



City of Greater Geraldton ANNUAL REPORT 2011 - 2012

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City of
Greater Geraldton
a vibrant future



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WELCOME TO THE CITY OF GREATER GERALDTON



The capital of the Midwest, Greater Geraldton has a population of 39,368 and is a progressive, sustainable region overlooking the Indian Ocean. Geraldton is surrounded by Greenough which boasts fertile farm land and world class beaches.

Situated an hour's drive inland from Geraldton, Mullewa sits in the heart of the wildflower region of Western Australian.

We are a rapidly growing local authority located 424km north of Perth, rich in indigenous and pioneering history with a strong and diverse economy based on agriculture, fishing, mining and tourism industries.

AMALGAMATION

On 1 July 2011, the former City of Geraldton-Greenough merged with the former Shire of Mullewa to become the new entity of the City of Greater Geraldton.



This amalgamation has provided many benefits to both the Geraldton-Greenough and Mullewa communities, including increased opportunities for more comprehensive and broader regional planning, increased capacity for stronger and more effective advocacy and enhanced contributions to community programs.



A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The City of Greater Geraldton is one of the few Local Governments in Western Australia which has managed to carry out two successful amalgamations. The melding of the City of Geraldton and the Shire of Greenough and then last year the inclusion of Shire of Mullewa to form the new entity has brought some great financial and planning benefits to the Mid West.

From an integrated planning point of view, the benefits of amalgamation have been immeasurable in terms of developing an overall strategy for not only the City but the whole area around the city. We have also been able to make great improvements to our Information Technology and Communication systems and rationalise our plant and machinery to ensure we can achieve the best value for money for our residents.

Almost all of the cost of implementing the integration of the local governments has been funded by the State Government. We owe a great deal of thanks to them. I believe the decision, taken four years ago, to proceed with amalgamation was the right one and I am pleased to say we are held in high regard within local government circles for the enormous progress we have made in moving toward more efficient and sustainable operations.

During the annual Local Government Conference, this year, I was invited to speak on our experiences and the successes we encountered along the way. Two of the main benefits of our mergers which I addressed were in relation to our enhanced ability to attract additional state and federal funding and also our capacity to attract more experienced and qualified staff and executives. The consolidation of the staff of the previous organisations has facilitated a situation where we were able to enable the staff to be more specialised in their roles and thus permit a better standard of services in many areas. I have also been invited to address quite a number of councils around the state on the benefits of amalgamation. I believe there is a good case for the reduction of local governments in Western Australia to achieve better efficiency, sustainability and more effective representation to state and federal levels of government.

Whilst our staff numbers have grown marginally, we have also been able to provide better services to tourism via the Geraldton Visitor Centre as the result of taking over its operations. We have also been able to concentrate on the economic development of the City, which is something that has been the wish of the Council for many years. Our staffing levels compare more than favorably with other organisations of similar sizes.

The work done in the last two years on the innovative 2029 and Beyond Project has enabled us to drill down into the community and establish their wishes and aspirations in relation to how the City can grow in a sustainable way. This has been a great base from which to launch into the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework which we will be required to comply with from the 1st of July 2013. Without the base of the 2029 project to work from (which was predominantly grant funded), we would have been faced with some substantial costs to get the information required to complete our 10-year Strategic Plan and the Four-year Corporate Plan required by the new legislation. This work has put us in front of most other local governments in Western Australia. Here I must acknowledge the foresight of our CEO, his Executives and the Council which chose two years ago, to take this very innovative path and then to continue the required support. We have received a great deal of praise from within the State and Federal Governments and their bureaucracies for the achievements which have come from this program.

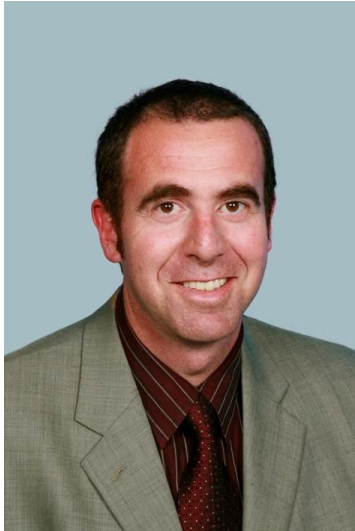
Over the last two years we have determined not enough provision has been made within past budgets, to ensure our approximately \$450 million of assets are able to be maintained and then replaced when and as required. This is a problem right across local governments across Australia and one we all have to come to grips with. Our early identification of this issue will enable us to be in a position to ensure our ongoing sustainability. Failure to address this dire problem would eventually place future grant funding in jeopardy. We must not leave our community in a position where we see community facilities fall into disrepair. Urban decay cannot and must not be contemplated.

Our organisation has received a number of important awards this year. I don't have the space to include them all but one of the very important and very prestigious ones was the IBM Smarter Cities Award – we were one of only two cities in Australia to be so awarded. Given our size compared with most other cities in Australia, we are very proud of our achievement. I am sure we received the award because IBM could see our commitment and the innovative things we are doing. This award will enable us to better assimilate our planning and development with our Information Technology plans. This integrates perfectly with the push forward to see Geraldton leverage off the great opportunities we have with the arrival of the National Broadband Network. We are truly in a unique position and I encourage our local businesses to look very carefully at their digital strategies and future directions as we have done. I guarantee this is a once in a lifetime chance!

I would like to convey my sincere thanks to the CEO, his Executive our Managers and our excellent staff for the great work they have done in the past year. I also thank the Council for their diligence, foresight and the support they have provided to the CEO, Executive and me.

Jan Carpenter

Mayor



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

More than one year on from the amalgamation between the City of Geraldton-Greenough and the Shire of Mullewa to form the City of Greater Geraldton, I can report there have been many positive outcomes proving structural reform is the way to go.

A new strategic community plan has been drafted, developed based on extensive community engagement undertaken as part of the City's international award-winning 2029 and Beyond project to guide the City's growing population that has hit the 40,000 people mark - and rising.

This year the City of Greater Geraldton was fortunate to be awarded an IBM Smarter Cities Challenge, an in-kind competitive grant program worth USD400,000 that saw six IBM specialist experts spend three weeks living and working in the City and then providing a report detailing recommendations to Council on urban development and digital investment.

This came on the back of Geraldton being chosen as one of only 19 sites in Australia to be chosen for the second roll out of the National Broadband Network with NBNCo hauling the first fibre in November 2012 which will allow about 3,000 homes and businesses initially, to connect to the high speed network and also allow Council to change the way it does business. Ultimately Geraldton will be Australia's first city to have every house and business connected to high speed broadband via fibre, fixed wireless and satellite. Additionally Geraldton has been selected as a key NBNCo satellite base station and the Point of Interconnect (effectively the exchange for the major part of northern Western Australia).

Staying on the digital dais, Geraldton continued to lead the way in the technology stakes securing funding of more than \$1 million for three programs to help the community transition into the digital world. Under the Federal Government's Digital Hubs and Digital Enterprises program, the Go Gero Digi Hub was set up at premises in the CBD, to extend free local NBN training for all community members and small businesses, to better understand how they can take advantage of the NBN and online opportunities. Under the third program, Digital Local Government, funding will allow the NBN to provide increased IT services for the City.

All these reflect and support the City's strategy to position Geraldton as a nationally significant digital city and economy.

The benefits of amalgamation were once again identified with funding of \$9 million through the \$112 million Building Better Regional Cities program, allowing critical infrastructure works in the Geraldton suburbs of Karloo and Wandina, which will see a priority release of 400 lots for affordable housing delivered through the Department of Housing by 2016, with the ultimate release of more than 1,500 new lots.

