

15 September 2025

At the conclusion of the Corporate, Finance, Properties
and Tenders Committee

Environment and Climate Change Committee

Agenda

- 1. Confirmation of Minutes**
- 2. Statement of Ethical Obligations and Disclosures of Interest**
- 3. Public Exhibition - Draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035**
- 4. Project Scope - Green Park Renewal**

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1. Register to speak by calling Secretariat on 9265 9702 or emailing secretariat@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au before 10.00am on the day of the meeting.
2. Check the recommendation in the Committee report before speaking, as it may address your concerns so that you just need to indicate your support for the recommendation.
3. Note that there is a three minute time limit for each speaker (with a warning bell at two minutes) and prepare your presentation to cover your major points within that time.
4. Avoid repeating what previous speakers have said and focus on issues and information that the Committee may not already know.
5. If there is a large number of people interested in the same item as you, try to nominate three representatives to speak on your behalf and to indicate how many people they are representing.

Committee meetings can continue until very late, particularly when there is a long agenda and a large number of speakers. This impacts on speakers who have to wait until very late, as well as City staff and Councillors who are required to remain focused and alert until very late. At the start of each Committee meeting, the Committee Chair may reorder agenda items so that those items with speakers can be dealt with first.

Committee reports are available at www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Item 1.

Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of the following meetings of the Environment and Climate Change Committee are submitted for confirmation:

Meeting of 18 August 2025

Item 2.**Statement of Ethical Obligations**

In accordance with section 233A of the Local Government Act 1993, the Lord Mayor and Councillors are bound by the Oath or Affirmation of Office made at the start of the Council term to undertake their civic duties in the best interests of the people of the City of Sydney and the City of Sydney Council and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act, to the best of their ability and judgement.

Disclosures of Interest

Pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, the City of Sydney Code of Meeting Practice and the City of Sydney Code of Conduct, Councillors are required to disclose and manage both pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any matter on the agenda for this meeting.

In both cases, the nature of the interest must be disclosed.

This includes receipt of reportable political donations over the previous four years.

Item 3.

Public Exhibition – Draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035

File No: X087085

Summary

The Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy and Action Plan 2017–2030 has guided the City of Sydney’s waste and resource management over the past 8 years. It focused on 6 priority areas: waste avoidance, increased recycling, litter reduction, planning for waste in developments, future treatment solutions, and better data management.

Of the 35 actions outlined, 29 have been completed or are ongoing, 2 were superseded, and 4 actions have been updated and are included in the City’s new strategy.

Significant achievements include reducing residential waste per person by 18%, introducing separate food waste collection for 20,000 residents, expanding recycling services to cover over 15 hard-to-recycle items, doubling recycling rates in public spaces, removing single-use items from City events, and supporting local circular economy projects with over \$400,000 in grants.

External factors such as new state and federal targets, changes in legislation, global recycling restrictions, increased single-use waste, and infrastructure challenges have prompted the need for a refreshed approach.

More positively, there is also growing momentum and support for a transition towards a more circular economy, such as increased global recognition of circular economy principles, acknowledgment of a landfill crisis in Greater Sydney, the state-wide single-use plastics ban introduced in 2022, recognition of the economic potential of circular systems, and strong local community support for waste reduction.

In response, the City has developed the draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025–2035.

This new draft strategy outlines 5 strategic directions: championing waste avoidance, boosting reuse and recycling, fostering circular design, keeping the city clean, and building resilient waste systems. It includes 36 targeted actions, such as promoting sustainable consumption, expanding food and textile recycling, supporting small businesses, improving urban waste management, and advocating for stronger infrastructure and policy support.

This strategic shift positions Sydney to lead in waste reduction and circular economy practices while adapting to evolving environmental and regulatory landscapes.

It is recommended that the strategy be exhibited for 6 weeks to seek community feedback and explore proposed actions with stakeholders.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note the Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2030 Actions Summary Table as shown at Attachment A to the subject report, the achievements delivered during that period, and the intention to finalise the Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2030 following final Council adoption of the Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035 ;
- (B) Council approve for public exhibition the draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035 as shown at Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council note that the draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035, including any recommended changes, will be reported to Council for adoption following the exhibition period; and
- (D) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make minor editorial amendments for clarity or correction of drafting errors prior to the exhibition of the draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy 2017-2030 Actions Summary Table
- Attachment B.** Draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035
- Attachment C.** Environmental Strategy Engagement Report 2024

Background

1. The Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy and Action Plan 2017- 2030 was adopted in 2017 and has guided the City's approach to waste and resource management for 8 years.
2. The Strategy comprised 6 priority areas including waste avoidance, increasing recycling, reduce litter and illegal dumping, planning for waste in new developments, future treatment solutions and better data management.
3. Targets for the Strategy focused on waste recycling and diversion from landfill across our own properties, our public spaces, residential services and commercial businesses within our local area.
4. Progress against targets, development of new services, programs and case studies were provided to Council through regular CEO Updates and our annual Green Report, which is also published on our website.
5. The Strategy outlined 35 actions for delivery over 10 years.
6. Since the Strategy was adopted in 2017,
 - (a) 29 of the 35 actions have been either completed or implemented as ongoing work of the City
 - (b) 2 actions were superseded, meaning they were delivered by other means or methods than originally outlined in the Strategy
 - (c) 4 actions are currently on hold or have yet to be implemented and updated actions have been incorporated into the new Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035.
7. A high-level update on how each of the 35 actions were addressed is included in Attachment A.
8. Highlights since 2017 from the implementation of the 35 actions include:
 - (a) residential waste per person reduced from 84kgs to 69kgs per year (18% reduction)
 - (b) separate food waste collections for more than 20,000 residents and in selected City of Sydney managed properties
 - (c) expanded collection and drop off recycling services for more than 15 common residential waste streams that cannot be recycled in the yellow bin. These services include mattresses, paints, chemicals, batteries, electronics, large cardboard, bicycles and scooters, clothing, bedding, soft toys, lightbulbs, x-rays, coffee pods, printer cartridges, polystyrene and blister packs
 - (d) doubled the rate of recycling and recovery from our streets, parks and public spaces, from 26% to 51%
 - (e) removing reliance on single-use items across our own events and services

- (f) supported circular economy projects in our local area with more than \$400,000 in grant funding
9. Since the adoption of the Strategy there have been several changes, both within our area and from external influences, that require us to review and update our strategy to be aligned with these changes. The notable external influences include:
- (a) new state and federal targets for reducing and recycling waste
 - (b) new NSW Government legislation requiring local governments to separately collect residential food waste by 2030
 - (c) international restrictions on exporting recycling
 - (d) continued and significant growth in single use plastics, textiles and electronics
 - (e) challenges with changes to NSW Government regulations impacting processing of waste and recycling
 - (f) increases in costs to service expanding material streams
10. More positively, there is also recognition and investment in making change including:
- (a) global recognition of the need for more circular approach from leading designers, innovators and governments
 - (b) acknowledgment of a landfill capacity crisis in Greater Sydney by NSW Government
 - (c) infrastructure and transfer capacity shortages, recognised by NSW Government but slow to move
 - (d) NSW Government single use plastics ban introduced into legislation in 2022
 - (e) recognition of economic opportunities from circular economy
 - (f) strong local community support for reducing waste and recycling more
11. As most of the actions have been completed or implemented and with the introduction of new federal and state strategies, targets and legislation, it is recommended that the 2017-2030 Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy and Action Plan will be closed out at this time and a new strategy be adopted.

Draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035

12. The new draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035 (see Attachment B) provides a clear roadmap for reducing waste and fostering circular economy principles.
13. By focusing on waste prevention, recycling, circular design, city cleanliness, and resilient systems, the draft Strategy aims to support Sydney to significantly cut waste, improve resource recovery, and build a more sustainable urban environment.

14. The draft Strategy has 5 strategic directions with each one listed below along with its ambition:
 - (a) Champion waste avoidance and careful consumption – alongside us, our communities consume responsibly, reduce waste and embrace circular practices.
 - (b) Boost reuse, repair and recycling – our communities have convenient access to reuse, repair and refurbishment services at no greater cost than buying new. Where these options are not yet available, recycling is prioritised over disposal to landfill.
 - (c) Foster circular design – new buildings and spaces are designed with circular principles, so they use fewer new materials, last longer and allow for easy repurposing at end-of-life.
 - (d) Keep our city clean – streets are clean and free of clutter and our environment is protected from the impacts of litter and harmful materials. We adapt our services as Sydney changes and grows.
 - (e) Build resilient waste and circular systems – flexible, reliable solutions meet the long-term waste and resource recovery needs of our communities. State and federal policies and regulation allow us to achieve our local ambitions for a more circular system.
15. To fulfil the ambitions of the 5 directions and realise our vision for a more circular economy, the draft Strategy includes 36 focused actions for our organisation and communities. Included in these actions are the following key activities:
 - (a) leveraging our buying power to support the shift to a circular economy transition
 - (b) supporting small businesses in our area to become more circular
 - (c) inspiring residents to reduce their waste through targeted communications campaigns
 - (d) acting on textile waste by providing new recycling options for unwearable items and creating more opportunities for our residents to understand and practice sustainable shopping and clothes repair
 - (e) deliver food scraps recycling to all residents and trial new local processing options
 - (f) increasing support for reuse and repair projects through our grants
 - (g) championing the use of circular design in new local developments by creating detailed guidelines to support the building sector
 - (h) tackling our urban waste management challenges with a dedicated program to address problem areas and with creative methods to curb single-use waste and litter
 - (i) providing flexible, reliable services to meet our long-term waste and resource recovery needs

- (j) advocating for adequate waste infrastructure and circular economy projects

Targets

16. To allow meaningful measurement of progress to achieving the long-term ambitions of waste reduction and circularity and to reflect changes to the external environment around how waste and resources are managed, the draft Strategy includes the following additions and changes to targets.
17. New waste reduction targets for residential waste, waste from our own properties and commercial and industrial waste. These targets acknowledge that we need to make less waste in the first place as well as reusing materials recovered and diverting from landfill.
18. Extending the previously adopted 90% landfill diversion targets for residential and commercial waste by 5 years from 2030 to 2035. When the targets were adopted in the previous strategy there was a strong expectation that the recycling and resource recovery industry in NSW would be much more mature, in line with other similar jurisdictions globally, however, with delayed investment in the sector and a lack of regulations driving investment there is now an infrastructure development lag.
19. Removal of target for recycling of construction and demolition waste in our area. Collection of meaningful data for this sector at the local government area level has been difficult to achieve. Unlike the commercial sector, which can be measured and extrapolated against regular business activities, construction and demolition activities are highly variable both in instances and volumes.
20. Reducing the 90% landfill diversion target for City streets and public spaces to 60% in 2030 and 70% in 2035 for similar reasons to those outlined for extending the timeline for achieving the residential and commercial targets, that is delayed investment and delivery of recycling and recovery infrastructure in NSW. This group of materials includes some more problematic waste streams such as street sweepings, stormwater materials, public litter and illegal dumping. While there are recycling opportunities for some of these streams, extending to beyond 60% and 70% will require significant investment in the industry and it is unclear if there is sufficient demand for processing of these streams.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

21. 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 2 - A leading environmental performer – the Strategy proposes draft actions to promote waste avoidance, increase reuse, repair and recycling and combat pollution with actions that:
 - (i) support our community to consume responsibly, reduce waste and embrace circular practices (Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Direction 1 – Champion waste avoidance and careful consumption)
 - (ii) provide communities with convenient access to reuse, repair and refurbishment services and recycling is prioritised over landfill (Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Direction 2 – Boost reuse, repair and recycling)
 - (iii) keep our street clean and free of clutter and our environment is protected from the impacts of litter and harmful materials (Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Direction 4 – Keep our city clean).
 - (b) Direction 4 - Design excellence and sustainable development – the Strategy encourages circular design principles with actions that:
 - (i) promote the design of new buildings and spaces with fewer new materials, that last longer and allow for easy repurposing at end of life (Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Direction 3 – Foster circular design).
 - (c) Direction 9 - A transformed and innovative economy
 - (i) Trial and test new ideas that commercialise circular economy innovations (Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Direction 1 – Champion waste avoidance and careful consumption).
 - (ii) Support capacity building programs focused on waste reduction and circularity for businesses in our area (Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Direction 1 – Champion waste avoidance and careful consumption).

Organisational Impact

22. Except for the already Council approved 2024/25 \$8.36M of funds for more cleansing equipment and the 2025/26 approved \$1.10M per year for additional cleansing, the Strategy does not propose an expansion of the City's ongoing cleansing and resource recovery services or changes to the composition of the businesses units responsible for delivering support for waste reduction and circular economy and implementing the Strategy. Rather the approach to designing waste reduction and circular programs and services will be informed and shaped by the new Strategy, with particular focus on areas of highest need as evidenced by the Strategy.

Risks

23. The draft Strategy is an evidence-based approach to delivering the community's aspirations and vision. Risk has been managed by ensuring the City's waste reduction, resource recovery and circular materials investments respond to the current issues facing the sector, drawing upon the most current available data and analysis, engagement with industry, and community consultation.
24. The actions presented in the draft Strategy are within the City's risk appetite which states:
- We recognise the critical importance of environmental protection and sustainability in our operations and decision-making. We are committed to minimising our negative impact on the environment and striving for a more sustainable future. We accept that sometimes environmental protection (e.g. pollution) and environmental sustainability (e.g. cleaner energy) place us at opposite ends of the risk appetite spectrum.
 - We embrace innovative solutions and emerging technologies that enable us to minimise environmental risks and enhance sustainability. We actively explore and invest in sustainable alternatives, renewable energy sources and efficient resource utilisation.
 - Our risk philosophy is centred around achieving a balance between innovation, community and user satisfaction and risk management, ensuring that we meet our strategic objectives while maintaining a robust control environment.
 - We are open to exploring new opportunities and changing service levels to the community, taking into account community expectations, needs and our financial sustainability.
 - We have minimal appetite for more than temporary disruption to our critical service functions, such as waste services.

Environmental

25. The draft Strategy responds to waste reduction and landfill diversion targets as presented in the draft Community Strategic Plan and the draft Environmental Strategy and details the actions we will take to achieve our targets and objectives of increasing reuse, recycling, more sustainable waste management.

Economic

26. The draft Strategy responds to our aspiration to be a global leader in innovation, technology and green industries and includes actions that support the transition to a green and circular economy.

Financial Implications

27. The draft Strategy includes actions that have capital and operational funding implications. These actions will be costed into individual capital project and operating budgets and considered as part of the annual development of the City's Long Term Financial Plan which is subject to Council approval.

Relevant Legislation

- 28. Local Government Act 1993.
- 29. Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.
- 30. Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

- 31. If approved the Strategy will be placed on exhibition for 6 weeks. It is anticipated the post-exhibition strategy will be reported to Council for adoption in late -2025.

Public Consultation

- 32. City staff conducted a series of targeted waste and circular consultations with 40 representatives from local commerce, industry, government, not-for-profit and community association representatives in 2022/23. The objectives of the consultations were to:
 - (a) better understand challenges faced by community and local businesses in managing waste
 - (b) share knowledge and awareness of circular economy projects in our area
 - (c) gather ideas and discuss what is needed to facilitate the growth of circular economy our area.
- 33. The draft Strategy also incorporates broader community engagement on waste and circular materials as part of the draft Environmental Strategy 2025-2035 undertaken in December 2024.
- 34. An engagement report has been included outlining the outcomes of the consultations (see Attachment C).
- 35. If approved, the draft Strategy will be placed on exhibition for 6 weeks. During the exhibition period the community will be able to provide feedback through a Sydney Your Say survey, attend a community workshop or webinar and/or provide written submissions.

