

Committee
for
Sydney

Year in review 2019

October
2019



Chairman's message

This has been a significant year for Sydney. A year in which the growth of Sydney, its economic performance, infrastructure needs and liveability were key issues in closely contested State and Federal elections. The last twelve months have also seen major, transformative infrastructure delivered and work commenced on new projects. It has been an exciting time for Sydney.

2019 has also been a big year for the Committee for Sydney. At the beginning of the year we welcomed our new CEO, Gabriel Metcalf, who arrived at a time when the Committee was actively advocating for Sydney in the context of the two elections. Since his arrival, Gabriel has got to know Sydney and our members, and has set about shaping our policy agenda for the years ahead.

Our output this year has been significant and varied. It has included the publication of seven reports and the hosting of more than 80 member events. This annual review provides a record of some of our activities and successes over the last year.

The Committee's influence, independence and relevance are dependent on continued support from our members. We advocate for the whole of Sydney, and our wide geographic and sectoral focus is reflected in our membership.

I would like to acknowledge the Committee's Deputy Chair, Kate Jordan, and all our colleagues on the Executive Committee. I am extremely grateful for their engagement, support and wise counsel during the year. I would also like to thank the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of each of our Taskforces who have devoted significant time and energy to the success of the Committee.

The Committee is fortunate to have a strong team working on our research, publications, advocacy and events. I would like to thank them for their energy, enthusiasm and impact.

Finally, I would like to thank our members who have devoted their energy, time and other resources to the work of the Committee over the last year. As a Committee, our success and credibility rests on the engagement of our members. Together we share a vision and ambition for Sydney and I look forward to working with you in the year ahead as we play a role in shaping Sydney's future.



Michael Rose AM



CEO's introduction

Sydney is one of the greatest cities in the world – but it is struggling to keep up. Because along with Sydney's global ambitions, comes a set of important challenges.

How to keep up with a growing population, in terms of infrastructure and housing supply?

How to include everyone in Sydney's prosperity?

How to get ready for the onslaught of climate change?

How to ensure that Sydney's famous quality of life does not allow it to grow complacent, as the economy continues to change and evolve, more rapidly than ever.

The Committee for Sydney plays a unique role in the business and civic landscape of Sydney: a champion for the whole of Sydney, a think tank that draws on the lessons from cities all over the world, a broad-based leadership organisation that stands outside of the interests of any single industry.

The Year in Review tells the story of just some of our impact across a range of key issues. It is truly a reflection of the breadth and depth of the Committee's membership, more than 150 of Sydney's leading organisations who have chosen to invest in solutions – to the problems of today and tomorrow.

For me, 2019 has been a remarkable year of discovery and learning. I have had the opportunity to meet with leaders in business, government, and academia, and I have listened as people discussed their concerns and their dreams for Sydney.

The Committee for Sydney is positioned to do great things, and I think you are going to like what you see in the years to come.



We are deepening the impact of our research, adding in-depth policy expertise and working closely with Government as move from ideas into implementation.

We are taking a bigger public profile, so that we can lead conversations that will engage the broader public in thinking about Sydney's direction.

And more than anything, we are focused on real-world impact – making tangible progress on the most critical issues facing Sydney.

It is truly an honour to be doing this work, with your support. Thank you for your membership and involvement with the Committee for Sydney.



Gabriel Metcalf



Committee highlights

Mobility

Sydney Metro West

We have maintained strong support for the funding and delivery of Sydney Metro West, a potentially game-changing piece of infrastructure. Based on our rigorous economic forecasting, we continue to make the case that Metro will create significant jobs uplift in Western Sydney as well as providing additional transport capacity to already congested parts of Sydney’s rail network.

Sandstone mega-region

We see enormous economic and social benefits for upgraded rail connections between Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong, and potentially Canberra. We have been hugely encouraged by the resources invested by NSW Government in a detailed feasibility study on the issue and have been working closely with the review team as it reaches its conclusion. In 2020 we will continue to press the case for investment in inter-state fast and high-speed rail.

Transport vision

As Sydney grows, it needs an integrated system of mass public transit to ensure that the city keeps moving. This year we began work on a Sydney Transport Vision Plan, a long-term examination into the city’s future mobility challenges and solutions. We will examine how a future transport system should work, including how to increase the availability of public and active transport for more people, and what the impact of autonomous vehicles will mean. The project will deliver detailed recommendations later in 2020.

Planning

Western Sydney

Realising the potential of Western Sydney has been a central part of our work in 2019, including the establishment of a Western City Taskforce to lead our work on the Western Parkland City, particularly around the new Western Sydney Airport. We are addressing key challenges to the fastest growing part of Sydney, including improving transport infrastructure, overcoming long-term water supply shortages, enhancing governance structures through the Western Sydney City Deal, and encouraging the growth of new economic precincts.

Female city

We have continued to promote Sydney as a female-friendly city, and forged a ground-breaking partnership with NAB, Monash University and Plan International to better understand the experiences of women in Sydney and develop policy approaches to enhance safety in the city. As part of the project we have established a cross-government taskforce to develop best practice a city that works for women.

