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# Quarterly Report to the Minister for Planning

No 3: for the period ending 31 December 2016

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Central District Commissioner, Maria Atkinson, discussing the draft Central District Plan with community stakeholders at the community drop-in session at Redfern Town Hall on 26 November 2016.

## Introduction

The Greater Sydney Commission's focus since its last report (on 31 October 2016) has continued to be its statutory responsibility to produce draft District Plans for Greater Sydney. Six draft District Plans and *Towards our Greater Sydney 2056* (a draft amendment to *A Plan for Growing Sydney 2014*) went on formal public exhibition on 21 November 2016 and will remain on exhibition until 31 March 2017.

Overall, the draft plans have been well received. An extensive program of briefings and drop-in sessions have been held with local community groups, councils, industry and professional bodies, and elected representatives during November and December. More engagement is planned in February and March 2017.

The Greater Sydney Commission has put a call out to local councils to nominate senior planning staff to be seconded to the Commission to assist with finalising the draft District Plans and the preparation of the revised *A Plan for Growing Sydney*. This is part of the Commission's commitment to ongoing engagement with councils and communities and ensuring that the plans are informed by local experts.

The Commission is committed to transparency and sharing information. One of its priorities is to report on how Greater Sydney is progressing in terms of liveability, sustainability and productivity. Version 1.0 of the Greater Sydney Dashboard is now available on the Commission's website.

On 21 November 2016 the Sydney Planning Panels went live. Each Greater Sydney District has a panel, chaired by its District Commissioner, to determine regionally significant development matters.

In November, during the state visit of King Willem Alexander and Queen Maxima of the Netherlands, five Australian cities and several organisations including the Commission signed Memorandums of Understanding with the Global Smart City and Communities Coalition. The Commission, Lake Macquarie, Ipswich, ACT Government and the Australian Smart City Association (ASCA) have committed to sharing best practices, knowledge and lessons learned between each other and with other cities within the network including Bandung, Genova, Rotterdam and Austin.

The Commission will launch the 2016-17 round of the Metropolitan Greenspace Program in mid-January 2017. The program has been revitalised to support the vision for a *Green Grid* throughout the Greater Sydney Region.

Forty-seven eligible nominations have been received for the inaugural Greater Sydney Planning Awards. The awards celebrate best practice in planning and showcase examples that are leading the urban development of the Greater Sydney Region. Winners will be announced on 23 February 2017.

2017 will be another big year for the Commission, with the Commission also leading the review of the *A Plan for Growing Sydney 2014*. As with the draft District Plans, collaboration and engagement will be the hallmark of this work and all Sydneysiders will have an opportunity to express their views throughout the development of a new Metropolitan Plan for Greater Sydney.

Thousands of Sydneysiders have engaged with the Commission in our first year. This is the beginning of an exciting era for strategic planning in Greater Sydney.

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jane Jacobs, “The Death and Life of Greater American Cities”

## **Exhibition of the draft District Plans and an amendment to *A Plan for Growing Sydney (APfGS)***

Draft District Plans are an important next step in implementing APfGS, an integrated strategic plan for Greater Sydney's growing population. The draft District Plans include proposed actions designed to shape each District's future and guide investment and policy decisions. These actions draw on clear long-term priorities for the District that have been shaped by collaboration and engagement with the community, local government and with State agencies and an extensive evidence base.

Six draft District Plans and a draft update to APfGS (*Towards our Greater Sydney 2056*) were launched on 21 November 2016. The draft plans have been very well received and have already generated significant media coverage and discussion. So far:

- stakeholder briefings have been held with council Mayors, Administrators, General Managers and planners, community groups, non-government organisations, industry and professional bodies;
- drop-in information sessions for community groups and Sydneysiders have been held in each District; and
- Commissioners and senior staff have been speaking at a number of conferences, meetings, forums and community events.

The Commission has also launched an improved corporate website for community engagement and to host the Greater Sydney Dashboard. This allows for the draft District Plans to be hosted in a digital format and for effective and efficient online community engagement, including a formal submission process.

A series of interactive engagement sessions, including open forums, targeted meetings and online engagement are being planned between 1 February 2017 and the close of the formal public exhibition period on 31 March 2017. A formal submission process is also available. More details will be available on the Commission's website in January 2017.

