

The Outer West of Sydney: Beyond the economic lens

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In a recent city focused workshop, a key speaker illustrated the changing face of Sydney and other cities around the world through a mind spinning array of charts and graphs inter-spaced with topical strategic maps of the Sydney Metro. The presentation included the emergent 'geo-spatial' view of the city and other techniques, grounded in the grinding national statistics of economy and demography.

These after all are the foundation statistics of our nation at a macro level, the ABS, census, economic and industry data along with other industry data sets. The resultant analysis and charting of such data can however only ever be as good as the data itself. Whilst we still use the economic or demographic lens as our key visor for the viewing of the city, we will only see it in such terms.

The economic and demographic lens has allowed us to view the city from the stratosphere, through national statistics that were not originally designed to describe the phenomenological changes in the face of the city and its forces and drivers.

Meanwhile on the ground, the city moves like a slow giant, creeping every outward toward the frontier threatening to swallow the outer centres which are in its direct path. Such centers however are on their own historical timeline from their post rural era and form their own

development path in proud emergence into their own new modern city.

The way in which these two phenomena, the slow giant and the regional centre in its wake, interact requires more understanding than a national statistic can provide. The new view of the city must combine the view from the stratosphere with a view from the ground.

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