



SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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[Archive](#)

ACT GOVERNMENT PLANS TO INTRODUCE A NEW PARKING SPACE LEVY

As part of its [Draft Transport Plan for Canberra](#), the ACT Government proposes to introduce a new parking space levy by 2013, limited to Civic and the town centres, supposedly to fund public transport initiatives. The details are not clear but the last time a levy was proposed (in the [2003-04 Budget](#)), it was sensibly rejected in 2005, after acknowledging that such levies don't have the desired effect of improving public transport patronage ([Shop Talk 29/4/05](#)). These kinds of levies have a superficial appeal, along the lines of a congestion charge, but they are in fact just another property tax (with a narrow tax base), on top of existing taxes (including the ACT's recently commenced 'change of use charge'). Developers also contribute to transport infrastructure (unless they're lucky enough to develop on airport land) through charges and conditions. These general taxes supposedly to pay for specific transport initiatives are simply 'tax creep'. The SCCA will vigorously oppose the levy which would mainly be borne by shopping centre owners and tenants.

QLD MAJOR PROJECTS OFFICE DECLARES THE FIRST SIX MAJOR PROJECTS

Last week the Queensland Minister for Local Government, Paul Lucas MP, announced in Parliament that the [Major Projects Office](#), established to facilitate the assessment of major projects, has declared the first six projects to be assisted ([Shop Talk 16/6/11](#)). This includes four SCCA member projects – Pacific Fair, Westfield Garden City, Coomera Town Centre and North Lakes Town Centre – with a development value of almost \$1.5 billion and providing 8,500 construction jobs. This is welcome progress for the MPO which only [opened for business](#) on 25 August. The ultimate measure of the MPOs success, however, will be enabling these projects to proceed with reasonable infrastructure charges and conditions.

CLAIMS BY UNITED VOICE OVER SHOPPING CENTRE CLEANERS ARE NOT TRUE

United Voice, the cleaners' union, has again made untrue statements about wages paid to shopping centre cleaners. The Fair Work Ombudsman has recently concluded a major investigation of the entire cleaning industry and there is no evidence cleaning contractors engaged by SCCA members are evading their industrial responsibilities ([Shop Talk 14/7/11](#)). If the union believes cleaners in shopping centres are underpaid then it must believe cleaners in all industries are underpaid and it is up to the union to address this by making application to Fair Work Australia to amend the *Cleaning Services Award* (the modern award). It makes no sense, and is unfair, for the union to discriminate by singling out shopping centre cleaners.

MINI GUNS ISSUE OF SHOPPING CENTRE NEWS NOW AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

The Mini Guns issue of [SCN \(Shopping Centre News\)](#) is now out, with rankings for 141 shopping centres between 6,000m² and 20,000m² GLA. This issue also contains an account by SCCA of the welcome moves to remove the silly requirements for shopping centre staff to hold real estate licences. For subscriptions, phone (02) 9555 7494 or email: subscriptions@shoppingcentrenews.com.au.

NOVEMBER 'RETAIL IN THE SPOTLIGHT' FORUMS IN SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE

The Property Council NSW and Victoria are each hosting a half-day Retail Forum on 17 November (in [Sydney](#)) and on 30 November (in [Melbourne](#)). The forums will examine the retail outlook and trends and include sessions on unraveling online retailing; improving the shopping centre experience; and making shopping centres work. Bernie Brookes, CEO Myer, will be a keynote speaker at each forum and there are a range of other expert speakers. Further information and registration details are [here](#) (for Sydney) and [here](#) (for Melbourne).