



# Langtree Avenue Revitalisation Discussion Paper

Mildura Rural City Council

**DRAFT**

18 November 2019



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## Contributors



**SIOBHAN HENNESSY** | Technical Director - Architecture  
**ANISSA WEBB** | Technical Director - Urban Design  
**MARLI ROBERTS** | Senior Consultant - Engagement, Communications and Community  
**WENNIE VAN LINT** | Technical Director - Finance/Economics  
**MICHAEL BYRNE** | Senior Transport Engineer  
**CATH O'BRIEN** | Senior Urban Designer/Planner



**MEGAN HILLS** | Project Strategist and Designer  
**AMBER HERRMANN** | Place Activation, Policy  
**CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS** | Social change initiator









An aerial photograph of a wide river at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange glow and reflecting off the water. A speedboat is moving from left to right, leaving a white wake. Two houseboats are moored along the right bank, which is lined with dense green trees. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds illuminated by the setting sun.

## Acknowledgement of country

*GHD acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land.*

*We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging; we celebrate and respect their continuing culture and connection to the land.*



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Document purpose

Mildura's CBD plays an important role in bringing people together for a variety of activities. However in 2019, like several other regional centres, the CBD and in particular the central retail heart is facing a number of challenges, as a result of local conditions, and broader market trends, digital disruption, social and environmental factors, and ever-changing community expectations.

The purpose of this discussion paper is to investigate the role and performance of Langtree Avenue (from Seventh Street to Tenth Street, including Langtree Mall), a key retail spine within Mildura's CBD. This paper shall outline the key market forces and trends impacting the CBD and retail areas more broadly, as well as the current challenges in terms of:

- Retail mix, place activation and programming;
- Access, permeability and perception;
- Place character, comfort and amenity; and
- Governance and partnerships.

To address the key issues raised, a highly experienced team from GHD's service lines, including Economic Advisory, Co-design and Communities, Architecture and Urban Design, and Strategic Transport have contributed to this paper, along with the Creative Ingredient, who are specialists in place design and activation.

In framing the core issues and responding to the relevant submissions raised on the draft Mildura CBD Plan 2019-2035, exhibited in April 2019, GHD shall provide informed recommendations to reinvigorate the mall and Langtree Avenue, for further consideration by Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC). It is anticipated the recommendations outlined in this discussion paper shall be developed further as part of the Place Activation Plan, following further consultation with key stakeholders.

While the current Mildura CBD Plan 2019-2035 provides directions and actions specifically targeted to Langtree Mall, Langtree Avenue and Feast Street, these will be reviewed based on the professional advice outlined in this paper (refer to Appendix A).

## 1.2 Assumptions and limitations

This draft discussion paper has been drafted to address the key issues identified by MRCC, following the review of relevant submissions on the draft CBD Plan (April 2019).

The following limitations and assumptions should be noted, due to timing and information available to inform this discussion paper:

### Assumptions:

- Opinions nominated as 'barriers' in the discussion paper are based on community feedback and submissions received for the Mildura CBD Plan 2019-2035, as well as, GHD's preliminary analysis.
- We have drafted the advice contained in this paper, on the assumption that the document is for internal review by MRCC and its Councillors only.
- The discussion paper represents preliminary advice only, with further targeted recommendations to be provided as part of the 'Place Activation Plan'.

### Limitations:

- GHD has presented an unbiased assessment of what we believe are to be the fundamental barriers and challenges faced via desktop research. No additional consultation or stakeholder engagement was undertaken prior to drafting this advice, to inform our research or conclusions, as directed by Council.
- GHD has prepared this piece in a limited timeframe, based on desktop analysis only. Comparable retail data from Macedon Ranges Council was requested, however we are still awaiting a response.



## 2. Background

### 2.1 Context

The Mildura CBD Plan identifies the CBD plays an important role as the primary service, administrative, business and cultural centre for Victoria's north-west region. With over 79 different nationalities recorded, it is a diverse locality both in terms of its community and its offering. Traditionally, Mildura's primary industry base was dominated by agriculture and horticulture, but more recently has diversified to become a leader in solar energy, as well as, growing its appeal in terms of tourism, hospitality, and the arts. The CBD, in particular the core retail heart, has the opportunity to showcase and build on Mildura's strengths.

The study area for this discussion paper is defined by 3 distinct areas along Langtree Avenue:

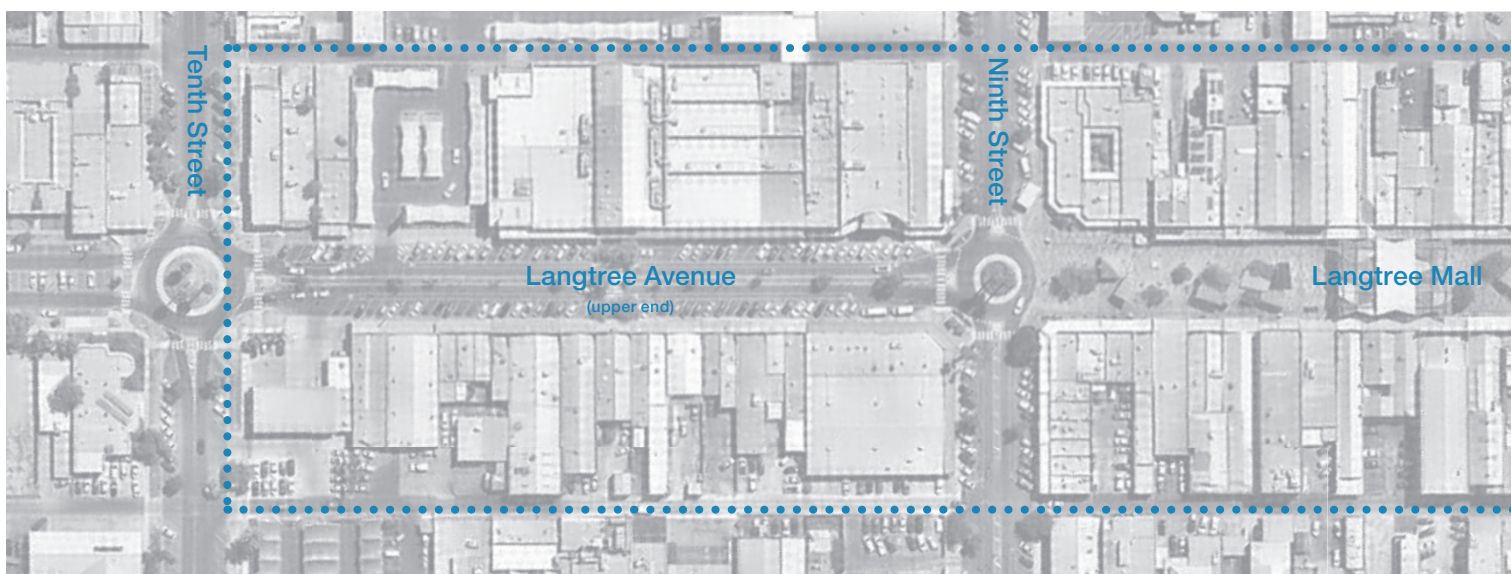
- (1) the upper end, between Ninth and Tenth Street;
- (2) Langtree Mall; and
- (3) Feast Street, between Seventh and Eighth Street.

The upper end of Langtree Avenue is characteristic of a 'high street' retail area, with a mix of supermarket, specialty and discount retail stores. The streetscape condition and amenity is quite poor, and is far less vibrant than further along Langtree Mall and Feast Street.

Langtree Mall was a project that was commissioned under the prior CBD Plan (2007), to create a focal point within the CBD for social and economic exchange, while supporting its identity and expression. The mall performs well from an accessibility perspective and is a popular venue for several events throughout the year.

Feast Street is known as a dining precinct, offering several eateries and creating nightlife opportunities within the CBD. While a popular area with a range of dining options, the streetscape condition is relatively poor. Within the current Mildura CBD plan, both the upper and Feast Street end of Langtree Avenue have been identified as priority areas for streetscape and other improvements.

As a whole, this stretch of Langtree Avenue has the potential to create a strong identity and inviting promenade connecting to the Riverfront. It is however disjointed in terms of its design and the sensory experience for users moving along and through the CBD. The Mildura CBD Plan aims to support complementary streetscape treatments, with further activation and 'placemaking' initiatives to be identified in this paper and the future Place Activation Plan.