VERONICA LEE

Executive Director City Services

James Whitney, Cleansing and Resource Recovery Manager

Gemma Dawson, Manager Waste and Circular Strategy

Attachment A

Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy 2017-2030 Actions Summary Table

Attachment A Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy 2017 - 2030 Actions Summary Table

Priority 1 Promote innovation to avoid waste		Summary	
Organisation			
1.1	We will investigate sustainable procurement opportunities for our own developments and projects	Commenced as part of embedding sustainability project	ongoing
1.2	We will consult with event producers about removing plastic waste packaging at all City of Sydney venues, and report to Council	Delivery of single use guidelines to promote removal of single use items	completed
Residential and business			
1.3	We will provide and promote funding opportunities for innovative technologies and processes to address problem waste streams not currently managed in a sustainable way	More than \$400,000 provided in grants for innovation projects that reduce waste and support the circular economy	ongoing
1.4	We will advocate for the Federal Government to expand national product stewardship schemes	Advocacy through submissions to federal consultation and data reporting	ongoing
1.5	Continue with regional partnerships to review and identify opportunities for re-use initiatives	Reuse initiatives delivered through waste avoidance and resource recovery programs	ongoing
Priority 2 Improve recycling outcomes		Summary	
Organisation			
2.1	We will introduce separate food waste collection infrastructure, where appropriate, to City properties	Food scraps service implemented at relevant City owned properties	completed
2.2	We will investigate ways to improve public place recycling	This project was not started and will be transferred as an action in the new strategy	not started
2.3	We will prepare the City’s operations depot to collect and store illegally dumped waste separately from other public waste to improve recycling outcomes	Operational amendments made to both Bay Street and Alexandra Canal Depot	completed
2.4	Where waste and recycling management are part of our service, we’ll include our targets in all future contracts	This has been included as standard information in all major contracts involving the management of waste and recycling	completed
Residential			
2.5	To improve recycling rates and reduce contamination at home, we’ll provide more signs and education materials	All bin stickers and signage has been updated and are available for residents to order online.	completed
2.6	We will create a community waste drop off point for problem waste	Community drop off for tricky recycling items are available through our 19 recycling stations, Ultimo pop up and quarterly recycling events.	completed
2.7	We will introduce free, weekly separate e-waste, metals and white goods collections for all City of Sydney residents	Free e-waste, metals and whitegoods collections are available to all residents	completed

Attachment A Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy 2017 - 2030 Actions Summary Table

2.8	We will develop and implement a subsidised trial food waste collection scheme for residents	Food scraps trial completed from 2019 to 2021 and is continuing as a service.	completed
2.9	We will investigate providing all City of Sydney residents with regular clothing and textiles collections for recycling	Residents have access to clothing recycling services through our doorstep recycling, Ultimo pop up and quarterly drop off events.	completed
2.10	We will investigate opportunities for new collection services, such as recycling soft plastics, at the new Alexandra Canal depot.	Soft plastics collected were put on hold due to external market conditions.	on hold

Priority 4 Clean and clear streets		Summary	
Residential and business			
4.1	All new Development Application conditions will include a requirement for compliance with the City’s Waste Local Approvals Policy	Updated in 2018	completed
4.2	We will update the City’s online process for booking bulky waste collection service to be compatible with mobile devices	Updated in 2019	completed
4.3	We’ll address illegal dumping, discarded cigarette butts, and litter with targeted education and patrols by City Rangers	Regular patrols and targeted campaigns for illegal dumping and litter	ongoing
4.4	To develop a program to reduce illegal dumping, we’ll engage with university representatives for student accommodation within the city	This project was not started and will be transferred as an action in the new strategy	not started
4.5	We will investigate the use of low and/or no zero emissions of vehicles that are fit for purpose e.g. hybrids, electric and hydrogen.	The City has a mix of electric vehicles for Cleansing and Resource Recovery	ongoing
Priority 5 Better data management		Summary	
Organisation			
5.1	We will upgrade the existing environmental reporting platform for City operations and construction	The City has an integrated platform for managing sustainability data including waste	completed
5.2	We will incorporate organisational and other relevant waste data into the open data environmental platform	The City has an integrated platform for collating emissions, water and waste data for our local government area	superseded
Residential			
5.3	To improve waste service standards and reduce contamination, we’ll install appropriate waste tracking and monitoring equipment on all collection vehicles	To be reviewed as part of future collection services	on hold
5.4	We will advocate for state government agencies to standardise waste data collection definitions and processes, and reinstate annual reporting	Advocacy through submissions and direct engagement with state government	ongoing
Business			

Attachment A Leave Nothing to Waste Strategy 2017 - 2030 Actions Summary Table

5.5	We will support consistent waste reporting across key commercial sectors by partnering with industry and state government	Grants to the commercial sector to attain NABERS and Green Start assessments	ongoing
5.6	We will advocate for state government to improve transparency and integrity of waste data from waste and recycling operators	Focus area of advocacy through SSROC and Greater Sydney Waste Leadership Forum.	completed
Priority 6 Future Treatment Solutions		Summary	
Organisation and residential			
6.1	We will engage with industry and other stakeholders to create opportunities to develop energy recovery facilities in NSW	Energy recovery from waste remains an emerging sector in NSW	ongoing
6.2	We will identify and secure solutions for easy collection and preparation of waste for onward transportation to final destination treatment or recycling facilities	Waste transfer was a crucial part of the regional waste infrastructure study conducted by SSROC and now part of the actions for the Greater Sydney Waste Leadership Forum.	ongoing

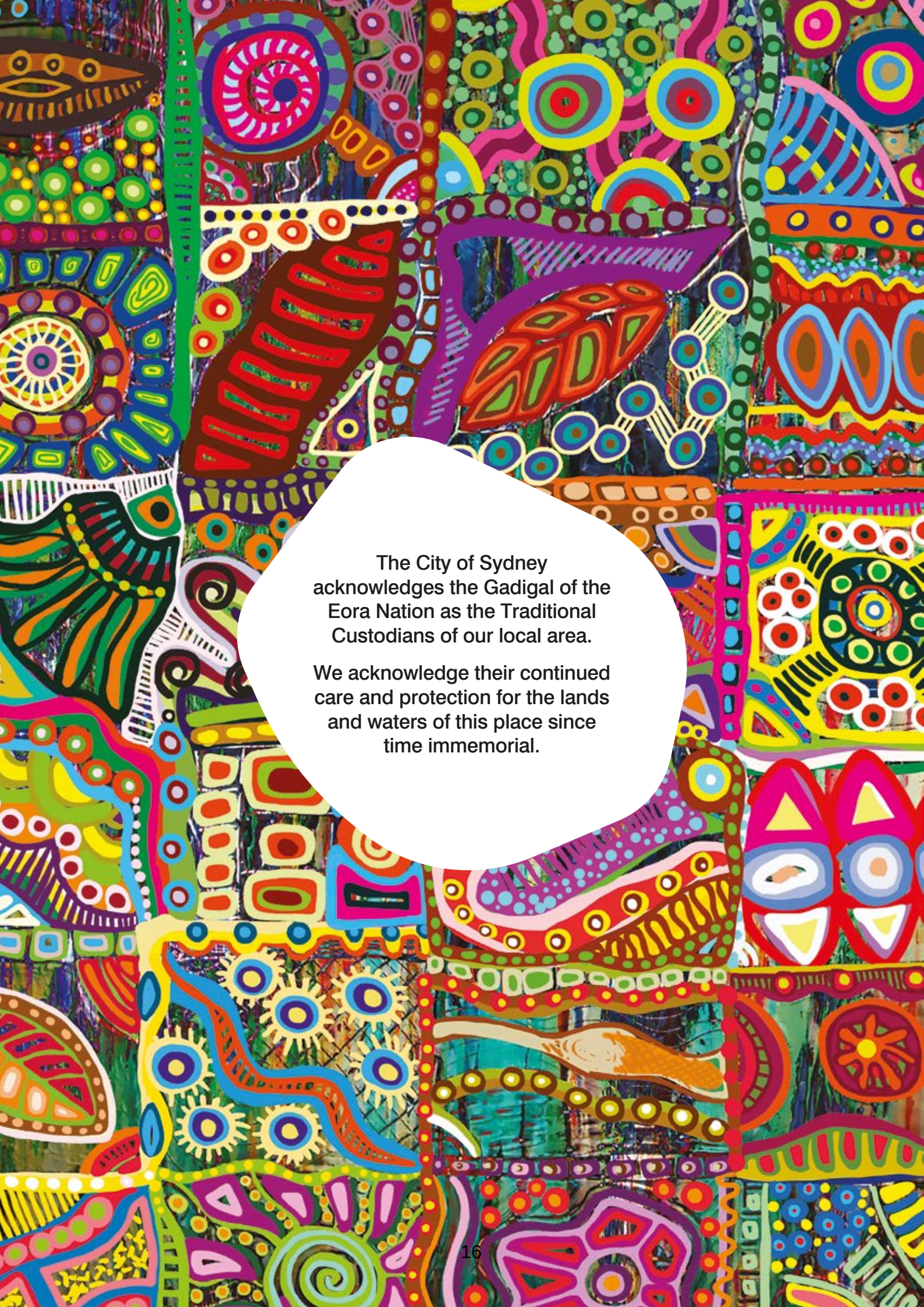
Attachment B

Draft Waste Reduction and Circular Materials Strategy 2025-2035



Draft
September 2025

Waste reduction and circular materials strategy 2025–2035



The City of Sydney
acknowledges the Gadigal of the
Eora Nation as the Traditional
Custodians of our local area.

We acknowledge their continued
care and protection for the lands
and waters of this place since
time immemorial.

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Message from the Lord Mayor



Sydney's future depends on how resources are used and managed today. Within the city and beyond, producing, consuming and disposing unsustainably depletes finite natural materials, generates waste and harms the environment.

Overcoming these challenges demands a transformative new approach, one rooted in the transition to a circular economy, keeping natural materials in use for as long as possible and designing out waste from the start.

The City of Sydney has long shown bold environmental leadership and we know moving to a circular economy is vital to preserve precious natural resources and meet our waste and emissions reduction goals.

Our communities have told us managing waste sustainably is important to them too. They'd like to see increased access to recycling programs, including for food scraps and more information about proper waste disposal and continued advocacy to reduce the impact of plastic in the environment.

Since 2018, we've awarded more than \$400,000 in grants for circular economy and resource recovery projects. Our own innovative circular projects include turning food waste from our buildings into soil conditioner for our parks. We've expanded our services for tricky-to-recycle items and partnered with major events to reduce waste – working with Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras to phase out plastic glitter and balloons is just one example.

Our efforts have also extended beyond local borders because we know waste systems operate across boundaries. Through region-wide initiatives such as Resilient Sydney, we've been working with other councils to push for better waste processing and the state government is now collaborating more closely with councils to solve the issue.

But the challenges before us require even greater action – and local councils can't shoulder this responsibility alone. The federal and state governments must identify, fund and regulate large-scale solutions. Accelerated waste infrastructure at the state level is essential, as are revised regulatory and economic systems that encourage rather than penalise sustainable choices.

At the City of Sydney, we're more than ready to play our part, and as this strategy shows, our focus for the next decade includes ambitious actions to achieve our vision for a circular economy. We'll tackle textile waste, collect food scraps across our area and test scalable new solutions for processing this valuable resource locally. Our NSW-first trial already uses insects to transform food waste. We'll also use our grant programs to boost reuse and repair, support businesses to go circular and champion the use of sustainable design in local developments and within our own.

Building a circular economy in Sydney will require collective effort from governments, businesses and residents. Join us in shaping a thriving circular future, where sustainable principles fuel innovation, resilience and growth.

Clover Moore AO
Lord Mayor of Sydney

Our vision for circular Sydney

In partnership with our communities, we will strive to make Sydney a city where nothing is wasted.



Introduction

Our new waste reduction and circular materials strategy continues the vision of Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050.

It charts a bold course for Sydney as a thriving circular economy, where sustainable production and consumption ensure finite natural materials are valued, cared for and kept in continuous use, safeguarding them for future generations.

In this envisioned future, these practices will enable a substantial reduction in waste and help combat the harms of climate change.

Our communities have made clear this is important to them. They want us to take decisive action to reduce our city's footprint and transition to a more regenerative, resilient local economy, lead by example and continue to govern in a sustainable way.

Since our last waste strategy, we've made significant progress towards a more sustainable and resource-efficient city.

We've increased recycling services available to our residents, promoted reuse and repair through training and events, deepened community education on avoiding waste and boosted funding for organisations driving circular outcomes.

Innovation in our waste processing contracts has ensured more materials are recycled into valuable new products. We use recycled crushed glass to pave our roads and turn food waste from our buildings into soil conditioner for our parks.

Outside our immediate area, we've also been working closely with other councils and state and federal agencies to advocate for policies that better support the recirculation of materials.

Collectively, these actions have helped reduce waste across our own operations, within our residential communities and in the businesses we partner with.



Our free clothes swaps foster community reuse.
Photo: Cassandra Hannagan / City of Sydney



Our community engagement stalls offer waste avoidance tips to residents and visitors in our area.
Photo: Cassandra Hannagan / City of Sydney

But while we've made strides, there is still more to do. Right now, waste sent to landfill accounts for 10% of our total area emissions. Meeting our adopted city-wide target of net zero emissions by 2035 – critical to a liveable, equitable city – will require much more waste reduction, supported by better management of materials.

The NSW Government has also announced that without new waste solutions, Greater Sydney's landfill capacity will be exhausted within the next decade.¹

As such, this strategy celebrates our successes and sets our ambition for an even more sustainable, resilient future, in which deeply embedded circular principles drive down waste and minimise our city's environmental impact.

To realise this ambition, the strategy outlines clear pathways across 5 directions, each focused on the elements required to transition to a more circular economy.

These include a collective commitment to careful consumption, widespread reuse, repair and recycling, smarter design and construction, careful waste management and good governance.

Across its 5 directions, the strategy discusses the roles of residents, businesses and visitors, along with our role as the local government.

It also speaks to the responsibilities of other levels of government and industry, and highlights our role within broader frameworks, illustrating how our actions contribute to the regional, national and global waste and materials ecosystem.

The strategy outlines how we'll measure success in our shift to a circular economy, presenting a set of ambitious targets for our organisation, residents and local area.

Beyond setting out our bold approach, this strategy provides a chance for us to share knowledge about the circular economy, making it easier for everyone to join us on the path to a more sustainable future.

The circular economy

At present, our society operates on a linear economic model, where natural materials extracted from the earth are used to make new products and often disposed of in landfill, or worse, released directly into the environment.

This take, make, use, dispose approach is driving unsustainable trends in production and consumption, depleting finite natural resources and creating substantial amounts of waste.

It's clear a transformative new approach is needed and over the last decade the circular economy has emerged as this alternative.

The circular economy is a different way to look at production and consumption, challenging the need for new things made from new materials.

Recycling extends the life of products and materials, but a circular economy goes further. It designs products for repeated cycles of reuse, repair and refurbishment, keeping valuable materials in use for as long as possible before recycling or disposal is needed.

Principles of the circular economy

1. Design out waste and pollution

Many products are currently designed without sustainable end-of-life pathways, sealing their eventual fate as landfill waste.

If a new product does need to be created, it should be designed to enable reuse, repair, refurbishment and, as a last resort, recycling.

2. Keep materials at their highest value

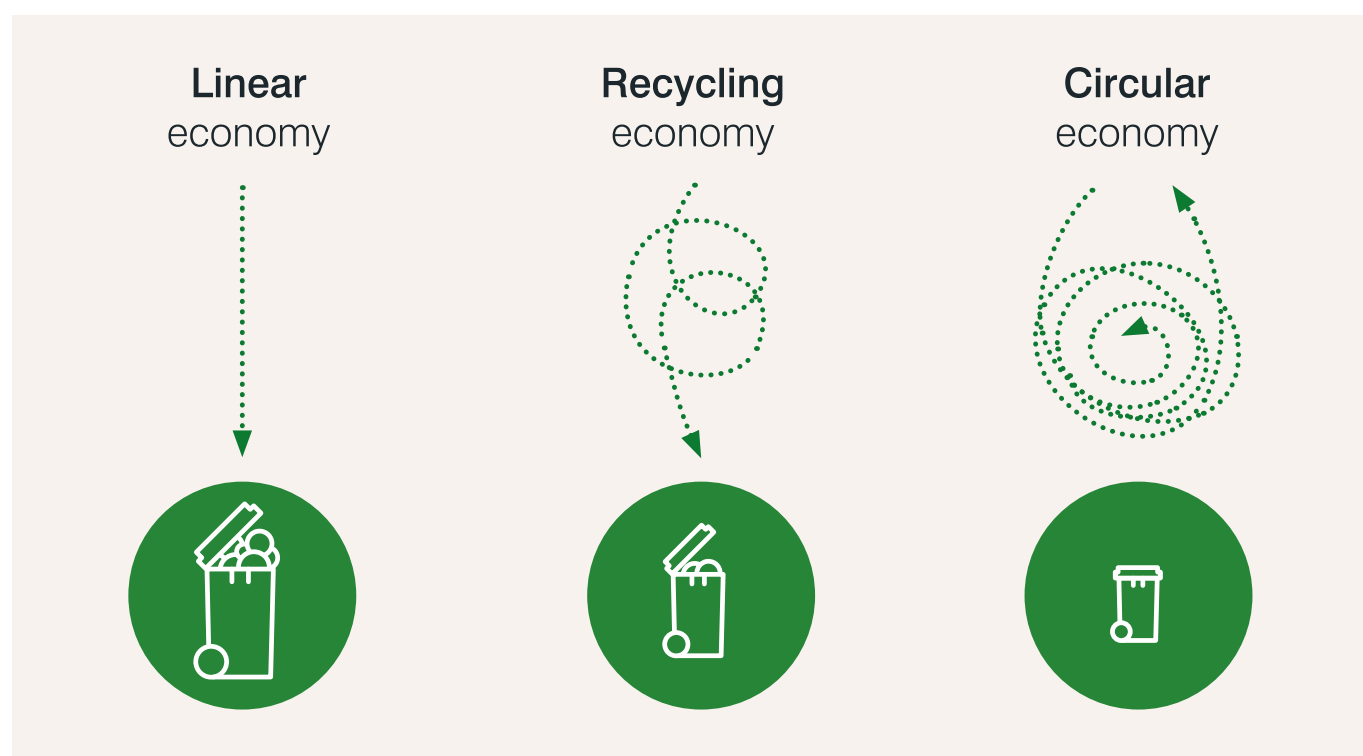
Products and their materials have intrinsic value, which should be maintained through reuse, repair and refurbishment.

Recycling, which requires dismantlement and significantly reduces value, should only take place once other options have been explored.

3. Regenerate nature

A linear economy repeatedly takes raw materials from the earth, depleting and disturbing natural systems.

The focus should move from extraction to regeneration, where nutrient-rich biological material is returned to the earth and nature is allowed to maintain healthy ecosystems.



In the linear economy, many products and materials are only used once then sent to landfill, driving production, consumption and waste. A recycling economy gives items a second life but the circular economy goes further, keeping products and materials in use for as long as possible.

How we'll move Sydney to a circular economy

The pathways to achieving our vision for a more circular economy will occur across many different parts of our organisation and city.

We'll focus our efforts through 5 key directions, each with a long-term ambition and an accompanying set of targeted actions.

Each direction represents a distinct approach to the elements needed to create a more circular economy, including a shared commitment to responsible consumption, broad recirculation of materials, better design, careful waste management and good governance.



Key steps

To fulfil the ambitions of our 5 directions and realise our vision for a more circular economy, we'll carry out 38 focused actions for our organisation and communities. Included in these actions are the following key activities:

- **Leveraging our buying power** to support the shift to a circular economy.
- **Supporting small businesses in our area** to become more circular.
- **Inspiring our residents to reduce their waste** through targeted communications campaigns.
- **Acting on textile waste** by providing new recycling options for unwearable items and creating more opportunities for our residents to understand and practice sustainable shopping and clothes repair.
- **Extending our residential food scraps recycling program** and trialling new innovations for processing this valuable resource locally.
- **Increasing support for reuse and repair projects** through our grants.
- **Championing the use of circular design in new local developments** by creating detailed guidelines to support the building sector.
- **Tackling our urban waste management challenges** with a dedicated program to address problem areas and with creative methods to curb single-use waste and litter.
- **Continuing to provide flexible, reliable waste and resource recovery services** that meet the long-term needs of our growing and changing communities.
- **Advocating for the accelerated development of adequate waste infrastructure** and for projects that support a circular economy.



We'll work to boost reuse and repair in our area.
Photo: Cassandra Hannagan / City of Sydney

How we'll measure success

To keep us aligned with the long-term ambitions of our 5 directions, we've set a series of targets that will allow us to meaningfully measure our progress.

