

M E D O W I E  
**7** DAY  
*makeover*  
8-14 MAY 2021



REPORT: MAKEOVER 1

## Thanks to the 7 Day Makeover Crew

David Engwicht

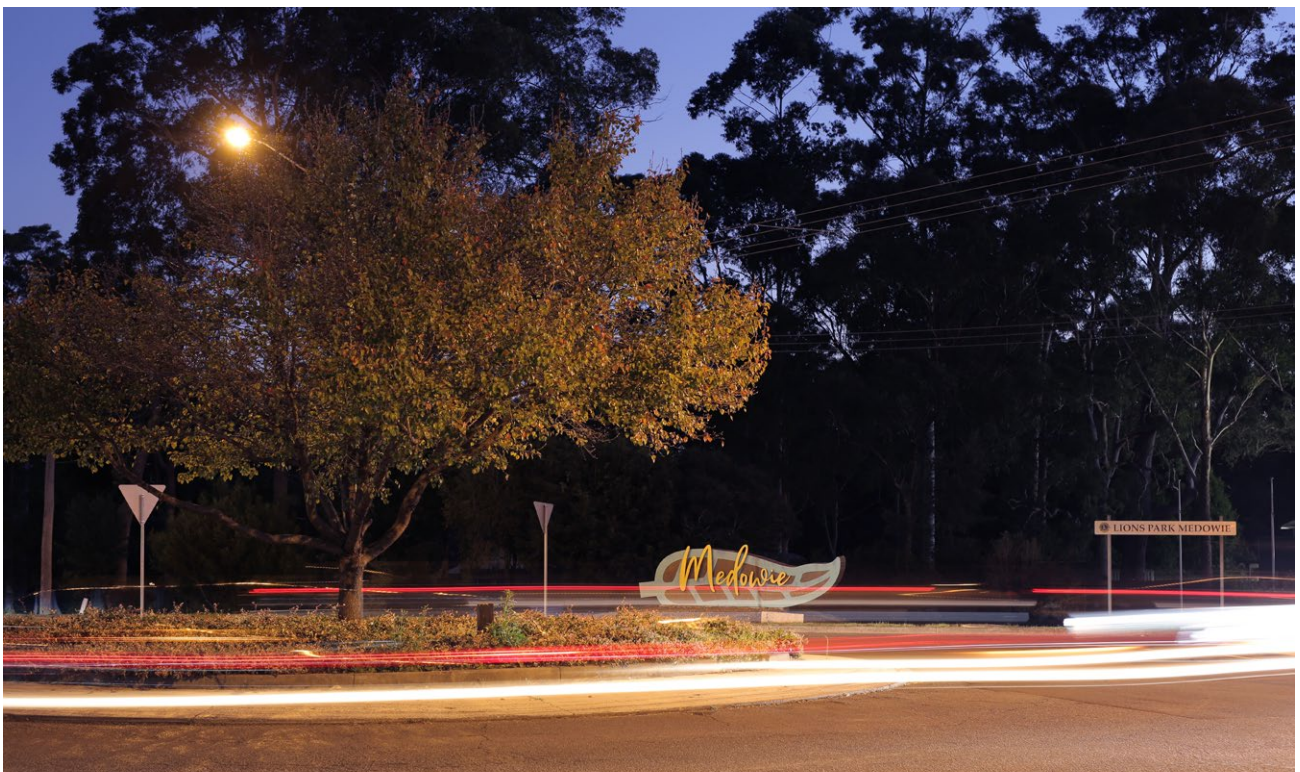
Jodi Stojanov

Steve Green

Connor Smith

Richard Wilkinson

Carol Foy (Intern)



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# THE CONTENTS

Background	4
The Process	5
Outcomes	6
Donations	7
Photo Gallery	9
Feedback	30
Recommendations	31
Grant Application Form	32



# BACKGROUND

Medowie, population 9,563, is located approximately 34 km north of Newcastle, not far from the Williamstown RAAF Base. The Worimi people are the traditional owners of the Port Stephens area.

