

DEVONPORT 2030

A discussion paper on the *key markers* for
growth into the future



DEVONPORT

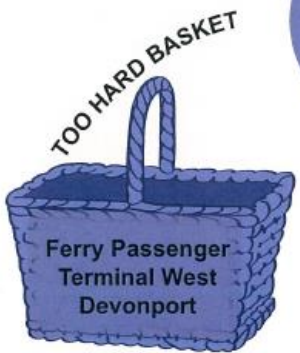
Chamber of Commerce & Industry Inc.

Your Business Voice



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I would like:

To boost the city's economy we need:

Foreshore Bike Hire

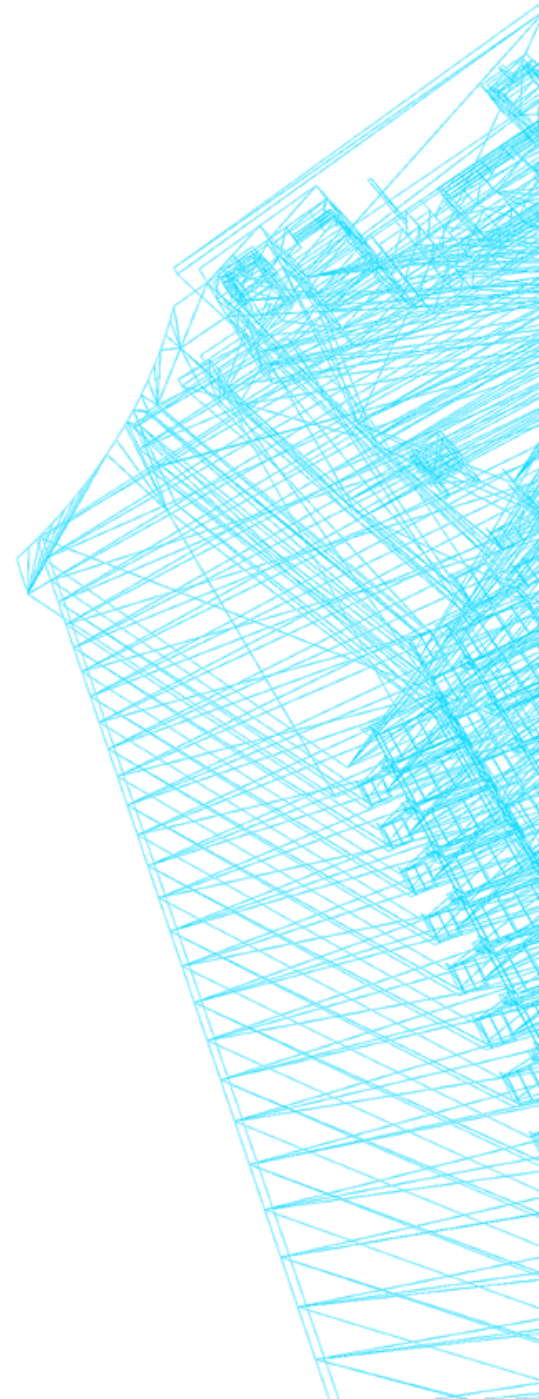
#Devonport2030
 @IndTas

FORWARD

The DCCI '2030' Discussion Paper was first developed in January 2012. It offered up a number of ideas for the city's development that could enable *sustained and long term growth* for business and industry.

After consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders; an on-line survey and panel speaker forum late last year, the attached paper seeks to capture the ideas of groups and individuals who are linked by a common purpose:

to see Devonport grow and thrive as a regional hub for business, tourism and industry, and leverage that prosperity to make Devonport a better place for the broader community.

