

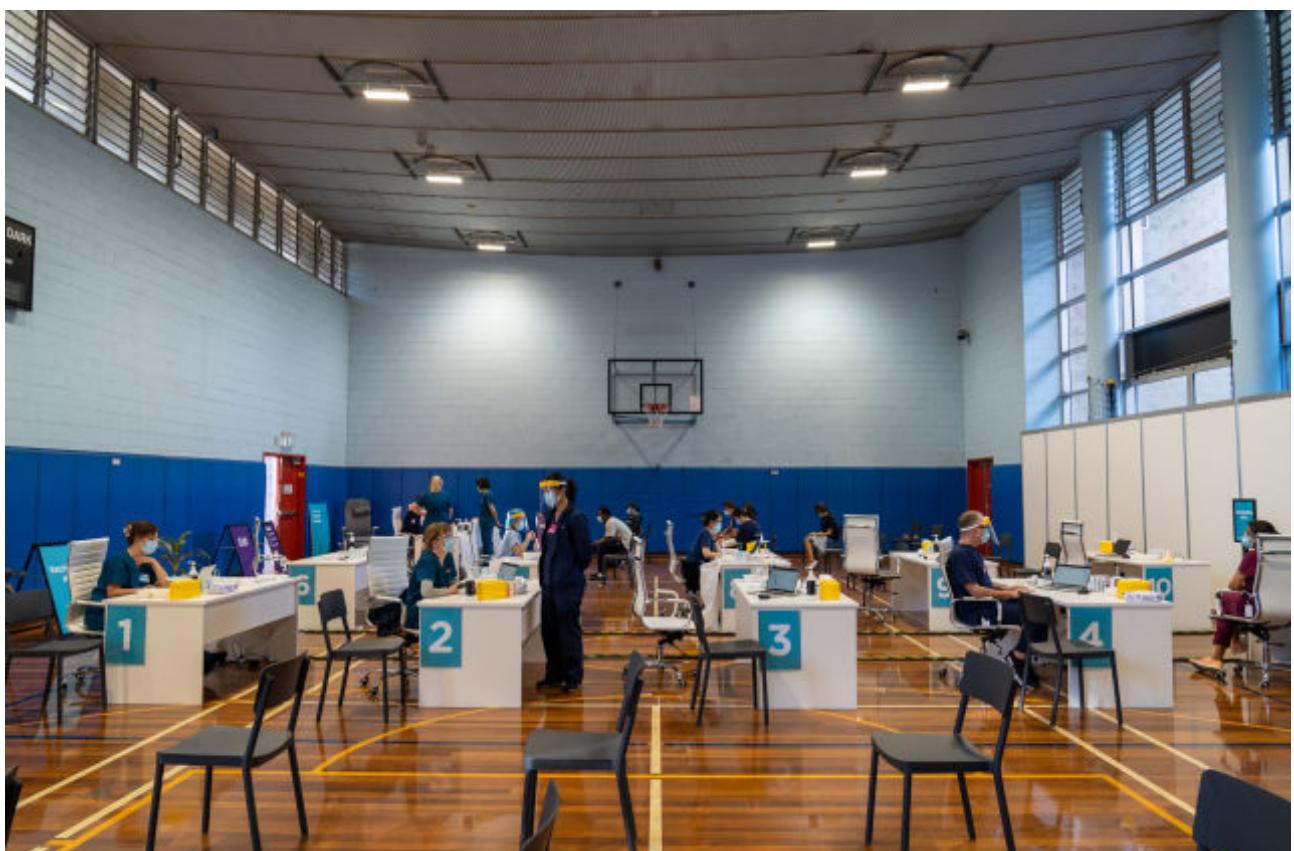
Attachment D

**First Quarter Community Recovery Plan
Report 2021/22**



Community Recovery Plan

Quarterly Report #5



Ultimo Community Centre is operating as a pop-up Covid-19 vaccination clinic. It is one of six venues provided by the City of Sydney to NSW Health to provide vaccinations in our local area.

Contents

Where are we now?	3
State of the city economy	3
Summary of the plan	7
What we have done	8
Action Area 1: Safely manage public space	8
Action Area 2: Equitable access to essentials	13
Action Area 3: Community resilience	19
Action Area 4: Protect creative sector	24
Action Area 5: Rebuild visitor economy	27
Action Area 6: Support business innovation	32

Where are we now?

State of the city update

Note regarding this data

Currently only limited up-to-date data is available at the City of Sydney level on the impact of Covid-19. Much of this data is collected or reported at different points in time, given different publication lags. The current situation continues to evolve – making much of the available data quickly out of date. Every attempt has been made to present the most recent data.

The arrival of the Delta strain in the final two weeks of the June quarter saw the September quarter dominated by City and Metropolitan-wide lockdowns as the NSW government, on the advice of health authorities, introduced severe restrictions on the activities, mobility, and livelihoods of residents. This lasted the entire quarter and impacted severely on the economics of the City. The consequences and challenges of the pandemic were highlighted in this quarter.

For the period July – September 2021:

- **City output (GDP):** The lockdown and tightened movement restrictions throughout the duration of the quarter is estimated to cost the city economy about \$250M per week, meaning growth in the quarter has probably declined by about \$3,500M or about 10%.
Compared to March quarter 2019, the quarterly modelled city output remains down about 6.0% in real terms, despite some ‘clawback’ recovery growth in the September quarter in 2020 and the first half of 2021.
The newly released ABS Monthly Business Turnover Indicator shows that for August 2021 Australia-wide accommodation and food services experienced the largest decrease in turnover, 10.7%, following a 16.9% fall in July.
Big falls were recorded in August in arts & recreation services (9.8%) other services (13.7%) and retail (-5.6%). Lockdowns directly impacted the operations of businesses in these industries, including cafes and restaurants, fitness centres, hairdressers and museums. Most of these are disproportionately located in the City.
- **Employment:** The ABS Labour Market Detailed publication for the quarter May-August showed the number of people employed in the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Area declined by 207,000 (the smallest geographic area the publication considers). Almost half of these were women working part-time. Based on a pro-rata proportion of jobs that suggests that the number of City of Sydney worker job-loss was in the order of more than 40,000. With the expiry of JobKeeper many of these employees dropped out of the workforce. This was confirmed by the ABS Payroll Tax Jobs Index which showed a decline of 11% for the City of Sydney LGA for the period since the lockdown was imposed.
- **Visitation:** Transport authorities indicate that transport patronage over the quarter decreased to be about 83% down on numbers in 2019. This is confirmed by City of Sydney pedestrian count figures (-90%), Opal Card usage (-83%) UberMedia-Roy Morgan Mobility Index (-83%) and Property Council estimates of office occupancy levels of just 5% of pre-Covid levels over the quarter. By September it was just 4%.

- **Spend:** Confidential spend data sighted by Council indicates the direct impact of the restrictions. For the September quarter (compared to the June quarter):

- Total retail spending decreased by 59%
- Total retail spending by international visitors decreased by 74%
- Total retail spending by domestic consumers decreased by 58%
- Spending at eating places fell by 76%
- Spending on accommodation fell by 86%
- Spending at clothing stores fell by 68%

However, the cumulative total gives an understanding of the impact on cash flow of city businesses and their economic viability following the end of JobKeeper and other support arrangements. It also explains why businesses have been increasingly concerned with the economic impact of the quarter lockdown. Compared to the equivalent quarter in 2019 (ie pre-Covid), spending in the quarter was as follows:

- Total retail spending decreased by 66%
- Total retail spending by international visitors decreased by 95%
- Total retail spending by domestic consumers decreased by 62%
- Spending at eating places fell by 79%
- Spending on accommodation fell by 93%
- Spending at clothing stores fell by 72%

As can be seen, the current lockdown effectively wiped out the gains made in the previous three quarters of 2020-21 as the city commenced recovery from the first Covid wave.

