



City of Parramatta

Stakeholder Workshop

Community Strategic Plan

15 November 2017

Introduction

As part of an ongoing consultation process, the City of Parramatta invited stakeholders from a broad range of areas including government agencies, community leaders and business groups to attend a workshop on Wednesday November 15, 2017. The purpose was to present the draft strategic objectives and supporting strategies from Council’s draft Community Strategic Plan.

This workshop was attended by close to 80 participants, including the Lord Mayor of Parramatta, Councillors and Local MPs. External consultants KJA were engaged to facilitate and produce this report on the proceedings. Held at the Parramatta Novotel, the event provided the opportunity to test and gather feedback on the draft strategic objectives and related strategies from the Community Strategic Plan.

The Community Strategic Plan is the highest level of plan that a council prepares on behalf of the community. The plan must include strategic objectives that address social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues, as well as strategies for achieving each objective.

These strategies cascade into Council’s Delivery Program and Operational Plan which turn the strategic objectives and strategies in the Community Strategic Plan into actions that sit within Council’s area of responsibility.



Source: Office of Local Government – Integrated Planning & Reporting

While Council is the custodian of the Community Strategic Plan, it may not be responsible for the delivery of all of the strategic objectives and strategies identified in the Plan. Other partners such as State agencies, non-government organisations, business partners and community groups are essential to help achieve the Plan.

City of Parramatta has undertaken an extensive 18-month consultation process to support the development of the Plan. The list of organisations that attended the workshop is included at Appendix A.

Strategic Objectives

Six draft strategic objectives were tested, along with related strategies. The six were:

Fair: We share the opportunities of growth for all.

Accessible: We are connected and can get to where we want to go.

Green: We care for and enjoy our environment.

Welcoming: We are inclusive and celebrate culture, creativity and community.

Thriving: We benefit from a having a thriving CBD, town centres and neighbourhoods.

Innovative: We collaborate, and employ new ideas to create a better future.

The full list of the draft strategic objectives and strategies is included at Appendix B.

Participants were asked three main questions:

1. Are these strategic objectives on the right track, or is there anything you would add/change?
2. What are the most important things Council should focus on over the next 3 years (i.e. Council's Delivery Program)?
3. What is your organisation currently doing that aligns with these strategic objectives and strategies, and what role do you see your organisation having in their implementation?

There was strong agreement and support for the strategic objectives and strategies, and for taking a collaborative approach to achieve the strategic objectives and strategies.

Q1. Summary of responses

Are these strategic objectives on the right track, or is there anything you would add/change?

Overall there was **strong endorsement** of the six strategic objectives and participants agreed that they addressed the range of opportunities and challenges facing the city. Table discussions encapsulated a range of issues including the **tension between growth and liveability** and the **importance of transport** and other **physical and social infrastructure to support population growth**.

There was wide **support for arts and culture**, with the need to address **perceptions of safety** noted as crucial for Parramatta's future as a thriving City. Other issues raised were access to green space, inclusion of people with a disability, recognition of heritage, and a stronger voice for Aboriginal people.

Q1. Individual responses

In response to Q.1, the following comments were made by individual participants and have been structured to align with the six strategic objectives:

Fair

"This is a fabulous initiative – we work in partnership with Parramatta and can see ourselves in this."

"This strategic objective is wonderful. The support that has been provided from Council over the last six years has been great."

"Health and wellbeing is really important."

Accessible

"Accessibility is about more than just transport – it's about access to services and facilities, especially during construction and inclusion for disabled people."

"Transport is crucial for the survival and growth of Parramatta."

"Transport connections are important for economic and social growth. If we set the vision we can get key consideration."

"Accessibility is fundamental – and requires partnerships- if you cannot access the city it cannot function as a city."

"We need to support business and maintain accessibility during the light rail construction."

Green

"The natural environment is a key asset to Parramatta which could attract greater tourism."

"Green open space is vital for community health and wellbeing."

"The focus should be on planting trees which provide the greatest shade in the fastest time."

"Need to think of green infrastructure in terms of the health benefits – especially in terms of reducing chronic disease."

"The river and trees have been neglected for 100 years – we can improve that."

Thriving

“We are already seeing this one delivered with events like Parramatta Laneways, live music, and NYE.”

“A thriving community is about social engagement and sustainability as well as economic prosperity.”

