

ATTACHMENT

8.

Draft 2013 – 2016

Lismore Business Promotion Program Business Plan



Lismore Business Promotion Program

DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN

2013-2016

Prepared for the
Lismore Business Promotion Panel
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lismore
come to the heart



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

1.1	Origin of the Lismore Business Promotion Program	1
1.2	How the Lismore Business Promotion Program is funded	1
1.3	How the SBRVL is collected	1
1.4	Rationale for 3 year Business Plan	2
1.5	Area covered by the Lismore Business Promotion Program	2

SECTION 2: PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

2.1	Main objective	3
2.2	2013 – 2016 Key objectives	3

SECTION 3: REVIEW OF PROGRESS TO DATE

3.1	Southern Cross University Review	4
3.2	Challenges facing the Program	5
3.3	Renaming the Program and Panel	5

SECTION 4: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

4.1	Performance indicators and next formal review	6
4.2	Subsequent review	6

SECTION 5: GOVERNANCE

5.1	Lismore Business Promotion Program and Panel	7
5.2	Funding of projects and events	7
5.3	City Centre Manager	7

SECTION 6: 2013 – 2016 PROMOTIONAL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

MARKETING

6.1	Branding	8
6.2	Key role of arts and culture	8
6.3	Advertising	9
6.4	Promotions	9
6.5	Communications	9
6.6	Website	10
6.7	PR/Social media	10

EVENTS

6.8	Year round events	10
-----	-------------------	----

PLACEMAKING

6.9	Power for events	11
6.10	Laneways activation	11
6.11	City Centre Activation (including Library Square)	12
6.12	City Centre markets	12

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY

6.13	Business training and development	13
6.14	Lismore Outer Urban Area	13
6.15	Links with the community	14
6.16	Youth activities	14
6.17	Sport	14
6.18	Indigenous Community	14

SECTION 7: PROGRAM BUDGET 15

ATTACHMENT

1.	Location Map	16
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Lismore Business Promotion Program DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2013-16

1. OVERVIEW

1.1 Origin of the Lismore Business Promotion Program

Lismore City Council's receipt of the Lismore Alive Final Report by Victorian company Planning by Design headed by consultant Stephen Sully in 2008 led to Council deciding to establish the position of a Lismore City Centre Manager (CCM) in early 2009. Based on exhaustive consultation with the business and wider community the Lismore Alive Report identified the challenges facing Lismore's city centre and provided a number of recommendations for revitalising the CBD.

1.2 How the Lismore Business Promotion Program is funded

A Special Business Rate Variation Levy (SBRVL) funds the city centre revitalisation and Lismore-wide marketing activities of the Lismore Business Promotions Program. The Program, now in its fourth year of operations, is actioned by the Lismore City Centre Manager and governed by the Lismore Business Promotions Panel.

The SBRVL has been in operation and administered by Lismore City Council since July 1, 1998. In a successful submission made by Council to the NSW Minister for Local Government in that year, the SBRVL was sought for two purposes:

- To create a new CitySafe program that would improve the experience of shoppers and visitors and combat perceptions that Lismore was unsafe, and:
- To promote the city centre and the overall business sector in general, in order to attract people back to shop and use the range of services Lismore has to offer.

1.3 How the SBRVL is collected

The SBRVL has been in existence for 14 years and is paid for by 234 Business Property Owners in the defined City Centre area and 846 Business Property Owners in the remainder of the Lismore Urban Area. In most, but not all instances, the cost of the SBRVL is passed on to businesses which lease or rent the rated Business Properties (the exceptions are Owner-occupied business premises).

1.4 Rationale for 3 year Business Plan

The Lismore Business Promotion Program Business Plan has been extended to three years as this timeframe provides greater continuity for a program that has strong support. This support is evidenced by the outcomes of the two most recent mechanisms of consultation and engagement with the Lismore Urban Area business community recently commissioned by Council and the LBP Panel, namely:

1. The Southern Cross University Review of the Lismore Business Promotion Program, the findings of which were presented in February 2013: and
2. The 13 February 2013, Workshop held to ascertain support for the proposed continuation of the Additional SBRVL.

The predecessor to this *three*-year business plan was the two-year 2011-2013 Lismore Business Promotion Program Business Plan. The LBP Panel requested an increase to what had previously been annual business plans because the time required for the approval of same was proving to be counterproductive.

