



# Maylands Town Centre

## Place Activation Plan



Maylands Town Centre has an opportunity to use place activation to develop and thrive. In January 2017, the City of Bayswater adopted a new Place Management Approach, including the introduction of Place Managers, to enable this activation to occur in each of its town centres.

In order to commence this process, the City and facilitator Warren Giddens conducted a workshop with local community members and traders to identify place activation priorities, and to drive the formation of an active place activation network, for each town centre. This document provides a summary of the activation ideas and visions identified in these workshops.

The development of a local group of placemakers (community members, landlords and traders – forming a place activation network) working in collaboration with the City of Bayswater through the Place Managers will drive the success of the projects proposed in this document.





# WHY PLACE ACTIVATION?

Placemaking and place activation is unique in its approach of supporting place users and key stakeholders to drive and often deliver improvements to their place. It creates a platform that enables ongoing meaningful dialogue between the many relevant disciplines and stakeholders involved in creating great places.

Specifically, developing a strong vision and set of key actions to drive ongoing projects and change allows for the strategic and resilient development of place. This enables places to adapt to meet current needs and respond to external conditions on an ongoing basis whilst building on what is working well.



# WORKSHOP SUMMARY

The City of Bayswater and facilitator Warren Giddens conducted a workshop with local community members and traders on 3 April, 2017. This section provides a summary of the ideas identified at this workshop.

## PLACE SCORE SURVEY

Workshop participants were surveyed for levels of satisfaction for different aspects of the Maylands Town Centre. Surveying these levels prior to the implementation of any place activation initiatives enables the effectiveness of these initiatives to be monitored over time.

Quality	Average score / 5
Appearance	2.6
Comfort	2.6
Safety	2.5
Things to do	3.1
Your love for the place	4.2
Uniqueness	3.7

## BUILD ON ITS STRENGTHS

Participants were asked to identify 'What makes Maylands Town Centre unique and special?' in order to identify existing strengths to build on. Strengths to retain and build on are:

- Eclectic, diverse range of people - backgrounds, cultures, ages
- Strong 'centre' around train station
- Authentic heritage and fascinating history
- Street art through 'heart' of town centre
- Traditional shopping precinct with village high street feel
- Passionate traders
- Unique local businesses
- Strong and visible presence of the Arts in many forms
- Strong sense of community
- Walkable, well-connected and accessible
- Proximity to river
- Eccentric locals - open, accepting, non-pretentious and tolerant culture.

# PLACE VISION

The place vision is used to guide decision making to ensure successful place activation in the short and longer term by having a clearly articulated end goal.

Participants were asked what an activated Maylands would look like. The following is a synthesis of the responses of participants:

“

A green and beautiful destination, known for its unique and creative delights, and buzzing with life.

People visiting, strolling, admiring, relaxing and engaging at all times of day.

”



# PLACE THEMES

Participants' ideas for improvements to the Morley Town Centre were collated, and the following key themes emerged:

## Beautiful streetscapes

- More colour
- More lights – unique (e.g. airport strip lighting as a reference to the historic Maylands Aerodrome)
- Encourage beautiful shopfronts
- Clean, well maintained, and sufficient bins to help keep pavements tidy
- Interesting rubbish bins (e.g. paint own bins, chalk paint / advertise, etc.)
- Parklets
- More seating, preferably with arm rests
- An easily accessible public toilet
- Plastic bag free, clean, green town centre
- Written guidelines for shopfronts
- Awnings on shops
- Kerbside alfresco dining options
- Maylands Train Station – seating around the palm tree.

## Green oasis

- Trees, trees, trees!
- Planter boxes
- Consider replacing trees on Eighth Avenue
- Remove dead trees and dust

## Artistic, creative & unique

- Art – as an event, culture, performance
- Multicultural heritage beyond just food
- Curated exhibition to activate Maylands
- Live music, local bands, venues
- Outdoor movies
- Window dressing competition for school kids
- Encourage more arts, cafes and bars
- Painting – paint hopscotch out front of premises interactive paintings
- Whimsical ideas, something fun
- Artworks at Maylands Train Station
- Attract more small, unique businesses, more tenancies.