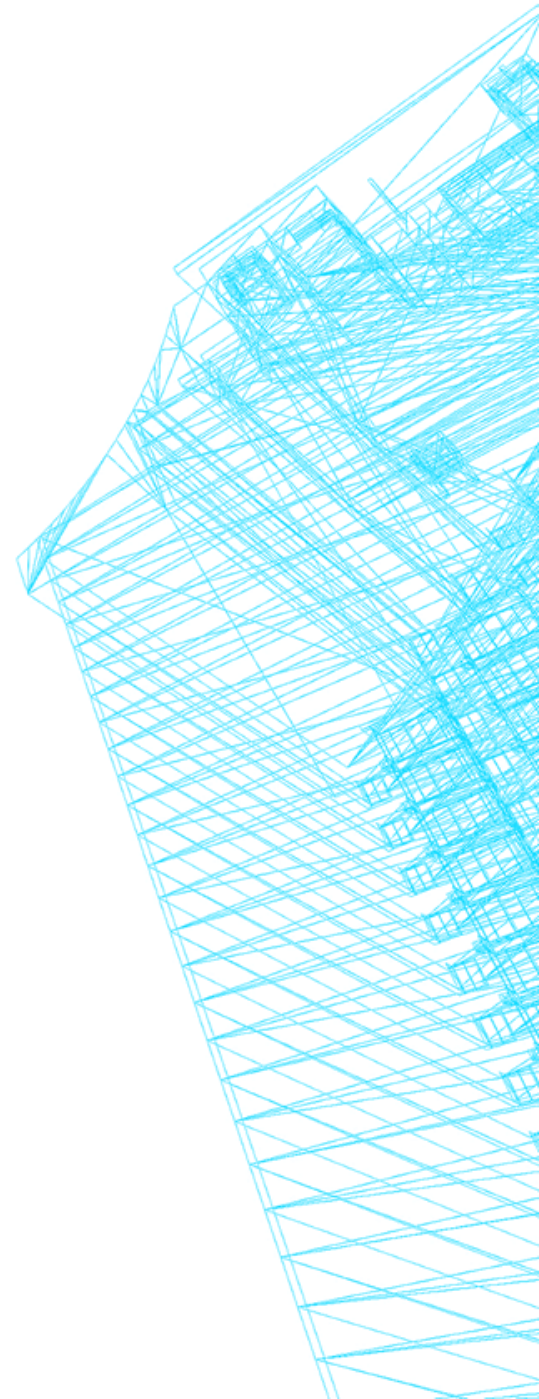


FORWARD/....

Out of the original ideas list reviewed with stakeholders, there were a few that attracted almost unanimous support, those being the heritage trains on the main line and an action plan for Rooke Street Mall, plus attention on secondary shopping areas such as Fourways, East Devonport and Spreyton.

The best strategy for getting direct flights to Sydney (while unanimously agreed as a good thing) was split and the response to passenger terminal moving to the city side was ambivalent with only one person in government seeing it as critical for the city's economic development.

It was generally agreed information on the Asian tourism market (particularly China) is needed urgently to tailor a tourism offer to suit demand. A focus on fresh food and the region's ability to produce high quality product was seen as an opportunity to leverage further, in particular in relation to the new retail precinct in the CBD.



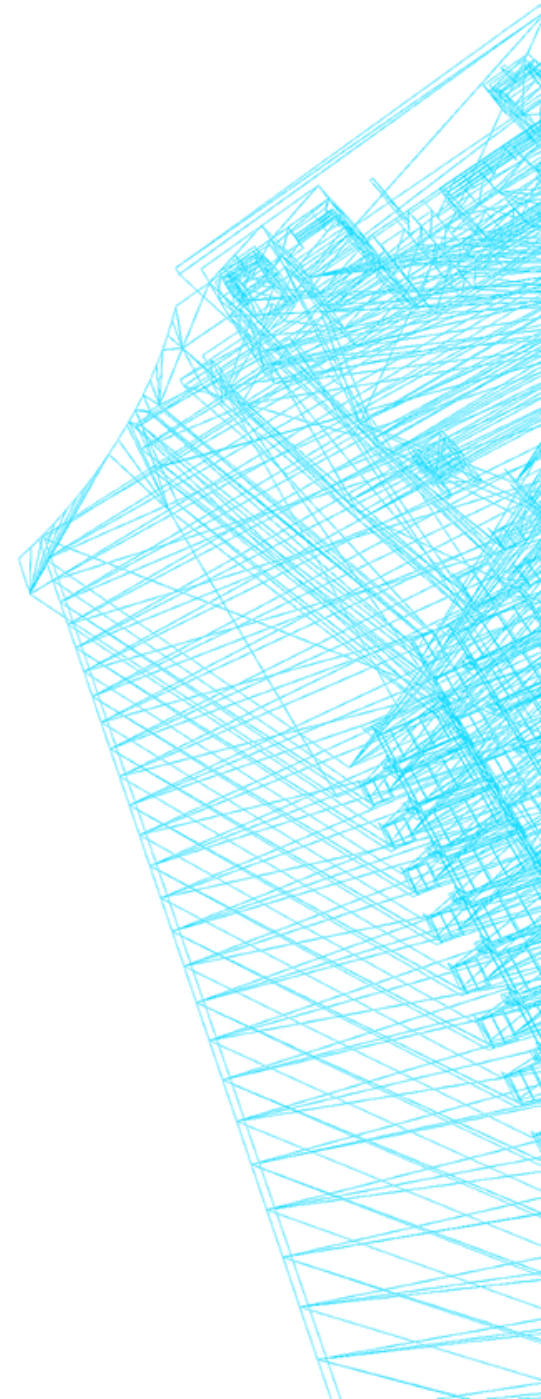
FORWARD/...

