

City of Parramatta Council  
Attn: City Strategy  
Subject: Strategy Refresh - Economic Development Strategy  
PO Box 32, Parramatta NSW 2124

RE: Future Parramatta: Draft Economic Strategy

The Night Time Industries Association (NTIA) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Future Parramatta: Draft Economic Strategy paper.

The NTIA is a non-profit industry association, encompassing providers and supporters of hospitality, arts & culture, events and performance across Greater Sydney. The NTIA supports the City of Parramatta for incorporating the night time economy in its Draft Economic Strategy.

As an industry body, the NTIA acknowledges the importance of the Draft Strategy in setting the strategic landscape for the future of Parramatta. Strategies such as this play an important role in assisting industry understand and align with Local Government's vision for the future.

The NTIA has provided a number of key recommendations, which we believe are critical in ensuring the City of Parramatta is setup for success. These are outlined on the following pages.

The NTIA thanks the City of Parramatta for the opportunity to provide a submission and contribute to the broader conversation. Should you have any questions about the recommendations of this submission, please do not hesitate to contact Mick Gibb, CEO at [michael.gibb@ntia.org.au](mailto:michael.gibb@ntia.org.au)

Yours sincerely,



Mick Gibb  
Chief Executive Officer

## Economic Benefits of the Night Time Economy

A robust night-time economy contributes to the local economy, creates a sense of place, strengthens community wellbeing, and will generate flow-on effects for other economies and aspects of the community. In a study of London<sup>1</sup>, New York<sup>2</sup>, and Sydney<sup>3</sup>, it was shown the Night Time Economy delivers between 10 to 20 times the economic benefits to cost, factoring all direct and in-direct costs.

A 2011 study commissioned by the City of Sydney identified \$15.1 billion was generated by the NTE industry per year, from the following sources:

- \$425 million was generated by beverage-led businesses (liquor retail, pubs),
- \$1.4 billion came from cafés, restaurants and takeaway food shops,
- \$868.6 million was generated by entertainment-led businesses.
- Shops and retail turned over \$3.9 billion, \$2.3 billion was generated by infrastructure services, and
- \$3.4 billion was attributed to other (libraries and archives, architectural etc.).

As outlined in the Night Time Industry Association's Recovery Roadmap<sup>4</sup>, Greater Sydney alone accounts for up to 22% of the national NTE revenue and employment. It is therefore critical that the City of Parramatta continues to consider how NTE can contribute to broader employment and regional attraction targets.

The NTIA urge the City to consider the benefits of revitalising a Night Time Economy that centres the voice of the youth in the development of these major economic hubs and entertainment precincts.

A 2004 Guide on the Charter to include Youth authentically in local region redesign proposals, recognises that centring the youth voice supports a whole-of-government approach in the development of the region and ensures better responses towards addressing the specific needs of young people in the various regions.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> VisitEngland – The Night Time & Evening Economy – Realising the potential for Destination Organisations, 2012

<sup>2</sup> NYC's Nightlife Economy, Impact, Assets, and Opportunities – The Mayors Office of Media & Entertainment, 2019

<sup>3</sup> Sydney Night Time Economy: A Cost Benefit Analysis, City of Sydney 2011

<sup>4</sup> Recovery Roadmap 2022, Night Time Industry Association 2022

<sup>5</sup> Connecting Young People in Local Communities <<https://www.mav.asn.au>> data > assets, 2004



## Social and Cultural Benefits of the Night Time Economy

The NTE contributes to a wide range of positive social and cultural outcomes. There is a deep symbiotic relationship between the night-time and music and arts economy. Cultural activities such as theatre, film, art, live music, and festivals play a significant part in contributing to a city's social capital and economic prosperity. With 98% of Australians engaging with the arts sector<sup>6</sup>, the social and cultural opportunities within the City cannot be ignored. As outlined in the Sydney 24 Hour Strategy by InvestmentNSW<sup>7</sup>:

*“A thriving creative sector drives increased cultural activation, which helps to create identity and drives a city's distinctiveness and reputation. This is critical to maintain interstate and international visitation, attracting and retaining talent across the State's workforce and, ultimately, preserving Sydney's position as one of the world's truly global cities.”*

On a broader policy level, NSW Treasury's 2040 Economic Blueprint aspires to have NSW recognized as a standout destination for cultural tourism, major events and creative industries, and as a showcase of global content ranging from screen production to major cultural events. Regional NSW's 20 Year Economic Vision outlines the priorities for the economic development of the regions, singling out the Night Time industries as a means to activate town centres. Destination NSW's Visitor Economy Strategy 2030 has numerous actions to support the Night Time industries with the aim of increasing the visitor economy across the state.

