



Attendees mingling.

## Celebrating the nightlife in Yarra that the community has built

On 21<sup>st</sup> of June, Yarra City Council hosted *Yarra 5 to 9: The Night Time Economy* Event at the LuWow bar in Fitzroy.

Four panellists headlined the event, coming from very different perspectives including: Adrian Basso, Manager of PBS Radio 106.7FM, Patrick Donovan, CEO of Music Victoria, Brian Vandenberg, Manager of Alcohol, Tobacco and UV policy of VicHealth and John Henshall, Principal of Essential Economics.

Attendees included members of the Yarra Liquor Forum, local businesses, local residents, representative from the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation, Victoria Police and the Victorian Taxi Industry Association, local government representatives and other interested stakeholders.

## Debate about how to sustain a vibrant, diverse and safe Yarra.

With the musical delights of Fraser A Gorman kicking off the event, Adrian Basso the moderator for the evening, set the scene for the night.

The purpose of the event was to ignite conversation on how can we achieve Yarra at night that meets the needs of visitors who

desire food, social atmospheres offered by pubs/bars, seek live music and arts and culture, with those of local residents who expect a respected environment in close proximity to their homes.



Panellists, from Left to Right: Brian Vandenberg, John Henshall, Patrick Donovan and Adrian Basso.

## What our panellists had to say

Patrick Donovan provided interesting facts about the contribution of live music to Yarra's night time economy and to Melbourne, and the importance of adopting a sensible management tool that recognises the role of live music to be played to ensure there are far clearer guidelines to nearby residents about reasonable noise levels.

Brian Vandenberg discussed community safety in a vibrant night time economy. Specifically the importance of our current approach to responsible serving of alcohol in licensed premises and the role for all sectors of the community – businesses, Government, Police and the visitors of Yarra at night to support respectful and safe levels of behaviour.

John Henshall spoke about his experience as a local resident and his appreciation for the choice of restaurants, pubs and entertainment at his doorstep. John offered ways forward to manage a successful night time economy. For example better noise insulation for residential and commercial premises in close proximity, improved street lighting and diversify the activities available.

### Feedback from the audience

During the **Q&A** session of the night, some comments raised included:

Getting a balanced approach. The need to use evidence-based and targeted approaches to enhancing vibrancy and safety, and applying a blanket approach. As per current State Government alcohol policy and legislation.

Changing the culture of heavy drinking through diversifying activities available at night and encouraging participation in the night time economy for all ages. Perhaps also through media campaigning which worked effectively for drink driving, e.g. TAC ads and also Quit Victoria's smoking campaigns?



Attendees and panellists "Q and A".

### In response to 'What do you like about Yarra at night?', comments included:

*"People/buzz/safety in numbers"*

*"Diversity – all ages"*

*Stuff open – cafes/shops*

*"Sophistication for all ages"*

*Not quiet*

*Music"*

***"Create a vocal 'majority' – independent research on what Yarra residents think of venues/music etc. and a response to complaints from vocal minority"***

### In response to 'What are the opportunities for Yarra at night?', comments included:

*"Create safe public transport for late night, early morning"*

*"Look for options to create diverse, non-alcohol night economy"*

*"Varieties of musicians for all ages"*

*"More art like Paris"*

*"Create a vocal 'majority' – independent research on what Yarra residents think of venues/music etc. and a response to complaints from vocal minority"*

*"Create sophistication"*

*"A rich range of out of hours options including classes, training, cinema, gyms, accessible open space"*



### Next Steps

On 3 July at the Council meeting, Council pledged \$35,000 in seed funding to get a live music festival, which would be held across existing indoor venues, up and running next winter.

Yarra City Council appreciates the input from this community conversation on how to sustain Yarra's night time economy that meets community's needs.

### Fraser A Gorman closing the night.

This input feeds into Council's current work on a night time economy project. The next steps of the project will be communicated to those who requested to be kept informed. If you want to hear more, contact Susan Gulko, [susan.gulko@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:susan.gulko@yarracity.vic.gov.au) or 9205 5156.

Many thanks for your participation. What a great night!