

ITEM 3.2. CITY OF SYDNEY COUNCIL ACHIEVEMENTS 2012 - 2016**FILE NO: S051491****MINUTE BY THE LORD MAYOR**To Council:

Tonight's meeting is the last of the current Council.

It is a great privilege to be elected to represent the people of the City of Sydney and this term we have achieved some extraordinary outcomes – for those who live in our area now as well as those who will live, work, run their business or visit here in the future.

These outcomes are the direct result of having a long term plan for the future – Sustainable Sydney 2030 – and outstanding financial planning which has allowed us to deliver on priorities while remaining debt free.

In 2008, Sustainable Sydney 2030 was adopted following the most extensive engagement program the City had ever undertaken. It included talking to tens of thousands of residents, businesses and visitors. We held roundtable discussions, major community workshops and forums with the Indigenous community and primary school children and recorded 18,854 website hits and 157,000 visitors to Customs House during the exhibition period. The majority told us they wanted Council to take action to address climate change.

Sustainable Sydney 2030 defined key issues and set out 10 strategic directions to take our city forward.

Over the last four years, staff have worked to turn the vision of Sustainable Sydney 2030 into reality. A number of key policies have been reviewed, exhibited or adopted, including:

- **Maintaining a globally competitive and innovative city:**
 - Central Sydney Planning Strategy (Draft);
 - Southern Employment Lands Strategy and Planning Proposal;
 - Central Sydney Development Contributions Plan;
 - Economic Development Strategy;
 - Tourism Action Plan;
 - Retail Action Plan;
 - Tech Startups Action Plan;
 - Draft Eora Journey Economic Development Plan;
 - OPEN Sydney Strategy & Action Plan; and
 - The Visitor Accommodation Action Plan.

- **Providing leadership on sustainability:**
 - Environmental Strategic Action Plan 2016-2021;
 - Draft Open Space and Recreational Needs Study;
 - Climate Change Adaptation Plan;
 - Energy Efficiency Master Plan;

- Interim Waste Strategy;
 - Residential Apartments Sustainability Plan;
 - Environmental Upgrades Agreement Policy;
 - Urban Forest Strategy;
 - Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan;
 - Tree Donation Policy;
 - Green Roofs and Walls Policy Implementation Plan;
 - Floodplain Risk Management plans; and
 - Advanced Waste Treatment Master Plan.
- **Planning for transport, walking and cycling:**
 - Connecting our City Transport Strategy and Action Plan;
 - Legible Sydney Wayfinding Strategy and Implementation Plan;
 - Neighbourhood Parking Policy;
 - Public Toilet Strategy;
 - Walking Strategy & Action Plan; and
 - Car Sharing Policy Review (Draft).
- **Designing places for people:**
 - George Street 2020;
 - City North Public Domain Plan;
 - Green Square Public Domain Strategy;
 - Sydney Streets Design Code;
 - Sydney Lights Design Code;
 - Green Square Infrastructure Strategy and Plan; and
 - Chinatown and City South Public Domain Plan Review.
- **Strengthening our community:**
 - Social Sustainability Policy;
 - Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan;
 - Mobile Free Food Services Policy;
 - Community Gardens Policy;
 - Markets Policy; and
 - Companion Animals Policy.
- **Enhancing the cultural and creative life of our city:**
 - Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan;
 - Live Music and Performance Action Plan;
 - Draft Cultural Ribbon Strategy;
 - City Centre Public Art Plan; and
 - Green Square Public Art Plan.

I'm going to highlight a few of our achievements.

Economic

On all measures, the City's economy is extremely strong.

Our economy has continued to grow strongly, residential and commercial development is booming and the City has successfully nurtured the growth of new sectors and attracted investment. **Global surveys during the term have consistently ranked Sydney as one of the leading global cities.**

Economic output across the Local Government Area has continued to rise – we've experienced growth of 25% in real terms over the period 2006-07 to 2014-15. In the current term, the city's economy outstripped the national economy, growing over 4.5% per annum or 2.5% per annum in real terms to 2014-15. Last year, economic output is estimated to have reached \$110 billion.

