

Many of the changes in the City over the past 30 years have been a result of increased residential population, shifting socio-political values and perceptions, a diversified local population, economic globalisation and technological change. Along the way, the City has developed a collection of assets and resources. These trends, together with external forces, have brought new challenges.

Some of these challenges are already being addressed by the City of Sydney through a range of initiatives, programs and policies in planning and design, social planning, cultural development and other areas of Council responsibility.

### A magnet for growth...

There are currently around 160,000 residents and 370,000 jobs in the City. The City added more residents within its boundaries than any other Local Government Area in NSW in the last five years, recording an annual average growth rate of 4.9 per cent. Over the past 10 years, the population grew by 54 per cent, while jobs grew by 11 per cent, as the City consolidated its role as Australia's major global centre. The City's strong economy, parks, cultural attractions, amenity and lifestyle opportunities create a magnet for growth.

### ...but land, services and infrastructure are under pressure.

The City of Sydney is working towards an additional 48,000 dwellings and 97,000 jobs between 2006 and 2031.

This is consistent with the State Government's *Metropolitan Strategy*, released at the end of 2005, which is planning for a total of 138,000 dwellings and 465,000 jobs by 2030 in the City.

This Vision provides marginal additional capacity, beyond the *Metropolitan Strategy* targets, for dwellings and jobs to allow for uncertainties such as:

- rapidly rising fuel prices forcing people to areas with good public transport;
- an accelerated return to City living, driven by the rich cultural life and amenities on offer, and constraints on the development of fringe, arable land; and
- higher rates of immigration from a more mobile global labour force.

'Building in' additional capacity is also wise from an affordability and market flexibility perspective.

These housing and jobs growth targets are significant and while challenging, planning settings can be adjusted over time to accommodate them without major changes in established residential areas. More importantly, infrastructure and services must keep pace with growth. The City of Sydney has accelerated its capital spending to provide community services and facilities but transport services and other infrastructure investment have

not kept pace with growth, and the availability of affordable housing is diminishing. The State Government has particular responsibilities here, but the City of Sydney is a willing partner in looking for solutions, and believes that the Federal Government should also be involved.

### A global role in finance, business services and knowledge oriented employment...

Sydney accommodates a network of globally competitive firms with specialisations in finance and insurance, property and business services, tourism-related industries, cultural, creative, multimedia and other information industries. In the globalisation era of the past 15 years, jobs in these sectors have concentrated in the central areas of global cities such as Sydney. Around 25 per cent of the State's knowledge jobs (excluding doctors, nurses and other in-person service workers), are located in the City.

### ...but there is fierce competition from other cities for an expanded role in global economic activity.

Other Australian cities have well developed industry and innovation strategies, and, with government support, are developing new markets and specialisations. NSW has prepared a *State Plan and Innovation Statement* that recognise Sydney's core strengths, but other Australian cities have had higher recent employment growth rates.

Brisbane and Perth benefit from population growth and resource related industries, while Melbourne recovered from decline in the early 1990s. Competitor cities in Asia-Pacific such as Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and offer competitive environments for finance and business services. These cities have the benefit of large or rapidly growing domestic or regional markets, and are well located as regional transport hubs.

Sydney might currently retain a 'liveability' advantage over some of these other cities but this is being eroded as congestion, under-funded public transport and an arguably declining reputation for culture and leisure negatively affect the City's standing. On the Mercer Index, which ranks world cities for quality of life, Sydney performs strongly, sitting at number nine in recent years. In the 1990s, however, Sydney ranked number three on the same index.

"The Sustainable Sydney 2030 Research Survey found that 45 per cent of Sydney Region residents agreed that 'most people could be trusted'. This is a higher level of general trust than that reported in the general Australian Survey of Social Attitudes and compares well with other major western cities."

### World class education institutions...

The City has high quality education and health institutions, which characterise global cities, including Sydney University, the University of Technology Sydney, Sydney Institute of Technology, and the Sydney campus of the University of Notre Dame. A large number of other higher education institutions, registered training organisations and language centres are clustered around Broadway, St Vincent's and the Garvan Institute in East Sydney, and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital on the western perimeter.

Educational institutions, and the students they attract, add richly to City life and are major assets.

### ...but an under-developed knowledge and learning culture, and need for attention to new literacies.

As the City grows the international role of its major research and educational institutions will also grow. New education institutions may be attracted, and these should foster and develop the City's creative and innovative capacity. The City's education institutions should be encouraged to play a greater role in the economic life of the precincts and communities in which they reside. This integration will be fundamental to developing a knowledge and learning culture.

Inequality occurs where communities cannot gain the increased literacies required in modern life. In addition to traditional literacy and numeracy, visual, cultural, civic and information technology literacies are required for rewarding participation in contemporary society.



The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras is a major event in the City

City of Sydney

### Diverse and tolerant communities...

As a place to live, the Sydney Region and the City rank highly in world terms. The City is dynamic, accepting, well resourced and tolerant.

The City is one of the most demographically diverse local government areas in Australia. Its residents and visitors have a range of incomes, ethno-cultural affiliations and sexualities and this is reflected in the cultural and street life of the City. The City comprises people of all ages and life stages, including children, young people, teenagers, international students and older generations. The City is also home to Indigenous communities, people with a disability and people who are homeless. In this way, the public life of the City exhibits the social qualities of tolerance as well as energy and enterprise which place it among the ranks of the world's most dynamic and creative cities.

