



Lismore Promotion Program
incorporating City Centre Management

Business Plan 2010-2011

Our Vision

Lismore's City Centre will be a vibrant meeting place for locals and visitors seven days a week and the most desirable location for business and pleasure.

Prepared for the
Lismore Business Promotion Panel
and Lismore City Council
by Stephen Nelson, City Centre Manager

lismore
come to the heart

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Section 1: Introduction

The Lismore Promotion Program

The Lismore Promotion Program is a partnership between business, Council and the community, funded by the Special Business Rate Variation Levy (SBRVL). The SBRVL is governed by the Lismore Business Promotion Panel and administered by Lismore City Council. The purpose of the SBRVL promotion funding is to ensure Lismore retains its function as a regional centre, with the revitalisation of the City Centre identified as being the key to this objective.

The SBRVL is levied annually on all business properties in the Lismore Urban Area to fund the Lismore Promotion Program (LPP). For the financial year 2010 – 2011, there are 1,082 rated property owners and an estimated 2,990 registered businesses in the Lismore Urban Area, directly and indirectly contributing to the budget which funds the program.

The Lismore Business Promotion Panel oversees and provides guidance to the City Centre Manager (CCM). The CCM is responsible for projects contained within the Lismore Promotion Program's Business Plan year-to-year, is also charged with carrying out the more strategic and long term process of City Centre Revitalisation.

Section 2: Objective

Key objectives of the Lismore Promotion Program

The over-arching purpose of the Lismore Promotion Program is to *"Promote Lismore in a positive manner which reinforces its position as the regional centre of the Far North Coast of NSW"*.

The key objective of this Business Plan is more focussed on promoting and activating the CBD in order to achieve our Vision: *"Lismore's City Centre will be a vibrant meeting place for locals and visitors and the most desirable location for business and pleasure."*

Objectives of the Business Plan

1. Marketing the new 'Lismore-come to the heart' brand.
2. Heightening awareness of the range of products and services offered within the Lismore City Centre across the Lismore Urban Area.
3. Increasing the numbers of consumers, their expenditure and length of stay in the City Centre.
4. Consolidating existing and mature target markets (e.g. LGA's west of Lismore).
5. Identifying and attracting new markets with potential for positive growth (i.e. coastal LGA's, the Northern Rivers and other NSW regions, SE Qld, etc.).
6. Providing reasons to visit and shop in Lismore, year round.

Section 3: Business Plan Components

Please note: these components are linked to the Budget (Section 6, Page 11)

3.1 Marketing

(Advertising / Media Spend / Publicity / Public Relations / Communications)

Media advertising and destination marketing

Strategically-planned media advertising is required to promote Lismore and the City Centre to local, regional and out-of-region audiences, year round. Marketing Lismore as an attractive destination with positive attributes, is of paramount importance. Our strengths are:

- an excellent range of shopping choices;
- the greatest concentration of services and facilities in the Northern Rivers region; and
- the cultural and creative activity that exists here.

In 2010-2011 expanded airing of the 'Lismore-come to the heart' 15sec and 30sec Generic 'destination' television commercials (TVCs) will occur. These were produced in late 2009 to promote the Lismore City Centre and act as stand alone 'destination TVCs', or can be screened to complement specifically themed TVCs promoting shopping campaigns or special events. Currently, all three regional television networks servicing Lismore run the destination TVCs when required, in a co-operative effort to increase awareness of the City.

Generic or tailored press advertisements will be placed in targeted print media, such as local or out-of-region newspapers and specialist publications like visitor guides and quality magazines.

Radio advertising will be employed, again, to publicise specific promotions, special events and festivals.

Brand awareness

The new 'Lismore-come to the heart' brand has established a benchmark and has been met with wide-spread approval. The proposed \$100,000 increase in the SBRVL funding will enable the brand to extend its reach, should the rate increase be approved. However, it still needs to gain greater take up by the business sector. A strategy to achieve this outcome has been devised via the efforts of a special sub-committee of the LBPP, working closely with the CCM.

Local retailers will continue to be encouraged to use the Lismore branding at the "top or tail" of their own television commercials. Local businesses of every kind will be invited to use the Lismore branding at every opportunity in their own radio or print advertising and on websites and other forms of marketing.

Collateral - production of TVCs, press ads, commissioned photography

Throughout the forthcoming year additional 15sec (and where appropriate 30sec) TVCs will be produced to advertise SBRVL-funded events and promotions, in collaboration with event organisers and business groups. As a condition of receiving funds, these TVCs will all contain the 'Lismore-come to the heart' brand elements and help to reinforce the city's position as a desirable destination for shopping, commerce, sporting and cultural activity.

