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Livelier heart, 24-hrs a day, urged for Sydney

A live city, 24 hours a day, was recommended to the City Council yesterday as one of the major aims for the development of Sydney.

REPORT ON CITY DEVELOPMENT

The other aims suggested are improving transport to and within the city, making the city a more pleasant place to work and live and stimulating economic growth without detriment to the other objectives.

The proposals were contained in the first report on the City of Sydney Strategic Plan, which is being prepared as a guide to the council in making future decisions about the growth of the city.

The 50-page report, tabled in the city development committee yesterday, focuses on the role, problems and deficiencies of the central business district.

Later progress reports

will deal with other parts of the council's area.

The full report is expected to be completed by May.

The report was commissioned late last year at the instigation of the vice-chairman of the City Development Committee, Alderman Andrew Briger.

It is being prepared by Urban Systems Corporation Pty Ltd in association with McConnell, Smith and Johnson, and W. D. Scott and Co Pty Ltd.

The deficiencies named in yesterday's report included lack of planning for building redevelopment, pedestrian and traffic movement, and parking; failure to take full advantage of

the unique harbourside setting; inefficient bus operations; an inflexible rail system; badly located, poorly designed and limited community facilities; and a lack of long-term planning in council works.

It said retail trade in the city was facing difficulty because of the development of easily accessible stores outside the city.

"The shopping public can be significantly affected by psychological conditions. Fares, parking, crowds, heat, inconvenience, declining accessibility become major issues in the mind of the shopper," it says.

"Unfortunately, the city

is loaded with psychological disabilities in attracting shoppers."

Unlike other major cities in the world Sydney shops had not benefited from a large tourist trade. Although the city was endowed with extensive open spaces, these were not distributed where they were most needed.

"Adequate funds do not appear to be available for the purchase of additional open space in areas of intense development, so that the public depends upon private development providing small scale plazas for lunch time and recreational activity," it said.

The report said oppor-

tunities for "diversity of activity within the city (were) lost because economics of redevelopment within the framework of existing regulations favour small-plot, single-use, redevelopment to high-plot ratios."

This resulted in a trend towards office functions at the expense of such uses as theatres, hotels, and retail stores.

It also meant the loss of older buildings and functions that were structurally and economically sound.

This in turn led to a loss of character and colour in the urban environment.

The report said that investigations currently in progress included transport studies embracing heliport facilities, tourist coach terminals, and better organisation of more conventional transport.

Other investigations are parking policy, vehicle circulation, and development control codes.

Parking policies and planning for pedestrian movement at Wynyard, Town Hall and St James were among the most urgent matters calling for action by council.

The loss of the Stadium had created an immediate need for a similar facility in a new location.

An outdoor amphitheatre or music bowl for concerts and lunch-time shows also was suggested.

The report says it would be "most desirable" to make provision for a future station between Town Hall and Chalmers Street, when the Eastern Suburbs railway is completed.

The Haymarket area had poor access to the rail system, which would become critical in the future.

A station at Woolloomooloo was also suggested as being justified if the area in the immediate vicinity was fully developed.

Expansion of water transport was another solution offered to ease the transport problem.