The steps required include a LBP Panel business plan workshop and recommendation of adoption by Council of a draft document, followed by a Report to Council and associated workshop before formal adoption.

NOTE: The process in early 2013 will be affected in some measure by the outcome of the proposed 5 year extension of the Additional SBRVL, should Council decide to make an application to the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for this extra funding.

1.5 Area covered by the Lismore Business Promotion Program

It should be noted that the Council-approved focus for the LBP Program since its inception has been the revitalisation of the city centre - hence the City Centre Manager's position and activities. The CCM is required to operate primarily in a defined city centre geographic zone encompassing the CBD and a portion of North and South Lismore. However, the LBP Program's Business Plan (and budget) contains specific initiatives and funding for business promotional activities across the Lismore Urban Area. Much of the 'umbrella' advertising and marketing efforts of the CCM effectively cover the entire LUA.

Please see Attachment 1: CBD Location Map

2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Lismore Business Promotion Program is based on a commonsense approach. The Program works to ensure that an attractive and sustainable product exists that can be promoted effectively to the local community and wider afield. This product is a combination of the amenity of the city centre, the range of goods and services to be found there, and regular activities and attractions that provide consumers with a reason to visit Lismore.

2.1 Main objective

The primary objective of this 2013 - 2016 Business Plan is to improve and expand the Lismore City Centre revitalisation process and enable business areas in the Lismore Outer Urban Area to be promoted effectively, whilst helping the Lismore Business Promotion Program to achieve its 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.”

2.2 2013 - 2016 Key objectives

Successive LBP Program Business Plans have contained consistent key objectives, which seek to position Lismore as the pre-eminent shopping destination for residents and visitors under the branding “Lismore – Come to the Heart” (and at a regional level “Lismore – Heart of the Northern Rivers”). Key objectives for the next two years incorporate the findings of the SCU Review, presented to the Panel in February 2013.

The key objectives include:

1. To expand marketing and promotional activities, whilst reinforcing the ‘refreshed’ ‘Come to the Heart’ brand (complete with a call to action) and encouraging its use by local businesses;
2. To improve communications with the business and wider community;
3. To increase awareness of both the Program and the role of the Panel that governs it;
4. To consolidate the calendar of events and activities in the CBD;
5. To expand and develop the new ‘Lismore come to the Heart’ website for the benefit of business and other stakeholders;
6. To sustain the pace of place management in the CBD exemplified by the laneways activation;
7. To assist the new strategic alliance of all arts and cultural bodies, ‘Creative Lismore’, in order to provide extra reasons to visit the city centre;
8. To increase the number of relevant and timely business education and development seminars and programs and ensure they are made available to all businesses in the Lismore Urban Area;
9. To secure additional funding and in-kind support wherever possible through sponsorships, grants and other funding avenues for events, activities and projects; and
10. To work effectively with the Lismore Chamber of Commerce and other similar local business networking organisations in order to assist the growth of the Lismore business community.

3. REVIEW OF PROGRESS TO DATE

Annual or bi-annual LBP Program Business Plans are reviewed regularly by the LBP Panel and adjustments made to program components and projects are made as required. Successive reports to the Panel and Council, extensive media coverage and bi-annual issues of the 'Lismore Heartbeat' newsletter have shown the results of the Lismore Business Promotion Program in detail since its inception in late 2009. A snapshot of positive outcomes so far includes:

- Origination and production of the high-impact 'Lismore-come to the Heart' brand and related collateral, and sequential media marketing campaigns, many linked to special events and retail promotions;
- Assistance for an average of 30 local festivals, events and activities each year; both within the city centre and outer areas in the Lismore Urban Area;
- The introduction of regular weekly and monthly attractions such as the CONcerts, the Makers' Market and the Lismore Produce Market;
- Production and airing of regular 'Come to the Heart' television commercials at key times to promote major shopping events organised by the City Centre Manager, such as Mother's Day, the annual Stocktake Sale and Christmas Bonanza;
- Creation of a state-of-the-art website incorporating the first ever comprehensive and LGA wide Business Directory with the ability to enable Lismore businesses which don't have an on-line presence, to benefit from inclusion. 450+ businesses were listed on the 'Lismore-come to the heart' website at the start of December 2012, and more are being added progressively;
- Organisational and marketing support for existing and brand new sporting and entertainment events;
- The introduction and adaptive use of social media including Facebook, Twitter, blogs and viral marketing and crowd-sourcing techniques to broaden the appeal of Lismore;
- Assisting major cultural initiatives such as the Back Alley Gallery and the Lismore Art in the Heart Project that have enlivened the CBD; and
- Securing sponsorships and additional grant funding to boost the LBP Program budget to the value of \$115,000 over the past two years.

