

Primary requirements for a Modernised WA Planning System.-

Urban Land-use Planning is a multi-functional set of activities that is relied upon to create new and modified future living conditions for communities.

Governments are charged with disposition and overall management of community resources for these purposes. They are expected to do that today by leading and setting the agenda for multiple public sector bureaucracies that should respond with optimal efficiency and a creative forward perspective, to the predictable needs of 'client-user' Communities.

Prerequisites today for Government are for all Communities to be supported by a transparent and community-responsive public service, characteristically -

***Research led *Creative bureaucracy *Community futures-focussed**

The State Government in WA must however recognise that it does not currently have the support of a Planning System that demonstrates any of those features and the taxpaying community deserves a much more futures-relevant and managerially competent service.

Although a need for change was recognised by the formation of an initially independent Review Group in late 2017, progress is slow and apparently being constrained by traditional bureaucracies that have no experience of operating such a futures-focussed modern Planning System.

An Alternative Planning System is urgently needed now in order for the Government to respond to legitimate taxpayer needs with creative, orderly and cost-effective management; for instance as follows.-

1. Undertakes action-linked **Research**; from external / international searches; documenting potentially relevant innovations; and from local sources. All in terms of tracking and evaluating creative development initiatives; including foreshadowing essential infrastructure requirements. Plus, openly reticulating that to the community by regular ('Planning Research Digest') publications.

2. Modernises **the interfaces with community AND changes the role of Local Authorities** (in Planning) from being passive quasi-judicial arbitrators beyond their capability far removed from their primary function of providing local Services. - To actively and continuously disseminating external research to local communities, interactively balancing that with current local socio-physical knowledge input from local communities themselves concerning genuine current and evolving needs; identifying control-factors, community values and future aspirations regarding living conditions. All then capable of being applied by regional Creative Design Teams to plan efficient, integrated communities with a sense of future home, place, identity - and choice.

3. Employs **Creative urban multi-professional, Design Teams** to gather and analyse briefing material from the above reconfigured socio-physical /community functional/ user-brief compiling/ sectors of Local Authorities.

These multi-professional Teams then constructing the essential detailed design briefing frameworks for creative three dimensional Development Planning, and producing locally relevant, innovative, community-aware designs for future urban living at various scales. - In negotiated partnership with willing independent commercial developers and/or other large land owners.

4. Refocuses effort onto **Comprehensive Development Areas** (linked by Metronet). Fully self-contained communities with all essential services, including social venues, recreational, markets, retail forums, meeting places; all integrated and interconnected with mobility infrastructure access to locally innovative and evolving employment. Pre-planned from the outset, to create a sense of 'place' and 'belonging' for future residents of all ages.

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In summary what is outdated and why?

The dead hand of non-creative 'Statutory' Planning (that has dominated and determined planning in WA) is a remote, retrogressive, centralised, bureaucracy that will never achieve the above. – But has produced a massive sprawling series of horizontal (and some now vertical) housing 'estates' comprised of ad hoc building with no qualitative visual, spatial or locational identity and with abysmal levels of social amenity.- Most being already functionally obsolete when set against the future fast-changing range and spread of contemporary and future socio-technical human values and rapidly changing post-industrial types of employment. Only a very few recent innovative exceptions locally have struggled to succeed, but in spite of the current Planning system, not because of it.

Currently the actual locus of delivery of Planning in WA (Local Authorities) being the direct interface for Planning 'Approvals' has the lowest level of currently relevant expertise, limited to 'statutory administration'; and for that reason, including erratic work-flow cannot attract creative professional planning staff. (Often contracting-out to miscellaneous private consultants; but with no consistent independently verified quality control available on relative creative skills capabilities.)

Local Authority functioning on that vital Future Planning approvals interface is guided and usually fully determined by staff with narrow 'Statutory' training, to apply the vague 'high-level' policies that they interpret, through an over-elaborate bureaucracy, as directives - not as a framework of principles, emanating from "the Government" (WAPC/DPLH). Usually with minimal genuine interactive involvement with local communities, who are not provided with detailed justifications or empowered to express their own needs, values, changing circumstances, or future aspirational visions. *(This dysfunctional Local Authority/ communities Planning managerial interface must also be re-evaluated by the Department of Local Government.)*

A modern Planning system should be founded on economically, efficiently and optimally responding to future human needs for creating and modifying relevant living environments, relevant to the now rapidly changing needs of future users and characteristics of location. That must be in continuing collective dialogue with the full range of clients it is required to serve namely PEOPLE. Anything less will eventually lead to social disintegration and unsustainable living conditions. (That is already observable in some localities in and around Metropolitan Perth.)