

Chinatown Public Domain Plan Program Update and Future Project Priorities

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Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on capital works improvements delivered by the City and other parties in the Chinatown area over the last 12 years and seek endorsement of future project priorities.

In 2010, Council adopted the Chinatown Public Domain Plan (Plan). The Plan was reviewed and adopted by Council in 2015. This review was in response to major development in the area including Darling Square, CBD and South Eastern Light Rail and The Goods Line.

This Plan is part of a broader City Centre Public Domain planning process whereby the City has been divided into eight precincts (Attachment A).

A key objective in the development of the city centre public domain plans is to rebalance space allocation of streets to provide more room for people to walk, cycle and stay. This objective is in line with strategic directions in Sustainable Sydney 2030 and key informing documents such as Public Space Public Life 2007 and Public Space Public Life 2020.

The Chinatown Public Domain Plan provides a co-ordinated response to public domain opportunities for streets and public spaces in the precinct, and recommends priorities for the City's capital works program, as well as being a tool to inform public domain works undertaken by government agencies and the private sector.

To date numerous public domain and building capital works have been completed, such as Thomas Street and Darling Square Library. (Attachment C)

Current works underway that deliver on the objectives of the Chinatown Public Domain Plan include the George Street South pedestrianisation project, which will complete the Sustainable Sydney 2030 vision of a George Street pedestrian spine connecting the harbour to Central.

Future project priorities recommended to inform future capital works program include Dixon Street Mall refurbishment and Quay Street upgrade.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) note the update on completed and current works underway in the Chinatown area; and
- (B) endorse the capital works priorities list and project proposals for exploration as shown in the subject report to inform the City's Long Term Financial Plan and capital works planning.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** City Centre Public Domain Plan Precincts
- Attachment B.** Chinatown Public Domain Plan Precinct
- Attachment C.** Photos of Completed Projects

Background

1. Following extensive community consultation, the Chinatown Public Domain Plan was adopted by Council in August 2010. A further review to the Plan was undertaken in 2014 and adopted by Council in 2015. This review was in response to significant development and infrastructure projects including Darling Square and South Eastern light rail project.
2. The Chinatown Public Domain Plan is part of a broader City Centre Public Domain planning process whereby the City is divided into eight precincts. (Attachment A)
3. Each precinct's streets and public spaces are studied to develop a series of projects to both significantly increase the quantity of public space and improve the quality of the city centre public domain. This outcome is based on the informing principles and recommendations set out in Sustainable Sydney 2030 and Public Space Public Life 2007 and 2020.
4. In addition to Chinatown, public domain plans have been completed for Harbour Village North 2012, George Street 2013 and City North 2015.
5. Public domain plans have been completed for Town Hall Public and City South. These will be presented to Council as separate reports.
6. Preparation of a public domain plan for City West and updates to existing plans are scheduled for future years. Where necessary, spot public domain updates are being undertaken to assist guiding future project such as the Hunter Street Metro precinct.
7. The Chinatown Public Domain Plan has initiated numerous public domain investments in Chinatown since 2010. (Attachments B and C)

Chinatown 2010 Public Domain Project

Date	Project	Project Cost
2010-2015	Chinatown Public Domain Plan adopted by Council in 2010. Significant changes with the Darling Square development presented the need to update the plan again in 2015.	\$200,000
2011-2012	Streetscape improvements - Little Hay Street, Kimber Lane and Factory Street. Includes Public art "In Between Two Worlds" by Jason Wing installed in Kimber Lane.	\$4,000,000
2011-2012	Dixon Street information kiosk. Conversion of the existing seating pagoda to an information kiosk.	\$500,000

Date	Project	Project Cost
2016-2017	Thomas Street public domain improvements including creation of new public space at Thomas Street/ Ultimo Road. Includes Lindy Lee artwork "Garden Cloud and Stone".	\$7,500,000
2017-2018	Harbour and Hay Street Public domain improvements delivered by Lend Lease as part of Darling Square development.	\$2,000,000
2015-2017	Wayfinding, mapping and directional signage installed in Chinatown/ Haymarket area. Signage also denoting "Korea Town" and "Thai Town".	\$185,000
2015-2019	Sussex Street – granite footpath paving and smart pole roll out as part of city centre pedestrian improvement program.	\$1,000,000
2019	Darling Square Library. New library facility.	\$10,000,000
2020	Former Haymarket Library on George Street to house the Museum of Chinese in Australia.	(subsidised lease)

8. The City is currently undertaking the replacement of cracked granite pavers and repair of seats in Dixon Street.
9. Necessary public domain maintenance and public art asset management are ongoing programs undertaken for Chinatown and across the City local government area.
10. The Chinatown 2015 Public Domain Plan project priorities are listed as follows.

Chinatown 2015 Public Domain Project priorities

No	Project priority	Status
1.0	Thomas Street	Completed
2.0	Quay Street	Documentation commenced
3.0	Dixon Street -south	To be commenced
4.0	Sussex Street	Completed - granite paving /smart pole rollout Liverpool Street - Hay Street

No	Project priority	Status
5.0	Goulburn Street	Granite/smart pole rollout to be completed
6.0	Hay Street	Western end of Hay Street at Darling Square completed. As part of George Street south project, Hay Street from George St to Sussex St is being pedestrianised and the Hay St footpath from Sussex to Harbour Streets being widened in 2022
7.0	Harbour Street	Western side of Harbour Street at Darling Square completed
8.0	Ultimo Road	Ultimo Road from George Street to Thomas Street included as part of George Street south project Section of Ultimo Road from Harris Street to Thomas Street subject to cycleway network feasibility and approval
9.0	Douglass Street and Lane / Edgar Street and Lane	Eager Lane closed to traffic - bollards installed and pavement re-sheeted
10.0	Valentine Street	Expected to be delivered by public domain contributions from nearby development

11. The recommended project priorities for the Chinatown public domain program is as follows:

Recommended Chinatown 2021 Public Domain Project priorities

No	Project
1.0	George Street, Hay Street and Ultimo Road Underway in 2021 and 2022, Chinatown sections costing \$18,000,000 George Street from Bathurst Street to Rawson Place is being pedestrianised - Hay Street from George Street to Sussex Street is being pedestrianised – Hay Street footpath is being widened from Sussex to Harbour Street– Ultimo Road footpaths are being widened from George Street to Thomas Street.