Further funding came in July from Federal Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, Hon Simon Crean, with the announcement of \$4.9 million as part of the \$13.83 million City West End Recreation and Entertainment Precinct project, under Round 2 of the Regional Development Australia Fund. This matched the Geraldton Port Authority's contribution of \$1.9 million and the Mid West Development Commission's funding of \$2.2 million. Securing all of this funding would not have been possible before structural reform; and Council's ability to match funding shows its commitment to strong financial management and sustainability.

On the sustainability front, more funding was awarded to the City for the Stormwater and Efficiency Project designed to harvest water captured in Geraldton's stormwater drainage system to irrigate public open space. The Federal Government's Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC) has committed \$3 million towards the \$6 million project.

Always health conscious, the City was fortunate to launch the Go Gero! Getting Active and Eating Well Made Easy project, funded by the Commonwealth Government under the Healthy Communities Initiative, aimed at creating partnerships and programs to engage the community in physical activity and healthy eating. An important partnership to evolve from this project is the Go Gero! Fruit and Veg van, a partnership with Foodbank Australia selling fresh fruit and veg to those who may find it difficult to access more conventional food outlets.

In closing I'd like to acknowledge and thank the Executive Team and all staff at the City of Greater Geraldton for their hard work and commitment, it's been a very exciting, rewarding and fast-paced year.

My thanks of course go to our hard-working Councillors who so diligently apply themselves to City matters to ensure Geraldton is the best place to live and invest.

Finally I acknowledge Mayor Ian Carpenter, who with his various leadership roles representing the City and local government generally, has shown great leadership, values and direction for the community he leads.

Tony Brun

Chief Executive Officer

INTERIM STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

The City's interim strategic community plan, in compliance with s5.56 of the Local Government Act, was adopted by Council in October 2011, following amendments to the Local Government Act which will soon result in local governments having to develop and implement integrated strategic long term plans.

The Department of Local Government has issued a guideline to all councils, demonstrating a prescribed integrated planning framework to be implemented within a set timeline. In order to maintain this timeline, the City has commenced this process with the development of an interim strategic community plan.

The City has five key goals which we use to drive our planning and decision making processes:



Opportunities for Lifestyle



Opportunities for Creativity



Opportunities for Prosperity



Opportunities for Sustainability



Leading the Opportunities

This City's interim strategic community plan has been developed, through community, councillor and staff consultation to ensure a clear direction is mapped out which will lead to improved services and outcomes for the residents of the City of Greater Geraldton. It also aims to ensure the Council can continue to provide appropriate leadership in a challenging and changing environment.

ELECTED MEMBERS

From 1 July 2011 until the swearing in of the new council, the City of Greater Geraldton was governed by a council of commissioners comprising Cr Barbara Thomas, Cr Nino Messina and Cr Ron Yuryevich, Cr Ian Carpenter and Cr Neil McIlwaine.



Front (L-R): Cr Nino Messina, Cr Ron Yuryevich and Cr Ian Carpenter
Back (L-R): Cr Barbara Thomas, Chief Executive Officer Tony Brun and Cr Neil McIlwaine

Commissioner	Council meetings attended (6 meetings held from 1 July to 12 Oct)
Chair of Commissioners Ron Yuryevich	5
Deputy Chair of Commissioners Ian Carpenter	6
Commissioner Nino Messina	6
Commissioner Barbara Thomas	5
Commissioner Neil McIlwaine	6

An inaugural council election was held in October 2011 during which 14 councillors were elected along with a popularly elected Mayor. Following council elections for the newly amalgamated City of Greater Geraldton, ordinary meetings of Council commenced in October 2011.



Front (L-R): Cr Nino Messina, Chief Executive Officer Tony Brun, Mayor Ian Carpenter, Deputy Mayor Neil McIlwaine

Mid (L-R): Cr Robert Ramage, Cr Tarleah Thomas, Cr Desmond Brick, Cr Ilse Middleton, Cr Ron Ashplant, Cr Graeme Bylund

Back (L-R): Cr Shane Van Styn, Cr Neil Bennett, Cr Chris Gabelish, Cr Jerry Clune, Cr Bob Hall, Cr Peter Fiorenza

Councillor	Appointed	Term Expires	Ward	Council meetings attended*	Agenda Forums attended**	Concept Forums attended***
Mayor Ian Carpenter	2011	2015	n/a	8	6	4
Dep. Mayor Neil McIlwaine	2011	2015	Tarcoola	7	6	5
Cr Shane Van Styn	2011	2013	Tarcoola	8	7	4
Cr Ron Ashplant	2011	2013	Chapman	8	6	6
Cr Desmond Brick	2011	2015	Chapman	8	6	6
Cr Graeme Bylund	2011	2015	Willcock	3	4	3
Cr Chris Gabelish	2011	2013	Willcock	7	5	3
Cr Bob Hall	2011	2015	Port	7	6	5
Cr Neil Bennett	2011	2013	Port	7	5	5
Cr Jerry Clune	2011	2015	Hills	8	7	6
Cr Ilse Middleton	2011	2013	Hills	8	6	5
Cr Tarleah Thomas	2011	2015	Mullewa	7	7	6
Cr Nino Messina	2011	2013	Mullewa	8	7	6
Cr Peter Fiorenza	2011	2015	Champion Bay	8	6	6
Cr Bob Ramage	2011	2013	Champion Bay	7	6	4

* 8 meetings were held from 18 October 2011 to 30 June 2012

** Recording of attendance at Agenda Forums commenced in November 2011. 7 recorded meetings were held from 15 November 2011 to 30 June 2012.

*** 6 Concept Forums were held from 6 December 2011 to 30 June 2012. Concept Forums commenced in December 2011.

ADMINISTRATION STRUCTURE

The City operations and administration is overseen by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with his duties and responsibilities outlined by the Council, the Local Government Act 1995 and through other statutory legislation.



Creative Communities

- Responsible for Community Development, Community Law and Safety, Economic Development and Marketing, Geraldton-Greenough Regional Library, Queen Elizabeth Centre II and the Geraldton-Greenough Visitor Centre.



Commercial Enterprises

- Responsible for the Geraldton Airport, Meru Regional Waste Facility, Aquarena, Land and Property Services, Queens Park Theatre and Midwest and Murchison Family Day Care Services.



Community Infrastructure

- Responsible for City Infrastructure, Planning and Development, Design and Projects, Fleet and Support Services, Parks and Works Operations and Major Projects



Sustainable Communities

- Responsible for Building Surveying, Town Planning and Environmental Health and Sustainability.



Corporate Services

- Responsible for Financial Services, Information Services, Human Resources, Management Accounting, Governance and Risk and Customer Relations.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFESTYLE

REGIONAL WASTE

A combined total waste stream of over 70,000 tonnes was disposed of at the Meru Waste Disposal Facility (MWDF) in 2011-12. The composition of waste stream varied compared with the previous year, with Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) comprising 31%, compared with over 33% in 2010/11. The drop in percentage was matched with an increase in the relatively inert component; Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste stream increasing from 45% to almost 48%.

The decrease in MSW percentage and increase in C&D percentages respectively, aligns with the State's newly released Waste Strategy. In March 2012, the Waste Authority launched the State Waste Strategy with emphasis on landfill diversion rates. In particular, the strategy has specific recovery targets for Regional cities, with aspirational targets of 30% MSW recovery by 2015 and 50% by 2020.