3.1 Southern Cross University Review

In late 2012 Southern Cross University's (SCU) Business School was commissioned by the Lismore Business Promotion Panel to review the effectiveness of the Lismore Business Promotion Program. The Review was based on extensive personal interviews and online surveys with consumers and members of the Lismore business community, and was delivered to the Panel in mid-February 2013. Key findings from the SCU Review have been incorporated in this 2013 - 2016 Business Plan.

3.2 Challenges facing the Program

The findings from the Review of the Lismore Business Promotion Program by the SCU Consultants suggest that the city centre revitalisation process has made considerable headway, but needs to consolidate and increase its marketing efforts. There needs to be more sustained out-of-region advertising and promotional activity, to ensure that Lismore's role as the commercial hub of the Northern Rivers region is not undermined by recent and rapid development in neighbouring coastal towns.

There is also a need for improved and more regular communications with the business community, which faces its own challenges due to poor take up of current and emerging technologies which are changing the face of retail operations, Australia wide. In addition, increased training and educational assistance needs to be provided for some sections of the business community that have not kept up with rapid technological change or had some difficulties adapting to current trends or altered consumer habits.

One of the most critical challenges is the need to bridge the gap between the clear demand for extended shopping hours by the community and the reluctance of a majority of retail and other businesses to meet this request. Despite all the events, attractions, retail promotions and events produced by the Program over the past four years (many staged on weekends and after hours, on purpose) the business community is lagging far behind community sentiment.

An overwhelming number of community respondents in the SCU Review asked for extended trading hours and this clear request has been voiced innumerable times to successive CCMs and LBP Panel members over the life of the Program, as well as via surveys and other forms of feedback.

However, at present a majority of retail businesses in the City Centre continue to close on Saturdays at 12 noon or shortly thereafter and reopen on Monday at 9am. This situation flies in the face of national trends for extended shopping opportunities, creates an environment of little to no activity in the City Centre outside of normal business hours, stimulates out-of-region shopping in South East Queensland and prohibits residents and visitors from being able to visit the City Centre on the weekends.

The SCU Survey showed that some businesses felt that the restaurant and café sector were the predominant beneficiaries of the LBP Program. This sector has embraced outdoor dining and extended trading hours and tends to participate more regularly in the co-operative marketing opportunities offered by the Program: visitors and shoppers have rewarded them with their patronage as a result.

3.3 Renaming the Program and Panel

The Lismore Business Promotion *Program* is governed and directed by the Lismore Business Promotion *Panel*. The Program is the comprehensive set of projects contained within successive approved Business Plans and the Panel is in effect the 'Board' which governs and directs the program. However, they both have the same acronym (LBPP), which has proved confusing and counterproductive.

As demonstrated in the SCU Review, there is widespread confusion by both the business and wider community as to the difference between these two separate entities. In addition, the two names are overly formal. A shorter name is therefore required, it is suggested. There is a need to convey a sense of interest and excitement for the fresh promotional *Program* name, linked to the existing/refurbished "Lismore-come to the heart' brand, and an equal need to enable people to understand the *Panel's* role at first take. Although the term of the current Panel has been extended to align with Lismore's Community Plan (Imagine Lismore) by Council, it is recommended that the name change take effect as soon as possible, linked to likely media interest in the results of the SCU Survey and the appointment of a new City Centre Manager.

4. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

4.1 Performance indicators and next formal review

As in previous Business Plans, a series of performance indicators are linked to the three year Program over the period 2013 - 2016. In broad terms these include:

1. Improved profile of the Lismore Business Panel;
2. Attendance numbers at the various events and activities coordinated or assisted by the CCM;
3. Participation rates in co-operative marketing campaigns and events such as the three major retail promotions conducted each year (Stocktake Sale, Mother's Day and Christmas Bonanza);
4. Media coverage of Program activities throughout the year;
5. Increased take up and use of the 'Lismore-come to the heart' brand by LUA businesses; and
6. Improved communications and education with stakeholders.

In specific terms, the outcomes of each of the ten 2013-16 Key objectives listed in Item 1.2 can be assessed by documentation and regular reporting to, and subsequent review by, the LBP Panel.