By June 2030	By June 2035
For our organisation:	
90% diversion from landfill with 50% source separated recycling from our managed properties	90% diversion from landfill with 60% source separated recycling from our managed properties
60% resource recovery of waste from our office strip-outs and fit-outs	70% resource recovery of waste from our office strip-outs and fit-outs
20% reduction in total waste generated from our managed properties (June 2019 baseline)	25% reduction in total waste generated from our managed properties (June 2019 baseline)
90% resource recovery of construction and demolition waste generated and managed by us	95% resource recovery of construction and demolition waste generated and managed by us
60% resource recovery of waste from our parks, streets and public places	70% resource recovery of waste from our parks, streets and public places
For our residents:	
35% source separated recycling of residential waste	40% source separated recycling of residential waste
80% resource recovery of residential waste	90% resource recovery of residential waste
10% reduction in total residential waste generation per capita (June 2023 baseline)	15% reduction in total residential waste generation per capita (June 2023 baseline)
For our local area:	
80% resource recovery of commercial and industrial waste	90% resource recovery of commercial and industrial waste
10% reduction in total commercial and industrial waste generation (June 2019 baseline)	15% reduction in total commercial and industrial waste generation (June 2019 baseline)

Notes:

- All targets are weight based.
- Resource recovery means diversion from landfill.

The current waste landscape

Waste and materials in our area today

Our local government area is one of the largest and fastest growing in Australia.

Home to nearly 245,000 residents today and an anticipated 27,000 more by 2035,² our area also hosts around 22,000 businesses and 520,000 jobs.³ In total, the city is used by an estimated 1 million people each day.

This scale of activity generates a broad range of waste, and it's important to understand the main sources, the materials involved and where it goes. This highlights where future efforts to reduce waste and recirculate materials are best focused.

Our organisational waste

We generate waste in our buildings and from our construction work to maintain and upgrade our streets and public spaces.

Since these areas are under our control, we can closely manage the type and volume of waste produced, as well as what happens to it.

At our buildings, waste currently totals around 950 tonnes each year and consists of materials like food, paper and packaging. We divert more than 90% of it from landfill and are now focused on securing higher value for these materials through increased recycling.

Our construction and demolition projects generate about 28,000 tonnes of waste each year, largely made up of materials such as asphalt, concrete, pavers and steel. The recycling rate is very high and we are committed to maintaining this as well as exploring more ways to reduce and reuse these materials.

Residential and public place waste

Waste is also produced by our residents and in the public places we manage.

While we don't have the same direct control over this waste, we are responsible for its collection, and can influence volumes and reduce disposal by educating residents and visitors.

Our residents currently generate around 64,000 tonnes of waste each year. About 65% of this goes into red lid bins and is later processed to extract metals for recycling, while the rest is collected for recycling and recovery through our yellow lid bin, pick-up and drop-off services.

Food is the most prevalent material in the red lid bin, along with recyclable items such as metal, glass and paper. In the yellow lid bin, these standard recyclable items are most common, but they're sometimes accompanied by contaminants like textiles and bagged items.

Meanwhile, electronics, textiles and large cardboard are the most common materials collected in our pick-up and drop-off recycling services, which focus on items that can't be recycled in the yellow lid bin.

Around 50% of our residential waste is diverted from landfill.

In the public places we manage, around 8,000 tonnes of waste is currently produced each year. This includes waste placed in our street litter bins, collected from our streets and parks, and cleaned from our stormwater drains.

The waste in these areas is a mix of organic materials, packaging and illegally dumped bulkier items such as furniture and tyres, and just over 50% of it is diverted from landfill.

Commercial and construction waste

Local businesses and construction projects generate waste as well.

We don't control or collect this waste, but we do recognise its significant impact and strive to influence reduction, reuse and recycling.

Among businesses in our area, we estimate 567,000 tonnes of commercial and industrial waste is generated each year.

This contains a variety of materials, mainly metals, plastics, food, paper, cardboard and wood, and around 47% is recycled while the remainder goes to landfill.

More than 300,000 tonnes of materials can be reduced, reused or recycled in the future.

Alongside this, we estimate more than 1 million tonnes of construction and demolition waste is produced in our area each year.

Bricks, concrete and soil make up the bulk of this waste, and while over 75% is recycled, this sector also represents significant opportunities for further reduction and reuse.

Waste in the circular economy

Moving to a circular economy is essential, but the process won't be quick or perfect.

During and after the shift, there will still be items without pathways for reuse, repair, refurbishment or recycling.

This means our communities will still rely on many of the waste, recycling and cleansing services we provide.

While we might expect to see a reduction in waste volumes and to adapt our service levels appropriately, we will continue to provide the essential support our communities need.

Control

Our buildings



950t

Our construction and demolition



28,000t

Manage and influence

Our managed parks, streets and public spaces



8,000t

Our residents



64,000t

Influence

Local area commercial and industrial



567,000t

Local area construction and demolition



over 1Mt

One year's worth of waste in our area and where we can control, manage and influence pathways for it. Data current at 2023/24.



We play a crucial role in managing waste. Photo: Chris Southwood / City of Sydney

Waste responsibilities

In Australia, responsibility for managing and reducing waste is split across federal, state and local governments.

The federal and state governments make waste management laws and set national and state waste reduction targets, which are often similar.

Waste is also regulated by the state government, using mechanisms that include a levy to discourage landfilling.

Local governments are responsible for helping to achieve the national and state targets for the waste streams we collect.

We also have our own waste reduction targets for our organisation and communities.

The ambition of the national and state targets is welcome, but we know the 2025 targets will not be met and it is unlikely that many of the 2030 targets will be achieved on time.

The federal and state governments must do more to identify, fund and regulate large, scalable solutions.

National waste reduction targets⁴

1. Ban the export of waste plastic, paper, glass and tyres
2. Reduce total waste generated in Australia by 10% per person by 2030
3. 80% average resource recovery rate from all waste streams by 2030
4. Significantly increase the use of recycled content by governments and industry
5. Phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025
6. Halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030

NSW waste reduction targets⁵

1. Reduce total waste generated by 10% per person by 2030
2. Have an 80% average recovery rate from all waste streams by 2030
3. Significantly increase the use of recycled content by governments and industry
4. Phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025
5. Halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030

Challenges and opportunities

Challenges

Any change brings challenges, and as we transition to a circular economy, we'll need to navigate a range of issues and considerations.



Product design and disposal issues

At present, many products are designed with landfill as the only end-of-life option. Plus, even if better options like recycling are considered, this can be hindered by collection challenges and costs to update industry infrastructure, which can't recycle many of the complex products in use today.



Regulatory and policy barriers

Existing federal and state policies fall short in supporting circularity, leaving the reuse, repair and recycling industries underfunded compared to those that extract raw materials from the earth. One result is that recycling can often cost more than landfill disposal, even with state landfill levies in place.



The appeal of the new and convenient

Since current systems don't adequately support reuse, repair and recycling, it's often cheaper and easier for consumers to buy new products instead. Reuse and repair practices aren't yet normalised either, so new products can be more appealing even if they're not the sustainable choice.



The realities of city living

About 80% of our residents live in apartments,⁶ creating competing demands for space. This can make it harder to reuse, repair and recycle. Plus, in dense urban areas like ours, there's less space to grow food and to compost.



A growing and changing city

Our population is growing and changing, which may increase resource use and waste. It will also create more competition for space on the street. This increased competition, coupled with our city-wide push to expand walking and cycling areas for better accessibility and lower emissions, will present new complexities for collecting and managing waste.

Opportunities

Although there will be challenges, transitioning to a circular economy will bring profound benefits to our area – environmental, social and economic.



Better environmental outcomes

Widespread circular practices will benefit our local environment and reduce our global impact, resulting in fewer emissions, less pollution, and protection of natural resources and biodiversity.



Cost and resource savings

When local businesses and organisations go circular, they'll find smart ways to save money and cut costs. This could be by using repurposed materials, sharing equipment or making products that last longer and are easier to fix.



New local jobs and markets

With some support, businesses operating on circular principles will be able to buy and sell at scale. This will create new jobs and markets, boosting our economy and building community wealth.



Greater innovation

The shift to a circular economy will drive radical innovation as systems are rethought, redesigned and rebuilt in a circular way. It will create new design methods, new processes and new ways for organisations to collaborate.



More connected communities

In many ways, the transition to a circular economy will happen at a person-to-person level, bringing together individuals to preserve resources and reduce waste. This will create more engaged and connected communities.



Sustainable local food systems

Transitioning to a circular economy will support the development of sustainable local food systems, where produce is grown locally with minimal impact and any waste is used to nourish the earth.



Increased local resilience

Circular businesses will rely less on international suppliers for materials and resources, making them less vulnerable to global trade issues, pandemics and other large-scale shocks. Localised production hubs and food systems will make our communities more resilient to shocks and challenges too.



Direction 1: Champion waste avoidance and careful consumption

'We envision the city as a leader in reversing climate change and restoring the natural environment by giving back more than it takes.'

Sydney 2050 Citizens' Jury⁷

Our ambition

Alongside us, our communities consume responsibly, reduce waste and embrace circular practices.



Responsible consumption in action.
Photo: Cassandra Hannagan / City of Sydney

Why this is important

The current economic model of take, make, use, dispose has fostered the misconception that raw natural materials are in endless supply.

As a result, products are often made from new rather than recycled materials and designed without sustainable end-of-life pathways, with few regulatory or financial barriers to deter this.

Similarly, consumers are rarely prompted to reflect on the impact of their purchases or to opt for more sustainable alternatives.

This in turn creates considerable waste and other environmental impacts. Nearly 30% of all local consumption-related emissions are linked to the purchase of goods and services.

To keep these impacts from escalating – and ideally, to reduce them – there must be a stronger shared awareness of making and choosing more sustainable products, plus the right support to do it as our city grows. Also essential is an understanding that these alternatives can prevent waste and other environmental harms.

This must all be rooted in circular economy thinking, with broad recognition that materials are finite, valuable and require wise use to support current and future needs.

What we're doing already

There are many ways we're championing waste avoidance and careful consumption in our area:

- Turning food waste from our offices into fertiliser for our parks.
- Replacing paper towels with hand dryers in our bathrooms and single-use serveware with reusables at many events.
- Equipping our residents with waste avoidance knowledge through community information stalls, webinars, communications campaigns, a tailored online Q&A service and a search tool.
- Upskilling our residents about localised, low-waste food production at Sydney City Farm, our urban agriculture site.
- Working with industry to increase circularity and reduce waste in commercial offices, hotels, entertainment venues and more.
- Awarding grants for circular economy and waste avoidance ideas, such as an accelerator program for circular economy startups.

What we want in the future

Reduced consumption of products made from new materials, without loss of consumer convenience or economic growth.

We want to use our procurement power to drive change in supply chains and service delivery models, so products and services used in our area are created and provided in a more sustainable, circular way.

Empowering local businesses, big and small, is also crucial for bold action on circularity and avoiding waste. Alongside this, we want to support broad innovation and collaboration on circular projects, fostering better practices and strengthening social cohesion.

Similarly, more education and support will deepen our communities' understanding of responsible consumption, waste avoidance and other circular practices, and make it easy for anyone to participate.

We also want to offer opportunities for our residents to understand and benefit from natural and regenerative systems, as these aid greatly in avoiding waste.

How we'll get there

Actions we'll take for our organisation:

- Review the goods and services we procure to see where we can consider alternative models that avoid buying new.
- Identify procurement mechanisms to support the development of circular economy systems.
- Develop guidance about how to choose furniture and furnishings that incorporate circular principles for design, use and end-of-life.
- Investigate opportunities to further reduce reliance on single-use items.
- Identify mechanisms across procurement and design to increase circularity and minimise disposal of textiles.

Actions we'll take for our communities:

- Create targeted communications campaigns that inspire our residents to reduce their waste.
- Increase opportunities for our residents to grow appropriate, nutritious food and to compost at home.
- Create convenient opportunities for our residents to locally share and swap household items.
- Maintain waste avoidance education and engagement activities for our residents, schools and community groups.
- Support capacity-building programs focused on waste reduction and circularity for businesses in our area.
- Showcase emerging circular economy innovations in our area and help businesses and organisations connect and collaborate.
- Trial and test new ideas that commercialise circular economy innovations.
- Collaborate with government and industry to reduce waste and promote circular solutions through our sustainability partnerships.

Snapshots of success



Sustainable office fit-outs are an impactful way to reduce waste.
Photo: Stephanie Zingsheim / City of Sydney

Turning the tables on office fit-out waste

Australia generates at least 30,000 tonnes of commercial furniture waste each year – and 95% of it ends up in landfill.⁸

This trend is fuelled by a few factors, including inflexible design and an overuse of parts that are hard to repair, reuse or recycle.

Recognising this problem in our own city, the Better Buildings Partnership stepped up.

Guided by us, the partnership includes leading property owners and influencers, and since 2011, we've worked together to make Sydney's buildings more sustainable.

In 2023, the partnership asked industry stakeholders about the challenges of office fit-out waste, and based on these findings, teamed up with the Green Building Council of Australia to create a new toolkit for circular office fit-outs.

Aimed at office fit-out project teams, this toolkit presents circular, sustainable design strategies to prevent waste at every phase of the process, from pre-design and concept design to the detailed plans.

Inspiring and useful, the toolkit is helping pave the way for more circular fit-outs in our area.

Working on an office fit-out?
Make it low-waste with the circular toolkit.



Our food scraps become fertiliser for our parks.
Photo: Abril Felman / City of Sydney



Revolve ReCYCLING save bikes from landfill.
Photo: Chris Southwood / City of Sydney

From food waste to fertiliser

A wide-scale food scraps recycling program is helping us manage our waste.

Trialing and scaling for success

In 2018, 2 of our properties began a food scraps recycling trial, which helped cut their monthly landfill waste by 30%.

Encouraged by these results, we've now introduced food scraps recycling at 12 properties. The scraps are taken to a processing facility south of Sydney and given a second life as compost, soil or mulch.

Exploring a localised approach

Building on this success, we began to explore on-site food scraps recycling, and in 2021 we bought food dehydrators to turn leftovers from 3 of our properties into soil conditioner for our parks.

The units processed 8,250kg in their first full year of operation, and this localised, circular project has also helped cut our transport emissions, since we now need to send fewer scraps away for recycling.

Supporting green business transformation

Our grants help local small businesses and startups explore circular practices and operate more sustainably.

Tech startup Greener has developed a digital tool that helps small businesses make green choices. The tool is now used by many businesses in our area, from restaurants and bars to homeware stores.

Not-for-profit Revolve ReCYCLING ran a pilot to collect and redeploy unwanted bikes in our area. The pilot was a success and the Revolve team now collects up to 500 bikes each month to refurbish, rehome or recycle.

Startup space Fishburners unveiled Australia's first accelerator program for early-stage circular economy businesses. Working on exciting ideas for textiles, technology and more, the 12 participating startups received mentoring, education and chances to connect with industry experts and investors.

Got a bright idea about how to fuel the circular economy? [Apply for a grant.](#)



Hands-on learning at Sydney City Farm.
Photo: Katherine Griffiths / City of Sydney

Sydney City Farm: cultivating sustainable food systems

Sydney City Farm is a place for our communities to connect with nature and learn more about localised, low-waste food production.

Located in St Peters, this 5,000 square metre urban farm hosts events throughout the year, from workshops, talks and webinars to school group sessions and family-friendly open days.

All activities speak to the unique needs of our communities, with topics like urban composting and worm farming, creating edible gardens in rental homes and growing bush food in cities.

Regular guided farm walks also introduce concepts such as seasonal planting, which is important for growing delicious produce in a low-impact way.

The farm runs a large volunteer program too, allowing interested locals to gain planting, weeding and harvesting experience.

Each year, volunteers help grow around 400kg of seasonal, organic fruit and vegetables, all donated to local charities.

A vibrant, sustainable alternative to large-scale food systems, Sydney City Farm gives our communities the knowledge and skills to make more sustainable choices themselves.

**Want to develop your gardening skills
and learn how to grow food?
Get involved at Sydney City Farm.**



Direction 2: Boost reuse, repair and recycling

‘The most sustainable product is
one that already exists.’

Adam Siegel⁹

Our ambition

Our communities have convenient access to reuse, repair and refurbishment services at no greater cost than buying new. Where these options are not yet available, recycling is prioritised over disposal to landfill.



Free clothes repair workshop for our residents.
Photo: Cassandra Hannagan / City of Sydney

Why this is important

Creating new products demands extracting finite materials from the earth – an inherently unsustainable process, especially at current rates of production and consumption.

Producing goods also creates environmental harm, often requiring large amounts of water, chemicals and energy.

The most effective way to reverse this is to recirculate existing materials and products for as long as possible, reducing the need for new, but at present, the systems to support this aren't mature enough.

As a result, reuse and repair are often less accessible and more costly than buying new, while recycling practices are still developing.