No	Project
2.0	Dixon Street Mall refurbishment. Scope includes seating and lighting upgrade as well as refurbishment of Dixon Street gates
3.0	Quay Street Upgrade to reinforce Quay Street as a major new pedestrian connection from Central Station to the Darling Harbour. Scope includes footpath widening, new paving, smart poles, and tree planting (final scope subject to traffic assessment)

12. The project priorities have been determined based on need, community expectation and opportunity to co-ordinate public domain outcomes and contributions associated with adjacent development or other projects such as George Street south.
13. The timing of the project priorities for Dixon Street Mall and Quay Street will be determined by Council's available capital budget allocations or delivery by developers as part of planning contributions.

Longer term project opportunities

14. There are longer term project opportunities that require further exploration, development and feasibility testing before scope can be considered for funding and implementation. These include:

No	Project
1.0	Sussex Street (Goulburn to Hay) Option testing to reduce road space allocation to provide footpath widening and more space for pedestrians and seating opportunities
2.0	Ultimo Road (Harris Street to Thomas Street) Feasibility testing and option development to provide separated cycleway as well as footpath widening
3.0	Harbour Street Option testing to reduce road space allocation to provide footpath widening and more space for pedestrians and seating opportunities

Covid -19

15. Public space is an absolute necessity for supporting healthy, equitable and financially viable city centres. The pressure for redistributing street space for high capacity transport, walking, cycling and public transport, is further increased through the demand for more space to enable safe social distancing.

16. Chinatown's vibrant night-time economy with a strong international student and visitor presence will need to be reinvigorated to support the recovery. Supporting the recovery will include attracting people back to the precinct and creating more space for people to safely access businesses in the area.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

17. Sustainable Sydney 2030 is a vision for the sustainable development of the City to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the City, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. The Chinatown Public Domain Plan is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 1 - A Globally Competitive and Innovative City - Chinatown embodies a rich combination of the city's history and its contemporary role as a global city in the Asia Pacific Region.
 - (b) Direction 3 - Integrated Transport for a Connected City - The Plan considers and responds to the changes to the City Centre as a result of the City and South East Light Rail Project and associated public domain transformation.
 - (c) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling - The Plan's focus is on creating a better environment for walking and cycling in the precinct.
 - (d) Direction 5 - A Lively and Engaging City Centre - A key objective of the Plan is to reclaim Chinatown from traffic, where there are more, and better quality open spaces for people to linger, and where 'fine grain' character such as small retail and service spaces is increased.
 - (e) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - Chinatown is one of the City's most vibrant communities and economies that is active day and night; better public domain outcomes as recommended by the Plan will build on its vibrancy a help improve conditions for the a thriving community and economy.
 - (f) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City - [insert information about how the subject of this report contributes to this Direction].
 - (g) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design - The Plan reviews anticipated changes that come with the surrounding major developments and seeks to provide design recommendations and input that would help improve public domain outcomes.

Risks

18. All project priorities recommended will require a project scoping and feasibility assessment process that will identify risks and mitigation measures prior to any implementation stage proceeding. This will include consultation and partnership with Transport NSW on proposals that require road space reallocation.

Social / Cultural / Community

19. Project outcomes recognise the importance of the public domain to bring people together by providing space to socialise and express cultural identity.

Environmental

20. Project outcomes are aligned with the City's environmental actions, in particular the need for more space to increase tree canopy and greening.

Economic

21. Project outcomes focus on delivering public domain quality and liveability which has been proven to be a key contributor to the competitiveness of cities to do business and attract investment.

Financial Implications

22. The City's long term financial plan has budget allocations for capital works for George Street South Pedestrianisation, including Hay Street and part of Ultimo Road, and the Chinatown Public Domain Plan program.
23. Priorities recommended for implementation by the Chinatown Public Domain Plan program will assist preparation and allocation of future capital works budgets or delivery by other parties through planning contributions.

Relevant Legislation

24. Project delivery will be in accordance to relevant planning and approval legislation and regulations including Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and Roads Act 1993.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

25. The George Street south (from Bathurst Street to Pitt Street), Hay Street (from George Street to Harbour Street) and Ultimo Road from (George Street to Thomas Street) pedestrianisation works are expected to be completed and opened up progressively from September 2021 to late 2022.

Options

26. Council may choose to identify these or other projects for investigation as part of the development and adoption of the Long Term Financial Plan.

Public Consultation

27. The adopted 2015 Chinatown Public Domain Plan builds on the extensive community consultation that was conducted for the 2010 Chinatown Public Domain Plan, which included a Lord Mayor's roundtable with key business, cultural and community leaders, street surveys, and two major well attended community workshops.
28. Individual projects will be subject to separate consultation and stakeholder engagement process which will be reported to Council with recommended project scope for Council approval.

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