“A thriving community is about more than just \$\$.”

“We need social sustainability as well as environmental and economic sustainability.”

“Education should be included as a key part of a thriving/happy community.”

Welcoming

“Council is already leading in this aspect.”

“We are already seeing the benefits of this approach in our diversity in schools and multiculturalism – it’s a very welcoming city.”

“We could look at extending programs such as making room for artists’ culture in industrial areas.”

“We need to have a greater recognition and a stronger voice for the local Darug people. We could make Parramatta a leading city for reconciliation.”

“Art and culture is invested in everything.”

“A community which has live music and cultural activities is a happy community.”

Innovative

“There are opportunities to be more innovative in land use planning, and make room for creative uses.”

“There are a lot of new initiatives involved in Smart Cities, eg in wayfinding which could be adopted here.”

“Parramatta should be involved in State Government innovation initiatives.”

“We need real, innovative initiatives to change perceptions [of safety issues] – eg I love NY.”

“Use community input to benefit the City”

A summary of discussions by table is included at Appendix C.

Q2. Summary of responses

What are the most important things Council should focus on over the next 3 years?

The second question focused on gathering input for the development of Council's Delivery Program. The Delivery Program outlines the principal activities of Council over the next 3 years to assist in delivering on the strategic objectives in the Community Strategic Plan.

A recurring theme in the discussion of Q.2 was the **important role Council plays in providing social and physical infrastructure, or advocating for it where provision is not within Council's capacity**. **Transport infrastructure** in particular was noted, as well as public spaces for community use. The **need to engage with all sectors of the community in decision-making** was stressed.

Other topics of discussion included supporting arts and culture by getting rid of red tape, providing more green spaces and maintaining balance with the natural environment.

It was also felt that Council needed to take a **central role in moderating the potential tension between development and growth and the needs of the existing community**. Suggestions included maintaining strong governance and planning functions in managing development and playing a central role in mitigating the negative impacts of major construction projects such as the light rail, by protecting local businesses and ensuring the CBD remains accessible.

Q3. Summary of responses

What is your organisation currently doing that aligns with these strategic objectives and strategies, and what role do you see your organisation having in their implementation?

The third question for discussion sought to identify what organisations are already doing with respect to the strategies, and to explore potential areas for collaboration with the participants' own agencies and organisations.

Participants were supportive of the need for collaboration between Council and their own organisations and recognised that the **successful delivery of the strategic objectives would depend on co-operation and alignment of activities**. Participants were confident that this co-operation could be achieved and many noted that they already had strong, positive working relationships with relevant Council staff across a range of shared issues.

Participants were happy to share their own organisational objectives and expressed a **strong willingness to consider partnerships** where the objectives were seen to align with their own.

A summary of discussions by table included at Appendix C.

Participant feedback from the workshop was very positive. Council's commitment to ongoing engagement was acknowledged, as was the opportunity to participate in a rich discussion of issues of importance for Parramatta's future.

Next steps

At the conclusion of the discussion period, participants were invited to continue to share their views via the online survey at <http://bit.ly/communitystrategicplan> which was to remain open until November 24, 2017.

Participants were advised that the content of their discussions would be written up by KJA in a report which would be made available to them.

It was communicated that there will be the opportunity for further discussions through into 2018, with the public exhibition of the draft Community Strategic Plan scheduled for April/May next year.

Appendices

A. Organisations represented

Arts NSW	Parramatta Chamber of Commerce
Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union	Parramatta Eels
Billbergia Group	Parramatta Mission
Chamber of Commerce	Parramatta PCYC
Cycleways Advisory Committee	PAYCE
Elizabeth Sheppard Media	St Vincent de Paul
Greater Sydney Commission	Strata Plus
Heritage	Sydney Festival
ICE Information and Cultural Exchange	Sydney Olympic Park Business Association
Live Music Office	Sydney Story Factory
M Projects	The Centre for Volunteering
Member for Parramatta	The National Trust
Museum of Applied Arts and Science	The University of New England
NSW Health	Tourism Accommodation
NSW Police	Transport NSW
Office of the State Member for Epping	Uniting
Park Royal Hotels	Western Sydney Community Legal Centre
ParraCAN	Westwords

B. Draft strategic objectives and strategies



The Community Strategic Plan is the highest level of strategic planning undertaken by a council. The following six strategic objectives are proposed to underpin our plan and have been developed in consultation with our community. They reflect the community's aspirations for the City of Parramatta for the next 20 years.

