

6. OUR CITY ENVIRONMENT CENTRE PROJECT

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Corporate Plan Output: City Solutions	

The purpose of this report is to advise the Council of a proposed investigative trip to Sydney by the Chairman of the Environment Committee in the company of the project manager, Rae Finlay, and project architect, John Vial, for the Our City project to view the Sydney City Council's *City Exhibition Space* and meet with the staff involved in establishing the complex.

The *City Exhibition Space*, in the former Victorian Customhouse building in Circular Quay, is a similar concept to that envisaged for the Our City project and is the first of its kind in Australasia. It has been created to profile an evolving Sydney in response to increasing interest in urban planning issues. The *City Exhibition Space* promotes greater awareness of how Sydney's future is planned. The changing programme includes multimedia displays, architectural models, detailed information on city developments and public lecture and video programme.

The *Sydney City Exhibition Space* is closely aligned with the Our City project and its aims and methodology, therefore it would be of great benefit to visit the exhibition space and speak with staff involved in its inception and eventual outcome as a complete entity.

The team will also be visiting the Hyde Park Barracks where an interpretation centre has been established to tell the history of the building and the social history of early immigration. The reason for visiting this is to view the methods of display - both audio visual, interactive and static and to meet with the staff and the design team involved in the project. This, like the Christchurch Our City project, is in a heritage building, the former barracks itself, and has combined not only the history of the barracks but the history of the building and its conservation. It is an outstanding venture which has won awards so is an important destination.

A meeting will also be arranged with the staff of the new Sydney Museum. This museum was specifically designed to tell the social history of Sydney and features an area that branded as *The City's - Past Present and Future* which is linked to the Sydney Historic Houses Trust and outlines its aims and policies for the advocacy and preservation of historic Sydney homes. One of the major features of the Sydney Museum is its didactic purpose especially designed for school students and children to learn about their City. Meeting with staff, and in particular the guides, will be a most valuable experience in relation to planning the format of the future programmes for Our City.

The trip is planned for Friday 4 May 2001 returning Sunday 6 May 2001. This early date is essential as planning is now underway for the Our City project and all concepts are to be completed by June 2001 to allow for the consent process and opening of the complex 1 September 2001.

Recommendation: That the Chairman of the Environment Committee, Councillor Anna Crighton be authorised to visit Sydney for the purposes outlined in the report above.