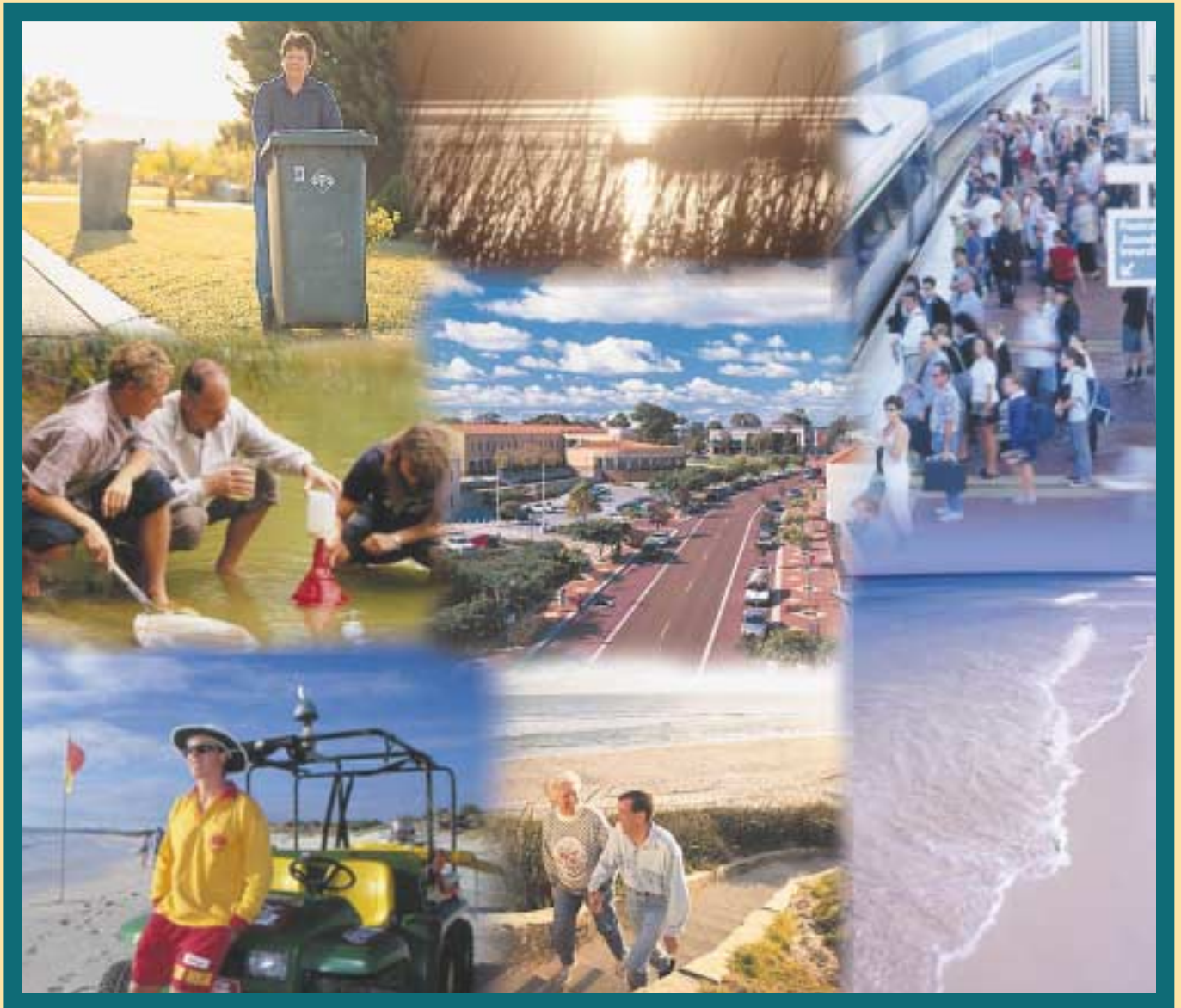


Submission on the Western Australian State Government's Proposed Sustainability Strategy

Submitted to the Sustainability Policy Unit
Department of the Premier and Cabinet