'Livability' was a word that came up time and time again, particularly when discussing the challenge of growing the city's population, which has remained stagnant for many years. Opportunities for Devonport as a conference destination were also raised.

During the stops and starts of the 2030 review, some of the ideas from the initial paper have come to fruition or underway but we have left them in the paper so we have an overall positioning statement about where we see opportunities for the city.

Further to public feedback, those ideas will guide the Business Planning process; set the direction for training workshops and corporate events, as well the professional skill set of the Executive team.

In this way, we will be able to provide the very best assistance to business and industry on a strategic basis, as well continuing to provide support or advocacy on a day to day basis.

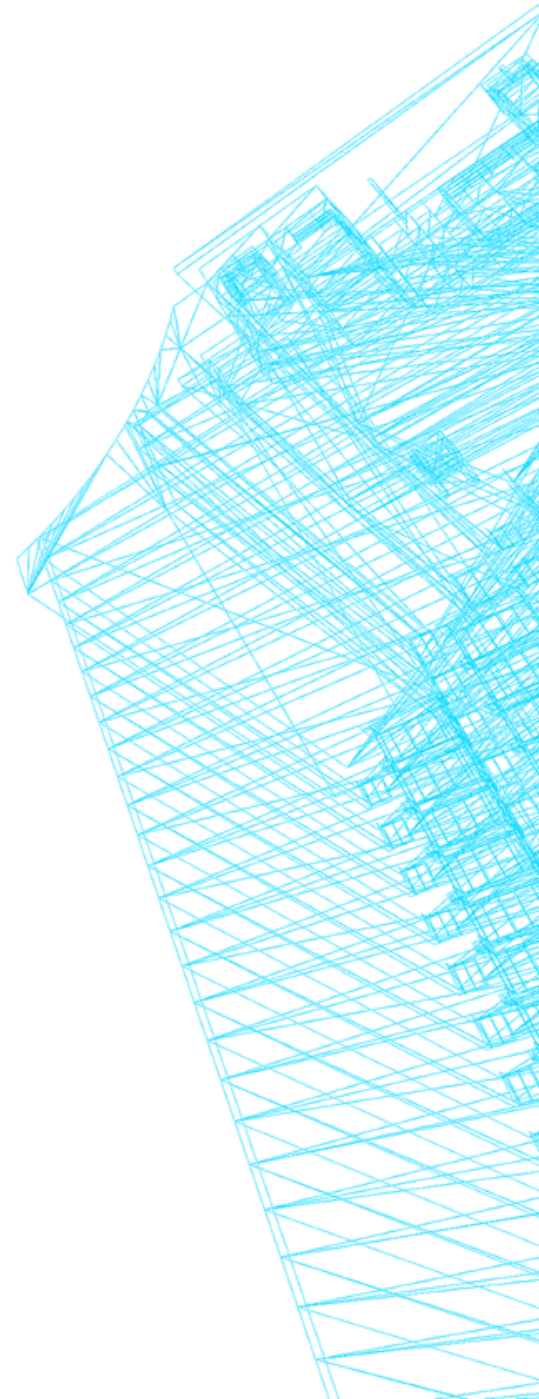


IDEA 1.0 POPULATION 30K+

The buzz in Devonport over the Christmas weeks is palpable. Relatives and friends flood the area over Christmas and New Year and there just seems to be the right amount of people to keep the shops and restaurants busy.

