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## **Jobs, parking boost : highlight of OC *Future City* transformation plans**

A series of proposals designed to boost jobs growth while transforming Orange's CBD are being floated by Orange City Council.

Suggestions to build an open mall, a piazza style town square in McNamara Lane and address parking were some of the ideas unveiled to the public last night as a means to boost economic development in the CBD and create more jobs.

The OC *Future City* proposals unveiled at a community forum were part of a multi-layered approach to transform Orange's CBD.

About 45 people attended a community forum at the Civic Centre last night to hear details of 3-component plan which includes:

- a piazza-style new town square and retail precinct in McNamara Lane,
- pedestrian malls in Anson Street or Lords Place,
- an upgrade of the Civic Square precinct, including an outdoor cinema screen and the planned conservatorium
- dedicated walking & cycling paths across a wider area from the new DPI site to the current DPI site,
- upgraded opportunities for using Robertson Park, all underpinned by the installation of core technology and foundation services.
- three multi-level car parks,

Mayor Reg Kidd said he was pleased with the response at last night's meeting.

"During the *Where to Next?* community conversation earlier this year, one of the key themes to come through was that the people of Orange want a CBD they can be proud of," Cr Reg Kidd said. "The ideas set out tonight have come directly from that community input."

"It's crucial at this early stage of what will be major changes that we aim high. We have the opportunity to get a CBD we can all be proud, but do it in a way that will grow jobs, attract investment and boost tourist numbers.

"These concepts are a strategy for the purpose of seeking grant funding, as well as a brief for expert urban designers. It's about pulling our thinking caps on and having a conversation. Which of these components are finally adopted, and when they're built will depend on government funding, staging and council priorities.

“The next steps involve putting these design concepts in a brief that will go to urban designers. It’s early days and there will be a lot more community conversation.

“Overall the message from last night’s community forum was one of support of creating a CBD, which will encourage more jobs and more economic growth.”

“People can find out more on the [YourSay Orange site](#).”

The proposals unveiled for community discussion last night are in three components.

#### **COMPONENT ONE**

- **Improve the attractiveness and usability of the CBD** by improving features such as high quality paving, street furniture, bins, lighting, planter boxes, trees, signage and enabling infrastructure (road upgrades, drainage etc)
- **Construct a multi-story carpark** on the existing Ophir car park to support increased traffic to the nearby retail and business precinct
- **Construct a pedestrian mall in Anson Street** (from Summer to Kite). This would connect the former Myers shopping complex with a planned multi-level Woollies Car Park commercial, parking & residential redevelopment through a pedestrian mall. The mall would be developed as a prestige pedestrian mall along the lines of Federation Square in Melbourne with a sympathetic mix of engaging heritage and modern forms and buildings – public space incorporating area for bands/music, large screens for public gathering (e.g. football matches), street artists, public art, kids interactive fountain for summer cooling, cafés, restaurants, retail to create an attractive space for people 35 years +, young families and older residents and tourists.

#### **COMPONENT TWO**

- **Transform Robertson Park** from a passive and under-used green space into a highly engaging space for social interaction. The project would include public art and lighting to attract increased use. New infrastructure for business activity would include permanent facilities (water, power, gas, WiFi) for stalls to transform the space on weekends into a tourist destination and pop-up food space.
- **Construct active transport links** to integrate the wider business precinct from the site of the new DPI office on Anson St to the Railway Station and old DPI building through the CBD. These links would include designated walkways, bike paths, lighting, location signs to promote active travel and interaction as people move

across the precinct. This is aimed at ensuring that staff working in offices are drawn to the CBD for lunch, shopping and recreation.

- **Continue to develop the Civic Square precinct** : This would include a large projection screen and sound system to use the museum forecourt as an outdoor gathering space linked to Robertson Park and McNamara Lane. Pending government funding the new home for the Conservatorium would be built in this area.
- **Transform McNamara Lane** : Convert McNamara Lane (from Summer St to the exit from the Aldi car park) into a cobble-stone pedestrian mall, converting the adjacent Council-owned parking into a community plaza. The concept is an Italian town square-style open space with multipurpose use on weekdays and weekends. The square would be surrounded by eateries, micro breweries, distilleries, organic produce, cafes etc . The plaza would include both open and covered communal eating. It would be a weekend market square (produce, arts, antiques, crafts, clothing, food etc) The target market is professionals (mid-week) and under 35 year old tourists and day/night economy for residents on weekend - increase safety by encouraging night time activity into the square.
- **Multi-level parking** : Expand the Civic Centre Car Park to 3-levels to accommodate expanded business demand and to offset loss of car parking in McNamara Lane.
- **Summer St / Byng St Roads** : Redesign locations in Summer St and Byng St to include shared pedestrian zones.

### COMPONENT THREE

- **Smart City Technology** : This component underpins whole city development as a smart economy. This would include the installation of core infrastructure and foundation services such as, smart lighting, USB charging, WiFi, smart bins, smart navigation supported by apps, smart parking, LED promotional signage.
- This system would be expandable to include electric car charging, on-demand public transport and other higher end uses over time.

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