Submission on the Western Australian State Government's Proposed Sustainability Strategy

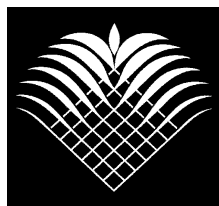
**Submitted to the Sustainability Policy Unit
Department of the Premier and Cabinet.**

**Submission co-ordinated by
Sustainable Development Officer
John Goldsmith, Strategic & Corporate Planning**

March 2002



City of Joondalup Mayor John Bombak accepts the Cities for Climate Protection Milestone 2 award from Mr Martin Brennan (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives), in recognition of Council setting Greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. The award is presented in front of the State Government's Sustainability Display featured in Lakeside Joondalup Shopping City (March 2002).



City of
Joondalup

Council Resolution

The City of Joondalup Council, at its meeting held on 9 April 2002, made the following resolutions;

That Council:

- 1. ENDORSES the City of Joondalup's submission on the State Government's proposed Sustainability Strategy as shown at Attachment 1 to Report CJ077-04/02;**
- 2. FORWARDS the submission to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (Sustainability Policy Unit) and THANKS the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Sustainability Policy Unit) for the opportunity to provide the submission;**
- 3. INVITES representatives from the Sustainability Policy Unit to brief Council on the development of the State Government's Sustainability Strategy; and**
- 4. NOTES that the submission is for discussion purposes only and in no way binds or influences future Council decision-making with regard to social, environmental and economic planning.**

(refer to Council report CJ077 – 04/02).

**CITY OF JOONDALUP SUBMISSION ON THE
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STATE GOVERNMENT'S
PROPOSED SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**

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1. Background

The State Government has called for public submissions relating to the development of the State Government's Sustainability Strategy. Sustainability for the purpose of the Strategy is defined as: "... the simultaneous achievement of environmental, economic and social goals." Development of the strategy is being co-ordinated by the Sustainability Policy Unit (SPU) from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

In December 2001, the SPU released a consultation paper entitled *"Focus on the Future: Opportunities for Sustainability in Western Australia"*, inviting written submissions until end of March 2002. The SPU will also be meeting with key stakeholder groups to get input into the strategy development process.

From the written submissions, an options paper will be prepared reflecting the outcomes of the consultation process in about May 2002. A draft strategy will be released for further comment in mid 2002. The strategy will then be released as a white paper towards the end of 2002.

The City of Joondalup submission on the State Government's proposed Sustainability Strategy is based on substantial experience gained on sustainable development and sustainability initiatives and has also benefited from input received from staff throughout the organisation, and Council's Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee. The City welcomes further consultation with the State Government to further the development of the State Government's Sustainability Strategy.

The City of Joondalup has a substantial role to play in promoting and facilitating sustainable development and sustainability initiatives. As the second largest local government authority in Western Australia, it represents approximately 161,000 residents and comprises 11% of the Perth's metropolitan area population. The City of Joondalup continues to strengthen its role in facilitating the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the City and providing leadership on sustainable development and sustainability issues. Highlights of City of Joondalup sustainability achievements are detailed in section 3 and are summarised below;

- Development of a Council policy on "Environmental Sustainability"
- Establishment of a community driven Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee.
- Establishment of a Community Funding programme, "Environmental and Sustainable Development Community Fund".
- Participation in the Cities for Climate Protection programme and adoption of Corporate and Community Greenhouse emission reduction targets by Council.
- Partnership development and representation on key sustainability networks.
- Demonstrated leadership within local government by the appointment of the State's first Sustainable Development Officer.
- Development of the City of Joondalup "Sustainable future" Sustainability Plan (2002-2007).

- Establishment of the City of “ Sustainable Futures Working Group”.

The City of Joondalup submission is issued to:

Professor Peter Newman
 Director, Sustainability Policy Unit
 Department of the Premier and Cabinet
 15th Floor, 197 St George's Terrace
 PERTH WA 6000

Copies of the City of Joondalup submission have also been issued to:

- WALGA Sustainable Development Advisory Group,
 C/o. Western Australian Local Government Association
 15 Altona Street, West Perth, 6005
- City of Joondalup Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee.
- City of Joondalup Sustainable Futures Working Group.
- Selected local community and environmental groups.

