

Sustainable Cities 2011 - New South Wales

Recipient: City of Kogarah **Pop:** approx. 60 000

Location: 14kms south of Sydney

Category: Community Action & Partnerships

Highlights:

The vision of the City of KOGARAH recognises the responsibility of all members of their society to achieve a positive, safe and sustainable future and to preserve it for current and future generations. Although Council is committed to achieving this vision, it would not be possible without the efforts and support of numerous partners. These include its community, including councillors, residents, schools and businesses, staff, government authorities and others such as academics, experts, NGOs and international organisations.

Community partnership projects Council has undertaken include:

- Council collaborates with the local Chinese community to celebrate Chinese New Year.
- KOGARAH Central Business District Task Force was established to ensure a coordinated approach by all the major stakeholders in the future planning of the KOGARAH Town Centre.
- Carss Park Community Gardens were established in response to overwhelming resident interest in a local garden. The garden is tended by a group of keen and enthusiastic gardeners who aim to promote sustainable gardening within the municipality.
- The Fighting Heart Disease in KOGARAH Strategy to reduce the behavioural risk factors associated with heart disease in the community, in partnership with The Heart Foundation.
- 'Say No to Transfats' Program is delivered to numerous food businesses to ban transfats within the City. Educational material from Council and the Heart Foundation is also disseminated.
- Chinese Friendship Group was established to provide an avenue for Chinese members of the community to learn conversational English and to review the suitability of Chinese language materials.
- Council has partnered with the Jubilee Stadium Steering Committee to deliver a number of upgrades and facilities within KOGARAH's iconic Jubilee Stadium.

Integral to the achievement of the city's vision and goals is facilitating community involvement through effective two-way communication between residents and Council. Examples of this strong communication include:

- Council's Community Consultation Policy underpins how Council consults with its residents.
- Extensive community involvement was undertaken in the development of *Bright Future, Better Lifestyle: Kogarah 2020*, also known as the Community Strategic Plan. It was the culmination of extensive community consultation, research and analysis.
- From the development of the Community Strategic Plan, a Community Reference Group was established. This group of residents or ratepayers, covering all demographics, established to continue to assist Council with its future planning and decision making.
- Extensive internal and external community consultation was undertaken in the development of Council's Environmental Sustainability Delivery (ESD) Plan.

Category: 'Dame Phyllis Frost' Litter Prevention

Highlights:

Through the Community Strategic Plan, KOGARAH's residents have communicated their vision for a 'clean' City. This not only refers to the reduction in litter and rubbish across the City, but also to well planned trees, well placed street furniture and educational information to encourage the community to play their role.

Examples of Council's key actions, projects and initiatives undertaken for litter management, reduction and education include:

- Street litter bins and cigarette butt bins have been installed in the streets of KOGARAH and are maintained twice daily in and around the shopping precincts of the KOGARAH municipality.
- To prevent litter from entering KOGARAH's waterways Stormwater Quality Improvement Devices (SQID) have been installed in and around KOGARAH's tributaries.



- Council's Illegal Dumping and Litter Integrated Plan reports on projects implemented annually.
- The Georges River Riverkeeper program addresses illegal dumping and proper disposal of waste items along the foreshore in KOGARAH's bays and waterways.
- Council has participated in supporting the State Government's litter prevention campaigns. It advertises reduction of litter on public transport with large billboards and posters on railway stations and on buses.
- Council conducts cigarette butt blitzes where staff hand out butt bins to smokers during KAB week.
- 'No tossers at our School' - KOGARAH implemented the 'Don't be a tosser' campaign to discourage littering in Council's high schools. Litter education material used in the project included bumper stickers, posters, cigarette bin stickers and banners. Litter audits were conducted and each high school developed anti-litter commercials. Schools were encouraged to display 'Don't be a tosser' posters on bins in school playgrounds.
- The Catchment Crusader Program has been operating at KOGARAH City Council for over six years. It is an integrated environmental education program that enables primary school students to become custodians of the environment. Issues addressed include the sustainable management of catchments.
- Council has leash free/pet friendly parks where bins and dog litter dispensers and bags are provided. Signs are provided informing dog owners of their responsibilities such as appropriate disposal and behaviour.
- Cigarette butts pollution prevention programs include individual butt bins and drain traps.
- KOGARAH has a Graffiti Management Plan and provides free graffiti removal kits to residents and businesses that have experienced graffiti vandalism to homes or businesses.
- Council uses stickers and tape to identify illegally dumped material as well as letters and postcards to inform residents that investigations into dumping are being carried out.

Category: Resource Recovery & Waste Management

Highlights:

KOGARAH City Council has had a long history in waste management and resource recovery. Council has been at the forefront in conserving resources, appropriately disposing of non-recyclables and the effective delivery of waste education featuring the waste hierarchy and encouraging a close loop cycle.

