



Our Future Sydney: Youth Summit

August 2019

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Introduction

The Youth Summit was the culmination of three months of consultation with students from eleven high schools in and around the City of Sydney local area on the future of Sydney.

Purpose

The purpose of the Youth Summit was to engage high school students in a dialogue about the future of Sydney in the year 2050.

The Summit took as its foundation the key areas of interest identified by students in the initial consultations run in April – June 2019.

A central aim for the day was to bring a diverse range of young people, from a diverse range of schools together in a stimulating collaborative environment of real-world learning focused on articulating a vision for Sydney in the year 2050.

This day-long engagement session then supported young people to develop and pitch big ideas that would help the City achieve their 2050 vision.

Objectives

- Find out how young people envisage the future of Sydney to the year 2050
- Give students the opportunity to develop big ideas that could impact the future of Sydney
- Give young people the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse range of young people outside their own school community
- Give young people the opportunity to speak directly with senior members of the City of Sydney Council about their ideas
- Enable young people to present their big ideas directly to the Lord Mayor
- Show their views count and the City of Sydney is listening
- Build civic engagement in children and young people
- Build ongoing, educative relationships with local schools

Participation

The following schools took up the opportunity to participate, collectively sending 43 students:

- Alexandria Park Community School
- Sydney Girls High School
- St Scholastica's College
- Marrickville High School
- Sydney Secondary College, Black Wattle Bay
- Sydney Secondary College, Leichhardt



VR goggles showing a flyover of Sydney and its future development.

Methodology

The Youth Summit was structured to facilitate deeper exploration of the five key themes that emerged from the initial in-school consultations as areas of primary interest for young people when contemplating Sydney in the year 2050.

At the start of the day the whole group of students participated in two starter activities aimed at putting the voices of young people at the centre of the process, and inspiring future thinking and collaboration.

- Future focused gameshow run by students from UTS's Bachelor of Creative Intelligence and Innovation degree.
- Why the voices of young people are important brainstorming session with a visual storyteller creating a pictorial representation of the comments.



The five key areas for exploration

The key areas identified by young people in the initial consultations as being of central importance when thinking about Sydney's future were:

- A safe and well-governed City
- A Sustainable City
- A Green City
- A Diverse City
- A Creative and Innovative City

Participants selected one of the five areas to be their focus for exploration. These groupings of students then divided into smaller groups of 3 or 4 to explore the issues.

Idea Generation Process

Young people worked their way through a five step process that started broadly and progressively narrowed the focus of their ideas. Participants were supported by university students from UTS and the City's emerging civic leaders program.

Students began by brainstorming what their ideal Safe and Well Governed / Sustainable / Green / Diverse / Creative and Innovative city would be like in 2050. This formed the basis for the creation of a vision statement.

Participants were then asked to generate ideas that would help Sydney become the city they envisioned.

Students interrogated their own ideas through discussion with City of Sydney staff who had expertise in each of the thematic areas under consideration. This helped participants to narrow down and clarify their ideas.

Each small group of young people then pitched their final ideas to all the attendees. A vote was then taken to decide which idea from each area should be delivered to the Lord Mayor at the Presentation Ceremony a week later.

A Safe and Well Governed City

- 83% of you wanted to be able to get anywhere you like on public transport, walking or by bike riding.
- 66% of you want a city where people help each other.

A Sustainable City

- 90% of you wanted a city the uses resources - water, energy and waste efficiently.
- 89% were worried about the impacts of climate change including heatwaves and storms.

A Green City

- 81% said you wanted a city with parks, trees and lots of nature.

A Creative and Innovative City

- 72% want the City to be a creative place where people have fun.

A Diverse City

- 77% wanted a city where lots of different cultures live happily together.
- 90% worried about a lack of affordable housing.
- 64% of you wanted a City that celebrates Aboriginal Communities and Cultures.

How young people described the process

Speaking at the Lord Mayor's presentation this is how Lilian from St Scholastica's College and Ben from Marrickville High School described the Summit process on behalf of all students:



Last Wednesday, a group of passionate students, including ourselves, from a number of high schools across the City of Sydney came together to engage in a captivating and much-needed conversation about our vision of Sydney in the year 2050. It was a unique opportunity to trade ideas, expand our outlook, and exercise a real influence over the future of our city.

Each of us had a choice of five features of urban planning to focus on. These included; “A Green city”, “A sustainable city”, “A safe and well-governed city”, “A creative and innovative city” and “A diverse city”. Within these groups, we had the opportunity to exchange our ideas and knowledge, with a view to devising a proposal for the year 2050. Throughout the course of the day, we broke off into specialised teams, in which we collaborated on a project.

The process was guided by a team of facilitators, and we were able to consult community leaders and experts in our fields. The day culminated in the presentation of these projects to our peers. Two teams from each focus group pitched their ideas, and later this evening you'll hear from the groups who were elected by their peers to present to you tonight.

One of the driving concepts of the summit was the role of young people in the development of a future-proof city. And who better to assess this than the youth themselves? Before starting our projects, we were asked to consider the question ‘why are the views of young people important?’, and what followed was a compelling exchange of opinions and experiences. Everyone was able to have their

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say, and everyone's ideas were recorded by a talented team of illustrators. There were some common themes in our answers. These included the idea that we are the future, and we will inherit the world shaped by decisions being made now, that we make up a large portion of Sydney's demography, and that we can offer a fresh and unique perspective of the world.

The discussion had the effect of unifying the room under the common desire for a future to be proud of, and to look forward to. Finding commonalities among a diverse group of my peers was a truly enriching experience. But perhaps the most valuable experience I had of the day was not only being listened to, but being encouraged to speak my mind. It was incredibly encouraging to see our ideas taken on board by adults with power, and acted on in real time.

Of course, an integral part of our role as youth in society is to take on the wisdom of those with experience, and to make it our own. And unfortunately, opportunities for teenagers and adults to meet as equals and share insights from each of our communities are few and far between. The youth summit gave us that opportunity, and I'm sure I speak for my peers when I say it was a privilege to speak to the group of professionals and leaders.