If Devonport actively works to increase its population by 5,000 before 2030, discussions with the state government around the need for public services (eg hospitals and cancer treatment centres) become easier; the business case for cheaper air tickets and direct flights to Sydney is clearer (cf the conference market) and of course, the rate base for Council increases, allowing for more services to the community.

These are just a handful of the potential benefits but of course for an increased population there needs to be more land release to allow for development, as per Latrobe and Shearwater; additionally, we support Council's continuing review of zoning criteria for land close to CBD that is *still* zoned rural-residential.





IDEA 2.0 MIXED USE WATERFRONT PRECINCT

There is no doubt opportunities around activating our waterfront have been largely unrealized to date. In a blue sky scenario, we see a mixed use precinct with an undercover shopping centre to the latest design standards, waterfront dining opportunities, residential and commercial suites, a CBD supermarket and concept stores that showcase local produce. Our stakeholder feedback strongly supported the idea of a supermarket that would showcase our local produce (eg a Fratteli Fresh, Sydney or Hill St Grocer, Hobart), as opposed to a Coles Express for example.

Recently during the review process, discussion around new space for the Devonport Gallery garnered good support with most seeing it as tourist drawcard that would be complimentary to the arts and food precinct proposed by the Living City Plan.



IDEA 3.0 RESTORATION OF THE HIGH STREET

With the event of the Market Place in 2016 it will be critical to ensure trading conditions in the existing CBD is future proofed. Even the Chamber Executive is divided on the best strategy to achieve this! However, the idea that was workshopped with stakeholders was reinstating traffic to all of Rooke Street, thereby increasing pedestrian and vehicular flow, providing additional convenience parking and 'natural surveillance' improves safety.

Concurrently, property owners and council need to work together to enhance and highlight our significant heritage shopfronts. This idea continues a trend to convert small regional malls back to vibrant high streets (Townsville; Raymond St Mall, Sale Victoria).

One stakeholder also offered that activating the residential component above the shops could further add to the vibrancy and amenity.



IDEA 3.0 RESTORATION OF THE HIGH STREET

There are those who worry about disruption to trade while the works are underway; more still that see the mall as under utilised event space that must remain, but ultimately the question is, how do we provide the best trading conditions possible for businesses, particularly when the Market Place will provide such strong competition for foot traffic.

A second element we see as critical for a financially sustainable CBD are strong anchors either end of Rooke Street that effectively draw foot traffic from one end to the other. We floated the idea of better utilising buildings at the top of Rooke Street (eg the old Luck and Haines site now owned by the State Government) to accommodate government services that generated lots of foot traffic, as well as employing large numbers of staff.

The overall consensus from all stakeholders was that there is no one magic solution - a number of strategies will be required to ensure the whole of the CBD maximises opportunities from council's development work.

