

A black brick wall with a cow and a cartoon

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**Placemaking Action Plan Engagement Report**

January 2024



# Background

Bayside City Council is developing a five-year placemaking action plan for seven Major and Large Neighbourhood activity centres across the municipality. Placemaking can foster a sense of place and strengthen its uniqueness and authenticity. In essence, placemaking aims to improve public spaces and enrich the experience of the people who use them.

The action plan will map out the strategic and phased delivery of placemaking commencing with Bay Street, Beaumaris Concourse, Black Rock Village, Church Street, Hampton Street, Martin Street, and Sandringham Village, and then the rollout of placemaking initiatives across all 40 plus smaller Activity Centres will follow.

The Action Plan will identify placemaking tools and ideas to contribute to community and social vibrancy, economic vitality, and a localised sense of character for each centre.

This report provides a summary of community feedback on the Placemaking Action Plan, focusing on ideas for suggested improvements, and the community’s sentiment about what makes an enjoyable and functional activity centre.

The feedback obtained through the consultation included 374 randomly selected intercept survey respondents conducted in the seven centres, 275 self-selected *Have Your Say* online surveys, 44 comments from BHARG, FReeZA, and DAIAC meetings, and two direct submissions via email to Council officers.

# Consultation process

## Consultation purpose

The purpose of the consultation was to understand the community’s views about the seven local activity centres.

The consultation focused on community views about a range of potential improvements specific to each centre, sentiment about placemaking initiatives, and feedback about what makes for a good local activity centre.

## Consultation methodology

The tools and techniques selected for this project were informed by the project content, stakeholders, and type of feedback sought.

Community engagement was conducted between 31 October and 27 November 2023.

The consultation feedback mechanisms included an online survey on the *Have Your Say* website, 21 five-hour face-to-face intercept survey sessions conducted by Metropolis Research (three five-hour sessions at each of the seven activity centres - one weekday morning, one weekday afternoon/ early evening, and one weekend session), and presentations at the BHARG (Bayside Health Ageing Reference Group), FReeZA (youth group for ages 12 to 25 years), and DAIAC (Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Group) meetings.

The intercept surveys times and dates were advertised by Council via the Have Your Say project page, with A-frame signage (including QR code to the project page) displayed on-site in each activity centre during survey sessions to encourage people to complete the online survey if they did not have time to complete face-to-face.

Council promoted the consultation via 3,502 emails to *Have Your Say* subscribers (open rate 54%, 137 click-throughs to the Have Your Say feedback page).

Consultation information was distributed via email to the seven relevant Traders’ Associations, the Bayside Business Network, the Bayside Tourism Network and Bayside Youth Services.

Additional signage with project information and a QR code link to the Have Your Say feedback page was placed in high foot traffic areas of all activity centres for the duration of the engagement campaign.

At the commencement of the consultation, a campaign news story was published on the Bayside City Council website, and this was further promoted through a feature article in Council’s weekly e-news, This Week in Bayside, as well as featuring in the e-news “Projects open for feedback” section in an additional three publications (11,000+ e-news subscribers).

Two campaign social media posts on Bayside channels and a feature article in Council’s weekly staff e-news, In the Loop, also promoted the campaign.

Interested participants had the opportunity to engage directly with Council through the online engagement tool Have Your Say, including the Ask a Question forum, and bookable meetings with Council’s Place Maker.

The survey was available in accessible formats on request.

# Participant profile

A total of 374 respondents were surveyed via an intercept survey method on-site across each of the seven activity centres, with the demographic and location breakdown as outlined in the following table,

It is noted that the intercept survey respondents were comprised of an age and gender profile that was significantly closer to that of Bayside City Council community as recorded in the 2021 Census. This reflects the random-sample nature of the intercept surveys compared to the self-selection method underpinning the online survey program.

It is however important to recognise that the age and gender profile of visitors to the seven centres will not match with the underlying community, as the centres attract both Bayside residents and visitors.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Demographic | Bayside  2021 Census | Intercept survey respondents (%) | Online survey respondents (%) |
| Gender | Male | 48% | 53% | 34% |
| Female | 52% | 47% | 66% |
| Self-describe | - | 0% | 0% |
| Prefer not to say | - | 0% | 0% |
| Age | 18 to 34 years | 20% | 13% | 6% |
| 35 to 44 years | 17% | 19% | 6% |
| 45 to 59 years | 30% | 26% | 40% |
| 60 to 74 years | 21% | 29% | 42% |
| 75 years and over | 12% | 14% | 7% |
| Suburb | Beaumaris | 14% | 9% | 14% |
| Black Rock | 7% | 14% | 8% |
| Brighton | 24% | 25% | 30% |
| Brighton East | 16% | 6% | 5% |
| Cheltenham | 4% | 3% | 3% |
| Hampton | 14% | 11% | 16% |
| Hampton East | 5% | 2% | 0% |
| Highett | 7% | 0% | 5% |
| Sandringham | 11% | 13% | 17% |
| Outside Bayside | - | 18% | 2% |

# Consultation findings

The following section summarises the key themes which arose in community feedback on the Placemaking Action Plan project.