Medium density housing

Sydney needs a greater diversity of housing, from high rises to single family homes; from transitional housing for people exiting homelessness to high income knowledge workers. This year we were especially focused on a new medium density housing code that fills the ‘missing middle’ gap between free standing homes and large apartment buildings. If we get this right, it will lead to much greater availability of modern versions of the terrace house, a well-loved building type that has been missing from recent developments.

Western Harbour Precinct

Taking a strategic approach to one of Sydney’s most prominent precincts, we have developed a place-making vision for Sydney’s Western Harbour that improves the area’s mobility options, enhances the public realm, develops the night-time economy, and coordinates a better visitor experience.



Norwest Metro station, opened in May 2019

Economy

Innovation economy

In 2019, we launched a major project examining how Sydney can become one of the world’s foremost cities for global talent, innovation, and the new economy. We will diagnose the state of Sydney’s innovation economy today, and ultimately develop an action plan that will move Sydney into the future, focusing on key areas of policy such as taxation; migration; regulation; and the relationship between business, government and universities.

Funding for infrastructure

Whilst the NSW Government is investing record amounts in infrastructure, the need remains for long-term continued funding on projects like Sydney Metro, Sydney Light Rail and Parramatta Light Rail. These projects will deliver transformative benefits to Sydneysiders for decades to come. We are undertaking detailed work on how to maintain sustainable investment over the long-term, including examining different funding models, and working with partners in the public and private sectors to ensure that Sydney’s infrastructure boom can continue.

Governance

NSW State Election Platform

The Committee developed a specific hard-hitting platform for the 2019 NSW State Election, and we have been pleased to see the re-elected government endorsing a number of the positions. This included the funding of business cases for fast rail links across the “Sandstone mega-region”; an overarching economic blueprint for Sydney, and a Minister for Mobility with responsibility for the entire transport portfolio.

Sydney Harbour

We proposed a new approach to the governance of Sydney Harbour, the city’s greatest asset, to maximise its economic, social and environmental potential. Bringing together members of the Committee with a passion and interest in the harbour, we identified simple changes that will shift the from a narrow, sectoral and competitive typology and towards a more coherent and long-term framework.

Culture

24-hour economy

Enhancing Sydney’s 24-hour economy remains a key advocacy priority for us. We made important contributions to two NSW Parliamentary inquiries on the night-time economy and the music and arts economy, providing evidence and expertise to both Committees. In 2018 we recommended the establishment of a Night Time Industries Association in Sydney and have been pleased to work with most of the major interest groups across the night time sector to establish the organisation, putting policy ideas into practice.

Ageing in Sydney

It is predicted that by 2021, there will be more people aged 65 years and older living outside Sydney than under 16s. To address how we should respond as a city to this demographic change, our report *Dignity and Choice* took a forward look at some of the social and structural challenges of an ageing population in Sydney, including recommendations on planning, transport, healthcare, and the environment to ensure that the city functions for older people.

Research



Sydney Harbour report released in August 2019



Sydney Harbour: Our greatest asset

Sydney Harbour is one of Sydney’s greatest public spaces but is pulled in too many directions as a result of being managed by over 30 different government agencies. This report considered the diverse and important uses the harbour plays for our city – as a transport corridor for ferries, a working harbour, an incredible tourism drawcard, a rich biodiversity asset and, most importantly, as an intern-generational public asset. It then proposed a new governance model and strategy at the NSW Government to deliver on the promise of the harbour.



Seeing the city: Towards a data-driven Sydney

Using mapping technology developed by OneMap, this report presented unexpected and unusual ways of visualising Sydney. By overlaying different lenses on the city, we were able to identify areas that need more investment, or centres where the changing demographic of our city will transform how they operate.



Benchmarking Sydney's Performance

This 4th edition of Committee for Sydney’s benchmarking report reviews Sydney’s performance over the last 12 months. It draws on a meta-analysis across hundreds of city indices produced around the world that incorporate well over 50,000 data points about how cities are performing and perceived in different areas.



Are Sydney's property and infrastructure owner's prepared for autonomous mobility?

While much has been written about the impact autonomous mobility will have on our transport network, analysis on its impact on our built environment has been lacking. In partnership with Arcadis, we assessed the readiness of our city to deal with autonomous mobility, taking into consideration the enormous impact it will have on parking and buildings. The research found that Sydney needs to start planning now, as much of the infrastructure being built today will be impacted.

“The Committee for Sydney’s thought leadership is outstanding. Long may it continue.”

