

Resolution of Council

17 March 2025

Item 13.4

More Bubblers in the City's Parks and Outdoor Spaces

Moved by Councillor Ellsmore, seconded by Councillor Miller –

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) Sydney summers are becoming hotter and hotter. The NSW Government's modelling projects that maximum temperatures will increase in Sydney by 2030 by 0.3-1.0°C and in the next 40 years by 1.6-2.5°C;
- (ii) heat stress can have a major impact on the local environment and people's health. It particularly impacts vulnerable populations and people living in poor quality housing, including housing which is not well insulated, ventilated or able to be cooled. This includes renters and public housing tenants who do not have access to air conditioning;
- (iii) the City of Sydney has a number of strategies to respond to the climate crisis and the increasing heat experienced in our city. Direction 2 of the City's 2024 Resilience Strategy aims to create a climate resilient city in which the community is supported to cope with heat and drought;
- (iv) summer is also a time when Sydney receives a number of visitors and tourists, who spend time outside and visiting public places;
- (v) drinking fountains in parks and gardens play an important role in reducing heat stress, in particular for people exercising outdoors, children, older people and people experiencing homelessness or sleeping rough;
- (vi) Council currently has 59 bubblers on city streets and 206 bubblers and water fountains in its parks, but not in all parks;

- (vii) the design of bubblers, water fountains and taps vary. Some, but not all, allow a water bottle to be refilled. Some have taps for dog bowls. Some public toilets have sinks which readily allow a water bottle to be filled, but others do not;
 - (viii) when a new park or playground upgrade is undertaken, council aims to include accessible bubblers with water refill taps and dog bowls, which is a long-standing council practice;
 - (ix) where bubblers or taps exist, they do not generally appear on the park or main street signage and wayfinding. This is because wayfinding signage can easily become illegible if it includes too much information. The City has carefully designed its wayfinding signage to show locations of key destinations and infrastructure within our parks and streets;
 - (x) though bubblers are usually located close to park entries and/or facilities, they can sometimes be tricky to find if they do not appear on park signage; and
 - (xi) this is why Council has an online mapping tool which shows the location of 'drinking fountains', and a web page that shows the location of public toilets;
- (B) Council confirm its commitment to including an accessible water bubbler or other access to free drinking water in the future design of all council parks, playgrounds, playing fields and public places, wherever possible; and
- (C) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) ensure new City of Sydney park and other wayfinding signage in the Local Government Area includes the location of water bubblers and free drinking water in public places where possible;
 - (ii) in time for next summer, investigate options to update existing signage to show the location of bubblers and water dispensers in council's parks and other public places, where possible;
 - (i) keep Council updated on the progress to implement the updated signage in time for next summer; and
 - (ii) if required, provide advice to Council on budget amendments to the 2025/26 budget and 4-year delivery plan, to fund an increase in the number of water bubblers in the Local Government Area.

Carried unanimously.

X113765