



Sustainable Sydney



Minutes

Meeting:	Darlinghurst Businesses Roundtable	
Date:	Friday 6 May, 2011	
Location:	Reception Room, Level 1, Sydney Town Hall	
Time:	12.00pm – 2:00pm	
Attendees:	Kim Woodbury , Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney (Meeting Chair)	Garry Harding , Director, City Operations, City of Sydney
	Jan Campbell , Business Precincts Manager, City of Sydney	Paul Lee-Maynard , President, Sydney Gay and Lesbian Business Association
	Syd Cassidy , Director, City Engagement, City of Sydney	Terry Lee-Williams , Manager Transport Strategy, City of Sydney
	Christopher Corradi , Area Planning Manager, City of Sydney	Michael Leyland , Acting Director City Property, City of Sydney
	Lesley Dimmick , Manager, Tap Gallery	Cr Shayne Mallard , Councillor, City of Sydney (Topic 3 – Topic 4)
	Cr Irene Doutney , Councillor, City of Sydney	Suzie Matthews , Manager Late Night Economy, City of Sydney
	Andrew Duckmanton , Co-Owner, Grandma Takes a Trip	Cr John McInerney , Councillor, City of Sydney (Topic 2 – Topic 4)
	Larry Galbraith , Policy Officer, Office of the Lord Mayor, City of Sydney	Sue Ritchie , Project Group Coordinator, Three Saints Square Project Group
	Lawrence Gibbons , President, 2010 Business Partnership	Roger Robertson , Licensee, The Oxford Hotel
	Julie Grimson , Manager, City Conversations, City of Sydney	Suzanne Toumbourou , Business Precinct Coordinator - Oxford Street Cultural Quarter, City of Sydney
Stephan Gyory , Owner, The Record Store	Cr Di Tornai , Councillor, City of Sydney	
CC / Apologies:	Lord Mayor Clover Moore MP , City of Sydney	Monica Barone , CEO, City of Sydney

Meeting notes

Introduction

Kim Woodbury welcomed all to the meeting and conveyed the apologies of Monica Barone, CEO who was absent due to illness.

On behalf of the 2010 Business Partnership (comprised of representatives from Darlinghurst and Surry Hills), Stephan Gyory thanked the Council for giving them the opportunity to explicitly outline the issues as they see them on Lower Oxford Street.

Lower Oxford Street, as defined by the 2010 Business Partnership, refers to the street as it runs from Whitlam Square at the South East corner of Hyde Park, up to Three Saints Square, at the intersection of Oxford, Victoria, South Dowling and Barcom Streets.

Stephan noted that the topics on today's agenda were distilled from a meeting held between Jan Campbell and the 2010 Business Partnership in late 2010. The four topics that the group will be addressing are interlinked.

Stephan advised that today the group wished to "talk through the issues... present solutions...and demand actions." He stated the intention of the group was to demonstrate that the City of Sydney has the responsibility, capacity and opportunity to manage and nurture the economies and unique identities of the City precincts; and offer solutions to the issues raised on the agenda.

Topic 1: Daytime economy

Outline of issues – Stephan Gyory (Speaking notes at Attachment A)

A "whole of day, whole of city" 24 hour economic strategy is required.

Lower Oxford Street is *the* gateway to Sydney's Inner East, which stretches from Surry Hills to Woolloomooloo and is the only natural flow point between the CBD and the Inner East.

The 2010 Business Partnership has the clear and worrying impression that the City's focus on Villages is secondary to its focus on the CBD; and they argue that without thriving vibrant areas radiating out of it, the CBD would not be a viable hub. Furthermore, the concept of purely local communities is not sustainable, as vibrant economies require visitors from outside as well.

There is lack of daytime trade because there is an imbalance in the business mix and vice versa. Safety issues flow on directly from this, because activation is the best form of safety. The decline of Lower Oxford Street could be considered to have begun with the removal of trams in 1959 and was "set in stone... granite, you might say, by the 2004 upgrade." This has resulted in an exodus by day time traders, vacant premises, accumulation of late night/junk food eateries and the recent addition of two pawn shops.

Two vital things that need to happen are:

- "Bring back the Boulevard"
- Enhance the Market

The 2010 Business Partnership perceives Council's focus on night time economies as missing the bigger picture of a "whole of day, whole of city" economy.



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Council is one of the biggest landowners on Lower Oxford Street and has an opportunity and (unmet) responsibility to nurture and direct the business mix. Active management is required in a way that represents the “independent, queer, bohemian otherness of the Inner East and celebrates it”.

Council's protracted timelines in decision making and action in relation to property management result in the market moving ahead without Council's active influence and often against the direction desired by Council.

Council's Small Bars initiative is a successful model that the 2010 Business Partnership would like to see emulated in order to invigorate business on Lower Oxford Street. (The only downside of the Small Bars initiative was that there was a perceived signal that Lower Oxford Street is “only about small bars”.)

It was requested that the City do the following things:

- Investigate and understand the underlying cultural identities of the inner city precincts and don't lump them into one catchall title like Cultural Quarter.
- Use this Identity to create and implement a policy on the proper management and creative utilisation of Council-owned properties
- Create a strategy to incubate, nurture and encourage the daytime economy as part of a larger 'whole of day, whole of city' policy.
- Create Programs and Incentives to nurture the desired daytime businesses in the same way as the Small Bars Policy.
- Actively go out and pursue the mix Council wants, as was done by the landowner at the intersection of Glenmore Rd and Oxford Streets.
- Use Council's clout to convince the other landlords and real estates to play along.
- Actively signal that Lower Oxford Street is not just about small bars and the night time economy, and that Council intends to Bring Back the Boulevard.

Discussion

It was noted that the City of Sydney was looking at Oxford Street as a boulevard – and this is a forefront concept. This is difficult as it is very busy but there is an effort by the City to lessen the demand for vehicles into the CBD. The State requires evidence to progress this work and although evidence is expensive, the City is working on this.

The City is a few months away from submitting to Council a transport plan for Sydney.

Oxford Street is not so much car dominated as bus dominated.

Two elements to the management of the business mix:

- Properties owned by independent landlords – little can be done about these
- Properties owned by the Council – City should have criteria for Council building tenancies and exercise active management

Residents are predominantly young, male and single and they want to live in a “queer, funky district”. The idea by Council to build a big corporate shopping centre is out of touch with the resident population.



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Topic 2: Identity & Economic Growth

Outline of issues – Andrew Duckmanton (*Speaking notes at Attachment B*)

Two quotes:

- "If you don't know where you're going you'll sure as hell end up some place else"
- "You are what you are"

Would like to see the area become one of the world's great inner city precincts on par with SoHo NY & London, Greenwich Village, Castro,

The area currently *does* have an identity: evening/night time entertainment district and unpalatable place. Business mix is following footfall dollars. This isn't what it should be.

The area has a genuine split between day/evening economy.

Melbourne's 24 hour policy is recommended.

Many daytime businesses have seen no growth for 3 years: 2 out of 3 visits are flowing out of the area.

Although good work has been done in analysing the use of the area with a floorspace study, there hasn't been an opportunity to consider the categories of 'time of day' use.

There are mixed messages from Council:

- There is a liquor freeze, yet small bars are actively encouraged
- There are daytime parking restrictions, yet unrestricted parking is available all night
- Council-owned buildings have been historically renovated, yet takeaway outlets have been installed as tenants

Need to think in terms of "whole of day, whole of area", not in isolation and need to declare an identity for the area.