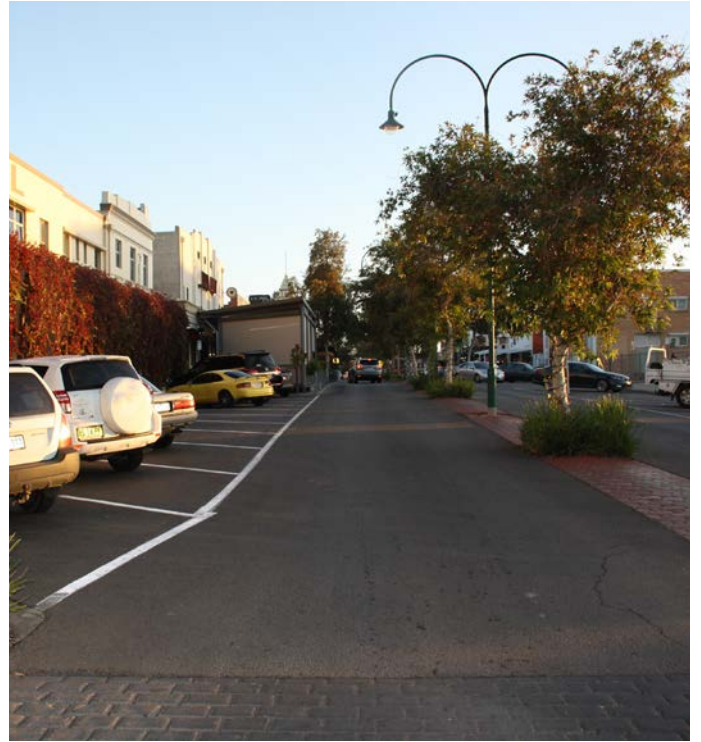


**Figure 1** *Langtree Avenue study area*

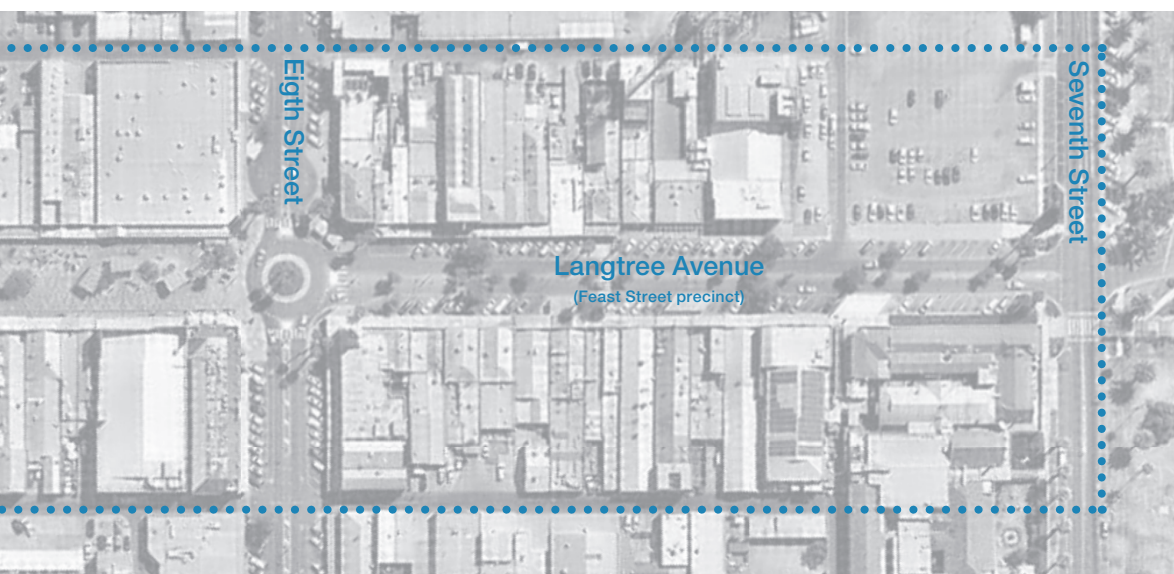




**Image 1** *Langtree Mall*



**Image 2** *Feast Street*



 Study area



# 2. Background

## 2.2 What is the role of a mall?

The role of the mall in Australia originates from the American model where shopping was the primary experience. The Mall in fact takes on many more diverse personas throughout history, depending on the context it resides in.

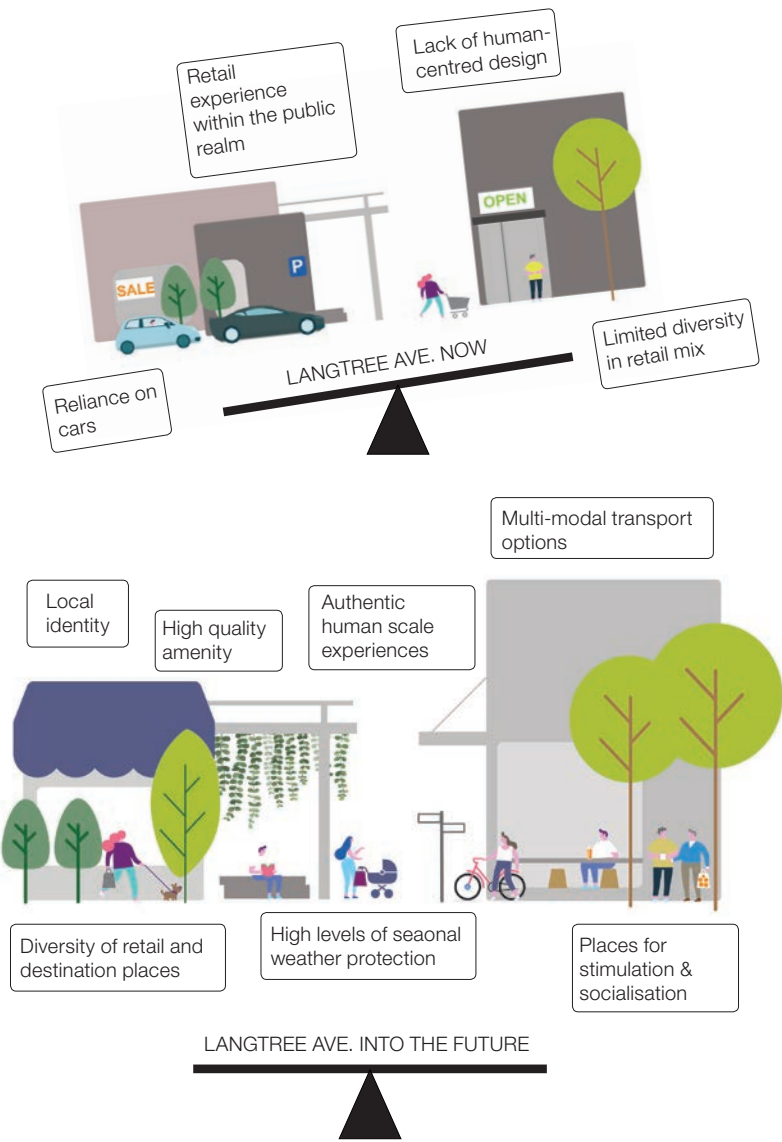
For instance, at St James Park in England, the mall was a place to promenade in an urban setting designed for pleasure and socialisation, set amongst shady trees and formal gardens. Figure 2 demonstrates how this urban space operated as a community asset independent of other commercial or retail connections.

One of the first shopping malls built in the 1950s was called Southdale in Minnosota, USA. It was an innovative retail experience for its time, responding to the lack of retail offerings, as well as public open space in the suburbs. It was also designed in response to the need for extreme weather protection, with average temperatures in winter reaching lows of around -13° celsius.

Along with two anchor department stores it included a central atrium originally designed to mimic Vienna’s outdoor squares, with plants hanging from the balconies, space for people to mingle and references to the outdoors with a fish pond, large faux trees, and a super-sized cage filled with birds.

There was a distinct balance between the places for people and community, and the provision of retail and commercial offerings.

Today an imbalance is evident between the two roles of the mall, with a greater focus on the viability of the shopping destination, rather than nurturing the human experience of these places that occurs on the edges and in-between spaces. With the increase of online shopping affecting visitation and closure of traditional community service outlets such as banks, there is a need to re-assess the role of the mall and restore the balance, to remain viable in the future.



**Diagram**  
Balancing the role of the street (Source: GHD)





**Figure 2** A view of the Mall in St James Park (1753) – Etching and engraving, Source: British Museum



**Figure 3** The Southdale Centre indoor square, Edina, Minnesota (1956), Source: Life Magazine Photo Archive



## 2. Background

### 2.3 Key retail trends

Shopping mall (street) developments in regional towns such as Langtree Avenue normally come with the expectation that their redevelopment will increase pedestrian traffic and therefore retail spend in/along the street and area. The long-term success of street shopping malls is often seen to be aligned to overall town and regional planning controls, where there has been a shift to shopping demand through the development of indoor shopping centres/malls.

The current disruption of the retail environment (main streets and malls) is characterised by the following broad trends. While metropolitan areas are experiencing and responding to these shifts already, the transition in regional centres is a little slower.

#### Destination and experiential retail:

- Successful retail models are now driven by offering a diverse range of uses and experiences, beyond traditional shopping to a more holistic offering centred on lifestyle, health and wellbeing and social drivers.
- Food and beverage retail drives a thriving day and night time economy and generates foot traffic, while supporting lifestyle aspirations.
- Larger landlords and developers are re-invigorating shopping centres and town areas with a food and beverage mix to support a retail 'halo' effect, such as Westfield and the Jamie Oliver restaurant as part of the City of Parramatta Centenary Square (refer to Section 5.3).
- People are seeking out products, places, and experiences that feel unique. Stores offering shoppers something more than just a product are gaining increase consumer loyalty while creating lifestyle aspiration and buzz around brands.
- A trend towards partnerships and collaborations, where retailers are partnering with local industry, other local and national brands to create a distinct and new offer and experiences.

