

NOTICE OF EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING PUBLIC SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA - A

An Extraordinary Council Meeting of City of Parramatta Council will be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER AT 5 PARRAMATTA SQUARE, PARRAMATTA on Monday, 25 September 2023 at 6:00PM.

Gail Connolly
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**CITY OF
PARRAMATTA**



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After the conclusion of the Council Meeting, and if time permits, Councillors will be provided an opportunity to ask questions of staff.

7. MINUTE OF THE LORD MAYOR

ITEM NUMBER	7.1
SUBJECT	End of Lord Mayoral Term Report
REFERENCE	F2022/03176 - D09138973
REPORT OF	Lord Mayor Councillor Sameer Pandey

CSP THEME: Thriving

WORKSHOP/BRIEFING DATE: Nil

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Lord Mayor Minute is to thank the Chamber for its dedication and leadership, and the community for their support during my time as Lord Mayor and note some of the key achievements and milestones of Council during this period.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) That Council note I thank the Chamber, the community, Council staff, and my family for their support during my term as Lord Mayor; and
- (b) That the Chamber note the significant achievements and milestones of Council during this period, some of which are outlined in this Minute.

BACKGROUND

- 1. I have been honoured to serve as Lord Mayor of the City of Parramatta since my election on 22 May 2023, and I would like to thank my colleagues for placing their confidence in me.
- 2. I am immensely proud to have played a part in the ongoing transformation of our City, particularly in a time where we experienced incredible investment and delivered community infrastructure that has been in planning stages for years. Strengthening Parramatta's brand globally as the diverse heart of greater Sydney and a destination for visitors, workers and students has been a key achievement during my time as Lord Mayor.
- 3. Firstly, I would like to thank the people of the City of Parramatta. Our City is filled with ambitious, tenacious, and compassionate people, and it has been my pleasure to serve as their Lord Mayor.
- 4. I also thank Council's tremendous staff, who have supported me through this time, and who continue to work hard to deliver exceptional services, programs, and projects for the people of Parramatta.
- 5. Council's hard-working staff continue to do an extraordinary job delivering Council's services, leveraging the growth of our City for the benefit of our communities. Many of Council's projects have been nominated for or won international and national awards over the past four months, a testament to the dedication and skill of our teams.

6. A special thank you to the CEO, Executive Team and the staff of the Lord Mayor and Councillor Support office, for their advice, professionalism, and support throughout this time.
7. To the Deputy Lord Mayor and my fellow Councillors, thank you all for your commitment to our City and its people. We have had tough decisions to make this year in this Chamber, and we have not always seen eye to eye, but we have always served with the community's best interests at heart, and I thank you for that.
8. Finally, I would like to thank my family, my wife Nimi, our children, and my parents, for their encouragement and support, not just in my time as Lord Mayor but throughout all my time as a Councillor. Without their backing, I would not have had the opportunity to serve as a Councillor or Lord Mayor and for this I am grateful.
9. It is also my pleasure to note some of the key achievements and milestones marked by Council during my time as Lord Mayor. I've sought to achieve five key goals during my term as Lord Mayor:
 - i) Promoting Parramatta as a Global City
 - ii) Listening through Engagement and Collaboration
 - iii) Building World-Class Infrastructure
 - iv) Celebrating Arts, Culture, Sports, Recreation, Environment, History and Heritage
 - v) Advocating for our City of Parramatta.

i) Promoting Parramatta as a Global City

My first day on the job was an opportunity to showcase our City to a global audience, as we welcomed the Prime Minister of India, the world's largest democracy, the Hon. Narendra Modi Ji and our Prime Minister the Hon Anthony Albanese to our City. Both Prime Ministers' addresses mentioned the City of Parramatta, highlighting our role in strengthening people to people links between India and Australia.

Prime Ministers Modi and Albanese unveiled a plaque to mark the gateway to Little India precinct in Harris Park. We continue to work with the Member for Parramatta Dr Andrew Charlton MP on plans to improve the streetscape and enhance the amenity of Little India to truly put it on the map as a unique destination. These achievements are the result of many years of hard work by Council which we are now seeing bear fruit.

It's great to see Parramatta where it belongs on the itinerary of world leaders. We are the heart of Greater Sydney and it's time that we realise our potential on the global stage. We are clearly not a second city. We do not live in the shadow of other cities. I have used my time as Lord Mayor to champion Parramatta as the true centre and heart of global Sydney, and there is much more to do, but we are making considerable progress.