Additional still photography is required to complete a portfolio of distinctive images, reflecting the same distinctive 'look and feel' as the suite of carefully constructed images created in late 2009. These new photos will reinforce the 'point of difference' and feature in press and TV advertising and destination marketing.

Communications

The inaugural business plan (2009/10) was focussed on setting up the priorities, philosophy, programs and approach that underpinned the plan. This was a task for the 2009/10 plan but due to competing demands was not given the time it now requires. Now this foundation has been established an important time priority for this plan will be the CCM's communication to other business owners/operators both in terms of personal interaction and information through a regular newsletter.

In terms of specifically how this will happen the following is planned. To replace the former bi-annual issues of the 4 page and, on occasion 8-page 'Lismore Leader', smaller and more frequent communications collateral or newsletter will be produced and disseminated to stakeholders. The updates will be via a combination of electronic and printed items, with a view to minimising printing and postage costs and encouraging more businesses and recipients to embrace e-mail. Secondly, the CCM will devote a set block of time during the week to directly communicate with business owners/operators. The regular 'street audits' of Council maintenance will also be targeted to have direct interaction with affected street owners/operators.

Shopping Guide

A single pocket-sized Lismore Shopping Guide featuring retail, wholesale, manufacturing and distribution businesses in the City Centre, South Lismore, North Lismore, Wyrallah/East Lismore, Goonellabah and the industrial estates. The aim of the pocket guide is to increase awareness of shopping opportunities throughout Lismore and to achieve highly-effective distribution, in partnership with the publishers. The widest possible range of publishers will be invited to provide presentations to the CCM and LBPP on this project, based on common criteria.

3.2 Activities

(Shopping Promotions / Festivals and Events / Entertainment / Attractions)

A sizeable number of the individual projects in this component of the Marketing section of the Business Plan will be produced in collaboration with the Lismore Chamber of Commerce. This is to maximise opportunities to both involve and benefit businesses in the City Centre and throughout the Lismore Urban Area.

The projects linked with the Chamber are a combination of Shopping Promotions and business education activities, and include:

- the annual Lismore June Stock Take Sale
- Mother's Day and Father's Day Sales
- the annual Lismore Christmas Shopping Bonanza
- seminars and educational forums held throughout the year.

In addition, the Chamber has requested the opportunity to work with stakeholders and the organisers of three established annual events in order to maximise benefits to the business community. These are:

- The North Coast National (Lismore Show)
- Tropical Fruits
- The Lismore Cup.

Each of these organisations will be required to present a proposal for their planned events and/or promotions, which must take place within the City Centre, for review by the Lismore Business Promotion Panel to ensure that they meet the criteria of the Lismore Promotion Program.

Other major activities include:

- Carols by Candlelight;
- the Lismore Lantern Parade;
- the City Centre Markets;
- the City Centre Entertainment program; and
- new events to take place in City Centre requiring SBRVL funding assistance.

Information on the new process and Guidelines for the approval, administration and acquittal of SBRVL funds for projects and events which meet with revised Lismore Promotion Program criteria will be provided to the LBPP for review and thence to Council for adoption.

In terms of activities that are being promoted by the CCM the LBPP resolved that they occur preferably late Saturday morning/early afternoon as opposed to when there is very little trading i.e. Sundays. This includes the City Centre Markets and Entertainment programs. The idea of this is that this activity would encourage the extension of trading hours. If this works then Sunday programming can be considered in future business plans.

The 2010-2011 LPP Business Plan makes provision for funding anticipated events and projects which support the overall aim of the Lismore Promotion Program – to stimulate activity in the City Centre in order to draw people to the CBD through out the week. These events and projects will be required to apply for SBRVL funding.

As a guide, the list of either approved or pending events currently includes:

- Erth's Petting Zoo –'Dinosaurs in Lismore' (NORPA)
- Australia's Strongest Man Contest and Truck Pull
- 'Walk the Line' for Lifeline
- 'Faces in the Street' Richmond Historical Society
- Summerland V8 Dirt Modified Club Australian Speedway Championships
- improved links between Tropical Fruits annual celebration and the business community (and including the Queer Fruits' Film Festival)
- Lismore Carols by Candlelight at its new riverbank location, trialled successfully in December 2009.
- 2010 Lismore NAIDOC Week
- specific retail and business promotions originating from individual streets of precincts within the City Centre and separate of major annual shopping campaigns.