The overall atmosphere of the day was one of collaboration and optimism. As young people, we are often outspoken, but seldom heard. However, we are the beneficiaries of the future, and of our City of Sydney. The summit is a heartening example of the progress that can be achieved when we collaborate as a community.

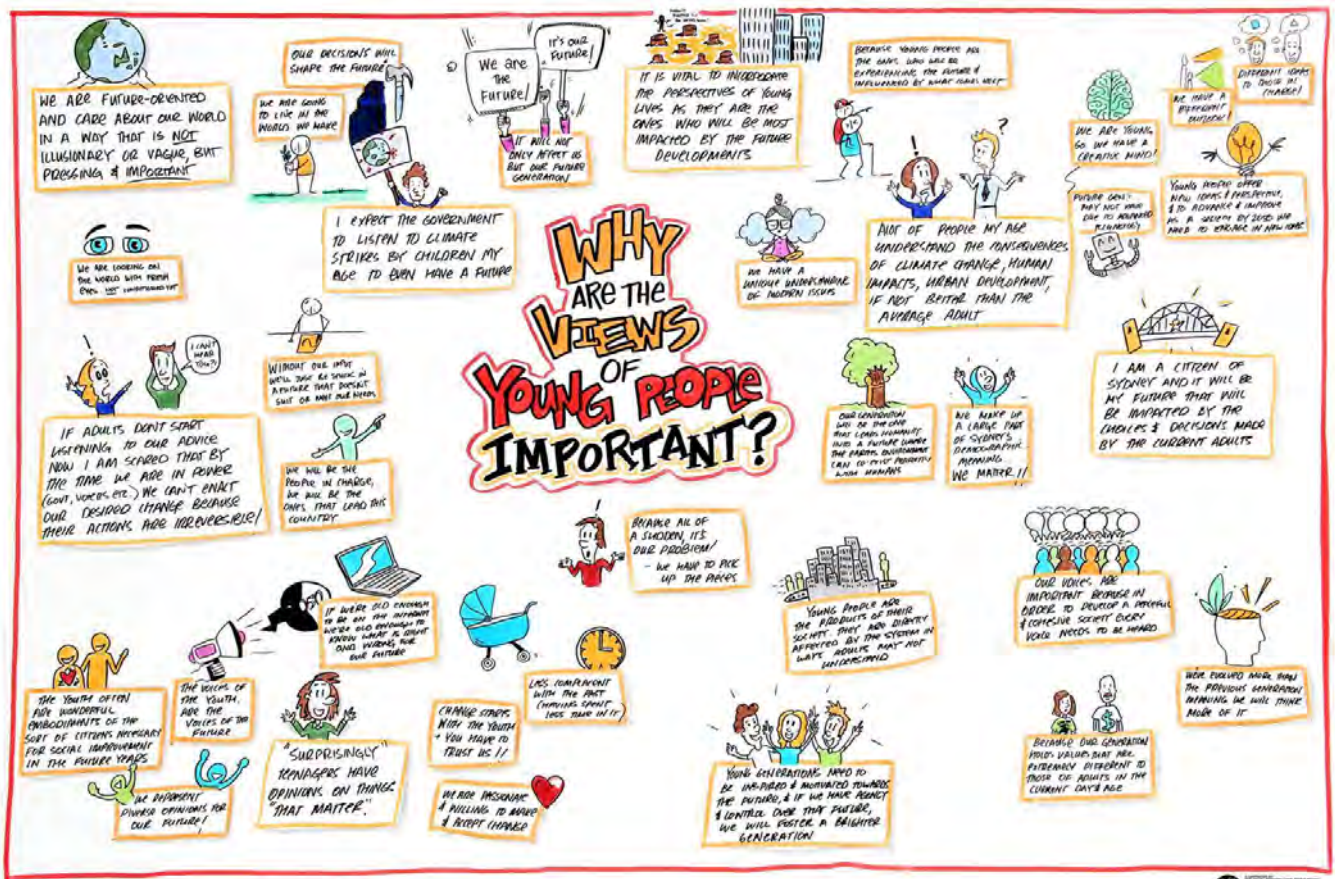
Trust me when I tell you, there is no shortage of ambitious, driven young people in the room tonight. Personally, I look forward to the year 2050.



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CEO Monica Barone discusses the students' ideas for action.



Outcomes

Some vision statements

Sydney in 2050 is a place that accepts and encourages live music, art, fashion and technology; facilitates cultural festivals, broadcasts sporting events (both women and men), creates artistic, creative and innovative days for everyone. Where people dance, sing and perform. Where they become culturally accepting and aware. Where they learn and join in to start something new. A place that doesn't exclude people who are unique or force people to adhere to cultural stereotypes. In the future the city will be inclusive towards all individuals, accepting and culturally aware, flexible and supportive of creativity.

Sydney in 2050 is a place that is welcoming to all, gives equal opportunities to all and meets everyone's needs. It welcomes differences and celebrates them rather than wanting everyone to be the same. Where people feel supported and feel free to celebrate what is important to them. That doesn't discriminate based on race, gender, religion, sexuality, age, education-level or wealth. In the future people will be aware of their biases. The structures of society will be welcome and support all.

Sydney in 2050 is a place that contains more water features and architecture that includes plants and facilitates natural processes. Where people follow policies to surround themselves with biodiversity and utilises nature for sustainable outcomes. That doesn't have concrete, zoos, wasted water, cut down trees or pollute the environment. In the future Sydney will be a place of protection for species (native and endangered) full of forest and plants in currently highly polluted areas.

Sydney in 2050 is a place that has creative art workers, street art, crazy new technology and even crazier fashion styles. Where people can express their creativity and show what they are feeling in art, music and other ways. That doesn't have any kind of backlash and allows others to express how they really feel. In the future it will be full of people who are not afraid to express themselves and are not told they are wrong.

Ideas for action

A safe and well-governed city

The two ideas pitched by the students were:

Reducing Car Dependence

Prioritise people over cars. Promote equitable access to our spaces by putting pedestrians, cyclists and public transport first. Improve convenience and efficiency and reduce pollution and costs. How?