### ...but creeping social exclusion, marginalisation and homogenisation from diminished affordability.

While the City's demographic indicators reveal the population's diversity, some trends and data reveal a creeping social exclusion and homogenisation among the population. The City's population is becoming richer at a rate faster than in the rest of the metropolitan area, which implies lower income groups are increasingly excluded from the City's amenity and resources. The share of families among the population is also declining at faster than average rates, as the number of single and two person households expands rapidly.

These trends are driven by the decreasing range and affordability of housing. Available data shows that one or two bedroom flats constituted almost 90 per cent of the growth in City dwellings in the 10 years to 2006. The proportion of low and moderate income earners renting and in housing stress in the City at the 2006 Census was 67 per cent, compared with 56 per cent on average across the metropolitan area. This represented an increase of over 1,500 in the City from the 2001 Census.<sup>1</sup>

Declining affordability is also evident in business space, which means that artists, small start-up businesses and niche retailers are increasingly denied opportunities to operate in the City.

For some communities in the City, access to employment, education and health care remains a cause of marginalisation and inequality.



More light rail would help lower congestion



Redfern terraces

City of Sydney



City of Sydney

Historic QVB



Cycling is on the increase in the City

## An extensive commuter transport system and high rates of public transport use for trips to the City Centre...

The City is at the centre of metropolitan Sydney's rail, road and water transport network. Over 70 per cent of City Centre workers travel to work by public transport, the highest proportion of any Australian city.

### ...but a system under strain, and polluted and congested streets.

The transport network is struggling with growth pressures and needs significant investment to accommodate Inner Sydney radial and cross regional travel. Key bus routes are at capacity and need urgent conversion to higher volume and less polluting mass transit modes, such as surface light rail and underground metro rail.

The City Centre is choked with cars. Bold solutions are required to reclaim its streets—for public transport, pedestrian movement and cycling, and public activity.

## A world renowned liveability...

The City is renowned as one of the world's most liveable cities. Its heritage buildings, theatres, art galleries and restaurants are popular with visitors and residents. Sydney is ranked in the top grouping of world cities in terms of natural and cultural amenities, social capital, and safety.

The network of Villages surrounding the City Centre, including Glebe, Kings Cross, Paddington, Surry Hills, Redfern, Erskineville, and Newtown, contribute to the City's liveability. These neighbourhoods have a distinct character and are valued places to live; their lively mixed-use feel are increasingly popular for small creative businesses, particularly in Oxford Street, Surry Hills, Chippendale and Ultimo-Pyrmont.

### ...in danger of being eroded by insensitive, out of place renewal and development.

Significant areas for renewal, outside of the City of Sydney planning controls, include Barangaroo, Frasers Broadway (former CUB site), and sites around Redfern-Waterloo, including the Australian Technology Park. These areas should match the mix and feel that has been successful elsewhere in the City—a 'fine grain' urbanity that provides for a range of business types and building forms, set in a street-based public domain.

Contemporary renewal and development can learn from the traditional city: legible and dense network of streets and lanes, buildings with active street frontages, a range of public spaces and viable and attractive walking and cycling. Outdoor activities should be encouraged to make the most of Sydney's mild climate and natural beauty.

New development has a particular responsibility to respect and advance the City's reputation.

## The City Centre is Australia's largest retail centre...

The City Centre's department stores and specialty shops provide for metropolitan markets and visitors. Increasingly, local shops provide for local residents. There is an extensive day time café and lunch culture that caters to City Centre workers. A major shopping centre investment will expand available mainstream retail.

### ...with a narrowing range of small business and 'leisure life' offerings.

Sydney's reputation as Australia's retailing, entertainment and night time capital is under challenge. Melbourne has developed a sophisticated platform for niche retailing, music venues and small bar trading through liquor licensing reform, urban design, small business assistance policies, cultural festivals and local-State Government tourism development partnerships. Brisbane, too, is broadening its music, dining and entertainment scene.

Sydney's mix of retailing and night-time hospitality has narrowed, with larger operators and established licensees dominating the scene. The City's streets and lanes need to be re-activated with new shops, restaurants and bars.

## A platform for sustainable living...

Walking and cycling are already the transport choice for around 50 per cent of trips in the City and public transport use is high. A high share of the City's residents also work in the City (59 per cent). This means City residents travel shorter distances on average and are less likely to drive than those living in the Sydney Region, with a lower impact in terms of congestion, air quality and emissions. The area within 10 kilometres of the City Centre provides significant future opportunity to increase sustainable modes of travel, particularly walking, cycling and light rail.

The sustainable technologies, that are essential to address global warming, will have lower costs in the City, as the investment costs can be averaged across a greater number of users in a smaller area. Density offers the prospect of broad-based collective solutions.

### ...but high and increasing rates of energy and water consumption, and waste generation.

In the last five years the City's energy demand increased by almost 20 per cent. Although water consumption decreased by five per cent over the last five years (due to the constrained supply and water restrictions), the general trend has been increasing consumption. By 2030, the City's annual water consumption is predicted to increase by 22 per cent, while greenhouse gas emissions are predicted to increase by 41 per cent. The City of Sydney's residential waste stream is predicted to increase by 50 per cent by 2030.