

**REPORT on the CBD MOBILITY FORUM
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PREPARED for the NSW DEPARTMENT
of PREMIER and CABINET**

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Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN) is funded by the NSW Government's Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care. Views expressed by PDCN Inc. are not necessarily endorsed by the NSW Government.

What is the Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN)?

PDCN is the peak body representing people with physical disabilities across New South Wales, representing approximately 700,000¹ residents. PDCN focuses on issues relevant to people with limited mobility, such as access to the built environment, transport and access to aids and equipment.

Membership of PDCN includes people with a range of mobility issues, from young children and their carers to aged people, who live in NSW from the Greater Sydney Metropolitan area to rural NSW who are from a wide range of socio-economic circumstances. PDCN has the background, knowledge and skills to advocate on all levels of Government regarding the needs of people with limited mobility.

An inclusive society is achieved when people with limited mobility are involved in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. Access to all modes of public transport is essential to facilitate community inclusion in all aspects of daily living. PDCN is able to represent the needs and interests of people with limited mobility.

Feedback relating to the Mobility Forum

The Physical Disability Council of NSW would like to thank the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet for providing the opportunity of providing feedback on the scope identified as part of the Mobility Forum:

- *Traffic Management – Proposals to better use existing road assets to improve mobility eg clearways, traffic light sequencing, street directional changes, etc*
- *Public Transport Management – Proposals to improve timeliness and better match existing supply to demand eg timetable changes, route changes, bus lane changes, development of alternative private services, etc*
- *Non-price Demand Management – Proposals to reduce pressure on the transport system at peak times using non-price measures eg more flexible work hours, telecommuting, managing truck traffic and delivery times, managing the supply of parking, etc*
- *Price-based Demand Management – Proposals to use pricing to manage demand for road and public transport services during the peak eg managing the price of parking, off-peak pricing on public transport, variable tolls on motorways.²*

The scope appears to focus entirely on the capacity of infrastructure and transport networks, while failing to recognise the importance of safe, convenient and connected pedestrian access within the central business district (CBD) for visitors, employees and residents.

1 ABS (2003-04). *Regional Population Growth, Australia and New Zealand, 2003-04*, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2008). *The health of Australians — an overview*, Canberra, p.36.

2 NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet – Mobility Forum (2008).

The most recent City of Sydney State of the Environment Plan indicates a steady increase, of 2.4% of 375,000 employees and a consistent number of 475,000 visitors accessing the CBD per year.³ As of September 2007, with a population of 6.91 million in NSW approximately, 700,000 residents of NSW have a physical disability. Many of this population of 700,00 need to access the Sydney CBD regularly or irregularly, and need safe, convenient and connected access to the built environment to prevent further personal injury.

In 2006, compared with other Council areas in metropolitan Sydney, the City of Sydney ranked second highest with 890 people being injured or killed in a motor crash.⁴ To reduce this number implementation of a Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP) is recommended as part of any improvements to ensure the following benefits to the community:

- *More appropriate pedestrian facilities, especially in busy areas;*
- *Improved continuous accessible paths of travel for people with mobility impairments, including older persons;*
- *Reduced injuries to pedestrians;*
- *Links with other transport services to achieve an integrated land use and transport facilities network;*
- *Integration into Council planning documents;*
- *Links with other Council transport plans targeting bike riders or people requiring accessible public transport;*
- *Planning for special events; and*
- *Pedestrian facilities which are consistent and appropriate throughout NSW.*

A clear and continuous accessible path of travel ensures access for the whole community by avoiding steps or other barriers (such as steep inclines, bollards, uneven or loose surfaces) from the main points of entry on the buildings allotment boundary or car park to and through the main door or doors used by the public.

Over the past decade in the City of Sydney, there has been a significant increase in residency. The currently figure of approximately 165,000 residents, include residents with physical disabilities. Any future infrastructure plan must ensure provision for a resident with a physical disability who needs accessible parking, and/or parking for support services to park if required.

In the case of an emergency in the Sydney CBD where evacuation is necessary, the Office of Emergency Services has identified the following safety sites:

1. Darling Harbour Safety Site;
2. Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Safety Site; and
3. Hyde, Cook and Phillip Parks Safety Site.

Any future infrastructure plan must ensure safe access for the whole community by providing access to the following train stations located in the CBD as a matter of urgency, so that rail transport can be used to escape if required:

³ City of Sydney, State of the Environment Plan (2007).

⁴ NSW Road Traffic Authority (2006). Road Traffic Crashes in NSW – Table 24.

- *Martin Place;*
- *Museum; and*
- *St James.*

To conclude with an ageing population, the high number of road crashes in the locality and lack of existing transport infrastructure, any future infrastructure works need to ensure access to the built environment for the whole community.