



MAYOR'S COLUMN 5 DECEMBER 2018

The RMS and their River Street Bridge proposal has now gone from being farcical to outright offensive.

Last week the retailers and shop owners along Victoria Street were delivered a devastating shock by the RMS when they were told parking along Victoria Street would be removed permanently as the new traffic lights would require extra lanes.

Can you imagine what would happen to those shops along Victoria Street if there was no parking available? Personally, I think those business simply would not survive.

What makes this whole thing ridiculously frustrating is that the first the Mayor's office heard of this was when irate shopkeepers started calling through letting us know about the visit from RMS officers. This is hardly great communication or collaboration with their most important local organisation being the Council.

The work on the Victoria Street intersection started off as a great community project. Council has been in discussions with the shop owners and retailers in the area working out ways we can beautify the precinct.

For a long time that particular part of Dubbo has been screaming for a makeover and as such the ideal opportunity was to work with the RMS to do the work all together with their plans for a traffic light intersection.

Sadly these early efforts between Council and the RMS to work together was left by the wayside in this recent blunder.

Working with the RMS is certainly challenging. Ever since the announcement that they had no plans to fix traffic congestion in West Dubbo and to simply build a bridge at River Street was made it has been nearly impossible to get a sensible proactive reaction from them over the long-term future of Dubbo's traffic and freight movements.

It is beyond me that a government department has such disregard for the views of Dubbo's residents.

I am certainly on the side of the shopkeepers in Victoria Street. I'm also on the side of the residents in West Dubbo who continually have to put up with a bottle neck at the highways intersection causing long traffic delays.

While it is crucial to come up with a solution to the dilemma that is the intersection at Whylandra and Victoria Street, it should not come at the expense of the established businesses that are working hard to make a living.

It is simply not fair to ruin people's lives and livelihoods.

If there is a silver lining, it is that the RMS has recognised their mistake and has now said it will work with Council and others to find an outcome that is acceptable for everyone. Over the coming months we will look at all the options.

On a similar topic, Council's survey on the River Street Bridge Proposal is coming to a close. In order to tally the results

and get a report to the NSW Government with the findings, all responses must be returned by the end of this week to be included.

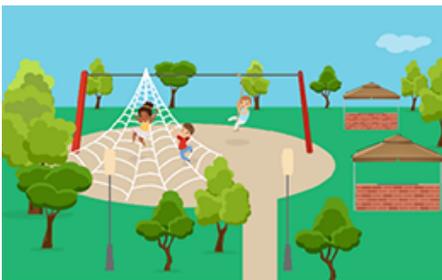
If you haven't returned your form by now, please complete it and consider dropping it into Council's Customer Service Centre on the corner of Darling and Church Street to ensure it is here in time to be counted.

The number of responses that have come back has been very impressive so far. I was hopeful that people would see the value of having their say and that has definitely happened.

Over the coming days the results will be added up and will be made public later next week. It's no secret that I have been opposed to the River Street Bridge but this survey will allow me to see if that is the general view and I will back whatever decision the community makes.

Last Edited: 05 Dec 2018

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