

Participate in Yarra

“How might we make Swan Street the safest, most vibrant place to enjoy Melbourne nights?”

Activated by Policy Booth for Yarra City Council

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The City of Yarra is renowned for its dynamic night life spread across several precincts, principally Collingwood and Fitzroy (Smith, Gertrude, Brunswick and Johnston Streets) and Richmond (Victoria, Church and Swan Streets).

Thousands of people travel to Yarra's popular shopping and dining strips each weekend. Many of the 58,000 jobs in Yarra are driven by visitors. The night time economy alone contributes 8.4 percent of jobs to Yarra. After 11pm, there are about 290 businesses open, and approximately 90 open after 1am on a Friday and Saturday night in Yarra.

However, the nature and intensity of this activity can negatively impact upon the local community through noise, litter and matters of public nuisance.

A lively night life can also on occasion make for unsafe behaviour and feelings of reduced personal safety. For example, anti-social behaviour, injury or assault from excessive alcohol drinking or excess noise from nearby activity, decrease residents' enjoyment of their neighbourhood. (Yarra City Council, 2013)


In 2012, Yarra City Council embarked on a program of research and consultation to examine obstacles to amenity at night and considers strategic opportunities to keep Yarra safe, vibrant and functional. Council has sought the views of residents, traders and visitors, alongside those of industry, government and experts, as how best to manage our night time.



As part of its program of consultation and engagement, Council engaged Policy Booth to gather community feedback on this issue.

On Friday the 5th of April 2013, Policy Booth activated a pop up community consultation in a laneway in Swan Street Richmond from 7pm – 10pm to ask visitors to the precinct, “How might we make Swan Street the safest, most vibrant place to enjoy Melbourne nights?”

Policy Booth used their unique, innovative methodology to collect answers from participants. This methodology sees participants actively ‘participating’ in consultations in creative, experiential ways. In this case, participants used stickers to highlight their answers to a series of questions, which were presented on the walls of the laneway and on large boxes. It is unique pop ups such as this that allow Policy Booth to engage the disengaged and collect meaningful feedback for clients.



The questions asked of participants were based on the six priority areas as highlighted by Council in the Discussion Paper.

They are:

- Safer people and vehicle movement
- Getting people home safely
- Enhance safety and appearance of public spaces used at night
- Increase diverse activities at night
- Clearer expectations on acceptable noise levels
- Minimise anti-social behaviour

The ideas captured in this report reflect participants' responses to some of these night time activity issues. The main ideas received from the public include how to:

- Improve safety and mobility at night
- Find more ways for people to get home safely at night
- Improve the function and appearance of public spaces at night
- Increase diversity of night time activities

Importantly, this pop up consultation is part of a 3 month community consultation. If you would like to be a part of the conversation, please visit: <http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/services/Community-Planning/the-night-time-economy-in-yarra/>.

We thank the 135 people who participated on the night! To discover who they were and what they had to say, read on.

April 5th 2013



#10 do you have any other ideas for making Swan St and surrounds a better, safer, more vibrant area at night?

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#9 VOTE NOW for the best ideas to make this area more vibrant at night:

Consultation Topic:

“How might we make Swan Street the safest, most vibrant place to enjoy Melbourne nights?”

Client Community and Corporate Planning branch, Yarra City Council

Date Friday the 5th of April 2013

Time 7pm - 10.30pm

Location Swan Street, Richmond



(those who live in Yarra)	54
Number of visiting participants (those who do not live in Yarra)	81
Average age	31.4
Male Participants	67
Female Participants	68
Total number of participants	135





Consultation Questions

Number of Respondants

#1: Why did you come to Swan Street tonight?	162
#2: Why choose Swan Street rather than another place?	152
#3: How often do you come here?	138
#4: How did you get here?	134
#5: How will you get home?	103
#6: Do you feel safe at night in Swan Street?	116
#7: What is your biggest safety concern in this area?	147
#8: Swan Street needs more:	147
#9: VOTE NOW for the best ways to make it easier and safer to get around at night:	149
#10: VOTE NOW for the best ideas to make this area more vibrant at night:	161
Average Number of Respondants	141



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Encourage pedestrian traffic by establishing pedestrian zones

”

participate



#1:

Why did you come to Swan Street tonight?

To Drink	21%
To Meet Friends	19.10%
To Eat	17%
For Music	3.70%
All of the Above	8.60%
I Live Here	16.70%
I Work Here	6.20%
Recreation and Fitness	3.70%
Passing Through	2.50%
I go to a Class	1.20%



#2:

Why choose Swan Street
rather than another place?

It's Close to Where I Live	25.00%
Good Atmosphere	17.76%
My Friends Come Here	13.82%
It's Got a Bit of Everything	12.50%
I Work Here	8.55%
Good Food	8.55%
Good Bars	7.89%
Good Music	5.92%



#3:

How often do you come here?

I Live Here	27.54%
Hardly Ever	18.84%
Once a Month	16.67%
Once or Twice a Month	15.22%
Once a Week	14.49%
Three times a Week	7.25%





participate



#4:

How did you get here?

Foot	29.85%
Train	28.36%
Car	17.16%
Tram	8.96%
Taxi	8.21%
Bus	4.48%
Bike	2.99%

How will you get home?