- **International travel and students:** The reduction of caps on international arrivals represents a continued threat to economic recovery and is likely to slow and delay recovery further. The city's hotel occupancy rate for the quarter decreased from over 50% at the beginning of the quarter (compared to 85% pre-Covid) to just 16%. This was the lowest level recorded for 2021. The lack of international visitors continues to impact restaurants, hospitality and culture.

It also impacts on the number of international students. Economically students are particularly important with an average local spend of \$25,000 per trip – six times the spend of the average international traveller. The latest arrivals data for May (NSW-wide) indicated that, compared to the February 2020 figure of 40,000 international student arrivals, there were just 200.

Over the period from March 2020 to September 2021, on-site enrolments in Higher Education and ELICOS courses in NSW (substantially located in the City and adjacent localities) declined by over 52,000 (48%) compared to only an increase of less than 13,000 in on-line enrolment – a net decrease of 28%. Significantly, this has particularly impacted on local businesses and shops servicing the resident student community. More particularly these 'missing' students may slow the rate of recovery of the hospitality sector as it seeks to expand, given their significance as source of labour. This may give rise to job vacancies being difficult to fill.

Confidence

- **Business confidence:** Not surprisingly, business confidence declined significantly through the pandemic period. Between February and the end of September 2020, the Index of Business Confidence has fallen by 18.2% and by 22.6% compared to September 2019. However, in response to the economic recovery as well as budget measures, it rose dramatically from November. That momentum of confidence continued into 2021. In fact, the May monthly figure was the highest for 10 years. However, the September 2021 quarter has seen that confidence level fall significantly by over 20% between May and August, as uncertainty about the ending of restrictions took hold. It did however, increase marginally to 104.6 in September (up 1.5%) as greater clarity about the road map out of lockdown was announced and restrictions were beginning to be eased.

However, the business confidence result was based on interviewing conducted before the Sydney-wide lockout and the latest restrictions were introduced in several states. There is no doubt that business confidence in NSW will be severely negatively impacted, particularly if the lockdown is reintroduced or restrictions further tightened. As an example, Victorian business confidence dropped 16 pts in June as the state confronted a new outbreak of cases and went into a two-week lockdown in early June 2021.

- **Consumer confidence:** Nationally Consumer Confidence also increased consistently from August to May. However, weekly confidence surveys in late June and early July highlight the fragility of such consumer surveys.

In July it declined 2.2% as Sydney entered lockdown. The next week as the lockdown was extended, Sydney consumer confidence fell 4.6%, and then by 10% in the next week (ended 6 July) after multiple major cities were placed in lockdown. The economic factor underlying confidence was indicated by the next week ended 13 July when Sydney consumer confidence rose by 3.7% after the Government announced income support to those in lockdown.

Sydney-siders remained reasonably sanguine during the extended lockdown and the Consumer Index remained virtually unchanged, albeit at levels that were above the 2021 average to date. However, as vaccination rates rose, cases began to fall and plans were announced for a ‘road-map’ out of lockdown, Consumer Confidence in Sydney began to rise and has continued into October as restrictions ease.

- **Recent trends - glimmers of light after the desert storm:** Objectively, the September quarter was one of significant economic ‘hurt’. The arrival of the Delta strain in early June interrupted the relatively positive recovery trends that were apparent in the first half of 2021. Overall, the run of economic data over the quarter has exacerbated the ‘hurt’. The consequences (and challenges) for the future were highlighted in the September quarter.

Jobs have been lost, with workers losing touch with their previous employer; many have withdrawn from the labour market; any gains businesses made in the September 2020 to May 2021 period were lost with businesses hanging by a thread and facing an uncertain future and the spectre of insecure work.

Far from being a thriving place for the exchange of ideas and energy, the city languished with virtually no workers, no visitors and no connection to other parts of Sydney or the globe. In the beginning, uncertainty over the length of the restrictive health requirements as cases, hospitalisations and deaths rose imparted a sombre gloom. However, as the mass vaccination campaign ramped up, vaccine supplies became available to more and rates rose dramatically. In the City of Sydney in the month to early October, the vaccination rate rose from 40% double dose to over 63% as younger people (who make up the largest age cohort of our population) became eligible for the vaccines.

Finally, after more than 100 days strict lockdown, this concerted attempt at mass vaccination saw average case numbers peak and decline. ‘Hope’ began to replace ‘hurt’.

Community Recovery Plan – Quarterly Report #5

A road-map with set targets to enable an easing of restrictions in mobility, movement and inter-action has been released. As the September-December quarter begins, it is clear hope provides for a more certain and sustainable economic recovery.

However, it will not be easy. We need to encourage businesses to re-open and to return employees to offices and shops; to encourage workers to return to the labour market; to get consumers to feel confident to visit and experience the city; and to encourage businesses and investors to feel confident about the future. Most importantly, we need to encourage Sydney-siders and other visitors that the interconnectedness of the people in the city people is its strength and not its vulnerability. We need to encourage residents to re-connect and embrace their neighbours.

There are still many issues to be addressed with the global economy still languishing; supply chain issues; health uncertainty from new strains of the virus; the possibility of further short, sharp lockdowns if required for public health reasons; the long-term effectiveness of vaccination and the need for booster shots, fragility of consumer and business confidence and complacency. We need to objectively learn the lessons of the pandemic both short and long-term and both health and economic.

Moreover, the likelihood of minimal international travel in 2021-22 and even 2022-23, and the subsequent impact on the food, hospitality and visitor-dependent businesses means the overall rate of further recovery is likely to be slow, and the employment impact may spike again.

Against those challenges is the resilience of the city and domestic economy, the momentum of confidence levels of business and consumers and the capacity of the city to attract back both workers and visitors.

The December quarter represents another critical period in the City of Sydney recovery.

Summary of the plan

Recovery goals

- Recovery is inclusive and equitable
 - Recovery supports a resilient economy and community wealth building
 - Recovery is a catalyst for a green and sustainable future
 - Recovery is strengthened by a robust and diverse cultural sector
-

Action Areas



Guiding principles

People are actively involved in recovery, shaping change in their city and their future

Recovery is responsive to the government health directions, led by stewardship and collaboration

Decisions are evidence-based and allow a flexible response

What we have done

This section provides an overview of activity under each of the recovery plan actions for the period 1 July – 30 September 2021:

	Total Actions	Actions Underway	Activity this Quarter
Business as usual/transformed actions:	39	39	37
New actions:	18	18	15
Recovery plan total actions:	57	57	52

Action Area 1

Safely manage public places and streets to support community life and business

People can move in and around the city safely because space is re-allocated and businesses can successfully reopen.