Capital works budgets to construct phase 1 of the Meru Master Plan's implementation along with the construction of the next Class III Cell have been approved for 2012-13, changes to the Meru License and approvals from internal as well as State agencies will need to be obtained prior to works commencing

BRIGHT STARS FAMILY DAY CARE

Mullewa Family Day Care

Mullewa has had a demonstrated demand for child care for many years. This year, the City of Greater Geraldton provided a venue to operate Family Day Care from a community building in the town. This was a wonderful initiative to help provide much needed child care to the community.

Funding Grants

The Bright Stars Family Day Care (BSFDC) was successful in obtaining two grants to assist with running of service. Both Grants were provided by the Department of Communities. The Early Years Grant provided funds to buy resources for the educators to assist with the introduction to the Early Years Learning Framework. The second grant was received via the Regional Communities Child Care Development Fund. The monies were put towards the purchase of a vehicle for the service.

Expanding Family Day Care Services

A majority of our educators are located in Geraldton but as the City extends its family day care services to provide much needed support to other regions, the service continues to grow. In 2011 - 12 two of our service educators relocated to Peel and Perth. A second service was established in Morawa to meet the ever growing demand for child care in this town. Statistics for the year showed greater numbers of new educators registered with BSFDC from outlying regions than those located in Geraldton.



Quality Improvement Plan

Bright Stars Family Day Care worked with various stakeholders to write a Quality Improvement Plan in 2011 - 12. The Plan involved self-assessment on services against the National Quality Standards. The plan will assist the City to continuously improve its Family Day Care services. This is a living document that will be reviewed regularly as part of our quality assurance process.

Family Day Care W.A. (FDCWA)

Bright Stars Family Day Care worked closely with the FDCWA members over the past twelve months to establish generic policies to reflect the new National Regulations and Law which are to be passed through State Parliament in August 2012.

Funding was made available to cover the cost of travel and accommodation for service staff to attend four three day workshops over an eight month period. These workshops were invaluable for the staff to work collaboratively with other services to gain an understanding of the new processes that would be required under the new system.

Aquarena Crèche

Bright Stars Family Day Care continued to provide ongoing support in 2011 -12 to the establishment of the Aquarena Crèche. BSFDC was involved with the design of both the building and the outdoor playground, ensuring it met the brief of the funding providers. The Crèche was opened to the public in November 2011.



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The City provides public health inspections and programs to facilitate and sustain the health and wellbeing of our community.

This year the City's Environmental Health Officers provided the following health inspections:

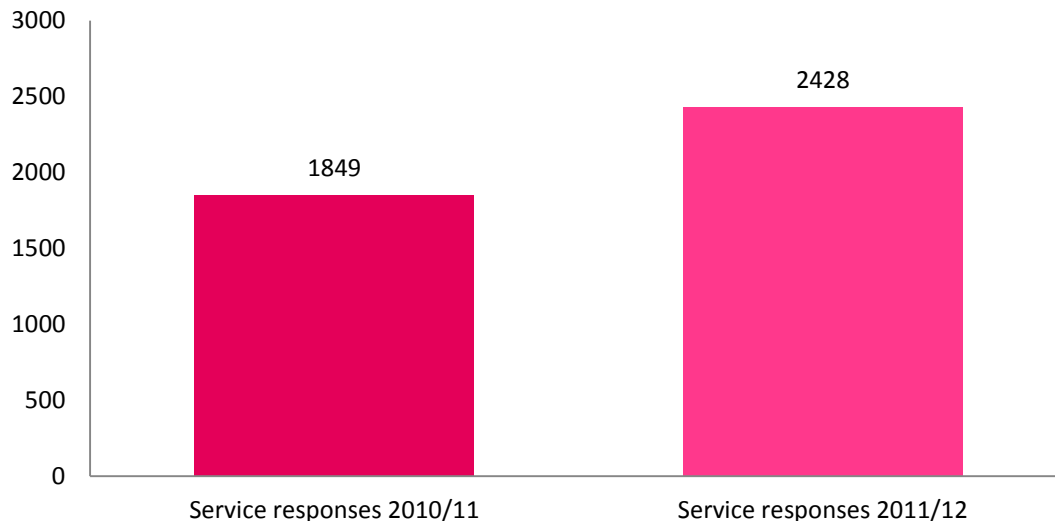
Statutory Compliance Activity Monitored	Inspections	Inspections	Inspections
	2012	2011	2010
Food Businesses	663	448	467
Caravan parks	8	5	6
Hairdressing and Beauty Establishments	34	31	26
Lodging Houses and Accommodation	23	23	29
Offensive Trades and Fish Processing	4	0	4
Pest Control Operators	1	4	6
Pet Meat Processors	2	2	6
Community and Commercial Public Buildings and Entertainment Venues	61	91	93
Skin Penetration / Tattooists	17	24	22
Soil Labelling	3	2	2
Abattoir Animal Carcass Inspections	15642	18542	17506
Health Related Complaint Investigations	260	244	208

During 2011-12, the City has continued to work towards a number of significant achievements in the area of environmental health including:

- * An Increase (by 17%) in "Food Safety Stars" rated food businesses – 150 businesses in total since 2011. This is a 100% increase since 2009.
- * A 43% increase in five stars rated businesses since 2011, an 8 fold increase since 2009.
- * Acceptance of the 2011 WA Consumer Protection Award
- * Continuation of the Fruit and Vegetable Chemical Sampling Program
- * Provision of food stallholders training, online I'm Alert food safety training (336 participants) and building fire safety training.
- * Completion of routine microbiological aquatic and natural recreational water sampling.
- * Facilitation of an Indigenous Environmental Health Worker Program with Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation Inc.
- * Securing of \$50,000 in funding for Midwest Aboriginal Environmental Health Forum projects including; Food Accessibility Pilot, Community Cold-room, Hospitality Training Centre Project, Waste Water Re-use System, Training DVD's, and Community Clean Ups.
- * Implementation of Healthy Communities Initiative "Go Gero Getting Active and Eating Well Made Easy Project"

COMMUNITY LAW AND SAFETY

The 2011-12 financial year has been a year of achievement on multiple fronts in a trying environment. Part of the year the team worked hard to overcome low staffing levels and provide a high quality service to the community. Due to public demand and an appreciation of the environment in which we live, the Rangers have paid increased attention to the areas of Off Road Vehicles and illegal camping. This is combined with attention to litter, animal control, fire prevention, crime prevention and emergency management. The following graph demonstrates the increase in Rangers service provision from 2010/11 to 2011/12:



To ensure the Rangers have the capacity to serve the community, training has been provided in First Aid, the use of quad bikes, the use of firearms, emergency management, fire control, four wheel driving and regulatory services. The majority of the Ranger Team is qualified with the Certificate IV in Local Government (Regulatory Services).

Following amalgamation, the City of Greater Geraldton embarked on a project to consolidate the local laws of all previous Councils. This project involved consultation with stakeholders and the community and is now nearing completion. This will allow for one suite of local laws to be applied to the entire Greater Geraldton area. Completed local laws can be found on the City's website www.cgg.wa.gov.au/your-council/local-laws.

A significant portion of City Rangers' time is dedicated to animal control. Rangers continue to provide a prominent presence through patrols of the Greater Geraldton area. 527 infringements for dogs were issued in 2011-12, an increase of 127 from last year during which 400 infringements were issued.

