

Greater Sydney Commission Information Note 9

DELIVERING THE GREATER SYDNEY GREEN GRID

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Subject: **Greater Sydney Region and District Plans**

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This information note is not to be construed as legal advice, does not form part of the draft plans and does not have statutory weight under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Users are advised to seek professional advice and refer to the relevant legislation, as necessary, before taking action in relation to any matters covered by this information note.

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Long-term vision

The Greater Sydney Green Grid is a long-term vision for a network of high quality green spaces that connect communities to the natural landscape. It includes tree-lined streets, waterways, bushland corridors, parks and open spaces linked to centres, public transport and public places.

The draft *Greater Sydney Region Plan* and the revised draft District Plans (October 2017) set out the long-term vision for the Greater Sydney Green Grid, by mapping opportunities for green grid connections. The revised draft District Plans also highlight 18 priority Green Grid corridors and other important projects.

The long-term vision for the Greater Sydney Green Grid and the list of priority corridors have been developed in consultation with councils across Greater Sydney, and are based on extensive work by the Government Architect NSW. The Greater Sydney Green Grid will be delivered incrementally over decades as opportunities and connections progressively become available and can be refined. Background reports on opportunities for Green Grid connections have been published by the [Government Architect NSW](http://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au).

Delivering the Greater Sydney Green Grid

Consultation on the draft District Plans released in November 2016 found that there was strong support for the concept of the Greater Sydney Green Grid as well as a desire for more information on how the concept could be delivered.

This Information Note outlines that the Greater Sydney Green Grid can be delivered through:

- infrastructure investment and funding programs
- local place-based planning
- plans, policies and programs.

Infrastructure investment and funding programs

Metropolitan Greenspace Program

The Metropolitan Greenspace Program supports councils in Greater Sydney and the Central Coast to improve regional open space by co-funding projects that enhance open spaces, parks, bushland, natural areas, waterway corridors and tree-lined streetscapes.

The Metropolitan Greenspace Program is administered by the Greater Sydney Commission and is being used by councils across Greater Sydney to deliver the Greater Sydney Green Grid. In 2016-17, \$4 million was provided for 19 projects. More information can be found on the Greater Sydney Commission's [website](#).

Parramatta Road Urban Amenity Improvement Program

The \$198 million Parramatta Road Urban Amenity Improvement Program is helping to fund the much-needed renewal of the Parramatta Road corridor. Specifically, it will help to deliver new open space and plazas, new cycle paths, new playing fields and streetscape improvements along the Parramatta Road corridor. Parramatta Road is identified as a Green Grid opportunity.

Walking and cycling programs

A range of NSW Government walking and cycling programs provide help for councils across NSW to deliver walking and cycling infrastructure. This includes the Walking Communities program as well as the Priority Cycleways, Cycling Towns and Connecting Centre programs.

In the 2016-17 financial year, the NSW Government is committed to contributing \$39 million to fund more than 300 walking and cycling projects across NSW.

Transport for NSW has published Walking and Cycling Program Guidelines that outline the priority weighting system that will assess walking and cycling proposals.

Environmental Trust programs

The NSW Government, through the Environmental Trust, uses a range of funding programs to rehabilitate and regenerate the environment across NSW. The Restoration and Rehabilitation Program funds projects run by community organisations and government entities working to prevent or reduce environmental degradation. A total of \$4 million was available under the 2016-17 round of the Restoration and Rehabilitation grants program.

The Restoration and Rehabilitation Program can help enhance and better connect sections of the Greater Sydney Green Grid where biodiversity values have become degraded.

Special infrastructure contributions

Special infrastructure contributions help to fund the regional infrastructure that supports communities across the State. Where open space has been identified as regional infrastructure and where there is capacity for it to be funded through contributions, it may be funded (or part funded) through a special infrastructure contribution.

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the special infrastructure contributions system including the preparation of the necessary plans and determinations as well as the collection and distribution of contributions.

Development contributions

Councils can use local infrastructure contributions made under Section 94 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to help deliver the Greater Sydney Green Grid. This can include the dedication of land, or a monetary contribution, or both. Local infrastructure contributions can be used only where development is likely to require, or increase demand, for public amenities such as the provision or augmentation of open space.

Fixed development consent levies collected under Section 94A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* can also be used to deliver the Greater Sydney Green Grid.

Local infrastructure investment

Councils across Greater Sydney continually invest in new or enhanced open spaces, and walking and cycling infrastructure, funded through sources of revenue other than development contributions, including user fees and charges and revenue from local property taxes (rates).