During the last four years, the city has approved development applications valued in excess of \$15.5 billion. The last year alone saw development valued at \$5.5 billion approved.

Our work in urban renewal areas has opened up new development opportunities and produced quality neighbourhoods. The \$13 billion Green Square development has been facilitated by the City's planning work and a \$1.3 billion infrastructure plan. When complete, Green Square will be home to 61,000 people and 22,000 jobs.

Our economic base has broadened. There's always been a strong financial base – with 20% of all national jobs in the finance industry in our area – **but we're also developing strong, interrelated clusters of activity across other sectors such as education and research, creative industries and information, communication and technology. This growth is mostly happening in our villages.**

When I first became Lord Mayor, I made investing in our village areas a priority, in the same way village areas like SoHo and Greenwich in New York and Chelsea in London have been developed so that they are now key destinations in their own right.

The city has become the primary hub of tech start-ups in Australia. A 2015 survey showed 64 per cent of all startups in Australia are located in our Local Government Area. Our Tech Start Up Action Plan, developed in close consultation with the sector and endorsed this term, outlines how we will encourage further growth.

At the core of Sustainable Sydney 2030 is the vision of a liveable city. This is because the places that people want to live in, are the places where people want to work and to visit.

And it's why our work to support the city economy is holistic, focusing on the amenity of the city as well as targeted industry and place based initiatives. **We've made it easier for Sydney businesses to compete in the fierce global market for talent and tourism dollars.**

In this term, we've invested **\$258 million to maintain and renew local roads, footpaths, plazas and laneways in the city centre.** This work has brought previously underused spaces to life, the results of which are available for all to see.

128 small bars and other innovative businesses have moved into laneways across the city. There are **21 food trucks** operating and our advice to the Hong Kong Tourism Commission has seen them launch a similar program.

Car share now has more than 30,000 members, including 9,600 business members.

We support the **film and television industry** which is valued at an estimated \$1 billion per year in our local area by providing assistance with stakeholder liaison and finding locations (such as the recent Jackie Chan feature film which will provide valuable international exposure for Sydney and an estimated total spend of \$15-20 million, the majority of which is in our local area).

Inadequate public transport and transport congestion costs our economy around \$5 billion per annum and is consistently identified in global surveys as one of the major factors affecting our competitiveness and liveability.

The City worked with business to advocate for **light rail through the CBD and George Street** to reduce congestion and transform George Street into a world-class main street. We are contributing \$220 million to support CBD public domain works including the creation of pedestrianised zones. The project has seen new international retailers opening stores in the city centre and new investment along George Street.

Sydneysiders told us they would start riding bikes if we had safe, separated cycleways. We listened and acted. **To date, 12.5 kilometres of new separated cycle-ways have been completed in our local area, including the first north-south separated cycleway through the City centre.**

We are also rolling out our wayfinding and walking strategies to make it easier to walk through the city centre.

We've installed more than **2,100 braille and raised letter signs** following extensive community consultation and on-site testing with Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and Vision Australia. The comprehensive network of braille and tactile signs is now in place at all signalised pedestrian crossings in the City of Sydney.

We've made design excellence a priority. Design excellence standards are now applied across all city development, not just the large commercial developments. For the major developments, a competitive process is required and approximately 40 competitions have been undertaken in the last four years.

This Council has been an **effective partner in attracting investment** to the city.

With Destination NSW, we have secured six national and international premiere musical events. We've supported the expansion of Vivid throughout the city centre. These events attract large numbers of visitors from regional NSW, interstate and, increasingly, overseas – many of whom stay in our city hotels, dine in restaurants and shop while they are here.

With Business Events Sydney, our initial contribution of \$1.5 million has helped secure 28 business events since 2013. These events represent more than 25,000 delegates who plan to stay more than 91,500 nights. The estimated economic impact from these events for our city is in excess of \$91 million. A further \$1.5 million was approved by Council to extend this rewarding partnership to 2021.

