

Post Exhibition - Resilience Strategy 2023-2028

File No: X087996.001

Summary

This report seeks Council approval of the Resilience Strategy 2023-2028 (the Strategy). The Strategy sets the community resilience directions and actions for the City of Sydney local area.

This new Strategy outlines the City's commitment to strengthening community resilience by working in partnership with residents, business, and other levels of government to build a connected, prepared and resilient city. The Strategy describes our current and emerging challenges, and opportunities for action across five directions:

- Direction 1: An equitable, inclusive, and connected community
- Direction 2: A climate resilient city
- Direction 3: Places, buildings, and infrastructure for resilience
- Direction 4: A robust local economy
- Direction 5: A prepared community.

Approval was given by Council on 26 June 2023 to publicly exhibit the draft Strategy for a minimum of 28 days to allow an opportunity for the community to provide feedback.

Public exhibition of the draft Strategy occurred from 17 July to 8 September 2023. Consultation included online engagement, social media promotion and presentation to several community meetings. Members of the public were able to comment through Sydney Your Say or directly to City staff. Over 200 pieces of feedback were received.

Strong support was received for the directions and actions in the draft Strategy. All the actions also received support from respondents.

People expressed concern about the impacts of climate change, community cohesion, emergency management and communication, and food security. These issues are all addressed in the Strategy. Based on the nature of the feedback provided, the final Resilience Strategy 2023-2028 requires only minor editorial amendments.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note the submission and feedback received through the public exhibition period as reported in the Engagement Report shown at Attachment B to the subject report;
- (B) Council adopt the Resilience Strategy 2023-2028, as shown at Attachment A to the subject report; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the Resilience Strategy 2023-2028 in order to correct any minor drafting errors and finalise design, artwork and accessible formats for publication.

Attachments

Attachment A. Resilience Strategy 2023-2028

Attachment B. Engagement Report

Attachment C. Draft Resilience Strategy 2023-2028 (changes marked-up)

Background

1. In 2018, Resilient Sydney collaborated with all 33 greater Sydney councils to deliver and implement a metropolitan-wide Resilient Sydney Strategy. The Resilient Sydney Strategy provides the framework and guidance for individual councils to develop a strategy specific to their local area.
2. The City has developed a draft Resilience Strategy as a member council of the Resilient Sydney network to contribute to local and metropolitan scale resilience. This is increasingly important in the context of ongoing and emerging shock events and disasters including severe storms, flooding, heatwaves, fires, and pandemics.
3. Seventeen metropolitan Sydney councils have developed or are developing resilience strategies for their local area, including:
 - (a) Bayside Council
 - (b) Blue Mountains Council
 - (c) Burwood Council
 - (d) Campbelltown City Council
 - (e) City of Canada Bay Council
 - (f) City of Canterbury Bankstown
 - (g) City of Ryde
 - (h) Georges River Council
 - (i) Hawkesbury Council
 - (j) Lane Cove Council
 - (k) Northern Beaches Council
 - (l) Penrith City Council
 - (m) Mosman Council
 - (n) Strathfield Council
 - (o) Willoughby City Council
 - (p) Liverpool City Council.
4. The draft City of Sydney Resilience Strategy has been developed over the last 18 months, to localise the work of the metropolitan-wide Resilient Sydney Strategy and identify ways the City can build on its existing activities to strengthen the resilience of our community to shocks and stresses. The project team has engaged widely with staff across the organisation and with the community.

Resilience Strategy 2023-2028

5. Resilience is the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, business, and systems within a city to survive no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. It involves the social, economic, and environmental systems that support urban areas, including physical infrastructure and places.
6. We are experiencing increasing shocks and stresses arising from climate change, geopolitical events, and economic shifts. The impact that a shock has on a place depends upon the underlying stresses. For example, the shock of the Covid-19 pandemic exposed existing inequities and amplified chronic stresses affecting our communities such as housing affordability, social cohesion, and food insecurity.
7. The City plays a major role in strengthening community resilience by providing infrastructure, programs, and services to support local communities. We are already undertaking activities to support community resilience, and the Strategy identifies ways in which the City can build on this existing work to further strengthen the community's ability to cope with shocks and stresses.
8. The Strategy provides a comprehensive explanation of the current and emerging shocks, stresses and resilience challenges our city and communities face, what we are currently doing to address these, and includes 15 Strategy Actions that respond to these challenges and are underpinned by an internal Action Plan.
9. The Strategy outlines five directions, and 15 supporting actions:
 - (a) Direction 1 - An equitable, inclusive, and connected community
 - (i) Advocate for safe, healthy, appropriate, climate-proofed crisis, social, affordable, and rental housing.
 - (ii) Monitor community wellbeing and equality to inform decision making about resilience initiatives.
 - (iii) Improve food security and equitable access to food.
 - (iv) Increase social connectedness within and between communities to strengthen their capacity to recover.
 - (b) Direction 2 - A climate resilient city
 - (i) Support our community to cope with increased heat and drought.
 - (ii) Update flood and sea level rise planning to prepare the city for predicted climate impacts.
 - (iii) Improve the City's ability to understand and manage climate risks and equity implications.
 - (c) Direction 3 - Places buildings and infrastructure for resilience
 - (i) Embed resilience principles in asset management.
 - (ii) Collaborate with government and councils for accessible waste and recycling facilities with reserve capacity.