The area was destroyed during the 'upgrade' and not much has been done to manage reinvigoration.

Image and identity are key measures of success. Lack of collective vision creates division and misunderstanding.

Recommended approach:

- Immediate, mid and long term strategies
- Declare what we want the area to be in all conversations – *one of the worlds' great inner city precincts being the home for Sydney's independent and creative daytime offer and a cosmopolitan/sophisticated evening and night time precinct.*
 - whole of area, whole of day



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- Work out what we are currently and what we feel we would need (weigh and measure the business mix) and research expectations to discover what we want it to be and deliver – identity
- Set timelines AND deliverable/expectations - plan
- Plan the work – work the plan
- Look at ways to keep people in the area and increase visitation.
- Declare the area a precinct and provide a geographic sense of place.
- Agree on a strategy and define timelines.
- Investigate and understand the underlying cultural identities of your sub precincts and don't just try and lump them into one catch-all title like Cultural Quarter
- Create a strategy to incubate, nurture and encourage the daytime economy as part of a larger 'whole of day, whole of city' policy.
- Use this discovered Identity to create and implement a policy on the proper management and creative utilisation of your North Side Properties
- Create Programs and Incentives to nurture the desired daytime businesses like the implementation of the laneways Activation/ Small Bars Policy.
- Actively pursue the mix we want, like a commercial 'group' would – such as Theo has designed/created at the intersection of Glenmore and Oxford Streets. And Westfield has done in WBJ and City. Give them reasons to be come.
- Use your clout to convince the other landlords and real estates to play along
- Actively signal to the rest of the world that Lower Oxford Street is not just about small bars and the night-time economy.
- Finally - declare that the outer precincts are AS important culturally and economically as the CBD.

Additional comments by 2010 Business Partnership

- We should also think about how to connect GLBT identity / needs.
- We consider the way San Francisco has fostered community and local business.
- As an international city, we should be directing tourists to inner-city suburbs; local community identity isn't being championed adequately. Focus is on the CBD and there is little in the way of wayfinding to raise awareness of inner-city villages amongst visitors. Contrast this with the way Melbourne has made a feature of its streets.
- Delighted that Oxford Street has been included in the Fringe Festival.
- Oxford Street Cultural Quarter is weird and unintelligible branding that doesn't mean much, considering Oxford Street is the main access point to the city.
- Every city is a city of villages/neighbourhoods. Sydney does a bad job of marketing its villages as vibrant financial hubs with their own unique identities.

Discussion

"Complicated names" like 'precinct' and 'cultural quarter' were questioned. It was suggested that they are not clear enough and need to be simpler. In relation to Oxford Street, 'street' was suggested rather than 'cultural quarter'.

Oxford Street was compared to King Street, where traffic is slower and there is a thriving sense of business and community.



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Topic 3: Planning

Outline of issues – Lawrence Gibbons (*Speaking notes at Attachment c*)

The stretch of Oxford Street is world famous; popular with the Gay and Lesbian Community; and Mardi Gras brings tens of millions of dollars into the local economy.

The City of Melbourne has a commendable “24 hour city” policy which aims to balance activities over a 24 hour cycle with regulation as it transitions from day to night. The area is dominated by single, young, male residents.

Oxford Street can be considered partly an arts district but ‘cultural quarter’ is not the best fit. John Piggett, 2nd generation owner of Oxford Street’s only 24 hour newsagency, tracked the official decline to 1959, when the trams were removed.

One of the reasons that Melbourne has big shopping streets is because trams run down them. The Business Partnership is very enthusiastic about a tram going up Oxford Street all the way down to the beach!

The upgrade on Oxford Street ‘turned down’ the lights, reduced signage and cut back awnings.

Council is the largest landowner on the block, bar none. There is a ‘downward slide’ in the business mix on Oxford Street; Council’s property department adds to this problem by approving takeaway shops in their own properties. Tenants feel a lack of continuity trading there because of short-term leases.

Pubs who are ‘good operators’ feel uncertainty because they are forced to re-apply for their licences on an annual basis.

Council moves too slowly and the market moves on.

The landlords on the street have the opportunity to facilitate local shops and a local economy. Planning instruments can be used to manage the mix.

Preference should be given to outdoor businesses. Footpath licence fees are too expensive and inhibit outdoor dining. The outdoor seating fee should be waived. “Council could ease up a little in terms of the aggressive way it enforces its outdoor trading policy.”

Key recommendations:

- Encourage outdoor seating/trade on Oxford Street (waive fees)
- Encourage use of outdoor display of goods
- Place a kiosk at Taylor Square
- Improve landscaping: group have been waiting for Council’s pending draft landscaping policy for 4 years; this has held up simple installation of planter boxes on the corners of Three Saints Square – 2010 Business Partnership would like a commitment to bypass the protracted strategy process.
- Improve signage/wayfinding.



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- The small bars initiative helped to successfully foster industry; the same should be done for Oxford Street.

Topic 4: Traffic & Transportation

Outline of issues – Sue Ritchie (Speaking notes at Attachment D)

Oxford Street used to be a high street, much like King Street before it started “going down the tube” – now it is a highway.

The priority of the RTA is about keeping traffic moving, with the resulting effect being buses and taxis flying past next to the footpaths.

- This is a hazard and creates a negative environment on the footpath.
- A journalist, dining outdoors on Oxford Street compared the traffic to “road trains thundering on their way to Darwin”.

Clearways keep traffic moving through and past the local area and “kill business”

Signage on Oxford Street is a further problem: it tells you how to get everywhere else but not where you actually are.

Pedestrians are dependent on pedestrian facilities to cross and the street is increasingly dangerous for pedestrians.

Light rail is strongly supported by the Business Partnership.

Council has done some good work: the PCTC study for Paddington and Centennial Park, which was extended down to Taylor Square, was a fantastic thing. The 6 recommendations that went to the RTA are supported by the 2010 Business Partnership. The recommendations that were rejected by the RTA are still supported by both the 2010 Business Partnership and advocated by Council.

These include:

- A right hand turn from Flinders into Oxford (locals have been campaigning for this for over 10 years)
- Extra pedestrian crossings facilities for the 3 5-way intersections
- A refuge island in the northern most residential section of South Dowling St

The group requested:

- That the Council keep the pressure on the RTA & the State Government to adopt the PCTC recommendations;
- That an official point of contact on traffic issues be confirmed;
- That 2010 Business Partnership works with Council on a plan of how light rail will work – working group requested.
- That Council looks at simulated light rail as an interim solution (i.e. what it would actually look like)



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The whole area has a parking problem.

- Three Saints Square area has a particular problem because of the cinemas.
- One hour is not long enough to park and shop. This is a negative and expensive experience for customers.
- A parking station is required.
- There should be an opportunity for business to apply for parking permits.
- Without parking, it is very difficult for business to get service by tradespeople / deliveries.

Residents and businesses are currently vying for parking spaces. In order to generate better relationships, residents should be given a visitors parking permit, which would generate more goodwill between business and residents.

The Three Saints Square Project has been trying to get planter boxes on all corners of the 5-way intersection at Three Saints Square, having door knocked the area and presented to Council in 2008 a petition with approximately 300 signatures, each signature representing different households, businesses and institutions from all 5 corners of the intersection. They are in their 4th year of working with Council to get these planter boxes, waiting on the Draft Streetscape Gardening Policy. They would like to by-pass the need to wait any longer for the Draft Streetscape Gardening Policy, and plan and install the planter boxes straight away.

