

Enquiries to: Lisa Cooke (nee March)
Strategy (9461 3243)
EMail: lisa_march@cityofperth.wa.gov.au
Our Ref: P1706872-2

20 March 2003

Professor Peter Newman
Sustainability Policy Unit
Department of Premier and Cabinet
197 St George's Tce
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Professor Newman

RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT STATE SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Thank you for providing the City of Perth with the opportunity to comment on the Government's draft *Western Australian State Sustainability Strategy*. The City supports the concept of sustainability and understands the importance of effective partnerships in working towards the goal of sustainable development.

Concerns Identified in the Consultation Paper

On 30 April 2002, the City of Perth made a submission in response to the State Sustainability Strategy consultation paper. In this submission, the City expressed its concern regarding the need for a common approach to operationalising sustainability into the functions of local government. It is the City's view that the government has largely addressed this concern in the draft Strategy with the proposal of a state – local government roundtable.

In its submission, the City also had concerns regarding the dominant focus on ecological issues and felt that social and economic issues had not been given sufficient attention. Whilst the draft State Sustainability Strategy does provide greater focus on social and economic issues, it is still felt that the Strategy could further strengthen the economic case.

Economic Focus

The backing of big business is important in the City. The City of Perth is not the primary motivator for sustainability in the city, it simply does not have the economic strength of business to influence changes in community attitudes. Business input is



vital, not only to the funding of many initiatives identified in the draft Strategy, but in the influencing of the broader community's response to sustainable development.

The City is also concerned that there has not been a comprehensive evaluation of the economic synergies between the CBD and the greater Metropolitan Perth or the economic relationship between Perth and the regions.

Capital City Issues

There is strong support by the State Government to establish regional partnerships to address many sustainability issues and, in many cases, a regional approach makes sense. However, it is likely to be quite difficult for a capital city to successfully address all of its sustainability issues through an alliance with other metropolitan councils. It would also seem that there are significant opportunities to enhance existing and develop new partnerships between the capital city and the State Government.

Heritage

Whilst the fundamental principles being applied are sound, there are issues that should be addressed in the heritage section of the Strategy. Consistency in addressing cultural heritage needs improvement, that is, the vision does not mention cultural heritage, yet it is mentioned in both the objectives and the actions.

As is the case with a number of proposed actions within the Strategy, the proposed heritage actions contain words such as 'support' and 'encourage' however, little indication is given as to who will be doing these things and how they will be costed. For example, *4.72 Support Regional Sustainability Strategies as opportunities to develop 'sense of place' stories.*

Other Concerns

- The Strategy does not clearly state the need for proposed working groups to establish aims, objectives, terms of reference and time lines. The City feels that this should be done as a matter of priority, as it is essential for creating a framework of implementation for the Strategy.
- It is not clear who will be responsible for reviewing the Strategy. It is also unclear as to how frequently reviews will be carried out.

City of Perth Contribution

The City must tread a finely balanced line between providing for the needs of its rate payers and residents and those who participate in the lifestyle of the city and form an integral part of its vitality and contribute to the economic benefit of the city and the State. Bearing this in mind, the City would be pleased to work with the Government to create a more sustainable Western Australia.

In conclusion, the City of Perth, as the capital city, has a unique and significant role to play in relation to the economy and well being of the broader community of Western Australia. As the capital city local authority, with diverse stakeholders and customers, it is a complex entity. Opportunities in sustainability exist in the City, but they will require a partnership approach.

The City of Perth welcomes the opportunity to participate in future consultation on the development of the State Sustainability Strategy. In particular, the City is looking forward to being involved in the proposed State – Local Government sustainability roundtable and the identification of the aims, objectives, terms of references and time lines for the various working groups.

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

Yours sincerely

CHARLOTTE STOCKWELL
DIRECTOR STRATEGY