#### Online retail:

- E-commerce and technology has led to a fundamental change in shopping habits and expectations (Australian online shopping industry report, 2019). In 2018, a 20% increase in online shopping purchases was recorded nationwide. Metropolitan areas are the biggest contributors, however a marked increase in online shopping was also recorded for regional areas. The study highlights that almost 75% of households are shopping online, and it is anticipated that by 2021 this will account for around 12% of all consumer spending.
- Despite the rise of online retail shopping, retailers are continuing to use a multi-channel approach. The battle lines between online and brick-and-mortar sales show that a large proportion of consumers prefer the in-store personal experience. The physical store therefore needs to have a strong and engaging presence – presentation/signage/ shopfront design is an important factor in consumer engagement, noting customers are savvy and lifestyle aspirations are high.

#### Ethical and value-based retail:

- There is a strong trend of conscious and green consumerism with an ethos of sustainable and ethical retail, and designing with sustainably-sourced materials. This includes support for local producers and makers, social innovation, entrepreneurship and start-up culture and a preference towards independent retailers. Encouraging the circular economy minimises waste and promote sustainability.
- Customers are supporting retailer and enterprise that cares about the greater good. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is becoming an increasingly popular concept in the retail world. More and more retailers have come to realize that giving back isn't just helping to make the world a bit better, but that it's also good for business.
- Retailers are finding that engaging with their customer is creating a sense of community which help brands set themselves apart and build stronger relationships with their customers which, in turn, drives sales and loyalty.



### Incubator and micro retail offerings:

- Micro interventions and fine grain design – retail design is moving away from the grandiose architectural design and treatments, to more of a fine-grain approach, creating interconnected passages, laneways and landscaping that creates a sense of enclosure and a tapestry of experiences.
- Smaller scaled retail offerings that disrupt the general supply mix through diverse and creative artisan stalls with very short tenancy periods are increasingly being used. These temporary stalls are commonly grouped together and appeal to smaller businesses to test community appetite for their wares and services.
- Pop-up and temporary retail continues to grow and expand, with food truck and container villages continuing to trend upward.

### Curated experiences:

- Retail centre operators and Local Council's are moving towards curated experiences and programming of activities for temporary activation of retail areas, in certain cases up to 18-hours a day, 7 days a week.

### Shared economy:

- In recent years the shared economy and peer-to-peer platforms have exploded within the retail market. These platforms allow goods and services to be exchanged directly between individuals, cutting out retailers and wholesalers. This is a 'disruptor' to the format of traditional business and infrastructure systems, and has become an important consideration in the planning, designing, governance and policy for retail areas.

### Digital innovation:

- Technology and digital enablers motivated by the younger generations with an expectation of digital connection.
- Digital Wayfinding / Digital Concierge - reinventing the customer experience as a digital tool/wheel that helps deliver a seamless and cohesive customer journey, and helps customers navigate the retail offers efficiently. These mediums are great for exploration and finding retailers and offers, and promote the precinct. Often these kiosks can be linked to smart phones / brands and loyalty but also enables Council to understand the typical street customer journey.
- Social media networks like Instagram and Snapchat are a source of inspiration for street style mavens, fashion bloggers, lifestyle experts, driving retail support and engagement / # tag shopping selfie walls, street art work/aspirational destinations.
- High Street precincts are branded and publicised via Facebook (such as Chapel St Precinct - <https://www.facebook.com/chapelstreetprecinct>) to freely promote and celebrate street life events on a daily basis.

Refer also to the broad trends outlined in Section 2.2 of the Draft Mildura CBD Plan report.



**Image 3** *The highly connected, 'digital age' in which we now live*



## 3. Framing the issue

### 3.1 Overview

While traditionally, the mall model has been seen as a recipe for creating a strong civic and retail heart, a place to gather, to shop and dine, visit and enjoy; the ingredients to create a thriving, prosperous and centre vary according to the location and context. For several regional locations, the success of such models has been impacted by competing 'big-box' indoor centres and a failure to keep up with market trends and lifestyle expectations.

Based on our analysis and feedback received from key stakeholders and the community during preparation of the draft CBD Plan, Langtree Mall and Langtree Avenue has struggled to maintain its appeal, and draw people back into the CBD. The Riverfront area has become more of a hub for a variety of recreational and community activities, and with Stage 2 improvements featuring a range of further community and commercial spaces, may become even more so.

The challenges that Langtree Avenue and Mildura's retail heart face, are multi-faceted and complex. As such, we have attempted to frame the issue and highlight some of the key barriers to its success below, to inform the recommendations outlined in Section 4.

### 3.2 Retail mix, place activation and programming

The ability of retail spaces to appeal to broad range of users is fundamental to the lifespan of stores and long term prosperity of the retail heart area. Presently, Langtree Mall and Avenue comprises a range of food and beverage, clothing and specialty retail stores, with Woolworths and some service retail functions, located at the upper end of Langtree Avenue (between Ninth and Tenth Street).

From a programming perspective, there are relatively few events and temporary activation initiatives to create appeal and provide a diverse range of experiences. That said, events like the Country Music Festival and Vanilla Slice Triumph, draw a significant crowd with discernible benefits to local traders. However, such events are infrequent to provide ongoing gains and promote the CBD.

Recognising the trends that are taking place more broadly within the retail market, it will be important for the Mall and Langtree Avenue to look at a targeted retail strategy, which recognises the function of the mall as a community space and provide for further lifestyle based opportunities.

Based on the current tenancy list for the CBD, Langtree Avenue has a higher tenancy turnover rate than Mildura



Image 4 Langtree Mall retail stores



Image 5 Langtree Mall - plaza (corner of Ninth and Langtree Ave.)



retailing. The higher turnover and the resulting vacancy rate would act as a deterrent to shoppers and tourist, reducing the long-term commercial viability of the Mall. The CBD as a whole, has more of a food and beverage, and service focus than 15th Street, but specialty retail lacks diversity (Refer to Table 1). Vacancy rates within the CBD dropped from 9.2% to 7.5% of the total floor area between 2010 and 2017, which is positive but on a gross floor area basis (sq.m), remains higher than the 15th Street precinct.

To better understand the drivers of commercial success in the Mall precinct, Council should undertake a two-part study to confirm factors that are causing a higher turnover from a trader's perspective and the reluctance of shoppers/ tourist to utilise the area.

A further consideration for Council is determine what further actions could be taken to encourage non-retail options within the Mall area, that encourages both increased pedestrian flow and 'stop and prop' users.

#### Key barriers:

- Retail mix lacks variety and appears to overlap with the specialty retail offering at Mildura Central (Fifteenth Street shopping precinct).
- Large proportion of discount and service based retail, diminishing its appeal to a broad range of users and age-groups.
- Several large tenancies present along the mall and the upper end of Langtree Mall, which in some cases exceeds the required floorspace.
- Limited dining, food and beverage offering within the mall area.
- Permanent retail offering only, most of which are operating within business hours only (9am-5pm)
- Limited diversity in programming of events and activities, and temporary retail activities.

Category	Mildura CBD				15th Street			
	2010		2017		2010		2017	
	m2	%	m2	%	m2	%	m2	%
Food, Liquor and Groceries	14,320	23%	12,500	20%	1,250	3%	760	2%
Food Catering	6,740	11%	9,380	15%	880	2%	1,230	3%
Homemaker	12,600	20%	10,970	18%	31,180	67%	27,110	63%
Other Non-Food	24,170	38%	28,250	46%	12,320	26%	14,010	32%
Services	5,320	8%	NA	NA	1,120	2%	NA	NA
<b>TOTAL occupied retail</b>	<b>63,060</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>61,100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>46,750</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>43,110</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1: Retail Floorspace Provision comparison by category**

Source: Mildura Retail Strategy Review 2010 and 2018 versions, Essential Economics

Category	Mildura CBD				15th Street			
	2010		2017		2010		2017	
	m2	%	m2	%	m2	%	m2	%
<b>Total Occupied Retail Floorspace</b>	63,060	90.80%	61,100	92.50%	46,750	95.40%	43,110	90.90%
<b>Vacant retail floorspace</b>	6,360	9.20%	4,940	7.50%	2,250	4.60%	4,320	9.10%
<b>TOTAL Floorspace</b>	<b>69,420</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>66,040</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>49,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>47,430</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2: Retail Vacancy and Turnover Rate**

Source: Mildura Retail Strategy Review 2010 and 2018 versions, Essential Economics

## 3. Framing the issue

### 3.3 Access, permeability and perception

It is typical for regional centres in Australia to be car dependant and culturally connected to their car. This was evident in the Mildura CBD Plan community consultation. High average warm temperatures and topography influence the reliance on motorised travel.

Land development has also enabled car use to 'sprawl' out from the CBD and the availability of parking and other transport infrastructure further encourages this. This is further entrenched by the lack of continuous shade provided either by vegetation or continuous building awnings.

Mildura lacks green and well protected corridors for comfortable active travel, which link points of interest, such as parks and cafes, en route. Evidence and community sentiment tells us that Council's efforts to encourage walking and cycling along the riverfront have proven to be successful and this highlights the importance of place and experiences when encouraging use by active modes of transport.

