

The Outer West of Sydney: Finding an Identity

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At a think tank on the development of western Sydney, the sense of common identity amongst competitive centres arose.

This is somewhat of a conundrum since the west is such a vast spatial region bounded by the Blue Mountains. As a result each particular centre seemed to 'self- image' itself based on its natural, social and economic traits and benefits.



Newcastle embraces the Hunter and Wollongong the southern highlands, so what does the

outer west region of Sydney embrace (if it should embrace any one thing?). The question therefore might be 'how does the vast region of the outer west of Sydney create a 'single self image' when it consists of almost individual tribal diversity and adversity.

The new plan for the growth of Sydney by the DOP&E brings this to life visually (see below).

<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-Your-Area/Sydney/A-Plan-for-Growing-Sydney>

The Outer West of Sydney: A very large box of chocolates?

The actual 'identity' of western Sydney, and the sheer scale of the western region will always plague any think tanks on how to develop this vast region. While the east of Sydney is 'suburb dense' the outer west is 'suburb sparse'. The east end of Sydney (spatially) is like a small box of chocolates that is brimming and full, while the west is rich also with chocolates but the box is like the size of a table. The eastern end suburbs rub shoulders with other suburbs within the infrastructure rich end of the city, with a few major centres emerging. The suburbs in the west end of the city metro however become regional centres with their own dynamics, separation and identity. These factors tend to underlie a competitive dynamic amongst them, where there is a fight for infrastructure to be pulled in their direction.

This becomes evident when you see the new Plan for Growing Sydney (DOP&E Dec 2014) which features a revisionist view of the Sydney metro right out west out to the mountains (see below). The question then is how does the western 'table size' box of chocolates 'self imagine' itself to create a regional identity or identities.

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