Discussion

It was noted that it would be a simple thing to extend parking – the Council can ask business if they want changed time limits, and if they want it, they can change it cheaply.

Terry Lee-Williams was confirmed as the appropriate contact/liason on matters relating to traffic.

The flow-on impact of the Academy Twin closure was noted, with consideration to the parking issues that previous patrons faced, and the flow-on impact of the cinema-goers no longer frequenting local restaurants and shops.

Meeting close

Kim thanked all the participants for their contribution to the meeting and undertook to follow up with them in the future.

Summary Points

Balanced focus on “whole of day, whole of city”

Perception that the City is focused on night time economies. The 2010 Business partnership would like to see a “whole of day, whole of city” 24 hour economic strategy.

Lack of daytime trade is caused by an imbalance in the business mix and vice versa. Safety issues flow on directly from this (because safety relies on activation).

Oxford Street ‘upgrade’ in 2004 resulted in exodus of daytime traders and an accumulation of night / takeaway eateries, and now pawn shops.

2010 Business Partnership wants to “Bring back the Boulevard” and enhance the market.

Impression that the City’s focus on Villages is secondary to its focus on the CBD – 2010 Business Partnership would like to see a declaration by Council that the outer precincts are as culturally and economically important as the CBD.

Strategy to incubate, nurture and encourage the daytime economy as part of a larger ‘whole of day, whole of city’ policy should be developed. (City of Melbourne’s “24 hour City” policy was commended)

Identity

Identity needs to be “investigated, understood and communicated”

The area’s current identity is “evening/night time entertainment district and unpalatable place”.

Research should be undertaken into the cultural identity of the City’s inner city precincts and the catch-all title of “Cultural Quarter” should be reconsidered in this context.

A strategy, including timelines and deliverable/expectations should be set.

Should include “whole of day, whole of city”

GLBT history / connections should form part of this

Council should communicate that they intend to “Bring Back the Boulevard”.

Would like to see the area become one of the world’s great inner city precincts, being the home for Sydney’s independent and creative daytime offer and a cosmopolitan / sophisticated evening and night time precinct.

Area should be declared a precinct with a geographic sense of place.

City should communicate this clearly



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Active property management

As one of the biggest landowners on Lower Oxford Street, Council has an opportunity and responsibility to nurture and direct the business mix.

Council adds to the current “downward slide” in the business mix by approving business such as takeaway shops in their own properties and offering only short-term leases.

Protracted timelines in decision-making and action in relation to property management result in the market moving ahead without City’s active influence and often against the direction desired by Council.

Council’s ‘clout’ should be used to convince the other landlords and real estate managers to cooperate.

Policy on management and creative utilisation of properties should be implemented, based on ‘identity’ (outlined above).

Programs & Planning

Programs and incentives to nurture desired daytime businesses on Lower Oxford Street should emulate the Council’s Small Bars initiative.

Planning instruments should be used to manage the business mix.

Uncertainty is generated amongst pubs who are considered to be ‘good operators’ because they must re-apply for their licences on an annual basis.

Outdoor trade / dining

“Council could ease up a little in terms of the aggressive way it enforces its outdoor trading policy.”

Footpath licence fees are too expensive and inhibit outdoor dining.

Outdoor seating/trade on Oxford Street should be encouraged and fees should be waived.

Outdoor display of goods should be encouraged to create a livelier street atmosphere.

Landscaping

Three Saints Square Project has been trying to get planter boxes on corners of the 5-way intersection for 4 years. Council Draft Streetscape Gardening Policy has held this up.

Business Partnership would like to by-pass the protracted strategy process, and plan and install the planter boxes straight away.

Place a kiosk at Taylor Square.

Mixed messages from Council:

Liquor freeze vs active encouragement of small bars



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Daytime parking restrictions vs yet unrestricted parking all night

Renovation/upgrading of council-owned buildings vs takeaway outlets installed as tenants

Signage, wayfinding, branding, promotion

Sydney could do a better job of marketing its villages as vibrant financial hubs with their own unique identities, and directing tourists to these areas. (Current focus is on CBD)

Branding of "Oxford Street Cultural Quarter" does not resonate as meaningful amongst Business Partnership members.

Street signage on Oxford Street tells you how to get everywhere else but not where you actually are.

Traffic and transport

The Business Partnership is strongly supportive of light rail on Oxford Street and keen to assist in advocating this.

Oxford Street used to be a high street; now it is a fast-moving, noisy and hazardous highway. Street is increasingly dangerous for pedestrians.

Recommendations to the RTA from Council's PCTC study are supported by the 2010 Business Partnership.

Requested that Council continues to advocate:

- A right hand turn from Flinders into Oxford (locals have campaigned for over 10 years);
- Extra pedestrian crossings facilities for the 3 5-way intersections;
- A refuge island in the northern most residential section of South Dowling St.

Terry Lee-Williams was confirmed as the official point of contact on traffic issues.

A working group on light rail, including the 2010 Business Partnership is requested.

A simulation of light rail as interim solution is requested.

Parking

Three Saints Square area has a particular parking problem because of the cinemas – 2 hours not enough to see a film.

The one hour parking in most areas is not long enough to park and shop; negative and expensive experience for customers.

A parking station is required.



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There should be an opportunity for business to apply for parking permits; it is very difficult for business to get service by tradespeople / deliveries without parking.

Residents and businesses are currently vying for parking spaces; residents should be given a visitors parking permit, which would generate more goodwill between business and residents.

DBP/2010 & COUNCIL ROUND TABLE FRIDAY 6TH MAY 2011
INTRO & TOPIC 1
S.R.GYORY

Firstly, I'd like to thank you all...not only for having us here today but for explicitly recognising the problems that Lower Oxford Street faces as reflected by the issues listed in agenda.

Lower Oxford Street here refers to the street as it runs from Whitlam Square at the South East corner of Hyde Park, up to Three Saints Square, at the intersection of Oxford, Victoria, and South Dowling & Barcom Streets.

It's important to make this distinction, because while we *are* here as representatives of Darlinghurst and Surry Hills the issues at hand pertain to a large degree to Lower Oxford Street.

That is not to say that the solutions we present to you today do not hold across the larger area, in fact it is and will be one of our fundamental points that a '*whole of day, whole of city*' Strategy is the only realistic way to address the issues facing the retail economy across the board.

So, Lower Oxford Street, it straddles Surry Hills and Darlinghurst and yet, can be said to be part of neither.

As the dividing line between two suburbs, two liquor accords, two LAPS, two police commands, two Resident's Guide maps...historically, two councils, and currently the tail end of a far too long Activity Hub, it has not so much fallen between the cracks, as has become one.

But this is all history, and other than framing the discussion today, we are not here to talk the through the issues again, we are here to present solutions and...I apologise if this seems impolite...to demand actions.

Forgive me if I have not dived straight into the first topic for discussion, but we felt strongly of the need for an introduction to today's conversation.

The Agenda today has been divided into four topics that were distilled from a meeting...only the latest in a long line...conducted between Jan Campbell, of your Economic development team and us, late last year.

