



PREMIER'S COUNCIL
FOR ACTIVE LIVING
NEW SOUTH WALES

Achievements of the NSW Premier's Council for Active Living

2004–2016





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PCAL's achievements

During its 12-year history, the NSW Premier's Council for Active Living (PCAL) advocated for policy change and created programs for active living and healthy eating across NSW. Among other key achievements, PCAL:

- ▶ collaborated with local councils to build healthier communities
- ▶ supported the NSW active transport agenda, particularly its walking and cycling efforts
- ▶ influenced many state and national policy documents
- ▶ convened an independent expert group to advocate for healthy planning in state policy and legislation
- ▶ brought the concept of the international FitCity conference to Sydney
- ▶ created enduring resources for healthy planning, active living, active travel and healthy eating.

PCAL's approach

PCAL sought to raise awareness about the active living agenda and help the government promote it. It did this through a strong collaborative model that leveraged connections with:

- ▶ the community
- ▶ government agencies
- ▶ non-government organisations (NGOs)
- ▶ public health workers
- ▶ senior policy makers
- ▶ urban planners.

Such a multi-disciplinary, inter-sectoral structure was unique, innovative and forward thinking, and it endured as one of PCAL's core strengths. Stakeholders attributed PCAL's successes to its ability to generate interest in, and commitment to, its agenda.

PCAL's legacy

Although PCAL disbanded in 2016, NSW Health is continuing its work in some areas. In April 2017, NSW Health and the Heart Foundation NSW launched Active Living NSW to maintain several core PCAL activities.

The NSW Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Strategy: Preventing overweight and obesity in New South Wales 2013–2018 also supports healthy eating and active living in NSW, and the 2016 *Premier's Priority Childhood Overweight and Obesity Delivery Plan* has expanded HEAL's remit. The plan seeks to reduce childhood overweight and obesity by 5% by 2025.

PCAL's history

NSW Premier Bob Carr founded PCAL in 2004. It operated under the Department of Premier and Cabinet before moving to NSW Health.

PCAL's members included senior representatives from government and non-government sectors and an independent Chair. The Heart Foundation NSW also:

- ▶ contributed a great deal to PCAL's strategic direction and day-to-day work
- ▶ hosted the PCAL Secretariat from 2006–2016.

This approach and the composition made PCAL an expert in the active living field in NSW.

This report

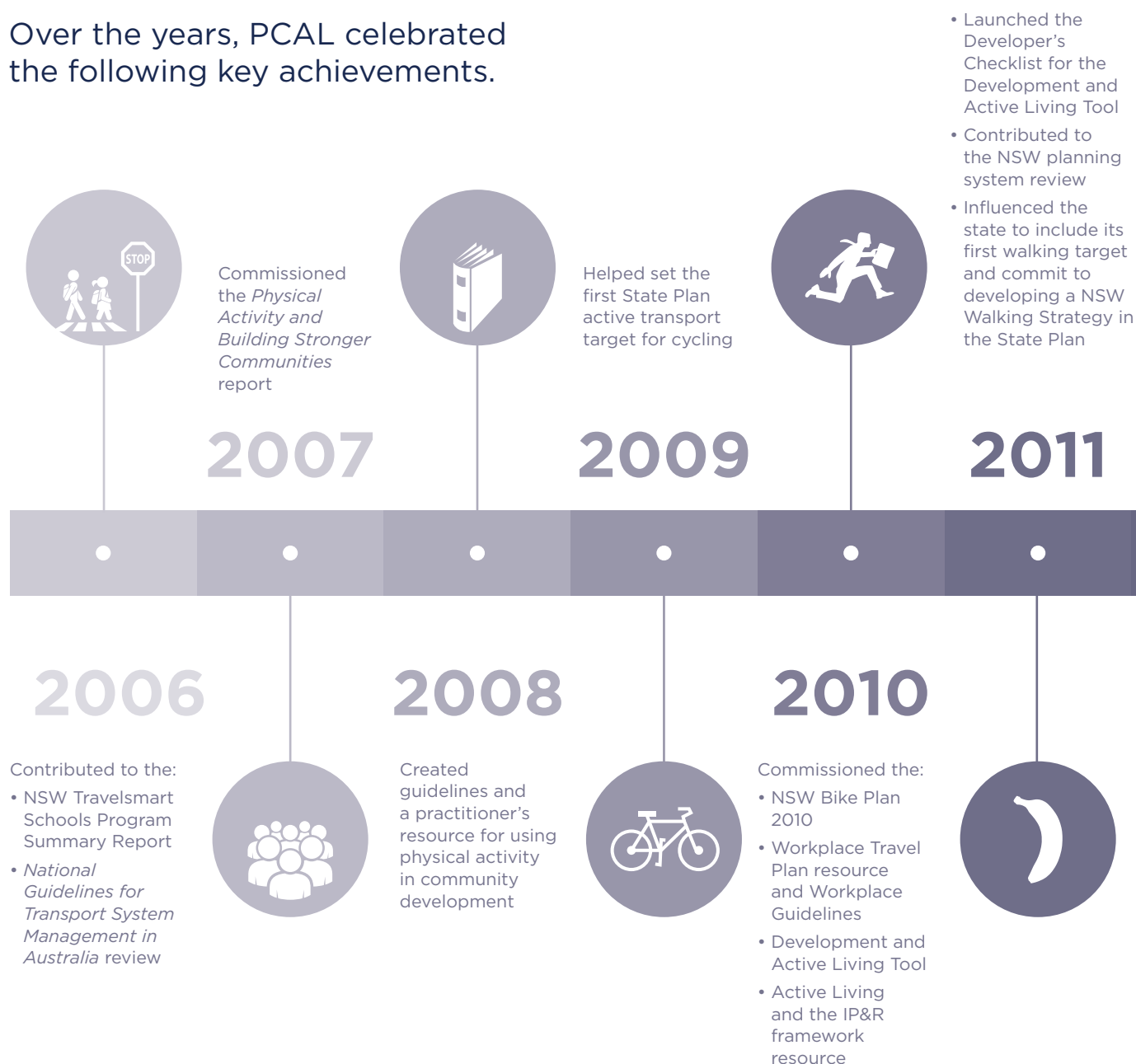
To compile this report, we interviewed available academics and PCAL members, stakeholders and staff. This report shares their views about PCAL overall, its impact on the NSW active living agenda and its inter-sectoral model.