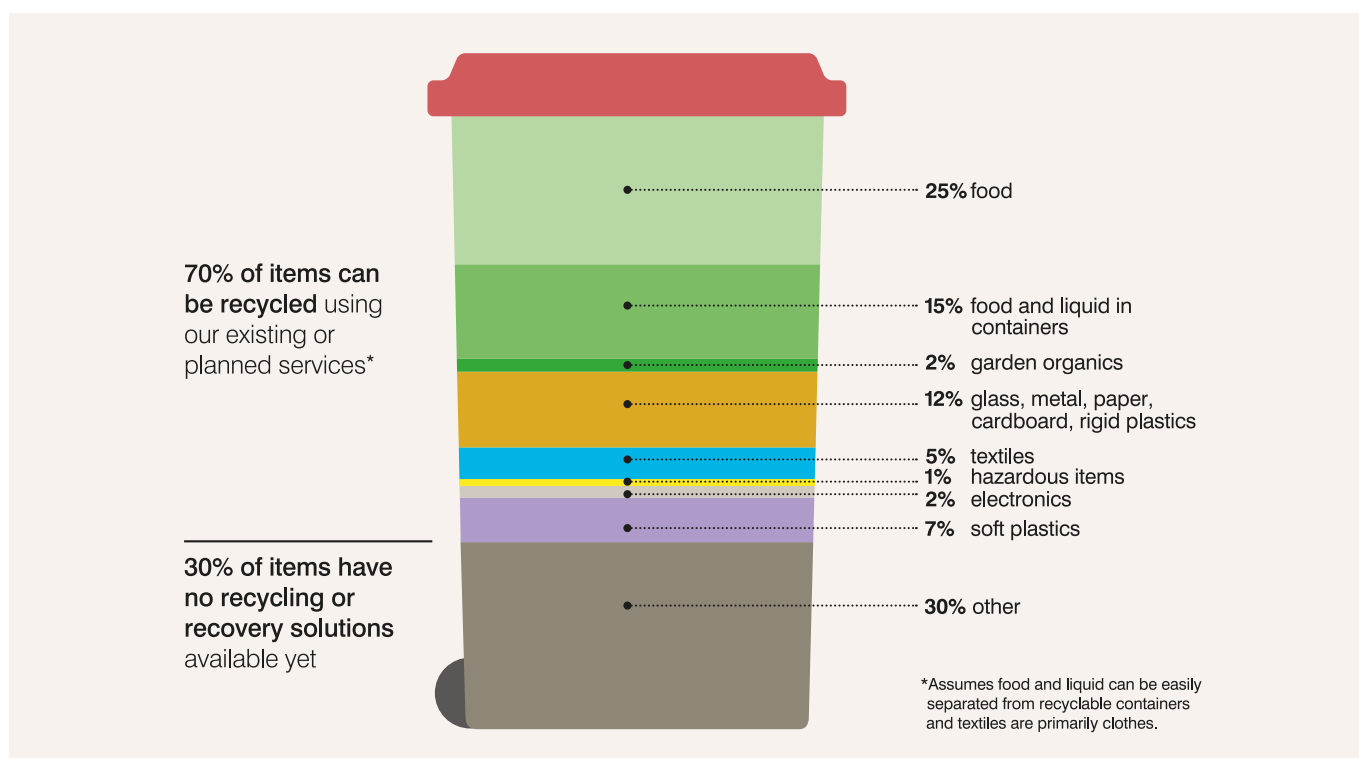
We can see this in our own area, where audits showed more than 25% of the furniture left out for household bulky waste pick-up is suitable for reuse. We also know our residents' red lid bins frequently contain recyclable items like glass, cardboard and electronics.

All this underscores the urgent need for more entrenched, accessible reuse, repair and recycling systems, bolstered by greater community awareness and participation.

What we're doing already

There are many ways we're fostering reuse, repair and recycling in our area:

- Reusing furniture and office equipment and recycling our electronics, employee uniforms and more.
- Using recycled materials in building major roads, cycleways and footpaths.
- Hosting reuse and repair events for our residents, including clothes swaps, toy swaps and mending workshops.
- Providing residents with pick-up and drop-off options to recycle tricky items like electronics, paint and polystyrene.
- Auditing residential bin contents to identify where extra recycling options could be provided.
- Awarding grants to organisations working on reuse, repair and recycling, including a furniture rehoming charity, a furniture repair workshop and a design practice developing recycled yarn.



Many items placed in red lid bins could be recycled instead. Percentages for item groups add to 99%, reflecting minor rounding adjustments. Data based on bin audits completed in 2023.

What we want in the future

Broad, convenient and cost-effective access to reuse, repair and refurbishment services, helping drive demand, boost participation and grow repair and refurbishment skills across our area.

We also want to make it easier for our residents to effectively participate in our recycling services. These include our kerbside yellow lid bin and food scraps recycling services, plus our Return and Earn stations and pick-up and drop-off options for tricky-to-recycle items.

Alongside this, we'll aim to keep adapting and evolving our services to meet the changing needs of our residents and the items they use, which may eventually require disposal.

We're already set to expand our recycling services for unwearable textiles and we'll seek to reintroduce soft plastics recycling as soon as the necessary industry infrastructure is in place.

To become circular, our society needs to both keep recycling and use more recycled products – so we also want to help create a thriving market for recycled materials.

How we'll get there

Actions we'll take for our organisation:

- Measure and report on the recycled content used in major construction materials we buy.

Actions we'll take for our communities:

- Create pathways to support increased reuse, repair and refurbishment in our area, including grants and a furniture rehoming trial.
- Advocate for suppliers of co-living and on-campus accommodation to explore alternative models such as leasing for furniture and home appliances.
- Extend residential food scraps collection across our area by 2030, in line with the state government mandate.
- Expand opportunities for our residents to recycle tricky items such as unwearable textiles.
- Grow tailored programs to increase participation and reduce contamination in recycling services for apartment buildings and social housing in our area.
- Explore opportunities to expand Return and Earn collection points in our area.

Snapshots of success



Learning more about reuse and repair will help reduce waste to landfill.
Photo: Alec Smart / The Bower

Inspiring new skills and habits

The Bower is an award-winning Sydney charity that champions reuse and repair through workshops, courses, events and more.

We've proudly supported The Bower since 2014, and in 2023 and 2024, we gave a grant to help its team present Australia's first Festival of Repair.

Held in Redfern, this trailblazing 2-week festival was designed to build new skills and inspire new habits, so more items are repaired and reused rather than sent to landfill.

At hands-on workshops and demonstrations led by skilled local craftspeople, festival attendees learnt how to repair their clothes, electronics, furniture, bikes and musical instruments.

Hundreds of attendees traded preloved fashion at a clothes swap and others enjoyed a weekend market day, discovering recycled and upcycled treasures and meeting our waste avoidance educators.

Sustainable design methods were showcased at the festival too, with expert talks about tiny homes and how to use reclaimed and recycled materials in new building projects.

The festival welcomed around 1,500 people and received great community feedback.

Tricky recycling made simple

Products and packaging have become far more complex in recent decades, but the mainstream recycling industry hasn't caught up yet.

This has made for lots of tricky items our residents can't recycle in the yellow lid bin – and to stop them from going to landfill, we've had to think outside the box.

Charting new paths for tricky items

We began providing our residents with ways to recycle tricky items more than 10 years ago.

Quarterly drive-through drop-offs for electronics, yearly drop-offs for chemicals and 10 walk-up recycling stations for batteries, mobile phones and light bulbs helped our residents live more sustainably.

Then, as products and packaging kept evolving, our residents told us they'd like more ways to recycle more items – so we got to work.

New services to meet new needs

In 2020, we revamped and relaunched our quarterly drop-off event as Recycle It Saturday. We also developed a doorstep pick-up service for residents to recycle tricky items from home.

In 2022, we updated our recycling stations at 16 community locations and rounded out the year by launching a walkable weekly drop-off centre at our Bay Street depot in Ultimo.

We worked hard to ensure these expanded services could accept a wide range of items, and now our residents can recycle polystyrene, clothes, metals, x-rays, electronics, coffee pods, blister packs and more.

With great feedback and uptake, these services have already helped residents save over 345 tonnes of items from landfill.

Have old electronics, clothes, paint or polystyrene? Try our recycling services for tricky items.



Recycle It Saturday.
Photo: Cassandra Hannagan / City of Sydney



Doorstep recycling service.
Photo: Chris Southwood / City of Sydney



Ultimo recycling pop-up.
Photo: Chris Southwood / City of Sydney



Our uniform recycling program has had a great response.
Photo: Cassandra Hannagan / City of Sydney

Fashioning a sustainable future

Clothing in Australia has a huge carbon footprint, largely due to the unsustainable ways clothes are made, used and disposed of.

It will take everyone to reverse this trend, and as a local council we can both empower our residents and lead by example with sustainable choices.

Helping our residents reuse and repair

From 2021 to 2024, we held a series of clothing reuse and repair events for our residents.

Nearly 2,000 people attended our 10 clothes swaps and 34 repair and upcycling workshops, swapping over 1.5 tonnes of items and learning easy ways to extend the life of their clothes.

Encouraged by the response, we plan to continue these events and have enjoyed sharing lessons with recent community-led swaps, helping contribute to their success too.

Recycling uniforms

In 2023 and 2024, we trialled a uniform recycling program with our cleansing and parks teams.

We collected and sent the teams' old uniforms to an Australian textile recovery company, who sorted the uniforms for reuse or recycling.

Good condition, non-branded garments were donated to charity, while items in a poor state or with logos were recycled into infill fibre for pet bedding, furniture and insulation.

We collected more than 500kg of uniforms during the trial and have now made it a permanent program, with plans to deepen its impact by expanding to more teams in our organisation.



Direction 3: Foster circular design

'The age of the circular economy is coming, and the built environment has a substantive opportunity to contribute to its development.'

Green Building Council of Australia¹⁰

Our ambition

New buildings and spaces are designed with circular principles, so they use fewer new materials, last longer and allow for easy repurposing at end-of-life.



This Zetland childcare centre repurposes old hospital buildings.
Photo: Katherine Griffiths / City of Sydney

Why this is important

In Australia, construction generates the same volume of emissions as the transport industry.¹¹ It also produces the most waste.¹²

But while the transport industry is accelerating towards electrification, the construction sector has been slower to adopt more sustainable practices.

Coupled with a predicted increase in demand for development, this means the impact of the construction industry is only set to grow.

We'll see this demand in our own area, where projected population growth will require an increase in housing, community facilities and open spaces to ensure the city remains a liveable and enjoyable place.

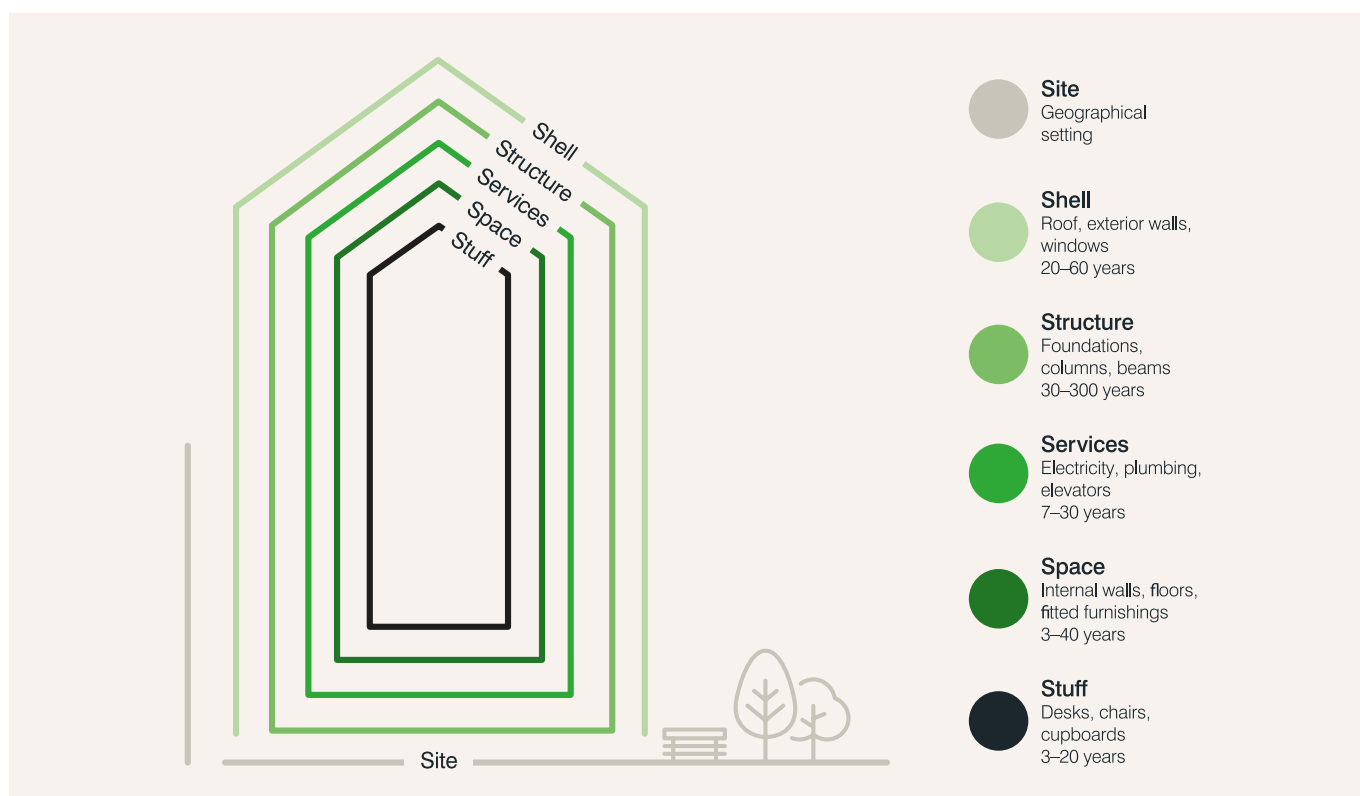
In the next 5 years alone, we'll seek to support nearly 19,000 new homes being built in our area, as tasked by the state government.¹³

With intensive new construction inevitable, a bold, broad embrace of circular design is more important than ever, so the negative effects of this construction can be minimised as much as possible.

What we're doing already

There are many ways we're fostering circular design in our area:

- Developing guidelines to ensure our community buildings are designed to avoid unnecessary waste.
- Requiring circular design considerations in our major new depot redevelopment.
- Creating circular design guidelines for architects, developers and contractors.
- Updating our local planning rules so underused city basements can be more easily repurposed for urban agriculture.
- Working with industry to champion circular office fit-outs in our area.
- Awarding grants for circular design related ideas, such as using smart design technology to reduce building material waste and creating circular fit-out guidelines for retail and hospitality venues.



We want to see more buildings designed as sets of largely independent layers based on lifespan, enabling disassembly not demolition and allowing materials to be preserved for reuse. Diagram adapted from Arup.

What we want in the future

A consistent approach to circular design at the federal, state and local levels, with all parties moving towards the same goals.

We want to champion the circular design transition in our own projects and guide the move for other developments, ensuring that as our population grows, the focus is on designing and building better, rather than on simply creating more.

This means that when we interact with those looking to build in our area, we'll encourage circular design strategies such as using repurposed, low-carbon materials or treating each building component as a separate layer to allow for flexible use and easier disassembly, preserving materials and reducing the need for demolition.

We also want to promote the importance of good design in enabling natural regeneration and sustainable food systems – essential elements for a circular economy. Our goal is to use our planning guidance and policies to create an environment where design that prioritises nature can succeed.

How we'll get there

Actions we'll take for our organisation:

- Review our design and construction activities to better incorporate circular design principles.
- Create a circular fit-out process for refurbishment of our managed properties.
- Audit materials for our major properties and assets projects to increase opportunities to retain, reuse and recycle.

Actions we'll take for our communities:

- Promote and encourage the use of circular design principles by developers, architects and construction contractors.
- Advocate for improved circular design standards in state and national built environment policies and for their use in significant planning projects in our area.
- Support the growth of urban agriculture within a sustainable food system and investigate how we might further design and plan for this in our area.

Snapshots of success



Our new guidelines will encourage circular design in our area.
Photo: Jamie Williams / City of Sydney

Stimulating circular design in local developments

Regularly interacting with those looking to design and build in our area makes us well-positioned to share knowledge and encourage circular design.

To achieve this, we're creating circular design guidelines for architects, designers, developers and building contractors.

Inspiring and useful, the guidelines will lay out the benefits of circular design, offer practical application strategies and show how it can benefit all parts of a project.

The guidelines will also introduce the build in layers concept, which enables deconstruction instead of demolition and allows materials to be preserved and reused.

Drawing on insights from design consultants, property developers and building companies, the guidelines will be tailored for local relevance and useful for new and existing developments of all types and sizes.

Circular design at work in our area

20 Martin Place

An unremarkable 1970s tower was transformed into a high-performing, 6-Green Star office building.

The building was stripped back to its steel frame, with tonnes of hazardous asbestos removed in the process.

A highly durable, environmentally responsive new façade was built on the original frame, using sustainable materials such as lower-carbon concrete. The design also incorporated flexible layouts and floorplans.

The project ultimately retained 5,500 tonnes of structural steel, achieved a 40% embodied carbon saving and set a world-class standard for energy efficiency in commercial buildings.

Camperdown Childcare

Circular design helped turn an old warehouse into a state-of-the-art childcare centre.

Reusable original elements, such as the roof trusses, were retained to minimise new construction and acknowledge site history.

New elements were designed as prefabricated modules, allowing for flexibility and reuse plus a more efficient build.

Low-impact materials helped reduce emissions, and a large roof cut-out created an outdoor play space in a great example of creative reuse.

With on-site construction and fit-out completed in just 12 weeks, an airy, adaptable centre ideal for early learning and development came to life.



Upgrades begin at 20 Martin Place. Photo: Built



20 Martin Place stripped back to its steel frame. Photo: Built



20 Martin Place transformed through circular design. Photo: Built



Direction 4: Keep our city clean

‘Our streets and public spaces are
the face we show the world.’

Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050¹⁴

Our ambition

Streets are clean and free of clutter and our environment is protected from the impacts of litter and harmful materials. We adapt our services as Sydney changes and grows.



A clean city benefits everyone.
Photo: Phoebe Pratt / City of Sydney

Why this is important

While the transition to a circular economy will greatly reduce waste, some will inevitably remain. It's crucial this waste is managed effectively as its impact can be considerable both within our area and beyond, especially in instances of improper disposal.

Litter, for example, can have a profound effect on our environment, polluting public spaces, parks and bushland, contaminating waterways and harming wildlife.

Three quarters of the marine debris in and around Sydney Harbour is made from plastic and comes from waste discarded in Greater Sydney.¹⁵ Illegal dumping and poorly stored bins can similarly affect safety, blocking roads and footpaths, creating public health risks and posing fire hazards.

Waste in the wrong place makes our area less pleasant for residents and visitors.

Creative, adaptable waste management, plus a shared sense of responsibility among residents and businesses, will counter these challenges and ensure our city remains clean, safe and welcoming for everyone.