Today's speakers will stick to these Topics, but we would like to make it very clear to you that we do not see these things as separate and we hope that through our

representations you will come to see that not only are they inherently related, they are in fact symptoms of a single underlying fact – the lack of a balanced and thriving, ‘*whole of day, whole of city*’ 24 hour Economic strategy.

So our intention today is twofold.

Firstly it is to try and show you that City of Sydney has not only the responsibility and capacity, but more excitingly, the opportunity to actively manage its main street economies; to actively understand and nurture the unique identities of these precincts that are so vital to the fine grain social, cultural and economic life of the Whole City

Secondly it’s to offer solutions to the specific issues recognised on today’s agenda...for me that means championing the vital importance of Lower Oxford Street...not as Frank Sartor suggested in the run-up to the Oxford Street upgrade, as a Traffic Gateway to the CBD and not, as the current 2030 plans suggests, as some kind of sleepy residential village playing second fiddle to the Central Business District.

In one sense, Lower Oxford Street is a gateway; it is *the gateway* to the Inner East of Sydney City. This stretches from Surry Hills to Woolloomooloo. In fact Lower Oxford Street is the the only natural flow-point between the CBD and the Inner East, which are otherwise separated Prince Alfred Park, Central Station, Elizabeth Street, Hyde Park, St. Mary’s Cathedral and the Domain.

As for the Lower Oxford Street ‘Village’ referred to in the 2030 plan Retail Rationale (which I have here) the Inner City Precincts are not ‘Also’ important, they is “Just” as important as the CBD. In fact, if you consider the language, without the surrounding precincts, there wouldn’t be a Central Business District, just a Business District.

Yes the CBD is a Hub, but without thriving vibrant things radiating into and out of them, Hubs are not a Hubs, they are just things, lacking a context that could be anywhere, like a business park. This argument applies to all the inner precincts, by the way.

And that brings me to the issues at hand:

- Lack of daytime trade
- Imbalance in business mix
- Safety perceptions

The first two of these are directly linked, circularly linked you might say...there is a lack of daytime trade because there is an imbalance in the business mix which reinforces the decline of daytime trade which...and so on.

It can be shown that the Safety concerns mentioned follow directly on from this cycle because activation is by far and away the best form of safety.

But why does this situation exist?

Again, and sorry for the history, but context is important here

The decline of Lower Oxford Street was a long time coming, a major street closure here, a bus stop moved there: a large business daytime fading away here, a late night food business opening there. All of this seemed inconsequential, but at the same time, a slow burning cultural and demographic shift was reinforcing it and then all of this was violently set in stone...granite, you might say, by the 2004 upgrade.

That it is in decline cannot possibly be denied, with an exodus of day time traders, vacant premises, the accumulation of late night eateries and most recently, the addition of not one, but two pawn shops and now, a third Mexican joint within fifty metres of two other, at 118 Oxford Street, by the way.

So what can we do?

There are two vital things that need to happen. One is out of your hands; the other is firmly within them.

Firstly, Lower Oxford Street is no longer a Boulevard, it's now a Highway: a once thriving cultural icon, reduced and degraded by the RTA's myopic focus on cars.

There is not much more we or you can do about this without the State Government and RTA coming to the party and so we applaud the Council's ongoing and continuous championing of Light Rail up Oxford Street. We applaud you and we ask 'what can we do' to facilitate this?

In addition, the others will speak more about what can be done to "Bring Back the Boulevard."

The second thing is the Market. Now I'd really like to make it very clear that this is not a personal attack on anyone, but rather a statement of facts as they are, because it's only by being brutally honest that friends can help each other out.

And we are friends.

We here today want just as much as you to address late night violence and the safety and amenity issues connected to it, but we believe that by just looking at the night time economy and what we want it to be, misses the bigger picture of a '*whole of day*,

whole of city' economy and what we want that to be and how it can affect and ameliorate the late night issues we currently face.

Bluntly - you guys are one of the biggest landowners on Lower Oxford Street. Here more than anywhere else you have this amazing opportunity to nurture and direct the business mix.

But it's not just an opportunity, it's a responsibility, and unfortunately, I have to say, that to date, this responsibility has not been met.

It's a real point that an organisation such as yours takes a long time to make decisions and enact them, but the market moves at a different speed and the City of Sydney, if it intends to remain a property owner, has to step up to the responsibilities that all other land owners have. Because basically, by not leading, by not taking the initiative, you drag the market in an unintended direction – ironically, in the very direction you don't want it to go.

The most amazing this is that you guys already have the model of how to achieve this: Small Bars.

You basically said this is what we want to have happen, and then you introduced the incentives and support and made it happen. The only downside to this is that because you did it in isolation, the signal you sent was that Lower Oxford Street was only about small bars. Well, that and the club life everyone is already aware of.

So that's what I am here to ask you to do today.

The time for passive ownership is past, if you want to do something about the state of Lower Oxford Street, it's time for active management. And not generic top down sanitised management, but one that reflects and represents the independent, queer, bohemian otherness of the Inner East and celebrates it.

So, on the dual issues of Lack of Daytime Trade & Business Mix I respectfully ask you to the following things, with no delay:

- Investigate and understand the underlying cultural identities of your inner city precincts and don't just try and lump them into one catchall title like Cultural Quarter.
- Use this discovered Identity to create and implement a policy on the proper management and creative utilisation of your North Side Properties

- Create a strategy to incubate, nurture and encourage the daytime economy as part of a larger ‘*whole of day, whole of city*’ policy.
- Create Programs and Incentives to nurture the desired daytime businesses like you did on your Small Bars Policy.
- Actively go out and pursue the mix you want like Theo did up at the intersection of Glenmore and Oxford Streets. Give them reasons to come.
- Use your clout to convince the other landlords and real estates to play along
- Do this and actively **signal** to the rest of the world that Lower Oxford Street is not just about small bars and the nighttime economy. Signal what you intend to Bring Back the Boulevard.

Finally, regarding your 2030 Retail Rationale:

I have to ask you guys...do you really believe this? Do you actually believe that the ‘Villages’ and I use that word reluctantly...do you believe that the Inner City Precincts are *just* places for *local* communities to meet, create, learn and shop?

Because if you do, then you need to take the word sustainable out of this statement, because that model is not sustainable, that vision is the death knell of retail and the daytime economy and really, an open invitation to that out-of-control nighttime economy you are trying to avoid.

These Inner City Precincts, these Main Streets, have the capacity to attract and entertain visitors and tourists and young urban professionals in a way that the CBD can’t. They add colour and flavour and that gritty urban edge that an International city not only needs, but also actually *has to have* to cut it on the world stage.

And until you openly declare that your ‘Villages’ *are* vital Inner City Business Districts, just as important as the central one, you are going to continue to watch places Lower Oxford Street slide inexorably away from you.

