

Relevant Information for Council

FILE: X023841.010 **DATE:** 19 August 2022

TO: Lord Mayor and Councillors

FROM: Emma Rigney, Director City Life

THROUGH: Monica Barone, Chief Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Information Relevant To Item 8.2 - Adoption - Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy

For Noting

This memo is for the information of the Lord Mayor and Councillors.

Purpose

To provide information to Councillors about how the Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy is implemented in practice, and how progress is monitored and reported to Council.

Background

At the meeting of the Resilient Communities Committee on 15 August 2022, further information was sought on the City's process and plans for implementing the accessibility principles in the Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy, in particular, the physical upgrades it applies to; how this information is reported to Council and how the City monitors implementation.

The Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines applies to the design of all new and renewed public domain spaces and infrastructure, including streets, parks and open spaces. Delivering accessible and inclusive public spaces and infrastructure is a core business-as-usual requirement across all City projects. The Policy and Guidelines do not apply retrospectively and do not determine when public domain spaces and infrastructure are renewed. Existing approaches to scheduling the City's public domain capital works projects and asset renewal programs apply.

This includes:

1. All streetscape upgrade projects delivered by the City through its Capital Works Program;
 - (a) These projects consider the streetscape holistically and includes upgrade of numerous elements including footpath widths and surfaces, new street furniture, crossing treatments, kerb ramps and street greening. The Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines guide, and the Streets Code guide the access outcomes achieved through the overall design coordination and in the design of specific elements, for example, kerb ramps or street furniture.
 - (b) Examples include new streets in the Green Square Town Centre and wider Green Square Urban renewal area, upgrade works in the CBD such as George Street South pedestrianisation and major improvement and upgrade works for 'Village Centre' streetscapes, including the recent Macleay Street Improvement for Kings Cross/Potts Point, McDonald Street widening in Erskineville and the upcoming Crown Street Surry Hills and Thomas and Hay Street Ultimo improvements.
2. All open space and park upgrade projects delivered by the City through its Capital Works Program:
 - (a) These projects deliver new or substantially upgraded parks and open spaces. The scope varies depending on the size of the park and the amenities provided in that park, and which elements are being renewed. The Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines apply to all elements including playgrounds, sports fields and spectator viewing areas, skate parks, pathways, planting choices, and park furniture.
 - (b) Examples of major new parks and open spaces where the Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines apply include the Drying Green in Green Square and the planned new inclusive playground in the Cook and Phillip Park in the City Centre.
 - (c) The Policy and Guidelines also apply to all small parks and playground works. Current examples include Clyne Reserve; Lawrence Hargrave Reserve; Minogue Crescent Reserve, Forest Lodge; Peace Park, Chippendale; Tote Park Zetland; Park on Lyons Road (Western Block), Camperdown; Woolloomooloo Playground; Blackwattle Playground; Ethel Street Playground; Harry Noble Reserve; James Watkinson Reserve; and Michael Kelly Rest Area.
3. Asset Renewal Programs:
 - (a) In line with the City's Asset Management Plan which forms part of the City's Resourcing Strategy, management of public domain assets is a critical area of local government responsibilities and how this is managed is governed by legislated standards.

- (b) The program for asset renewal and enhancement is informed by the City's Asset Management Strategy. In particular, the City inspects the conditions of relevant public domain assets (including footpaths, parks and open spaces) and assigns asset conditions ratings to specific elements. These are then used to determine priority areas for asset renewal, which are documented in Asset Renewal Programs. There are several Asset Renewal Programs for footpaths and streetscapes. Every asset that is renewed aims to meet the relevant requirements of the Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines and other technical specifications. For example, if an Asset Renewal Program determines a kerb ramp must be replaced, the new kerb ramp must meet requirements of the Policy and the specific requirements for kerb ramps outlined in the Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Guidelines and relevant Sydney Streets Technical Specifications.
- (c) Council approves the City's Asset Management Plan and associated asset expenditure as part of the Annual Operating and Capital Budgets as reflected in the Operational Plan. This means Council approve the parameters by which the City determines which assets are upgraded, and the value of expenditure allocated to this. The specifics of which public domain assets are to be renewed through this process that year are not reported to Council.

The Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines also applies to new streetscape and open space such as parks delivered by developers through Voluntary Planning Agreements. As part of those agreements, the City requires developers to deliver public domain infrastructure that meet the requirements of Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy and Guidelines. The City's Public Domain team manage this process and ensure that before the developer hands over the asset to the City for management, that the requirements have been met. These projects are reported to Council in line with requirements of the relevant planning process.

The City reports progress on delivering improvements in access to the public domain through the annual report for the Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan. Action 4 within the current plan commits the City to "continue to improve the accessibility of the public domain for people of all ages and abilities, through renewal programs, upgrades and new capital projects". Annual reports detailing progress are overseen by the City's Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel, reported to Council via CEO Update, published on the City of Sydney [website](#) and shared with the NSW Disability Council and Minister for Families and Communities, Disability Services in line with requirements of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014. From financial year 2021/22, this will also be reported to Council in the annual report.

In our annual reports, we provide qualitative commentary describing key access outcomes from significant capital works projects. However, given the diverse scope of public domain projects the policy and guidelines apply to, and the numerous access principles and access standards that apply, measuring progress quantitatively on all aspects of access is not feasible. The City uses the following key indicators in order to demonstrate progress in the Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan Annual Report:

- # of non-compliant kerb ramps remediated; and
- # of new kerb ramps/ continuous footpath treatments installed.

In 2020/21, the City delivered 133 new kerb ramps, 19 continuous footpath treatments and five raised pedestrian crossings. Staff are currently preparing the 2021/22 annual report which will be reported to Council via CEO Update before 30 November 2022.

Memo from Emma Rigney, Director City Life

Prepared by: Anna Rigg, Manager Social Policy

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P.M. Barone', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

MONICA BARONE

Chief Executive Officer