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Professor Peter Newman
Director Sustainability Policy Unit
Department of Premier and Cabinet
15th Floor 197 St Georges Tce
PERTH 6000

Dear Professor Newman

STATE SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Thank you for providing the City of Perth with the opportunity to provide comment on the development of the State Sustainability Strategy.

The City supports the concept of sustainability and welcomes the opportunity to reflect on what we are already doing and what we could do better in the journey towards improving sustainability. The City held a brainstorming session, 15 April 2002, in response to the Government's consultation paper. During the brainstorming session a number of existing partnerships with the state and federal governments, addressing social, economic and environmental issues were identified. Discussions were also held on how these partnerships could be improved to further sustainability in the city and Western Australia.

Existing City of Perth projects that demonstrate principles of sustainability include:-

- Coastal Clean Seas programme for Point Fraser
- CAT buses
- Cities for Climate Protection programme
- Economic Development Plan

The City is concerned however, that the State Government's consultation paper focuses predominantly on ecological issues. It is felt that greater attention to economic and social factors is required to assist the City in gaining a greater understanding of the need to integrate social, economic and environmental goals. It is suggested that this focus would also assist business and industry to understand their role in the movement towards a more sustainable state.



In encouraging the move towards sustainable industries, the Government should continue to be mindful of Western Australia's geographical isolation and its economic climate. Giving economic issues due consideration will assist in developing broader partnerships, particularly with the business sector. It would also assist the move towards a more sustainable Western Australia if the State Sustainability Strategy had significant and obvious input from business and industry, particularly in the area of practical and operational examples.

Whilst it is understood that different local authorities will have different community needs, desires and aspirations, and therefore slightly different approaches to improving sustainability, a common approach to operationalising sustainability into the functions of local government is needed. It is important to ensure that sustainability is considered in the day to day activities of local government, not just for specific projects. A common definition of sustainability would seem to be the most appropriate starting point to achieve this.

It is felt that the definition used in the consultation paper does not go far enough to clearly explain what sustainability is. Additionally, the definition relies on goals and yet those goals are not articulated within the consultation paper.

The City of Perth has preference for the definition of sustainability used by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI).

Development that delivers basic social, economic and environmental services to all without threatening the viability of the natural, built and social systems upon which these services depend (ICLEI, 1996).

It is felt that this definition is more practical than that used by the State Government.

It would be beneficial to the City of Perth if the State Sustainability Strategy identified leaders and champions in sustainability across all levels of government. This will be particularly useful at the local government level.

Should you wish to discuss the City of Perth's comments further, please contact Lisa March on 9461 3243.

Yours sincerely

CHARLOTTE STOCKWELL
DIRECTOR STRATEGY