

From: Kate Hamilton [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 17 February 2020 10:22 AM
To: Local Government Mailbox <localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Submission to IPART on SRV for Lismore Council

Dear Responsible Officer,

please find my written Submission against the 24% proposed increase in rates for Lismore Council and in addition to my arguments I have proposed

a number of solutions including amalgamations and an Innovation Precinct development for the CBD. To support my ideas for economic and social revitalisation

I am therefore attaching my Blueprint for Revitalisation of Lismore and the region for consideration which has been positively received by the Mayor and General Manager.

Regards

Dr Katherine Hamilton


Director & Principal Consultant

Hamilton & Associates

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



17 February 2020

To IPART Commissioners,

Submission: Argument against unreasonable rate rises under Special Variation

In this Submission I am writing to you to argue the case against unreasonable proposed Special Rate Variation rate increases of up to 24% for the rate payers of Lismore. I do not believe that it is defensible or thought out on a number of grounds that I detail below.

Firstly, unreasonable rate increases discriminate against a significant proportion of the Lismore population including retirees, pensioners, businesses, low and medium income households and tenants in rented homes.

Secondly a rate increases such as those over 10% are set well above the State average and are not comparable to most other medium size towns with similar populations. For example, Ballina and Byron Bay. The rates for other Council in NSW (NSW Rates Scale from the OLG) are proportionately lower and any high rates proposed by Lismore Council, is for many a financial impost. For example, a rate increase of 24% would equate to an increase that would be quite difficult for those on a fixed income.

The Office of Local Government and IPART set out the guidelines for rate pegged increases imposed by Council each year relative to the maximum percentage they may increase general revenue by, this year is 2.6%. Allowable rate increases take into consideration the capacity of rate payers to meet an increase, special circumstances and changes to the population

Thirdly, Lismore is *not a* wealthy town and the average income is \$53-64,000 per annum with 21.1% (8,844) single parent families and 8.2% (3,696) unemployed and, a further 9 % (3,960) combined people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island and people with a disability.

Moreover, GDP has been sluggish, wage growth has flatlined for several years, while the costs of food, energy, school fees, childcare, petrol and goods and services have steadily increased. We have a slow economy and a higher rate than ever before of insecure, temporary and contract work. Job security seems a thing of the past. Thus, in this economy a unreasonable rate rises are unfair and discriminatory. The floods of 2017 had a detrimental effect on people, business and the overall economy with 85 shops closing up and leaving soon afterwards.

Fourthly, for a Council that is committed to a vibrant, lively and thriving culture and economy, the flow on effects of an insupportable rate rise will slug industry and businesses in and around Lismore where margins are thin and, they are still recovering from the impact of the flood *and* higher rents.

One of the reasons that there are so many empty shops in Lismore is because of the high rents charged by landlords. Several shop keepers have stated this to me when questioned. Relative to Ballina and Casino, even Grafton, Lismore's shop rental prices are too high to represent value for money according to my sources. This has a knock-on effect of tired, empty city facades and discourages customers and tourists. Further rate rises places further burdens on the existing shops often struggling to survive.

These shop keepers claim that owners are prepared to leave premises empty, rather than take lower rents. Putatively because they can write off the losses on tax. It is therefore incumbent on Council to take a proactive approach. It could study the Newcastle Model which gained agreement with landlords for cheaper short-term rent for start-ups, creative enterprises and other businesses. Additionally, Council could publish the rental and rates costs for premises in the CBD compared to say Ballina, to expose the difference and encourage owners to lower rents.

Landlords will *absolutely* pass on a rate rise to their tenants. That is a fact. That fact will burden local business and SMEs, not to mention the lower to medium income households whose rents will rise. This will create rental stress and poverty for people living on benefits and this is inconsistent with Council's stated position on supporting the disadvantaged in affordable housing.

Local businesses are leaving Lismore already, with empty shop fronts and recently in 2018/2019 more shops/businesses having left the area. Local business claims their rents are too high already and their insurances are insupportable. Local business is the life blood of the economy for Lismore.

Fifthly, once rates have been increased, they *do not* go down and this means that all future rates are impacted by radical, proposed rate rises. The special circumstances argument for the case to raise rates put by Council is linked for many to the recently reported shortfall of Council revenue. As a resident and home owner my strongest urging to not pass on the burden of any financial losses to rate payers.

