

**ATTACHMENT E**

**APPENDIX: CITIZENS' PANEL  
FINAL PRESENTATION**



# City of Sydney Citizens' Panel

Recommendations for inclusion in  
the City's Climate Change Adaptation  
Plan.

# Preamble

We are a diverse group of citizens who live in many of the villages that make up the City of Sydney. We love where we live and value the vitality of the city and the connection we feel to the people within our communities.

We have learned much about the risks the City faces from climate change now and into the future, and some of the ways in which the Council plans to address those risks.

We recognise that these risks also provide an opportunity to create an even more livable and resilient city.

What follows are our recommendations to help achieve this vision.

# Overarching principals to guide the

## CCAP:

- A resilient, long term plan – politically sustainable, economically efficient and socially inclusive;
- A flexible and dynamic plan, able to evolve and respond to unexpected trends and consequences;
- A plan that is based on the most up-to-date data; and
- A plan that is delivered via a comprehensive and effective communication strategy.

## Risks and vulnerabilities:

The Citizens' Panel identified the following risks and vulnerabilities that had not been considered by the City of Sydney

- Absence of effective communication to the community about the risks posed by climate change, and the City's planned adaptation actions;
- Impacts to food security;
- Impacts on vulnerable groups that have not yet been identified by the City;
- Impacts to mental health within the community;
- Risk of litigation – has the City adequately assessed it's duty of care in a changing climate? Does climate change increase the organization's exposure?

## Risks and vulnerabilities:

- Sea level rise – the Citizens’ Panel is concerned that the City has not adequately assessed the impacts on the LGA;
- Impact of sea level rise on the water table;
- The fact that policies for dealing with climate change may be in conflict with other council policies;
- Changing wind patterns;
- Impacts of extreme weather events on pets, leading to increased stress for pet owners; and
- Impacts on wildlife. A changing climate could cause fauna from other areas to use Sydney as a refuge. This could have multiple impacts on biodiversity within the LGA;

Priorities for adaptation actions:

The Citizens' Panel were presented with a list of actions that the City could take to adapt to the risks posed by Climate Change. What follows is an assessment of the way these actions should be prioritized:

- **Storm water upgrades**
- **Use of recycled water**
- **Community education on efficient gardening**
- **Implementation of the Urban forest strategy**
- **Selection of sustainable materials for use in the City's buildings**
- **Water sensitive urban design**
- **Community awareness about extreme heat days and flooding**



## Additional adaptation actions:

The Citizens' Panel identified a number of actions that the City had not listed.

These were seen as a priority by the Panel. They are as follows:

- A Chief Environmental Officer should be appointed at the executive level within the City of Sydney. This person should be empowered to coordinate action to address climate change. They should be responsible for embedding climate change awareness across the organisation;
- An effective community education program should be developed that provides accessible information about the impacts of climate change, and the actions the City will take to adapt to a changing climate;
- Communications should include warning systems for severe weather events, such as those used by the Rural Fire Service for bushfires;

## Additional adaptation actions:

- More deliberative community forums
- The City should identify groups that are particularly vulnerable to climate change. The City should develop strategies to increase the resilience of these groups. These strategies should be tailored to the specific needs of each group;
- Council must take leadership in actively reducing use of motor vehicles to reduce air pollution;

## Additional adaptation actions:

- Council should divest from all investment in fossil fuels within its portfolio. All future investment should meet strict guidelines for ethical investment in companies responsible for renewable and clean energy;
- Council needs to review its insurance policy to ensure that it considers the risks posed by the most extreme climate change scenarios;
- Once risks are identified, the City should take action to reduce its exposure to litigation;

# Additional adaptation actions:

- The City should become a global leader in action to address climate change. This would mean assisting developing countries and other councils with fewer resources;
- The City must address inflexible, outdated regulations that impair the capacity of citizens to adapt to the risks posed by climate change. For example, it should be easy for residents to install photovoltaic cells on their roofs, and build awnings for shade protection;
- Increase planting within the LGA. More plants will provide multiple benefits that will enable the city to adapt to climate change. These include more shade, cooling the atmosphere and reducing air pollution by filtering the air. Increased planting has been shown to provide community and social benefits that will help build resilience;

# Additional adaptation actions:

- Dedicated respite spots for active transport users. People cycling and walking will need cool, sheltered places to rest during hot weather and storms;
- Face masks should be made available for use during high pollution days. There should be more community education about the use of face masks;
- Wind breaks were seen as important. Native trees and built features should be used as wind breaks;
- New design principles to reduce wind tunnels [The built environment should be designed to reduce wind tunnels]