What we are doing to support recovery

- | 1.1 Prioritise our business concierge service to support businesses to open and operate safely | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There were 362 contacts to the business concierge service in quarter 1 21/22 and 1,540 since commencement as follows: <table border="0" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; width: 30%;">Q1 21/22</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Since Commencement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">Calls:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">144</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">Emails:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">218</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> – The majority of enquiries are about the City's grants program. | Q1 21/22 | Since Commencement | Calls: | 144 | Emails: | 218 |
|---|--|----------|--------------------|--------|-----|---------|-----|
| Q1 21/22 | Since Commencement | | | | | | |
| Calls: | 144 | | | | | | |
| Emails: | 218 | | | | | | |
| 1.2 Continue the acceleration of the capital works program to upgrade city streets, parks and playgrounds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Accelerated landscaping program is now complete. – Other completed projects in the quarter included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New skate plaza at Federal Park, Forest Lodge | | | | | | |
| 1.3 Clean public places and streets to a high standard | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – During the recent lockdown, all waste streams recorded significant increases in Q1 compared to the previous quarter. – City contractors experienced significant strains on staff resources due to COVID related absences. To accommodate the changing requirements of public health orders and cases where workers had to isolate, there were delays to some collection services, including green organics, booked bulky household collections, and reported illegal dumps. | | | | | | |

What we are doing to support recovery

General red bin waste and yellow bin recycling collections were prioritised. These collections continued as per regular schedules with minimal missed collections despite more waste being generated and limitations on available staff resources.

- The Home Recycling Trial continued which allows residents to have items collected from their front door with a contactless pick up and recycled via RecycleSmart. Resident uptake in this service has been steadily increasing since the start of the trial with 2.6 tonnes of tricky items recycled in September alone.
- The City's cleansing operations monitor for 'hot spots' in the LGA as identified by NSW Health and cleansing crews attend and service the immediate area. This includes removing any illegal dumps, steam cleansing footpaths and street furniture and emptying and cleaning street litter bins.
- Additional mobile street litter bins around hospitals and testing venues have been deployed as required.
- Areas with high pedestrian activity especially on weekends have been prioritised for servicing, including providing more litter bins and rubbish collections.
- Additional waste collections and street cleansing services have been provided to apartment blocks put under Covid-19 lockdown within the LGA.

- 1.4 Promote safe alternatives to single-use items to address emerging waste issues
- This quarter Plastics Oceans Australasia pivoted to online engagement activities for 14 local schools and 253 students to continue delivering the City's waste avoidance program. Activities included a virtual digital waste audit workshop and a National Science Week webinar hosted by a water scientist about plastic pollution in Sydney's waterways.
 - The Eliminate Single-Use App is in development for event organisers to easily find better alternatives to single use items like cups, tableware, utensils, bottled water and more. Over 40 suppliers and 30 solutions in 6 categories have been reviewed and updated. The app will be available as soon as user acceptance testing and internal checks are complete.
 - To continue waste avoidance engagement, while our educators were unable hold pop-up education stores during lockdown, a new 'Ask A Waste Expert' online service was set up on the City's waste & recycling webpages so residents could still ask questions directly to our staff about how to avoid, reduce and

What we are doing to support recovery

		recycle more. 108 questions from 78 enquiries have come in so far with the top 3 most common questions being about how to recycle plastics (22%), metals (17%) and food waste (15%).																																																
1.5	Communicate that Sydney is safe, clean and open for business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The City's approach to communications during lockdown was to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Localise health information • Connect people with services and relief packages • Provide messages of support • Encouraging conversations that restore optimism & engender pride in the city <p>In the next quarter, communications will revert to the promoting reconnection with the city as recovery commences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covid related content articles on City of Sydney News promoted via City's social channels and to 15,849 weekly email digest subscribers: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Page Views:</th> <th>Q1</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>• Public health alerts as required:</td> <td>6,833</td> <td>68,513</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Covid-19 page on CoS website:</td> <td>19,385</td> <td>25,544</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Face masks required in City venues:</td> <td>154</td> <td>5,552</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Get your Covid vaccination:</td> <td>10,831</td> <td>10,831</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Priority vaccination information:</td> <td>4,604</td> <td>4,604</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Green Sq Library pop-up vax clinic:</td> <td>3,468</td> <td>3,468</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Covid testing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community:</td> <td>941</td> <td>941</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Ultimo pop-up vax clinic:</td> <td>1,941</td> <td>1,941</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• New Covid check-in card:</td> <td>1,062</td> <td>1,062</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Support for business:</td> <td>997</td> <td>997</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Financial help for residents:</td> <td>2,026</td> <td>2,026</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Relief through lockdown:</td> <td>1,278</td> <td>1,278</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Mandatory changes to check-in:</td> <td>995</td> <td>995</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• City community hotline promotion:</td> <td>1,098</td> <td>1,098</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Exercising safely in parks:</td> <td>674</td> <td>674</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> 	Page Views:	Q1	Total	• Public health alerts as required:	6,833	68,513	• Covid-19 page on CoS website:	19,385	25,544	• Face masks required in City venues:	154	5,552	• Get your Covid vaccination:	10,831	10,831	• Priority vaccination information:	4,604	4,604	• Green Sq Library pop-up vax clinic:	3,468	3,468	• Covid testing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community:	941	941	• Ultimo pop-up vax clinic:	1,941	1,941	• New Covid check-in card:	1,062	1,062	• Support for business:	997	997	• Financial help for residents:	2,026	2,026	• Relief through lockdown:	1,278	1,278	• Mandatory changes to check-in:	995	995	• City community hotline promotion:	1,098	1,098	• Exercising safely in parks:	674	674
Page Views:	Q1	Total																																																
• Public health alerts as required:	6,833	68,513																																																
• Covid-19 page on CoS website:	19,385	25,544																																																
• Face masks required in City venues:	154	5,552																																																
• Get your Covid vaccination:	10,831	10,831																																																
• Priority vaccination information:	4,604	4,604																																																
• Green Sq Library pop-up vax clinic:	3,468	3,468																																																
• Covid testing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community:	941	941																																																
• Ultimo pop-up vax clinic:	1,941	1,941																																																
• New Covid check-in card:	1,062	1,062																																																
• Support for business:	997	997																																																
• Financial help for residents:	2,026	2,026																																																
• Relief through lockdown:	1,278	1,278																																																
• Mandatory changes to check-in:	995	995																																																
• City community hotline promotion:	1,098	1,098																																																
• Exercising safely in parks:	674	674																																																
1.6	Work with NSW Government on city management initiatives such as mobility and transport, temporary footpath widening, cycleways, change signal timing, lower speed limits, travel demand planning and reprioritisation of roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The City opened online applications for outdoor dining in new spaces, including reallocated road space on 30 November 2020. Since the commencement of the program until 30 September, 419 applications have been received, of which 156 relate to reallocated road space and 263 relate to reallocated footway space. Of these, 262 have been approved, 89 not approved/withdrawn, 66 are being assessed and 2 are on hold. <p>In total, \$3,208,465 in footway dining fees have been waived since the commencement of the pandemic.</p>																																																

What we are doing to support recovery

- In July, Council endorsed the extension of the program and waiving of fees to June 2022. Despite the onset of winter and a second extended lockdown, the City experienced a renewed demand for alfresco dining. 103 new applications were received in the period ending 30 September. Of these, 30 have been approved, 17 not approved/withdrawn, 56 are being assessed.

