

Re-Activating Gosnells Town Centre Ideas for Action



Prepared by Village Well
for the City of Gosnells

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DRAFT



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The Vision

The vision aims to capture a current snap shot of the aspirations of the Gosnells community, whilst reflecting the history, retail offerings and the people and place that help make Gosnells Town Centre a unique and resilient destination, now and into the future.



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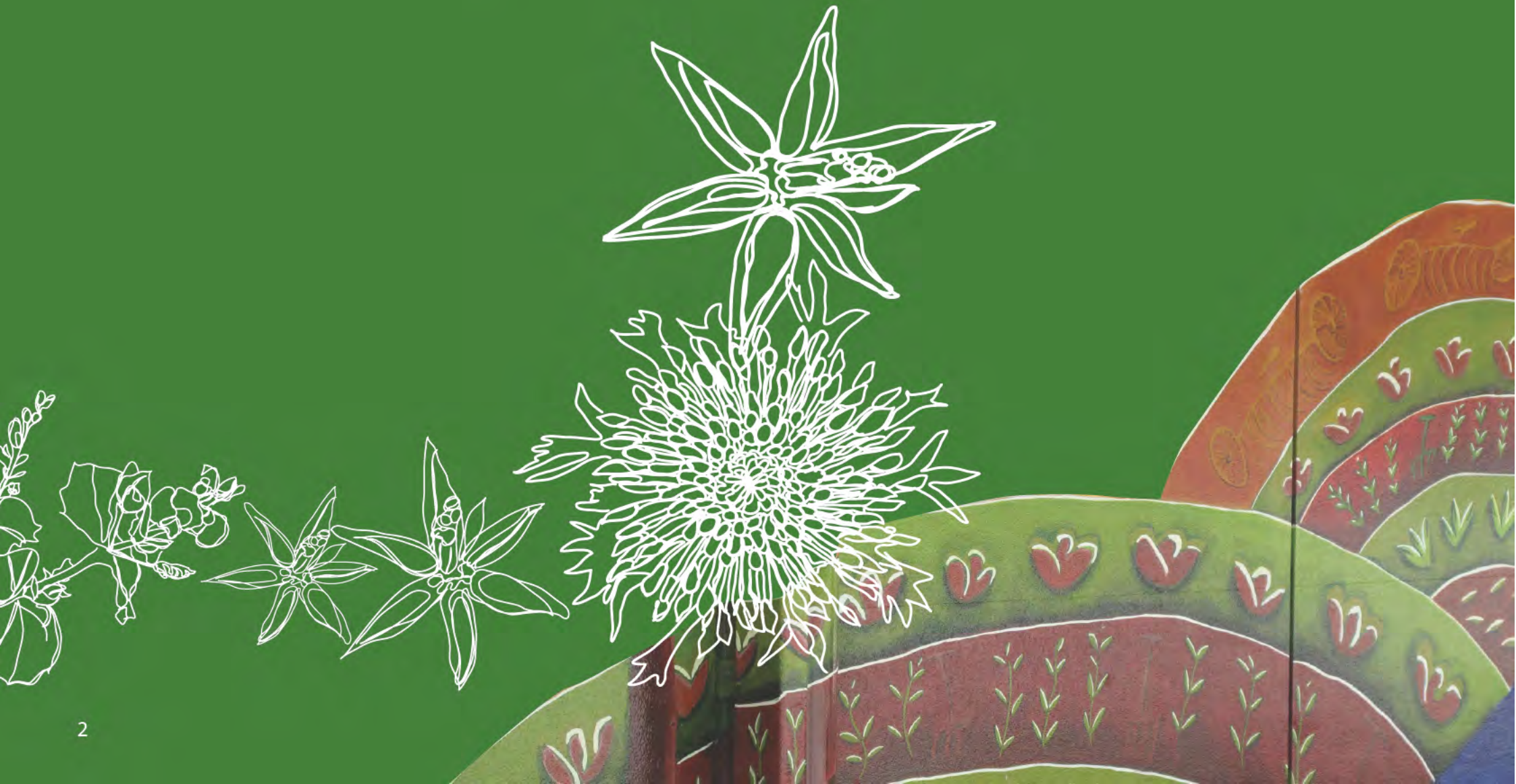
Welcome to Gosnells Town Centre, the living heart and soul of our community.