1. PCAL's achievements

From 2004–2016, PCAL contributed extensively to NSW policies on and programs for:

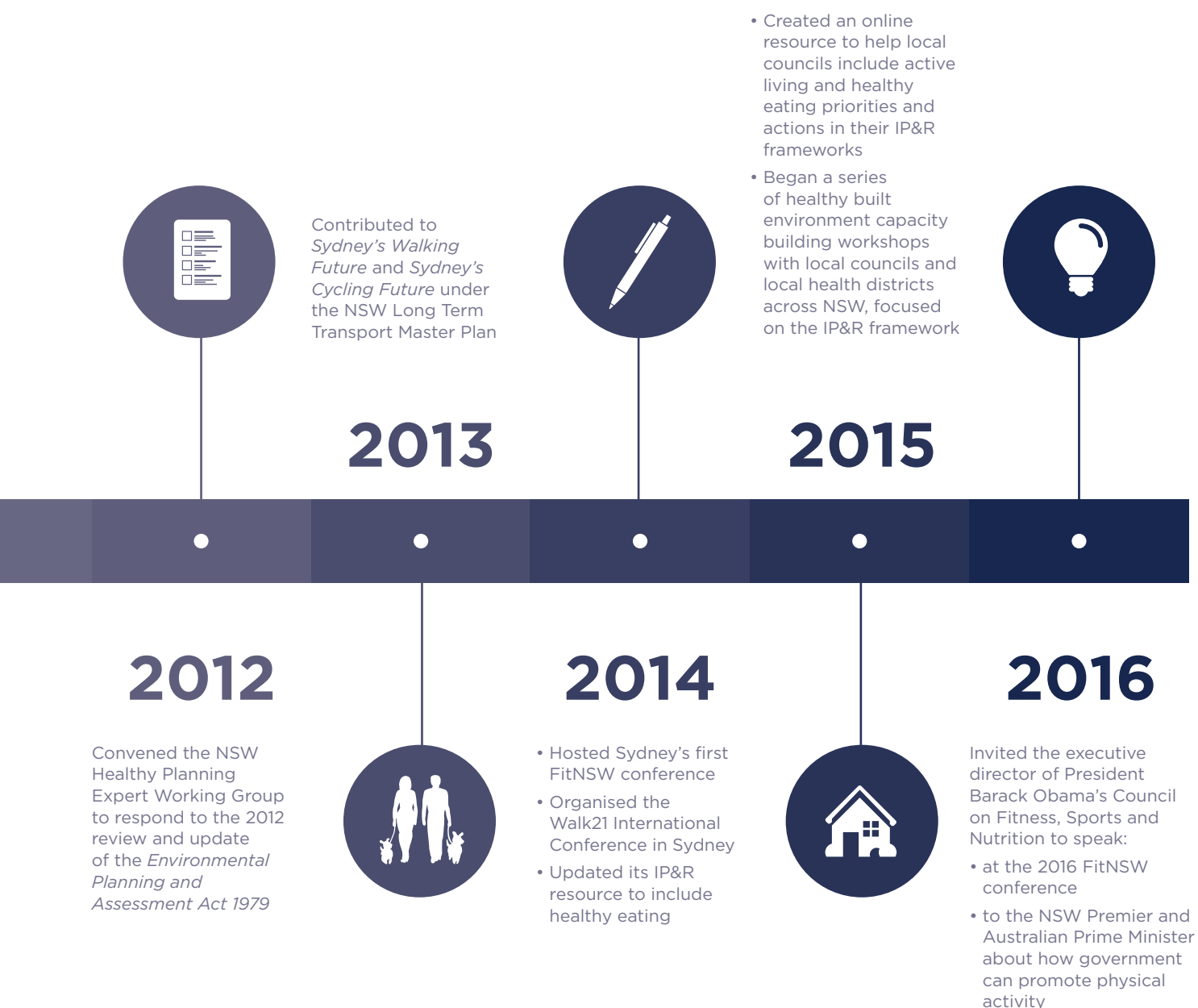
- ▶ healthy built environments
- ▶ physical activity and active living
- ▶ active travel
- ▶ healthy eating.

Over the years, PCAL celebrated the following key achievements.



PCAL also helped affect the local population's behaviour by:

- ▶ advocating for change
- ▶ collaborating with agencies
- ▶ raising awareness of these issues
- ▶ seeking expert advice.