4.2 Subsequent review

Should the proposed 5 year Additional SBRVL funding eventuate, a mid-term Review will be undertaken in the first half of the 2015 - 2016 financial year, using the same methodology as that employed in the SCU review presented in February 2013, in order to obtain business and community feedback on the progress and effectiveness of the Program.

5. GOVERNANCE

5.1 Lismore Business Promotion Panel

The Lismore Business Promotion Program is governed by the Lismore Business Promotion Panel: the peak representative business group for Lismore. The eight member Panel provides strategic advice and direction to the Lismore City Centre Manager and makes recommendations to Lismore City Council.

The Panel meets on a monthly basis or as required, and delegates authority to the Lismore City Centre Manager to coordinate all aspects of the Program, with a degree of autonomy but with the requirement that any significant alterations to approved budget items needs the approval of the Panel (see 5.3).

5.2 Funding of projects and events

The LBP Panel determines the allocation of funds for events and activities within the Program, based on submissions received from business and community groups. Event organisers are required to complete a detailed Application for SBRVL funding, and if successful, provide a detailed Acquittal following the production of their event. The LBP Panel regularly reviews such Applications and determines which events or activities best match the funding criteria, which are aligned to the aims and objectives of the Lismore Business Promotion Program.

The LBP Panel has determined to review the existing SBRVL funding criteria, with the intention of reducing concurrent funding for long-established events and activities and finding ways to support new and fledgling events.

5.3 City Centre Manager

The City Centre Manager is an employee of Council, reporting to the Executive Director, Sustainable Development (EDSD), who provides direction on operational matters. The CCM reports to the Lismore Business Promotion Panel on a monthly basis and Council staff assist the CCM as/when required and provide full secretariat services to the LBP Panel.

The CCM is delegated to implement this 2013 - 2016 Lismore Business Plan (and the Budget) once endorsed by the LBP Panel and adopted by Council. This delegation assumes spending is in line with the 2013 - 2016 Lismore Business Plan's objectives and is overseen by the EDSD.

However, all funding applications come back to the LBP Panel for consideration and resolution. Furthermore, if there are significant changes to the individual budget categories in this Plan (defined as plus or minus 10%) then those proposed changes shall be approved by the LBP Panel, with the proviso that any such changes will not impact the annual budget bottom lines.

6. 2013 - 2016 PROMOTIONAL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

NOTE: The components in the 2013 - 2016 Promotional Program are consistent with those contained in previous Business Plans. As has happened throughout the life of the Lismore Business Promotion Program since its inception, individual projects within this three year Business Plan may change emphasis, according to altered economic or other circumstances. As will be demonstrated, new events and activities are planned in the next three years, subject to the result of the proposed 5 year extension of the Additional SBRVL.

The majority of projects, events and activities described below are also listed in the 2013 - 2016 Business Plan Budget.

MARKETING

In addition to paid-for advertising, the marketing initiatives devised by the CCM drive the promotional program. High impact and attractive graphics in the 'Lismore - come to the heart' house style feature on printed and electronic collateral year round, in support of the major shopping promotions and events which take place in the city centre.

Increased use of social media, including securing links to influential national retail-focused and other 'blogs' will be a feature of the next three years' marketing efforts.

6.1 Branding

The 'Lismore - come to the heart' brand has proven to be successful. Now in its fourth year however, the brand and associated collateral needs to be 'refreshed'. The original destination television commercial (TVC) will be replaced by a new version containing a strong call to action, and the graphics updated.

Awareness of the brand is high among the public and business and the brand is recognised in the media. However, the actual take-up by business has been poor. Renewed efforts will be made to encourage local businesses using regional radio, television and print advertising on a regular basis to incorporate the brand and slogan in their commercials. Via improved communications channels, all businesses can be informed how easy it is to acquire and use the brand/logo, along with conditions of use.

6.2 Key role of arts and culture

The 'point of difference' selected to provide the city centre with an identifiable character is the level of arts and culture available in the LUA, reflected in the 'Lismore-come to the heart' brand. The Lismore Business Promotion Panel has supported the recent formation of a peak arts group and its intention to provide a strategic direction for the arts and cultural sector. This new arts, culture and entertainment alliance has been branded 'Creative Lismore'.