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<sup>6</sup> National Arts Participation Survey, Australian Council for the Arts, 2020

<sup>7</sup> Sydney 24 Hour Strategy, Investment NSW 2020

## City of Parramatta Objectives

The NTIA applauds the City for its stated focus on safety and diversity in a thriving night time economy. The City's recent attainment of Purple Flag status is a solid foundation to build upon and to strengthen the diversity of offerings without compromising on safety. The City has identified the following core objectives:

1. We have a safe, thriving and diverse night time economy.
2. We are a lively city with events, festivals and activations that support the local economy.
3. We are a destination of choice for visitors

The NTIA makes the following recommendations:

- 1. Engage in an audit of existing after dark lighting strategies to ensure they align with international best practice.** Research conducted by Arup noted that; "Engaging a community with simple lighting interventions can be used to build resilience, create safer places and reduce antisocial behaviour while building a sense of community."<sup>8</sup>
- 2. Build upon the Purple Flag accreditation by progressing toward a Special Entertainment Precinct.** Sound and noise management remains as a core challenge for licensed venues seeking to diversify their operations. An SEP will provide operators with a degree of certainty that they can curate performance without an onerous regulatory environment and with the support of local council.
- 3. Align stakeholders across multiple sectors of the economy in partnerships and collaboration.** Diverse and disparate components of the night time economy work in tandem to create the ecosystem of the night. This includes obvious players such as hospitality, arts and performance but also includes ancillary elements such as the commercial property sector, public transportation and the local council. City of Parramatta should seek to support and initiate programs that bring these stakeholders together to achieve activation of the city with each party having a clearly defined role and desired outcome for success. Programs may include forums, workshops and activations where all parties collaborate in strategy design and execution.
- 4. Invest in and support wayfinding and placemaking in Uptown Districts.** Key to establishing an identity is a patron's ability to know where they are and what the district is about. Simple wayfinding measures such as decals on footpaths, stickers in shopfronts and

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<sup>8</sup> [The role of lighting in supporting town centre regeneration and economic recovery](#), Arup, 2020



the use of council owned street assets (ie flag and light poles) can also help support the district establish an identity. The NTIA urges City of Parramatta to investigate programs to support existing and emerging districts in the City to improve wayfinding.

5. **Explore the development of a Global DA to support event activation.** Assessing the opportunities for a Global DA akin to that of Wollongong can support the speedy activation of events and festivals to foster vibrancy.
6. **Invest in creative infrastructure in public spaces.** Aligned with the Global DA component, investing in three phase power, interchangeable lighting and fixed staging can support rapid activation of space. This also serves to ensure performance and cultural activity can be a significant drawcard to events.
7. **Support the local curators, creators and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artists.** Parramatta has an astounding amount of creative and cultural talent. Council operated or supported events should prioritise local emerging artists to provide a bedrock of live performance experience.
8. **Support the creation of dedicated pick-up and drop-off destinations around the city for taxis and ride sharing.** Dedicated taxi ranks and ridesharing stations support the ease of ingress and egress within the City. As the night time economy grows, how people enter and exit will become a considerable focus. The NTIA urges the City to take a front-foot approach to this matter.
9. **Align DA conditions with liquor licensing conditions across licensed venues.** To remove any doubt and complexity, the NTIA urges the City to seek to align the liquor licence conditions with those of a DA. This will support operators being able to trade to the full extent of their liquor licence where an inconsistency exists between the licence and the DA.
10. **Leverage the Western Sydney Airport's potential to draw in international visitors through a vibrant and diverse night time economy.** Parramatta can become a key destination of choice for international visitors through strategic activation of space, support for vibrant night time economy operators and considerable branding efforts to highlight the cultural diversity of the area.