2. City of Joondalup statement of support of State Sustainability Strategy Initiatives

The City of Joondalup strongly supports State Government initiatives that enhance environmental, social and economic sustainability within Western Australia.

The City of Joondalup strongly supports the consultation process for the development of the State's Sustainability Strategy.

The City of Joondalup strongly supports appropriate State Government sustainability initiatives including;

- Political leadership and support.
- Action on the part of State Government to enhance sustainability.
- Provision of appropriate funding.
- Communication and community education.
- Improved co-ordination between State Government Agencies.
- Development and implementation of relevant laws and legal mechanisms to enhance environmental, social and environmental sustainability.

The City of Joondalup supports proactive action to promote sustainability initiatives at all levels of society and government (ie. Local, State, National and International). In particular, the City will strongly support incentives and resources for such action where it is placed at a community level.

The City of Joondalup supports the State in taking a leadership role to ensure that sustainability initiatives will include economic, environmental and social sustainability.

The City of Joondalup supports the uses of simple, meaningful and easy to understand programme titles, which support sustainability initiatives. The City of Joondalup supports the development of a definition of sustainability in plain English such that any person is able to understand what is being said about the matter and what it means for them as individuals in society.

3. Current City of Joondalup Sustainability Initiatives and Actions

The City of Joondalup continues to strengthen its role in facilitating the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the City by providing leadership on sustainable development and sustainability issues. Some recent highlights include:

- Development of Council policy 2.6.4 on “Environmental Sustainability”.
- Council endorsed expansion of the Environmental Advisory Committee terms of reference; to specifically address and consider sustainability issues (renamed the Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee). Council endorsed sustainability aims and objectives.
- Council endorsed revision of the Community Funding Programme, to establish the “Environmental and Sustainable Development Community Fund”. This fund is believed to be the first such community funding programme in WA specifically related to sustainable development.
- Council participation in the Cities for Climate Protection programme, an international sustainability programme addressing Local Government response to Global Warming and Greenhouse gas emission reductions. Council endorsed corporate and community Greenhouse gas emission reduction actions.
- Partnership development and representation on key sustainability networks (e.g. The WA Local Government Association Sustainable Development Advisory Group, and Edith Cowan University’s Ecosystem Health Conference Steering Committee).
- Demonstrated leadership within local government by the appointment of the State’s first Sustainable Development Officer.
- Development of the City of Joondalup “Sustainable Futures” Sustainability Plan (2002-2007).
- Establishment of the City of Joondalup Sustainable Futures Working Group to review the draft Sustainable Futures.
- The intention to develop Joondalup as a Learning City in partnership with its key educational stakeholders (including Edith Cowan University, the West Coast College of TAFE and the WA Police Academy) as well as to create a ‘learning organisation’ internally.

Samples of other City of Joondalup sustainability initiatives include:

Sustainability Topic	Existing City Projects
Council and administrative support for sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee to City of Joondalup Council. • City of Joondalup representation on key sustainability networks and groups. • Support for Yellagonga Catchment Group and long term catchment management issues
Creating and enhancing community through Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for Yellagonga Catchment Group volunteers and community membership ▪ Community Development activities and programs are developed to improve social conditions for people living in the community. Examples include “Community Safety and Security”, “Community Connections”, the “City of Joondalup Elder Protection Network”, “Family Liaison”, “Youth in Public Space”, “Community Arts” and some intergenerational programs.
Local Economic Development and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional economic development strategy. • Buy Local Policy. • Local Recruitment Policy (currently being investigated)
Sustainable transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelsmart travel survey. • Bike Plan Program. • Community Buses.
Resource and Waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cities for Climate Protection programme. (Greenhouse gas emissions reduction programme). • Secondary Waste Management Strategy.
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revegetation activities of Yellagonga Catchment Group and Friends of Reserve Groups.

