

Our Community Our Future:



A Guide to Local Agenda 21



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Foreword

In 1992, the United Nations released a ground-breaking action plan for sustainable development called Agenda 21. Agenda 21 is a blueprint that sets out actions we can all take to contribute to global sustainability in the 21st century. It recognises that most environmental challenges have their roots in local activities and therefore encourages Local Governments to promote local environmental, economic and social sustainability by translating the principles of sustainable development into strategies that are meaningful to local communities. This process is called Local Agenda 21 (LA21).

The importance of LA21 was recognised in June 1997 by APEC Ministers for Sustainable Development when they set an APEC-wide target of doubling the number of Councils with LA21s by 2003. At the time there were approximately 61 councils in Australia with LA21 programs in place.

The importance of local ESD has been further recognised by Environment ministers from all Australian jurisdictions (meeting as the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC)) when they agreed to encourage the implementation of LA21 in their own jurisdictions in order to meet the APEC LA21 target in Australia. In July 1999 ANZECC Ministers agreed to encourage LA21 in their jurisdictions through an ANZECC LA21 Achievement Award. The award will promote LA21 by recognising best practice and raising the profile of LA21 amongst Local Government.

Since the Pathways to Sustainability Conference in June 1997 and the release of the Newcastle Declaration, we have seen the growth of Local Agenda 21 initiatives and the LA21 movement in Australia. Moving ahead on sustainable development is not an easy task but it is essential to secure Australia's future. Australia needs leadership on sustainable development and many Australian Local Governments are providing that leadership.

What sets LA21 apart from other approaches to local sustainability is its focus on participation and the involvement of the community in sustainable development planning and management. It rests on the development of a web of successful partnerships between government, industry and community groups.

We are now starting to see strong synergies in Australia between LA21 and other sustainable development issues like greenhouse gas emission reduction, integrated coastal management, biodiversity conservation and the objectives of the Natural Heritage Trust.

I commend this Manual to any Council wishing to undertake its own LA21 or local ecologically sustainable development program. It has grown out of the diversity of approaches that exist in Australia. I hope the Manual will stimulate Australian councils to continue their efforts in leading local sustainable development. The Manual acknowledges the efforts of all local governments in moving Australia onto a more sustainable path. I would like to thank all those who contributed to this Manual, and in particular, the contribution of Environs Australia who were the consulting experts on the Manual.



Senator The Hon Robert Hill
Federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage

Introduction

What is Local Agenda 21?

Local Agenda 21 is a program aimed at implementing sustainable development at the local level. A Local Agenda 21 program comprises systems and processes to integrate environmental, economic and social development. Founded on a strong partnership between local government and the community, the progress towards local sustainable development will be guided by the preparation of a long term strategic action plan that integrates existing policies and programs and an agreed future direction.

Local Agenda 21 provides the basis for debate on and awareness of sustainable development at the community level. The main focus of Local Agenda 21 is to involve all groups in sustainable development planning in the major areas of economic, social and environmental development. This focus on participation clearly sets Local Agenda 21 apart from other initiatives which focus more on the achievement of outcomes for sustainable development.

What are the key outcomes from a Local Agenda 21 program?

There are significant positive outcomes that should result from an effective Local Agenda 21 process; these include

- stronger community and local government partnership
- ongoing community involvement in the resolution of sustainable development issues
- integrated decision making which takes all foreseeable economic, social and environmental considerations into account
- development, implementation and periodic review of a long term, integrated action plan which incorporates sustainable development principles
- changes which promote a continual improvement toward sustainable development.

About this Guide

Local governments in Australia and around the world are increasingly becoming lead agencies for sustainable development. They are developing and implementing systematic approaches to provide for our long term future in terms of the health and well being of our communities and the environment which supports us.

This guide has been prepared to provide local councils and the communities they represent with guidance and direction in planning and implementing a Local Agenda 21 approach.

The guide is aimed at

- individuals and groups want to know how to gain commitment from key decision makers to establish a Local Agenda 21
- councils that have committed to sustainable development and need guidance on how to commence a Local Agenda 21

- councils that have started to develop a strategy or who are actively working towards sustainable development but who need further direction, perhaps on a particular aspect of their work.
- councils that are progressing well and want some further ideas.

There are three sections to this guide.

Section one details five ‘Action Areas’ devised from the experience of many local councils so far.

Section two details the case studies used to illustrate a variety of approaches to Local Agenda 21.

Section three provides further reading and useful contacts and references and includes a number of appendices.

This guide offers practical guidance on how to develop a Local Agenda 21 framework to tackle issues of sustainable development. The process detailed here involves working through five ‘Action Areas’.

Action areas in a Local Agenda 21 process



The Action Areas cover the basic activities of a Local Agenda 21, which include

- Involving the entire community in preparing a long term sustainable development action plan through representative community involvement
- Determining the vision, goals, targets and priorities for action, taking an integrated approach
- Working in partnership with all stakeholders to achieve those goals
- Monitoring and reporting procedures, including the use of local indicators to track progress and to allow participants to hold each other accountable to the action plan.

A key element of a Local Agenda 21 is improvement of the frameworks and systems used for planning, policy making and implementing because they can be more influential and enduring than specific actions, which will change regularly.

The exact approach taken by each council will vary depending on its particular circumstances (resources, history of working on sustainability, involving the community, and level of commitment). The types of issues that a community focuses on will also vary from council to council.

This guide provides a best practice approach. The detailed case studies in Section 5 and examples throughout show the breadth of approaches that have been taken. There will also be many other approaches that have not been detailed here.

While this guide is directed towards local councils wishing to undertake a Local Agenda 21, sustainable development work can be undertaken by any organisation, including regional groupings of councils. Matters to be considered in such regional work would be similar to those discussed in this guide, although with certain differences given different structures, areas of responsibility and methods of operating (see Appendix 11 for some examples of regional sustainability work).

Background

Where did Local Agenda 21 come from?

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), known as the Earth Summit, developed Agenda 21, a blueprint for action to achieve sustainable development. Agenda 21 called upon governments around the world to take a course of action to implement that blueprint (see Appendix 2 for an outline of Agenda 21). Local Agenda 21 comes from Chapter 28 of that blueprint (see Appendix 1).

Because so many of the problems and solutions being addressed by Agenda 21 have their roots in local activities, the participation and cooperation of local authorities will be a determining factor in fulfilling its objectives. Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and sub-national environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to the people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilising and responding to the public to promote sustainable development.

Agenda 21, paragraph 28.1

Local councils are one of the nine 'major groups' named in Agenda 21 as being fundamental in working towards sustainable development. The others include women, youth and children, indigenous people and their communities, non-government organisations, trade unions, business and industry, scientists and technologists, and farmers.

Local Agenda 21 since the Earth Summit

Since 1992 the importance of sustainable development, and Local Agenda 21's role in this, has been reinforced in many international and national forums, including Habitat 2 and Rio +5.

Locally the 1997 Newcastle Declaration from the 'Pathways to Sustainability' Conference (an international conference focussing on the challenge of sustainability for local government), clarified and re-stated the commitment of local government to Agenda 21 and sustainable development

sustainability is a global necessity and ... Local Agenda 21 is a fundamental framework for enhancing local and global sustainability.

Newcastle Declaration 1997

Also, both the UN General Assembly and the APEC Environment Ministerial Meeting have recognised the importance of Local Agenda 21. At the latter, a target was set of doubling the number of Local Agenda 21 initiatives by all APEC countries by 2003. It is estimated that approximately 140 councils were engaged in Local Agenda 21, local ESD or other local sustainable development initiatives in 1997.

More recently, the Mayors'-Pacific Environmental Summit in Honolulu in February 1999 affirmed the endorsement of previous global forums for Local Agenda 21 and concluded

that (Local Agenda 21) has been key to achieving sustainable development outcomes at the local level.

What does sustainable development mean?

The World Commission on Environment and Development used the term 'sustainable development' in its 1987 final report, 'Our Common Future', and defined it as

development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development uses the term 'ecologically sustainable development', or ESD, which it defines as

development that improves the total quality of life, both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends.

These and the many other definitions of sustainable development recognise that we need to link development and protection of the environment in order to protect and manage ecosystems and natural resources which are essential for fulfilling basic human needs and improving living standards for all. In this guide we often use the term 'sustainability' as a shorthand for these terms.

What are the links between Local Agenda 21 and the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development?

The principles and concepts contained in Agenda 21 and Australia's National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development are very similar. Agenda 21, from where Local Agenda 21 was derived, speaks of 'sustainable development', whilst the National Strategy for ESD (also developed in 1992) has as its goal 'ecologically sustainable development' (defined above). These are compatible concepts.

Local Agenda 21, seven years on from the Rio Earth Summit, has developed into a process with much international support. Because it was developed specifically for local government it is tailored to the needs of local government. As such it is a good process for Australian local governments to use to achieve the outcome of ESD. Local Agenda 21 encourages the involvement of people in determining the nature of sustainable development locally rather than just relying on improved planning processes.

What are some of the key principles of sustainability?

A number of principles form the foundation of sustainability and hence a Local Agenda 21. The following list of principles are based on our research, literature and experience of what is most applicable to local councils.

Integration - the effective integration of environmental, social and economic considerations in decision making.

Community involvement - recognition that sustainability cannot be achieved, nor significant progress made toward it, without the support and involvement of the whole community.

Precautionary behaviour - where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.

Equity within and between generations - fairness and equal access to opportunities both in our lifetimes, as well as for future generations.

Continual improvement - the declining environmental situation means there is an imperative to take immediate action to become more sustainable and to make continual improvement.

Ecological integrity - to protect biological diversity and maintain essential ecological processes and life-support systems.

See Appendix 3 for further detail on each of these principles of sustainability, and Appendix 4 for the goal, objectives and guiding principles from the National Strategy for ESD.

Who is promoting Local Agenda 21?

Local Agenda 21 is being promoted by a range of organisations nationally and internationally. In Australia, the Commonwealth Government, through its ongoing promotion of ESD, and some state governments have provided support in terms of resources and funding. Environs Australia, the Local Government Environment Network, has been actively promoting Local Agenda 21 since 1993.

Globally, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), an international body representing local governments from around the world, and original drafters of the Local Agenda 21 chapter, is actively coordinating the international Local Agenda 21 campaign.

Independent networks have also played a large part in promoting Local Agenda 21. For example, in Western Australia much Local Agenda 21 activity has occurred as a result of considerable effort from academics, local government officers and councillors. A Local Agenda 21 Advisory Group has been established to allow members to share their resources and to support local government planning for sustainable development.

In South Australia, a partnership for Local Agenda 21 exists as a collaborative effort between the State Government, the Local Government Association, and now 30 councils in South Australia that have made a commitment to undertake Local Agenda 21 programs. The aim of this partnership is to encourage all councils to be involved and for this Local Agenda 21 activity to help shape and inform state level policy and planning processes.

In New South Wales, the *Local Government Act 1993* requires councils to have regard to ESD principles in carrying out all of their responsibilities. This requirement has acted as a catalyst for Local Agenda 21 work in that state especially as it has been tied with local state of the environment requirements and a focus on community participation.

Details of each of these organisations can be found in Further Reading and Appendices.

Why should council implement a Local Agenda 21?

There are potentially many benefits from undertaking a Local Agenda 21, these include

- Managing change more effectively
- More effective policy development
- Enhanced capacity to meet community needs
- Greater community cohesion
- Stronger regional links
- Cost savings
- A healthy and vibrant community
- Staying relevant

Further detail of each of these benefits is contained in Appendix 5.

How does Local Agenda 21 fit with existing policies, programs and activities?

Local Agenda 21 provides the context for all council operations. It is not a discrete program which sits alongside strategies for waste management, parks and gardens and community services. Rather, the vision of sustainability and the goals and targets of Local Agenda 21 should set the direction for all council activities. This is why Local Agenda 21 should not be driven only by environment managers. For a Local Agenda 21 action plan to succeed, it needs to have the support of managers with responsibilities covering social and economic development. In this sense, it is an umbrella program, a strategic framework for directing action towards sustainable development. In contrast to the corporate plan with its three year horizon, the Local Agenda 21 has a much longer time frame.

A Local Agenda 21 program is not about starting from scratch but rather about building on existing programs, activities and policies. For councils that have already undergone integrated strategic planning, Local Agenda 21 will be about applying sustainability principles to that framework. Local Agenda 21 can build on work already being undertaken, ensuring that it is long term, involves the community and takes account of principles such as ecological integrity, precaution and equity between and within generations.

One of the most effective implementation strategies for Local Agenda 21 will be compiling audits or inventories of existing programs, strategies, activities and policies that are either a) working towards sustainability or b) moving away from sustainability. The aim will be to strengthen the first set and neutralise the second set.

See Appendix 6 for a description about how Local Agenda 21 relates to specific council programs.

Who is currently involved?

There is Local Agenda 21 and ESD activity in every state and territory. A recent survey conducted by Environs Australia showed that at least 70 councils were either starting or had developed a Local Agenda 21 program. Local sustainable development is a world wide movement. In 1997 more than 2000 local authorities in 64 countries around the world were developing their own Local Agenda 21 programs.

Action Area

1

Preparing the ground for Local Agenda 21

Council support will be required in order to start a Local Agenda 21 process. Therefore, in most cases, the initial steps involve providing council with enough information and sufficient detail about the process, the benefits and costs for council to proceed. Councils have indicated that leadership, commitment and adequate resources are essential elements to make sure Local Agenda 21 is successful and useful.

This Action Area is aimed at getting a formal council resolution or endorsement for the commencement of a Local Agenda 21 process, and to getting sufficient resources to make a start. Each step in this Action Area can be undertaken to a greater or lesser extent, depending on available time, resources, energy and commitment of the person responsible for getting things going.

The early stages of a Local Agenda 21 involve the following elements

- researching various approaches and outcomes
- gaining political and management commitment
- developing an inventory of existing council strategies and activities
- doing a simple assessment of the current state of the area
- tailoring the Local Agenda 21 process to your council requirements
- emphasising that Local Agenda 21 builds on existing council strategies and resources
- developing a preliminary budget and roles for staff
- providing a report to council on the steps in moving forward

Researching various approaches and outcomes

Having an understanding of the Local Agenda 21 work of other councils (particularly neighbouring councils and similar councils in your state) will help to provide an understanding of

- the types of approaches which are likely to be effective
- the likely expenses and other resource requirements
- benefits of a Local Agenda 21, which can be used to promote the concept
- likely supporting and constraining factors.

The case studies provide details of how nine councils have been working on a Local Agenda 21. Further information about the experiences of other councils can be obtained from your state Environment Resource Officer, Environs Australia, and local networks such as the Local Agenda 21 Advisory Group in Western Australia or the South Australia Partnership for Local Agenda 21 (see Further Reading and Appendices for contact details).

Gaining political and management commitment

A Local Agenda 21 process is a local council's response to local sustainable development issues. While the catalyst for initiating a Local Agenda 21 process may come from community groups or government agencies, an effective program is dependant on the council's active involvement. To be effective, it is also important that it is owned, accepted and implemented by both council and the broader community. Ideally, there should be a council resolution to develop and implement a Local Agenda 21 action plan.

Whoever takes the first steps to start a Local Agenda 21 will need to talk to the following groups and individuals to gain support from across the local community

- councillors and management staff at the council
- government and non-government organisations and state agencies
- regional organisations, catchment groups, environment organisations landcare and other similar groups
- industry, businesses and trade unions
- community groups.

Discussions can be informal or representatives may be gathered together for an information session. The support of a key person or group, either within council or externally, will also help to gain a broadly based commitment by council and community (perhaps the CEO from a key industry in the locality or a high profile community spokesperson). So often good plans don't progress further than the concept phase because not enough time or detail has been given to ensuring this commitment.

Developing an inventory of council strategies and activities

One of the first steps will be to assemble and review existing and relevant strategies and activities. Knowing what strategic work has already been undertaken and to what extent the community has been involved will mean that the Local Agenda 21 can build on what already exists, without duplication. Its development can be sensitive to what has already been asked and provided by the community. This information will also provide necessary background information for the rest of the Local Agenda 21 process.

Relevant council strategies, programs and activities may be documented in

- the corporate plan and annual report
- economic development plan
- cultural plan
- local transport strategy
- waste management plan
- local conservation strategy
- regional development plans
- catchment management plans
- coastal management plans.

With this information, discrepancies between existing visions, objectives and goals in the various strategies can be identified, as can potential sources of support and resources. Doing such an inventory can also highlight how little is known about the range of council programs and can highlight any significant gaps in activity.

WHAT'S WORKING

In the process of developing a draft Environmental Management Plan, Tweed Shire Council (NSW) undertook an audit of all units' functions to identify existing programs and potential programs to promote sustainability. This involved one on one interviews with key personnel which assisted greatly in identifying priorities. The audit showed up many gaps and a number of activities that were not sustainable. Knowing what was actually happening in individual units was essential information, forming the basis of the draft Environmental Management Plan. This information is constantly being updated and refined.

Contact: Rance Salan, Tweed Shire Council, NSW, ph: (02) 6672 0400
Web: <http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/agenda21/index.htm>

Current Management Systems

The inventory could also include an evaluation of council's management systems. Criteria used should assess whether the operation of the management systems assist or hinder the achievement of sustainable development. Some criteria for judging this might include

- Are management systems aimed at providing solutions for the long term, rather than only solving immediate problems?
- Do they examine the long term impact and sustainable development implications of new proposals?
- Do decision making processes allow for social, economic and environmental factors to be taken into account? (for example, through cross-departmental communication)
- Does the current system encourage the development of innovative solutions that would assist in achieving sustainable development?
- Is their substantial community involvement and joint ownership?

WHAT'S WORKING

To set the ball rolling in the City of Gosnells, WA, a small in-house task force was established. It was comprised of a councillor and deputy, a council officer, a director and a scholarship student. Initial work included researching options for developing a Local Agenda 21, assessing the knowledge of staff about sustainable development planning, and ascertaining the resources available in the council to run such a program. Sponsoring a university student provided additional valuable resourcing in this early development stage of the Local Agenda 21 initiative.

Contact: Stuart Jardine, City of Gosnells, Western Australia, ph: (08) 9391 3201

Assessing the current state of the area

Having a good understanding of the current state of the physical, social and economic environment of the area is an important building block for a Local Agenda 21. It means that the recommendation to council can be based on an assessment of current conditions. It will also provide necessary background information for the rest of the Local Agenda 21 process.

Information about the physical, social and economic environment of the area can be obtained from

- state of the environment reports
- national land and water audit reports

- planning strategies
- studies by local universities or schools
- maps and data sets of the region
- inventories and databases available through state agencies
- the Australian Bureau of Statistics

This information gathering exercise will help to highlight some of the issues in the area and identify gaps in the data. There are many organisations that can help to fill gaps in data - for example, local Business Enterprise Centres, local environment groups and history groups.

This profile of the area will change as more data or better analysis becomes available. This process is a continuing one - some councils can adapt the processes of the State of the Environment Report; others may need to start from scratch. This activity can also be used to raise awareness and understanding of Local Agenda 21 across the many departments in council as information is sought from them.

WHAT'S WORKING

The City of Greater Dandenong's *Environmental Management Strategy* includes a profile for each of 18 Action Areas. Describing the current state of each area, for example safety, waterways, transport or business development, it provides a context for the stated goals and actions to be taken by council.

Contact: Dr John Wisniewski, City of Greater Dandenong, Victoria, ph: (03) 9238 1453

Tailoring the Local Agenda 21 process to your council

Prior to preparing a report to council recommending the commencement of a Local Agenda 21, it is important to have a good understanding of how the council operates, the relationship of the council with various stakeholder groups, the council's management regime, past programs and what is important to the council. Having this understanding will mean that the Local Agenda 21 process can be tailored to suit the council and community. It will therefore have a greater chance of being accepted by council and of being effective in the long run.

Table 1: Examples of how to make the Local Agenda 21 fit your council

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITIES
What programs and activities is council already involved in?	Use Local Agenda 21 as the linking and integrating element of the council work program.
Does council have a strong history of community consultation?	The program must not be seen to reinvent policy, or be too demanding for councils with little history of consultation. It should take account of the results of previous consultative processes and set realistic goals for further consultation.
Does council have an interest in positioning itself nationally or internationally?	Local Agenda 21 is an international program that appeals to many councils for its overseas connections and networks. Make connections with an overseas council also working on Local Agenda 21.
What are the main issues in your community?	Promote Local Agenda 21 as a means of resolving these issues and gaining support through increased community involvement. For example, a rural council could focus the Local Agenda 21 program on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long term agricultural productivity issues • management of salinity • management of urban centre expansion • development of the local economy.

Emphasising that Local Agenda 21 builds on existing council strategies and resources

In seeking support and council commitment, it should be emphasised that the development of a Local Agenda 21 does not mean starting from scratch. Many existing reports, strategies and plans will already have considered sustainable development issues and council may already be working on these. Some of these may involve council and community cooperation and communication. There may already exist an overarching strategic planning framework, such as an Integrated Local Area Plan that has many of the characteristics of a Local Agenda 21. The Local Agenda 21 process is about improving what already exists.

Table 2: Building on existing council programs

ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY
<p>What programs and projects has council already undertaken?</p>	<p>Programs may have elements such as visions, community consultation processes and actions that can be used as a basis for the Local Agenda 21. Likely candidates here include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and Cultural Plans • Local Conservation/Environment Strategies • Recreation Plans • Local Economic Development Plans • Environment Management Systems • Environmental Indicator Reports • Strategic Land use Plans • Corporate Plans
<p>Are there people who have championed any of these projects, and may be in a position to become champions of Local Agenda 21?</p>	<p>Councils can add status and new bases of support for Local Agenda 21</p>
<p>Are there resources in any of these programs that may be used or re-used for Local Agenda 21?</p>	<p>Better outcomes and reduced costs will be obtained by using existing expertise and building on what already exists. Resources may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff expertise in involving the community • consultation forums • newsletters and community organisations.

It is important to use these documents and activities as foundations for the work on Local Agenda 21, and to build up a sense of ownership within council about the task at hand. Local Agenda 21 should not be seen as a separate project but as a means to combine council programs into a coherent strategy - an umbrella program under which the other activities fall.

WHAT'S WORKING

The City of Moreland's internal Local Agenda 21 Committee was established to develop a Local Agenda 21 Integrated Action Plan. Ultimately, council's commitment to Local Agenda 21 will be reflected in the Municipal Corporate Plan. Incorporation of the Local Agenda 21 concept is being undertaken as part of the council's review of its Corporate Plan. In the longer term, it is intended that the Integrated Action Plan will significantly influence the focus of the Corporate Plan.

Contact: Richard Jennings, City of Moreland, Victoria, ph: (03) 9240 1111

Developing a preliminary budget and roles for staff

A successful Local Agenda 21 will also depend upon the allocation of sufficient resources to get the ball rolling. Unless some resources are allocated to either a preliminary research phase or to the initiative itself, little will be achieved. The report to council could suggest one or more budgeting options. It could also mention opportunities for existing council resources to be re-allocated, and for each department to commit to Local Agenda 21 activities and budgets and identify potential sources of funding (including sponsorships and grants). A range of resourcing options is possible.

Table 3: Resourcing options for Local Agenda 21 programs

APPROACH	INDICATIVE COSTS	EXAMPLE
Rate increase to fund council officers	Increased rates for residents	Tweed, NSW
Integrate into existing work program of council officers	Opportunity costs (they could be doing other activities) and any budget items required	Gold Coast, QLD
Combination of existing staff and consultant	\$50,000 to \$80,000 plus budget items	Mandurah, WA
Employ full-time council officer/s	\$50,000 to \$100,000 plus budget items	Moreland, Victoria
Employ officer on a regional basis resource sharing	Negotiate secondment of officer from an existing Local Agenda 21 council.	Victor Harbour, SA

Reporting to council on establishing a Local Agenda 21 process

The report to council is necessary to gain formal commitment and funding for the Local Agenda 21 process.

- Begin with an overview of Local Agenda 21 - What is it? Where is it happening? Why are people doing it both in Australia and overseas?
- Ensure that examples of benefits to council and the region are included - for example, dollar savings, integration of policy, development of sustainable technologies, whatever is relevant to the council.
- Present the experiences of other similar councils (population, housing stock, urban-rural) showing what issues can be dealt with in a Local Agenda 21 - amalgamations, rural and urban integration, expanding urban fringe.
- Detail what council is already doing and emphasise how the Local Agenda 21 process complements the current programs in council and the added values it can deliver.
- Propose a Local Agenda 21 structure (see Action Area 2) and timeframe, detailing the cost and asking for council commitment.

Recommending a Local Agenda 21 coordinator

The report to council might recommend the appointment of a Local Agenda 21 coordinator with sufficient resources to organise the first simple processes that will establish the foundation of the Local Agenda 21 - for example, a survey of residents about issues of relevance to them, the establishment of a steering committee, and an awareness campaign.

When making recommendations to council about the appointment of a Local Agenda 21 coordinator, careful consideration should firstly be given to where such a position should rest in the council structure and what level of seniority such a position should hold. The management structure surrounding the position should form part of any recommendation and should be very carefully thought through to ensure the best strategic outcomes possible (keeping in mind that Local Agenda 21 will ideally involve the whole of council).

Emphasising that it is not too big

One of the main obstacles to developing an effective Local Agenda 21 is that it can all seem too big, undefined and resource intensive. When preparing a report to council, it is important to emphasise that Local Agenda 21 is an ongoing process which can be broken down into manageable parts, that council can take one step at a time. It may help to suggest some actions that can be achieved within a limited timeframe and that are likely to have an immediate impact.

A simple action, but effective in that it prompts consideration of sustainability, is the use of a sustainability checklist for all council and committee agenda items.

WHAT'S WORKING

The City of Nedlands in WA is trialing a simple checklist of parameters to be included in council agenda items, similar to the existing legislative, budget and policy considerations, to guide council in considering the long term impact of its decision. Recognising that council staff are not experts in the area of sustainability, the checklist comes with a commentary to assist officers to understand the questions. The checklist is in an excel spreadsheet with statements covering economic, environmental and social issues.

Contact: Max Hipkins, City of Nedlands, WA, ph: (08) 9386 6900

Action Area

2

Building partnerships and driving the process

A key feature of Local Agenda 21, which distinguishes it from many other processes, is that it attempts to encourage the active involvement of the community to determine and implement actions for local sustainable development. It is particularly important that those groups within the community (eg. indigenous people, youth, migrant groups, women), which have previously had little role in planning processes, are included. It also seeks to build intergovernmental and business partnerships to pursue a common goal.

Each local authority should enter into a dialogue with its citizens, local organisations and private enterprises and adopt 'a Local Agenda 21'. Through consultation and consensus-building, local authorities would learn from citizens and from local, civic, community, business and industrial organisations and acquire the information needed for formulating the best strategies.

Agenda 21, paragraph 28.3

This Action Area describes some activities to assist with building strong partnerships, both with the community and with a range of organisations. As community involvement is one of the principles of sustainable development, this Action Area is relevant to each of the other Action Areas.

Activities under Action Area 2 include

- recognising the role of partnerships in Local Agenda 21
- building a community profile
- developing a comprehensive community involvement strategy
- developing an effective information strategy and awareness campaign
- determining who will drive the Local Agenda 21 process

Recognising the role of partnerships in a Local Agenda 21

Local Agenda 21 requires broad commitment to achieve sustainable development. It is not possible for one group, for example a local council, to work towards sustainable development without support from the wider community. Local Agenda 21 also recognises that the community is made up of a myriad of groups with diverse backgrounds and needs.

Community participation in the development and implementation of a Local Agenda 21 encourages council and community support for it by

- improving understanding of the necessity for sustainable development
- developing a sense of identity and fostering a sense of 'place' within the community

- demonstrating that individuals can make a contribution and a difference
- demonstrating that everyone's view is important.

Without the representation and commitment of the wider community the Local Agenda 21 process may be seen as shallow and tokenistic.

Gaining a broad commitment

Opportunities must be provided for everyone to be included in the Local Agenda 21 process. Partners will come from interest groups, community organisations, ethnic groups, clubs, church groups, education organisations, media, business and industry, other levels of government, elected officials, staff and interested individuals and families.

Local Agenda 21 must not be seen as just an environmental program. It requires broad participation by those involved in the environmental, economic and social issues in the community.

WHAT'S WORKING

The Local Agenda 21 Advisory Group, established by the Western Australian Municipal Association (WAMA) has been working with State government departments to determine how the State Government can best assist local government working on Local Agenda 21.

Contact: Clare Walsh, Environment Resource Officer, WAMA, ph: (08) 9213 2042

Building a community profile

Building a community profile is an important part of facilitating a partnership approach for Local Agenda 21. Unless there is a clear picture of the people and groups in the community, it is impossible to involve them effectively or communicate with them seriously. A community profile assists with determining

- How best to communicate information about the Local Agenda 21 process - for example, through what medium and in what languages.
- How best to involve people in a Local Agenda 21 — for example, through general meetings at the council or with individual groups.
- How to promote the Local Agenda 21 process — for example, by relating Local Agenda 21 to issues of importance to the community.

The following table lists some elements of a community profile. The extent of your community profile will depend on the resources available to compile such information and on whether information is readily accessible. Much of this information will already exist in council or be accessible through other agencies; however, some further work may need to be undertaken.

Other resources that can be used in building a community profile include

- the Australian Bureau of Statistics information;
- other strategic work of the council (for example planning strategies, corporate plans or cultural programs);
- local council surveys or reports from educational institutions

Table 4: Things to include in a community profile

PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY PROFILE	WHY IT IS IMPORTANT
Population size	Enables comparisons with other councils of similar size.
Population breakdown by age and gender	The age and gender distribution of the community affects community needs.
Aboriginal and ethnic composition of the population	Such groups may have special needs and require special communication methods that depend upon culture and language.
Communication systems for the population	Allows for effective use of communication systems. Information might include: readership of local papers, access to Internet, radio, television, use of resource centres and libraries.
Number and type of non-government organisations (NGOs), and the number of community members in these groups	Identifies how NGOs in the community could be involved in Local Agenda 21.
Community interest in environment, economic, and social matters.	Information on the relative support for these different areas of council's responsibility will assist in promoting Local Agenda 21 to the community.

Making sure partnerships are established

Council will also need to determine the scope of its Local Agenda 21 partnership with the community prior to developing a community involvement strategy. The particular model adopted will depend on the level of resources available and the degree of commitment of the council and community to the Local Agenda 21 process.

There are a variety of partnerships which can be developed. They range from the Local Agenda 21 process being driven by the community and resourced by the council, to a situation where the Local Agenda 21 process is basically driven by the council with strategic involvement of the community. Ideally, the model adopted would have a strong input from both council and the community.



Table 5: Strengths and weaknesses of different models of community involvement

CHARACTERISTIC	STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
Community essentially driving the Local Agenda 21 program with resources from the council	Potentially strong involvement and ownership by the community and the capacity to have the community involved in implementation. Creates a good balance between obligations and influence for both community and council.	Council commitment may be insufficient to support all Local Agenda 21 initiatives. May become too much of a burden for the community group and lead to burn out.
Involving the community organisations in equal partnerships with council	Increases the direct commitment of the community by requiring investments of time and other resources.	Balance between every different interest may lead to slow decision making. Balance may also be hard to sustain.
Involving the community organisations strategically or on a case by case basis	Allows the community to be involved at key points (local business often prefers this approach) without a large investment of time or expertise.	If too structured, it may fail to stir interest or commitment by the community. May be driven by council political priorities to a greater degree.

Council will already have a range of existing relationships with the community — for example, with the local Chamber of Commerce and resident associations — and in the day to day interactions with people from the community. The Local Agenda 21 process can build on these and may involve new partnerships that cross sectoral boundaries — for example, in regard to the issue of reducing greenhouse gases, local builders, energy efficiency experts and real estate agents may become actively involved.

Developing a community involvement strategy is about determining how and to what degree to involve the community in each of the stages of a Local Agenda 21. Issues include

- how many people to involve
- how representative will they be
- what level of input they will have to decision making
- how involved can they be in implementation, monitoring and review stages
- what involvement or communication mechanisms to use.

Ideally, a Local Agenda 21 would involve as many people as possible and to the fullest extent that people are willing to be involved. Communication would be interactive and responsive, rather than just a one way stream of information from council to the community. It would be ongoing and not just consultation at a particular point in time. However, in a diverse community, involvement of this degree can demand allocation of significant resources. This depends upon factors such as

- the number of distinct community groups
- specific cultural and language groups
- preferred means of presentation and information flow.

(This information should have been established in the community profile.)

Council will need to appreciate the effort and resources necessary to allow for effective community involvement.

WHAT'S WORKING

Reverse Garbage Cooperative, a community waste recycling organisation based in the area, received a grant of \$5000 to run the community education component of Marrickville City Council's Agenda 21 Environment Strategy. They were made responsible for the initial community outreach, for running workshops and disseminating information on environmental practice, sustainable development and Agenda 21.