- Congestion pricing
- Cheaper public transport
- Wider footpaths

Youth Community Spaces

- Stimulating, safe places for young people to come together with diverse programs created by young people. The spaces should be self-governed by young people which will encourage young people to participate.
- Wide range of activities possible in each space.
- Programs to develop social and emotional skills on offer.



Reducing car dependence presentation to the Lord Mayor



Team: Jessica and Vanessa (Sydney Girls High School), Siena (St Scholastica's College), Isaac (Sydney Secondary College - Blackwattle Bay).

As young adults, we are extremely concerned about what our excessive dependency on private vehicles means for our futures. Perhaps the most prominent concern relating to this is the growing problem of increased greenhouse gas emissions from our transport sector, which makes up almost a fifth of all pollution in Australia. A 2018 article published by *The Guardian* found in a study that almost 87% of all Australian commuters travel to work by car. We want to strive towards achieving a safe, well-governed city of Sydney by focusing on increasing the efficiency and efficacy of alternative modes of transport in the CBD that addresses these key concerns.

Fewer cars lead to fewer accidents. Less time wasted on waiting for the red man to turn green means that pedestrians are prioritised and rewarded for making small sustainable choices that contribute significantly to solving much bigger problems. By reducing the number of cars on our roads, we decrease the amount of greenhouse emissions and work towards preserving our environment and paving the pathway for a more sustainable Sydney for our futures.

One practical measure which can be enforced to reduce car dependency is congestion pricing. Congestion pricing has already been implemented in numerous major cities - namely London, Stockholm, Singapore, and Milan. Congestion pricing works by disincentivising the need for private vehicles by charging cars per kilometre travelled in particularly traffic-dense areas, or through increased tolls. This would make the city centres more attractive to pedestrians and bike riders, and reduce journey time, especially for emergency vehicles. If we look to other parts of the globe, we can see these measures in effect. In London, the London Ambulance Service reported a tripling in survival rates from cardiac arrests, attributing this to better machines and also lower traffic congestion due to

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the introduction of the tax. By implementing such initiatives, we would be able to refocus our attention on putting the safety of pedestrians and bike-riders first in our city.

In addition we wish to achieve a safer, well-governed city by promoting equitable access to the city's streets by reassessing our transport priorities. Currently, the government's stance on climate change and road infrastructure; the construction of new highways and express tunnels show that achieving efficiency for private vehicles are clearly our roads' key priority - a short-term fix that only exacerbates a long-term problem. On our streets, traffic lights favour vehicles and pedestrians do not have sufficient time to cross the road, which incentivises private transport. Walking, a sustainable mode of transport that assists additionally in moving towards a healthier and happier population, is made to seem inefficient and unattractive.

We must actively promote more sustainable modes of transport like cycling, buses and trains through practical, real-world applications. To make cycling more appealing, we propose that we connect the city's bike paths to create an interconnected network of bike paths throughout the city. Reducing fares would greatly promote public transport use, especially when combined with congestion pricing for private transport. At the moment, public and private transport cost around the same amount in the long run, so if there were a gap in the prices, public transport would become a much more appealing option.

Phasing out cars by 2050 would be greatly beneficial to both our streets and the environment. Overall, reducing car dependency in Sydney would contribute significantly to a safe and well-governed city.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/sep/13/transport-emissions-continue-to-rise-as-australia-lags-behind-other-nations>

A sustainable city

The two ideas pitched by the students were:

Solar, Hydro and Wind Power

Encourage companies to install renewable energy generators on top of buildings.

- Improves company reputation.
- Helps them to adopt renewable energy sources.
- saves space, is cost effective.
- Improves the morale of employees and of course improves the environment as a whole.

Green Credit Program

An incentive program which encourages schools, universities and businesses to reduce waste expenditure by rewarding them with Green Credit when they meet certain waste reduction quota.

Green Credit is a special currency that gives participants access to sustainable products and services that will benefit their sustainability needs.



Solar, hydro and wind power presentation to the Lord Mayor



Team: Hayley (Sydney Girls High School), Angus and Ben (Marrickville High School), Enya and Luana (St Scholastica's College)

Converting the City of Sydney's energy to renewable energy would be a ground breaking change to our district, and sadly it's quite overdue. Renewable energy is created from naturally produced energy, such as solar and hydro energy, and hence why that is the focus of our initiative. Energy is fundamental basis of our society and, in light of climate change, it should be sustainable, unlike the finite and damaging nature of fossil fuels. This emphasis on climate emergency mobilisation will also urge wider Australia to declare a climate emergency.

Renewable Energy technology is obviously an important element to enhance sustainability, and reliance on clean energy. Fortunately, the technology for renewable energy is readily available, and advanced, so this is a plausible idea for Sydney. This is important because a large part of issues regarding being sustainable is the dedication required to achieve this standard.

Renewable energy makes sustainability available and easier, so if certain individuals aren't environmentally conscious or can't afford a sustainable lifestyle, this will no longer be able to stop our fight against climate change. Similar to the cost of solar panels, renewable energy will cost considerably less by 2050.

Extending this, it is cost effective in the long run, as renewable energy is understood by the environmental department of Sydney to be the most efficient way to reduce carbon emissions, and the greatest priority in creating positive action for climate change. We also think this would be a great opportunity for Sydney, as a tourist attraction, promoting our sustainability, or hopefully even carbon neutrality. Many headquarters of businesses are located in the CBD, and so the conversion to complete renewable energy in Sydney would cause a ripple effect in these companies Australia-wide. Hopefully it would further set a

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standard for other councils to also move towards renewable energy. To encourage large businesses and buildings in the district we would highlight the fact that renewable energy is cheaper than coal-fire energy. According to the climate council fossil fuel energy costs four times more than solar and wind energy.

We further want to encourage a policy for buildings and corporations to be transparent about how much they are contributing to environmental damage, and how sustainable they are. This creates a reputation of environmentally conscious corporations that encourages renewable energy. Demand from the public is also driving this change. Increasing public pressure would help to implement these changes. Ideally we would reintroduce the coal tax and establish a tax rebate for those who use renewable energy, and develop a policy for all buildings to use a minimum amount of renewable energy. However, it would be difficult and take a long time to pass through to federal government, and the sooner we can increase Australia's renewable energy usage the better!

