

# STAGE 2 ENGAGEMENT OUTDOOR DINING GUIDELINES



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The City of Greater Geelong sought community and trader feedback on the Draft Outdoor Dining Guidelines, designed to support vibrant, safe, inclusive, and high-quality outdoor dining across the municipality. The guidelines aim to strike a balance between business use and public access, while enhancing the experience of streets, laneways, and public spaces.



**26 DAYS**

of engagement  
(Stage 2)



**1**

Drop in session



**4**

print  
adverts in  
local  
newspaper



**38**

Surveys  
received

## SOCIAL MEDIA



**12,545**

Reach/Impressions

**1068**

Actions (Clicks,  
reactions,  
shares, comments etc.)



**1500**

Postcards  
delivered to  
cafes

## WHO PARTICIPATED

Feedback was received from a mix of hospitality business owners, operators, and community members. Participants included cafés, restaurants, bars, bakeries, mobile food vendors, and others.

Respondents represented a broad range of suburbs, including Geelong, Geelong West, Belmont, Newtown, Ocean Grove, East Geelong, and beyond.

## KEY SURVEY INSIGHTS

### Survey Question

Do the guidelines support safe, accessible and welcoming dining?

Are the guidelines clear and easy to follow?

Do they balance trader needs and public space?

Do they promote a vibrant city?

### Common Responses

89% positive - Yes or somewhat.

88% positive - Mostly clear, with some requests for simplification.

55% positive - Mixed feedback, some feel the balance is right; others seek more flexibility.

85% positive - Strong support for outdoor dining enhancing vibrancy and activation.

## KEY THEMES FROM SURVEY COMMENTS

### What's working

- Clearer expectations and standards.
- Outdoor dining seen as essential to city vibrancy.
- Guidelines offer consistency and uplift in public realm quality across the City of Greater Geelong.

*"I'm pleased to see the guidelines being laid out so clearly."*

*"Outdoor dining enhances community life and supports local business."*

*"Outdoor dining makes all different parts of Geelong look livelier, especially in winter. It really adds to the vibe of the city."*

*"It's a great positive thing for Geelong. With good planning, we can make it better and safer, for people with disabilities, older people, and for foot traffic in general."*

### Common Concerns

- Permit cost and complexity cited as a barrier for small businesses.
- Some desire for more flexibility and responsiveness to context.
- Some concern about public space being dominated by commercial use.
- Reduce vehicle speed limits rather than adding heavy infrastructure requirements.
- Heaters having to be moved in and out after business hours.
- Unclear expectations for dogs (e.g. where they can go, under table not blocking pathways)

*"Council makes it hard for small business to comply."*

*"Some businesses neglect their areas. Enforce basic upkeep."*

### Community Suggestions

- Include Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) design principles.
- Provide clearer permit cost structure and responsibilities.
- Include advice for dog-friendly venues.
- Include neurodiverse design considerations.

*"Permit costs and complexity need review."*

*"Not just wheelchairs, think about neurodiverse users too."*

## NEXT STEPS

- Review all feedback and incorporate relevant revisions into the Guidelines.
- Review the City of Greater Geelong website to ensure clear and transparent communication of fees.