



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

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**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL WEDNESDAY JULY 22**

### **Five year plan adds transparency to City vision**

22 July 2009

The City of Geraldton-Greenough will be a leader in service delivery and infrastructure within five years, with the visionary adoption last night of budget projections for the next five years.

Believed to be one of the few Local Government Authorities in WA to do so, the City's five year forecasts provide a detailed schedule of deliverable projects and priorities up to and including the 2013/14 financial year.

Chief executive officer Tony Brun said the projections were aligned to the Plan for the Future 2009-2014, adopted by Council at the special Council meeting held last night.

"Having budget blueprints going forward will allow the City to deliver its services in the most efficient and effective way," he said. "It will help us turn our vision for Geraldton-Greenough into a reality, by clearly showing what projects are achievable on a year by year basis.

"We have taken this step because of the unprecedented amount of growth and major developments taking place within our community. We need to anticipate and manage this growth to create the best outcomes for our residents."

The adoption of forward estimates for four years provides a greater level of transparency about the City's priorities than any other local government organisation in WA. The adoption of the Plan for the Future links the City's vision for Geraldton-Greenough to a series of deliverable outcomes, strategies and actions.

Reflecting the expansion of the City's services, the five year projections anticipate a required residential rate increase to 8.25% in 2010/11. This increase relates to asset sustainability and preservation, and bridging a service gap.

The asset renewal increase follows a comprehensive review of the City's assets over the past 12 months, which found more funding is required to maintain existing assets. A suggested rate increase of 2.5% on top of the general rate will be introduced to build up reserves to fund future asset maintenance programs.

The service gap increase rate reflects a gap between the services the City provides, and what it can afford to provide. As the City's services expand to meet the needs of a growing population, a notional 2% increase to the general rate will help the City of Geraldton-Greenough provide a level of services equal or higher than that of other regional local governments in WA.

"Not only do we have a vision for the future of Geraldton-Greenough," Mr Brun said. "We now have a practical framework to deliver it."

**ENDS:**

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