

Post Exhibition - Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2025–2029

File No: X109038

Summary

On 12 May 2025, Council approved the draft Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2025–2029 for public exhibition. The draft plan was developed through consultation with over 350 people with disability, their families and carers, service providers and disability representative organisations, the City of Sydney disability employee network, Inclusive City, and the City of Sydney Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel.

The draft plan was placed on public exhibition from 13 May to 11 June 2025. During this time 16 submissions were received. Overall feedback was positive and indicated that respondents felt this plan will help build a more inclusive and accessible city for all.

A summary of the submissions received, and the City of Sydney's responses, are provided at Attachment B.

Based on the feedback provided, minor amendments have been applied to the final Inclusion (disability) action plan 2025–2029.

Under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022, the City of Sydney is required to develop a disability inclusion action plan and review and remake this plan every four years. The City of Sydney Inclusion (disability) action plan 2025–2029 (Attachment A) will be the City of Sydney's sixth plan and must be in place by 1 July 2025.

Once adopted, accessible versions of the plan will be provided through the City of Sydney's website and on request. These include an accessible PDF, Large print and Easy Read.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council adopt the Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2025–2029, as shown at Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) Council note the feedback received on the draft Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2025–2029, as detailed in Attachment B to the subject report; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2025–2029 in order to correct any minor drafting errors and finalise design, artwork and alternative formats for publication.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2025–2029
- Attachment B.** Engagement Report - Stage 2
- Attachment C.** Engagement Report - Stage 1
- Attachment D.** Edits to the Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2025–2029

Background

1. The Inclusion (disability) action plan 2025–2029 is the City of Sydney's commitment to ensure an inclusive and accessible city for all. Inclusive cities are easy to get around, they provide people with disability opportunities for participation in the diverse social, cultural life of the city and access to meaningful employment opportunities. An inclusive city benefits everyone, not just people with disability.
2. This will be the City of Sydney's sixth plan and will continue to build on the success of previous plans by embedding access and inclusion as core considerations across all council services and processes and to deliver meaningful outcomes for people with disability and their families and carers.
3. In line with feedback from our community, this plan will focus on continuing to provide a range of inclusive facilities and spaces, programs, services and events. It will promote greater visibility and understanding of non-visible disabilities and people with an intersectional experience of disability, as well as address key recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission.
4. The plan will ensure that the City of Sydney meets its obligations under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022 to take active steps to create a more inclusive community and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 to provide for equitable access to accessible facilities and services.
5. In line with the requirements of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022, the City of Sydney consulted over 350 people with disability, their families and carers, to develop the draft plan through a variety of channels including; in-person and online focus groups, an in-person co-design roundtable workshop, a survey, and multiple in-person engagements at City of Sydney events.
6. A summary of key feedback and suggestions raised during the consultation period have been captured are included within the Engagement Report - Stage 1 at Attachment C to the subject report.
7. The Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel was consulted throughout the development of the plan and will continue to play a critical role in monitoring the implementation of the plan once adopted.
8. The draft plan was placed on public exhibition from 13 May to 11 June 2025. The plan was produced as an accessible PDF, along with large print and Easy Read versions. In person and online consultations were held to increase accessibility and participation. A message inviting comment was also produced in Auslan.
9. During the public exhibition period, the City of Sydney received 16 submissions, 3 from organisations and 13 individual submissions from people who live and work in and visit the City of Sydney local area.
10. Overall feedback received was positive and indicated that respondents felt this plan will help build a more inclusive and accessible city for all. Suggestions for areas for improvement within the plan were also received during the public exhibition period.
11. Details of all positive feedback and suggestions are included in the Engagement Report - Stage 2 at Attachment B of the subject report, along with the City of Sydney's responses to this feedback.

12. The draft plan includes actions to address all suggestions received in line with the City of Sydney's responsibilities and only minor changes are, therefore recommended following the exhibition period. These are shown at Attachment D.
13. The internal Implementation plan that supports delivery of the Inclusion (disability) Action Plan details the individual projects and steps required to achieve each action. It allocates a responsible officer, timeframe, and measures to be reported onto Council bi-annually. All actions in the Implementation plan are integrated into and reported through the Operational plan and business unit plans and are budgeted for annually.
14. Following adoption of the plan, accessible versions, including accessible PDF, Large print and Easy Read, will be provided through the City of Sydney's website and on request.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment – NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan

15. The City of Sydney's Inclusion (disability) action plan 2025–2029 has been designed to align with the four directions established in the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan and to build on the progress made by previous plans.

Strategic Alignment – A City for All – Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan

16. This plan aligns with the City of Sydney's long-term vision for a just, inclusive and sustainable Sydney which is embodied in the A City for All – Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan. The plan supports delivery of our commitments, in particular the principles that "Sydney is a just city that respects human rights and dignity" and that "Sydney is a safe and accessible city for people of all ages and abilities".

Strategic Alignment – Community Strategic Plan 2030–2050 – Delivering Sustainable Sydney

17. Community Strategic Plan 2030–2050 – Delivering Sustainable Sydney renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This plan is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 1 – Good governance and stewardship – people with disability are supported to participate in decision-making at the City of Sydney.
 - (b) Direction 3 – Public places for all – providing equitable access to well-designed spaces that support social connection, with an emphasis on safety, amenities and accessibility.
 - (c) Direction 5 – A city for walking and public transport – accessible streetscapes and infrastructure to enable people with disability to navigate our city.
 - (d) Direction 6 – An equitable and inclusive city – everyone can participate, prosper and reach their full potential in a city that is just and inclusive.
 - (e) Direction 7 – Resilient and diverse communities – the City of Sydney is committed to building social connections, a diverse economy, and social cohesion to improve resilience, and champion social justice and equity for all.

