

## POPULARISE LANE COVE!

With the impact of increasing density on Lane Cove village, and concerns about the type and scale of retail desired or appropriate for changing local needs, there is concern that market forces are not delivering what the community wants.

In the USA a recent start-up website <https://popularise.com/> serves the challenge of communities taking charge of the commercial make-up of their local urban centres. This is about making local connections for local business, supporting start-up enterprise to help sustain and diversify the local economy, creating opportunities for shop and job-sharing where an individual might otherwise be challenged, or setting up a resource hub where services or courses can be provided on an as needs basis or exchanged.

A quick overview shows the basic idea is to start a 'drawing board' for a real project, where friends and neighbors can help campaign on ideas for new business or community places. To support an idea, online votes are taken by clicking "Build it!" You get places you want and help build a better village.

Lane Cove has one of the highest contingents of active and creative folk this side of the harbour, many working from home or in relatively isolated studios. It would be good to create more jobs within the village to help support local retail, and to provide more employment for our increasing population. Sites such as the soon to be developed Rosenthal car-park, with added potential for Birdwood Lane activation, would be an ideal catalyst for this approach.

Combine the networks and energy of In The Cove, Lane Cove ALIVE and TVO with the potential of a 'popularise' style website, add some initiatives from City of Sydney -

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/business/city-spaces/creative-hubs>

<http://www.creativecitysydney.com.au/opportunities/affordable-creative-space/>

and we could also eliminate vacant shopfronts around Lane Cove, and provide developers with a vision to cross-fertilise their projects, generating a new vitality and community influence for OUR village.

This is an introductory article for a series that will follow on local urban issues and challenges.

Jon Johannsen  
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