# Sydney: A Smart City Well on Its Way

Sydney is the capital of the Australian state of New South Wales, and the country's most populous city, with over 5 million residents. It is both a national and regional hub for finance, manufacturing, and tourism. Sydney has been designated an Alpha+ World City and is regularly cited as one of the world's most "livable" cities. Moreover, the IESE Cities in Motion Index ranks it 19 out of 174 cities globally, indicating that it is already a leading smart city. Sydney continues to invest in cultivating smart city initiatives, and in its most recent Smart City Awards recognized projects such as the Resilient Sydney Platform, which measures and reports on carbon emissions, energy, water, and waste in the city, and City on Wheels, which tracks wheelchair movement in the urban landscape to gather information on navigating an urban terrain.

Sydney is also known for being among the most expensive cities in the world, and somewhat behind in its preparedness for dealing with climate change. Indeed, in a recent study exploring smart city expectations, conducted by The Economist Intelligence Unit and sponsored by Nutanix, Sydney's citizens cited affordability of living as their first priority (41%), followed by environmental sustainability (31%), and efficiency and reliability of public services. Business executives also named affordability as a key priority (31%), but singled out cultivating Sydney's innovation environment (43%) and workforce quality (39%) as their top two concerns for smart city development.
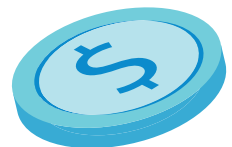
Citizen Priorities: Affordability, Sustainability, and Public Services

41%

Sydney's citizens consider affordability of living their number one priority (41%) for smart city initiatives.

38%

To meet this challenge, 38% believe that these initiatives should focus on improving the ability of energy and water utilities to vary pricing according to usage, while 37% consider encouraging the growth of low cost transportation options a top priority.
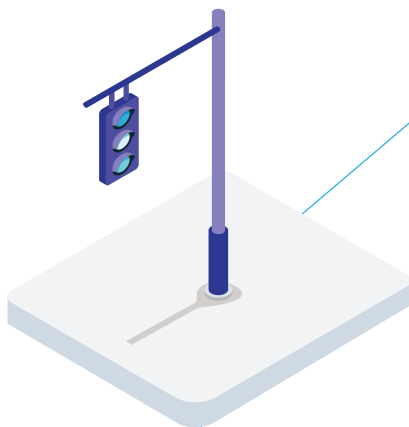
65%

The CITI index ranked Sydney 108 globally for mobility and transportation, which reflects the city's overwhelming reliance on cars as the main mode of urban transportation. The city reports that private cars account for 65% of all trips to work within greater Sydney.

34%

In order to improve Sydney's environmental sustainability, 34% believe that smart city projects should prioritize improving the efficiency of waste recovery (such as recycling). The same number (34%) want to focus on expanding the availability of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power.

30%

To improve the personal health and safety of Sydney's citizens, 30% of respondents said that smart city projects should prioritize reducing response time when threats to personal safety or health are reported, and 26% selected safeguarding against terrorism --both of these responses were in the top three of all cities surveyed.

1 in 4

1 in 4 named improving road safety as a top priority.

29%

Citizens also suggested that smart city projects can help improve employment opportunities in the city by expanding training in advanced technologies in higher education (29%), and by attracting large technology companies to establish operations in the city (28%).

63%

Although 59% of respondents believe that smart city initiatives could exacerbate existing social inequalities, 63% believe the benefits of these projects outweigh the loss of personal privacy.

81%

For example, 81% would be willing to share their personal data to reduce road and transportation congestion, and 75% would do the same to reduce energy costs by personalizing energy tariffs.

72%

72% agree that facial recognition to fight crime does more good than harm, and 78% agree that improving personal identification (including facial recognition) could help prevent and solve crime.

## Business Priorities: Innovation and Workforce Quality

43%

Sydney's business executives named improving the city's innovation environment as their top priority for smart city initiatives (43%).

37%

To do this, 37% cited increasing the use of conferences or hack-a-thons to develop technology-enabled solutions to urban challenges.

1 in 3

1 in 3 also selected facilitating greater research and development collaboration between universities and businesses. The same number believe supporting the growth of technology start-ups should be a priority to encourage more innovation in Sydney.

35%
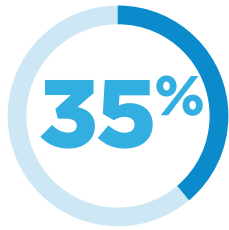
Business executives also hope that smart city projects can improve workforce quality. When asked about improving the availability of talent for their organizations, 35% said that smart city initiatives should prioritize encouraging the growth of digital platforms for on-demand work.

