



wollongong city council

# CULTURAL PLAN

2014 - 2018

Wollongong  
City Centre  
Evening Economy  
Action Plan



## 1 An Inclusive and Connected Community: A Connected City Centre

*Connected transport and connecting visitors, businesses and events.*

Fundamental to an evening economy is a city centre with strong and efficient transport links and one which delivers a more 'connected' experience for city workers, residents and visitors. Effective wayfinding and clear and safe paths of travel between evening economy areas is also integral to the achievement of this goal.

Based on the findings of the research and public consultation process, the following short, medium and long-term actions are recommended for a connected city centre.

- 1.1 Continue to deliver free Wi-Fi to key outdoor locations in the city centre.
- 1.2 Incorporate an evening economy component into the Wollongong City Centre App that identifies wayfinding and transport/parking options.
- 1.3 Work with Destination Wollongong to deliver integrated experiences for visitors.
- 1.4 Investigate public street lighting to better indicate paths of travel and direct people flow.
- 1.5 Investigate options for digital signage in the Crown Street Mall to promote what is on and where during the evening.
- 1.6 Investigate a 'safe overnight car parking station'.
- 1.7 Advocate/lobby for extended operation of the green bus hours to help support the growth of the evening economy.
- 1.8 Investigate alternative public and private transport options.

## 2 Celebrating our Places: An Attractive City Centre

*People-friendly spaces that are inviting, interesting and safe public spaces.*

The goal focuses on safety and connectivity within our city centre in the evening.

It recognises that the quality of our public spaces in the evening is dependent on the right balance of public infrastructure, active street frontages and space management.

Based on the findings of the research and public consultation process, the following short, medium and long-term actions are recommended for an attractive city centre.

- 2.1 Implement a Wollongong City Centre App that includes amenity and safety information.
- 2.2 Continue to provide a high-quality CCTV network.
- 2.3 Share the knowledge across our community on the gap between actual and perceived safety in the evening based on data collection and evidence.
- 2.4 Lobby for a Night Bus for the southern suburbs.
- 2.5 Investigate more public toilet options, particularly along migration routes between evening economy activation hotspots including the Crown Street Mall.
- 2.6 Investigate change-room options for events.
- 2.7 Review the cleaning schedule for footpaths to identify areas that require additional attention.
- 2.8 Review bin placements and bin emptying schedule.

### 3 A Smart Economy: A Progressive City Centre

*Respond to the needs of residents and business including creative industries and work toward achieving a beneficial balance between economic growth and residential amenity.*

The focus of this goal is to achieve a better and more consistent approach to accessing land use activities for premises, effective regulation and compliance, the establishment of unique characters within the city centre and their effective management and the simplification of processes to reduce red tape.

Based on the findings of the research and public consultation process, the following short, medium and long-term actions are recommended for a progressive city centre.

- 3.1 Revisit the City Centre Revitalisation Strategy to achieve a sustainable evening economy in the city centre including attracting a larger residential community compatible with inner city centre living.
- 3.2 Develop and implement city centre evening trading planning controls. This would allow opportunities for evening trading in appropriate locations and the identification of development controls including appropriate acoustic treatment.
- 3.3 Develop a clearly defined protocol for dealing with noise complaints.
- 3.4 Explore innovative ways to encourage noise compliance (e.g. the silent clowns in Paris).
- 3.5 Following the review of the planning controls, ensure that section 149 certificates issued for residential evening economy zones, clearly identify that these areas have capacity to trade in the evening to alert the purchaser.
- 3.6 Incorporate into our planning controls outdoor dining in the city centre up until midnight with appropriate controls.
- 3.7 Obtain a blanket DA for street trading in the Crown Street Mall.
- 3.8 Develop a Crown Street Mall Activity Policy to encourage and provide guidelines for increased activation of the Crown Street Mall.
- 3.9 Produce accessible Building Code of Australia information for businesses.
- 3.10 Contribute to the 2015 Review of the Building Code of Australia (BCA).
- 3.11 Investigate how the interpretation and application of the BCA can optimise the evening economy, including change of use requirements for existing buildings and where a DA is required for an existing building.
- 3.12 Establish and resource the small to medium enterprise unit to help deliver improved information and guidance for proponents of the evening economy in the city centre throughout the application process.
- 3.13 Develop information guides for start-up businesses that provide specific information on process requirements and resources available for setting up a temporary or permanent venue/activity.
- 3.14 Consider hosting workshops for entrepreneurs, agencies and not-for-profit groups with a focus on development consent, fees and grants available to support pop-up or temporary activation events in the city centre.
- 3.15 Promote the city to developers as an evening economy trading environment.

## 4 Vibrant Community: An Activated City Centre

*A wide choice of leisure and entertainment, and a rich mix of private and public attractions for a range of age groups, lifestyles and cultures, including families.*

This goal focuses on increased activation of the city centre in the evening. It recognises that increasing the mix of offerings in the evening is a crucial factor for a successful evening economy in the city centre, offering more diversity for different segments of the community to enjoy.

Based on the findings of the research and public consultation process, the following short, medium and long-term actions are recommended for an activated city centre.

### **Retail**

- 4.1 Consider the mechanisms available to encourage ground floor retail to trade into the evening, rather than closing at 5.30pm. This is especially important in areas where local services such as childcare, chemists, gyms and supermarkets should be trading later to service the community and visitors.
- 4.2 Improve and manage outdoor dining systems and processes.

### **Activities**

- 4.3 Consider extended operating evening hours for cultural venues i.e. Wollongong Art Gallery, Libraries and Wollongong Town Hall.
- 4.4 Deliver a feasibility report on a City Centre Digital Activation Strategy.
- 4.5 Investigate options to attract new evening events such as markets, festivals, live music events, food and beverage events and educational events e.g. evening classes in public buildings.
- 4.6 Identify evening performance spaces and encourage local performers, artists and creatives to activate these spaces as part of a street activation program.
- 4.7 Focus on new uses for under-utilised fine-grains spaces in the evening.
- 4.8 Implement Council's Creative Spaces Strategy.

### **Marketing**

- 4.9 Wollongong City Council to work with Destination Wollongong to include a focus on the evening economy as part of Destination Wollongong's marketing activities for the city centre.
- 4.10 Destination Wollongong to develop and promote various 'city centre experience' packages to encourage various demographics to use the city centre in the evening for longer periods of time e.g. a family package could incorporate dining, movies and any major event taking place in the city centre.
- 4.11 Destination Wollongong to communicate upcoming events to city centre businesses to enable these businesses to plan ahead for these increased opportunities.

## 5 Civic Leadership and Governance: A Collaborative City Centre

*A collaborative city centre evening economy that recognises Council's leadership role and is built on mutually beneficial partnerships between a diverse range of stakeholders.*

It is recognised that Council has direct control in some areas, while in other areas Council can influence outcomes and/or can voice community concern.

This goal focuses on working with stakeholders to ensure a holistic and consultative approach is taken to the city centre evening economy. It promotes the facilitation and utilisation of strong and effective partnerships between all city stakeholders to address issues associated with the city centre evening economy including transport issues, alcohol-related issues and safety issues.

Based on the findings of the research and public consultation process, the following short, medium and long-term actions are recommended for a collaborative city centre:

- 5.1 Establish a City Centre Evening Economy Key Stakeholder Group to track city centre evening economy progress and to identify and address any other issues that may arise.
- 5.2 Facilitate a workshop to examine the red tape problems relating to evening economy regulatory processes to see where processes can be improved and/or simplified.
- 5.3 Work in partnership with key stakeholders to improve community perceptions of safety.