Instead, I propose that rates be raised by a reasonable and comparable amount to the rest of NSW, including Byron Bay and Ballina of *no more than 10%*. I understand that Council costs rise and that rate rises are necessary. I propose, to make up for any future shortfalls, that Council sells a piece of Council land and or buildings that could be developed instead.

Sixthly, sell the Regional Library building to Social Futures and with the profits develop a new, modern, sustainable Library and Community Centre. I suggest Council investigate the Blue Mountains Council Library and Community Centre in Katoomba which is frankly sensational. I recommend a study tour by Council and staff to see it in action.

Finally, other solutions could be a rationalisation of all the roads in Lismore that are linked to businesses, agricultural producers and major employers e.g. Uralba Street, Avondale Avenue, Union and Casino Streets and Wyrallah Road and lobby State Government to fund upgrades as regionally significant to commerce and growth.

There are solutions other than a radical rate rise that will burden all of Lismore -sell land and encourage diversification, innovation, new businesses and a larger population. Ballina has sold its industrial sites and recently Ballina Council received over \$4m from Government for a proposed Innovation District including a musical museum near the airport.

Council consulted the community in a number of ways and the results of the survey returned a rejection of the proposed 24% rate rise this a majority of rate payers against the proposal and when the rise was voted on in Council three Councillors had absented themselves and the Mayor used a casting vote to pass the rises.

There was no discussion of alternate percentages put forward by Council either during the consultation or after the vote. A rescission motion was put to Council by a group of Councillors but was defeated.

In closing I in the strongest terms *NOT* to agree to rate rise but be thoughtful of the impact and inventive in the solutions. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

*Dr Katherine Hamilton
Director & Principal Consultant
Hamilton & Associates*



SUMMARY:

1. A high rate rise discriminates against business, pensioners, retirees, single parent families, low to medium income households and the unemployed.
2. 2.7% is the State average for rates on a par with Ballina which has the same population.
3. The economy is slow, business is not thriving, wages have flatlined, jobs are insecure and GDP sluggish especially for regional towns and costs of fuel, energy, childcare, food and goods/services are rising steadily.
4. Rate rises of more than 10% will negatively impact renters including businesses in the CBD. Landlords will definitely pass on rate rises.
5. Once rates are increased, they don't go down again. Anything over a 10% rise is insupportable and special circumstance is not a justification.
6. I propose that Council sell some of its land to meet the shortfall in revenue and limit rate rise for this financial year to 10% only.
7. It could study the Newcastle Model which gained agreement with landlords for cheaper short-term rent for start-ups, creative enterprises and other businesses.
8. Additionally, Council could publish the rental and rates costs for premises in the CBD compared to say Ballina, to expose the difference and encourage owners to lower rents.
9. Sell the Regional Library to Social Futures (they offered to buy it) and put profit into a new Library and Community facility.

10. Seek State Government funding for the maintenance and upkeep of commercially significant roads that meet the needs of growing economy and population.
11. Amalgamation with Casino and or Kyogle Councils would shift the economic and social balance of the area and afford significant economies of scale.
12. Champion and develop an Innovation Precinct for thee CBD and actively gain the support and funding from State and Federal Governments and from business.

The Revitalisation of Lismore: The Chattanooga Model

**A Blueprint for the Future
Prepared for the Mayor and Council of Lismore City**

by
Dr Katherine Hamilton

Introduction

The purpose of writing this paper on the revitalisation of the regional City of Lismore is to make a series of recommendations to the Mayor and Council that could enable success by using the template of the American city of Chattanooga in Tennessee for an Innovation Precinct. Chattanooga became the first regional city in the United States to establish very fast broadband through their publicly owned, Not for Profit (NFP) company, the Electric Power Board (EPB).

Known as The Gig, this initiative subsequently revived their economy to become a technologically enabled Gig Economy. Based on this facility the Council and community set about attracting businesses and people into Chattanooga to set up and trade and, to employ a workforce thus revitalising its economic and socio-cultural life. In 2015 Chattanooga City Council launched their Innovation District as an interconnected and rezoned city block and, they repurposed the empty Ebley Building as its centre.

Lismore and other regional centres in Australia, are being negatively impacted by damaging climate events and coming back from these as economies and communities will take innovative thinking and political will to future proof them as thriving towns. The timing of this proposal is significant because of a convergence of synchronous factors affecting Lismore and other regions in Australia.

Evidence from cities around the world making transformations and reinventing themselves such as Chattanooga, Portland and Vancouver, demonstrate that having a Blueprint and a Plan based on a set of principles that were agreed to by all stakeholders in consultation, has been *fundamental* to their successes.