While Medowie has a very strong community, it faced the following challenges:

1. While the road to the airport and the Port Stephens area passes right through town, travellers were totally unaware that the CBD was just a couple hundred metres off the highway. The town was missing out on passing trade.
2. The town centre does not have a traditional main street. Instead it is a collection of car parks with shopping complexes in the middle of each. This fragmented the town centre, making it car-centric. It was distinctly unfriendly for pedestrians, and did not encourage street life.
3. The town lacked a “civic heart” – the equivalent of a town square. The one space that could perform this function (the park beside the community centre) was disconnected from the shops, under-developed, and overgrown.
4. The town centre did not tell the story of its location. It could have been any generic town in Australia or NZ.
5. There was no seating or “linger nodes” that encouraged social life. This automatically makes any town centre less attractive to visit.

Any community placemaking program has the following **risk factors** (based on 25 years experience):

- The community doesn’t understand the basic principles of placemaking, and invests in ineffective projects.
- The community can’t agree on the most important projects or on the design for a project and the process becomes bogged down in endless meetings.
- The town naysayers oppose what is proposed and nothing ends up happening.

Creative Communities developed the *7 Day Makeover* to address these risk factors and to minimise the potential for projects to go off track.

The process is also based on agile-planning – as opposed to master-planning. The outcomes of this makeover prove that the agile approach produces results that are far superior to the traditional methods. Throughout the seven days, dozens of people added bits of magic to the overall design.



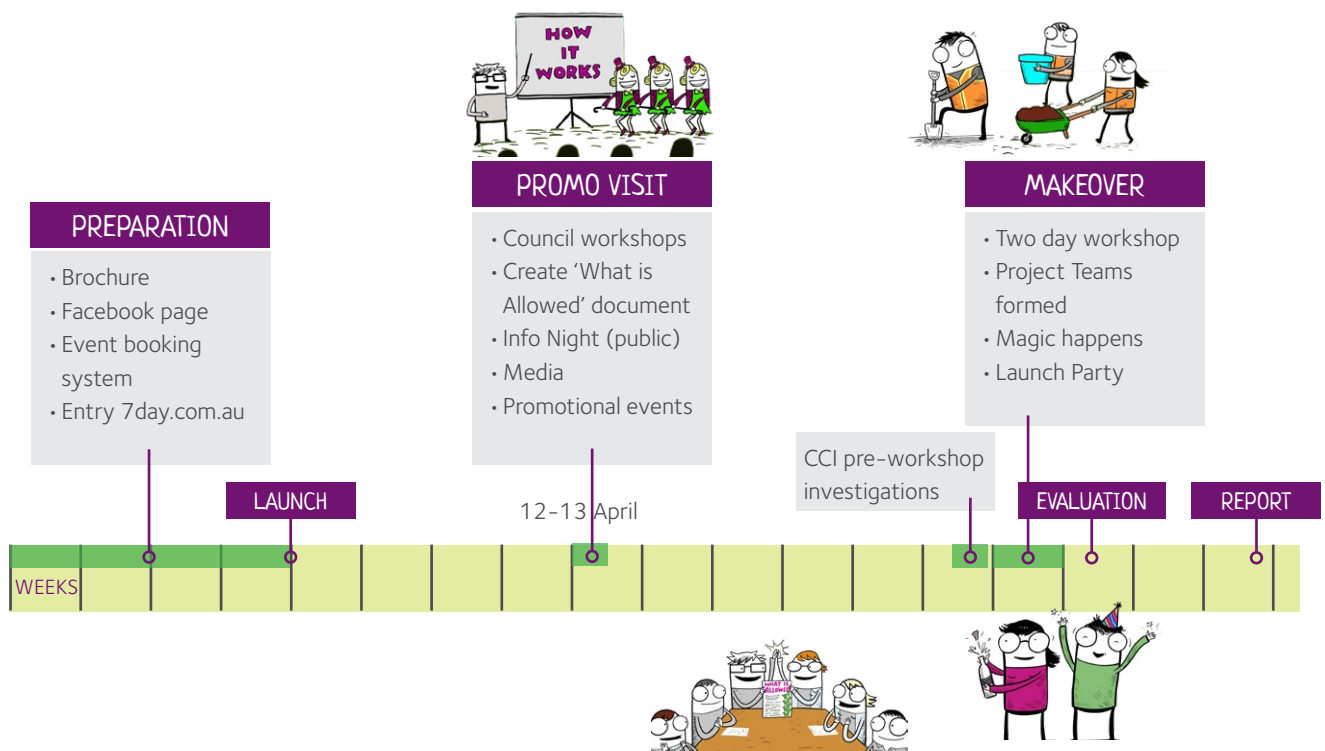
It was possible to drive through Medowie, and not even be aware that there was a town centre with a wide array of shops and services.