Encouraging active transport within the CBD itself has proven to be more challenging; while the Langtree Mall provides a high quality pedestrianised centre, its attractiveness and use is limited by a lack of cross block permeability.

Langtree Mall and the upper end of Langtree Avenue has a number of key strengths, which can be built upon, including: its central location in the heart of the CBD; level of accessibility for those with limited mobility and reliant on scooters or walking aids; proximity to other strong retail locations such as Eighth Street and Lime Avenue; proximity to the riverfront; and its connectivity to Feast Street which continues to develop as a dining and social destination.

#### Key barriers:

- Nostalgia and desired convenience of being able to park adjacent to the shops on Langtree Avenue.
- Perceived distance from surrounding carparks to the mall, feels greater due to poor pedestrian connections.
- A limited number of pedestrian linkages to Langtree Mall, some of which are through private tenancies, limiting permeability after hours and are illegible to visitors.
- Perceived lack of carparking supply puts added pressure on Council when retail is suffering.

- Street treatments in Mildura more broadly currently prioritise private vehicles over pedestrians and cyclists, which creates physical and psychological barriers for people, which impacts their mode choice over a range of trip types.
- To park and walk to different stores and key services within the CBD is seen as inconvenient and time intensive.



Image 6 Lintons Lane (behind Feast Street)



Image 7 Shillidays Lane (behind Langtree Mall)



### 3.4 Comfort, safety and amenity

High quality public realm is critical to retail strips as this space will bring people in and allow them to wander, dwell, stop and socialise. The national Urban Design Protocol – ‘Creating Places for People’ highlights that the core principles to achieving liveable and engaging places are comfort, vibrancy, safety and walkability. The space must feel comfortable and welcoming for a variety of active and static modes that provide space to dwell, relax and enjoy, gather in, or simply to stroll or ‘passiagata’, the once popular tradition amongst local Italians.

People feel safe when there are others around or eyes on the street, so the attraction of people, creates a magnet to attract others. Mildura’s warm climate, means that an even greater emphasis is required on comfort and amenity, not only in terms of its appearance and scale, but protection from the heat, inclement and extreme weather conditions.

While Langtree Avenue has the potential to become the heart and soul of the CBD, it lacks appeal, and a consistent and meaningful narrative and treatments, to promote it as a unique destination, pleasant and comfortable experience. The visual clutter and poorly designed signs and shopfronts also detract from the visual amenity and street character.

#### Key barriers:

- Capital cost to implement major streetscape works along Langtree Avenue is a significant barrier to improving comfort, safety and amenity.
- Council is risk adverse to encouraging multi-functional seating arrangements that may attract unruly groups. This limits access to amenity by other sectors of the community such as families, people with mobility scooters, etc.
- Wide and extensive hard paved footpaths contribute to the heat island effect making the experience intense and uncomfortable, during the warmer months.
- Lack of a night-time economy and few shops open in the evenings, particularly restaurants and outdoor dining experiences, street-side and along laneways apart from along Feast Street.
- Lack of vision, direction, coordination and leadership by all stakeholders, Mildura City Heart and Council to build and implement a brand for Langtree Avenue.

### 3.5 Governance and partnerships

The City Heart trading zone relies on owner and tenant participation, with support from Council. Tenancies are owned and leased by different parties, which presents challenges for ongoing management. The overall willingness by owners/tenants to contribute to initiatives undertaken within the CBD varies, with certain owners electing to leave their premises vacant as a tax break, rather than lowering rents to attract new tenants. We are also aware that certain owners are seeking rents above market value, which may be a deterrent for retail operators.

In order to experience the benefits of Mildura’s CBD revitalisation, the Council must be considered both a leader and a supporter in the project development process. Further definition of the Governance and decision-making structure is required. Through our case study research, it is clear that the most successful projects are those that instil a sense of pride at all phases of the project. There needs to be strong communication around the benefits to community, innovation and continued learning opportunities.

#### Key barriers:

- Lack of dedicated funding for place activation projects, including self-funding models or dedicated Council funds (i.e. from rates levy).
- No existing Retail and Place making/activation strategy for the CBD, to provide guidance and support to decision makers and owners/tenants.
- Aspirations by retail owners and tenancies appear to vary, with limited ownership and participation in City Heart activities.
- Current governance structure does not support effective partnerships and collaboration between key stakeholders, such as Mildura City Heart, Mildura Regional Development and Council.
- Lack of consistent positioning to date for unique place identity (place brand, promotion, lifestyle precinct positioning) – i.e. not a clear vision to draw people to the CBD for a unique experience (good shops are not enough).
- No clear pathway for community applications to enable events and programming in the mall, which clearly outlines permit approvals process and required insurances.

## 4. Response to submissions

Council have identified seven key questions that respond to the submissions raised on the Draft Mildura CBD Plan. The topics covered in this section are seen as contributing factors to the underutilisation of Langtree Avenue, particularly the mall in its current form.

A response to these questions is provided below. The targeted recommendations in relation to the broader issues is outlined in Section 5.

### *Question 1: How is access to car parking affecting the life and sustainability of Langtree Mall?*

#### **Background**

Access to Langtree Mall and Avenue via car requires the use of surrounding on and off-street parking spaces. As a result, the accessibility of the mall by car users is limited by the willingness of people to walk what may be perceived as an incrementally longer distance to their destination. While this may seem trivial, for most other locations in Mildura drivers can at least seek out opportunities to park immediately outside of their destination, creating an expectation that this should always be the norm. As highlighted at the recent Vacant Shops Forum, it was recommended that carparking be taken out of the conversation.

As there are a limited number of east-west access points along the mall to adjacent laneways, and Deakin and Lime Avenues more broadly, most users of Langtree Mall access it via either Eighth or Ninth Streets. This lack of permeability in the street network requires longer walking distances for access. Improving the overall attractiveness, vibrancy, diversity of uses and programming within Langtree Mall and Langtree Avenue is fundamental.

#### **Response**

The proximity and access to carparking is not a root cause, impacting the life and sustainability of Langtree Avenue. Incremental measures to promote behaviour change and mode shift should be considered, as well as strategies to improve east-west permeability, and the actual and perceived level of accessibility and distance between carparking areas and this central retail spine.

The ability to create pleasant and interesting journeys, between key destinations and along Langtree Avenue, will also contribute to the broader objectives around mode shift, walkability and improving accessibility and comfort.

### *Question 2: How can we activate Langtree Mall at night to improve community safety?*

#### **Background**

Based on a recent article in Sunraysia Daily (September 27, 2019), the rate of crime incidents has reached a 10 year high, and remains the 4th highest LGA for incidents per 100,000 people. While these statistics cover the broader area, conversations with the community and key stakeholders during the CBD plan preparation suggest that people avoid going to the Mall and other parts of the CBD at night, due to fears for their safety.

Feast Street has a lively atmosphere at night, due to the presence of several dining and bar premises for locals and visitors. However, the Mall and upper end of Langtree Avenue have much lower levels of activity at night.

#### **Response**

Design and land use have a direct impact on feelings of safety and of antisocial behaviour by reducing opportunities for crime to occur. These include informal measures, passive surveillance and 'eyes on the street', and formal measures, breaking down territorialism (people of similar demographics, ages congregating in one area) and the use of CCTV, as contributing factors.

Ultimately it is the informal measures that catalyse change; where people draw further people and the feeling unsafe being attributed to the lack of activity, particularly in the evening are lowered. Measures to create a thriving night time economy, will improve community safety.

### *Question 3: How can a regional mall be revitalised?*

#### **Background**

In an ABC article titled 'Small town shops are struggling, but some regional Australian cities are fighting back' (19 November, 2018), it is clear that similar challenges both in terms of retail competition with 'big box' shopping centres outside of the CBD, and the implications of the broad retail trends are being felt by many regional centres.

Other factors such as population demographics and role of the Mall, as explored in Section 2, offer a new approach to retail place making and human-centred design thinking.

There are several successful examples of regional towns and cities reinvigorating their 'high street' or shopping mall, through a range of carefully curated strategies to offer a



further range of leisure experiences, initiatives to encourage small businesses to flourish, and respond to expectations in this new 'digital age'. A notable example being the Maitland Levee mall revitalisation, which has been hugely successful.

### Response

Building on the vibrant and well activated Feast Street, the upper end of Langtree Avenue and the Mall are prime areas for re-invention, shifting the focus from simply shopping to experiencing fun and inspiring creative, cultural and physical activities.

These experiences have an underlying purpose of: strengthening the local identity and connection, improving the community's mental and physical health; inspiring active lifestyles, working to reduce harmful alcohol and drug use; create safer spaces and reduce the crime rate; engaging families in activities for positive relationship building, thereby working to reduce domestic violence;

stimulate business and economic development. In addition to this, a long term retail and activation strategy is required, to ensure that the tenancy mix and ongoing program of activities, events, temporary retail and incubator spaces, promote a successful and thriving shopping and community precinct.

This does not include ripping up the mall, which was suggested within certain submissions, but rather on creative ways to use and reinvigorate this important central spine, placing greater emphasis on its function as a civic square.



**Image 9** The 'Maitland Levee' - mall revitalisation has repositioned central Maitland as a leisure based retail activity centre supported by a night time local produce & wine economy.