Contact: John Street, Reverse Garbage, NSW, ph: (02) 9569 3132

When designing an involvement strategy, remember that many community groups and individuals operate on schedules not as rigorous or regular as those within council. Over-consultation can be avoided by recruiting a large number of active participants, and reducing the load placed on individuals.

As well as involving the community, it is necessary to involve all council staff and get their commitment. To do so, it will be important to show how Local Agenda 21 is relevant to their jobs and areas of responsibility. This may require changing the thinking that comes with entrenched ideas, perceptions and professional bias.

WHAT'S WORKING

As part of the "Sustaining the Tweed" program, an internal two day workshop was held to educate council staff and assist in the implementation of an Agenda 21 program for Tweed Shire Council. It involved relaying the broad concept of sustainability to staff, management and councillors, positive outcomes of implementing an Agenda 21 program, and some ideas about sustainable work practices. Implications and possible initiatives for various council units were discussed and some short term approaches for sustainability were determined.

Contact: Rance Salan, Tweed Shire Council, NSW, ph: (02) 6672 0400

Web: <http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/agenda21/index.htm>

Developing an effective information strategy and awareness campaign

Participation can be encouraged through a measured and well resourced information and awareness program. This can provide information about opportunities for involvement in the Local Agenda 21 process.

It is essential to keep both the community and council informed about Local Agenda 21 activities and progress. An information strategy details how best to relay information to community and staff. An awareness campaign is about encouraging involvement and support. Both are necessary in order to maintain strong participation in every part of the Local Agenda 21 process.

Developing an information strategy

An information strategy applies to each stage of the Local Agenda 21, including the reporting of progress and outcomes of the Local Agenda 21 process. The strategy would identify the best means of disseminating information, its format, pitch and the appropriate language/s to use. Development of an information strategy would involve considering

- the interests of age and gender groups identified in the community profile

- the requirements of non-English speaking audiences
- the potential coverage of the region, especially if the community profile shows a diverse geographical spread — for example, a small town in a rural environment
- what channels of information already exist in council — for example, newsletters, website, public meetings, council meetings
- what existing council activities could be used to disseminate information — for example, application processing, rates notices, general inquiries desk

Raising awareness

An awareness campaign promotes how people can get involved, the work being undertaken and the outcomes of the Local Agenda 21. It would seek to ensure that information given about the Local Agenda 21 process is accurate, relevant, accessible and regularly updated.

Raising awareness about the Local Agenda 21 work which is being undertaken and its outcomes is necessary not only to get people involved in the first place, but also to maintain interest. Showcasing the Local Agenda 21 may also assist in seeking funding and can help to make connections with other organisations that can become partners in the process.

Raising awareness involves informing staff in all departments of council, their managers and councillors, as well as the wider community. Without broad council understanding and support, the Local Agenda 21 is unlikely to succeed. An inter-departmental working group may be an important way to consolidate any support.

Many councils have used an event or festival to kick off the process of partnership building. In some cases they have used the start of a new term of office for councillors.

WHAT'S WORKING

Tweed Shire Council (NSW) uses its weekly newsletter to all houses in the area to promote what is happening and to suggest ways for householders to improve local sustainability. It also promotes its sustainability work through radio and by meeting community groups. The Tweed Shire Council State of the Environment Report contains a sustainability section and its home page has a Local Agenda 21 section.

Contact: Rance Salan, Tweed Shire Council, NSW, ph: (02) 6672 0400

Web: <http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/agenda21/index.htm>

Hamilton-Wentworth in Canada has an 'Annual Sustainable Development Day', which promotes activities to the general public, elected officials and the various organisations and institutions involved in implementation of their Action Plan. A report that shows progress against benchmarks and targets is distributed on this day.

WHAT'S WORKING

The external Local Agenda 21 Committee of Moreland Council in Victoria is looking at innovative participatory mechanisms such as street theatre, eco-art exhibitions, industry forums (breakfast clubs), school prize giving and school-based 'visioning' through poetry writing and arts projects, and environmental fairs. There are plans to form neighbourhood and ward based 'action groups' working on specific issues.

Contact: Richard Jennings, City of Moreland, Victoria, ph: (03) 9240 1111

As achieving sustainable development is a long term process, commitment will have to be created over and over again. Both councils and community groups will have to develop innovative ways of maintaining the interest and involvement of residents. This may include progressing from the seasonal festival or community education approach to making the Local Agenda 21 program the mainstream theme of community and council activities.

Driving the process of Local Agenda 21 — some common elements

Whatever form of community partnership is adopted (more community, or more council), there needs to be some structure to the Local Agenda 21 to ensure that it remains on track. There is no one set model; however, a common set up is that a council officer manages and drives the program and a steering committee oversees and guides it. Sub-committees or working groups can also be useful for specific purposes. The make up of such groups and the position of the Local Agenda 21 coordinator will vary from council to council.

Steering committees and working groups provide an opportunity for community representatives to be involved in decision making. They are also an opportunity to develop partnerships with various organisations. Understanding other councils' and communities' experiences will help you get an idea about an appropriate structure for your council's Local Agenda 21.

Establishing a Steering Committee and Working Groups

A steering committee, with the support of the coordinator, can steer the Local Agenda 21 process. This does not mean that it determines all the outcomes. It may decide to establish working groups and other means to achieve specific outcomes. Steering committees can be either advisory to council or delegated matters on which to make recommendations for council consideration. A steering committee is useful as a means to oversee and guide the process and to ensure the integration and direction of the many elements essential for its operation.

Table 6: Two different steering committee/council relationships

CHARACTERISTIC	STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
Reports direct to the council and is referred matters on which to make recommendations	Has major impact with council with capacity to turn ideas into action and can access budgets and staff more readily	A balance needs to be kept between councillors, council employees and the community otherwise council may feel that the committee has too much direct power
Committee advises council or reports to a council sub-committee	Allows greater involvement of a wider group of the community and can be less constrained by council procedures	Can become or be seen to be ineffective and powerless

WHAT'S WORKING

In Johnstone Shire Council (Qld), the Johnstone Plan Steering Team (comprising the Mayor, General Manager and Planner and Shire Engineer) was given the responsibility of coordinating the activities of all partnership groups. It reported directly to council. Basically, it was the conduit through which information and recommendations passed, in both directions, between the council and stakeholder groups.

Contact: Matthew Hyde, Johnstone Shire Council, Queensland, ph: (07) 4030 2265

WHAT'S WORKING

The Hornsby Shire Council Local Agenda 21 Committee found that it was getting actively involved in a number of projects without making the kind of difference they hoped for. It has now decided to take a more strategic approach, identifying a number of roles for itself including advising Council on planning, policy, practice and performance, assisting council staff to embrace ESD practices and developing action plans.

Contact: Stella Whittaker, Hornsby Shire Council, NSW, ph: (02) 9847 6666

The establishment of the steering committee is one of the first steps in a process that is substantially participatory. It reflects the idea that a Local Agenda 21 is about the council and community working together. Therefore it is important that all stakeholders are represented in some way otherwise ownership, support and credibility will not be developed.

The steering committee should be made up of councillors, council employees, and representatives of various interest groups within the community. As well as being an example of partnerships in action, the committee should ideally have members with skills to assist in performing its roles.

Steering Committee and Working Group membership should be selected carefully and should include members who have

- expertise in theme areas covered by the committee
- the capacity to provide leadership and initiative
- a commitment to work in the project over a long term
- community respect and the capacity to influence behaviour.

The steering committee will need to have the resources and information necessary to be capable of steering the Local Agenda 21 process. Gathering these could be the role of the committee, the Local Agenda 21 coordinator or both. Initial tasks could include

- researching examples of similar processes elsewhere
- making an inventory of current council plans and documents
- determining the nature and extent of the Local Agenda 21 process to be undertaken
- providing information to the community and providing reports to the council to start to get people interested
- identifying sufficient resources to develop and implement the Local Agenda 21

(These are referred to in other Action Areas.)

The steering committee can involve itself in

- visioning — develop and facilitate a long term vision making process to encourage involvement and consensus
- setting directions — goals, indicators, targets and actions
- building partnerships — develop partnerships and new ways of involving the local community in council operations and policy development
- resourcing — develop resources (finance, expertise, in-kind) to support the Local Agenda 21 process
- educating — coordinate an education and awareness program for council and the community, monitor community attitudes and promote Local Agenda 21 activities
- globalising — encourage local community and council links nationally and internationally
- integrating — promote new ways of integrating council's policies and operations across all council departments.

Further details of each of these roles are given in Appendix 7.

WHAT'S WORKING

In WA, the purpose given to the City of Subiaco's Local Agenda 21 steering committee was to develop a sustainability plan through the implementation of a Local Agenda 21 policy and to advise council on sustainable development. It consists of 4 councillors, 3 community representatives, 2 from administration and 1 staff coordinator. Its goals include

- To prepare and implement a strategic management plan for the protection of the environment and the promotion of ecologically sustainable development
- To develop understanding of the objectives and principles of ESD
- To integrate environmental management planning with the strategic planning of the city
- To draft action plans for implementing policy
- To recommend a set of objectives for achieving best practice environmental management in respect of council's operations
- To involve local community participation in the planning and implementation process
- To develop local commitment to the principles and practices of ESD
- To recommend a process for ongoing monitoring and review.

Contact: Jason Leong, City of Subiaco, WA, ph: (08) 9237 9255

Working groups can focus on the detail of specific problems, consider solutions, and report back to the steering committee. Working groups are useful to deal with specific or unique elements of the process. It is important that they reflect the diverse views of the community and are cross-sectoral in their identification and research of issues.

The groups can be responsible for distinct issues such as the built environment, natural environment, energy use and pollution. In which case, they could include people who have the knowledge and experience to provide workable outcomes, including representatives from

- local businesses
- community based organisations such as churches and resident associations
- state government departments and agencies
- educational institutions
- environment groups
- indigenous and ethnic organisations.

These partners can also take responsibility for creating awareness within their networks about the Local Agenda 21 process.

WHAT'S WORKING

A number of working groups make recommendations to the City of Nedlands Local Agenda 21 steering committee. The convenor of each of these groups is a member of the 12 person steering committee

Natural Environment	Energy Efficiency
Built Environment	Community Well being
Waste Management	Transport

Contact: Max Hipkins, City of Nedlands, WA, ph: (08) 9386 6900

Alternatively, if working groups are to focus on specific tasks such as outreach and education, setting priorities, or communication, their members will ideally have skills to assist in performing those roles.

A range of working groups were used to develop the Strategy for a Sustainable City of South Sydney.

Local area planning teams

Consisting of residents and representatives of community organisations, they reviewed information, identified local issues and proposed objectives and actions.

Peak planning team

Consisting of 25 members, including community, business and state government representatives, it oversaw and developed issues and strategies identified by the Local Area Planning Teams.

Issue based forum

Dealt with contentious or controversial issues - for example, affordable housing. It consisted of community, council and state government representatives.

Wider Liaison Group

Reviews the work of the Peak Planning Team and clarifies outcomes. Consists of representatives from state government departments, public authorities such as the EPA and adjoining councils.

In house team

Consisting of senior officers of the council, the team develops issues, objectives and strategies/actions to produce a draft strategy.

Action Area

3

Setting the vision and the framework to move towards it

The establishment of an agreed vision is a fundamental step in a Local Agenda 21 process as it involves the community thinking about their long term future and what they want to leave for future generations. These aspects of a vision make Local Agenda 21 more than just a council program. This Action Area discusses

- features and benefits of a Local Agenda 21 vision
- different types of community vision
- using scenarios of the future to inform the process
- developing a shared vision involving community and council
- a framework for achieving the vision - goals, targets and indicators

Features and benefits of a community vision

A Local Agenda 21 vision is a common picture of the community's environmental, economic and social future and it should be sufficiently long term to allow substantial change from the patterns of the present. A vision, by its nature, will be a broad idealistic statement of general agreement for the future.

There are many benefits in developing a common vision these include:

- focussing on core values and long term outcomes. The vision-making process can help break through barriers between different interest groups or council departments
- involving a broad range of people in discussions about their vision for the future. This can lead to development of important networks across the community and council and give people a sense of ownership
- allowing an evaluation of past approaches and encouraging new ways of looking at the future
- getting people to think about the long term well being of the community, beyond, for example, three year political timeframes.

Different types of vision

There is no specific formula for what a vision should look like. A vision can be a short statement or a more comprehensive explanation of the preferred future.

Table 7: Strengths and weaknesses of different forms of Local Agenda 21 visions

SCOPE	STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
One paragraph statement	Can encapsulate the sentiment of an entire community and distil the essence of what that community wants	Can become a 'motherhood' statement with little practical application
Short page or set of paragraphs and dot points	Can lay out the vision in more detail but still be at a level of abstraction that encourages agreement	May not allow an easy transition to practical programs that deliver on the vision
A vision statement that clearly outlines the major goals of the Local Agenda 21 with a complementary set of indicators that can be used in monitoring progress	Ensures that the vision is enabled in action and provides a powerful basis for monitoring and reporting	May cost significant amounts of money and time, as well setting the agenda at the start

Two example visions

To achieve environmentally and economically viable sustainable development through the creation of a healthy, safe and enjoyable environment for present and future citizens.

City of Greater Dandenong (Victoria), Environmental Management Strategy: The Way Ahead, 1996, p. 7.

The City of Adelaide developed a page long vision as part of its Environmental Management Plan (see Appendix 8)

Using scenarios for the future, based on a 'business as usual' approach

It is useful to prepare a 'business as usual' scenario before developing a vision. By projecting forward to say 20 or 50 years time on selected issues, people can get an idea of what the future will be like if current activities and trends continue unchanged. The projected outcomes can be environmental conditions such as air and water quality, economic variables such as employment, and social conditions such as crime and public health.

Outcomes in a 'business as usual' scenario provide a reference point for developing a vision and specific goals. People can compare outcomes forecast in the scenario, with the outcomes they would like and thereby see how much change needs to be made in current directions.

Techniques for forecasting include

- using straight line projections based on current trends
- taking account of particular activities or events that are planned and foreseeable — for example, the development of a freeway, or new railway line in the region
- continuing a statistic percentage in the current year on a per capita basis to forecast year — for example, amount of major crime or traffic accidents in the year 2010.

Information for undertaking a 'business as usual' scenario may be obtained from the assessment of the current state of the area, from council reports such as state of the environment reports, or it may need to be sourced from various council departments or external organisations. Councils could use ABS data and demographic forecasting packages to get a picture of the community say in 25 years time, for example, level of economically active population, ethnic and cultural diversity, numbers of school aged children.

The forecasts will be based on a range of assumptions and it will be necessary to review both the assumptions and the forecasts during the course of the Local Agenda 21 process.

WHAT'S WORKING

Sutherland Shire Council in New South Wales is conducting a vision making exercise, 'Shape the Shire', using data obtained from environmental indicators, the Environmental Management System and the State of the Environment Report. 'Indicators of a Sustainable Community' and 'Trend Indicators' provide a comprehensive picture of changing environmental conditions in the Shire and inform the development of a vision.

Contact: Dr Garry Smith, Sutherland Shire Council, New South Wales, ph: (02) 9710 0547,
E-mail: gsmith@ssc.nsw.gov.au

Developing a shared vision involving community and council

Vision-making should not be seen as just an activity for the steering committee or working groups but ideally a collective activity by the community. Input to the vision should be obtained from as many people and groups as possible. Ideally, any discussions with the community would also extend into the development of goals, indicators, targets and actions. This can be done through surveys, meetings, interviews and workshops.

In some communities this process has taken many months and considerable resources. In others it has been a re-affirmation of a previous planning process. A vision could be produced during a one-off workshop or through an on-going process. The kind of vision-making process used will depend on the extent of resources and interest available as well as timeframes.

WHAT'S WORKING

In the development of its Vision 2000 statement, Manly Council in New South Wales conducted separate workshops for councillors, council staff and community groups. These workshops raised possible visions, missions and key objectives from different perspectives. It also hosted a one-day community forum, sent a random survey to 1200 residents and used a series of discussion papers to explore specific issues.

Contact: Manly Council ph: (02) 9976 1500

WHAT'S WORKING

The City of Nedlands, WA conducted a 'Spreading the Word' seminar, which was designed both to alert people to sustainability issues and to get views on future directions. The results of the seminar assisted in the preparation of a draft Sustainability Plan by council staff, which expresses a vision for the City.

Contact: Max Hipkins, City of Nedlands, ph: (08) 9386 6900

The process of determining a vision should begin by considering any previous vision statements within corporate plans and planning documents as these can provide a good starting point. These can be amended, built upon or changed. A community is constantly changing and the vision needs to be an up-to-date statement of where that community wishes to go.

Determining a vision can take a number of forms. It can be based on free ranging discussion about where the community wants to be. A vision can be established through an awareness and forecast approach based on the consequences of doing nothing (using the scenario of ‘business as usual’). Whatever approach is taken, it needs to be sufficiently long term. Using a specific date — for example, the year 2020 — may help in defining a vision as participants can then begin to picture themselves in the future.

Table 8: Some approaches for determining a vision

APPROACH	STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
Council uses its Corporate Plan as a basis and undertakes a consultation program	If the Corporate Plan is an accurate reflection of community views, this can shorten the time in creating a common vision, as well as ensure council support	This process may lock out alternative views, especially ones which currently enjoy little political power. Corporate weaknesses may not be identified in a corporate process
Council resources a community group or groups to run a vision-making process	Can be relatively comprehensive and use many styles	Needs to ensure that council commitment is not lost or that the process is not hijacked by a minority
Council hires a consultant to get the vision developed	Process often gets completed on time and within budget	The process needs to be well run to ensure that local issues and views are incorporated

A framework for achieving the vision: goals, indicators and targets

Just as important as determining the vision is the setting of goals, indicators, targets, and an Action Plan to achieve it.

- **Goals** represent the desired end point on specific issues
- **Indicators** measure progress towards goals
- **Targets** provide measurable commitments towards the achievement of goals
- **Action plans** clearly identify all actions necessary to achieve specified targets

When developing each of these, the sustainability principles mentioned earlier will need to be considered and included. This could be achieved by having an introductory session for those involved in determining goals, indicators and targets.

Involving the community is also an important aspect of this phase as it is about determining how the council and community intend to become more sustainable. Active participation of the community in selecting the goals and targets will enable people to feel commitment and ownership of them.

WHAT'S WORKING

In the City of Adelaide, reference groups went through a process of four meetings over a period of five months covering the following topics:

- Clarifying the purpose of an Environment Management Plan
- Clarifying what is meant by sustainability
- Establishing a Vision for a Sustainable City
- Proposing indicators for sustainability
- Proposing actions required to move towards sustainability
- Setting priorities and responsibilities for the programmes

Contact: Rebecca Collins, City of Adelaide, ph: (08) 8203 7290

Web: <http://www.adelaide.sa.gov.au>

There are a variety of techniques to assist with group planning (determining goals, targets, indicators and actions). These include:

- brainstorming — to generate a large number of ideas
- role playing — enabling people to creatively remove themselves from their usual roles and perspectives and allowing them to understand choices and decisions made by others
- focus groups — using professional facilitators to solicit people's reactions
- force field analysis — identifying hindering and facilitating forces affecting the functioning of any situation, assessing the relative strength of each force, and planning alternative actions to overcome or promote these forces
- ranking — assigning qualitative and quantitative values to problems and comparing these in order to rank problems from low to high priority
- surveys — a relatively low cost method of directly obtaining information about people's attitudes, opinions, needs, perceptions, policy preferences, behaviours and characteristics
- SWOT analysis — considering strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of any proposed action

(Local Agenda 21 Planning Guide, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, 1996, Toronto, Canada)



Table 9: Examples of the relationship between goals, indicators, targets and actions

ISSUES	GOAL	INDICATORS	TARGETS	ACTIONS
The community's generation of waste is unacceptable	Minimise waste produced by the community	Number of tonnes of waste going to landfill Proportion of households buying recycled products rather than non-recycled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one third of households directing their organic waste to neighbourhood depots by 2003 • reduce construction waste to landfill by 30% by the year 2005 • reduce industry waste to landfill by 30% by the year 2005 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up organic waste depots • encourage the regional waste board to actively work with the building industry to recycle construction waste • liaise with businesses in the area on methods of reducing waste (eg. setting up and coordinating a database of available waste resources)
Destruction of native bushland is excessive	A healthy natural environment for the enjoyment of local people and to provide habitat for native animals	Area covered in good quality native vegetation Numbers of (indicative species eg powerful owls)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revegetate 10% of council managed land by 2004 • all landowners in the identified priority areas taking part in the council run incentive program. • community can identify the key species of the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake a survey of vegetation in the area • prioritise areas for the development of habitat corridors • work with community groups to revegetate degraded council managed land • provide incentives for private landowners to retain and care for their native vegetation • use council media and signage to alert the community to the qualities of the flora and fauna of the area

No vibrant local shopping centre	A diverse and vibrant shopping area, which fills the needs of the community in a pleasant environment and which is viable for local businesses.	Community satisfaction with the area. Local business satisfaction Ability to meet most shopping needs locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% occupancy of shops • 75% of community meeting weekly needs locally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a streetscape plan • promote the local shopping centre to the local community • improve community transport and access to the shopping centre
The old and young are moving out of the community	All people have the opportunity to have a full and enjoyable life, and the ability to contribute to community life.	Level of involvement in cultural, sporting, leisure activities. Number of people suffering depression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the number of aged care facilities by 50% • provision of low cost housing for young adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • council run access services • promote local clubs and organisations and facilitate access to these • provide assistance to migrant support groups in the area
Crime is increasing	A safe community	Confidence of people to walk alone at night Confidence of parents in letting their children walk to school unattended	Reduce level of crime in the area by 50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liaise with police and local community on options such as improved lighting • determine land use planning implications for safety and produce a policy to promote desirable options

Determining goals

Goals help fill out the details of the vision. They also show how the community will move towards the vision on particular issues. Goals cover the major issues and opportunities in the council area. They will include environmental, economic and social goals.

Toronto, Canada, developed a healthy community and equity statement which included the following goals

- adequate food, shelter, income, literacy and education
- opportunities for people to participate in decisions affecting their lives and communities
- elimination of intolerance and violence
- physical, mental and social well-being
- uncontaminated air, water and food
- access to nature

Goals may be developed by working groups and other stakeholder groups, each considering a particular topic of interest to the community - for example, transport, land use, citizenship, unemployment. The goals could be refined by the steering committee and made available for broader community comment before being finalised. In practice, goals are likely to be developed as part of a more in-depth vision-setting process.

Choosing indicators

Indicators are used to measure progress towards (or away) from each goal (ideally, they will be developed at the same time as goals are determined). When choosing indicators, the question to be asked is 'What should we measure to give us an idea about whether we are moving towards or away from this goal?'

Indicators serve two important purposes, they

- provide a method of monitoring which allows for comparison over time. In this way, they can show whether the activities being undertaken are moving the community towards its goals
- are a good way to educate and motivate people to work towards the vision of sustainability. They can be used to focus attention and effort on achieving the goals of the community.

Further details on the uses of indicators are contained in Appendix 9

Indicators are not intended to describe the full nature of an issue, they only convey information about a certain component of it. So it is important to choose carefully what to measure; there may need to be more than one indicator for each goal.

Characteristics of indicators

There are a number of characteristics that indicators should have. They need to be

- relevant to the council and local community
- related clearly to the achievement of the goal they are measuring
- able to be generally understood
- measurable on a practical and regular basis
- economically viable to use, the data should not be too expensive to collect or to interpret.

Ideally, Local Agenda 21 indicators should clearly show linkages between economic, environmental and social factors — for example, the link between a goal of air quality and community health. They need to engage the community and may build upon successful programs like Saltwatch and Waterwatch. They should reflect the principles of sustainability; they would not promote actions which are contrary to principles like equity between generations, ecological integrity, and the need for precaution.

WHAT'S WORKING

The City of Unley, in South Australia, chose indicators relating to the top 20 issues of concern to the community (identified in its community survey). These included such things as

- number of passengers on public transport per year
- number of safety promotions per year
- number of residents involved in greening programs
- the approved budget for Home Assist and other services for the elderly

Contact: Bruce Lang, City of Unley, South Australia, ph: (08) 8372 5152

It can be expensive to collect and process data on every indicator nominated by the community. Therefore, it will often be necessary to make do with a limited number of indicators. So prior to finalising the list of indicators, it is wise to check on the availability of the data. There may already be existing data sources (within council or externally), and resources such as volunteer groups or schools that are available to collect information. However, it is advisable to concentrate efforts and resources on collecting data for the most relevant indicators, and to resist the temptation to collect data just because it is readily available or cheap to collect.

Setting targets

A target provides a measurable commitment and an identifiable step towards the achievement of a goal. Given the need for urgent action towards sustainability, targets and the timeframes for them should be achievable but challenging. If they are too easy to achieve, they will give a false sense of improvement. If they are too difficult, people may give up trying to achieve them at all.

Targets are a key part of the Local Agenda 21 process because they set the direction for action, they focus resources, both financial and personnel, on the achievement of goals. It is therefore important to involve the community.

Targets show how the community thinks it will best reach its goals, given its powers, expertise and resources. Over time, these factors will change so the targets will need to be reviewed this is part of the monitoring and reviewing process.

Questions to consider when determining targets include

- Is the target sufficient for us to meet our immediate priorities?
- Does the target provide an acceptable and worthwhile challenge?
- Is the target achievable?
- Is it likely to help us move towards our goal?
- Can the target be measured (either quantitatively or qualitatively)?

The last of these questions is important because targets provide the basis for reviewing the Action Plan. By measuring progress towards a target you can determine whether the actions are helping to achieve these targets.

Targets can sometimes relate to international, national, state and regional, as well as local objectives. For example, Australia has national targets in relation to greenhouse gas reduction. However, such targets will not be achieved by action at the national level alone. Ideally, targets set by councils will match those of broader jurisdictions, if not exceed them.

The Santa Monica Sustainable City Program included the following goals and targets for the policy area of resource conservation

Goals

- promote the use of conservation technologies and practices and reduce the use of non-renewable resources
- develop local, non-polluting, renewable energy, water, and material resources, and expand recycling technology in these areas

Targets (for the year 2000 relative to 1990 levels)

- reduce energy usage by 16%
- reduce potable water usage by 20%
- reduce solid waste volumes by at least 50%
- achieve a 50% average post-consumer recycled and/or tree-free content in all city paper purchases
- convert 75% of the city vehicle fleet to reduced-emission fuels
- reduce waste water flows by 15%
- increase total number of trees on public property by 350

It may be necessary to prioritise targets if there are not sufficient resources to work towards all targets simultaneously. One mechanism for priority-setting is 'force field' analysis. This involves identifying those conditions which facilitate and those which hinder progress to each target. Higher priority is given to targets where present conditions will facilitate success. For other targets, the emphasis will be on conditions which hinder progress.

For further information on force field analysis, see <http://www.psywww.com/mtsite/forcefld.html>

Setting a vision, goals and targets and determining indicators will be difficult tasks. Issues may not be well understood, or there may be disagreement between groups in the community. An important challenge for those involved in the Local Agenda 21 process is to achieve greater consensus, and set up the framework for substantial action.



Action Area

4

Creating a local action planning document

A successful Local Agenda 21 requires action to move towards the community's vision. An Action Plan provides a realistic and practical framework that clearly identifies the actions that have been chosen to attain the targets. It will be a plan for all those involved in the actions as well as a tool for the monitoring and review of the Local Agenda 21 process.

This Action Area discusses

- developing a local action planning document
- identifying actions to achieve the targets
- Actions to improve management systems
- On-the-ground actions

Planning for local action

A local Action Plan documents the detail of the Local Agenda 21 process and thereby acts as both an educational document and a blueprint for action. It is an essential element of a Local Agenda 21, as it

- gives shape to the Local Agenda 21 process and allows the council and the community to check its progress at regular intervals
- shows that the council is committed to working towards the community's vision
- encourages partnerships with organisations promoting similar objectives by making goals, targets and intended actions public
- allows for monitoring and future review, and
- encourages community involvement

The Action Plan could take a number of forms. However, in order for the Local Agenda 21 to be put into effect, the Action Plan should state the community vision, goals, indicators, targets, actions, timelines, responsibilities and budgets. The plan can also refer to other documents and processes that support and give substance to the Local Agenda 21 process, for example, the corporate plan and other strategic documents.

Table 10: Things to include in a local Action Plan

Things to include in a local Action Plan

- A profile of the area - its physical form, the nature of the community that live in, work in and visit the area. Mention elements that make the area distinctive - elements to be proud of and elements that need improving
- A summary of what the council and community have done and are doing to improve the sustainability of the area
- A statement about where the Local Agenda 21 process sits relative to other council strategies and the corporate plan, and the commitment of council to Local Agenda 21
- The visions, goals and indicators (including a brief statement about the current state of affairs relating to each issue). Perhaps include suggestions of what individuals can do in their daily lives to help achieve the goals
- The proposed actions and the targets they are to achieve
- Details of who is responsible for undertaking the actions, their relative priority, budgets and timeframes for implementation
- Details of the Local Agenda 21 process to date - the process of determining the vision, goals, indicators, targets and actions
- Details of the ongoing Local Agenda 21 process - how progress will be monitored, how the Action Plan will be reviewed and the Local Agenda 21 process itself kept healthy
- Details of how people and organisations can get involved - for example, through the steering committee, helping to implement the nominated actions, and monitoring
- Contact details for inquiries - perhaps a web address

WHAT'S WORKING

Armidale City Council's Environmental Management Plan 1998, is set out in a user friendly fashion with pictures for interest and a list of suggestions about 'what the community can do' for each of the Action Areas. For example, under the heading of 'Air Quality', it lists the following among others

- Don't burn slow smouldering fires
- Be part of a car pool or use public transport
- Have your car regularly tuned
- Plant trees and vegetation
- Never burn rubbish or treated timber

Contact: Stephen Gow, City of Armidale, NSW, ph: (02) 6770 3541

Identifying actions to achieve the targets

Deciding on appropriate actions to achieve the shared vision and in particular, the targets, provides an opportunity to take stock of a council's many plans and projects, and to consider how they impact on achieving those targets. The inventory of current council activities (see Action Area 1) should provide the necessary background information. This step is about determining what further activities are needed and how current activities may need modifying in order to meet the targets.

An Action Plan will need to address each of the targets and

- define actions to achieve the target
- rank these actions (eg using high, medium and low priority)
- assign who will be responsible for implementing each action (usually a position, department or organisation rather than a person)
- estimate capital and recurrent costs, and identify possible sources of funding — possibly applying cost sharing principles
- estimate the amount of work time needed to carry out the action, preferably including a timeline

WHAT'S WORKING

In the development of *Sutherland Shire 2010, Your Future*, Sutherland Shire Council surveyed residents on a broad range of issues relating to the shire and its development. It also utilised the already existing mechanisms for public participation to encourage people to state what they would like for the shire. The resulting plan highlights a range of short and long term outcomes of importance to the shire and its community. For example a short term outcome is to identify potentially contaminated land in order to minimise risks to human health, and a long term outcome is the remediation of such sites.

Contact: Dr Garry Smith, Sutherland Shire Council, New South Wales, ph: (02) 9710 0547, E-mail: gsmith@ssc.nsw.gov.au

The range of actions that might make up a Local Agenda 21 process is extremely broad. Typical categories for action could include

- actions to improve council management systems, including improving internal communications
- on-the-ground actions that implement council and community objectives
- actions directly associated with the Local Agenda 21 process — for example, education and publicity, research, and partnership building

The *Sutherland Shire 2010, Your Future* document describes desired outcomes under a broad range of headings

Natural	Water Air Land Flora and Fauna	Economic	Economic and Environment Shopping Tourism
Social	Population and Housing Family Patterns/Housing Costs Community Services Education Health and Safety Open Space and Recreation	Built	Urban Design Transport Energy Waste

Choosing actions

Processes to assist with the identification of actions include

- considering the inventory of existing programs and activities to determine which ones can be used to move towards the set targets and which hinder progress towards them
- brainstorming of a wide range of new activities that are possible under existing council structures, and given community resources
- considering a range of actions from other councils' Local Agenda 21 processes.

Many of the activities already undertaken by council will be directly relevant to achieving the Local Agenda 21 goals. Indeed, ideally all of council's operations should be linked to the goals and targets.

WHAT'S WORKING

In the City of Mandurah, WA, working groups (involving council, industry, community and state government representatives) used a brainstorming process to determine actions and outputs. Interestingly, they then worked 'backwards' — considering what it was that they were trying to achieve and what was the purpose of the proposed actions. The groups then turned their attention to creating milestones and indicators. It was considered that starting with actions would make the process seem more real.

