

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a red t-shirt and denim overalls, is captured mid-jump over a series of concrete steps. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. In the background, a modern building with a distinctive lattice facade is visible. Other people, including a small child in a hat and sunglasses, are walking in the background. The entire image has an orange tint.

# Sydney 2050

**Citizens' Jury  
Concepts Report**



# Sydney 2050

**What concepts should  
be implemented in  
Sydney by 2050?**



04	<b>A Letter to the Future...</b>
06	<b>Executive Summary and Introduction</b>
07	<b>Participatory Governance</b>
02	<b>First Peoples of Australia – Leadership and Representation</b>
11	<b>Innovative and Future Ready</b>
13	<b>Housing For All</b>
15	<b>Regenerative Ecosystem</b>
17	<b>Moving Efficiently and Sustainably</b>
19	<b>Embed Creative Arts in Everyday Life</b>
21	<b>24-hour City</b>



# A letter to the future...

Dear Sydney-siders in 2050,

In August 2019, a group of fifty Sydney-siders came together over three months faced with a huge task: to imagine Sydney in thirty years' time.

We invested our time and personal energy towards creating a vision for the people of the future. Our discussions have been deeply influenced by what was happening around us - Sydney is ringed by bushfires, highlighting the global climate change crisis. Droughts across the state have meant tighter water restrictions. We are witnessing our neighbourhoods change as a result of the increasing cost of real-estate in Sydney, and we are spending countless hours in congested traffic.

Those of us who were living in Sydney thirty years ago know that Sydney has changed dramatically in that time, and we are certain it will continue to change in the next thirty to come. In working with the City of Sydney, we have been given the opportunity and responsibility to come up with a vision for the future of the city, and bridge the past with the future.

In looking forward, we also have to look back. It is important that we acknowledge the connection that the Eora nation have had for thousands of years to the land that Sydney is built on. It is important that we acknowledge the negative impact of colonisation on the landscape and its traditional custodians. We have much to learn from our First Nations people about nurturing and respecting the land.

Our hope for Sydney in 2050 is that it is a sustainable, inclusive, diverse city that is welcoming and embraces people from all walks of life. A city where people want to live.

Citizens' Jury, 2019



# Executive Summary & Introduction

The jury was randomly selected from residents, workers and citizens in the City of Sydney and surrounding councils. The jury met for six full Saturdays, reviewing public over 2,500 submissions for ideas for the future of the city. On the first Saturday we the jury set the goal to identify the concepts to realise the community's vision for 2050, mindful of the challenges it faced.

The process commenced by sifting through thousands of ideas submitted by the public, followed by hours of discussion about “what will Sydney look like in 2050?”. We spoke with subject-matter experts from architecture, town-planning, sustainability, housing, and more. We also consulted with holders of Indigenous wisdom and knowledge. The process was not always smooth-sailing, however through the dynamic facilitation we were provided, we were able to create a document which was presented to the City of Sydney.

Through continuous group discussions, all ideas were progressively distilled down into eight overarching concepts:

- 01 Participatory governance:** a new model of governance that genuinely engages citizens in decision making on all levels, which is responsive and adaptable.
- 02 First peoples of Australia (leadership and representation):** the traditional custodians of the land being able to play a central role on how to shape the city, through active participation in governance that is embedded and respectful.
- 03 Innovative and future ready:** a city that is always ready for the future.

**04 Housing for all:** a city providing a wide range of accessible and affordable housing options, being inclusive, promoting social and community cohesion.

**05 Regenerative ecosystem:** a leader in reversing climate change and restoring the natural environment by giving back more than what the city takes.

**06 Moving efficiently and sustainability:** a city with efficient, people-focussed transport that is car-free, green and enjoyable.

**07 Embed creative arts in everyday life:** a future where creative arts are alive, interwoven and celebrated in everyday life, accessible for all at different times.

**08 24 hour city:** a vibrant, lively, culturally diverse city, that is open 24 hours.

Through these eight concepts we want to ensure that the culture of the city we live in evolves and adapts for the future. As the City of Sydney is already developed, we need to ensure that no space will go to waste. We want all spaces in the city to be flexible for a multitude of purposes throughout the day and the night. The City has a responsibility to play an active role in providing and encouraging health for our people. We care for the livelihood of our citizens, and want greater priority to be added to health and wellbeing.

For these ideas to come to life, we need action taken now so that our vision for the city will be achieved by 2050. The vision that we have outlined in this report will take a combined and sustained effort from the City, citizens, and businesses.