4. State and Local Government relations and partnerships

The relationship between State and local Government is regarded as a critical factor to foster environmental, social and economic sustainability initiatives. It is suggested that State and Local Government relations can be enhanced to facilitate and promote sustainability in the following ways;

- By recognising the role of Local Government in working alongside and engaging with local communities.
- By developing and resourcing community based communication strategies between Local and State Government. Sustainability needs to be a local issue that people identify with and support to advance their lifestyle choices.
- By encouraging joint State/Local Government project development initiatives. Funding, resources and support are key issues for Local Governments to be involved in sustainability and Local Agenda 21 initiatives.

- By providing leadership on sustainability issues with business through the appropriate government departments.
- By exploring sponsorship opportunities for business to contribute toward the achievement of sustainability in the community.
- By co-ordination of the Sustainability Strategy through Premier in Cabinet with specialists in the area of economic development, social sustainability and environmental sustainability – working together to address the triple bottom line approach.

The issues currently being faced by many Local Authorities include:

- high level usage of cars for local journeys.
- the need to develop viable local employment opportunities for local communities.
- ageing suburbs and the associated costs of upgrading community facilities and infrastructure.
- suburbs where community life is not evident.

Ongoing State and Local Government community development initiatives to increase social sustainability and community building will encourage and engage communities to begin to identify their specific needs. From this work many issues such as employment, security and environment are identified which can be addressed leading to the beginning of truly sustainable communities.

5. Content and Structure of the State Sustainability Strategy

The City of Joondalup recommends that the following topics be considered and incorporated into the State Sustainability Strategy;

- The definition of sustainability as proposed by the Gallop Government is not comprehensive enough, does not consider future generations, and should include an intention to provide the future with repair over and above existing level, not just maintenance levels.
- The new State Environment Report being compiled should include clear indicators and proposed actions, and must include reference to the previous SOE report.
- The State Government should consider renaming the State of the Environment report to more fully reflect the economic and social/community aspects of sustainability. A possible title is “Indicators of Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability in Western Australia”.
- Incentives for positive sustainable activities must be realistic, and of worth to the intended recipients.
- Partner organisations should include Swan Catchment Council, as well as those catchment councils in country areas as they have great impact on the state of the metropolitan waterways.

- Measures and audits required for businesses to develop sustainable practices. It must be easy to follow and implement.
- Policy makers and the business community must be willing to support the strategy through their actions.
- Public education programs should be targeted at existing community networks and easy for the general public to follow and implement
- The promotion of eco-efficiency practices can be approached from an economic viewpoint, where there is a baseline audit of the costs before implementation of the strategies followed by an analysis of the costs with the recommended practices in place.
- Sustainability needs to focus not only on restoration and repair, but also on minimisation and prevention of negative impacts.
- An integrated approach to planning and decision making to enhance sustainability.
- The Sustainability Strategy should make provision for the setting of sustainability indicators and targets for WA.
- Local government and community initiatives towards sustainability should be recognised and strongly supported in the Strategy.
- The fundamental importance of protecting ecological health needs to be acknowledged in the strategy.

The City of Joondalup Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Committee has identified the following specific issues which should be addressed in the Sustainability Strategy:

Secondary Waste Treatment

The State Government should set a realistic target and develop an action plan (in order to achieve Waste 20-20 vision) for all local governments in the metropolitan region to be operating secondary waste treatment/recovery for domestic waste.

Population Policy

The Sustainability Strategy should address the need and role of a population policy for Western Australia.

Reporting of Economic, Social and Environmental Performance (Triple Bottom Line).

The economic, social and environmental performance (triple bottom line) of all government agencies should be undertaken.

Government Vehicle Fleet

All government fleet vehicles should be powered by cleaner energy sources such as LPG/LNG gas. The environmental/social/economic benefits of this technology have been well documented.

Local Government Initiatives on Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The State Government should be actively encouraging all local governments to join the Cities for Climate Protection program in order to help tackle local air quality problems within their own boundaries.

