

## Key themes emerging from the initial engagement for the Darwin City Deal

The Darwin City Deal initiative is a joint project between the Northern Territory Government, the City of Darwin and Charles Darwin University to design a 10-year plan for the Darwin city centre that sets a long term and sustainable vision for the future.

Our first step in this engagement process was to put forward a draft vision that generated discussion and acted as a conversation starter among stakeholders and the wider community. This concept was presented as a video 'flythrough' and showcased at a high level some possible options for inclusion in the Darwin City Deal.

At the same time we are developing papers around the game changing opportunities that would allow Darwin city to become a truly innovative, liveable and economically successful capital of Northern Australia.

The following information provides a broad overview of the stage 1 survey responses. The survey was promoted through media coverage, several Facebook posts which received significant reach and engagement, some Facebook advertising, a letterbox drop to CBD residents and businesses and a pop up presence at the Darwin City Boutique Markets in early September.

2017 Darwin City Deal online survey stats:

- 649 surveys completed
- 21 questions in the survey
- Survey open for 31 days

### Snapshot

- **68%** of those who responded to the **pop up shops** question supported the idea, although many noted that it would be important to ensure pop ups didn't have a detrimental impact on existing retailers
- **48.8%** of those who responded to the **driverless bus** question supported the idea of it running in the Mall
- **60%** of respondents liked the **concept proposed for State Square** but many noted they would like to see more trees and shade, ensure the walkways are covered and a lot more seating in shaded spaces. A number indicated they would need further information before being able to comment on the proposal.
- **67.9%** agreed or strongly agreed with the **greening and public space concept proposed for State Square**
- **57%** liked the **concept proposed for Myilly Point** but many noted they would like to see more shade and trees, more seating and play areas. In addition to this a number indicated they would need further information before being able to comment on the proposal.
- **72.3%** agreed or strongly agreed with the **greening and public space concept proposed for Myilly Point**
- Shopping, green space, events, cultural activities and entertainment were all things that would encourage people to visit the Darwin CBD more often
- **62.8%** of those who responded to the question about a more significant CDU presence in the city were supportive of the idea

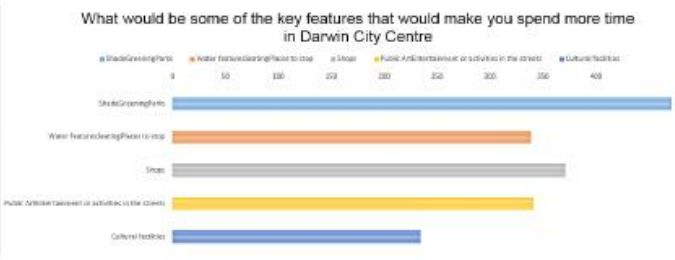
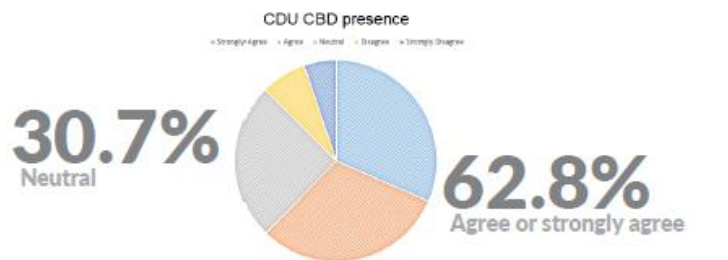
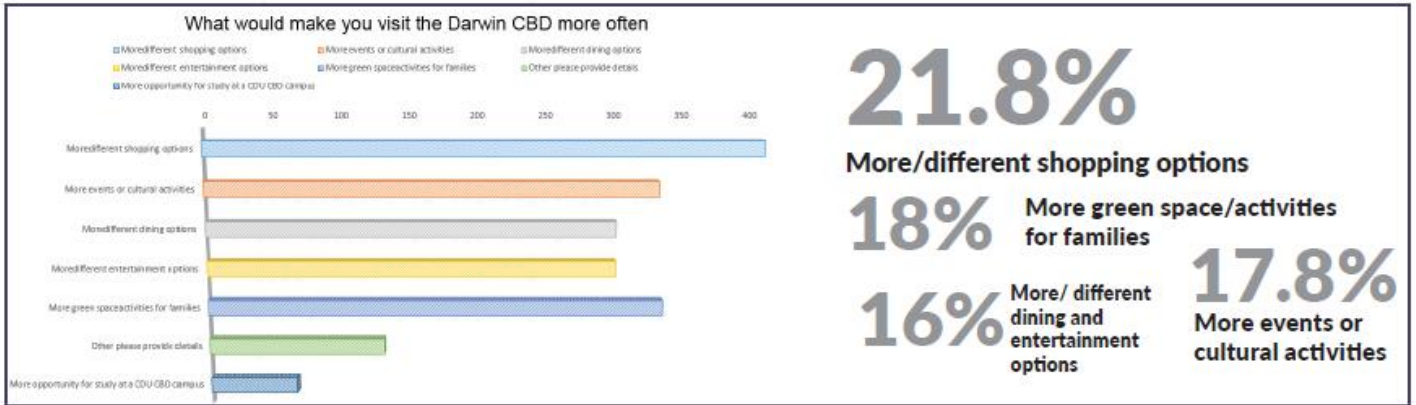
# Darwin City Deal