A place transformed by the care of its proud locals.

A place that is bustling, energetic and thriving, whilst grounded in its natural beauty and tranquil setting that is uniquely Gosnells.

“Making the City of Gosnells a great place”

City of Gosnells Website



Re-activation



This document is designed to be a practical tool kit for all of the passionate locals in the Gosnells Community, who want to be a part of the re-activation of Gosnells Town Centre. It is the beginnings of an *The Action Plan*, a clear step-by-step collection of ideas for action. These actions respond to the vision, and will help the community realise the on-going activation of Gosnells Town Centre.

A fundamental ingredient for this Action Plan is the community. This is a community led initiative and relies on the passion and drive of the community and individuals to own and deliver the ideas for action 'on-ground', in partnership with the City of Gosnells.

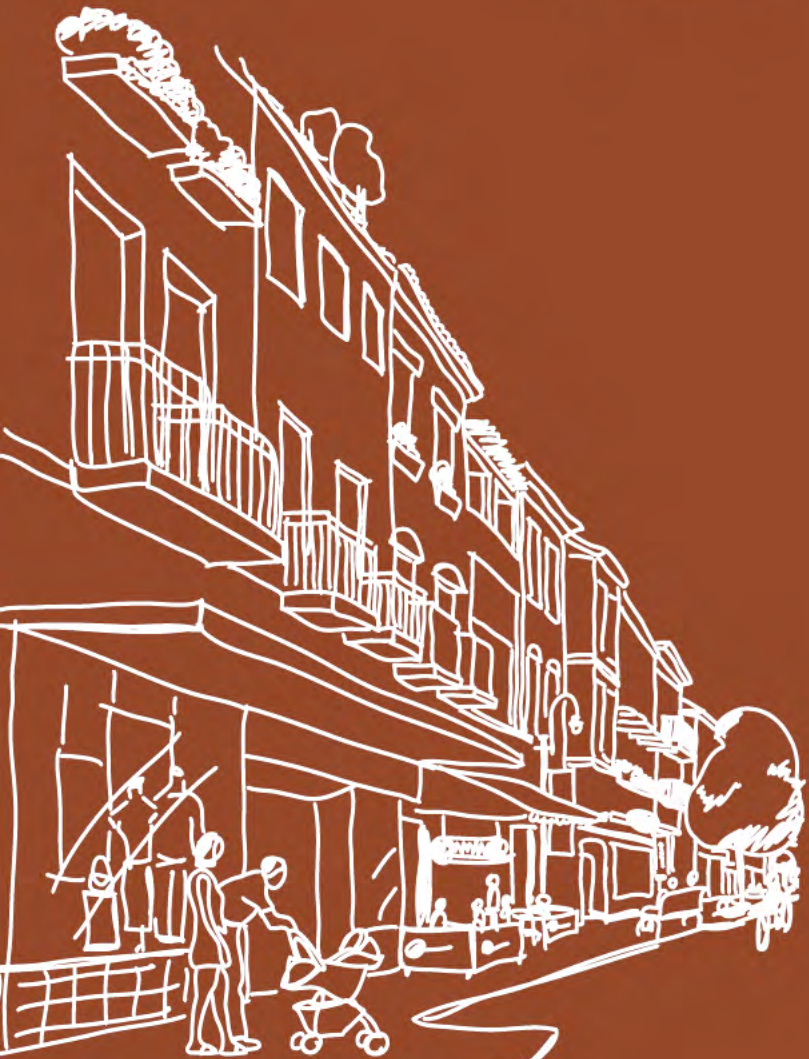
This Action Plan should be read as a living and flexible document. It is the beginnings of a re-activation process for Gosnells Town Centre. It should be reviewed and updated in consultation with the community on an on-going basis, providing the platform for new and emerging ideas and opportunities to be realised.

