

MAINSTREET PROGRAM

1479. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Local Government and Regional Development:

- (1) Has the Mainstreet program been disbanded?
- (2) If so, why?
- (3) If not, which government department now administers the program?
- (4) Why have the communities of Wagin, Denmark and Dunsborough, which have had proposals for support before the Mainstreet program and other areas of government for several years, been ignored yet again?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

- (1)-(4) The Mainstreet program provides funding of up to \$120 000 over four years to regional towns. Past commitments mean that all of the money allocated to the Mainstreet program for the 2002-03 financial year will be taken up by towns already in the program. Some money will be available in 2003-04 as towns within the program complete the four-year cycle. The Mainstreet program has a budget allocation to the 2004-05 financial year. However, it is considered inappropriate to introduce new towns to the four-year program in 2003-04 when the program has only one more year to run. Consequently, no new towns will be accepted into the program and any remaining money will be directed to support other regional initiatives. Communities are encouraged to approach their local regional development commissions with any community development projects of a kind that have traditionally been funded by the Mainstreet program for consideration under their regional development schemes. The Department of Local Government and Regional Development will administer the program until current participants complete the four-year cycle.