International Charter for Walking

Creating healthy, efficient and sustainable communities where people choose to walk

We, the undersigned, recognise the benefits of walking as a key indicator of healthy, efficient, socially inclusive and sustainable communities and acknowledge the universal rights of people to be able to walk safely and to enjoy high quality public spaces anywhere and at anytime. We are committed to reducing the physical, social and institutional barriers that limit walking activity. We will work with others to help create a culture where people choose to walk through our commitment to this Charter and its strategic principles:

1. Increased inclusive mobility
2. Well designed and managed spaces and places for people
3. Improved integration of networks
4. Supportive land use and spatial planning
5. Reduced road danger
6. Less crime and fear of crime
7. More supportive authorities
8. A culture of walking

S. Paul
Ken McLean
W. Vaylathel
W. Vaylathel
W. Vaylathel
W. Vaylathel
W. Vaylathel
W. Vaylathel

www.walk21.com



Signing of the Walk21 International Charter for Walking, October 2015. Left to right: Peter McCue (PCAL), Ian Dencker (Auburn City Council), Cllr Stephen Bali (Blacktown City Council), Cllr Ned Mannoun (Liverpool City Council), Cllr Karen McKeown (Penrith City Council), Cllr Steven Issa (Parramatta City Council), Cllr Dai Le (Fairfield City Council), Henning Bracker (Bankstown City Council), Cllr Tony Hadchiti (WSROC).

1.1 Working with local government

Local councils play important roles in their communities as:

- ▶ leaders
- ▶ employers
- ▶ strategic and land use planning authorities
- ▶ providers and managers of facilities and services.

As such, they can:

- ▶ influence active living outcomes
- ▶ complement other government agencies' and NGOs' roles.

PCAL frequently collaborated with local councils across NSW to:

- ▶ create healthy planning and development policies
- ▶ help them incorporate healthy eating and active living priorities and actions in their Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) frameworks, using PCAL's guide
- ▶ increase their capacity for this planning and integration.

PCAL also partnered with the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC), to facilitate eight WSROC mayors signing the Walk21 International Charter for Walking. Developed by the Walk21 international charity, the Charter is a policy reference that cities and other groups can use to encourage more everyday walking and greater walkability. Overall, 31 local council mayors across NSW have signed the charter.

'Walk21 put Sydney on the map very firmly as a city that believes in active living.'

1.2 Supporting the active transport agenda

PCAL contributed substantially to the NSW active transport agenda, particularly its walking and cycling policies, by:

- ▶ overseeing development of the NSW Bike Plan 2010
- ▶ contributing to the NSW Walking Strategy
- ▶ coordinating the 2014 Walk21 International Conference in Sydney
- ▶ advocating for the state's first walking target as one of the NSW 2021 State Plan's active transport targets
- ▶ hosting Active Transport Roundtable meetings
- ▶ creating workplace travel plan resources
- ▶ supporting the NSW Active Travel Charter for Children.



NSW Bike Plan

PCAL effectively used an interagency governance model to oversee development of the NSW Bike Plan 2010. Premier Kristina Keneally released the plan in May 2010, which pledged to invest \$158 million through 2020. It included:

- ▶ infrastructure projects
- ▶ social programs
- ▶ other significant supports, like cycling skills training and information for cyclists.

NSW Walking Strategy, including State Plan active transport target

In 2011, Premier Keneally asked PCAL to help develop the state's first draft Walking Strategy. From November 2010 to January 2011, PCAL commissioned studies to inform the Strategy, including:

- ▶ a cost-benefit analysis to estimate the financial benefits of walking
- ▶ a literature review
- ▶ a stakeholder engagement report
- ▶ NSW walking data and trends.

In September 2011, the Government released *NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One*, which included an active transport target. The plan committed to:

- ▶ increase walking for short trips
- ▶ develop and implement the NSW Walking Strategy.

Just over two years later, the government released its Long Term Transport Master Plan with two sub-plans – *Sydney's Walking Future* and *Sydney's Cycling Future* – to support these goals.

Walk21 International Conference

In October 2014, PCAL facilitated the NSW Government and City of Sydney co-hosting the 2014 Walk21 International Conference at Luna Park. More than 500 international delegates from the community and development, health, planning and transport sectors participated in the significant week-long event, which included:

- ▶ more than 100 papers
- ▶ 11 'walkshops' about walkability around Sydney
- ▶ a unique 'speed dating' session, where 35 researchers and practitioners gave short presentations to many participants about how their work encourages more people to walk.

These initiatives led to later actions, including:

- ▶ the launch of the NSW Active Travel Charter for Children
- ▶ the NSW Active Transport Roundtable's investigation into other active transport opportunities.

'Getting Walk21 to Sydney was a tremendous coup. [It's] a very significant conference and organisation [with] a lot of respect and clout. PCAL did this'.

Workplace Travel Plan resource and Workplace Guidelines

PCAL effectively used its connections with the local business community to influence workplace active travel policy in NSW through the PCAL Workplace Travel Plan resource and Workplace Guidelines.

A workplace travel plan is a tool that addresses an organisation's travel needs and impacts and helps make them more efficient.

PCAL Workplace Travel Plan resource

Gives organisations:

- ▶ information about the benefits of workplace travel plans
- ▶ a best-practice case study to show how they can tailor their own plans
- ▶ links to other plans
- ▶ key Australian and international references.

Many employers have travel and transport challenges, including:

- ▶ costly staff parking
- ▶ expensive and time consuming business travel
- ▶ community and shareholder pressure to be environmentally friendly.

