

# Charles Street Square upgrade

In March 2020, the City of Parramatta publicly exhibited the draft concept design for a proposed upgrade to Charles Street Square, Parramatta. The objective of the community consultation was to seek feedback from key stakeholders and the community on the proposed changes to the square.



people received information about the draft concept



design.

A4 brochures distrubuted explaining the project in English and 4 community languages.





Media coverage 2 television news stories on Channel 9, 8 news print articles and 4 online news articles.



A4 brochures downloaded explaining the project in English and 4 community languages.





# 1,000+

distributed to residential and commercial properties.



100+ survey responses

were received via the engagement portal.



email submissions were received.



direct mail letters sent to residential and commercial properties.



interactions via social media, community drop-ins and a stakeholder briefing.



### business owners and tenants at invitation only stakeholder briefings.

What did we hear?

In addition to gaining an understanding of current perceptions of Charles Street Square, **three main themes emerged from the feedback**. People were generally positive about what is proposed, and many expressed enthusiasm about the improved amenity that will be delivered by the project. More than half the people surveyed said they had an "OK" experience of the square as it is today, and indicated they believe the square is in need of an upgrade.

For those who said they had a poor experience of the square, the main reasons given were that the space is dated, degraded and boring, i.e. there is not much to do there.





felt that the draft design would make it **easy for everyone to access the area** and the transport options available (i.e. the ferry and interconnecting bus services).

# Ø

Liked the wide walkways, ramps and stairs to allow for various modes of travel (i.e. walking, cycling, running), and that access for prams, wheelchairs and people with limited mobility has been improved.



?

Liked the improved connectivity to a widened Parramatta River loop. Suggested maintaining access to local businesses during construction and operation was important.

Use and experience

This theme related to what people will do in the upgraded space.



## Ø

Liked the variety and flexibility of seating and furniture and that the provision of amenities like water bubblers, public toilets, bike parking, bike pump station, play equipment, and bins would improve the overall experience.

## Ø

Liked the increased shade and would like more of it.

Suggested improved signage, for example to and from nearby entertainment venues or events, would improve their experience.

### **Character and identity**

Within Council's engagement portal, people responding to the Charles Street Square project were able to use a variety of tools to indicate how they felt about the proposed character and identity of the draft concept design. As well as responding to survey questions and indicating reactions on a sliding scale, **people had the opportunity to indicate design features they liked** on a photo-montage of the proposed upgrade.

### said they could see the space becoming a **nice place to wait for the ferry and meet friends**. Most respondents liked the terraced seating, sheltered seating, ferry wharf ramp and

mature trees.

83%



# Ø

Liked the opportunities for art installations and representations of Parramatta's identity.

# Ø

People also supported design elements which would see the space becoming a more welcoming place for families.

# 2

Agreement on the need to increase safety, and for landscaping to include the use of native species. Also:

- need for robust maintenace
- prevent rubbish and graffiti
- adjacent retail and commercial tenancies renovated/upgraded.

In response to stakeholder and community feedback, City of Parramatta has refined the design to include:



#### More shade and shelter

Enlarging the riverfront shelter to offer 43% more weatherproof area. This will be of benefit to visitors using the ferry service.

Four additional tall-trunked trees have been incorporated into the design to provide dappled shade while maintaining views to the Parramatta River.



#### Visible and accessible customer service points

The ferry office has been modified to incorporate a service window for customer interaction. Ferry staff are also provided with views of wharf operations.

The laser projectors essential to the public art project which features as part of Charles Street Square have been integrated into the roofline of the ferry office.



### Expanded work program

The project now incorporates public space connecting the Garden Terrace to the existing arcade from Charles Street, the proposed colonnade of 180 George Street, and the rooftop terrace of 36 Charles Street. Raising this area improves public access.



#### More landscaping and green spaces

Together with the additional trees, more garden areas in the centre of the site (an extra 150m<sup>2</sup>) and more planting on the Garden Terrace adds more green space to Charles Street Square.

The extent of hard surfaces, including concrete terracing, is reduced. The River Amphitheatre offers seating capacity for more than 400 people.



#### Access improvements

The amended design incorporates minor adjustments to ramps to improve clear width of the Riverfront Walk.

There is also a small reduction in the overall travel distance along the ramps between street level and the riverfront. Double handrails to all stairs better assist people travelling in either direction.



#### Public spaces designed for easy maintenance

The amended design incorporates minor adjustments to ramp geometry to ensure maintenance equipment including street sweepers can be accommodated. Small retaining walls within the lower level garden beds will improve the flood resilience of our landscaping.



the Charles Street Square upgrade. The community will be asked to submit further feedback during the Review of Environmental

Factors (REF). The REF is a planning document that responds to NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment legislation. It identifies safeguards that will be put in place throughout the design and construction program to ensure

environmental protections.

#### For more information see

www.participate.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/ charlesstreetsquare





We will continue to keep you updated as this project progresses via Council's engagement portal: www.participate.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/charlesstreetsquare