Other actions we will take

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1.7 Review and determine if current fee waivers should be extended to continue to support activation of space for community life, cultural participation and commercial use while maintaining accessibility</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fee waivers/rent foregone: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City assisted 3,347 businesses this financial year and 5,072 businesses since the beginning of the pandemic with relief of inspection, registration, application and administrative fees for health and building compliance activities such as food premises, mobile food vendors, temporary food stalls, skin penetration, cooling towers and fire safety statements. • Footway dining, market permits and filming fees on grounds of hardship. • Return of venue hire and banner fees for bookings that have been unable to proceed. • Waived/discounted venue hire fees for events that were able to proceed – Value of fees waived: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waived inspection, registration, application and administrative fees relating to Health and Building regulatory and compliance activities, such as: food premises, temporary food stalls, mobile food vendors, skin penetration, cooling towers and annual fire safety statements: |
|--|---|

Fees waived	Fin YTD \$ 557,935
-------------	-----------------------

- Waived filming fees, markets rental fees and venue hire cancellation fees:

Filming fees foregone	Since commencement \$ 161,059
Market rental waived	\$ 60,361
Venue hire cancellation fees waived	\$
Venue hire fees waived/discounted	\$

- Waived footway dining fees:

Fees waived	Since commencement \$3,208,465
-------------	-----------------------------------

Other actions we will take

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rent relief on commercial properties (excluding QVB): 	
	Apr 20 – Sep 21
Total rent relief forecast	\$7,886,615
Total rent deferral estimate	\$3,930,039
1.8 Invest in the pedestrianisation and activation of south George Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Construction to permanently convert the southern end of George Street to a pedestrian boulevard, creating 9,000m² of additional pedestrianised space began in March. Despite Covid restrictions and the NSW Health pause on construction, works are progressing well and are ahead of schedule. – More space for people to move around the city centre is now available, with the opening of new mid-block pedestrian areas on George Street, between Bathurst and Goulburn streets. – Works are now underway south of Goulburn Street to Rawson Place and should be completed early 2022. – A Community Liaison Officer has been appointed to work with local residents and businesses to ensure they are well informed ahead of works in the area. Regular updates continue to be provided to the community as construction continues. – The initiative is viewed as a positive step in the recovery by providing space for physical distancing, creating new outdoor space for businesses to utilise, and improving the look and feel of the street for people. It is considered to be a project that will help reinvigorate the southern CBD.

Action Area 2

Provide equitable access to the essentials for safe and comfortable daily life for all residents

Address rising inequality within our community by advocating for and supporting access to essential services for all. This includes housing, food, community services, digital resources and skills development.

What we are doing to support recovery

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>2.1 Direct existing grant support towards addressing emerging community issues and funding those most in need</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– In response to the June 2021 lockdown, the City offered community emergency quick response grants to provide urgent support for vulnerable groups in the city.– In this quarter 21 organisations were supported with \$199K in grants. 12 were for food security projects, six were for community cohesion projects and three were for digital inclusion projects. Further grants will be awarded in the next quarter. |
| <p>2.2 Continue to provide online and face-to-face programming with a focus on supporting health and wellbeing, digital literacy, social inclusion, reskilling and employment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Provided 319 online program sessions for 6,674 people.– Cultural and community programming was immediately pivoted to an online delivery format, where possible:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lunchtime talk series was accessible online and Auslan interpreted.• First Nations and Paralympic Wikipedia Edit-a-thons were delivered online with the Paralympic Edit-a-thon captioned.• Art and poetry activity packs were made available for download.• Five live online events were presented as part of History Week, From the Ground Up which included talks, Citizen History: House Histories research workshops and the release of a new walk on the Sydney Culture Walk app.• 11 online Auslan and English Storytime videos, featuring Deaf presenters as literacy role models were produced.• 3 Australian Life photography panels were delivered online and Auslan interpreted.• 4,166 attendances at targeted initiatives to improve community health and wellbeing• 25 programs to increase inclusion and diversity• 23 accessible programs offered to people with disability• 2,633 subscribers to an e-newsletter to support new residents in urban renewal areas to connect with each other and established communities |

What we are doing to support recovery

- 107 attendances at the online Wear It Purple forum and panel discussion with a diverse up line of LGBTIQ young people speaking and performing.
- 53 participants at International Student Leadership Ambassador wellbeing and empowerment workshop
- 99 attendances at the Youth in the city school holiday program online
- 76 attendances at 8 online Moon Festival programs to celebrate moon stories from eight cultures, including those of First Nations Peoples.
- From 23-27 August the libraries celebrated Book Week via a series of livestreamed Storytimes broadcast from the home offices of library staff.
Library staff negotiated with publishers for rights to read the titles, organised books to be posted to session deliverers and went live on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of Book Week. The sessions captured the imagination of a devoted crowd of the City's littlest library lovers. Three sessions were delivered with an average of 30 connections per session, including families and childcare groups.
- The City of Sydney's Online Book Club continued throughout the period to a dedicated group of readers. Themes during the period included Romance, Young Readers Literature and Narratives in Nature with readers selecting books from a suggestions list based on the topic.

2.3 Manage community spaces, services and facilities to ensure safe, equitable and affordable access and participation

- Six of the City's community centres and community venues for hire were made available to NSW Health for community testing and vaccination clinics.
- Libraries remained closed between 25 June and 27 September when two libraries reopened for Reserve and Collect service and Home Library resumed.
- During the period the Library launched the Caring Calls project, developed to assist library members to access library resources from home, reduce social isolation and maintain their connection to the library and provide access to local community information that might be of interest.
- The team made regular calls to Home Library Service members since the commencement of lockdown, as well as 64 library members over the age of 70 to help with accessing library services from home and to provide opportunity for social connection.
- These calls are an opportunity to promote eResources to the community and offer tech support and advice to those who need it. Library staff are also able to provide relevant contact details for other

What we are doing to support recovery

2.4 Increase utilisation of internet and digital access and participation through City libraries and community facilities and explore opportunities to support digital training and advocate for subsidised internet access beyond our own facilities

- services if required such as Covid-19 helpline, mental health, food and other essentials.
- Staff also made around 200 calls to members with reservations to manage their collection from Surry Hills and Newtown when they reopened with Grab & Go service on 27 September.
- All online events were free to attend.
- Accessibility and inclusion were supported through the provision of Auslan interpretation and live captioning at online events and alternative programming such as online Auslan and English Storytime, digital workshops and online webinars.
- 10 online programs were offered specifically aimed to improve digital literacy and inclusion.
- During the period the Library launched the Caring Calls project, developed to assist library members to access library resources from home, reduce social isolation and maintain their connection to the library and provide access to local community information that might be of interest.
- The team have been making regular calls to Home Library Service members since the commencement of lockdown, as well as 64 library members over the age of 70 to help with accessing library services from home and to provide opportunity for social connection.
- These calls are an opportunity to promote eResources to the community and offer tech support and advice to those who need it. Library staff are also able to provide relevant contact details for other services if required such as Covid-19 helpline, mental health, food and other essentials.
- Staff also made around 200 calls to members with reservations to manage their collection from Surry Hills and Newtown when they reopened with Grab & Go service on 27 September.
- From September the libraries provided online remote access to Newsbank. This online platform provides the community access to over 12,800 newspaper titles from around the world. Library members can access a wide range of online newspapers and newspaper articles in the comfort of their home or anywhere with access to the internet. The range includes over 650 Australian newspapers with full digital replica image editions of many titles.

