

From: Leone Morrison [REDACTED]
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To: Local Government Mailbox
Subject: Fit for the Future: City of Sydney Submission

While I cannot speak for councils generally around the State, I can speak from my experience as a resident within the City of Sydney Council.

The Council officers are efficient and they are accessible for information sharing. This Council has made so many improvements to the amenity, sustainability and infrastructure of this already large area of inner Sydney CBD and suburbs.

I cannot see that bigger can be any better.

City Council is the right size now. The last amalgamation which grew the Sydney City Council into a very large area and constituency, I believe reached its optimum proportion to serve business and residents to its maximum efficiency. It took a lot of settling in of systems and consolidating staff structure.

We now have more and more families coming to live in the inner city. High density housing has been matched with business and community amenity. Parks, libraries, galleries, support of all aspects of culture, bringing vitality into laneways, sporting fields have been integrated into the new brown belt developments and throughout the established areas.

We appreciate our democratic status.

We are heartened by the vision of the Lord Mayor and Councillors and officers. Sydney as an international host is brilliant with its Festivals, music and art, from the small back lane cultural fabric to the galleries and museums. It is becoming more of a walking and cycling city. Small pocket parks are re-vamped and the larger parks maintained with planning for replacement trees etc.

As for business, Council keeps forums open for discussion. I have attended a number over the last 11 years when council officers and consultants have met with business and community leaders to progress business and community initiatives.

As a resident, I appreciate the honest, hard working Council Officers and its Councillors who through their leadership independent of political parties, have systematically converted their vision for Sydney as a sustainable city with bold transport infrastructure plans, energy efficiency and balance of social and corporate opportunities into transparent business planning and execution of works. It does the planning, makes the changes and gets the work done.

- It is progressively greening its environment and has already achieved reduced carbon emissions against its committed goals.
- The problems of the homeless and disadvantaged are being met by diverse strategies to achieve flexible outcomes
- It has become a leader in environment technology and its steady implementation conservation of power and water
- Architecture, landscaping, design and social amenity in several projects has attracted a number of awards
- The City Council has taken responsibility and committed substantial funding for new urban developments and their infrastructure

- The late night economy has been boosted by a range of initiatives: revitalising lanes, small bars, galleries etc. Food trucks and considered changes add to the calming of night crowds
- Building of infrastructure is steadily proceeding along its projected time line over ten years
- It is the city of major events attracting visitors from overseas, interstate and across Sydney. Something for everyone. Great festivals of people for people
- The economy has been boosted by the Sydney City Council with an approved \$25 billion worth of development. Two thousand new businesses have been started and 55,00 jobs to match.
- Business and Council have been working in partnership. Council's emission and energy saving initiatives have been passed on to business.

Yes, the City of Sydney is fit for the future and has been steadily planning and implementing its progressive initiatives over 11 years.

I am satisfied that the City of Sydney considers the millions who travel into the city to work each day, as well as our business and residential population. The homeless, the disadvantaged, the young and the old. Nourishment and shelter, jobs, amenity and entertainment. The wonderful festivals that bring people into the city. Singles, couples, families, babies in prams. A vibrant city that never sleeps.

I see the numbers of bike riders increasing as I move around the inner city, I feel that Sydney at last is creating cycleways and pedestrian walkways that make it look more like other modern cities of the world. I am inspired by the plans to revolutionise the public transport through the city, using trams and car free areas. It feels as if Sydney is growing up.

If a big metropolis like New York can afford to make way for pedestrians and cyclists and minimise cars, surely this is an achievable inspiration for Sydney. We need to be bold and take courage. The benefits will be huge.

Green Square is a credit to the new build. Look at the example of Redfern as a renewed urban environment. Its new housing development is dense and high; discreetly designed and placed within its traditional victorian architecture; its rebuilt parks and sporting facilities; its old strip shopping is complemented with modern facilities integrated under new buildings. Then observe the crowds of people coming off the train on their way home from work and school, to understand how planning and appropriate facilities can change the balance and diversity of an urban population, its local environment and the resulting toning down of social pressures.

This is what the Fit for the Future Council of Sydney has achieved and continues to achieve around its "villages" and business precincts. One feels energy and opportunity in our City.

Leave it to our Sydney City Council and others that have efficient, corrupt free governance to manage local government in manageable areas.

State Government can get on with the big jobs of education, health and large transport initiatives.

Leone Morrison