FAIR.

WE SHARE THE OPPORTUNITIES OF GROWTH FOR ALL.

OUR STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THIS INCLUDE:

- Invest in services and facilities for our growing community
- Advocate for affordable and diverse housing choices
- Support our community to live active and healthy lives
- Engage in community capacity building to strengthen and empower our communities and build resilience
- Support learning and individual development
- Incorporate principles of universal design and accessibility into our City
- Provide a safe CBD and neighbourhoods

ACCESSIBLE.

WE ARE CONNECTED AND CAN GET TO WHERE WE WANT TO GO.

OUR STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THIS INCLUDE:

- Advocate for improved public transport and connectivity between Parramatta CBD, neighbourhoods and regional connections
- Improve travel experience and quality of life by managing traffic congestion and parking
- Upgrade our road networks and improve road safety
- Develop and promote active and sustainable transport through provision of walking and cycling networks

GREEN.

WE CARE FOR AND ENJOY OUR ENVIRONMENT.

OUR STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THIS INCLUDE:

- Protect and enhance our natural environment, air and water quality
- Keep our City clean
- Create and connect people to green space and provide outdoor sport and recreation spaces for our community to enjoy
- Build community resilience and infrastructure to reduce the impacts of extreme weather events
- Support sustainability in our built environment by encouraging energy and water efficiency, local supply, renewables, and reduced emissions and waste

THRIVING.

WE BENEFIT FROM HAVING A THRIVING CBD, TOWN CENTRES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS.

OUR STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THIS INCLUDE:

- Plan and deliver a vibrant and attractive CBD and neighbourhood centres
- Support Parramatta to become a destination city, with a thriving night time economy
- Facilitate local jobs growth and support people in finding employment
- Attract public and private investment to the City and support the growth and prosperity of local businesses
- Harness the new knowledge economy and attract leading research, educational and training facilities to Parramatta

WELCOMING.

WE ARE INCLUSIVE AND CELEBRATE CULTURE, CREATIVITY AND COMMUNITY.

OUR STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THIS INCLUDE:

- Make Parramatta a leading City of Reconciliation
- Conserve our heritage
- Recognise and celebrate our diversity and support a city where our people live harmoniously together
- Promote and support arts, culture and sport, and the growth of vibrant cultural precincts
- Foster creativity and creative industries

INNOVATIVE.

WE COLLABORATE, AND EMPLOY NEW IDEAS TO CREATE A BETTER FUTURE.

OUR STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THIS INCLUDE:

- Manage growth by engaging in strategic planning and implementing innovative solutions for our City's future
- Foster strategic partnerships to deliver the best outcomes for our community
- Develop Parramatta as a Smart City
- Engage and consult our community in decision-making
- Provide a strong governance framework and manage our assets and financial resources in a transparent and sustainable manner
- Provide service excellence through our diverse, skilled and effective workforce

C. Summary of discussions by table

Table 1

- Strategic objectives are about right. Good objectives but need to focus on implementation
- Parramatta needs to sort out its identity
- Balance between liveability and growth
- Celebrate and promote our built and indigenous heritage and manage the tension with growth and development
- Transport is key to improving accessibility
- Need to strike a balance between a culture of growth and preserving heritage
- Promote the cultural heritage
- Facilitate community hubs of services by putting service clusters in local centres
- Promote the integration of new sectors into the existing community
- Manage the impact of climate change on local areas by influencing development and behaviour
- More green space
- Develop visitor and events strategies
- Promote indigenous education and support ATSI businesses
- Support community and business engagement

Table 2

- Transport is the veins and arteries of the city
- Green is important: trees and green spaces that keep climate cool for people
- Heritage culture and art (creation not just consumption) is important
- Not just CSP goals, these are human goals: we should all be working on these in our own ways (ie endorsement of the strategic objectives)
- Parramatta's heritage provides opportunities for tourism
- The natural environment is a key asset for Parramatta which can be used to attract visitors
- The arts and creative industries are important – Council can support the arts and creativity by training and promoting young local artists. Locally defined events, such as the Arab film festival can be the key to arts success in Parramatta
- Growth should be planned rather than simply accepted

