

# A guide to Council decision-making

# About the City of Sydney

Australia has 3 levels of government: federal, state and local councils.

The City of Sydney is a local council responsible for a range of facilities and services in our designated area. These services include rates, roads, waste and recycling services, cycleways, greening, health and safety services, business permits, community services, planning controls, building regulations, compliance (including rangers, animal management and parking), recreation (including parks and sport facilities) and culture (including libraries and festivals).

Council responsibilities in NSW are set out in the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *City of Sydney Act 1988*.

The City of Sydney's vision is set out in Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision and our priorities for its implementation are set out in our community strategic plan.

The City of Sydney Council is made up of 10 elected councillors and City of Sydney employees. We employ around 1,900 people across a diverse range of areas and occupations.

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## How Council makes decisions

At the City of Sydney, issues are discussed and considered at Council committee meetings. Members of the public can speak to items on the agenda at a public forum before the committee meeting. Then a formal decision is made at a Council meeting the following week. Council can also delegate certain decisions to the Lord Mayor or CEO.

We're committed to consulting our diverse communities on important decisions. We seek input from local communities when we develop projects, strategies and plans. Our communities rely on us to represent their collective interests and to facilitate their participation in decision making.

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## Activities and how you can participate

### Council elections

Councillors are elected by popular vote every 4 years.

If you're an eligible resident, owner, or occupier in the City of Sydney local area, enrol to vote in the local council election. Certain businesses may also be eligible.

[View more information on the next election and check your enrolment eligibility.](#)

### Council and committee meetings

Council and committee meetings are usually open to the public. Meeting agendas and minutes are published for everyone to read.

You can [watch meetings online](#).

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To find the meeting agendas and minutes of Council meetings, including information about decisions made, [visit our meetings website](#). View the [calendar of scheduled meetings](#).

### Contact a councillor

Anyone can contact councillors about any issue that is of interest or concern.

Find out more about [your elected representatives and their contact details](#).

All City of Sydney councillors represent the entire [local government area](#).

Public forums Public forums are held before Council committee meetings to give community members the opportunity to speak about items on the agenda.

Anyone can:

- speak at or attend a public forum
- make a written submission, which will be circulated to councillors
- watch a public forum live online (webcast).

View the [guidelines for speakers at meetings and forums](#).

Email [secretariat@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:secretariat@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au) or phone 02 9265 9333 before 12pm on the day of the public forum to register to speak.

If you would like to write a submission, email [secretariat@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:secretariat@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au).

### Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee

This committee is a technical review body that advises Council on traffic-related matters. The committee is run under Transport for NSW guidelines.

Meetings are usually open to the public. Anyone can speak to an item on the agenda if they register before the meeting.

View the [calendar of upcoming meetings, agendas and more information about the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee](#).

Phone the committee secretary on 02 9265 9648 if you would like to attend or register to speak at a meeting.

Transport for NSW guidelines for the meetings are included in the document [delegation to councils for the regulation of traffic](#).

### Community consultations

We use surveys, workshops, community meetings, drop-in sessions and online activities to find out what people think about issues and plans before making a final decision.

Check [our consultations webpage](#) to find out more about a project you are interested in and what consultation activities are planned.

If you see a 'Have your say' poster, scan the QR code on the poster with your phone to find the online survey.

### Notifications

We advertise projects on consultation to increase public awareness and to invite comments.

We notify people through letters, posters with QR codes, emails, newsletters and social media posts.

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Subscribe to the [Sydney Your Say email newsletter](#).

If you see a 'Have your say' poster, scan the QR code on the poster with your phone to find the online survey.

We display a laminated letter for development applications during the exhibition period at the site.

Follow the City of Sydney on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

### Comment on development proposals

Anyone can comment on or object to a development or outdoor dining proposal being assessed by the City of Sydney.

Development applications can be determined by Council employees under delegation, the Local Planning Panel, or the Central Sydney Planning Committee where the cost of works exceeds \$50 million.

Read the steps on [how to comment on or object to a development or outdoor dining application](#).

A weekly list of development applications currently open for public comment is available at our [customer service and neighbourhood service centres](#).

To get the list by email, [subscribe to the development application newsletter](#).

The NSW Planning Portal has a [helpful guide to the development application process](#).

### Strategic planning

Strategic planning involves preparing long-term strategic plans and setting development planning controls.

The City of Sydney's strategic planning direction is informed by regional and district policies, plans and guidelines, our [local strategic planning statement](#) and strategic objectives that are based on our community strategic plan, [Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision](#).

Visit our [consultations webpage](#) to have your say on policy and planning changes, proposed works and maintenance, and City of Sydney vision setting.

If the consultation is currently open for public comment, the project webpage will describe how you can give feedback.

Our [community engagement strategy](#) describes our public exhibition and notification processes for land use planning matters as required by the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000. It replaces our community participation plan.

### Advisory Panels

We receive high level independent advice and expertise from 7 advisory panels. Find out more about the:

- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel](#)
- [Design Advisory Panel](#)
- [Housing for All Advisory Panel](#)
- [Inclusion \(Disability\) Advisory Panel](#)
- [Multicultural Advisory Panel](#)

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- [Nightlife and Creative Industries Advisory Panel](#)
- [Public Art Advisory Panel](#)

### Updates

If you have contacted the City of Sydney about an issue that concerns you, we will try to update you about any decisions on that matter.

Include your email address when you give feedback on an open project. We will send you an email when that project is going to Council.

Council meeting minutes and decisions are published on the meetings website, where you can [read the minutes and decisions from past meetings](#).

Sydney Your Say is our community consultation hub where you can [find updates on project status and decisions made](#).

### Access support

If you are Deaf, hard of hearing or a person with complex communication needs, you can contact us through the [National Relay Service](#). You will need to provide our phone number 02 9265 9333.

If you need an interpreter, you can contact us through the [Translating and Interpreting Service](#) on 131 450. You will need to provide our phone number 02 9265 9333.

If you would like Auslan or language interpreting during a workshop, meeting, or drop-in session, you can contact us to request this service.

Email [sydneyyoursay@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sydneyyoursay@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au) or call 02 9265 9333.

