



SHOROC SUBMISSION

INQUIRY INTO SUSTAINABLE CITIES 2025

Introduction

SHOROC is the *Shore Regional Organisation of Councils* representing Mosman, Manly, Pittwater and Warringah situated on Sydney's Northern Beaches. Together these councils represent over 260,000 residents (2001 Census).

SHOROC provides the regional forum and framework for discussion, information sharing, resource sharing and joint service delivery.

Member Councils collaborate on issues of common interest and have identified regional priorities that present major challenges in terms of conservation of the region's natural and cultural heritage, infrastructure provision and maintenance, and economic and social development.

Sydney, as an international city, provides significant services beyond the needs of its resident population. This is particularly relevant to the SHOROC region (referred to as the Northern Beaches Peninsula), which attracts an increasing number of *domestic* and *international* visitors who come to enjoy the lifestyle, beaches, waterways, national parks and such Sydney icons as Manly and Taronga Zoo. Many visitors to the region are day-trippers, people who live outside the SHOROC region, but still live within the Sydney metropolitan area.

Increased demand for new infrastructure and improved services is putting renewed pressure on all levels of government to provide funding support.

Local government provides a strategic platform to advise State and Federal government agencies of the changing demographics and emerging needs of residents and visitors. Local government must also

manage the impact of planning decisions on their built and natural environments.

New planning processes should not be imposed upon local government, but should be progressed in true partnership, with appropriate resources available to Councils throughout the process, such as during the research phase when information gaps may be identified, and particularly during the implementation of any new plan or strategies.

Issues referred to in the *Sustainable Cities 2025 Discussion Paper* relating to the preservation of bushland, significant heritage and urban green zones, efficient use of energy, sustainable water and stormwater management, eco-efficiencies and urban planning are referred to in each member Council's Management Plan.

SHOROC councils are adopting a regional approach to evaluating our bushland, catchment and foreshore issues, and we are currently reviewing ESD principles tied to our State of the Environment Planning processes.

SHOROC works collaboratively towards achieving sustainable regional solutions in the areas of waste management and transport services.

Waste Management in the SHOROC Region

Waste Management is an ongoing challenge for the region and SHOROC continues to work collaboratively to ensure the continued life of its Kimbriki Waste and Recycling Centre at Terry Hills.

The Centre is a landfill and recycling depot jointly managed by all four SHOROC Councils. Recently, consideration has been given to a tender for the construction, operation, maintenance and management of an alternative waste technology at the site. There is also a proposal to restructure the management of Kimbriki with the formation of a company, controlled by the SHOROC Councils.

The four SHOROC Councils collect approximately 55,000 tonnes of putrescible household waste each year. This waste is currently disposed of at the Waste Services NSW facility at Belrose. However, the Belrose facility is due for closure in 2005 or shortly thereafter.

SHOROC is seeking an ecologically sustainable waste solution with the maximum environmental and economic benefit.

Transport in the SHOROC Region

Transport has been the subject of much public debate during the past year and a concern for the Northern Beaches Peninsula (NBP) for many years.

The NBP has major transport shortcomings in comparison to other parts of the Sydney region in so far as it is physically separated by topographical constraints and waterways, has no rail transport system and relies exclusively on three roads linking the Peninsula with the remainder of Sydney.

The three access points are at the Spit Bridge (Manly Road), Roseville Bridge (Warringah Road) and from St Ives (Mona Vale Road). The Spit and Roseville Bridge routes and to a lesser extent Mona Vale Road have a long history of capacity problems resulting in traffic delays and congestion, particularly during the peak periods.

Whilst traffic delays and congestion are increasingly common to many areas of Sydney, it should be noted that the Northern Beaches Peninsula remains uniquely disadvantaged as:

- Unlike the rest of Sydney which has relatively convenient access to mass rail transport and a number of road options to access that system, the nearest railway stations are located outside the NBP and can only be accessed by travelling through the constrained entry/exit points identified above.
- There is limited scope to increase the capacity of the three existing entry/exit points. The current RTA proposal to widen the Spit Bridge has been totally rejected by the SHOROC Councils as a band-aid approach that will not improve the flow of traffic in this area, but in fact increase travelling times (a finding of an independent Consultant's report on the development proposal).
- The public transport (bus) system, bus transport being the only mass transport system available in the region, also competes for space on the same constrained road system; and
- Without a corresponding increase in local jobs, any population growth will be car dependent.

In the face of increased use of private transport within and into the region, our challenge for the future is to provide an equitable transport solution that will sustain our region's growth without compromising the natural environment or the lifestyle values of our residents.

Our focus on transport is not only the major gateways and transport corridors. Local transport or community transport needs are also being considered, particularly in relation to 'access for all' and 'equity of services' for a range of user groups.

However, for these initiatives to succeed, we will require the full support and commitment from both the State and Federal Governments to work with us and fund the infrastructure needs of this region.

Social Planning in the SHOROC Region

Any discussion or planning for Sustainable Cities must have regard for the social needs of the region to protect and maintain the unique cultural and lifestyle values of our communities.

Local government leadership and participation has proven critical in the development of safe communities because of councils' role in planning, designing, constructing and maintaining places, spaces and facilities for public use.

Housing affordability is a growing concern for the SHOROC region. The cost of housing is forcing low and middle-income earners to live in other areas. While job opportunities exist for unskilled and semi-skilled workers, and lower-paying professions such as nursing and childcare services, there is not the available labour market in the region to match demand.

Research being undertaken by Manly and Warringah Councils as part of the Local Government Housing Initiatives Program (examining key housing issues for the area) will be seeking to clarify some of the relationships between labour shortages and the lack of affordable housing in the area.

While an effective transport system will enhance opportunities to attract people to employment within the region, it is unlikely that improved transport will solve all of our labour shortages, as people will only travel so far to work in low-paying professions.

Conclusion

SHOROC acknowledges the need for planning to improve the liveability of Sydney and to achieve sustainable outcomes. However, clearly articulated strategies to sustain Sydney into the future, should have regard for the metropolitan sub-regions of Sydney, including the Northern Beaches Peninsula (SHOROC region), and the greater Northern Sydney region.

Residents and visitors know no boundaries and therefore future planning should reflect the needs of the whole Sydney community providing integrated solutions, particularly for the equitable provision of infrastructure, such as transport, and appropriate management of our natural and built environment to reflect the emerging needs of residents.

Such a planning process will require an integrated approach which links Commonwealth, State and Local government planning processes. This will require a strong commitment from both the Federal and State Governments to work with Local Government and ensure that Councils are adequately resourced.

Councils have a range of legal responsibilities at the land development stage and, due to the increasing complexity of planning processes, are spending more time and resources in assessing development applications.

Local government partnering with the community and State Government is a structural reform initiative to be pursued even more vigorously in the future. Whereas the community partnership process is going from strength to strength in our region, the present gulf that exists between some NSW State instrumentalities and local government is a major impediment to more effective service delivery in the SHOROC region.

A Sustainable Cities Plan for Sydney should encourage a positive investment and development environment.

From a local government perspective we need guidance and certainty for the efficient, effective and coordinated provision of infrastructure and services to the community.

This submission has been prepared by the SHOROC Executive Officer on behalf of the SHOROC Management Committee, comprising the General Managers of Mosman, Manly, Pittwater and Warringah Councils.

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SHOROC Member Councils

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| Manly Council | www.manly.nsw.gov.au |
| Mosman Municipal Council | www.mosman.nsw.gov.au |
| Pittwater Council | www.pittwaterlga.com.au |
| Warringah Council | www.warringah.nsw.gov.au |