Identity and (the pathway to) Economic Growth

The issues (as per agenda)

- Need to set vision for the area and establish common goals
- Strategy for economic growth
- Multiple stakeholder engagement

Within this I will try and set out

- What is the problem (and why)
- What is the impact
- Our thoughts on solutions

Two thoughts to consider (when thinking of the problem)

'If you don't know where you're going you'll sure as hell end up some place else'

'You are what you are'

What we would like the area to 'seen' as (or become)

One of the world's great inner city precincts on par with SoHo NY & London, Greenwich Village, Castro, etc etc that (via it's identity) helps define Sydney's complete offer

Overview/issues

- Area **does have an identity** (by design by default??) of being a pretty good (declining) evening/night entertainment precinct and an unpalatable place (which is a thoroughfare) during the day. There are exceptions (generally off Oxford St) and i'm not putting things down BUT in general it isn't what it should be..
 - Not exactly the one we would all wish for??
 - Not exactly compelling to entice traders/visitation
 - Ergo – 'you are what you are' is true and that is the style of people we get/area we are
- Truth is – we all know it isn't working (as well as we'd all prefer) – the area has a genuine split economy, day and evening night, with little 'transition' economy of day through to night
 - Business mix is following the footfall/dollars
 - It doesn't seem to be able to get out of this itself
- Isn't it best to try something different to see if that brings different results
 - Our suggestion has always been collaboration (look/thank you for today) and a business approach to a declared goal

- Understand current/problem via research and discussion (many layers), get mutual agreement, collaboratively work a plan that will achieve the result required

What's driving this

- The business mix is unbalanced making the offer unbalanced as well ('old' research suggest 2 in 3 resident shopping trips migrate out of the area)
- We struggle to understand/observe any movement in the business mix of the area as we don't have access to any historical information (plugged in) to show 'what was/what has become'
- Council sends a host of mixed messages about what it wants the area to be
 - Liquor freeze vs small bars
 - Lack of car access/penalties making it a difficult place for visitors to come
 - Choice of tenants in council properties
 - DA's that are all focussed on evening/night economy are reviewed/granted without any thoughts on (collective) impact
 - Continuing the divided nature of area (geographically and economically) vs openly stating a defined goal and setting an agenda
- Daytime economy has been massacred of late with a reduced offer and no collective agenda/outcome meaning reduced visitation and reduced interest from traders
 - Causality dilemma
 - Look at where the traders we want in the area are actually opening
- Residents love the area at night (mainly) but leave the area 5 days a week to work – we don't get an infill of daytime traffic to replace that. The night gets both residents' and visitors.
- The precinct itself isn't defined or have a holistic identity – creates a perception barrier during day for consumers and businesses/traders
- We need to stop thinking in isolation and think 'whole of day, whole of area'
- We need to get a bit of control/extend some shape into what it becomes – set an agenda

Why

The area is not defined as anything above an entertainment precinct

- Passively as there has been an absence of any 'meaningful' discussion/declaration of any use above night time entertainment and also via the small bars conversation
 - and openly via the discussion around social outfall,
- and by default or design that is the style of business that now proliferates the area.
- This has been very much since the Oxford Street upgrade where we 'deserted' the area and then didn't manage the re-invigoration very well

It does not have an identity that guides future daytime use

How do we fix this

- Immediate, mid and long term strategies
- Declare what we want the area to be in all conversations – *one of the worlds' great inner city precincts being the home for Sydney's independent and creative daytime offer and a cosmopolitan/sophisticated evening and night time precinct.*
 - **whole of area, whole of day**
- Work out what we are currently and what we feel we would need (weigh and measure the business mix) and research expectations to discover what we want it to be and deliver – identity
- Set timelines AND deliverable/expectations - plan
- Plan the work – work the plan

Need to set Vision for the area and establish common goals

How will identity help this?

Identity is defined by the World English dictionary as The individual characteristics by which a person or thing is recognized

A recent survey in the US or over 2,500 CEO's highlighted that 'image and identity' is the Number 1 business issues they saw facing their companies.

Why?

Because identity and image are the key drivers to business success - especially in a competitive market place that is spoilt for choice.

Million are spent defining identity's as they drive interest, relationships, opportunity, opportunity identification (NPD), and visitation.

If your consumers don't know who you are and what you do they don't spend the time finding out, they spend their time (and money) somewhere else with the what they know fills their need via Identity and Image – they don't stay around to see what you are doing.

If you don't know them – how can you offer them what required? (Identity changes that)

And this is the dilemma that the 'Southern part of Darlinghurst Northern part of Surry Hills part of Taylor Square part of East Sydney fringe of the city place that has lots of nightlife' suffers.

People don't really have an idea of who we are or what we offer above what the dominant aspect that we signal through lots of passive ways – that we are an evening/night-time economy.

We don't have a collective vision that drives the conversation of what the area will become and we are allowing the market to set the identity and image of the area around what it is now – we are in a self perpetuating problem and we are not setting, protecting or nurturing the precinct for the future.

The result is a bunch of mixed messages, a loss of daytime economy, the truth in the law of diminishing returns being the less you have the less people visit/use and true causality dilemma to fix it up. (Which came first – the strategy or the tactical events/ideas?)

We don't have any collective understanding of what we are trying to develop and for whom – as such people see us as the structural thoroughfare we are and rush on by (except for night). We are all trying to develop something in isolation to each other – and it shows.

And this is where the opportunity lies – to work together to develop this area into one of the worlds truly significant inner-city precincts, that has a focus on its 24 Hour 'Whole of Day. Whole of Area' Offer, that caters magnificently for its residents and businesses BUT genuinely encourages visits across the whole because of the characteristics that it has [developed via our declarations].

But we have to have agreement around this – currently a lot of what council (and others) do could be seen as passive interference and not active management

- Day business leaves and night business replaces (low hanging fruit, only suckers willing!)
- 66 Oxford Street
- Latest two tenants

The problem in a nutshell

The area is a \$430 million economy [Environmetrics study] where 2 in 3 visits by residents flow out of the area to other shopping environments [de tomassi research CoSC] due to a lack of requirements/what they want with separated day/night economy (dominated by the evening/night) and no transition between to soften or blend.

Our suggestion is the evening/night consumes close to 70% of the \$430 million leaving only \$129 million (or \$2.4 million weekly) for approx 250 daytime shops to compete for – might sound like a lot but Westfield turns over \$1billion and doesn't trade at night.

IF the residents don't use visitors won't

All our chatter as turned this area into something people are becoming LESS aware of and have LESS desire to visit (Tourism NSW research)

This means MORE of the same unless we change things NOW

Has this happened before

Use talk to melb as an example as an example

What did they do

Went back to identity as the first step – how do i know, i was there.

Strategy for economic growth (combines with multiple stakeholder engagement)

Develop a vision and plan

- Research - Develop understanding - of what we have (styles of business and what people think of us – what they want it to be)
- Develop identity and Image strategy (with all involved) – our thoughts are around independent bohemian business and cultural mix
- Look at what would be ideal mix to keep people in the area AND have visitation
- Get a structure where everyone can be involved/briefed (working parties or even the board suggestion of the Cultural Quarter NB: board OK but doesn't have to be called Cultural Quarter)
- Start the journey of actively managing via passive (media) channels and start getting new businesses in the area by choice – actively manage the outcomes

BUT need all on the same page including Council

Actions/What we want summarised

Declare the area a precinct and provide a sense of geographic place to it

Start communicating whole of area/whole of day goals in all conversations, Press Releases etc

Agree to collaboratively working and the need for active investment

Define timelines – there is a major concern if we don't

Investigate and understand the underlying cultural identities of your sub precincts and don't just try and lump them into one catch-all title like Cultural Quarter

Create a strategy to incubate, nurture and encourage the daytime economy as part of a larger 'whole of day, whole of city' policy.

Use this discovered Identity to create and implement a policy on the proper management and creative utilisation of your North Side Properties

Create Programs and Incentives to nurture the desired daytime businesses like the implementation of the laneways Activation/ Small Bars Policy.

