

PUBLIC REALM FUTURES

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For more than two decades HUB has been driven by simple, beautiful and functional design. We have been dedicated to designing, manufacturing and delivering the highest quality street equipment solutions in the public realm.

We also understand the incredible power for good that digital connectivity, digital services and data can play in creating better, more liveable urban spaces. For the past decade we have innovated to bring these things together to help activate urban life.

However, our digital lives still yearn for analogue experiences. And reconciling this desire as policy makers, practitioners, innovators, and entrepreneurs can be a challenge. There is no common blueprint.

Do we know what good looks like?

HUB established the Life Enabled program to seek answers to such questions, and if possible, suggest best practices where gaps exist.

This document summarises our work so far.



01

**PUBLIC REALM:
FUTURE NEEDS**

In today's rapidly evolving world, the significance of quality public realm has emerged as a pivotal factor in shaping the liveability and vibrancy of cities and communities. The public realm encompasses the shared spaces that are accessible and open to all, fostering social interaction, cultural exchange, and a sense of belonging.

It comprises parks, plazas, streets, sidewalks, waterfronts, and other public spaces that collectively form the fabric of the urban environment. Recognising the profound influence of the public realm on our daily lives, it becomes imperative to explore its importance and the transformative potential it holds.

But the transformative power that digital connectivity has played and continues to play in our economy and daily lives, is also something that we must recognise as being significant. And while it is expected that we are 'just connected' when we wake up every day, this somewhat invisible service has a very physical footprint. In the public realm.

This document summarises the work of the Life Enabled program over the past year, and how it has explored the intersections of this very invisible, yet at the same time very physical world. A world where the lines between people, place, technology and data are blurring. A world where peoples demand for data is as significant as their ability to generate it.

Let's explore..



02

**BEYOND
A SMART
OVERLAY**

Since the emergence of the smart cities agenda in Australia in 2016 there have been repetitive attempts to deploy and scale the use of technology in cities and our communities for public good. The outcomes have been mixed, often seen as an add-on rather than being embedded.

The approach has thus evolved to be one of embedding digital infrastructure into the core plumbing of our cities and development projects, providing a platform for enabling digital services that can collect and communicate data. And when data flows, insights are possible.

And we have also learned that infrastructure, when deployed on its own for a single use, is no longer a preferred model for Council's and land authorities.

This has opened the door for shared digital infrastructure to be deployed through collaborative public/private sector agreements, and co-investment, ensuring value creation and the public good is placed at the heart of our digital economy.

But what are the issues and how do we do this?



Here are some resources exploring this issue further:

Download

[Place Futures Note: Shared Infrastructure](#)

Watch

[Webinar: Rebooting Digital Infrastructure](#)

03

**PRECINCT
4.0**

Many frameworks have evolved to influence the outcomes delivered through urban development. Sustainability has been at the heart of this evolution.

Core sustainability drivers like net zero, circular economy, lifecycle water management, urban heat island and placemaking have influenced the way we plan, design, deliver and manage precincts.

And with the corporate-led ESG framework rapidly becoming an aspiration of government stakeholders as well as private companies, is it time for a precinct best practice refresh?

And with this, we ask the question - could digital and data be the super enablers for ESG performance?

Over the past year we have heard that the following, need to become the underpinning principles of next generation precinct development: Sustainable, measurable, collaborative and trustworthy.

And for these issues, no one framework currently exists. But should it?

We have spent the year listening and learning, researching and engaging. Here are some of the outcomes from this process:

Download

[Reference Questions: The Digital Urbanism Framework](#)

Watch

[Webinar: Digital Trust in Smart Places](#)

[Vodcast: Precinct Promises: Digital Dreams](#)

[Vodcast: Measuring Urban Life](#)

Listen

[Podcast: Precincts Behaving at their Best](#)

[Podcast: Planning for Next Gen Urban Development](#)

[Podcast: \(Plan\)ning and \(Tech\)nology](#)





And we generate data at incredible rates and amounts as well. Whether it be the tens of thousands of Instagram photos and videos we post every day, or a lidar point cloud scan of a public place, or an 8K high-definition video stream for public safety via a CCTV camera.

As our urban desires and experiences seek to be more 'in-real-time' to enable greater intelligence and insight, the next generation of digital connectivity (5G mmWave) and data activation capability (Digital Twin) become critical enablers.

But how will we design, build and manage this high-fidelity future?

Here are some notes we have assembled:

Download

[Place Futures Note: Digital Twin](#)

[Place Futures Note: Sensing Places](#)

Watch

[Webinar: 5G and Place](#)

[Webinar: Watch This Space: The World of Place Analytics](#)

04 HIGH FIDELITY PLACES

Data moves through the public realm via connected digital networks, is consumed by humans and ingested by machines to support the services we depend on. And this appetite for data, and the speed at which it travels, is growing larger. Our daily data diet is up to nearly 30 gigabytes of data consumed per person per day.

05

STREETS AHEAD

Under our footpaths and overhead, the arteries of our cities lay and hang. Our streets seem to not only facilitate most of our daily mobility needs, but they also power our cities, allow water to move and play host to digital connectivity infrastructure. The competing needs are significant, and the governance arrangements are complex.

On top of this, our streets are public places that are called into the fold from numerous economic development, climate, resilience and social perspectives.

And as our digital lifestyles grow, the corresponding physical footprint increases.

Whether it be 5G infrastructure seeking refuge or the platoons of delivery vehicles dropping off everything from parcels to pizzas, one thing is for sure is that our streets are digitally dynamic in multiple ways.

We have started thinking about the future of our streets, here are some views:

Listen

[Podcast: Street Lab Part 1 Last Mile Musings](#)

[Podcast: Street Lab Part 2 Place invaders, space enablers](#)



06



PLANNING FOR CONNECTIVITY

We are of the opinion that planning for digital infrastructure (such as wireless connectivity) is a process separated from the government-led urban planning process.

Well actually, it's not our opinion, it's a plain fact. Which sounds illogical, right?

How can we live and work in the digital economy yet have a planning process that has little if any influence to how wireless connectivity is planned, designed and deployed?

With the major telecommunications companies recently divesting their ancillary assets – such as towers and rooftop sites – to neutral third-party hosts, the digital

connectivity landscape in Australia has changed in a monumental way.

We are entering the era of neutral host shared infrastructure. We believe this is going to bring new opportunity to deliver greater community value.

What does this mean? Let's work it out together.

Contact

[Website: Planning for Connectivity](#)

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