

**MM-2 MAYORAL MINUTE - PROPOSAL FOR URBAN RENEWAL
ALONG PARRAMATTA ROAD CORRIDOR FOR THE INNER
WEST GROUP OF COUNCILS**

Department Executive Services

Author Initials: AT

REPORT

Inner West Councils that share Parramatta Road from North Strathfield east have been discussing opportunities for a collaborative regional approach to manage urban renewal that is expected to follow the upgrade to this key transport corridor.

The WestConnex motorway is being developed to meet the growing needs of Sydney. It is 33 kilometres in length, includes capacity improvements on existing roads and new sections of roadway to better link Sydney's west with its international gateway, Sydney Airport and Port Botany.

As part of the WestConnex proposal, an extension is planned for the M4 to continue it east from North Strathfield to Taverners Hill, Petersham. The design of this section is a concept at this point in time.

This portion follows the Parramatta Road corridor and will directly affect the Local Government areas of Strathfield, Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Marrickville.

A key objective of delivering the WestConnex is to *“create opportunities for urban renewal, improved liveability and public and active transport improvements along and around Parramatta Road”*. In continuing the planning of the WestConnex, part of the next stage identifies *“define urban renewal objectives and principles with Urban Growth New South Wales to inform an urban renewal strategy for the Parramatta Road corridor”*.

The WestConnex is seen as a catalyst to transform Parramatta Road. It is predicted that new development would occur combining business, residential shopping, civic land uses, capitalising on the improved public transport opportunities and the lower noise and congestion through the removal of traffic and freight.

It is proposed to develop a master plan for Urban Renewal along the Parramatta Road corridor and strategies for its achievement. In order to implement any strategy, the planning powers for Councils, along the corridor, would need to be taken over by the planning authority that will be responsible. Losing planning control along the corridor would be detrimental to the local communities that live adjacent to the corridor and there is potential that community benefits that traditionally flow from major redevelopment would be lost.

The Mayors of Ashfield, Strathfield, Burwood, Leichhardt, Marrickville and Canada Bay have met on three separate occasions to discuss the establishment of a “special purpose authority”, or in light of the recommendations of the independent Local Government Review Panel a “County Council” form of structure, comprising of two representatives of each Council to assist in facilitating the progression of the urban renewal along the corridor.

Mr Iain Walker of newDemocracy was asked to provide his thoughts on how this may work and I have attached a copy of his proposal. This will be the subject of further discussion at future meetings, if all Councils agree, as it is proposed, to establish a citizens' panel to

facilitate community engagement across the region to ensure broader community input in the planning process.

The meetings to date have been working towards gaining a clearer understanding of the structure and operation of a specially convened “County Council” for delivery, ensuring the planning outcomes associated with the urban growth predicted along the corridor will be able to be carried out with legitimate community engagement and deliver tangible community benefits, through the planning process.

This will only occur if all Inner West Councils adopt a collaborative approach and work together demonstrating that Local Government can cooperate and share resources on major regional projects.

To date, there has been a genuine commitment from all Councils to examine fully the options presented, however more discussions will need to take place before it can be determined if agreement can be reached.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT Council endorse the collaborative approach being currently undertaken by the Mayors of the Inner West Sydney Councils that will provide the region with a planning solution for Parramatta Road.
2. THAT a further report be tabled at a future Council meeting on progress being made towards achieving a positive urban renewal outcome for the communities of Councils that share the Parramatta Road corridor.
3. THAT if the Inner West Sydney Councils agree to proceed with the formation of a County Council, or similar body that Council nominate hte Mayor and on other Councillor to represent the City of Canada Bay

Attachments:

1. The newDemocracy Foundation Proposal for the Inner West Group of Councils Working Together for Parramatta Road

PROPOSAL FOR THE INNER WEST GROUP OF COUNCILS

WORKING TOGETHER FOR PARRAMATTA ROAD

About The newDemocracy Foundation

The newDemocracy Foundation (nDF) is a not-for-profit research institute with deductible gift recipient (DGR) status, with a particular focus on best practice citizen engagement and innovations in democratic structures. We are non-partisan and hold no position on any issue. The Foundation's Research Committee comprises leading academics in deliberative democracy, practitioners, and former politicians from each side of politics, led by Geoff Gallop and Nick Greiner.

In 2012, nDF completed projects for the City of Canada Bay and the Public Accounts Committee of the NSW Parliament. We are currently undertaking a citizen's jury in South Australia for Premier Jay Weatherill. Some recent coverage on this latest project can be found at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-07-20/residents-look-out-safety/4833080?section=sa>

Our Proposal

In light of the findings of the Independent Local Government Review Panel it is proposed that the Inner West Group of Councils consider forming a "County Council" consisting of two councillors per council whose sole purpose will be to provide a region wide planning solution for Parramatta Road.

Parramatta Road is often cited as the prime example of the flaws in the current structure of local government. For this reason it is the ideal first project to visibly prove the merits of the County Council structure as a preferred solution.

Authority

Existing legislation already allows for councils to pursue a County Council structure. The County Councils are in effect "what you make of it" and only have the authority the member councils choose to delegate to it.

Establishment

Upon establishment, The Foundation proposes the County Council pursue a new Sub Regional Plan for Parramatta Road.

The objectives of a new Sub Regional Plan for Parramatta Road are:

- ✓ to demonstrate the benefits of collaboration, and

- ✓ to prove the effectiveness of the new structure in eliciting an actionable, area wide plan which participating Councils can support.

In practical terms, this planning process will deliver a spatial map outlining where density is to be placed, where new public spaces are to be created or enhanced and which heritage neighbourhoods are to be preserved. The plan would also clearly articulate the costed trade-offs that the community viewed as fair in terms of use of levies flowing from development.

Operational Overview

The early and substantive community engagement aspect of the process could work as follows:

- a. an open call for submissions whereby interested parties, community groups and developers make public submissions as to their views on how the area should work.
- b. a Citizens Jury of 43 participants is drawn *in order to synthesise this information*.
- c. this Citizens Jury for Planning (for which a separate and detailed proposal will be created if this summary proves to be of appeal to Councils) would require approximately 9-10 months to operate.
- d. central to the jury process is time for greater exploration of tradeoffs, independent access to experts of their choosing and their make up as everyday citizens rather than aligned interests.
- e. the County Council would have agreed to adopt the Jury's recommendations on an "all or nothing" basis.
- f. It should be noted that individual Councils would be likely to make submissions to the Jury so the views of each Council will have been incorporated throughout the process.

The Department of Planning have expressed interest in providing the necessary funds.

Time Period

We propose that the County Council be established for 24 months. Following that time period, respective councils will review its efficacy and their desire to embrace the structure.