

Lismore Business Activation Plan

2025 - 2027



Lismore Business Activation Plan introduction

Lismore is the heart of the Northern Rivers, known for its welcoming community, rich culture, arts, and stunning natural surroundings. Located on the land of the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, Lismore offers vibrant shopping, dining, events, essential services, and educational opportunities.

The Lismore Business Activation Plan 2025 - 2027 aims to stimulate Lismore as a thriving business hub and encourage more people to explore and enjoy the city and its surrounds.

This plan provides a simple strategy to support business activation and promotion across Lismore's key business areas:

- Lismore CBD
- South Lismore
- North Lismore
- East Lismore
- Goonellabah

Local businesses and organisations including Business Lismore have helped shape this plan, and their input will continue to guide its implementation for the best outcomes.

The plan focuses on:

- ✓ Making Lismore more vibrant
- ✓ Promoting local events, attractions, and businesses
- ✓ Enhancing the city experience
- ✓ Supporting local businesses and economic growth

Framework

The plan will be adjusted each year, to reflect key learnings, feedback, community and business engagement

- A detailed framework for business activation is outlined on page 2.
- Planned activations and promotions from June 2025 – June 2027 feature on pages 4-7.



Lismore Business Activation Plan framework

	CORE		COMPLEMENTARY	
GOALS	Vibrancy <i>Lismore activities and spaces attract people to explore, shop and be inspired.</i>	Promotion <i>Boosting visitation and local engagement with Lismore’s business community, events and attractions.</i>	Experience <i>Lismore streets and spaces are attractive, easy to get around, and help people feel safe and connected.</i>	Support <i>Lismore’s business community accesses helpful information resources, programs and opportunities.</i>
OBJECTIVES	V1. Support and implement activation projects that engage both businesses and the community across Lismore.	P1. Attract both locals and visitors to experience Lismore’s events, shopping, and vibrant community spirit.	E1. Implement small-scale improvements to create welcoming, community-friendly spaces to connect in business centres.	S1. Support and collaborate on key events and initiatives that activate business districts, drive foot traffic, and increase local engagement.
	V2. Strengthen key events to attract more visitors, enhance attendee experiences, and increase local business support.	P2. Promote positive stories about Lismore, celebrate local businesses, and inspire economic growth through Visit Lismore channels.	E2. Support the delivery of a vibrant Christmas atmosphere with decorations, lighting, music and interactive experiences.	S2. Support local businesses and stakeholders to develop and trial projects that generate economic, social and cultural benefits.
	V3. Celebrate Lismore’s community, honouring First Nations heritage, diverse local stories, and future vision.	P3. Increase website engagement through integrated marketing through Visit Lismore channels.		S3. Increase awareness of valuable business resources and information, encouraging participation and economic growth.
	V4. Revitalise city spaces through community-driven placemaking initiatives.	P4. Boost awareness of Lismore’s attractions by enhancing branding and visual promotions across business districts through Visit Lismore channels.		
	REPORTING AND REFLECTING • Measure progress against key performance indicators • Provide an update each July to Lismore City Council, stakeholders, and the community. • Share data, updates, and opportunities through the Lismore City Council website, social media, and Business e-news. • Collaborate across Council to support business activation • Work with external partners to maximise opportunities and impact.			



Planning for success

The **Lismore Business Activation Plan** aims to create economic, social, and cultural value for Lismore by driving business growth, increasing visitation, and enhancing public spaces. We will track progress and share outcomes with key stakeholders.

Key success measures

Success will be measured using a mix of data and feedback, including:

- ✓ **Economic trends** – using platforms like .id Profile, Neighbourlytics, banking transaction data, and Why Leave Town (shop local program).
- ✓ **Participation data** – tracking attendance, demographics, and engagement in funded projects.
- ✓ **Marketing performance** – monitoring engagement, web traffic, and conversions.
- ✓ **Stakeholder feedback** – gathering insights from businesses, community members, and audiences through surveys.
- ✓ **Impact assessment** – evaluating social, cultural, and environmental benefits with partner organisations.

Plan delivery and contacts

This plan guides the use of Special Business Rate (SBR) levy funds for revitalising Lismore's business areas. Developed by the Destination and Economy team in consultation with stakeholders, it builds on business renewal engagement efforts following the 2022 natural disaster.

Lismore City Council manages financial and reporting, following IPART (Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal) requirements.

For more information, visit lismore.nsw.gov.au/business or contact the Destination and Economy team at (02) 6625 0500 or business@lismore.nsw.gov.au.

Get Involved!

Local businesses - help spread the word about Lismore's attractions and activities! See visitlismore.com.au, connect and tag @visitlismore on social media.