What we're doing already

There are many ways we're keeping our city clean:

- Maintaining a 24/7 street cleansing schedule and collecting more than 14 tonnes of waste from our street litter bins and public spaces each day.
- Emptying around 107,000 residential bins each week, more than 99% on time.
- Resolving waste storage and collection issues at residential properties with a tailored building-by-building approach.
- Developing precinct-scale solutions for areas experiencing significant waste and safety issues.
- Reducing the impact of major events in our area through dedicated waste-sorting to maximise recycling rates.
- Committing funding for new vehicles and staff to manage increased leaf-drop.
- Raising awareness among residents and local businesses about issues that affect cleanliness, such as illegal dumping or litter from single-use plastic items.

How our cleansing team keeps Sydney clean

Every day:



1,000+ hours
cleaning streets and
collecting waste



1,700+
locations serviced



14+ tonnes of
waste picked up from
public bins and spaces



60+ vehicles
used for **street cleaning**
and **collecting waste**

Every year:



2+ million
attendees at 100+ events
provided with cleansing,
waste or recycling services

Maintaining cleanliness is a continuing priority for us. Our cleansing team, responsible for our streets and public spaces, plays an important part in this.

What we want in the future

Buildings and spaces in our area are equipped with well-designed and integrated waste and recycling infrastructure.

We want to more rapidly respond to areas with recurring waste problems and work with local businesses to help guide the transition to more circular systems, resulting in less waste and litter in our public spaces.

Alongside this, we'll boost engagement with our residential waste and recycling services and motivate our residents to reuse or rehome unwanted items, so fewer materials are thrown out.

We also want to harness innovation and explore new systems to ensure people who visit our city can do so in a more sustainable way.

How we'll get there

Actions we'll take for our organisation:

- Investigate systems and innovations to increase recycling and recovery outcomes in our event waste services.

Actions we'll take for our communities:

- Create a dedicated program to address recurring waste issues where standard approaches do not work and bespoke solutions are required.
- Communicate our roles and responsibilities, including what waste services we provide and their service levels, as well as residents' responsibilities around their bins and waste collection.
- Check in regularly with residents and make sure waste charges are equitable.
- Update our waste management development controls and guidelines to respond to changes in technology, data, services, waste streams, and state policy and requirements.
- Talk to small businesses in our area to encourage good waste management practices and increased resource recovery.
- Track changes and growth in the use of our street litter bins and investigate options to reduce waste and increase resource recovery.

Snapshots of success



We're raising awareness about issues that affect the cleanliness of our city.
Photo: Getty Images

Combating single-use plastic

In 2022, the state government banned often-littered single-use plastic items to reduce their harm on the environment.

To amplify the bans, we spread the word among our residents and businesses, also encouraging the use of sustainable, reusable alternatives to replace the banned items.

For businesses, we promoted our toolkit on eliminating single-use items and our guidelines on reducing event waste.

For residents, we created online articles and ads about the banned items and reusable swaps, which attracted lots of attention and generated plenty of robust discussion.

Want to use fewer single-use items and reduce waste? [Here are our tips.](#)

Busting illegal dumping myths

Illegal dumping pollutes waterways, wastes valuable materials and makes our city less enjoyable to spend time in.

Yet we found 30% of Sydneysiders saw it as recycling and good for the environment, while 50% didn't know it was against the law.¹⁶

In 2022, we set out to combat these misbeliefs with billboards, ads and articles, emphasising the illegality of dumping and prompting our residents to fix, sell or donate their unwanted items instead.

This campaign reached more than 12,000 people and we repeated it to similar success several months later.

**Have large, unwanted household items?
[Book a pick-up and we'll collect them.](#)**



Our depot upgrade will help meet our teams' future needs.
Photo: Cassandra Hannagan / City of Sydney

Safeguarding our future needs

To continue providing core services such as cleansing and managing waste, we need resilient, futureproofed infrastructure. This is what's driving our upgrade of Bay Street depot.

Located in Ultimo, Bay Street is our oldest depot, operating for more than one century. The site has expanded as our city has grown and now it's time for a major update to support our next 100 years of operations.

As part of this transformation, the depot's heritage buildings will be retained and a new, multistorey structure will be built on the eastern side of the site.

The new design will prioritise flexibility, reflecting how our operations, technology and population may change and allowing modifications to be made with ease. Sustainability and resilience will be at the heart of the design too. The updated depot is intended to feature heat-resistant materials, maximise use of recycled water and support our continuing transition to a 100% electric fleet.

The design will also consider circular principles such as extending the life of materials.

Once complete, this redevelopment will keep our operations running smoothly for decades to come.



Direction 5: Build resilient waste and circular systems

‘Effective collaboration between state and local government is essential to meet shared infrastructure, recycling and circular economy aspirations.’

Greater Sydney Waste Leadership Forum¹⁷

Our ambition

Flexible, reliable solutions meet the long-term waste and resource recovery needs of our communities. State and federal policies and regulation allow us to achieve our local ambitions for a more circular system.



Rooftop garden upgrade at The Pyrmont, part of our Smart Green Apartments program. Photo: Katherine Griffiths / City of Sydney

Why this is important

Collecting and managing waste and recycling is a core responsibility for councils.

Yet many councils, including ours, face significant challenges in managing this waste and transitioning to a circular economy.

With many material types to manage, we must rely on the private sector to process some or all of our waste and recycling.

In addition, the current framework for planning and regulating waste in NSW is incomplete, unable to drive the growth in resource recovery processes, technologies and products required to support a circular economy.

Similar gaps in federal frameworks also affect other critical elements required for transitioning to a circular economy, such as product stewardship.

Alongside our own work to maintain flexible, future-ready services and assets, responding to these gaps with a robust joint approach is crucial to achieving smarter waste management and thriving, resilient circular systems.

What we're doing already

There are many ways we're helping to build resilient waste and circular systems:

- Hosting the Resilient Sydney program on behalf of all metropolitan Sydney councils and working jointly on resilience and waste challenges.
- Playing an active part in region-wide circular economy projects coordinated by the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils.
- Participating in the Greater Sydney Waste Leadership Forum with the NSW Environment Protection Authority and other Greater Sydney councils.
- Contributing to state and federal level working groups seeking to strengthen circular systems.
- Advocating for stronger support from the state and federal governments to better manage waste and achieve circular results.



To be recycled, items in the yellow lid bin must pass through many processes and facilities.

What we want in the future

Flexible, reliable, well-placed services and assets that support reduced waste and emissions.

We'll continue to explore innovations to ensure our services are fit for purpose, support our growing population and align with changing regulations.

Plus, we'll continue building a fleet of waste and cleansing vehicles that can access all parts of our city, particularly as walking and cycling areas are expanded and green spaces grow.

We want to work with neighbouring councils to support innovation and call for products that have more recycled content and end-of-life recycling options.

Meanwhile, it is critical that the market, strongly supported by government, build waste processing facilities that are accessible, affordable and contribute to emissions reduction, resource recovery and the circular economy.

State and federal governments must also incentivise manufacturers and retailers to value materials and design products that support the circular economy and reduce waste to landfill.

How we'll get there

Actions we'll take for our organisation:

- Plan for future cleansing and resource recovery services that respond to how our area will grow and meet the needs of our communities.

Actions we'll take for our communities:

- Plan for renewal of our long-term processing contracts and review our services to further incentivise reducing waste, increase resource recovery and manage costs with minimal effect on residents.
- Trial innovative new services and products that will contribute to achieving our waste avoidance and emissions reduction targets.
- Participate in regional, state and federal partnerships and projects that support national waste and circular economy targets.
- Advocate at the state and federal level for adequate waste infrastructure and effective product stewardship regulation.

Snapshots of success



The Metropolitan Sydney Mayoral Summit on Waste.
Photo: Nick Langley / City of Sydney

Working together on waste solutions for Greater Sydney

We consistently collaborate with neighbouring councils to strengthen waste and circular systems in our region. One way we do this is through our Resilient Sydney work.

Hosted by us on behalf of all metropolitan Sydney councils, the Resilient Sydney program is about preparing our region for big challenges – and ensuring we have effective, future-ready waste systems is a crucial part of this effort.

In mid-2023, Resilient Sydney partnered with the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils to coordinate the Metropolitan Sydney Mayoral Summit on Waste.

Held at Sydney Town Hall, the summit brought together nearly 140 Greater Sydney council leaders to discuss shared waste challenges and possible solutions, as well as how the region can move towards a circular economy.

The summit also sparked the creation of the Greater Sydney Waste Leadership Forum, which we helped set up through Resilient Sydney in late 2023.

At the forum, Greater Sydney councils work closely with the NSW Environment Protection Authority on reducing waste and enhancing the circular economy in our region.

Forum priorities include driving important waste and resource recovery projects, supporting region-based partnerships and actively sharing information to help meet common goals.

A follow-up summit is also planned for 2025.



Our innovative trial uses fly larvae to transform food waste.
Photo: Nick Langley / City of Sydney

Our insect-powered food scraps recycling trial

In early 2025, we started using insects to transform our residents' food scraps into animal feed and fertiliser, in a NSW-first trial with Australian innovator Goterra.

Known as insect farming, this method of food recycling is relatively new to Australia. It uses black soldier fly larvae to convert leftover food into nutrient-rich organic products, which are then sold to farms and businesses.

Compared to composting and other traditional food recycling methods, insect farming has a much smaller emissions footprint and requires a lot less space, making it a promising option for our growing urban area.

The trial itself involves residents' food scraps being processed right in the heart of our city, thanks to the compact infrastructure involved.

Insect farming also offsets the demand for resource-intensive agriculture and creates more circular systems. Insect-farmed animal feed, for example, can replace the need to grow new soybean crops.

An exciting step forward, this trial is helping advance our vision for a localised, low-impact residential food scraps recycling solution.

**Want to recycle your food scraps?
Find out how you can get involved.**

Actions and approach

Our actions

Direction 1

Champion waste avoidance and careful consumption

For our organisation:

Review the goods and services we procure to see where we can consider alternative models that avoid buying new.

Identify procurement mechanisms to support the development of circular economy systems.

Develop guidance about how to choose furniture and furnishings that incorporate circular principles for design, use and end-of-life.

Investigate opportunities to further reduce reliance on single-use items.

Identify mechanisms across procurement and design to increase circularity and minimise disposal of textiles.

For our communities:

Create targeted communications campaigns that inspire our residents to reduce their waste.

Increase opportunities for our residents to grow appropriate, nutritious food and to compost at home.

Create convenient opportunities for our residents to locally share and swap household items.

Maintain waste avoidance education and engagement activities for our residents, schools and community groups.

Support capacity-building programs focused on waste reduction and circularity for businesses in our area.

Showcase emerging circular economy innovations in our area and help businesses and organisations connect and collaborate.

Trial and test new ideas that commercialise circular economy innovations.

Collaborate with government and industry to reduce waste and promote circular solutions through our sustainability partnerships.

Direction 2

Boost reuse, repair and recycling

For our organisation:

Measure and report on the recycled content used in major construction materials we buy.

For our communities:

Create pathways to support increased reuse, repair and refurbishment in our area, including grants and a furniture rehoming trial.

Advocate for suppliers of co-living and on-campus accommodation to explore alternative models such as leasing for furniture and home appliances.

Extend residential food scraps collection across our area by 2030, in line with the state government mandate.

Expand opportunities for our residents to recycle tricky items such as unwearable textiles.

Grow tailored programs to increase participation and reduce contamination in recycling services for apartment buildings and social housing in our area.

Explore opportunities to expand Return and Earn collection points in our area.

Direction 3

Foster circular design

For our organisation:

Review our design and construction activities to better incorporate circular design principles.

Create a circular fit-out process for refurbishment of our managed properties.

Audit materials for our major properties and assets projects to increase opportunities to retain, reuse and recycle.

For our communities:

Promote and encourage the use of circular design principles by developers, architects and construction contractors.

Advocate for improved circular design standards in state and national built environment policies and for their use in significant planning projects in our area.

Support the growth of urban agriculture within a sustainable food system and investigate how we might further design and plan for this in our area.

Direction 4

Keep our city clean

For our organisation:

Investigate systems and innovations to increase recycling and recovery outcomes in our event waste services.

For our communities:

Create a dedicated program to address recurring waste issues where standard approaches do not work and bespoke solutions are required.

Communicate our roles and responsibilities, including what waste services we provide and their service levels, as well as residents' responsibilities around their bins and waste collection.

Check in regularly with residents and make sure waste charges are equitable.

Update our waste management development controls and guidelines to respond to changes in technology, data, services, waste streams, and state policy and requirements.

Talk to small businesses in our area to encourage good waste management practices and increased resource recovery.

Track changes and growth in the use of our street litter bins and investigate options to reduce waste and increase resource recovery.

Direction 5

Build resilient waste and circular systems

For our organisation:

Plan for future cleansing and resource recovery services that respond to how our area will grow and meet the needs of our communities.

For our communities:

Plan for renewal of our long-term processing contracts and review our services to further incentivise reducing waste, increase resource recovery and manage costs with minimal effect on residents.

Trial innovative new services and products that will contribute to achieving our waste avoidance and emissions reduction targets.

Participate in regional, state and federal partnerships and projects that support national waste and circular economy targets.

Advocate at the state and federal level for adequate waste infrastructure and effective product stewardship regulation.

How we'll achieve them

The directions and actions presented in this strategy represent the result of work with our employees, communities, industry and other government agencies.

We look forward to realising the vision of the strategy in partnership with them.

Our actions will be incorporated into our relevant operational and business plans.

We'll track and regularly report on our progress through our existing yearly plans and frameworks.

It's also expected that government and industry will initiate their own actions, and we'll continue to push for and help inform new policies and projects that drive forward the circular economy.



A planting day at Sydney City Farm. Photo: Renee Nowytarger / City of Sydney

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Attachment C

Environmental Strategy Engagement Report 2024



Environmental Strategy focus groups

Engagement Report

Client: City of Sydney

Date: 6 February 2025

Report title: Environmental Strategy focus groups engagement report

Client: City of Sydney

Version: Interim Report

Date: 27 February 2025



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Cred Consulting acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we operate.

We pay our respects to the Traditional Owners, Ancestors and Elders past and present.

We recognise the strength, resilience and contributions of First Nations Peoples, and the eternal and spiritual connection held in the lands, skies and waters, through cultural practices and beliefs.

Our team is proud to live, learn and thrive in the place we now call Australia, and recognise sovereignty has never been ceded by First Nations Peoples of this continent.

As embedded in our values, we are committed to building connected, healthy and resilient communities and creating purposeful outcomes that reflect our deep appreciation for the peoples and cultures that make us who we are and shape where we are going — together as one.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The City of Sydney (the City) is revising its environmental strategy. The City is committed to reducing the environmental impact of their operations, buildings, people and transport on the local area and this document outlines the City's plans for a sustainable Sydney over the next 5 years.

The current 2021 – 2025 Environmental Strategy focuses on reducing emissions and energy use, using alternative water sources, supporting the growth of the circular economy and introducing better performance standards for buildings. The strategy also looked at how the City can mitigate the impacts of climate change and protect biodiversity, green spaces and waterways. This strategy is now approaching the end of its lifecycle and work is underway to revise the strategy and develop the next iteration through to 2030.

The City of Sydney, as part of the development of the next Environmental strategy 2025 – 2030, wants to consult with the community, particularly climate vulnerable groups, to better understand what they think the new environmental strategy should cover and the support they need to contribute to a Sydney that is more sustainable and resilient.

1.2 Purpose of engagement

The purpose of the engagement was to engage with climate vulnerable groups to better understand community perception of what an environmental strategy should deliver and what support people need to contribute to the achievement of sustainability targets.

This was achieved through a series of focus groups that explored community priorities, community experiences with climate impacts, what people do in their day-to-day life to be more sustainable, and how the City of Sydney can better support them to do that.

Learnings from community engagement will be combined with learnings from data from research projects to identify priorities for the revised strategy

1.3 Engagement program

The engagement program consisted of a series of three focus groups with targeted community cohorts who could be considered more vulnerable to climate impacts:

- People with a household income between \$50,000 and \$90,000 (considered low income for the LGA)
- People who rent apartments
- Mandarin speakers

Two focus groups, a focus group with people with disability and First Nations people is yet to be conducted.

This report provides a summary of findings from all focus groups listed above. Findings in this report have been summarised by focus group cohort.

1.4 Recruitment to the focus groups

Two focus groups (people who rent apartments and people with a household income between \$50,000 and \$90,000) were independently recruited by Taverner Research, and one focus group (Mandarin speakers) was independently recruited by Multicultural Marketing and Management, a specialist multicultural market research agency. The purpose of the independent recruitment approach for these focus groups was to ensure a demographically representative group of the community were in attendance. Community members expressed their interest in participating in the focus groups and were screened according to their demographic characteristics.

The selection process was designed to ensure each group of participants aligned with the specific cohort, reflected the City of Sydney local area and were a diverse mix of the community. A range of demographic factors were considered, including suburb, age, gender, housing tenure, dwelling type, language spoken at home and ability. The focus was on ensuring a broad mix of representation.

1.5 About the focus groups

Focus group 1: People with a household income between \$50,000 and \$90,000

This focus group was facilitated by Cred Consulting over Zoom from 5.30-7.30pm on Tuesday 10 December 2024. 12 community members attended the focus group.

Participants were independently recruited by Taverner Research to ensure community members within this income bracket were represented.

Focus group 2: People who rent apartments

This focus group was facilitated by Cred Consulting over Zoom from 5.30-7.30pm on Thursday 12 December 2024. 10 community members attended the focus group.

Participants were independently recruited by Taverner Research to ensure people who rent apartments in the City of Sydney were represented.

Focus group 3: Mandarin speakers

This focus group was facilitated by Multicultural Marketing and Management, a specialist multicultural market research agency from 6-8pm on Wednesday 11 December 2024. 12 community members were represented.

Participants were independently recruited by Multicultural Marketing and Management to ensure people who spoke Mandarin were represented.

Focus group 4 (people with disability) and focus group 5 (First Nations) have yet to be conducted.

1.6 Participant profile

A total of 34 participants attended all three focus groups. All participants were residents of the City of Sydney local area. Figure 1 provides a demographic snapshot of the participants who attended.