Foot	36.89%
Train	23.30%
Car	18.45%
Tram	10.68%
Taxi	7.77%
Bike	1.94%
Bus	0.97%

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Develop and deploy tools to better educate the community about their options for night-time transportation, with particular emphasis on the night bus

”



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Enhance the ubiquity and accessibility of public transportation

”

#5:

On a scale, how safe do you feel at night in Swan Street?

Unsafe	1	1.7%
	2	1.7%
	3	2.6%
	4	3.5%
	5	4.3%
	6	7.8%
	7	13.8%
	8	24.1%
	9	22.4%
Very Safe	10	18.1%



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Design spaces and interventions in precincts strategically selected for people to meet safely, strategically installing lighting, seating and other amenities to create nodes of retreat in the street

”

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Curate a night-safe digital experience via the integration of available smartphone apps and social media tools to promote safety and improve the function of precincts at night

”

#6:

What is your biggest safety concern in this area?

Disruptive or aggressive people	40.14%
Drunken behaviour	29.93%
Danger from cars	8.16%
Lack of security / police	6.80%
Poor street lighting	4.76%
Groups of people in the street	4.08%
Criminal behaviour	4.08%
Being separated from your friends	2.04%



“
Curate a night-safe digital experience via the integration of available smartphone apps and social media tools to promote safety and improve the function of precincts at night
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#7:

Swan Street needs more:

Street art / performance	20.41%
Parking spots	14.97%
Security / Police officers	11.56%
Taxis	10.88%
Free Wi-fi hotspots	10.20%
Bike lanes	7.48%
Street Lights	6.80%
Rubbish Bins	6.12%
Public Toilets	4.76%
Bike Racks	4.76%
Safe meeting places	2.04%



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Create islands of safe interaction and late night activity by curating appropriate activities such as street performances, art installations, food trucks, music performances or a night market

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#8:

VOTE NOW for the best ways to make it easier and safer to get around at night:



More after-hours trains & trams	44.97%
A temporary night-time weekend taxi rank	14.77%
A cab share system that helps to group people travelling in the same direction	8.05%
A well-lit bike path system	8.05%
Wider footpaths & well lit pedestrian zones	7.38%
Encourage venues to provide private transport	6.04%
Priority parking for designated drivers	4.70%
More free wi-fi hotspots	3.36%
More night bus routes	2.68%

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Encourage more night trains and trams to be added to the schedule

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Create better public spaces for islands of activity via wider footpaths, and walking paths that penetrate deeper into residential areas

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participate



#9:

VOTE NOW for the best ideas to make this area more vibrant at night:



Night markets	34.16%
Street festivals & performance	22.98%
Allow restaurants and cafes to be open later	12.42%
Urban art installations	9.32%
Encourage food trucks to park here	7.45%
Allow bars and clubs to be open later	5.59%
Allow more services to be open 24 hours (gyms, shops, cafes, bars)	4.97%
24 hour eating & shopping events	3.11%



#10:

Do you have any other ideas for making Swan Street and surrounds a better, safer, more vibrant area at night?

- Separate bike lanes / bikes slow traffic
- Strongly support night market
- Needle boxes for junkies
- More live music
- Music during consultation
- Pedestrian precinct between 11pm and 2am
- Do something about the fact that people start fights for no reason
- Better access to transport when you need it the most - late night
- Make it easier and safer for people to get home
- More police - have made it better for locals
- Keep the drunks out
- Strongly supports food trucks
- Less high density residential buildings
- New residents should sign a contract that they support the night-life / music so that they understand what they are buying into
- Keep cyclist off footpaths
- Better control of soccer fans passing through
- Strongly supports restaurants open later
- Strongly supports better street lighting
- Strongly supports taxi ranks
- Strongly supports 24h public transport
- Businesses to stay open beyond 2am
- Make zoning clear to residents



participate **B**

Participants came up with the following ideas for Yarra City Council when asked, HOW MIGHT WE...

Improve safety and mobility at night:

- Encourage pedestrian traffic by establishing pedestrian zones
- Create better public spaces for islands of activity via wider footpaths, and walking paths that penetrate deeper into residential areas
- Design a program to improve responsible transport solutions such as free car parking in night time precincts for designated drivers



Find more ways for people to get home safely at night:

- Enhance the ubiquity and accessibility of public transportation
- Encourage more night trains and trams to be added to the schedule
- Develop and deploy tools to better educate the community about their options for night-time transportation, with particular emphasis on the night bus – this was an under-used resource based on the feedback from those consulted
- Develop and deploy tools to assist in the better communication of public transport services and times so visitors can pre-plan their return journey



Improve the function and appearance of public spaces at night:


- Design spaces and interventions in precincts strategically selected for people to meet safely, strategically installing lighting, seating and other amenities to create nodes of retreat in the street
- Facilitate the provision of wifi in strategic locations and spaces to encourage safe, interactive engagement
- Curate a night-safe digital experience via the integration of available smartphone apps and social media tools to promote safety and improve the function of precincts at night
- Facilitate enhanced interfaces between precinct visitors with personal mobility solutions such as Go Get, and UBER. Pilot this through strategic projects

Increase diversity of night time activities:

- Curating and coordinating activities such as street performances, art installations, food trucks, music performances or a night market



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Acknowledgements

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