeting.
3. To make recommendations on how the community and the ACT Government can work together in decision making about play spaces.

This report outlines the decisions made as a result of this process.



PLAY SPACES PRIORITIES FRAMEWORK

On 22 September the Play Spaces Forum agreed on the following Priorities Framework to guide immediate and future decisions. The forum members used the Better Suburbs Statement section on Play Spaces, as well as a range of ACT community surveys and studies to inform this framework.

Principles

1. Quality over quantity: getting the right mix that delivers value (value of play, value for investment, leverage value of existing assets etc.).
2. Connecting the community (physically and socially).
3. Play spaces are inclusive.
4. Play spaces enhance physical and mental wellbeing.
5. Play spaces enhance and preserve the natural environment.
6. Equity across the city (number, variety, location).

Strategies

1. Provide a variety of play spaces to encourage people of all abilities and ages to participate in outdoor activity together.
2. Co-locate play spaces with existing amenities (physical) and co-design play spaces with community (social).
3. Set targets for inclusive play spaces.
4. Design play spaces to encourage physical activity for the whole community.
5. Maintain and enhance connections between play spaces and the natural environment to develop capacity to enjoy natural play.
6. Balance the number, variety and location of play spaces across the city.

BROAD FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

On 22 September the Play Spaces Forum allocated the \$1.9 million to five “buckets”, as follows.

Forum members also nominated to participate in smaller panel meetings to make the detailed project decisions for each bucket.

Following is a summary of the bucket allocations.

<p>BUCKET 1</p> <p>Nature Play Spaces</p> <p>\$350,000 (2 play spaces)</p>	<p>BUCKET 2</p> <p>Whole of Suburb Play Review</p> <p>\$375,000 (5 suburbs)</p>	<p>BUCKET 3</p> <p>Play Space Amenity Upgrades \$525,000</p>	<p>BUCKET 4</p> <p>Play Space Refresh</p> <p>\$500,000 (TCCS defined list)</p>	<p>BUCKET 5</p> <p>Play Space Strategy</p> <p>\$150,000</p>
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BUCKET 1: NATURE PLAY AREAS IN EXISTING DISTRICT PLAY SPACES

On 22 September 2018, the Play Spaces Forum allocated \$350,000 to build two new nature play areas in existing destination play spaces.

On 26 September 2018, the assessment panel for Bucket 1 met to select two sites for new nature play areas, valued at \$175,000 each (\$350,000 in total). The panel used the Priorities Framework developed at the Forum, alongside expert advice offered by Urban Synergies to make their assessment. A process of elimination was used.

The result was:

1. Northside – Glebe Park, Civic
2. Southside – Eddison Park, Woden

The panel determined that a nature play space would be a unique addition to these parks, change the user mix and be a good profile site to educate the community on the value of nature based play spaces. The group wanted the activity of designing, building and promoting use of the site to be highly profiled and monitored for user feedback.

The panel also selected two 'reserve' sites for a nature play space:

1. Northside - Yerrabi Ponds, Gungahlin
2. Southside - Kambah Adventure Park

In relation to these nature play areas, the panel recommended that:

1. They cater for all ages including older children.
2. They provide some opportunities for risky play.
3. They include subtle ways to increase carer confidence and capacity to engage in nature outside a formal play space.
4. They are designed to be diverse and different to what is already on offer in Canberra.
5. Repurposed materials should be used if possible.
6. Design is inclusive and accessible for all abilities and all ages.
7. Design is created with the community (co-design).
8. These two nature play spaces will be a model to promote to other parts of Canberra.
9. TCCS collaborates with the City Renewal Authority to further enhance Glebe Park.
10. TCCS conducts observations and chats with users of existing nature play spaces.

BUCKET 2: WHOLE OF SUBURB PLAY REVIEWS AND CO-DESIGN

On 22 September 2018, the Play Spaces Forum allocated \$375,000 for five suburbs to receive a co-designed play map and detailed plans for one key new or rebuilt play space.