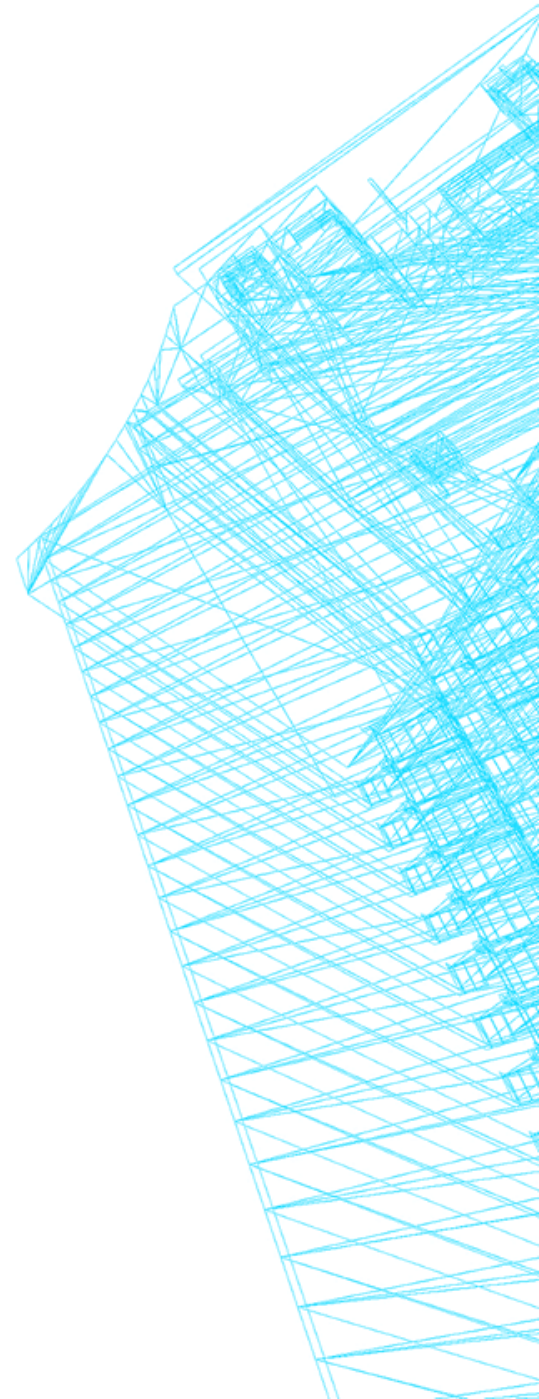
IDEA 4.0 AN ACCESS REVIEW

i) A Port Strategy

In 2012, we sought to explore the relocation of the ferry passenger terminal to West Devonport to better capture the annual 400,000 visitors that arrive on the Spirit. At the time, less than 30% stayed overnight in Devonport. Discussions with TasPorts have left us satisfied that this opportunity has been lost due to space requirements.

That said, there is still opportunity for the city to engage with smaller boutique cruise ships and the navy to tap into this market that gives local business such a boost. Additional attractions in the CBD will also help to retain more of these numbers.

TasPorts has recently completed their regarding their port review for the state which provides certainty around the Spirit of Tasmania home in Devonport which is also welcomed.

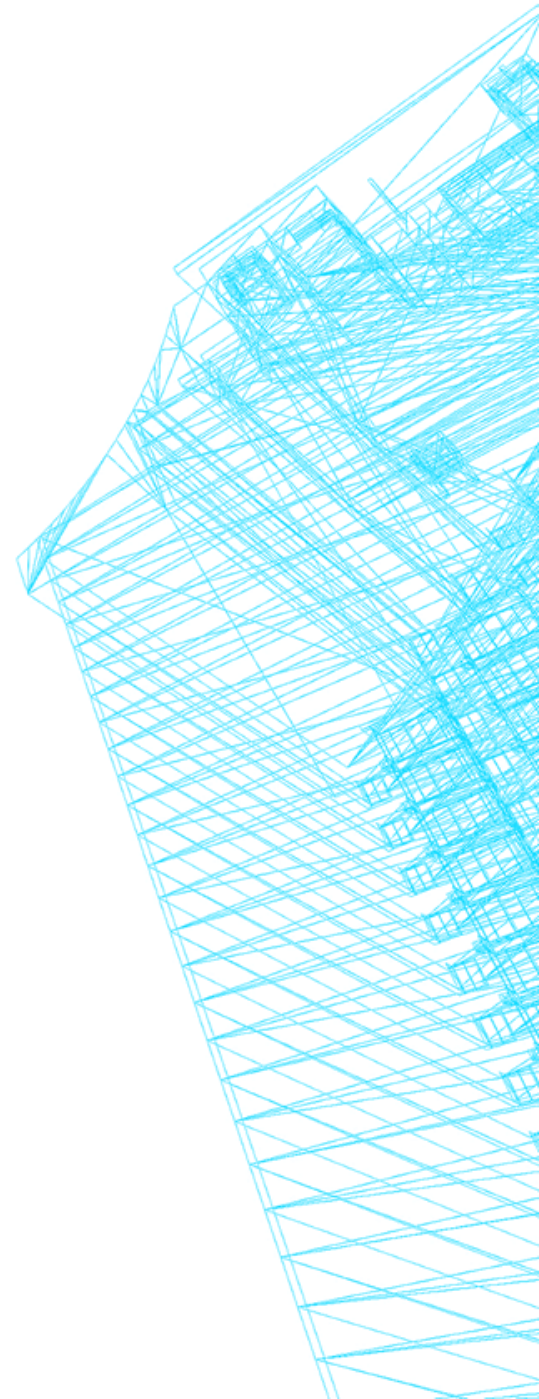


IDEA 4.0 ACCESS REVIEW

ii) Flight routes and fare structures

Tourism Tasmania data shows that, of the respondents to the Visitor Survey, twice as many NW Coast residents fly out of Launceston than Devonport and they represent around 25% of total passengers at Launceston airport. This is because flights can be significantly cheaper and direct flights to Sydney are available.