3.3 Placemaking

(Improving the amenity and built environment to make the CBD more attractive)

Placemaking is about creating meaningful places that reflect the needs of the people who inhabit them and the customers that visit them. It is about the mix of spaces, assets, management, activities and culture that creates an environment that enhances the well-being of a community.

Creating a City Centre as a “third place” is about providing a meaningful alternative place for people to socialise and interact as an alternative to their first and second ‘Places’ of home and work.

Place Management is about people working together, capitalising on that spirit of place to improve an area that they recognise as having unique features. In the case of the Lismore City Centre it is not only about economic growth but also about creating a vibrant and dynamic destination for locals and visitors. Place management is also about providing leadership and vision for the eventual revitalisation of a CBD that acts as the heart of the city and the “heart of the region”.

The Lismore Promotion Program recognises the importance of Place Making and Place Management as a vital element within this Business Plan, and integral to the revitalisation process. This process will require more than a single year to achieve its desired outcome – a dramatic improvement in the appearance, life and amenity of the City Centre. Subsequent Business Plans are likely to contain individual projects which will contribute to the process overall.

‘You are here’ signage at pavement level throughout CBD

A series of free-standing permanent information sign-boards are to be positioned in strategic locations within the City Centre. One side of the signs will be dedicated to the kind of information most beneficial to shoppers and pedestrians:

- directions to the nearest public toilets and car parking
- a simplified street directory, including the network of lanes and arcades in the City Centre
- directions to major points of interest in the CBD (Art Gallery/VIC/riverbank parks etc)
- public transport hubs.

The reverse face of the ‘you are here’ signs will feature advertising. Businesses in each of the streets housing the signs will be invited to purchase a presence on the sign. This advertising will help subsidise the costs of construction and erection.

These information signs will be branded with the ‘Lismore-come to the heart’ logo PLUS the international ‘i’ for information sign. They will need to be of the highest quality, be vandal and graffiti-resistant and present a positive service to locals and visitors to the City Centre.

A review is also occurring in respect of the effectiveness of the ‘P’ parking signage around the CBD in terms of their location and size.

'Art in the Heart' project

The CCM organised a successful briefing and forum on 17 March 2010 featuring 'Renew Newcastle' founder and CEO Marcus Westbury and Ms Kim Spinks from Arts NSW. Lismore has the potential to become a state-funded 'Creative Enterprise Hub' (CEB), which would enable the 'Art in the Heart' project-placing creative workers in vacant CBD premises on a temporary basis- become a reality.

Given that between the 2001 and 2006 census, employment in the creative industries in the Northern Rivers grew 25% faster year on year than the rest of the regional economy and that the region is recognised as the key 'hotspot' for the State's creative industries beyond Sydney, the Lismore 'Art in the Heart' project meets the definition of a CEB and would also appear to match key Arts NSW criteria for such CEB status, defined as:

- community interest and support;
- a critical mass of creative practitioners or creative industries;
- available empty space; and
- a town centre location which allows for geographic co-location and can operate as a hub.

Meetings are being held with those property owners who have expressed interest in being involved in the 'Art in the Heart' project, and once the level of commitment by the property owners is judged sufficient to meet Arts NSW criteria, a report will be sent to the organisation, requesting assistance to take the project from concept to reality.

This will ideally involve receiving sufficient funding to appoint an Art in the Heart project manager and establish a small, focused Lismore Art in the Heart board of directors. This board will commence reviewing applications from individuals and artists' collectives and other organisations wanting to use empty commercial spaces in the Lismore CBD.

Once the 'Art in the Heart' project is formally established, the CCM will relinquish the current lead role and act in a supportive capacity.

'Eat Street' and Margaret Olley Arts Centre

The identification of Magellan Street (and immediate surrounds) as an 'eat street' precinct is being considered by Council in mid-2010 via the review of the Outdoor Dining Policy with a view to aiding the creation of this potential place-making 'hot spot'. The proposed Magellan Street location of the markets and some of the entertainment planned will help promote 'eat street'.

Further 'hot spots' which will take longer than the period this 2010-2011 Business Plan covers (but which the CCM has been asked to help progress) include The Olley Arts Centre site and Spinks park/Riverbank precinct. It should be noted that any possible CCM support requested can only occur if the projects proceed.

Additional tasks include reinforcement of existing 'experiential' programs, such as the Café and Culture Trail, and the new "Walkabout Lismore" City Centre walks. In most instances, the CCM's role will be to support and further publicise existing products.