A detailed Engagement Report recording feedback received during this period will inform revisions to the draft District Plans and the revised APfGS.

## **The Greater Sydney Dashboard**

Version 1.0 of the Commission's Dashboard went live on 21 November 2016. It has several important indicators to track and measure how Greater Sydney is progressing linked to liveability, sustainability and productivity. Additional functionality being developed includes mapping, comparative exploration and live linking of data to ensure that visualisations constantly change as new data arrives. Future versions will also include indicators of how Greater Sydney and the six Districts are performing against the Priorities and Actions of our strategic plans. The Greater Sydney Dashboard can be accessed via the Commission's website: <http://www.greatersydneycommission.nsw.gov.au/dashboard>





North District Commissioner, Dr Deborah Dearing, discussing the draft North District Plan with community stakeholders at the community drop-in session in Chatswood on 3 December 2016.

## **City Deal and the Western Sydney Airport**

The Australian and NSW Governments have committed to the Western Sydney City Deal through a Memorandum of Understanding. The Western Sydney City Deal will be an undertaking between three levels of government to work together to improve the lives of current and future residents of the West and South West Districts through better transport, more jobs, increasing housing supply and affordability, and environmental initiatives.

Deputy Chief and Economic Commissioner, Geoff Roberts, is co-chairing working groups for defining the goals of the Western Sydney City Deal. The working groups involve the State and Federal Governments and eight councils within the West and South West Districts.

The Commission also continues to work closely with other NSW Government agencies, councils and the Federal Government on opportunities associated with the development of Western Sydney Airport.

Initiatives and commitments made as part of the City Deal will be supported by the final District Plans, the revised Metropolitan Plan and the Future Transport Strategy.

## Metropolitan Greenspace Program (MGP)

New and improved open greenspace areas will be created with a new round of MGP funding from the NSW Government. When the 2016-17 round opens in mid-January, 2017 local councils will be invited to apply for a share of \$4 million in grants to create better greenspace areas and outdoor public facilities. Projects that receive funding will support Sydney's Green Grid linking open spaces, tree-lined walkways and cycleways to create a network of green connections from people's homes to local centres, workplaces and recreational areas.

The NSW Government's contribution to the 2016-17 MGP of \$4 million (compared with \$3 million in 2015-16) will support the many important Green Grid projects identified with councils in the district planning process so far. Grant funding will be matched dollar for dollar by local councils. Since 1990 the MGP has provided more than \$41 million for over 600 projects in partnership with councils.

The MGP is managed by the Greater Sydney Commission, which has developed a long-term vision for Sydney's Green Grid including the blue grid of estuaries and waterways and has been working with councils to identify priority Green Grid projects across the city.

## Greater Sydney Planning Awards

The Greater Sydney Planning Awards, launched in September 2016, celebrate best practice planning and showcase examples of leading metropolitan planning in the Greater Sydney Region. Forty-seven eligible nominations have been received and will be reviewed by the judging panel of representatives from the planning profession, academia, public sector, development industry and the Commission. Award winners will be announced on 23 February 2017 at an awards ceremony and published on the Commission's website.



Judging is underway to select the winners of the inaugural Greater Sydney Planning Awards.

## 2017: The Year Ahead

The Commission has some large deliverables in the year ahead, most importantly:

- Undertaking a formal review of the Metropolitan Plan (APfGS), progressing concurrently with preparation of the future Transport and Infrastructure Strategies and finalisation of the draft District Plans;
- Exhibition, community engagement and further development of the draft District Plans – a range of community engagement activities will be held in February and March 2017. Draft District Plans will continue to be developed collaboratively throughout 2017;
- City Deal and the Western Sydney Airport – continuing to lead discussions and leverage opportunities presented by the Western Sydney Airport and the City Deal;
- The Greater Sydney Dashboard – further versions with more data and analysis will be published in 2017; and
- Implementation of the Parramatta Road Urban Amenity Improvement program – formally transitioning from UrbanGrowth NSW to the Commission on 1 March 2017.



The Environment Commissioner, Roderick Simpson, and Director of Engagement, Dianne Knott, talk with community stakeholders at a briefing session on the draft District Plans and the draft amendment to APfGS.