In June this year, I hosted a **business and cultural delegation to Guangzhou** as part of the celebrations for the 30th anniversary of the Sister City Relationship between our two cities. The City's support enabled the Australia China Business Council, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, 4A Gallery, and a collaboration between Sydney universities to strengthen relationships or pursue new opportunities with government, academic and industry representatives in China.

Sydney's visitor numbers continue to grow. In 2015, the number of visitors was almost 22% higher than for 2007 and the number of visitor nights almost 40% higher.

Our draft **Central Sydney Planning Strategy** lays the foundations for future economic growth, unlocking up to 2.9 million square metres of floor space while protecting heritage, public views and sun access to special public places.

By re-balancing incentives between residential and commercial floor space in the City, it will provide for 133,000 jobs and 10,000 more dwellings and, with the introduction of an affordable housing levy, could deliver 300-520 new affordable housing units.

The Strategy is the first major reform of Central Sydney planning controls in 45 years and will ensure that Central Sydney maintains its role as Australia's most productive location and export-orientated services centre.

The City's economic staff have estimated that, over the next 20 years, the additional floorspace will add \$21.2 million to the City's economy – increasing the economic value of the city centre by 40 per cent, our LGA's economy by 25 per cent and the nation's economy by 1.3 per cent.

Environmental

Under Sustainable Sydney 2030, the City has become an environmental leader with bold targets and action on waste, water, energy and greenhouse emissions.

Earlier this year, Chris Dunstan, a Research Director from the University of Technology, said 'the City of Sydney is doing more than any other Government in Australia to reduce greenhouse gas emissions'.

We became carbon neutral in 2007 and we were the first government in Australia certified in 2011.

Since 2006, our organisation's greenhouse gas emissions have reduced by 27 per cent and emissions across our Local Government Area have reduced by 19 per cent amidst strong growth in population and employment (reducing carbon intensity by 36 per cent).

Across the City's operations, our greenhouse emissions targets were met by retrofitting 45 of our major buildings with energy savings measures, replacing 6,604 street and park lights with energy efficient LED lights, installing solar panels and maintaining our fleet emissions.

Across the LGA, we've worked successfully with the business community to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions with programs such as the Better Buildings Partnership, CitySwitch Green Office, Environmental Upgrade Agreements and Smart Green Business.

Better Buildings Partnership members have saved \$36 million in electricity costs a year and reduced their emissions by 45 per cent since 2006 – over halfway to their target to cut emissions 70 per cent by 2030.

Our **Smart Green Business program** has moved into its third phase during this term of Council. The program is currently working with medium to large non-office based businesses such as hotels, retailers and entertainment and conference facilities.

The City's potable water use been maintained at 2006 levels by watering our parks more efficiently, connecting some parks to recycled water supplies and retrofitting our properties with efficient fixtures and fittings. We also delivered precinct-scale stormwater harvesting schemes at Green Square Town Centre and Sydney Park.

We've **increased our urban canopy**. In 2008, 15.5 per cent of the city was covered, rising to 17.1 per cent when measured in 2013. It is anticipated that we will be close to our target of 23 per cent by 2030 when it is next measured in 2018. And we now have 139 green roofs and walls, 19 community gardens, five landcare groups, three community footpath verge gardens and one community composting group.

World leaders reached an historic agreement at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Paris, committing to limiting global temperature rise to less than 2 degrees, ideally 1.5 degrees. **By signing the Paris Pledge for Action, the City of Sydney stands with other city leaders who have also committed to this goal and our Environment Action 2016-21 sets bold targets for next term and outlines how we will achieve them.**

Effective action requires collaboration and partnerships across Federal, State and Local Government. We've continued to advocate for improved minimum standards for new homes and regulatory reform where change is needed to achieve a sustainable future for our city including energy market reform.

Social

Evidence shows that cities committed to social justice, equality and inclusion perform better economically, environmentally, culturally and socially.

The City is one of a few councils in NSW on track to address a shortage in the supply of childcare. In 2013, we commissioned a comprehensive analysis of current and future Early Childhood Education and Care needs which identified unmet demand of 3,104 places.