## A day & night destination

- Interventions to add some life/ positive vibes at night (e.g. a lighting project, strung lighting between buildings)
- More evening activity
- Open the library for longer hours – a great community activation space
- With more people out and about, the town centre will feel safer
- Attract people because of the choice of activities.

## Entertaining

- Programming of regular events in the town centre
- Streamlined marketing of events
- Restaurant crawl
- Public wifi
- More for kids – a green space such as a piazza
- Allow stalls on streets/street markets
- Historical walk – promote walks and utilise plaques on the ground.

## Supportive local government

- Provide seed activation funding
- Reduce 'red tape' wherever possible.



## Activated underutilised spaces

- Activate laneways – more art and lighting
- Repurpose Sussex Street industrial precinct
- Identify and activate key vacant spaces
- BWS / Starswiss cake shop rear laneway – create a piazza in available space
- Vacant site opposite Coles– utilise space for public use or an appropriate business
- Upgrade private car parks where in poor condition
- Piazza at the railway
- Kerbside activation (e.g through alfresco moving to the kerbside)
- Maylands Hall – reinstate entrance and/or activate street corner at Guildford Road/Eighth Avenue intersection
- Create ‘linger nodes’ on Eighth Avenue – small spaces in the public domain (not alfresco areas for businesses)
- Reuse parcel office, even temporarily
- Pop-up stalls on the train station frontage.

## A welcoming destination

- Centralised point of welcome
- Community noticeboard – post community events, link to an online profile, investigate an interactive board
- Event to welcome new people
- Acknowledge Indigenous people (e.g. through signage) to show respect
- Connection with potential visitors through social media.

## People before cars

- Use colour and design on the ground to highlight pedestrian areas
- Slow down traffic on Whatley Crescent and Eighth Avenue
- Pedestrian friendly Eighth Avenue (e.g traffic calmed, or one way, or pedestrianised)
- Paint roads in sections to show drivers that this is a pedestrian zone (where permitted)
- Traffic calming and streetscape upgrades (painting footpaths and crosswalks)
- Provide high quality access for cyclists
- Install bike parking at key locations throughout the town centre
- Well organised parking
- Have car free days/times weekly.

# ACTIVATION PLAN

## TOP PRIORITIES

Participants voted on their top priorities amongst all the ideas proposed at the workshop. These are the highest priorities to be focused on:

### 1 A lush, green town centre

A greener town centre is the top community priority for Maylands, and this greening would take many forms. Many more street trees are required, as well more colour in the form of flowers. Planters and parklets, interesting hanging baskets, greened medians, vertical gardens and climbers are all part of a green town centre. There are also a number of significant vacant sites currently blowing sand and dust about, and these could either be improved or planted (even lightly), or developed.

More trees is a critical element in cooling the centre in summer, softening the centre's numerous hard surfaces, and encouraging more pedestrian activity. Patrons are far more likely to linger on the street and in alfresco areas where it is cool and leafy. Lighting of trees in the evening will reinforce the green character of the area after dark, and will contribute to improving the safety of the centre in the evenings.

Greening is a shared responsibility, as both the City and businesses will need to contribute by adding more plants, whether through City-planted street trees or through planters, hanging baskets, parklets or climbing walls around businesses.

Maintenance of landscaping is also a key consideration, and this requires both regular maintenance by the City (including feeding, watering and mulching), and upkeep by businesses and residents for plants on private land or where plants are 'adopted' by benevolent business owners.





## 2 Improved Eighth Avenue

When Eighth Avenue is envisioned primarily as a public space rather than a thoroughfare for cars, its current state presents a number of constraints. It is still easy for cars to drive too fast through the street, and pedestrians cannot feel confident that cars will slow down or stop for them. The median is also narrow, limiting opportunities for adding any significant amount of greenery to the street.

In the short term, the streetscape requires upgrading through resurfacing of the road, new line markings, and the introduction of new planting areas in the verge and median where possible.

In the longer term, the use and design of the road and streetscape in its entirety requires addressing, whether to create a narrower and more curving street that requires slower and more careful driving, or to create a one-way street, a pedestrian street, or a mix of these, or possibly a new alternative to these options altogether.



