Withers Urban Renewal Project

Project Scope

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The South West Development Commission (SWDC) has recently formed a partnership with the City of Bunbury to collaboratively examine the locality of Withers and support the development of a suitable urban renewal plan for this area.

The Withers precinct is predominantly residential with a limited number of community facilities such as a library, community health centre and family day centre located within. The precinct is situated in an urban area containing a shopping centre, community health care services, primary and secondary schools, local parklands and regional recreational facilities.

Key features are:
- Neighbourhood Centre containing Minninup Forum Shopping centre etc;
- Hudson Road Family Centre;
- Newton Moore Senior High School;
- Maidens Park Primary School (previously called Withers Primary School);
- South West Sports Centre;
- Police and Citizens Youth Centre (PCYC);
- Hay Park (a recreational park for sports clubs);
- The Maidens Reserve; and
- St Josephs Primary School.

Withers was developed as a public housing estate during the 1960’s, 1970’s and 1980’s. A product of the government approach to public housing during this period, Withers developed into a residential estate with a high concentration of public housing. Part of the design concept was based on the “Radburn” design, named after the precursor town in the United States where a “spinal” open space system with houses facing the open space rather than the road existed. It also featured long winding streets that followed the lands’ contours but did not connect with each other. Areas of multi-storey, medium density housing (more commonly known as ‘flats’) were located at strategic points along the edge of the public open space corridor. The design was based heavily on topography and pedestrian linkage but had very little regard for street connectivity.

1.2 OBJECTIVE

The aim of this project is the development of a comprehensive community and government owned quadruple bottom line action plan for the sustainable development of Withers that includes:

1. Confirmation of priority issues regarding liveability within Withers for current residents, service providers and the greater Bunbury community. This information will be based on summaries of previous consultation reports, feedback from community stakeholders, Reference Groups (x3) and a Project Control Group; and

2. Development of costed, evidence based, best practice strategies to address identified priority issues based on feedback from Reference Groups (x3), a Project Control
Group, legislative and technical and budgetary limitations of relevant agencies.

Strategies will include:

- Integrated public open space planning that promotes greater public safety, physical activity and recreational and cultural opportunities;
- Integrated transport planning that provides options for public transport as well as cycling and walking that improves access and mobility;
- A housing strategy that provides for improvement to existing housing and opportunities for new affordable housing including appropriate options for seniors and other groups in the area;
- Infrastructure planning that incorporates a review of community infrastructure and services together with recommendations for further development;
- A local area economic development strategy, including a review of local employment and business start-up / incubation opportunities; and
- A perception change strategy to reduce stigma and enhance image and identity of Withers.

Both SWDC and the City of Bunbury will also provide relevant technical support and expertise to progress the consultancy. The SWDC will accept contract management responsibility with the support of the City of Bunbury.

The consultancy will be overseen by a Project Control Group consisting of project partners SWDC and the City of Bunbury. There will also be three reference groups with participation of stakeholders in the areas of

- Business;
- Community; and
- Government

1.3 COMMUNICATION

Apart from stakeholder consultation listed at 1.4.3., all communications relating to this project should be endorsed by the CEO’s of the City of Bunbury and the SWDC. There should be appropriate acknowledgements and use of logos on written material that is provided to stakeholders.

The City of Bunbury will communicate publicly in relation to residents’ and other community concerns and the SWDC will communicate publicly on matters relating to other stakeholders within the spirit of this agreement.

The consultant will communicate publicly via the CEO’s of the SWDC or the City of Bunbury and not independently to this.

The CEO’s shall meet monthly to discuss both the project and communication strategy implementation.

1.4 SPECIFICATION

1.4.1 INITIAL EXPLORATION

The initial exploration will require a desktop review of all information sources such as:

- WA Planning Commission Liveable Communities Framework incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED);
- City of Bunbury - A Snapshot of Withers: Services, Projects and Resources in 2010/2011;
- Research from the University of WA (UWA) School of Population Health;
- Research from CSIRO on urban renewal and development;
- Research from the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute and the Australian Institute of Urban Studies;
- The Planning Institute of Australia;
- Appropriate Australian Standards; and
- Any other documentation, research, plans or information relevant to the task.

In addition to the desktop review, initial discussions will be required to be held with the following authorities and stakeholders to gain an insight into positions, policies, priorities and directions regarding the precinct from a regional and local perspective.
- South West Development Commission;
- City of Bunbury;
- Department of Housing;
- WA Police Service;
- WA Country Health Services;
- Department of Sport and Recreation;
- Department for Communities;
- Department for Child Protection;
- Landcorp;
- Withers Action Group; and
- Appropriate representatives from the community’s
  - indigenous population;
  - seniors;
  - young people;
  - families;
  - businesses operating in the area;
  - sporting, interest, social and religious groups; and
  - cultural groups.