I recently recommended a Tourism Strategy to promote Parramatta as a global destination of choice for visitors. I look forward to reading the CEO's report on preparing this strategy.

Council also supported my Minute calling for a Vivid Parramatta program, which will start to address the imbalance in funding festivals and events across Greater Sydney. Council also agreed to advocate to the NSW Government to help restore the balance between funding provided for destination marketing in the Sydney CBD and Western Sydney. Between 2015–2022, 354 events were supported in Eastern Sydney, compared with only 137 in Western Sydney. Addressing this imbalance will be an important focus for Council as we truly come into our own as a global city with a unique story to tell.

ii) Listening through Engagement and Collaboration

During my time as Lord Mayor I prioritised listening to our community through engagement and collaboration, essential for putting people at the forefront of our decision making.

I've hosted a series of 'Meet the Lord Mayor' morning and afternoon teas with over 300 people from local groups representing primary and high schools, community services, faiths and religions, arts and culture, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Some of the common themes we heard were the need for accessible, fit for purpose community spaces, completing public transport links, activities and spaces for youth, funding, rising cost of living challenges and greater genuine engagement and community consultation efforts.

It was wonderful to host a forum of former Lord Mayors, learn from their collective wisdom and hear how their legacies shaped Parramatta as we know it today. I've also welcomed participants in City of Parramatta's inaugural Your Place, Your Voice! workshops across our local wards.

I get out and about in our local communities, doing street walks and meeting business owners, shoppers and community members as they go about their daily lives. I've loved meeting with local businesses in our Church Street and Eat Street areas, Wigram Street in Harris Park, Carlingford Court, Parramatta Farmers Markets and also launching new restaurants and retail outlets as they start business in our LGA. Parramatta is very much open for business!

Council has also supported a range of local community charity initiatives including Cancer Council's Australia's Biggest Morning Tea and Daffodil Day, Children's Medical Research Institute for Jeans for Genes Day, and homelessness support services such as Parramatta Mission, St Vincent de Paul, Uniting Youth2Home, Men2Home and Women2Home and Jesuit Refugee Service.

Seeing the work of our community groups, charities and selfless volunteers has truly been a highlight of my time so far. I thank our volunteers, staff and community members so much for all the tireless work they do at this time where so many in our community are struggling to make ends meet.

I had a terrific time meeting the successful recipients of the 2023 Parramatta ClubGRANTS program. 46 community organisations shared in over \$380,000 in funding for this round, supported by our local Clubs. I also enjoyed joining in Pitch for Good Parramatta, an innovative project providing support to four local social enterprise organisations, include Addventagious, Upcycled Tech, The Freedom Hub and CONFIT.

iii) **Building World-Class Infrastructure**

Parramatta promises a great lifestyle, but we know there is much to do to ensure this promise holds true. Council continues to advocate for the world class social transport and cultural infrastructure our community deserves. Promoting wellness and livability is a cornerstone of our collective vision for a vibrant and thriving community. According to our research, for every dollar invested in parks and sportsgrounds, we achieve \$10 of social value over a year.

We just celebrated Parramatta's biggest pool party with the opening of the \$88.6 million Parramatta Aquatic Centre (PAC). With capacity for more than a million annual visitors, 2,000 plus learn to swim places, and a range of accessible health and recreational facilities, this world-class, sustainable health and wellness centre is the training ground of our next generation of Olympians. This is the culmination of many years of hard work by Council and staff, and I congratulate and thank all involved for an amazing achievement.

I'm so proud of PHIVE, our community hub and civic heart, for placing as a finalist for Public Library of the Year, awarded by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). The Parramatta Town Hall has nearly been restored to its former glory, showcasing our history and heritage of our City of Parramatta. Well done to everyone involved in bringing these iconic landmarks to where they stand today.

Council continues to collaborate with all levels of government to deliver community infrastructure to support our City's growth. The NSW Government recently announced \$10.6 million in funding for our new Civic Link, which will connect the Parramatta CBD to the Parramatta River. We opened The Green at Parramatta North and broke ground at George Kendall Riverside Park, Ermington in conjunction with the NSW Government. Council delivered a new district playground at Arthur Phillip Park in Northmead which has been embraced by the local community. These meeting places enable people from all walks of life to come together, build friendships, and share in the joy of physical activity.

iv) **Celebrating Arts, Culture, Sports, Recreation, Environment, History & Heritage**

My vision is to see Parramatta become a place where people don't just survive in the current cost of living crisis, but thrive through the range of opportunities our City offers locals and visitors alike. We have wonderful, unique arts, culture, sports, recreation, environment, history and heritage groups, events and facilities that Council seeks to assist and partner with to deliver world class experiences.

