

Downtown Bend Safety and Hospitality Report and DBBA Request

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We have three needs in Downtown Bend:

1. People need to be safe when they are in Downtown (actual safety).
2. People need to *feel* safe when they are in Downtown (perception of safety)
3. We need welcoming environment in Downtown Bend (for staff and visitors)

These needs are impacting our current Downtown vitality and they are instrumental in creating a thriving Downtown district in the future.

Last year the City of Bend and Bend Police Department piloted a program with additional security and police presence in Downtown Bend.

Downtown Bend building owners, business owners and employees reported a decrease in unwanted behaviors over the Spring and Summer months of 2018. Furthermore, we received feedback that people felt safer seeing the presence of security and police on the street.

The Downtown safety pilot program included increased police presence in Downtown Bend, including all of the officers from local schools. In addition, the DBBA was given a direct police Bend PD contact, Mike Landolt, which help immensely in connecting business and building owners with police, getting permission to trespass individuals on private property, and increasing general communication between the Downtown district and Bend PD.

The second component of the pilot program included Security Pros increasing their presence in Downtown, not just to include the parking garage, but to include the entire EID. Security Pros was staffed in Downtown the following hours for EID patrol:

	Hours/wk.	Hours/total
July 1st - Aug 31st	40	360
Sept 1 - Sept 30th	30	120
Oct 1-Nov 1st	16	80
Nov 1, 2018-March 18th	10	190
March 19 - May 20th	20	200
May 21 - June 30th	30	150
Total Pilot Program Hours:		1100

**note - these hours include pilot program hours ONLY, and do not include scheduled parking garage hours.*



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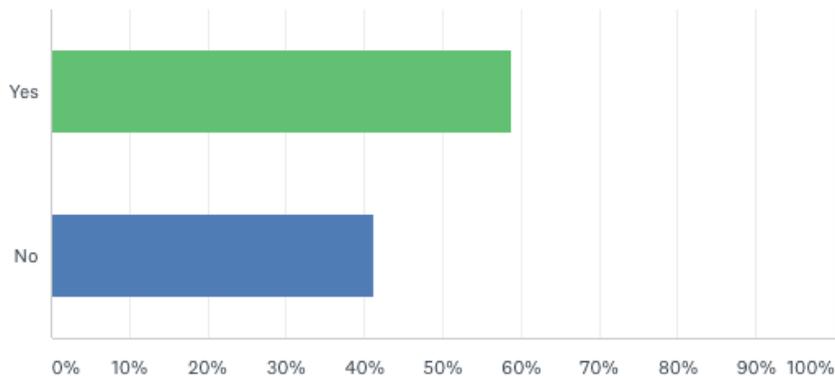
During that time, Security Pros logged 183 reports during their garage circuits (not included in the Pilot Program) and 27 reports within the EID, for a total of 210 reports. Here is the breakdown of those reports:

Alarm in garage	29
Broken Glass	8
Citizen Assist (non DT related issue)	1
Disturbance	2
Drugs	3
Graffiti	9
Human Fluids	5
Loitering	113
Lost and Found	10
Parking Violation	3
Shoplifting	1
Theft	1
Trash	21
Vandalism	3

Note: The Police were contacted by Security Pros 12 times during this pilot program.

The Downtown Bend Parking Advisory Committee learned that even when employees were given parking passes by their employers for free, they were not using them because they didn't feel safe. The DBBA also heard repeated reports from business owners, building owners and employees who felt unsafe in Downtown Bend. We wanted to understand the *perception of safety* in Downtown and how it impacted behavior. We surveyed 159 Downtown Bend business owners and employees and asked the following questions:

Have you ever had an experience that made you feel unsafe in Downtown Bend?



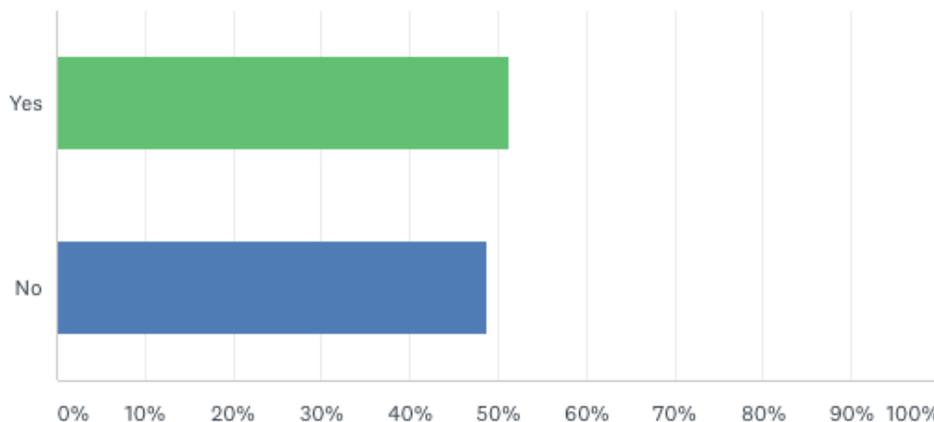
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If you answered yes to the above question, describe the situation that made you feel unsafe:

- Transient/Homeless Population 47%
- Not enough light/too dark 14%
- Nighttime Party Crowd 10%
- Attacked, harassed, followed 6%
- Under 5%:
 - Vandalism, Skateboarders, Pedestrian Safety, Car Racing, Aggressive Dogs.

Interestingly, only 12 out of 104 responses were specific instances that made a person feel unsafe, the other 92 responses were general feelings of being unsafe.

Do you feel safe parking in the areas designated for employees:



If you do not feel safe parking in employee designated areas, what would have to change for you to feel safe?

- Increased Security – 45%
- Increased Lighting – 44%
- Closer Parking – 19%
- Cameras – 7%

Given that Bend Police Department data shows that Downtown is safe, why do you think people *feel* unsafe?

- Homeless/Transient Population – 83%
- Party Crowd- 8%
- Dark/Late Night – 15%
- Under 5%
 - Unreported Incidences, Bend’s Growth, Alley Ways



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What would it take to change the perception of safety in Downtown?

- Increased Security – 43%
- No Loitering/Panhandling – 24%
- Increased Lighting – 24%
- Education – 7%
- Less than 5%
 - Cleaner Public Spaces, Stop Over-Serving

Furthermore, we have collected responses about Downtown from the public. Here is a sampling of what we heard:

“We used to love to take the children to Drake Park – such a wonderful outing. Now? Not so much.” – Faye

“When they (the homeless) show up, nothing is done anyway. It is not a priority for City Council. The homeless are more important than business owners and tax paying citizens.” – Petra

“I work downtown and I am yet to see any officer at the satellite police post and I am yet to see a police car in their designated parking spot in the parking garage. Under half of our calls reporting a disturbance end in seeing an officer arrive – and we we complain about this, we are just encouraged to keep calling. In the last year alone, I’ve had to step into volatile situations because our patrons are our livelihood and I refuse to stand idly by. Something much worse than a punch in the face is going to happen to a bystander if nothing is done.” - Nate

“Had a bad incident downtown a few weeks ago. Violent homeless guys are definitely a problem.” – Rob

“As someone who has always loved to visit Central Oregon and the Bend area, I have been hesitant for the past couple of years. It’s become a miniature Portland and I avoid PDX like the plague. I have preferred to shop in Bend, instead of Portland, because I didn’t have to wade through pan handlers, people living on the sidewalk, human excrement. The last time I was in Bend – it was bad, and it sounds like it’s getting worse.” - Penelope

“This is what happens when the homeless population is not addressed. City leaders, clean this up!” – Tom

“A while back, I tried to enter the downtown Starbucks with my wife, and a homeless man decided to block the way and spat at us. I decided it wasn’t worth it for a cup of coffee, and went home (we did report the issue to the police, but there wasn’t much they could do).” - Kevin

“I remember when I used to love to go downtown. Stroll the shops, get something to eat, go to the library, and just enjoy walking around. In the last few years I haven’t felt safe. I stopped going and avoid downtown all together.” - Angela



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After reviewing the data & comments, the DBBA feels like several steps need to be taken to:

1. Keep downtown safe
2. Create an environment where people feel safe
3. Foster a culture of hospitality in Downtown Bend

Our vision includes these goals:

1. To have every person, regardless of age, mobility, sex, or race feel safe when they are in Downtown Bend
2. To be named the friendliest downtown in the nation
3. To be able to say honestly and authentically that although Bend has become a big city, when visiting Downtown Bend, you still feel the local small town vibe.
4. To be able to exemplify the oft heard, “Be Kind, You’re in Bend”

In order to achieve these goals, it is essential that we have key partnerships & support from our City.

Our request is:

1. Reestablish full-time security in the garage – before this summer
2. Add security patrols to the other parking lots (Mirror Pond and Newport) – before this summer
3. Complete the necessary functions to get the Police substations working – as soon as possible
4. Continue to support funding for additional Bend Police Downtown – (thank you!)
5. Support the DBBA in piloting an Ambassador program for Downtown Bend (details attached)



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