– Tim Reardon, Secretary, Department of the Premier and Cabinet



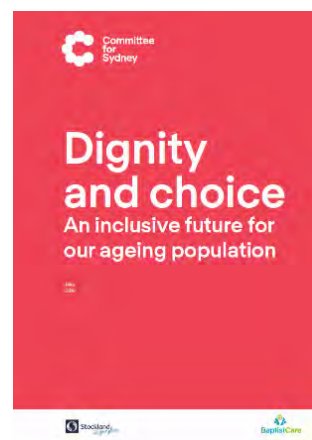
Strengthening economic cases for housing policies

The Committee supported the development of this report articulating the economic value of housing as essential infrastructure. Researched by Professor Duncan MacLennan, UNSW, SGS Economics & Planning, and Cadence Economics, this report found that investing \$7.8 billion in building 125,000 affordable dwellings would repay the initial outlay and deliver an additional \$12 billion impact on the economy through improved productivity.



Safety after dark: Creating a city for women living and working in Sydney

Launched on International Women's Day, and using analysis by Plan International and XYX Labs, this report examined how our public spaces work for women travelling to and from work – and found that much of the city feels unsafe for many women. Transport hubs, including bus stops and train stations, were identified as particularly problematic.



Dignity and choice: An inclusive future for our ageing population

Sydney's population is set to age in coming decades, with a quarter of the population over 65 by 2056. Planning for this demographic change requires thinking across the policy spectrum – from housing for older people, making public spaces work for all ages and delivering a transport system that supports continued social and economic engagement as people age. This report unpacks 31 recommendations for all levels and sectors of government to deliver an ageing-friendly city.

In 2020, the Committee's research agenda is designed to answer key challenges facing Sydney.

- **Unleashing Sydney's Innovation Economy** – How do we expand the jobs of the future to ensure Sydney's prosperity in the 21st century?
- **Transport vision** – What does the impact of new transport innovation and technology mean for how we design our transport system?
- **New directions for public space** – How do we rethink our streets as the primary space for public life?
- **Benchmarking Sydney** – How does Sydney stack up against other global cities, and what are the crucial changes we must undertake to become one of the world's leading cities?
- **Growth projections** – How do we accommodate the 2 million new people coming to Sydney in the next 20 years? Is it feasible to shift the balance between in-fill and greenfield development as we grow?
- **Retrofitting suburbia** – How do we regenerate and restore the post-war Sydney neighbourhoods to bring them back to life?
- **Cities that change** – global best practices on transportation and land use transformation.

Each year we will take on similarly ambitious work.

Submissions

Vivid Sydney activating the city's winter night-time economy

Sydney's night-time economy

Submission to the NSW Parliament's Joint Select Committee
June 2019

Taking forward ideas set out in our *Sydney as a 24-hour City* report, this submission established a blueprint for enhancing Sydney's night-life and improving the way the city functions after dark. Many of the recommendations made in the submission were subsequently endorsed by in the Select Committee's final report.

Building confidence

Submission to the NSW Department of Fair Trading
July 2019

Following a number of high-profile incidents regarding building safety standards in Sydney, this submission set out ideas for next steps in building regulation reforms for State Government. Our ideas highlighted how to deliver greater transparency, accountability, and quality of work in the building and construction sector.

Short-term letting

Submission to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
September 2019

This submission established what a new regulatory framework for short-term rental accommodation should look like, balancing the need for overarching regulation while maintaining choice for consumers and without introducing burdensome regulation.

Review of the planning framework for the Western Harbour Precinct including the Pyrmont Peninsula

Submission to the Greater Sydney Commission
September 2019

As part of the Committee's work to develop and deliver a new vision for the Western Harbour Precinct, this submission examines how to maximise the potential of the area to help it become one of the primary hospitality and entertainment precincts in NSW.

Media

The Committee has strengthened its position as an independent ‘go to’ organisation to fresh, evidence-based thinking on policy impacting Sydney and other Australian cities. In 2018/19 we secured significant media coverage on a range of issues including:

- Population growth
- Infrastructure investment
- 24-hour economy
- Water and sustainability
- Affordable housing
- Building standards
- Sydney’s ageing population
- Cost of living
- High-speed rail
- Streets as Public Spaces

All aboard for a better future for Sydneysiders

Look around — in all directions this beautiful city is changing. The high-rises sprouting up like fast-growing trees, the sounds of construction, the crowds of people on the sidewalks. And, quietly, underneath this noise, the inexorable progress of the tunnel boring machines carving our future train lines.

Once a smallish city at the edge of the world, Sydney is on track to have a population of eight million people, the same as London today, a giant metropolis, entwined with the global network of superstar cities.

Everywhere Sydneysiders ask each other, what are we to make of this new place emerging before our eyes? Will the city work for me? Will I be better off, or forgotten in the rush to change?



The story of Sydney is not yet written and, in truth, cities are always unfinished projects.

But I’m a newcomer to this city, so take it from someone viewing the city with fresh eyes: if we make the right choices, the emerging Sydney is going to be an amazing place, a place that makes our lives better even while it welcomes more people. This will happen across many sectors, but no more than how we move around the city.

Last week, for the first time,

commuters from Tallawong to Chatswood were able to ride the new Metro line to work, sending a clear message — Sydney is capable of building new transport, unlike so many cities around the world, which are simply unable to amass enough funding or enough political capital to make transformative investments.