On 27 September, the assessment panel for Bucket 2 met to select five suburbs for reviews, valued at \$75,000 each (\$375,000 in total). They deliberated between 25 identified suburbs, including those independently assessed as having play spaces most in need of repair and action, as well as three petition suburbs.

The panel selected five suburbs for whole of suburb play reviews. These reviews will be done in partnership with the local communities, to determine the best mix of play spaces across the suburb to better meet the community's needs. This will include design of one key play space and concept plans for the wider suburb.

The majority of the 25 shortlisted suburbs were Southside locations as the bulk of priority suburbs were in that part of Canberra. The panel reviewed information about the suburbs that included: provision, quality and diversity of play spaces in the suburb; ages catered for play in the suburb; childhood development outcomes and whether school playgrounds in the suburbs were open to the public.

The five suburbs selected to have a whole of suburb review completed in 2018-19 are:

1. Richardson
2. Waramanga
3. Torrens
4. Narrabundah
5. Higgins

The panel also recommended the five 'reserve' suburbs:

1. Lyons
2. Kambah
3. Chisolm
4. Gordon
5. Hackett

In relation to these whole of suburb reviews, the panel recommended to:

1. Consider proximity to child care centres.
2. Engagement with schools, playgrounds and other community groups.
3. Don't exclude people from surrounding suburbs from the consultations.
4. Inform all forum and panel members in next step consultations.

BUCKET 3: AMENITY UPGRADES

On 22 September 2018, the Play Spaces Forum allocated \$525,000 for amenity upgrades in play spaces across Canberra. Amenity includes items other than play equipment that help to make a visit to a play space more comfortable for all users, such as paths, seating and shade.

On 16 October and 23 October 2018, two panel meetings were held to make item and location decisions for \$525,000 in amenity upgrades.

The panel agreed on the following recommendations:

1. Allocations would aim for an even spread across suburbs.
2. Priority would be given to the 20 shortlisted suburbs (the original 25 less the five that were selected for whole of suburb reviews).
3. Paths, seating and shade were a priority, with the recognition that shade sails are generally not provided in local play spaces under the Australian Standards. Relocation of seating to shade under trees was also to be considered. Pricing of shade sails in district and central play spaces would be at the higher end of the cost estimate due to the size of the sites. Some larger and more popular local play spaces could be selected for shade sails.
4. Discretion would be provided for TCCS staff to come up with cost wise solutions in the implementation of decisions.
5. The panel agreed to over-allocate by 10-20% to provide for a 'reserve' list should more works be possible with the allocated funds.
6. The panel agreed for TCCS to have general flexibility to implement decisions.
7. The panel agreed for TCCS to use repurposed, or recycled materials where possible.
8. The panel agreed that seating could include a mix of traditional seating (such as benches) and nature seating, such as boulders and logs.

The panel was provided with detail on community requests received through communications to MLAs, Fix My Street and Access Canberra. The panel was also provided with ACT wide maps detailing provision of amenity such as shade sails, path access, partial fencing and the locations of the shortlisted suburbs.

35 play spaces in total will receive new amenity elements. Following are descriptions of these amenity upgrades and how they have been categorised by the panel.

AMENITY CATEGORY 1 - \$100,000 to new amenity (based on suggestions by TCCS and community requests) in playgrounds that will be refreshed by TCCS

16 play spaces were selected by TCCS to be refreshed (Bucket 4 allocation of \$500,000 from the forum). These 16 sites were presented to the panel. All were in the 20 priority suburbs. As the refresh (which includes repainting, repairing decks and borders, new mulch and other improvements) would ensure a useful extended life of 5-6 years for each play spaces, the panel agreed that providing further amenity in these locations would be beneficial. TCCS provided the panel with a list of suggested amenity for these locations and the panel selected items to be fulfilled from that list.

