

OLD TOWN PLAZA — DEAD OR ALIVE?

The recent election of a new president and secretary to the Bankstown Chamber of Commerce has brought with it a strong desire for change.

High on the list of priorities for the new chamber is the desire to make the Old Town Plaza a safe place to shop after dark, and to bring it to life on a Sunday.

The chamber proposes an open Sunday market, with market stalls, free childrens' exhibitions, rides and music.

Secretary of the new Chamber, Gary Green said

**By
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"the Old Town Plaza is the centre of commerce in Bankstown, it is the best place to hold a market."

"It has all the space and facilities desirable for holding a market of this style — transport, toilets, seating and telephones.

"Our aim is to provide the people of Bankstown with something to do on a Sunday in their own area, instead of going into town, or to other areas."

The chamber would also like to see table and racks displayed outside shops in the plaza three to six days a week, instead of the present one day a week.

In response to a suggestion that retailers were out to make a profit rather than providing a service to customers, Mr Green commented:

"Of course retailers want to make a profit, that is why we are in business, but we feel that outside trading is of great benefit to the community as well.

"A proportion of the market profit would be donated to charity."

"Modern awnings set amongst the existing trees and in different colors would also be an attractive addition to the plaza," the president of the chamber, Mr Arnold Bello said.

"We would like to see a regular calendar of events established under the title

'Bankstown City Markets' which would bring to Bankstown a mini Expo to promote industrial and commercial products."

Another issue of concern to retailers in the plaza is safety. The chamber would like to see improved lighting at night.

"We want the plaza to be a safe place for shoppers and retailers, particularly on Thursday nights," said retailer Yvonne Bonaddio.

"We feel the presence of a security guard between 8pm and 3am on a Thursday night would encourage more people back to the Old Town Plaza to shop," she said.

The Bankstown Chamber of Commerce is prepared to meet council on part of the cost of a security guard to patrol the plaza between 8 pm and 3 am as a way of preventing the violence that occurs after dark.



Two of the Bankstown Chamber of Commerce members fighting for changes at the Old Town Plaza, Gary Green and Yvonne Bonaddio.