## 4. Response to submissions

### *Question 4: What could the mall look like through applying place making principles?*

#### **Background**

Place making is fundamentally about creating environments that people want to visit and spend time in, through collaborative approaches to the planning, design and management of public spaces.

In a retail context, adopting a place making approach, needs to focus on delivering unique experiences, as well as, being functional. For place making approaches to be successful, it requires a strong vision, which is founded on the unique attributes of the 'place' and aspirations of its community.

#### **Response**

Langtree Mall lacks a strong vision to highlight the identity, character and in turn the purpose for why people should visit. A strong vision (the precinct brand) creates a holistic narrative that would situate the mall in relation to the CBD and waterfront. The vision determines the retail mix, aesthetic and programming (events and activities) that activate a place. Likewise, the mall lacks governance structure and an events and activities calendar to program the mall seasonally and attract new and alternating audiences. Central to programming are the collaborative relationship forged between traders, cultural partners, community organisations and individuals to identify opportunities to get involve and co-deliver activations.



**Image 9** *'Maitland Levee' demonstrates a strong user focus, with pedestrian and bike friendly networks emphasised*

### *Question 5: Where has the uptake of active transport been successful in regional Australia?*

#### **Background**

Active Transport continues to be on the agenda for state and local Council, to fund and support facilities and infrastructure, which improves the uptake of active transport in local communities. Our research has showed us many regional Councils are providing strategic actions to improve uptake of alternative active modes of travel, however struggle with implementation due to costs associated with rolling out new infrastructure, community education programs and ongoing promotion.

That said, in both metropolitan and regional cities, there are still significant challenges in moving away from a culture where 'the car is king'. For regional areas in particular, public transport options are limited by timetabling and so private vehicle use is almost inevitable.

While there are several benefits to increasing the uptake of active transport, such as improving health and wellbeing, social interaction, reduction of cars (which in turn reducing greenhouse emissions), and reducing the need for car related infrastructure; it requires significant behaviour changes.

#### **Response**

While efforts have been made by various regional centres across Australia to increase the use of active travel modes (e.g Bendigo, Geelong, Albury), it is difficult to highlight examples where this has been successful at the broader town/city level. A complete and considered response is required in order to change established norms regarding transport use. Such a response involves the promotion of active travel programs, improved active infrastructure, changes to the availability and cost of parking and other road-based infrastructure and considered land use planning.

Many options can prove to be difficult to navigate politically at the local government level and as a result only become workable once issues arise – i.e. parking supply and availability.

Promotion of active travel in regional Australia has often been approached through the provision of improved infrastructure, such as bike lanes and associated facilities.

The take up of cycling has seen success where regions have actively leveraged their natural features, parks and trails through promotion of 'bike trails' such as in Bendigo.

Such programs promote local tourism and the presence of tourists actively using these facilities encourages locals as it is seen to be more normative and 'cool'.

Other state organisations such RACV also recognise these benefits. RAC in Western Australia carried out a study in Albury and Perth to monitor the uptake of E-Bikes in 2016 (<https://rac.com.au/about-rac/media/media-releases/june-2017/electric-bike-trials-a-big-success>). The results were very positive and demonstrates a change of perception and uptake is possible through a focused and targeted program.

#### **Question 6: Shop vacancies and the role of landowners to be part of the solution?**

##### **Background**

There are vacant shopfront spaces along Langtree Avenue and the Mall, which detracts from a vibrant atmosphere. The presence of vacant shops has also contributed to the perception of economic decline, however this is not the case.

Compounding the problem is a large number of property owners who have no interest in attracting leases, as the empty space is a taxation advantage. While Council funds Mildura City Heart, Mildura Regional Development and several key studies for the area to assist the CBD traders, these supportive measures are undermined by an unwillingness of land owners to be part of the solution.

We understand that some land owners would rather leave their shops vacant, and are seeking rents up to 20% more than market value, rather than making their shop available at more viable rental rates for both the landlord and tenant.

##### **Response**

Landlord negotiation is integral to the process. For those who desire some lease activity, the promotion of short-term leases for small business and creatives can provide incentive and generate positive PR for their company. However, when there is resistance to allowing the use of their space for temporary activation, the formulation of negotiable opportunities with Council for less direct win-win outcomes is a consideration.

#### **Question 7: How can pedestrian permeability be delivered along Langtree Avenue?**

##### **Background**

Refer to Question 2.

##### **Response**

As highlighted for Question 2, it is recommended to improve east-west access and permeability along the Mall. This would require strategic property acquisitions and a focus on activating the resulting laneways such that they become places of interest in and of themselves along the way to the Mall. This would help to provide an improved user experience for those accessing the Mall and contribute to interest in it as a destination. The challenge with this response is how well the community would engage with and use the laneways, etc. given existing attitudes to motorised travel.



**Image 10** Pop-up stores in Mackay, where landlords offered 2 weeks free rent, to attract small businesses and generate immediate activation benefits






## 5. Key recommendations

We have applied a multi-disciplinary lens to examine the triggers and potential response mechanisms via economic initiatives, place activation and experiential interventions, and possible spatial and built form modifications.

The following recommendations would be dependent on further community and stakeholder consultation. These will also inform and guide the Place Activation Plan.

### 5.1 Retail mix, place activation and programming



#	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	DETAIL	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
1.1	Develop a diverse retail mix	<p>Develop a targeted retail strategy for the study area and broader CBD, that focuses on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages engagement with national retailers to create a mix of local &amp; national brands, promoting a high retail offer.</li> <li>• Targets anchor tenants that bookend the mall, with food and beverage retail. Ensure the design sleeves the edge to draw activity and act as an entry marker.</li> <li>• Enhances the 'urban pulse' by articulating a chain of experiences and spaces (pulses of activity), utilising creative installations to enhance amenity and encourage people to stay longer.</li> </ul>	<p>Retail Strategy</p> <p>Place Branding Strategy (PBS)</p>
1.2	<p>Rebrand the Avenue</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain pedestrian and people priority through the mall and shift perceptions of the space as a 'mall' to a 'town square', a place to meet, to showcase the community and share culture (food, music, dance, performance and workshops). The place brand should be targeted to the cultural, heritage and local experiences offered in Mildura.</li> <li>• Consider removing the word Mall from the place, and address the place as Langtree Avenue, to complement new branding and purpose.</li> </ul>	<p>PBS</p> <p>Mildura City Heart - marketing and branding</p> <p>FPMMAC Involvement</p>
1.3	<p>Create a central retail zone within the mall</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide further opportunity to create something new and dynamic within the mall, which is under Council control.</li> <li>• Place smaller retail and kiosk units strategically along the central spine to create visual interest and a more dynamic streetscape. These visual interrupters and physical events along the customer's journey would densify the retail offer, and help reduce the vast Mall expanse. These spaces could be used by temporary pop-up vendors or existing retailer as an add-on retail zone.</li> <li>• Council could start by testing a temporary retail space in the centre of the mall, creating natural activity around the space. A suitable trader(s) would need to be selected to ensure a high quality produce and service is achieved.</li> <li>• Create physical disrupters and alternate streetscape configurations to turn the mall from a transit space into a place to linger, a 'sticky place'.</li> </ul>	<p>Place Activation Plan (PAP)</p>

#	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	DETAIL	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
1.4	Create incubator spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council should leverage opportunities to lease and/or subdivide units to allow for a pilot or experimental mix of smaller retailers, with short term agreements/leases. This would allow for more boutique artisan and local brands to get a foothold in the market and create a diverse and interesting retail mix.</li> </ul>	PBS PAP
1.5	Increase food retail in the mall and encourage alfresco dining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include a fruit and vegetable retailer, to generate greater footfall along Langtree Avenue. With nine locations in Victoria, <i>Marketplace</i> is Victoria's largest and fastest growing fruit and vegetable retailer with a vision of bringing their local community closer to quality, freshness and great value. Westfield are using this retailer to reactivate dead spaces of their centres.</li> <li>Strategically place anchor food retailers within the mall and upper end of Langtree Avenue. Food brands like Nandos and Grill'd would be a good fit if centrally located, creating destination on the street, for day and night time operation. Both brands also have broad aspirational appeal to various ages and very family orientated. They engage with good design both internally and externally, have a strong shopfront presence, and great external alfresco dining ambience. Larger landlords are using these brands to create food precincts within shopping centres, for the same reasons highlighted above.</li> <li>Encourage outdoor alfresco dining (noting this is dependent on changes to the retail mix), to encourage traders to invest in quality outdoor furniture and curated throughout the year (i.e. umbrellas in summer, blankets and heaters in winter).</li> </ul>	Retail Strategy PAP
1.6	Relax outdoor trading restrictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blur the lease line and street line boundaries, to enable the shopfront threshold to spill over in to street frontage creating a shared zone. This would create greater visual interest along the customer journey for impulse interactions and help break the linear nature and expansive nature of the streetscape.</li> </ul>	Policy changes





