

Werribee River Association

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Submission to Wyndham City's 'Draft Environment & Sustainability Strategy 2016-2040'

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Page	Section		Comments
3	Vision & Principles		<p>The vision and objectives of the strategy are sound and fit very well with WRivA's purpose, but we suggest the strategy needs to rewrite its principles in a more active way :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Human health outcomes will be achieved by caring for the natural environment</i> • <i>Quality of life outcomes will be achieved after assessing Council decision making with triple bottom line accounting</i> • <i>Natural environment outcomes will be sustained and strengthened by facilitation of community stewardship</i> • <i>Natural environment outcomes will receive high priority when facilitating urban growth</i> • <i>Long term sustainable outcomes will be achieved by usage of relevant evidence based scientific data</i> • <i>Improved environment outcomes will be achieved by programs of assessment and maintenance</i>
5	WCC's Environmental Framework		<p>Very comprehensive framework. WRivA submits the wish that all officers and teams have as part of their induction and/or reinvigoration, visits to significant natural places and that as part of their ongoing work plans they meet significant groups and individuals in the community, working with them on matters of concern.</p>
6	Targets Sustainable City	1.1 Stakeholders	<p>Southern Rural Water, Western Water and others might also be included, impacting directly on the river as they do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA are also likely to have increasingly important role to play with RDF's expanding, water quality decreasing, and the recent EPA inquiry consultations revealing a broad call for the EPA to act on behalf of the community.
7		1.3 RDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note comments in 1.1 above. • A hub should be established for the north & east of the City
7		1.5 Planning Control & Growth	<p>Encroachment by physical and visual means should be strongly enforced to preserve the Werribee River for the people for all time. There is a need to meet community calls for access and ownership of parks and reserves which are part of waterways and wetlands. There is a need to control access to precious places. The difficult to access planning facets of the City's website and systems need improved, more convenient and helpful access for the community if stewardship by the community is desired. Advocacy for wider margins of land available to the public along waterways should be undertaken. A briefing and ongoing involvement should be sought on the current discussions regarding the Yarra River Protection Act., for the purposes of ensuring advantages can be gained for City of Wyndham and the Werribee River.</p>

8		1.6 Urban Ecology	<p>Specific targets could be included here such as, e.g. <i>"Platypus surveys will be carried out each 2nd year to determine status of species."</i> <i>"Bird species numbers in three sites will stay at 2017 benchmark levels."</i></p> <p>A briefing should be sought from the EPA on the release of recycled water from further upstream, and the lack of information on other possible threats to water quality, for the purposes of ensuring advantages can be gained for City of Wyndham and the Werribee River.</p> <p>Corridors such as the Werribee Biolink, into which the City of Wyndham has invested money, need implementation to protect the existing endangered platypus population, improve habitat for native birds, lessen edge effects on narrow riparian vegetation strips, slow evaporation rates of precious rainfall, shade waterways to stop warming of water by sun, provide shade for exposed pathways, and lessen effect of litter on waterways.</p> <p>A Street Tree Strategy should include the riparian woodland of the Werribee River as a corridor with which to link major streets and roads, in order to give links to other places of habitat value.</p>
8		1.8 Community Engagement	<p>Excellent targets here, which will achieve community support if carried out well.</p> <p>Excellent suggestion for a community and business forum.</p> <p>Re-order the long term targets to put <i>"The community governs..."</i> first.</p>
9	Targets Valuing nature	2.1 Coast	<p>Partnerships with relevant government, authority, business and community groups need recognition in the section.</p> <p>Short term targets need to include the auditing of environmental values, and the setting of long term targets for protection</p>
9		2.2 Land Management	<p>Land managed by government, authorities and business needs to be addressed here to ensure good knowledge of responsibility in event of maintenance issues.</p> <p>The maintenance of Council controlled land needs to be reviewed to determine how to best add value to riparian areas along the Werribee River.</p> <p>Advocacy to gain funding for the Werribee Township Regional Park should be a priority.</p> <p>A linear park strategy to protect the Werribee River should be developed by all three municipalities through which the river runs, in order to create a culture of greater recognition, appreciation and protection of the river for the community.</p>
10		2.3 Biodiversity	<p>See 2.2 above.</p> <p>Bird survey data gathered in the district shows a possible decline in bird species numbers, and Birdlife Australia data over a wider area shows a definite decline. Threats exist to migratory birds internationally, and it would be good to support Melbourne Water initiatives on the WTP site, and Parks Victoria at Cheetham Wetlands, even by way of advocacy, education or partnership.</p> <p>Advantage should be taken of the Greening the West initiative which would enhance the <i>"Increase in overall extent and condition of native habitat..."</i></p> <p>An increase in support for community groups engaged in assisting these targets is required.</p>
10		2.4 Litter	<p>Excellent initiatives.</p> <p>Community collected litter data needs to be recognised.</p> <p>Infringement needs to be seen to be working.</p> <p>Need to set a target in advocacy of working to get greater support from State & Commonwealth government re support for smarter litter laws, which include more than, but could also include a cash for containers</p>

			<p>deposit scheme. Smarter litter laws would also avoid compartmentalisation of litter control, and allow partnerships to tackle this growing threat to our way of life.</p> <p>e.g. Hot spots on water need to be identified and a regular maintenance regime established to tackle concerns, forgetting who is supposed to clean up, but rather actually cleaning up as part of <i>"...local responses unique to Wyndham."</i>(Introduction P.2)</p> <p>Also relevant here is the statement: <i>"...will instil a sense of pride and contribute to a positive quality of life.(2.3 Biodiversity P.10)</i></p> <p>Need to take leadership on some initiatives desired by the community.</p> <p>E.g. cigarette butt-free events, litter-free events, etc....</p>
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Thank you for the opportunity to submit our thoughts.

John Forrester

President

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