I championed a Lord Mayor Minute for Council to develop an 'Arts and Cultural Precinct' in our CBD, to make sure we get maximum benefit from public and private investment in Powerhouse Parramatta and a revamped Riverside Theatres. This will be a major drawcard for visitors who want to see our unique arts and culture practices, as well as our world class heritage assets.

The City of Parramatta also received international recognition for its night-time economy, gaining 'Purple Flag' accreditation in May. Purple Flag accreditation means

that our city's CBD meets international standards of excellence in vibrancy, diversity and safety at night. Parramatta's CBD was the first location in Western Sydney to earn the Purple Flag and only the second in Australia. This is a huge step in the right direction for Parramatta's CBD's expanding night-time economy.

Our Riverside Theatres has been recognised as Performing Arts Centre of the Year at the prestigious PAC Australia Impact Awards, shaking off the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by breaking 35-year box office and attendance records for a single season in 2023.

The City of Parramatta is committed to our First Nations people, to listening to stories and lived experiences, and we are taking action to improve the lives of those who are rooted in this place. Over my term, I've commemorated National Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and Burramatta NAIDOC Day as part of Council's Warami Festival. I also tabled a Lord Mayor Minute for Council to support the Voice To Parliament and promote open, respectful and constructive dialogue in the lead up to the referendum, recognising the diversity of views on the Voice within our community.

Our Parramatta Artists' Studios' First Nations Engagement Framework was also awarded the Local Government NSW Leo Kelly OAM Arts & Culture Award for Delivery of a Strategic Cultural Plan. We also officially opened Reko Rennie's 'Where Eels Lie Down', an iconic public artwork in Parramatta Square that pays homage to the eel's significance in our City's First Nations culture, history and identity. In recognition of the importance of public art in shaping the narrative of our city and attracting visitors, I tabled a Lord Mayor Minute in September to develop a 'Public Art Strategy' for our city that will cement our reputation as a cultural destination.

v) Continuing to advocate for our City of Parramatta

Council continued to advocate for improved infrastructure and transport services for our City, including major infrastructure projects Sydney Metro West and Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2. With the Light Rail Stage 1 nearing completion, we have advocated heavily to the NSW Government to lock in funding for Stage 2 and commit to a delivery timeframe. Council has also been vocal in advocating for additional stations and the acceleration of Metro West. We continue to advocate for the renewal of the Camellia Precinct as a key jobs, housing, and transport hub to support the rapid growth of the Parramatta region.

Advocating for our City as a 'Smart City' has also been a priority for my term. Council endorsed a Lord Mayor Minute promoting Parramatta as a smart city throughout a series of events and programs during 'Smart September.'

Council also recently endorsed an advocacy position, advanced through a Lord Mayor Minute, asking the NSW Government to ring-fence the funding earmarked for the Willow Grove house rebuild towards the Riverside Theatre redevelopment, and other heritage projects in Parramatta. The decision not to go ahead with the Willow Grove rebuild is an opportunity for the NSW Government to work with Council and our community to ensure Parramatta's economic transformation is supported with adequate infrastructure and a commitment to our unique story and place.

Council took a major step forward by endorsing draft Strategies for Economic Development, Smart City & Innovation, Social Sustainability and Environmental Sustainability as part of our 'Future Parramatta' campaign. These strategies build on the long-term vision established by our Community Strategic Plan 2018- 2038 for

Parramatta to become, "Sydney's Central City: sustainable, liveable and productive – inspired by our communities", and have been developed through extensive consultation with our community and stakeholders. A draft First Nations Strategy is also on public exhibition. Council staff are to be congratulated for the terrific work in pulling these strategies together. These dynamic strategies are set to make our city smarter, greener, connected, and more prosperous than ever.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION FOR COUNCIL

1. There are no new financial implications for Council as a result of this Lord Mayor Minute.

Lord Mayor Councillor Sameer Pandey

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no attachments for this report.

REFERENCE MATERIAL