Sustainability Criteria for New Housing Developments

New housing sustainability criteria should be developed and adopted, including key sustainability aspects such as solar design, water conservation, insulation and domestic heating.

Domestic Water Recycling

Regulations that currently prevent domestic water recycling should be reviewed and revised to maximise the opportunity to reuse domestic water.

More Water Efficient Gardening

Place a greater emphasis on Western Australian endemic species in gardens.

Community Consultation/Sustainability

Significantly enhanced community consultation processes are required to assist and support sustainability initiatives and the assessment of proponent projects.

Treaty and Protocol Ratification

The State Government should lobby the Federal Government to support the ratification of global treaty's and protocols such as the Kyoto Protocol, to encourage enhanced sustainability at the international level.

Government Purchasing Policy

The State Government needs to adopt a "buy-local first" purchasing policy in order for WA to be economically sustainable and socially responsible in the long-term.

Penalties for Environmental Pollution / Environmental Degradation

Environmental pollution penalties should be reviewed as a matter of urgency in order to make environmental pollution and environmental degradation a real cost *and* disincentive to polluters, instead of a marginal externality to business.

Review of Subsidies

Government subsidies that support unsustainable industries should be removed. Industries and businesses that receive subsidies should meet triple bottom line (environmental, economic and social) sustainability criteria.

Renewable Energy

A substantial expansion of renewable energy source development should be undertaken, as part of the State's energy resource strategy

Drink Container Return Scheme.

Waste minimisation programmes such as container refund schemes should be investigated and implemented where appropriate to minimise waste.

Product Packaging Sustainability Criteria

Sustainability criteria for product packaging should be developed and implemented.

Sustainability Education

A review of educational programmes should be undertaken to encourage greater sustainability life skills for both primary and secondary education. In essence, to create a sustainable future, we need to educate the future generations on how to be sustainable.

6. Sustainability networks

6.1 Existing Sustainability Networks.

Sustainable development can be encouraged by sharing information, developing alliances and partnerships with key groups. Development of the State's Sustainability Strategy should recognise existing and potential communication and sustainability networks, such as:

- ***Working Groups, Committees, Advisory Groups, Regional Government Bodies,***
- ***Community based groups, Non-government organisations,***
- ***National Agencies/Associations, International Agencies/Associations,***
- ***Professional associations, Research/Scientific organisations.***

The City of Joondalup is represented on numerous groups which consider environmental, social or economic sustainability issues. A sample of such groups are detailed below:

Organisation/Group Name	Role/Scope of
City of Joondalup "Sustainable Futures" Working Group	An internal working group to review the draft City of Joondalup "Sustainable Futures 2002-2007" sustainability plan and to provide guidance to the City of Joondalup Executive Management Team.
Western Australian Municipal Association Sustainability Advisory Group	To provide a local government advisory forum for sustainability and sustainable development issues.
City of Joondalup Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee	To recommend to City of Joondalup Council on environmental and sustainability issues.
Edith Cowan University Indopacific Ecosystem Health Conference steering committee	To co-ordinate and manage the development of the Edith Cowan University Ecosystem Health Conference (November 2002).
International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives	Assists local government in developing environmental initiatives and supports the Cities for Climate Protection programme.
Local Government Finance Managers Group	Development of Triple Bottom Line Reporting
Yellagonga Catchment Group	Long term environmentally sustainable management strategies for the Yellagonga Catchment area
Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park and other Friends of Reserve Groups	Revegetation natural areas in the City of Joondalup.
Mindarie Regional Council	Development of Waste Management and Secondary Waste Management facilities for the region.
Strategic Advisory Committee – Seniors Interests	Oversee the strategic co-ordination of all Seniors issues across Council. Provide advice to Council to ensure that the concerns of seniors are adequately represented in the City's planning processes and the strategic direction being developed for older people across the City.

Organisation/Group Name	Role/Scope of
Seniors Working Group	The Working Group assists with the identification of and development of programs, activities and services specific to the needs of seniors, which are designed to address the unique needs of senior community members. The Working Group also provides information to the Strategic Advisory Committee – Seniors Interests as necessary.