Actively pursue the mix we want like and commercial 'group' would – such as Theo has designed/created at the intersection of Glenmore and Oxford Streets. And Westfield has done in WBJ and City. Give them reasons to be come.

§ Use your clout to convince the other landlords and real estates to play along

Actively **signal** to the rest of the world that Lower Oxford Street is not just about small bars and the night-time economy.

Finally - declare that the outer precincts are AS important culturally and economically as the CBD.

The stretch of Oxford Street that runs through Darlinghurst from South Dowling to Whitlam Square is one of Sydney's most famous and iconic streets. Oxford Street is one of the world's most well known gay strips along with similar districts in San Francisco, New York, Berlin, Amsterdam and Bangkok. On any given Friday or Saturday night thousands of gays and lesbians flock to more than a dozen venues on or near Oxford Street. Many of them are City residents who chose to live in or close to an old fashioned gay ghetto where they can safely socialize. Others travel from Sydney's outer suburbs or from interstate or overseas to spend time and cash right here in Sydney. In March, Oxford Street becomes an international mecca for gay, queer, lesbian and transgendered people during Mardi Gras. The event brings tens of millions of dollars into the local economy.

There can be little doubt that Oxford Street's night time economy is booming. Gay revellers are joined by a diverse range of young people, who pour into the precinct's many bars, nightclubs and underground live entertainment venues, spending money, generating employment and having fun. According to a recent study conducted by the City of Sydney, on any weekend night the pedestrian traffic on the stretch of Oxford Street closest to Oxford Square is as busy as many CBD streets during peak commuting hours. Until now, Council has used its blunt planning instruments to curtail late night trading when possible. Publicans complain that Council's policies have provided no planning certainty -- forcing good operators (such as the Beauchamp and the Oxford Hotel both of whom are present here today) to reapply for their development application annually, costing them money and providing no market security.

It must be stated that when the sun rises, Oxford Street is far from pretty. Drunk and drugged revellers stumble out of day clubs onto an otherwise desolate strip. After 8 in the morning, no one goes to Oxford Street, unless they are scurrying past on their way to somewhere. And why would they? Oxford Street's culinary offering is cheap and tawdry: burritos, burgers, pizza and falafels abound. And the retail offering is sliding down market quickly: two dollar shops, convenience stores and a cavalcade of pop up shops have now been joined by new pawn shops that have recently opened on the strip. Council's own property department has added to the problem, approving a takeaway Mexican shop in one building and falafels in another. In the absence of a clear planning policy that dictates a diverse range of business mixes on Oxford Street, the precinct will continue to slide downward.

A vibrant, international city thrives 24 hours a day. Like Frank Sinatra once crooned: "I want to wake up in a city that never sleeps." In the world's best urban precincts, night time revellers are replaced by breakfast and brunch diners, followed by daytime shoppers spending their hard earned cash in unique, local shops offering authentic, locally crafted, goods. At night, the world's best precincts offer a range of high quality and mixed price options where people can while away their evening hours perhaps followed by an independent theatre production or an arthouse cinema release until they hit the pubs, the clubs and the live entertainment venues and do it all over again. As in so many other regards, Melbourne manages its 24 hour economy better than Sydney. While the City is fixated on the problems around its Late Night Economy and is now developing a policy to address the issues, Melbourne takes a more holistic approach. According to the City of Melbourne's website: "Melbourne's vibrant night time economy is a major contributor to its status as a world leading cultural city. The key aim of the 24 Hour City policy is to balance increasing activities over the 24 hour cycle with regulation. This in turn promotes a safe, vibrant and inclusive city as it moves from the day into the night."

The City of Sydney has one of the youngest populations in all of Australia and the neighbourhood precincts around Oxford Street have some of the largest populations of single, young men to be found anywhere. Unfettered by children, partners and in many instances mortgages, they chose to move into the neighbourhood for lifestyle reasons. The local market feeds on youth culture and is home to some of Sydney's best vintage clothing shops, leather and fetish shops along with a wide range of cutting edge art galleries and independent retailers. The precinct truly is Sydney's counter cultural quarter. Up the road, from the National Art School on Taylor Square to the College of Fine Arts way over in Paddington, Oxford Street is undisputedly Sydney's visual arts precinct. But as Kate Blanchet recently pointed out here at Town Hall, Sydney has many Cultural Quarters and frankly trying to fit Lower Oxford Street into a Cultural Quarter slipper is like trying to shove a drag queen's foot into a size six pump.

Council is in a unique position to turn around the fortunes of Oxford Street. As the largest land owner on the strip and the consent authority for small business approvals and footpath useage in the City of Sydney, this local government could easily take the tarnish off the old Golden Mile if it wanted to. If the City had the passion and commitment to activate Oxford Street that it has dedicated to activating laneways in the Central Business District, Oxford Street would eventually be restored to its former glory. Imagine if Council put half of the energy into Oxford Street that it has into George Street, where the City of Villages is committed to spending more than \$150 million on the CBD. Since ratepayers own much of the northern half of Oxford Street between Taylor and Whitlam Squares, it is in all of our interests to see that Council succeeds in resuscitating Lower Oxford Street as soon as possible. On Tuesday I also attended the Lord Mayor's "Late Night" round table discussions on behalf of local, small business. Suzie Matthews will confirm that everyone in the room --- without exception--- lauded the City's efforts to facilitate, approve and promote Small Bars in the local Council area. Imagine what Darlinghurst would look like if the City decided to dust off the old tart.

Two weeks ago, we convened a round table discussion of our own. Twenty local business owners sat around a big wooden table at the Tap Gallery to provide their input into our discussion with you today. I would like to report what John Piggett, the 70 something, second generation owner of Oxford Street's only 24 hour newsagency had to say. John tracked the decline of Oxford Street way back to 1959 when the trams were eliminated from Oxford Street. By comparison, Chapel Street in Melbourne has twice the retail meterage of Oxford Street. And the trams have much to do with the precinct's success. During the news agency's hay day, his father sold 50,000 newspapers per week including outside the Oxford Hotel, where Council allowed him to sell printed material on the footpath. Imagine! According to John -- Council's upgrade did nothing to improve the street's dire situation. The premises next to him have sat empty for 18 months. As part of the "upgrade" John reports that the lights outside his 24 hour business have been reduced substantially.

To add injury to insult, when the City did its "upgrade" of Oxford Street, Council reduced the visual impact of signs, reduced overhead lighting, scaled back the heritage awnings so there is now less room for outdoor seating and planted a forest of non native, asthma inducing plane trees up and down the strip which serves to block shop fronts and scaled back signage.

Council's insistence that it will bring yet another grocery store to Oxford Street, when the market has opened a Woolies in the St Margarets redevelopment and a Thomas Dux in the

old Water Board redevelopment while the area falls into rapid decline, has created market uncertainty for its existing tenants, who do not have long term leases. As the largest land owner, Council has the opportunity to create a precinct that reflects the market's funky, unique and alternative identity. In one bohemian inner city retail precinct in San Francisco, key landlords have decided to only allow unique small business occupants. On Valencia Street in San Francisco, a local land lord recently refused to take rent from American Apparel because he felt that a vintage boutique and a café would add better long term value to the precinct's unique market identity. Imagine if the City of Sydney's property department thought like that. On top of that, the City of San Francisco actively uses a number of planning instruments that prevent large retail stores from taking over the local marketplace. Under the City's planning code, any store that has ten locations nationally must apply for special permission to operate in the City limits and chain stores are banned completely from certain key precincts. On top of that the City has a number of policies in place that nurture and reward local small businesses through grants, loans and in the tendering process.

