



SIANZ 2024 NATURE POSITIVE CITIES SYMPOSIUM

Tuesday 26 March - Wednesday 27 March
Museum of Contemporary Art Australia | Sydney



Rob Stokes

KEYNOTE SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

Rob Stokes is an urbanist and recognised thought leader on sustainable urban development. Currently serving on the Australian Government Urban Policy Forum and as Chair of Faith Housing Australia, as well as Interim Chair of Net Zero Cities CRC and on the Advisory Board for the UNSW Cities Institute, Rob was Australia's first ever minister for Active Transport, and first ever Minister for Public Spaces, both with the NSW Government, where he introduced laws facilitating cycleways along disused rail corridors; modernised laws around pedal-assisted e-bikes; and created the Greater Sydney Parklands to integrate and expand urban parks. Rob also served as minister for Planning, Cities, Infrastructure, Transport, Education, Environment and Heritage in a political career spanning more than 15 years. Rob is a regular columnist on cities and planning and has written more than 20 articles in referred books and journals. A qualified lawyer, Rob has read sustainable urban development at Oxford and completed a PhD in planning law under a Commonwealth Scholarship.

ABSTRACT

Parks in a City, Or a City in a Park – new ways of thinking about nature in cities

In a wide-ranging address, Rob will reflect on a decade of policy development designed to shape cities more as organisms, and less as machines. Focussing on the experience of metropolitan planning in Sydney, Australia, Rob's address will discuss how governance reforms such as the Greater Sydney Commission; Western Sydney Parkland Authority; Place-making NSW and the Greater Sydney Parklands Agency; as well as instruments like "A Metropolis of Three Cities"; the Cumberland Plain Conversation Strategy; the Net Zero Cities Action Plan; and the Active Transport Strategy were part of a movement to promote strategic planning for sustainable urban development.