Table 3

- Make sure strategies are comprehensive
- Strengthen entrepreneurship and education
- Perceptions of safety are hard to overcome. Need to improve safety - and the perception of it
- Health and wellbeing are connected to place
- The importance of both physical and social infrastructure
- Continued investment in the cultural sector
- Resilience – to respond to challenges and opportunities
- Changing nature of community
- Turn input into outcomes
- Opportunity to act as an incubator for new businesses

Table 4

- Strategic Objectives are about right, but we also need to build capacity
- Some of the strategies are more important than others
- City for young and old – ecosystem for all ages and all stages
- Collaboration is critical – can't do this by ourselves (reweaving of civic society)
- Artists create an atmosphere of possibility, brings prosperity
- Transport is important, as are social justice, housing and homelessness, welcoming, energy and affordability, supporting people
- Parramatta needs to be moved at a higher level. Cross-Council connections need to align strategies across the area
- Capacity-building in sport and culture is important for a vibrant community
- Council can provide the good governance and collaboration with community to manage development
- Involving young people creates a more vibrant community and encourages them to stay in the area
- Community is not just for the young – also the mature
- Strategy to find ways to collaborate and measure success

Table 5

- Support strategic objectives but strengthen around social including different parts of the community more directly
- How to translate macro into micro
- Marketing of the city and how to build on success
- Importance of language
- City, not just CBD
- The test will be how we operate on day to day
- Inclusion on people with a disability needs to be spelled out more clearly
- Conserve heritage and celebrate history
- Encourage a mix of businesses in the city – a weekend as well as weekday economy
- A thriving community needs to be socially, as well as environmentally and economically sustainable.
- Translating the SOs into action – need to align these with organisations’ own strategic plans
- Transport is crucial to the survival and growth of Parramatta – must integrate with RMS and TfNSW priorities

Table 6

- Its sounding like a document that people can read (good) – important to write in plain English
- Beef up education and indigenous/colonial history
- Safety: move to innovation? If build a city that looks nice, increase safety
- Suggested that Wanderers march best thing for city (except police didn’t agree)
- Council just one player, need to work together
- Events are important
- How to make sure business doesn’t go bust as development happens
- Conserve, promote and celebrate heritage. Heritage could be a major drawcard for tourism
- Important to create vibrant streets. Focus on Parramatta being a safe community
- Programs like “Laneways” can bring new business to the city
- Concern about potential disruption from light rail construction

Table 7

- Strategic objectives are about right
- People impressed: fair and welcoming front and centre. Parramatta made positive strides on these.
- Need to consider land use planning controls – flexible regulation for things like the night time economy
- Do density well
- Access is important
- Need to focus on city as well as neighbourhoods
- Affordable housing
- Community wants infrastructure here before growth
- Green infrastructure brings health benefits
- Public domain important to a thriving CBD and neighbourhoods

Table 8

- The Strategic Objectives provide a good “catch all”
- Growth must leave the city in a workable position and bring jobs
- Access – timeliness of travel is important
- Environment – green space vital going forward (mix of small and large spaces)
- Cultural events are glue for society
- Impact of development on streets
- Jobs creation is vital
- City infrastructure: Feel safe and happy when we have quality infrastructure
- Cultural events can provide a glue for the city
- Walkability around restaurants is important
- Safety can be improved by activating spaces and being conscious about lighting
- Significance of Parramatta River as central to our City
- Parramatta Park could be used more – perhaps as a venue
- Events such as Laneways and Parramasala can bring fun to the city and get people into the streets.

Table 9

- Agree with strategic objectives
- Good design is important
- Flexible support for local artists
- If we want things to happen, need to take risks and support people
- How to make Parramatta a city of reconciliation when people from country can't afford to live here?
- Importance of language
- Innovation strategies need to be more innovative
- Fair green and thriving most important: plan 5 to 10 years after that
- Bohemian theory and the value of a city expressed by the number of artists
- Need to be real – our city
- Partnerships are important
- Local political representation needs to resurface
- There is support for grass roots culture of arts and sport
- Aboriginal people would like a stronger voice - Parramatta could be a leading city of reconciliation
- Important for the CSP to be inclusive and incorporate all views
- Need to reserve land for schools and other services
- Need to plan in advance for the disruption that comes from development