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Survey shows shared approach to enhancing CBD vibrancy

A recent survey has highlighted how the community, businesses and the City of Bunbury can work together to enhance the visitation and vibrancy of the Central Business District.

The CBD Experience survey conducted by the City revealed that 93 per cent of people visit the CBD for a wide variety of reasons, a statistic Mayor Gary Brennan said was very encouraging.

“The fact that we had 801 responses to the survey and such a large number of people indicated they spend time in the CBD gives us great confidence in developing strategies that can enhance the CBD experience,” Mr Brennan said.

“It is important, however, that it is a collaborative approach and early feedback is that all stakeholders are very keen to make a difference.”

Key findings from the survey were presented at a public forum and the City will further analyse the feedback before making any decisions on changes, such as parking.

“Our view, and one that was backed up by the survey, is that parking is just one part of the CBD puzzle,” Mr Brennan said.

“Council will look at implementing solutions in response to feedback from the survey as our way of contributing to enhancing the CBD.”

Changes raised by survey respondents being considered include free periods in shopper/visitor car parks; improved signage and awareness of motorists of where to park; more short term parking in strategic locations; free parking and no time limits on public holidays; increasing time limits on outskirts of CBD; introducing PayStay (mobile app) on street; change parking start time; and further incentives.

Mr Brennan said alterations could be implemented in a short space of time once Council had made decisions on any changes.

“We acknowledge that improving the signage directing people to the appropriate parking bays is required and this is something we hope to roll out fairly quickly,” he said.

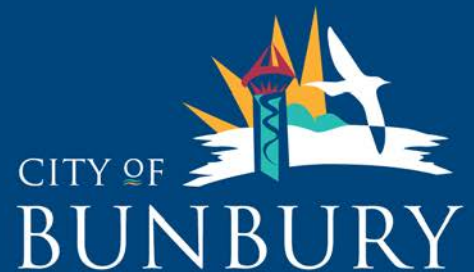
“Alternative payment options on the street such as PayStay can also happen sooner rather than later and it will address the feedback from people who felt they were ‘clock watching’ while parked on the street, or for parents of small children who sometimes found it difficult to get a ticket.”

Mr Brennan stressed, however, that businesses and the community still had a key role to play.

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“The surveys asked what the City, business and community could do to enhance the CBD experience and we have acknowledged that people feel strongly about parking,” he said.

“But also strong was the feedback about what businesses could do with much of it revolving around opening hours, customer service and the appearance of shops.

“It was quite clear from the survey that the community also has a big role to play with feedback encouraging greater support for CBD businesses and event.

“People also made it apparent that those visiting the CBD needed to have more respect for the area, such as reducing anti-social behaviour and picking up their litter.”

Other key data from the survey included:

- 96% of Bunbury residents and 93% of non-Bunbury residents shop in the CBD;
- 69% of Bunbury residents and 61% of non-Bunbury residents dine in the CBD at least monthly;
- When people visit the CBD for non-work related activities, the majority of people stay for 2 hours or less (78% of Bunbury residents and 67% of non-Bunbury residents);
- 63% of respondents were Bunbury residents 37% non-Bunbury residents;
- 51% of Bunbury residents and 52% of non-Bunbury residents come into the CBD for work purposes at least weekly;
- 53% of Bunbury residents and 60% of non-Bunbury residents attend events less than once a month;
- On weekdays 35% of Bunbury residents and 38% of non-Bunbury residents most commonly visit the CBD in the morning, 27% of Bunbury residents and 26% of non-Bunbury residents mostly visit in the afternoon and 23% of Bunbury residents and 26% of non-Bunbury residents mostly visit in the evening.

ENDS

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