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The best places are not created by designers, planners, developers, consultants or council officials. The best places are created by the people who live and work in them.

This document is intended to support the people of Gosnells to create a place which reflects and celebrates who they are.

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Ideas for Action



Through distilling data collected at community and stakeholder workshops and from analysis of the unique qualities of the area, *6 Key Ideas for Action*, have been identified to activate Gosnells town centre .

The emphasis is on providing realistic and achievable ideas to inspire the community of Gosnells to take action and ownership for the activation of their town centre. This is a unique opportunity for the community to create the place that they want.

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“From little things big things grow”
– Kev Carmody, Paul Kelly

Six Key ideas have come from the community and hold powerful potential for creating positive change.

These action ideas are simple, practical things which the community can do on the ground to make Gosnells Town Centre a great place.

IDEA #1

The Gosnells Community Collective



Images: Noble Park, Victoria (courtesy Village Well)

WHO	WHERE/ HOW	WHY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local champions Local businesses Schools Volunteers Historical societies Community art groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek out opportunities to promote the local and unique qualities of Gosnells Town Centre e.g. improve shopfronts and provide collective promotions. Seek out other like-minded locals, with a passion and pride to make Gosnells a great place for all. Lead by example. Be Gosnells Town Centre place makers! Meet regularly to lead the <i>on ground</i> management, decision making and implementation of community inspired actions to make Gosnells Town Centre a great place. e.g. form a local traders association and meet every month. Support local initiatives, network and help raise funding to realize ongoing community led <i>Ideas for Action</i> are achieved. Always find ways to celebrate and promote the small wins. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ownership of a place rests with the community as a whole. Fostering a shared ownership and responsibility for Gosnells Town Centre can be a transformative process. It will build new connections, new possibilities and new friendships. A 'can do' attitude and a many hands approach to change builds a real local place.



Inspiration:
The Paynesville Gippsland Victoria community blitz was completed over 2 weekends and was delivered by locals.



Images: Paynesville, Victoria (courtesy Village Well)

IDEA #2

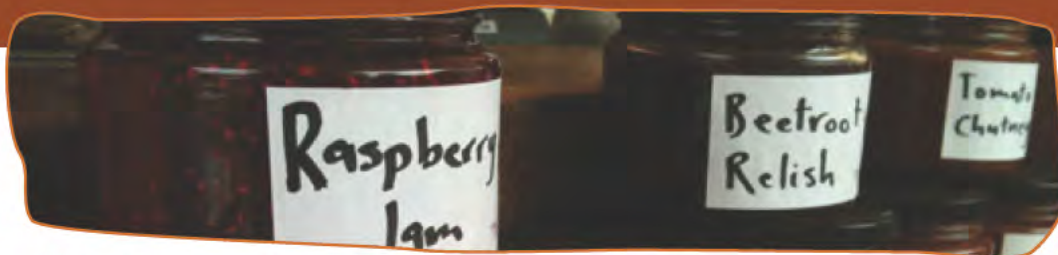
Gosnells Farmers Market



Images sourced from Google Images and Village Well



Who	Where/ How	Why
<p>Partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local growers and producers eg foods, arts and crafts Encourage cross-promotion with existing businesses such as food operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A readily accessible high exposure location Combine with other local events to boost interest Make it a regular event Consider a night time market during hotter months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Markets are a great community focus Stalls encourage small business start ups Build on and co-promote other activities in the Town Centre Promotes a lively Town Centre Flow on effect to nearby businesses



Images sourced from Google Images and Village Well

IDEA #3

'Little' Main Street



Inspiration:
The Social Studio – Collingwood, Melbourne

The Social Studio in Collingwood Melbourne is a non-profit social enterprise, training establishment/retail space/café where youth create fashion garments and learn from and share skills with volunteers.

