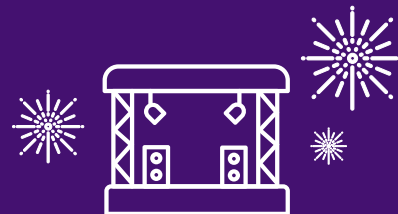


Vibrancy Reforms

Tips for Districts to create more vibrant places



Districts are dynamic going-out hubs across NSW where local business communities have combined their diverse cultural and entertainment offerings to create welcoming, inclusive and vibrant areas. The Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner supports this network of coordinated Districts, each reflecting its community's character – from food and entertainment to arts, culture and nightlife.

The NSW Government's Vibrancy Reforms make it easier for these Districts and businesses, plus cultural organisations and councils to activate local places, support live music and events, and grow the night-time economy.

By reducing red tape and introducing more flexible planning, licensing and regulatory pathways, the reforms empower these groups to work together to create vibrant, welcoming and safe local centres.

Through the Vibrancy Reforms, Districts can:

- support more live music, events and cultural activity
- activate streets, public spaces and local centres
- attract visitors and increase dwell time
- support local business growth and investment
- deliver coordinated events and experiences
- strengthen place-based partnerships.



Chippendale Collective X IAC Partnership. Photo: Yeah Rad

Use the checklist below to identify practical opportunities to support activation and economic growth within your District.

1 Support more live music and entertainment

Key reforms

- Many music related development consent conditions, plans of management and liquor licence conditions that previously restricted live entertainment have been removed.
- Hotels, clubs and small bars that previously had conditions prohibiting live entertainment may now be eligible to host live music and performances.
- Eligible live music and performance venues can trade for up to 2 additional hours on nights when a live performance is held and receive an 80% discount on certain liquor licence fees, subject to meeting relevant requirements.
- A wider range of live music and arts performances, including comedy, theatre and book readings, can be held indoors and outdoors without development approval, subject to development standards and event frequency limits:
 - not before midday in any zone
 - by 8pm in residential zones
 - by 10pm in areas adjoining residential zones
 - by midnight in all other zones
 - up to 2 events per week.

1 Support more live music and entertainment (continued)

Why it matters for Districts

- Increased cultural programming can drive visitation, foot traffic and local spending.
- A diverse entertainment offering strengthens local identity and destination appeal.
- Greater opportunities exist for collaboration between businesses, cultural organisations and performers.

Examples

- Promote a coordinated live music program across multiple venues within the District.
- Encourage venues to trial new entertainment offerings with reduced regulatory barriers.
- Encourage local businesses to connect with artist, performers and cultural organisations through Neon Marketplace: neonmarketplace.nsw.gov.au

2 Easier outdoor dining and place activation

Key reforms

- Businesses can use private land and car parking spaces for outdoor dining without development approval.
- Food and drink premises with outdoor dining areas on private land or at registered clubs can increase patron capacity without modifying their development consent:
 - up to 20% for venues approved for up to 100 patrons
 - up to 15% for venues approved for more than 100 patrons (up to 50 additional patrons)
 - up to 30% within Special Entertainment Precincts (up to 100 additional patrons).

- Low-impact outdoor entertainment can be delivered with reduced planning requirements, including in residential zones.
- Councils have greater flexibility to support temporary street closures for dining, performances and events.
- Temporary events on public land, including streets and public buildings, can occur as exempt development, subject to development standards and landowner consent.
- Food trucks, market operators and buskers can operate more easily across multiple local government areas through streamlined approval processes.

Why it matters for Districts

- Increased venue capacity supports business growth and activation.
- More active public spaces encourage visitation, longer stays and increased local spending.
- Districts have greater opportunities to coordinate precinct-wide activations and campaigns.

Examples

- Businesses can provide additional outdoor seating during busy weekends and events without seeking development approval.
- Districts and councils can collaborate to identify suitable locations for shared dining zones.
- Plazas, parks and community facilities can be incorporated into broader event and activation programs.

3 Additional temporary trading hours during special events

Key reforms

- A broader range of licensed venues can access extended trading hours during NSW Government-declared special events, including restaurants, breweries, small bars, hotels, clubs and live music venues.

- Councils can also declare extended operating hours for unlicensed community, entertainment and retail venues, including cafés and takeaway food outlets, during special events.

Why it matters for Districts

- Districts can maximise opportunities arising from event-driven visitation.
- Extended trading hours encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more locally.
- Increased activity can create opportunities for sponsorship, partnerships and collaborative promotion.

Examples

- Coordinate and promote extended trading across participating venues during festivals, markets and community events.
- Support businesses to align trading hours with major cultural, sporting and community events.

4 Special Entertainment Precincts

Key reforms

- Councils can establish Special Entertainment Precincts with locally tailored trading hours and sound management settings that support live performance, hospitality and entertainment activity.
- Community and stakeholder engagement helps ensure precinct settings balance the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

Why it matters for Districts

- Stronger precinct identity and long-term economic growth.
- Greater certainty for businesses through a clear and consistent operating framework.
- Increased investment and activation supported by a more predictable planning environment.

Examples

- A District can promote itself as a recognised entertainment and destination precinct.
- Businesses can benefit from consistent trading arrangements, with approved venue trading hours aligned to those established for the Special Entertainment Precinct.
- Greater regulatory certainty can support long-term business investment and programming.

District action checklist

Consider how your District can:

Develop coordinated live music and cultural programming across local venues.

Promote outdoor dining and place activation opportunities.

Work with council and local stakeholders to support precinct-wide events.

Leverage extended trading opportunities during special events.

Connect businesses with artists, performers and cultural organisations.

Promote the District as a destination for visitors with a diverse mix of entertainment and hospitality activities.

More information

Vibrancy Reforms snapshot

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/office-of-24-hour-economy-commissioner/vibrancy-reforms>

Changes to liquor licensing

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/liquor-and-gaming/liquor-licensing/sound-regulation-for-licensed-venues/key-changes-under-vibrancy-reforms>

Planning and the night-time economy

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/night-time-economy>

Incentives for live music and performance venues

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/liquor-and-gaming/liquor-licensing/sound-regulation-for-licensed-venues/incentives-for-live-music-and-performance-venues>

Fact Sheet: Reforms to Venue Sound Management Regulation – Automatic Removal of Certain Noise Related Conditions (Liquor & Gaming NSW)

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/noindex/2025-12/fact-sheet-automatic-removal-of-certain-noise-related-conditions.pdf>

Going Live: Venue Guide for managing sound

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/office-of-24-hour-economy-commissioner/vibrancy-reforms/seps/going-live>

Information for Businesses and Community: Special Entertainment Precincts

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/office-of-24-hour-economy-commissioner/vibrancy-reforms/seps/information-sheets>

Purple Flag

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/office-of-24-hour-economy-commissioner/purple-flag>