In discussions with the General Manager of Devonport airport, it is apparent this data would support discussions with either Qantas or Virgin to commence either Q400 or ATR flights out of Devonport direct to Sydney, which historically we know provide sustained economic benefit. In relation to budget flights out of Devonport, opinion is split on whether this will dilute the certainty of the current service through Qantas Airlines.





IDEA 5.0 HERITAGE TRAIN TRAVEL ON THE MAIN LINE

The track between Devonport and Burnie is considered one of the most scenic in the world. A tourism experience where you could travel along the coast by steam train, stopping off to sample quality local produce, seafood or wine is an experience that would equal Cradle Mountain, Freycinet, Strahan or Hobart and could potentially open up the whole of the North West Coast. As a contrast to built-up urban environments, it would also appeal to profitable emerging markets such as China.

Through discussions with the Don River Railway Society President, the main impediments getting back on the main line are insurance costs, track upgrade and maintenance, testing and recertification of rolling stock as well as upgrade of communications to the latest standards. We would also add to that list, assistance with marketing strategies at a state level e.g. Tourism Tasmania



IDEA 5.0 HERITAGE TRAIN TO TRAVEL ON THE MAIN LINE

The challenge of getting steam trains on scenic freight lines is not specific to the North West Coast, (cf New Zealand: <http://www.greatnzsteamjourneys.co.nz/about.asp>), but the opportunities to build up the offer are there: Tim Fischer, when he spoke to the 2030 Panel Forum last year, suggested launching a Timmy the Tiger train off the back of the next Don River Railway Thomas Day. Long term he also saw opportunities to have a steam train from Deloraine (Ashgrove Farm) through to Devonport and then along the coast to Burnie.

It's a wonderful vision that obviously will take some work to deliver but the Chamber is keen to support the Rail Society volunteers in re-instating heritage trains on the main line for what could be a unique and spectacular tourist anchor on the coast.



IDEA 6.0 BIKE HIRE ON THE FORESHORE

The best example of bike hire, unsurprisingly, is probably found on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra which has similarly level and scenic bike paths near the water. Devonport visitors would be encouraged to really see and experience the city. There are existing bike retailers in the city that already provide a hire service - they could be encouraged to trial bike hire over summer by simply giving them licensed space at the foreshore markets

In addition to local bike rides, extending the current cycle paths past Ulverstone and further along the coast to Wynyard or beyond would attract the burgeoning cycling market to the region. The CCA is already working towards this goal and we support their endeavours.

A blend of travel experiences, say for example where you could cycle part of the way along the coast and then catch the steam train back would also broaden appeal.



IDEA 7.0 A CITY PARK

Devonport does not have a fenced park for very young children that is free from traffic risk, other than the Bluff; the Mersey foreshore being narrow and hemmed by a major river and busy road. In a city this size, the lack of a traditional city park is noticeable to new residents. Building a park retrospectively is not without its challenges but the current showground site, if it were ever offered for sale, has strategic merit – its close to the CBD and the railway line cuts through it so there is potential for a steam train stop at some stage.

A City Park could be home to a Community Garden; off leash dog exercise outside of peak hours; multi access children's play equipment; botanic displays and hemmed by residential housing, perhaps either town houses or something aimed at 'empty nesters'. A public private partnership model of this nature is obviously dependant on a number of variables, not least of which is the public desire for such a space, and the ability to raise capital to build and maintain it. It is nonetheless, a good flag on the hill for Tasmania's third largest city.



IDEA 8.0 ENHANCING NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STATEMENTS

There are many distinct areas that have evolved over time, for example, the 'heritage quarter' either side of Hiller Street. To encourage them to further enhance their neighbourhood characteristics, consideration should be given to naming precincts. Again this relates to liveability and enhancing our urban environment.

By way of example, East Devonport (formerly Torquay), could turn its industrial heritage into a plus for retailers, industry and residents. Casual leasing space near the water for start up cafes, restaurants and bars could pop up over summer, its edgy, affordable offer contrasting well with a redeveloped waterfront offer in West Devonport.