## 5. Key recommendations

### 5.1 Retail mix, place activation and programming

#	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	DETAIL	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
1.7	Create a community space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a community space and anchor in the mall, either in a vacant shop or a pop-up structure in the centre to host events/temporary programs from the library, art galleries or for hire by community groups.</li> </ul>	PAP
1.8	Small visitor centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject to the final masterplan for the Stage 2 Riverfront, investigate the opportunity for a small Visitor Centre with virtual reality and new technologies, located within the mall area.</li> </ul>	PAP PBS
1.9	Curate authentic human-centred programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore sponsored temporary installation and 'pop-ups' to provide an alternate funding stream (e.g pop-up project (now annual) to engage the activate parts of the Albury CBD and engage with the community via contemporary art installations - <a href="https://architectureau.com/articles/plastic-palace/#">https://architectureau.com/articles/plastic-palace/#</a>)</li> <li>Create a seasonal calendar in conjunction with FPMMAC.</li> <li>Create a calendar of events through a self-sustaining funding model by developing clear funding streams and allocate a specific role/responsibility within Council to oversee the events program and ongoing communications, marketing and coordination.</li> <li>Implement night time programming, performances and busking to enhance the ambience and the sense of 'eyes on the street'.</li> </ul>	PAP FPMMAC Involvement
1.10	Build on the arts scene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider programming of events to showcase local artists, through temporary exhibits along Langtree Avenue or within vacant shops.</li> </ul>	PBS PAP Mildura Arts Centre involvement
1.11	Provide enabling infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing appropriate infrastructure to enable events, including power and water access and highlighting event zones to show what types of events can be held.</li> <li>Design the Avenue to accommodate adaptable spaces, through soft infrastructure (i.e. provision for moveable furniture, plant pots, umbrellas) to the existing hard infrastructure. This should be adaptable to seasonal change.</li> </ul>	Mildura CBD Plan
1.12	Establish a mixed use precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The recommendations outlined in the draft CBD Plan still apply in terms of the adaptation and construction of floors 2-3 above retail tenancies, for provision of temporary and permanent accommodation, office space etc.</li> </ul>	Mildura CBD Plan CBD Living Strategy


## Relevant case studies:

CASE STUDY	ABOUT THE PROJECT	SUCCESS FACTORS
<p><b>Make Space, Newcastle, NSW</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make Space was a not-for-profit artist run collective founded in 2009 with a retail shopfront in the Newcastle Mall.</li> <li>• Stocking product by members and other makers from Newcastle and its surrounds, the space was always a riot of colour, with a common recycling theme running through their various disciplines.</li> <li>• Everywhere was the mark of the artist and everything for sale was either a one-off or a limited production line. The Make Spacers also loved to rescue discarded items from the street, give them a bit of love, and use them to create whimsical shop and window displays.</li> <li>• This was undertaken as part of the broader Renew Newcastle project. The Emporium was another successful initiative, utilising the ground floor of the David Jones building, into a fine arcade of boutiques filled with Newcastle's creative talent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make Space moved to different shops in the Hunter St Mall five times in four years because the spaces they created were so compelling, they were rented by commercial tenants.</li> <li>• Make Space was renowned for doing shop fit outs for less than \$50.</li> <li>• It is still operating in Newcastle and is currently housed in the former railway station.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Creative Geelong Makers Hub, Geelong VIC</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Creative Geelong Makers Hub is a range of spaces housed in Centrepoin Arcade, 132 Little Malop Street for co-working, multimedia space, exhibition spaces and makers workshop spaces.</li> <li>• The Creative Geelong Makers Hub onsite is a place that supports and encourages a diverse range of disciplines – from science and art to tech and design. This is not only in practice, but through providing spaces where new businesses can emerge, and collaboration take place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly successful project which provides spaces to build community pride and support creative industries in the region.</li> </ul>





## 5. Key recommendations

### Relevant case studies:

CASE STUDY	ABOUT THE PROJECT	SUCCESS FACTORS
<b>Jimmy's on the Mall, Queen Street Mall, Brisbane, QLD</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brisbane City Council as part of their transformation of the mall, the longstanding establishment (Jimmy's on the Mall) was redeveloped to better integrate into the space and improve activation of the mall. Its key aspects are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Architecture aesthetic and contextual design responsive to the tropical Brisbane climate</li> <li>Double-storey tenancy placed in the centre of mall to generate activity from all sides</li> <li>Food and beverage trading to generate activity</li> <li>Green walls and planting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designed with local aesthetics and subtropical design with an existing successful anchor trader selected to continue in order to ensure the right offer and level of service.</li> <li>Placement of structure within the mall generates more activity and creates a sense of enclosure. Double storey provides multi-level activations and greater sense of volume.</li> </ul>
<b>Case Study: Flicks On The Bricks, Bundaberg, QLD</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A mural was painted on a wall facing a car park which included a television screen.</li> <li>Regular events centred around screenings, without the need for fixed or permanent infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highly popular event that activates the Bundaberg activity centre at night.</li> <li>Quick win project.</li> </ul>
<b>Re:START Mall, Christchurch NZ</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the Christchurch earthquake, Re:START mall for created as a means of reinvesting life into the city, the site shaped by shipping container buildings filled with gallery and bars.</li> <li>Celebration of localism and community</li> <li>Colourful spaces</li> <li>Articulated built form provide visual interest</li> <li>Density of activity</li> <li>Reused material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Configuration of the shipping containers was created narrower spaces, double height spaces and folding glass doors at ground level to enhance the density of activity. The tenancy mix was carefully curated and anchored by the original department store.</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Access, permeability and perception


#	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	DETAIL	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
2.1	Improve east-west connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make improvements to east-west access and permeability along the Mall and to the upper area of Langtree Avenue. This would require strategic property acquisitions and a focus on activating the resulting laneways, such that they become places of interest in and of themselves along the way to the Mall. This would help to provide an improved user experience and shorter trips between destinations.</li> </ul>	Mildura CBD Plan PAP
2.2	Create broader linkages and better end-of-trip facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify safe multi-modal transport options that include connections to and through Langtree Avenue. Infrastructure and facilities such as E-Bikes, mobility scooters could be provided. This network should be promoted across the region to increase their use among bike user groups.</li> </ul>	Mildura CBD Plan
2.3	Establish a tourist trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with local businesses, wineries, vineyards, etc. to develop a bicycle 'tourist trail' around the region that commences and ends close to the Mall.</li> <li>The tourist trail should align with existing and new sites of heritage or cultural significance.</li> </ul>	Mildura CBD Plan
2.4	Active travel programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote cycling and active travel programs across businesses and schools. It is vitally important that younger generations see active transport options as being more normative in the region.</li> </ul>	Mildura CBD Plan
2.5	Establish a mixed use development, including a carpark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a multi-functional, multi-deck parking facility immediately connected to the Mall. This would improve access, supply and parking reliability for vehicle access to the mall. Immediate parking would provide a connection similar to that provided to shoppers at Mildura Central. The challenge with this response is that it further entrenches dependency on motorised travel in Mildura, with associated impacts on surrounding streets, access and amenity. As an ameliorative measure to a singular car-parking response, a parking structure could be incorporated as part of a mixed use development that avoids the loss of street activation and could enable improved integration and permeability.</li> </ul>	Mildura CBD Plan



## 5. Key recommendations

### Relevant case studies:




CASE STUDY	ABOUT THE PROJECT	SUCCESS FACTORS
<b>Street Art Festival and Augmented Reality, Darwin, NT</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Street Art Festival. The festival began in 2017, at a time when dozens of inner-city retail outlets, offices and cafes were closing their doors because of a dramatic economic downturn.</li> <li>By downloading a free app, viewers can use their phone or tablet as a magic window that converts three of the festival's murals into three-dimensional animations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three years on, dozens of multistorey murals now adorn the walls of buildings, transforming previously derelict alleyways into colourful enclaves of public art.</li> <li>The incorporation of augmented reality [AR] in this year's event has created an entirely new experience for the many visitors wandering along the laneways.</li> </ul>
<b>Bike Bendigo program, Bendigo, VIC</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bike Bendigo is a not-for-profit community organisation working to make bike riding an easy and attractive choice for people of all ages and cycling ability.</li> <li>They envision Bendigo to be the bicycle capital of regional Australia. Run by a committee of passionate volunteers, Bike Bendigo was established in 2014 out of the community momentum generated by a series of public discussions on the topic: 'Bendigo, a cycling city'.</li> <li>They work in partnership with a range of organisations to continuously improve the bicycle friendliness of our region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent website with current content, videos, events and information to promote a buzz.</li> </ul>
<b>Edward Street Carpark, Bendigo, VIC</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Edward Street Carpark is a good example of how to integrate these structures into the urban fabric. Built to cater for parking demand near the Bendigo CBD, the carpark features 420 spaces for casual parking, shade structures and ground floor retail.</li> <li>Public toilets, baby changing facilities, disabled parking and bike parking are all provided within structure; combining essential amenities for different users.</li> </ul>	

