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Downtown biz getting plenty of buzz from popup toilet project

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Downtown Winnipeg BIZ launched Pop-up Toilet, a new fully accessible two stall public washroom with a small retail kiosk, in Downtown Winnipeg on June 4, 2018. Danton Unger/Winnipeg Sun

It's been nearly three months since the introduction of the bright orange pop-up toilet which has become a mobile fixture of the downtown. In its third location since the beginning of June, organizers say the pop-up toilet has been garnering large success amongst the patrons of Winnipeg's downtown.

"This has been kind of an experiment, a pilot project to try (the pop-up toilet) out at different locations," said Councillor Jenny Gerbasi (Fort Rouge East and Fort Garry). "We're surveying people and gathering the response of the community which has been very positive — overwhelmingly positive responses from people who think it's a really good idea and think we should be doing more of these."

Of people surveyed, 81% said they would support the city spending money to build permanent public toilets downtown according to statistics gathered by the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ. In addition, 57% said having safe and available public toilets would increase the amount of time they spent downtown. Almost all said the previous location of the toilet at Merchant Park was a good one (98%), and 72% felt that a permanent toilet should be built there.

The pop-up toilet will be at the corner of Graham Avenue and Hargrave Street for the remainder of the month, after which it will be moved to its final location of the year off Main Street. Following which, the toilet will be removed over winter and the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ will compile the information gathered into a report and present it to City Council with the goal to introduce permanent public toilets around downtown.

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