1.4.2 REVIEW EXISTING PLANS
The existing plans and documents listed are required to be reviewed in relation to this project, together with other relevant data.
- City of Bunbury Strategic Plan;
- South West Development Commission Strategic Plan 2010-2025;
- City of Bunbury Withers Report to Council 2011;
- City of Bunbury - A Snapshot of Withers: Services, Projects and Resources in 2010/2011;
- City of Bunbury Crime Prevention Strategy;
- City of Bunbury City Vision 2007;
- 2001 Withers Pindan Report; and
- Any other documentation or plans relevant to the task.

1.4.3 CONSULTATION
Extensive community engagement is required for this project. However due to the succession of previous broad public consultation forums, it is anticipated that community engagement will be developed through other methods such as, but not limited to, use of reference groups, focus groups, face-to-face meetings and surveys. Liaison with key stakeholders is required including relevant state and local government agencies and
community groups or groups representing targeted demographics within the community. These include those authorities and stakeholders listed at Clause 1.4.1.

In addition to engaging with the local community and regional stakeholders, independent perception research on the area is a significant part of this project requiring consultation with people outside of the region.

It is expected that applicants will provide a proposal on undertaking the community engagement and research as part of their submission outlining methodology.

In addition, it is expected that attendance at the following meetings will be required:
- A start up meeting with the Project Control Group and meetings with the group at key study milestones;
- Regular briefings to the Chairman of the Steering Committee; and
- Briefings of the findings of the study to participating agencies.

1.4.4 EXPLORATION OF IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES
This phase will involve summarising and compiling all the relevant data from the initial exploration and consultation phase to commence a process of exploring opportunities to fulfil future needs and provide resolutions for gaps and deficiencies.

1.4.5 DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN
Prepare a strategic report that includes all data, considerations, evaluations and recommendations formulated during the process.

1.4.6 OUTPUTS
It is expected that the final report will be a comprehensive community and government owned quadruple bottom line action plan for the sustainable development of Withers that includes:

- Confirmation of priority issues regarding liveability within Withers for current residents, service providers and the greater Bunbury community. This information will be based on summaries of previous consultation reports, feedback from community stakeholders, Reference Groups (x3) and the Project Control Group.
- Development of costed, evidence based, best practice strategies to address identified priority issues based on feedback from Reference Groups (x3), the Project Control Group, legislative and technical and budgetary limitations of relevant agencies.

Strategies will include:
- A broad based spatial plan that integrates and maximises efficient and safe use of public spaces that are well designed and universally accessible in order to create new opportunities for greater physical activity and enhanced recreational and cultural participation.
- A transport strategy that provides options for both public transport as well as cycling and walking;
- A housing strategy that provides for improvement to existing housing and opportunities for new affordable housing including appropriate options for seniors and other groups in the area;
- A review of infrastructure and services together with recommendations for further development with involvement and input from all significant stakeholders;
- Local area economic development strategy, including a review of local employment and business start-up / incubation opportunities; and
- A perception change strategy to improve public recognition and perception of Withers.
Adele Farina to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Regional Development.

I refer to the answer to my Question Without Notice asked on 13 November 2012 stating that the consultant's report findings and survey findings on the Withers Urban Renewal Project were made available to the public meeting on 30 October 2012 and that the report on the service providers engagement process would be made public when it is completed, and ask -

1. As the report findings and survey findings were reported at the 30 October 2012 meeting, when will copies of these be released?
2. The service providers engagement process was completed some months ago, what is the delay with completing and releasing the report?
3. As the Withers Urban Renewal Strategy and Action Plan was expected to be completed and released by early November, what is the cause of the delay and how soon can the community expect the Strategy and Action Plan to be released?
4. Were consultants TPG Town Planning and Urban Designed engaged to undertake the community engagement process only or to also prepare the Withers Urban Renewal Strategy and Action Plan?
5. Will the Minister table the Brief/Instructions/Terms of Reference provided to the consultants and if no, why not?

I thank the Member for some notice of this question.

1. I am advised a copy of the community engagement findings will be available on the South West Development Commission website by the end of this week.
2. The engagement process was recently completed. The report is being finalised.
3. The consultants are currently finalising some aspects of the strategy. The strategy and action plan must be endorsed by the Bunbury City Council and the South West Development Commission Board prior to any release.
4. TPG Town Planning and Urban Design were engaged to prepare a strategy and action plan for the Withers Urban Renewal Strategy. A community engagement process was part of this brief.
5. The brief was previously publically available on the Government Tenders website. However I table a copy of the brief for the Member’s information.