Workplace travel plans address these challenges by:

- ▶ promoting sustainable travel choices, like car sharing, cycling, public transport and walking

PCAL Workplace Guidelines

Include design goals for organisations trying to change their travel behaviour, such as:

- ▶ site integration, layout and design
- ▶ education, planning and training.

- ▶ managing workplace parking
- ▶ encouraging video-conferencing and remote working
- ▶ offering incentives for using these options.

After it rolled out these resources, PCAL hosted an informative workshop for its partners, including:

- ▶ Commonwealth Bank of Australia
- ▶ Delfin Lend Lease
- ▶ (then) Department of the Arts, Sport and Recreation
- ▶ (then) Department of the Environment and Climate Change
- ▶ (then) Department of Planning
- ▶ Landcom
- ▶ (then) Ministry of Transport
- ▶ Optus
- ▶ (then) Roads and Traffic Authority
- ▶ Stockland
- ▶ Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

PCAL commissioned case studies of organisations that have used its guidelines and resource, including Optus, Fairfax and the former Roads and Traffic Authority.

Transport for NSW also recognised the resources' value, and in 2017 it took charge of updating them. The Workplace Travel Plan resource is considered best practice and features on websites for:

- ▶ Australian Bicycle Council
- ▶ Cancer Council
- ▶ City of Sydney
- ▶ Victoria Walks
- ▶ Western Australian Department of Transport.



1.3 Hosting annual FitNSW conferences

In February 2014, Sydney held the inaugural Australian Fit City Conference. The conference emerged from a 2013 interagency forum about linking health, active travel and land use planning in NSW.

From 2014–2016, NSW Parliament House hosted annual FitNSW conferences, which showcased:

- ▶ local and international best-practice initiatives to encourage active living across government, industry and the community
- ▶ PCAL as an innovative leader in physical activity, active living and healthy built environments.

Year	Theme
2014	Supportive environments for active living – collective action and next steps
2015	Creating more walkable and liveable communities
2016	Supporting local communities to move more – interagency strategies to reduce childhood obesity

A highlight of the conferences came in 2016, when PCAL invited Shellie Pfohl, Executive Director of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition under US President Barack Obama, to give the keynote address. Her message about making communities more healthy and active through the 'Let's Move' initiative aligned well with that year's theme. Pfohl later spoke with NSW Premier Mike Baird and Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull about how government can work with stakeholders to sustainably promote physical activity.

Each conference drew about 170 people from academic, health, local government, planning, transport, urban design backgrounds.

'An excellent, stimulating event'.

'Great opportunity to gather information and see what is happening at a local, regional and state level'.

1.4 Convening the Healthy Planning Expert Working Group

In 2012, PCAL convened an independent group to help review the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and draft policy updates. Members of the Healthy Planning Expert Working Group (HPEWG) included healthy planning experts across multiple agencies, such as:

- ▶ Australian Institute of Landscape Architects
- ▶ Council on the Ageing NSW
- ▶ Local Health Districts (LHDs)
- ▶ National Heart Foundation – NSW Division
- ▶ NSW Health
- ▶ NSW Police
- ▶ Office of the Government Architect
- ▶ Office of Local Government NSW
- ▶ Office of Sport
- ▶ PCAL Secretariat
- ▶ Planning Institute of Australia
- ▶ Roads and Maritime Services
- ▶ University of NSW (UNSW)
- ▶ University of Sydney.

The group advocated for the updated Environmental Planning and Assessment Bill (EP&A Bill) to include a health object. In 2013, they succeeded in getting one in the draft planning Bill for the first time in NSW history.

Although the 2013 Bill did not pass NSW Parliament, South Australia and Tasmania later adopted its healthy living provisions. Stakeholders were also heartened when the Sydney Metropolitan Plan, *A Plan for Growing Sydney* (2014), included an action for the HPEWG to work with the Department of Planning and Environment to develop guidelines for a healthy built environment.

When a revised EP&A Bill was drafted in 2016, HPEWG again advocated for it to include health and wellbeing as an object. When the 2017 Bill passed, it did not use this wording, but it implied it by referring to promoting 'good design and amenity of the built environment'.

PCAL's ability to build and maintain relationships with a diverse range of stakeholder and member agencies was key to both submission processes. It is unlikely that a single agency would have recommended policy changes with the same depth and expertise.

'[The Healthy Planning Expert Working Group] was a nascent, fragmented, scattered group of people across NSW who had an interest in the built environment, urban planning and health, which came together and formed a solid group'.

'I find it difficult to imagine that anyone other than PCAL would have done it'.



Shellie Pfohl,
Executive Director of the (US) President's
Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition,
presenting at FitNSW 2016.



1.5 Creating resources for healthy living

Healthy built environments

PCAL commissioned several prominent resources to develop and support healthy built environments at the local level. These resources:

- ▶ filled a gap in practical guidance about land use and transport planning
- ▶ rolled out progressively to NSW local councils.

The Development and Active Living Tool (2010) is one of PCAL's most popular and frequently referenced resources. The Green Building Council of Australia's Green Star – Communities scheme also embraced it as a valuable tool.

Together with the Developer's Checklist (2011), it gives local councils and developers helpful advice about:

- ▶ incorporating active living provisions in their local environment plans, development control plans and IP&R frameworks
- ▶ submitting major development applications
- ▶ assessing their development
- ▶ starting discussions with consent authorities
- ▶ following directions in the *NSW Department of Planning Position Statement: Planning for Active Living*.

PCAL also produced enduring resources for community development, including:

- ▶ the Designing Places for Active Living web resource
- ▶ Guidelines for the use of physical activity for community development purposes and the accompanying Practitioner's Resource.