Lismore Business Activation Plan program: July 2025 to June 2027

When	Goal	Activity Type	Description	Key Performance Indicators
July - September 2025	Promotion	Marketing Campaign	Father's Day/Shop Local campaign (August/September) promotions.	Increase online engagement metrics by 5% annually, grow local business participation in the Shop Local program by 5% per year, and increase the total value of Shop Local cards loaded over a 12-month period by 10%.
		Engagement	Business Lismore to expand its marketing and engagement activities to increase business awareness of initiatives, opportunities and general information. *	Deliver a minimum of 4 communications per year (newsletter, social media campaign or info sessions) and achieve a 15% increase in engagement (opens, clicks, attendance) per year. Annual business survey results identify improved awareness of local initiatives and opportunities.
		Annual Business Awards	Business Lismore to deliver a high calibre Lismore Business Excellence Awards including celebrity MC or guest. *	Increase business participation by 10% pa.
	Experience	Business Centre Activation	Delivery of Laneways of Lismore Arts (LOLA) Festival (23 August 2025).	Deliver LOLA in collaboration with local arts organisations and businesses, attracting 6,000 + attendees to Lismore and generating measurable social, cultural and economic outcomes. Support capacity building opportunities to a minimum of 20 local creative industry workers. Deliver Event Impact Report and coordinate into quarterly data reports to inform business on impact.
			Converge Program final Art Exhibition.	Deliver final Converge exhibition showcasing outcomes from the program, attracting a minimum of 500 attendees over a two-week period. Achieve 80% positive program participant feedback. Deliver Event Impact Report and coordinate into quarterly data reports to inform business on impact.
			Biannual Lightbox Lane exhibitions (June and December) – June exhibit delayed.	4 lightbox installations, artist engagement, visitor insights, and feedback. Increase promotion of gallery through Visit Lismore social media, website and promotional campaigns. Support capacity building by providing paid opportunities to 4 local creative industry workers.
	Support	Business Insights	Delivery of annual Business Activation Plan report.	Issue to LGA businesses with a 30% read rate.
			Delivery of quarterly data reports to inform businesses of current LGA spend trends (July).	Issue to LGA businesses with a 30% read rate.
			Footpath Activation Trial outcomes report (from trial held in Jan-June 2025).	Feedback provided from 10% of businesses, aggregated into a report and presented to senior staff and elected body.
		Event Support	Support local programs and events that activate and engage with Lismore's Business Centres.	Deliver Event Impact Reports and coordinate into quarterly data reports to inform business on impact.
		Business Relationships	Business Lismore to work collaboratively to build and maintain relationships with other Chambers, Local Government and State Government agencies to support projects of economic benefit. *	Maintain monthly contact with Lismore City Council, and a minimum quarterly contact with State Government agencies and other Chambers to ensure positive relationship development.

When	Goal		Activity Type	Description	Key Performance Indicators
October - December 2025	Vibrancy	Experience	Business Centre Activation	Delivery of Christmas programs.	Increase business centre foot traffic and spend. Grow online engagement analytics by 5%. Deliver Event Impact Report and coordinate into quarterly data reports to inform business on impact.
				Scheduled parklet relocation in Business Centres.	Stakeholder and community feedback collected from QR data.
				Biannual Lightbox Lane exhibitions	4 lightbox installations, artist engagement, visitor insights, and feedback. Increase promotion of gallery through Visit Lismore social media, website and promotional campaigns. Support capacity building by providing paid opportunities to 4 local creative industry workers.
	Promotion		Engagement	Business Lismore to expand its marketing and engagement activities to increase business awareness of initiatives, opportunities and general information. *	Deliver a minimum of 4 communications per year (newsletter, social media campaign or info sessions) and achieve a 15% increase in engagement (opens, clicks, attendance) per year. Annual business survey results identify improved awareness of local initiatives and opportunities.
			Marketing Campaign	Christmas Shop Local campaign	Increase online engagement metrics by 5% annually, grow local business participation in the Shop Local program by 5% per year, and increase the total value of Shop Local cards loaded over a 12-month period by 10%.
	Support		Business Insights	December CBD Occupation Audit undertaken.	Audit undertaken encompassing defined area, within a two-week period.
			Business Insights	Delivery of quarterly data reports to inform businesses of current LGA spend trends (October).	Issue to LGA businesses with a 30% click rate to report.
			Event Support	Support local programs and events that activate and engage with Lismore's Business Centres.	Deliver Event Impact Reports and coordinate into quarterly data reports to inform business on impact.
			Business Development	Business Lismore to deliver an annual Economic Growth Program with keynote speaker focusing on business support, growth and development. *	Achieve a minimum of 50 business participants and a 75% of attendees reporting an increased understanding of program objectives in post event survey.
			Business Relationships	Business Lismore to work collaboratively to build and maintain relationships with other Chambers, Local Government and State Government agencies to support projects of economic benefit.	Maintain monthly contact with Lismore City Council, and a minimum quarterly contact with State Government agencies and other Chambers to ensure positive relationship development.