The community can assist Rangers in minimising the risk of dog related accidents and incidents by ensuring that they have adequate fencing to keep their dog contained; that their dog is registered and wears a registration tag and identification tag; and micro chipping pets to assist Rangers in returning the animal home.

As in previous years, the City of Greater Geraldton expresses its gratitude for the support provided by Geraldton Dog Rescue in rehoming unwanted and unclaimed animals.



Community Safety

The Community Law and Safety Department administers the committees of the Local Emergency Management and Community Safety Crime Prevention. Both of these committees have been well attended in the year and the input and passion of attendees has to be commended. Significant achievements in this area have been:

- * CCTV installation at the Geraldton Regional Library and Breakers Car Park (Western Australian State Government Funded)
- * Upgrade of street lighting in Fitzgerald Street (Western Australian State Government Funded)
- * Introduction of the Graffiti Recording and Reporting Device Initiative (Western Australian State Government Funded)
- * Successful submission for CCTV installation in Mullewa
- * Development of the educational DVD - Operation Runway
- * Business Crime Prevention Workshops
- * Development of a new Community Safety Crime Prevention Plan
- * Updated and Maintained Emergency Arrangements, Business Plans and Annual Reports
- * Waggrakine Fire Prevention Workshop
- * First City of Greater Geraldton Community Safety Day, which was held concurrently with the Sunshine Festival. This event showcased local agencies and organisations involved in community safety in the Greater Geraldton area. The event was extremely well attended and will be held again next year.

Special mention must be made of the efforts of City of Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Brigades. This year saw a busy fire season in the Mullewa District. This came during the Christmas break and was caused by lightning strikes in the area. The Local Brigades were supported by other City Brigades and attacked the fire to bring it under control and protect the local community. City Rangers and Works crews worked extended hours to assist the first responders with the provision of machinery support and operational logistics. The City Brigades attended a large number of small and large fires throughout the year and the City of Greater Geraldton thanks the volunteers for their time and support.



It is important to highlight the need for the community to act early in ensuring they comply with fire prevention measures outlined in the City's first and final notice and maintain those measures until the 1 May. Further fire prevention and safety information can be found on the City of Greater Geraldton website and the Fire and Emergency Services (FESA) website.

The City of Greater Geraldton is a member of the Mid West Industry Road Safety Alliance which was formed in 2011-12. Through this group, the City meets with representatives from haulage operators, Police, Main Roads and other key agencies to discuss and address road safety issues within the transport industry.

The City also participates in Roadwise meetings which have continued throughout 2011-12, providing an ideal forum to raise safety issues on state and local road networks.

TOWN PLANNING

Mullewa Local Planning Scheme and Strategy

Prior to amalgamation the (former) Shire of Mullewa had been working on the development of a new Local Planning Scheme and Local Planning Strategy. The finalisation of these was progressed after the merger and the Minister for Planning granted approval to the new local planning scheme and strategy which were gazetted in June 2012.

Waggrakine Residential Estate Structure Plan

The Structure Plan replaces the former Guided Development Scheme for Waggrakine. The Plan retains the general pattern of subdivision and land uses proposed by the previous Guided Development Scheme, including a centrally-located Local/Neighbourhood Centre, three school sites, a community hall site and various sites set aside for public open space and drainage. The design of the local road network has been modified so that it accords with current planning practice and policy, with many of the no-through roads replaced by a conventional and permeable road layout.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2011-12, the City continued to work on sustainable transport advocacy, strategic transport modelling and road safety promotion.

The City of Greater Geraldton advocates sustainable transport and travel alternatives. This year saw an increase in bicycle parking, shared pathways and pathway renewal and plans for a further two bicycle parking facilities in Marine Terrace have been approved for installation in 2012-13.

A contract has been awarded for the development of the *Strategic Transport and Land Use Model*, based on actual captured commuter behaviour; this model will be the foundation of all major transport infrastructure decisions made by the City in the future. It will be a pivotal tool to determine; where key transportation links need to be upgraded or established, optimal public transport routes, where to establish commuter cycling links, the growth and impact of freight movements along with optimisation of land use as a function of transport infrastructure. When developed the model will be the most comprehensive transport model undertaken in WA. The model is planned to be completed in 2012-13.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The City of Greater Geraldton strives to deliver best practise in environmental sustainability and implements and supports a wide range of local environmental sustainability projects.

This year, the City has completed the following sustainability initiatives:

- * Provided energy audits to local businesses, assisting 10 small to medium businesses save up to 40% in energy costs.
- * Conducted real time energy meter monitoring at City facilities including Art Galleries, Airport, Family Day Care Centres and QEII Community and Seniors Centre.
- * Supported the Geraldton Community Nursery to propagate over 17,000 local provenance seedlings; an increase from 9,500 seedlings in 2009 and 12,000 seedlings in 2010.

- * Assisted in the completion of a Concept Plan with the Men of the Trees community group to propagate 30,000 seedlings and develop new a community nursery site for up to 200,000 seedlings per annum.
- * Installed 10,000 litre capacity water harvesting facilities at the QEII Seniors and Community Centre.
- * Installed a 76 panel solar PV system at the QEII Seniors and Community Centre which generates 70% of the centres energy demand.
- * Progressed a Climate Change Partnership Agreement with Northern Agricultural Catchment Council producing a climate change policy, cost estimates of adaptation actions and greenhouse emissions inventory.
- * Progressed towards milestone 2 and 3 of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives Water Campaign following an award received for improving management of water use and water quality in both corporate operations and the wider community.

In addition to these achievements, the City continues to progress environmental sustainability with the following initiatives:

- * Biodiversity conservation and natural resource management
- * Implementing strategies for reducing Energy, Water, and Waste
- * Implementing Climate Change Adaptation Plan actions and promoting awareness and understanding of climate change
- * Partnering with community groups and agencies to support coastal and biodiversity programs
- * Implementing Corporate Environmental Sustainability Strategy actions and reviewing targets
- * Continuing to support the One Million Trees project which aims to plant 1 million trees by 2015
- * Continuing with renewable and energy efficiency projects such as installing energy generation systems on City owned assets and improving energy efficiency in facilities.

MORESBY RANGE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Management Plan presents a new vision for the section of the Moresby Range immediately south of White Peaks Road and east of Geraldton. It has been strongly informed by extensive community consultation that asked the people of the Midwest – *What future did they want to see for the Range and how did they want to engage with the Range into the future?* The major finding was that the community wanted the Range to be turned into a unique and iconic Park that would become an asset and a resource for the regional, Western Australian and international communities. This concept has underpinned the work done collectively by both the City and the Shire of Chapman Valley in the creation of the Management Plan.

CITY CENTRE TRANSPORT PLANNING AND CAR PARKING STRATEGY



The Strategy considers a number of parking issues in the city centre and the major findings associated with each. These include the ample availability of public parking at times of peak demand, the need to focus on making better use of the available parking rather than adding to the supply, and the need to use parking pricing as a Travel Demand Measure. Parking is increasingly recognised as not only an essential part of overall land development and the transport system, but also as a means to realise various community objectives such as reducing traffic congestion, achieving environmental goals and in particular, attracting private investment.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVITY

ARTS

Artists in Residence Program

In 2011-12 the City reinstated its Artist in Residence program, which presented a broad range of nationally and internationally-significant artists. The first artist presented by this program was saxophonist Julia Banholzer from Frankfurt, Germany. Baholzer has performed and recorded all over the world and performed for former President Bill Clinton in Vienna, Austria immediately prior to her arrival in Geraldton.