Selections:

Play space	Item/s	Cost
Deakin - Hannah Place	Bike track, handball hopscotch lines on Basketball Court	\$1,200
Campbell - White Crescent	Paths	\$2,750
Deakin - Latrobe park	Shade sail	\$22,000 - \$26,000
	Path connection	\$7,700
	Natural elements seating/play	\$1,200
	Seating boulders	\$600
Griffith - Throsby Lane	Park bench	\$2,000
	Path connection	\$5,400
Chisholm - Alston Street	Path connection	\$7,500
Gowrie - Weathers Street	Bench	\$2,000
Kambah- Toole Place	Benches	\$4,500
	Path connection	\$6,300
Kambah - Boddington Cres	Fence	\$5,000
	Benches	\$4,500
	Handball/Hopscotch	\$300
Farrer - Wagga Street	Natural elements seating/play	\$1,200
	Seating boulders	\$600
Lyons- Tooms Place	Natural elements seating/play	\$1,200
	Seating boulders	\$600
	Path connection	\$3,600
TOTAL		\$84,150

Reserve list if funds available:

Hackett - Tryon Street	Path connections	\$3,060
Lynham- Lambert Place	Path connections	\$8,100
Farrer - Wagga Street	Path connections	\$16,020
O'Malley - Culgoa Cirt	Path connections	\$9,900

AMENITY CATEGORY 2 - \$125,000 to new amenity (based on community requests) in 20 shortlisted suburbs

The panel reviewed a list of community requests that fell within the 20 shortlisted suburbs, with TCCS price estimates. The selections were as follows:

Play space	Item/s	Cost
Griffith – Captain Cook Park	Seating and tables	\$6,000
Belconnen – McDermott Place	Shade sail	\$26,000
Deakin – Hannah Place	Shade sail	\$26,000
Campbell – Glossap Street	Shade sail	\$26,000
Hackett – Bragg Street	Seating, boulders, soft fall, edging, repair of basketball	\$5,000
TOTAL		\$89,000

The panel decided any remaining funds could be transferred to the next category (see below).

AMENITY CATEGORY 3 - \$75,000 to amenity (based on community requests) in suburbs outside the 20 shortlisted suburbs

A detailed list of community requests within play spaces was provided, with price estimates. The selections were as follows:

Play space	Item/s	Cost
Yarralumla – Muller Street	Move seating to shade	\$1,000
Latham – Umbagog District Park	Move seating to shade	\$1,000
Greenway – Bartlett Place	2 seats	\$4,500
Page – Burkitt Street	Shade sail	\$26,000
Nicholls – Candlebrook Close	Shade sail	\$26,000
Tuggeranong Park – Learn to Ride	Shade sails	\$26,000
Oxley – Newman Morris Circuit	Table and Seats	\$10,500
TOTAL		\$95,000

Reserve list if funds available:

Play space	Item/s	Cost
Bruce – Link Crescent	Shade sail	\$22,000

AMENITY CATEGORY 4 - \$75,000 to providing a spread of fully fenced play spaces across Canberra (in response to the community petition)

The panel agreed to focus on play spaces that are high density, central locations and that are already partially fenced. The panel aimed to achieve an even spread across Canberra. The panel suggested future liaison with the Education and Training Directorate may allow for more fully fenced sites to be available to the community outside school hours. Discussion included the need for effective communication with the local communities to ensure agreement and understanding of the fencing decisions.

The panel was provided with a list of approximately 50 play spaces that were already partially fenced, with estimated costings to fully fence. Community petitions for fencing were also included.

The selections were as follows:

Play space	Cost
Gungahlin – Linear Park	\$8,500
Palmerston – Spec Place	\$5,100
Bonython – Burgoyne Street	\$22,500
Woden – Eddison Park	\$11,500
Kaleen – Gwdir Square	\$2,000
Florey – Kesteven Street	\$6,000
MacGregor – John Holt Street	\$2,000
Throsby – Bettong Avenue	\$11,500
Kambah – Boddington	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$74,100

Reserve list if funds available:

Play space	Cost
Calwell Shops	To be determined

AMENITY CATEGORY 5 - \$20,000 to the Farrer community group (in response to the community petition)

\$20,000 will be provided to the Farrer community group for a dirt bike track. This track is part of a range of neighborhood improvements the Farrer group has been working on. The panel acknowledged this funding does not fulfil the request of the petition, which was for a new play space. Other amenity will also be provided to Farrer through other categories. The Wagga Street play space in Farrer will receive natural seating elements and will also be refreshed by TCCS.