- (f) Direction 8 – A thriving cultural life – people with disability have opportunities to participate in, contribute to and benefit from cultural life within the City of Sydney.
- (g) Direction 9 – A transformed and innovative economy – people with disability can access diverse businesses that meet their needs and participate in an inclusive city economy.
- (h) Direction 10 – Housing for all – people with disability have access to high quality, accessible, affordable and diverse housing.

Organisational Impact

- 18. The City of Sydney has responsibilities under the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 to provide equitable access to its facilities, infrastructure and services for people with disability. We also have responsibilities under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022 to develop a disability inclusion action plan that addresses barriers to inclusive participation faced by people with disability.
- 19. The Inclusion (disability) action plan 2025–2029 includes practical steps the City of Sydney will take to address barriers for people with disability to ensure inclusive participation in city life, access to mainstream services and meaningful employment.
- 20. These actions have been designed to build on the City of Sydney's ongoing commitment to inclusion through the success of previous plans, and harness new and emerging opportunities, with the aim of ensuring inclusion and the rights of people with disability are considered across all City of Sydney services and facilities.
- 21. The actions are deliverable within existing staffing and operational budgets or will be delivered through future planned capital works projects, procurement contracts and agreements.

Risks

- 22. Any identified risks arising from the adoption of the plan are within the City of Sydney's risk appetite, which states:
 - (a) We make decisions that align with our corporate objectives, policies and strategies and are committed to conducting our activities in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations and relevant industry standard and;
 - (b) We acknowledge that some financial risks may be necessary to achieve our goals, particularly when investing in new initiatives that align with our strategic objectives. We carefully evaluate financial options and risks and consider the potential impact on our financial position, cash flow, and overall stability and;
 - (c) We acknowledge the diverse expectations of our stakeholders, including the community, ratepayers, regulatory bodies and elected officials. Our risk appetite considers stakeholder expectations and seeks to align infrastructure management practices with their needs, while maintaining a responsible and sustainable approach.
- 23. Specific to deadlines for adoption of the plan, if the Inclusion (disability) Action Plan 2025–2029 is not endorsed by 1 July 2025 the City of Sydney will not meet its legislative requirements under the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022.

Social / Cultural / Community

24. The plan's purpose is to foster the development of an inclusive and accessible city for everyone. The delivery of actions within the plan will ensure that people with disability who live, work in or visit the city experience greater independence and dignity, and more equitable opportunities for social and economic inclusion.
25. Inclusive cities benefit everyone, not just people with disability. By implementing key actions within this plan and continuing to build a city that is easy to get around, we provide equitable opportunities for participation in the diverse social, cultural life of the city and access to meaningful employment opportunities.

Economic

26. The plan contains actions to improve the public domain and participation in programs and events in the City of Sydney local area. The plan also includes actions to support businesses in the city, particularly those within the hospitality and retail sectors, to be more inclusive and accessible to people with disability. Improving access in these ways encourages a wider diversity of people to come to the city and therefore opens up potential market opportunities for businesses.

Financial Implications

27. The proposed actions in the Inclusion (disability) action plan 2025–2029 will be delivered within the resourcing levels included in the draft 2025/26 operational and capital works budgets and future year forward estimates, subject to Council approval. These resourcing levels are consistent with previous iterations of the City of Sydney's budgets.

Relevant Legislation

28. Local Government Act 1993.
29. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).
30. NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022.
31. Carers Recognition Act 2010.
32. Anti-Discrimination Act 1977.
33. Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987 (Cth).

Critical Dates / Time Frames

34. The City of Sydney is required to have the Inclusion (disability) Action Plan 2025–2029 in place by 1 July 2025, in line with the requirements of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022.

Public Consultation

35. In line with requirements under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and Disability Inclusion Amendment Act 2022, from 20 August to 9 October 2024, the City of Sydney consulted extensively with over 350 people with disability, their families and carers, disability service providers and disability representative organisations to inform the development of the draft Inclusion (disability) Action Plan 2025–2029.
36. In developing the plan, a total of 160 submissions were received via Sydney Your Say, email and phone. In addition, 90 participants took part in a peer-led co-design roundtable workshop and 53 participants were engaged through in-person pop-ups at events. We aimed to ensure representation of our diverse communities by conducting 5 targeted focus groups with 53 participants.
37. An Engagement report - stage 1 outlining this consultation and feedback received is shown at Attachment C.
38. The draft plan was placed on exhibition on the City of Sydney's Sydney Your Say webpage from 13 May to 11 June 2025. A total of 16 submissions were received during the exhibition period.
39. The draft plan was available on the website in a range of accessible formats including:
 - (a) accessible PDF
 - (b) large print
 - (c) Easy Read
 - (d) an Auslan video was developed and made available on the website inviting feedback
 - (e) other alternative formats were provided upon request
40. The draft plan was also circulated to key disability sector organisations, disability representative organisations and people that participated in the consultation process. These include organisations representing diverse disabilities and people with intersectional identities. Our Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel and City of Sydney disability employee network Inclusive City were also encouraged to circulate the draft plan to their networks for feedback.

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