The broader community can come and purchase one-off garments from the studio.



Images: The Social Studio, Collingwood Victoria (sourced from Google Images)

WHO	WHERE/ HOW	WHY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target traders, property owners and places (see diagram, right). Because of its desirable location, the Salvation Army shop has significant potential, particularly for a cafe that provides amenity and local focus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traders to brain-storm shared small wins to generate business, cross promotion and a sense of identity. Target Salvos to (perhaps through sub-letting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide a cafe appeal to the youth market through a retro fashion feature Encourage traders to provide dynamic visual merchandising branded through bags and banners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little Main Street is a prominent yet under utilised area It has significant assets: riverside location, walking distance to Gosnells' business heart and the train station Simple, positive changes will provide a heart to the area New cafe will promote linkages to the river New cafe to leverage off existing food offer.



1. Little Main Street
 2. Gosnells Railway Market
 3. Gosnells Railway Station

Inspiration:

The Salvo's Toast Cafe - Mornington Victoria.
 The cafe is funded to provide training opportunities for young people and affordable internet access to those in the community unable to access on line services.

Visual Merchandising revamps – Village Well



ACTION #4

The Square summer/winter Knowledge Share Program



Images courtesy Village Well

WHO	WHERE/ HOW	WHY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Knowledge Centre • Local schools and play groups • Community groups • Youth groups, e.g. YAC • Educational institutions • City of Gosnells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Square on a regular basis for programmed events and classes normally housed in the Knowledge Centre. • Provide equipment to encourage use of the square e.g. portable chairs, tables and cushions. • Publicise the events through community notice board on the Square and local media. • Use the City's facilities to administer the use of the Square to generate frequent activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Square is a significant public space. • An active body that manages the space is central to the success of the Square being activated. This requires not only keeping the space clean and safe, but also managing the programming of the space to generate daily activity. • Links business strip to river front.



Inspiration:
**Federation Square,
 Melbourne Victoria.**

Images: Federation Square, Melbourne (sourced from Google Images)

Images sourced from Google Images

IDEA #5

The Lissiman Street revival



WHO	WHERE/ HOW	WHY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local champions Lissiman Street businesses School groups Environmental groups Aged groups Rotary Residents The Gosnells' Community Collective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a community blitz day to beautify and activate Lissiman Street. An event self facilitated and self organized by the community. Encourage some use of vacant spaces/shopfronts. Consider offering lower rents as potential for start up opportunities, for young innovators, niche and speciality retailers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under utilised assets Eyesore in a prominent location right next to the train station. Change the perception from being a back end, dead and dry place to a people friendly place. Welcoming details promote connection to place and encourage movement between activity areas.



Images sourced from Google Images



Inspiration:
Paynesville, Gippsland Victoria

The Paynesville Gippsland Victoria community blitz was completed over 2 weekends and was delivered by locals.

- Hold a planting day to beautify and soften existing landscape edges.
- Organise a community mural art wall. Involve local school and youth groups.
- Adopt a 'micro place' competition along Lissiman Street. Invite community groups and school groups to decorate existing micro places along Lissiman Street. Run a competition for the community to name each 'blitzed' space.
- Make areas close to the train station particularly welcoming.