The first resource complemented NSW Planning's legislation, policies and strategies at the time. It outlines key considerations for designing healthy built environments in urban, regional and rural areas that can:

- ▶ positively impact individual and community health and wellbeing
- ▶ support active living.

The second resource helps communities create best-practice, evidence-based, active living programs that strengthen engagement and build social capital. It can be applied at either the policy or grassroots level. It pairs with the Practitioner's Resource, which helps communities plan, implement and evaluate their programs.

Healthy eating

In 2011, PCAL expanded its focus from active living to include healthy eating, welcoming new members from the food industry and other health-related NGOs.

While still making valuable contributions to healthy built environments and active living, PCAL broadened

its goals to include:

- ▶ promoting healthy weight, healthy eating and active living and advising the Premier on the best ways to do this
- ▶ developing five key messages for NSW Health's 'Make Healthy Normal' social marketing campaign
- ▶ raising awareness of and driving behavioural change in these areas
- ▶ supporting evidence-based policies that align with the goals, targets and activities in *NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One*
- ▶ promoting and implementing the NSW Walking Strategy, once approved
- ▶ partnering with local government to support initiatives that promote healthy eating, food security, healthy built environments and physical activity
- ▶ building sustainable relationships with relevant government, industry and non-government sectors
- ▶ working with the community sector to encourage healthy eating and active living.

In 2014, PCAL updated its IP&R Resource to include healthy eating, from production and processing to distribution, recycling and disposal. Over the next two years, it hosted five workshops across NSW to demonstrate how the tool could be used to incorporate healthy eating and active living priorities and actions

into local IP&R frameworks. These workshops attracted:

- ▶ local council staff
- ▶ LHD staff
- ▶ strategic planners
- ▶ relevant community groups.

PCAL then commissioned a case study to show how three NSW local councils:

- ▶ included healthy eating priorities from the Illawarra Regional Food Strategy in their IP&R frameworks
- ▶ prepared an integrative and collaborative strategy to improve local food systems.

1.6 Influencing policy documents

A key aspect of PCAL's agenda was advocating for and initiating policy change at a state and national level. These efforts were integral in influencing healthy built environments across NSW and affecting population-level behaviour change.

Over the years, PCAL succeeded in contributing:

- ▶ several policy submissions about active living issues in planning and transport
- ▶ evidence for these issues by commissioning case studies and research
- ▶ submissions to the following reviews and policy documents.

Date	Document	Purpose
May 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sydney Towards 2036</i> • <i>Metropolitan Transport Plan</i> 	Metropolitan strategy review
March 2011	<i>Our Cities: A National Strategy for the Future of Australian Cities</i>	Discussion paper
Nov 2011	Submission to the NSW planning system review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stressed the role of supportive physical and social environments in planning to promote active living. • Drew on suggestions from forums with UNSW's Healthy Built Environments Program (HBEP) and relevant stakeholders.
Dec 2011	<i>Submission to the National Guidelines for Transport System Management in Australia (2006) review</i>	Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • including health cost and benefit calculations in major transport appraisal processes • considering the economic impacts of active transport options.
Feb 2012	<i>The way ahead for planning in NSW?</i>	Issues paper for the NSW planning system review
Sept 2012	<i>A New Planning System for NSW – Green Paper</i>	Green paper for the NSW planning system review
June 2013	Submission to <i>The Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responded to key components of the draft related to health and wellbeing. • Drew on suggestions from forums with UNSW's HBEP and relevant stakeholders.
June 2013	<i>A New Planning System for NSW – White Paper</i>	White paper for the NSW planning system review

2. PCAL's approach

2.1 Raising awareness about active living

The PCAL members and stakeholders interviewed for this report confirmed that PCAL did not just engage in the active living agenda, but actively contributed to it. PCAL raised awareness about active living in NSW, nationally and internationally, and helped the government promote it.

Stakeholders defined PCAL's agenda as:

- ▶ focusing on the links between health, physical activity and the built environment
- ▶ supporting walking and cycling.

'There is no doubt that PCAL made a significant contribution to active living. PCAL influenced this and helped to build momentum. It gave Local Health District staff somewhere to go regarding active living, and led to the very significant Healthy Built Environment Program'.

'PCAL was absolutely in front of the public agenda'.

2.2 Using a multi-disciplinary, inter-sectoral model

In 2004, PCAL's multi-disciplinary, inter-sectoral structure was unique and innovative. It was informed by the evidence behind the 1986 Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, which showed that a cross-sectoral approach was necessary to improve health through physical activity. The model was one of PCAL's core strengths.

When Premier Carr created PCAL, this was the first time such a holistic approach to physical activity had been used in NSW. It looked past the idea that health risk factors belong to the health sector alone. As one survey response said, 'the effector arms for active living at a population level live outside the health sector'. From the start, PCAL leveraged the strengths of

- ▶ all levels of government
- ▶ non-government agencies, such as the Heart Foundation
- ▶ the private sector to advance its policy agenda.

Because the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) managed PCAL early on, the organisation had clear government support and a direct line to the Premier. Its members were mostly government agencies – such as Education, Environment, Planning and Transport – that communicated and negotiated openly, and achieved many of their goals.

When DPC transferred responsibility for PCAL to the Department of Health, the inter-sectoral

approach remained strong thanks to members who were, according to one survey respondent, 'senior enough to make things happen'. Survey respondents attribute such high-level engagement to the perceived government ownership of PCAL, even after DPC had transferred responsibility for PCAL.