# 01

## Participatory governance



# Participatory governance

01

## WHAT:

---

We want a new model of governance that genuinely engage citizens in decision making on all levels, and is responsive and adaptable.

## WHY:

---

There are currently concentrated power structures making decisions for citizens, rather than citizens holding the power.

We want a city influenced by diverse views, needs, and wants. We want to rectify imbalances and inequities.

## HOW:

---

- » Participatory budgeting
- » Citizens' panels of sizeable scale for true representation
- » Innovative online voting system
- » Data to be used by council to generate economic benefit, and help communities



# 02

## First Peoples of Australia — Leadership and Representation





# First Peoples of Australia – Leadership and Representation

02

Although we as a Jury are a diverse range of people there were no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people amongst us. However, we did receive some input.

## WHAT:

---

We want the traditional custodians of the land to help shape the city, through active participation in governance that is embedded, respectful.

We want Sydney to be a place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices influence the identity, design, and functioning of Sydney (Eora).

## WHY:

---

We recognise that our history has displaced the First Peoples of Australia, and that current systems don't adequately allow First Nations perspectives, values, and priorities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities possess wisdom and knowledge that must be valued in shaping how we care for our country and our communities – in governance, planning, education and health. This has the capacity to enhance social and emotional wellbeing for all.

We must recognise the cultural authority of the First Peoples of Australia. We want a society that shares the respect for, and connection to this land that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had for 60,000 years.

## HOW:

---

We need to promote First Nations' self-determination and empowerment so that ideas are not imposed on people and we don't repeat the mistakes of the past.

In line with the principles of reconciliation, we want to place responsibility on non-Indigenous people to adapt their systems and practices to value and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and encourage discourse and community reflection.

We need a process of truth telling and recognition that deals with the impacts of invasion and colonisation.

A woman with blonde hair is wearing a grey VR headset and a grey knit vest over a dark top. She is smiling and looking upwards. The background is a library with bookshelves filled with books, slightly blurred. The entire image has a dark blue overlay.

# 03

**Innovative and  
future ready**



# Innovative and future ready

03

## WHAT:

---

We want the City of Sydney to become a city that is always ready for the future.

## WHY:

---

Our current built environment in the city of Sydney stifles the attraction of new innovators and creators - the current rules of our city's development and administration are rigid and risk becoming outdated. In the past, Sydney has not been prepared for major technological changes. Priming Sydney to continue to evolve enables us to be ready for new technologies and changes we haven't anticipated.

## HOW:

---

The City of Sydney should ensure a focus on buildings and spaces with adaptive uses. The City should take charge to make space for innovation instead of allowing for developer's narrow interests to dominate the development of Sydney. Information the City of Sydney collects should be richer, deeper and freely available to allow the critical assessment needed to know if they're doing the right thing.

The city should not just support the creation of new ideas but also provide the environment to incubate those new ideas into new industries. This must include affordable training, as it is essential in preparing people for technological challenges to come. There must also be a fund that is readily accessible to local innovators so that we do not lose our brilliant ideas. This could be initiated and promoted by the City and draw upon the wider international investment community.





# 04

## Housing for all





# Housing for all

# 04

## WHAT:

---

We the jury envision a Sydney that can be called home throughout any stage of life. We want to ensure diversity in the city by providing a wide range of accessible and affordable housing options. We want Sydney to be inclusive and to promote social and community cohesion.

## WHY:

---

Sydney is currently an unaffordable city to many and is at risk of losing the diversity of its people and neighbourhoods in its villages. Sydney does not provide a safety net nor adequate supply of accessible housing for people at risk of homelessness. People who provide essential services in Sydney are being pushed out of the city.

## HOW:

---

- » Planning incentives for developers to include affordable housing in new developments.
- » Stimulate supply of collaborative/cooperative living projects and the number of affordable single/family residences.
- » Advocate for the introduction of financial penalties, taxation and incentives to curb the amount of unused space in the city.
- » Encourage community cohesion through the development of mixed affordable housing for diverse demographics, including emergency accommodation, disability, student, youth, artists etc.



# 05

## Regenerative ecosystem



# Regenerative ecosystem

# 05

## WHAT:

---

We the jury, envision the city as a leader in reversing climate change, and restoring the natural environment by giving back more than it takes. Creating a city where every space is maximised for the greater community good.

## WHY:

---

To combat the climate emergency, we need to be regenerative and beyond sustainable. The City has finite access to natural and financial resources, the built environment and space. Air pollution, water pollution and water scarcity must be addressed for a healthy city.

We want the buildings of our city to be made of materials which support the environment, not degrade it. We want the people to transform their waste into materials to feed back into the economy.