But the Metro Northwest line is just the start. A new metro line is being built under the Harbour to the CBD, then out to Sydenham and Bankstown.

Up next will be West Metro connecting the CBD with Olympic Park and Parramatta, followed by rail to the new Western Sydney Airport, St Marys and Macarthur.

Ultimately, for Sydney to be successful we will need an interconnected

network of metro lines — like London or Tokyo or New York — so you can get from anywhere to anywhere. This will mean moving away from a ‘hub and spoke’ model in which all lines run to the CBD, by adding cross connections that make it possible to transfer between lines, providing service to all of greater Sydney through an interconnected grid of train lines supplemented by rapid bus lines.

New technologies will make this all work better if we handle them the right way. We can use micro-mobility — everything from electric scooters to autonomous vehicles of various sizes — to get to and from the train station quickly.

Lots of people will prefer to use cars, of course, and tradies and deliveries are

still going to be done with trucks, but when people have real options transport is going to work better for everyone — especially the people who need to drive but who are stuck in hours of traffic today.

These changes will be driven by technology, but really at its core it is a cultural shift. Now that we’ve proven we can build a metro, we must not stop. We should be planning to move at this speed, opening a new train line every six to seven years, for as long as Sydney continues to grow.

Sydney is already one of the greatest cities in the world. If the city keeps going with its transport investments, it’s going to be even better.

Gabriel Metcalf is the CEO of the Committee for Sydney.

Judgment delivered: ‘envy of the world’

REACTION

ELIAS VISONTAY

Business leaders and economic think tanks have praised the NSW government for sticking to its election promise of investing heavily in infrastructure and for achieving a surplus, heralding the state’s budget as “the envy of the world — for now”.

Citing the budget surplus, investments in roads and the expansion of Sydney’s Metro system confirmed in yesterday’s budget, the chief executive of the Committee for Sydney think tank Gabriel Metcalf said “the budget further enhances NSW’s reputation as the best-run and most dynamic state economy in the country”.

“This is a smart budget, making NSW the envy of the world — for now,” Mr Metcalf said, but noted “the government is making some hard choices to prioritise frontline services and to invest in the infrastructure for the future, which means having to cut costs somewhere else”.

“The NSW government has been very strategic about its asset recycling program,” he said. “It has made this infrastructure boom possible. But we can see that eventually the government will run out of assets to sell. It’s time to work on a plan for how to continue the infrastructure building, especially the transport Sydney so desperately needs, with other sources of funding. Further asset recycling, land taxes, value capture, borrowing, road user levies — all of it should be considered.”

NSW Business Chamber chief Stephen Cartwright called the budget “a solid financial blueprint”. “For the fourth year in a row, net debt is in negative territory despite record infrastructure spending.”



Five key principles to take Sydney into the future

‘Populate or perish,’ was a postwar rallying cry in Australia as the federal government sought to attract people from across (some) of the globe. Today, a more likely refrain you might hear is “populate and perish”, as Sydney frets that its highest population in history is putting an unsustainable strain on resources.

It is true that Sydney is a fast-growing city, in line with Toronto, Vancouver and Melbourne. Some of this population growth is driven by things specific to Sydney: it is one of the best places in the world to live, so it’s not surprising that people want to be here.



whether to grow or not grow. You can think about the two poles of this debate as the “San Francisco option” and the “Tokyo option” — two lovely cities that have made completely opposite decisions about growth.

San Francisco has decided to protect the existing urban fabric against change. It emphasises values of preserving heritage buildings and maximum community input. It has produced very little housing, even while their economy boomed. The result is predictable: now only the ultra-wealthy can afford a home there.

Tokyo made a different decision. It has accommodated a higher rate of housing development over many decades. It is also one of the most

affordable world cities. It put tall buildings on major streets, with compact, intimate neighbourhoods behind. At major train stations, buildings are super-tall.

Neither option is right for Sydney. There is a way to accommodate enough development to keep up with a growing population while still protecting the parts of the city everyone cherishes.

I would distil this into five principles:

First, invest in public transport. Sydney has outgrown the ability to rely on driving as the default way of getting around. Give people more options, such as creating an interconnected public transport grid, like we see in London.

Second, put new growth within walking distance of train stations. This makes it possible to add people without adding traffic.

Third, create a beautiful public realm. The world’s great cities have

invested heavily in their networks of streets, parks and plazas. City life is lived largely in public, and the cities we love to visit show us this: window shopping along the wide avenues of Paris, sitting on the grass in New York’s Central Park, eating at a sidewalk cafe in Rome.

Fourth, put local shopping streets at the heart of neighbourhoods. You see these all over Sydney, places like King Street in Newtown or Church Street in Parramatta. Streets that enable the simple pleasure of being able to walk to stores, coffee shops and pubs. New development should either reinforce existing shopping streets or create new ones.

