

# **URBAN DESIGN AND CULTURAL FACILITY PLANNING PRINCIPLES**

## **URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES METROPOLITAN**

The following urban design principles have been provided by the Authority and are drawn from an unpublished document.

Urban Design, the art of making places for people, is fundamental to delivering enhanced living environments. Better-informed application of urban design principles and skills to planning objectives is central to providing a high level of amenity and sustainability for development. Incorporating evaluation of urban design principles into the initial investigations of a development area establishes clear implementation objectives and opportunities early in the process. These objectives and opportunities can form the basis for review and assessment of decision making throughout the concept planning and master planning stages.

The key principles of urban design provide for people to interact with and respond to the environment. These qualities can be used to formulate responsive design solutions at virtually any scale of development:

### **Character**

Place making should respond to the existing natural and developed features of the environmental context. A place that enhances the distinctive local landscape, sense of place and history whilst providing a quality living environment will establish a rich environmental character unique to its locality. A responsive context analysis will identify;

- Distinctive landscapes
- Natural features
- Locally distinctive built form
- Streets patterns which respond to the context
- Special spaces of natural or cultural significance
- Skylines and roofscapes
- Building materials
- Local culture and traditions
- Avoiding standard solutions

### **Continuity and enclosure**

The form and fabric of a place define the living environment and establish a hierarchy of both public and private spaces providing clarity of function and movement.

- Streets, footpaths and open spaces overlooked by buildings
- Clear distinction between public and private space
- Avoiding gaps in the line of buildings

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- Enclosing streets and other spaces by buildings and trees of a scale that feels comfortable and appropriate to the character of the space
- No leftover spaces unused and uncared for

### **Quality of the public realm**

Good urban design provides a sense of well being and amenity by ensuring recognition of the natural context and the functional requirements of the community and responding with:

- Public spaces and routes that are lively and pleasant to use
- A feeling of safety and security
- Uncluttered and easily maintained streets and public places carefully detailed with integrated public art and functional elements
- Well-designed lighting and street furniture
- Places suited to the needs of everyone, including disabled and elderly people
- Attractive and robust planting appropriate to the locality

### **Ease of movement**

Ease of movement for residents and visitors is reinforced by consideration of connectivity and permeability and provides for an community which easy to get to and to move about in. Movement in a community is enhanced by;

- Density highest where access to public transport is best
- Roads, footpaths and public spaces connected into well-used routes
- Easy accessibility
- Direct routes that lead to where people want to go
- A choice of safe, high quality routes

### **Legibility**

Legibility principles establish an understanding of place and way finding for residents and visitors. A discernable planning structure and complementary place making ensure that the living environment has a clear image and is easy to understand. Enhancing the legibility of a place will include the identification and incorporation into planning of such components as;

- Natural landmarks and focal points
- Views and view corridors
- Clear and easily navigable routes
- Discernible districts and gathering places
- Gateways to particular areas
- Edges and buffers
- Lighting
- Works of art and craft
- Signage and way-markers

## **Adaptability**

Provision for changing lifestyles and community needs enhances the future social and economic sustainability of a community. A place that can change easily provides for:

- Flexible uses
- Possibilities for gradual change
- Buildings and areas adaptable to a variety of present and future uses
- Reuse of historic buildings and spaces

## **Diversity**

Diversity of space and function provides our Community with a range of experience and choice. This can be achieved through;

- Place making to provide for variety of function and land use
- Opportunities for multi function and land use
- Variety of spatial planning defining fabric
- Provision for a broad cross section of community and cultural values
- Variety of built form and development character
- Opportunities for biodiversity

## **Objectives**

The following objectives form an initial direction for the evaluation of decision making during the planning process

