

Submission
No 68

INQUIRY INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTS AND
CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE OUTSIDE THE SYDNEY
CBD

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Mr David Borger, MP
Chairman
Legislative Assembly
Public Works Committee
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

RECEIVED
9/9/08

Dear David

Inquiry into the development of arts and cultural infrastructure outside the Sydney CBD

I refer to your letter regarding the Inquiry into the development of arts and cultural infrastructure outside the Sydney CBD.

While your inquiry specifically focuses on arts and cultural infrastructure outside the Sydney CBD, the City's work in the precincts and villages outside of the CBD (Green Square, Darlinghurst, Ultimo/Pymont, Redfern, Kings Cross and Glebe) and its plans for the future may be of use in your inquiry.

The City of Sydney agrees with the NSW State Government State Plan that it is essential to create linkages between residential development and retail areas, employment spaces, Government services and recreational, cultural, artistic and entertainment precincts to ensure safe, cohesive liveable cities.

As you may be aware, Council has recently adopted the **Sustainable Sydney 2030** (SS2030) vision and strategy. The plan responds to the many challenges facing the City and our community.

One of the directions of the strategy is to maintain a **cultural and creative city**, through fostering cultural vitality and community participation, encouraging emerging technologies, innovation and creativity, meeting the needs of our diverse community and celebrating Indigenous heritage.

One key project is the development of **Activity Hubs**, sustainable places for communities in the City's distinctive villages to meet, create, learn, work and shop. Activity Hubs are place with distinctive and diverse character around key community main streets. The 2030 vision builds on the City's Local Action Plans and will provide a focus for doing business, healthcare, taking transport, shopping, meeting people and having cultural and learning experiences.

For example, the 2030 vision proposes a series of small projects to improve access to the villages surrounding King Street Newtown, that will support community life, the arts, retail and creative enterprise and the live music scene.

Another key project is the **Eora Journey**, a cultural walk from Redfern to the harbour and an Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Centre. In response to the strong call from the

Indigenous community and broader community to celebrate and share the story of the world's oldest living culture, the cultural walk will include artworks and messages about traditional and contemporary Indigenous culture to teach and share stories.

An **Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Centre** was called for by Sydney's Indigenous community, to create a place of learning, employment, cultural celebration, understanding and innovation. It will nurture cultural regeneration and cultural understanding among visitors and the Sydney community.

A third project is the **Cultural Ribbon** from Darling Harbour to Bennelong Point and Macquarie Street. The Cultural ribbon, a walk linking cultural destinations and landmarks, will support the city's identity as a place internationally recognised for its rich and unique cultural experiences.

A key direction of SS2030 is a **globally competitive and innovative city**. To continue to grow, the City will need to foster clustering of creative enterprises, improve liveability and housing affordability and the availability of a range of housing types.

Another key direction is **vibrant local communities and economies**, which sees the City's villages as important places for economic growth through attracting and clustering innovative and creative enterprises.

The City has developed a series of action plans for each of the elements of SS2030, and we would be happy to provide you with more detail.

The City supports arts and culture in Sydney through a range of funding programs, events, public art, history and cultural development activities, arts and cultural infrastructure and future strategies.

The City's Grants and Sponsorships Programs enable us to significantly contribute to and support the arts, culture and learning by directly funding projects being undertaken by cultural institutions, major and community festivals and events, and a variety of community and cultural development activities and services.

The City supports cultural institutions and events through the provision of hire waiver for the City's street banners poles, parks and open spaces, major and community venues. The banners provide significant promotional opportunities for organisations and events, and the venues and parks provide workshop, rehearsal and performance space.

The City's history program captures and documents the City's rich history, and provides the community with access to archived information, oral histories, publications and self-guided walking tours throughout the City's village precincts.

The Curatorial department supports the City's collection of artworks, furnishings, historic artefacts, civic memorials and gifts. The City's curator recently published a book about Sydney Town Hall, one of Sydney's much loved landmarks, and is this week opening a heraldry exhibition at Customs House.

The City is a producer of events, using the City itself as a stage, with events such as New Year's Eve, Chinese New Year and Art & About, the annual visual arts festival which is expanding this year into the Oxford Street / Taylor Square Precinct. This expansion complements the work the City is currently undertaking to establish the Oxford Street Cultural Precinct, recognising the area's historic significance, economic development, tourist appeal and the natural concentration of creative industries in the area.

Also part of Art & About 2008, the City will also launch 'By George', a series of temporary installations throughout the City's Laneways. This project is part of the City's Laneways

Revitalisation Strategy, supporting the fine-grain and unique precincts and public spaces throughout the City.

The City supports cultural community development initiatives and delivers public programs through the Pine Street Creative Centre in Chippendale, the Library Network and our Community Centres.

The City has eight Libraries in its Network, with the new Surry Hills Library and Community Centre scheduled to open in 2009. In addition, the City is working toward the Green Square redevelopment which will incorporate a Library, Community Centre and event-ready open spaces.

The City's Public Art program manages the City's collection and its conservation, public programs and the commissioning of new work. Currently, new work is being developed in Glebe, Redfern and Surry Hills. In 2007 the City formed a Public Art Advisory Group, to assist and support the City in the selection of public artists, the commissioning of new public art projects, the removal of existing works, and in the assessment of public art proposals in private developments.

The City runs the City Recital Hall, an internationally recognised performing arts venue which attracts artists from all over the world.

Currently the City invests approximately \$21.3 million annually to support arts and cultural activities and infrastructure (2007/2008). In addition the City often provides support for one-off projects, such the upcoming 'By George' laneway's projects and the recent pledge of \$1million to the Museum of Contemporary Art to support the museum's planned redevelopment.

The City currently has 47 dedicated arts and culture staff. This excludes our venue management staff, filming and external event liaison staff, casual or contract staff and the many more staff who support the City's delivery of arts and culture through a range of discreet projects and programs.

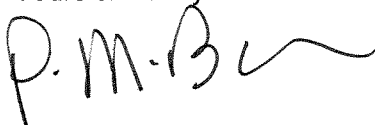
I understand the State is reviewing its grants processes and City staff have met with the relevant NSW State Government staff who are undertaking this review.

The City has two full time staff engaged in seeking corporate sponsorship for its events program.

We are currently seeking partnerships with the State and Federal Governments in relation to the Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Centre. We are also working closely with NSW Events to assist in the development of major events in the City of Sydney, both those produced by the City, and those produced by third parties on the City's land.

I look forward to hearing the outcomes of your enquiry. If you would like further information about the City please contact Kate Murray, Cultural Development Manager on 9265 9333 or at kmurray@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



MONICA BARONE
Chief Executive Officer