

# Sutherland CBD outdoor dining parklets prove a success



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Parklets in Flora Street, Sutherland. Picture by Chris Lane

Extended footpath pockets for outdoor dining in Flora Street, Sutherland have proved a success, with a recommendation they stay until a long-term vision for the area is drawn up.

Sutherland Shire Council installed the facilities, known as parklets, in October 2022 with the aid of a state government grant, which was introduced during the pandemic to encourage people to eat outdoors.

Bus and taxi zones and most car parking were relocated to enable the top of Flora Street to be repurposed. Some parklets are reserved for the customers of adjacent eateries, while others can be used by anyone.

A report by council staff, which will be considered by councillors in June, said the initial six-month trial received support from the surrounding community, and was extended for a longer period.

"Based on the success of the project, it is recommended the parklets and associated changes in Flora Street remain in place until a long-term vision can be realised following the adoption of the draft Sutherland / Kirrawee Place Plan," the report said.

A community survey found the parklets had been beneficial to cafes and restaurants, and the public seating provided a space to relax and unwind with a takeaway meal or coffee.

"It also has provided an outdoor meeting place in the middle of Sutherland, to catch up," the report said.

"Things to do in the evening remains a challenge, with virtually no improvement between the two surveys" (which were taken before and after the parklets were installed).

The report said the council has received a request to consider another parklet installation on the western side of the Sutherland CBD.