While in Geraldton, Banholzer undertook the following community activities: talks at schools; a talk for artists at ACDC; a performance with the Nagle Catholic College Jazz Band in the Queens Park Amphitheatre; a performance as part of the QPT Street Festival on Marine Terrace; and a performance as part of the QPT Piano Bar Series.

Mid West Art Prize

The Mid West Art Prize, presented by the Art Gallery of WA and sponsored by the City, was launched in March 2011. The highly successful inauguration set the standard for a significant cultural event -- not only for the Mid West, but for all of Western Australia.

In 2012 the Mid West Art Prize again attracted artists from across the Mid West and Western Australia and provided a showcase of some of the region's most talented artists.

Queens Park Theatre

The Queens Park Theatre, owned and operated by the City, is working to significantly increase the quality, quantity and audience engagement of its programming. In 2011-12 the Theatre presented more than fifty critically-acclaimed and popular acts, including John Butler, David Strassman, and the Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

The Theatre also reopened its amphitheatre and launched the Moonlite Cinema Series (presenting screenings of art films twice monthly) and Sunset Music Series (presenting classical and jazz performances once monthly). In addition the Theatre activated its foyers through the development of visual art exhibitions and an after-show Piano Bar Series.

Queens Park Theatre Street Festival

In 2012 Queens Park Theatre launched the QPT Street Festival on Marine Terrace. The Festival supports artistic development in the Greater Geraldton community while activating key public spaces.

This is achieved through the provision of year-round instructional and mentoring sessions for emerging artists (especially performing artists) at Queens Park Theatre and corresponding performances in the Marine Terrace pedestrian mall. Performances are held by the clock tower on Marine Terrace on Saturdays from 10:00am to 2:00pm during the period of 1 October to 31 May. Additional performances are presented during cruise ship visits.

Redevelopment of Geraldton Regional Art Gallery

The City is committed to redeveloping the Geraldton Regional Art Gallery to provide a broader range of arts opportunities for the local community. In 2011 the City partnered with the Mid West Development Commission to develop a Schematic Master Plan for the Gallery.

New initiatives in the proposed master plan include upgrades of interior spaces and hardware which will provide opportunities to showcase the diversity present within the arts community in the Mid West and across WA. The improvements made will allow the Gallery to access exhibitions of a National standing, conduct community educational workshops and to better care for the City Art Collection.

COMMUNITY GRANTS

City of Greater Geraldton has committed to providing 1% of the value of rates to the community as Community Grants. Usually two grant rounds are undertaken per annum however in 2011 - 12 three rounds were undertaken to bring the grant program in line with the financial year.

During Round 6 held in March 2011 a total of \$ 120,030.00 was distributed to 40 applicants with a combined total project value of \$1,349,437.

Round 7 held in September 2010 resulted in a total of \$38,600 of funds distributed to 17 applicants with a combined total project value of \$223,425.

Council also considered an urgent request from the Amateur Basketball Association and granted \$5,000 to a project valued at \$16,300.

During Round 8 held in March 2011, a total of \$80,830.00 was distributed to 24 applicants with a combined total project value of \$1,307,754.

Overall, 86 Community Grant applications were received with a total of \$244,460.00 being distributed for community projects valued at \$2,896,916.

Two additional rounds of grants will soon commence closing in 15 September 2011 and 15 March 2012.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

KidSport

The City began the administration of this program in April 2012 and approved 223 applications equating to over \$25,000 in funding.



This funding was used to facilitate the participation of young people between the ages of 5 and 18 in a range of organised sports. Of the participants, more than 58% (approximately 130) had never played sports with a club before.

It is anticipated that within the next 12 months of this the program's promotion during the summer and winter sporting seasons, the City will receive over 400 applications and provide more than \$50,000 worth of funds to assist local clubs with sporting fees for KidSport participants.

This will enable approximately 240 young people to access structured sporting activities for the first time and reap the many benefits of being involved in a sporting or recreational club.



Youth'n'Motion

This program aims to provide quality services to meet the needs of young people in Greater Geraldton and progress a Council Youth Policy and Strategic Plan. An estimated 7,000 participants between the ages of 12 and 25 (20% of the Greater Geraldton population) are involved in this program.

Youth'n'Motion programs are based on the principles that every young person:

- * Has the right to be brought up in a safe, caring, encouraging and challenging environment where they are given the opportunity to become everything they can be, reaching their full potential in life.
- * Is an integral part of the makeup of our community and that the youth of today ARE tomorrow's leaders.

The City's Youth Policy has been reviewed to include Mullewa following the amalgamation of the two local authorities in July 2011.

Youth'n'Motion Bus

The Youth'n'Motion Mobile Youth Centre is an invaluable resource for the community. It is a recognised safe venue for youth to gather and to receive assistance if needed from respected and reliable youth workers.

The service is provided at popular "hangouts" on Thursday evenings which has been identified as a high-risk night where large numbers of youth venture into the city precinct after school.

The City has continued to expand the activities and events particularly in relation to engaging female participants and encouraging them to join in rather than becoming passive spectators.

The establishment of the Mobile Youth Centre "Wall of Pride" has also been welcomed by the young population of Greater Geraldton.

Youth workers regularly take photos of youth participating in the variety of activities offered and photos are added to the wall of the bus. Notes and positive affirmations are also added to assist to empower youth and celebrate participation in positive life choices.

Basketball remains a highly valued activity provided by the Youth'n'Motion service as an extension of the Mobile Youth Centre.

National Youth Week

National Youth Week held in April 2012 was a collaborative effort which networked youth service providers and provided a well-attended night of information and activities.



Midnight Basketball

Two Midnight Basketball tournaments were held in 2011-12 with State Basketball League player Michael Lay undertaking the role of manager.

The Midnight Basketball program has been very successful. The program is a national social inclusion program to assist youth in identifying and embracing positive opportunities. With dinner, a compulsory life skills workshop and tournament basketball games being offered the program attracts young people who will benefit the most. The program also appeals to local community businesses, who are ultimately responsible for guiding the program to its success.

Midnight Basketball aims to offer these positive contributions to the City of Greater Geraldton:

- * Provide young people with a safe, healthy and positive environment at times when they may be vulnerable to harmful and anti-social behaviour.
- * Combat drug, alcohol and other physical abuse by young people.
- * Support the learning needs of young people and provide them with encouragement to participate in mainstream society and their local community.
- * Provide positive role models and reinforce the importance of self-esteem among young people.
- * Divert young people in areas of need from the risk of anti-social and criminal behaviour.

In addition to City funding, supplementary funding for the program has also been secured from the Midnight Basketball National Program, Department of Sport and Recreation and the Attorney General's Office.

Youth Resource Centre Feasibility Study

The City, with supplementary funding from the Midwest Development Commission is conducting a feasibility study for a youth resource centre in the central business district. The feasibility study is due for completion in August 2012.

Youth Strategic Plan

This plan is being reviewed to include Mullewa and strategies included in the plan are being progressed for the Geraldton area.

Youth Engagement

The need for increased youth engagement has been identified through the 2029 & Beyond Projects World Cafes. The City is looking at opportunities to increase young people's participation in government decision making and understanding of the processes.

AUSTRALIA DAY 2012

Geraldton's beautiful foreshore was once again the perfect playground for thousands of patriotic and passionate Australians to celebrate Australia Day on Wednesday 26 January.



Titled the *Wind on Water Festival*, the 2012 Australia Day program had a diverse range of activities and events offering something for all ages, interests and cultures to enjoy from 8am to 10pm.