A green city

The two ideas pitched by the students were:

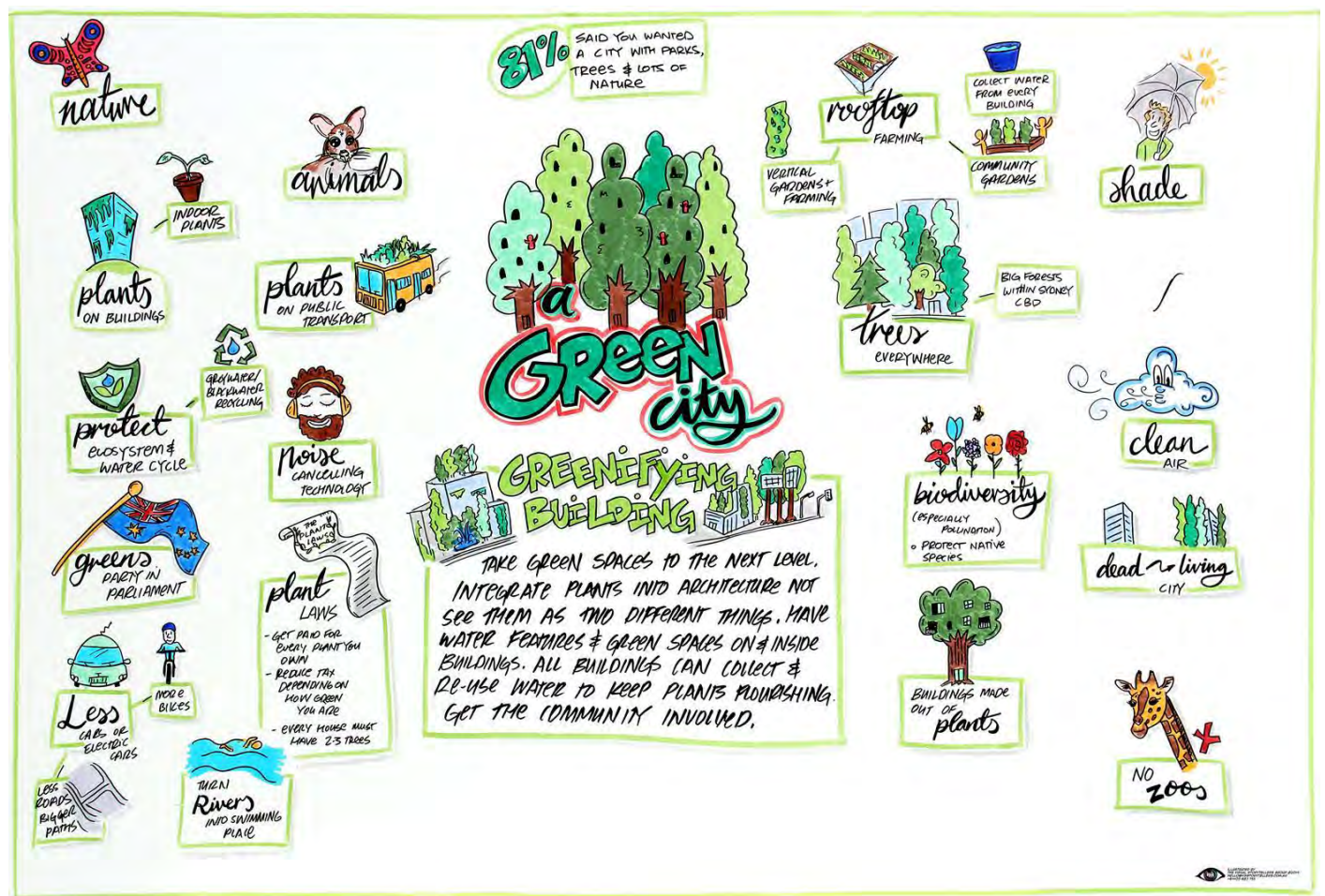
Greenifying Buildings

Take green spaces to the next level. Integrate plants into architecture not see them as two different things. Have water features and green spaces on and inside buildings. All building can collect and re-use water to keep plants flourishing. Get the community involved.

Plant Laws

Laws to help the environment and help people reconnect with nature:

- Get tax reduction for the amount of healthy plants you own.
- Minimum amount of trees per square km.
- Replace 80% of factories with green spaces.
- Community gardens throughout the CBD.



Greenifying buildings presentation to the Lord Mayor



Team: Alex and Lewis (Marrickville High School), Lilian and Ruby (St Scholastica's College)

Our vision for the future essentially revolves around a greener city. We began our ideation by visualizing our ideal green utopia, and found it to be a biodiverse, sustainable and balanced environment which could sustain good quality of life for our growing population.

We want to live in a city where architecture and the natural world are integrated rather than seen as two separate entities, and where the built environment serves to complement nature, rather than exterminate it. We see the future as not only belonging to us, but to the entire Sydney ecosystem, which means that we as humans have an obligation to deliver this utopia. We plan to revolutionise the way we build, using more plant-based building materials, utilizing up-and-coming manufacturing technologies like 3D printing, and recycling existing materials. Our strategy includes becoming smarter about where and how we work, encouraging businesses and individuals to integrate the outdoor environment into their day-to-day schedule, and fostering new attitudes towards our role in the natural world.

As well as these initiatives, we will also give Sydney residents free plants in order to accelerate the greenification of the city. This is a call to action for individuals, and helps them take the first step. We hope it will create a new norm of bringing the natural world into our everyday lives. With that idea in mind, we needed to find a way to motivate the community. Our solution was creating incentives for companies and individuals and allowing the community to own their future, rather than enforcing rules. We realized that in order for the wider community to get involved in initiatives like ours, they need to feel like they are being listened to, and can take pride in the direction the city is going in. In essence, we want to break down the barriers between our built habitat and the wider ecosystem, of which we are all a part.