Contact: Bryce Bunny, City of Mandurah, WA, ph: (08) 9550 3826

Some questions to ask when determining appropriate actions include

- Will the actions allow us to achieve the targets we have set?
- What are the actions' impacts — social, economic, environmental?
- Will the actions address identified barriers to Local Agenda 21?
- Do any of the actions conflict with one another or overlap?
- Do any of the actions have benefits in more than one area?
- Are there resources or might resources become available to implement the action?
- Is the action cost effective?
- Can the action be allocated a timeline and responsible lead agent?
- Does the action have the support of the community?
- Is there widespread support in the council for the action?
- Is there a person or organisation who will champion the action?
- As a set of actions, are they realistic and desirable for the council and community alike?

Resourcing actions

Most actions will be resourced through the council and may require a good ‘business case’ for adoption. Many activities will also be made possible through partnerships with other sectors of the community — for example, a revegetation target may be met by working with Greening Australia and local landcare groups. Funding for actions may be obtained from external sources such as state or federal government — for example, the Commonwealth Government’s Natural Heritage Trust or sponsorship arrangements. Resource sharing is another option — for example, a number of councils using the one community development officer.

WHAT’S WORKING

The Lake Macquarie Environmental Management Plan details a range of strategies, both for the short and medium term. It recognises that the implementation of more complex programs are subject to resource constraints, including staffing and budgetary matters. However, the document was to be used to provide direction for new resource requests and program projections.

Contact: Tracey Ferguson, Lake Macquarie City Council, NSW, ph: (02) 4921 0365

WHAT’S WORKING

As part of the implementation of its Environmental Management Plan, the City of Adelaide established an electronic database to assist staff to include actions from the plan in the budget planning process, to report on actions undertaken and to set targets to implement the actions for which they had been allocated responsibility.

Contact: Rebecca Collins, City of Adelaide, ph: (08) 8203 7290

Web: <http://www.adelaide.sa.gov.au>

Prioritising actions

When choosing actions, it is important to establish a number of specific actions that can be commenced immediately and which can motivate and demonstrate the value of the Local Agenda 21 program. Often such early initiatives can even help to finance the ongoing program by saving the council money.

WHAT’S WORKING

Marrickville Council in NSW has found a number of demonstration projects useful for showing the community that sustainability can be achieved, and for demonstrating innovation in environmental practice. Such programs have included trialing a solar light at Cooks River Foreshore and promoting the energy and water efficiency improvements of a building retrofit program.

Contact: Stefanie Pillora, Marrickville Council, NSW, ph: (02) 9335 2198

WHAT’S WORKING

Manningham Council in Victoria has used energy savings to fund further action. An initial energy audit at Manningham brought about annual savings of \$40,000. A proportion of additional savings, now identified by the Greenhouse Officer, are directed toward environmental programs.

Contact: Adam Briscoomb, City of Manningham, Victoria, ph: (03) 9840 9325

WHAT'S WORKING

Newcastle City Council has set up a revolving energy fund. This involves returning all savings achieved below its 1995 energy bill of approximately \$1M for investment into products and services that provide additional energy savings.

Contact: Peter Dormand, Newcastle City Council, NSW, ph: (02) 9299 9325 or pdormand@ncc.nsw.gov.au

Priority actions could include

- introducing resource conservation measures that also save money for the council - for example, an energy audit and reduction plan, or introducing a purchasing policy which reduces resource use
- strengthening existing programs that work towards achieving targets and that have existing constituencies of support and resources
- developing partnerships with sectors that meet several targets at the same time, such as support for local manufacturers of sustainable technologies which could help meet local economic development and energy reduction targets.

Defining Responsibilities

To ensure implementation of the Action Plan, responsibility for each action must be clearly defined. A specific council officer, department or community organisation should be named.

Wellington City Council in New Zealand has used the following format to report on progress of its *Our City – Our Future Strategy*. The following example is taken from the draft Progress Report 1998.

Table 11: An example of clearly defined responsibility for actions (Wellington City Council)

TARGET OR INITIATIVE	IS IT HAPPENING?	WHO CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN?	HAVE THEY ACCEPTED THIS ROLE?	HOW WILL THEY DO IT?	WHO CAN HELP?
		(The primary implementation organisation)		(This identifies the high level strategy or plan the organisation will use to achieve the target or initiative)	(These are organisations who could play a secondary role in the implementation of the target or initiative)
Most people think the quality of life has improved over the previous five years, by 2005	Yes	Wellington City Council Commissioning: Policy	Confirmed numerous groups should be involved	Community Development Policy; Quality of Life Monitoring Program	Disability Reference Group; National Council of Women; Ethnic Affairs Council

WHAT'S WORKING

For each of its identified aims, the City of Mandurah's Sustainable City Plan (Footprints into the Future) specifies actions, responsibility, priority and cross references to related actions. For example:

Aim: To promote the use of environmentally sustainable building materials

ID	Action	Priority	Responsibility	Cross Ref
BE8	Development of information package on sustainable building materials	Medium	Strategic Planning / Building	
BE9	Implementation of a green purchasing policy for Council	High	Strategic Planning / Corporate Services	EC11
BE10	Investigate the option to require Council to purchase locally	High	Corporate Services	EC11
BE11	Redesign building application form to gather information on source of building materials	High	Building	

Contact: Bryce Bunny, City of Mandurah, WA, ph: (08) 9550 3826

Actions to improve management systems

Council's management structures can be a fundamental barrier or enabler to some of the key aspects of sustainability. For this reason, councils will need to provide adaptable structures for management and decision making and provide, through training, a change in the culture of the organisation.

They will also need to set up processes which ensure that sustainability principles and the Local Agenda 21 goals and targets are integrated into all of council's policies and activities. Goals and targets isolated within one particular area of council operations are unlikely to be effective.

Actions to improve council management systems could include

- introducing an Environmental Management System into council
- establishing an open information system
- developing a strategic and participatory decision making system, which includes a range of interest groups and individuals early on in decision making processes
- assessing council's major activity areas against stated sustainability goals and targets
- ensuring that budgeting and accounting systems consider full social and environmental costs, as advocated in environmental accounting
- developing a purchasing policy that considers the 'life cycle' analysis of products
- getting contract specifications right to avoid future problems
- encouraging the transfer of information, knowledge and experience across both the council and the community.

Table 12: Actions to improve council management systems

EXAMPLE OF ACTION TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	DESCRIPTION
Introducing an Environmental Management System into council	An Environmental Management System (EMS) provides a structured approach to environmental management across all of a council's operations. Although an EMS traditionally focuses solely on environmental issues, it can be broadened to include broader sustainability themes such as employment, community involvement and cultural issues.
Developing a strategic and participatory decision making system	Ensuring that council's major, ongoing decision making processes involve a range of stakeholders at an early stage means real commitment to community participation, which is an important component of Local Agenda 21. One method for involvement might be the establishment of community consultative committees.
Assessing council's major activity areas against stated sustainability goals and targets	A good example would be assessment of how land use planning and building approvals take account of total energy usage, transport methods and waste disposal. Ideally, all areas of council should be assessed, but choosing a few prominent areas will promote the sustainability objectives throughout the council and community.
Ensuring that budgeting and accounting systems consider full social and environmental costs	Environmental accounting frameworks that better inform environmental management decisions are being developed for local governments. These frameworks combine physical with financial measures and thereby support integrated decision-making. In contrast to most practice to date, they do not isolate market transactions from the capital of the natural environment.
Developing a purchasing policy that considers 'life cycle' analysis of products.	Purchasing, whether of products or services, is something that is relevant across the whole of a council organisation. A purchasing policy containing sustainability criteria is therefore a useful mechanism to get council officers thinking about sustainability as well as to start putting it in place.
Getting contract specifications right	Many councils are moving to a model of purchaser-provider and the contracting out of service provision is becoming more common. In these circumstances, it is important to ensure that the activities of contractors are directed to meeting the goals and targets of the council.
Encouraging the transfer of information, knowledge and experience both across the council and the community	Making the most of resources available, both those within council and the community, is an essential part of improving management systems. This involves knowing what resources are available - for example, experience in involving the community or in obtaining information, useful databases and electronic information systems, and people with a background in innovative strategic work.

WHAT'S WORKING

Manningham City Council in Victoria has implemented an EMS across all units of its operations. The key objective of the EMS has been to cement environmental management into the philosophical approach of the organisation. The approach taken was to concentrate not only on the environmental risk areas of the organisation, but also the opportunities for influencing other members of the community to think about the environment. A database, accessible by every service unit, helps to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to play their part.

Contact: Stephen Ray, Manningham City Council, Victoria, ph: (03) 9840 9461

WHAT'S WORKING

Marrickville Council in NSW used criteria covering Local Agenda 21 themes for assessing projects. These included

- Have access issues been considered?
- Have public art issues been taken into account?
- Will environmental best practice be pursued in the project?
- Has community safety been included in the project?
- Have community consultation processes been designed?
- Have the full risks of the project/issue been considered?
- Is there an opportunity to work with a team approach?

Contact: Deirdre Bruen, Marrickville Council, NSW, ph: (02) 9335 2272

On-the-ground actions

Table 13: Some examples of on-the-ground actions that have provided 'wins' for councils

TYPE OF ON-THE-GROUND ACTION	EXAMPLE
Sustainable use of resources through activities such as environmentally preferable purchasing systems	<p>Local Government in NSW is a major purchasing force - spending nearly \$2 billion every year on goods, services and capital equipment. The NSW Waste Boards have developed a model <i>Waste Reduction and Procurement Policy and Guidelines for Local Government</i>. The aim of the Policy and Guidelines is to assist Councils enhance in-house waste reduction in administration and operations areas through avoidance and systems review, and also to change procurement and purchasing arrangements to increase the proportion of products bought from re-used, recycled and re-processed sources.</p> <p>The model Policy and Guidelines can be obtained in CD-ROM format by contacting the Southern Sydney Waste Board (02) 9316-9199 extension 224.</p> <p>A downloadable version can be viewed at the Southern Sydney Waste Board web-site http://www.sswb.nsw.gov.au or the combined NSW Waste Board's web-site http://www.wasteboards.nsw.gov.au.</p>

<p>Promotion of sustainable economic development through programs such as Energy Smart Homes</p>	<p>Energy Smart Homes commenced in NSW in 1997 in response to uncertainty caused by deregulation regarding costs and greenhouse gas emissions. Energy Smart Homes was devised by the Greenlight Consortium, formed by Manidis Roberts and Environs Australia, to assist local councils in their contribution to energy efficiency particularly in the housing sector. The program provides guides for new houses and developments as well as renovations to existing residences. One of the main tools of the program is a computer software package, the National Home Energy Rating Scheme. As a result of Energy Smart Homes, 40 NSW councils in 1998 offered residents a \$500 subsidy for upgrading to more efficient hot water systems.</p> <p>Contact: Greenlight Consortium, NSW, ph: (02) 92815442, Website: http://www.greenlight.com.au</p>
<p>Health improvements for the community through programs such as Smogbusters</p>	<p>Smogbusters is a joint arrangement between the Commonwealth Government and five community based conservation councils in the five largest capital cities. The aim of Smogbusters is to work with the community to improve urban air quality and to assist in meeting greenhouse gas objectives by increasing community understanding of and involvement in practices with respect to transport and motor car use. In Brisbane, Smogbusters has been active in community education programs, tree plantings and promoting the Smoky Vehicle Hotline. In Perth the emphasis has been on developing and distributing information to residents on ways to reduce car dependency and to promote public transport.</p> <p>Contact: Rachel Carlisle, National Coordinator ph: (03) 9348 9044</p>
<p>General quality of life improvements</p>	<p>Bayside Council in Victoria is one of many councils tackling the task of building bicycle lanes and paths to create municipal bicycle networks. At less than \$4000 per kilometre, bicycle lanes are a cost effective way to deliver benefits to cyclists and in some cases have increased cyclist numbers by 25% in a few months. Developing bicycle networks assists local communities in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving their quality of life.</p> <p>Contact: Richard Smithers, Local Government Coordinator - Bicycle Victoria, ph: (03) 9328 3000</p>
<p>Improving access to adequate services</p>	<p>The Community Support Strategic Plan completed by the City of Boroondara in Victoria in November 1997 is a local area needs-based planning project. The aim of the plan was to clearly identify community needs in local areas and analyse resources on the basis of needs.</p> <p>There were three key objectives for the plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to identify community needs in designated areas across the city • to develop principles for the allocation of resources

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to identify priorities for the development or re-development of community services and facilities <p>Contact: Brendan Carins, Manager - Social Policy, City of Boroondara, Victoria, ph: (03) 9278 4750</p>
<p>Working with groups for support of innovative sustainability programs</p>	<p>Local councils through their Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs) are becoming increasingly involved in cooperative arrangements to address environmental issues that occur on a regional basis. The Green Web-Sydney Vegetation Management Plan was initiated by the Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils and involved a core group of four of the ROCs, Greening Australia, Greening Sydney 2000, Environs Australia, the Department of Land and Water Conservation and the Australian Local Government Association. The project has developed a range of products to assist councils in adopting a consistent and cooperative approach to vegetation management and the conservation of biodiversity.</p> <p>Contact: George Curtis, Environmental Projects Officer, WSROC Ltd, ph: (02) 9671 4333</p>
<p>Ecosystem maintenance and repair through providing financial incentives</p>	<p>A growing number of councils are offering private landholders financial incentives for landcare works and biodiversity conservation through rate rebate schemes and grants. In Queensland, Johnstone Shire Council, Cooloola Shire Council and Cairns City Council are offering rebates for the protection of high value vegetation and wildlife habitat. Logan City Council in Queensland has introduced a Residential Conservation Zone into its planning scheme. Rate rebates of 25% and 50% provide an incentive for private land holders to rezone their property to the new zone. Conditions of the new zone include restriction of development and clearing and rehabilitation of degraded areas. The Melton Shire in Victoria has introduced a rebate for environmental works to control noxious weeds, pest animals and erosion. The Coorong District (South Australia) Local Action Plan offers financial incentives to private landholders for revegetation projects and projects to protect remnant vegetation and wetlands.</p> <p>Contacts: Environs Australia, ph: (03) 9654 1322</p> <p>Carl Binning, CSIRO - Division of Wildlife and Ecology - Resource Futures Program, ACT, ph: (02) 6224 2600 Website: http://www.dwe.csiro.au/futures/</p>
<p>Providing a good example, by making council activities more environmentally friendly.</p>	<p>Local councils are direct providers of many services. This means they directly use resources such as water, energy, manufactured goods, and they generate waste.</p> <p>Councils can therefore directly reduce their impact on the environment by implementing 'cleaner production' in their own processes.</p> <p>For example, Waverley City Council (NSW) has trialed the use of a garbage truck and tipper truck which runs on compressed natural gas (CNG). Similarly, Liverpool Council (NSW) has given consideration to converting its fleet of</p>

	<p>100 cars and trucks to CNG over a five year period. Not only will this initiative reduce the production of greenhouse gases, it will help to improve air quality.</p> <p>For information on CNG contact: Marion Stefaniw, Australian Greenhouse Office, ph (02) 6274 1833</p>
<p>Incorporate industrial ecology principles into land use zoning</p>	<p>Land use planning can be applied to ensure that industrial developments are placed in areas where they will have a minimal environmental and community impact. Zoning laws can also be designed to encourage symbiotic, or complementary industries, to be sited in the same areas. In this way, through thoughtful land-use planning and the design of individual plants, cleaner production can be incorporated at the beginning of industrial activity, rather than added afterwards.</p> <p>These types of developments, also known as ‘industrial ecology parks’ can facilitate improved recycling of outputs from one industry by other industries, rather than those outputs simply being treated as waste and sent to landfill. Such recycling reduces waste and increases profits, not only for the creator of outputs, but also the buyer.</p> <p>This type of planning can also reduce transport costs and the environmental effects of transport.</p>
<p>Working to bring all people into decision making processes.</p>	<p>Redland Shire Council entered an agreement with the Quandamooka Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (QLC) for joint decision making. The basis of the agreement is that both parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have accepted the other's rights, interests and custodial obligations over the area, and • want to ensure the special environment on North Stradbroke Island is preserved for present and future generations <p>Under the agreement, a process has been put in place to reach agreement on native title matters. The process involves conducting a planning and management study of North Stradbroke Island which will consider environmental and cultural conservation, local economic development, and the provision of physical and social services.</p> <p>The findings of the study will be used to develop a native title agreement incorporating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A vision and strategic land use plan for the area • A management framework agreement <p>Contact: Sarah Sing, Redland Shire Council, Qld, ph: (07) 3286 8439</p>

<p>Promote the identity of the area through the development and implementation of a cultural policy.</p>	<p>The City of Fremantle (WA) is preparing a Cultural Policy and Plan to preserve, promote and enhance Fremantle's unique identity.</p> <p>Priority strategies under the plan could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engaging a designer to develop a proposal for visual themes • resourcing the reconciliation process • refining community participation methods to ensure the inclusion of a diverse population • improving and extending existing cultural facilities <p>Contact: City of Fremantle, ph: (08) 9432 9999 Web: www.fremantle.wa.gov.au</p>
<p>Protecting local heritage as part of sustainable tourism</p>	<p>In response to a desire to conserve the heritage values of a series of key historic rural landscapes, Wingecarribee Shire in the Southern Highlands south of Sydney developed and implemented a conservation planning strategy.</p> <p><i>Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Local Communities</i> is a how-to-do-it guide developed by the Australian Heritage Commission. It is designed to help individuals and groups working locally to identify, conserve and protect heritage places.</p> <p>Contact: Australian Heritage Commission, GPO Box 1567, Canberra ACT 2601 Ph: (02) 6217 2116 Fax: (02) 6217 2095 E-mail: clare.henderson@ea.gov.au</p>
<p>Help to clean up local industry, by working in partnership with major industry players</p>	<p>In the City of Greater Dandenong, there are 1800 small businesses who work within the Motor Vehicle Service and Repair Industry. Working with organisations such as the EPA and South East Water, and industry related groups, the city has developed an awareness program including seminars, site visits and an information kit to help the industry with housekeeping practices.</p> <p>Contact: Lorraine Nelson, City of Greater Dandenong, Victoria, ph: (03) 9239 5240</p>

Action Area

5

Implementing, reporting, monitoring and reviewing

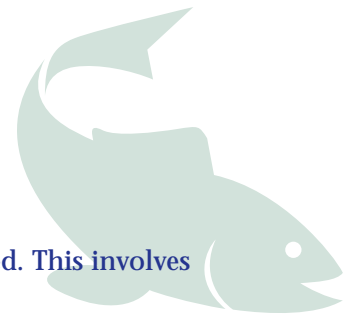
Putting all the planning into action is a crucial element of a Local Agenda 21. This Action Area contains some pointers on

- implementing the Action Plan
- reporting on implementation
- monitoring progress
- reviewing and evaluating

Implementing the Action Plan

Having made an Action Plan, it is important to see that it gets implemented. This involves

- ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan
- keeping Local Agenda 21 on the political as well as senior management agenda, so that it retains some priority within council
- publicising Local Agenda 21 activities to maintain support and community involvement if that is appropriate
- keeping channels of communication open, at least at the level of senior management so that Local Agenda 21 activities throughout the organisation can be implemented in the most effective and efficient manner
- promoting the sustainability principles (as outlined in Section 1) and the goals and targets in-house so that there is a consistent approach in the implementing activities
- assisting with the sourcing of external funding, eg. from state and Commonwealth Government agencies
- building partnerships with local businesses whose involvement or sponsorship could help to reduce costs to council of the Local Agenda 21 program.



Reporting on progress

Reporting on the activities that have taken place under the Local Agenda 21 Action Plan could occur annually, perhaps linked with council's annual report.

Reporting on implementation of the Local Agenda 21 Action Plan has a number of benefits. It recognises the work of people involved and allows them to see that the Local Agenda 21 process is one which is being taken seriously by council. Effectively, such a report establishes a mechanism for accountability and for evaluating council's implementation of the Local Agenda 21 Action Plan.

Reporting can also be a mechanism for continuing to promote Local Agenda 21 both in council and the community (people come and go, so there is a need to continually involve new people). It can also be a valuable way for councils to learn from each other and to keep up momentum for the Local Agenda 21 program nationally and indeed internationally. Making such information available to other councils opens up opportunities such as shared data collection strategies and other cooperative approaches. It also allows for peer group evaluation and benchmarking of successful actions.

Reporting on progress need not be solely in the traditional report format. Options to promote the information in the community include using annual reports and corporate plans, promotion through the media, council and school newsletters and displays in community and shopping centres. The aim being not only to keep up support for the Local Agenda 21, but also to get the community thinking about sustainability issues and perhaps changing their own lifestyles accordingly.

Monitoring and reviewing

An effective monitoring, reviewing and evaluating process will ensure that the Local Agenda 21 plan remains relevant to a community over time and as conditions change. This is essential to the principle of continual improvement.

A monitoring, reviewing and evaluating process goes beyond determining that an activity has begun or has been completed. It determines if an action achieved the target, and if the target helped move towards the relevant goal.

A dynamic Local Agenda 21 plan that incorporates an appropriate monitoring, reviewing and evaluating process can accommodate changes in community needs, improvements in information and the quality of indicators. The Local Agenda 21 plan remains relevant because of the regular and systematic feedback provided by the monitoring, reviewing and evaluating process. Since the process is built into the plan and the community is involved at all stages of the plan's development, any changes resulting from the monitoring, reviewing and evaluating process are regarded as a continuous and expected part of the Local Agenda 21 plan. As with each other step of the Local Agenda 21 process, it is desirable to have the involvement of the community.

The monitoring process would involve asking the following

- Does the process continue to involve the community? Perhaps the community make-up has altered so the information program needs amendment?
- Does it still involve all sections of the council?
- Is there still commitment to the process by council?
- Are the vision and goals still relevant or have changing circumstances, knowledge and priorities left them no longer appropriate?
- Are the indicators the most appropriate? Perhaps there are new technologies or resources available that would make other indicators more appropriate.

WHAT'S WORKING

The City of Marion's Local Agenda 21 plan and program is reviewed annually by the Environmental Policy Advisory Committee which consists of eight community representatives, four councillors, four council staff and a state government representative. The review produces recommendations for amendments and implementation and these are forwarded to council for consideration in the financial and corporate planning process. A comprehensive review is planned for every three years to coincide with the production of the State of the Environment Report and the review of council's corporate, strategic and development plans. The aim is to fully integrate all review processes.

Contact: Team Leader - Environment, City of Marion, South Australia, ph: (08) 9375 6665,
Website: <http://www.marion.sa.gov.au>

Where to next?

Local Agenda 21 is about the long term, but so often council work is reliant on particular personalities and priorities. People come and go, so does the support they bring to particular programs and issues. In order to keep your Local Agenda 21 strong and healthy you need to keep an eye on the bigger picture, what trends are happening in council, what progressive approaches are being used elsewhere, what programs can help to keep Local Agenda 21 in the spotlight?

Maintaining local support

Officers need to continually refer to a Local Agenda 21, to keep it on the council agenda. This may involve council officers referring to Local Agenda 21 wherever possible in reports to council, and prefacing any council media releases or articles with details of how the particular item of interest fits in within the Local Agenda 21 action plan.

Tip: Ensure that an updated copy of the Local Agenda 21 action plan is available to the public through the public library. Try to keep key council people aware of the document, including council's media section, customer service staff, councillors' and in particular the mayor's assistants and speech writers.

It is important for a council to determine the issues that will motivate the community, and to design its Local Agenda 21 activities around these issues. Although the Local Agenda 21 process is a long term agenda, a council has to prioritise actions. The council should focus on and implement those actions which will appeal to councillors and the community, and therefore demonstrate how Local Agenda 21 is relevant to them.

Finding resources

Resourcing the Local Agenda 21 is an ongoing effort that will need constant attention. Resources could include council allocations, grants from state and Commonwealth Governments, sponsorships from local businesses, schemes such as revolving energy funds. There are likely to be other financial arrangements that can resource the Local Agenda 21. In kind support can also come from a range of organisations. For details of Commonwealth Government environment programs, such as the Natural Heritage Trust, which support and assist projects undertaken at the local level see Environment Australia's homepage at <http://www.environment.gov.au.html>.

Sharing experiences

Get in touch with other councils to learn from their experiences. State based networks such as the Local Agenda 21 Advisory Group in Western Australia and the South Australian Partnership for Local Agenda 21 are the first place to look. Some national networks are being fostered by Environs Australia. Local Agenda 21 activity is strong in many countries around the world and can be accessed through the internet. Why not get in contact with an overseas council and exchange experiences?

Regional approaches

Many issues of a Local Agenda 21 involve taking a regional approach (as discussed in Appendix 10). If neighbouring councils have not sought to promote sustainable development, seek to develop regional approaches on matters that may start them thinking. Working with neighbouring councils may also help with the learning process and to become more innovative.

Building on good work

Just as Local Agenda 21 can be the catalyst for taking new initiatives, so too can many initiatives help to strengthen the Local Agenda 21 process. Programs and tools such as Cities for Climate Protection™, State of the Environment reporting and environmental accounting can bring Local Agenda 21 to the attention of all divisions of council and help to promote it to the community.

Case Studies

Introduction

The following section covers a series of Case Studies drawn from the experiences of a number of councils. These cases illustrate the diverse approaches that councils are currently taking to encourage local sustainability within their jurisdictions.

The Case Studies suggest that while many councils do not necessarily use the terminology, Local Agenda 21, they nevertheless have in place many aspects of a Local Agenda 21, such as strategies to encourage the use of integrated decision-making.

Attached to a number of the cases are further illustrative examples of some of the tools and techniques that councils are using to develop a Local Agenda 21 with their communities.

The Case Study councils are categorised according to the Australian Classification of Local Governments (ACLG) which is based on population, population density, population growth and the location of the Local Government area.



The cases are based on the experiences of the following councils

- City of Gold Coast, QLD (<http://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/>)
- City of Mandurah, WA (<http://www.mandurah.wa.gov.au/>)
- City of Manningham, VIC (<http://www.manningham.vic.gov.au/>)
- City of Marion, SA (<http://www.marion.sa.gov.au/>)
- Marrickville, NSW (<http://www.slsw.gov.au/plb/libs/marrickville/>)
- Moreland City Council, VIC (<http://moreland.vic.gov.au/>)
- City of South Sydney, NSW (<http://www.sccc.nsw.gov.au/>)
- Sutherland Shire Council, NSW (<http://www.mycommunity.com.au/sutherland/>)
- City of Unley, SA (<http://www.span.com.au/unley/>)

The selection of cases is based upon the opinions of Environs Australia personnel and management, and does not necessarily reflect the views of the participating Case Study council. At the time of publication and to the best of our knowledge, the information contained in the case studies was correct.

City of Gold Coast

Integrated Environment Plan

case study



Council Profile:

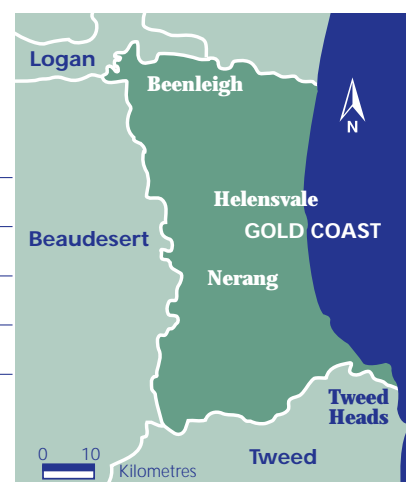
Land area: 145,100 ha

State: Queensland

Council Category: Urban Regional Very Large

Budget: approx. \$450,000,000

Population: 380,270 (June 1998)



Introduction:

March 1995 marked the amalgamation of the Albert Shire with the former Gold Coast City, to create Australia's second largest local government, in terms of population, and the nation's seventh largest city. The rapid population growth the city is experiencing, represents the highest population growth of all local government areas in Australia. Population projections predict the city will increase from nearly 400,000 people in 1998 to over 500,000 by the year 2011.

The Corporate Perspective

In response to the enormous pressure that such growth places on both the natural and urban environment, the Council's Corporate Plan strikes a careful balance between the conservation of the city's natural resources and the sustainable development that will maintain an economically prosperous city. This is being achieved by addressing each of the issues that contribute to and impact upon the people and environment of the Gold Coast.

The initial development of the Corporate Plan commenced in 1996, with a major public exhibition period undertaken in May 1996. In late 1998, Council adopted an amended Corporate Plan. Input into the preparation and refinement of the vision and objectives of the Corporate Plan has been achieved from the following stake holder groups:

- Community organisations
- Industry representatives/business organisations
- Chief Executive Officer and senior management

- Individual citizens
- Staff

The Corporate Plan vision is stated as:

“Naturally the world’s best place to be..

...because We will create a City that is recognised internationally for the quality of its lifestyle, economy and environment. The Gold Coast’s future will be secure as Australia’s most desirable place to live and favorite place to visit”

Key objectives of the Draft Corporate Plan 1998-2001

1. Quality of life;

Respect the individual, improve health and safety, and enhance the choices available for living, working, learning, cultural and religious activities, recreation and entertainment.

2. Healthy economy;

Manage, broaden and strengthen the economic and employment base of the region by encouraging enterprise that is sustainable and appropriate to our economic future.

3. Environmental sustainability;

Conserve the natural environment, maintain biodiversity, preserve cultural heritage and create a functionally and visually desirable built environment.

4. National and International profile;

Support the Gold Coast’s position as a sustainable and exciting tourism, events and business destination.

Each of these broad objectives is further defined by a number of corporate objectives and organisational objectives.

The Integrated Environment Plan

Since the development of the initial Corporate Plan in 1996, and its revision in 1998, Council has embarked upon a process of strategic planning, review and research to identify a mechanism for realising this vision. Many of the plans and initiatives that have resulted from this process will fall under the umbrella of the ‘Integrated Environment Plan’ (IEP), currently under development.

The Integrated Environment Plan for the City seeks to define the relationship between the Corporate Plan and council’s existing environmental projects and it’s commitment to the objectives of Local Agenda 21. Ecologically sustainable development, LA21, and the requirements of the new Queensland Integrated Planning Legislation (IPA), provide the foundation for a new era of environmental administration in the City. Council is currently in the process of developing this plan and establishing an advisory group to coordinate its implementation.

Currently listed for inclusion under the umbrella of the IEP are the following plans and initiatives:

The City Planning Scheme
State of the Environment Report Benchmark '97
Nature Conservation Strategy
Bushfire Management Strategy
Northern Waste Water Strategy
Urban Heritage and Character Study
Community Health Plan
City Transport Plan
Environmental Accounting Project
Energy Efficiency Housing Policy
City Landscape Strategy
Catchment Management Plan
Management of Coastal Dune Areas
Floodplain Structure Plan

Goals:

Gold Coast City's Integrated Environment Plan aims to:

1. identify the relationship of existing Council programs to ESD and Local Agenda 21
2. reduce the confusion and perceptions of conflict arising from ESD discussions
3. promote ESD principles within the Council and the community

Case Study:

Overview of initiatives included under the umbrella of the Integrated Environment Plan

City Planning Scheme

An essential element in achieving the aims identified in the Corporate Plan and Integrated Environmental Plan is the Gold Coast Planning Scheme and specifically the Strategic Land Use Plan.

The Strategic Land Use Plan recognises the importance of the Gold Coast's continuing growth and development and emphasises the new focus of working more creatively towards long term sustainability. Three principal elements of natural environment, economic development and community development underpin the Plan. Twelve strategies are identified and a range of implementation proposals. In addition the Plan adopts three time horizons - 2001, 2011, 2031, with the year 2013 being selected as a long term planning horizon for planning major infrastructure items - water supply and transport.

The Plan also contains many new strategic objectives with a clear sustainability focus. They include the promotion of urban consolidation, the creation of new urban forms that reduce dependency on the private motor car and per capita energy use, support for the reuse of waste water and no further release of land for rural residential use pending investigation of infrastructure needs.

There is a commitment in the Plan to ensuring that new development contributes to the maintenance of existing ecosystems. The impact of all new development will be assessed through a new system of measures as prescribed in the new planning legislation for the State, the Integrated Planning Act 1997.

The Integrated Planning Act has as an objective 'sustainability' which requires extensive public consultation to identify the community's desired environmental outcomes. To achieve ecological sustainability, the Council recognises that it needs to obtain the agreement and commitment from not only Council but also industry and the community as partners in the process.

The State of the Environment City of Gold Coast Benchmark '97

The State of the Environment City of Gold Coast Benchmark '97 initiated a regular process of reporting and consulting on the environment between the Council and the community. Benchmarking, monitoring and measurement are vital in tracking progress towards environmental targets and goals. It is envisaged that the State of the Environment (SoE) process will become an important tool in tracking progress being made to ESD and improve decision making. Whilst the SoE report identified "minimum" local environmental impact, current available data indicates reason for concern with regards to the impact of local activities on the global environment, as demonstrated by such issues as global warming.