Regular Street Audits

It is well known that an important part of creating a great place is ensuring the centre is well maintained and safe. Without those two background aspects being well covered the other initiatives such as markets and entertainment will be of little value. Council has over the last decade put a huge effort into improving the safety of the CBD. The same effort is required in terms of maintenance. It must be noted that Council's pavement is old and therefore there is a limit to the improvement maintenance can provide.

A feature of the 2009/10 plan was the regular street audits carried out by the CCM, a Council works supervisor and generally a trader. This audit picked up on smaller maintenance items such as broken street furniture, pot holes and cracked pavement etc. This will be a regular feature of the CCM's work in this plan with reports to the LBPP and via the newsletter.

3.4 Operations

City Centre Manager

The CCM's annual cost is \$80,000. The funding will be resolved by Council at its June special Council meeting. Council also provides office accommodation, secretariat and other resources valued at an additional \$20,000 per annum.

Section 4: Governance and Evaluation

Governance

The Lismore Promotion Program is governed by the eight-member Lismore Business Promotion Panel (or "LBPP" in abbreviated form), which makes recommendations to Council. Of note there are slight changes to the membership of the '*' items listed below. Depending upon the outcome of the Council June resolutions these may change.

The Lismore Business Promotion Panel consists of:

- one Councillor (the Economic Development Policy Advisory Group Chair)
- one Lismore Chamber of Commerce representative *
- one Lismore Shopping Square representative (the largest single contributor to the SBRVL Lismore Promotion Program) *
- three members drawn from the business community who financially contribute to the SBRVL Lismore Promotion Program within the Lismore (Inner) Urban Area
- one member drawn from the business community who financially contribute to the SBRVL Lismore Promotion Program within the Lismore (Outer) Urban Area, and
- Council's Executive Director – Sustainable Development, who chairs the Panel in a non-voting capability and facilitates meetings.

The relationships between the various parties are shown in the diagram below:



The LBPP provides direction and guidance to Council on the Special Business Rate Variation Levy (SBRVL) Lismore Promotion Program and expenditure of its funds, as well as governing the activities of the City Centre Management Program and the City Centre Manager (CCM).

As a group, the LBPP currently meets on a bi-monthly basis or as required, and is responsible for:

- recommending to Council and monitoring the annual Business Plan including approving variations;
- providing advice and recommendations to Council within its terms of reference;
- instituting and reviewing Key Performance Indicators for both the CCM and the Business Plan; and
- providing advice to the CCM as requested but otherwise the CCM has power to act within the budget and program of the business plan.

The Executive Director – Sustainable Development provides direction on operational matters. The Lismore Business Promotion Panel receives detailed reports, including the progress of approved actions, from the CCM. Council staff administer the Lismore Promotion Program and provide limited secretariat support to the LBPP.

Financial control of the SBRVL Promotion Fund, including all purchases on approved budget items, is retained by Council, together with auditing and acquittal responsibilities.

The term of service for the Lismore Business Promotion Panel will come to completion at the end of the current Council term of office. At this time, all positions will be declared vacant and the process of calling for nominations, recommendation for selection and approval by the new Council will start over again.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and evaluation mechanisms

There are a number of documents and objectives applicable to developing KPI's for the Business Plan and the CCM's position. These include:

1. Formal adoption of the 2010-2011 Business Plan.
2. Achievement of the broad objectives contained within the Business Plan.
3. Achievement of milestones and the success of individual projects within the Business Plan.
4. Increased activity and subsequent interaction by residents and visitors coming to the City Centre, obtained by regular sampling of public opinion at various events, plus comparative data on pedestrian traffic in key City Centre locations.
5. A comparison with existing community attitude survey results contained within the *Lismore Alive Final Report*, obtained by regular sampling of public opinion at various events in the City Centre.
6. Documented media coverage generated by the CCM.
7. Additional resources obtained by the CCM (e.g. sponsorships, participation in co-operative promotions and government grants).

The LBPP will from the above develop and monitor a set of specific KPI's for the plan and CCM role. Separate of existing quarterly reviews of the CCM's KPIs, the 2010-2011 Business Plan will be reviewed and assessed in December 2010 and June 2011 respectively.

CCM Key Performance Indicator (KPI)-based incentive payments

The CCM's performance is reviewed every three months (linked to the personal and Business Plan Key Performance Indicators set by Council and the Lismore Business Promotion Panel described above) and is eligible for quarterly incentive payments upon achieving these KPIs.

The CCM is permitted to attend at least one conference each year that can be shown to contribute to the role and is encouraged to carry out research and learning that contributes to ongoing Professional Development.