AMENITY CATEGORY 6 - \$130,000 to access and inclusion amenity

The need for improved access and inclusion was identified in the Priorities Framework. The panel recommended a focus on play spaces that already have some level of accessibility and to look for even distribution across Canberra. The panel agreed that it would not be practical to decide on specific items and gave authority to TCCS to work on the best outcomes for the selected play spaces by first ensuring good access, then adding value by providing more inclusive play opportunities.

The panel recommended TCCS consult with accessibility and inclusive play specialists to determine amenity changes. Six sites were selected with the understanding that approximately \$20,000 would be spent on each site. Any leftover funds were to be spend on improving path access in the play spaces that are to be fully fenced (Category 4).

A list of over 60 currently accessible play spaces was provided and a map of their locations. Selected play spaces are:

1. Crace – CRIP Community Playground
2. Woden – Eddison District Park
3. Greenway –Limburg Way
4. Dunlop - James Harrison Street
5. Barton – Telopea Park
6. O'Connor – Cockle Street

BUCKET 4: PLAY SPACE REFRESHES SELECTED BY TCCS

The Play Spaces Forum provided \$500,000 (\$30,000 per play space) to deliver essential refresh work to protect the condition 16 play spaces that are structurally sound but tired. The list of play spaces selected by TCCS was provided to the amenity upgrades panel on 16 October 2018 and these selections were supported by the panel.

This work will extend their service life by at least 5-6 years, and improve aesthetics. Works will include repainting the equipment, replacing soft-fall mulch, repairing seating/decks/fences and replacing borders. The selected play spaces are all in the 20 priority suburbs and include:

1. Campbell – White Crescent
2. Hackett – Tryon Street
3. Lyneham – Lambert Place
4. Deakin – Hannah Place
5. Deakin – Beadford Street
6. Griffith – Thorsby Lane
7. Chisolm – Alston Street
8. Gordon – Iredale Place
9. Gowie – Weathers Street
10. Kambah – Toole Place
11. Kambah – Boddington Crescent
12. Curtin – Carruthers Street
13. Farrer – Wagga Street
14. Lyons – Toombs Place
15. O'Malley – Culgoa Circuit
16. Stirling – Bunbury Street



Were Street, Calwell – Before and after refresh work

BUCKET 5: STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PLAY SPACES

The Forum allocated \$150,000 to the development of an ACT Play Spaces Strategy. This strategy will be developed in 2019-20 in order to capture all the learnings from the implementation of the other four buckets in 2018-19.

The strategy will outline the principles for play space provision, the community value of play spaces, analyse the hierarchy and distribution of play spaces and seek a model to work towards across Government, to provide an equitable and effective mix across the ACT. This strategy is to be developed in partnership with the community. A cross-Government group will guide the process. Community stakeholder groups will be involved. All forum and panel meetings have resulted in recommendations for consideration under this strategy, including:

1. The need for equity across the city
2. Use of the Priorities Framework as a starting point.
3. Consideration of financial contributions from developers for urban infill to public spaces.
4. Liaison with the Education Directorate for the use of schools play spaces by the community.
5. Including skate parks and other areas that cater for youth.
6. Looking at the need for more spaces to cater to teenagers and amenity, such as water and shade in these sites.
7. Improved liaison with the developers of new suburbs to ensure appropriate shade and fencing in some instances.
8. Considering co-locating community gardens in play spaces.
9. Ensuring children and young people are engaged in the strategy.
10. Tapping into community organisations that work with young people to support the engagement.
11. Collaborating with Ngunnawal spokespeople to include storytelling and educational information at play spaces
12. Targeting engagement with disadvantaged and minority groups so all voices are heard.