The consultation includes feedback from 651 individuals:

* 374 Intercept survey respondents
* 275 Have Your Say Quick Poll contributions.
* 44 comments from the BHARG, FReeZA, and DAIAC meetings.
* 2 emails direct to Council officers.

## Feedback summary

The following key findings were identified in the data collected from the community engagement:

* ***Visiting the activity centres*** – the seven activity centres appear to operate as local activity centres, with most respondents travelling only a relatively short distance to visit the activity centres, mostly by car and/ walking. Most were visiting during business hours or both during business hours and after hours. The majority of visits were of a medium duration for example including a mix of shopping, window shopping, and a coffee, socialising, or a meal.
* ***Views about the activity centres*** – the overwhelming majority of respondents reported that they would recommend the activity centre to friends and/ or family as a place to visit. A strong majority of respondents believed that there were places for people to get together in the activity centres, although the vibrancy of the activity centres at night was rated as moderate at 5.5 (intercept) and 4.0 (online) on a scale from zero to 10.
* ***How well existing placemaking features are working*** – the features that respondents considered were working best included the street library at Sandringham Village, the historical markers at Bay Street, the outdoor dining, lighting, street plantings, signage, and wayfinding, all of which were rated at “good” levels by the intercept survey respondents. The features that respondents considered were working least well included the public sculpture at three centres, events and attractions, and picnic tables, all of which were rated at “poor” levels by the intercept survey respondents. Self-selected online respondents rated how well these features were working measurably lower than the intercept survey respondents.
* ***Liking the centre-specific placemaking initiatives*** – the majority of both intercept and online survey respondents reported that they like most of the placemaking initiatives that were tested through the surveys, although only a minority of respondents liked the bronze paper stacks and chairs, the concrete etched designs, and seats, and some of the murals on commercial buildings, street art on service and utility infrastructure, and colourful planters.
* ***Liking the placemaking initiatives*** – a minority of the intercept and online survey respondents liked most of the seven initiatives, although 61% of intercept survey respondents liked the spacelets for outdoor dining, 80% of online survey respondents liked the street art, 68% liked the creatively designed recreation features, and 60% liked the large outdoor chess set.
  + The main reasons why intercept survey respondents liked the placemaking initiatives were that they encourage people to get together (61%), whilst the main reasons why the online survey respondents liked the placemaking initiatives were that they make a place feel livelier (79%) and encourages people to get together (73%).
* ***Local shopping precincts enhance and contribute to centre’s character*** – the most common ways by which both intercept survey (20%) and online survey (23%) respondents felt that local shopping precincts enhance and contribute to a centre’s local character were through the variety of shops and other businesses within the centre. The diversity of people (11%) and trees, greenery, and planting (10%) were also commonly nominated by intercept survey respondents, whilst online respondents also nominated vibe / community atmosphere (17%) and updates to the precinct / maintenance / art / décor (13%) as enhancements that could contribute to character.
* ***Centre-specific characteristics to preserve / improve*** - the most common centre-specific improvements, or characteristics that respondents want to preserve were focused on the quality of greenery including trees and other plantings, art and beautification including art, décor, sculpture, and other beautification works, the range of quality of shops and dining venues of various types. There were also references made to planning and heritage preservation in some centres, as well as amenities including seating, lighting, bins, and other infrastructure.
* ***Reasons why local shopping precincts are important*** – the main reasons identified by intercept survey respondents were the variety and number of shops and restaurants, whilst the main reasons identified by online survey respondents were the community feel / atmosphere.

## Support for actions

The key findings from the consultation exercise were that the majority of respondents were satisfied with their local activity centre to the point that they would recommend it as a place to visit to family and/ or friends.

There were mixed results in relation to how well existing placemaking features were working across the activity centres, with intercept survey respondents reporting relatively “solid” to “good” levels, whilst the self-selected online survey respondents tended to rate how well these features were working at “poor” to “very poor” levels.

Vibrancy at night in the seven activity centres was relatively modest.

The placemaking initiatives that were specific to each centre were mostly well received by respondents and supported.

There was, however, mixed views about the seven placemaking initiatives from all centres that were asked of all respondents.

## Item-specific feedback

The following sections outline the summarised results for each of the questions included in the intercept and online surveys, including their engagement with and views about each of the seven activity centres, as well as their views about the seven placemaking initiatives, and their broader views about the role of activity centres within the community.