Finally, build a diversity of housing. There is no single best type of housing; different people, at different stages of life, need different things, and that’s one of the great benefits a city such as Sydney can offer. From granny flats to high-rises, from terraces to experimental apartment unit designs, we should

welcome all of it, including social and affordable housing in all neighbourhoods.

People are understandably worried about whether Sydney can stay liveable as it grows.

That’s where planning comes in. A good planning system doesn’t just provide quantity, it insists on quality — making sure development aligns with public transport and public space. In exchange for greater densities, more people will get the chance to take the train to work, walk to stores and parks, and enjoy the glorious life of the city.

Gabriel Metcalf is CEO of the Committee for Sydney.

NSW urged to borrow to bolster infrastructure

Jenny Wiggins

The NSW government should borrow money at record low interest rates or sell off more assets like the WestConnex motorway to build more transport networks amid concerns projects are stalling because they can’t be funded, the Committee for Sydney says.

“Sydney has outgrown the ability to be so reliant on just a car-based transport system,” Committee of Sydney’s chief executive Gabriel Metcalf told *The Australian Financial Review*. “Sydney is becoming a major world city and it is now big enough that it needs a sophisticated mass transport system more like what you would see in London,” he said.

While the NSW government had done “incredible things” on infrastructure, it needed to keep going if it was going to provide a mass transport system for a population forecast to hit 8 million by 2040, Mr Metcalf said.

“We’re only part way into what needs to be a multi-decade period of infrastructure building. There are options. The options include further asset recycling, further borrowing or potentially other new sources of funding.”

But the Committee for Sydney, a think tank whose members include government departments, companies and universities, is worried that the government is struggling to find money for the next round of transport projects, including the Metro West rail link between Sydney’s CBD and Parramatta; the second stage of the Parramatta light rail line, the proposed Western Harbour Tunnel; and a proposed North South rail line.

The committee says the government, which has projected a surplus of \$802 million for 2018-19, could take more advantage of record low interest rates to borrow money to pay for more public transport, and sell its remaining 49 per cent stake in Sydney tollroad WestConnex or other assets.

Other financing options open to the government include introducing more “value capture” taxes, which seek to tap into rising land prices near infrastructure projects; striking more public-private partnerships; and raising fares on public transport.

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said the state’s approach to asset recycling was to put all options on the table. “Last week we announced a scoping study for the long-term lease of the state’s commercial softwood plantation business, but we need to await the results of the study before deciding on what options to take,” the Treasurer said. “This is the extent of our plans at this time.”

But Mr Perrottet said NSW would welcome more funding from the Commonwealth for big new infrastructure projects including the Metro West and the F6 motorway extension.

“I know the Commonwealth has locked in a commitment to returning their budget to black, but with the trade balance looking better thanks to a lower Australian dollar and higher-



Committee of Sydney CEO Gabriel Metcalf calling for more funding for infrastructure projects. PHOTO: LOUIE DOUWIS

than-anticipated iron ore prices, this may give the Commonwealth more flexibility in this area,” he said.

Mr Perrottet noted that low interest rates made borrowing “more attractive” and said NSW would have some \$38 billion of debt by 2022-23.

The NSW government is devoting most of its capital spending in 2019-20 to transport, and is putting \$13.4 billion towards delivering the final stages of WestConnex; building the city and

south-west stages of the Sydney Metro; upgrading motorways such as the Pacific Highway and Princes Highway; and finishing the troubled CBD and south-east light rail project, which is \$1 billion over its initial budget and expected to open a year late.

It has also set aside money for future projects, including \$6.4 billion for Metro West over four years, although the total cost of the rail line is estimated at about \$20 billion.

METRO HAS SYDNEY ON RIGHT TRACK

Transport The new mass transit system is a life-changing measure the city needs to stay globally competitive, writes Jenny Wiggins.



More than 440,000 people have boarded the 36-kilometre Metro North West already. PHOTO: YANNI ASPRADAKIS

Andrew Constance says it’s a “game changer”. The NSW Transport Minister reckons Australia’s first automated metro system — which aims to have trains zooming in and out of rail stations every four minutes — is the catalyst Sydney needs to rank alongside London, Paris and Tokyo as a truly world-class city.

More than 440,000 people have boarded Metro North West, a 36-kilometre rail line running between the Sydney suburbs of Chatswood and Tallawong, since it opened on Sunday. While there have been a few hitches in the first week, including a train breaking down, it has been embraced by the public.

When *AFR Weekend* hops aboard the new “turn up and go” metro at Chatswood station on Friday at 7am, there are about 20 people in each carriage heading north. Olivia, a high school student travelling to Epping, used to take a bus, but says the new train is “nicer”.

Richard Vanunuo, who works in market research and lives in North Sydney, says the metro is “life-changing”. Vanunuo used to drive to his job in Norwest, a journey that took him an hour.

The commute still takes an hour door-to-door but he hates paying toll fares (which he says have become “too expensive” at a cost of \$20 a day). Now Vanunuo can read and relax, paying \$3.53 for a one-way trip or \$5.05 during peak hours. “Instead of two dead hours a day, I have two nice hours.”