When	Goal	Activity Type	Description	Key Performance Indicators
January – March 2026	Vibrancy	Business Centre Activation	EOI issued with consultation underway with businesses to support involvement in 2026 activations.	A minimum of 10 businesses engaged to support activations throughout the year.
			Delivery of Bilby Hunt around business centres.	Boost engagement around CBD businesses with prize collection (target 500) and spending (target 5% increase).
	Promotion	Engagement	Business Lismore to expand its marketing and engagement activities to increase business awareness of initiatives, opportunities and general information.	Deliver a minimum of 4 communications per year (newsletter, social media campaign or info sessions) and achieve a 15% increase in engagement (opens, clicks, attendance) per year. Annual business survey results identify improved awareness of local initiatives and opportunities.
	Support	Event Support	Support local programs and events that activate and engage with Lismore's Business Centres.	Deliver Event Impact Reports and coordinate into quarterly data reports to inform business on impact.
		Business Development	Business Lismore to deliver an annual Flood Plan Workshop to the business community. *	Achieve a minimum of 30 business participants and a 75% satisfaction within the post event survey.
		Business Relationships	Business Lismore to work collaboratively to build and maintain relationships with other Chambers, Local Government and State Government agencies to support projects of economic benefit.	Maintain monthly contact with Lismore City Council, and a minimum quarterly contact with State Government agencies and other Chambers to ensure positive relationship development.
		Business Insights	December CBD Occupation Audit findings announced in January 2026.	Media Release attended by journalists, report on growth in CBD investment.

When	Goal		Activity Type	Description	Key Performance Indicators
April – June 2026	Vibrancy	Experience	Business Centre Activation	Deliver Family orientated activity within the Quad or similar location to activate the City Centre.	Boost family engagement around CBD businesses that includes engagement with businesses. Social media interactions, partnerships and promotions.
				Biannual Lightbox Lane exhibitions (June and December).	4 lightbox installations, artist engagement, visitor insights, and feedback. Increase promotion of gallery through Visit Lismore social media, website and promotional campaigns. Support capacity building by providing paid opportunities to 4 local creative industry workers.
				Scheduled parklet relocation.	Stakeholder and community feedback collected from QR data.
	Promotion	Engagement	Business Lismore to expand its marketing and engagement activities to increase business awareness of initiatives, opportunities and general information.*	Deliver a minimum of 4 communications per year (newsletter, social media campaign or info sessions) and achieve a 15% increase in engagement (opens, clicks, attendance) per year. Annual business survey results identify improved awareness of local initiatives and opportunities.	
		Marketing Campaign	Mother’s Day/Shop Local campaign	Increase online engagement metrics by 5% annually, grow local business participation in the Shop Local program by 5% per year, and increase the total value of Shop Local cards loaded over a 12-month period by 10%.	
	Support	Business Insights	June CBD Occupation Audit undertaken.	Audit undertaken encompassing defined area, within a two week period.	
			Delivery of quarterly data reports to inform businesses of current LGA spend trends (April).	Issue to LGA businesses with a 30% click rate to report.	
		Event Support	Support local programs and events that activate and engage with Lismore’s Business Centres.	Deliver Event Impact Reports and coordinate into quarterly data reports to inform business on impact.	
		Business Relationships	Business Lismore to work collaboratively to build and maintain relationships with other Chambers, Local Government and State Government agencies to support projects of economic benefit.*	Maintain monthly contact with Lismore City Council, and a minimum quarterly contact with State Government agencies and other Chambers to ensure positive relationship development.	