The most effective PCAL representatives were decision-makers, such as the NSW Heart Foundation CEO or people with direct links to their agency's Chief Executive or Departmental Secretary.

In PCAL's later years, increased collaboration across government and sectors:

- ▶ strengthened the evidence base
- ▶ boosted NSW Health's investment in UNSW's Healthy Built Environment Program
- ▶ saw local government adopt more healthy living priorities.

The multi-disciplinary approach was also key to engaging local council planners. Since health-focused messaging would not have resonated with planners, PCAL reached them by providing:

- ▶ workshops on how to incorporate healthy eating and active living in local environment plans, development control plans and strategic planning frameworks
- ▶ advice on major development applications.

In the private sector, PCAL collaborated with peak bodies in the fitness and food and beverage industries, as well as large corporations. This collaboration, particularly about workplace policies, was useful even where PCAL's agenda and the private sector groups' agendas differed.

'PCAL was at the time quite unique and ground-breaking in its inter-sectoral collaboration'.

'A huge strength of PCAL was that it actively sought out the participation of all relevant disciplines and sectors – not just nutrition, planning, transport, but all of these; not just public but also private organisations, including for example Optus in workplace travel planning'.

'The model transcends the content area it worked in'.

2.3 Building strategic relationships

Stakeholders frequently cited PCAL's core strengths as its ability to:

- ▶ generate interest in, and organisational commitment to, its agenda
- ▶ build relationships and strengthen its collaborative working model.

PCAL identified key people in NSW Government agencies, local councils and universities whose roles and interests aligned with their own. It then connected with these people and linked them with one another.

Many agencies and stakeholders noted that while they had initially come to PCAL about a specific issue or event, they soon became deeply engaged. PCAL involved them further by allowing them to share in its responsibilities and achievements.

Connections with senior policy-makers were often key to driving action. For example, once PCAL asked a senior officer at Transport for NSW to chair the Active Transport Roundtable, its partnership with Transport was seen as more effective.

In another example, PCAL engaged with the former Ministry of Transport, providing active travel advice and support to Transport's CEO. As a result, the Ministry acknowledged the importance of active travel, recognised PCAL's support and stayed engaged at a senior level.

Department staff with less seniority found this engagement challenging. They often supported PCAL's work but without decision making power, they had difficulty promoting it higher up in their organisations.



Lucy Turnbull,
Chief Commissioner,
Greater Sydney Commission,
presenting at FitNSW 2016

2.4 Developing resources

Not only did PCAL commission domestic and international documents, it also produced many resources of its own. The following resources provided relevant information for public health workers, urban planners, local government, the community and NGOs:

- ▶ a monthly newsletter
- ▶ evidence papers, including reports, studies and position papers
- ▶ factsheets, guidelines and other tools.

PCAL's monthly e-newsletter

PCAL's monthly newsletter featured six to eight consumer-focused articles and related pictures. It included:

- ▶ links to evidence, toolkits and resources
- ▶ local and international active living initiatives
- ▶ information about a range of issues for different disciplines and organisations.



Survey respondents appreciated that its format made it easy to read and share. They also praised it for being brief, concise and focused.

Survey respondents repeatedly mentioned the newsletter as an effective tool to:

- ▶ engage people in the active living agenda
- ▶ expand their interest
- ▶ deepen their knowledge.

PCAL's evidence papers

PCAL published or collaborated on the evidence papers in the table below, which include position papers, reports and studies.

Date	Title	Purpose
2006–2007	<i>NSW Travelsmart Schools Program Summary Report</i> (developed with TravelSmart NSW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed that a parent's trip influences their choices on how they and their children get to and from school • Suggested including active travel to workplaces in active travel to school programs
2007	<i>A as in Active: Incorporating Active Living Principles within Planning</i>	Set out PCAL's position
2007	<i>Physical Activity and Building Stronger Communities</i> report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed PCAL's guidelines for using physical activity for community development purposes • Reviewed other literature about the role of physical activity in building stronger communities
2008	<i>The CHESS Principles for Healthy Environments</i>	Set out PCAL's position
2008	Supportive Environments: utilising the NSW planning system to enable active living	Set out PCAL's position
2008–2009	Reports commissioned to prepare the NSW Bike Plan 2010 and draft Walking Strategy	See section 1.2
2010	<i>Why Active Living? A health, economic, environment and social solution</i>	Set out PCAL's position
2014–2016	Healthy Built Environments quarterly column in the <i>New Planner</i> , the NSW Planning Institute of Australia's journal	Set out PCAL's position

'The NSW Ministry of Health is committed to evidence-based approaches to increase participation in physical activity'.

PCAL's factsheets, guidelines and tools

PCAL developed a range of factsheets and audit tools with the NSW Centre for Physical Activity and Health. Along with its published guidelines and tools, these integral resources helped people and organisations apply active living principles to their everyday lives.