He’s also happy his mobile phone works throughout his journey. “There are no black spots — that’s a big deal.” The metro carriages, which were designed in France and built in India, also have charging points for phone cables.

It takes 40 minutes to get to Tallawong, A

customer service officer, Kris, stands at the front of the train, ready to take back control from the automated system if there is a problem.

During an eight-minute wait on the station for the next train back, announcements warn of “increasing wait time due to operational issues”. Another train has failed to let passengers off at Chatswood, causing slight delays.

But the trip back to Chatswood is smooth. Dominic Ivory, an insurance underwriter who is heading into the CBD, says he’s a fan, even though the metro trip is a couple of dollars more expensive than the bus he used to take.

Ivory is looking forward to the metro being extended so he can travel all the way through to the city without having to change to Sydney’s suburban trains at Chatswood.

Imagine how wonderful it would be if a new metro line opened every five or six years.

Gabriel Metcalf, Committee for Sydney CEO

Everyone has a seat until the metro passes through Epping station, where crowds of people heading into the city pile on and it’s standing room only.

Constance claims the \$7.3 billion metro is having a “phenomenal” effect on how people get around, with about 20-35 per cent of people within the north-west transport corridor choosing the new train.

But the real long-term benefits for Sydney are expected to be realised when the metro, which is Australia’s biggest public transport project, is extended into the city’s central

Sydney, get serious on water recycling

James Hulme



Water is central to Sydney’s history and identity. Like Coleridge’s doomed

mariner, we can see water everywhere, but are still scarred by the past memory and future possibility of drought. However, the water restrictions announced this week are unlikely to be the last and suggest that, as a city, Sydney has not yet planned for an un-rainy day.

Many will remember the last Sydney drought, between 2000 and 2011, that saw dam levels fall to almost 30 per cent, the lowest since the 1950s. While the public adapted quietly and efficiently to water saving habits during that period, an abundance of rain since the drought broke has let us slip back into bad habits. Now is the time to relearn those lessons and have a broader conversation about Sydney’s water future.

Our city is growing rapidly and putting increased pressure on natural resources like water, not just to drink but to provide sewerage services. This growth can be absorbed, but only by planning effectively and a smarter use of water. A city of 8 million people is unlikely to be fully watered by our existing dams and desalination plant, but there are ways for us to do more with less.

The Committee for Sydney believes that now is the time to have a serious civic debate about recycling drinking water. Plenty of other cities do it: London, Singapore, even Perth. We recognise that some people are uncomfortable with the idea of drinking recycled water, but at a basic minimum we shouldn’t be watering our gardens or washing our cars with fresh water.

Second, let’s plan our city for dry days ahead. We would like restoration of disused waterways to turn them into the centrepieces of new urban parks, including rivers and ponds that help to cool areas in hot weather, particularly those in the west, which is most impacted by the urban heat effect.

Let’s also encourage greater use of efficiency measures such as repairing dripping taps, installing rainwater tanks and waterless toilets to make the most of precious resources. Finally, more use of “vertical gardens” such as the Central Park development would also help to soak up rain and save on amounts used in watering.

This week’s announcement is a wake-up call — a splash of water to the face, if you like — that Sydney needs to foster a more water-conscious culture. With 99 per cent of NSW already in drought, now is the time to act to save Sydney from a parched future.

James Hulme is director of advocacy for the Committee for Sydney.

Events



The Honourable Gladys Berejiklian, Premier of NSW addressing Committee members, May 2019

Total Events 69
Taskforces 20
Total attendees 3,553
Unique Member reps 2,955
International Speakers 16

“Keep it up – CfS plays an important role.”
– Brian Tyson, Managing Partner, Newgate Communications

DATE	EVENT	HOST / SPONSOR
12 Oct	Treasurer's Lunch	Allens
15 Oct	Launch of CAV research	Arcadis
24 Oct	Shaping places through business improvement districts with Dr Julie Grail	PwC
2 Nov	Angling Towards Asia	Accor
2 Nov	Shadow Treasurer, Chris Bowen	MinterEllison
7 Nov	Annual General Meeting	EY
7 Nov	Annual General Meeting Reception	EY
12 Nov	Resilient by Design Reception	City of Sydney
14 Nov	Transport Planning as Freedom Planning with Jarrett Walker	UTS
5 Dec	EA Breakfast	EY
11 Dec	Arcadis Boardroom Lunch	Arcadis
12 Dec	Sydney Harbour Workshop	PwC
13 Dec	End of Year Drinks	Stockland

“The international speaker events are a highlight as they provide insights into how other cities have approached and/or are solving major challenges.”
– Glenn Wightwick, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Innovation and Enterprise), UTS