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July - September 2026	Experience	Business Centre Activation	Deliver Family orientated activity within the Quad or similar location to activate the City Centre.	Boost family engagement around CBD businesses that includes engagement with businesses. Social media interactions, partnerships and promotions.
	Promotion	Marketing Campaign	Father's Day/Shop Local campaign	Increase online engagement metrics by 5% annually, grow local business participation in the Shop Local program by 5% per year, and increase the total value of Shop Local cards loaded over a 12-month period by 10%.
		Annual Business Awards	Business Lismore to Deliver a high calibre Lismore Business Excellence Awards including celebrity MC or guest. *	Increase business participation by 10% pa.
		Engagement	Business Lismore to expand its marketing and engagement activities to increase business awareness of initiatives, opportunities and general information.	Deliver a minimum of 4 communications per year (newsletter, social media campaign or info sessions) and achieve a 15% increase in engagement (opens, clicks, attendance) per year. Annual business survey results identify improved awareness of local initiatives and opportunities.
	Support	Business Insights	June CBD Occupation Audit findings announced in July 2026.	Media Release attended by journalists, report on growth in CBD investment.
			Delivery of annual Business Activation Plan report.	Issue to LGA businesses with a 30% click rate to report.
			Delivery of quarterly data reports to inform businesses of current LGA spend trends (July).	Issue to LGA businesses with a 30% click rate to report.
			Business Activation Plan deliverables review for July 2027– June 2028.	Deliver updated Business Activation Plan by October 2026.
		Business Relationships	Business Lismore to work collaboratively to build and maintain relationships with other Chambers, Local Government and State Government agencies to support projects of economic benefit.*	Maintain monthly contact with Lismore City Council, and a minimum quarterly contact with State Government agencies and other Chambers to ensure positive relationship development.
	Event Support	Support local programs and events that activate and engage with Lismore's Business Centres.	Deliver Event Impact Reports and coordinate into quarterly data reports to inform business on impact.	

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			Marketing Campaign	Shop Local Campaign – Christmas.	Increase online engagement metrics by 5% annually, grow local business participation in the Shop Local program by 5% per year, and increase the total value of Shop Local cards loaded over a 12-month period by 10%.
	Support		Business Insights	December CBD Occupation Audit to be undertaken.	Audit undertaken encompassing defined area, within a two week period.
			Business Development	Business Lismore to deliver an annual Economic Growth Program with keynote speaker focusing on business support, growth and development. *	Achieve a minimum of 50 business participants and a 75% of attendees reporting an increased understanding of program objectives in post event survey.
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	Promotion		Marketing Campaign	Mother's Day/Shop Local campaign.	Increase online engagement metrics by 5% annually, grow local business participation in the Shop Local program by 5% per year, and increase the total value of Shop Local cards loaded over a 12-month period by 10%.
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* Delivered by Business Lismore.

Background

The Destination and Economy team developed this plan through ongoing collaboration with local businesses, government agencies, and community stakeholders. It builds on insights from Business Renewal Engagement following the 2022 natural disaster and considers broader social and economic trends affecting Lismore.

This Business Activation Plan directs Special Rate Variation (SRV) funds for Lismore’s revitalisation and promotion until June 2026. These funds are indexed and dependent on ratepayer contributions. The City Safe Program and other grant-funded projects fall outside this plan’s budget but align with broader Council strategies.

Collaboration and engagement

- ✓ **Works alongside key Council teams** (events, strategy, planning, parks, facilities, and services).
- ✓ **Leverages larger opportunities** for business growth, tourism, and community engagement.
- ✓ **Partners with Business Lismore, Business NSW, and government agencies** to maximise impact.
- ✓ **Encourages local businesses to get involved** and contribute ideas for shared success.

We **value our strong relationships** with **Business Lismore, Business NSW, and government agencies**, and we **welcome all local businesses and organisations** to connect with us. By working together, we can explore opportunities, align priorities, and create **long-term benefits for Lismore**.

On 13 May 2025 Lismore City Council resolved to commit \$50,000 (excluding GST) per annum from the Lismore Special Business Rate to Business Lismore to support the delivery of business advocacy, education and support to businesses within the ratable area including Lismore CBD, South Lismore, North Lismore and Goonellabah. A Service Level Agreement with Business Lismore has been developed to ensure expenditure is in alignment with the Business Activation Plan.

For more information on current programs and activations, visit:

<https://www.lismore.nsw.gov.au/Business/Business-support/Lismore-Business-Activation-Plan>

Operating context – relevant strategies and policies

National	Australia 2030: Prosperity through Innovation Revive – Australia’s Cultural Policy 2023-2028 Thrive 2030 The Re-Imagined Visitor Economy
State	NSW Government North Coast Regional Plan 2036 Northern Rivers Regional Economic Development Strategy 2023 Lismore Regional City Action Plan 2036 Destination NSW Visitor Economy Strategy
Local	Lismore City Council Community Strategic Plan Lismore City Council Economic Development Strategy 2019-2024 Lismore City Council Destination Management Plan 2024-2028 Lismore City Council Business Activation Plan 2021-2023 Lismore City Council Business Promotion Program 2016-2018 Lismore City Council Shaping the Lismore CBD Report 2019