- Conserve and interpret the areas of special cultural and heritage value;
- Encourage innovative, good design that expresses the Canberra landscape, heritage and culture;
- Enrich the public places through colour, movement, texture and sound;
- Build on the 'garden city' image through protecting and conserving significant ecological corridors.
- Ensure that the treatment of streets is consistent and reflects the role and connections across the adjacent districts and the City;
- Establish a pedestrian circuit within the Molonglo Valley;
- Create a hierarchy in the public spaces, where the function and symbolic importance of the space is clearly evident;
- Ensure that the layout for residential development blends with the scenic backdrops of the Hills, Ridges and Buffers.
- Provide secure and safe places by encouraging passive surveillance from adjacent shops, offices, residences and streets;
- Establish a continuous active retail and community facility frontage to the main pedestrian routes;
- Expand the opportunities for vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian movement into and across the city;
- Add richness to the sensory environment (e.g. colour, texture, aroma and sound);
- Establish variety in the public places to ensure that a range of leisure and social activities can be supported;
- Enhance opportunities for people to discover and learn more about Canberra's heritage and culture; and

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- Improve the sense of belonging to the community groups who use particular areas by reflecting their values in the design of these places.

## **CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITY PLANNING PRINCIPLES**

### **Access**

Services and facilities should be provided in locations that optimise accessibility for all users and provide access for people with disabilities. To this end facilities should be centrally located in mixed use areas, identifiable by users of the service, be visually appropriate with adequate signage and have good access to public transport.

### **Equity**

Services and facility planning considers the long and short-term needs of residents and visitors with regard to access to facilities and services to achieve inter-generational equity. Facility management considerations need to address issues of affordability with regard to meeting principles relating to access and equity.

Where cultural and community facilities or spaces are displaced by redevelopment, assessment of the impact of removal should be undertaken to determine the extent or how alternative facilities need to be provided. Such assessment would include the need to replace existing facilities plus provide for the needs of incoming populations.

In assessment of need for community facilities, the potential for multi purpose, shared use and co-location options should be examined and encouraged. The provision of facilities and services needs to recognise the social, economic and cultural diversity of residents, workers and visitors.

### **Equality**

The diverse needs of residents, workers and visitors are to be considered in the planning and provision of services and facilities. In planning for the provision of community and cultural facilities consideration is given to recognition of the dignity, worth, independence, cultural diversity and human rights of people seeking to access facilities for cultural and community activities.

### **Consultation and collaboration**

Fair, open and participatory processes are used in planning for cultural and community facilities and services. To achieve this, the active involvement of the community including social, cultural and commercial groups as well as other government and non-government agencies is encouraged in planning, development and review processes.

## **Safety**

Community safety issues are considered in the design and location of facilities. Where possible, natural surveillance of public facilities and amenities should be provided by locating facilities in active, mixed use and accessible locations.

## **Flexibility and innovation**

Facility design should recognise that communities are dynamic and constantly undergoing change. Facility design should be sufficiently robust and flexible to provide opportunities for adapting facilities to meet changing needs through the life cycle of the communities. Flexible and innovative approaches to management will promote opportunities for partnership, collaboration and coordination.

## **Sustainability**

The provision of facilities and amenities contributes to a diverse, supportive community and an efficient, healthy and livable city and contributes to community well being. In order to meet commitments to ecological sustainability and reducing greenhouse emissions, facility planning and development is linked to consideration of energy efficiency, waste minimisation, integrated land use and transport planning.

## **Amenity**

Facility development and provision aims to be functional, people oriented, user friendly, welcoming and attractive. The design and management of facilities encourages and promotes community participation and ownership.

## **Value management**

Facility provision is based on an approach that includes stakeholder participation, an integrated planning process, needs analysis, development, determination of options for operation, evaluation and depreciation.

Efficient and effective management of facilities is achieved through cost effective use of available resources, to deliver value for money outcomes. In this context cultural and community facility managers are recognised as playing a community development role in fostering and initiating community programs as well as managing venue hire arrangements.

Monitoring and evaluation are continuous and ongoing processes that should be undertaken within a community development framework.