

Wednesday 15 May 2019

A bold vision for future global cities

In a first for Sydney, a leading international figure will take to the stage of Sydney Town Hall as a 3D projection to outline his vision for how citizens can design future cities.

Thanks to 3D technology, the Mayor of Seoul, Park Won Soon, will present his keynote address from Seoul at the City of Sydney's CityTalks: Big ideas transforming global cities on Thursday 23 May.

He will be joined by Henriette Vamberg, partner and managing director Gehl Copenhagen, and local guests the Honourable Jay Weatherill, former Premier of South Australia, and Steven Satour, co-chair of the City of Sydney's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel.

Lord Mayor Clover Moore, who will give the keynote welcome and take part in a panel discussion, said the talk will help inspire Sydney's future.

"From an elevated walkway, to the world's biggest lithium-ion battery project and the transformation of New York's Times Square into a pedestrian precinct, our speakers' ideas have helped reimagine cities around the world," the Lord Mayor said.

"Mayor Park Won Soon famously reclaimed a 1970s highway overpass and transformed it into a kilometre-long public 'skygarden' called Seoulo 7017, so I am looking forward to hearing about his approach to urban transformation," the Lord Mayor said.

"This is the first CityTalks event to take place as part of our consultation and research for our plan for Sydney in 2050. As Sydney sets new targets for 2050 and forms a bold vision for our own city's future, this is a wonderful opportunity to learn from the experience of these local and global leaders."

Affectionately dubbed 'the listening mayor', Mayor Park says citizens were at the heart of Seoul's transformation over the past 10 years.

"My focus has been on how we could implement citizen democracy in our administration," Mayor Park said.

"I concentrated on changing the focus from development and civic engineering to citizens and their quality of life. Citizens now actively engage in policymaking so we can come up with more relevant policies.

"I started as a civic activist, and have emphasised a 'local to local' and 'people to people' approach to exchange information among local governments, reducing trial and error and identify effective policies.

"That's also why we created the Seoul Urban Solutions Agency, so we can share urban solutions with cities to help create smart, liveable, environmentally and economically sustainable urban domains. So far we've distributed 72 policies to 54 cities in 32 countries."

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Former Premier of South Australia, The Hon. Jay Weatherill, says he hopes the talk will inspire others to take action on climate change.

“By launching the world’s biggest lithium-ion battery project, we created a more stable national electricity market, and a more cost effective way of providing that stability,” Mr Weatherill said.

“It also gave South Australia an international reputation for leadership in tackling climate change.

“This project showed that you should question orthodoxy, be prepared for a fight, and that you should never let a good crisis go to waste.

“My hope is that by sharing some of the processes that assisted us to be successful, we can encourage people to see climate change as an opportunity, as well as a threat.”

Henriette Vamberg, partner and managing director of Gehl Copenhagen, worked on the pedestrianisation of Times Square.

While in Sydney she will review the City’s 2007 Public Spaces Public Life Study prepared by Gehl which made the case for light rail and the pedestrianisation of George Street.

Ms Vamberg says Sydney faces new pressures and challenges as the number of people living, visiting and working in Sydney grows.

“I’m looking forward to sharing insights on creating a sustainable mobility culture that encourages walking and cycling through design and programming,” Ms Vamberg said.

“By listening to people from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds who can bring different aspects to the conversation, you discover new ways of having a positive impact on cities.

“Ultimately the goal is to strengthen amenities, do more on climate action and provide an inclusive city and changing city.”

CityTalks: Big Ideas transforming global cities
Thursday 23 May 2019, 6.30pm–8.30pm
Centennial Hall, Sydney Town Hall

The event is free but bookings are essential: [ticketmaster.com.au/event](https://www.ticketmaster.com.au/event)

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