

# SOUTH-EAST CITY NEWS

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SOUTH-EAST CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION INC (SECRA)

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Recently, local member and Minister for Adelaide Dr Jane Lomax-Smith said that the Adelaide City Council objective to increase the city overnight population to 34000 by 2010 was 'dopey' The figure includes 26000 permanent residents compared to an estimated current permanent population of 17000.- an increase of almost 53% in 4 years. Dopey or not it begs the question where will they all live and in what kind of accommodation? Older houses and cottages will be bulldozed to make way for multiple concrete boxes and the character of Adelaide will be changed for ever.

Many of these apartments will be sold to investors and rented out to transient populations of young couples and overseas students. This makes community-building difficult and when this market collapses as it inevitably will, what will become of this housing? The developers will be long gone and the permanent residents will be left to pick up the pieces. This policy of the Council needs to be questioned. Who are the winners and the losers and is it really sustainable in the long run?

SECRA is concerned about changes to the Development Plan which facilitate this form of development with very limited chances for residents to have any say about the quality and quantity of development. *David Plumridge, Chairperson*



**SHOULD OUR HERITAGE BE PROTECTED?** Beautiful mansions and many more-humble cottages make up the intrinsic character of the south-east corner of our city. In the 70's and 80's many were replaced with well designed townhouses, many built by the Housing Trust when that body acted as a responsible provider of affordable public housing. In more recent times developers have demolished much of our heritage and replaced it with .....who can say what! As developer pressure mounts it is essential that the Council moves to record and protect what is worthy of saving in the south of the city before it is too late. To its credit, Council has committed the funds – the work must now be done without delay. The book "Lost Adelaide" is worth reading – available for loan from the Hutt St Library

**YOUR BUDGET – BE INVOLVED** The Council is now asking for public comment on the 2006-2007 Annual Business Plan and Budget which can be obtained from the Customer Centre, Libraries or the ACC website. It is a very comprehensive document which shows Total Operating Expenditure of \$105m, Total Capital Expenditure of \$63m and rate revenue of \$57m. In a big-spending budget residents may well ask if enough is being spent to maintain city streets, footpaths and street (footpath) lighting. Comparatively small sums are allocated to improving the amenity of city living. Residential street quality languishes in the south-east precinct while millions are spent in pursuit of business promotion and education development in the city.

\$400000 to buy a new Connector Bus (same line as last year), solar-powered, is good but will it be any bigger or will residents still be left standing at the stops? The \$380000 per year running cost should be subsidised by the Unis as it is used mainly by their fee-paying customers to the exclusion of residents and visitors to the city.

We condemn the proposal to spend \$1.5m on the big screen at the Rundle Convergence (i.e. Times Square). Such a scheme is farcical - how could this ever become a sensible place of public gathering - it is yet another example of Council attempting to prop up flagging retailers in Rundle Mall. In a decently redeveloped Victoria Square it might make sense.

A further \$2.7m funding for events such as the East End Street Markets (\$400000 NETT COST TO RATEPAYERS IN 2006/07), Busking Festival *et al* and another \$1m in sponsorship funding for major events (such as Clipsal?) are of questionable nett benefit to the people of the city. More money should be spent on city residents rather than elusive visitors

\$28m to be borrowed for the bus depot which should be funded by the State Government or the private sector and which many would argue is totally in the wrong place is yet another example of Council misdirection of ratepayers resources.

SECRA will make a submission on the budget – the views of members on this and other subjects would be most welcome.

**PEDESTRIANS NEED TO KNOW THEIR PLACE** In 2002 Jan Gehl, celebrated Danish architect, commissioned by the Council and the State Government prepared a report 'Public Spaces and Public Life' which emphasised the importance of the pedestrian in the life of the modern city. He argued that in a car-dominated city such as Adelaide, pedestrians are often the losers. Footpaths are restricted and often become an obstacle course, squares look more like carparks and roundabouts, walk times at traffic lights are reduced, buttons have to be pushed, footpaths are poorly maintained and frequently disrupted by driveways and at intersections. Every "hallowed motorist" ends up as a "humble pedestrian" entitled to expect better treatment, especially the elderly and disabled. Walking should be pleasant and easy.



Gehl made 16 positive, achievable recommendations to improve the pedestrian's lot in Adelaide including improved pedestrian networks and diverting through traffic away from the city centre. Very few have been taken up by the authorities. (By the way, he did recommend more families to live in the city and he did advocate extension of the tram to North Terrace)

**BRING BACK THE WARDS** *You win some and you lose some!* Our joint submission with the North Adelaide Society asking the Council to review its elected representation finally prompted – after 3 years of inaction - a move by the Council. Unfortunately, the State Government refused to facilitate the previously enacted provisions for a review and opted instead for a long drawn out process of major review with a delay of the democratic process for Adelaide electors for 12 months. Whilst a decision to carry out the review is welcomed it is to be hoped that the result will be a strengthening of local elected representation with the emphasis on 'local' and 'elected'. We now await the appointment of the review panel.

**FOOTNOTE: CLIPSAL VACATED VICTORIA PARK FOR 2006 ON 12TH MAY – FULLY 47 DAYS AFTER THE EVENT**

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