The elements at play at this point in time expedite opportunities for Lismore. For example, the imminent roll out of fast broadband through the NBN in Lismore and the region; the visioning and planning work already being done by the Mayor, Council and community and a strong regional focus by Federal and State Governments on infrastructure and connected economies. Finally, the influence of the relocation of some sections of city populations to regions in Australia is making a difference. Moreover, there is a clearly defined need in Lismore and the region to reengineer the economy and expand its industries supported by a committed and engaged community.

Lismore: the centre of the region

Lismore is a town of approximately 45,000 people set in the lush hinterland of the Far North Coast of NSW and only 30 minutes from Ballina and the ocean. Situated at the junction of the Wilson River and Leycester Creek, it has Regional City status as a Services Centre. The Base Hospital is undergoing a significant upgrade and is part of the largest employment sector, Health Services and Social Assistance. Lismore has a heavy rail line which was an important artery for commerce and people. It is strongly recommended to re-establish this line with active rail links between Brisbane, Byron Bay and Lismore through to Sydney. In addition, Lismore also sports an airport as well as a diversity of businesses across the region.

One of Lismore's greatest strengths is the presence of the Southern Cross University (SCU) Campus in East Lismore with approximately 3,000 students it is an employer of note and teaches many disciplines including environmental science, science and engineering, business and tourism, ICT,

health and education, an on site, industry standard teaching facility Studio One29, with performance specialists and media, music and animation.

The integration and articulation of North Coast TAFE programs with SCU degrees means both institutions belong to the knowledge economy. Recently the Shadow Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Tanya Plibersek launched the National Institute for Flood Resilience at the Lismore Campus demonstrating a commitment to the science and social impacts of flooding and climate change.

The University campus presents the potential for enhanced development linking it more closely with a future Innovation Precinct (IP). This activation would enhance Lismore as a University Town. Worldwide, University Towns have some unique characteristics that stimulate their economies, their cultural and intellectual lives and contribute to their attraction and vibrancy.

Engineering Solutions

Lismore is recovering from a catastrophic flood in 2017 which breached the levy and flooded the CBD and low-lying areas. The sustained input and investment from the Council and the resilience and optimism of the community in response to the flood are tributes to Lismore. In addition, a sizeable investment of \$8.2 million was made by the NSW State Government for the Flood Mitigation Project launched by the Premier Gladys Berejiklian in early 2019. The aim is to prevent any future possibility that Wilson River and Leycester Creek will converge at the junction of the Lismore CBD and flood the whole area.

This importance of this initiative cannot be underestimated as it will restore the business confidence of many traders in both the CBD and South Lismore and that will contribute to the growth and prosperity of the town and region. The role of City Councils and Mayoral presence in an Innovation Precinct is pivotal to its success. The Mayor of Lismore is already seeking to relocate the Council Offices back into the CBD which is to be commended. These two factors, the flood mitigation project and the physical presence of Council in Lismore are proactive steps to ensure strengthening economic viability and greater connectedness as well as being symbolic of the future for Lismore.

The City of Chattanooga,

The City of Chattanooga in Tennessee, USA provides a living template for the revitalisation of Lismore. Prior to 2010 Chattanooga was a dying, rustbelt town with an abandoned manufacturing base and the remnants of pollution in the water and land. The jobs had dried up and, despite the concerted and decades long collaboration between the private and public sectors, a jump start for the economy was needed.

That came when the EPB put forward the idea to roll out a very fast broadband network to homes and businesses throughout the City. It was the fastest broadband speed in regional America at that time and it was paid for by the City of Chattanooga. The Gig was the lightning bolt that jolted all the ideation, planning, investments, business migration and community activation for Chattanooga. Suddenly Chattanooga had celebrity status as the first regional American city to get the Gig and to organise and coordinate their evolution around access to broadband and the economic and social benefits it engendered.

Chattanooga continued to build on the availability of the Gig attracting new venture capital firms, start-ups and e-enabled companies which set up shop there and, the Gig was the key to their marketing and promotion. The City developed the idea of an Innovation District which was a rezoning of a specific part of the City and the reactivation of a disused building as well as, making changes and identifying and incorporating common themes of Innovation Districts in other cities. Central to the success of the Innovation District is the 'anchor' organisations located there in particular, the University of Tennessee and the City Council and Mayors Offices, but also the for profit, start-ups and venture capital companies and the NFP organisations supporting the growth of an entrepreneurial culture.