Council's waste management and resource recovery initiatives include:

- Council's current waste diversion from landfill rate is approx 52%.
- Council provides a twice a year clean up collection for bulky goods and includes a drop off for e-waste.
- Council partners with NSW Railcorp and 'MX Newspaper' to provide paper recycling bins at railway stations.
- Chemical collections are run annually and attract over 1 200 participants. Over the past 6 years, Council has diverted over 40 tonne of chemicals from landfill annually, 23 tonnes of paint and 3.5 tonnes of batteries.
- Council has also run electronic waste collections with over 80 tonnes diverted from landfill.
- Waste management practices are incorporated into Council events. An 'Envirobank Reverse Vending Machine' has been trialed at a number of events. This initiative allows participants to exchange recyclable bottles and cans with a voucher or useful environmental item to encourage recycling.
- Council's depot recycles asphalt profiling material removed from local roads during resurfacing works. The material is stored and reused as a base and sub-base material for road and kerb and gutter construction.
- Council's depot converts all suitable green waste material into mulch and used on gardens within its parks.

To support Council's sustainable waste management strategies, education is delivered by the following:

- Council's St George Recycling and Disposal Guide is a directory which contains drop-off and contact details for local recycling companies.
- Council produces recycling brochure stickers for bin lids and recycling magnets. These have also been reviewed by Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) groups.
- KOGARAH City Council offers the Keep Australia Beautiful (KAB) Waste Watchers and Wonderful World of Organics programs to all primary schools at no cost.
- Waste and recycling talks/workshops to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.
- Provision of waste reduction equipment and tools at cost to residents.

Category: Environmental Innovation & Protection

Highlights:

KOGARAH City Council addresses local environmental sustainability issues through partnerships with its community, staff, neighbouring councils, industries and other organisations. Key projects and initiatives include:

- Council's Environmental Sustainability Delivery (ESD) plan aims to bring together environmental aspirations, initiatives and actions for the City of KOGARAH.
- To ensure sustainable urban development, Council collaborates with green building associations, universities, green architects and planners to develop its Development Control Plans, suburb Master plans, Residential Guides and regular review of its Local Environmental Plan.
- Council partners with a variety of organisations to deliver sustainable transportation within KOGARAH including NSW Transport Authorities, Bicycle NSW, City Rail and buses and St George Bicycle Users Group.
- Council depends on its staff and contractors to deliver its environmental goals. Internal initiatives include new staff sustainability inductions, sustainable procurement, annual Green Champions Award, new ideas on Council's intranet and celebration of environmental days internally.
- KOGARAH City Council provides environmental grants every two years through the Mayor's Green Grants. The grants support projects for individuals, community groups and schools within KOGARAH. Funds are available to local businesses on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Projects implemented include the installation of sustainable gardens, rainwater tanks, electronic newsletters, stormwater improvement projects and multi-cultural educational programs.

KOGARAH's community is proud of its natural environment and it is highly valued, as seen from consultations with the community for the *Bright Future, Better Lifestyle: KOGARAH 2020*. Key features include the Georges River, green corridors, as well as foreshore improvements. Given the importance of local natural assets and society's dependence on biodiversity, Council places its natural environment as its highest priority and strives to protect and enhance its ecological processes.

Category: Water Conservation

Highlights:

Amongst the innovative water conservation initiatives Council has undertaken include:

- KOGARAH City Council partnered with Sydney Water and the UTS Institute of Sustainable Futures to become Sydney's first council to adopt Total Water Cycle Management principles into its Sustainability Management Plan.
- The Carlton Industrial Sustainable Water Program is a KOGARAH's Council and NSW Environmental Trust initiative to foster sustainable management of water resources with local businesses and the community. Businesses are audited each year using an innovative environmental audit checklist, developed internally. As a result of audits several positive transformations have taken place including water efficient taps and toilets, the installation of rainwater tanks, onsite water treatment and recycling of waste water and the improvement of general business operations to reduce pollution and environmental impact.
- Jubilee Stadium Rainwater Tank and Irrigation System, home of the St Georges Dragons NRL team, has recently undergone major renovations to improve public facilities and water management.
- A Water Management Policy was developed to address sustainable water cycle management issues and promote Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles within the municipality.
- KOGARAH's Smart Irrigation Project is an initiative to promote sustainable, smart and water wise irrigation.
- The Irrigation and Landscape Efficiency program is a partnership offered by Sydney Water to councils to achieve sustainable water savings, improve playing surfaces and protect waterways.
- KOGARAH City Council's participation in the *Every Drop Counts* business program has enabled Council to establish formal water management systems and undertake water efficient practices.
- Council regularly collaborates with universities and academics to advance research in sustainable water use.