IDEA #6

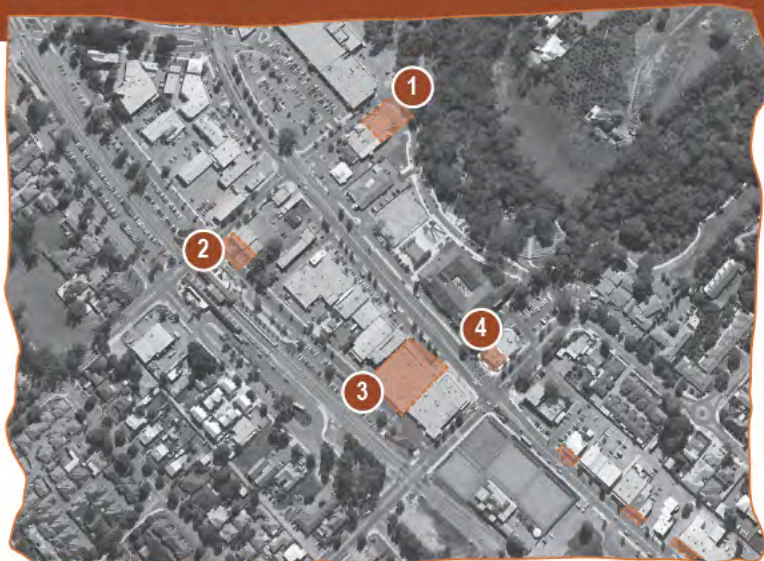
Traders as Place Makers



“From little things,
big things grow”
See opportunities in
the ‘ordinary’.

Images sourced from Google Images

WHO	WHERE/ HOW	WHY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All traders and shop owners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All locations throughout Gosnells and the Town Centre have the ability to be 'place makers' through collective small works by local traders or community groups doing their own 'micro' place making projects. <p>Suggested sample locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foothills Plaza Traders on key corners of Main Street and Federation Parade, Lissiman and Main Street, Dorothy Street and Albany Highway, Fremantle Road and Albany Highway As well as various shop fronts and retail clusters all the way along Albany Highway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small improvement projects bring more activity and economic benefits for everyone. Local traders acting together will build a sense of pride in place.



1. Corner Main Street and Federation Parade
2. Lissiman Main Street
3. Foothills Plaza
4. Albany Highway and Dorothy Street

* Various retail clusters throughout the Town Centre



Images sourced from Google Images and Village Well

IDEA #7

A place for your
ideas...

Have we got you thinking?

Scribble your own *Ideas for Action* for Gosnells Town Centre.

IDEA #8

A place for your
ideas...

Have we got you thinking?

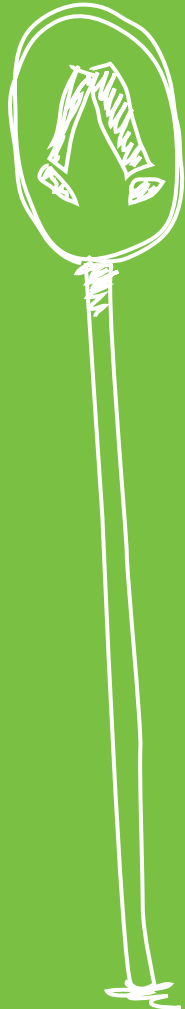
Scribble your own *Ideas for Action* for Gosnells Town Centre.



Next Steps

The community and the council will need to commit to reviewing these action ideas on an ongoing basis.

Space should be provided for new and emerging ideas and the best of these should be incorporated into councils future planning process.



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The community of Gosnells is ready for change.

Through the implementation of the simple ideas for action outlined in this plan, Gosnells Town Centre can create a great place which is unique to the community.

This Action Plan should become a living document, and be reviewed and updated in consultation with the community on an on-going basis. This document should provide the platform for new and emerging ideas and opportunities.