**Total site visits**  
**3000**

**Submissions received**  
**649**

**Consultation period**  
**31 Days**



## Myilly Point Concept



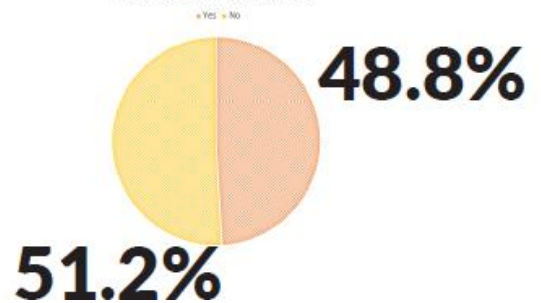
**57%**  
Liked the concept

## State Square Concept



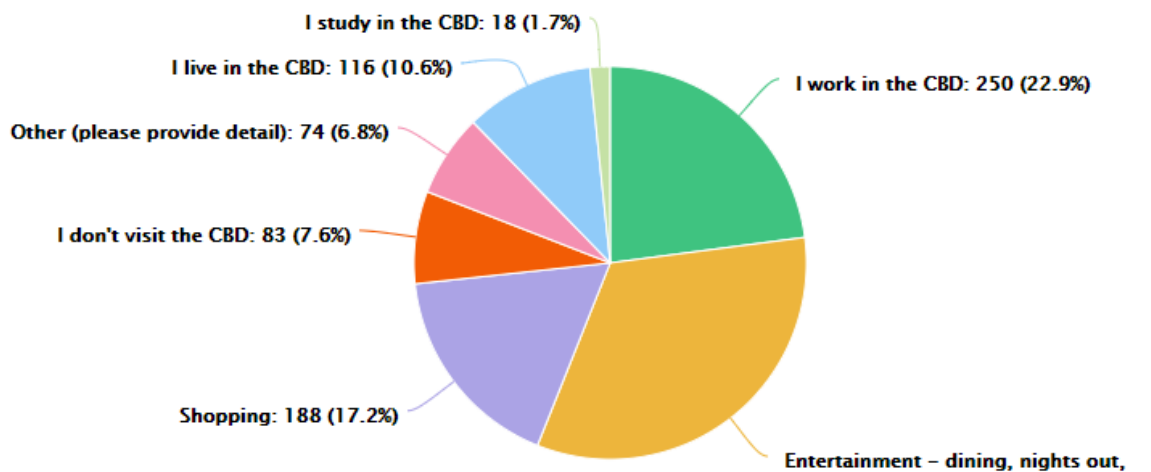
**60%**  
Liked the concept

We are currently trialling a driverless bus at the Waterfront. Could a driverless bus work in the Mall too?



### Why do you currently come to the Darwin CBD?

(649 responses / 0 skipped)



## Economy

An improved city retail offer, expanded café and restaurant experiences, increased cultural offerings and more small business opportunities were identified as important components of creating a vibrant Darwin city centre.