To help dramatically increase stock, we introduced a Childcare Development Control Plan (DCP) which was the first of its kind and says that all buildings over a certain size in our area have to provide space for a childcare centre.

Our planning staff have also been negotiating the inclusion of childcare centres through voluntary planning agreements (VPA) when developers submit new development applications. Recent additions include a centre in the new Haymarket Library building, as well as two centres in the proposed redevelopment of the George Street Cinema site. All three will be handed over to the City to run as part of the VPAs.

We've also been building our own centres – **construction of three new centres in Alexandria, East Sydney and Annandale has been completed and another centre in Green Square is due for completion early next year.**

All this work has resulted in a net increase of 967 new operating places, over 2,000 places that have been approved or are under construction, 588 places currently under assessment by planning staff– **overall it's an increase of more than 3,500 places.**

In our ever growing city, the provision of **parks, playgrounds and open space** is more important than ever.

In the last 10 years, we've added over 18.3 hectares of open space to our city. Key projects include Pirrama Park, Pyrmont; Harmony Park, Surry Hills; Chippendale Green and Sydney Park.

Sydney Park is now one of Sydney's best loved regional parks, with at least one million people a year enjoying it. It includes an \$11.3 million water reuse scheme – the largest in Sydney - that will provide water to the parks four wetland areas which are an important part of the park's ecosystems as well as playing a role in flood mitigation.

We've upgraded 81 neighbourhood parks and delivered 48 new or upgraded playground facilities. And we've upgraded existing playing fields at Jubilee Oval, Waterloo Oval, Reg Bartley Oval and Turruwul Park and delivered new swimming centres including Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre and Prince Alfred Park Pool.

We've upgraded courts at Prince Alfred Park, Rushcutters Bay Park and St James Park and delivered a major skate facility at Waterloo Oval.

This term we've seen the completion of new parks and the renewal of existing parks with works valued at almost \$80 million. These include Quarry Green in Ultimo, Wulaba Park in Waterloo and Chelsea Park in Redfern.

Our commitment of **\$540 million over 10 years for Green Square** will deliver quality infrastructure as well as new community facilities. Community facilities include an innovative library and plaza to be completed in 2018; Gunyama Park Aquatic and Recreation Centre for which construction is expected to start in mid-2017; the Drying Green park that will open next year as well as the Green Square Community and Cultural Precinct on the former South Sydney Hospital site.

The community and cultural precinct will house the Joynton Avenue Creative Centre which will provide an accessible place for creative practice, a gallery space suitable for an Artist-Run Initiative, opportunities for emerging artists to hire low cost spaces, as well as incubator office space. The precinct will also house the Waranara Early Education Centre and the Banga Community Shed with tools, equipment and other resources for the local community to use.

We've also **upgraded and maintained existing community properties**. In all, we've invested \$240 million during the implementation of Sustainable Sydney 2030 and have committed to a capital program of some \$317 million over the next 10 years.

Ensuring our city has enough social and affordable housing continues to be a priority. There are now 845 affordable housing units in our area, up from 447 in 2007. A further 224 have been approved and not yet completed and there are more in the development pipeline.

We're using every mechanism available to us to increase the supply of social and affordable housing in the city.

We've introduced a **new Affordable Housing levy** in the Southern Employment Lands precinct, and the proposed levy in the Draft Central Sydney Planning Strategy which could deliver up to 1200-1400 new affordable units. And we've used our own property portfolio to facilitate the delivery of affordable units.

At the former South Sydney Hospital site in Green Square, I joined the Minister for Social Housing, Brad Hazzard MP, in opening the Exordium apartments, providing 104 affordable units in Zetland.

Just last month, Council approved the sale of the Marion Street depot for a **new 'Common Ground style'** development delivering 112 affordable units and 46 supported homeless places, subject to the Future Living Consortium being awarded funding under the NSW Government's Social and Affordable Housing Fund. Council also endorsed providing City-owned land close to the Green Square Town Centre to deliver a further 300 affordable units.