## 3 Public spaces around Eighth Avenue

Within the 'heart' of the town centre (the shopping precinct around the train station), there is little in the way of public space. There is currently a small grassed area on Whatley Crescent next to the old Parcel Office, and there is a larger grassed area next to The RISE across Guildford Road. However, in terms of places to stop or socialise near the station, and particularly on Eighth Avenue, there is nowhere attractive offering a few seats clustered together, some shade, and a place to meet.

The necessity and location of three taxi bays currently on Eighth Avenue needs to be reviewed to see whether a parklet can instead be constructed here. This would be a moveable structure, probably made of wood, with seats, shade and attractive design, which offers a place for people to rest, meet, relax, socialise, and enjoy lunch or takeaway food and drinks from the town centre.

Other sites around Eighth Avenue have also been identified as possible public spaces, including the laneways coming off this street. Work on identifying suitable laneways or portions of laneways, and how best to activate these is a high priority.

Eighth Avenue has much potential to offer the range of public spaces that can create a really diverse, comfortable and welcoming town centre.

#### 4 Ease of movement & connectedness

Connectivity and ease of access in and to the town centre, especially for pedestrians and cyclists, is a top priority for Maylands. The centre is transected by both the rail line and by busy Guildford Road, making access between different parts of the centre challenging, and leaving some areas more isolated.

The area south of Guildford Road, which includes the Maylands Library, The RISE community facility, the Maylands Historical and Peninsula Association and a number of supermarkets and smaller shops is relatively hard to access on foot or bike. There are few safe or pleasant crossing points. In time, a reduction in vehicle speeds through the town centre portion of Guildford Road will do much to improve this situation.

Similarly, premises and activities northwest of the train line along Railway Parade are constrained by poor connection with the rest of the town centre. Entrances and exits to the train station are far less attractive and welcoming than those on the Whatley Crescent side, and efforts are required to draw people up from the station to this side, through beautification with art, signage, and possibly noticeboards drawing people's attention to this side as they come into the station on the train.

Pedestrian amenity through the centre could be greatly improved through more planting of trees along pedestrian routes, which are uncomfortable in summer. Resting points through strategic positioning of seating will also assist. For cyclists, bike parking in more locations throughout the centre will make the place more welcoming, and thoughtfully placed bike parking outside appropriate destinations will send an inviting message.

A number of major streets throughout the centre have inappropriately high vehicle speed limits, including Eighth Avenue, Railway Parade and Whatley Crescent. The effect of reducing these limits will be to improve the experience of pedestrians and cyclists, thus encouraging more of these modes of transport, and will promote a more comfortable environment for relaxing and dining outdoors in the centre's public realm. In the case of Whatley Crescent, it will also divert traffic towards the more appropriate Guildford Road.





## 5 Identity through art

The Arts have a strong presence in Maylands. From the street art within the town centre introduced through Studio 281 to the WA Ballet, the WA Youth Jazz Orchestra (WAYJO), and the galleries at Studio 281 and Ferguson Foundry, there is much to celebrate and promote. Maylands is also home to much creative talent, with many artists and creatives living and working in the area.

Showcasing Maylands' talent through initiatives such as exhibitions of local artists and performances in public spaces will help build awareness of the area's exceptionally high quality in this area. A mix of larger, unique events and initiatives, and smaller regular initiatives such as busking and regular classes and exhibitions will help to maintain momentum.

Regular and ongoing publicity of local cultural venues and artworks is required. This can occur through an online presence and community noticeboards promoting events, and signage directing to premises and individual works.

As a place 'brand' is developed and promoted to potential visitors and tourists, it is important that this aspect is clearly and creatively articulated, and that Maylands develops its position as an artistic leader and destination.

## 6 Collaboration

The establishment of a Place Activation Network to collaborate with the town centre's Place Manager on making improvements to the centre will ensure that initiatives are properly rooted within Maylands' unique context.

Local people are the experts on their places, and will have the best understanding of how the place works and what is missing.

There are high levels of skill and talent within Maylands, and collaborating to make the most of these assets has enormous potential for building on and strengthening Maylands town centre's vitality and resilience both locally and more broadly.







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