Section 5: Priorities and Execution

Priorities for Lismore Promotion Program and City Centre Manager

SHORT TERM ACTIONS (July – December 2010)

1. Continue to use the 'Lismore –come to the heart' brand marketing collateral to promote the City Centre as effectively as possible, with an emphasis on take up by businesses and other sectors.
2. Establish a series of markets in the City Centre and expand the frequency and range of entertainment in the City Centre.
3. Subject to approval for the increase of 0.44% in SBRVL funding, incorporate this additional \$100,000 within the Business Plan in accordance with 'tied' projects.

4. Activate and then hand over the 'Art in the Heart' program to the proposed new board and executive officer.
5. Assist the development of 'Eat Street' and other Place Management 'hot spots'.
6. Assist relevant Council departments with the Woodlark Street development celebrations.

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS (January 2011- June 2011)

1. Extend marketing operations.
2. Expand City Centre entertainment program.
3. Promote use of the River precinct.
4. Help extend Art Gallery hours / create other arts attractions.
5. Assist forward planning for The Olley Arts Centre.
6. Continue to seek ways to provide benefits to SBRVL contributors, businesses and the City Centre.

Review mechanism

The Business Plan will be reviewed and assessed at the end of the Short Term and Medium Term Actions timelines, in December 2010 and June 2011.

Section 6: Lismore Promotion Plan 2010-2011 Business Plan Budget

6.1 Budget (A) where the Special Rate Variation is not approved

Marketing	\$52,000
(Advertising / Media Spend / Publicity / Public Relations / Communications)	
• Media Spend	40,000
• Brand awareness and take up	1,000
• Production – TVCs, press ads, commissioned photography	5,000
• Communications – reg.info to stakeholders (combination 'e' and print)	5,000
• Pocket Guides	1,000
Activities	\$148,540
(Shopping Promotions / Festivals and Events / Entertainment / Attractions)	
• June Stock Take Sale – Lismore Chamber of Commerce (LCoC)	20,000
• Mother's Day / Father's Day Sales (LCoC)	5,000
• Christmas Shopping Bonanza (LCoC)	20,000
• Education seminars (LCoC)	5,000
• Tropical Fruits, including Film Festival (LCoC)	4,000
• Lismore Cup (LCoC)	4,000
• North Coast National -Lismore Show (LCoC)	4,000
• Lismore Lantern Parade	20,000
• Carols by Candlelight	12,500
• City Centre Markets	20,000
• City Centre Entertainment program	20,000
• New events to take place in City Centre requiring SBRVL assistance and outside CBD activities.	14,040
Placemaking	\$6,000
(Improving the amenity and built environment to make the CBD more attractive)	
• 'You are here' signage at pavement level throughout CBD	5,000
• Art in the Heart – CCM lead role until handover	1,000
• Eat Street – CCM assists by request	
• Margaret Olley Arts Centre – CCM assists by request	
Operations	\$86,560
• CCM salary package *	80,000
• Projected \$3.2% increase in Award (will not apply before November 2010)	2,560
• CCM KPI-based incentive payments	2,000
• Professional development (CCM's attendance 1 conf. p.a.)	1,500
• Catering – LBPP meetings/ launches	500
TOTAL	\$293,100

* this assumes Council on 9 June 2010 funds \$40,000 of the CCM role irrespective of the outcome of the SRV i.e. the LBPP recommendation to Council. If Council does not provide this if the SRV is approved then the budget (B) will revert to a total of \$353,100 and the subtotals adjusted.

6.2 Budget (B) where the Special Rate Variation is approved

EFFECT ON BUSINESS PLAN BUDGET IF SBRVL INCREASE (\$100,000) APPROVED

If approved by NSW State Government, the \$100,000 increase which is 'tied' to the breakdown of projects below, will feed into the 2010-2011 LPP Business Plan.

This will have the effect of increasing the separate sections of the LPP Business Plan as shown below (non-SBRVL increase sub-totals are listed in parenthesis):

Business Plan Budget components IF SBRVL INCREASE APPROVED

Marketing (Advertising / Media Spend / Publicity Public Relations / Communications)	107,000
City Centre Activities (Shopping Promotions / Festivals & Events / Entertainment / Attractions)	188,540
Placemaking (Eat Street /Art in 'Heart /CBD signs)	11,000
Operations CCM salary package / CBD Audits	86,560*
TOTAL	<u>\$393,100</u>

* this assumes Council on 9 June 2010 funds \$40,000 of the CCM role irrespective of the outcome of the SRV i.e. the LBPP recommendation to Council. If Council does not provide this if the SRV is approved then the budget (B) will revert to a total of \$353,100.

Section 7: Attachment – City Centre Map