Stakeholders saw opportunity for many of these supporting uses in the areas surrounding the Smith Street Mall, including:

- The Esplanade – a number of respondents suggested allowing limited low rise development of restaurants, cafes and bars on The Esplanade, taking advantage of waterfront views and creating an entertainment precinct. It was also suggested that the former oil tanks below The Esplanade could be used as entertainment or hospitality spaces, creating a unique venue that would attract visitors
- Mitchell Street – there were a number of suggestions to either make Mitchell St a one way street or close it to traffic entirely at night
- Connecting laneways – many respondents suggested improvements to laneways and arcades that connect city streets would encourage more interest in boutiques. Shaded walkways and arcades would allow a more intimate shopping experience.
- Parking – the cost and availability of parking in central Darwin was a key theme raised by respondents to the survey, with many suggesting the removal of parking fees, or a time limited amount of free parking, would make a significant difference to people's willingness to spend time in the city

## Connectivity

Stakeholders noted many challenges and barriers to arriving in Darwin city, whether coming by car, bus, cycle or on foot. In particular:

- Public transport – many raised the issue of public transport, believing increased services would make it more likely for people to come to the city. In particular, if an increased university presence were to occur in the city, improved public transport was noted as a necessity
- A free city bus loop – a number of respondents indicated they would like to see a frequently looping free city bus to transport people within the city centre. Examples of other CBDs that offer this service include Perth, Brisbane and Melbourne
- Park n ride – some suggested that large free parking stations on the outskirts of the CBD with free frequent shuttle bus connections to key areas in the city would improve the amenity of Darwin city
- Ferry connections – several respondents suggested ferry connections between Darwin, Palmerston and Mandorah would be a good investment for the future, allowing improved connectivity and also a tourism opportunity
- Light rail, tram or similar – light rail was suggested as a rapid way to move people from the suburbs into the CBD, reducing the need for parking for city workers and visitors
- Cycleways – many respondents indicated they would come to the city more often if there were improvements made to cycleways from areas such as Nightcliff, Cullen Bay and generally around the CBD

Many respondents indicated their belief that Darwin city should become a place for people first, with vehicle traffic limited and improved opportunities for shared spaces for cyclists and pedestrians.

Once in the city, improved connectivity between areas of the CBD would help draw visitors into the unique and varied retail and hospitality offering available. Public realm design and improved wayfinding signage would help give a sense of direction and place, particularly if the wayfinding signage incorporated Larrakia and heritage information.

Public safety after dark must be a key consideration in planning for connectivity between areas of the city centre. Improved lighting is key to this, as is better design of public spaces (see Public Safety).

## **Character and design**

Many respondents noted that the character and design of “old Darwin” held a special place in their hearts. The stone and tropical design of buildings such as the Victoria Hotel, Brown’s Mart and Old Admiralty House hold fond memories for long term residents of Darwin.

Significantly, a large number of respondents indicated they do not want to see “more concrete boxes” in building design, preferring instead to see contemporary tropical design that reflects Darwin’s climate and history.

To create an engaging and welcoming environment for Darwin, a greater focus should be placed on all street-level frontages to ensure they are occupied and have attractive, well-lit facades. This brings light, movement and a sense of safety to the streets as well as opening up opportunities for business. Many respondents mentioned the lack of upkeep of older buildings in Darwin city and a desire for these to be improved.

Many respondents indicated a preference for seeing more Larrakia history and heritage reflected around Darwin city, through signage, memorials, public art and public space design. There was also a strong preference to see other cultural heritage, including Greek and Chinese, reflected better around the CBD.

Festival Park, which is set up as part of the Darwin Festival each year, was mentioned by a number of respondents who believe something similar year round would be a welcome addition to Darwin city.

## **Greening, shading and public spaces**

Stakeholders wish to see parks, gardens and existing streets activated through creative programming, play spaces, art and greening in a way that makes them more welcoming, functional and interesting for users.

As part of an activated and interesting environment for people, consideration must also be paid to the basics – places to sit (benches and tables), spots to get protection from the elements (sun and rain), and considerations such as drinking fountains and public toilets.

