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## Orange City Council wraps up the year with a list of highlights

A boost for tourism, millions of dollars' worth of road upgrades, over 3 kilometres of new footpaths, and over 52,000 phone calls, letters or emails to Orange City Council's customer service team.

2018 was a great year for Orange, according to mayor Reg Kidd.

"It's good at this time of the year to look back and consider the big picture of our city and our Council," Cr Kidd said.

"2018 has been a successful year in terms of getting major projects underway while ensuring the day to day running of the city is going smoothly.

"We launched a stage one of our detailed plan for Orange's economic future, called *ActivateOrange*. It's an ambitious bid for \$170 million dollars in new investment and will impact every aspect of the city with the goal to boost growth and jobs.

"It includes a CBD revitalisation, new Life Sciences Precinct, expansion of the southern industrial and freight precinct and upgraded roads and is awaiting a funding decision from the NSW Government.

"We will add to this plan over the next 12 months to make it the guiding document for Orange's future economic development incorporating indigenous development, community amenities, jobs and sports.

"An upgrade of 1.4 kilometres of Forest Road is one of the major highlights of the year and it is almost complete.

"I think we can all agree this was a project the community was calling out for and I'm proud the Council, along with the state and federal government, as well as James Richmark, the developers of the Bloomfield Medical Centre, have been able to come together to fund this project.

"Our footpaths crews laid 4,450 square metres of concrete over 16 projects, including a 1250 metre path in Anson Street between Douglas Place and Matthew Avenue.

"Another major project and an example of governments working together is the Orange to Carcoar Pipeline, which is in its commissioning stage.

"The \$28 million project funded by Council, the NSW Government and Central Tablelands Water, provides water security for the whole region, potable water to Spring Hill and Lucknow and is able to pump water both ways in an emergency.

"It's good value for money for the Council and a good economic boost for the whole region."

In 2018, there were over 500 development applications and modifications approved by Council and 21 compliant development certificates issued.

Cr Kidd said it was a clear sign the city, the economy and Orange's reputation was growing creating more work for the construction, trade and housing sectors and retailers.

"We're seeing good growth and progress in the region with over \$145 million worth of development applications, and compliant development certificates approved and issued by Council.

"While the drought has been tough on a lot of people, it's been wonderful to see good use of the Macquarie to Orange Pipeline and our stormwater harvesting schemes."

Council's customer service team answered 28,000 phone calls, received 24,000 emails and entered 11,000 customer requests from requests to fix leaking pipes, to requests for street trees, booking Council facilities and advice on renovation regulations and development applications.

The Orange Civic Theatre sold 45 thousand tickets to 79 shows, the Visitors Information Centre had 120,000 walk-ins and the Orange City Library lent 170,000 physical items.

"Tourism in the region got a big boost after Cabonne Council, Blayney Shire Council and Orange joined efforts.

"We then launched a new brand to badge the efforts of the new joint council marketing wing, *Orange360*," Cr Kidd said.

"In 2018 Orange welcomed more than 1.2 million tourists, hosted over 200 community events and delivered several high profile conferences, such as Town Planners Conference and NSW Regional Tech Expo. We also had the Regional Tourism Awards and the NSW/ACT Regional Achievement & Community Awards conferences bringing hundreds of people into our retail stores, restaurants and cafes across the City.

"The new Orange 360 brand is seeing good growth in its early days and we look forward to seeing what we can achieve together.

"I was proud to see Orange chosen as a route for the Queen's Baton Relay and it was heart-warming to see the community rally to support residents chosen to carry the baton.

"The Orange Regional Museum launched the exhibition *Paddock to Plate; a history of food and wine in Orange and district* in April and has been visited by 38,000 people.

"We also saw the final year of the Centenary of WWI and with it the Central West Libraries blog. The blog provides a lasting tribute to the men and women from the district who served in the war and has been recognised internationally for the quality and accuracy of the content.

"The Orange Regional Gallery presented 24 exhibitions and secured \$4 million in funding for an extension to the building.

"We've hosted 12 sporting events of state or national significance which injected about \$5 million into our economy.

"We also celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the official opening of the Orange Botanic Gardens and the installation of the Tim Winters seat.

"We couldn't do all of this without our wonderful volunteers.

"This year, we were able to deliver 11,000 hours of social support including outings and visits, 2,010 transport trips, 316 hours of gardening and nearly 20,000 meals to people who need them.

"This is all because of our wonderful volunteers.

“This year another 73 people volunteered to help us with our community services, bringing our total to 412.

“It makes me so proud to see so many people dedicated to making life better for others.”

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