

Resolution of Council

9 September 2019

Item 13.2

Sydney Light Rail Project and Proposed Additional Pedestrianisation of George and Devonshire Streets

By Councillor Vithoukias

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) that the report of Transport for NSW CBD and South East Light Rail Business Case Summary, November 2013, is used by the City in reference to light rail outcomes. The economic baseline in this report is six years old and has since been downgraded by the NSW Audit Office; reducing the likelihood that a positive cost benefit outcome will be achieved;
- (ii) the NSW Audit Office Media Release CBD and South East Light Rail Project 30 November 2016 stated: "Transport for NSW did not effectively plan and procure the CBD and South East Light Rail (CSELR) project to achieve best value for money." According to a report released by NSW Auditor-General, Margaret Crawford: "Transport for NSW is on track to deliver the project, but it will come at a higher cost with lower benefits than in the approved business case";
- (iii) that residents, ratepayers, small businesses and their families have been severely and negatively impacted by the overdue and over budget Light Rail Project;
- (iv) that hundreds of small businesses have suffered massive economic losses;
- (v) that hundreds of small businesses have been refused financial assistance by Transport for NSW;
- (vi) that without the direct advocacy of the Small Business Community there would not be a Small Business Assistance Program of any kind;

- (vii) that Transport for NSW intends to terminate the Small Business Program on 1 October 2019; and
 - (viii) that Council has proposed additional pedestrianisation of other sections of George Street and Devonshire Street;
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) urgently create and implement an awareness advertising solution across all relevant media channels, to inform all businesses along the light rail route of the 1 October 2019 deadline for financial assistance applications;
 - (ii) investigate any and all plausible activation programs to encourage return patronage to the completed Light Rail route. This is to assist any longstanding or newly set up small businesses along the corridor;
 - (iii) set up and implement a robust stakeholder consultation program for residents and businesses that could be impacted by these additional proposed pedestrianised sections of George and Devonshire Streets, prior to the City of Sydney making a commitment to implement;
 - (iv) provide a full list of the public domain works associated with these proposed additional pedestrianisation sections and disclose the budgets for these future public works prior to the City of Sydney making a commitment to them, and include this in the stakeholder consultation program; and
 - (v) investigate developing a Small Business and Residents Financial Assistance Program for those that could be negatively impacted by these additional public domain works, with recommended criteria and budgets, and provide a report back to Council with options for endorsement and public exhibition. This assistance program should be operational prior to the City of Sydney beginning any future public works for the proposed additional pedestrianisation;
- (C) the Lord Mayor be requested to write to the Minister for Transport to request in the strongest language possible, that the Small Business Assistance Program remain in place for a full 12 months after the entire light rail route is fully operational; and
- (D) the Lord Mayor be requested to write to the Small Business Commissioner asking her Office to deploy its resources to conduct a business health check six months and 12 months after Light Rail is fully operational, and request that the results of the health checks be provided to Council.

Note – the motion above was not carried. The resolution below was lost.

Moved by Councillor Vithoukas, seconded by Councillor Forster –

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note:

- (i) that the report of Transport for NSW CBD and South East Light Rail Business Case Summary, November 2013, is used by the City in reference to light rail outcomes. The economic baseline in this report is six years old and has since been downgraded by the NSW Audit Office; reducing the likelihood that a positive cost benefit outcome will be achieved;
 - (ii) the NSW Audit Office Media Release CBD and South East Light Rail Project 30 November 2016 stated: "Transport for NSW did not effectively plan and procure the CBD and South East Light Rail (CSELR) project to achieve best value for money." According to a report released by NSW Auditor-General, Margaret Crawford: "Transport for NSW is on track to deliver the project, but it will come at a higher cost with lower benefits than in the approved business case";
 - (iii) that residents, ratepayers, small businesses and their families have been severely and negatively impacted by the overdue and over budget Light Rail Project;
 - (iv) that hundreds of small businesses have suffered massive economic losses;
 - (v) that hundreds of small businesses have been refused financial assistance by Transport for NSW;
 - (vi) that without the direct advocacy of the Small Business Community there would not be a Small Business Assistance Program of any kind; and
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) urgently create and implement an awareness advertising solution across all relevant media channels, to inform all businesses along the light rail route of the 1 October 2019 deadline for financial assistance applications;
 - (ii) provide a full list of the public domain works associated with these proposed additional pedestrianisation sections and disclose the budgets for these future capitol works prior to the City of Sydney making a commitment to them, and include this in the stakeholder consultation program; and
 - (iii) investigate developing a Small Business and Residents Financial Assistance Program for those that could be negatively impacted by these additional public domain works, with recommended criteria and budgets, and provide a report back to Council with options for endorsement and public exhibition. This assistance program should be operational prior to the City of Sydney beginning any future public works for the proposed additional pedestrianisation.

The motion was lost on the following show of hands –

Ayes (4) Councillors Forster, Phelps, Scott and Vithoukias

Noes (5) The Chair (the Lord Mayor), Councillors Kok, Miller, Scully and Thalys.

Motion lost.

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