28%

28% named expanding consultation between educational institutions and businesses on skill requirements.

43%

Sydney's affordability was the third highest priority for business executives. To this end, 43% believed that smart city development should focus on improving the commercial planning capabilities of city authorities through better data collection and analysis.

39%

39% pointed to improving the ability of energy and water utilities to vary pricing according to usage or time of day.
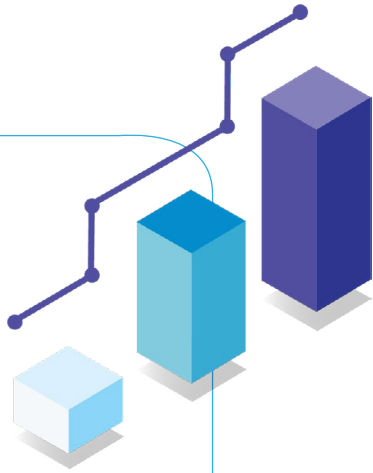
45%

When asked about what types of market opportunities they hope smart city initiatives will deliver, 45% of executives named developing new marketing strategies through the use of open-government data, a number considerably higher than the global average.

90%

A full 90% of executives consider the ability to access Sydney's open-government data vital to their organization, the second highest globally.
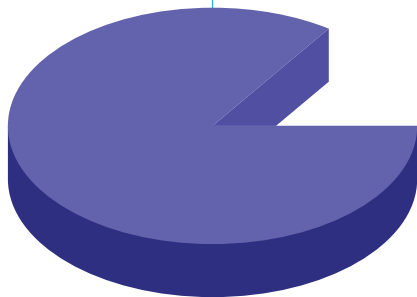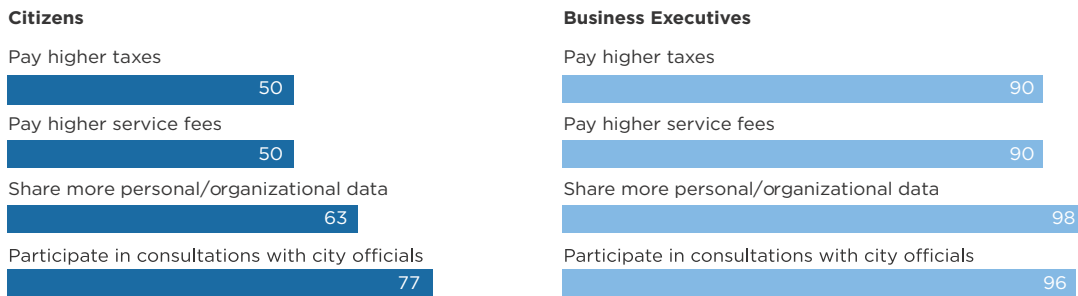
39%

39% also hope that smart city initiatives in the city will create market opportunities via partnerships with large technology companies.

Trade Offs: Business Executives and Citizens are Willing to Give to Get.

Sydney's citizens are more willing than most to give money, data, and time to get the benefits of smart city initiatives. However, Sydney's business executives are far more willing than most to incur costs to get the benefits of these projects--in fact, they are more willing to pay higher taxes and fees, and participate in consultations with city officials about smart city projects than any other city surveyed across all of these measures.

In exchange for benefits of smart city initiatives, are you or
your organization willing to . . .
(% of respondents)

Citizens

Pay higher taxes

| 50 |

Pay higher service fees

| 50 |

Share more personal/organizational data

| 63 |

Participate in consultations with city officials

| 77 |

Business Executives

Pay higher taxes

| 90 |

Pay higher service fees

| 90 |

Share more personal/organizational data

| 98 |

Participate in consultations with city officials

| 96 |

The enthusiastic support of these projects by business executives appears to stem from multiple sources. 98% believe that smart city initiatives make their city a more appealing place to do business. This optimism may itself derive from the strong communication between city officials and executives: 92% of executives agree that city officials have taken a proactive role in including the business community in the development of these projects--more than any other surveyed city. City outreach to these executives was well placed, given that 96% agree that innovations spearheaded by the private sector are essential to the success of smart city initiatives.

Key Takeaway: Sydney seems well positioned to cement its role as a leading smart city. The city is supporting a wide range of projects, and has made extensive outreach to its citizens and business executives. As a result, all key stakeholders are committed to advancing and taking full advantage of the growing number of smart city projects.