

Summary Recording of the City Life Roundtable held on March 20, 2007

7.30 – 10.00 am at the Parramatta Town Hall

Chaired by Dr Deborah Kuchler, Chairman of the Parramatta Economic Development Partnerships

Industry Representatives	Parramatta City Council Representatives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dennis Fitzgerald (DF), Parramatta Leagues 2. Judi Barnes (JB), Pacific International Suites 3. Adam Reid (AR), Parramatta Advertiser 4. Allan McKinnon (AMK), AFL NSW/ACT 5. George Georgkalis (GG), Inside Out Restaurant 6. Lin Henry (LH), Old Government House 7. Chris Levins (CL), Parramatta Park Trust 8. Robyn Bushell (RB), UWS 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Karen O'Donnell (KOD), Heritage Centre Manager 10. Andrew Overton (AO), 'Animating the City' Officer 11. Michelle Desailly (MD), 'Parramatta Stories' Officer 12. Mike Thomas (MT), Economic Outcomes manager 13. Michelle Macgregor-Owen (MMO), Business Development Manager 14. Richard Petkovic (RP), Project Officer 15. Serge Markov (SM), City Marketing Officer 16. Solaire Eggert (SE), Project Support Officer

Apologies – Joel Coronan/The Roxy, Richard Saliba/PJ Gallaghers, Tony/El-Phoenician, Melinda Madigan, Sydney Turf Club

Industry Trends

- Tourism/accommodation/recreational sectors have still got lots of capacity for growth
- There is an increasing emergence of new competitive product both inside Parramatta (new hotels, restaurants, sporting codes) and from outside centres (Homebush, Blacktown, Penrith, Norwest) that have offered opportunities for visitation/patronage levels
- Opportunities are also being missed by local operators and Council to capitalise on major events in and outside the LGA to draw people to the area at peak times
- There is little synchronisation between major 'city life' players, event schedules and complementary services/facilities
- Poor way-finding, lighting and distribution channels in and out of the city hamper tourist / visitor trade
- The lack of publicity targeted at youth and family-markets, the untapped Hills District and others - alerting potential visitors to the proximity and vibrancy of Parramatta is also seen as a wasted opportunity
- High attrition rates are observed in the restaurant trade which is adversely affected by the exit of large businesses and the apparent lack of residential populations inside the CBD

Challenges and Opportunities

- To develop a clear positioning statement and coordinated communications plan to market Parramatta as a destination
- To research and better understand visitor markets – Hills area, Penrith, Blacktown, Regional NSW, Interstate
- To centralise and calendar local events information to maximise the marketing thrust of local operators
- To engage major players such as the Sydney Turf Club, Sydney Olympic Park, Parramatta Speedway and co-promote local initiatives (eg The Golden Slipper Carnival, Symphony in the Park)
- To capitalise on secondary business opportunities generated by professional sports (rugby league, AFL, horseracing, water polo) and other major events (expos, music concerts, Easter shows, large AGMs) and pull the after-crowds into Parramatta
- To consolidate links with NSW Sports and the new strategic plan in an effort to harmonise programs
- To examine existing policies preventing illuminated signage and late trading hours in and around the city, to move away from the perception that Parramatta is 'old'/'sleepy'
- To further develop the evening economy and steer Parramatta towards a premier, safe, 24 hour city
- To address the perception that the city is not a safe place to visit/shop/eat/stay
- To creatively overcome the view that we are 'out West' e.g. Western Sydney, Westmead, University of Western Sydney – the word 'West' might be perpetuating a negative view.
- To consider improvements to the Parramatta Pool, mall area, construction sites and hoardings
- To support visitor sites, local tourism and linkages with a view to leveraging Parramatta's heritage assets and river setting by way of shuttle bus services, ferry routes, commentaries and wayfinding devices
- To lobby Sydney Ferries for greater frequency/reliability of service
- To further develop Parramatta's art and gallery market
- To investigate incentive schemes to attract big business to the area