6.2 Suggested enhancements for Sustainability networks

Communication and sustainability networks can be improved in the following ways;

- Investigation and formalisation of State and Local Government partnership via the WA Local Government Association.
- Development of a reporting format that is standard for community groups to list their activities, but also easy for groups to implement.
- Effective and timely utilisation of the local government communication network offered by the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA's newsletter issued to all local government authorities) to provide a standardised communication link between State Government and Local Government.
- Effective leadership support by top executive management.
- Development of a communication strategy.

7. Other comments

7.1 A positive approach towards enhancing sustainability

The State Sustainability Strategy should be based on a positive, proactive approach, which seeks to achieve real, substantial and long-term improvements in the environmental, social and economic sustainability of Western Australia.

7.2 Performance reporting for environmental, social and economic sustainability.

The State Sustainability Strategy should address the adopting of appropriate sustainability performance reporting by State government agencies and authorities, in accordance with Triple Bottom Line principles.

7.3 Community education and information

Local governments provide a key pathway for community education and information via local government's role in library services. The Sustainability Strategy should recognise this fact. Local Government's role in the provision of access to information and community education should continue to be supported.

7.4 Research and development for sustainability

Whilst it is recognised that research and development will be required for specific aspects of sustainability and sustainable development, the State Sustainability strategy should note that most sustainability solutions already exist. The implementation of those solutions is primarily subject to political, economic and/or social motivation to implement solutions.

The implementation of appropriate sustainability solutions should not be delayed due to a perception that more “research” is required. Proper recognition of the state of scientific knowledge should be made on key sustainability issues.

For example, the consultation paper notes that the salinity problem is one of the major sustainability issues facing WA. The process of salinisation and its impact on the environment was scientifically recognised and understood early in the 20th century, yet unfortunately little government or social response took place until decades later.

An unanticipated set back for companies prepared to conduct Research and Development into sustainability has been the withdrawal of government funding for R&D and the removal of tax benefits. Governments should perhaps give consideration to reinstating such incentives in the interests of supporting sustainable development led by the business sector.

Inevitably when research is undertaken it is essential for it to be measurable and accountable. If the Sustainability Strategy embarks on research not only should the processes be widely advertised but should engage at the community level instead of just a government sector or industry level. Research that needs to be undertaken includes:

- The urban environment – how the environment in which we live impacts on our lifestyle and choices including housing, public open space, amenities and accessibility. Too often we have seen designers develop suburbs with no distinction of age or alternative lifestyle choices. For example, not everyone wants a four bedroom two bathroom home or even to live in ‘new’ suburbs where all the houses are the same and whole suburbs are blocked in with large walls. Planners should be encouraged to consider methods for reducing dependence on cars for local journeys.
- The consultation paper focuses on cleaner transport systems and other environmental projects but pays little attention to the way our communities are planned i.e. the built environment and how it coexists with the surrounding environment. For example, our levels of car dependence are determined by the way our cities are planned. This should be the platform on which any sustainability strategy is based as most other social and environmental factors flow from this. The Sustainability Strategy should highlight the importance of urban design and its impact on the liveability and sustainability of urban environments.

7.5 Contemporary views of sustainability

The State Government’s attention on sustainability issues is supported.

The importance of sustainability and sustainable development has been widely recognised for many years and there is little doubt that most communities are far more aware of sustainable environment issues than they were 10 years ago. Political pressure is now providing the driver to formally address the issue.

7.6 Economic Equity in Society

The maintenance of economic equity in a society is a crucial underpinning to the development of economic, social and environmental sustainability. For example, assisting in the provision of alternative income opportunities for farms affected by salinity will help to realign equity of wealth.

7.7 Sustainability Principles

The Sustainability principles on page 6 of the consultation paper is strongly supported, particularly with regard to the principle relating to the lack of scientific certainty.