### Reasons and timing for visiting the seven activity centres:

A majority of the random sample intercept survey respondents were most likely to visit the seven activity centres for shopping, dining, and socialising, most often both during business hours and after hours. The intercept survey respondents were significantly less likely to visit the activity centres for exercise.



These results reinforce the view of the activity centres as principally a shopping destination for the local community, with significant secondary roles as a location for dining out as well as socialising.

### Duration of usual visits to the activity centres

The majority of both random sample intercept (52%) and self-selected online (51%) survey respondents reported that they typically visit the activity centre for a “medium” period of time, for example, they might go with a purpose in mind but end up shopping to window stop or have a coffee.



These results reinforce the role of the activity centres as primarily for grocery and similar types of shopping, but with significant secondary roles for dining out and socialising.

### Method of travel around the area

The majority of both random sample intercept and self-selected online survey respondents reported that they typically travel around the area by car and by walking.



These results, while reflecting the local nature of many visitors to the activity centres (who often walk to the centre), also highlight the continued prevalence of vehicle travel to these seven activity centres.

### Place for people to get together in / around the activity centres:

The overwhelming majority of random sample intercept (86%) and self-selected online (72%) survey respondents felt that there were places for people to get together in the seven activity centres.

Metropolis Research notes that the older, self-selected online survey respondents were less likely than those randomly approached within the activity centres, to believe that there were places for people to get together.



It is noted that Hampton Street (96%) recorded the highest agreement from randomly selected intercept survey respondents that there were places for people to get together, whilst Martin Street (77%) recorded the lowest agreement.



### Vibrancy of the activity centres at night:

On average, the randomly selected intercept survey respondents rated the vibrancy of the seven activity centres at 5.5 out of a possible 10, or a very moderate level of vibrancy.

The self-selected online survey respondents were measurably and significantly less positive in terms of their view about the vibrancy of the centres at night, rating the vibrancy at just 4.0 out of 10.

Metropolis Research draws attention to the fact that 23% of the intercept survey and 46% of the online survey respondents felt that the local activity centre was somewhat not vibrant or not vibrant at all.



Bay Street (6.1) and Black Rock Village (5.7) were considered the most vibrant activity centres by the randomly selected intercept survey respondents.



### Recommend activity centres to friends and / or family:

The overwhelming majority of both randomly selected intercept (92%) and self-selected online (81%) survey respondents reported that they would recommend the activity centres to friends and/ or family.

It is noted that the older, self-selected online survey respondents were notably less likely to recommend the activity centres as a place to visit than the intercept survey respondents who were surveyed whilst visiting each of the activity centres.

These results strongly suggest that the overwhelming majority of the community are sufficiently satisfied with the seven activity centres to recommend them as a place to visit.



Particularly among the randomly selected intercept survey respondents, there was no meaningful variation in the likelihood of recommending each of the seven activity centres.



### How well existing placemaking features are working in activity centres:

Respondents were asked to rate how well 15 existing features were working across the seven activity centres. Not all features were included in each activity centre, with the following table displaying the average score (from zero to 10).

The randomly selected intercept survey respondents rated how well the 15 existing placemaking features were working in activity centres from a high of 6.9 or “good” for street libraries to a low of 5.5 or “poor” for picnic tables.

The self-selected online survey respondents rated how well these existing features were working at levels significantly lower than the intercept survey respondents, from a high of 5.3 or “very poor” for street libraries to a low of 3.8 or “extremely poor” for picnic tables.

Metropolis Research notes that the lower scores reported by the self-selected online survey respondents is typically observed for non-random sample surveys such as the online survey, which tend to receive greater participation from those with more negative views on the issue than is recorded from a random sample survey such as the intercept surveys.



### Like or dislike various centre-specific placemaking initiatives and design:

Respondents to both the randomly selected intercept and self-selected online surveys were asked if they liked a range of initiatives specific to each of the seven activity centres.

Whilst the majority of the intercept survey respondents reported that they liked most of the centre-specific initiatives, it is noted that:

* ***Hampton Street*** - a minority of intercept survey respondents liked the bronze paper stacks (46% liked), the concrete etched designs (46%), bronze beach chair (39%), bronze shopping cart (35%), and street art on service and utility infrastructure (30%).
* ***Martin Street*** - a minority of intercept survey respondents liked the murals on commercial buildings (24%).
* ***Beaumaris Concourse*** – a minority of intercept survey respondents liked image two of the murals on commercial buildings (42%).
* ***Black Rock Village*** – a minority of intercept survey respondents liked the street art on service and utility infrastructure (38%), cement seating (38%), and colourful planters (33%).