IDEA 8.0 ENHANCING NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STATEMENTS

A good example is the 'pop up' culture in Christchurch where vibrant retail space has been created almost out of thin air in the form of shipping containers following the earthquakes (refer image board and <http://popupcity.co.nz/restaurants-and-cafes>).

As an overarching principle, as the city approaches a major crossroad in its development and growth, our built environment should always have a reference point linking it to the city's history and the wonderful characters that have shaped its persona.



IDEA 9.0 - DEVONPORT: THE DIGITAL CITY

With access to the NBN and an active digital economy there are many opportunities for Devonport into the future. The Chamber will actively promote and support initiatives that utilise digital technology eg free WiFi for the CBD and Fourways.

Into the future we are also keen to work, particularly with small business, on workshops and networking assistance to demonstrate how they can utilise digital media to broaden their market reach, increase profitability and strengthen their brand.



IDEA 10.0 CREATING AN 'ASIA READY' TOURISM OFFER

Closely linked to our Digital City goal is the need to have an Asia Ready offer. Have local tourism and business operators been given information on cultural characteristics that can give tourists from Asia an even better experience?

Would a tourist with limited English from Asia feel empowered to experience Devonport without a tour guide; what tools could we provide them to do so? (Given that, at some point the next generation of tourists from Asia will have the confidence to explore, independently from the traditional guided tour).



IDEA 11.0 CREATING UNIQUE SHOPPING EXPERIENCES

With major development in the CBD comes the need to support surrounding areas such as **Fourways, Spreyton and East Devonport**.

Working to their strengths, and again, tying into the idea of character statements, planning considerations around these areas should look at beautification, ease of parking, affordability of parking and additional assistance with developing their 'brand' and marketing.

The emergence of strong, destinational retail in the CBD does not necessarily mean these satellite centres cant do well – as the city becomes harder to get into and out of quickly, these smaller areas can compete by being a quick and convenient alternative on the way home from work etc.



IDEA 12.0 A 'CARAVAN FRIENDLY' CITY

You can often see caravans of motor homes parked near the Elimatta hotel where tourists park and walk in to town. We can take fuller advantage of this market by making wash bays available; creating more parking and feeding this information into all city promotions

One of our stakeholders put forward the view we need to adopt a 'leaving strategy' for visitors so we become the destination of choice for tourists wrapping up their holiday; this might be hotel discounts bundled up with carwash or meal vouchers and so on that are all tailored for travellers getting on the ferry with motor homes or caravans.



IDEA 13.0 BECOMING A CONFERENCE DESTINATION

One of our stakeholders with event experience has noted there is currently there is a gap in the market for a large capacity conference centre or entertainment venue.

With its proximity to a regional airport, the Melbourne market; affordability and fresh produce, Devonport is well positioned to be a conference destination for the local Tasmanian and interstate markets.

A critical success factor would be additional hotel accommodation and complimentary activities that showcase the local region (eg guided fly fishing tours; winery tours, guided walks etc).



IDEA 14.0 A TOURISM HUB

There are three key areas where Devonport has a natural advantage in tourism, being Food Tourism, Geo Tourism and Rail Tourism. These run concurrently with event based tourism including triathlons, yacht racing and classic rally cars which have all worked well in the past.

As enthusiasts will tell you, Devonport (specifically the Mersey Bluff through to Don Heads) and the North West Coast of Tasmania is rich with sites of geological importance. This emerging tourist market is a good fit for the coast, we are working to our strengths by utilising natural coastline and it is popular with the Asian tourist market.

In relation to food tourism, Sue Dyson spoke at the DCCI 2030 forum last year and defined food tourism as food experiences that a 'worth a journey'. She cited a few potential examples such as fresh seasonal whitebait, that 'might one day rival the hairy crab season in Shanghai or the season for elvers in the Basque country'!



IDEA 14.0 A TOURISM HUB

A further market that can be included in this mix is the ‘foodie biker’ – as highlighted in a piece by Advocate journalist, Libby Bingham, regarding the ‘foodie biker’ trend in Victoria and support from local bike enthusiasts.

In relation to rail, Tim Fischer spoke at the Chamber’s 2030 forum last year he suggested a “one click” experience so that visitors from China could fly from China into Melbourne, tour the city for the day and then take the ferry in to Devonport all on the one ticket – ie make it easy for the Asian market to get here.