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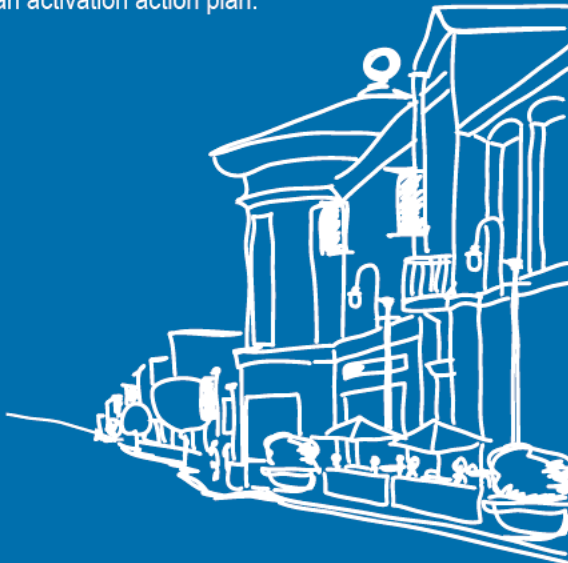


Background

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Village Well has been engaged by the City of Gosnells to work with their passionate local community, including traders, residents and council officers to generate a collective Town Centre vision and action plan for the on-going activation of Gosnells Town Centre.

This report builds on previous research undertaken to date on behalf of the City of Gosnells around the activation of the Town Centre, by translating a shared vision into the beginnings of an activation action plan.



This section of the report is a summary of key information that has helped inform the *Vision* and the *Ideas for Action*, for the re-activation for Gosnells Town Centre.

This background data is integral to the Village Well Place Making Model and our Place-based approach to analysis.

In summary this data has been divided into the following sections

Lay of the Land

This is an analysis of the place including the physical and social background, and the values and the context for the Ideas for Action. It helps develop a clear narrative for the place and its people from which the Place Story is drawn. The process involves a desktop review of existing research to understand the current positioning of Gosnells as well as a physical Place Audit to understand the key anchors, connections and meeting places of Gosnells.

Place Audit

The Place Audit summarises key findings for Gosnells and are drawn from first impressions of the site. It is a tool that establishes the feel of the place and its community, and it provides a more formal analysis of the connections, meeting places, design and local competition.

Community Values

Our analysis of place has been further tested and strengthened with the community through a series of engagement activities with Gosnells' community. This process ensures that the community values are understood and inform our place making recommendations.

Specifically, Village Well facilitated a series of Visioning Workshops with the community regarding the activation of Gosnells Town Centre.

The workshops focused on confirming the challenges and opportunities for the project, teasing out the communities vision for Gosnells Town Centre, including a 'Place Essence' and 'Place Principles' to guide the 'Ideas for Action'.

The Community Visioning Workshops included:

Two three-hour visioning workshops, one with the community on Monday 18 November and one with traders and Council Officers on Tuesday 19 November 2011.



LAY OF THE LAND

The Gosnells Town Centre is situated within the City of Gosnells. It is a short distance from Perth's CBD and an affordable housing option for budding hobby farmers and a community seeking access to the city, without the high price tag.

Its community are predominantly Anglo Saxons with 83.5 per cent of its residents being born in Australia, and of the 27.8 per cent born overseas the majority are from the United Kingdom. Gosnells also has a higher than average Indigenous population when compared to Perth (3.7%) (ABS, 2007:online).

At first glance, Gosnells is divided by the Albany Highway, and seemingly cut-off from the bustling traffic that Tonkin and Roe Highway brings. A look with fresh eyes reveals that Gosnells is also divided by the Canning River, and borders Ellis Brook Valley which forms part of the extensive Banyowla Regional Park a wildlife destination in Spring and a torrent of waterfalls in Winter. Gosnells is also a stones throw away from the Champion Lakes Stadium, a world-class rowing venue with comparable facilities to the course used in the Sydney Olympics at Penrith (NSW).

The City of Gosnells has invested heavily into the improvement of the Gosnells town centre, spending 10 years and \$25 million on a revitalisation project that spanned from 1997 to 2007 (Government of WA, 2010).

The revitalisation included the development of a new civic complex and town square; the redevelopment of Pioneer Park, access to the Canning River and a treetop walk (Government of WA, 2010). Not only has the revitalisation improved the economic performance of the Town Centre and helped to attract local and national investment, it is also improving the quality of life for its community.