A diverse city

The two ideas were:

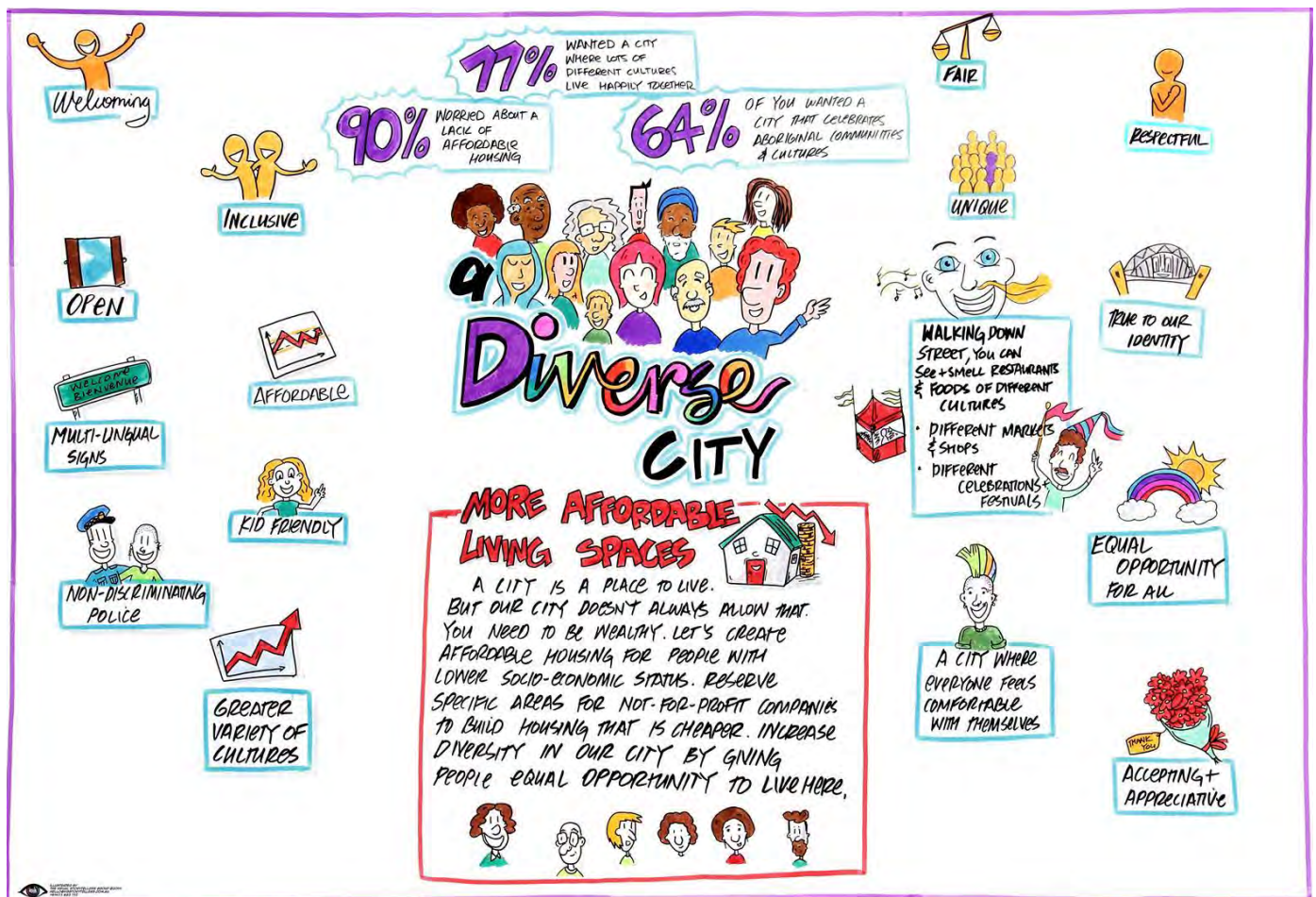
More Affordable Living Spaces

A city is a place to live. But our city doesn't always allow that. You need to be wealthy. Let's create affordable housing for people with lower socio-economic status. Reserve specific areas for not-for-profit companies to build housing that is cheaper. Increase diversity in our city by giving people equal opportunity to live here.

The Global City Festival

A celebration of all diverse cultural groups in the Sydney area. An opportunity for small diverse businesses, schools, families and community members of different backgrounds to come together and interact.

- Free entry, food music, performances and games.
- Opportunities for inter-cultural interaction: cooking classes, dance and language classes.
- Programs so schools engage with the festival.



More Affordable Living Spaces presentation to the Lord Mayor



Team: Clare, Hugo, Jaida and Nicholas (Alexandria Park High School)

Many would describe Sydney as a place filled with diversity. A place with individuals of different viewpoints, ethnicities, genders, abilities and more. However, within the inner city this is not the case. How can we ever get the most out of diversity, or a diverse city, if all citizens do not have equal and easy access to an adequate standard of living?

Housing is a vital aspect to achieving an adequate standard of living. Housing that meets every individuals' needs and requirements, as well as a suitable lifestyle, is a reality that not everyone is able to create. Instead it has just become a dream.

There are a number of factors that contribute to a person being able to afford living in the inner city. Someone's education level, socio-economic status, cultural background, place of birth, and abilities, can all have an impact on their capacity to live in the City of Sydney region.

With the city offering quite possibly the best resources, opportunities and lifestyle in our state, the need for affordable housing is growing. Allowing all people from all walks of life to live together, and create a truly diverse community, is a great achievement. One that we should all aim for.

And we believe that we have come up with the suitable solution.

If we reserve certain areas or plots of land for community housing companies, they can then create and rent this housing to individuals that may not otherwise be able to afford living in such an expensive area. They choose candidates through their application process, which includes information such as their income and their need for living in the area. This will actively diversify the community, by offering opportunities to those that may not be able to receive it. However, as of right now the waiting list is lengthy and only allows those who have no other option but to live in the area, which isolates those who could be in need.

Transforming redundant areas into liveable spaces such as abandoned housing and apartments is another step to creating affordable housing for all. These spaces are

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otherwise unused, and despite being capable of meeting living requirements, are wasting away. In a space of two decades Australia has added 2.1 million homes to its property portfolio. However, across Australia 11.2 percent of housing has been left vacant. All of these properties could very easily be transformed into affordable living spaces for low income earners, possibly through community housing companies.

