

We The People  
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We the People 272 Dodge City-Beautiful One Day Dodgy the Next



Good Day to you. Listeners may remember over the last few years I've made critical comment in the public interest regarding the Gold Coast City Council and the mayor Tom Tate. The narrative information comes from many deeply concerned citizens and groups and anonymously from distressed employees of the Council who fear retribution. Much has been written about real and perceived conflicts of interest among Councillors and whether they always adhere to the principles of the Local Government Act of Queensland. These principles require transparency, sustainable development, democratic representation, social inclusion and ethical behaviour. My view is that this Council does not address these requirements well and in fact it appears the Council is the lackey of the State government which wants an over-populated gridlocked Gold Coast and a sycophantic Council to do its bidding. Put simply the comparison of the Gold Coast with paradise is left wanting but a comparison with the wild west town of Dodge City seems far more appropriate. Dare I say.....Dodge City, beautiful one day, dodgy the next.

Dodge City was a notorious place full of gun-slingers and nefarious characters. In the burgeoning settlement, there was initially no law enforcement and Dodge City quickly acquired its infamous stamp of lawlessness. As the many buffalo hunters, railroad workers, drifters and soldiers streamed into the town after long excursions on the prairie, they quickly found the saloons and the inevitable fights ensued. With the gunfighters dying with their boots on Dodge City developed the Boot Hill cemetery which was used until 1878. Now enter Wyatt Earp who was appointed to clean up the town. He had 4 deputies including Bat Masterson. Intending to restore order, one of the first things the new lawmen did was to initiate a "Deadline" north of the railroad yards on Front Street to keep the commercial part of the city quiet. On the north side, the city passed an ordinance that guns could not be worn or carried. On the south side of the "deadline", those who supported the lawlessness continued to operate as usual, with a host of saloons, brothels, and frequent gunfights. The expression "Red Light District" was coined in Dodge City when the train masters took their red caboose lanterns with them when they visited the town's brothels. The gun-toting rule was in effect around the clock and anyone wearing a gun was immediately gaoled. Soon, Dodge City's gaol was filled with the help of Doc Holiday and his partner Big Nose Kate. Dodge City Kansas was known as a "**wicked little town**" where the laws were bent and shadowy characters made plenty of money. Eventually Dodge was a favourite home of the film industry where notables such as Errol Flynn and Olivier de Havilland starred in the film of the same name.

So with tongue-in-cheek perhaps you too can see the comparison with the Gold Coast and why we need a Wyatt Earp to clean up the joint. The Queensland CCC ran operation Belcarra into local Councils but decided that because more than 12 months had passed they couldn't possibly prosecute those who had allegedly broken the law. They have even recommended that fellow Councillors decide whether or not a real or perceived conflict of interest should prevent a Councillor from voting and this is in keeping with the very best of Dodge City logic. The CCC's reputation for being a toothless tiger is underpinned by their near impotent report and inaction in the face of the most compelling evidence. The Belcarra report would make the writers of Yes Minister and Utopia proud because at least in my view it fails to do anything of substance and relies heavily on its own supreme expressions and word count to appear worthy when it really misses the target by a country mile. This is in part because of the old political chestnut where the scope and terms of reference are limited and therefore does not and cannot attend to the real issues facing local government in Queensland. It simply becomes a limited self-fulfilling prophecy and is in reality inconsequential and Dodge City will remain Dodge City. Have no doubt the powers in George street and Southport know this. So in the end it is up to the good folk of the Gold Coast to bring this lot into line and to clean up Dodge City. Your first real opportunity is at the next State election where I strongly recommend you do not vote for Labor or the LNP, rather for an independent Wyatt Earp who will make a difference. When the next Council elections arrive my further advice is to drain the swamp completely and send them all packing to Boot Hill.

**Until next time this is Gunslinger Bayley**

The Dodge City Peace Commission