A record 47 nominations were received for the Premier's Australia Day Active Citizenship awards whilst the inaugural Geraldton Fame Seeker competition for youth under 25 included more than 25 participants.



It has been independently estimated that between 12,000 and 14,000 people participated in the variety of entertainment along the Geraldton foreshore. This is a significant increase in the estimated numbers expected to attend the event. Concurrent activities along the 1 kilometre of foreshore ensured easy access to entertainment for patrons throughout the day.

The 2013 Australia Day celebrations will again be a highlight in the social calendar for people of the Midwest region.

The program will begin with a citizenship ceremony and the presentation of awards from 10am continuing through the day with a Kids Beach Party, Seniors Afternoon Tea, youth activity area and will wrap up with a family concert and firework display.

HARMONY DAY 2012



Harmony Day is celebrated around Australia on 21 March each year. It's a day where all Australians celebrate our cultural diversity. The day is also the United Nation's International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Harmony Day gives people the opportunity to celebrate what makes each Australian unique and share what we have in common.

The events held were designed to develop greater cultural awareness and understanding between all members of our community, Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians and those from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. The City partnered with the Midwest Multicultural Association to showcase talents, arts, crafts and cultural food to bring the community together and unite them in fun, music and laughter.

A Harmony Dinner was held on Saturday 17 March at the Queen Elizabeth II Seniors and Community Centre. The ticketed event attracted over 150 adult patrons and 45 children who were provided with an evening of cultural performances and a buffet meal.

The Harmony Celebrations held on Sunday 18 March at Stow Gardens at the Geraldton foreshore was a free community event and included cultural performances, activities, craft and information stalls, sports activities and cultural food stalls. The event attracted an estimated 800 people.

The City looks forward to once again partnering with the Midwest Multicultural Association to deliver a memorable 2013 Harmony Day celebrations.



GERALDTON REGIONAL LIBRARY AND HERITAGE SERVICES

Amalgamation with Mullewa

Mullewa Library became a branch of the Geraldton Regional Library as a result of the amalgamation in 2011. The City continues to extend some of the Library services enjoyed by Geraldton patrons to the Mullewa community.

Story time sessions, holiday activities, information sessions and author visits have been conducted in Mullewa. For the first time patrons have benefitted from a local stock budget, with new magazines, DVDs and best sellers added to the collection. A public access computer is now available in the Library, which patrons can access free of charge, as well as gain access to free downloadable talking books and E-books and online tutoring services.

Heritage

As a result of a review of the structure of the City of Greater Geraldton, the Library acquired the additional role of Heritage, which is a natural extension of the existing Heritage Services team, with more of an external focus. The Library will continue to develop, enhance and nurture relationships with local, regional, state and national organisations and agencies, as well as work collaboratively with those agencies to ensure good outcomes for Heritage in the region. The department will now be referred to as Libraries and Heritage.

Big Sky Readers and Writers Festival 2011

This year's festival, which received very positive feedback, was a huge success. The inclusion of a high profile key note speaker, Ita Buttrose, attracted a new audience to the event. Guests and attendees enjoyed themselves by participating in a variety of social events, discussions, debates and readings. Big Sky 4 Youth travelled to Mullewa, where Craig Silvey and Dr Richard Walley presented sessions to students from two schools. Guests included Emmanuel Mollois, Piers Akerman, Juliet Marillier, Sally Dingo, Shamini Flint, Norman Jorgensen and James Foley.





RSYWA 2012

Randolph Stow Young Writers Award

Randolph Stow Young Writers Award

This year more than 600 entries were received from students throughout the Mid west region including home schooled students. The Randolph Stow Young Writers Award (RSYWA) was first introduced twenty two years ago as a way of encouraging students in the art of creative writing.

The competition is open to students from years four to twelve with each category divided into different levels allowing entries to be judged equably. The presentation night was hosted by Strathalbyn Christian College with children's author Raewyn Caisley invited as guest speaker. This year over 40 awards were presented across ten categories of poetry and prose.

LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Read Anytime Anywhere Anyhow and Read 3



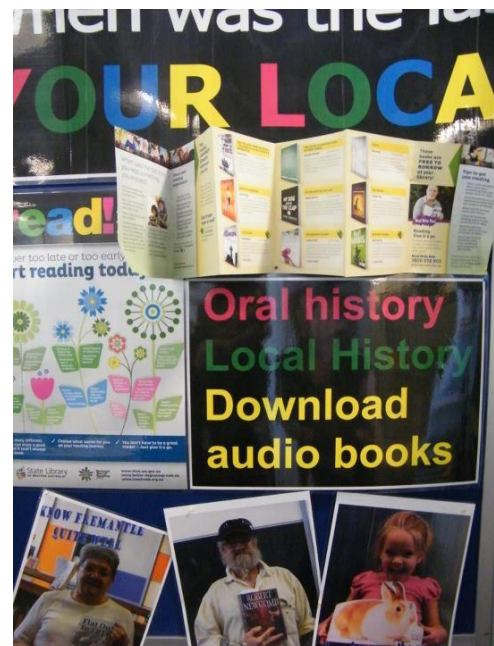
As 2012 is the National Year of Reading, the Geraldton Regional Library was involved with the promotion of Read Anytime Anywhere Anyhow and Read 3 programs during May and June. The programs encouraged people to rediscover the habit and enjoyment of reading, in particular reading for pleasure. Since the launch of Read Anytime Anywhere Anyhow at the beginning of May, the Library staff have organised displays in shopping malls and the CBD to promote the Library's resources, events and programs as a way to help kick start the discovery of reading.

read!3

Geraldton Regional Library was the only country Library to participate in the Read 3 pilot program, an initiative instigated by the State Library in conjunction with the Better Beginnings program to target adults who struggle with literacy. Along with five metropolitan libraries, Geraldton staff engaged with classes and individuals from Durack Institute, Bundiyarra and the Read-Write Now program.

Oral History Program

The Oral History Program was a highlight of the year, with digitisation achieved for two thirds of the collection. Oral History Morning sessions were held on a monthly basis, with attendance averaging 30 to 35 people per session.



Publishing Program

Another addition to the Mid west Heritage Series, *Geraldton's Wildflower: the wax*, by Gary Martin, was launched in February 2012. Work commenced on a joint project with the Western Australia Museum Geraldton to oversee the publishing of the next title in the series, *Mining in the Midwest*. Funding was successfully applied for from the Federal Government to publish another title which will tell the story of the No 1 Railway Station.

Special Services

A strong Better Beginnings program has continued to be offered this year. Families with babies receive a gift of a board book and each child receives a welcome certificate signed and presented by the Mayor. Families are also encouraged to attend the weekly Rhyme Times sessions.

Contact details of these families are recorded, and a birthday party is held for these babies when they turn one year of age.

The Library has partnered with John Willcock College to encourage use of Library services. Each Year 8 class visited the Library to familiarise themselves with the free resources available to them.

In 2011 – 12, the Library offered a program called Finding My Place to Year 10 VIP students from Geraldton Senior College. The students attended ten workshops which aimed to assist in self and career development. Finding My Place was funded by the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

Children's Book Week was celebrated this year at the Library with a visit by children's author, Raewyn Caisley. The author visited various schools in Geraldton and was also guest speaker at the presentation of the Randolph Stow Young Writers Awards.





OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROSPERITY

TOURISM

Geraldton Visitor Centre

Whilst the Geraldton Visitor Centre recorded a slight decrease in visitors this year with just below 63,000 visits, the new Rest Centre facility on the foreshore has been well utilised with just under 18,000 visitors, 9,800 more visitors than last year. The City of Greater Geraldton Rest Centre is a disabled friendly facility and provides visitor information, hot showers and public amenities, beach wheelchair hire, parenting room, beach volley ball hire, cool drinks and ice creams, hats, sunscreen and sunglasses, beach toys and towels, souvenirs and children's clothing.

The Geraldton Visitor Centre website www.geraldontourist.com.au received 229,340 visits in 2011-12, 16,880 more than last year. The City's Geraldton Visitor Centre website provides valuable information on city accommodation, attractions, cafes and restaurants and visitor services.

The City of Greater Geraldton continues to provide its visitor centre newsletter which has become a valuable tool in assisting hotels and local businesses, hospitals, visiting professionals tourists and residents find out what is happening each weekend.

Cruise Ships

In 2011-12 the City appointed a Cruise Ship Coordinator to develop the cruise ship market in Geraldton. The City coordinates the cruise ship volunteer tour guide program and is working with key stakeholders to develop a Geraldton Cruise Ship Strategy. The City of Greater Geraldton is proud of Geraldton's ranking as the second highest port for satisfaction by cruise ship passengers in 2011 and is working hard to retain that recognition.

LAND AND PROPERTY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2011-12 the City continued with concept plans for major land developments for Flores Road (Old Tip site) and Lot 9 Verita Road, Rudds Gully.

A major land acquisition of Lot 9 Verita Road, Rudds Gully was secured, comprising 176 hectares for the proposed Southern Districts Sports Centre and a mixture of residential and commercial development lots. This lot was acquired at a cost of \$4.5M from loan funds.

The Olive Street development has received WA Planning Commission approval for subdivision with the development currently in detailed design stage for subdivision works and drainage design for the stormwater harvesting project. Works on this project are expected to commence in mid-January 2013.

In 2012-13, project coordination will continue with various studies in geotechnical, environmental and civil engineering assessments to support scheme amendments and development plans to the North West Coastal Highway precinct development and Lot 9 Verita Road while Stage 1 of the Airport Technology Park will undergo road and utilities development following tender processes.

Land Development construction works for 2011-12 year slowed, compared to previous years. The Seacrest residential estate development continued to progress against the trend with works also commencing on the Deepdale Industrial Estate.

Design of the Place Road and Flores Road intersection upgrade project was finalised this year and construction has now commenced. It is anticipated that the upgrade will be completed late December 2012.

Other design projects commenced in 2011-12 include:

- * Chapman Road Carpark and Laneway Project (Beaurepaires site)
- * Maitland and Durlacher Street Intersection Signalisation and;
- * Minenooka Road Realignment

GERALDTON REGIONAL AIRPORT



Following deregulation of Geraldton Airport by the State Government for intrastate regular passenger transport (RPT) services in November 2011, QantasLink entered the Geraldton-Perth market in competition with Skywest. In 2011-12, passenger movements through the airport increased to over 136,000 representing annual growth of 29%.

This reflects a significant increase of the growth trend in Mid west air travel, as the previous five years average annual growth was 5.2%.

Recognising the significant growth of Mid west air travel demands via its Regional Airports Development Scheme (RADS), the State Government provided a \$240,000 grant to assist the City in commissioning specialist consultants to produce construction design plans and detailed specifications for a new main runway and associated taxiways and apron, to accommodate larger jet aircraft in anticipation of future airport expansion.

Council purchased additional land south of the airport to ensure land would be available to accommodate the new runway, which will be designed to handle regular future services by Airbus A330/Boeing 787 size aircraft. Construction design for a new 2700 metre runway and conversion of the existing runway to a full length parallel taxiway has been undertaken.

The proposed new Airport Master Plan was approved by Council in September 2011 for issue to aviation stakeholders and the community for consultation, prior to formal council adoption. Adjustments were made where appropriate to reflect stakeholder and community feedback.

In late 2011, the State Government announced the establishment of a Steering Committee to oversee development of a State Aviation Strategy and a related Issues Paper was released in early 2012 seeking aviation stakeholder and community input. The City made a submission and having regard to the range of strategic issues canvassed in the process for formulation of a State Aviation Strategy that are directly relevant to planning for Geraldton Airport, finalisation of the new Geraldton Airport Master Plan has been deferred pending adoption of the proposed strategy by the State Government. The City understands a draft State Aviation Strategy will be released for further public consultation by the end of 2012.

The City Works Depot has relocated from a site on North West Coastal Highway to the area previously used as a depot by the former Shire of Greenough with a number of good quality transportable buildings acquired to provide administrative accommodation.

The building of a new airport maintenance shed was completed during June 2012 along with refurbishment of the rear portion of the adjacent Air services building for office space for airport staff. Expansion of both long and short term parking will commence in September 2012 including facilities for introduction of paid parking at the airport.

Planned projects at the airport in 2012-13 will include construction of a new General Aviation apron area, taxiway enhancement, and commencement of the development of the Airport Technology Park.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This year saw the launch of the City of Greater Geraldton's new Economic Profile website www.economicprofile.com.au/geraldton. This website provides economic statistics on industries, tourism, workers, trends, employment, demographics and population for the region.

The City's Geraldton Opportunities website www.geraldtonopportunities.com.au a combined initiative with the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Mid west Development Commission received a new look and updated links.

The City continues to market the Geraldton region with the "Geraldton – Take a Fresh Look" campaign which promotes the vibrant regional city that Geraldton is fast becoming. "Take a Fresh Look" visitor guides and maps have been produced and distributed throughout the state. In 2011-2012, this campaign appeared in Scoop magazine, Home in WA magazine, the West Australian and numerous tourism brochures.

This year the City was successful in applications for Federal funding for the Digital Hubs and Digital Enterprise programs. The Digital Hubs program will look to provide computer access and training to members of the community and not for profit organisations.

Geraldton secured the rights to host the 2011-12 Clipper Round the World Yacht Race and has entered a racing team in the international event.



Foreign Affairs

The City of Greater Geraldton continues to foster sister city relations with local government in China and Japan. Delegations from Yueqing, China and Kosai, Japan visited Geraldton this year and the City signed a memorandum of understanding with the cities of Lishui in the Zhejiang province and Zhanjiang in the Guangdong province of China to form a Friendship City relationship. Sister city relationships provide opportunities to internationally promote Geraldton as a SMART City; promote our cultural communities; and establish relationships between cultural institutions, universities and colleges, museums, heritage, community arts, libraries and sports.



LEADING THE OPPORTUNITIES

CUSTOMER RELATIONS

This year, the City launched its Customer Service Charter, an improved customer complaints handling process and reported a substantial improvement in customer service as compared to last year, measured externally by Customer Service Benchmarking Australia. The results are benchmarked against 54 councils across Australia. The City uses the report to identify areas where customer service training may be required.