The entry to what could have been the “civic heart” was blocked by a rubbish bin and picnic table.



# THE PROCESS



# OUTCOMES

## PARTICIPATION

- Over 90 people attended the Info Night.
- Over 324 different people participated in the actual makeover
  - 39 people participated in the Workshop on Saturday.
  - 21 people participated in the Workshop on Sunday.
  - 24 attended the Volunteers Briefing
  - 60 volunteers on the Monday
  - 75 volunteers on the Tuesday
  - 77 volunteers on the Wednesday
  - 100 volunteers on the Thursday
  - 201 volunteers on the Friday

## THE WALK ABOUT

On the walk around town, we identified key issues that impacted the vitality of the town centre and key opportunities:

- While there was no indication for travellers that there was a large CBD, there was plenty of space on three corners of the main round-about for a grand entry statement. Council had given \$20,000 towards creating this entry statement.
- The park beside the Community Centre could be turned into a “civic heart space” if the front was opened up (to connect it into the shopping precinct) and the undergrowth was removed to make the space much larger.
- There were a number of spaces throughout town that could be turned into “mini town squares”.
- There were opportunities to “stitch the town back together” through the use of sculptural bollards, and colour.

## PROJECTS

The quality of work was generally exceptionally high.

The following was delivered:

- A large entry statement on three corners of the main roundabout – including solar lighting.
- Lighting of the trees in Lions Park and the new civic heart park.
- 10 Medowie Re-Leaf Lounges throughout the town centre.
- Placement of 24 mini leaf sculptures on sandstone blocks throughout town to help stitch the place together.
- Creation of four “mini-town squares”.
- Opening up of the park and visually connecting it to the shops.
- Creation of a story-telling stage and book library.
- A fairy garden.
- Nature play area and sensory path, including a dry creek bed and bridge.
- Love locks installation.
- Photo opportunity board.
- Cleaning and mural on the Woolworths retaining wall.
- Ninja trail.
- New entry from back carpark to park.
- Replacement of plastic retaining wall around swing set.

## FINANCES

- \$66,125 was raised by the community. Council contributed \$45,000 of this. (See next page for details.)
- To date, a total of \$66,434.89 has been spent.
- This means that there is \$9380.11 remaining for follow-up makeovers – as of 24 May, 2021 (contingent on some invoiced donations being paid.) This consists of \$5690 GST refund plus the \$4000 grant made by Creative Communities – minus the \$309.89 overspend.

## PROCESS

Generally speaking the process achieved exactly what we set out to achieve:

- The tight time-frame of seven days meant people were in action mode and didn't get bogged down in endless talk and planning.
- The final design that emerged from the process was better than anyone could have planned in advance.
- Participants stayed agile, allowing the design to mature and morph during implementation.
- There was virtually no conflict over the design.
- The process built a strong sense of community amongst participants.
- Participants are fired up and ready to continue the momentum.
- The Medowie 7 Day Makeover Facebook page now has a local administrator, and is being used to organise follow up activities.