During this term, we established the **Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund** with the \$10.3 million from the sale of land in Harold Park (that also secured 76 new affordable housing units). The fund will contribute to a variety of new projects.

We'll continue to support new projects and strongly advocate for the extension of a levy across the local government area. However, the affordable housing crisis will not be addressed until there is leadership from the Federal and State governments.

The City continues to work hard to support homeless people in our area. **We've provided \$4.2 million towards homelessness services and we are the only council in Australia with a homelessness unit.**

We've partnered with NSW Family and Community Services, NSW Police, St Vincents Homeless Health, Mission Australia, Neami National, Launchpad Youth Services and other specialist homelessness services to reduce homelessness in key areas including Woolloomooloo, Wentworth Park and Belmore Park.

Cultural

Our community expressed a strong desire for a cultural and creative city in Sustainable Sydney 2030 and this was endorsed and extended through our community engagement in the development of Sydney's first Cultural Policy.

I am proud that our strong financial position has enabled Council to continue investing \$34 million each year in the cultural and creative life of our city at a time when other levels of government have reduced funding.

Direct funding through our grants and sponsorship is only one lever at our disposal. We know that the leadership we provide through our city planning, regulatory reform and the management of our property portfolio are also critical.

In an Australian first, a **\$25 million state of the art Creative Hub** for dance, theatre, music, film and visual arts facilities will be built in the city centre following an agreement negotiated by the City and developer, Greenland Australia.

Since 2012, Council has undertaken a number of short, medium and long term (5-10 years) initiatives to activate lower **Oxford Street**. One of the most visible initiatives was the activation of City-owned properties with creative tenants. Since February 2012, four formerly vacant City-owned retail and 14 office spaces were activated by creative enterprise through the Oxford Street Creative Spaces Program.

On average each year, more than 170 cultural workers and creative entrepreneurs benefited from access to affordable space through this program, with 30% working 30 or more hours from the space. In addition, another 140 artists each year were provided with space to work from.

Since the commencement of the Creative Spaces Program, the **tenants have attracted tens of thousands of visitors to the area** including customers, clients and audiences/participants in public programs and events. 585 events were delivered by artists, businesses and organisations including artist talks, workshops or masterclasses, VIP customer nights, industry gatherings, exhibition opening nights and meet-ups.

In addition to those who worked directly from the spaces, a further 1,900 artists and creatives had their work showcased in the spaces over the last four years.

The Eternity Playhouse opened in November 2013 and has quickly become a prominent and iconic theatre destination in Sydney. This 127 year old heritage listed building was restored and renovated by the City into a state-of-the-art theatre and new home for Darlinghurst Theatre Company.

In 2015, Darlinghurst Theatre Company staged 198 theatre performances across seven major productions and attracted 22,000 theatre patrons. They hosted over 50 events for not-for-profit organisations, local groups and performing arts schools.

When the Darlinghurst Theatre Company transferred to the Eternity Playhouse, its former home in Greenknowe Avenue, Potts Point became vacant. Following a comprehensive expressions of interest process, Independent Music Theatre was selected to manage the space.

In February 2014, the venue reopened as Hayes Theatre Co with a new production of *Sweet Charity*. That production attracted capacity audiences, won numerous Helpmann and Sydney Theatre Awards, had a return season at Sydney Opera House and subsequently toured to Melbourne, Canberra and Wollongong. This quickly and firmly established the Hayes as a major new home for musical theatre in Sydney and Australia.

As well as making City-owned properties available for creative activities, we've begun making it easier to make use of space not originally designed for creative activities. In February, Council endorsed the creative spaces discussion paper *New Ideas for Old Buildings* for public exhibition. This paper sets out options for overcoming the regulatory barriers our creative community face in establishing new creative spaces and provides a foundation for the next Council to overcome them.

The City has made over 20 City-owned properties available for **student rehearsals** at no-cost, we've supported the establishment of **The Gig Buddies pilot project** (to pair a person with a learning disability, aged 18 and over, with a volunteer to go to events together) and, in 2014, we approved \$60,000 one-off seed funding to 10 Group to support the establishment of **Art Money** - an interest-free art purchasing scheme. Art Money was launched in April 2015 with 26 participating galleries. One year on and the number of city galleries participating has increased to 35. Art Money has issued over 300 loans generating over \$1.7 million in sales. One-quarter of customers have identified as first time art buyers.