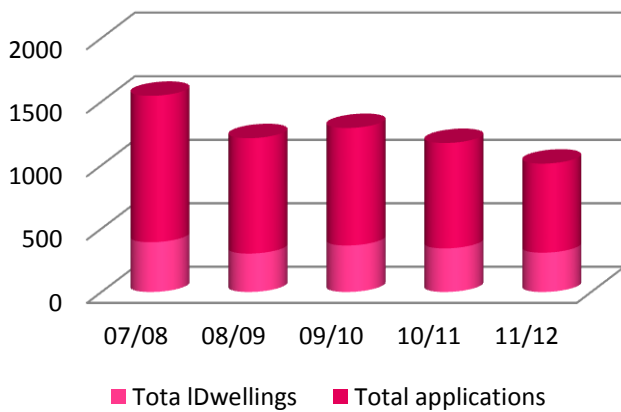
In 2012-13, in line with the Digital Local Government Strategy, the City will examine those services that can be provided more effectively via technology based solutions enabling an increased "self-service" capacity for the community. This will assist customers to transact with the City in time frames that suit "anywhere, anytime" scenarios whilst still maintaining face to face customer service for other target groups.

BUILDING ASSESSMENTS

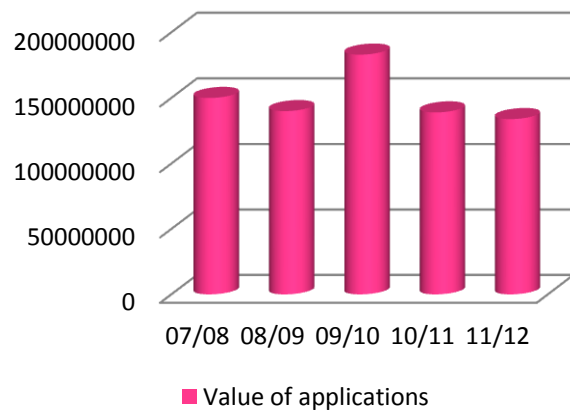
The City of Greater Geraldton provides advice and liaises with customers in building related matters, processing of building permit applications and on-site inspections in accordance with current regulations, standards and legislation to ensure safety and compliance for the Greater Geraldton community.

The City's building department continues to see a substantial amount of permit applications with 1013 applications in for the financial year with a value of \$133,938.356.00. This figure is down only slightly from last year but still considered healthy in the current economic climate. The numbers of dwelling applications have dropped by a mere 24 from the previous year.

Types of applications



Value of applications



Working with Industry

The City continues to meet regularly with the local MBA via working groups to discuss issues and to work through changes to legislation. This has enabled a coordinated approach to matters of mutual interest at the same time allows for views to be expressed and to inform/educate.

Building department officers have undertaken a number of presentations to explain the function, statutory duty and the internal processes of the City in relation to the New Building Act 2011 and Regulations 2012.

Together we are working towards the production of high quality safe buildings for the end-user which will benefit the City and the community as a whole.

Change in legislation

Over the past 15 years the State Government has been developing new building approval legislation. The new Building Act allows the owner of land/building to use a private Building Surveyor to advise, adjust and certify drawings and documents before applying to Local Government for a building permit. The option will still be there for the owner to use Local Government for advising and certifying prior to a permit being issued for class 1 and 10 Classifications.

Whether a private surveyor or local government is used, all relevant approvals (i.e. planning, health) must be gained before he/she can certify compliance and before the Local Government can issue a building permit.

With privatisation comes the possibility of fee fluctuations, in the private arena the cost will be dictated by the industry and market forces. There will still be a set fee for domestic building approvals if the owner decides to use Local Government for that service.

The building department has been very busy developing processes and procedures to cater for the New Building Act 2011 and the Regulations 2012 this has been challenging as changes have been continually put forward by stake holders and adopted by the minister.

The building department also has had the job of educating the public and smaller builders that don't belong to organisations like the HIA and MBA, on the requirements of the new Building Act and Regulations that local government needs to be able to accept building permit applications.

Certifying services

With the introduction of private certifiers and the limitations of the New Building Act to not allow local governments to accept uncertified applications for class 2-9 buildings, as most private certifiers are based in Perth. The city has set up a certifying service to support the local community and caters for local builders and developers in the surrounding area.

Online lodgement of building permits

During the last couple of years the online lodgement process has been developed with the help of local builders as guineapigs it has been a long process with some ups and downs and has recently gone live, this will benefit the high volume project builders and hopefully document storage requirements for the City.

STATUTORY PLANNING

A total of 408 planning applications were processed during the financial year with a combined estimated value in excess of \$80 Million.

Application type	Number received	Estimated value (\$)
Alfresco dining	1	5,000
Ancillary accommodation	8	895,843
Change of use	2	199,111
Commercial / retail	17	5,889,000
Demolition	0	0
Extractive industry	12	750,000
Front fence	6	52,700
Group dwelling	25	12,621,802
Home based business	18	335,500
Industrial	30	8,577,550
New single residential dwelling	61	23,146,484
Mixed use	1	5,000
Other	80	24,688,171
Outbuilding	68	1,716,705
Relocated single residential dwelling	3	239,000
Residential additions / alterations	42	1,690,168
Retaining wall	23	413,400
Signage	11	222,500

INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLANNING

The City has been working towards meeting the Department of Local Government's integrated strategic planning framework. This framework requires that the City utilise the information received as a result of the various and ongoing community engagement projects the City has conducted, to develop a 10 year strategic community plan.

The City has also commenced work on the development of its workforce plan, which in conjunction with the City's People Plan will support the strategic community plan and identify the City's workforce needs over the next 5 years.

BUDGETING AND FINANCIAL PLANNING

The City continues to work with the community in securing grant funding through the state government's Royalties for Regions program by assisting in the development of business cases supporting grant funding applications and in reporting for acquittal of grants on completion of projects.

The new integrated strategic planning framework for Local Government requires the development of a 10 year, long term financial plan to support the achievement of the community's vision for the region. Work to deliver that plan commenced in 2011-12 and will be a key focus in 2012-13.

RECORD KEEPING PLAN

The City of Greater Geraldton submitted its Record Keeping Plan on 7 March 2012 as required under the State Records Act 2000. Our plan will be reviewed on 7 March 2017.

As part of the induction process, new councillors and staff are made aware of the legislation and their responsibilities towards compliance.

DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN (DAIP)

A requirement of the Disability Services Act (1993, amended 2004) is that all Local Governments develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) that outlines the ways in which they will ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to facilities and services. The City of Greater Geraldton recognises its responsibility to provide adequate means of access to Council information, functions, facilities and services for all persons.

This year, the City partnered with the Disability Services Commission in the 'You're Welcome WA Access' project. Information was gathered from more than 130 facilities and businesses regarding their accessibility and provided this information to www.accesswa.com.au to enable people with access challenges to plan holidays and trips into the City before they leave the comfort of their homes.

The City partners with local agencies to celebrate the International Day for People with Disabilities in December each year, in 2011 support was provided for workshops in the lead up to the inaugural *Creating Waves* art exhibition.

The City is committed to addressing the access and equity needs of the community and has implemented policy and procedure to further develop access to services and facilities.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The City of Greater Geraldton complies with the Freedom of Information Act 1992. The Coordinator Governance and Risk is the City's Freedom of Information Coordinator. Any formal application for information that is not already freely available at the City may be made through the Freedom of Information Coordinator. Between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012, the City received 10 (ten) Freedom of Information requests.

COMPLAINTS

The City of Greater Geraldton, in accordance with s 5.120 'Complaints Officer' of the Local Government Act 1995, does not have a designated Complaints Officer and the Chief Executive Officer fulfils this role in terms of subsection (2).

As required in accordance with s 5.121 'Register of certain complaints of minor breaches' of the Act, the City maintains an electronic register (Customer Service Database) at its Information Service Desk. The City reports no complaints as defined under s 5.110(6) (b) or (c) of the Act for the period ending 30 June 2012.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