DATE	EVENT	HOST / SPONSOR
22 Jan	Sydney Festival Evening	Sydney Festival
07 Feb	Sydney Women's Fund	Clayton UTZ
08 Feb	Sydney's Economic Update with SGS	NAB
12 Feb	Learning from the successes (and failures) of American Cities with Joe Cortright	WSP
19 Feb	Making Sydney a world-class night-time destination with John Graham MLC	PwC
28 Feb	Future of Mobility	Uber
08 Mar	International Women's Day	ICC
12 Mar	Dissecting the Royal Commission with Shadow Minister for Financial Services, Clare O'Neil MP	UNSW
26 Mar	Weighing up the votes: What will the result of the NSW Election mean for Sydney?	Minter Ellison
27 Mar	Resilience and Climate Change with Ernst Rauch	Westpac
02 Apr	Matthew Olsen, Chief Trust and Security Officer, Uber breakfast	EY
04 Apr	Jennifer Keesmaat, Former Chief Planner, City of Toronto	Mirvac
04 Apr	Private Dinner with Jennifer Keesmaat, Former Chief Planner, City of Toronto	Ethos Urban
11 Apr	City Life: The New Urban Australia	Grimshaw Architects
01 May	Getting it done: shaping the future of Sydney – A Conversation with NSW Premier	Allens
02 May	Future Mobility 2040: Convergence	Arup
03 May	Life in Sydney: An in-depth analysis of Sydneysiders and the issues they care about	Ethos Urban

DATE	EVENT	HOST / SPONSOR
07 May	Vibrant and Sustainable Night Time Economy	Dexus
14 May	Private Dinner with Ben Rogers	WSP
15 May	Growing Well: Making New Places Fit for the Future with Ben Rogers	Lendlease
16 May	Truth Telling in Public Places	Lendlease
23 May	Dignity & Choice: An inclusive future for our ageing population	Stockland
28 May	Priorities for the NSW Government - Briefing from Tim Reardon, Jim Betts and Elizabeth Koff	Clayton UTZ
29 May	EA Networking Drinks	Sofitel Darling Harbour
03 June	Boardroom discussion with Peter Schwartz	GPT
05 June	Everyone's Business: What role should business play in shaping our cities?	Mirvac
06 June	City Transformation	Arup
06 June	Future Mobility 2030: The Individual	Arcadis
10 July	Future Mobility 2020: The First Step	EnergyLab
18 July	I Amsterdam and the DNA of Cities with Carolien Gehrels	UTS
18 July	Private Dinner with Carolien Gehrels	Hoyne
19 July	The Political Year Ahead with Anna Caldwell	Newgate
23 July	The renaissance of the Paris Central Business District	Arup
24 July	Private dinner with Alessandra Cianchetta	The Star
25 July	Treasurer's lunch	EY
26 July	Mobility, innovation and public space – the Dutch experience with Willem Snel	AECOM
01 Aug	Sydney Harbour Report Launch	PwC
01 Aug	Sydney Harbour Report Private Dinner	Place Design Group
19 Aug	Build to Rent – lessons from the UK with Andy Leahy	MinterEllison

Member support



Ann Sherry AO, Carnival Australia and Victoria Black, WSP at the Plan International Girls Walk event, October 2018

Members



Members at the Committee's End of Year celebration, 2018

Our members are vital to the output and impact of the Committee. With more than 150 organisations from diverse sectors, our differences are our strength; our passion for Sydney is our driving force.

This leadership group continues to thrive, finding and leveraging synergies between existing members and welcoming fresh ideas and contributions. During the year, we welcomed 13 new members.

Invested in the future of Greater Sydney, we collaborate to develop solutions to some of our city's biggest challenges, and advocate for a better future.

We thank our members who have hosted events and activities for us (listed on p12 and p13), and those who have sponsored activity including our research reports, international speakers, fundraising events, and more. Without this support, our program simply would not be possible.

Building for the future

With firm plans to grow, in August 2019 we launched a new program of annual sponsorship opportunities designed to drive deeper, more strategic engagement, and more activity.

One part of this new program is the Innovation Fund, which will bring together 10 partners who will support all research in 2020. We are excited to welcome Dexu as the inaugural partner and thank them for their leadership in this space.

Sponsors

Events

International Women's Day: NAB, PAYCE, Grimshaw, The Star, Urban Growth, Transdev

Smart City Awards: PAYCE, PwC, UTS, KJA, Thales

Reports

Autonomous mobility: Arcadis

Seeing the city: OneMap & Tract

Dignity and Choice: Stockland and Baptist Care

Safety after dark: NAB

Sustaining the advantage: Dexu and Landcom

Sydney Harbour: Place Design Group

The work of the Committee for Sydney would not be possible without support from our valued members. We are proud to represent some of the most prominent organisations in Sydney, working with them to develop innovative ideas and solutions to make our city the best place in the world to live, work and play.