CASE STUDY	ABOUT THE PROJECT	SUCCESS FACTORS
<p><b>Fish Lane, South Brisbane, QLD</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create a unique dining, art and entertainment spine, Aria have delivered Fish Lane.</li> <li>• This carefully curated link draws on the essence of South Brisbane, to create its very own hub and lifestyle destination. Stretching over 6 blocks, Fish Lane is a successful example of how to create an interesting journey but also connect people with other nearby community, entertainment and retail spaces within Southbank.</li> <li>• It comprises: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 35 pieces of art</li> <li>2. Pocket parks and signage</li> <li>3. 17 leading retailers, including high quality dining options</li> <li>4. Year round events</li> <li>5. Creative lighting installations</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Laneway Precinct partners maintain a website, promoting events and dining experiences</li> <li>• Creative response, to connect people and place</li> <li>• A portion of the laneway is dedicated to cycling, with other spaces to meander, linger and pause</li> </ul>



## 5. Key recommendations

### 5.3 Comfort, safety and amenity

#	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	DETAIL	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
3.1	Create high quality, interesting journeys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make the paths along Langtree Avenue walkable: shady, attractive and interesting.</li> <li>Create an interpretive trail leading from the river through Langtree Avenue.</li> </ul>	Mildura CBD Plan PAP
3.2	Greening the public realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide green relief along suitable sections of Langtree Avenue, taking into account climate suitability and adaptability, by adding a mix of large canopy trees, climate-tolerant lawn and native landscaping.</li> </ul>	Mildura CBD Plan PAP
3.3	Imaginative wayfinding and interpretive signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore new and creative ways to deliver interactive wayfinding signage and kiosks, digital applications, as well as, interpretive signage. It should be supported by apps and new technology platforms (QR codes, VR etc) to appeal to a wide audience.</li> <li>Incorporate signage and/or artwork to celebrate and educate users about the local Aboriginal culture.</li> </ul>	To be determined
3.4	Implement creative lighting for night time activation and safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve lighting or install simple solar lights in trees/awnings in the interim.</li> <li>Encourage traders to use brighter lighting in their shop windows.</li> <li>Use public art, which is a tool for reducing anti-social behaviour, as it encourages people to value their public space, and in turn builds social capital.</li> <li>Create colour and movement to enhance visual connections and create a sense of evolution, improving the street product, particularly during the evening.</li> </ul>	PAP
3.5	Extend trading hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend trading hours, test dual use of tenancies, and implement Thursday/Friday shopping nights in combination with arts/cultural programming.</li> <li>More people and more activity make place safer at night, therefore moving to evening trade is an integral first step, particularly at street ground level.</li> </ul>	PAP Policy changes
3.6	Expand on amenities for all ages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install a play space (quality design that integrates urban form and soft landscaping) near or adjacent a café or food and beverage venue to draw in different audiences during the day and increase the diversity of people using the Mall.</li> <li>Improve public toilet amenities and provide baby change room facilities.</li> <li>Consider cooling devices through large canopy trees, permeable surfaces or water features, within the Mall.</li> </ul>	PAP Mildura CBD Plan

Relevant case studies:

CASE STUDY	ABOUT THE PROJECT	SUCCESS FACTORS
Westfield Chermside, QLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Westfield Chermside have recently completed a highly successful renovation of their shopping centre, complete with sub-tropical resort style landscaping, sculptural lighting installations and a variety of incubator and experiential elements, to blur the threshold and retail lease line.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Creative incubation spaces – used by pop-up and smaller retailers, providing diversity and a high level of amenity for users.</li><li>Landscaping which provides a high level of amenity and comfort, while contributing to its appeal as a destination for leisure.</li><li>New park-style interventions appeal to different ages and interests, giving people a reason to stay for longer periods.</li></ul>



High quality indoor and outdoor spaces, create ‘destination’ appeal and interest



Food precinct central to revitalisation strategy



Children's play spaces






Incubator spaces add interest and variety, while supporting smaller businesses





## 5. Key recommendations

### Relevant case studies:

CASE STUDY	ABOUT THE PROJECT	SUCCESS FACTORS
<b>White night and laneway luminaires (Creative City Project), Ballarat, VIC</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The City of Ballarat Creative City Strategy and Master Plan, which aims to position Ballarat as one of Australia's leading creative cities, has been recognised with a national award.</li> <li>White Night is an annual 2-day night time festival celebrated the local creative community and institutions through installations, lighting, exhibitions, performance, film, music and dance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light projections onto buildings</li> <li>Family-focused programming</li> <li>Varied activities and experiences</li> </ul>
<b>Creative Map, Newcastle, NSW</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creative solution to orient users, and promote tourism and place identity.</li> <li>Applied to the Mall situ, would attract locals and visitors like to explore the precinct.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project flows through to printed tourism materials distributed around the city, while also attracting visitors to see the large version.</li> </ul>
<b>Urban forest and research, Baltimore, U.S.A</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlike other urban localities, Baltimore are making a conscious effort to expand their urban forest. They have developed a mapping and analysis tool to closely monitor their trees.</li> <li>It allows city officials to layer that information with health and crime records. Through this, it was found that where the tree canopy increased, both temperature and crime declined.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitment to greening extends beyond planting, to ongoing analysis, to monitor and respond to changes.</li> <li>Effective tool to demonstrate the real benefits of greening and canopy cover.</li> <li>Demonstrates the city's environmentally sustainable ethos and a proactive measure to prepare for climate change.</li> </ul>

## 5.4 Governance and partnerships

#	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	DETAIL	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
4.1	Partner with landlords to establish new leasing strategies  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build/maintain an active, healthy relationship with landlords in view of mutual benefit and the opportunity to create unique temporary place activation projects.</li> <li>Work with landlords to explore the division of large tenancies into smaller footprints and affordable lease areas to enable start-ups businesses and improve the retail mix.</li> <li>Work with landlords to establish opportunities for short-term (3-6 month) discounted leasing arrangements to test local social enterprises or start-ups.</li> </ul>	Place Management Charter
4.2	Develop Design Guidelines for Langtree Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to develop Langtree Avenue Place design guidelines, to provide guidance on signage, external shopfront design, branding and external areas. This should target a high standard of quality, consistent design and ambience for the streetscape. Grants and incentives are recommended to build trust, commitment and momentum.</li> </ul>	PBS
4.3	Place Management Charter  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a governance and place management charter to define expectations for external partners, and partnerships for the delivery (expectations or operation) of activations, events, year round activities, creative programs (art commissions), retail quality/standards and day-to-day place presentation and curation.</li> <li>Establish a program, involving various parties, to deliver a carefully curated program of activities and experiences.</li> </ul>	N/A (creates mechanism for other recommendations)
4.4	Strategic acquisitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council also has the opportunity to purchase premises and private laneways for place activation. For example Council may benefit from relocating the Mildura Visitor Centre into Langtree Avenue to draw visitors from the riverfront into the CBD; ensuring that the Visitor Centre includes an exciting opportunity for local food and wine sampling, cultural exhibitions, unique quality gift products.</li> <li>There is also an opportunity to incorporate an innovative digital education hub and 'culture charging station'.</li> </ul>	Planning mechanisms  Mildura CBD Plan






## 5. Key recommendations

### 5.4 Governance and partnerships

#	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	DETAIL	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
4.5	Marketing, branding and collateral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building a strong brand and identity to improve the sense of place, improving destination marketing and local branding (City Heart branding with specific reference to Langtree Mall). Conver</li> <li>Apply a branding and communication strategic approach to showcase Council's commitment over the life of the project. Create momentum through creative outlets and varying media platforms including an independent website, posters, postcards, YouTube videos or decals on pavements to increase and participation of the community.</li> <li>Online platforms should be provided to involve people in the process and conversation (e.g City of Ballarat communications program is designed to better understand what their various brands and identities are throughout the city, which will inform a Ballarat Prosperity Framework - <a href="https://mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au/49571/documents/117683">https://mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au/49571/documents/117683</a>)</li> <li>Create a 'shop local, buy local' promotional campaign and showcase local produce and wines through programming including tasting events.</li> </ul>	
4.6	Training for traders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train trader to improve visual merchandising and presentation using the Precinct Design Guidelines and by teaming up with culture/creative partners to assist in the design of shopfronts.</li> <li>Work with traders to develop a shared understanding of the co-curation of the public/private interface and their role in activation of the mall.</li> </ul>	Place Management Charter PBS

## Relevant case studies:

CASE STUDY	ABOUT THE PROJECT	SUCCESS FACTORS
<p><b>Art in the City Program, Dandenong, VIC</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of a larger effort to stimulate cultural activity, the Art in the City Program installed temporary artworks from emerging and established artists in the vacant shops and laneways of the city centre.</li> <li>The artworks, which are visible to passing pedestrians, explore, celebrate or present issues that are relevant to Dandenong.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successfully activated the space while strengthening local identity.</li> <li>Quick win project.</li> </ul>
<p><b>My Place Grants Program, Maitland City Council, NSW</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a CBD revitalisation focus, grants up to \$8,000 (artist and community partnerships) Council provided support around approvals, risk etc. (but no need for Council to be a creative director)</li> <li>Temporary projects within the philosophy of 'lighter, quicker, cheaper' - gets things happening fast and in a visible way.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community led solutions - engaging local artists and</li> <li>Passionate community members. A series of varied installations delivered – laneway nighttime puppet show, lighting projects, mini laneway festival, laneway recycled art installation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Splash Adelaide, City of Adelaide</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program partners and co creates with the community to bring streets, spaces and the public realm to life through a series of activations, events and projects. The short-term nature of Splash Adelaide projects means that trials are easy to roll out and assess for success in a relatively low risk</li> <li>Supports community to test and trial creative ideas and projects</li> <li>Themed around responding to the challenges and opportunities for the city</li> <li>Delivery of pilot projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared responsibility for activation between Council and community partners with year-round rather than one-off events. Key outcome was the encouragement of collaboration between community and Council.</li> <li>The program allowed allows public space stakeholders to quickly implement projects for a trial period to test activation ideas and projects and has been attributed to bringing vibrancy to the CBD.</li> </ul>