In this respect, the SoE report has played an important part in raising Council's awareness on global environmental issues. Whilst the report includes some economic and social data, it identifies the need for research to provide a better understanding of the relationship between society, economy and the environment to help build sustainable communities.

The Council are presently undertaking the first review of the original document.

Gold Coast City Council Nature Conservation Strategy

The Nature Conservation Strategy was devised following extensive public consultation including workshops involving many different stakeholders including Council elected members and staff, green activists, developers and the community. These players worked together to develop a conservation strategy which could address the Gold Coast's unique planning, conservation and development issues.

The strategy's aim was:

"To conserve the Gold Coast's outstanding natural environment for future generations, a careful balance between conservation and development must be struck and maintained".

The Strategy presents a blueprint to conserving the City's natural areas by:

- ensuring sustainable land use planning and development processes;
- forming partnerships with landholders;
- buying key parcels of land;
- raising community awareness;
- using local laws to protect vegetation;
- involving the community in the management of natural areas;

- keeping detailed information about the City's natural value; and
- measuring conservation achievements through SoE Reporting.

The 20% Club for Sustainable Cities

The Council became a member of the international 20% Club for Sustainable Cities in 1995 along with many other Councils throughout the world. The Council has committed to reducing its environmental impact by 20% over 5 years in the area of waste water and natural habitat conservation.

Environmental Accounting Project

The Council is involved in a local government environmental accounting study by the Australian Centre for Regional and Local Government Studies and the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The study started in 1996 and is trialing the value of the United Nations guidelines for an integrated system of Environmental and Economic Accounts (SEEA) for local governments in Australia. The study has helped to identify the scope and nature of environmentally related revenues and expenditures by the Council.

Northern Waste Water Strategy

The Council initiated a three year community consultation and advisory committee process in 1995 to develop a waste water strategy for the expanding populations in the northern areas of the City. The process identified that all effluent should be treated to a minimum tertiary level, that there should be no direct disposal of reclaimed water to estuaries or the ocean and that all reclaimed waters should be reused in ecologically sustainable ways.

Urban Heritage and Character Study

This comprehensive landmark study included consultation processes to uncover the community's perceptions and values for urban heritage and character. The study identified key elements to the Gold Coast's urban heritage and character and presented aspects of the City from early settlement through to the high rise of the City and Tourist areas.

Local Agenda 21 Milestones for Gold Coast City Council

1. A Public Commitment to 'Sustainable Environmental Management' 1996
2. Sustainability Audit and SoE Report Benchmark 1997
 - An audit of Council-in-house programs and community activities
 - Audit of environmental conditions on the Gold Coast
3. Extending the Sustainable City Vision
 - Draft Strategic Plan 'Building Sustainable Communities' 1998
4. Integrated Environmental Plan - Local Agenda 21 Action Plan 1998
5. Implementation and Integration

Conclusions

As a result of government reform and amalgamation, the City has had the opportunity to undertake an extensive corporate review, redesigning its internal structures in a more effective manner attaining a higher level of corporate coordination and focused activity. This reorganisation has facilitated the delivery of new sustainability objectives.

As is apparent, many of the existing plans and initiatives already encompass numerous Local Agenda 21 objectives, in particular public consultation, partnerships and the ethos of sustainable development. The issue now is to identify the remaining elements that need to be completed to establish an effective process.

At the present time the Council is awaiting comments on its Agenda 21 Discussion Paper that was recently put out to consultation. Following response to this document, a recommendation will be put to council on the formal adoption of the Local Agenda 21 process by Gold Coast City Council.

It is envisaged that in the long term Local Agenda 21 will provide a powerful catalyst for implementing a sustainable vision within the local community.

Political Acceptance

The amalgamation process brought a whole suite of changes, which are still having an effect in the City. Likewise the newly introduced Integrated Planning Act has involved the Council in developing many new processes.

There has been a corporate commitment to establishing a sustainable city since 1996. As a result there have been few observed political barriers to this program. The critical milestone will be the Council's formal adoption of Agenda 21 later in 1999.

Program facts & figures:

Staffing: Three members of staff from the Strategic and Environmental Planning Branch contribute to the Local Agenda 21 work. Equivalent to less than one full time position (approx. \$60,000 with on costs).

Budget: \$15,000 operating budget.

Key Contact:

Mr David Corkill
Coordinator Environmental Planning
City of Gold Coast
PO Box 5042
Gold Coast MC Queensland 9729
Tel: +61 7 5582 8807
Fax: +61 7 5582 8878



City of Mandurah Sustainable City Plan

case study



Council Profile:

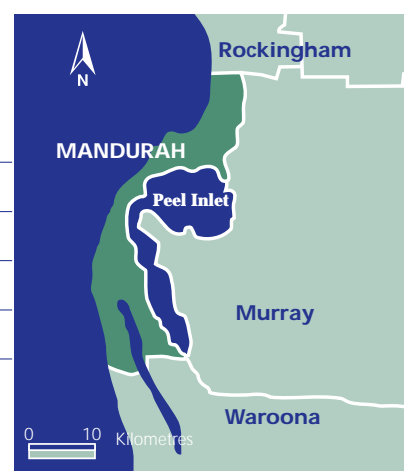
Land area: 173.5 square kilometres

State: Western Australia

Council Category: Urban Regional Medium

Budget: \$28,000,000

Population: 42,000



Summary:

Mandurah is located on the South West coast of Western Australia, 72 kilometres south of Perth. In the past 15 years, Mandurah has grown from a Shire to a City with the expectation of continual population increases beyond 1999, and with no appreciable drop in population growth expected for at least 10 years. The change of a small holiday and retirement town to one of Western Australia's largest and fastest growing regional cities has placed a duty on both the Council and the community to provide services, facilities and employment prospects, while protecting the natural environment and the lifestyle in Mandurah.

The City of Mandurah Local Agenda 21 program is in its third year. Mandurah's Sustainable City Plan was launched in March 1999 and marks the implementation of Local Agenda 21 for the City. The Plan focuses on balancing environmental, social and economic goals in such a way that the essential ecological processes that sustain the City are protected. It is not a separate program but builds upon what the Council and community have already done. In particular, the initiative builds upon the Council's Community Charter. State government requirements to review activities and prepare a Principal Activities Plan, along with National Competition Policy, have both been important drivers in the Council's process to streamline its activities in line with community aspirations.

This review provided a platform for developing Local Agenda 21. A community consultation process was undertaken in 1997 to identify community concerns and priorities and produce a Community Charter. Six priority themes were identified covering many aspects of quality of life in the area - Natural Environment; Young People;

Employment, Economic Development and Tourism; Lifestyle and Safety; Leadership, Consultation, Communication; and Community Services, Infrastructure, Transport. Three specially formed Working Groups - the Natural Environment, Built Environment and Economic, have developed these themes further. They each involve Council, industry, community and State Government representatives. These Working Groups have formulated actions, indicators and milestones to progress and monitor the implementation of the community's aspirations.

The Local Agenda 21 process has enabled the Council to think more creatively about tackling the City's competing interests and community expectations. The Council explicitly chose to pursue Local Agenda 21 as a way of addressing the major priorities of the City which normally would have been seen as conflicting issues. Mandurah is the first Council in the State to adopt a Local Agenda 21 and its approach is being monitored by other Councils in Western Australia.

As Local Agenda 21 principles become further integrated into Council activities, decisions will reflect the growing community awareness of environmental sustainability. For the moment, the indicators developed by the Working Groups can be used to monitor the progress of only those initiatives which have been identified in the process, and these are mainly Council based. As the implemented programs evolve, the indicators will expand to cover more generic or holistic themes. Community involvement will also increase as a result of both Council and the community work to achieve the same goals. It is widely accepted that although difficult, Local Agenda 21 requires constant monitoring and feedback to update and evaluate sustainability goals.

A commitment to full community participation is essential in Local Agenda 21. Linkages between Council and community as well as partnerships between the City and other local governments in the region who are developing a Local Agenda 21 are to be encouraged. The Council is already an active member of an informal Local Agenda 21 network for Western Australia which was established after the *Newcastle Pathways to Sustainability Conference* in June 1997. This involves local Council planners and practitioners exchanging information and expertise on developing a Local Agenda 21.

This case study is based upon details of the Local Agenda 21 process outlined in Mandurah's *Sustainable City Plan*.

Goals:

The Council of the City of Mandurah has established a vision to be:

'A regional city reflecting community values.'

'To create a diverse and expanding ecologically sustainable economic base where society's requirements can be satisfied with minimal impact on the environment'.
(Corporate Plan 1997-2000)

This statement encompasses the approach that Mandurah is taking to achieve Local Agenda 21.

"The City of Mandurah's Sustainable City Plan does not propose to reinvent the wheel or invalidate work already done. Rather it seeks to integrate completed aspects, needs and issues". (Bryce Bunny, 1998)

Case Study:

Local Agenda 21 Milestones

The City of Mandurah Process 1997-1998:

- 1a Council approves detailed preparation of the Sustainable City Plan
- 1b On going Seminars - Aspects of Sustainability
- 2 State of the Environment Report (produced using students)
- 3 Establishment of a Steering Committee and first meeting
- 4 Establishment of terms of reference for the Working Groups (Natural Environment, Built Environment and Economic Group) and selection of members
- 5 Working Groups meet and identify Issues and Actions
- 6 Draft - Indicators and Milestones

The City of Mandurah Process 1998-1999:

- 7 Next Steps Workshops - Internal Adoption and Reality Check
- 8 Internal Implementation Group
- 9 Draft Sustainable City Plan
- 10 Comment Period
- 11 Review Plan
- 12 Report to Council
- 13 Council endorsement and implementation of Sustainable City Plan

Step 1 Council Approval of Process for the Sustainable City Plan

Getting started and building upon what is already in place

The Council's approach to Local Agenda 21 is to build upon what is already in place which means building in particular upon the Council Community Charter and Corporate Plan. In order to comply with the State Department of Local Government direction for Councils to prepare a Principal Activities Plan, Mandurah carried out a review of the major activities and projects planned for the City over the coming four years. At that time the introduction of National Competition Policy also meant that the Council was obliged to review the cost of providing its services and introduce Activity Based Costing.

Mandurah Council places great emphasis on community involvement so in formulating these costings and future plans the Council consulted the community which in turn resulted in the production of the Mandurah Community Charter. By listening to young people, community groups, conservation and environment interests, business people and Council staff who work directly with the community, a Charter was established which provides the City's collective view of the main priorities of Mandurah's citizens.

The Charter listed six commitments for 1997, which the Council has already established as goals. These outline the major priorities that the community wanted the Council to address. The six priorities are:

- Natural Environment
- Young People
- Employment, Economic Development and Tourism
- Lifestyle and Safety;
- Leadership; Consultation, Communication
- Community Services, Infrastructure, Transport.

Through this community consultation the main concerns of the community have been identified as:

- Preservation and enhancement of Mandurah waterways and the coastal eco-system.
- Creation of a future for young people in the City.
- Promotion of a broader economic base for the City, while protecting the natural environment and sustaining the Mandurah lifestyle.
- Ensuring the safe, friendly, relaxed feel of Mandurah is not lost to new development.
- Council should play a leadership role in vision setting, planning and policy development through community consultation and communication.
- Council support for the community and its future development through the provision of appropriate community services and facilities, infrastructure and public transport.

The Council identified the resource commitments to these priorities in its Corporate Plan 1997-2000.

Local Agenda 21

The Local Agenda 21 process was really set in motion with the adoption of the Community Charter in which Council committed to sustainability principles and goals. Following this, the Council also adopted a commitment to developing a Sustainable City Plan. The Plan encourages sustainable development encompassing the economic, social and environmental values of the city. The Plan aims to ensure:

“that development in any of these areas is not carried out in isolation but has regard to the other factors influencing the community and helps to ensure the lifestyle that Mandurah Citizens currently enjoy can be sustained and improved over time”

The Council explicitly chose to pursue Local Agenda 21 as a way of addressing the major priorities of the City which normally would have been seen as conflicting issues. Engaging in Local Agenda 21 was entirely consistent with the Council’s vision statement priorities and with a commitment to developing new ways of working across traditional service boundaries. The integrated nature of Agenda 21 relies on cross-departmental cooperation and recognition of its broad capability. Furthermore Local Agenda 21 principles are slowly being filtered through Council and the community and the goals of environmental sustainability are being constantly reflected in community consultations.

Step 2 State of the Environment Reporting (SoER)

SoER is a tool for tracking progress being made to sustainability and helps to improve decision making. The first SoER has been developed with minimum resources and included community surveys. It was important in these early stages to get benchmark data on environmental conditions in the area. This assisted in highlighting problems and priorities.

In order to further a Local Agenda 21 initiative like other Councils in the State the Council has involved Environmental Science students from Murdoch University. The students, under supervision, carried out the Council's SoER. This additional resourcing in the early developmental stages has been very important in getting the Local Agenda 21 initiative off the ground in Council given limited initial funding. The SoER indicated that the City of Mandurah was experiencing enormous pressures, especially from population growth and new development.

However it also found that despite these pressures a lot of the environmental problems such as water quality, which had arisen as problems in the 1970s, were being addressed. The report additionally highlighted a lack of awareness amongst the community over issues of heritage and in particular Aboriginal cultural heritage. The SoER was launched by the Environment Minister for Western Australia in 1998.

Step 3 Establishment of a Steering Committee

A Sustainable City Steering Group was established in 1997. For just under one year the group meet monthly to progress the initiative. The Steering Group, just as the Working Groups, included Councillors (3) Council staff (1), business, community, youth and State Government representatives. Representation from local Aboriginal communities was sought but unfortunately not achieved within the lifetime of the group.

The current activities of this group have come to a logical end and it will now be replaced by an internal Council Steering Group whose focus will be to implement the actions and commitments generated by the previous groups. This internal group, in order to prioritise its work, will target those issues that are undergoing the most rapid change.

Step 4 Establishment of the Working Groups and Terms of Reference

Working groups that focussed on the key areas of the Built Environment, Economic, and Natural Environment were established by Council to provide a starting point to the detailed work of providing substance to the Council and community goals. As is standard practice with any of Council's community advisory groups, Terms of Reference were established at the first meeting. The group's initial task was to define the actions to achieve a Sustainable City.

The Working Groups further developed the Sustainable City Visions:

Built Environment:

Channel the impact of human activity on the environment of the City of Mandurah in order that:

- *basic biological functions are maintained and enhanced, and*
- *future Mandurah residents can enjoy a sustainable future*

Natural Environment:

- *Improve Society's co-existence with the environment*
- *Satisfy society's requirements with minimal impact on the environment*

Economic:

To create a diverse and expanding ecologically sustainable economic base which results in employment and business opportunities for all.

Step 5 Working Groups Meet and Identify Issues and Actions

The Working Groups adopted a novel process; it took an 'ends' orientated approach i.e. starting with actions and working backwards to arrive at the issues and then objectives. The Working Groups were keen to start first and foremost with the actions and outputs of the process as this made it a more 'real' process. After this initial valuable brainstorming exercise each group was asked to consider what they were trying to achieve in each of the portfolio areas and what was purpose of the proposed actions were. The Working Groups as the final part of the process, turned their attention to creating milestones and indicators. This work formed the basis of a report to Council and broader discussions about the Sustainable City Plan both within Council and the wider community.

Step 6 Draft - Indicators and Milestones

The Working Groups towards the end of their meeting period developed indicators and milestones. The task was difficult initially as this was a new concept to many. The following is an example of the indicators developed by the Working Groups.

SAMPLE INDICATORS:

Built Environment:

- Compliance to Star Energy Rating for new homes
- Ratio of Energy Efficient to non energy efficient homes
- Energy consumption / square metre for commercial buildings
- Tonnage of domestic waste
- Average annual per capita water consumption in City
- Number of buildings in the town Centre that promote heritage themes in their design

Economic Working Group

- Waste Audit undertaken
- An increase in the number of sporting events within Mandurah
- An increase in tourist visitor nights
- Information on Mandurah's economy provided to Businesses
- Review of rating system undertaken
- Increase in the no. of new businesses within Mandurah

Natural Environment

- % budget allocated to environmental control / enhancement
- Annual increase in population
- Number of bush reserves with management plans
- Number of kilometres of vegetated corridors
- Number of wetlands lost
- Changes in midge populations
- Measuring for salinity
- Number of licensed bores
- Number / frequency algal blossoms
- Number access points on coastline
- Ratio vegetated areas to bare sands on dunes
- Professional fish catch

Again the indicators derived by the Working Group demonstrate creative thinking and valuable information about the community's desires. However these indicators have not yet been rigorously tested to determine which will be the most useful to decision-makers and the local community. Some of the selected indicators will be difficult to measure and difficult to interpret. The innovative work already undertaken will provide a base for more in-depth work to establish meaningful sustainability indicators for the City.

Steps 7 - 12 - Consultation, Council Report, Action Plans, Comment and Review

The Working Group papers, which identify a comprehensive series of implementation tasks along with the responsible Council Department, were used as a basis for preparing the Sustainable City Plan. The Plan was prepared by Council Officers as the Council itself is key to much of the targeted actions. The Sustainable City Plan was endorsed and launched by Council in March 1999.

However implementation of the aims established by the Working Groups will require strategic planning and the involvement of many Departments. As stated above, the work of both the original Sustainable City Steering Group and the Working Groups has come to an end and they will now be replaced by an internal Council Steering Group whose focus will be to action the commitments generated by the previous work. This internal group will consist mainly of elected members and Council officers.

In order to maintain contact and the involvement of the community a Local Agenda 21 Newsletter will be produced and distributed widely. In particular the Council hopes to facilitate a continued debate on sustainability issues in the media and amongst community groups. The newsletter will contain information on Local Agenda 21 initiatives in the Council and elsewhere both nationally and internationally.

Getting Runs on the Board

Practical Initiatives

The Council is now set to investigate options for getting practical projects under way and involving the community in Local Agenda 21. Council activities have already included a wide range of developments for Mandurah. These have included increases and improvements to community services, such as joint partnership between the State Government and the City of Mandurah in developing the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre and community arts projects. The purchase of Global Positioning System (GPS) will monitor coastal erosion and be useful in hydrographic surveys. It will also be utilised for positioning and mapping of Council's Infrastructure assets. Future environmental projects to be completed also include the City's Integrated Waste Transfer Station. The design of the station has been developed to minimise earthworks and to ensure minimal disruption to the natural environment.

Additional issues that have been undertaken by the City which fit into the Sustainable Strategy but have not yet been part of the Working Group process include the following:

A Solar Skyline Policy is being developed with architectural consultants. This will define development guidelines for the town Centre to maximise solar access as building heights increase.

A new series of **bus routes** is planned and has been facilitated by Council in conjunction with State Government and the State Department of Transport.

The Council is actively **lobbying for a train line extension** to be brought to the City as early as possible.

A **Concept Vegetation Plan and Bushland Policy** has been developed. The vegetation plan has mapped vegetation and defined areas of preferred public space and parkland prior to subdivision plans have been submitted for particular areas. The Bushland Policy states Council's objectives in preserving bushland and defines management practices.

The **Heritage Inventory** is a Municipal Heritage Inventory which is being developed. This lists more than fifty sites of local and regional heritage value. Various sites have been recommended for preservation or documentation.

Lessons Learnt:

Opportunities:

- A vital element was the informal Local Agenda 21 network for WA established after the *Newcastle Pathways to Sustainability Conference* in June 1997 which involves local Council planners and practitioners exchanging information and expertise.
- The development of a new strategic vision following an extensive visioning process in the community to determine community values turned out to be very sympathetic to sustainability issues.
- Reorganisation in Council in line with the new commitments to efficiency and serving the community provided a new focus which was more conducive to Local Agenda 21 objectives.
- Development of more direct communication links with the local university (Murdoch University). In particular this has given rise to a student involvement in the Council's work on Local Agenda 21 and to links with other Councils in WA with student assistance on their Local Agenda 21 and sustainability program.
- The SoER was important in getting critical environmental and sustainability issues recognised.
- The process takes a lot of time and can be frustratingly slow, patience is required from Council and community representatives.
- Regular seminars on sustainability topics were held for Council officers which were open to Working Group members and Community members. This stimulated an on-going debate about key issues especially within Council. Seminars on issues such as ground water, urban design and alternative economics were held.

Concerns:

- Being one of the first Councils in Western Australia to implement Local Agenda 21 means the level of awareness needs to be raised amongst stakeholders. This requires dedicated planning and performance skills in the communication field.
- Keeping up with the fast pace of change in a growing city is very difficult.
- Individuals and departments in Council may have their own agendas and priorities that may not be conducive to sustainability and it is sometimes hard to win support.

Program Facts & Figures:

Staffing: 1.5 people (equivalent to approximately \$60,000 plus approximately \$20,000 on costs)

Budget: \$20,000 in 1997 and a similar budget for 1998. This covers consultancy, costs associated with running the groups and printing and publishing specifically related to Local Agenda 21 work. However some consultancy on related programs such as the Skyline Policy has been undertaken under a different consultancy budget in Council.

Key reports:

City of Mandurah (1999) Sustainable City Plan: Footprints into the Future

City of Mandurah(1998) Key Facts, Strategic Planning and Development Services Department

City of Mandurah (1997) Community Charter and Corporate Plan 1997-2000

City of Mandurah (1996) Annual Report 1996-1997

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City of Manningham Environmental Management System and Local Agenda 21

case study



Council Profile:

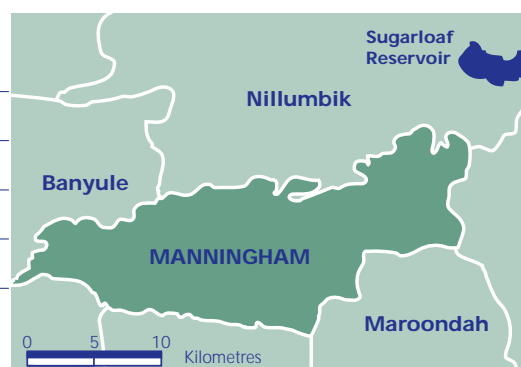
Land area: 114 square kilometres

State: Victoria

Council Category: Urban Developed Large

Budget: \$70,000,000

Population: 112,000



Summary:

Manningham includes the former City of Doncaster & Templestowe, as well as the non-urban area known as Wonga Park. It is a 'middle ring' suburb to the east of Melbourne. The City's current administrative boundaries were created in 1994. It is located 12 kilometres east of Melbourne's Central Business District.

Manningham City Council already has a strong reputation in the environment field following the comprehensive and widely acclaimed Conservation Strategy adopted by the former Doncaster and Templestowe Council in the 1990s. The Manningham Council's commitment to sustainability and Local Agenda 21 will now be progressed in the Council and community through an Environmental Management System (EMS). Council endorsement of an EMS and Local Agenda 21 was obtained in 1997 in the Corporate Plan. The Council achieved accreditation to the international standard 14001 across all Service Units of the organisation in December 1998. The EMS has been developed as part of the Council's Quality System and the format of the quality system has been extended to include EMS elements, to ensure only one system needs to be maintained.

The Council's EMS is much more than an environmental program; it is more of a 'sustainability management system' with a focus on balancing environmental, social and economic goals in such a way that the essential ecological processes that sustain life are protected. The leading-edge EMS recognises that unlike many organisations, Councils are incredibly complex, carrying out a huge range of services for and with the community. As such, they have a very significant capacity to influence the people and institutions they work with. The true reflection of the EMS's sustainability focus is that the System aims to go well beyond compliance (i.e. 'stopping bad things from affecting the environment') and instead, looks for those opportunities where the organisation has greater leverage to

improve the environment. This often includes education, using purchasing power and naturally extends to the political arena as well. The implementation strategy is based upon achieving inspirational environmental concepts and stretch goals like: zero waste; zero pollution; zero extinction; zero soil degradation and zero climate damage.

The key objective of Manningham's EMS is to cement environmental management into the philosophical approach of the organisation and to ensure mechanisms are in place to constantly 'check and correct' the culture of the place. The approach aims to ensure that each and every one of the Units of Council is responding to the sustainability commitments that have been made in the City's Corporate Plan and the conservation-sustainability strategy, Green Print. Council's overall approach to Local Agenda 21 is to build upon its existing strategies and programs by embarking upon a Council-wide EMS.

Much of the information contained in this case study has been obtained from both the Council's Corporate Plan 1997-2000 and the article "An EMS for a Sustainability Seeking Council" in the Local Government Environment Yearbook 1997 by Phil Sutton (Environs, 1997).

Goals:

Manningham's vision for a sustainable future is:

"one where there are no trade offs or compromise between social, environmental and economic aims. The pathway to sustainability will involve a move to eliminate waste, pollution and intensive resource use, recycling targets will approach 100% while biodiversity loss should be reduced to zero. Ultimately a sustainable pathway will aim to eliminate any damage to the atmosphere. All this can be achieved through a robust economy and equally robust and healthy community" (Corporate Plan 1997)

The Council's Vision aims to achieve world best practice in local government enabling it to provide quality and valued services with a clear customer focus, whilst at the same time maximising the social, residential and environmental benefits to the people of Manningham.

Case Study:

A 10 year long the Pathway to Sustainability (Target 2007)

In the year 2007 the Council will be 10 years along the pathway to sustainability. It will sustain a diverse, high quality residential community complemented by a prosperous business sector with a sophisticated understanding of what it means to be sustainable. The City will provide a safe, secure and healthy environment for the community. There will be reduced reliance on fossil fuels as the community moves towards greenhouse reduction targets."

Local Agenda 21 Milestones:

1. Work Place Environment Group 1991
2. Conservation Strategy 1992 (City of Doncaster & City of Templestowe)
3. Environmental Know-how (Education) Strategy 1994
4. The Greenhouse Officer Program 1994
5. Curb Waste 1994

6. 'Attending to the Environment' - Manual on Contract Specification 1996
7. Corporate Plan 1997-2000 - (including a commitment to Local Agenda 21) 1997
8. Trial of Environmental Management System - Council's Economic and Environmental Planning Unit 1997/8
9. Energy Smart Business Sector Program 1997/8
10. Home Energy Rating Program 1998
11. Cities for Climate Protection™ Program 1998
12. 'Green Print' (review of the Nature Conservation Strategy) 1998
13. Full Council Environmental Management System 1998
14. Sustainability Innovations Committee Proposal 1998 (a revamp of the Work Place Environment Group)
15. Full certification to ISO 14001 by the Council in December 1998

The implementation of the System was undertaken by Environomics (Economic and Environment Planning), CaLM Services (Culture and Leisure Management Services). This included design and training elements. It ensured the System was compatible with the Quality System architecture already in place.

Manningham has a deserved reputation as a green-minded Council. It has been involved in a number of the more typical environmental initiatives, such as the development of a Conservation Strategy and the appointment of a Conservation Officer. Indeed the original Conservation Strategies conveyed some of the key sustainability directions that the Council wishes to continue to pursue.

Interest in an EMS was started by the Environmental Know-how (Education) Strategy which identified the need for "institutional learning". Despite being a proactive Council it found following this internal review that both a wider range of issues could be tackled and more effective follow-through could be achieved in some areas of Council activity. This could only be achieved by engaging all areas of administration and service delivery to take responsibility for environmental matters. Additionally, there was a desire to convert the Conservation Strategy from a one-off, static wish list into a dynamic program of strategic action. An EMS could provide the basis for all of these identified needs. By going for an EMS that was capable of accreditation under ISO 14001 the Council could also benefit from the discipline that comes from having an external certifying body to verify its environmental management system. Indeed the Council is now offering its skills in EMS on a commercial basis to other Councils and the EMS. By exceeding accreditation requirements the Council has been able to achieve many other corporate goals and secure a competitive advantage.

Pursuing a Local Agenda 21 was entirely consistent with the Council's vision statement priorities and with a commitment to developing new ways of working across traditional service boundaries. It is also consistent with its corporate commitment to world's best practice in local government:

'Council will continue to work in partnership with Federal, State and regional bodies, special interest groups and the community in general to maintain the environmental integrity and well-being of Manningham. Importantly, the focus will be on developing locally relevant strategies which will assist in tackling global issues to produce a city which is a pleasant place to live and which is environmentally and economically sustainable.'

The Corporate Plan 1997-2000 sets out the following values and commitments:

The Corporate Plan commitments:

- People - 'Ensuring all people are treated with dignity, respects and fairness'
- Quality - 'A high quality service that responds to the needs of our customers and provides value for money'
- Government - 'Open, consultative, cooperative and accountable government in touch with existing and changing needs of the community'
- Innovation - 'Creativity, continuous improvement and responsibility-taking at all levels of the organisation, finding innovative ways of developing solutions through sound research'
- Communication - 'Accurate, timely and relevant information involving the open exchange of ideas and information with the community and all employees'
- Environment - 'An ecologically sustainable environment to maximise opportunities for all people, future generations and nature, to enjoy social, psychological and physical well-being'
- Leadership - 'Leadership in the community and throughout the organisation based upon policies, goals and objectives which are developed in partnership with the community'

In the Corporate Plan there is a commitment "to create a local Agenda 21 Program, working with the community to develop environmental strategies which ensure that long term economic, environmental and social needs of the community are met without major trade-off". The commitments to EMS in this document include an expectation to continue best practice EMS and to prepare for the introduction and achievement of environmental quality assurance certification ISO 14000.

The integrated nature of an EMS and Agenda 21 relies on cross departmental cooperation and recognition of its broad capability. This is very much in keeping with recent changes to local government in Victoria which have provided the incentive for Manningham to embark upon a rolling program for continuous efficiency improvement in almost every section of its administration. As part of reorganisation, the bringing together of two strategic functional areas - environmental planning and economic policy, gave further strength to the Council's pursuit of an integrated approach to environmental management and thus helped pave the way for the Environmental Management System within the Council.

The Council's EMS

'More than the Environment'

Manningham did not adopt the standard off-the-shelf approach to their EMS but instead, with the initial strategic input of Green Innovations, created an EMS that meets their specific needs. EMSs were developed in manufacturing and resource processing industries and tend to concentrate on cost savings, corporate responsibilities and legal liabilities. Councils therefore need to develop modifications to the currently available EMS options, especially because of the wide range of environmental matters they cover. Taking a sustainability approach meant building into the management system economic, social, cultural and ethical considerations which are not the domain of a typical EMS.

Cultural and Leisure Services were the first Unit to seek accreditation under the international standard ISO 14001. This pilot process ensured that the Council -specific approach could be fine-tuned before taking it through the remaining 19 Units of the organisation. The Council has now embarked upon a Council-wide EMS covering its 19

service Units. It was valuable to start with CaLM which as a Unit did not have a traditional environmental focus but had a great deal of impact upon the environment.

Units of the Council are increasingly recognising through the EMS process what influence they have on the communities' behaviour with respect to environmental issues. They are realising that by changing their practices they can help the community to change. The Energy Smart Business Program is a prime example of this. The EMS is therefore evolving gradually into something that is much more than a system to reduce the direct impact of Council's activities. The Council staff training on environmental awareness raising and systems thinking has been one of the most crucial elements of the development of the EMS. Although the Council's work engages the community in many ways it does not have a Community Steering Committee to oversee the process.

Manningham's EMS will differ from the off-the-shelf variety in a number of ways. It will seek to look beyond legislative requirements and take a more proactive approach to environment or sustainability management. It will:

- be based on a formal commitment to ecological sustainability;
- be driven by a concern for community well-being, competitive advantage and corporate citizenship, rather than only legal compliance and cost saving;
- deal with a wider variety of issues.

It has three strands:

1. a program to generate positive environmental benefits within the community and beyond the municipality, i.e. by 'greening' businesses within the municipality;
2. a program to reduce negative environmental impacts of the community, both within and beyond the municipality; and
3. an in-house program to reduce the Council's negative environmental impacts.

Progressing an EMS for ISO 14001 accreditation involves an exhaustive process which can be both time-consuming and costly. Manningham has found the translation of EMS policy into objectives and targets challenging but very rewarding. Major elements of the EMS have been built into the Council's corporate and business planning.

The EMS is the main vehicle for delivering the Council's Local Agenda 21 obligations. As such the EMS in each Unit includes key commitments to:

- Manage indirect effects as actively as direct effects (using life-cycle assessment);
- Manage not only physical impacts but also the impacts that arise from influence;
- Make use of scenarios of a future sustainable economy and society to guide action;
- Foster a 'project generation process' that creates a flow of environmentally beneficial developments - to complement the traditional 'project assessment process';
- Encourage the widespread adoption in the community of a sustainability-seeking approach to organisational management; and
- Promote sustainability in a way that is politically and economically viable and is preferably advantageous to the local community and the Council.

