



31 March 2017

Greater Sydney Commission
PO Box 257
Parramatta NSW 2124

Dear Greater Sydney Commission

RE: Outdoor Media Association: Submission 'Towards Our Greater Sydney 2056'

The Outdoor Media Association (OMA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on 'Towards Our Greater Sydney 2056'.

The OMA is the peak national industry body representing 90% of Australia's Out of Home (OOH) media display and media production companies, as well as some media display asset owners.

OMA media display members advertise third party¹ products on both digital and static signs across a variety of OOH formats and locations; airports, bicycle stations, billboards, buses, bus stations, cafes, doctors' surgeries, free-standing advertisement panels, medical centres, office buildings and lifts, pedestrian bridges, railway stations, shopping centres, taxis, trams, universities and street furniture (bus/tram shelters, public toilets, telephone booths and kiosks).

Part of the role of the OMA is to develop constructive relationships with state and local governments and to contribute to the process of developing policies for outdoor advertising that are fair and equitable to the industry, governments and the community.

Background

OOH is one of the fastest-growing media sectors in the world, as other media platforms decline. In 2015, the OOH industry experienced unprecedented growth, posting a 17% overall increase on net revenue, from \$579.3 million in 2014 to \$677.8 million in 2015.

The OOH industry uses its profits to reinvest in the communities it is a part of. In Australia, the OOH industry provided some 17,664 public items of infrastructure to the community, including pedestrian bridges, bus shelters, kiosks, phones, park benches and bicycles. The total replacement value for this infrastructure sat at \$352.0 million in December 2014.²

¹ Advertising in which the advertisement is not associated with the premises. That is, where a land or asset owner allows an Outdoor media display company to display an advertisement for a third party company or product.

² 2016 Deloitte Access Economics, *Out-of-Home Adds Value: Out-of-Home Advertising in the Australian economy*

The OOH industry also plays an important role in supporting the arts, sports and charitable organisations and is widely used by government bodies to advertise community messages such as road safety messages and health awareness campaigns. In 2015, the industry donated advertising space valued at more than \$34 million to more than 160 charitable and community campaigns.

Support for Towards Our Greater Sydney 2056

The OMA recognises that the purpose of the consultation and submission process is to promote conversation with stakeholders, experts and the community about the challenges facing Sydney within the strategic planning context, including future directions. The OMA takes great interest in the way cities will change in the coming years, and the ways in which the OOH industry will facilitate developments.

Cities, by their very nature, are shaped by a combination of public and private interests. As Australia's population becomes more urbanised, governments are acknowledging the benefits of partnering with industry to tackle big issues facing cities such as housing, congestion, sustainable development, pollution, public transport, safety and security. Indeed, the resounding message from the 2016 OMA Future Cities conferences in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney was that cities must collaborate to compete.³

The OOH industry can make a vital contribution to future challenges for cities, making them smarter and more capable of tackling some future challenges by:

- Enhancing the vibrancy of cities by creating dynamic and interesting urban spaces.
- Providing the community with technology 'hot-spots' and information tools to navigate the city.
- Continuing to provide community and transport infrastructure such as bus shelters, kiosks, bicycles etc
- Providing a revenue stream for governments through rent and taxes.
- Providing emergency and information channels for governments, and opportunities for charities to secure advertising space.

As one of the fastest growing media sectors, and with the industry's increasing use of interactive digital technologies, OOH has much to contribute to the future of Sydney as a Smart City through collaboration with the Greater Sydney Commission.

Key Themes of 'Towards Our Greater Sydney 2056': Productivity, Liveability, Sustainability

1. Productivity

Infrastructure contributes significantly to making our cities more productive, and OOH advertising has a history of extensive partnership with the NSW Government in building, funding and maintaining public transport infrastructure, as well as providing a

³ Tim Williams, Committee for Sydney, 28 April, Future Cities

revenue stream for governments. In 2015-2016, the NSW government reported close to \$48 million in revenue from OOH advertising on assets owned by Roads and Maritime Services and Sydney Trains.⁴ This ongoing funding source is reinvested into improving public transport services for the community.

2. Liveability

Urban Design Solutions

The OMA and its members are committed to providing urban design solutions that improve the liveability of cities. There are considerable future opportunities for governments to work together with OOH providers to achieve optimal, future-focussed urban design and utilities in Sydney.