It would be beneficial for Lismore Council to take these salient factors into consideration when developing its own Innovation Precinct as one of its four core organising principles suggested for revitalisation in this Discussion Paper.

Four Core Organising Principles

The four organising principles recommended are intrinsically complementary and each one supports and enhances the others. They are

- New Urbanism principles
- A University Town
- The Innovation Precinct and;
- Green Technology and Agricultural Industries.

City revitalisation and activation.

The landscape, geography and history, in fact the very DNA of the Lismore region, are suitable for innovation technology industries and entrepreneurial companies centred in an Innovation Precinct. The author's argument, based on the example of Chattanooga, is that Lismore's socio-economic composition, the presence of a University Campus and the history and culture will propel the growth of ideas and catalyse change for the city and the region. The flexibility of this proposal means that not all changes need to occur simultaneously. Lismore Council, SCU and stakeholders such as relevant NSW State Departments, industry and the Business Chamber could collaborate in identifying and establishing an Innovation Precinct area for rezoning as a first step. This may necessarily mean relocation of a number of existing businesses.

The first two organising principles provide the environments, planning controls and the character of the town. They are place and people centric and exemplify liveability, sustainability and a high quality of life. However, importantly they provide the planning guidelines and tools to control the type of development wanted by the community and planners as a profile for a University Town. The Innovation Precinct is where the dynamic, inventive, future focussed industries will meet the youth and intellectual capital from the University colliding with businesses, academics, entrepreneurs and creatives.

The renewable Green Technologies and Agriculture ventures will be located in the Innovation Precinct and applied to the city, region and the world. They will enable the development and expansion of green technologies and agriculture that will mark Lismore on the map as a leader in alternative power, storage, health, quality food and agricultural products of the 21st Century. The organising principles for the design of the future City of Lismore represent a *modus operandi* because they are congruent, highly affective, liveable and vibrant manifestations of urban planning and settlement. The benefits are discussed below.

An Innovation Precinct

In the past few years, more and more cities around the globe have focused on the creation of Innovation Districts to boost their chances of being competitive in the rapidly advancing knowledge-based economy. Boston, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Detroit are often cited as examples. In *The Rise of Innovation Districts*, the Brookings Institute defines innovation districts as “*geographic areas where leading-edge anchor institutions and companies cluster and connect with start-ups, business incubators and accelerators. They are also physically compact, transit-accessible, and technically-wired and offer mixed-use housing, offices and retail.*”

Innovation Districts also focus on placemaking assets that elevate the quality of life. Ideally, they are made up of everything people need to have a convenient, safe and engaged urban regional life. In this designated section of a city creative thinkers, entrepreneurs, innovators, artists, students and people of all perspectives and backgrounds come together and collaborate to better and more quickly conceive and implement new ideas. The prerequisites for creating an Innovation Precinct are as follows.

A compelling vision

There must be a compelling vision that underwrites the development and realisation of a plan to revitalise Lismore and other regions such as the establishment of an Innovation Precinct. This is often manifested through the passion and drive of the Mayor, Council and a small group of people in a position to affect change. The vision is socially cohesive in nature and stimulates cooperation.

A Gig Economy

A gig economy was in its infancy in 2000 as technology had not advanced sufficiently to uncouple companies and telecommunication from bricks and mortar. Nor did it have longevity, in other words technology needed to be around long enough and, be sophisticated enough to become the norm for the majority of the community to be comfortable with it, and for the technology to be integrated into the daily life of companies doing business.

Willingness and Business Confidence

The next factor to facilitate an Innovation Precinct is the willingness for the creative, professional talent and their companies i.e. the ‘digitals’, the entrepreneurs and the start-ups to translate the possibility of the Gig economy to their own business, aspirations, and balance sheets and to take the risk and invest in the new region. A first step for Lismore that will convey this greater confidence to the business world and the community is for the Council of Lismore to relocate to the CBD Innovation Precinct and be more visible and accessible.

Drivers for sustained change:

The Innovation Precinct would be a driver of sustained change as are those involved with the ideation, design, zoning and activation of the Precinct. This was demonstrated in the work of the Chattanooga Council, the University of Tennessee and the businesses and entrepreneurs which made their Innovation District viable. The designing and consultation with community groups ensured that all the elements of the City were connected to the Innovation District and were energised and included through the process.