By way of example, the Council's Greenhouse Officer Program pioneers the way for the energy component of an Environment Management System. The City of Manningham has through its approach generated cost savings of \$40,000 every year since 1992 and as a

direct consequence of energy conservation approximately 550 tonnes of CO₂ has not been pumped into the atmosphere.

The program's objectives are designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce energy costs and elevate individual awareness of greenhouse issues. These will now be achieved through the Cities for Climate Protection™ program by:

- monitoring and evaluating Council purchased energy with a view to reduced CO₂ emissions. This will involve an assessment of all Council assets and the introduction of new or more efficient technology;
- a rate payer education scheme which seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the municipality;
- a survey of households to determine how ratepayers think and feel about energy costs, energy conservation, renewable energy, and what sort of involvement Council should have in reducing greenhouse levels;
- contribution toward the creation of National Energy Efficiency Housing Policy 2;
- dissemination of energy conservation information to the business community to inform them of the facts and opportunities that energy conservation approaches provide; and
- compliance with Energy Victoria's Energy Smart Company Guidelines.

The EMS will help achieve the following benefits:

to Council:

- providing confidence to stakeholders;
- competitive advantage
- economic advantages
- achievement of corporate sustainability goals.

to the community:

- a healthier environment
- improved service delivery across a range of services
- improved understanding of sustainability
- greater involvement in Council activities
- identification of economic development opportunities.

An Environmental Policy including the following commitments:

- serving local people, people globally, future generations and nature
- being a sustainability-promoting organisation
- core environmental purposes
- conformity with the 'Natural Step'
- stretch goals
- communication between staff and community
- improvement in opportunities and action.

Lessons Learnt:

Opportunities:

- a top level commitment is essential
- commitment is also needed from all Units in the Council and the approach has to impact on all the operational areas of the organisation
- a strong staff training program is needed which will help empower staff as well as inform them of how an EMS works
- the quality assurance process in Council provided a unique opportunity to progress the EMS work and to do this in tandem
- the need to develop ongoing training and education opportunities to ensure the constant growth and development of the EMS culture within the organisation
- Manningham City Council has found it useful to seek out opportunities to secure a competitive advantage through the EMS. This is especially important when dealing with Units whose primary focus is not directly related to environmental concerns. This approach has provided much needed incentives for such Units to become involved in the EMS. It is envisaged that the Service Units of the Council will be able to tender for all sorts of jobs with an increased capability because of the increase in their skills and knowledge arising from the EMS process
- the corporate culture within the Council will ultimately impact on motivation
- financial gain through the implementation of the EMS and related activities (i.e. energy audit) will bring only short term benefit unless the gains are fed directly into continuous energy or sustainability management
- the EMS is forging new ground; this approach in local government in just a few years will be just another example of 'good management' practice, providing both economic and environmental benefits

Barriers:

The main point is that there is a need to show real benefits to the community to ensure commitment.

Program facts & figures:

Staffing & Budget: There is no staff nor budget specifically for Local Agenda 21 work in Manningham City Council. However, more than \$90,000 is directly provided as cash for conservation and planning commitments.

The EMS however is a significant resource and staff commitment for the Council.

Key reports:

'The Green Print' (1998) Manningham City Council

Conservation Strategy(s) (1992) City Doncaster & City of Templestowe

'Attending to the Environment' - Manual on Contract Specification (1996) Manningham City Council and City of Port Phillip

Corporate Plan 1997-2000 (1997) Manningham City Council

Environmental Management System Training Manual (1998) Manningham Environomics & CaLMa Services with Green Innovations Inc.

'An EMS for a Sustainability Seeking Council' (1997) in the Local Government Environment Yearbook 1997, Phil Sutton, published by Environs Australia

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City of Marion Local Agenda 21 - Creating a Sustainable Future

case study



Council Profile:

Land area: 55.45 square kilometres

Council Category: Urban Developed Large

State: South Australia

Budget: \$36,500,000

Population: 74,318 (1996)



Summary:

The City of Marion is predominantly suburban in character with several natural features such as native vegetation, historic cultural sites, ground water supplies, significant geological sites and accessible coastal beaches. The Marion coastline extends 7 kilometres along the eastern coast, featuring sandy beaches, coastal cliffs and reefs making it an area which residents are keen to see protected and properly managed. The residents of Marion are diverse both in terms of ethnicity and age, with 21% of the population born overseas, predominantly in the United Kingdom. Other ethnic communities that are strongly represented include eastern European and Mediterranean. The Aboriginal population of approximately 400 have a particular relationship with the Warriparinga site on the Sturt River, being a traditional meeting place for the Kaurna people.

In 1995 the City of Marion commenced a strategic planning process titled 'Working Together' which was based upon the principles of Integrated Local Area Planning (ILAP). This ILAP process allowed the Council and the community to identify the main environmental, social and economic issues affecting the local area. All of the identified priority issues were then drafted into a document called Strategic Issues which was used to guide Council's strategic and corporate planning throughout the period 1995-1998. However in 1998 organisational changes led to the review of the ILAP Strategies Planning framework. Despite this the LA21 program has remained intact.

An identified priority in the early planning stages of the ILAP project was the need to develop a Local Agenda 21 program as a framework and action planning process to deal specifically with environmental issues affecting the City. In June 1995 Council therefore

committed to undertake a Local Agenda 21 program as part of its ILAP framework. Marion's Local Agenda 21 is the strategic planning process which ensures that environmental considerations are integrated with social and economic considerations. Local Agenda 21 is therefore linked with other Council ILAP programs and plans that occurred at this time. The LA21 program is now three years old and includes many significant plans, policies, projects and partnerships. The Council along with ten other Councils in South Australia has also joined the Cities for Climate Protection™ campaign (CCP™).

Goals:

To promote sustainable development in the City of Marion through the implementation of the Local Agenda 21 program.

The Local Agenda 21 Environmental Policy and Action Plan details the City of Marion's commitment to working with the community to promote ecologically sustainable development in the local area.

Case Study:

Main Elements & Milestones of Marion's Local Agenda 21

Step 1: Getting Started and Getting Commitment in the Council

Marion's Local Agenda 21 had its origins in the ILAP program. As part of ILAP the Council established decision-making structures and policy-making processes which were founded on the following building blocks:

- active community participation in the decision making process which leads to the development and implementation of programs and projects and the delivery of Council services;
- integration of social, environmental and economic factors;
- cross functional teams involved in planning and implementation;
- a long term and holistic design and focus developed and implemented at the local level; and
- integration with relevant regional, state and national policies and programs.

The Integrated Local Area Planning process was the City of Marion's overall strategic planning framework for the period 1995-1998. Like Local Agenda 21 the ILAP approach sought to ensure that the Council and community worked together to identify priority economic, social and environmental issues. LA21 identified five areas in which strategies should be developed: water management, biodiversity, environmental education, built environment and City administration.

On the basis of this approach the Council undertook the following four formative steps to commence the Local Agenda 21 program.

1. Created a full time permanent position for an Environmental Officer, located in the City Managers Unit (the Unit was responsible for all Governance and Policy issues). This was done to ensure that environmental policy and issues were fully integrated with the corporate and strategic planning of Council and had the full support of senior management and the Councillors.

2. Established a formal advisory committee of the Council to guide the Local Agenda 21 program and advise the Council on all environmental policy issues. The Environmental Policy Advisory Committee is comprised of eight community representatives, four Councillor's (including the Mayor), four Council staff and a representative of the Department of the Environment, Housing and Aboriginal Affairs. The Council at a later stage committed to maintaining the Committee in the long term. EPAC has met every month for a three year period.
3. Commenced an awareness raising program for Council staff regarding the principles and objectives of Local Agenda 21.
4. Developed a *Local Agenda 21 Environmental Policy and Action Plan* as a management tool to guide Marion's Local Agenda 21 program.

Step 2: Consultation, Information Gathering and Setting Priorities

To identify which environmental and sustainability issues had to be addressed in the Policy and Action Plan a number of consultation sessions were held over a six month period. These included workshops with Council staff and Councillors, local youth groups, business representatives and the broader community. As a result of the consultation process the following priority issues were identified:

- water catchment management
- urban form and design
- biodiversity
- environmental education
- waste management and minimisation
- air quality
- coastal management
- city administration
- intergovernmental relationships and partnerships

Working groups were established to formulate policies and strategies which would address the identified priority issues. These policies and strategies were then drafted into the *Local Agenda 21 Environmental Policy and Action Plan*. Council endorsed this document in July 1997. The Marion Local Agenda 21 Network also offers a further means for people to become involved in Local Agenda 21. As part of the Local Agenda 21 work each year to celebrate World Environment Day submissions are invited from the local community and schools for funding towards projects which protect the local environment. \$1,000 grants are available from the Community Environmental Grants Scheme for minor equipment, supplies and materials. In the past funded projects have included native vegetation planting, seed collection, weed removal, educational development and development of environmental products or technology.

Step 3: The Local Agenda 21 Environmental Policy and Action Plan

The Local Agenda 21 Environmental Policy and Action Plan has been developed to provide a policy framework to address priority environmental issues. This document includes issue specific policies which now ensure the integration of environmental considerations in all of Council's operations and functions. The programme includes actions to:

- ***“improve the Council’s own environmental performance by ensuring that environmental considerations are balanced with economic and social factors in all the Council’s operations and functions***
- ***promote a greater community involvement in and awareness of environmental issues.”***

It provides a framework to ensure that environmental performance is a whole of organisation responsibility and a joint Council and community effort. Action plans were developed for each of the issues and responsibility for implementation ascribed to the relevant business units of Council. Local Agenda 21 is a long-term commitment to promote sustainable development into the future; it does not finish with this document.

Practical projects included in the plan cover an Environmental Plan Amendment Report to amend the Council Development Plan so that environmental considerations are included in all development decisions. These include an energy audit of Council buildings, a Pollution Prevention Project to work with local industry, a Stormwater Infrastructure Capacity Study, a Cities Bike Plan and coastal protection works as well as Cities for Climate Protection™ and the Council Environment Management System.

Step 4: Review, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Local Agenda 21 Program and Environmental Policy and Action Plan

The Local Agenda 21 plan and program is reviewed annually. This review is coordinated by EPAC and recommendations for amendments and implementation are forwarded to Council for consideration in the financial and corporate planning process.

The Council has a strong commitment to review the document every year to assess its progress. A comprehensive review is planned for every three years to coincide with the production of the State of the Environment Report and in association with the review of Council's corporate, strategic and development plans. The purpose of this is to ensure that all review processes are fully integrated. As a result of this review process the Policy and Action Plan will be amended and its progress and effectiveness will be reported in a State of the Environment Report.

In 1998 EPAC decided, following a review of the Plan, that the following projects and issues are a priority for 1999:

- Environmental education
- Water Resources Working Party
- Education program for Council staff (biodiversity, water management and energy efficiency)
- Biodiversity - survey of native and remnant vegetation (for use in service delivery, development assessment and Council decision making)

An initial State of the Environment Report with sustainability indicators has been drafted to provide a baseline to measure the effectiveness of Council's Local Agenda 21 program. For example, the effectiveness of a strategy to develop measures, which reduce energy consumption and dependency on fossil fuels, may be measured using an indicator that

quantifies annual energy consumption rates per sector and energy source. The SoER and the EMS form important parts of the review, monitoring and evaluation of the Local Agenda 21 program.

State of the Environment Report

This report is in draft form and uses the pressure-state-response model akin with the Commonwealth, State and many other local government SoERs. It therefore details the present **state** of the environment in the City of Marion, the **pressures** that impact on the environment and the means of monitoring the **responses** that have developed through the Local Agenda 21 program to address environmental issues in the area. The report develops and reports on a number of sustainability indicators against which the effectiveness of the Council's Local Agenda 21 strategies can be determined. The indicators have been adapted from those developed as part of the Southern Region of Council's Regional Environment Strategy - 'A Strategy for a Sustainable South' (1997).

To facilitate linkages between the Local Agenda 21 planning process and SoER, EPAC reviewed the selection and development of the indicators to be used in the report. This ensured a partnership approach between Council and community. The indicators are also linked in the SoER to corresponding policies in the Local Agenda 21 Environmental Policy and Action Plan and the City of Marion Environmental Health Management Plan, as these three documents establish together the strategic direction for environmental management within the Council for the next three years. This linkage of SoER to the strategies of Local Agenda 21 Plan is a vital way of monitoring not only the effectiveness of strategies but also ensuring that environmental issues flagged in the SoE are dealt with by Council.

Environmental Management System

As a result of the Local Agenda 21 Policy and Action Plan the following policy position on the development of an Environmental Management System was established and adopted in the Council's corporate plan in 1998. The first Audit report was produced in March 1998. This initiative represents the central element of the Council's commitment in its Local Agenda 21 to 'getting its own house in order'.

Policy Objective

“To ensure the effective environmental performance on behalf of the Corporation of the City of Marion”.

Policies

“The Council will comply with all environmental legislation requirements pertaining to its operations. In addition the Council will apply the principles of continuous improvement to aim beyond compliance towards more sustainable and innovative outcomes.

Council will adopt a strong sense of environmental awareness amongst all employees and staff. This will be achieved by the adoption of an environmental management approach that incorporates environmental priorities within works programs or business plans and ensuring appropriate educational training is included in general training”.

After the formal adoption of the Plan the Council allocated \$20,000 to commence the development of an EMS. The purpose of the EMS is to integrate environmental management systems into all of Council's operations and functions, therefore encompassing both operational and management activities. The development of the EMS is also intended to place the Council in a position where it can achieve ISO 14000 certification.

The EMS is being carried out in three stages modelled on the ISO 14000 process, the international standard for EMS:

1. preliminary audit/review by external consultants of all the Councils' operations and procedures;
2. development of operations, procedures and policies to ensure legislative compliance and achievement of best practice where possible; this will include the establishment of appropriate training and skills development programs within Council; and
3. evaluation of process, including combination of benchmarking and internal audits. It is intended that this review and monitoring process will be cyclical and operated over a three year time frame to ensure that it is complimentary to the Local Agenda 21 and SoE reviews and the strategic planning processes.

Following the completion of an Environmental Audit Report in April 1998, an Environmental Improvement Agreement (EIA) is now being negotiated with the Environment Protection Agency. The EIA will formally and legally commit the Council to implementing the recommended actions specified in the Environmental Audit Report over a three year period. This requires that Council allocate an adequate budget and human resources to fulfil the requirements of the EIA.

The report seeks to ensure all existing environmental procedures and policies are integrated into Council's day to day operations. In effect it provides a 'road map' of Council intentions with respect to the environment. Although it is acknowledged that the Council has made significant advances in terms of its environmental commitments and policies "*the Local Agenda 21 Action plan is a 'far sighted' and proactive environmental strategy*". A major deficiency identified by the auditors was the lack of internal strategy to deal with new environmental requirements e.g. disposal of excavated material. Although gaps in their environmental performance and management had already been identified in the Local Agenda 21 process there were no mechanisms in place to systematically deal with deficiencies and concerns and where they were it was not being done in a way that was effective. For instance, the Built Environment section of the Local Agenda 21 Environmental Policy and Action Plan has not been included in the Policy Manual for environmental services; Parks and Gardens do not include design criteria for best practice environmental management, and Contracts and Purchasing Policy Criteria for Selection of Suppliers does not include environmental objectives. The EMS will aim to achieve a 'step change' in internal Council performance which is really proactive rather than passive in nature and striving for continuous improvement in day to day activities across all Council Units.

Managerial and operational performance indicators are being developed as part of the EMS and it is intended that ultimately these indicators will be reported against and along with the sustainability indicators in the State of the Environment Report. This will provide the final linkage between the Local Agenda 21 Policy and Action Plan, the EMS and the SoE reporting process.

Partners

Marion is actively involved in the *South Australian Partnership for Local Agenda 21* established by the State Government's Department of the Environment and Natural Resources and the South Australian Local Government Association. This has established partnerships with neighbouring Councils, regional catchment management boards and State Government agencies to deliver specific Local Agenda 21 projects. In addition this partnership arrangement has enabled Council to access Natural Heritage Trust funding for Local Agenda 21 work. The Council's ability to undertake Local Agenda 21 has been greatly assisted by the support and guidance of the Partnership.

South Australian Partnership for Local Agenda 21 Guidance on Local Agenda 21

Step 1 Getting Started

- Making a commitment at a policy and budgetary level to undertake a Local Agenda 21 program
- Setting in place the decision making structure and processes to facilitate the program with full community participation
- Creating a climate of support and awareness of what Local Agenda 21 is about

Step 2 Setting Priorities

- Council and community defining a vision of sustainability and what priority issues need to be addressed to achieve that vision
- Assessing what the Council and community are already doing or need to do to address these issues
- Information gathered in the first phase is drafted into policy statements, management plans and action plans which are integrated into Council corporate or strategic plans and linked to other community environmental initiatives

Step 3 Implementation

- Establishing systems to ensure that the plan is implemented, for example through an Environmental Management System
- Setting up and continuing partnerships to maintain the program long term
- Building on existing initiatives

Step 4 Evaluation - Review and Monitoring

- Setting in place mechanisms and systems which ensure there is a long-term commitment to monitoring, review and evaluation of Local Agenda 21 program e.g. Sustainability Indicators and State of the Environment Reporting.

Cities for Climate Protection™ (CCP™)

The Council along with ten other Councils in South Australia has joined the Cities for Climate¹ Protection™ campaign (CCP™). This campaign work is being undertaken as an integral part of the Council's Local Agenda 21 work. Targets and an action plan to meet greenhouse gas reductions are being developed hand-in-hand with environmental indicators in the Council's State of the Environment Report and performance indicators in an environmental management system. Marion Council's commitment to the CCP™ campaign means that it has agreed to undertake:

- an energy and emissions audit of the local area
- on the basis of this information forecast energy and emissions
- establish reduction targets
- develop and implement an action plan to meet the targets.

¹ CCP™ is a campaign to help local government reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their communities through energy efficiency, transport management, building policies, waste management, land use strategies as well as local air quality and urban management

In the SoER, whilst the Council has been able to report on local energy consumption rates by residents in the City of Marion, it was not able to isolate information on consumption rates by sector and energy source. This targeted information will be calculated in the CCP™ program. This will in turn facilitate, as the Local Agenda 21 work of the Council develops, a move, towards making individual stakeholders being more accountable to achieving overall and sector specific targets for greenhouse gas reductions.

Lessons Learnt:

Opportunities:

- There is a need for a designated and specialist position in Council to drive the program. It is vital that this position is located in the strategic and governance area of the Council's structure.
- At the beginning of the process the full commitment of the then Chief Executive Officer to Integrated Local Area Planning as a management and planning tool, helped to get an early corporate commitment to the process. The CEO also recognised at that time the role of Local Agenda 21 as a public policy tool.
- The time spent raising awareness of Local Agenda 21 principles and objectives amongst Council staff and elected members was 'worth its weight in gold'. This is a process which should never be hurried and needs to be constantly addressed throughout the duration of the program.
- The plan is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. The wider Local Agenda 21 program ensures that the document is a 'living document' which can be effectively used in the strategic and corporate planning processes of Council. It too is a cyclical process of continuous improvement.
- Getting beyond 'formalised' community groups is a hard process in terms of involving the wider community in the Local Agenda 21 program. Mobilising the community needs to happen early in the process so that the Council and the community can travel the Local Agenda 21 road together. Marion's Local Agenda 21 has been most effective at tackling the changes which need to occur in the Council's management and operations however the work is only just beginning in terms of establishing effective working relationships with community groups.
- The existence of EPAC as a formal Advisory Committee of the Council with broad representation has been vital in the formulation and implementation stages of the program.
- Tangible outcomes, in terms of program delivery, need to be demonstrated early in the piece if Local Agenda 21 is to be seen as worthy, credible and a productive process. As such, policy development and implementation as part of Local Agenda 21, needs to be an iterative process.
- The EMS has legitimised the broader policy objectives of Local Agenda 21, as it requires environmental outcomes of legislative significance and in this way the Council administration and Council are therefore obliged to commit to compliance and continuous improvement.

Barriers:

- Public sector restructuring and changes in intergovernmental relationships has led to difficulties in integrating locally derived outcomes with State Government policies.

Program facts & figures:

Staffing: Coordinated by the Environmental Officer, with seconded specialist staff as necessary e.g. Environmental Health Officer to assist with regulatory elements of the EMS; approximately equivalent to \$50,000.

Operating Budget: First year (not including salary component) \$40,000. Second year \$60,000.

Key Reports and References:

City of Marion Local Agenda 21 Environmental Policy and Action Plan (1997)

City of Marion State of the Environment Report (1998)

City of Marion Environment Audit Report (1998)

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Marrickville Agenda 21 Environment Strategy

case study



Council Profile:

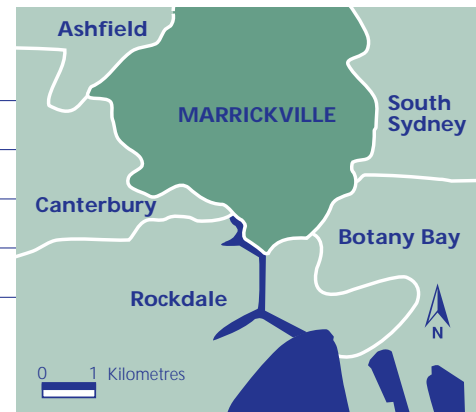
Land area: 15.39 square kilometres

State: New South Wales

Council Category: Urban Developed Large

Budget: \$66,000,000

Population: 77,800



Summary:

Marrickville is an inner suburb of Sydney, approximately 8 kilometres south west of the CBD and is one of the most densely populated areas of Sydney. The Marrickville Council's Agenda 21 Environment Strategy was launched in 1997. As such the strategy is still very much in its infancy. The primary focus of the initiative is environmental concerns and measures but there is a commitment to expand the work to embrace social and economic issues. For instance, Marrickville intends to integrate the Council's Social Plan with the Agenda 21 Strategy in future years. The Agenda 21 Strategy also commits the Council to improving the health and well being of the community. The Strategy builds upon the Council's SoER and focuses on additional themes of planning controls and community development. The Strategy has three main strands: information programs, regulation and economic measures. A major objective of the Strategy is to strive for excellence in environmental responsibility and performance both as a Council and community. Good networks were already in existence on environmental matters in the area upon commencement of the Agenda 21 work. This in part explains the Council's decision to hand the role of initial promotion of Agenda 21 to a community group - the 'Reverse Garbage Cooperative'. This group is a well known and established community waste recycling project and well placed to take a strategic role in the promotion and facilitation of Marrickville's Agenda 21 initiative.

Goals:

Marrickville's Agenda 21 (1997) commits the Council to:

“promote the highest level of environmental responsibility by businesses, schools, households and community organisations and by Council through innovative environmental education

integrate the principles of ESD (Ecologically Sustainable Development) into Council's planning instruments and building controls

affirm the Cooks River as a major natural resource and work towards preventing water pollution and restoring the river environment

demonstrate the value of remnant vegetation and native wildlife by accepting our responsibility for its protection, restoration and enhancement

implement the goal of 60% reduction of waste going to landfill by the year 2000 through cooperation with the local community and the other Councils in the region

promote health and well being of all members of our community through improving local environmental conditions”

Case Study:

Step 1 Getting Started

Marrickville Council had a good track record on the environment but evidence from progressive SoE reports, particularly the 1997 report, showed that the Council had to do more if it was to make the concept of sustainable development a reality.

Marrickville Council initially developed an Agenda 21 Environment Strategy and then set about implementing it and getting support from the community. The Strategy is basically environmental in nature however it is hoped that its focus can be broadened over the coming years. The community education component of the work was undertaken by Reverse Garbage Cooperative on behalf of the Council.

Step 2 Setting Goals and Identifying the Means to Achieve Them

The Marrickville Agenda 21 Environment Strategy was launched in 1997. The Strategy builds upon the Council's environmental record and SoER on waste, water, biodiversity and environmental quality and focuses on the two additional themes of planning controls and community development. Sustainable development will be progressed by the Council in three main ways: an information program, regulation and economic measures. Demonstration projects have formed a key element of the Council's approach. These are strategically timed and planned to maximise community and Council awareness and commitment.

The Council's commitment to the environment is expressed in its Vision Statement “a safe, healthy, culturally enriching and ecologically sustainable environment for all the people of the Marrickville area”. To implement this vision the Council ascribed to the six principles contained in Marrickville's Agenda 21 for the sustainable operation of businesses, community and Council.

Furthermore the Council committed itself to an Environmental Management System (EMS) which would achieve the following:

- establish and maintain environmental standards for its own operations
- assess the potential environmental effects of our activities, and regularly monitor our environmental performance
- continually improve environmental performance, including more efficient use of energy, water and other resources
- promote environmental awareness amongst Council personnel and contractors

Key Themes- Information Programs, Regulation, Economic Measures

The detailed actions along with responsible stakeholders (Council, community) and time frames identified in the Council's Agenda 21 can be grouped under the following approaches:

- **Information programs** - audits, advisory programs, awareness campaigns, award scheme, demonstration projects
- **Regulation** - prescriptive or performance based
- **Economic measures** - Council purchasing policy, developer contributions, rebates on the purchase of efficient materials/ equipment

Key outcomes of Agenda 21 included the establishment of a Marrickville Agenda 21 Committee comprising community representatives, Councillors and staff and a staff working group to develop detailed action plans. The need for an innovative communication strategy and Environmental Management System were reaffirmed together with a commitment to integrate Agenda 21 into the Council Management Plan. Of course a commitment to the environment and Local Agenda 21 was an element of the Council's Strategic Plan back in 1996. Now Agenda 21 shapes the whole focus of the Plan. Although the Agenda 21 process was initiated by Council, the fact that it involved extensive community input in its development meant that it became a community and Council initiative. It also gave the work a global focus rather than merely a local focus.

Step 3 Council - Community Partnering

Community Facilitation - Key Partners - 'Reverse Garbage' Community Project

Extensive promotion of the Agenda 21 strategy was undertaken during the second half of 1997. This involved mail outs and talks to many community groups in the area. Good networks were already in existence on environmental matters in the area upon commencement of the Agenda 21 work. This in part explains the Council's decision to work with a community group, 'Reverse Garbage' Cooperative on the information program. Reverse Garbage is a well known and established community waste recycling project based in the area. Reverse Garbage was responsible for the majority of the initial community outreach and for running workshops and disseminating information on environmental practice, sustainability and Agenda 21. Early involvement of the community was considered a vital aspect of the Council's Agenda 21. Community forums were established to allow for ongoing input and involvement by the community in the development of the Council's Agenda 21 work. Suggestions from the forums are systematically incorporated into the Council's programs. Notably as a result of this consultation program the Aboriginal Consultative Committee has taken an interest in the Strategy and have appointed an Agenda 21 representative. A Council video on

environmental work in the Council area has been produced and is being used to promote Agenda 21.

Step 4 Getting Runs on the Board - Demonstration Projects

Demonstration projects are also a key element of the information program. The Council has found them useful in terms of:

- highlighting key aspects of Marrickville Agenda 21
- demonstrating to the community that sustainability can be achieved
- assisting in the implementation of environmental guidelines and controls
- demonstrating innovation in environmental practice

Demonstration Projects in the area have included ongoing and future plans for:

Retrofit Program (Information and Awareness Raising) - Energy and Water efficiency improvements in building renovation

Solar Light trial - Cooks River Foreshore

Streets to Rivers Project - Review of stormwater and Street cleaning to reduce litter and pollution

Reducing our Waste - Council Site Waste Minimisation and Management Development Control Plan

Warren Parks / Richardsons Outlook - Plan of Management for Warren Parks and Richardsons Outlook

Public transport Promotion - Review of Council role in transport planning and information distribution on public transport

Habitat Corridors - Cooks River and Alexandra canal habitat corridors

Marrickville's Unique Plants - Public information on unique flora and fauna

Green Business Awards - Environmental awards for business as part of Environment week, including best practice in low energy design

Aboriginal and Ethnic communities - Two innovative community cultural projects to link with aboriginal and cross-cultural communities

Community Involvement in Agenda 21 - Quarterly Forums, development of ESD checklist for assessing community organisation

Green Jobs - Opportunities for supporting green business e.g. Marrickville Community Nursery

Step 5 Implementation

Regulation & Planning Controls

As a key part of its Agenda 21 work the Council has incorporated Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) principles into the drafting of its new planning scheme. The planning system offers a major avenue for the Council to pursue sustainability objectives by introducing measures to reduce the impact of new and existing development in the area. Specific planning controls have been developed in site waste management and minimisation and energy, water efficiency and stormwater standards. The Council will develop, with the involvement of the Marrickville Agenda 21 Forum, an Energy and Water Efficiency Policy for existing and new buildings based upon the Inner Metropolitan Regional Organisation of Councils (IMROC) policy *"Towards a Regional Energy and Water*

Efficiency Policy” (1997). The Council aims to encourage developers through information, education and incentives to go beyond compliance and to implement ‘best practice’ wherever possible. The IMROC project has developed an energy, water and stormwater efficient policy for residential development across the region. It covers development controls as well as other Council initiatives including, public information, demonstration projects and financial incentives. Examples of the policy on Greenhouse & Energy and Water are included below:

- (a) maximising solar gain in winter;
- (b) subdivision design and location of new buildings;
- (c) design to encourage bicycle and pedestrian access; and
- (d) plumbing fixtures in new housing.

Economic measures

In addition to demonstration projects tackling economic dimensions of sustainability i.e. Green Jobs and Green Business Awards, the Council are also conducting research into further economic measures that the Council could undertake to promote sustainability i.e. rate rebates or other financial incentives.

Economic measures recommended in the IMROC Policy Toolkit include:

- Rebates to householders who complete energy efficiency improvement or reduce water use
- Purchase deals with suppliers of water efficient products i.e. irrigation
- Financial incentives for householders to purchase water efficient appliances and fixtures
- Water use assessments for existing dwellings by trained plumbers
- One-off householder grants for energy and water efficiency measures e.g. insulation, boilers, storage systems, shower heads, energy efficient lightbulbs, appliances
- Council promotion, action as clearing house and extension of the Commonwealth Energy Card
- Council development of a sliding scale for developer contributions for water supply and sewerage services
- Council request to electricity retailers to quote supply of green power
- Guarantee or pre-purchase a quantity of installed insulation, solar water heaters and water efficient fixtures

Step 6 Getting Further Commitment in the Council

The Longer Term Objectives

The Council’s revised Strategic Plan has incorporated key aspects of Agenda 21 and the Council’s Management Plan will integrate Agenda 21 objectives along with Social Plan goals into each of the Council’s areas of activity. This will be done through work to integrate the Agenda 21 Strategy into the individual business plans for each strategic business unit within the Council. The recent amendments to the *Local Government Act 1993* in NSW which require Councils to have regard to ESD in their Management Plans and integrate ESD principles into all Council operations, will add further impetus to the Council’s efforts to integrate ESD into all its management and planning functions.

Step 7 Monitoring Progress

Draft Agenda 21 criteria for assessing the projects the Council had planned for in 1998/99 have been developed. These cover Local Agenda 21 themes such as:

- Have access issues been considered?
- Have public art issues been taken into account?
- Will environmental best practice be pursued in the project?
- Has community safety been included in the project?
- Have community consultation processes been designed?
- Have the full risks of the project/issue been considered?
- Is there an opportunity to work with a team approach?

These draft criteria reflect developing and existing Council priorities and policies not only in the Agenda 21 Environment Strategy but also in Council's Access Policy and Disability Discrimination Act Plan (in development), Public Arts Policy, Local Arts Strategy, Local Environment Strategy and Environmental Management System (in development). This approach will ensure that new community projects in Marrickville will also embody a commitment to sustainable development. The Council intends to build upon this approach in developing sustainability indicators.

Lessons Learnt:

Opportunities:

Key success factors:

- Good networks already established in the community by Environmental Services prior to launch of the Strategy
- Political and senior management support
- Use of local facilitators with some experience in the subject area
- Extensive involvement by community and focus groups and ongoing forums
- Involvement of staff in each of the working groups
- Timeframes set for each action
- Responsible personnel identified for each action

Barriers:

- Lack of knowledge in the Council and community of the Agenda 21 concept
- Low budget prevented extensive publicity
- Low level publicity in particular affected participation by multicultural community (which is being addressed)
- Separate development of the Council's Social Plan (again this issue is under review)

Primarily the Strategy has focused on environmental issues although there are plans to extend the work to cover social, cultural and economic aspects. This will include integration of the strategy with the Council's Social Plan, research into economic measures to progress sustainability, wide Council use of the Agenda 21 Criteria for new projects and development and sustainability indicators.

Program facts & figures:

Staffing: One member of staff has coordinated the Agenda 21 work (Manager, Environmental Services) (equivalent \$50,000 per annum). Additional staff and community members have played a role in the development of the Marrickville Agenda 21 Environment Strategy document.