'Creative Lismore' representation includes NORPA, the Lismore Regional Gallery, Arts Northern Rivers, the Richmond River Historical Society, Art in the Heart, the Star Court Theatre, Event Cinemas, Light'n'Up, community and commercial galleries, plus relevant Council departments. The group aims to improve communication between individual and successful arts organisations and market their combined offerings more effectively to local and regional visitors, with attendant benefits for business.

Local businesses need to be encouraged and educated around the leverage that can be generated through arts and cultural events around the CBD. The CCM will work closely with businesses to obtain direct benefits and gain more exposure from these kinds of events.

6.3 Advertising

The new TVC and associated press and radio advertisements need to demonstrate that the city centre has improved and that the range of shopping and *experiences* available in Lismore set it apart. There is a need to increase advertising to out of region markets (Brisbane, South East Qld, Coffs Harbour and the West) for specific events and activities that can attract shoppers and patrons from further afield.

As well, regular press advertising in print media spanning surrounding towns in the Northern Rivers will highlight the range of services Lismore has to offer, and reinforce its role as the regional hub.

6.4 Promotions

In addition to the major retail promotions (Stocktake Sale, Mother's Day and Christmas Bonanza), the CCM will continue to devise and coordinate smaller but no less effective business-focussed promotions throughout the year. This promotional activity will include opportunities for Outer Lismore Urban Area business nodes.

6.5 Communications

The SCU Review has identified clearly certain areas where both the LBPP and CCM roles need to improve. The most critical of these is the need to communicate more effectively with both business and the wider community. The business sector needs to receive more timely and regular information in order to:

- learn what the CCM and LBP Program's overall planned promotional activities are for the whole year in general terms, and be informed in detail and well in advance of forthcoming specific promotions and marketing initiatives;
- find out how they can participate and benefit from the planned promotional activity; and
- get to know who the LBP Panel members are and what their role is in governing the LBP Program on behalf of the business community.

Actions to improve communication with key stakeholders will include installing a 'business-only' tab on the website homepage, complete with password, which will enable Lismore businesses and Business Property Owners to see what promotions and co-op marketing opportunities are imminent. As well, this restricted access area on the website will allow businesses to view the proceedings of LBP Panel meetings and become more familiar with Panel members. This business section could also include background material on, for example, Place Making and trends in Town Centre Management across Australia and elsewhere.

Other planned actions include:

- Year-round production of regular (at least monthly and possibly fortnightly) Business bulletins, to be produced in printed and pdf formats, and to be both hand-delivered as well as emailed. These 'shorter/smarter/quicker' bulletins could be branded as 'The Pulse';
- Continue production of at least bi-annual issues of the 8pp Lismore 'Heartbeat', and distribute these across the entire LUA by a combination of hand-delivery, email, and where necessary, post. (It is recommended that Property Owners be mailed copies of the 'Heartbeat', but not the more frequent bulletins.)
- Update and expand databases to increase the number of recipients of Program communications.

The SCU Report clearly identifies that there is still confusion between the differing roles of the Panel and the Lismore Chamber of Commerce in the minds of both business and community members, and that many people are unaware who governs the promotion Program and why. Actions to remedy this situation include:

- Panel members agreeing to act as spokespersons for the Program, making themselves available for contact with members of the business and wider community, and being prepared to speak to the media on behalf of the Program; and
- Establishing a regular column or 'spot' in local print media, in which individual Panel members can be profiled in turn, alongside information for businesses and the wider community provided by the CCM.

Above all, the CCM will make regular 'one on one' contact with business owners and managers a priority and assign time each week for this purpose.

6.6 Website

The 'Lismore-come to the heart' website (launched in late December 2012) currently contains listings for over 450 businesses in the LUA and is a most comprehensive and dynamic marketing tool. The site will be updated continually, new businesses added, and details of forthcoming events, attractions and promotions will be uploaded as/when required. This brand new site is the result of a partnership between the LBP Program and Lismore Tourism, is linked to the websites of key organisations in the city and has the potential to help improve communications with the business community. Website maintenance will incur ongoing management costs.

In addition to the website an application (app) should be developed which could include maps and info on businesses and facilities in the CBD. Up and coming events should be showcased and include links to businesses where the public can buy tickets or sign up for offers. This will also potentially open up the CBD to a different demographic and arm them with more information about the CBD and what's on.

6.7 PR/Social media

Public Relations activity generates exposure for the Lismore city centre, at minimal cost. The CCM will work closely with other Council's Media and Community Relations Coordinators and Lismore Tourism to sustain coverage of various aspects of the CBD's retail mix, arts and cultural offerings and major events. It is estimated that such PR activity generates as much as \$30,000 value p.a. in local, regional and national consumer, food, fashion and lifestyle magazines and newspapers.