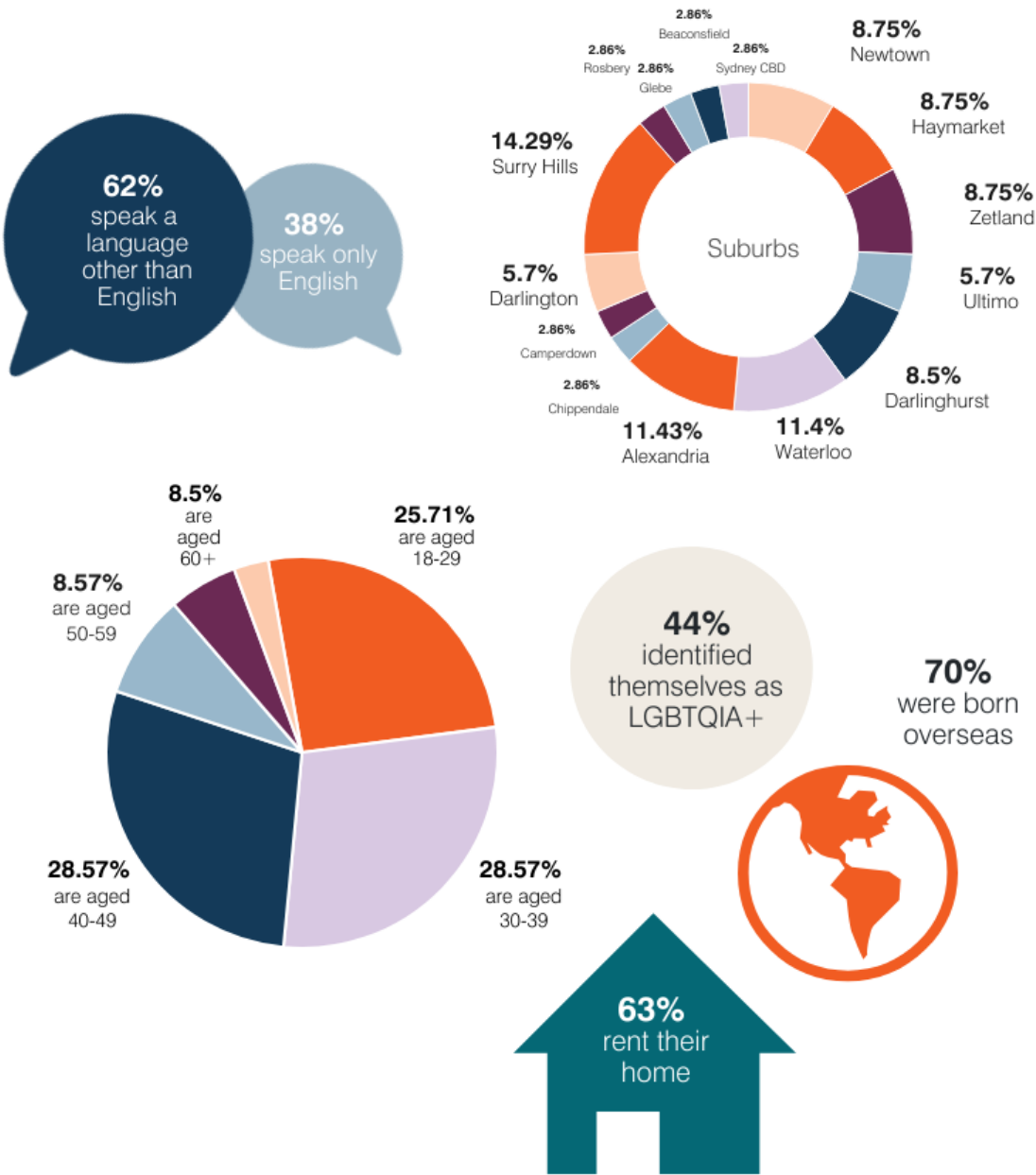


Figure 1 City of Sydney Environmental Strategy demographic snapshot

2. People with household incomes between \$50,000 and \$90,000

2.1 What we heard

Feedback on priorities

The City of Sydney has identified four key priorities to help achieve their vision of a sustainable and resilient Sydney. These priorities are:

- Resilient and efficient operations: Ensuring our work and suppliers reduce energy, water and waste in our buildings, pools, parks and other facilities.
- Efficient and climate resilient buildings: Reducing the reliance on fossil fuels by supporting electrification to cut emissions, encouraging the use of renewable energy sources and helping people make their homes more climate resilient.
- Regenerative and inclusive city: Regenerating the waterways and land. Ensuring everyone can access zero carbon transport and has the ability to reuse and repair instead of buying new.
- Strong foundations: Communicate our progress and use data to drive informed decision making.

The priorities were presented to participants and they were asked to share their feedback and identify any other priorities that they feel are important to achieve the vision of a sustainable Sydney. Feedback provided by participants is summarised below:

Waste management

Participants expressed a desire for more bins to allow adequate waste sorting. They want to see a faster rollout of green bins/FOGO bins for food waste, more frequent sorting of chemical waste and opportunities to recycle plastic.

Trees and greenery

Participants raised the need for more green space, native plants for streetscapes, and trees to provide shade and cool the environment. They also spoke about nesting boxes, native bee boxes and soft surfaces instead of hard pavements. Participants indicated that more soft surfaces would result in better drainage.

Public and active transport

Participants want to see more affordable public transport, bike lanes incorporated into the road instead of footpaths and more car parking and solar chargers for electric vehicles.

Energy efficiency

Participants expressed a desire for more consideration of energy efficiency. They suggested installing solar panels on Sydney Town Hall and City of Sydney buildings and they spoke about doing an

efficiency review of apartment buildings. Key issues that were raised included poor insulation of homes, lack of natural ventilation and how to make homes cooler without needing air conditioning.

Experience of climate-related impacts

Participants were asked what climate-related impacts they have experienced and how they were affected.

Participants primarily spoke about the impacts from erratic/unstable weather like heavy rain and storms. They mentioned humidity, mould, rising damp and flooding as key issues, along with the increased electricity bills associated with managing impacts. Participants also spoke about leaking roofs, flooding due to blocked or old drains and pot holes or obstructions on the road as a result of heavy rain.

Participants noted that there is a need for double glazed windows and building heights designed to accommodate sea breezes, to help reduce the impacts of humidity.

Barriers to responding to climate impacts

Participants were asked what barriers they face that make it harder to respond to climate impacts. Feedback provided by participants is summarised below:

Cost

Participants stated that cost is a major barrier to responding to climate impacts, particularly given the cost of living crisis and for those who live alone. Electricity bills are becoming more expensive and the cost associated with modernising buildings or making changes to respond to climate impacts results in more expensive strata fees, which are not affordable.

Challenges with strata, body corporate and landlords

Participants indicated that strata/body corporate and landlords are a key barrier. They shared experiences of strict strata bylaws, body corporate not accepting new ideas or approving changes, landlords refusing to install air conditioning or ceiling fans and strata committees not believing in climate change so being unwilling to make changes to the building. One participant mentioned that they are not permitted to use their air conditioner after 10pm and another noted that the City of Sydney rejected their strata committee request to install solar panels on the building.

Some participants stated that their landlord is not interested in making changes to the property to improve energy efficiency or climate resilience, and also refuses to let the tenant make their own changes. A participant indicated that they have no other option but to turn their oven on during winter to keep their house warm.

Participants ultimately spoke about feeling disenfranchised and unsupported by their landlord and strata committee due to the resistance they face when they make suggestions or ask for changes.

Building and infrastructure design

Participants stated that the design of buildings and the materials used are not fit for purpose when it comes to withstanding climate impacts like heavy rain. They felt that this is a common theme across the LGA, where infrastructure is outdated or poorly designed. Participants also spoke about their building not having sufficient space to install electric vehicle chargers.

Suggestions to improve sustainability

Participants shared a range of suggestions to improve sustainability and mitigate barriers. They suggested that development approval processes should be expedited for proposals that actively address climate impacts. They felt that this would be a good incentive to encourage more climate resilient buildings that can withstand climate impacts over time.

Participants also spoke about the need for high energy efficiency appliances, more native plants and less chemicals in the public domain (for example, swapping weed spray for steam or alternative options).

Participants suggested more comprehensive waste disposal options, including soft plastic recycling and allowing plastic milk bottles as part of Return and Earn. They also suggested making it easier for community groups to collect and recycle bottles as a fundraising initiative.

Participants spoke about having markets or an online council service where residents can share and swap their used goods and clothing with others.

Living sustainably – how participants do this now and what they want to do in the future

Participants were asked what they currently do in their everyday life to be more sustainable. Participants mentioned the following:

- Sorting waste, recycling and using Return and Earn
- Using the fan instead of the air conditioner
- Taking shorter showers
- Using public transport, active transport and carshare services instead of driving a personal vehicle
- Donating used goods, purchasing second hand goods and buying fewer new items
- Composting and using a food waste bin
- Avoiding single-use plastics and food waste
- Using rechargeable batteries or using solar power to charge batteries
- Carrying a reusable coffee cup and reusable grocery bags
- Buying local and Australian made items
- Sharing food with neighbours and using community gardens
- Only using washing machine on a full load and hanging washing up instead of using the dryer
- Collecting excess water in a bucket or water tank and using it to flush the toilet
- Reusing paper bags as bin liners
- Taking part in energy peak events to receive credits on electricity bill.

Participants who lived in apartment buildings were asked if their building has implemented any sustainability initiatives. Participants spoke about switching to LED lighting, motion sensor lighting, green waste bins, solar panels and working toward electric vehicle charging.

Participants were also asked what they would like to do in the future to be more sustainable. Participants mentioned the following changes:

- Use public transport more often
- Sort and recycle waste more effectively, including food waste and e-waste
- Have a compost bin
- Collect and reuse grey water
- Install in-ground heating
- Use 100% recyclable packaging
- Move to a fully electric lifestyle with a self-generating grid
- Use native plants.

Barriers to living sustainably

Participants were asked what barriers they face that make it harder to live sustainably. They reiterated the same barriers raised in terms of responding to climate impacts, namely cost and challenges with strata, body corporate, landlords and the City of Sydney council. Participants also spoke about the inconvenience aspect (particularly if they are time-poor) and not knowing what they can do and where.

Participants expressed concern about the lack of Return and Earn machines in the Sydney CBD, the excessive use of plastic in supermarkets, abandoned e-scooters and bikes, limited amount of green space in the Sydney CBD and no available compost collection options.

Participants noted that there are significant barriers in terms of implementing sustainability initiatives in apartment buildings, particularly cost. They stated that there are already costly ongoing maintenance tasks in many buildings and that means sustainability initiatives are pushed aside. Participants saw value in grant funding for strata titles to enable more sustainability initiatives.

Participants suggested that the City of Sydney offer free solar powered charging points in bus stops and benches. They also expressed a desire for free community thrift stores and for all phones and small electronics to use the same charging and accessory cord.

Support needed from the City of Sydney

Participants were asked if there is anything the City of Sydney can do to support them to live in a more sustainable way. The suggestions raised by participants are summarised below:

- More comprehensive waste disposal options, including e-waste recycling, compost collection and food waste disposal in the green bin
- Free apartment efficiency review
- More Return and Earn machines
- Rebates for households that use less electricity or produce less waste
- Incentives and subsidies for buildings to make changes and become more climate resilient
- More trees, greenery and community gardens

- Tool/equipment library, where people can borrow items like tools and sewing machines rather than purchasing new
- More electric vehicle charging and parking spots
- More affordable public transport costs
- Education and outreach (particularly to younger people and harder to reach groups) to promote sustainability and the options that are available
- Reduced car speeds in the city centre and more pedestrian space
- Community environment champions who can promote sustainability initiatives
- Businesses using compostable packaging.

3. People who rent apartments

3.1 What we heard

Feedback on priorities

The City of Sydney has identified four key priorities to help achieve their vision of a sustainable and resilient Sydney. These priorities are:

- Resilient and efficient operations: Ensuring our work and suppliers reduce energy, water and waste in our buildings, pools, parks and other facilities.
- Efficient and climate resilient buildings: Reducing the reliance on fossil fuels by supporting electrification to cut emissions, encouraging the use of renewable energy sources and helping people make their homes more climate resilient.
- Regenerative and inclusive city: Regenerating the waterways and land. Ensuring everyone can access zero carbon transport and has the ability to reuse and repair instead of buying new.
- Strong foundations: Communicate our progress and use data to drive informed decision making.

The priorities were presented to participants and they were asked to share their feedback and identify any other priorities that they feel are important to achieve the vision of a sustainable Sydney. Feedback provided by participants is summarised below:

Lack of trust with government on climate issues

Participants stressed that they have a lack of trust with all levels of government on climate issues. Participants suggested that to build this trust, they'd like to see what types of sustainable actions and changes they're undertaking to tackle environmental and climate issues. Participants suggested providing regular updates on what their goals are, what progress they're making and how does the City of Sydney compare to other local government areas.

Waste management

Similarly to other focus groups, participants expressed a desire for more bins to allow adequate waste sorting, particularly for food waste and soft plastics. Participants also raised that it's hard to dispose of furniture in a sustainable way. They also requested additional marketing material, particularly in apartment buildings, as participants raised that there is a lack of knowledge on waste sorting and what can/can't be recycled.

Accessibility issues to waste management

Participants mentioned they had a strong desire to recycle throughout this focus group, however aren't able to travel to City of Sydney recycling centres due to not owning a car or the recycling centre is too far from their home.

Green space and biodiversity

Participants encouraged the City of Sydney to improve their green space and increase biodiversity through the local government area. Participants were reminded of the *Greening Sydney Strategy* and that biodiversity and green space is covered within this document.

Initiatives and programs

All participants identified that the initiatives and programs provided by the City of Sydney are great, however the marketing of these programs are not accessible. Participants raised that there are onerous application processes to partake in them e.g. apartment household compost programs and this inhibits participants in participating in sustainable outcomes.

Types of priorities

A participant raised a specific comment on the types of priorities – identifying that the priorities are more geared towards large infrastructure priorities and not easily accessible, community priorities.

Experience of climate-related impacts

Participants were asked about the climate-related impacts they've experienced and how these have affected them.

Many discussed environmental challenges such as rising heat and humidity, as well as cold temperatures and flash flooding. A common concern was that their apartments were either too hot or too cold, with many lacking air conditioning or heating. Several participants mentioned that as renters, landlords are reluctant to provide these amenities. Additionally, many highlighted that their homes were poorly insulated, making them uncomfortable during both summer and winter months. The age of the apartment buildings in the local area was also noted, with many being outdated and ill-equipped to handle climate-related issues.

Participants expressed concern that these problems would only worsen over time and urged the City of Sydney to encourage landlords to install proper heating, cooling, and insulation. They also recommended that the City investigate drainage systems around the city to help mitigate flash flooding.

Barriers to responding to climate impacts

Participants were asked what barriers they face that make it harder to live sustainably. Similarly to other focus groups, many of the participants noted that the rising cost of living impacts hinder the adoption of climate-resilient measures.

Participants mentioned that they are unable to make any structural or design changes to their home, thus they need to spend additional money on heating, cooling to assist with ventilation. Participants raised with the rising cost of rent, and then paying for additional home materials, is a costly expense.

As noted earlier, participants also mentioned they are unable to access recycling services or Return and Earn chutes without a car.

Living sustainably – how participants do this now and what they want to do in the future

Participants were asked what they currently do in their everyday life to be more sustainable. Participants mentioned the following:

- Go op shopping – buying old, instead of new
- Advertising used products on Facebook marketplace and Gum Tree
- Walking and using public transport
- Carpooling
- Buying products in easy to recycle packaging
- Using reusable coffee cups
- Bulk shopping to reduce deliveries and packaging
- Not using soft plastics, paper towel or tissues
- Recycling as much as possible and giving things away
- Disposing of e-waste and batteries etc responsibly, and
- Having a vege gardens.

Participants also mentioned that their apartment building were undertaking the following sustainable initiatives:

- Recycling water for the gardens
- Signage for waste management
- E-water for cleaning, and
- Sensor lighting in common areas.

Barriers to living sustainably

Participants were asked what barriers they face that make it harder to live sustainably. Similarly to other focus groups, many of the participants noted that the rising cost of living impacts their response to climate impacts.

These barriers raised by participants are summarised below:

- Lack of information on available programs
- Apartment layout and design e.g. doesn't include space to dry clothes, natural ventilation
- Apartment doesn't allow for sharing of facilities e.g. recycling for soft plastics
- Landlord support for structural changes in apartments, and
- Bike share scheme is no longer appealing due to dumped Lime Bikes across the city.

One participant mentioned “Some of these problems are inevitable with climate change and there doesn't seem to be understanding around this, most people are doing all we can”.

Support needed from the City of Sydney

Participants were asked if there is anything the City of Sydney can do to support them to live in a more sustainable way. The suggestions raised by participants are summarised below:

- Improved access to existing recycling services e.g. places where you don't need to access via car
- More recycling support from the City
- No more use of single use plastic bags and only brown paper bags
- A reference sheet of local services/ resources
- Not many sustainability resources or initiatives that are for renters, only home owners e.g. solar panels
 - e.g. a participant raised that they'd like to explore splitting prices on cooling and heating appliances with their landlord.
- Ban use single use coffee cups
- Car share zones/pods – particularly in apartment buildings carparks
 - e.g. a participant raised that their apartment block had a carpark only full of car share no private vehicles.

4. Mandarin speakers

4.1 What we heard

Feedback on priorities

The City of Sydney has identified four key priorities to help achieve their vision of a sustainable and resilient Sydney. These priorities are:

- Resilient and efficient operations: Ensuring our work and suppliers reduce energy, water and waste in our buildings, pools, parks and other facilities.
- Efficient and climate resilient buildings: Reducing the reliance on fossil fuels by supporting electrification to cut emissions, encouraging the use of renewable energy sources and helping people make their homes more climate resilient.
- Regenerative and inclusive city: Regenerating the waterways and land. Ensuring everyone can access zero carbon transport and has the ability to reuse and repair instead of buying new.
- Strong foundations: Communicate our progress and use data to drive informed decision making.

The priorities were presented to participants and they were asked to share their feedback and identify any other priorities that they feel are important to achieve the vision of a sustainable Sydney.

Unlike other focus groups, the participants were divided and not in general consensus of the priorities provided. The majority of participants agreed on the second priority – efficient and climate resilient buildings.

