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PLAN TO GIVE CITY NEW LIFE

Preparation of a master plan to revitalise the city area of Sydney is well under way.

A firm of consultants said in a preliminary report to the Sydney City Council the plan would be ready by May.

The report said the master plan would aim to:

- Improve accessibility into and within the city;
- Maintain and restore the environmental quality of the city; and
- Maintain and stimulate

economic growth and investment.

"Imaginative and positive control of development is essential if the city is to cope with today's pressures for change and renewal," the consultants said.

"There could be a need in the city for an outdoor amphitheatre or music hall for concerts

and lunch-time shows."

Suitable sites existed in the Botanic Gardens, using the natural contour of the valley.

"During the 162 years of its existence, the City of Sydney has developed with little overall planning guidance," the report said.

Resident population in the city had fallen from 100,372 in 1947 to 68,600

in 1969.

The report said:

- Loss of buildings of historical and architectural interest was reducing interest in the city.
 - Haphazard short-term development ventures resulted in deterioration of the physical environment.
 - Travelling conditions were forcing city workers to other locations.
 - Private re-development was worsening the environment.
 - Lack of clear strategy on parking had created wholesale conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.
 - Extreme congestion was forcing retail trade to the suburbs.
 - Inflexibility of the present rail system may limit development in some parts of the central business district.
- The report criticised past city councils for spending available revenue "on the titivation of existing (facilities) rather than on new works."

The strategic plan was initiated by Ald. Andrew Briger, vice-chairman of the council's development committee.