- Schools Rainwater Tank project assists primary and secondary schools to install rainwater tanks to reduce potable water use in toilet flushing and irrigating school gardens. Schools underwent a water audit to assess suitability and potential benefits that could be achieved.
- KOGARAH's Town Square Water Reuse project involves stormwater reuse and rainwater harvesting at the high profile development.

Category: Energy Innovation

Highlights:

KOGARAH City Council has always had a commitment to sustainable energy management and has long recognised that climate change is a significant global challenge. Council has partnered with a number of stakeholders to deliver innovative and pioneering initiatives. Amongst the sustainable energy management projects implemented include:

- KOGARAH's Town Square Development was the result of partnerships with a number of stakeholders that focuses on energy innovation. Partners include the state and federal government - Australian Greenhouse Office, academics - University of New South Wales, SolArch and industry - developers, architects and builders.
- KOGARAH City Council's Solar Depot project was undertaken in partnership with the solar industry and state government. Solar modules were installed reducing approx 40% of the depot's annual energy use.
- Council undertook audits of its top ten highest consuming energy sites and identified opportunities to reduce energy within these sites. The data from the audits were compiled, along with the recommendations to develop Council's Energy Savings Action Plan.
- Council also undertook an audit of all its open space and outdoor lighting which identified carbon emission reductions and possible energy savings of \$25 000. The audit was extensive and covered around 700 lamps/globes within the municipality.
- Council is part of the SSROC Streetlighting Improvement Program action group. Through this group, Council is working with Energy Australia on an extensive trial of a new luminaires that uses energy efficient lamps.
- Council has adopted an Energy Efficiency Policy since 2005 which aims to help reduce electricity use.
- Council supports and funds the *Watch our Watts* program, delivered in partnership with Observatory Hills Environmental School.
- Most of Council's events are offset with accredited carbon offset programs. Events are usually publicised and information provided on the offset project to ensure transparency in the offset process.

Category: Heritage & Culture

Highlights:

'KOGARAH' is of Aboriginal origin and means 'Place of Reeds'. It takes its name from the reeds in the inlets along Georges River and at the head of KOGARAH Bay. The City of KOGARAH acknowledges the original Aboriginal inhabitants, the Cadigal people who were part of the Dharuk language group and lived in the area.

The *Bright Future Better Lifestyle Kogarah 2020* vision recognises KOGARAH's indigenous heritage and culture. KOGARAH City Council is committed to establishing a process of reconciliation in partnership with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents. Council celebrates NAIDOC week every year with story time sessions reading dreamtime stories, indigenous bushwalks and high school debates.

The City of KOGARAH has a multicultural and diverse community, with more than a third of the population born overseas. With a wide diversity of cultural, religious and language groups, Council recognises the need for education and engagement which is inclusive and targeted to diverse community networks. The key to Council's approach is respect and balance with most educational workshops and training including English and non-English sessions.

Built heritage is an important part of the built environment and provides the community with a sense of identity, pride and history. It makes an important contribution to the quality of the City. Council aims to enhance the beauty, appeal and amenity of its local area and promote its heritage. It looks to entrust future generations with a liveable and sustainable City, one rich with culture and character.

Numerous key projects and initiatives have been implemented to preserve the City's local heritage for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

Category: Young Legends

Highlights:

KOGARAH City Council recognises that young people's needs and expectations differ to other groups in the community. Council has developed a Youth Engagement Strategy. A key component of the development of the Engagement Strategy for the Community Strategic Plan was the development of a number of projects to encourage the engagement of its younger population to get involved and have a say. Their input was invaluable as they represent the future and their views were important for Council to consider in the development of the community's long term strategic plan.

A number of targeted programs and initiatives for youth include:

- School holiday activities for children from 9 to 14 aimed to combine art and recycling in a series of workshops across the libraries.
- The Catchment Crusader program has been operating for over six years. It is an integrated environmental education program that enables primary school students to become custodians of the environment and have an increased sense of responsibility for their local environment.
- Council's Youth Officer works with all local high schools to ensure they are involved in a range of community engagement activities around issues including community safety, social planning, youth recreational needs, mental health awareness, etc.

Council appreciates that in order to develop leaders who will become KOGARAH's future custodians, the younger generation require nurturing, encouragement and support within their community. Examples of youth leadership projects and initiatives which Council has implemented include:

- Council's Youth Advisory Committee has the opportunity to influence decisions made by Council that affect young people. It is voluntary and the committee meets once a month to discuss issues, express their views and contribute to the development of the local community. The committee helps to organise and participates in youth activities and events, contribute to important community development projects affecting young people and inform Council on issues that are important to young people.