What we are doing to support recovery

- The Library was successful in applying for a grant through the Good Things Foundation to increase the collection of digital devices available for loan. Devices will be purchased to support access for older people who are socially isolated, disadvantaged and do not have a device of their own. The Library will also provide digital skills training sessions to support access to services and social connection.
 - The Library participated in a research project with the State Library NSW and Department of Customer Service (Behavioural Insights Unit) on increasing visitation and use of libraries by inactive members. The research included a survey of members and analysis of usage data to understand barriers to use and the design of an intervention to address the barriers identified. Due to the timing of the project, the Library focussed on increasing use of online resources and designed an intervention that promoted resources via the enewsletter and provided an avenue for phone support to enable access.
- 2.5 Work with other government agencies and organisations working in the homelessness sector to support those at risk of or experiencing homelessness**
- Seven-day coverage provided by the City's homelessness unit and public space liaison officers who continue to engage with people experiencing homelessness. Staff continue to provide rough sleepers with the most up to date information from NSW Health, along with information about service provision and accommodation available.
 - 485 people were supported from July - September to access temporary accommodation.
- 2.6 Continue to leverage the City's existing Supported Accommodation, Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund to create more affordable housing**
- The City's LGA wide affordable housing levy came into effect in July 2021. The expanded levy is estimated to result in up to 1,100 additional affordable dwellings.
- 2.7 Advocate to federal and state governments for increased investment in social and affordable housing as well as no forced evictions and tenants' rights**
- The Lord Mayor hosted a Social Services Roundtable on 9 September to hear from more than 25 local community organisations, including key advocates and providers of social and affordable housing.
 - This resulted in a Lord Mayor Minute to Council on 20 September, where they committed to further advocacy, including writing to the Premier requesting the urgent provision of more social and affordable housing within the City of Sydney and Greater Sydney. Council also resolved to fund a transition plan for people experiencing homelessness who have been temporarily housed during lockdown.

What we are doing to support recovery

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>2.8 Prioritise the provision of food security services for our vulnerable communities through partnerships, networks, grants and existing services</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Delivered 12,852 Meals on Wheels meals to 232 residents and continued service uninterrupted. – In the period 12 not-for-profit agencies were supported through Covid-19 community emergency quick response grants to provide food support to the community. – The City continues to work with four food relief agency subgroups, made up of 34 core agencies, to respond to ongoing demand across the LGA during the pandemic. |
|---|--|

Other actions we will take

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>2.9 Work with charities to support their fund-raising to provide ongoing services to people in the local area</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In July 2021, Council resolved to donate \$300,000 each to OzHarvest Limited and Foodbank NSW & ACT Limited, along with \$100,000 to SecondBite to support these organisations to assist vulnerable communities to access food relief over the next three months. |
| <p>2.10 Advocate to the federal government for the continuation of financial and other support packages and broadening access to assistance</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More than 250 people attended an online event ‘Living in Lockdown’, presented by the City of Sydney with the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS) on 1 September. The event featured a panel of speakers from local community organisations discussing initiatives and impacts of the Covid-19 lockdown in Sydney during 2021. Hosted by Dr Cassandra Goldie, CEO of NCOSS, discussion was centred on the realities of people who rely on access to income support or other charitable relief, in line with ACOSS’s ‘Raise the Rate’ campaign and advocacy for the Covid-19 disaster payments. Guest speakers included Katherine McKernan, CEO, Homelessness NSW; Frances Rush, CEO, Asylum Seekers Centre and Ashlee Donahue, CEO Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Women’s Organisation. An ACOSS member who accesses income support provided insights into the Lived Experience of food insecurity and social isolation during the lockdown. The event was an important advocacy opportunity and highlighted the need for ongoing advocacy, collaboration and engagement with community to inform decision-making. |

Other actions we will take

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>2.11 Connect impacted international students to accommodation and mental health support services</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Four of the City's international student ambassadors participated in the City's Youth Week Training and Employment Program.– 53 international students participated in a Wellbeing and Empowerment workshop.– The City's international student ambassadors assisted in the promotion of Covid vaccination related information and support services to their networks.– The City provided information directly to international students to assist them to access vaccination bookings.– The City's international student ambassadors conducted eight informal online social activities such as study groups, movie nights, games nights and Q and A sessions to build students' connections and shared experiences. |
| <p>2.12 Advocate to the NSW Government to direct energy efficiency support to low-income residents and strata communities in the local area</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– The City is collaborating with NSW Government to ensure energy efficiency stimulus, incentives and support include strata communities and low-income communities.– The City is working with DPIE to promote changes to the NABERS Energy rating and renewable energy indicator to more clearly link to the Energy Savings Scheme and drive economic benefits through efficiency upgrades to buildings. |

Action Area 3

Strengthen community cohesion to build the resilience of local communities

Communities are connected, engaged and empowered to manage their own recovery and ready to respond to shocks and emergencies.

What we are doing to support recovery

- | <p>3.1 Provide grants that facilitate community engagement in City owned spaces and public places</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Due to the second lockdown, the City continued to provide rent relief for childcare centre providers for an approximate value of: <table style="margin-top: 5px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: right;">Fin YTD</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Since Commencement</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 521,046</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$2,187,235</td> </tr> </table> | Fin YTD | Since Commencement | \$ 521,046 | \$2,187,235 |
|---|--|---------|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| Fin YTD | Since Commencement | | | | |
| \$ 521,046 | \$2,187,235 | | | | |
| <p>3.2 Provide residents with links to support services and practical assistance</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provided information and referral pathways to residents in a range of formats online and in print with links to relevant health, safety and support contacts. There were 51,872 website visits to the City's Covid-19 response webpage during the quarter. – Continued the community hotline which received 138 calls for requests to information or support. – 23,500 hardcopy flyers, <i>Your guide for support during the Covid-19 pandemic</i>, were distributed to social housing properties, food relief distribution points, and to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. – The Lord Mayor wrote to social housing residents to inform them of vaccination services available in their local area. – The City has distributed 11,500 cloth masks to residents, including information on how to wear and care for a cloth mask safely and a QR code linking to NSW Health information. Masks have been delivered to boarding houses, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, Community housing providers, Meals on Wheels clients, and rough sleepers. – City staff coordinated a donation of 2,000 N95 masks from State Emergency Services (SES) to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations providing food relief. – City staff conducted 1,279 check-in calls to residents during July – September, to provide support and assistance during lockdown. | | | | |

What we are doing to support recovery

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>3.3 Support the provision of health and safety information to residential strata owners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The City continued to provide health, safety and resilience information through to strata communities through Smart Green Apartments and Residential Strata Sustainability Group and staff networks. – A webinar was delivered in September on emergency preparedness in strata with 102 attendees. |
| <p>3.4 Advocate to ensure environmental sustainability is of high importance in fast-tracked urban renewal programs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Advocacy has continued to NSW Government for environmental outcomes aligned to City targets in the following renewal projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Station Western Gateway • Waterloo Estate • Blackwattle Bay |
| <p>3.5 Coordinate local emergency response through Local Emergency Management Committee</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The City continues to coordinate the activities of the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC), including the response and recovery to Covid-19. This includes regular reporting on response and recovery activities and emerging issues. Progress update includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fortnightly LEMC meetings. • City of Sydney LGA Resilience Risk Assessment complete. • Revised Local Emergency Risk Assessment and Local Emergency Management Plan complete and endorsed by the LEMC and Region Emergency Management Committee. • Support to the NSW Health public health response through the use of City facilities as vaccination and testing clinics. • Coordinated support to vulnerable communities through emergency food distribution (hampers and kitchens), dedicated community hotline, targeted communications, personal protective equipment, and community quick response grants. • City of Sydney Crisis Management and Incident Response and Recovery Teams activated to address strategic, operational and business continuity requirements of the organisation and community. |

