



FROM THE COAST

Revitalising the Town Centre

If you're walking or driving through the Esperance town centre this week, you may notice cameras being installed at key intersections, traffic counters and information being collected. Don't panic! The Shire is gathering data as part of a study into traffic movement and parking in the town centre. Together with community engagement and historical data, the study will help form part of the Esperance Town Centre Revitalisation Plan (ETCRP) which aims to enhance the "central heart" of Esperance.

You may wonder what all the fuss is about. Esperance has plenty of parking, all of it free and traffic seems pretty easy at the best of times. The study will help us to look at our traffic conditions objectively as well as crash history, to identify and address issues of poor visibility, pedestrian and cycle movement, roundabouts, traffic volumes and the way parking is currently being used. Our focus will also be on how these are used into the future.

Consultation with the community has revealed that parking is a significant issue within the town centre for many people. Discussions have also been raised surrounding potentially making it easier for cyclists and pedestrians to move around. These issues and the overall traffic movement in the town centre will be addressed in the Esperance Town Centre Parking, Traffic, and Pedestrian Strategy, as recommended by the ETCRP.

The ETCRP is looking at the town centre over the next 20 years in terms of social, economic and cultural development. We want to make sure our town centre is a vibrant hub for the community and visitors by enhancing public spaces, improving facilities and clearly reflecting Esperance's identity and relaxed lifestyle. To do that we are looking at how our public spaces, streetscapes, and parking areas are being used and how they could be used better. Analysis of traffic issues will help us identify opportunities such as outdoor dining (alfresco), innovative and exciting retail activity like parklets and pop up shops. Reducing the visual dominance of cars, achieving slower, smoother traffic movement and becoming more pedestrian and cycle friendly are all things which deserve our consideration as a community. We also need to consider future needs such as room for public transport.

Consultants are undertaking the Esperance Town Centre Parking, Traffic, and Pedestrian Strategy which will include community engagement. We need as much feedback and as many ideas as we can about parking, traffic, and pedestrian concerns. Community engagement is being planned for late July and everyone is encouraged to come along and share your thoughts. The Esperance Chamber of Commerce and Industry will also be providing input into the plan and will encourage all local businesses to forward information and ideas to ensure community and commercial needs are recognised. Keep an eye out on the Shire website, Facebook page, noticeboards and the Shire Flyer where we will keep you up to date.