One of the strongest themes to come through the survey was the need for a significant increase in trees, green spaces and all weather walkways around the city centre. Stakeholders also wish to see consideration given to sustainable use of water and energy through recycling of water, planting appropriately for the climate and increased solar power.

Culture and creativity does not have to be just about one-off events and festivals – stakeholders wish to see fun and play incorporated into the everyday experience of Darwin through playgrounds, sculpture and street art, and creative public realm activations that provide something unique and welcoming for both visitors and locals.

A number of respondents indicated their desire for better use of The Esplanade as a public space, through development of cafes and bars, a boardwalk and increased activation, particularly on weekends.

Several respondents also mentioned their desire to see a place where families and children could swim in the CBD, either a swimming pool, water park or crystal lagoon in parklands.

## **Public safety**

A significant number of respondents to the survey indicated their concern about antisocial behaviour, itinerants/homeless people on the streets and the behaviour of drunks and beggars.

Many indicated this behaviour is a significant deterrent to them spending more time in the city centre and their belief that any revitalisation of the CBD must include solutions to the issue of antisocial behaviour.

A number of respondents suggested improved amenities for homeless people should be provided, such as public toilets, showers and shelter.

## **CDU presence in the city**

There was strong support for the idea of an increased CDU presence in the city centre, with many indicating that if they were studying in the CBD, they would seek additional services such as more corner stores, coffee shops open longer hours, more street entertainment, free bus services and high speed internet. High quality modern library services were also flagged as important for students, along with street food, rooftop bars and cafes and generally more opportunities for students to engage with the rest of the community in the city centre.

Some direct quotes included:

- I would be interested to see public street furniture like reading nooks, a public book exchange, possibly over several areas. Locations in Bicentennial park for coffee carts for studying under the trees.
- Free public transport in the CBD. Higher frequency of public transport from greater Darwin into the CBD. Free shuttle from CDU's campus to CBD campus
- Facilities that provide reliable wifi hotspots; more live music - local, interstate and international.
- Lunchtime yoga/exercise/meditation in parks, live music (especially local artists trying to make a start), markets, food festivals
- Movies, entertainment, activities eg small version of water park or gondolas on human made small canal
- Quality food stores, things like outdoor sports areas
- places to sit and study in the shade
- UNI BAR - live performances, cheap drinks. A place to create mateship with fellow students
- Poetry recitals and street theatre/jugglers etc. Acts which inspire creativity and movement.

## Museum and art gallery

The proposals to establish a new art gallery in State Square and a new Museum of the Northern Territory at Myilly Point were key projects in the draft concept. While the survey did not specifically ask for views on these projects, only the spaces they were proposed to be located, many respondents did indicate their views.

### Art gallery (direct quotes from survey responses)

- An art gallery and shade will only attract people to the area on a regular basis if there are activities
- Love the idea of the new art gallery
- The art gallery sounds like a sensible building to insert there, but looks like it's too heavy and imposing on the heritage buildings next to it in the concept
- I like the idea of the art gallery in the CBD
- It would be great to have a proper art Gallery, aquarium and a science centre
- Ok but would like to see a more striking building for the art gallery and a less sterile looking space
- I think the upgrade to the proposed State Square will great if there is lots and lots of shade. Free live music on the weekend, pop up cafes and bars. The art gallery looks nice but at what cost??? People don't come to the Territory to visit art galleries. For the majority of locals it will be a visit one every 3 - 5 years.
- old woollies site is a better place for the art gallery.
- Looks great, particularly like the art gallery and pop up shop ideas as well as the pedestrian and bike friendly access if there is enough cover in the Wet.
- the new art gallery at State Square is a great, I imagine that would include local, national and international collections.