Overall, the need for affordable housing in the inner city of Sydney region is extensive. And with Sydney's population growing by the second, there is little time to waste. Implementing these strategies and adapting them to each region's needs is a solution to the growing lack of diversity.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/census-snapshot-one-million-homes-left-empty-across-australia-20170717-gxcpiw.html>

<http://theconversation.com/taxing-empty-homes-a-step-towards-affordable-housing-but-much-more-can-be-done-80742>

A creative and innovative city

The two ideas were:

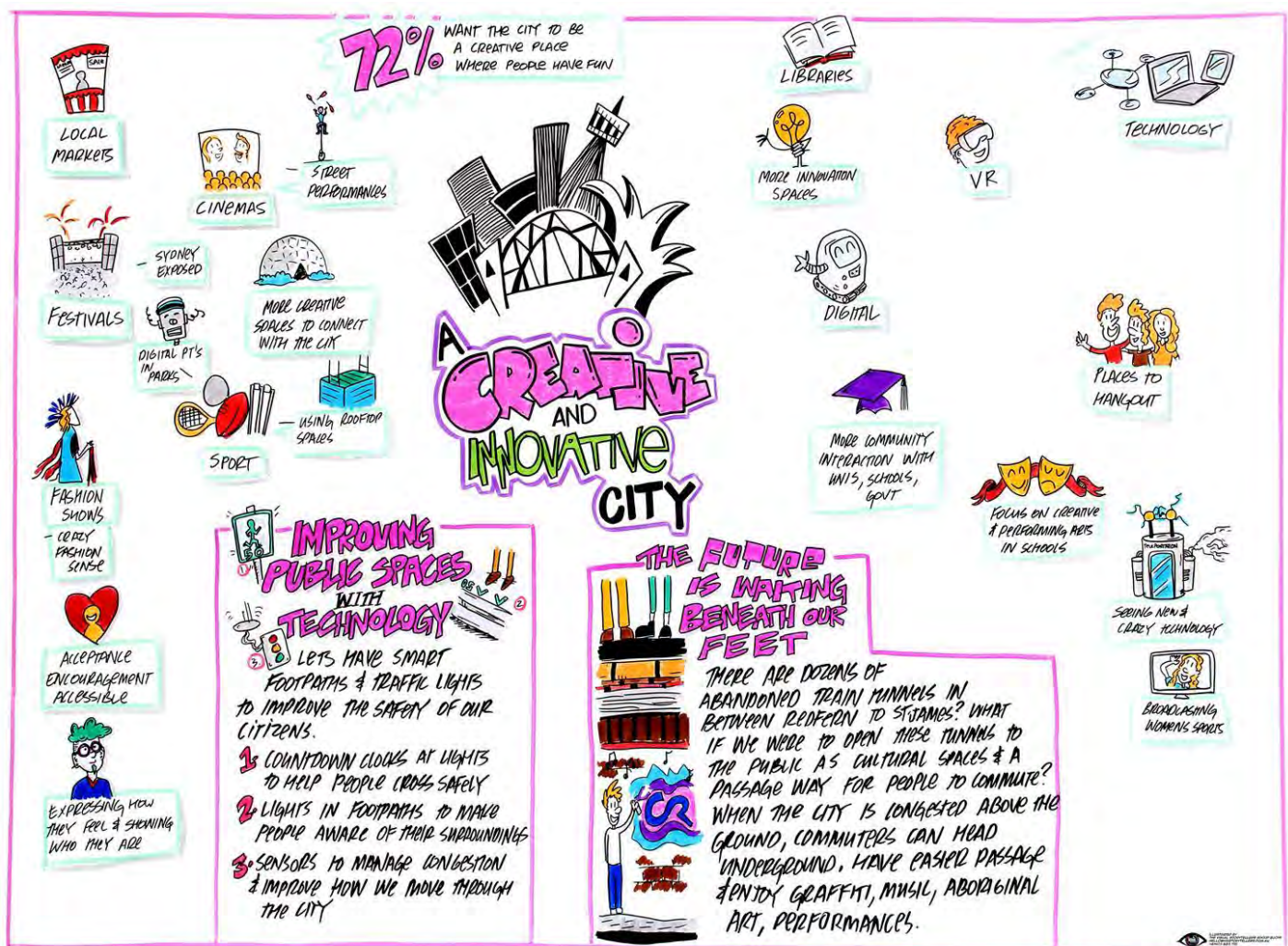
Improving Public Spaces with Technology

Let's have smart footpaths and traffic lights to improve the safety of our citizens. Countdown clocks at lights to help people cross safely. Lights in footpaths to make people aware of their surroundings. Sensors to manage congestion and improved how we move through the city.

The Future is Waiting Beneath Our Feet

There are dozens of abandoned train tunnels in between Redfern to St James. What if we were to open these tunnels to the public as cultural spaces and a passage way for people to commute? When the city is congested above the ground, commuters can head underground, have easier passage and enjoy graffiti, music, Aboriginal art and performances.

It was agreed that both ideas should be presented to the Lord Mayor.



Improving Public Spaces with Technology presentation to the Lord Mayor



Team: Chelsia and Hannah (Sydney Girls High School), Peter and Oscar (Sydney Secondary College-Blackwattle Bay)

Good evening. My name is Chelsia Kwon and I am joined here today by Hannah Chow. We are students from Sydney Girls High School, located in Surry Hills, and we have a great interest in the city and its workings. We'd like to present an idea that will make for a more creative and innovate City of Sydney. Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge my fellow partners Oscar and Peter from Sydney Secondary College, who unfortunately could not make it today, for their hard work and support throughout this project. I'd also like to thank the Lord Mayor of the City Of Sydney for allowing us to present at this distinguished event.

Improving Public Spaces within the City of Sydney through the implementation of advanced technology. This statement summarises our idea and we believe that our proposal would be beneficial for the City of Sydney. It is greatly targeted at improving the safety of the people who use the city, as well as helping to reduce congestion at traffic lights, in an attempt to optimise efficiency within our city. The focus of our idea has been placed greatly on the innovative aspect of technology, with our main focus on the technology within the city that controls traffic and pedestrian lights.