New Urbanism

The beauty and planning integrity of New Urbanism (NU) is its adaptability to various models of housing and business settlement and because it represents a preferred urban pattern of living for many people. A pattern that is human scaled (maximum 4 stories), walkable, accessible and dynamic. Below is a summary of NU principles and immediately apparent is the crossing over between them and the themes for a University Town *and* Innovation Districts. They include the following aspects:

Walkability: New Urban communities are accessible by foot and contain housing, work places, shops, entertainment, schools, parks and civic facilities-all the essentials of daily life all within easy walking distance from each other. The City of Sydney for example, was very successful working with the University of Sydney opening up and improving the safety and access to the University through Redfern Station and Darlington via activated footpaths.

The revitalisation of these suburbs has been fast and lively. There are cafes along the route from Redfern Station to the University, the farmers markets at Darlington has grown into an urban oasis of freshly grown food and a social hub and the University has provided lit walkways and safety stations along the route leading into a refurbished open space at the back of the Student Union building.

Connectivity: New Urbanism is connected, and the street grid network promotes foot traffic and public transport especially light rail, bikes and busses. Smart transportation in new urbanism means a variety of interconnected means of transportation. The New Urban town and city are pedestrian friendly and encourage greater use of walking and bicycles or electric scooters.

Mixed-use and diversity: New Urbanism promotes a mixture of shops, offices, apartments and homes on site. There are mixed uses within neighbourhoods such as corner stores, childcare, civic parks and entertainments as well as coffee houses and other small businesses. There is a diversity of people, of all ages, incomes, walks of life, cultures and ethnic backgrounds. New Urbanism promotes high tolerance of diversity and difference because it is a vital ingredient of a dynamic sense of place.

Mixed housing: New Urbanism supports and designs for mixed housing stock. The planning laws and regulations zone for different sorts of residences and there is a strong emphasis on affordable housing.

Quality architecture and good urban design: New Urbanism is about a quality investment not fast money through rezoning. This abiding focus on beauty, aesthetics and human comfort are what create a sense of place. The special placement of civic functions and sites within the community and human scale architecture and surroundings nourish the human spirit.

Traditional Neighbourhood structures: New Urban towns and cities have a discernible city centre and a city edge or horizon as well as quality open space. Traditional community structures don't mean conservatism, there is increased densification of the urban areas with much greater diversity of usage with the highest density at the urban centre and reducing as it goes out toward the edge.

Increased density: Densification is one of the foundational principles of New Urbanism and with 75% of the world population destined to be urbanised by 2030 we must work on how to accommodate greater density without losing our quality of life.

Sustainability: Eco-friendly technologies are supported and encouraged in the new urban town as is respect for the natural systems and ecology of an area. Reducing the impact of developments and their operations is built into the planning systems. New Urban towns and cities use less energy, use less fossil fuel for transportation, have more local production, more walking and less driving and are healthier place to live and breathe and work.

All of these principles taken together add up to better urban environments that are creative, enriching, uplifting and that inspire the human spirit.

The University Town

The University Town is a powerful idea and reality throughout the world. Many university towns are based on New Urban principles already. The university town is largely an American concept however European university cities and towns are often congregated around an old university that forms the centre of an intellectual, economic, social and political culture. University towns often have teaching hospitals, restaurants, laboratories, research centres, university printing houses, libraries, museum collections, sporting teams, business incubators and festivals, traditions and tourism all intertwined in a rich melange of historical and cultural influence.

A University as Incubator

The collective power of dynamic creativity that emanates from the tensions between youthful expression, community and academic life creates an aura around the university town. These same tensions fuel successful centres of technological innovation and research. The university town often has a proportion of educated and transient populations with a large number of people living in non-traditional lifestyles and subcultures, hippies, bohos, gay culture and the 'creative classes'. There is a tolerance for unconventionality, an active music and artistic scene and usually generous lashings of progressive politics. University towns are good for business and business innovation.

So, it is recommended that Council locates and connects the University to the CBD and Innovation Precinct in Lismore by establishing a University presence within the Innovation Precinct and opening up access through the bottom of the campus on Bright Street and create a bike pathway. To further encourage the flow a business could set up a Velo bike system which is pay one end and leave at the destination like Paris. The influx of students will benefit and rejuvenate the economy and public life in the CBD.