Budget: \$5,000 for developing and publishing the Strategy. \$5,000 to community organisation Reverse Garbage Cooperative to undertake promotional work and run workshops. Total budget approximately \$66,000 (approximately 1/3 staff support). Video costs \$15,000.

Key reports:

Marrickville Council (1997) Marrickville Agenda 21 Environment Strategy

Marrickville Council (1996) Air Quality Strategies for Marrickville

Marrickville Council (1996) Management Plan 1996-2000

Marrickville Council (1995) Make Your House a Healthy Home

Marrickville Council (1995) Reducing Noise in Marrickville

Marrickville Council State of the Environment Reports (annual)

Marrickville Council Strategic Plan (annual)

Marrickville Council (1994) Waste Management Strategic Plan

Inner Metropolitan Regional Organisation of Councils (IMROC) (1997)
"Towards a Regional Energy, Water and Stormwater Efficiency Policy".

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Tools and Techniques: Community Facilitation - Key Partners

Reverse Garbage Cooperative Community Project

Marrickville Council

Marrickville's Agenda 21 Environment Strategy is a unique example of a Council deciding to work with a community based organisation, Reverse Garbage Cooperative. Reverse Garbage is a well-known and established community waste recycling project based in Marrickville and well placed to run a community outreach program to promote the Council's Agenda 21. The group received a grant of \$5,000 in 1997 to promote Agenda 21 over a period of a few months. They were to contact a range of community based organisations, such as clubs, churches and charities, with a particular focus on Marrickville's multicultural communities. The aim was to build upon existing community interest in the environment and good will. Involvement of the community was considered a vital aspect of the Council's Agenda 21 Strategy. Multicultural communities in the area were to be specifically targeted as groups previously not represented in environmental matters in the area. Indeed the UNCED Rio Agenda 21 document identifies indigenous groups along with other sectors of the community (including youth and women), as major groups in society whose participation in Local Agenda 21 needs to be specifically sought and facilitated.

A mailing list of 134 groups was compiled. Each group was contacted with information on the Agenda 21 initiative and asked to complete a Council produced Green Office Checklist (which assesses paper use, energy use, water use, waste generation, chemical use and staff training). Assistance on an Environmental Audit was offered to groups along with an offer of a presentation on Agenda 21 to their staff or members. Most groups have reported to the Council that they found the checklist useful however varying degrees of interest in implementing green practices were reported. Responses varied from environmental organisations that were already doing a lot on environmental issues to service clubs who did not see the environment as a priority concern. Some respondents, these included youth groups and community centres throughout the Council, were sent additional information and guidance material including a Council publication 'Make Your House a Healthy Home' and 'Marrickville Council's Environmental Checklist - Household Edition'. A Council video on environmental work in the Council area was produced and used in talks to promote Agenda 21. Unfortunately only a couple of organisations took advantage of the offer of a free environmental audit which is conducted by Environment Safety Service Australia (ESSA). However it is envisaged that these audits will be used as case studies to promote further take-up of this service by community organisations.

In addition an Agenda 21 Environmental Forum was established and initial meetings facilitated by the Reverse Garbage Cooperative. The numerous talks to community groups centred on translating Agenda 21 into action in the home, focusing on energy use, water use, waste and biodiversity. Environmentally friendly products were displayed and offered for sale at each meeting e.g. energy efficient light bulbs, water saving shower roses, eco-friendly cleaning products.

Presentations were made to the Council's Ethnic Communities Consultative Committee (ECC), the Aboriginal Consultative Committee and to some ethnic groups. The Aboriginal Consultative Committee has taken an interest in the Strategy and have appointed an Agenda 21 representative. In addition Marrickville's Agenda 21 leaflet has been produced in various languages: Portuguese, Greek, Vietnamese, Arabic and Chinese and translated material on waste and water issues were obtained from the EPA especially for the public meetings. A second Agenda 21 Forum specifically focused upon 'Taking the Message to our Multicultural Community'; this session included special guest speakers from the ethnic

community. There is a real possibility in the future that the Council's aboriginal community will become more involved in the Agenda 21 work. In particular there is an interest both in the Cooks River area, where a number of middens have been identified that need protection, and in contributing to the knowledge of indigenous species and of the environment in Marrickville.

The Forum has made recommendation about further promoting Agenda 21 to Marrickville's ethnic community:

- using the ethnic media more to get the message out to specific language groups
- using already existing networks of community groups to disseminate information, particularly using influential community leaders
- targeting presentations to the cultural interests and concerns of the various groups
- providing information both written and verbal in different languages (using translators to give talks)
- making better links with children, especially through schools as a way of getting the environmental message into non-English speaking background homes
- utilising self interest, cost saving and convenience as a central message in environmental education

Reverse Garbage have carried out a self evaluation of the four months of outreach work they were contracted to carry out for the Council and point to some key lessons:

- **Talking to groups** - This is an effective means of getting the message across to individuals but it can be very time consuming. It would be more effective and more cost effective to use a 'train the trainer' approach - i.e. running information sessions for community organisations which they can then run for themselves.
- **Council networks** - Again this was a useful approach i.e. the Ethnic Communities Committee and Aboriginal Consultative Committee were invaluable in making initial links with Marrickville's aboriginal community. This approach could be extended to involve other Council services and ultimately sectors of the community - Youth services, Aged Services, Disability Services.
- **Grants and funding available for environmental projects** - An exhaustive list of contacts for all available grants and schemes is needed along with advice on how to apply for funding, as many groups may be very keen to undertake environmental work but have insufficient funds.
- **Diversity of community groups approached** - Time needs to be allowed to reach all ethnic communities.
- **Time constraints** - There was insufficient time to carry out the required outreach work, although a good start was made and some important inroads made, more lead time was needed to build up the required trust, contacts and confidence within the community.

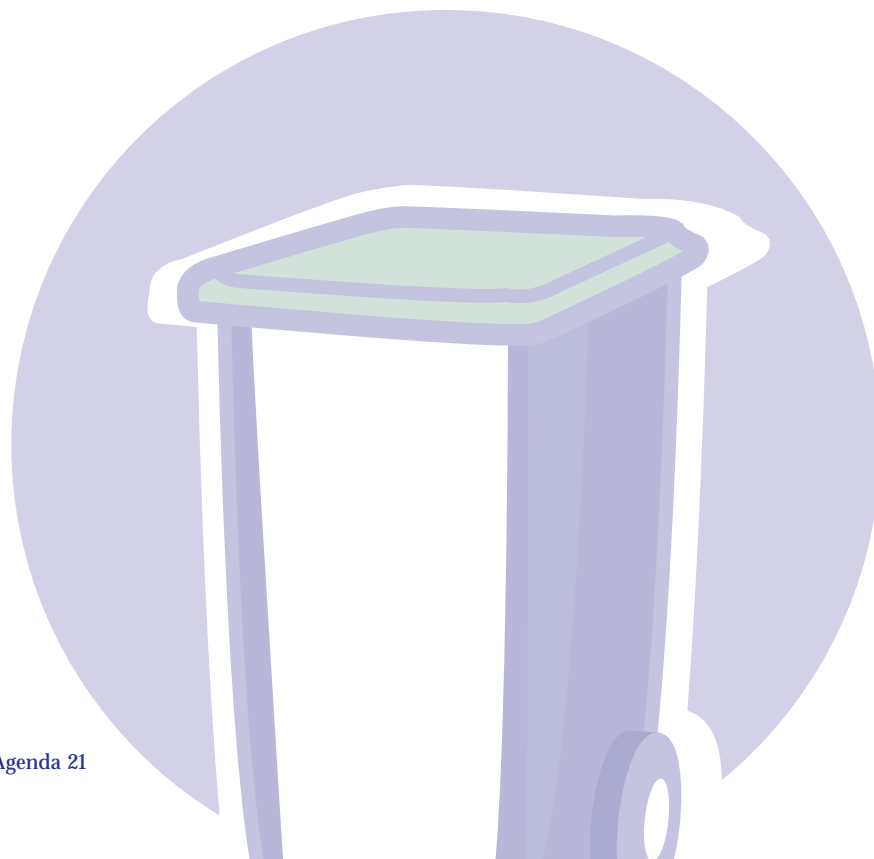
References:

Marrickville Council (1997) Marrickville Agenda 21 Environment Strategy

Reverse Garbage (1997) Promoting Marrickville Council's Agenda 21 to Local Community Groups - A Project Carried out By Reverse Garbage Co-operative, Marrickville

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Moreland City Council - Local Agenda 21

case study



Council Profile:

Land area: 51 square kilometres

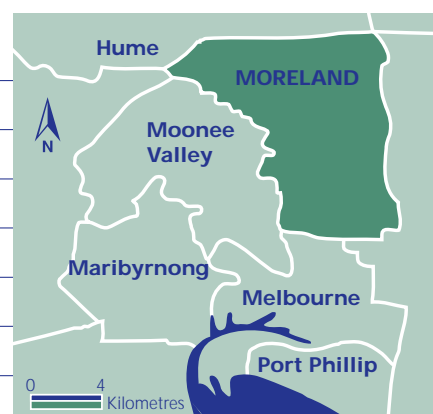
Council Category: Urban Developed

Very Large

State: Victoria

Budget: \$60,000,000 (Operating),
\$14,000,000 (Capital)

Population: 135,000



Summary:

Moreland City Council in Melbourne is an amalgamation of the former Brunswick and Coburg Councils and part of the former Broadmeadows Council. Moreland's Local Agenda 21 was initiated after Council amalgamations in Victoria in 1996. Amalgamation gave the Council a unique opportunity to revise the Council's core values and commitments. The Council decided to embark upon a new process - Local Agenda 21, which would strive to build upon the much credited Local Conservation Strategies and thriving community environmental networks of the previous Councils. Post-amalgamation, Moreland identified a number of key local issues as priorities for policy development which between them covered most of the issues which could be included in a Local Agenda 21. It was decided that rather than do a separate plan, a Local Agenda 21 "way of thinking" or process should be fed into the development of these strategies. A Council report on Local Agenda 21 was adopted in 1996.

The approach of the Council focuses on two main streams of activity: internal - within the Council and external - within the community. Since 1996 the Council is developing both internal departmental action plans and an external community action plan. These two plans in the future will be brought together into a corporate plan of action on Local Agenda 21. The community based action plan has been developed from nine sustainability principles covering social, economic and environmental goals e.g. governance, sustainable economic growth and quality of life on earth. A key element of the internal work has been the development and implementation of an environmental audit of Council operations.

With the support of key decision-makers in the Council the Local Agenda 21 concept was incorporated into the Corporate Plan for the first time in 1997/2000. As the Council's Local Agenda 21 program develops there is an annual opportunity to inform the review of the Municipal Corporate Plan and to ensure that it reinforces the goals of Local Agenda 21. Ultimately the Local Agenda 21 Action Plan may impact on both the priorities and the focus of the Municipal Corporate Plan.

Goals:

The Corporate Plan of Moreland is designed to address the question of:

What sort of place do we want Moreland to be in the future?

How can we create the sort of city we want?

What are the Council's priorities and how can we contribute to addressing them in a sustainable way?

What are the important actions and how can they be implemented?

This statement of strategic intent reflects Moreland's commitment and approach to Local Agenda 21.

Case Study:

Step 1: Demonstrating a Public Commitment to Local Agenda 21

Following amalgamation, Moreland Council identified a number of key local issues as priorities for policy development; for example, waste management, economic development, open space, health, transport and energy management. Integrated consideration of these priorities seemed conducive to the Local Agenda 21 process and prompted Council to formally initiate a Local Agenda 21 strategy.

Fostering participation and ownership by those who will be affected by the process, both within the Council and in the community, is fundamental to the development of a Local Agenda 21. The Council therefore initiated two main and separate streams of Local Agenda 21 activities - externally and internally.

Step 2: Creating a Climate of Support - In Council

The Council soon realised that developing a Local Agenda 21 strategy did not mean starting from scratch. Many of the Council's existing policies and practice were already fully in line with Local Agenda 21 objectives. Right from the very beginning therefore it was decided that rather than do a separate plan, a Local Agenda 21 "way of thinking" should be fed into the development of all strategies - waste management, economic development, open space, health, transport and energy management. Sustainable development requires that all policies work together to meet the needs of the community in ways which put less pressure on the environment. The aim of doing this at an early stage was to foster an approach in Council which could lead to 'win/win' solutions, rather than the usual trade-offs between the different spheres of Council activity with resultant 'winners' and 'losers'.

Overall the Local Agenda 21 approach in Moreland has been more a process or "way of thinking" rather than a specific planning exercise. Furthermore the Local Agenda 21 concept was interpreted so that it was relevant and fitted into the way the Council was already doing things. After all many functions of Council can contribute to sustainable development and help to improve the quality of life e.g. transport, housing as well as

environmental management. It was not seen as a separate project but it was built into everything that the Council and others were doing. With this approach in place and with the support of key decision-makers in the Council the concept of a Local Agenda 21 was first written up in the Corporate Plan in 1997/2000.

Step 3: Creating a Climate of Support - In Community

An outwardly focused program has been developed to create a climate of support in the community that maximises community participation and involvement in the development and implementation of Moreland's Local Agenda 21. To ensure implementation of Local Agenda 21 all sectors of the community as well as the Council need to act together. A Local Agenda 21 Community Committee has been established whose task is to steer the Local Agenda 21 work in the community. In particular its role has been to examine the various options for community participation and involvement in Agenda 21 and identifying and promoting opportunities to enhance sustainability in the community. An officer coordinates this work with specific responsibility for the community Local Agenda 21 work. Further, the Community Committee is hosted by councillors and the minutes are reported back to Council. Early on, it was recognised that the Community Committee would have to include a wide variety of people and interests and one advisory committee alone would not suffice. This was particularly important for Moreland Council as the previous Brunswick, Broadmeadows and Coburg Councils all had well-developed Local Conservation Strategies and there were already networks and activities happening in the community which local people wished to continue. The challenge was to respect and extend this existing work without losing anything of value.

The Community Committee had two training sessions on Local Agenda 21. They were presented with a range of model Local Agenda 21 processes based upon best practice approaches both in Australia and internationally, from which the Committee strived to develop a process suited to local conditions in Moreland.

A local strategy can first identify what the local community wants and needs and then act as a catalyst in delivering this. To succeed it has to use all available resources and involve all interest groups. Different groups within the community can be excellent contributors to the process. Consequently as a starting point for planning new activities the Committee played a key role in gathering information on past community and Council initiatives which might pertain to the Local Agenda 21 objectives. In effect an audit or stock take of past and present community and Council activities was undertaken by members of the Committee, consulting and networking widely. In this way a profile of the community and its assets was gained. This was of particular importance given the historical context already described in this paper. In particular the committee strived to build upon past approaches to community consultation and the lessons learnt from these past experiences. Much of this community based stream of the Local Agenda 21 work however is still being developed. Eventually the Committee will play a vital role in reviewing options for involving the community through existing mechanisms and by developing new ways of engendering community involvement, building upon the talents, resources and enthusiasm of many different sectors of the community.

Step 4: Audit

The Environmental Audit of Council Activity

A second stream of the Council's Local Agenda 21 activities focuses on Council's internal operations and decision making. This work was begun in 1997 but since the beginning of 1998 has been coordinated by an officer with specific responsibility for the in-house Local Agenda 21 work. This basically covers broad resource and environmental management

issues such as improving office practices, contract development and customer services. An interdepartmental committee has been established to spearhead the work and to ensure that the process integrates across the whole organisation (internal Local Agenda 21 Committee). The establishment of effective housekeeping arrangements was an essential element to these beginning stages of the Local Agenda 21 process. The system was developed with scope for regular review as the Local Agenda 21 developed further. Reviews of internal actions take place on a bimonthly basis.

An environmental audit of the organisation was undertaken in 1995/96, which has resulted in many recommendations on how the Council can reduce waste, save energy, save water and improve its purchasing practices. The Council took a lead in awareness raising and education amongst its own staff. Continual staff education sessions were integral to the audit process and have resulted in very positive responses by staff to the required changes in Council practices. Environmental audit is a useful tool in developing Local Agenda 21 as it ensures that the Council's stated aims are followed through into action. This is particularly valuable in demonstrating publicly the impact generated by the Council as well as setting, again publicly, policy targets and practical actions that can be deployed by the Council to address its impact.

Internal Local Agenda 21 Activities

On completion of the environmental audit in 1995/6 the Council embarked upon wider internal Local Agenda 21 activities. The aim is to develop a Local Agenda 21 Integrated Action Plan. The first phase of the work has involved compilation of Departmental Action Plans. Each member of the Internal Local Agenda 21 Committee has listed priorities for the Council-wide action plan. Ideally these should be actions which encroach upon all roles and areas in each department of the Council. This is to occur prior to budgeting in order to allow for appropriate resourcing within each department. This framework will continue annually if effective. Senior management's support and understanding of what is being asked of each department and the departmental representative on the Internal Local Agenda 21 Committee is actively encouraged. This top down support is seen as vital to ensure appropriate resourcing as well as effective monitoring of the action plan.

Monitoring takes place at two levels:

1. The Local Agenda 21 action plan is incorporated into departmental work plans and the achievement or otherwise of the appropriate actions therefore will be considered by the normal departmental performance procedures.
2. Reports on implementation of the Departmental Action Plans are collected intermittently by the Internal Local Agenda 21 Committee. Overall progress on Local Agenda 21 actions is collated and published to maximise Council staff awareness and intensify continuation of the program.

Step 5: Community Goal Setting

External Local Agenda 21 Activities

A Local Agenda 21 will not work unless the local community is actively involved in helping identify what issues really matter locally. To this end the Community Committee set about highlighting issues of local importance and aims for the necessary action.

The Moreland's Local Agenda 21 Action Plan addresses the questions of:

What sort of place do we want Moreland to be in the future?

How can we create the sort of city we want?

What are the Council's priorities and how can we contribute to addressing them in a sustainable way?

What are the important actions and how can they be implemented?

To move from these broad statements of intent the Committee has identified nine Local Agenda 21 principles

1. The Quality of Life on Earth
2. Efficient Use of the Earth's Natural Resources
3. The Protection of our Global Commons
4. The Management of Human Settlements
5. Chemicals and the Management of Waste
6. Sustainable Economic Growth
7. Governance, Democracy and Political leadership
8. Accountability
9. Social Justice.

Step 6: Action Plan

In order to move from such expansive principles to action the Community Committee then set about deciding short, medium and long term targets and accompanying actions - Moreland Local Agenda 21 Action Plan Framework. The Framework includes over 38 targets and 29 actions. This is subject to constant change as the plan is constantly re-drafted.

The Committee has then prioritised actions for 1998 and plans to organise theme based forums and workshops for each of the actions for individuals and groups who are targeted as key players and stakeholders.

Step 7: Implementation

Whilst much progress has been made on internal actions resulting from the environmental audit of the Council it is still too early in the process to comment on the outcomes especially in terms of the integration of social, economic and environmental concerns. In addition much of the community work is in its infancy. Recently the community Local Agenda 21 Committee has developed further actions relating to two recently prioritised Local Agenda 21 objectives: *'community education'* and *'the development of a vision for Moreland'*. The aim of this forthcoming work will be to encourage more awareness and activity at the ward level throughout the Council. This will be done through work in schools and public forums on priority local issues (ward based). Ultimately it is hoped that this will lead to the formation of neighbourhood 'action groups' working on specific issues. A variety of community participation and development techniques will be used: street theatre, eco-art exhibition, industry forums (breakfast clubs), school prize giving and environmental fairs. As part of this work school based 'visioning' using poetry writing and art are also planned.

The Council has also initiated a Community Grant Program to support community sustainability projects which further Agenda 21 objectives. In 1997-98, \$30,000 was available for community projects; in 1998-99, the budget is \$20,000. In line with sustainability objectives the project funded must encompass social and economic as well as environmental themes. It is envisaged that this program may have the additional

benefit of widening membership on the Local Agenda 21 community committee. Furthermore as a way of practically demonstrating sustainability themes the Council is keen to support and promote 'Icon' projects. These types of projects would provide symbolic examples of sustainability.

So far the membership of the Local Agenda 21 Community Committee is biased towards environmental considerations. There are also representatives of housing, transport and primary health interests. Nevertheless, the balance of economic and social interests are considered by all committee members. Consistent effort is being made to broaden the membership of this group, for instance it is hoped that the Community Grant Program will provide new members down the track for the committee and more immediately new links with other Council Committees may result in a wider representation of community interests on the committee.

Step 8: Maintaining Momentum and Monitoring Progress

As the Council's Local Agenda 21 program develops there is an annual opportunity to inform the review of the Municipal Corporate Plan and to ensure that it reinforces the goals of Local Agenda 21. Ideally the Local Agenda 21 Action Plan will inform the priorities and focus of the Municipal Corporate Plan. Unfortunately to date only internal progress on sustainability and Local Agenda 21 has been monitored. There are however plans to develop sustainability indicators to monitor community and Council progress towards sustainability goals.

Lessons Learnt:

Opportunities:

- The Council did not see Local Agenda 21 as an add-on or in some way separate or to be superimposed over existing programs, committees and strategies. Instead it was considered important that the program should develop its own 'niche' within Council operations.
- Senior and political support for Local Agenda 21 at Moreland came from both the Mayor and Council's senior executive and is reflective of the priorities of the entire Council.
- This is the last term of office for the current Council and therefore it has been earmarked as the year to put in place on the ground achievements in this the 'Year of Implementation'.

Concerns:

- Focusing on two separate streams of activity, internal and external, has required tight coordination and the adoption of similar processes in both streams to make this approach work effectively.
- The Council has found the community program tricky as to succeed it had to include a wide variety of people and interests. Of particular concern is the membership of the Local Agenda 21 Community Committee which is presently biased towards environmental interests.
- Local Agenda 21 was found to be a very broad and nebulous term and as such covered many areas in which the Council was already active.

Tools and Techniques - Environmental Auditing - Internal Activities to Get 'Your Own House in Order' - Moreland Local Agenda 21

An Environmental audit is a useful tool in developing Local Agenda 21 as it ensures that the Council's stated aims are followed through into action. In particular the Council can move closer to its stated goals for instance in energy and waste reduction. This is particularly valuable in demonstrating publicly the impact generated by the Council as well as setting, again publicly, policy targets and practical actions that can be deployed by the Council to address its impact. Moreland undertook an environmental audit as a key component of the internal stream of the Council's Local Agenda 21. Activities focus on Council's internal operations and decision making. An Officer now coordinates this work with specific responsibility for the in-house Local Agenda 21 work. The establishment of effective housekeeping arrangements was an essential element in the beginning stages of the Local Agenda 21 process.

Environmental Improvement

An environmental audit of the organisation was undertaken in 1995/96, which has resulted in many recommendations on how the Council can reduce waste, save energy, save water and improve its purchasing practices. The audit basically covers broad resource and environmental management issues such as improving office practices, contract development and customer services. An interdepartmental committee has been established to spearhead the work and to ensure that the process integrates across the whole organisation (Internal Local Agenda 21 Committee). The system was developed with scope for regular review as the Local Agenda 21 develops further. The Council also took a lead in awareness raising and education amongst its own staff and continual staff education sessions were integral to the audit process. This collaborative approach has resulted in very positive responses by Council staff to changes in Council practices.

Education and Awareness Raising

Whilst some of the proposed actions may seem insignificant in scale in relation to global environmental issues the combined effect across Councils can be very significant indeed. In addition the work impacts more widely in terms of raising awareness generally amongst staff on how people impact upon the environment in all aspects of life and how these negative impacts can be minimised. Often interest and motivation to improve environmental practice comes from focusing upon tangible cost-saving benefits without really acknowledging the educational benefits which also arise from this work. The Moreland approach to an Environmental Audit emphasised both the tangible and intangible benefits and as such educational aims, principles and methods formed a key part of the process.

The Council wanted to engender in its staff the necessary knowledge, skills and commitment for environmental improvement. The active involvement of many different personnel in all stages of the process, including investigation, was encouraged. This was a preferred route to commissioning a consultant/specialist to provide a list of technical measures for the Council to adopt.

Furthermore the investigations, findings and recommendations of the audit process indicate opportunities for the Council to address many more environmental issues as part of its Local Agenda 21 work.

The Audit Process

An essential first step in the process was to identify and demonstrate that the Council and its staff had already shown substantial commitment to environmentally responsible work practices, as depicted by the following initiatives that were in place at the time of the first audit in 1995:

- glass recycling
- paper recycling and reuse in office
- purchase of energy efficient computer printers and monitors

The first audit report identified additional areas where both further environmental benefits and cost savings could be realised throughout the Council. It was estimated that in the first year of operation the audit practises could lead to savings in excess of \$34,180 (a potential saving of approximately 0.06% annual Council operating budget). Moreover these savings could be achieved without substantial disruption and the need for complex changes in work practices or costly equipment.

The audit covered the following areas of Council operation:

- energy management
- waste management
- resource management
- Council buildings
- vehicle fleet management
- environmental education

The environmental education component covered the need for environmental education in Council and set out principles for education and action. These included a mission statement, a focus on action and wide involvement, creative solutions, consideration of all viewpoints, a comprehensive approach, reviews and ongoing learning and action.

The staff throughout Council willingly participated in the program and operated in a very constructive manner. This proved invaluable in ensuring that the recommendations of the audit report were implemented.

By undertaking this program the Council has established itself as a leader in the field. There are plans to extend the audit to further Council sites.

Program facts & figures:

Staffing: Two Officers, Conservation Planner and Conservation Team Leader in the Urban Strategy Unit, City Strategy Directions - one has responsibility for internal activities and policies (position created at the beginning of 1998), the other for external programs. (Approximately \$100,000). Local Agenda 21 is a key responsibility of both of these Officers. There is also some overlap with the work of the Council's Environment Officer.

Budget: \$70,000 operating budget (including \$30,000 Community Grant Program - excluding staff).

Budget relates to the projects and programs specifically coordinated by LA21 committees

Key Reports and References

Moreland City Council (1997) Local Agenda 21 Action Plan - draft

Moreland City Council (1997) State of Moreland Report - draft

Moreland City Council (1996) Environmental Audit - working document

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City of South Sydney - A Strategy for a Sustainable South Sydney

case study



Council Profile:

Land area: 17.9 square kilometres

State: New South Wales

Council Category: Urban Developed Large

Budget: \$86,700,000 (1997)

Population: 72,000 (1997)



Summary:

The Strategy for a Sustainable City of South Sydney is primarily a planning program. This initial work, centred on extensive public participation, aims to ensure that future development within the City is progressed with sustainability as a key guiding principle. This has meant that development is encouraged that is sensitive to both the physical and social environment, as well as to local and regional issues and conditions. It was finalised in 1995 and developed over a period of four years with considerable community input and Council commitment. Furthermore the Strategy seeks to provide a blueprint for the Council and community to work together towards the goal of sustainability. More recently one of the most significant outcomes of the Strategy has been its use as the basic framework for the preparation of Council's latest Management Plans (1996-99, 1997-2000) and subsequent planning policies such as the South Sydney Development Control Plan 1997.

Although it was not a conscious decision from the outset to produce a Local Agenda 21, the strategy and overall approach of the Council is consistent with Local Agenda 21 themes covering:

- social and economic as well as environmental issues
- consultation on a shared vision
- a multi-sectoral approach
- participatory target setting

- an action plan
- monitoring using local sustainability indicators
- stakeholder accountability to the action plan
- a long-term vision.

Goals:

“The council strategy reflects and emphasises the local community vision for South Sydney. It must also establish a framework for integration of all planning functions - the physical, social environmental and corporate, to enable the council to anticipate change, set long term goals and identify strategies to achieve them”
Councillor Vic Smith, Mayor South Sydney, 1995

Case Study:

Overview:

Strategy for a Sustainable City of South Sydney -

The Local Agenda 21 Process 1991 Step 1: - Getting Started	Background and Issues: 'Planning for the Future'
1992/3 Step 2 - Reaching Out	Community Participation Program - Planning Teams
1993 Step 3 - Visioning	Environmental Vision In-house Review - Sustainability Goals and Principles
1994/5 Step 4 - Action Plan	Detailed Strategy/Action Plan - Strategy for a Sustainable City of South Sydney adopted by Council 1994
1996/7 Step 5 - Implementation	Input to Council's Management Plan Integration sustainability/ESD objectives into other Council plans & policies
1998 Step 6 - Monitoring	Review of Strategy Development of Sustainability Indicators

Step 1: Getting Started - Background Issues Document

Recognition of a previous lack of community consultation and participation in planning processes led South Sydney Council to ensure that community input to the development of the planning strategy was sought from the outset. To initiate public participation, a discussion paper titled 'Planning for the Future' was developed and published in 1991. This identified local issues and trends. As a result the Council received numerous telephone enquiries and comments, and over 200 written submissions. The comments were collated and referred to community planning teams. This initial discussion document aimed to stimulate public awareness of and involvement in the development of a new planning strategy for the area. This was a fundamentally different approach to involving

the community in the planning process. The Council has sought to integrate all its planning functions - physical, social, environmental and corporate in this process. South Sydney is an area of the city faced with immense development pressures. By taking this integrated approach the Council would be better enabled to:

- pursue development that is not at the expense of social and environmental goals
- anticipate change
- set longer term goals (10 years)
- identify strategies to achieve these longer term goals

Step 2 Reaching Out - Community Planning Consultation Process

A complex consultation process was developed using planning teams (see below). Following on from the public consultation an in-house team further developed the issues, objectives and strategies identified by the public. They prepared the draft strategy plan which was then circulated to Councillors and back to community planning team members. Briefings were then conducted with each group in order to explain and gain feedback on the Draft Strategy.

Key elements:

- **Local Area Planning Teams** - to review information, identify local issues and propose objectives and actions. Local area based teams consisting of interested local residents and representatives from community organisations.
- **Peak Planning Team** - to oversee and develop issues and strategies identified by the Local Area Teams. Approximately 25 people including representatives from the local teams and resident action groups, Chambers of Commerce and Manufactures, welfare and environmental lobby groups, selected State Government departments (Planning, Transport, State Development, Sydney City Council and South Sydney Council service departments). Run by an independent facilitator.
- **Issue Based Forums** - to deal with contentious or controversial issues e.g. affordable housing, consisting of agencies, community, Council and State government representatives.
- **Wider Liaison Group** - to review the work of the Peak Planning Team and clarify outcomes, consisting of State Government departments (other than those involved in the Peak Planning Team), public authorities such as the EPA and Water Board, and other adjoining Councils.
- **In-house team** -to develop issues, objectives and strategies/actions and produce a draft strategy, consisting of Senior Officers of the Council.
- **Councillors** - to approve draft strategy

At the conclusion of the public participation process the various community planning teams were surveyed for their responses to the draft strategy. Over 90% indicated that they endorsed the final document either fully or in principle with a similar number indicating that it was a true reflection of the participation process.

Step 3 Focusing Input - Creating a Vision

South Sydney Council's Strategy for a Sustainable City identifies over 500 planning issues. In addition to the twenty major objectives it also identified over 200 minor objectives which are relevant to the local area and region. The participation program identified an extensive number of key issues to be addressed in the planning and development of South Sydney. Some of the key issues included:

- the quality of the physical environment
- the capacity of the physical environment to recover from long term degradation
- the future role of the City in terms of the uses it supports and encourages
- the implication of environmental and land use factors on community health and general well being
- the needs of the community (i.e. affordable health, housing and employment) as well as the needs of specific groups within the community
- public safety
- the range, quality and accessibility of services
- public participation
- the relationship between the City of South Sydney and its region

These were translated into twenty agreed major objectives:

1. enforce, promote and encourage development and systems that minimise resource use
2. promote a healthy environment by eliminating air and noise pollution
3. increase residential and employment densities
4. accommodate diverse land uses and minimise adverse impacts on the community
5. develop an urban design and open space strategy
6. identify, co-ordinate and plan impacts of regional trends to minimise impact and maximise community benefits
7. promote development that conserves the environment
8. create an environment where public transport is the preferred form and the use of private passenger vehicles is actively discouraged
9. manage the road system to channel traffic along main routes and restrict traffic in residential areas
10. reduce the number of trucks and impact of road freight
11. minimise risks from the use, storage and transport of hazardous materials
12. ensure parking facilities are managed to discourage private passenger vehicles whilst supporting balanced economic activity
13. adopt a health plan for the City which recognises and supports the impacts of the environment on health
14. improve public safety and crime through urban design and community action
15. accommodate and provide services for those with special needs

16. provide a range of appropriate and affordable housing
17. facilitate and support employment initiatives
18. provide for public participation in the planning process
19. seek additional forms of funding for community facilities and services and urban improvement schemes
20. provide appropriate accessible and affordable recreation and community facilities

However as there was no agreed overall goal developed through the earlier public participation process to link the multitude of objectives and strategies contained in the community vision the Council planners devised their own goal of sustainability. This provided a much needed framework for the strategy. The planning strategy for South Sydney therefore grew through a gradual process focused on working towards sustainable development - a Local Agenda 21.

