

# City wants full planning control

## We can rule own destiny: Lord Mayor

SYDNEY City Council wants to get total planning control for the city from the State Government and help to remove its \$17.5 million debt.

The Lord Mayor, Alderman N. Shehadie, said yesterday council officers were preparing an example of legislation, called the Sydney Environment Act, which would create a special planning region controlled by the council.

This is the first move of its type in New South Wales. Similar legislation is being prepared for Adelaide.

Ald. Shehadie said: "I have a large case to prove to the authorities that we can control our own destinies."

"I will be pushing for greater power for the council and for control which rightly should be ours."

"At present, 66 per cent of people in the city are non-rate payers and this means that the upkeep of central Sydney, which belongs to Australia and not just New South Wales, is being carried on the blistered shoulders of 15,000 people."

### RED TAPE

To make a decision the council at present has to operate through up to 14 State Government bodies such as the Department of Main Roads, the Water Board, the State Planning Authority and the Maritime Services Board.

It also has to deal with small committees such as the parking advisory committee to make some decisions.

Ald Shehadie said the council had a \$17.5 million debt and would be asking the State and Federal Governments for relief.

The council is exhibiting 20 projects for the next 12 months and has asked the Loan Council for the total costs of \$7 million.

Ald Shehadie said the council has proved that

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it had the expertise to cater for Sydney's unique problem. But planning was being held back by the State Government's Sydney outline plan, issued in 1971, which had been started 24 years ago and was obsolete.

The council wants powers to control its own planning in conjunction with State Government advisory reports such as the Sydney transport study.

To do this the State Government could pass legislation like the proposed Sydney Environment Act, or establish the area as a separate region when the State Planning and Environment Commission is formed later this year.

Powers the council wants to take over include collecting parking fines, issuing taxi licences, fixing shopping hours and determining road closures.

It also wants the State Government to reduce land tax for the area to attract residential building and to give it some share of the \$1000 million debt relief money granted by the Federal Government at the 1970 premiers' conference.

### EXTRA

Ald Shehadie said he would meet State ministers and the Federal Minister for Urban and Regional Development, Mr Uren, on the planning issue and extra funds.

He said: "The Federal Government holds the purse strings and we want them in with us."

The chairman of the council's development committee, Alderman A. Briger, said yesterday there could be a major confrontation with State Government bodies unless the powers were granted.

He said: "The central city is like a police State because they have the power to prevent road closures and while we have more planning expertise than them, we are helpless."

Ald Shehadie said one of his main concerns was the \$200,000-a-year the council paid for parking meter attendants to the State Government. Although the council paid for their time, it did not receive a large share of the millions of dollars collected through meters and fines.