What we are doing to support recovery

- The City continued to waive parking fees for essential workers with 366 parking permits provided, and converted on-street parking for pop-up cycleways and workzones, foregoing revenue \$2,106,069 since commencement in April 2020, as follows:
 - Free on-street parking

	Since Commencement
Hospitals:	\$672,291
Cycleways:	\$161,815
Workzones:	\$ 62,017
 - Free Goulburn St car park parking

Q1 21/22	Since Commencement
Police:	\$ 63,465
Health:	\$ 3,417
Charity:	\$ 0
 - Free Kings Cross car park parking

Q1 21/22	Since Commencement
Police:	\$ 24,390
Health:	\$ 22,525
Charity:	\$ 1,700

3.6 Work with the Resilient Sydney network to share best practice and establish cross boundary recovery initiatives

- Resilient Sydney Ambassadors Network met in July on the topic of “Surviving Lockdown, Getting Ready for a Scorch” and then in August to share experiences of contact tracing and ongoing practice management of pandemic issues for councils.
- Councils met in workshops in July, August and September to share best practice on affordable housing policy and project interventions during an unprecedented rise in housing values across Sydney as recovery gathers pace.
- Resilient Sydney councils continue metropolitan wide projects with the NSW state government to support investment in urban forestry, net zero planning and social cohesion and wellbeing – directing recovery into building a safer and more liveable city.

Other actions we will take

3.7 Empower communities to manage their own recovery by strengthening local connections through networks, events and forums, for example supporting community

- The City hosted an online ‘Get Prepared’ information session in partnership with the Red Cross and NSW State Emergency Services. Over 30 social housing community leaders, residents and frontline workers attended the information session on 26 August.

Other actions we will take

celebrations at the end of the pandemic

- The City also distributed 300 hardcopy Emergency Preparedness Handbooks to social housing residents.
- In recognition of Emergency Ready Week in September, the City, in partnership with local social housing residents and non-government organisation hosted a Covid-19 Social Housing Support webinar. The webinar featured updates on current responses during the Covid lockdown from key staff from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice Housing, NSW Land and Housing Corporation, NSW Health and the City of Sydney. Over 70 residents and key frontline workers attended the session.
- The City hosted the quarterly Domestic and Family Violence Forum on 14 September attended by over 65 sector representatives, addressing integrated service provision and diversifying responses to domestic and family violence under Covid-19 restrictions.
- In partnership with food relief agencies, the City delivered workshops in business continuity planning and supported the groups to develop local protocols outlining ways of working together for ongoing support and in response to a crisis.
- The City has built the capacity of trusted frontline organisations to deliver food and support to vulnerable communities during the 2021 lockdown.

3.8 Facilitate capacity building workshops with the community sector and community led organisations to support their planning for the reopening of their services

- Due to the extended lockdown, no activity against this action was scheduled this quarter.
Support for reopening will be reported in the next quarterly report.

3.9 Explore with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community the idea to facilitate a culturally sensitive commemorative event due to the impacts on participating in *Sorry Business* during the pandemic, and to provide an opportunity for support, collective reflection and acknowledgement for community members who have passed away.

- Due to the extended lockdown, no activity against this action was scheduled this quarter.
The focus of the City's work with the community during the lockdown was to support access to services such as on testing, food relief and vaccinations.

Other actions we will take

- 3.10 Celebrate the work of the community groups and volunteers including at the annual Lord Mayor volunteer thank you event
- No activity scheduled this quarter.
-

Action Area 4

Protect and empower the cultural sector by prioritising the role of local creativity, cultural spaces, talent and knowledge

The resilience of our cultural sector is strengthened through involvement in recovery efforts, sustaining diverse cultural practice, protecting creative spaces and thriving community participation.

What we are doing to support recovery

- | <p>4.1 Direct existing grant support to sustain cultural organisations and stimulate development opportunities for local creatives</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No activity scheduled this quarter. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------|---------|--------------------|--------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|----------|-----------|-----------------|----------|-----------|--|---------|--------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| <p>4.2 Advocate to federal and state governments for targeted support for culture and no net loss of cultural space</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No activity scheduled this quarter. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>4.3 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practices and knowledge sharing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The City is working to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander grant applications through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion • Training • Application • Assessment – Nine successful community emergency quick response grant applications were from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned organisations, seven of which were verbal applications. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>4.4 Continue work to maximise opportunities for cultural sector in City owned spaces and community venues</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The City is providing rent relief for creative spaces, short-term empty property, creative accommodation grant and live/work Waterloo and William St tenants for an approximate value of: <table border="0" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">Fin YTD</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Since Commencement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>• Creative spaces:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$21,430</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$194,205</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Other cultural:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$63,155</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$360,755</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Other social:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$33,638</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$171,338</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> – In total, the City has provided rent relief for Accommodation Grant Program recipients and creative tenants to the value of: <table border="0" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">Fin YTD</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Since commencement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Rent relief</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$639,269</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$2,917,532</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Fin YTD | Since Commencement | • Creative spaces: | \$21,430 | \$194,205 | • Other cultural: | \$63,155 | \$360,755 | • Other social: | \$33,638 | \$171,338 | | Fin YTD | Since commencement | Rent relief | \$639,269 | \$2,917,532 |
| | Fin YTD | Since Commencement | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Creative spaces: | \$21,430 | \$194,205 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Other cultural: | \$63,155 | \$360,755 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Other social: | \$33,638 | \$171,338 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Fin YTD | Since commencement | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rent relief | \$639,269 | \$2,917,532 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

What we are doing to support recovery

- All cultural tenants continue to be provided proactive contract management support through a challenging period for the creative industries. On 26 July 2021, Council resolved to provide “Support for Our Community - 2021 Lockdown Response” by approving Creative Live Work and Accommodation Grant Program tenant rent relief commencing 26 June (being the date that the City of Sydney local government area was placed under stay-at-home orders) and ending once stay-at-home orders affecting the City of Sydney local government area are lifted.
- 4.5 Enable diverse local cultural infrastructure and activation through the City’s Open and Creative planning reforms
 - The Open and Creative planning reforms, a set of measures to make it easier for small businesses to trade later, or host performances and shows are still with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for finalisation. Once drafting by Parliamentary Counsel is complete, the reforms will be published and able to be implemented.