South Sydney has followed international as well as Australian guidance on Local Agenda 21. The Local Agenda 21 approach adopted has given the work of the Council a framework in which to group and attempt to integrate its different policies from its greenhouse strategy to its food policy.

Step 4 Action Plan, Activities & Programs

The South Sydney Strategy identifies and proposes detailed actions to address each of the community's major objectives. These are grouped within five main areas:

- Environment
- Land Use and Transport
- Character and Identity
- Community Well-being
- City Management.

Finally within each area an overall goal has been developed, along with a number of specific objectives and strategies for achieving these objectives.

The Strategy also includes a separate Implementation Plan which indicates the exact type of activity needed to implement each action:

- policy / plan
- capital works
- negotiation
- further investigation
- administrative action

and includes details of:

- who is responsible for any action?
- what current action is occurring?
- what are the proposed future actions?

The Strategy document is very detailed specifying goals, objectives, actions and the relevant actors. It does however have various limitations. Disappointingly for instance it does not detail specific time frames. Instead the strategy states that implementation will essentially be determined by Council's resource availability and its annual review of corporate priorities and programs.

Step 5 Implementation - More than just a Planning Strategy

The Council adopted the Strategy in 1994. The final Strategy being publicly launched in June 1995. Since its launch the strategy has been used as the basic framework for the preparation of the Council's Management Plans. To do this five in-house teams of senior officers were appointed to analyse and attempt to integrate the objectives of the Council's various strategies: Sustainable City of South Sydney, the Social Plan, the Health Management Plan, the Food Policy - 'What's Eating South Sydney?' and the Greenhouse Effect Policy Statement. This has ensured a much more thorough and consistent approach to the implementation of the document and reflects Council's continuing support for the strategy.

As a result of this work the Council's Management Plans (1996-1999, 1997-2000) include an overarching objective *"to ensure a sustainable City of Sydney through efficient and equitable management and allocation of resources to enhance the quality of life and well-being of its community"*

Activities in the management plan are grouped as follows with sustainability objectives and actions dispersed through each section:

- Environmental Management
- Community and Cultural Services
- Strategic Planning
- Civic Infrastructure and Public Assets
- Corporate Management

Step 6 Monitoring - Annual Review of the Strategy & Sustainability Indicators

Annual Review of the Strategy

The first annual review of the Strategy in 1996 indicated that many of the detailed actions in the strategy had already been completed or were currently under way. Many of these actions have been progressed through the array of Council programs which have been developed since the launch of the Strategy

It has now been necessary with such a range of policies in place relating to environment and sustainability issues to re-establish the Council's in-house Environment Steering Group. This group will co-ordinate these various programs and provide overall guidance on sustainability issues.

Key ESD and Local Agenda 21 Initiatives and Policies:

1992 Greenhouse Effect Policy Statement
1995 Strategy for a Sustainable South Sydney
1995 Darlington Urban Village Scheme
1995 Green Square National Design Competition
1995 Food Policy - What's Eating South Sydney?
1995 and 1996 State of the Environment Reports
1996 South Sydney Urban Design Development Control Plan (with ESD component)
1996 South Sydney Council, Development Control Plan No.11 - Transport Guidelines for Development.
1996-1999 Management Plan (includes Sustainability Objectives)
1996 South Sydney Open Space Strategy
1996 Health Management Plan
1996 Social Plan - Public Housing Estates ('Who Cares - We Care')
1997 Safer Design Policy
1997 South Sydney Bike Plan
1997 Environment Steering Group
1998 South Sydney Local Environmental Plan
1998 Future Directions Statement:
Stage 1 Review of Strategy for a Sustainable South Sydney
Stage 2: Review of Green House Effect Policy Statement
Stage 3: Review of other environmental policies
1998 Resource Management Policy -Stage 1: Water Re-use Policy
1998 Green Square - Draft Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan (plan for a strong ESD initiative)
1998 Adoption SEDA initiative and Energy Smart Homes Policy
1998 Draft South Sydney Affordable Housing Strategy
1997/2000 South Sydney Council Management Plan
1999 South Sydney 'Waste Not' Development Control Plan
Ongoing Close Waterloo Incinerator Campaign

The South Sydney Development Control Plan

The South Sydney Development Control Plan applies the objectives and actions of the Strategy in the context of detailed design and environmental standards for the development control process. It has translated the Strategy such that it:

- provides detailed design principles, criteria and controls so that development responds to its context and is aesthetically harmonious and environmentally compatible with the existing built environment
- ensures that development contributes to environmental improvements
- encourages design that enhances and contributes to the City's heritage

- ensures design is sustainable and environmentally responsible and takes into account its social and environmental impact
- provides for flexibility and an integrated approach to the development process.

Sustainability Indicators

In its current form the strategy does allow the Council to evaluate whether or not various environmental actions have been undertaken however it does not enable an assessment of the overall progress being made towards a more sustainable South Sydney. To tackle this problem as a future priority the Council will be developing sustainability indicators. In particular the Council faces strong development pressures and indicators can provide a way to monitor the overall impact of this trend on the area. In addition it is envisaged that the sustainability indicators will provide a means to communicate progress or lack of it on such key issues to the public. The effects of Council policies can be clearly illustrated by the use of indicators and so there will also be an opportunity to develop further the trust of the community in the planning approach being taken by the Council.

Lessons Learnt:

Opportunities:

Importantly the Strategy gave rise to many benefits. In particular the use of community planning teams was considered highly successful. In addition there is now a clear mandate for sustainable development in South Sydney and ESD continues to provide a broader focus for many new projects e.g. the Open Space Strategy has a strong safety focus.

Furthermore through the work the Council has been able to develop:

- an environmental ethic for Council operations
- a new framework of integrating many planning functions
- a 5-10 year planning framework
- new linkages of planning activities to corporate and financial planning processes
- improvements of in-house processes for policy integration
- stronger links with adjoining Councils and government and agencies
- a new overall goal and direction for the Council's Corporate Plan
- a new model for working with the local community
- better integration with regional and State initiatives and policies.

Concerns:

The biggest obstacle to the preparation of the strategy was the sheer scale of the project. This gave rise to many problems including:

- the complexity of the project and extent of community involvement (>100 community groups) which gave rise to considerable problems in terms of the required staffing and funding to manage and service the project
- considerable community time and effort was required
- the public participation process adopted was largely untested

- delayed Council adoption of the strategy as elected Councillors and senior staff took over 12 months to come to terms with such a complex document
- there is a need to involve Councillors at every stage.

In addition because sustainability was adopted as an overarching goal only latterly there was initially a lack of focus for the community consultation and no overall goal to link the multitude of objectives and strategies in the community vision developed in the planning consultation process. This also gave rise to a lack of initial community endorsement of sustainability goals. This was however rectified when the draft strategy was put back to the community for comment.

One major criticism of the work so far is that it is strong on strategy and policy but short on tangible projects in which the community can get involved. This has been identified recently as a future priority for the Council.

Other concerns include:

- concern over the political and financial ramifications of the recommendations, particularly the capital works recommendations
- in some cases Councillors removed themselves from the Peak Planning Teams on the grounds of a perceived conflict of interest; earlier involvement would have facilitated a quicker passage of the strategy through Council
- Councillors and staff expressed initial reservations about the potential loss of power resulting from the high level of community involvement.

Program facts & figures:

Staffing & Budget: The document took 4 years to complete costing approximately \$150,000 (excluding in-house staff time). The major component of this amount was spent on the final printing of the strategy document. \$20,000 on the consultation processes; \$6,000 on initial and supplementary printing. Six key staff and approximately 6 other support staff from other Council departments were involved in the project. This included an independent facilitator.

Tools and Techniques: Sustainability Planning and Local Agenda 21 - City of South Sydney

The Strategy for a Sustainable City of South Sydney is primarily a planning program. A previous lack of community consultation and participation in planning processes led South Sydney Council to ensure that the community was extensively involved in the development of a new planning strategy. To initiate public participation, a discussion paper titled 'Planning for the Future' was developed and published in 1991. As a result the Council received numerous telephone enquiries and comments, and over 200 written submissions. The comments were collated and referred to community planning teams. This initial discussion document aimed to stimulate public awareness of and involvement in the development of a new planning strategy for the area. This was a fundamentally different approach to involving the community in the planning process which was largely untested.

Structure of the Planning Consultation Process

In 1992 the Council established a structure and process for consulting the public on the draft planning document. This included a number of planning teams and forums - Local Planning Teams (LPTs), A Peak Planning Team (PPT), Issues Based Forums and Wider Liaison Group.

Local Planning Teams (LPT)

The Council established a number of community planning teams on a local area basis. These Local Planning Teams (LPT's) consisted of interested local residents and representatives from community and business organisations. LPT's met regularly between April and December 1992. A series of background papers were prepared and distributed to team members to assist them in understanding and analysing various issues. The effective operation of the Local Area Planning teams was sometimes hampered by their small size (i.e. <5 members). To overcome this local area teams were invited to Peak Planning Team meetings. Initial consultation with the community planning teams quickly revealed that the environment was a key concern of the community. The environment therefore emerged as an important theme of the consultation program. Eventually however as there was no agreed overall goal to link the multitude of objectives and strategies contained in the community vision the council planners devised their own goal of sustainability. This provided a much needed framework for the strategy.

Peak Planning Team (PPT)

A Peak Planning Team was also established to oversee and develop issues and strategies identified by the Local Area Teams. The Peak Planning Team comprised approximately 25 people including representatives from the local teams and resident action groups, Chambers of Commerce and Manufactures, welfare and environmental lobby groups, selected State Government departments (Planning, Transport, State Development, Sydney City Council and South Sydney Council service departments). The Peak Team was also used to co-ordinate planning activities external to the Council. i.e. with neighbouring Councils, State Government departments and public authorities. The Peak Team met 10 times over the same period as the Local Planning Teams (April-Dec 1992) and was run by an independent facilitator. Council planners largely set meeting agendas, however community members were free to vary or add agenda items.

The teams identified over 500 issues, which were collated into 20 major objectives and some 200 minor objectives. The teams also developed a number of strategies in response to these issues and objectives. These subsequently formed the foundations of the strategy plan.

Issues Based Forums

Allowance was made for issue based forums to be conducted as part of the public participation program. The forums provided the opportunity for contentious or controversial issues to be dealt with, which could not be resolved by the Local Area or Peak Planning Teams. Specific forums were held on affordable housing and State Government plans for a former Goods Yard site. Issues identified and strategies developed in these forums were added to those of the Local Area and Peak Planning Teams. The issues and strategies developed by the Forums were added to the LAT and PPT discussions.

Wider Liaison Group

A Wider Liaison Group which included officers from State Government departments (other than those involved in the Peak Planning Team), public authorities such as the EPA and Water Board, and other adjoining Councils was established to review the work of the Peak Planning Team and clarify outcomes. Members of this group were essentially kept informed of issues and outcomes by correspondence.

Results of Planning Consultation Process

Following the public participation an in-house team further developed the issues, objectives and strategies identified by the public. They prepared the draft strategy plan which was then circulated to Councillors and back to community planning team members. Briefings were then conducted with each group in order to explain and gain feedback on the Draft Strategy. The participation program identified a number of key issues to be addressed in planning in South Sydney.

At the conclusion of the public participation process the various community planning teams were surveyed for their responses to the draft strategy. Over 90% indicated that they endorsed the final document either fully or in principle with a similar number indicating that it was a true reflection of the participation process.

Generally the use of community planning teams was considered highly successful. The information obtained from this wide ranging community input has been extensively analysed and provides the backbone not only for the strategy but also for other subsequent strategies developed by the council. The process provided a new model for working with the local community which will be used again.

However the complexity of the project and extent of community involvement (>100 community groups) gave rise to considerable problems in terms of the required staffing and funding to manage and service the project. The process also depended upon considerable community input (time, effort and resources) and Council resources.

Tools and Techniques Used in the Planning Process:

- An initial expert workshop was held to assist in the development and refinement of the process to be piloted.
- The community was briefed through presentations and papers to the level where they were better able to make informed decisions.
- Precinct committees were formed especially to assist the process.
- Decision-making was achieved by consensus or voting with a 70% majority required to approve actions and proposals.
- An open and participatory structure was used with regular feedback to the community. Many questions put to council about the program were also followed up regularly.
- Staff involved in the program were especially trained in facilitation and conflict resolution skills.

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Sutherland Council - Developing a Blueprint for a High Quality of Life

case study



Council Profile:

Land area: 370.91 square kilometres

State: New South Wales

Council Category: Urban Developed

Very Large

Operating Budget: \$97,339,000 (1997)

Population: 206,483 (1997)



Summary:

Sutherland Shire Council is developing a Local Agenda 21 strategy for its area in a step by step process which it began in 1993. Sutherland was one of the first Councils in Australia to commit to a Local Agenda 21 process. The program started with an extensive public outreach program and community visioning. Through the visioning process the Council has prepared a community vision of what the Shire would look like in the year 2010 if the principles of ESD were adopted. This vision has been turned into goals which have guided further Council work. The Council is now working both on external and internal procedures for implementation of these goals, including most recently scenario planning and a second community visioning process.

As far as internal operations are concerned Local Agenda 21 looks set to make significant changes to strategic planning in the Shire. Involvement of all sectors of the community in realising a vision has been a central theme of their approach. The Council has developed innovative approaches to partnering with the local community using 'Agenda 21 Ambassadors' and a public education campaign. Its approach aims to gain broad community involvement in the implementation of ESD principles across all community and Council activities. A further backbone of its approach has been to conduct detailed research into the condition of the local environment (SoE reporting) and quality of life in the Shire. Indicators of a Sustainable Community and 'Trend Indicators' - those key indicators which will provide an efficient yet comprehensive picture of changing environmental conditions in the Shire, have been championed by the Council. Ultimately these 'Trend Indicators' will be used to assess development applications and Council

activities into the future. The Council has also developed an Ecological Sustainability Index Guide to assess future residential development in the Shire.

ESD goals will be achieved in the Shire by following an Agenda 21 which includes the following elements:

- Community Partnering
- Integrated Environmental Planning
- Education
- Organisational Change

and be implemented by the following practical steps:

- Formulating a research program - to assess present and future options for the Shire in terms of State of the Environment and Trend Indicators of quality of life
- Activities and processes to engage the community and form partnerships
- An Action Plan - showing critical paths and time frames
- Establishing targets and assigning responsibility to stakeholders and partners for implementation

Goals:

“Conservation of Ecosystems to protect water, air, land and biodiversity, enabling the present generation to achieve its needs and visions, without compromising those of future generations”

(Sutherland Council definition of ESD 1995)

The Council aims to fully update its management actions and procedures to ensure that ESD is a key component, provide forums for all sectors of the community to discuss the issue of sustainability and enhance the opportunity to make sustainable development a reflection of community goals over the next 50-100 years.

Council Management

ESD should become a key component of Council management and processes.

Community Involvement

Provide many opportunities and forums for all sectors of the community to discuss ESD and sustainability issues.

Community Goals

To make ESD a reflection of community goals over the next 50-100 years.

Case Study:

Step 1 Getting Started

The Beginnings of Community Partnering

In March 1993 the Sutherland Shire Council began to survey its residents on broad issues relating to the Shire and its development. The initial phase of Agenda 21 has been led by the Council's Environmental Science and Policy Unit. The aim was to give the community an opportunity to discuss Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and to have a direct and comprehensive input into the future of the area. The Council already had a strong tradition of public participation with the community represented on key working parties and mechanisms in place to encourage public comment on key development proposals.

The feedback from a questionnaire and information compiled by the Council went towards drafting a plan which attempted to paint a picture of the Shire in the Year 2010, highlighting both short and long term outcomes of importance to the Shire and its community. The focus for the plan was ESD. The first draft was circulated for consultation for three months using focus groups, random survey and group presentations.

Defining ESD became a key task in this initial phase. A guiding principle agreed at this time by the participants was that ESD can be best achieved through the integration of local planning and policy making, with a focus on long term objectives and involvement of all sectors of the community. This definition and guiding principles have become the backbone of the Agenda 21 program in Sutherland Shire.

ESD Principles in Sutherland Shire

Stewardship

Protection of the environment for benefit of present and future generations.

Long Term

Planning for 50-100 years.

Integration of ESD into Planning

To reconcile development pressures with stewardship of the environment will require integration of ESD principles into the development control processes of the Council.

Organisational Change

Organisational change within the Council to incorporate ESD principles in the day to day activities of the Council.

Community Involvement

All sectors of the community should be encouraged to establish sustainability goals and allocated responsibility for actions. As the community becomes more involved and informed about the issues the Agenda 21 will reflect the community's expectations more closely.

Monitoring

Monitoring and review of the Shire's progress toward sustainability goals forms an essential component of the process. As a result of its collective actions is the Shire becoming more or less sustainable.

Four focus groups worked on the plan

- Natural
- Social
- Economic
- Built Environment.

These groups were also divided into further sub-groups to produce detailed vision statements encompassing ESD principles in relation to all operations of the Council.

A number of key findings from the consultations were identified and incorporated into the final copy of the plan entitled 'Sutherland Shire 2010: Your Future'. The plan was adopted by Council in December 1993. The Plan proposed a series of both short and long term outcomes. Although the outcomes are prescriptive the initial Plan did not specify exactly how the identified outcomes were to be achieved. The detail of implementation was to be tackled later in the Agenda 21 process

Step 2 Getting Commitment in Council

Short Term Objectives

The Council addressed many of the short term goals of the vision in its Management Plan (covering 4 years). These include commitments such as improvements in public transport and waste minimisation. However the long term goals need further consideration. These longer term and more intractable goals included such things as human centred development and integrated transport systems. These have to be tackled through development control plans, integration of strategies and further policy statements.

The Sutherland Shire's Vision is seen as the starting point of a Local Agenda 21. It was the intention that the community, private sector and all levels of government would have regard for the initial plan in their decision-making and daily activities. Monitoring and reviewing formed an essential component of the plan, with further refinement planned as the community became more involved and informed of the issues. Community participation / partnership in the Shire is encouraged at every opportunity and involves many community visioning workshops. The ultimate aim will be to evolve a mechanism for continually reflecting community expectations.

The Council publicly launched its Agenda 21 program in August 1996 before a wide audience of school children, conservationists and local industry leaders. The key theme for the launch was the need to strike a balance between development pressures and preserving the natural environment. The region contains some of Sydney's fastest-growing areas so controlling development and protecting the area and in particular its waterways and beaches is crucial.

Longer term objectives would be tackled by following an Agenda 21 to include the following elements :

- Community Partnering
- Integrated Environmental Planning
- Organisational Change
- Education.

To monitor whether the Shire is moving along a sustainable path the Council is using the following mechanisms:

- EMS
- Sustainable Community and Council indicators - 'Trend Indicators'
- Observing community perceptions.

Step 3 Next Steps in Community Partnering

'Ambassadors of Agenda 21'

"How do you get families to discuss environmental sustainable development (ESD) over their bowl of cornflakes? How do you make the thorny issue of ESD understandable to primary school children? And just what is Agenda 21?"

(James Iliffe, Sutherland Shire Council, 1996).

To further engage the public as part of its Agenda 21 the Shire instigated an 'Ambassadors of Agenda 21' program. Ambassadors have been nominated in the following areas: 'Green Ambassador', 'Industry Ambassador', 'Public Ambassadors'. Dr Mary White, Australian Heritage and geological author, was nominated as the 'Green Ambassador'. She runs

public lectures and fora updating the community on the state of the environment and other pertinent issues relating to the Council's Agenda 21 work. An industry representative was sought for the 'Industry Ambassador' to gain industry's commitment to implementing Environmental Management Systems. Companies in the Shire are encouraged to sign a 'Memorandum of Understanding' committing them to an EMS. The Public Ambassadors, a group of 50 school students from local primary and high schools, provide ideas to the community on preserving the Shire's environment and natural resources.

Step 4 Implementation in Council - Integrated Environmental Planning - 'Shaping the Shire' Visioning Exercise

Tackling the Longer Term Objectives

It had been observed that urban planning in the Shire has served legitimate development needs but produced some undesirable environmental consequences. For instance sprawling housing has failed to provide adequate bushland nodes and corridors for the maintenance of native fauna, causing undesirable flooding impacts in certain localities and resulted in heavy sedimentation on inland waterways. Recent developments in catchment based planning and in the ability to predict the impacts of urban development, have resulted in better designed urban form, but more could be done. The Council is striving to introduce measures to ensure that future development control and Council actions avoid the mistakes of the past and conform to a sustainable development blueprint. An Ecologically Sustainable Sutherland Shire Map is being produced which will be a blueprint for a sustainable urban form for Sutherland Shire. This will identify critical sites, areas and communities, identify where actions should be undertaken and describe actions for change towards sustainable development.

The Strategic Planning Unit conducted a further visioning exercise in 1998 - 'Shape the Shire'. By incorporating the previous Agenda 21 work, and in particular environmental indicators and the future vision for the state of the environment, it is envisaged that the resultant strategy will reflect ESD principles and be fully integrated with Local Agenda 21 activities. The Council is attempting in this way, to integrate the three processes of state of the environment reporting, EMS and strategic planning.

Organisational Change

Environmental Management System (EMS)

Appropriate Agenda 21 components are already incorporated into divisional programs through discussion with Divisional Directors. Agenda 21 has been further progressed through incorporating environmental management systems into the Council's work and business activities. As part of a program being assisted by Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC), an EMS is being piloted in the Shire's Leisure Centres. Introducing an EMS for the entire operations of the Council presents the Council with one of its biggest challenges. Ultimately an EMS will be introduced for all businesses and departments of the Council. A further basic component of the approach being taken is to facilitate the joint working of the Council's Strategic Planning Unit, Environmental Planning Department and the Environmental Science and Policy Unit to foster more sustainable land use patterns in the Shire. This will ensure that the programs are linked together and that development control and council actions conform with ESD principles.

Ecological Sustainability Index for Residential Dwelling Design

An Ecological Sustainability Index has been developed by the Council's Environmental Science and Policy Unit and is currently being introduced to the development industry. It is to assess the impact of individual urban development on the environment. This has

drawn upon various schemes already in existence in NSW to assess the energy efficiency of new developments. The approach taken by the Council looks at the whole range of environmental impacts - water, materials and waste, ecosystems and energy efficiency. A weighting system has been devised that rates the environmental impact of the development. The Index aims to provide a flexible means by which a developer can trade-off environmental disbenefits against beneficial aspects. This tool provides an example of how the Council integrated ESD into a number of Council operations to facilitate a consistent approach across Council. The Index is used as a tool for use by designers and developers. It may ultimately be applicable as an assessment tool for Council officers and committees to refine and standardise the assessment of building and development applications

To achieve further objectives, the Council has identified the following practical steps as part of its next Agenda 21 activities:

1. Formulating a research program - to assess present and future options for the Shire in terms of State of the Environment and in particular 'Trend Indicators'
2. Ongoing activities and processes to engage the community and form further partnerships
3. An Action Plan showing critical paths and time frame
4. Establishing targets and assigning responsibility for implementation to different stakeholders or partners.

Step 5 Research, Auditing, Indicators and Scenario Planning

Measuring Trends in Environmental Quality

The essential future of the Shire had been identified in the initial visioning process as: biological diversity, protection of natural treasures, enhancement of active and healthy lifestyles and economic development that benefits the community and adds to the Shire's environmental quality. A consultant was employed to produce four baseline reports on land use, water quality, biodiversity and air quality. This research showed that current trends in environmental quality are predominantly downwards. In particular water quality is both visually and quantitatively worsening, tree loss had escalated, salt marshes are being lost and domestic and business waste is increasing despite recycling initiatives.

To monitor the trends in the environmental conditions more accurately and to introduce methods for assessing the success or otherwise of Council actions, a set of environmental quality indicators has been produced by the Environmental Science and Policy Unit. These are being further refined to produce Sustainable Community and Council Indicators - 'Trend Indicators' which will be compiled at the development assessment and other appropriate stages in the Council's activities. Use of these indicators will foster a more dynamic approach to SoE reporting and will serve to underpin better land use planning in the Shire. Although these indicators take a comprehensive look at environmental quality in the Shire they do not yet encompass many social, cultural or economic goals.

As a vital part of both the research and education elements of Sutherland's Local Agenda 21, the Council has pioneered an innovative way of presenting the information on environmental quality and future trends. For each element of environmental quality i.e. air quality, it has looked at contributing factors, quantifiable risks and outcomes for four scenarios:

1. maintain current levels
2. maintain current trends

3. achievement of best standards
4. scenario 1 but addressing problems.

Each scenario gives for each element projections of probable changes and the consequences in terms of social, economic, political as well as ecological aspects. This information on future scenarios or options will be presented to the community and formed the basis of a second visioning exercise in the Shire, to be conducted with the Council's Strategic Planning Team, 'Shaping the Shire'. This approach gives the community concrete evidence and enables them to make informed choices between a series of options for the future of the Shire. The impact of both Council and community actions are brought to life in this sort of exercise. This is a much more focused exercise than the initial visioning session undertaken at the beginning of the Local Agenda 21 process in 1993 'Sutherland Shire 2010 - Your Future' which came up with a general vision for the future of the Shire containing a broad wish list.

Education

Partnering with the community has required considerable and continuous work involving multiple areas of the Council. In order to extend community knowledge of the processes that affect the quality of life in the Shire the Council has introduced new educational programs in many areas: strategic planning, environment and health regulation, waste management and environmental science. These include cinema advertising and presentations in schools on reducing water pollution, waste minimisation and environmental protection.

Preparing an Action Plan

Following the completion and integration of these processes the Council will identify an integrated action plan with critical planning pathways and timeframes for implementation. Key targets and milestones in the future will be also identified in the resultant Action Plan to trigger further or renewed actions. Actions will be assigned both to the Council and community.

Lessons Learnt:

Successes:

- Renewed weight was given to the LA21 work after a Council survey of community attitudes as part of the strategic planning process in 1997 revealed the environment to be the biggest concern of the community in Sutherland Shire (a survey of 500 residents showed quality waterways, beaches and wetlands were ranking highest out of 21 issues)
- The amendments to the Local Government Act 1993 in NSW to make it incumbent upon Councils to have regard to ESD in Council Management Plans have provided added impetus
- The Council has a strong tradition of public participation
- The process of identifying a need for an Agenda 21 process for the Shire and the subsequent focus on the meaning of ESD provided a unique opportunity for the council to bring private industry and a wider cross section of the public into this work
- Selecting the Environmental Science and Policy Unit to take a lead on Agenda 21 afforded a level of impartiality to the process

- State of the Environment Reporting is mandatory in NSW. The Agenda 21 Sustainable Community and Council Indicators - 'Trend Indicators' work is a logical progression of this work
- Ambassadors for the Environment
- Local Government Excellence in the Environment Award (NSW-wide) 1998 - for Local Sustainability / Local Agenda 21.

Concerns:

A number of factors prevent or slow improvement in environmental quality, these include:

- lack of information on trends in environmental quality
- economic policies and accounting practices which favour the short term
- misunderstanding by management of the departmental locus of responsibility
- localised community misunderstanding of the regional and environmental implications of policy
- lack of leadership for sustainable development policies
- lack of accountability in government and community (audits and policy monitoring).

Program facts & figures:

Staffing: Agenda 21 work is facilitated and coordinated by staff in the Environmental Science and Policy Unit with involvement of the Strategic Planning Unit and Environmental Planning Dept. In 1996-7 this involved two F/T dedicated staff and in 1998 two and a half F/T dedicated staff.

Budget: The budget for the Agenda 21 work annually is \$50,000 for consultancy work - expert research and facilitation, plus \$25,000 for the community partnering process - workshops and publications. In-house aspects of the Agenda 21 process are combined within the general governance expenditure of the Council. These modest costs are to be deemed recoverable due to the medium to long term savings resulting from improved management in the Council.

Key reports:

- Sutherland Shire 2010 : Your Future (1993)
- State of the Environment Report (1996 & 1998)
- Clean Waters Policy (1995)
- Draft Biodiversity Strategy (1998)
- Draft Policy on Contaminated Land (1998)
- Public Transport Policy (1997)
- Waste Minimisation Policy (1993)
- Interim Policy on Siting of Microwave Towers (1997)
- Ecological Sustainability Index for Residential Dwelling Design - Support Information and Instructions for use (1998)

Tools and Techniques: Indicators of a Sustainable Sutherland Shire - Community and Council

Sutherland Shire Council is developing a Local Agenda 21 strategy for its area in a step by step process which they began in 1993. The program started with a community visioning process to establish goals for a sustainable Shire and is now working both on external and internal procedures for implementation of these goals, including most recently scenario planning and a second community visioning process. Its approach aims to gain broad community involvement in the implementation of ESD principles across all community and Council activities.

Sutherland was one of the first Councils in Australia to commit to an Agenda 21 process. A backbone of their approach has been to conduct detailed research into the condition of the local environment (SoE reporting) and quality of life in the Shire - Indicators of a Sustainable Community and Council and 'Trend Indicators'. These are key indicators which will provide an efficient yet comprehensive picture of environmental conditions in the Shire. It is envisaged that ultimately these 'Trend Indicators' will be used to assess development applications and Council activities into the future, and be fully integrated into the Ecological Sustainability Index for Residential Dwelling Design that the Council has introduced to guide new development in the Shire.

From an extensive range of indicators (listed below) key indicators have been selected in biodiversity, water quality and land use. Key indicators are also being developed for air quality. Two indicators have been chosen to represent the current state of, and trends in the status of biodiversity within the Shire - the amount of bushland and the number of mammal species within the Shire. For water quality it was decided to use aquatic ecosystem health and swimming water quality and for land use the extent of hard surfaces. For biodiversity, bushland has been selected as an appropriate indicator as it is the element which contains the majority of native species and it therefore provides the habitat for the widest range of flora and fauna. The number of mammal species has been selected as this represents a range of fauna that are more sensitive and responsive to environmental change. The reasons for the choice of key water quality indicators stems from the public desire to know about water quality as opposed to aquatic ecosystem health, in addition bacterial pollution is not a problem for aquatic life but for human health, furthermore the sources are also different for each. For land use many environmental problems are associated with urban sprawl and can be traced to the root cause of increasing areas of hard surface.

Sustainability Indicators & Trend Indicators

Indicators of a Sustainable Council

- tonnes hazardous waste generated
- hazardous materials purchased
- % recycled paper of total paper supply
- petrol consumption of the Council fleet
- energy usage of Council buildings
- no. native trees planted
- no. trees removed
- water consumption litres/year
- known Council landfill; sites needing remediation

- mode of travel to work by Council staff
- number of movable history items held in Council collections
- number of substantiated complaints regarding Council environmental operations.

Key/Trend Indicators

Biodiversity - the amount of bushland
the number of mammal species within the Shire.

Water quality - aquatic ecosystem health
swimming water quality

Land use - the extent of hard surfaces.

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City of Unley - Local Agenda 21 Program

case study



Council Profile:

Land area: 14 square kilometres

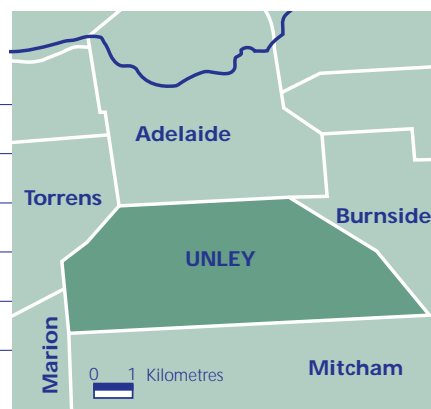
State: South Australia

Council Category: Urban Developed

Medium

Budget: \$18,000,000

Population: 36,000



Summary:

Unley Council's Local Agenda 21 is an environment focussed program in which the community has been extensively engaged and involved. The Council has used an innovative and inclusive process to build awareness and encourage contribution to the development of the Environmental Action Plan (adopted in May 1998) which identifies a set of strategic objectives and key issues for action at the local level. The plan employs the principles of Local Agenda 21. This has ensured a comprehensive approach to municipal environmental management at the local level. It adds to the process by providing an operational framework and procedures for applying sustainable development planning principles to local management practice. It provides a mechanism for the community to continuously develop and monitor its progress towards sustainability objectives.

Whilst the implementation of the Action Plan is important, its preparation and implementation is a long-term project which will be guided by the Council for the Unley community. As such it is only the first step in what is an ongoing process of building upon complementary programs and partnerships that are already in place which complement sustainability principles. Complementary programs include: the Council Corporate Plan, the Council's Cultural Policy and Unley Development Plan.

