
BUNDABERG CBD REVITALISATION
COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP (CRG)

MINUTES OF MEETING

HELD AT THE FUNCTION ROOM, COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AT 5.30 PM ON
THURSDAY, 3 May 2018

PRESENT:

CRG Members - Peter Donaldson, Peter Heaps, Anne Canniford, Grant Davies, Tracey McPhee, Glenn Hopwood, David Job, Adam Curran, Trish Mears, Kylie Goodman-Jones, Glenn Hopwood,

Council – Cr Helen Blackburn (Chair), Cr Wayne Honor, Cr Steve Cooper, Dwayne Honor (Project Manager), Ben Artup (Exec. Dir. Strategic Projects & Economic Development) Chris Sampson (Manager Strategic Projects), Andrew Beckenhauer (Economic Development Officer), Cara Laing (Stakeholder Engagement Support)

APOLOGIES:

Apologies were tendered for - Wayne Turrell, Yale Morgan, Gordon Hard, Matthew Knott, Katie Murrell, Peter Marles, Peter Murray, John Greenhalgh.

BUSINESS OF MEETING

1. **Confirmation of Minutes – 1 March 2018 accepted**

The Minutes from the last Community Reference Group Meeting held on 5 April 2018 were tabled and accepted.

2. **Review Place Activation – Cr Helen Blackburn**

The Chair advised that Council recently advertised and interviewed for a Place Activation Officer, while good applicants were received, Council was unable to find a suitable person. Upon further review, Council has decided to defer appointment of the position until closer to the construction starting date; and are looking at other ways to undertake place activation to get the ball rolling using existing resources (Communications Team). This may involve more frequent liaison with traders, themed monthly events/marketing and increased support from Council for CBD happenings. Council's Communications Team to assist with media; getting the right message out to the community.

CRG Members were invited to discuss interim ideas:

- CRG Member queried the success of 'My Bourbong' on social media platforms.
- Responding CRG Member advised that the concept was a 'good idea in principal', however for the CBD Traders to further advance, legal advice is required and set-up as corporation with bank accounts, etc. Legal obligations have created awkward situation and the 'My Bourbong' Initiators have received negative feedback from some traders; as a result, the whole initiative has been placed on hold. It was noted that 'My Bourbong' had potential for improvement and to be taken further, with the right support.
- The Chair advised that Council does not actively support any other corporate portions of business, with the exception of Life Education, etc.
- The Responding CRG Member also advised that incorporation is time consuming, with membership and leadership challenges.
- A CRG Member suggested a Board for leadership and management, made up of the initial founders of 'My Bourbong'.
- The Responding CRG Member answered a query, stating that while no direct invitations have been issued to date, 'My Bourbong' was open for trader interest and membership. It was further noted that a lot of work is required behind the scenes to get the initiative off the ground; and commended local business woman, Tara Jacobsen for her branding efforts of 'My Bourbong'.
- CRG Member suggested that perhaps Business Students at the CQUniversity could assist in the start-up of 'My Bourbong'.
- Andrew Beckenhauer recommended the group focus on the basic fundamentals of community engagement: To start with a small idea and go from there. Andrew suggested taking the 3 biggest issues to workshop and think of ideas to achieve the right objective.
- CRG Member noted that it was hard to organise members and initiators to get together due to current work and family commitments for all involved.
- CRG Member referred to last meeting's ARA Place Activation Presentation and queried: How are you going to get everyone to achieve the same thing? Noting that resistance from independent traders would be a likely possibility.
- CRG Member tabled idea for CBD Traders to get involved in a wheelbarrow/suitcase style sale. To display their specials on the street at a designated or low period. The idea would need Council's marketing support and social media to advertise the sale.
- Andrew Beckenhauer noted the success of the Crush Festival events in the CBD and commented on the high volume of people in the main street as a result. Andrew advised that the best approach is to 'try, try again'. Do something to move forward, but if it doesn't work, keep moving forward to the next idea. Don't wait until the last minute before construction starts to progress activation of the CBD.
- The Chair proposed night trading or market days with music and entertainment to create movement and activity in the CBD. CRG Members discussed Friday Night trading similar to the larger cities, Cr Cooper noted that with current legislation/regulations, traders aren't necessarily limited to a particular night for longer trading hours.
- CRG Member suggested lighting up an area of the CBD for a 'market night' event. The Chair suggested something similar to previous Battle of the Bands event. CRG Member suggested various cafés could stay open later (Indulge, Rosie Blu, Brewhouse (+ adjacent car park) and Club Hotel).