Other actions we will take

- 4.6 Facilitate opportunities for collaboration and capacity building to ensure cultural sector resilience and sustainability
 - No activity scheduled this quarter.
- 4.7 Continue to explore opportunities for making space for culture in partnership with public and private sectors
 - In 2014, the City entered into a Voluntary Planning Agreement with Greenland Pty Ltd to deliver a Creative Hub as part of the Development Application consent for its mixed-use building at 115-119 Bathurst Street. The City of Sydney Creative Studios is a 2000 square metre facility encompassing a variety of affordable rehearsal spaces, production spaces and creative studios for creative practitioners and enterprises. In September 2021, Brand X Incorporated were appointed as service operator of the Creative Studios following an open tender process. The City is currently undertaking the final fit-out of specialist technical equipment and systems for recording, rehearsal and production capabilities, as well as the fit-out of the entry foyer and café. Brand X is now working with the City to prepare for the facility starting operations in early-mid 2022.

Other actions we will take

- 4.8 Set up a working group comprising representatives of the cultural sector to agree sites for pop-up or future cultural activity and prepare a report to Council to approve these sites as Covid-19 recovery activity sites – Action complete
-

Action Area 5

Rebuild the visitor economy through promotion of our vibrant and safe city with activated main streets and nightlife

People in the city are supported to safely return to a 24-hour Sydney through a phased and integrated approach, with government and industry working together.

What we are doing to support recovery

- 5.1 Use our communications channels to promote shop local and visit local to residents, workers and visitors
- Continued option for online events to be promoted on What's On(line). Despite a strong start with many events being moved online as reported last quarter, the volume of events dropped off as the lockdown continued with a 74% decrease in the number of events being submitted.
 - When stay at home orders were announced on 26 June, What's On reverted to What's On(line) and presented events that are being held online only.
 - Leveraged What's On as primary event platform:
 - Events submitted: 1,000
 - Page views per month: 57,536
 - Sessions per month: 45,344
 - Email subscribers: 31,512
 - Development of a city revitalisation marketing campaign is underway in preparation of the end of lockdown.
- 5.2 Continue to invest in local festivals and major events that demonstrate Sydney's vibrancy and encourage local Sydneysiders and others from around the state and country to visit
- Due to the Sydney Covid-19 outbreak in June, *NAIDOC in the City 2021* was held online from 10 to 24 July. The theme for NAIDOC Week 2021 was 'Heal Country!' and called for stronger measures to recognise, protect and maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage. The program for NAIDOC in the City was produced by the Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research. The website went live on 10 July which featured a Welcome to Country, history of NAIDOC, and an online marketplace including interviews with stallholders. An online weaving workshop with Ronnie Jordon from Culture on The Move was held on Saturday 17 July and on Saturday 24 July MCs Aaliyah Bradbury and Jake Gordon presented a 2-hour online show, sharing music and interviews, with performances by Magpie Swoop, Tessa Thames, Gii Music and Marcus Corrowa.

What we are doing to support recovery

- In 2021 the 28 *Australian Life* finalist images were presented as an online gallery of images. There were 1971 images submitted to the competition, they were taken in locations all over Australia. Judges Trent Parke, Michaela Skovranova, Justine Clarke and curatorial adviser Sandy Edwards selected the 28 finalist images.

Since we broadened the focus nationally, images came from all around Australia. There are entries from Papunya to Bathurst Island in the Northern Territory, from Canberra, and Mt Kosciusko, from Fremantle to Broome and from dozens of places around Sydney and NSW. The 2021 winner was 19-year-old Georgia Brogan for her image *Youth*.

The inaugural People's Choice award was a great way for audiences to get involved with Australian Life. 3082 votes were received and the winner of the Olympus People's Choice Award It Always Rains Before Kick Off by Elise Derwin received a total of 322 votes. The winner received an Olympus Professional Prize Pack valued at \$5000.

The light installation *Intersections* by Ian Strange was presented in a Victorian terrace in Surry Hills from 24 June – 4 July. Large LED beams of white light pierced through the entire building and created a spectacular light installation visible from the street and from the light rail along Devonshire street. The installation commenced at the same time as the most recent Sydney lockdown meaning only the local community was able to view the work.

- The large-scale mural *As One Door Closes, Another Opens* by Will Cooke was installed on 28 June at Top of the Town building in Darlinghurst. It draws on the simplest of utilitarian objects – the common door. Not just any door though: this work is inspired by the progressive designs of modernist architect Jean Prouve (France, 1901-1984). This project has been well received by the community and residents have delighted in posting images from varying perspectives of the mural from locations such as the Taronga Zoo and the Harbour Bridge.

- 5.3 Continue to partner with Business Events Sydney to build the pipeline of business meetings for Sydney

- Lockdown and the extended closure of both domestic and international borders has delayed the materialisation of business events that were planned to take place in 2020 and 2021. BE Sydney has nevertheless been recently allocated City of Sydney funding towards some key national corporate meeting opportunities.

What we are doing to support recovery

One of these meetings is Unbound ANZ a multi-year opportunity. A leading innovation event and closely aligned with the City's priority industries, it is expected to attract 2,000 delegates and worth nearly \$5M in estimated direct expenditure in 2022. The event is forecasted to grow to 6,000 delegates and \$12M in estimated direct expenditure by 2023, then to 8,000 delegates and over \$18M in direct expenditure by 2024.

- BESydney will continue with the acquisition of domestic business events (with +600 delegates), focused around the following criteria which aligns with the City's priorities including:
 - National multi-day business events to be held between 2022-2024.
 - Minimum 50% interstate delegate mix
 - Business event to be held within the City of Sydney LGA
- The latest wins take BESydney's bid win tally to 18 year-to-date, and 92 events in total secured through to 2029 with a combined estimated direct expenditure of \$480M.

5.4 Continue to engage with the accommodation and entertainment sector to ensure sustainability is promoted and prioritised

- While the accommodation and entertainment sector continue to be heavily impacted by the pandemic, the City continues to focus on 3 primary goals:
 - Activate Upgrades:
The City has continued to promote and offer subsidised building ratings to the sector through the provision of grants.
 - Build Capacity and Foster Leadership:
The Sustainable Destination Partnership is the key platform through which the city builds the sector capacity and demonstrates leadership. The City contributed to a leadership forum and annual workplan endorsement for the Sustainable Destination Partnership.
 - Promote and Recognise:
A submission was also made for Sydney to participate in the annual Global Sustainable Destination Index.

5.5 In line with health advice, welcome people back to Sydney through roaming ambassadors, maps and digital services

- It has not been feasible to recommence the visitor ambassador program while the city is in lockdown and interstate and international borders remain closed.

What we are doing to support recovery

- 5.6 Advocate to state and federal governments for ongoing support for international students while they continue to be impacted by the pandemic
- A factsheet was prepared to provide up to date information for City representatives to refer to in their conversations with stakeholders on this issue.