Along Oxford Street, unlike in any other precinct, the City has the tools necessary to create a sustainable, vibrant 24 hour economy. Council could, if it wanted, give preference to local small business tenants who sold unique, recycled or locally made goods during daylight hours. It could encourage outdoor seating along the street, to create a buzz and reduce the impact of anti social behaviour. It could waive outdoor seating fees on the strip, for example. It could decide not to impose exorbitant fines on cafes that had not forced its patrons to vacate their tables by five minutes past ten. It could and should look at expanding outdoor seating till midnight to encourage passive surveillance and to activate the street. It could allow the display of goods on the footpath to activate the space in order to encourage a 24 hour economy. John Pigget's father used to sell direct from the footpath and John thinks Oxford Street should be like Orchard Street in Singapore. And why not? Why shouldn't Oxford Street have a vibrant, pumping 24 economy instead of a dysfunctional, dying and declining local marketplace? Council has the resources to turn Oxford Street around. We look forward to working with the City to reinvigorate one of Sydney's most famous and best loved streets. Here quickly are a few policy recommendations, we encourage Council to implement on Oxford Street to turn the street's fortunes around:

PLANNING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Encourage outdoor seating on Oxford Street to activate space, increase passive surveillance and ensure a vibrant 24 street life before 10pm
 - Waive footpath fees on the street to encourage outdoor seating
 - Ease red tape to get outdoor seating
 - Expand hours for al fresco dining to minimise late night anti social behaviour
 - Relax policing so that cafes aren't fined for allowing patrons to linger beyond 10pm

- 2) Reduce restrictions around signage
 - Eliminate onerous development application process
 - Allow prominent signs to highlight activity
 - Allow illumination and increase lighting for visibility and late night trade

- 3) Implement a planting policy to soften key spaces:
 - Three Saints Square: Council has refused to implement a street planting policy, despite ongoing calls from local businesses and residents
 - Similar planter boxes should be considered at Taylor Square, Oxford Square and at Whitlam Square
- 4) Outdoor display of goods should be encouraged to develop a retail precinct vibe
 - Waive fees for display of goods
 - Encourage shopkeepers to keep goods on footpath past 5 to activate the transition period
 - Place a kiosk at Taylor Square with space for free newspapers, a community notice board, etc. Look at a similar facility at Oxford Square.
- 5) Use planning process to encourage local small businesses on Oxford Street
 - Use the same planning instruments that Council used around small bars to attract local small business
 - Fast track applications for locally owned small businesses
 - Introduce a grants program for small businesses on the strip as happened with Small Bars.

CoS / 2010 Business Partnership Meeting – 6th May 2011**Topic 4: Traffic & Transport (light rail, traffic speed, parking for shoppers & businesses)****Speaker: Sue Ritchie.****A) Light Rail & Traffic Speed****(i) Issues**

- Oxford St has been changed from a high street into a highway
 - It used to feel like King St Newtown, now it feel like Parramatta Rd
- Oxford St is being dominated by a focus on
 - traffic movements in & out of the city
 - keeping the traffic flowing
 - keeping the traffic speed up
 - use of Oxford St as an arterial road to feed the city
- Bus lanes that have been implemented along Oxford St
 - Buses & taxis fly along, uninterrupted, in a lane that is right next to the footpath
 - It has become dangerous for pedestrians, e.g. a protruding elbow, or someone meandering or stumbling onto the road, could result in a pedestrian collecting a bus
 - Fast moving bus lanes have created a negative, threatening atmosphere on the footpath, instead of the pedestrian-positive atmosphere that it should & used to be
 - A review of alfresco dining on Oxford St near Three Saints Square, referred to it feeling like you were experiencing road trains going past on their way to Darwin
 - Also, cyclists share the lane with the fast moving buses, which is an accident waiting to happen, especially on Oxford St between Hyde Park & Taylor Square due to the volume of buses
- Clearways were introduced
 - They keep the traffic moving quickly
 - They also kill the business trade from about 2.45pm
- The predominant signage (RTA signage) exacerbates the problem
 - The signs are designed to keep traffic flowing
 - The signs tell you where you are going to, not where you are
 - They actually create traffic as lost people keep circling the area trying to work out where they are
 - E.g. at Three Saints Square where Darlinghurst & Paddington meet, & the numbering on Oxford St restarts, the prominent signs identify Oxford St, Bondi Junction to the right, & Kings Cross to the left, so someone looking for 10 Oxford St Darlinghurst, or 10 Oxford St Paddington remains lost
 - Other e.g. there is no sign identifying “Taylor Square”, or “Whitlam Square” or “Three Saints Square”
- All of this has increased the traffic speed & traffic movements on Oxford St
 - It's been a cumulative effect over time

city of villages

- It's like boiling a frog by increasing the temperature of the water the frog is in. It doesn't jump out, it just eventually dies
- From the pedestrian's point of view
 - On Oxford St, between Hyde Park & Taylor Square, the median strip which was a refuge for pedestrians, was taken out as part of the Oxford St upgrade
 - Lower Oxford St is now 6 lanes of pretty impregnable traffic
 - Pedestrian have had to become more dependent on lights, crossing, refuge islands etc, in order to cross safely
 - There are 5-way intersections that don't have 5 pedestrian crossings, so to get from one corner to the adjacent corner, all other 4 streets have to be crossed. This used to be OK, because people could cross anyway, but now it is dangerous to do so
 - It's even more dangerous because most people are unsuspecting, still being of the old mindset that Oxford St is pedestrian friendly place to meander, when in fact the increased traffic speed & number of traffic movements, has made it quite dangerous.

(ii) What Is The Solution - What Do We Need From Council re Traffic Speed & Light Rail

- Council has done some proactive work on the small section of Lower Oxford St from Taylor Square to Three Saints Square, so we can start of that positive note, then address the whole of Lower Oxford St
 - The fact that the Paddington/Centennial Park PCTC Study happened was good
 - The fact that the study area was extended from the boundary of Paddington at Three Saints Square west, to include Taylor Square was good
 - The fact that 6 recommendations were put to the RTA was good
 - The fact that when 5 were rejected, the CoS appealed the decision, was good
 - The 5 rejected recommendations ought to be no brainers
 - A right hand turn from Flinders into Oxford (which the locals have been campaigning for, for over 10 years)
 - 3 5-ways intersections needing extra pedestrian crossings facilities
 - a refuge island that is needed in the northern most, residential section of South Dowling St
 - **What do we need from the CoS re Traffic Speed:**

(1) To keep the pressure on the RTA & the State Government to adapt the PCTC recommendations

- The Community has supported the CoS, e.g with letter campaigns to the Premier, Ministers & the RTA, & press campaigns.
- The Community will continue to put pressure on the RTA & the State Government to adopt the recommendations
- We need Clover to keep the pressure on the RTA & the State Government by continuing to write to them in support of the recommendations & the Community's wishes

(2) An official point of contact at Council

- We need someone to proactively keep_us informed, in a timely manner, of any updates with the RTA or the State Government, &

to advise the Community, so that the Community's efforts complement those of the CoS, & are effective.

