

# The Penrith Progression Online Forum

<http://ourfuture.com.au/our-future-penrith>

June – September 2014



## 1. Introduction

The Penrith Progression online forum was launched in June 2014 to consult with stakeholders and the community about how we can transform the heart of Penrith. The forum was created to build upon the planning and research that had already been done, identifying real projects, partnerships and capital investment to create local jobs. The forum was open to all stakeholders who had registered an interest to be part of the Penrith Progression (over 600 people). Participants were invited to join the forum through the Penrith Progression e-newsletter. Links to the forum were also posted on the Penrith Progression Facebook and Twitter accounts. The forum had over 39 responses and over 500 views.

Participants were able to provide feedback on the following six questions:

- a) Tell us your bright idea for bringing people to the city centre
- b) For a more inclusive city, what would make Penrith City Centre more accessible?
- c) What would make you want to walk, cycle or use public transport more in Penrith City Centre?
- d) What do you think of when you talk about 'greening' or improving the sustainability of Penrith City Centre?
- e) What types of housing would make you want to live in Penrith City Centre?
- f) What would attract residents of Penrith to spend more time in the Penrith City Centre?

## 2. Forum Results

Participants were asked about their bright ideas for improving the city centre.

- a) Tell us your bright idea for bringing people to the city centre
  - Closing off high street for Summer night markets
  - Using Allen Place car park for markets
  - Creating a pedestrian walkway from the Civic Centre through Woodriff Gardens to the river
  - Upgrades to the eastern side of the river
  - Free outdoor cinema nights on the river
  - Jazz evenings with food stalls
  - A light show on the Nepean River depicting the crossing of the Blue Mountains
  - Penrith CBD festival
  - Buildings where you can live, work, shop, retire and play
  - More high rise buildings with vertical and roof gardens
  - High rise residential
  - Reflect the State Government's desire to be a major regional city, sitting only behind Sydney and Parramatta in size and scale
  - Create a night time economy
  - Support the new airport with secondary businesses/services
  - Affordable CBD housing for young people
  - A Penrith *Vivid* festival
  - Greater promotion of events within the city such as Hawkesbury Harvest markets and Lewer's Forage and Feast markets
  - Re-locate the parking that will be lost for the City Park

For a more inclusive city, what would make Penrith City Centre more accessible?  
and

- b) What would make you want to walk, cycle or use public transport more in Penrith City Centre?
- A free bus service, similar to Perth, Kuala Lumpur etc
  - Improved shop facades and lighting to make pedestrians feel safer at night
  - Create a lively 'cappuccino strip' with alfresco dining in a central hub. This would improve the feeling of safety day and night.
  - Pedestrian networks connecting Thornton to the station and CBD
  - Improved cycle ways in central locations such as High Street
  - Improved traffic flow and designated cycle ways on Mulgoa Road
- c) What do you think of when you talk about 'greening' or improving the sustainability of Penrith City Centre?
- Council offers recycling initiatives
- d) What types of housing would make you want to live in Penrith City Centre?
- Apartments hidden behind and over shops
  - Apartments with the bottom level reserved for public parking
  - Housing should be mainly freestanding in Penrith's outer suburbs
  - Townhouses and flats close to the station with sufficient parking
- e) What would attract residents of Penrith to spend more time in the Penrith City Centre?
- Good coffee
  - Wider variety dining options
  - Increased accessibility between parking and the night time economy (laneways often dark or closed at night)
  - High Street to become a corso of eateries, specialty shops and greenery
  - Improved shop facades and some sort of "Penrith Shop' branding
  - Family friendly spaces down High Street with cafes, music and less discount stores
  - Turning Panthers into more of a 'Lifestyle Precinct' and Thornton's 'Canal Precinct' proposals are good examples
  - Being able to live and work within the City, more housing options and jobs to bring density
  - Revitalising the restaurants and cafes in High Street
  - Building low rise residential apartments above High Street shops to increase density and safety
  - Increased safety at night time, more police patrols
  - More alfresco dining
  - More employment options in the area – more workers = more people around and the amenities will come with this
  - Create a large entertainment centre like Acer Arena but on a smaller scale
  - Create an indoor sports centre
  - A database/website of local groups and activities, something to do apart from shopping in Westfield
  - Better car access and parking
  - More outdoor entertainment and small restaurants with different food options
  - Turn Riley Street into a 'restaurant promenade' – Close off the street and relocate businesses under Hoyts to encourage a wider variety of restaurants

### 3. Survey – City Typology

As well as the forum questions, participants were surveyed on the type of city they thought Penrith should become. These city typologies have emerged from the project through workshops and other consultation. Participants could select up to three ‘types of city’, the results were as follows:

| City Typology   | Votes |
|---|-------|
| <b>Collaborative</b><br>Enables communities to share assets (such as spaces, cars, skills and utilities) to create a stronger, healthier, more connected community                  | 2     |
| <b>Networked</b><br>Based on the idea of leveraging the relationship between more than one centre to make the region or connection competitive                                      | 6     |
| <b>Diverse</b><br>Embraces a broad range of uses and users to achieve social, cultural, demographic and economic robustness   | 2     |
| <b>Inclusive</b><br>Based on economic, social, environmental and culturally sensitive policies that allow every aspect of the city to improve                                       | 3     |
| <b>Vibrant</b><br>Competes for people and investment by thriving as an active, engaging and prosperous city   | 7     |
| <b>Lifestyle</b><br>Has a focus on quality of life  | 9     |
| <b>Knowledge/Talent</b><br>Nurtures knowledge creation and dissemination  | 2     |
| <b>Healthy</b><br>Considers causes, effects and solutions that relate to population health, sustainability, natural resource management, transport, climate change and urban design | 6     |
| <b>Digital</b><br>Combines broadband and infrastructure and innovative services to meet the needs of citizens, employees and businesses   | 3     |
| <b>Innovation</b><br>A city at the forefront of inventing and introducing new ideas, methods or products to the way we work, live and play  | 5     |

### 4. Conclusion

The forum collected some fantastic new ideas, and a number of ideas that build on the opportunities identified in previous consultations. Diversity in terms of housing, arts and culture, entertainment, dining options, a night time economy and connectivity have been key themes across all workshops and focus groups. There is a strong desire to create a more vibrant city, by increasing density and activity within the centre. Accessibility and connections to key activity nodes (i.e. Penrith Station, CBD, hospital, university, Nepean River and Thornton), for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport has been identified as an area that needs improvement. The perception of safety at night has also been identified as key issue that deters people from the city centre. When asked what type of city Penrith should be, participants chose lifestyle, followed closely by a vibrant city. Interestingly, this is the same result as when the survey was done at the economic and place shaping focus group meetings.

Thank you to all who participated in the online forum and survey. All ideas have been taken into consideration, and will help to inform the Economic Masterplan and Place Shaping Framework.