The State Sustainability Strategy must recognise that there will always be a degree of uncertainty relating to some sustainability issues and that this fact should not deter the immediate implementation of appropriate sustainability solutions. Sustainability will be about vision and risk taking and we need to encourage those visionaries and risk takers who have already been involved in working towards these principles.

7.8 Sustainability action vs. rhetoric and inaction

The City of Joondalup seeks practical action and leadership demonstrated by the State Government via the State's Sustainability Strategy. Significantly enhanced assessment of sustainability issues is sought and the City of Joondalup seeks to engage in these processes.

7.9 Role of State Government Agencies

The Sustainability Strategy should consider the role of State government agencies and authorities in facilitating sustainability initiatives and possible organisational changes. The strategy should consider the role of the Environmental Protection Authority;

- 1) The Environmental Protection Authority to be totally independent, not just in name but in practice.
- 2) That as an advisory body its opinions and recommendations are valued for their expertise and knowledge.
- 3) That policy and procedure of the EPA be strengthened to ensure that EPA recommendations are enforceable.
- 4) That appropriate government accountability be required to ensure enforcement and compliance of EPA recommendations.
- 5) That greater emphasis be placed on proactive encouragement of sustainability initiatives rather than an excessive reliance on re-active environmental impact assessment of proposals.

7.10 Avoid unnecessary bureaucracy

Development, endorsement and implementation of the State's Sustainability Strategy should avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.

7.11 Global sustainability issues related to State sustainability issues

Western Australia's primary sustainability objective is to address Western Australian sustainability issues and achieving sustainability within its own borders. There would be enormous benefits from developing and implementing a range of sustainability options within our own State.

It is recommended that the State's Sustainability Strategy focus primarily on State sustainability issues and avoid undue emphasis relating to global sustainability issues. Although the relationship with global sustainability issues can be noted, it is important that the State Strategy is developed as a practical document for Western Australia. Public awareness of these issues is constantly increasing and support for any initiative would be greater than in the past.

Western Australia could become a world leader on the restoration of salinity affected landscapes and land degradation because it is such a critical problem here. This could be utilised as a niche market for Research and Development projects in our State.

7.12 Sustainability and business

The City of Joondalup recognises that Western Australia has a number of world-class environmental management and waste technology companies whose export of services should be supported.

With a growing demand for such services in East / South East Asia and the Indian Ocean Rim, the enhancement of these capabilities will have a positive effect on the environmental management and research capabilities of businesses in Western Australia.

8. Acknowledgements

The City of Joondalup submission on the State's Sustainability Strategy was co-ordinated by the City's Sustainable Development Officer Mr J Goldsmith. Contributions from the following staff and committee members are gratefully acknowledged.

Manager Projects, Planning and Policy
Manager Contracts
Manager Library Services
Sustainable Development Officer
Community and Health Services
Local Area Development Officer
Co-ordinator Environmental Health Services
Community Building Officer
Project Officer- Youth in Government Programme
Yellagonga Environmental Health Officer

and Members of the City of Joondalup Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee;

Cr J Hollywood
Cr A Nixon
Mr S Hawkins
Mr J Goldsmith
Mr D Cluning
Mr J Kirton

Councillor, Committee Chairperson
Councillor (Deputy, Cr O'Brien)
Community Representative, Deputy Chairperson
Sustainable Development Officer
Manager Operations Services
Manager Organisation & Strategic Development

<i>Mr C Merry</i>	Community Representative
<i>Mr S Magyar</i>	Community Representative
<i>Mr R Kurup</i>	Community Representative
<i>Mr V Cusack</i>	Community Representative
<i>Mr W Carstairs</i>	Community Representative
<i>Mr D Wake</i>	Community Representative
<i>Mr G Down</i>	Community Representative
<i>Mr G Hartnett</i>	Community Representative

9. References/Further Reading

Chambers and Galloway and Associates. (July 1998). Development of a Local Agenda 21 Framework for the City of Wanneroo.

Chambers and Galloway (1999) State of the Environment/Sustainability Indicators report.

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Western Australian Municipal Association. (June 2000) Local Agenda 21 Report Card, Local Agenda 21 in Western Australia.