

# Brighton shopowners want a new lease of life



## \$700,000 for Queensland multicultural events

Cultural diversity will be celebrated right across Queensland in the coming year, after \$700,000 was set aside by the Bligh Government for multicultural festivals, events and community development projects in 2009-10. Multicultural Affairs Minister Anastacia Palaszczuk said applications would be accepted for the 2009-10 round of Multicultural Assistance Program (MAP) grants from 11 September 2009 and will be open for two months.

"The Multicultural Assistance Program (MAP) is a key component to the Queensland Government's Multicultural Policy, Multicultural Queensland - making a world of difference," Ms Palaszczuk said.

"This program allows community organisations and local governments to apply for grants to help them stage multicultural festivals and cultural celebrations that foster positive community relations right across the state. "The grants, which are administered through Multicultural Affairs Queensland in the Department of Communities, also help fund community development projects and help improve access to services." Ms Palaszczuk said the 2009-10 MAP grants reinforced the Bligh Government's ongoing commitment to multiculturalism in Queensland.

"With almost 18 per cent of Queenslanders born outside of Australia, we have a great opportunity to host events and activities which capture and celebrate the rich cultural diversity that exists in our state," she said. "Queenslanders will be familiar with several popular MAP-supported festivals, including the Paniyiri Greek Festival in Brisbane, the Australian Italian Festival in Ingham and the Caboolture Multicultural Festival.

"The Griffith University's Multi Faith Centre's Training Program for Interfaith Understanding and Dialogue is also an example of how the grants program supports community relations projects that encourage social cohesion and harmony.

"I encourage all organisations and community groups to think about how they could make a difference in their community through a MAP grant."

*SHOP owners fear Brighton-Le-Sands is dying, killed off by bad press, badly managed policing and neglect by Rockdale Council. Business is down by at least 30 per cent, shops and restaurants are closing or relocating and many that are still operating have reduced staff.*

Residents said the "hoon" element that deterred tourists and residents had largely disappeared, but so had everyone else.

They are pointing the finger, not at the recession, but at the council and bad press after the December 2005 riot.

Brighton-Le-Sands was caught up in the aftermath of the Cronulla riot when youths travelling in groups and looking for retaliation converged on various locations, including Bay Street.

Residents said the resulting news reports created the impression Brighton-Le-Sands was a lawless place with race problems, hence regulars to the area's many restaurants stopped coming.

They said the council had done nothing to help, preferring to spend taxpayers' money in Rockdale itself.

Rockdale Mayor Bill Saravinovski is sympathetic and largely in agreement.

The funding for the Bay Street upgrade was there, he said, although he could not put a date on when the bulldozers would be rolling in,



Time for a turnaround: Bay-Street, Brighton needs a revamp, say shopowners. Picture: Lisa McMahon

but it was unlikely to be before Christmas.

Shopkeepers said the solution was to make Brighton-Le-Sands attractive to families by getting on with the long-promised upgrade of Bay Street, widening the footpaths for outdoor seating, generally beautifying the area and organising festivals and activities on the beach.

"We are suffering and dying slowly but Brighton can be brought back to life," said Manuel Belogiannis, who cut staffing at his Petar's Restaurant from 24 to less than 10.

"We've got to change the atmosphere and build the place up again."

**At Nick's Cake Shop in Bay Street, Con Theos said: "Brighton is not dying it's dead.**

**"Everybody knows why that is people are scared to come out after dark because they are still worried about what happened in the Cronulla riots.**

**"That was the turning point. It wasn't the car hoons that caused the prob-**

**lem.**

**"The council has enough money for everybody else but not us. We asked them to beautify the street and do you know what they gave us? A few flagpoles."**

**At Ferris Wheel, a fast-food shop in Bay Street, Con Karras is short of customers, although it is lunchtime.**

**"Can you see any people around?" he asked.**

**"The council does not provide anything for this area. They even took the Greek festival away.**

**"They should provide activities to bring people back."**

**Therese Gousetis of Zande, on Bay Street, near The Grand Parade, said: "This is an entrance way to the beach but there is nothing to excite you. There should be something on the beach, like volleyball events."**

**Angela Kouloukakis, of Kamari on The Grand Parade, agreed: "There is nothing to draw people here, not even a nice kids' playing area."**

The traders wanted a more consistent balance when it comes to policing.

"We get the police here in the mornings like six police on pushbikes at 10am when there are four people in the street, but there does not seem to be any police around at night when you need them," John from Brighton RSL said.

"We want two policemen rather than 10 or 15. If there is a lot, everyone thinks something is going on and gets frightened," said Con Theos.

Rockdale Mayor Bill Saravinovski said: "There are technical things to be fine-tuned, such as some design issues with the RTA regarding the corner of Bay Street and The Grand Parade.

"We may be doing the work in stages, probably after the Christmas.

"We are certainly supporting Brighton and doing everything we can.

"We've spent millions on the beach-front to encourage people to come here but we can't physically drag people to the area. The traders could do a lot to help themselves.

"At the end of the day Brighton will have more money spent on it than King Street in Rockdale."

St George police's Superintendent Helen Begg said crime had dropped in the past three years.

She said police maintained a presence with regular patrols on foot, bicycles, cars, boats and horses.

She said a new mobile policing van would aid police response.

Article from The Leader  
BY MARIA GALINOVIC

## Running for charity

ANTHONY Peridis may spot a celebrity or two running alongside him in the New York marathon in November. But rather than be starstruck, the Miranda resident and television presenter will be focused on supporting a worthwhile cause. The former sports journalist usually spends his time travelling to the city's hotspots on Channel Seven's Sydney Weekender. But as an ambassador for the Heart Foundation, he is also training to take part in one of the world's most popular marathon events. Mr Peridis, 30, has almost raised his target of \$15,000 to compete in the run half of which will go towards supporting research funds and prevention programs for the foundation, and the remainder for his travel expenses. Mr Peridis has been a runner for about 17 years and ran in his eighth City to Surf this month. He hopes to finish the 42.2 kilometre run through the five boroughs of the Big Apple in less than 3 hours. "It's something I've always wanted to do," he said. "New York is one of my favourite cities in the world and I'd like to support the foundation." Heart, stroke and blood vessel disease is a leading cause of death in Australia.

Article from The Leader -BY EVA TEJSZERSKI / photo: Marathon man: Anthony Peridis will sweat it out in the New York. Picture: John Veage