Local infrastructure investment decisions, which can also help to deliver the Greater Sydney Green Grid, are made in accordance with community strategic plans and plans of management prepared under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Local place-based planning

Local place-based planning for urban development and renewal can identify how open space and walking and cycling infrastructure can form part of a wider network of green connections. Once identified, new and enhanced open space and green connections can be reflected in local environmental plans and development control plans.

Local place-based planning allows planning authorities to work with developers to deliver infrastructure and that benefits the wider community through voluntary planning agreements.

Plans, policies and programs

A range of plans, policies and programs from all three levels of Government can help deliver the Greater Sydney Green Grid, either directly or indirectly.

The NSW Government, through the Office of Strategic Lands, uses the Sydney Region Development Fund to acquire land for open space, where that land has been identified and reserved for regional open space in a planning instrument. The [Western Sydney Parklands](#) have been acquired by the Office of Strategic Lands.

Transport for NSW and Roads and Maritime Services are developing the Principal Bicycle Network in collaboration with councils. This Principle Bicycle Network will provide a framework for investment in cycling infrastructure that will be integrated with the Greater Sydney Green Grid and boost access to green space.

The NSW Government has established a \$530 million conservation fund to protect areas of biodiversity value. Three quarters of the conservation fund (\$397.5 million) is used to implement the [Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program](#). Land is being acquired to protect areas of biodiversity value which can form part of the Greater Sydney Green Grid.

The Office of Environment and Heritage has published the Cumberland Subregion Biodiversity Investment Opportunities Map or [BIO Map](#), with the aim of directing funding for biodiversity to strategic locations where it can provide the greatest benefit. The BIO Map highlights a number of biodiversity corridors which either integrate with or complement the Greater Sydney Green Grid.

Some councils have developed detailed policies that support Green Grid connections. The [City of Parramatta's Parramatta Ways plan](#) aims to better connect communities to each other and to open space. It delivers and expands on the Greater Sydney Green Grid, adding more fine grain green connections, to increase the liveability, use and accessibility of open space.

[Sutherland Shire's Greenweb program](#) identifies key areas of bushland habitat in the Shire and establishes corridors to connect them so both plants and animals can move easily between them. It operates on both public and private land, however the focus is on habitat on privately owned land within the Greenweb network. This is supported by Council's [Greenweb Grants](#) which provides financial assistance to property owners in the Greenweb network for ecological restoration work.

The Australian Government's [20 Million Trees Program](#) aims to re-establish green corridors and urban forests and is part of the larger National Landcare Programme.

Appendix 1: 2016- 2017 Metropolitan Greenspace Program grants

Greater Sydney Green Grid Projects* supported by 2017 Metropolitan Greenspace Program grants			
Local government area	Greater Sydney Green Grid priority project / opportunity	Funded project	Amount
Blacktown	Western Sydney Parklands Extension and connections	Great West Walk Stage Two	\$40,000
Blue Mountains	Great Western Highway Penrith to Blackheath Corridor	Great Blue Mountains Trail – Cliff Drive, Katoomba	\$593,154
Blue Mountains	Eastern Escarpment open space and trails	Knapsack Reserve, Glenbrook	\$225,000
Camden	Nepean River Trail (major opportunity)	Nepean River Trail Western Gateway, Camden	\$200,000
Canterbury-Bankstown	Salt Plan Creek Open Space Corridor	Salt Pan Creek Reserve, Riverwood	\$171,500
Cumberland	Prospect Reservoir Water Pipeline Corridor	Prospect Reservoir Water Pipeline Corridor – Hopman Street pedestrian link, Greystanes	\$20,000
Cumberland	Prospect Reservoir Water Pipeline Corridor	Prospect Reservoir Water Pipeline Corridor – Warren Road pedestrian link, Merrylands West	\$95,000
Cumberland	Duck River Open Space Corridor	Duck River Open Space Corridor – Regional Parkland, Auburn	\$100,000
Georges River	Georges River Parklands (major opportunity)	Gannons Park water quality improvement and renaturalisation, Peakhurst	\$562,000
Inner West	Iron Cove Greenway and the Hawthorne Canal	Greenway Central Missing Links Masterplan	\$45,000
Ku-ring-gai	Lane Cove National Park and Lane Cove River	Browns Waterhole Track, South Turramurra	\$20,000
Ryde	Eastwood to Macquarie Park Open Space Corridors	ELS Hall Park upgrade, North Ryde	\$450,000
Wollondilly	N/A	Picton Botanic Gardens	\$80,000

* The Metropolitan Greenspace Program also supports projects on the Central Coast. In 2017, \$100,000 was granted to Central Coast Council for the Terrigal Rotary Park Upgrade.