The SCU is teaching innovation and new industries in ICT, Entrepreneurship, Film, Television and Animation Production, Adventure Tourism and Tourism Management, Engineering and Green Futures and would have close relationships within the Innovation Precinct. The SCU could support a shop front in the CBD and connect more closely with North Coast TAFE to build a presence and bring more students in and around town. Plus, the introduction of free WIFI throughout the CBD will also attract students and tourists.

The university town is a community with a distinctive branding of the culture, a predominance of the mostly young student population and the presence of educational institutions that pervade economic and social life. The university, the staff and students drive the culture and the social and intellectual life of the town and, the university is a major employer in the region. However, it has been demonstrated that the presence of universities also attracts and supports start-up companies and an array of services.

As outlined in the discourse, new urbanism and university towns have strong synergies and the ingredients for dynamic, hip, diverse and exciting cultures. Therefore, being branded a University Town is an immediately recognisable brand and one which is locally, nationally and globally recognised

Green Technology and Agriculture industries

This organising principle builds on the strengths the region already has and expands the outcomes through the Innovation Precinct. Some starter ideas would be to consolidate sustainable green energy and green food production for Lismore. Two more industries emerging as key to the future are solar storage industry e.g. Tesla batteries and, the clean, uncontaminated food products and hemp industries. Hemp has multiple other uses including that supplanting cotton thus greater sustainability. It is similar to the reuse of plastic for pavers, the use of hemp as a manufacturing product and for medicinal purposes is a future trend.

Green, clean food production needs to be supported and encouraged from agribusiness to the local organic farmer, it too is the way of the future for food security, population health and export businesses. Tasmania has established a reputation and multiple businesses based on these industries. There are many more industries that could be established in Lismore and the region such as Film and Animation, Adventure Tourism, Warehousing and Data Warehousing, exports of new products and many more. Needless to say, new ideas, potentials and patents, start-ups and job generation will arise in the Innovation Precinct as Lismore Council, business and the University would prepare the infrastructures to nurture, promote and capitalise on these products and services of the future.

In conclusion, a number of recommendations arise from this preliminary study and some of the steps can be achieved in the short and medium terms however, all the ideas and recommendations comprise a realisable future born of knowledge, passion and commitment by the Mayor and Council with the collaboration of the University, the community, other levels of government and private enterprises. A compelling vision of a preferred future.

Finally, the author has a declared interest in this project not only as a member of the community, but also as a researcher who intends to visit Chattanooga and other Innovation Districts in America and Canada in 2020 and undertake research on revitalisation through Innovation Districts. It is recommended that Lismore Council undertake the following actions:

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Commission further research and feasibility studies to investigate adopting the four organising principles for the revitalisation and regeneration of Lismore.

Recommendation 2: Create an Innovation Precinct for Lismore that connects business, technology and the University (SCU) and the Health Precinct in an integrated fashion within the CBD land zoning.

Recommendation 3: Work closely with the SCU to establish their presence within the Innovation Precinct and link the Precinct to the existing SCU Innovation Hub and; open access through Bright Street as a more direct conduit for transport.

Recommendation 4: Move Councillors and staff offices back into the CBD and anchor the people and buildings in the Innovation Precinct thus providing visibility, accessibility and confidence for the business and community.

Recommendation 5: Identify and promote SCU courses that relate to the knowledge economy and feed them into the Innovation Precinct's purpose, functions and businesses. Give opportunities for work to SCU's Innovation Hub Start-ups and entrepreneurs.

Recommendation 6: Activate and develop the Wilson River and gain funding from State Government and industry to promote new industry initiatives including tourism and hospitality.

Recommendation 7: Council commits to keep and protect the building structures and heritage and, the building envelopes of the CBD. This could be done by adopting New Urban principles.

Recommendation 8: Invite and support research and development technology companies including Green Technology and Agriculture to locate in the Innovation Precinct.

Recommendation 9: Approach the film industry promoting the Lismore environment and historic CBD as ideal sites for film and television production that could be linked and/or housed for production in the Innovation Precinct. Likewise, with the gaming industry and software creation.

Recommendation 10: Adopt a comprehensive communications and promotions plan for Lismore to promote, market and tell our story of a University Town with an Innovation Precinct.

Recommendation 11: Propose and lobby for State and Federal Governments to reinstate the railway service from Brisbane to Sydney via Lismore and Byron Bay as a matter of urgent attention and for its integration with all other transport systems.

Recommendation 12: Link the North Coast TAFE to the Innovation Precinct and investigate some co-location to support knowledge economy courses.

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More references available- 22 February 2019