This of course positions them perfectly for rail tourism where he suggested the rail journey between Devonport and Burnie could be augmented to run as far as the Ashgrove dairy farm at Deloraine.



IDEA 15.0 INDUSTRIAL PARKS

With its proximity to air and sea ports, transport networks and relative affordability, Devonport can also carve out an economic future with large scale industrial parks.

One idea that was raised during the consultation period was the absence of a one stop shop for industry that could identify industrial sites across the region. There are project ready sites in East Devonport, Latrobe Wesley Vale etc. but who is marketing them; where would investors go to get this information from one spot? It was suggested that the DCCI (and by inference the BCCI and CCCI) could collect and house this information for potential NW Coast investors that overlapped various council boundaries and facilitate investment opportunities for industry. This is something we will take on board and review with the Industry Sub-Committee.



IDEA 16.0 AN AGRIBUSINESS HUB

Agriculture and aquaculture are clearly two of the key anchors of our local economy. Our cool climate gives us a competitive advantage in terms of slower growing periods affecting flavour and quality; we are counter cyclical to markets in the northern hemisphere and can trade on our GMO free status. These industries are ably and proactively supported by peak bodies such as the Tasmanian Farmers Federation and also various levels of government including Department of Primary Industries and State Growth.

The Chambers focus over the next few years will be in promoting skills education, in for example, the rapidly growing high value premium crops market; working with government to ensure that school leavers are job ready and continuing to provide strong advocacy on issues that are critical for the regions growth and development.

ANNEXURE A – IMAGE BOARDS

Christchurch 'pop up' retail space:

Good example of what could be achieved in East Devonport near the Torquay ferry terminal – affordable retail space, accessible either by ferry from Devonport or by car



IMAGE BOARDS

Princes Park, Battery Point Hobart

An example of city park hemmed by residential housing. Has a small children's playground and acts as a thoroughfare between the suburb of Battery Point and the CBD



IMAGE BOARDS

Thomas The Tank Engine

As part of the Don River Society annual program, a Thomas day perhaps either side of the Taste would be a strong point of difference and tourist draw card for the coast.



Don River Steam Train

The section of rail between Devonport and Burnie, currently used for freight only, is recognized as one of the most scenic in the world.



IMAGE BOARDS

Bike hire at Lake Burley Griffin
A great tourist attraction that would transpose well to the local Devonport market.



IMAGE BOARDS

Fratelli Fresh in Sydney showcases local produce by incorporating Café Sopra in the mezzanine space above the fresh produce and deli items. It started in a warehouse in the industrial precinct of Waterloo ten years ago and now has three additional concept stores in the CBD



IMAGE BOARDS

Waterfront dining and art installation at Cockle Bay, Sydney, part of a mixed use waterfront precinct developed by Lend Lease Retail



The Chamber would like to acknowledge its appreciation to the following stakeholders for their feedback and contribution to the 2030 Discussion Paper:

Matthew Atkins – Assistant General Manager, Devonport Council; Professor Janelle Allison, UTAS Pro-Vice Chancellor (Regional Development); Steve Bramich, Braddon Building Surveyors, Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck; Sue Dyson, Tasmanian Editor Gourmet Traveller; Steve Farquhar - Qantas State Manager, Tasmania; Tim Fischer AO, former Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the National Party; the Hon Ruth Forrest – MLC; the Hon Mike Gaffney MLC; Lara Hendriks - Regional Manager North West Region, Department of State Growth; William Housego - President of the Don River Rail Society; Roger Jaensch MP (in his then capacity as) Executive Chairman, Cradle Coast Authority; Mary Massina – (in her then capacity as) Executive Director of the Property Council of Australia (Tasmania Division); Gerard O'Brien, Owner, Silverleaf investments; David O'Byrne (in his then capacity as) Minister for Economic Development and Infrastructure; Jeremy Rockliff MP – Deputy State Premier and MP for Braddon; Sid Sidebottom (in his then capacity as) Federal MP for Braddon; Sue Smith – retired MLC for Montgomery; Wayne Tucker - (in his then capacity as) Devonport Airport General Manager, Brett Whiteley - Federal MP for Braddon (then candidate for Braddon), Cameron Wilkins, Costa Group.

FEEDBACK

Comments on the '2030' Discussion Paper can be emailed to mail@dccj.org.au