It is noted that a majority of the self-selected online survey respondents liked the majority of these centre-specific initiatives, although it is noted that only 25% of the online survey respondents liked the Black Rock Village cement seating, 41% liked the Martin Street style of seating, and 49% liked the Hampton Street bronze seat chair.



### Like the seven placemaking initiatives:

Of the 374 intercept survey respondents, a majority (61%) liked the spacelets for outdoor dining, whilst less than half of the intercept survey respondents liked the other six initiatives.

The 275 online survey respondents were significantly more positive in their views about the seven placemaking initiatives, with approximately half or more liking the street art (80%), the creatively designed recreation features (68%), the large outdoor chess set (60%), and the outdoor performance areas (47%).



These results do suggest that there was only a moderate degree of enthusiasm for the seven placemaking initiatives amongst those who visit the seven activity centres.

### Reasons for liking the placemaking initiatives:

The most common reason why respondents to both the random intercept survey and the self-selected online survey liked the placemaking initiatives were the view that they encourage people to get together, with 61% of intercept and 73% of online survey respondents nominating this reason.



These results do suggest that those who currently use the seven activity centres were focused primarily on how the activity centres can contribute to the social life of the local community within the activity centres.

### Reasons for not liking the placemaking initiatives:

Of the 49 respondents (29 intercept and 20 online) who did not like any of the seven placemaking initiatives, a total of 32 response were provided as to why they did not like them.

The main reasons why the randomly selected intercept survey respondents did not like the seven placemaking initiatives were that no change was needed (3 responses), don’t look interesting (2 responses), and that they like it as it is (2 responses).

The main reasons why the randomly selected intercept survey respondents did not like the seven placemaking initiatives were their perception that the initiatives were dull or boring (6 responses), a waste of money (3 responses), and that they need parking instead (2 responses).

### Reasons why local shopping precincts are important:

The randomly selected intercept survey respondents nominated the variety / number of shops and restaurants (21%), the proximity to home (19%), the community feel / atmosphere (17%), and accessibility (15%) the most important reasons why local shopping precincts are important.

This clearly reflects the intercept survey respondents use of and engagement with the activity centres as primarily (but not exclusively) as local shopping precincts. The self-selected online survey respondents were significantly more focused on the community feel / atmosphere, with 42% of these respondents nominating these reasons.



These results reinforce the earlier results that show that, particularly the intercept survey respondents engage with the activity centres primarily as shopping locations, which tends to focus their attention on range of shops, accessibility, and proximity.

The online survey respondents focus on community feel and atmosphere likely reflects both their older demographic, as well as their less positive outlook on the activity centres.

### Local shopping precincts enhance and contribute to centre’s character:

The most common ways by which both randomly selected intercept survey (20%) and self-selected online survey (23%) respondents felt that local shopping precincts enhance and contribute to a centre’s local character were through the variety of shops and other businesses within the centre.

The diversity of people (11%) and trees, greenery, and planting (10%) were also commonly nominated by intercept survey respondents, whilst online respondents also nominated vibe/ community atmosphere (17%) and updates to the precinct/ maintenance/ art/ décor (13%) as enhancements that could contribute to the centre’s character.



### Summary of preferred improvements to the activity centres:

Across the seven activity centres, the most common centre-specific improvements, or characteristics that respondents want to preserve were focused on the quality of greenery including trees and other plantings, art and beautification including art, décor, sculpture, and other beautification works, the range of quality of shops and dining venues of various types.

There were also references made to planning and heritage preservation in some centres, as well as amenities including seating, lighting, bins, and other infrastructure.



### Summary of feedback from community group meetings and two emails:

Council officers conducted face-to-face discussions at three community group meetings (BHARG, FReeZA, and DAIAC) and also received two emails from the community.

In summary, there were eight positive areas noted and 36 areas for improvement, with the main feedback as follows:

* ***Positive aspects of the activity centres*** – included beautification and art (5 responses), and one each for shops and restaurants, greenery, and public toilets.
* ***Areas for improvement in the activity centres*** – included seating (8 responses, cleanliness including litter and graffiti (4 responses), three responses each for beautification and art, shops and restaurants, amenities like shelters and fountains, footpaths, inclusiveness for people with disability, and greenery (2 responses).

## Project Evaluation

The various consultation exercises that underpinned this consultation program were a useful tool to provide both visitors to the seven activity centres as well as local community members who were interested and engaged with the activity centres to provide feedback on the potential placemaking initiatives, as well as broader feedback on the activity centres.

It is important to bear in mind that the randomly approached intercept survey results are a scientific poll of visitor sentiment in relation to activity centres, whereas the self-selected online survey respondents reflect the views of those in the community who were sufficiently aware of, and engaged with the issues to motivate them to proactively participate in the consultat♀ion.