Year	Title	Purpose
2007	Assessing the Physical Environment factsheet	Informs the public and relevant organisations
2007	The Environment and Active Living factsheet	Informs the public and relevant organisations
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Urban Environments Site Assessment Audit • Irvine Minnesota Inventory • Neighbourhood Environment Walkability Survey • Pedestrian Safety and Bicycle Safety Audit Checklists • 'St Louis' Tool • Systematic Pedestrian and Cycling Environmental Scan (SPACES) Instrument • Walkability and bikeability checklists for local government 	Audit tools
2007	Involving the Community in Assessing the Environment factsheet	Informs the public and relevant organisations
2007	Modifying Audit Tools factsheet	Informs the public and relevant organisations
2008	Guidelines for the use of physical activity for community development purposes	See section 1.5
2008	Guidelines for using contracted external providers for physical education and school sport	Advises school principals and out-of-school-hours centres about hiring external providers to enhance physical education and sport.
2010	The PCAL Workplace Travel Plan resource factsheet	See section 1.2
2010–2011	Development and Active Living: Designing Projects for Active Living	Gives developers, planners and local councils development resources including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an assessment resource and navigational tool • a checklist with case studies.
2015	Addressing Active Living and healthy eating through Councils' Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework	Tells local councils and other stakeholders how they can address active living and healthy eating in their IP&R frameworks.

3. PCAL's legacy

When PCAL was formed, the organisation focused on active living and healthy built environments. The NSW Government later expanded PCAL's agenda to include promoting healthy eating. With this approach firmly embedded in several senior cross-government committees, policies and programs, the government decided to discontinue PCAL from December 2016.

Since then, NSW Government has continued to work on overweight and obesity. To read more about this, see the:

- ▶ *NSW Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy*
- ▶ *Premier's Priority Childhood Overweight and Obesity Delivery Plan.*

3.1 Launching new programs

Active Living NSW

On 1 April 2017, NSW Health and the Heart Foundation NSW launched Active Living NSW to continue several key PCAL activities, such as:

- ▶ hosting the annual FitNSW conference
- ▶ convening the Healthy Planning Expert Working Group to advocate for healthy built environments
- ▶ working with LHDs and local councils to integrate healthy eating and active living in local council IP&R frameworks
- ▶ publishing a monthly bulletin
- ▶ offering new resources on its website.

Visit activelivingnsw.com.au for more information, including archived PCAL resources.

3.2 Overcoming challenges

PCAL faced a range of challenges and limitations that related to both the active living policy agenda and the funding and governance model. Some respondents from government agencies involved with PCAL believed it:

- ▶ became less effective over time
- ▶ needed to demonstrate concrete value to funding agencies.

Policy agenda

In general, PCAL's policy development was slow and non-linear. Collaborative policy development also made it harder to point to annual outcomes.

When the NSW Government added a healthy eating remit to PCAL's agenda, PCAL faced significant challenges. These included:

- ▶ gaps in policy understanding and the evidence base to support actions around the food and beverage industry
- ▶ no planning structures, such as development controls on the number and location of fast food outlets, to support their work.

Adding obesity to PCAL's agenda further changed the landscape. Some respondents noted that this shifted the policy focus from physical activity to healthy eating and nutrition.

Focusing entirely on healthy eating can overlook the benefits of physical activity, such as:

- ▶ preventing falls
- ▶ delaying dementia
- ▶ supporting mental health
- ▶ reducing cardiovascular disease and the risk of some cancers.

'The rise of obesity thinking means that all physical activity work is undertaken under the rubric of obesity strategies, where physical activity is a minor player.'

Funding and governance

PCAL's collaborative culture was among its key achievements. But building strategic relationships required an investment that PCAL could not easily quantify.

Originally, all member agencies contributed funds to ensure commitment to annual goals. They also paid to commission evidence and resources as needed. But the funding model changed, and eventually NSW Health was the key funder of PCAL.

Because PCAL received funding one year at a time, long-term planning proved difficult. Changes in government also affected its agenda and resources, as the organisation responded to shifting priorities.

PCAL further relied on people's goodwill and dedication. This meant when people moved on, some initiatives lost momentum.

3.3 Advising future models

The stakeholders interviewed for this report had valuable insights about which of PCAL's qualities should inform any future models or new programs.

Qualities of suggested model	Benefits
Collaborative	<p>Agencies whose strategies and programs align could work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on an agenda that addresses multiple issues together • toward a long-term vision. <p>For example, the active living agenda could come under the Greater Sydney Commission, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a Social Commissioner and a legislative and governance structure • reports to Cabinet • engages key agencies, including Education, Health, Planning and Transport.
Inter-sectoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships across different sectors and disciplines • A strategic or interagency research agenda to build an evidence base
National approach	While policy windows are more likely to be open at state level, functions such as transport incentives are best approached nationally.

While they generally agreed about the key characteristics of a future model, stakeholders disagreed about how any similar organisation should relate to government. They saw benefits to each structure below.

Relationship to government	Benefits
A valuable government asset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good governance and champions • Less susceptible to cuts • Government funding
One step removed	Higher ability to engage local government
Separate	A private organisation modelled after the National Physical Activity Plan, which was created after the US defunded the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Physical Activity Branch

'By definition, success requires change and moving with the times'.

4. PCAL's History

4.1 Building on PATF

PCAL succeeded the NSW Physical Activity Task Force (PATF), which Premier Carr created in 1996. From 1996–2002, PATF:

- ▶ developed and implemented Simply Active Everyday: a plan to promote physical activity in NSW 1998–2002
- ▶ achieved 56 of its 66 objectives
- ▶ became what the World Health Organisation called a 'global best-practice model for health promotion'.

Significant, high-level government support for the physical activity agenda, which was changing both in Australia and overseas, laid the groundwork for PATF and, later, PCAL.