Accor

AECOM Australia Pty Ltd

Airbnb

Allens

Amazon Web Services

AMP Capital Investors Limited

Aqualand

Arcadis

Architectus

Art Gallery of NSW

Arup Pty Ltd

Australian National Maritime Museum

Australian Rugby Union

Australian Turf Club

Bangarra Dance Theatre

BaptistCare

Bell Shakespeare

BESydney

Billbergia

Blacktown City Council

BlueCHP

Botanic Gardens & Centennial Parklands

Boyden

Bridge Housing

Brookfield

Campbelltown City Council

Captain Cook Cruises

Carnival Australia

Celestino

Charter Hall

City of Canterbury Bankstown Council

City of Parramatta

- City of Sydney

City West Housing

Clayton Utz

Coles

Community Housing Ltd

Compass Housing Services

Connect MacPark

Cox Architecture

Create NSW

Cultural Capital

Deloitte

Destination NSW

Dexus

EG

Elton Consulting

Ethos Urban

Evolve Housing

EY

Financial Services Council

Five at Heart

Frost* Collective

Georges River Council

GoGet

GPT Group

Grimshaw Architects

HASELL

Heart Foundation

Hoyne

Hume Community Housing Association

ICC Sydney

Imagination

Inner West Council

Investa Office Management Pty Ltd

Ipsos Australia & New Zealand

ISPT (WSQ Retail)

Ivany Investment Group

JCDecaux

JLL

John Holland Group

Keolis Downer

Kinesis
- KJA

KPMG

Laing O'Rourke Australia Construction Pty Limited

Landcom

Lendlease Development

Link Housing

Liverpool City Council

Luna Park Sydney

Macquarie Corporate Holdings Pty Limited

Mastercard

McKinsey & Company

Mecone

Metro Trains Australia

MinterEllison

Mirvac

Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences

Museum of Contemporary Art

NAB

National Art School

Newgate Communications

News Corp Australia

Night Time Industries Association

NRMA

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

NSW Land and Housing Corporation

NSW Office of Environment & Heritage

oOh!media

Outdoor Media Association

PAYCE Consolidated

Place Design Group

Plenary Group

Port Authority of NSW

Poulos Brothers

PwC

RobertsDay

RPS Group

Scentre Group

Sculpture by the Sea

SGS Economics and Planning

SMEC

South Western Sydney Local Health District

“I really appreciate the contribution of the Committee.”
– Kiersten Fishburn, CEO, Liverpool City Council

- SSROC

St George Community Housing

Stockland

Sydney Airport

Sydney Community Foundation

Sydney Dance Company

Sydney Festival

Sydney Fish Market

Sydney Fringe

Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

Sydney Living Museums

Sydney Local Health District

Sydney Opera House

Sydney Swans

Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Sydney Theatre Company

Sydney Water

Sydney Writers’ Festival
- TAFE NSW

Thales

The Star Entertainment Group

The University of Sydney

Tract

Transdev Australasia

Transport for NSW

Uber Australia PTY LTD (Sydney)

University of Technology Sydney

University of Wollongong

UNSW

Urbis

Vicinity Centres

Western Sydney University

Westpac

Willoughby City Council

WSP Australia Pty Ltd

WT Partnership



Ben Rogers, Director of Centre for London, talking about the future of mega-cities in May 2019

Governance

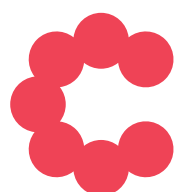
Executive Committee members

- Michael Rose AM, Chairman**
- Kate Jordan, Deputy Chair,** Deputy Chief Executive Partner, Clayton Utz
- Martin Blake,** Lead Partner, KPMG
- Virginia Briggs,** Partner, MinterEllison
- Dorte Ekelund,** Principal Advisor – Smart Cities, SMEC
- Sally Fielke,** General Manager Corporate Affairs, Coles
- Kevin George,** Executive General Manager - Office, Dexus
- Barney Glover,** Vice-Chancellor and University President, Western Sydney University
- Lyn Lewis-Smith,** CEO, BESydney
- Sally Loane,** CEO, Financial Services Council
- Rohan Lund,** Group Chief Executive, NRMA
- Larry McGrath,** Executive General Manager Customer and Corporate Affairs, John Holland Group
- David Rolls,** National Development Director – Property, Lendlease
- Charlie Taylor,** Director, McKinsey & Company
- Siobhan Toohill,** Head of Group Sustainability and Community, Westpac
- Brian Tyson,** Managing Partner, Newgate Communications
- Michael Wilkins,** Managing Director – Sport, Wagering and Gaming, News Corp

Taskforces

- Planning**
Chair: Bruce Taper, Kinesis
Deputy Chair: Alison Holloway, SGS
- Smart Cities**
Chair: Dorte Ekelund, SMEC
- Transport**
Chair: Larry McGrath, John Holland Group
Deputy Chair: Jodie Brough, Newgate Communications
- Knowledge Economy**
Chair: Virginia Briggs, MinterEllison
Deputy Chair: Ken Woo, PwC
- Liveability / Lovability**
Chair: Lyn Lewis-Smith, BESydney
Deputy Chair: Prof. Ross Harley, UNSW
- Western City**
Chair: Andy Marks, Western Sydney University








Committee
for
Sydney

Keep in touch

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