

**(sent out via email on Dec 9, 2018)**

## A brief newsletter from Visions for Armidale Creeklands Inc ...

Dear Member of Visions for Armidale Creeklands Inc,

No doubt you have been wondering what has been happening recently with Visions for Armidale Creeklands Inc. Well, in short, quite a lot! **Read on!**

### **What has happened to the consultants' draft Master Plan for the creeklands?**

You will be aware that the draft Master Plan for the creeklands was **not released** for comment - as we had been told it would - at the October 24 Council meeting. We wrote to the CEO asking for some explanation as this delay has put our association in a difficult position - we were expecting to have been working on responses to the draft Master Plan by now. No reply has been received to date.

So, what has happened to the draft Master Plan? It turns out that the Mayor's Message in the Armidale Express Extra (Nov 28 page 20) explains things in this way ...

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#### **"Mayor's Message**

A number of strategies to enhance and progress Armidale have been taking shape in recent times.

The Armidale CBD Revitalisation plan, Dumarsq (sic) Creeklands Master Plan, Car Parking and Mobility Study, Community Services Public Art Policy and Armidale City Activation Plan are among the studies and plans being undertaken to build upon the city's strengths and take it

into the next 20 years and beyond.

What has become **abundantly clear as each strategy has progressed is how interwoven and interdependent these plans are upon one another**. To gain the most from these investigations and their outcomes, a more formal connection is needed – to ensure they inform one another and build upon their initiatives.

For this reason, **Council is looking to implement an overarching city masterplan, designed to bring all these strategies together**.

It is also important the overarching masterplan expands the outlook of each plan to consider how the city services and supports the rest of the Armidale region. How do people in the region's other centres use the city and what changes are needed to better meet their needs?

**A review of the existing plans has begun, to identify their synergies, and the city masterplan will gain momentum early in the new year. Development of the masterplan is expected to take about 12 months and will include broad public consultation, designed to encourage input from all sectors of our community.**

That includes our young people, residents in the towns and villages, people from non-English speaking backgrounds – so we get a clearer picture of all the community's needs and aspirations.

Follow-up deliberations and consultation scheduled for the supporting plans will work hand in hand with formulation of the masterplan.

That includes finalising plans for the CBD revitalisation. **A community advisory group comprising local business people and other key stakeholders has been busy reviewing the original concept designs, in line with community feedback received at the start of the year.**

The group's time and efforts have been extremely valuable, to help forge some fantastic designs that can be considered and intertwined with the initiatives, objectives and styles of the broader masterplan.

Initial investigations for each of these plans have already produced some excellent feedback and ideas. They can only be improved by revisiting each of them and fine tuning them within the context a broader city vision and with the benefit of far-reaching consultation for the masterplan.

Simon Murray"

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So, it seems that we will NOT get to see the draft Master Plan for the creeklands - at least not for some indefinite time!

Of course, this is most frustrating to some of us in our association. Nevertheless, we appreciate that coordination of planning is a good thing - if it realises benefits and avoids mistakes.

(You may remember, for example, our submission last April to the consultants mentioned broader things relevant to the creeklands such as the need for a major link between the creeklands and the CBD and Mall, especially between Dangar and Faulkner Sts. We also mentioned the need for more parking along the creeklands and our desire to think bigger than just the area considered by the consultancy - that is, between Markham and Douglas Sts. We also wanted flowing water!)

We have requested a meeting with the Mayor and the CEO and we will be asking if our association can be involved in providing community feedback and participation in developing an over-arching city master plan - we will see what happens.

### **Our public meeting (November 8, 2018)**

As you know, we held our public meeting - which attracted some 25 passionate and interested association members and community members. You have already seen the condensed outcomes which we have sent you. One of the outcomes is a revised Mission statement and a commitment to improve our ability to fund raise on our own behalf.

### **Revised Aim**

Following feedback from our members and the community, we expanded our previous 'Mission' statement to a single aim supplemented with two additional statements that explain how we want more than just water features and how we are committed to collaboration. Without it, we realise we won't achieve much at all!

#### **"Aim:**

***To assist in the careful planning, design and development of beautiful, healthy and safe public spaces featuring wetlands, lagoons and billabongs, connected by flowing water along the Armidale Creeklands".***

Also:

***"We support the development of user-friendly infrastructure such as attractive bridges, paths and cycle ways, play and recreation areas, along with performance***

*and creative spaces which will complement water features and improve the quality of life, economy and beauty of Armidale".*

and

*"Visions for Armidale Creeklands Inc aims to collaborate with the wider community by seeking the visions of the aboriginal community, sporting associations, recreational users, the business community, residents and visitors of all ages and those wanting environmental protection, stream health, wildlife corridors, native vegetation and deciduous colour".*

*So, these delays by Council are really stirring our community association to consider the BIG PICTURE and EXPANDING our horizons to improve our city - let's get on with it!*

*We realise that our commitment to see continuously flowing water is a big ask - it will require much planning and ingenuity to achieve - but we must do it!*

#### **A last-minute Christmas Gift idea ...**

As you may know, our association is very keen to involve all ages - all generations - in our commitment to improving Armidale's creeklands over the long-term. We therefore need to attract a greater number of members - and especially more 'young' members - to join our association. Perhaps you might know of some young adults who would like to see the creeklands improved over the long-term and might appreciate receiving a gift 12-month membership of our association? It will only cost you \$22 (inc GST) per membership.

You can purchase a gift membership by filling out the gift recipient and your payment details here:

<https://www.armidalecreeklands.org.au/buymembership/gift-membership-12-months>

Attracting more members is vital for the success of our association as our influence is directly related to the number of members. Members benefit by being able to get preferential access to information (such as this newsletter, can stand for the committee, and can put forward and vote on ideas for improving the creeklands - we are also exploring 'members only' web pages on our website where only you will be able to read about certain updates). Most importantly, members will NOT be asked to sell raffle tickets! Your membership dues go towards the basic running costs of our association such as printing, Facebook promotions, website hosting, etc. But we have big plans for leveraging funds into the future ...

#### **Other items of interest ...**

- With the amazing talents of some of our committee, we have been revising our publicity brochure and branding - watch out for it!
- We have sought meetings with our State and Federal members of parliament.
- We held a bus tour recently - [see images on our website.](#)
- We are exploring ways for our association to attract charitable donations.
- We are liaising with UNE about future Honours projects relating to the creeklands.
- We met recently with representatives of UNE, UNELife, Armidale Urban Rivercare Group (AURG), Landcare, aboriginal representatives and sporting associations to explore cooperative approaches - we all see a lot of synergies.

Members of your committee are passionate about striving - if necessary, over the **l o n g - term** - to achieve our new Aim (see above) .

Thank you for your ongoing support!

Kind regards,  
Your committee

**Visions for Armidale Creeklands Inc.**

**Web:** [www.armidalecreeklands.org.au](http://www.armidalecreeklands.org.au)

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