We've all experienced it: waiting at a pedestrian crossing for the lights to turn green only to cross without actually knowing how long we have to make it to the other side. This is a common sight within the city as many people tend to run and try to cross when the red lights are flashing, in order to make it to the other side. This act is not only extremely dangerous for pedestrians but also causes delays for the traffic. We'd like to combat this problem by implementing traffic signal countdown timers at all lights and pedestrian crossings within the City of Sydney. These types of lights have proved to be very useful in other areas of Sydney, such as Chatswood as well as the several which are scattered throughout the city. The City of Sydney is one of the most densely populated cities in Australia and these new generation lights have been shown to lead to improved driver

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response and greater awareness of one's surroundings and are recommended in areas with low vehicle speed and heavy pedestrian traffic.

The implementation of these lights would not be too costly or require a lot of time as there are already systems that have been created and can be used. When speaking to our expert from the City of Sydney we were informed that it was possible for these lights to be put in place as the advanced technology needed for these lights were available but still required some time for development and implementation. Traffic signal countdown timers would greatly reduce the risks of pedestrian and vehicle accidents and would greatly contribute to combating the growing congestion of traffic with the city.

We hope that our idea to make a more creative and innovate City of Sydney will be heard and acted upon. We hope to see countdown timers combined with traffic signals in the near future. Thank you.

The Future is Waiting Beneath Our Feet presentation to the Lord Mayor



Oisin, Ushante, Shane and Tom (Alexandria Park High School)

When we envisaged the future, the year 2050. We reviewed the possible issues that may arise. Overpopulation would be apparent, hence congestion in the CBD would have a drastic impact on tourism and also for the local's work efficiency, this would ultimately taint the overall image of the Sydney we all know and love.

To combat these concerns we looked for a creative and innovative solution. We propose a scheme to refurbish and renovate the decommissioned railway tunnels beneath the CBD - converting them into a web of passageways for commuting, creativity and the arts. Space from unused platforms can be repurposed as small venues for hire which could definitely be used for art installations or market stalls. Further supporting small businesses and

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upcoming artists. Music, performances and graffiti walls can also be incorporated into the tunnels to add to the atmosphere.

Sydney is predicted to have 7.5 million residents by 2050, that's a 60% increase from today. It's expected that 2 million people will walk the streets of the CBD.

Sydney makes approximately \$110 billion dollars through tourism with 91 million tourists every year exploring Sydney. These numbers are bound to keep growing with a greater percentage than ever.

Sydney is not known for its street art, Melbourne, on the other hand, has successfully incorporated murals and street exhibitions into their city's fabric which has become one of the main attractions for tourists in Melbourne. Sydney is a beautiful city but it's quite one-dimensional when it comes to its tourist attractions, these, of course, revolving around the Sydney harbour; the introduction of these tunnels would be extremely practical, both in the sense that they ease congestion whilst providing shelter from the elements eg. rain or heat. But they would also encourage and even provide people with a reason to come to Sydney's CBD.

The tunnels would also provide a blank canvas for people of all cultures to showcase their artworks and performances, till eventually, these tunnels become part of our city's identity.

The tunnels will provide job opportunities, opportunity to showcase your art to the public and a safe and fast way to commute through the city. What else could you ask for?

What will we do when the tunnel spaces have been exhausted by the rapid growth of humans in further future? The simple plan would be expanding the tunnels, which is a manageable process.

Drawing aesthetic and practical inspiration from places such as The Grounds, The Rocks, and New York's Highline, the tunnels will attract tourists and boost the city's personality. These tunnels will not only ease congestion but overall provide an immersive, practical and aesthetically appealing space.

SOURCES:

<http://www.visitsydneyaustralia.com.au/lost-tunnels.html>

<https://www.news.com.au/national/nsw-act/subterranean-sydney-eerie-underground-world-right-beneath-the-cbd/news-story/de0147c78c833003c918aba0413fcfa8>

Questions to the Lord Mayor

After the presentation young people were then able to ask Lord Mayor Clover Moore a direct question.



Question 1: Hi my name is Kevin and I'm from Marrickville High School. As we all know Sydney is a diverse community that seeks to showcase the array of cultures that exist within it. We believe a mural, an art installation that recognises the cultures and styles of all Australians would be of great value to the City of Sydney. As Lord Mayor how would you be able to support young Australians in this endeavour?

Lord Mayor: Well, what you'd have to do is come and talk to us. There are a range of views about public art and so we have a public art panel. So, when I'm asked to put a statue somewhere I can refer it to the public art panel and there are a range of people with arts backgrounds and they can give me advice about whether or not it is a good idea. So we have that sort of resource. We also have a terrific resource of people in our creative area. So we'd talk to you about who wanted to be involved, where it would be and develop it up with you. And before a decision was made about it, it would come to Council and you'd come and address the committee about it. We're always interested in new ideas and I think that that would be very welcome.

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Question 2: We know more and more people are migrating to Sydney and it is predicted to become a global city. What is the council and Sydney in general doing to adapt their housing and sense of belonging for the increasing diverse community and growing population? How are we sustaining it to be an affordable city to live in?

Lord Mayor: The issue of affordability in Sydney and in all our capital cities is a really important one. It's one of the most important after climate change. We have a policy at the City of being inclusive and welcoming everyone and our social policy is based on that. But if you can't afford to live here it is much harder for you to be part of all the wonderful things that are happening here because again transport is difficult. So transport is also up there as an important one.

The City is not responsible for housing, we wish we were, it's a state issue and a Federal issue and we lobby very hard to get the Federal and State Governments to develop policies on affordable housing. In fact I'm working with the other capital city Lord Mayors from around Australia on this very issue and I was in meetings in the NSW parliament today on this very question.

We know anyone on a Newstart allowance can't live in a capital city in Australia and that's a real indictment on us as a society and we would really like our State and Federal Governments who are responsible for housing to have affordable and social housing policies. In fact in recent years the amount of housing that is available for very low income people who need social housing has gone down. So an increase in the provision of affordable housing as the population grows, simply hasn't happened.