## 5. Key recommendations

Relevant case studies:

CASE STUDY	ABOUT THE PROJECT	SUCCESS FACTORS
<b>BCDMe – Warrnambool, VIC</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides power to the people</li> <li>Supporting local business through free media</li> <li>Promotes and enables a plethora of events and meetings throughout the year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates a positive energy in the township</li> <li>Gives a voice to traders and communities.</li> </ul>
<b>7-Day Makeover, Mid Coast Council and Creative Communities</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A partnership between Mid Coast Council and Creative Communities International with businesses raising \$52,000 to contribute to the project.</li> <li>60 volunteers were involved to help communities and businesses revitalise tired town centres in just seven days.</li> <li>2 days of planning workshops educating volunteers on what makes a great place then generating ideas.</li> <li>5 days of project delivery – volunteers building their ideas in the streets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediate change to a space, no waiting for a masterplan to find funding sources for large projects</li> <li>Quick win project</li> </ul>

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and recommendations outlined in the preceding sections of this discussion paper, the following recipe could be applied for Langtree Avenue:

### 1. Take the community on a journey

Be proud of Mildura – create a positive, authentic place brand for Langtree Avenue through targeted engagement (i.e. ‘My Mildura’) with the Traditional Owners, local traders, other key stakeholders and the general community. This is an immediate action underpinned by the need to support authentic human experiences that are co-designed by a collective multi-cultural community.

### 2. Generate a buzz - something is coming...

Council and City Heart should meet, greet and entice landlords, real estate agents and tenants to show their commitment to a new vision for Langtree Avenue. Start to provide physical hints and clues through media releases, street decals, pilot retail, pop-up shops etc., to excite and engage the community.

### 3. Start implementing to achieve quick wins

Endorse the CBD Plan and start implementing key actions, in particular quick win items, to demonstrate to the local community that investment in the CBD is a priority and contribute to the overall buzz related to revitalisation efforts within the CBD area, particularly Langtree Avenue.

### 4. Refocus the conversation

Take car parking out of the conversation and focus conversations on human-centred design. Key groups should talk about both retail and destination/lifestyle experiences, and the ways in which everyone can work together to reinvigorate the CBD and Langtree Avenue, to create lasting benefits.

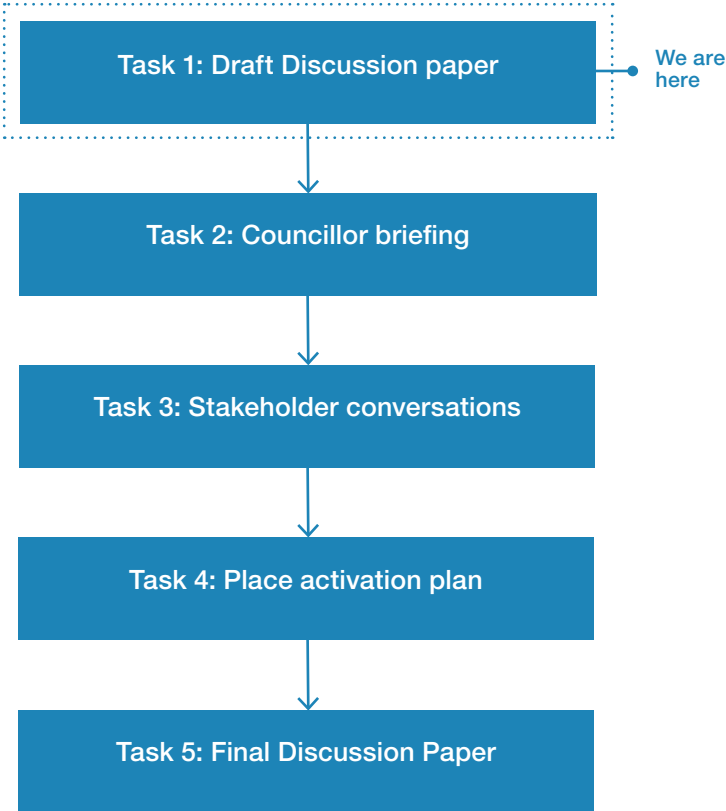
# 7. Next Steps

This discussion paper has been prepared for internal review by MRCC and its Councillors.

Upon briefing the Councillors on the recommendations outlined in this paper, GHD will undertake further consultation with key stakeholders, such as the traders, Traditional Owners, and other community and user groups, to be agreed with MRCC.

These further targeted conversations and inputs will inform a Place Activation Plan (PAP) for Langtree Avenue. The PAP will include key recommendations for areas along Langtree Avenue, particularly Langtree Mall, including potential activities, landscape treatments and priority place activation opportunities.

Upon receiving comments on the draft Place Activation Plan, GHD will produce a consolidated final discussion paper inclusive of the PAP, draft recommendations and stakeholder engagement summary.







# APPENDICES

# Appendix A - CBD Plan References

REFERENCES
<b>RETAIL MIX, PLACE ACTIVATION AND PROGRAMMING</b>
Background Report – Section 2.5.3 Land use
Background Report – 3.3.1 Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF)
Background Report –
3.4 Local Policy and Strategies – Mildura Retail Strategy
Background Report – Section 4.6.2 Retail / Commercial
Background Report – Section 5.1 Overview – Uses and activities
CBD Plan- Direction 1 – Desired Outcome 1.B
CBD Plan - Direction 1 – Desired Outcome 1.E
CBD Plan - Direction 1 – Key Action 1.A.1
CBD Plan - Direction 1 – Key Action 1.A.2
CBD Plan - Direction 1 – Key Action 1.A.3
CBD Plan - Direction 1 – Key Action 1.E.1
CBD Plan - Direction 2 – Key Action 2A/B.1
CBD Plan - Direction 3 – Key Action 3B.1
Direction 5 – Key Action 5B.4
CBD Plan - Direction 5 – Key Action 5C.1
CBD Plan - Direction 3 – Desired Outcome 3D
CBD Plan - Direction 6 – Desired Outcome 6A
CBD Plan - Direction 6 – Key Action 6A.3
<b>ACCESS, PERMEABILITY AND PERCEPTION</b>
Background Report – 2.5.5 Transport access and parking
Background Report – 2.5.8 Pedestrian and cyclist movement
Background Report – Assessment of key priority status, Improve access to the CBD
Background Report – Section 5.1 Overview – Governance and Advocacy
Background Report – Section 5.1 Overview – Transport and movement
CBD Plan - Direction 2 – Desired Outcome 2.E
CBD Plan - Direction 2 – Desired Outcome 2.C
CBD Plan - Direction 3 – Key Action 3D.2
CBD Plan - Desired Outcome 2.E
CBD Plan - Direction 2 – Key Action 2E.2

REFERENCES
CBD Plan - Destination Laneway Project – A - Potential subdivision of large tenancies and blocks to create through access to Langtree Mall
<b>COMFORT, SAFETY AND AMENITY</b>
Background Report – 2.5.13 Character and place
Background Report – 2.5.14 Environment and Sustainability
Background Report – 3.4 Local Policy and Strategies – Community Safety Plan
Background Report – Section 5.1 Overview – Community facilities and services
Background Report – Section 5.1 Overview – Character and place
Background Report – Assessment of key priority status ('Make the Mildura CBD a place people will want to experience')
CBD Plan - Langtree Avenue Placemaking Project
CBD Plan - Direction 1 – Desired Outcome 1.A
CBD Plan - Direction 1 – Key Action 1.A.3
CBD Plan - Direction 1 – Key Action 1.C.2
CBD Plan - Direction 2 – Desired Outcome 2.C
CBD Plan - Direction 3 – Desired Outcome 3.B
CBD Plan - Direction 4 – Key Action 4A.1
CBD Plan - Direction 3 – Key Action 3B.2
CBD Plan - Direction 3 – Key Action 3E.2
<b>GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIP</b>
Background Report – 2.5.13 Character and place – Street life participation
Background Report – 3.4 Local Policy and Strategies – Community Access and Inclusion Plan
Background Report – 3.4 Local Policy and Strategies – Youth Engagement Strategy
Background Report – Section 5.1 Overview – Governance and Advocacy
CBD Plan - Direction 5 – Key Action 5A.1
CBD Plan - Direction 5 – Key Action 5A.2
CBD Plan - Direction 3 – Desired Outcome 3E
CBD Plan - Direction 3 – Key Action 3E.2
CBD Plan - Direction 1 – Key Direction 1B.1
CBD Plan - Direction 2- 2A/B.1



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