

Item 3.1

Zero Emissions Transport

File No: S051491

Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

In 2007 Sydney was the first Australian city to become carbon neutral for its operations and this year we met our 2008 goal of 70 per cent emissions reduction by 2030 – nine years early. I am proud of the City leading by example to take action on accelerating global warming.

But we know the world is not on track to meet the Paris Agreement targets and avert catastrophic climate change, we need to do more. We declared a climate emergency in 2019, together with 85 Australian councils representing 7.4 million people.

We are making strong progress toward our targets of reducing carbon emissions in the local area by 70 per cent by 2030 and by setting a new goal to get to net zero emissions by 2035.

In 2019/20, the transport sector contributed 17 per cent of Sydney's carbon emissions. As at September 2020, transport emissions accounted for 17.6 per cent of Australia's total emissions.

We need to continue our shift away from private vehicles in the city, to modes of transport with lower emissions that need less space - public transport, walking and cycling.

That is why the city contributed \$220 million to the Light Rail along George Street, specifically the public domain, to create a world class pedestrianised boulevard down the spine of the city, which we are now extending further to Central with an investment of \$40 million. It is also why the city continues to invest in the bike network and separated cycleways and continuous improvements for pedestrians.

Encouraging active and public transport will continue to be a priority for the City, to reduce congestion, improve amenity and reduce emissions. Major new transport projects, such as the Metro and light rail will make a major contribution to emissions reduction from mode shift. A key priority is for Metro West to extend to Zetland via Central, by 2031.

Supporting the Transition to Electric Vehicles

The introduction zero emissions vehicles, such as electric vehicles and buses, are also an important part of reducing emissions from the transport sector – particularly as the electricity grid becomes green. Major vehicle manufacturers have already indicated a move towards electric cars.

The NSW Government is committed to Net Zero emissions by 2050 with an aim for a 35 per cent cut in emissions by 2030 compared to 2005 levels. I commend the Minister for Transport and Roads on his recent announcements to:

- transition its entire bus fleet to zero emissions vehicles by 2030;
- run trains on renewable energy within four years; and
- provide incentives for or reducing barriers to electric vehicle ownership and use, including removing stamp duty for electric vehicles and providing electric vehicle rebates.

I also commend Minister Kean and Minister Constance for their plans to expand the electric vehicle charging network.

Using the Planning System to Expand the Electric Vehicle Charging Network

Electric vehicle charging should take place primarily off-street, through a combination of charging facilities in residential and commercial buildings; and potentially through market-driven, private approaches to charging stations accessible to the public. For example, Bell Resources intends operating a network of Ultra-Fast Electric Vehicle charging stations, co-located with car washing and takeaway coffee.

The City's planning controls provide an opportunity to introduce Electric Vehicle infrastructure into new development. Having occupant parking spaces built with sufficient infrastructure to enable fast chargers to be installed as needed at a later stage will support the transition to Electric Vehicles.

Planning controls can facilitate buildings providing Electric Vehicle charging facilities and encourage growth in electric vehicle uptake by requiring new developments to provide wiring to support an Electric Vehicle charger in each individual parking bay. Individual owners can install chargers as they buy electric vehicles, and as power demand increases over time building managers can implement load balancing, individual metering and other models that all use the same underlying infrastructure. This requirement will also capture carshare bays, to support carshare operators in their transition to Electric Vehicles.

I recommend that Council request that the Chief Executive Officer prepare draft planning controls for Electric Vehicle ready spaces in new development for consideration.

For existing buildings NSW planning controls allow for Electric Vehicle charging to be installed without a development application.

The Smart Green Apartments program is a key initiative of our Residential Apartments Sustainability Plan. We work with strata communities to improve environmental performance and a building's liveability and value, while reducing operating and maintenance costs for owners. The City should ensure that opportunities to install Electric Vehicle charging are part of the program.

The City should also use its partnerships with commercial owners to install Electric Vehicle charging, for example in hotels and other visitor destinations.

This is a rapidly evolving and complex issue. The City should develop appropriate communication materials so that everyone – residents, businesses, building owners, visitors – can have confidence in the City’s approach, and what the opportunities are for charging, now, and in the future.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) the Lord Mayor be requested to write to the NSW Minister for Transport and Roads and the NSW Minister for Energy and Environment commending the NSW Government on its recent commitments to electrify public transport and support the transition to Electric Vehicles, and to advocate for:
 - (i) rapid implementation of public transport projects in Future Transport 2056, including the Metro West extension to at least Central and Zetland by 2031;
 - (ii) accelerated delivery of the City’s proposed bicycle network, continuing the partnership with the City of Sydney;
 - (iii) public transport to operate using renewable energy, with zero emission buses in Green Square and the city centre, trains powered by renewable electricity and ferries powered by renewable energy as soon as possible, and any fleet not suitable for upgrade to have formal emissions offsets; and
 - (iv) partnering with the City to expand the electric vehicle charging network;
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
 - (i) prepare and report to Council draft planning controls in Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 requiring new development to be ‘Electric Vehicle ready’, with car parking spaces enabling individual electric vehicle charging;
 - (ii) investigate opportunities to encourage Strata Communities, through Smart Green Apartments, to install Electric Vehicle charging;
 - (iii) investigate opportunities to encourage commercial owners such as the Better Building Partnership and Sustainable Destination Partnership members to install Electric Vehicle charging in hotels and other visitor destinations; and
 - (iv) investigate opportunities to communicate to residents and businesses so people with or looking to buy electric vehicles, and/or install charging, understand the approach to charging in the City, and can easily navigate the statutory processes.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE

Lord Mayor