Aerial photograph
of Gosnells
Town Centre and
surrounds

PLACE AUDIT

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- **Streetscapes:** the “bones” of the Gosnells Town Centre were perceived to be good. However, Albany Highway could benefit from some softening of the edges with landscaping and pedestrian friendly detail.
- **The River Foreshore:** is an integral feature of Gosnells. It provides a lushness and softening of Albany Highway and a sanctuary from the hot summer climate and meeting place for the community. The river is, however, a hidden asset that requires greater prominence within the town centre;
- **Community Facilities:** public amenities and conveniences are available in the town however are difficult to find and could benefit from some wayfinding. The installation of additional facilities along the river meeting places could help to activate the areas;
- **Local Competition:** the neighbouring towns of Maddington and Armadale all have competitive retail offers and a modern retail experience offering the buyer a variety of products and services. All are within a 15km from Gosnells town centre;

- **Retail perception:** although the perception of the retail offer in Gosnells is poor, the town centre is equipped with all the primary necessities of a successful neighbourhood centre. There is a great quality local butcher, bakers and fresh fruit located at both the Railway Markets and Foothills Centre. Notably lacking Gosnells’ retail mix are clothing and footwear boutiques.
- **Library and Town Square** fronting onto Pioneer Park and the tree top walk this precinct on Federation Parade is under utilised despite the recent council spending. The space requires something to increase activity and visitation.
- **Convenience Shopping:** Gosnells is well resourced for purchasing day-to-day goods. Located on either side of Albany Highway is a Coles supermarket and a Super IGA.
- **Mixed retail precinct:** South along Albany Highway preceding the Bowls Club, an eclectic mix of street side retail can be found, including take away food offer and specialist stores.

The diagram adjacent summarises key observations as they relate to the site specifics.



Place Audit Map 6th May 2010



- 1 The former heart of Gosnells, the Railways Hotel is a landmark building with heritage value
- 2 The Markets are a key asset and have great bones. Lacking in off-peak activation.
- 3 Trevors Carpets - A prominent location with strong visibility from Albany Highway and potential links to the river
- 4 Salvo's - Strategic scope to activate Little Main Street, close to the river and heavily used by shoppers of the neighbouring Coles Supermarket.
- 5 Shopping complex - A prominent area, with potential access links to river
- 6 The Square - Lacks a sense of enclosure and edges lack activation.
- 7 Dorothy Street - Potential entry statement to the "heart" and river walk. Building facades lack vibrancy, specifically the Post Office corner.
- 8 Train Station - Bus Interchange.
- 9 Vacant shops - potential start-up opportunities, for young innovators, niche, specialty and destination retailers.
- 10 Food anchors - food anchors. Coles, Markets and Foothills Shopping Centre

-  Edges have the potential to be entry statements to the Town Centre "heart"
-  Five minute walking distance
-  Opportunities
-  Federation Parade Walk - link to Civic Centre is under utilised



COMMUNITY VALUES

WHAT MAKES THIS PLACE SPECIAL

Participants were asked to articulate what they think makes Gosnells Town Centre special. With this exercise, participants found it easier to express a mixture of existing and aspirational special qualities for the Town Centre.

The key existing qualities were identified as;

- The Town Square
- The inherent natural and semi-rural character
- The markets

“You would want to live here.”
- What Makes Gosnells Special?
Exercise Stakeholder and
Trader Visioning Workshop,
November 2010

The key future qualities were identified as;

- People living in the Town Centre
- Lots of activity options
- Attractive, Vibrant and Welcoming
- A heart with a beat


TOP TEN THINGS TO DO IN GOSNELLS


Elaborating on this, participants were asked to identify the top ten things to do in Gosnells. The adjacent diagrams is a summary of the responses. The responses echo the key qualities of the already identified assets, namely the Town Square, the natural environment and the markets.