# DONATIONS



PLATINUM SPONSOR



\$25,000 +  
\$20,000 for entry statement



GOLD SPONSOR



Plant, equipment, work crew  
Value over \$5000



Materials, equipment, work crew  
Value over \$5000



Nathan Rose (Jack)

Plant, equipment, work crew  
Value over \$5000



\$5,000 Cash



Materials, equipment, work crew  
Value over \$5000



THE GARDENS & THE BOWER

\$5,000 Cash



#### SILVER SPONSOR

Meryl Swanson MP & Kate Washington MP 2500



#### BRONZE SPONSOR

A Better Way	100
Ansteys Healthcare	1000
A - Z Clinical Solutions	500
Charlie & Ashley Hitchcock	50
Colourworks	1000
Curtis & Blair Real Estate	500
Grant & Diane Diggins	50
Jasmin Thai Restaurant Medowie	200
Joanna Davies	100
Lauren Robbers	25
Lions Club of Medowie	500
Mary, Brenden & Jesse Summers	100
Medowie Car Care	100
Medowie Dental	1000
Medowie Family & Sports Physio	200
Medowie Family Clinic	200
Medowie Social	1000
Melissa Gole	50
Miranda & John Brazel & Hatch	500
Murray Consulting Solutions	1000
Narelle Batten	100
Oma's Bubba's Boutique	100
Peta Jackson	50
Tim & Sally Twelvtree	100
Tina Palmer	100

## IN KIND SUPPORT

#### SILVER

Adam Tighe & Cuta (4 paw supervisor)  
Adam Walker - AWCE  
Dig-Right Earthworx  
Eturf

#### BRONZE

Active Diner Medowie  
AJR Earthmoving Pty Ltd  
Arbor Culture Tree Services  
Archer's Complete Property Maintenance  
Dave Smith Concrete  
GRC Electrical & Excavations  
Greg Dowling Property Medowie  
Julie Saric---  
Laing O'Rourke  
Medowie Building Services  
Medowie Hardware  
Riviera Gardenscapes  
The Sign Place Maitland  
TM Therapy Medowie  
Virgina Butcher  
Wayne Wilson Airconditioning and Refrigeration  
Woolworths Medowie



# PHOTO GALLERY







Stitching the town back together and making the place more pedestrian friendly







Creation of a series of "mini civic lounge rooms"







Making the park a “civic heart” and connecting it to the town



Nature play for children





Storytelling stage & book library



Opening the park up to make it safer





Fairy garden



A more inviting entry



## PLANNING – DAY 1 & 2









## MAKING – DAYS 3-7





















































# FEEDBACK

As a resident, I'd love to say what a great job you've done, bloody awesome. To everyone involved, congratulations on a job well done.

*Kerrie Fletcher*

Thank you to all who worked on the makeover. You have all done an amazing job... I'd love a makeover to include a working bee on a weekend so I could have gotten involved.

*Therese Davis*

Love how the park near the community hall was tidied up. I'd love to see a bike track foot path for the little kids.

*Leah Callaghan*

More advertising that this was going to happen. Had no idea.

*Lauren Hill*

Mother's Day stopped a lot of people coming on Sunday. Thanks to David, Jodie and the excellent team of great people all went well even the weather.

*Ron Wallace*

The playground area should have been fenced off while machinery was being used in the area. It would have been neater if there were templates for painting the leaves on the wall and footpaths. A stop/go traffic controller would have been useful when machinery was moved across or near the roads. Regardless of the signs, there were many impatient/ignorant drivers making it difficult for volunteers trying to get a job done.

*Elaine Rose*

Hi guys, loved the makeover and the process. My suggestion would be maybe have the planning days the week before - that allows more time to solidify plans and get materials sorted. Apart from that I would have liked more ideas (and volunteers) aimed outside of the park - while the park looked amazing - it was a bit of a shame it took all the focus.

*Elissa Brackley*

I think the main thing was just timing. Many felt that if it was a different weekend to Mother's Day a few more might have been able to get there....

*Mel Gole*

Firstly, I just want to say thanks and to congratulate everyone who was involved - what an absolutely fantastic job you all did!!

Everything looks amazing and I'm sure will encourage locals (and even those passing through?) to enjoy the fabulous spaces and resting areas that have been created.

Unfortunately, due to personal commitments, I was unable to participate... but would love to help out if this becomes an annual thing?

...A huge thank you for making Medowie an even more beautiful place than it already was!!

*Lesley Seach*

The only suggestion I have would be to trial a 10 minute 'toolbox talk' at morning tea time each day for the key work crews from each project team to get together and talk through any design changes that had occurred in the previous 24hrs. Plans were changing so rapidly and it was hard to keep track and prioritise resourcing. Those not onsite could dial in if they needed to.