- Cr Honor indicated that other businesses in the CBD might follow on and get involved, but we've got to start somewhere.
- Cr Honor advised that Council is currently in the process of selecting a supplier for the Smart Water Meter project. While the project is being rolled out in different areas across the region on a trial basis and benefits analysis; there is a lot of supporting technology required for the project may also provide alternative benefits to the community. This may include footpath traffic volumes, variation of lighting, public toilets, parking and signage.
- The Chair agreed with Cr Honor and suggested that Telco companies such as Optus and Telstra be approached to investigate locality based 'push-texting' for the CBD, for example upcoming event notifications. CRG Member advised that the Safe Night Precinct uses a portable digital sign which could be incorporated.
- CRG Member acknowledged the ideas but queried if these types of events will allow businesses to make money. There was a bigger picture at play. Whilst revenue would be a large draw card for participation, it could not be guaranteed.
- Andrew Beckenhauer advised that we need to build a connection with the CBD; we want people to come back. Are we solving real problems and encouraging the required activity?
- Ben Artup advised that Council can provide support through things such as communications/media, waiving busker's fees, etc. Agreed to keep it simple during a trial situation and see where things go.
- CRG Member suggested Living Books (Readers Digest), where real people who have experienced significant life events are situated in a public space to talk to the general public and answer questions about said events. Another CRG Member suggested similar concept in Living Artists.
- Andrew Beckenhauer proposed the incorporation of art installations (with potential for child interactive installations). The Chair suggested that ultimately revitalisation is about commerce in the CBD. Will art bring the right people in to the CBD? A CRG Member acknowledged that live art draws crowds. Another CRG Member suggested commissioning artists such as caricatures.
- CRG Member queried areas for activation and asked if it would be rolled out progressively. CRG Member suggested shutting off a section of Bourbong Street at the Target end, with cafes open late, buskers/entertainment, extra lighting, etc.
- CRG Members debated a suitable night for such an event, stating that traditionally, locals saw Thursday night for shopping and Friday night for going out; noting that other events such as Riverfeast occur on Friday nights.
- Cr Cooper acknowledged that while events draw people to the CBD, people are there for the event and there is still not a lot of local business trade. The "Biggest footpath sale Bundy's ever had" was suggested to bring the business outside the stores.
- CRG Member did not support restricting vehicle traffic through Bourbong Street. The Chair suggested to reclaim a select number of parking spaces to create additional space in front of the footpath/store fronts.
- Cr Cooper advised that previously marketed 'big sale' events had attracted high revenue, with stock being bought in for the sale. It was acknowledged there was some risk involved in creating a 'post sale' lull afterwards. Cr Cooper also suggested that rather than bring food in for events, bring food out from local cafes; open up existing businesses.
- Cr Honor suggested bonus points for shopping on special shopping nights. The Chair agreed a loyalty system could have potential.

- Cr Cooper noted that whenever events or special nights are implemented, follow ups would be required with repetitive or ongoing occurrences. Ben Artup queried the timing of such events, asking how many times a year. CRG Member suggested once a quarter. The Chair agreed that events could occur quarterly.
- Andrew Beckenhauer identified that unified branding/marketing would be beneficial; this could be a continuation of 'My Bourbong', or something new. Council can provide support.
- CRG Members were widely agreeable to a footpath sale event.
- Cr Cooper stated that businesses needed to proceed with serious intent and follow through with delivery of promises. Cr Honor affirmed, saying there needs to be a reason for people to return every day of the week.
- Cr Cooper suggested a sectionalised approach, with priority to different areas of the CBD with each event held. Andrew agreed, suggesting to start small and create a reason to grow. Andrew suggested the Commonwealth Bank car park as a market space and move to a new area once that space is exhausted. The Chair suggested Suncorp Arcade, noting that this was a large quantity of vacant shop space that required activation. CRG Members agreed to create a condensed space first, then expand.
- CRG Member suggested a focus on main street activation, rather than a back street car park.
- CRG Member suggested alley sales; noting they carry a significant work load in packing and relocating stock to an alternative location, including extra wages for additional support. They felt business would not want to move a larger volume of stock, however a couple tables on a footpath would be a more realistic possibility. Limits need to be realised.
- The Chair advised that Council's Economic Development team would work through the ideas tabled at tonight's meeting and distribute through minutes. Liaise with Communications Team for 'best bang for buck' options with media outlets. The Chair suggested radio advertising (pushed through Council) and flyers for Traders in Woongarra, Bourbong, and Quay Streets area to deliver the message and get feedback on ideas.
- The Chair noted that CBD Traders would likely need to step up and pay membership fees for operational and marketing costs (e.g. \$50/month). Cr Cooper suggested a third/third/third contribution style scenario.
- CRG Members suggested window flyers, facebook advertising, radio, locality push texting to deliver the message to the community. The Chair advised that herself with selected CRG Members (Tracey McPhee and Anne Canniford) would deliver flyers and seek feedback from CBD Traders.
- The Chair suggested that perhaps the first event could be food themed and be attached to the Winterfeast Festival. CRG Member advised that while printed material may have already been finalised, events are still accepted on the website and through social media.
- Cr Honor suggested having a radio station stall in the street to draw people in with incentives.

Dwayne Honor left meeting at 6.03 pm

Next Steps:

The Chair suggested meeting back in 4-6 weeks' time with printed matter for review and comment by the CRG. CRG members agreed.

This concluded the business of the CRG Meeting at 6.08 pm.

Cr Helen Blackburn
Chairperson – Bundaberg CBD Community Reference Group |