We want no space in the city to go to waste. We must renew empty spaces and unused buildings to support lively and vibrant communities.

## HOW:

---

Key recommendations, for more detail refer to the infographic and appendix:

- » Expansive greening: trees and plants enveloping the city: street, buildings, rooftops, small spaces
- » Regenerative agriculture and urban farms
- » Ocean regeneration
- » 100% renewable energy including multiple micro-grids
- » Circular economy: zero waste, share, repair, reuse, recycle
- » An educated environmentally conscious society
- » Sustainable building construction standards with integrated recycling and waste management
- » Policy to incentivise and support regenerative practices
- » Green transport



# 06

## Moving efficiently and sustainably





# Moving efficiently and sustainably

# 06

## WHAT:

---

We want a city designed for people and not vehicles, active 24/7, where there is space to walk, bike, stroll, jog, chat, rest, relax and enjoy life.

## WHY:

---

We have a city that is congested with too many vehicles. Not only making our transport inefficient, but also creating air and noise pollution. Sydney-siders and visitors are increasingly sedentary and we face an obesity epidemic. We want walking and biking to be easy and enjoyable and the first choice, leading to better social cohesion and mental health.

## HOW:

---

### » **Car-free, green spaces:**

We want a car-free city that allows for vibrant green open spaces for the people, where no space goes to waste (fewer cars will improve emergency vehicle response times, critical in a densely populated city). People can get around our city in 30-minutes.

### » **Connected green corridors:**

We want green spaces that are connected by green corridors that enable and encourage people to move efficiently and enjoyably by active transport. We have traffic light signalling that favours pedestrians, cycling and public transport, over vehicles.

### » **Active transport - walking and bikes:**

We want to be a city designed to facilitate safe and active lifestyles 24 hours a day. Suitable for all ages and mobility levels - from the infants to the incapacitated. Whether by walking or

cycling, we have a positive culture through early education, and safe, secure and efficient infrastructure (in-journey and end-of-journey) that truly encourages car-free alternatives.

### » **Accessible public transport:**

We want a 24-hour public transport system that is accessible to all users (reliable, safe, clean and low to no expense), connected to other modes of transport and sustainably powered; maximising space (overground and underground), so that no space goes to waste.

### » **Electric vehicles for freight and people moving:**

We want sustainable electric vehicles available where active transport is not feasible or not favourable.



# 07

## **Embed creative arts in everyday life**



# Embed creative arts in everyday life

07

## WHAT:

---

We want a future where creative arts are alive, interwoven and celebrated in everyday life. We want creative arts to be more accessible for all people in order to invigorate and strengthen our cultural identity.

We want Sydney to be a city that is lively, culturally diverse, an entertainment and recreational hub. We as the citizens jury define arts as creative productions; they come in the form of live music, live theatre, visual arts, literature and entertainment.

## WHY:

---

We don't feel that art and culture are valued enough in our community. Making art accessible fosters an understanding of art as a professional highly skilled and valued practice. Art stimulates and gives form to empathy and understanding: it is a necessary part of a democratic community that recognises human rights. A cultural identity for Sydney must be established that values creativity, diversity and inclusion.

## HOW:

---

- » City of Sydney to foster creative expression through community cultural development.
- » City of Sydney needs to support professional and emerging artists by providing long term, low cost studio spaces so we can maintain the creative industry in the City of Sydney.
- » We need artist led creative industry consultations with the City and commercial interests, with a focus on a creative community.
- » We want creatives to live, practice and be exhibited publicly in the city.
- » Artists creating art in Sydney for Sydney.

# 08

## 24-hour city





# 24-hour city

# 08

## WHAT:

---

We want a vibrant, lively, culturally diverse city that is open 24 hours a day. We want a city that has a soul and an identity that people can enjoy at all times. We want Sydney to have a normalised night-time economy that includes live music, theatre, art, shopping, health services, food, and education.

## WHY:

---

Sydney has lost its night time identity, and global standing, as well as jobs and opportunities. People are becoming more sedentary and isolated, leading to social disharmony. We need to increase the liveability of the city by creating a true 24-hour city. The rigid 9-5 city is missing the economic benefits of the night-time economy.

## HOW:

---

- » Have a 24-hour public transport system, including metro, train, light rail, and buses.
- » Dedicated night mayor.
- » Law reform around trading hours and licensing of night time venues.
- » Cap on empty shops, before action by the City of Sydney and private businesses if that cap is exceeded.
- » Increased safety measures to increase night time participation.
- » Introduce late night precincts to more easily manage night time economy.

# Sydney 2050