The CCM will also work to create new media opportunities that are not directly attached to an event or advertising campaign, but which reinforce the brand and generate interest in Lismore's commercial sector.

EVENTS

6.8 Year round events

Major events in the City Centre will continue to act as reasons to visit the city centre and to reinforce the perception that Lismore is the home of cultural, sporting and other events. The Program has supported iconic events such as the Lismore Lantern Parade, North Coast National, Christmas Carols and Tropical Fruits for successive years, but the Panel will review funding criteria in early 2013 to ensure that new events with the potential to raise the profile of the CBD and stimulate patronage from well outside the 2480 postcode, can be assisted.

The review will seek to identify and then fund one or more signature events that have the potential to match existing major iconic events recognised and supported by Council and the business and wider community with a view to presenting these in 2014 and beyond. The CCM will scope potential new signature events such as a family-oriented alcohol-free New Year's Eve concert and related activities, or a 'Taste of Lismore' food and wine festival, and report back to the Panel.

The CCM will continue to work closely with Council's Tourism and Events units to achieve a critical mass of quality events and promotions which will enable locals and visitors to anticipate correctly that there will be some kind of scheduled activity taking place in the city centre throughout the year. In addition, the CCM will provide in-kind support for the LCC Events team to assist with 'pitching' for large sporting events to come to Lismore.

Council's Events, Tourism and Arts coordinators have proposed an 'Arts in August' festival to highlight the huge range of cultural activities on offer in Lismore. The recently formed Peak Arts Group 'Creative Lismore' will be invited to join discussions around this proposal and will have much to contribute.

PLACEMAKING

There is widespread acceptance and understanding of the need for placemaking and place management within the LBP Program. The Panel will consider a range of proposed projects aimed at enhancing the amenity of the CBD and creating an attractive sense of 'place.' These include:

- Installing solar-powered fairy lights around The Block to improve night-time ambience for diners and patrons attending evening events;
- Instituting walking tours of the city centre laneways and arcades and creating and/or improving signage to direct pedestrians to key CBD destinations;
- Installing wi-fi facilities throughout the CBD in strategic locations and providing a smart phone app (linked where possible to the website) to enhance the walking tours described above;
- Activating spaces with currently little or no activity or life (the paved area beside the Transit Centre, for example) via performances, small-scale special events, commercial promotions and community activities; and
- Identifying a section of the laneway network that could become a shared pedestrian zone, and host a café, performance space and other uses attractive to consumers.

6.9 Power for events

Provision has been made to continue installing power outlets to service promotional and special events in the three streets in The Block that have not yet been upgraded (to date, Magellan and Carrington Streets have been completed). The recent Woodlark Street upgrade made no provision for this need, which restricts the ability of the Program to produce live entertainment etc in this area.

6.10 Laneways activation

Without a doubt, one of the most successful projects to occur within the Program has been The Back Alley Gallery (TBAG), which has gained national and international recognition for Lismore and continues to generate interest. In the next two years The Back Alley Gallery plans to expand throughout City Centre laneways with the fourth stage commencing in April 2013, supported by funding from The Seed foundation in WA.

Plans also exist to establish a colourful and engaging walking tour of the CBD laneways for residents and visitors, which would include QR codes at strategic locations enabling viewers to access more information about TBAG and the artists who contributed works.

The Back Alley Gallery also proposes hosting an annual laneway festival based on the overwhelming success of this event in 2012, attended by over 1500 people of all ages. The CCM will continue to assist TBAG in a project management, marketing and support role and pursue all avenues for fresh sponsorship, out-of-area publicity and residential art programs.

6.11 City Centre Activation (including Library Square)

The lack of a central plaza, square or open space in the city centre is one of the greatest obstacles facing the revitalisation of the CBD. Although admittedly on a larger scale, central spaces such as Brisbane's South Bank or Melbourne's Federation Square enable people to meet, to celebrate, to eat, to listen to music, to wander through markets and exhibitions and to celebrate on major occasions.

The Program is forced to present regular weekly activities such as the Produce Market and scheduled CBD events and entertainment year round in the four streets which make up The Block. This situation is far from ideal and tends to concentrate activity in Magellan Street because of its ability to manage traffic issues the most effectively.