In regards to the other priorities, the participants identified the following issues:

- Priority 1 – requires large scale investment, which may be hard for community to understand or is ready for
- Priority 3 – though the priority is important, participants mentioned that this priority felt less tangible, and
- Priority 4 – was viewed as beneficial but requiring broader community involvement.

Experience of climate-related impacts

Participants were asked about the climate-related impacts they've experienced and how these have affected them.

Participants shared how rising temperatures, wildfires, and unstable weather patterns have disrupted daily life, posed health challenges, and heightened environmental concerns. Many emphasised the struggle to adapt to these changes, particularly highlighting the increased risk of fires and the detrimental effects of extreme heat on personal well-being and community resilience.

“Recently, everyone in Sydney has experienced temperatures over 30 degrees Celsius, which seem to have set a historical record. This is what I find most difficult to adapt to.”

“Hot weather causes concentrated rainfall, which stops trains from running, making it impossible to travel green. Additionally, the rainfall can cause waterlogging on roads, posing a safety hazard to travelers”.

Participants also raised the instability with the dramatic increases of wild weather. Participants noted the following impacts of wild weather include:

- Train delays and traffic jams – which impact getting to work, home or other commitments
- Strong winds cause inconveniences in daily life, and sometimes outdoor activities need to be cancelled
- Drought or heavy rain lead to reduced crop yields and higher vegetable prices, and
- Smoke from fires have caused decline in air quality, and thus impacting health.

Barriers to responding to climate impacts

Participants were asked what barriers they face that make it harder to live sustainably.

Similarly to the other focus groups, participants highlighted the challenges, including the inability to modify living spaces due to renting apartments, limited access to relevant resources, and financial constraints that hinder the adoption of climate-resilient measures.

“The recycling locations are sometimes far away and difficult to reach. For example, if you want to recycle batteries at OfficeWorks, there are none near my address.”

“Central air conditioning requires additional fees, and the owner adds the maintenance costs to the tenant's usage fee, which has increased by three times”.

“The owners of investment properties are not actively investing in sustainable equipment. For tenants, facing the increasingly hot summer, this affects their sleep and quality of life.”

The discussion also underscored the impact of specific weather conditions, such as strong winds and heavy rainfall, which exacerbate daily challenges by raising safety concerns and restricting mobility, particularly in relation to taking public transport to work and home.

Living sustainably – how participants do this now and what they want to do in the future

Participants were asked what they currently do in their everyday life to be more sustainable. Many participants were actively adopting practices to reduce their environmental impact.

Participants mentioned the following:

- Driving electric vehicles
- Recycling and minimising the use of disposable items
- Using public transport and walking instead of driving
- Sorting of rubbish and recycling
- Picking up litter
- Use energy saving LED light bulbs
- Use own cloth carry bags, and
- Use less disposable tableware.

Participants also mentioned that their apartment building were undertaking the following sustainable initiatives:

- Garbage sorting in apartment buildings
- Energy saving motors lighting, and
- Sensor lighting in common areas.

“Our apartment recently launched a new sustainability project. Our residents recycle leftover food using food recycling bags provided by the City. The collected food, such as fruit peels and vegetables, is processed and degraded to be used as fertilizer.”

Barriers to living sustainably

Participants were asked what barriers they face that make it harder to live sustainably. Like the other focus groups, many of the participants noted that the rising cost of living impacts their response to climate impacts and restricted access to appropriate resources and difficulties in implementing modifications within rental properties.

“I want to buy a portable air conditioner, but it is difficult to install in my living situation, which will increase the installation cost. Besides, I also need to ask the landlord for permission.”

“An old apartment in the city where you cannot install air conditioning because these old houses need to be protected”.

Support needed from the City of Sydney

Participants were asked if there is anything the City of Sydney can do to support them to live in a more sustainable way. The suggestions raised by participants are summarised below:

- Increase frequency of buses and trains to encourage patronage and less reliance on cars
- Lower public transit costs
- Improve infrastructure to encourage walking and cycling
- Community based initiatives– outdoor nature experiences, workshops on waste transformation, sustainability focused events for children and teens
- Encourage targeted communication and training programs for building managers and non-English speakers to facilitate effective implementation of sustainable practices, and
- Government subsidies to encourage the adoption for renewable energy solutions.

“We provide free language tutoring to non-native English speakers, especially our parents, so that they can better integrate into and adapt to the Australian living environment.”

“We can continue to implement the \$2 cap on public transportation costs. This is because many people will give up low-carbon travel due to the high cost of public transportation. For example, if you have a long commute, you may prefer to drive a private car to save time.”

Item 4.

Project Scope - Green Park Renewal

File No: X099771.002

Summary

This report outlines the proposed scope of works for the renewal of Green Park, Darlington. Green Park has been identified as part of the parks and playgrounds improvement program.

The project brief is to refurbish the park to create a high quality, inclusive and accessible open space, and includes the restoration of the heritage bandstand and the creation of an AIDS memorial garden. The renewal will enhance the overall amenity of the park by upgrading the existing path network, adding new seating benches, retaining walls, park furniture, and lighting.

A draft Concept Plan was on public exhibition from 24 July to 21 August 2025. A letter was distributed in the local area and the proposal was exhibited on the City's website. The proposed works are supported by the community.

The proposed park renewal works include a new pathway network to improve accessibility and circulation through the park and maximise the usable lawn areas. The revised pathway network allows for more seating areas including accessible seating which can be directly accessed from pathways, while new lighting throughout the park will improve nighttime safety. The design aims to create an inclusive open space using simple, durable materials that reflect the character of the existing park and neighbourhood.

The proposed restoration works to the bandstand will return the bandstand to its original form and include new stair access to allow the space to once again be used by the public and the proposed AIDS Memorial garden will provide a space for memory, commemoration and reflection.

The proposal aims to balance the history of the site with the needs of a wide variety of user groups, including local residents and people sleeping rough, those who visit the park to access services provided by mobile voluntary service providers, as well as hospital staff and visitors, art students and those who want to visit the area in remembrance.

This report recommends that Council endorse the proposed scope of works for the renewal of Green Park, Darlington.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) endorse the project scope for the Green Park, Darlington renewal, as described in the subject report and shown in the Concept Plan as shown at Attachment B to the subject report, for progression to relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation tender and construction; and
- (B) note the estimated financial implications as outlined in Confidential Attachment D to the subject report.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Location Plan and Site Photos
- Attachment B.** Concept Plan
- Attachment C.** Engagement Report
- Attachment D.** Financial Implications (Confidential)

Background

1. The City of Sydney (the City) has an ongoing parks improvement program. This program is for parks which need upgrade, renewal or enhancement works, the replacement of end-of-life equipment, and to generally provide appropriate facilities for local residents.
2. Green Park is a neighbourhood park located at 301 Victoria Street, Darlinghurst. It is bounded by St Vincents Hospital to the east on Victoria Street, a sandstone wall to the Sacred Heart Hospice to the South, Darlinghurst Road and the National Art School (former Sydney Gaol) to the west, the Sydney Jewish Museum, residential apartments and some commercial frontages on Burton Street to the north.
3. The land is Crown Land under management of the City of Sydney and included in the City's General Crown Reserves Plan of Management.
4. In accordance with the Crown Lands Management Act 2016 and the Native Title Act 1993, the City notified NTS Corp Limited of the proposed works from 21 March – 18 April 2025 (28 days). NTS Corp Limited provide services to First Nations people who hold, or may hold, native title rights and interests in NSW. No submissions were received.
5. Green Park is characterised as a neighbourhood park. It is currently used by hospital workers and visitors, local residents and dog walkers, commuters and people sleeping rough.
6. The project team presented to the Design Advisory Panel (DAP) on 29 May 2025. In response to DAP feedback, the path layout around the bandstand was revised and additional seating was placed in the park.

Concept Plan and Scope of Work

7. A draft concept design was developed for the works and community consultation was undertaken from 24 July to 21 August 2025.
8. The draft concept design sets the overall layout. The key principles are:
 - (a) improve usable space within the park: improve turf areas and garden beds and activate underutilised areas in the park
 - (b) improve night-time safety: replace the existing park lighting with new standard light poles on the paths of travel to improve night-time safety in the park
 - (c) increase seating and amenity: install new seating areas in the park to offer a variety of seating opportunities in both sun and shade. New terraced seating walls will overlook the bandstand and lawn areas

- (d) restore the bandstand: restore the bandstand to its original form and make it accessible to the public via a new external staircase. The bandstand was erected in 1925 to host public band concerts which were a popular feature of Sydney life in the interwar years. The bandstand was converted to a café in the early 1990s and following a short period of operation it has been vacant for an extended period due to the constrained nature of the building. It is proposed to restore the bandstand to its original form to allow for the space to once again be used by the public including for public performances.
 - (e) create an AIDS Memorial: in 2019 Council noted and received the petition of 1,332 citizens requesting that Council support an AIDS Memorial and place of remembrance in Green Park, Darlinghurst. An AIDS Memorial Garden will form part of its renewed landscape, providing space for memory, commemoration and reflection.
9. The proposal includes the following:
- (a) improved park furniture and signage
 - (b) improved lighting throughout the park
 - (c) improved lawn areas and garden beds
 - (d) upgraded pathways for better access
 - (e) New drinking fountain with dog bowl
 - (f) More rubbish bins
 - (g) restoration of the bandstand building and a new staircase into the building
 - (h) a new AIDS Memorial Garden adjacent to the bandstand
 - (i) new irrigation to lawn areas and memorial garden
10. A review of Environmental Factors (REF) will be lodged for the works in accordance with the Environmental Planning Assessment Act 1979 and the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure 2021).
11. A Development Application (DA) will be lodged for the architectural changes to the bandstand building as a locally listed heritage item .

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

12. 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 report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 3 - Public places for all - this project will enhance accessibility and inclusivity, upgrading the park will ensure it serves as a welcoming space for all community members which meets the needs of a variety of users and provides opportunities for social interaction.
 - (b) Direction 4 - Design excellence and sustainable development - this project is part of a wider program of renewal of parks and reserves across the city. It will provide an improved quality of open space. Incorporating sustainable materials and practices in the park's renewal, promoting environmental responsibility and resilience to climate change.

Organisational Impact

13. Upgrading the park assets in Green Park will improve the quality of these existing assets and represent a mitigation of risk to the City. The assets will require ongoing maintenance.

Risks

14. Risks of not implementing the scope of these works include further deterioration of the parks condition including, paving, irrigation, turf areas and non-compliant lighting.
15. This approach is within the City's risk appetite, which states:
 - (a) We acknowledge our responsibility to protect and enhance the social and environmental wellbeing of our community. Our risk appetite emphasises the integration of sustainable practices into infrastructure asset management, considering environmental impacts, climate change resilience and community engagement.

Social / Cultural / Community

16. The site is an important open space within the Darlinghurst area where many people have limited access to outdoor areas within their own homes. The site is also used by workers and visitors during the daytime especially from St Vincents hospital. Improving the amenity offering within the park represents an investment in this community, providing opportunities for people to enjoy the park into the future.
17. In 2019 the Darlo Darlings Community Group established a community campaign which proposed an AIDS Memorial in Green Park, Darlinghurst to honour those who lost their lives during the AIDS crisis, and to provide the community a dedicated place of remembrance. The campaign received wide community support. Green Park is of special significance to the community, as it was a place where many sought comfort and reflection during difficult times.

Environmental

18. Protection and enhancement of the existing planting and trees through this work is in line with the Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan.
19. No trees are proposed to be removed as part of this proposal.

Financial Implications

20. There are sufficient funds in the 2025/26 capital budget and forward estimates to complete the works included in this project.
21. Current project cost estimates and financial implications for the delivery of the Green Park renewal are detailed in Confidential Attachment D.

Relevant Legislation

22. Local Government Act 1993 - Section 10A provides that a council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion of information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
23. Attachment D contains confidential commercial information which, if disclosed, would:
 - (a) confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business; and
 - (b) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.
24. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise Council's ability to negotiate fairly and commercially to achieve the best outcome for its ratepayers.
25. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
26. State Environment Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.
27. Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
28. Native Title Act 1993

Critical Dates / Time Frames

29. Current Program Dates:

(a) Council consideration of Concept Design	September 2025
(b) Detailed Design	October 2025 - Mid 2026
(c) Tender	Mid - Late 2026
(d) Construction Start	Early 2027
(e) Completion	Late 2027

Options

30. Proceed with the progression of the improvement works as outlined in this subject report including relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, tender for construction.
31. Project does not proceed - this option is not recommended as the current condition of the park is in need of renewal.

Public Consultation

32. Community consultation was undertaken as a 2-part process: early engagement (pre-consultation) and public consultation / exhibition. For a detailed description of the consultation process and findings refer to Attachment C.
33. An early engagement notification letter/email was issued to residents. A total of 41 submissions were received during the period. The purpose of the early engagement was to seek input from the community about how they used the space and how the park could be improved.
34. The public consultation involved the following:
- (a) A webpage on Sydney Your Say showed the plans from July 24 to August 21 2025. The page included an electronic copy of the concept design, survey and other key information about the consultation.
 - (b) An email was sent to 6,643 of our Sydney Your Say e newsletter
 - (c) A letter was posted to residents in properties surrounding the park, inviting them to give feedback on the proposal. 850 letters were distributed.

- (d) A pop-up consultation feedback session was held in the park on Saturday 9 August 2025, 10am to 11:30am. City staff were available to answer questions and obtain feedback about the proposed concept plan. Respondents were also encouraged to view the plans and provide feedback on the Sydney Your Say website. Approximately 6 people attended the sessions.
 - (e) The community and stakeholders were able to give feedback using an online feedback form. A link to the feedback form was provided on the Sydney Your Say website.
 - (f) Signs were placed in the park directing people online to leave their feedback.
35. There were 54 submissions received during the consultation period. The Sydney Your Say page was visited 1318 times during the consultation period. This included 22 submissions via email and 32 submissions via the online feedback form.
36. The proposal was well supported by the community and the responses highlighted that an upgrade to this park would increase the current use of the park. Responses to the key comments and suggestions are included in Attachment C.

KIM WOODBURY

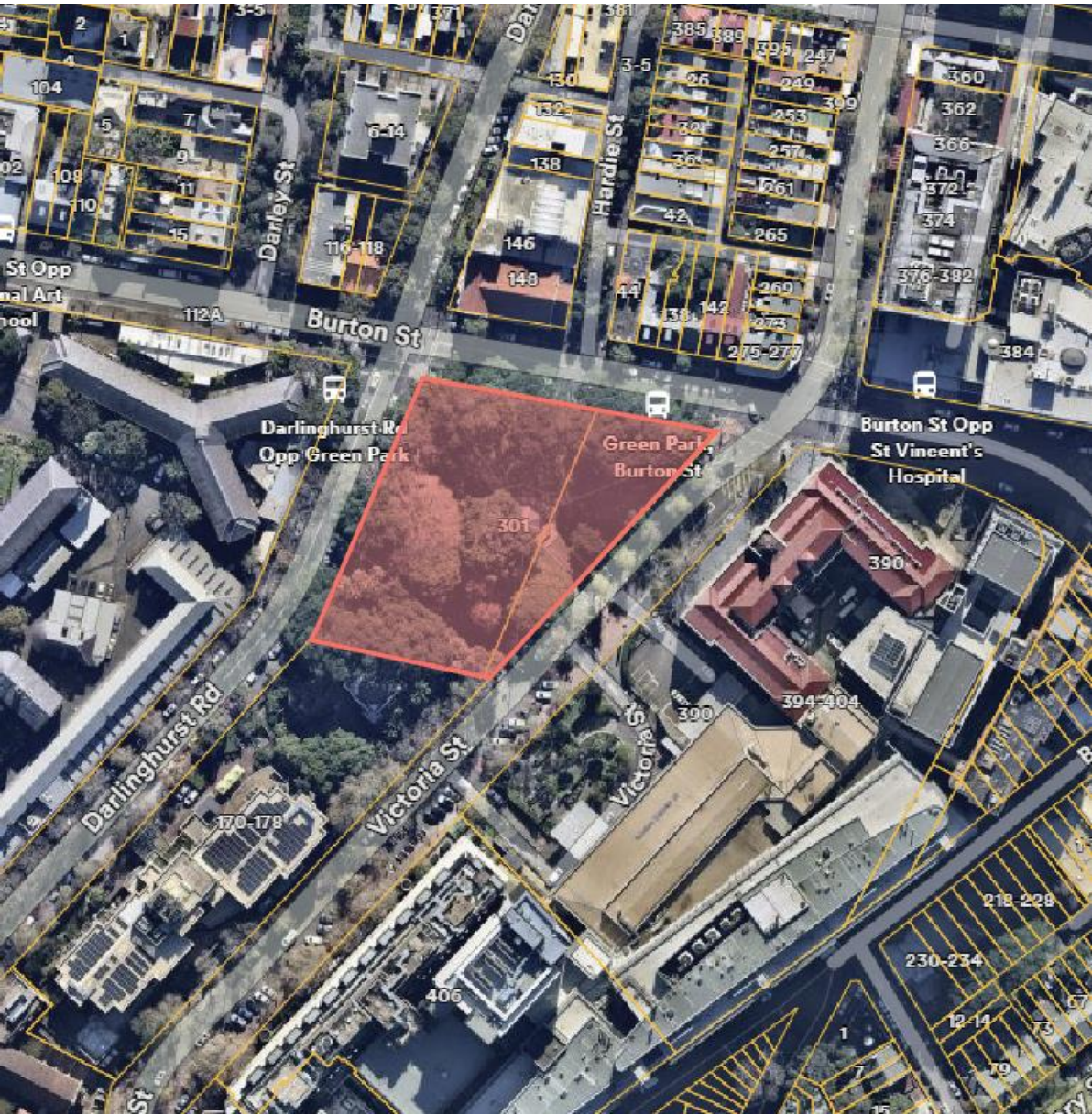
Chief Operating Officer

James Kidd, Design Manager

Attachment A

Location Plan and Site Photos

Green Park, Darlinghurst





Existing park and bandstand looking south west towards the bandstand from entrance at Burton Street and Victoria Street – people sitting on lawn, footpath and bandstand building



Looking south east towards bandstand from entrance at the corner of Darlinghurst Road and Burton Street – worn turf area, people sitting on lawn, footpath and bandstand building



Looking south on Victoria Street footpath – turf embankment, street trees, people sitting in park.