### Museum (direct quotes from survey responses)

- While I think having a museum there is a good idea, you could also have part of the University campus there and multi storey accommodation units and or hotel accommodation all with a museum on top.
- It is OK. I think more could be done with it. Such a large plot of land, for just a museum. Why not incorporate a University campus, Hotel and apartment block into the plans.
- To have a new museum closer to the city centre is a good idea and as well all the green space/water bodies around is a great plan
- No museum. It's a waste of money. Expand current one if required
- We do not need a new museum. Please upgrade the existing one and landscape the existing area surrounding.
- Yes, it's time to do something with the land but what will happen to the old museum?
- Great to have a museum in town (instead of tucked away like MAGNT).
- Yes I agree with the purpose as a museum. It should be a cultural museum and Bullocky point a natural history museum
- What a waste of money. Go to Melbourne museum and check out the children's playground. It brings in families who pay to attend the amazing indoor and outdoor playground. Could a smaller sister museum be added into existing museum and extra funding to art works and children area added.
- Why another museum? We already have several. There is a major need for a stand-alone Territory Library building, with proper facilities for conservation, digitisation and research, before adding another museum. Splitting and rehousing the existing MAGNT Art Gallery / Museum complex might be an idea
- Don't waste money building another museum at Myilly Point.

- Don't like the idea of another museum. Darwin has enough now
- New museum will not attract my family. And i think we have sufficient museums for tourists already.
- Not necessarily keen for more traditional museums as there are plenty - we want places where the locals can go and therefore take visitors, not where they go once or twice and drop off the visitors.
- The community does not need or want another museum, waste of money, it will not employ a lot of people and will not bring tourists. The one we have is fabulous already and in a great location, it works really well. The only time you would consider building a new museum or art gallery for the purpose of stimulating the economy would be if you were going to do something on a par or better than MONA in Tasmania.
- No museum...total waste of money
- Instead of building a museum 5 minutes' walk from a museum build a sporting venue in the CBD like Rod Laver (on a smaller scale) to attract locals into the CBD.

## Other issues

Submissions that were opposed to the Darwin City Deal concept either voiced a generally negative opinion or highlighted specific projects or elements of concern for further consideration. These concerns included:

- The viability or need for constructing a museum at Myilly Point
- Issues about Barneson Boulevard
- Antisocial behaviour, itinerants and public nuisance
- Parking
- Dislike of some of the public art shown in the concept

These issues have been noted and will either be addressed through subsequent consultations or passed to the relevant area of the NT Government or City of Darwin for further consideration.

## Next steps

As well as further engagement around greening and shading, public amenity and activation, the next phase of engagement will include specific details of projects being considered.

# Darwin City Deal



1. Why do you currently come to the Darwin Central Business District (CBD)?

- I live in the CBD
- I study in the CBD
- I work in the CBD
- Entertainment – dining, nights out, cinema/cultural activities
- Shopping
- I don't visit the CBD
- Other (please provide detail)

Have your say by 14 September 2017.  
Help develop concepts to create a vibrant Darwin City centre.

Send completed survey to:

Darwin City Deal  
GPO Box 4396  
Darwin NT 0801

OR [darwincitydeal@nt.gov.au](mailto:darwincitydeal@nt.gov.au)

2. What would make you visit the Darwin CBD more often?

- More/different shopping options
- More events or cultural activities
- More/different dining options
- More/different entertainment options
- More green space/activities for families
- More opportunity for study at a Charles Darwin University (CDU) CBD campus
- Other (please provide detail)

3. Currently, does the Darwin CBD have a special feature, aspect or character that is important to you?

- Yes (please provide detail)       No

4. What would be some of the key features that would make you spend more time in Darwin City Centre?

- Shade/Greening/Parks
- Water features/Seating/places to stop
- Shops
- Public Art/Entertainment or activities in the streets
- Cultural facilities

5. What are your ideas for cooling and greening Darwin city?

6. Do you like the greening and public spaces concept for State Square?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Do you like the greening and public spaces concept for Myilly Point?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



8. Do you like the proposal to develop a more significant CDU CBD presence?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. What do you think of the proposed concepts for State Square?

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10. Do you like the concept proposed for Myilly Point?

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11. What sort of retail would you like to see in the city centre?

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12. What do you think about having pop-up shops in the CBD?

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13. If you were studying in the city centre what sort of activity/features would you like to see?

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14. What sort of public art would you like to see in Darwin CBD?

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15. We are currently trialling a driverless bus at the Waterfront. Could a driverless bus work in the Mall too?  Yes  No

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16. How should we reflect Darwin's heritage and multiculturalism in the future vision of the city centre?

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17. Thinking big, what's your vision for Darwin CBD?

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18. Other comments?

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