Library Square - potential key 'place' (subject to RDA funding)

Council is proceeding with plans to develop the open areas surrounding the present Library, Northern Rivers Conservatorium Arts Centre and including Fredericks Car Park, bounded by Magellan and Dawson Streets. The aim is to develop a true Community Space, to act as a central meeting place and multi-use venue for open air concerts, festivals, markets, parades, and gatherings of all kinds.

In late February, Council was advised that its original application to Regional Development Australia to help fund 'Library Square' was unsuccessful. If Council is successful in securing funding for the proposed Library Square precinct in a *second RDA bid in May 2013*, it could enable the existing C Block structure to be upgraded and re-roofed and become the administrative wing of a new twin-level cultural centre to be constructed immediately adjacent, which would stage exhibitions and other activities in 800m² of new galleries and work spaces.

A parallel development involving the construction of a sizeable office which could house all Council departments plus commercial tenants, would similarly free up space in the Fredericks Car Park, remove current parking in front of The Con and create the Community Space to be known as Library Square. Subject to funding, Library Square could be a reality by mid-2015.

If the proposed Library Square redevelopment does eventuate, in 2015, the Program will move a major portion of its events and activities to the new open space, the benefits of which are immediately apparent. Citywide shopping promotions will of course continue to take place throughout the CBD.

In terms of naming (and eventual branding), it is suggested that more dynamic and attractive alternatives for 'Library Square' be investigated.

6.12 City Centre markets

Instigating a farmers' market as a key component in activating the city centre was one of the main recommendations of the Lismore Alive Final Report. This has been achieved - and it works. The Lismore Produce Market received assistance from the Program in its start-up mode, but has been financially self-sufficient since April 2011 and pays a nominal weekly fee to Council for electricity and the use of the site in Magellan Street.

The Lismore Produce Market is one of the undoubted success stories of the Program, despite a certain amount of criticism from business, but not shoppers, which is a factor common to similar markets across Australia. The Produce Market has integrity, personifies the 'buy local' ethos, has proved to be a popular attraction, brings extra numbers to the CBD each week, and could readily transfer to the proposed Library Square site in 2015. The increased space plus access to parking for vendors and market-goers will be a plus.

Note: Patterns of use, pedestrian traffic flow and habits, and all important perceptions affect the dynamic of the city centre. Shoppers in the CBD seem to regard areas beyond the four main streets which comprise The Block as 'too difficult' when invited to attend events or activities even slightly further afield. The aforementioned lack of a genuine 'common space' in the city centre means that people are unwilling to travel beyond their habitual journeys.

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY

6.13 Business training and development

The Lismore business community has its own challenges including a slow take up of current and emerging technologies which are changing the face of retail operations, Australia-wide. In addition, increased training and educational assistance needs to be provided for some sections of the business community that have not kept up with rapid technological change or had some difficulties adapting to current trends or altered consumer habits.

In contrast to neighbouring Byron Bay and other centres competing for consumer spending, a number of CBD businesses have yet to establish websites, embrace social media or upgrade outdated building interiors or even point-of-sale displays. Although this places them at a disadvantage, there are avenues for improvement readily available. The Lismore Chamber of Commerce and other business networks such as Stella – Women in Business will be encouraged to apply for SBRVL funding to present an expanded series of business training and development seminars and programs aimed at improving the attractiveness and profitability of businesses keen to prosper and grow.

6.14 Lismore Outer Urban Area

The SCU Review shows clearly that commercial areas beyond the city centre want some form of recognition and promotion - beyond the 'umbrella'/destination marketing regularly carried out by the CCM. There is provision in the Advertising section of the Budget to enable this to occur. A key factor will be increased and improved communication with the whole of the business community: outlying commercial centres can be given the opportunity to participate in localised promotions coordinated by the CCM and likely requiring co-op income from relevant businesses.

The Program already supports events which take place in the Lismore Outer Urban Area, and the CCM will investigate promotional projects which can spotlight Outer LUA locations such as Goonellabah, Wyrallah Road, the Industrial Estates, and North and South Lismore (the last two business precincts are already within the defined LBP Program City Centre area).

It must be remembered that the Program is city-centric for good reason. Through the 'Lismore Alive' consultation process Council and the business and wider community recognised that the commercial heart and main drawcard of Lismore, the CBD, needed to be revitalised. As the SCU Review points out, there is a widespread perception among the general public that things have improved noticeably, but that more needs to be done in the city centre in order to achieve the Program's vision.