- (d) Direction 4 - A robust local economy
 - (i) Analyse and communicate changes in the economy to help businesses and communities to adapt to changing conditions.
 - (ii) Promote economic diversity and inclusion to strengthen the innovation economy and the skills needed for a resilient future.
- (e) Direction 5 - A prepared community
 - (i) Develop disaster preparedness and climate adaptation initiatives with priority communities.
 - (ii) Enhance community facilities to support priority communities during shock events.
 - (iii) Support businesses to become more resilient and to contribute to community resilience.
 - (iv) Strengthen the City's emergency communications channels, ensuring they are accessible to diverse communities.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

10. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This plan is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 1 - Responsible governance and stewardship - the Strategy ensures that the City continues to be an active contributor to metropolitan governance as a member council of the Resilient Sydney network by contributing to local and metropolitan scale resilience.
 - (b) Direction 2 - A leading environmental performer - the Strategy addresses how the City is adapting to a changing climate by understanding risks and creating equitable solutions.
 - (c) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - the Strategy describes how the City will collaborate with partners and community to increase equity and create connected communities that are more resilient to shocks and stresses.
 - (d) Direction 7 - Resilient and diverse communities - the Strategy describes how the City will work with communities and government to prepare organisations, services, infrastructure and people to respond to and recover from shock events.
 - (e) Direction 9 - A transformed and innovative economy - the Strategy describes how the City will improve community economic resilience through diversity, inclusivity and revitalising of our city.

Organisational Impact

11. In developing the Strategy, significant consultation was undertaken with City staff across all divisions and many business units.
12. Strategy actions build on the work already being done to strengthen resilience and have been developed and agreed in partnership with relevant City staff.
13. Many aspects of the Strategy can commence implementation in FY24 with existing resources, and the need for further resources to deliver on the Strategy over subsequent years will be considered in future year's budget and business planning.

Risks

14. The successful implementation of the Strategy is subject to risks arising outside the City's control, including:
 - (a) Inadequate state and federal policy and legislative frameworks to manage resilience challenges that exceed the City's regulatory remit.
 - (b) Lack of partner funding from other levels of government to support community resilience initiatives.
 - (c) Unwillingness of residents, government, and business community to collaborate on the delivery of Strategy actions.

Social / Cultural / Community

15. The Strategy addresses the City's key social resilience challenges including inequality in Sydney, homelessness, community safety, housing, increasing food insecurity, social cohesion, loneliness and isolation, and digital literacy and inclusion.
16. The Strategy addresses the City's key cultural challenges including the role of community facilities in providing enhanced services to support the community as trusted places to access resources, programs and training, and develop relationships - increasing community connection.
17. Cultural and community challenges and opportunities expressed by priority communities during consultation activities have been included in the Strategy. Priority communities include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people with disability, and culturally diverse communities.

Environmental

18. The Strategy acknowledges that the community is already feeling the impacts from climate change, particularly priority communities who are more adversely affected than others. We need to plan and adapt to the changing nature of climate risk. Protecting our communities will require greater investment in resilience, adaptation and mitigation planning.
19. The Strategy outlines our key climate related resilience challenges and opportunities for action including understanding climate risk, adapting to heat, drought, bushfire impacts, storms and flooding, sea level rise, and equity in our climate response.

Economic

20. Economic recovery, lack of economic diversification, skills and labour shortage, supply chain disruption, and innovation and creativity in the economy have been identified as key challenges under the Strategy.

Financial Implications

21. Many aspects of the Strategy can commence implementation in FY24 with existing budget and resources. The need for budget and resources to deliver on the Strategy over subsequent years will be considered in future year's budget and business planning and will be incorporated into the City's approved Long Term Financial Plan which is subject to Council approval.
22. The City plans to identify funding opportunities for some actions through grant programs available from state and federal governments, and international networks e.g., C40.

Public Consultation

23. Public exhibition of the draft Strategy occurred from 17 July to 8 September 2023. Consultation included online engagement, social media promotion and presentation to several community meetings. Members of the public were able to comment through Sydney Your Say or directly to City staff.
24. This built on the consultation activities that were undertaken during the development of the draft Strategy, which were reported to Council in the pre-exhibition Council report in June 2023.
25. Feedback was gathered through a survey that was available online and in hard copy. City staff spoke to people at nine community meetings, ran a webinar for the business community with 48 participants and presented to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel.
26. The public exhibition period was promoted on the City of Sydney's website, electronic newsletters, social media channels and on QMS digital screens across the local area.
27. In total, 198 people gave feedback through the survey. This included 185 online survey responses and 13 hard copy survey responses. Two submissions were also received via email from Go Get and the Green Building Council of Australia.
28. Strong support was received for the directions and actions in the draft Strategy. All of the actions also received support from respondents. The five actions people saw as most important were:
 - (a) Advocate for safe, healthy, appropriate, climate-proofed crisis, social, affordable, and rental housing.
 - (b) Support our community to cope with increased heat and drought.
 - (c) Collaborate with government and councils for accessible waste and recycling facilities with reserve capacity.

- (d) Improve the City of Sydney's ability to understand and manage climate risks and equity implications.
 - (e) Improve food security and equitable access to food.
29. People expressed concern about the impacts of climate change, community cohesion, emergency management and communication, and food security. These issues are all addressed in the Strategy.
 30. Based on the nature of the feedback provided, the final City of Sydney Resilience Strategy 2023-2028 requires only minor amendments. These include: removing references to the 'draft' Strategy; updating the date of the Strategy to reflect its anticipated endorsement in December 2023; updating the last paragraph on page 9 to describe how community engagement informed the final version of the Strategy; and revision of the 'What our communities told us' section from pages 15 to 17. This section was updated to describe the community engagement activities undertaken during public exhibition as well as during strategy development and to describe the feedback gained during the public exhibition phase. This includes that people told us climate change is the greatest threat to resilience, and the feedback received from the business community on what it considers the most significant shocks and stresses.
 31. Attachment C shows the proposed changes to the Draft Strategy.
 32. The Strategy engagement report summarises the feedback received during the consultation.

KATE DEACON

Director Strategic Development and Engagement

Anna Mitchell, Executive Manager Sustainability and Resilience