'Things to do in Gosnells' Community workshops 19th Nov 2010



- 1 Visit Pioneer Park
- 2 Visit the Pub
- 3 Go to the Market
- 4 Pick fruit from the Orchard
- 5 Play lawn bowls
- 6 Train-spot
- 7 Have a picnic
- 8 Go to the library
- 9 Visit public art
- 10 Go to the Turkish restaurant
- 11 Go to the football

 Five minute walking distance

 What could the potential links between these activities be, and what are the potential places 'in-between'?



KEY THEMES IN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following challenges and opportunities arose from an exercise where workshop participants were asked to write down their top three challenges and top three opportunities for the town centre. These challenges and opportunities provide a snap shot of the emerging themes around the community's perception of Gosnells Town Centre.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The key challenges and opportunities touched on common themes around place activation and programming, retail mix and general beautification and presentation of places.

The top three challenges for Gosnells Town Centre identified by participants were:

- Lack of safety both perceived and real (22)
- Unsightly/unused buildings (14)
- Lack of activation (9)

The top three opportunities for Gosnells Town Centre as identified by participants were:

- Natural beauty (22)
- Design/physical improvements and use of space (16)
- Programming (events and community activities) (15)
- Improving the retail mix and offering (15)



KEY EMERGING THEMES

The challenges and opportunities identified were then grouped into key themes for further investigation. Participants used these themes to develop strategies around the re-activation of the Town Centre. The re-activation strategies for each theme have been used throughout the place story and activation plan.

The 13 key themes for the activation of Gosnells town centre as identified by the community are:

- The leasing mix
- Tidying up the town and the cleanliness of the 'dead streets'
- Traffic and parking management
- The market as a destination and fresh food as an anchor
- Safety and security
- A place for young people
- Creating a heart (space activation)
- The river as a destination.
- The business community
- Poor investment on the Main Street
- Poverty, fragmented community
- A niche for the Town Centre
- Poor Image.

KEY ACTIONS "SMALL WINS"

Under each key theme, participants identified a number of re-activation strategies. These ideas have formed the foundations for many of the ideas for actions.

In order to distil the key next steps to make this project successful, participants were asked to agree on core actions and strategies for Gosnells town centre.

These key actions have been summarised as:

1. Have a Blitz Day to ‘tidy up’ and beautify dead spaces
2. Have a visual merchandising Blitz Day - set new Street Standards
3. Address street maintenance and comfort issues
4. Host an iconic event - The Night Market or Farmer’s Market
5. Seek out a Place Manager
6. Form an action group with key players
7. Involve local youth in ‘on ground’ activation
8. Launch a new image/brand for the Town Centre

Item 1 to 5 were considered to be most important actions for implementation.

GOSNELLS TOWN CENTRE PERSONALITY, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

The personality exercise helps to inform the future brand and positioning statements for the town centre.

The table adjacent organises participant responses from the workshops into common themes. The left column (Personality Now) outlines how participants perceive the current personality of Gosnells Town Centre, and the right column (Future Personality) sketches their perception of an ideal future personality, that incorporates the desired qualities of its current personality.

This exercise highlighted that the community are looking for a refreshed and positive Gosnells identity that they can feel proud of.

PERSONALITY NOW	ACTION TO ACHIEVE IN THE FUTURE	PERSONALITY FUTURE
Good bones Connected Central Beautiful roses Good positive view Helpful and loyal	Maintain Strengthen Evolve	Honest Clean People place Happy atmosphere Caring Energetic Fun and vibrant Successful Respectful Proud Local
Ugly Grey Split personality Empty Too sheltered Hot – climate Disconnected A bit over weight Room for improvement Shaggy needs a haircut	Evolve a weakness into a strength	Safe Vibrant Outgoing Friendly
	Introduce	Green A person that takes action and follows through Has a strong identity Beautiful
Not someone you want to hang out with A lost adolescent Unsafe Pig sty Bit nasty	Leave behind	