Other actions we will take

- 5.7 Engage local creatives in the City's programs and work with others to do the same to activate precincts to support local businesses, sustain local culture and drive footfall on main streets
- As part of the \$20 million Al Fresco City Project partnership with NSW Government, the City continued to work closely with grant recipients of the \$3M CBD Activations Grant Program. Of the 96 funded initiatives, 57 have already been completed. Due to the latest lockdown, a total of 35 initiatives are currently being rescheduled to be delivered between November 2021 and June 2022 in the CBD. This will include creative events such as 'Spring Sessions by Merivale' (live music and performances in laneways) in November, and 'Sticky Notes' a series of music performances at Customs House Forecourt in December.
- 5.8 Partner with Destination NSW to develop a local and domestic visitor marketing campaign for Sydney, with focus on the cultural offering over the 2020–2021 summer
- With the extended lockdown active for the entire reporting period, all destination and experience marketing by Destination NSW and the City was put on hold. A new campaign is in development by both organisations which will commence as soon as restrictions ease in October 2022.
- 5.9 Encourage and facilitate the return of international students back to Sydney in partnership with education sector
- Current figures indicate 96,223 international students are onshore in NSW while 54,025 remain offshore, which equates to 34% of the student population.
 - Study NSW announced on 24 September 2021 that the International Students Arrival Pilot plan to return international students to NSW received endorsement from the Australian Government. The plan will allow 250 international students to return each fortnight from early December 2021. The plan is fully funded by the education sector with in-kind support provided by the NSW Government around logistics and coordination. The returning students must be fully vaccinated with a Therapeutic Goods Administration recognised Covid-19 vaccination before landing in Sydney. They will quarantine in purpose-built student accommodation in Redfern and adhere to the same health and quarantine requirements set by the Australian Government for returning Australians.

Other actions we will take

- At the flagship Australian International Education Conference (AIEC), the City participated in the virtual panel, ‘Opportunity in Adversity’ to discuss the success of virtual internship nano projects delivered during Covid to enhance the skills of students onshore and offshore.
-

Action Area 6

Support businesses and organisations to innovate and adapt, so that industries can evolve and grow

Connecting people to new ways of thinking and working, harnessing their creative capacity to solve problems, pivot and transform through skills development, new models and partnerships so more businesses can share in the benefits.

What we are doing to support recovery

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>6.1 Facilitate dialogue with heavily impacted sectors to support their recovery</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– As part of ongoing consultation with the business community, the City hosted a virtual consultation session with chambers of commerce, industry organisations and local businesses to further understand business sentiment, Covid-19 related impact, and current needs. These insights will inform the upcoming \$3million business support grant program to launch in February 2022 and help reactivate the city post lockdown. |
| <p>6.2 Direct existing grant support for organisations, businesses and industry, including those dominated by women, to assist them to innovate, adapt and grow</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– The City's grants relationship managers are working with the recipients of Knowledge Exchange Sponsorships awarded last quarter which include Building Sydney's Gig Economy – a study into the highly vulnerable gig work in Sydney and InvestHer Business Workshops to support female entrepreneurs. |
| <p>6.3 Continue to support collaboration across the innovation precincts within the Camperdown Ultimo collaboration area</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– The City has continued to work collaboratively with precinct partners and the Greater Sydney Commission on the Tech Central innovation precinct to develop a brand identity and website for the precinct, an investment and talent attraction prospectus and an online tool identifying the physical networking assets in the precinct. It is expected Tech Central will be launched in October or November.– Staff met with the chair and CEO of the new Tech Council of Australia to discuss their priorities for the tech sector, including the target for 1 million people to be employed in technology jobs by 2025, and to contribute \$250B to GDP by 2030. The collaborative work in the Tech Central will support these targets. |
| <p>6.4 Implement the Central Sydney planning strategy to support a pipeline of development and investment certainty</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Central Sydney planning strategy and planning proposal were approved by Council and the Central Sydney planning committee in December 2020. The city is working with the NSW Government on the drafting and finalisation of the planning controls and contributions plan. |

What we are doing to support recovery

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>6.5 Continue to use City procurement to support local businesses and a shift to a circular economy</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implementation of the social and sustainable procurement guidelines, supplier code of conduct, and returnable schedule on selected procurement activities is being monitored for effectiveness. |
| <p>6.6 Continue to support communities and businesses to accelerate their uptake of renewable energy to stimulate the green economy</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Action to support businesses is largely delivered through the flagship programs of the Better Buildings Partnership (BBP) and CitySwitch Green Office. In Q1 activity focussed on annual reporting and setting up resourcing for the year ahead. <p>Engagement commenced on how these programs can be leveraged to drive sustainable outcomes at a precinct level at Tech Central and Greenhouse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There is 18.3 MW of rooftop solar installed in LGA, an increase of 1.5MW from last quarter. The City has continued to encourage renewables uptake through innovation grants. A recent grant project found that combining rooftop solar with a green roof in the CBD resulted in a cooler roof with thriving wildlife. It also removed an additional 8.8 tonnes of carbon emissions and reduced the impacts of flooding by slowing stormwater runoff. A webinar was delivered with over 280 registered from across academia, government and industry. – To support residents to switch to renewables, the City awarded a knowledge exchange grant to the Sydney Solar Villages project. Over six months, the community group is bringing their insight and experience to the villages of the City of Sydney through a series of solar information nights, with support from existing guides and resources created by the sustainability programs and planning teams. Switching to Greenpower is also covered. |
| <p>6.7 Continue to assist businesses and apartment buildings owners' corporations to implement retrofits for increased efficiency</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Smart Green Apartments program has reduced emissions by 25,395 tonnes CO₂e per year and saved owners' corporations \$2.48M. An additional 30kW of solar was installed this quarter, taking the total installed to 682kW. – The Strata Sustainability Reference Group was held in August and focused on sustainability, resilience and Covid-19 support for high density communities. – A webinar on emergency management in strata was delivered in September with 102 attendees. – To date, the City has supported 126 apartment buildings to get a NABERS rating (12 this quarter) with six procuring GreenPower (two this quarter). – One e-news was sent to 3,414 subscribers. |

What we are doing to support recovery

- The City continued to advocate for improved minimum environmental standards for apartment buildings.
- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>6.8 Prioritise investment in City projects that provide significant local green economy benefits</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The City announced an accommodation grant for a new venture Greenhouse. Greenhouse will be a new climate technology startup innovation hub at Circular Quay. <p>Greenhouse will provide a desirable and affordable home to startups and scaleups focused on tech solutions to benefit the environment and grow the green economy. The clean tech industry is set to play a critical role in the continued growth and economic success of wider Sydney and the national economy</p> <p>The hub will open in 2022 and will take over the first 3 floors of the new 56-storey tower at 180 George Street at Circular Quay, delivering 3,800 sqm of affordable space. It will be a place where local talent can accelerate their growth into local and global markets, make a positive impact on the environment and contribute to reducing Australia's carbon emissions.</p> |
|--|---|

Other actions we will take

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>6.9 Produce skills development programs to enhance innovation, collaboration, digitisation and e-commerce</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The third Sydney Landing Pad program, delivered by Haymarket HQ with funding support from City of Sydney, attracted 60 applications from all over the globe. The goal of the program is to support high growth companies to successfully expand in Australia and increase Sydney's connections with international markets. 14 companies from sectors including medtech, fintech and clean technology were selected to participate in the program. The 2-week intensive program was delivered between 23 August and 3 September. The program included 8 workshops, individual advisory sessions and multiple connections to local founders and industry experts. – The City also partnered with Investment NSW and Asialink to deliver a Clean Economy Roundtable on 16 August. The roundtable was attended by 20 key stakeholders across industry, government, and academia to unlock trade and investment opportunities and inform the upcoming NSW-Guangdong Joint Economic Meeting in late December. |
|---|--|

Other actions we will take

- 6.10 Advocate to federal and state governments to invest in green economy as major generator of jobs
- With the announcement of the City's investment in Greenhouse, the new green-tech startup and scale hub innovation hub at Circular Quay, the City has signalled to the state and federal governments the importance of investing in the green economy.