You guys do an amazing job

*Marnie Coates*

Loved it - Thankyou again to David and his crew.

*Trina Roche*

Thank you Creative Communities and 7 Day 7 Day Makeover Medowie team for supporting our town and helping to make our ideas a reality!!

*Rose Jane*

Thank you guys and girls so much for helping bring light into this town! 31 years in Medowie, and this community makes me so proud! The artists, the heavy lifters, the brains, the gardeners, the skilled tradesmen and tradeswomen, what an epic week!

*Kyra McGrorey*

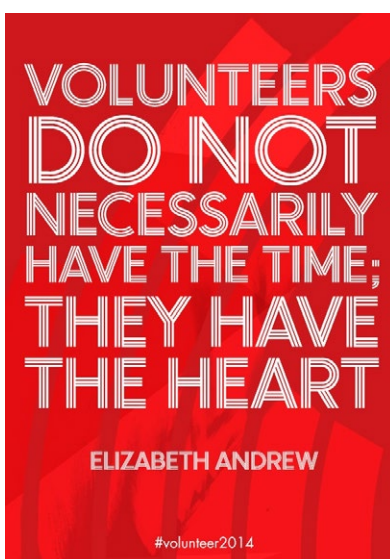
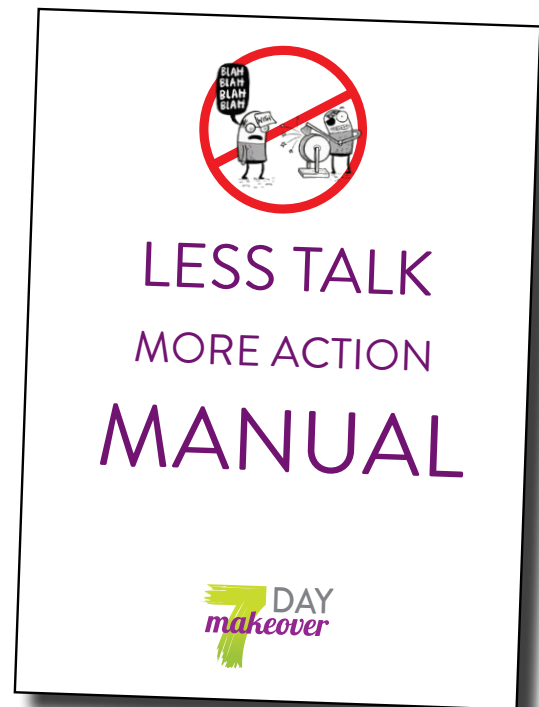
Congratulations to everyone involved! You show great community spirit. The improvements look awesome!

*Eileen Clark*



# RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Creative Communities work with Port Stephens Council in educating retailers and land owners how they can contribute to the vitality of the Medowie Town Centre using an updated version of Till Boosters (now called Town Boosters).
2. That the community work with landowners to continue the pedestrian wayfinding to connect and stitch the various shopping precincts together. This will require use of the leaf bollards on sandstone blocks and the use of a couple car parking spaces to create the connections.
3. That the Medowie community use the *Less Talk, More Action* booklet (part of the kit left behind) to guide future actions to avoid falling into the master-planning/ endless meetings trap.
4. That Creative Communities continue to oversee and mentor the Medowie community in spending the \$4000 grant from Creative Communities and the money remaining from the existing makeover. An application form for funding is attached or can be requested from [jodi@7day.com.au](mailto:jodi@7day.com.au).





# PLACE MAKING GRANT APPLICATION

## MEDOWIE



**YES!!** We want to apply for a Place Making Grant. We understand that the final decision as to who receives grants rests entirely with Creative Communities.

Contact person:

Phone:

Email:

Date:

Project name:

Describe the project:

List the tasks that need to be undertaken and who will be doing them:

Team leader/s:



Volunteers:

Budget: (please list all materials or services required, and the cost):

BUDGET TOTAL:

When do you intend to implement the project?

What permissions are required and do you have them?

What OHS issues are there and what plans do you have in place to address these:

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION TO: [jodi@7day.com.au](mailto:jodi@7day.com.au)