Looking north east towards bandstand near Darlinghurst Road – large canopy trees, footpaths, bandstand, worn turf areas.



Looking north west towards bandstand from southern Victoria Street entrance – lawn areas, canopy trees, bandstand, people sitting on lawn, footpath.



Looking south along Darlinghurst Road – boundary walls, gravel seating area, footpath, parked cars, canopy trees, people sitting on benches.

Attachment B

Concept Plan

Background

We are upgrading Green Park, Darlinghurst.

The proposal includes improving the path network; night time lighting; increased usable area; more seating; increased garden areas and improved lawn areas.

The existing 1920's bandstand building will be restored to it's heritage condition and be accessible to park users.

A new AIDS Memorial Garden with seating will be built adjacent to the Bandstand.



Green Park 1922



Green Park 2020



Artist impression of Green Park



Indicative AIDS Memorial garden



Indicative memorial planting



Indicative park seating



Indicative turf areas



Indicative seating walls



Proposed Concept Design



- Legend**
- 01 Restored bandstand with stair access
 - 02 New AIDS memorial garden
 - 03 Improved lawn areas
 - 04 Improved planting beds
 - 05 Upgraded pedestrian paths with lighting
 - 06 Landscape terraces and seating walls
 - 07 New park seating
 - 08 New seating and accessible ramps to Victoria Street and Darlinghurst Road
 - 09 Gay and Lesbian Holocaust memorial retained
 - 10 Victor Chang Memorial and drinking fountain retained
-
- lawn
 - memorial planting
 - mass planting
 - park sign
 - bin
 - seat
 - seating walls
 - New drinking fountain with dog bowl
 - Deco granite paving
 - upgraded park paths
 - extent of works
 - Proposed light poles

Attachment C

Engagement Report



Engagement report

Upgrading Green Park, Darlinghurst
September 2025

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Engagement summary

From 24 July to 21 August 2025, we asked the community for feedback on a concept plan to upgrade Green Park, Darlinghurst.

Consultation on the plan provided an opportunity for stakeholders and the community to review and comment on the design.

Consultation activities included:

- Letters to nearby residents and businesses
- project signage in the park
- a pop-up event in the park
- emails to key stakeholders

This report outlines the community engagement activities that took place to support the consultation and summarises the key findings from the consultation.

Purpose of the engagement

The purpose of the engagement was to:

- gather feedback from stakeholders and the community about the proposed upgrade.
 - determine the level of satisfaction with the concept design.
-

Outcomes from the engagement

Submissions received during consultation

We received a total of 54 submissions during the consultation period.

32 submissions were received via the Sydney Your Say survey portal and 22 email submissions.

The Sydney Your Say page was visited 1318 times during the consultation period.

Key findings

Online feedback form – rating the design and elements of the proposed upgrade

Respondents who completed the online feedback form were asked whether they supported the proposed design as well as to rate how important elements of the proposed design were to them.

The overall design was strongly supported by **90.63%** of survey responders.

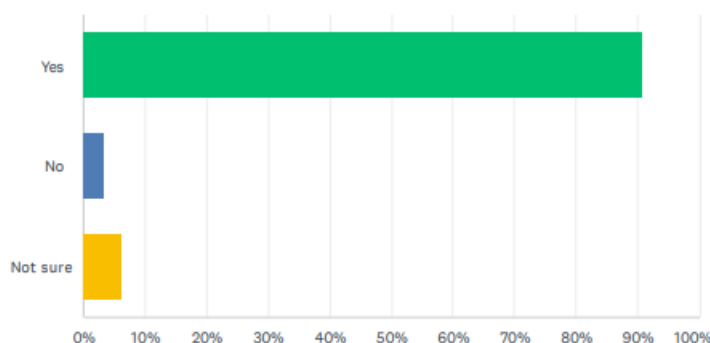
The five design elements in the park were also strongly supported or supported by survey responders:

- more seats throughout the park were strongly supported or supported by **98%** of survey responders
- new lighting on main paths was strongly supported or supported by **96.89%** of survey responders
- maximalising usable areas of the park, including lawns was strongly supported or supported by **97%** of survey responders
- increase and improve garden areas was strongly supported or supported by **98%** of survey responders
- improve the pathway networks was strongly supported or supported by **96%** of survey responders

The full results from the survey are below:

Q1 Do you support the proposed improvements to Green Park?

Answered: 32 Skipped: 0

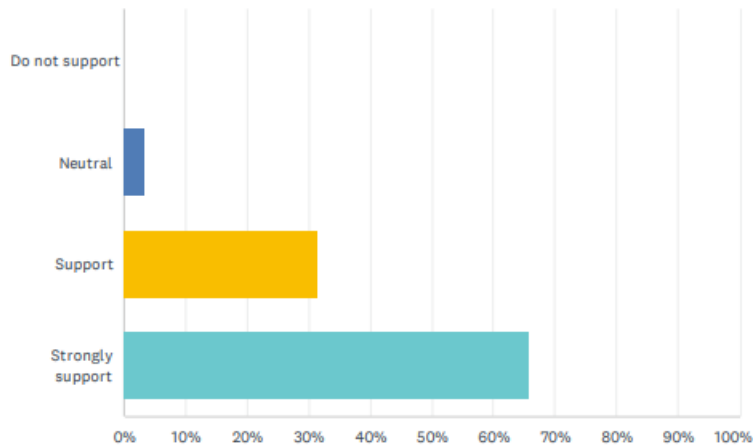


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.63%	29
No	3.13%	1
Not sure	6.25%	2
TOTAL		32

Engagement report

Q2 More seats throughout the park

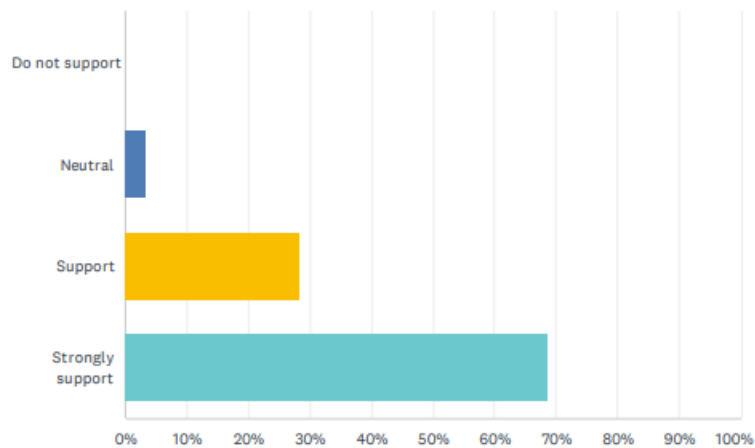
Answered: 32 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Do not support	0.00%	0
Neutral	3.13%	1
Support	31.25%	10
Strongly support	65.63%	21
TOTAL		32

Q3 New lighting on main paths

Answered: 32 Skipped: 0

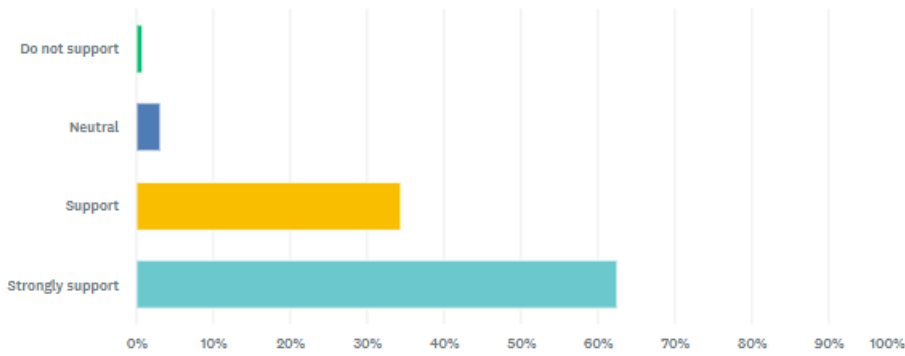


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Do not support	0.00%	0
Neutral	3.13%	1
Support	28.13%	9
Strongly support	68.75%	22
TOTAL		32

Engagement report

Maximise usable areas of the park, including lawns

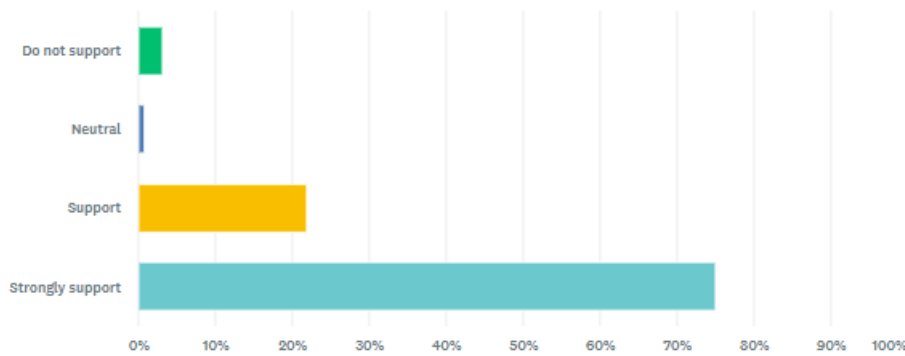
Answered: 32 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices ↓	Percentage ↓	Responses ↓	
Do not support	0%	0	***
Neutral	3.13%	1	***
Support	34.38%	11	***
Strongly support	62.5%	20	***
Total		32	

Increase and improve garden areas

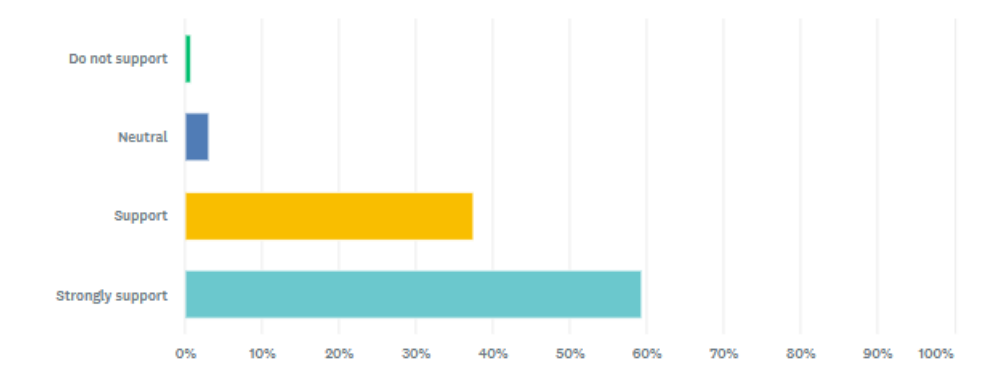
Answered: 32 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices ↓	Percentage ↓	Responses ↓	
Do not support	3.13%	1	***
Neutral	0%	0	***
Support	21.88%	7	***
Strongly support	75%	24	***
Total		32	

Improve the pathway network

Answered: 32 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices ↓	Percentage ↓	Responses ↓	
Do not support	0%	0	***
Neutral	3.13%	1	***
Support	37.5%	12	***
Strongly support	59.38%	19	***
Total		32	

Subjects/topics raised in submissions

Several subjects/topics were raised in the feedback received. These were presented as concerns, suggestions and/or requests.

This feedback was received through the survey as well as individual emails during the consultation period and discussions with the community at onsite events and is summarised below.

Comments	Total	City of Sydney Response
PARK UPGRADE		
General support for the design	13	Noted
Include acknowledgement of the aboriginal community	1	This will be incorporated into the signage design of the park upgrade.
More seating in the park for nearby workers and students visiting the Jewish Museum	2	The park upgrade includes a variety of new seating options and locations throughout the park.
Include table and chairs to encourage picnics	1	The park upgrade includes a variety of new seating options and locations throughout the park. Inclusion of picnic tables and chairs will be considered during the detailed design process.
Oppose sitting walls unless they serve a dual purpose (retaining walls) as they are uncomfortable	1	The seating walls are part of a variety of new seating areas in the park. They serve a dual purpose and will retain areas of the park to improve lawn and planting areas.
Exercise equipment should be installed in the park	1	Council's Park Fitness Equipment Plan sets out a plan to ensure all members of the community will be within a 10 minute walk (800 metre radius) of outdoor fitness equipment. The area around Green Park is serviced by existing fitness equipment at James Hilder Reserve, Rushcutters Bay Park and Bourke Street Park.
Install a public toilet in the park	1	Council's Public Toilet Strategy recommends that public toilets are located within a 5-10 minute walk (400-800 metres) of any point within central Sydney and at all village centres and major neighbourhood parks. Green Park is serviced by the new automated public toilet at Taylor Square (approx. 300 metres walk).
Install bike parking around the park	1	Bike parking is available at a number of locations in close proximity to the site on

		Darlinghurst Road, Burton Street, and Victoria Street. Installation of additional bike parking around the park will be considered during the detailed design process.
Include a playground in the space	1	The City aims to ensure all members of the community are within a 10-minute walking distance (800 metre radius) of their local playground. The area near Green Park is well serviced by existing playgrounds at Lacrozia Playground, Surry Street Playground, Albert Sloss Reserve, and Frances Newton Reserve.
Ensure there are adequate bins throughout the park	1	The park upgrade has increased the number bins in the park and will consider their best locations in the detailed design.
Include a water feature in the design	1	The park upgrade will not include a water feature in the design.
Trim larger trees to improve lighting in the park and make it more inviting	2	The project team will work with arborists to determine if this can be achieved.
Increase planting in the park	1	The park upgrade proposes to increase the planting areas in the park.
Include elements of re-wilding to the park which includes re-introducing native bees	1	“Re-wilding” is not part of the proposal, however there will be increased planting areas and the selection of planting species that attract pollinators will be considered in the detailed design.
Native plants should be used with information about the plants or Aboriginal names	1	The planting design will use a mix of native and exotic planting species. Signage for plant names is not part of the park upgrade.
Drainage in the park needs to be addressed as it is often muddy for multiple days after rain	1	Park drainage issues will be reviewed as part of the detailed design.
Engineering issue that needs to be addressed is the mud which accumulates on the concrete on the western side around the bandstand when it rains	1	Park drainage issues will be reviewed as part of the detailed design.
Address the drainage issues on the Eastern edge of the park. Water often flows from the park over the footpath	1	Park drainage issues will be reviewed as part of the detailed design.
The new path network takes up too much open space in the park	1	The new path network has been proposed to maximise open space and lawn areas in the park and considers the ‘desire lines’ of visitors to the park

The two main paths should be in an "X" shape when viewed from above, intersecting each other at the band stand - otherwise the public will just create a muddy 'desire path'	1	The new path network has been proposed to maximise open space and lawn areas in the park and considers the 'desire lines' of visitors to the park
Park should be designated as an off-leash area	1	Green Park is currently identified as an off-leash dog park. It is not proposed to change this.
Restrict pets in the park	1	Green Park is currently identified as an off-leash dog park. It is not proposed to change this.
The design is plain and uninspired	1	Noted
BANDSTAND		
Would like to see the upgraded bandstand used for public performances	2	The bandstand was erected in 1925 to host public band concerts which were a popular feature of Sydney life in the interwar years. The bandstand was converted to a café in the early 1990s and following a short period of operation it has been vacant for an extended period due to the constrained nature of the building. It is proposed to restore the bandstand to it's original form to allow for the space to once again be used by the public including for public performances.
Would like the bandstand turned into a café	2	The building is not suitable for use as a café (refer above) and it is proposed to restore the bandstand to it's original form to allow for the space to once again be used by the public.
Would like the bandstand repurposed to be utilised as a community outreach centre to be used by homeless and vulnerable people in the area	1	The building is not suitable for community use and it is proposed to restore the bandstand to it's original form to allow for the space to once again be used by the public.
Oppose renovation of the bandstand unless it will be utilised	1	Restoration of the bandstand to it's original form will allow for the space to once again be used by the public including for public performances.
AIDS MEMORIAL		
Support the inclusion of an AIDS memorial garden	16	Noted
Include an acknowledgement to Professor David Cooper AC (former Director UNSW's Kirby Institute) as part of the AIDS memorial garden	13	The requests for acknowledgement of Professor David Cooper AC will be considered as the detailed design for the AIDS Memorial garden is developed.

Include an acknowledgement to Bill Whittaker AM (first CEO of the AIDS Council of NSW) in the AIDS memorial garden	1	The request for acknowledgement of Bill Whittaker AM will be considered as the detailed design for the AIDS Memorial garden is developed.
A more respectful option for the AIDS memorial should be considered rather than a garden	2	The AIDS Memorial garden is proposed to be integrated with the renewed landscape of Green Park, providing space for memory, commemoration and reflection.

Preconcept consultation

Prior to undertaking community consultation on the concept design, the City undertook some early consultation work in early-2024 to ask residents how often they use the park and what they would like to see in the new design.

41 submissions were received during the early consultation period. Ideas and suggestions received during this time helped to shape the concept plan. Key themes from the pre-consultation were:

- **Improved pathways and park amenity** – enhance planting and turf areas, access to more formal seating benches around the park and to rationalise the path layout.
- **Better lighting** - park feels dark and gloomy during the day, improved lighting at night (doesn't feel safe)
- **Revitalise the bandstand** – the building is admired and well loved by the community and should have more activation.

Engagement activities

Overview of engagement

1. Sydney Your Say webpage

A Sydney Your Say webpage, "[Your say on the proposed design for Green Park, Darlinghurst](#)" was created. The page included an electronic copy of the revised concept design, survey and other key information about the consultation.

2. Online feedback form via Survey Monkey

The community and stakeholders were able to give feedback using an online feedback form. A link to the feedback form was provided on the Sydney Your Say website.

3. Consultation letter

A letter was posted to residents in properties surrounding the park, inviting them to give feedback on the proposal. 850 letters were distributed.

4. Signage

Four signs were placed in the park directing people online to leave their feedback.

5. Park pop-up

City staff attended the park on Saturday 9 August from 10am to 11:30am. This was attended by approximately 6 residents.

6. Sydney Your Say e-newsletter

An email was sent to 6643 of our Sydney Your Say e newsletter

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By virtue of the Local Government Act 1993 Section 10A Paragraph 2

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