Our media channel plays an important part in cities and the built environment, because a significant proportion of the urban population's engagement and interaction with cities occurs outdoors. OOH can enhance the way people experience their city streets: it can excite, entertain, inform, and stimulate businesses.

Infrastructure and Transport

The OMA believes that the use of technology will help cities tackle the challenge of improved liveability through better infrastructure and transport connections between people's homes and areas of employment, schools, shopping, services and recreational facilities. Outdoor advertisers are increasingly transitioning from being producers of poster advertising to providing utilities that improve the liveability of cities:

- Interactive mobile technology that helps people experience and navigate cities - e.g. wi-fi hubs for wayfinding.
- Street furniture that creates social urban spaces for the community – e.g. Singapore's Jurong bus stop, featuring extensive seating, a swing, a rack of children's and adult books, bicycle parking and a rooftop garden.
- Digital inventory utilising digital technology – e.g. signing featuring wi-fi phone charging stations, interactive journey-planning digital boards and screens that broadcast weather, news and local event information.
- Bike schemes which improve public mobility and fitness goals, and reduce congestion.
- Structures that are self-maintaining with technology built-in to ensure they are working, up-to-date, clean and safe.

The OOH can play an important role in providing utility for the Sydney of the future. We believe there is an opportunity for the Greater Sydney Commission to enter into a dialogue with the OOH industry to allow it to positively contribute to the operation of cities, while also providing an opportunity to increase the vibrancy of urban spaces. The hyper-connectivity of digital signage provides the community with a democratisation of

⁴ <http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/about/corporate-publications/annual-reports.html>;
<http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/annual-reports>

utility, offering equal access to this technology for all people, while giving cities the ability to do more with less.

As noted by Gary White, Chief Planner for NSW, “The really important thing that comes out of advertising is this notion of connectivity. You’re connecting, you’re adding colour, you’re adding space, you’re adding messaging to that place-making”.⁵

Social Capital

OOH is a valuable communication channel for governments who are regularly among Australia’s top ten OOH advertisers. OOH can also assist governments to invest in the social capital of communities by donating highly visible platforms for charity awareness raising, emergency messaging during times of natural disaster and missing persons’ alerts in collaboration with the Australian Federal Police.

3. Sustainability

Cities are changing at an unprecedented rate and the OMA believes that technology, and smart out-of-home, will help Sydney’s future be both sustainable and liveable. The OMA submits that the OOH industry can make an important contribution to the utility and sustainability of Sydney in the future, and that this can be reflected in planning policy and legislation.

Interconnected transportation options - particularly for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and people with disabilities – all contribute to a sustainable city, and OMA members have provided 17,664 pieces of public infrastructure nationwide, with a replacement value of \$352 million. These include bus shelters, bicycles and pedestrian bridges. In NSW alone, OMA members provide and maintain over 7000 items of public infrastructure (such as street furniture and bus shelters) to the value of \$90 million.

Melbourne and Brisbane’s city bike schemes counteract the trend towards the unsustainable lifestyle of automobile-dependent communities, which threatens human health and well-being. Disconnected communities reliant on cars create unhealthy sedentary lifestyles, contributing to depression, obesity and heart disease. Bike schemes and pedestrian bridges, both provided by out-of-home advertisers worldwide, contribute to city sustainability by encouraging people to take daily exercise, improving public mobility and fitness goals, and reducing congestion and carbon emissions.

In Europe, self-service bicycle schemes operate across 70 cities and are popular, attracting hundreds of thousands of long-term subscribers through affordable pricing, option to pay by credit card and link ups with other transport cards. The Out of Home industry’s funding of these programs through advertising revenue makes these schemes affordable and convenient for the community, improving quality of city life, optimising travel options and satisfying current environmental and public health targets.

Through collaboration with the OOH industry, the government will be capable of fulfilling all three of Sydney’s triple bottom line obligations – social, financial and environmental.

⁵ Gary White, 28 April, Future Cities

Conclusions

The OMA and its members propose to work closely with the Greater Sydney Commission to make Sydney a world Future City. We would welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss potential collaboration between the out-of-home industry and the Greater Sydney Commission.

Thank you for the time that you have taken to review this submission. Should you wish to further discuss any of the issues raised, please contact the OMA's General Manager, Tess Phillips on 02 9357 9900 or by email at tess.phillips@oma.org.au.

Yours sincerely



Tess Phillips
General Manager