- At the moment we have managed to find Terry Lee Williams, City Access Manager, Transport Strategy, who seems really good. Is he the right person to be dealing with?
- Re the whole of Lower Oxford St (ie Hyde Park to Three Saints Square)
 - Everyone wants Light Rail
 - Clover supports it
 - The new State Govt have committed to light rail up Oxford St turning right into Flinders St
 - Lawrence has research that supports the commercial benefit of light rails in cities that have it
 - The 2010BP would like to see light rail such that:
 1. All the existing bus traffic be moved to the inner most lanes (resolving the need for a bus lane & a clearway next to the footpath)
 2. The adjacent lane be used for cars
 3. The curbside lane be used for parking
 4. The existing bus stops be replaced by the new tram stops
 - We need to flesh out the details .e.g.
 - Will the stops be in the same places as the existing bus stops?
 - Will it have overhead wiring that could be a problem for Mardi Gras?
 - How will light rail on Lower Oxford St co-exist with buses on Lower Oxford St that need to continue up Oxford St through Paddington?
 - When will the rest of Oxford St, from Taylor Square, to Three Saints Square & then up through Paddington, get light rail?
 - **What do we need from the CoS re Light Rail:**
 - (1) To plan & work through the issues of Light Rail in association with the 2010BP & the rest of the Community**
 - Set up a working group with the 2010BP & the rest of the Community
 - Flesh out the details e.g. tram stops, & how it will impact the street
 - Prepare a plan for discussion with State Government
 - (2) To plan an interim “Simulated Light Rail Solution”**
 - It would be the same solution as light rail but using buses instead of trams
 - An interim solution could be delivered in the meantime, as it would not be dependent on installing the infrastructure required for light rail
 - Problems could be ironed out by simulating light rail, before they start digging up the roads

- The issues of bus lanes & clearways could be addressed at the same time, when moving the buses into the centre lanes of the road
- Issues such as passenger safety getting on& off buses in the centre lanes, are the same problems that will have to be addressed with light rail.

B) Parking For Shoppers and Businesses

(i) Issues

- The whole of Oxford St & surrounds has limited parking
- The recent CoS 2008 Environmetrics Business Study identified Three Saints as particularly being adversely affected, because of the additional demand in the area for parking the are houses 2 cinemas & 2 late night trading book shops
- Problems for Shoppers
 - Parking is a barrier for shoppers deterring them from shopping on Oxford St
 - One hour parking dominates the area
 - Oxford St itself is dominated by one hour parking
 - One hour is not long enough for a shopper/visitor to walk from their car to their destination, have a browse, possibly something to eat, & walk back to their car before they get fined
 - You can set your watch by the Parking Rangers
 - Parking fines really hurt because they are so expensive
 - Parking fines leave shoppers with a feeling of resentment for the area
 - Parking meters are a hassle, expensive and are a deterrent for shoppers
 - Oxford St's main competitor, Westfield Bondi Junction, doesn't present the same barrier to its shoppers
 - Westfield Bondi Junction has 2 hours free parking, then it is \$6 per hour
 - On Wed 4th May 2011, Radio station 2BL 702 had a story on the threat that big business poses to small business in regards to Woolworths going into the hardware business.
 - One of the guest speakers on 702 repeatedly recommended for small business to lobby their Councils to provide a solution to parking problems as it was such a significant problem for small business on high streets, so they can compete on a more level playing field with the malls & megastores which have been allowed to be built and now threaten the existence of high streets
 - It also discussed that parking is so important for shoppers, that that people will choose to shop at malls or superstores, even to buy lesser products or experience lesser service, because they have the convenience of parking
- Problems for Businesses
 - Some businesses don't need parking for their staff
 - Some businesses have parking e.g. there is a lot of rear lane access parking for shops in Three Saints
 - Some business do need a parking permit e.g. when a GM has to go out to meetings, pick up things, or make deliveries
 - Parking spots are often available during the day in the streets, as residents have take their cars to work, e.g. around Three Saints finding a parking spot

during the day is not an issue, but you can only stay there for one hour without incurring a fine

- E.g. at a recent meeting with Andrea Beattie from the CoS at the Beauchamp, after 45 minutes, I had to interrupt the meeting to move the car
- Trades people, e.g. plumbers, carpenters, those making deliveries, have refused to come on site because of the fines incurred in the area.
- Residents understandably resent businesses in the area because of the impact they have on resident parking, even though the business may be good for the area, e.g. the cinemas

(ii) What Is The Solution - What Do We Need From the CoS re Parking for Shoppers & Businesses?

(1) Free 2 hour parking is needed along Oxford St

(2) Parking meters on Oxford St need to be reviewed

- Preferably the parking meters would be removed
- At least the cost should be decreased

(3) A discrete, underground Council car parking station is needed

- At least one, near Three Saints Square, if not elsewhere, to accommodate the pressure of parking from the cinemas & the late night trading bookshops
- Discrete, underground car parking stations is one of the strategies that heritage Swiss ski resorts have implemented, to cope with record numbers of visitors.
- The entrance to the underground car parking stations can be very discrete, as in Swiss heritage villages, where they often look like carriage way entrances
- CoS meetings are accessible at the Rex building in Kings Cross because a car park is one of the options to get access to the area
- East Sydney galleries and restaurants are accessible because a car park is one of the options to get access to the area

(4) Allow businesses to apply for parking permits to be considered on a case by case basis

(5) Allow businesses and residents to obtain temporary parking passes for trades people

(6) Allow residents to have a visitors parking permit system

- Due to the pressure on parking, residents understandably often end up resenting popular, local businesses
- Giving the residents a visitors parking scheme at the same time as reforming business parking schemes, would provide an update to the current system that would also be good for residents
- A residents visitors parking permit scheme has been working successfully in Bronte for 8 years. A suggestion to discontinue the visitors parking scheme in Bronte was met with significant community protest because it works so well
- A visitor still has to find a parking spot, it just means that they can stay longer than one hour, without being fined.

C) Planter Boxes at Three Saints Square**(i) In addition to Lawrence Gibbons address on Topic 3: re Planning**

- The Three Saints Square Project has been trying to get planter boxes on all corners of the 5-way intersection at Three Saints Square, having already door knocked the area & already presented to Council (10th March 2008) a petition with approximately 300 signatures, each signature representing different households, businesses and institutions from all 5 corners of the intersection
- We are in our 4th year of working with Council to get these planter boxes, waiting on the Draft Streetscape Gardening Policy
- We appreciate the reasons why the Draft Streetscape Gardening Policy has been delayed
- We appreciate efforts by the CoS in the meantime, in that the CoS:
 - Has provided Living Colour displays at the intersection, twice per year for 6-weeks
 - year
 - is currently landscaping the grassy verge on Barcom Ave at Oxford St, including plans for a sculpture
 - has planted a tree on Victoria St and one on Oxford St
- We appreciate that the north east corner is Woollahra Council, who were advised in 2008 of the Community's plan

(ii) What Is The Solution - What Do We Need From the CoS re the Planter Boxes?

- (1) To by-pass, in this case, the need for the Community to wait any longer for the Draft Streetscape Gardening Policy (which is yet to be published, advertising for public comment, debated, modified and implemented)**
- (2) To start planning straight away, with the Community, planter boxes to be installed on the 4 CoS corners at the intersection**
- (3) To install the planter boxes.**