4.2 Founding PCAL

Premier Carr founded PCAL in 2004 following the NSW 2002 Childhood Obesity Summit. PCAL received initial funding to:

- ▶ advise the Premier how to encourage people to 'be active in the everyday'
- ▶ find strategic partners and harness resources across government, NGOs and the private sector
- ▶ collaborate with key organisations on a comprehensive physical activity strategy for NSW
- ▶ recommend ways to implement the strategy and track its progress
- ▶ advocate for policy change.

PCAL's inaugural members included senior representatives from both government and non-government sectors and an independent Chair.

Government members	Non-government members
Commission for Children and Young People	Heart Foundation NSW
Ministry of Transport	NSW Centre for Physical Activity and Health, University of Sydney
Roads and Traffic Authority	
Departments of:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ageing, Disability and Home Care • Arts, Sport and Recreation • Community Services • Education and Training • Environment and Climate Change • Health • Housing • Local Government • Planning • Premier and Cabinet 	

Inaugural members developed a work plan focused on:

- ▶ promoting healthy urban environments
- ▶ promoting active transport
- ▶ developing active communities.

Throughout PCAL's 12-year history, its member agencies changed. By 2011, they included:

- ▶ community health and industry groups
- ▶ Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure
- ▶ Department of Premier and Cabinet
- ▶ NSW Food Authority
- ▶ Office of Communities (Sport and Recreation).

Representatives were appointed for an initial two-year period, and PCAL established member sub-groups for particular pieces of work.



4.3 Championing PCAL

PCAL's Chair was independent from its members and government. The individuals who served as Chair were the most prominent champions for active living in NSW. They:

- ▶ gave PCAL strategic direction
- ▶ engaged key agencies at a high level
- ▶ understood both the subject matter and stakeholder agendas
- ▶ used their profiles to engage the public and the media.

PCAL Chairs were:

- ▶ Libby Darlison, inaugural chair, a senior public sector professional with experience in the university sector, 2004–2010
- ▶ Layne Beachley AO, a professional surfer, 2010–2012
- ▶ Geoff Huegill, an Olympic swimmer, 2012–2014.

Staff were also key advocates for PCAL's agenda, engaging with government agencies and the university sector at local, state and national levels. Staff during PCAL's history included:

- ▶ Peter McCue
- ▶ Rebekah Costelloe
- ▶ Emily Fletcher
- ▶ Jos Ellison
- ▶ Natasha Sherwood
- ▶ Lauren Templeman
- ▶ Philip Vita
- ▶ Annabey Ehrlich
- ▶ Janna Wooby.

The Heart Foundation NSW was another PCAL champion that contributed greatly to both strategic direction and day-to-day activities. Along with the Department of Premier and Cabinet and NSW Health, the Foundation formed an Executive Working Group for PCAL.

The Foundation also hosted the PCAL Secretariat from 2006–2016, which included:

- ▶ a manager (later an executive officer)
- ▶ a project officer
- ▶ an administration officer.

Peter McCue was one of PCAL's strongest champions. He held roles in the organisation for 10 years, first as manager and later as executive officer.

4.4 Providing value

While we cannot quantify PCAL's impact on the public health agenda, the organisation's legacy speaks volumes. Over 12 years, PCAL:

- ▶ contributed to countless NSW policies and programs
- ▶ helped affect population-level behaviour change
- ▶ created enduring resources to support the active living and healthy built environment agenda.

Here, PCAL's stakeholder responses are particularly useful. Most stakeholders believed PCAL:

- ▶ was an expert in the active living field in NSW
- ▶ engaged a range of agencies, sectors and disciplines to build a broad community.

'PCAL created something from basically nothing'.

'PCAL had a multiplicative effect at a large scale across government'.

'More than half of the population would have been reached by PCAL'.

'Exponential activity in a whole field of work was galvanised by PCAL'.

Appendix: Survey questions

Questions for all respondents

1. When were you involved with PCAL?
2. How were you involved?
3. During this time, what were its main achievements in:
 - ▶ policy development?
 - ▶ partnerships?
4. What did you know about the NSW agency or government's perspective on PCAL's role?
5. Did NGOs or inter-sectoral partners share that view?
6. What challenges did PCAL face while you were involved?
 - ▶ Was their inter-sectoral work effective?
 - ▶ Was active living a key part of the public agenda at that time?
7. Based on how PCAL worked while you were involved, what:
 - ▶ aspects of it could be effective in the current policy or political environment?
 - ▶ other strategies could be used now to advance the active living agenda?

Questions for respondents involved with PCAL since the start

1. What triggered PCAL's creation and its predecessor partnerships?
2. How did PCAL begin?
3. How was the PCAL model developed? What considerations led to this model?
4. What was PCAL's original goal, and do you think it was achieved?
5. How did the PCAL model develop over time?

Questions for respondents involved with PCAL at the end

1. Why was PCAL disbanded?
2. What is your or your agency's view about future inter-sectoral partnerships around the healthy living agenda?

Questions on PCAL's international perspective

1. Is there something unique or important about the PCAL model?
2. What contribution did PCAL make to the international active living policy agenda?
3. Have similar organisations successfully used the PCAL model?
4. What other models could NSW use to advance the healthy living agenda through inter-sectoral partnerships?
5. What policy focus would such partnerships need to succeed in the future?
6. What partnership characteristics would be important?

Final comments

Do you have any final comments about:

- ▶ the Healthy Built Environment Program
- ▶ health in planning
- ▶ active or workplace travel
- ▶ NSW Health
- ▶ the role of LHDs
- ▶ PCAL Chairs or host agencies
- ▶ funding organisation perspectives?

