

# Celebrating Community Voices - March 11<sup>th</sup> 2019

Kaya! Welcome & good evening everyone.

It's wonderful to have you all join us to "Celebrate Community Voices".

We come together tonight to look towards Bassendean's future with the launch of the Town's community engagement strategy as well as to take part in the development of a new State Government plan for women in conjunction with International Women's Day.

And because of the strategic importance of these projects we have some special guests that I'm delighted to welcome here this evening:

- Minister Simone McGurk, Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence & Community Services
- Our Local Member, Minister Dave Kelly, Minister for Water; Fisheries; Forestry; Innovation & ICT; & Science.
- From the Department of Communities we have Michelle Andrews – Acting Director General; & Hilary MacWilliam
- Darren Klemm – Commissioner for Department of Fire & Emergency Services
- From the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries Assistant Director General: Margaret Butcher; & Director Jodie Holbrook
- Jeanice Krakouer Chair of South West Aboriginal Land & Sea Council.

Thank you for joining us this evening, we really appreciate your time and your interest in working with our Town to achieve a vibrant, healthy future for Bassendean and our community.

These guests were invited to join us as it is important that this is an inclusive process and we recognise that a partnership between the two tiers of government is critically important if we are to achieve the best outcomes for our community.

However, in addition to our guests from state government, I also want to thank each of you who may not have an official title, but who are equally as important.

Our greatest asset in Bassendean is the people, each of you, who contribute in so many ways to enriching our community. It is wonderful to have you here as we start the conversation about the future of our Town together.

I also would like to acknowledge the Whadjak people of the Noongar nation and the important role they have played, and continue to play, in caring for this place that we now know as the Town of Bassendean. It's particularly relevant to reflect on the traditional owner's stewardship of this land as we tonight launch our visioning project "BassenDream Our Future".

But tonight we are also celebrating International Women's Day, which this year had a theme of "more powerful together", bringing into focus the role of both women and men together in building strong communities, which is very pertinent as we talk tonight about visioning for our own community's future.

So, “BassenDream Our Future” is our quirky name for our community engagement process designed to enable us to together create a shared vision that will shape the future of our Town for the years ahead and the next chapter for the Town of Bassendean.

It’s an exciting time in the Town of Bassendean. We are on the cusp of many great opportunities to realise some of our Town’s potential. We have a Council that has learnt from some of the difficult lessons of the past, a state government committed to quality development & investing around train stations as well as a community who want to be engaged in the process.

We are very fortunate in Bassendean to be a well-connected Council, close to the city, and despite our small size, 3 train stations allowing our community to be linked to transport, to employment, to education and other amenities.

We are also very fortunate to have one of the largest wetlands in the Perth metropolitan area as well as extensive river frontage and beautiful shared open spaces.

But there are also other aspects that contribute to Bassendean’s spirit that create the village atmosphere that so many recognise and appreciate.

And as most of us are aware the population of Perth is growing and the city cannot continue to sprawl in the way that it traditionally has. As a city we must come up with ways to address the challenges and the opportunities that this growth brings with it, with each local government area having a contribution to make, including the Town of Bassendean.

Here, in our Town, we currently have just under 7,000 (6,856) dwellings spread across our three suburbs of Ashfield, Bassendean & Eden Hill.

To prevent further urban sprawl the state government requires our Town to provide capacity for an additional 4,150 new homes by 2050, that’s a 60% increase over the next 30 years.

So, we are seeking from our community your thoughts, ideas and expectations on how Council should respond to the challenges and opportunities that our growing and evolving community presents in a way that preserves the character and spirit of Bassendean.

So over the next six months we are really wanting to hear all of the different voices in our community so that we know what matters to you.

In modern local governments it is no-longer a matter of the community voting in a Council and then stepping back and waiting for progress to happen; instead we are all in this together and all need to contribute to get the best outcome.

So we need your thoughts and ideas on how we can preserve the things we love about our Town, it’s character and natural beauty, whilst allowing the Town to develop to meet the needs of our community in the years ahead.

This process will culminate in the Town of Bassendean preparing a new Local Planning Strategy, Planning Scheme and related planning policies.

The Local Planning Strategy will outline our strategic intentions for planning and development for the Town.

It establishes key principles that will be used in considering land use and development in response to changes in population, housing, business, employment, transport, community facilities and infrastructure.

We anticipate that by September we will have a really strong vision and narrative for the future of our Town shaped by our community. In parallel to this we will have a Local Planning Strategy reflecting this vision and translating it into practical outcomes.

A key aspect of the Town's future growth is the delivery of quality medium-density housing options in order to address issues such as affordability, housing diversity and access to employment and services.

I think about the future needs of my own family and see a need for housing options for elderly parents to age in place, for my children to have access to affordable homes to live in as they become young adults within the community they are connected to, for young couples who are just starting out, for families who still want a back yard and for downsizers who don't want to be shackled to a quarter acre block.

At the moment many of these options aren't readily available, but with some careful planning we can ensure that our future Town better meets the needs of all our community members.

But talking about density, infill and population growth can often elicit some concerns about its impact on the existing community.

These concerns may come from experiences here in the Town of Bassendean or from what's been observed in other local governments.

If you're like me I'm sure you can conjure examples in your mind of where density has been done badly - and this is what we need to avoid.

However, I am confident that if we do this well, increased density will achieve fantastic results for our local community, improve the amenity, services and vibrancy of our urban spaces as well as consolidating our urban growth in order to achieve a more compact, sustainable and connected community.

Part of the discussion we need to have with our community is around how we can best accommodate population growth in key areas where it is appropriate, rather than on blanket or ad-hoc density. This includes in identified precincts and activity centres such as Old Perth Road and around our train stations.

It makes a lot of sense to focus on these areas given that the success of the commercial, retail and hospitality outlets that we all enjoy, rely on patronage from locals and the resident population also provides the critical mass required to make efficient public transport viable.

Government policy plays an important role in facilitating quality development outcomes, which is why we invited some of our State government colleagues to join us here this evening because this needs to be done in partnership with our community, the Town & the State.

So there are two things that we are hoping for:

First is that our community is fully engaged in this process.

This is our neighbourhood and our home, so hearing from everyone who feels connected to this community is so important.

The process of engagement that will unfold over the coming months will seek to tap into all the voices in our community. Whilst it would have been wonderful to have all of our Town's residents here this evening that was not possible.

So, I do encourage those of you who have been able to join us to discuss with your neighbours and fellow community members the need to have a say as this is all of our futures and everyone's perspective is important if we are to get this right.

Second, and I direct this more to our state government colleagues. The importance of the State Government and the Town of Bassendean working in collaboration to make this a reality cannot be understated.

The partnership between the two tiers of government is critically important if we are to achieve the best outcomes for our community.

We seek your continued support in making our community's vision a reality.

We have been grateful for the support we have received during my time on Council from many state government agencies including Communities, Transport, PTA, Planning and Main Roads to name a few.

But there have been lessons learnt through some of these more recent processes and we need to take these learnings on board to ensure the success of our future projects together.

As we move into this next chapter of creating a strong vision and developing our planning framework, we ask that you work with us as strategic partners as this will be more important than ever.

We not only look forward to working together to achieve the shared outcomes we need to build a strong, healthy and connected community; We also look forward to witnessing the next chapter in the Town of Bassendean's future.

I'm excited about what the future holds for Bassendean.

I really hope you are too.

Thank you.