One of the very important projects for us is in Waterloo where there is a development that is proposed. It is not a very good development, to be quite kind about it, and we are putting forward to the State Government a proposal that would provide a much better environment – a mix of social housing and affordable housing with a smaller amount of market housing. So, that's one particular project that we are hoping to get Federal and State funding for.

What we do is that we pull all the levers we have. So, we make our sites available, we have a grants system for projects like youth at risk housing or housing for homeless older women. Those sorts of projects we can support, one-off special projects.

I was just at Parliament today with Alex Greenwich about the homelessness count we did recently, which showed that whilst numbers of people sleeping on the street has gone down very slightly the numbers of people in emergency and temporary accommodation has gone up. So what it means is that what is lacking is the supply of social and affordable housing. You can get accommodation for a night in emergency housing but what you need is long term housing.

So for all of you interested in 2050 this one should determine how you vote. What the policies are on housing, because unless people have safe and secure housing and then opportunities for education and adequate health and transport, it's hard to have a good lifestyle. So this is really important. We try and get as much social and affordable housing into our city but it is, at the end of the day, something the State Government has to do.



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Question 3: Based on our current plans we are trying to minimise our use of privately owned cars mainly because of their pollution and also because of safety. What are your ideas on what we should do about electric and hydrogen fuelled cars which have built in artificial intelligence to help our safety while they are good for our environment?

Lord Mayor: Well I think they're a good idea. In fact we have probably the most progressive fleet in any council in terms of our hybrids and our electric vehicles. The challenge has been again that we need the State Government to put in the charging points. When you go to other cities you see those charging points but it hasn't been a priority here. It is for us. We use hybrids and electric cars as part of our work but we need more charging points – but I think it's just a matter of time – it's going to happen. Going back to the first thing that you talked about which was a pedestrian-friendly city and a city that was walkable and that people could cycle and use public transport – that's the sort of city that we're working towards Sydney becoming.

Question 4: Judging by the ideas you have seen here today how possible is it to implement them in the future in Sydney?

Lord Mayor: We have been doing a number of things that you've talked about for a number of years and it is very encouraging for us to know that the things you think are important are the things that we're doing.

We're dramatically reducing our emissions. Why that's important is that 70-80% of emissions are in our cities, so even though our Federal or State Government might be letting us down on this, we know if we are working hard in our cities, we are making a serious contribution to addressing climate change.

The City of Sydney works with other global cities in an organisation that is called C40 and C40 is about cities working together to address climate change. So when Trump became president of the United States all those American cities came together and said 'We will keep doing our work.' I say the same in terms of our Federal leadership.



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Question 5: Good Evening Lord Mayor, my question is about how Sydney will maintain its communal rapport between all citizens. In the future it has been extrapolated that the future generation will become more dependent on technology and therefore will spend less time outdoors and more time indoors. Therefore decreasing that sense of community between people. What is the City of Sydney planning on doing to maintain that strong sense of communal bond between its citizens?

Lord Mayor: One of the important things we've done is created parks that are dog friendly. It's amazing how people go to the park with their dog, they get to know the name of the other dogs and that builds up a whole rapport. I even know of people who got married because they met in the park over their dogs.

The public facilities we build and the parks we create are available to everyone whether they are living in public housing or they are living in an expensive house. So by providing public libraries, public community facilities, beautiful public parks, walkable streets, there are ways for people to come together – that is if they look up from their device.

It is becoming very techno but we still need people, and we still need communication and we still need opportunities. So also we have a grants system here and when people apply for grants because they have a creative idea or an idea for an environmental project or for starting up some innovative or useful business they can apply to us through our grants system and that's another way of bringing people together.

We run festivals and we run events; we run Art and About, we run Luna New Year, we run New Years Eve, we run a whole range of things through the year – a whole calendar you can look at on our website. These are all about bringing people together.

We do have a really terrific and diverse community and I walk from home into the Town Hall as many days of the week as I can. I walk through Redfern, I walk through Surry Hills, I walk through Darlinghurst and then I walk through the city. And I see on that trip the wonderful diversity of our city and have many interesting conversations – I can tell you!

Conclusion

This report represents the culmination of a five month consultation process involving 202 students from 11 local high schools. The young people we have spoken to have been diverse: they have come from public and private schools, non-religious and religious schools with a wide range of culture backgrounds.

All the ideas these young people generated at the Youth Summit were included with other ideas submitted by the public and presented to the Citizens' Jury to assess, prioritise and make recommendations to the City to include in the plan.

While the young people involved in this process have been diverse, the messages we have heard them speak have been strongly aligned. They want an environmentally responsible, creatively innovative, equitable, diverse and affordable city. They want a city you can get around without the use of cars. They want a city where human development and the natural environment are in harmony.

They want a city which gives its young people opportunities to express themselves and be heard. They are a generation that is strongly aware of the importance and validity of their own ideas. Ideas they feel are often at odds with adult mainstream, particularly where climate change is concerned. Here, they emphasis the gravity of the environmental problems facing Sydney and the world and the need for urgent action:

A lot of people my age understand the consequences of climate change, human impacts, urban development, if not better than the average adult.

Our generation will be the one that leads humanity into a future where the earth's environment can co-exist properly with humans.

We've evolved more on climate change than the previous generation: meaning we will think more about it.

Our Future Sydney: Youth Summit

The City is committed to listening and acting on the insights of young people to help Sydney be the city they imagine it could be in 2050. This was summed up by the Lord Mayor in her official address to young people, teachers and parents at the Youth Presentation:

“It’s wonderful to have young people in our town hall. I would like to thank you, all of our students, and your teachers and I’m sure you have discussed all this with your parents too.

Have you said at the dinner table what you think it will be like in 2050? I’m sure you have.

When we started this work 2030 seemed a long way off but it’s not a long way off now, it’s only 12 years. So now we are looking further forward and it is fantastic hearing from you because it’s going to be your city, it’s going to be your world and we want to leave a responsible legacy for you.”



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We are future-orientated and care about our world in a way that is not illusionary or vague, but pressing and important.