Bringing the City's history alive has been made easier with the introduction of our **Sydney Culture Walks** app. This app offers users curated walking tours through Sydney's historical and public art points. Over the past 24 months, there have been 22,457 total users making 61,454 total sessions.

Public art is an important element of any city. In the last four years, we have installed popular artworks including Jason Wing's *In Between Two Worlds* in Chinatown; *Youngsters* by Caroline Rothwell in Barrack Street; *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall* by Aboriginal artist Tony Albert; as well as numerous temporary works through the Art and About and Eora Journey Recognition in the Public Domain programs.

Progress has also been made in the development of significant new artworks to be installed in the city centre as part of the George Street light rail project including Tracy Emin's *The Distance of Your Heart* and *Cloud Arch* by Junya Ishigami.

Events delivered by the City – **Lunar New Year, Christmas, New Year's Eve and Art and About** – continue to evolve and have grown significantly under this Council's leadership. At the same time, we've been able to provide significant support for some of Sydney's major festival and events such as Sydney Festival, Sydney Film Festival, Sydney Writers' Festival, Fringe Festival, The Biennale and Mardi Gras.

We want to make sure that our **libraries play a central role in the community** and respond to changes in population and technology so we've upgraded our existing libraries and are building new ones. Green Square Library Plaza is due for completion in early 2018 and Darling Exchange Library is part of a new building designed by Japanese Architect Kengo Kuma and Associates and due for completion in 2019.

Partnerships

I would like to thank the many members of our advisory panels and reference groups who have worked with Councillors and City staff to achieve these remarkable outcomes.

This includes the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel, Better Buildings Partnership, Central Sydney Planning Committee, Chinese New Year Advisory Panel, City Switch National Steering Group, Curatorial Advisory Panel, Cycling Advisory Committee, Design Advisory Panel, Eora Journey Public Art Working Group, Green Living Centre Reference Committee, Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel, Late Night Premises Reference Group, Live Music Live Performance Taskforce, Mid-tier Industry Reference Group, Night Time City Operations Group, Night Time City Transport Working Group, Public Art Advisory Panel, Residential Apartment Sustainability Reference Group, Retail Advisory Panel, Safe Space Steering Group, Social Sustainability Taskforce and Sustainability Strategy Reference Group.

I would also like to **thank the tens of thousands of people** – residents, workers, business owners, representatives of the not-for-profit and business sectors and government representatives – who have shared their knowledge and advice and who have been active and engaged contributors to our city. **The important feedback from across our community shapes our policy and informs the detail of how projects are designed and implemented.**

I would also like to acknowledge the importance of the City's participation in international collaborations such as the **C40 Climate Leadership Group and the 100 Resilient Cities Program.**

Sydney was announced as a member of the 100 Resilient Cities network in late 2014. This initiative, pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation, helps cities around the world become more resilient to the physical, social and economic challenges of the 21st century. We are now working collaboratively with Councils from across metropolitan Sydney, as well as the NSW government, to develop the Resilient Sydney strategy.

I want to thank Councillors for your contribution and commitment to the City, especially those Councillors not seeking re-election – Deputy Lord Mayor Irene Doutney, Councillor John Mant and Councillor Jenny Green. And of course, the late Cr Robyn Kemmis who we miss every day.

Importantly, I wish to recognise the outstanding efforts of City staff over this term. We have benefited from having dedicated and expert staff working at this Council, led by our effective and inspiring CEO Monica Barone and our committed and talented group of Directors.

Thank you to the CEO, Directors and all staff for all your hard work and expert advice and commitment to our common goals of Sustainable Sydney 2030.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council acknowledge the contributions of all City Councillors, City of Sydney staff, partners, community members, and all who have worked constructively to achieve a better city.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE

Lord Mayor