6.15 Links with the community

A large number of the events funded by the Program are produced by community organisations. The CCM will continue to assist them and build positive working relationships with the organisers to ensure that the events are trouble-free and successful. A feature of many of the community events is fund-raising for charitable and other worthy causes and the CCM will help to maximise attendances and revenue.

6.16 Youth activities

The Program will continue to encourage local schools and related youth organisations to hold events in the City Centre. More interaction with youth will generate a more diverse set of performances and events in the CBD and frequently involves families and supporters. The CCM will work with the Council's Community Services team as needed to implement these activities.

6.17 Sport

Lismore is particularly well endowed with sporting facilities and Council's Events unit has proved to be extremely accomplished at securing major sporting tournaments of every kind to be held right across the LUA as well as the city centre. The Program will continue to value-add to all major sporting events such as the Masters' Games in order to maximise returns to business, and the Panel will evaluate funding applications which have the potential to bring competitors and spectators to Lismore.

6.18 Indigenous Community

Lismore has a very strong Indigenous culture and heritage which deserves to be celebrated and showcased. The CCM would like to work closely with the local Indigenous community to come up with ideas and events to celebrate Indigenous culture. As an example of possible co-productions which can benefit local and other partners, the Sydney-based "Message Sticks" Film Festival, which celebrates Indigenous film making, could come to Lismore. There is a need for education on a local level about Lismore's Indigenous heritage which could be achieved through the arts and well executed events.

7. PROGRAM BUDGET

NOTES:

1. The budget for each year is shown in two Scenarios: (A) cessation of, or (B) extension of the Additional SBRVL
2. The sequential annual LBP Program budgets shown below are based on the assumption that annual rate pegging (determined by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal) will be 3% per annum.
3. Based on the delivery of all previous LBP Programs, provision should be made for some project line items to be carried over to subsequent years, within the Budget.

2013-14 FINANCIAL YEAR

INCOME	SCENARIO A: \$221,500.00	SCENARIO B: \$328,000.00
EXPENDITURE	SCENARIO A: \$221,500.00	SCENARIO B: \$328,000.00
Budget item	(Return to existing SBRVL)	(Additional SBRVL Year 1 of 5 – \$106,500)
MARKETING	45,000.00	80,000.00
EVENTS	45,000.00	80,000.00
PLACEMAKING	16,000.00	32,000.00
BUSINESS+COMMUNITY	25,000.00	40,000.00
CONTINGENCY	2,580.00	8,080.00
<i>Sub-total Program Costs</i>	<i>133,580.00</i>	<i>240,080.00</i>
CCM Employment / Admin	87,920.00	87,920.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$221,500.00	\$328,000.00

2014-15 FINANCIAL YEAR

INCOME	SCENARIO A: \$228,145.00	SCENARIO B: \$336,200.00
EXPENDITURE	SCENARIO A: \$228,145.00	SCENARIO B: \$336,200.00
Budget item	(No Additional SBRVL)	(Additional SBRVL Year 2 of 5 – \$109,700)
MARKETING	46,000.00	80,000.00
EVENTS	46,000.00	80,000.00
PLACEMAKING	18,000.00	36,000.00
BUSINESS+COMMUNITY	25,000.00	42,000.00
CONTINGENCY	3,027.00	8,082.00
<i>Sub-total Program Costs</i>	<i>138,027.00</i>	<i>246,082.00</i>
CCM Employment	90,118.00	90,118.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$228,145.00	\$336,200.00

2015-16 FINANCIAL YEAR

INCOME	SCENARIO A: \$234,989.00	SCENARIO B: \$346,848.00
EXPENDITURE	SCENARIO A: \$234,989.00	SCENARIO B: \$346,848
Budget item	(No Additional SBRVL)	(Additional SBRVL: Year 3 of 5 – \$113,00)
MARKETING	47,000.00	82,000.00
EVENTS	47,000.00	82,000.00
PLACEMAKING	18,255.00	37,000.00
BUSINESS+COMMUNITY	26,000.00	44,500.00
CONTINGENCY	3,913.00	8,527.00
<i>Sub-total Program Costs</i>	<i>142,168.00</i>	<i>254,027.00</i>
CCM Employment	92,821.00	92,821.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$234,989.00	\$346,848.00





LISMORE CITY COUNCIL

MAP TITLE: Potential Town Centre Management Area Map

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Scale: 1:7,000