The LA21 process has been achieved chiefly through the development of a Local Agenda 21 communications strategy to engage and consult with both a large number and range of people in the local community. An initial commitment to Local Agenda 21 was made by the Council in 1996 through a draft discussion paper "Sustainability Through Community Action" which was reinforced in 1997 with the endorsement of the Newcastle Declaration.

In addition the Council has joined the South Australian State driven Partnership for Local Agenda 21, a Council and State Government Local Agenda 21 network. The process adopted by Unley roughly follows the steps advised by the South Australian Partnerships for Local Agenda 21. More recently the Council has joined the Commonwealth Cities for Climate Protection™ program, which it intends to progress as an integral part of its Local Agenda 21 work. ²

Background:

The City of Unley has a diverse population of more than 36 000, covering a total area of 14 square kilometres. Just minutes from Adelaide, the City of Unley is rich in heritage, with a wide range of amenities and a strong sense of community. The City itself is a contrast of heritage buildings and a cosmopolitan lifestyle of restaurants, cafes and entertainment boulevards. The City area includes many parks, open spaces and creeks. The wide range of community services and facilities available to residents have been developed as a result of wide spread community action and consultation. These include such services as waste management plans, construction of bicycle routes and bicycle parking facilities. Other Council strategies include boosting the marketing of Unley's retail precincts and attracting tourists to the area.

Goals:

The City of Unley has taken a lead locally to develop and endorse an Environmental Action Plan for the City employing the principles of ESD and Local Agenda 21.

The Council has resolved that the local environment can be sustained in a variety of ways including:

“protecting and nurturing our natural environment, reducing and managing energy use by the Council, businesses and individuals households; ensuring businesses can thrive; planning the effects of development; ensuring that the community works together for the benefit of all.”

² CCP™ is a campaign to help local government reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their communities through energy efficiency, transport management, building policies, waste management, land use strategies as well as local air quality and urban management.

Case Study:

Development of the Unley Environmental Action Plan

Step 1 Getting Started: Raising Sustainability Issues in Council and Demonstrating a Public Commitment

- Involves Council making a commitment at a policy and budgetary level to undertake a Local Agenda 21 program
- Setting in place the decision making structure and processes to facilitate the program with full community participation
- Creating a climate of support and awareness of what Local Agenda 21 is about

Step 2 Setting Priorities: A Community and Council Vision and Information Gathering

- Involves the Council and community defining a vision of sustainability and what priority issues need to be addressed to achieve that vision
- Assessing what the Council and community are already doing or need to do to address these issues
- Information gathered in the first phase is drafted into policy statements, management plans and action plans which are integrated into Council corporate or strategic plans and linked to other community environmental initiatives

Step 3 Implementation

- Involves establishing systems to ensure that the plan is implemented, for example through an environmental management system
- Setting up and continuing partnerships to maintain the program long term
- Building on existing initiatives

Step 4 Evaluation - Review and Monitoring

- Setting in place mechanisms and systems which ensure there is a long-term commitment to monitoring, review and evaluation of Local Agenda 21 program, e.g. Sustainability Indicators and State of the Environment Reporting.

Step 1 Getting Started - Raising Sustainability Issues in Council and Demonstrating a Public Commitment

An initial commitment to Local Agenda 21 was made by the Council in 1996 through a draft discussion paper “Sustainability Through Community Action” which has been reinforced in 1997 with the endorsement of the Newcastle Declaration. At that point the Council resolved to develop an Environmental Management Plan for the City and to establish an Environmental Management Plan Advisory Committee (EMPAC). This initial paper looked at five characteristics of life in Unley

- City Character
- Resources Management
- Economic Development
- Local Environment
- Community Life.

These areas were to form the basis of the consultation and drafting of the Environmental Management Plan that was to follow. The Committee performed the key initial task of standing back and reviewing Council policies and initiatives that might be relevant to Local Agenda 21. The committee comprised elected members, staff and community representation.

Step 2 Setting Priorities - a Community and Council Vision and Information Gathering

In order to increase not only community awareness and interest, but also understanding and commitment to the objectives and principles of sustainable development and Local Agenda 21, the Council embarked upon a number of promotional and participatory processes. This has been achieved chiefly through the development of a Local Agenda 21 communications strategy to engage and consult with both a large number and range of people in the local community. This included the following activities: a Community Broadsheet on sustainability and Local Agenda 21; community questionnaire; web page; newspaper articles; school packs; telephone information service; community focus groups and workshops; and a competition to provide both a name and logo for the Unley's environmental plan. A Production Team and consultant were engaged by the Council to produce the Council's consultation material and carry out the consultation process. The EMPAC was also established in 1997 to coordinate the development of the Plan. As part of the process of developing the Plan the EMPAC was to consult with the community. This process of consulting with the community to establish a shared vision for sustainable development formed the core of the Council's Local Agenda 21 work.

A detailed survey was distributed to all residents, schools and businesses and community groups in the City. In total 19,470 questionnaires were distributed throughout the community, including 16 schools. 1,519 were returned with a response rate of 4% (734) from the community and interestingly 47% (785) from schools. The Council also received 150 and 332 entries respectively to the logo and name competition. The survey contained 74 issues which were divided into the five characteristics of life in Unley i.e. City Character, Resources Management, Economic Development, Local Environment and Community Life. Respondents were asked to indicate which of the issues were of most concern to them and to nominate other issues of concern not mentioned on the survey. By listening to local views the Council has been able to develop an understanding of local actions needed to work towards sustainability. A successful Local Agenda 21 needs to be rooted in a proper awareness of sustainable development and an understanding of what the community wants.

The top twenty issues of concern to both residents and students, in priority order, included: household waste and recycling; open space; undergrounding of cables; street tree planting; litter; crime; greening Unley; air quality; water quality; street sweeping; footways; safety; creeks; services for the elderly; recycling education; stormwater; cycling; parking; disease prevention; and immunisation. The survey has been used to provide an indication of community consensus as to the future needs of Unley, in effect sign posting areas that needed to be attended to in the Environmental Plan. In addition to the community survey, residents were invited to community workshops to discuss the issues raised in more detail. To further encourage wide community participation in the process randomly selected residents were contacted directly by telephone and letter. In total 700 residents were contacted and 88 attended the 11 workshops (representing a response rate of 8%). In total eleven workshops were held in a variety of locations throughout the area. Community facilitators also travelled in a community bus to promote awareness of the community consultation process and canvas issues. One workshop was held for community groups.

As a key element of the above work the 'Anderson Family', a 'typical' four generation family was created by the Council to communicate sustainability themes to the community. The family members were used to provide an example of how residents can help to ensure that Unley remains a 'great' place to live now and in the future. This promotional material and in particular the community broadsheet have been produced based on a brief prepared by Council, by a specially engaged Production team. The Community Broadsheet "*Your Local Solutions to Global Issues - How Your Efforts Can Make a Difference in Unley*" introduced the Anderson family and their views on life in Unley. Published in full colour it presented the following sustainability themes pictorially and imaginatively: "*Unley And Its Character Then And Now*", "*Economic Development - More Than Just Dollars And Cents*", "*Our Local Natural Environment*", "*Growing Up In Unley*", "*Children Playing Their Part - Helping Manage Our Resources*".

Local sponsors encouraged participation in the project by providing a prize for naming the plan while school kids were encouraged to design a logo (enticed by the chance to win a mountain bike from a local retailer). Other sponsors helped to fund the development of the plan.

Step 3 Implementation

The Environmental Action Plan (as it was eventually named following the competition) covers the following aspects of Unley life and encompasses the following aims:

City Character:

To maintain and improve the unique heritage character and visual appearance of Unley

Resources Management:

To protect and manage the resources of Unley in order to strengthen its environmental sustainability

Economic Development:

To provide new opportunities and identify new directions for the City to generate sustainable employment and City wealth that benefits the community with a cleaner and greener environment

Local Environment:

To preserve and rehabilitate the natural environment and to encourage sensitive and healthy living within the City

Community Life:

To facilitate and promote civic, social and cultural needs of the community within the context of environmental sustainability.

The Council's Corporate Plan updated in 1996 already provided a mission statement with elements that are clearly related to Local Agenda 21 objectives:

"To ensure that the people of Unley receive the services, amenities and facilities they require to achieve and maintain a quality life style and meet the priority needs".

The Corporate Plan identifies that this should be done through providing:

- infrastructure
- empowering the community
- acting as a catalyst for influencing development and lifestyles
- increasing knowledge of citizens rights

- protecting the environment
- improving the quality of life in Unley.

The Unley Environmental Action Plan forms an important part of the implementation of the City's Corporate Plan. Furthermore the Council's Local Agenda 21 initiative is seen as a mechanism for coordinating and integrating Council policies whilst progressing sustainability. It has been recognised from the beginning that many of the Council's present policies have relevance to Agenda 21. As Council policies come up for review or amendment it is envisaged that they will increasingly embrace sustainability principles and be more integrated. Local Agenda 21 is not seen by the Council as a separate project but rather that it should be built into everything that the Council does, in the same way as striving for value for money.

Whilst the implementation of the Action Plan is important, it is only the first step in an ongoing process of building upon and incorporating sustainability objectives into complementary programs that are already in place. These include: the Council Corporate Plan; the Council's Cultural Policy; Unley Development Plan; 'Access for all Action Plan'; local history projects; household recycling and waste minimisation; trainee schemes; business development and Street Life programs; water catchment management; 'Goodwood Precinct'; Seniors' Week; and Neighbourhood Watch.

Unley Council, together with many other Councils embarking on Local Agenda 21, has realised early on that developing a Local Agenda 21 strategy does not mean starting from scratch. Many existing policies and practices will already be fully in line with Local Agenda 21 objectives - they may simply not be labelled as such. Local Agenda 21 is a mechanism for developing new ways of working across traditional service boundaries. It is also a process that can realise significant efficiency gains and is a way to forge closer links with community groups.

The Environmental Management Action Plan includes over 49 strategic action objectives in the five key areas and over 208 specific actions including both existing and new initiatives. The largest proportion of actions is in the local environment and community life areas. For each action there is a corresponding performance indicator and responsibility for implementation has been assigned to individual Council managers and officers. The community and stakeholders outside the Council have not yet been assigned appropriate tasks. Local Agenda 21 as a collective project needs to encourage all sections of the community to act together to make sure that the agreed pathway and actions towards sustainability are implemented. The next step will be to identify key local partners who already share responsibility for key areas or who have powers to take the work forward in a practical way.

The Unley Environmental Action Plan will be implemented annually through the annual business plans of the various Council Business Units. The Plan is in effect the business plan for the Council's environmental management program and ensures that environmental considerations are integrated into all Council operations and functions. In this way the plan is a strategic instrument in ensuring that environmental performance is the responsibility of the whole organisation. The Council's performance indicators form a critical part of the Plan and provide an important means of monitoring the implementation of the Plan throughout Council. They will also provide a practical way of providing information to the community.

Step 4 Review and Monitoring

In the first year of the Plan the performance indicators relating to the top twenty issues of concern to the community (resulting from the community survey) will become the benchmark indicators to compare performance in future years. These may include:

- number of passengers on public transport per annum
- number of safety promotions per annum
- number of people accessing publications on waste minimisation practices
- number of promotions on recycling
- number of improved stormwater management practices
- number of on-street parking restrictions
- number of local residents involved in greening programs
- approved budget for the Council Watch program
- approved budget for Home Assist and other services for the elderly.

This is the Council's first attempt to monitor the progress being made on sustainability and therefore some of the chosen indicators may not prove to be effectual in the long term. The majority of the indicators for example are internally focussed and therefore do not provide a means of assessing the overall impact and direction of the community's activities in terms of a more livable and sustainable City. Indeed the Action Plan and accompanying indicators have been developed to provide a starting point for the Council on what is a long term process of building a deeper awareness, understanding and commitment to sustainability both in the Council and the community.

Lessons Learnt:

Opportunities:

Essentials for getting started on a Local Agenda 21 process:

- have someone in the organisation champion the cause in a Project Management role
- gain support through a Council resolution to have a Local Agenda 21 Program
- engage an advisory committee which reports to Council
- have an appropriate budget
- network with other Councils and partners i.e. membership of the South Australian Partnership for Local Agenda 21
- develop and work to an agreed program plan - steps, timelines, pathways, actions, roles, responsibilities, finance etc.
- develop an understanding amongst Councillors of the program and process that needs to be gone through. This is particularly important considering the length of the process and in particular the time needed to conduct meaningful consultation.

It is vital that a consultation program meets its objectives, suits the community and is affordable. Based upon the experience of Unley key elements of a consultation program embody the following:

- establish exactly **what** needs to be achieved
- establish **who** in the community to consult with

- select the way or how the community can be involved
- select communication methods.

The City of Unley has embraced and is committed to the support and delivery of the objectives of Local Agenda 21. This has been attained through:

- at the beginning of the process endorsing in November 1996 the establishment of an Environmental Management Plan for the City and an Environmental Management Plan Advisory Committee
- later on in the process endorsing a commitment to the Newcastle Declaration
- networking with other Councils, State government and other partners by taking up membership in 1998 in the South Australian Partnership for Local Agenda 21
- further networking and commitments to related sustainability programs by endorsing in 1998 participation in the Cities for Climate Protection™ program.

Program facts & figures:

Staffing: No additional staff are employed and no staff are assigned solely to the project. Three staff contribute towards the work, approximately equivalent to a full time person (Approximately \$40,000). A consultant was engaged to conduct community workshops, analyse the results of the community workshop and questionnaire and produce the first draft of the Plan.

Budget: An operating budget was established for the preparation of consultation materials, conducting the consultation, analysis of consultation material, preparation of a draft Plan, and design and production of the Plan. This included production team costs. (In kind and volunteer help from key professionals to the Production Teamwork was also secured).

Key reports:

Sustainability Through Community Action, *City of Unley, November 1996*

Summary of Community Feedback from Community workshops (*Don Allan, ADBR, December 1997*)

Community Survey - Quantitative Analysis of Reports (*Don Allan, ADBR, December 1997*)

Community Survey - Qualitative Report of Student Comments (*Don Allan, ADBR, January 1998*)

Community Survey - Qualitative Analysis of Community Comments (*Don Allan, ADBR, December 1997*)

Compilation of the submissions, contributions and comments from the community

Tools & Techniques: Local Agenda 21 Communications Strategy

- City of Unley

The evolution of a Local Agenda 21 for Unley is being achieved for the Council through an extensive consultative program.

Consultation:

In consulting with the community the Council set out to:

- build awareness of and invite participation in the development of the Environmental Management Plan and Local Agenda 21

- give an easy way to explain sustainability and the Local Agenda 21 process
- engage the wider community in the process.

The Council has evolved a Local Agenda 21 communications strategy which has included the following activities: a Community Broadsheet on sustainability and Local Agenda 21; community questionnaire; newspaper articles; school packs; telephone information service; community focus groups and workshops; and a competition to provide a both a name and logo for the Unley's environmental plan. The Broadsheet and questionnaire were placed on the Council's web site. A Production Team and consultant were engaged and briefed by the Council to conduct this work. An Advisory Committee of Council (EMPAC) was also established in 1997 to coordinate these activities particularly in relation to the development of an Environmental Management Plan for the Council.

A core element of this approach has been to design a broadsheet and questionnaire which was interesting and attractive in appearance to the community to gain their attention. A Production team was engaged to produce the promotional and marketing material - this included a graphic designer, illustrator, photographer and public relations specialist. A local playwright was also engaged to script the content of the Broadsheet to make the copy come alive. The consultant and graphic designer also prepared the content of the community survey based on a brief by Council. The Production team's brief also included an advertisement for community groups, overview of the schools program, sponsorship and writing the telephone script for use by consultants when ringing up residents to invite them to the community workshops. The Broadsheet, questionnaire and workshops were designed to stimulate ideas from the community on quality of life and sustainability issues in Unley. The Community Broadsheet and survey were distributed to each household, schools, business and community groups in Unley and included on Council's web site. Ultimately all this information was to be fed into the drafting of the Environmental Management Plan.

The Schools' pack included - Information Broadsheet; Community survey (Internet response encouraged); Logo design competition entry; Walk the Internet - information exercise; Information Hotline details; supporting materials for teachers, including background information, lesson plans and Certificates of Participation. An individual letter of invitation was sent to each school. The logo and naming competition in particular was specifically targeted at schools. Interestingly, Internet responses were encouraged throughout the project but only a handful of Internet responses were received.

- **“Unley Way To Go” Fair** (8,000 participants)
- **Telephone service** (approx. 20 calls)
- **Community questionnaire** (1,519 completed)
- **Community workshops** (240 invited; & 88 attendees)
- **Name Competition** (332 entries)
- **Logo Competition** (150 entries)
- **School packs** (1800 distributed)
- **Broadsheet** (19,470 mailed)

Total numbers of the community reached: 20,000 plus

Lessons Learnt in Engaging the Community in Local Agenda 21

Step 1 Select who in the community to consult with:

- all households
- all businesses
- selected relevant community groups
- local school youth
- Council staff
- Elected Members

Step 2 Select the way or how the community can be involved:

- community questionnaire with free entry to a prize draw
- competition to give a name to the Council's management plan was open to all and included schools
- community workshops held locally and spread across each Ward
- a separate workshop for community groups
- school packs including a logo design competition, providing the opportunity for youth to contribute
- sponsorship/support by local businesses
- creating an Advisory Committee (EMPAC - Environment Management Plan Advisory Committee)
- encourage written submissions from the community to the advisory committee
- invite comment on the Draft Plan as it is developed.

Step 3 Attracting the community to be involved:

Unley selected a number of ways to build awareness in the community, by inviting and attracting them to become involved.

To build awareness the Council elected to:

- direct mail the broadsheet and questionnaire to each household and business in the city
- advertise workshops through the local Press
- issue Press Releases to the local press
- include articles in Council's publication "The Town Crier"
- issue individual letters of invitation to community groups and schools
- publish the key results of the questionnaire
- publish the results of the free draw and competitions.

Furthermore to allow for easy participation the Council used the following methods:

- self addressed free mail return envelope for questionnaire response
- questionnaire response via the Internet

- development of school packs
- residents selected at random from each Ward and invited by phone to attend workshops
- Advisory Committee meeting agendas advertised widely
- draft Plan made available to the community via various mediums - hard copy, diskette and Internet site for a period of six weeks.

The consensus building process adopted developed a common view of the key sustainability issues as relevant to Unley. This has provided a strong foundation for the establishment of the Unley Environmental Action Plan and the Plan can now expect strong community support.

CREATING 'THE ANDERSON' FAMILY

In 1997 the Council began to seek out four generation families living in Unley. The Council initially intended to use a real family but this proved problematic so it built up a fictitious family working from an artist's impression.

Picture Hazel sitting contented reading in her home in Unley.

It is Hazel's 83rd birthday.

Startled at a sudden noise and slamming of a door, her eyes light with a smile as her great grand daughter, Katie, bursts into the room.

"Happy Birthday, Great Nan. I made it", Kate says as she hands her a card and gives her a hug.

"Thank you Katie, it is a beautiful card".

"Great Nan, what's it like to be 83?"

Taken back, Hazel looks at Katie, sees the innocent smile and says, "It's nice being 83 because I can watch you grow into a young lady."

As Hazel thinks, it is a better place for Katie to live in now than when I was her age. We've done a great job in nursing our environment back into good health.

So it is with this story in mind, Unley Council created the Andersons. It is a four generation family comprising:

- Hazel, the Great Nan
- Richard, the son of Hazel
- Catherine, the daughter of Richard
- Mike and Katie, the children of Catherine.

As the Andersons is a four generational family it provides a 'real' example of sustainability themes and in particular intergenerational and quality of life themes. Furthermore stories of their lives and accounts of their views and aspirations for the future have provided a way of conducting a debate in the community about 'is our world a better place?; has it improved over a period of four generations; and what can I do as an individual to make it a better place for our *children?*'

The Andersons is a device the Council is using in an interesting way to introduce environmental issues to the community by:

- giving a personal/human touch to communications
- highlighting that individuals can participate and make a difference
- allowing the Andersons to talk with the community as equals.

In short they are a communication tool. The Andersons and Local Agenda 21 were introduced to the community by the city wide distribution of a broadsheet and questionnaire. The Community Broadsheet and the Anderson family therefore formed a determining component of the Council's Local Agenda 21 communication strategy.

Based upon the experience of the team involved in the Unley work successful promotional material needs:

- high quality and distinctive graphic design
- size of print that is easy to read
- incentives for returning response forms i.e. free post return direct to Council offices
- a prominent Council logo
- a readable script
- a variety of distribution methods
- consideration of size and packaging
- to include real people
- an adequate budget
- relevant quality/paper stock (recycled)
- an adequate print run
- a visible telephone and Internet address
- a phone line for assistance
- sponsors logos/recognition.

Key Contact:

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<http://www.unley.sa.gov.au/unley/>



Further Reading and Contacts

Action Area 1

Background documents - Agenda 21, Local Agenda 21 and ESD

Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 <http://www.igc.apc.org/habitat/agenda21/ch-28.html>

Commonwealth of Australia (1992) *National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development* Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra

Commonwealth of Australia (1992) *Inter-governmental Agreement on the Environment - Agreement between the Federal Government and States and Territories* Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra

Environment Australia *Ecologically Sustainable Development and Local Agenda 21* - this website contains links to national and international Local Agenda 21 sites <http://www.environment.gov.au/igu/>

Griffith R (1998) *Everything you wanted to ask about ESD.... But were afraid of the answer* Hawksbury-Nepean Catchment Management Trust, NSW

Keating M (1993) *Agenda for Change: A plain language version of Agenda 21 and the other Rio Agreements* Centre for Our Common Future, Geneva

Mehra M and Jorgensen A (1998) *Towards Sustainable Development for Local Authorities: Approaches, Experiences and Sources* Institute for Environment and Systems Analysis (IMSA Amsterdam) Website: <http://www.eea.eu.int:80/Projects/EnvMaST/susdevla>

Munro D and Martin W (1991) *Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living* IUCN, UNEP and WWF, Gland (Switzerland)

United Nations (1992) *Agenda 21. The United Nations Programme of Action from Rio* United Nations Department of Public Information, New York (Agenda 21 can also be viewed from <http://www.environs.org.au/~councilnet/clnet/members/LA21.htm>)

United Nations Commission on Environment and Development (1992) *Agenda 21 and the UNCED Proceedings*

The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) *Our Common Future* Oxford University Press, Oxford

International Local Agenda 21 context

ICLEI *Local Agenda 21 Initiative*- Website: <http://www.iclei.org/iclei/la21.htm> Toronto

ICLEI (1997) *Local Government Implementation of Agenda 21* Toronto

ICLEI (1998) *National Obstacles to a Local Agenda 21* Toronto

ICLEI (1999) *Asia Pacific Local Agenda 21 Resource Guide* Toronto

Lawrence G (1998) *Millennium Papers, Issue 2: Local Agenda 21 Into the New Millennium* United Nations Environment and Development-UK, London

Examples of Local Agenda 21 initiatives

City of Mandurah (1998) *Planning for Sustainable Futures – National Conference, September 1998 Conference Proceedings*

City of Mandurah (1999) *Local Agenda 21: Accepting the Challenge for Western Australia, March 1999 Conference Papers*

Environs Australia (1996) *Sustainability & Local Environments: Myths, Models and Milestones* Conferences Papers: Second National Conference - November 1996, Environs Australia, Melbourne

Environs Australia (1998) *1999 Local Government Environment Yearbook Executive Media*, Melbourne

ICLEI (1992 onwards) *Case Studies Series Toronto* (note following: Nos.6, 10, 14, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31)

ICLEI (1998) *Local Agenda 21: Model Communities Programme - Programme Summary Toronto*

ICLEI (1998) *Local Agenda 21: Model Communities Programme Volume One - Final Report Toronto*

ICLEI (1998) *Local Agenda 21: Model Communities Programme Volume Two - Case Studies Toronto*

Local Government Management Board (1997) *Local Agenda 21 Case Studies: Case Studies of Work for Local Sustainability* LGMB Publications, UK

Whittaker S (Ed.) (1995) *First Steps: Local Agenda 21 in Practice: Municipal Strategies for Sustainability as Presented to Global Forum 94 in Manchester*, HMSO, London (available from Environs Australia)

Websites

CouncilNet *Local Agenda 21 and Sustainability* - this website contains links to other Local Agenda 21 sites and some specific examples of Local Agenda 21 work
<http://www.environs.org.au/~councilnet/clnet/members/LA21.htm>

EURONET and ICLEI *Local Sustainability: European Good Practice Information* (Case studies of sustainability projects by European local authorities)
<http://www.cities21.com/europractice>

European Commission *Action Towards Local Sustainability*

A European project helping local authorities to improve quality of life in their communities through sustainable development. The website contains policy guidance, case studies, tools and techniques for local sustainable development
<http://www.sustainability.org.uk>

ICLEI *Case studies on the Local Agenda 21 process* <http://www.iclei.org/csdcases/la21int.htm>

Local Agenda 21 UK Web Site <http://www.la21-uk.org.uk>

Pathways to Sustainability Conference
<http://www.ncc.nsw.gov.au/enviro/sustciti/confout.htm>

The Regional Municipality of Hamilton - Wentworth Council Vision 2020: *the sustainable region* <http://www.hamilton-went.on.ca/vis2020/>

Wellington City Council, New Zealand *Our City ~ Our Future - Strategy for the Future of Wellington* <http://www.wcc.govt.nz/wcc/future/ocof.old/strategy.html>

Journals

Local Environment Carfax UK, USA and Australia - ICLEI Journal. For details see <http://www.carfax.co.uk/loe-ad.htm>

Local Environs, the quarterly newsletter of Environs Australia.

Action Area 2

Building partnerships

Department of Justice, Victoria (1997) *How to get the Best out of Planning: A guide to facilitating meetings*

Forum for the Future and World Wildlife Fund, UK (1998) *Involving Business in Local Agenda 21 - Good Practice Guidance* [For details contact WWF-UK <http://www.wwf-uk.org>]

NSW Environment Protection Authority and Department of Land and Water Conservation (1997) *What we Need isa Community Education Project: an eight step guide to running a community education project* Report 97/57, Sydney

NSW Public Works (1995) *Planning for Community Involvement in Water and Sewerage Projects: How you can help* NSW Government, Sydney

Sarkissan, W (1994) *The Community Participation Handbook* Impact Press, NSW

US Environmental Protection Agency (1997) *Community-Based Environmental Protection: A resource book for protecting ecosystems and communities* Washington DC

Ward J (1993) *Australian Community Development: Ideas, skills and values for the 90's* Partnership Press and Community Quarterly

Ward J (1993) *Facilitative and Effective Management Skills for Local Government: Ideals, principles and practices for the productive 90's* Partnership Press

Websites

US Environmental Protection Agency (1998) *Green Communities: How do we get there?* [<http://www.epa.gov/region03/greenkit/4community.htm>]

Action Areas 3 - 5

More ideas for developing a Local Agenda 21

ICLEI (1996) *The Local Agenda 21 Planning Guide: An introduction to sustainable development planning* Toronto

Local Government Management Board (1998) *Sustainable Local Communities: Some Model Approaches to Strategy Development* LGMB Publications, UK

National Local Government Environmental Resource Network, Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies (Australian National University) and Commonwealth Department of Housing and Regional Development (1994) *Towards Local Sustainable Development: A Toolkit of Strategies - An integrated environmental management manual* Canberra

Websites

Ontario Round Table on Environment and Economy Sustainable Communities Resource Package, Ontario Ministry of Environment and Energy, Toronto
<http://www.web.net/ortee/scrp/index.html>

The United States Environmental Protection Agency Green Communities webpage provides guidance on how to develop a vision statement.
<http://www.epa.gov/region03/greenkit/3intro.htm>

Indicators

Alexandra J, Haffenden S and White T (1996) *Listening to the Land: Directory of Community Environmental Monitoring Groups in Australia*, Australian Conservation Foundation, Australian Print Group, Maryborough

Reuter DJ (1997) *Conference Proceedings: National Workshop on Indicators of Catchment Health* CSIRO, PISA, RIRDC, CRC, South Australia

Websites

Hart Environmental Data contains detailed discussion and examples of indicators of sustainability. There is also a suggested process for their development.
<http://www.subjectmatters.com/indicators/HTMLSrc>

Sustainable Community Round Table (USA) <http://www.olywa.net/rountable/index.html>

Sustainable Seattle is a highly acclaimed community project which has involved the development and publicising of a list of 40 indicators of that community's sustainability. Although not developed in relation to a local government, they are a good example of the types of indicators which can be developed and the way that they can be reported.
<http://www.scn.org/sustainable/>

The United States Environmental Protection Agency Green Communities webpage discusses various types of indicators, how to select indicators, and how to use and report on them. It also contains links to other indicator web sites and references.

<http://www.epa.gov/region03/greenkit/indicator.htm>

Wellington City Council, New Zealand *Right Here - Right Now* (a summary of Wellington's State of the City Report) <http://www.wcc.govt.nz/wcc/future/ocof/herenow/summary.html>

SoE Reporting

Alexandra J and White T (1997):

- *Environmental Indicators for Reporting at Local, State and National Levels* Report prepared for Environment Australia by the Australian Local Government Association, Deakin
- *Executive Summary* Australian Local Government Association, Canberra
- *Choosing and Using Environmental Indicators* Australian Local Government Association, Canberra

Cousin R and Fabricius C (Eds.) (1996) *Towards Better Practice: State of the Environment Reporting* Proceedings of a National Environmental Law Association Seminar, Australian Environmental Law News, No.2 1997, June-July

Department of Local Government, NSW (1998) *Environmental Guidelines: State of the Environment Reporting by Local Government - Promoting Ecologically Sustainable Development* NSW

NSW Department of Local Government (1997) *Discussion Paper: State of the Environment Reporting* <http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/soe.pdf>

White T (1996) "Approaches to State of the Environment Management: Looking for Sustainability? Any Door will Do!" in *Sustainability and Local Environments: Myths, Models and Milestones* Conference Papers: Second National Conference - November 1996, Environs Australia, Melbourne

Commonwealth SoE Reporting

Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council, State of the Environment reporting Task Force (1998) *Core environmental indicators for reporting on the state of the environment - Discussion paper for public comment*, ANZECC Secretariat, Canberra

Commonwealth Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories (1994) *State of the Environment Reporting: Framework for Australia*, Canberra

The Commonwealth's Environmental Indicators Report series covers the themes of human settlements, biodiversity, the atmosphere, the land, inland waters, estuaries and the sea, natural and cultural heritage, and local and community uses (Commonwealth Department of the Environment, 1998, Canberra)

Alexandra J, Higgins J & White T (1998) *Environmental indicators for national state of the environment reporting - Local and Community Uses, Australia: State of the Environment (Environmental Indicator Reports)*, Department of the Environment, Canberra

Fairweather P & Napier G (1998) *Environmental indicators for national state of the environment reporting - Inland Waters, Australia: State of the Environment (Environmental Indicator Reports)*, Department of the Environment, Canberra

Hamblin A (1998) *Environmental indicators for national state of the environment reporting - The Land, Australia: State of the Environment (Environmental Indicator Reports)*, Department of the Environment, Canberra

Manton M & Jasper J (1998) *Environmental indicators for national state of the environment reporting - The Atmosphere, Australia: State of the Environment (Environmental Indicator Reports)*, Department of the Environment, Canberra

Newton P, Flood J, Berry M, Bhatia K, Brown S, Cabelli S, Gomboso J, Higgins J, Richardson T and Ritchie V (1998) *Environmental Indicators for National State of the Environment Reporting - Human Settlements, Australia: State of the Environment (Environmental Indicator Reports)*, Department of the Environment, Canberra.

Pearson M, Johnston D, Lennon J, McBryde I, Marshall D, Nash D and Wellington B (1998) *Environmental Indicators for National State of the Environment Reporting - Natural and Cultural Heritage, Australia: State of the Environment (Environmental Indicator Reports)*, Department of the Environment, Canberra.

Ward T, Butler E & Hill B (1998) *Environmental indicators for national state of the environment reporting - Estuaries and the Sea, Australia: State of the Environment (Environmental Indicator Reports)*, Department of the Environment, Canberra

Integrated Management

Environs Australia (1996) *Attending to the Environment: A manual for contract specifications* Melbourne

Local Government Association and Local Government Management Board (1998) *Integrating Sustainable Development into Best Value* LGMB Publications, UK

Australian Local Government Association (1993) *Making the Connections: A Guide to Integrated Local Area Planning* Canberra

Environmental Management Systems

Australian/New Zealand Standards (1996) ISO 14001, 14004, 14031 - *Environmental Management Systems* (copies can be obtained from Standards Australia)

Osborn, D (1999) *Green Beans Among Grass Roots - Entry Points to Learning More About Local Environmental Accounting*. Available at Website: <http://www.nolg.gov.au> or rosborn@dynamite.com.au

O'Tarpey M, Pry M and Heard G (1993) *Environmental Management: A Guide for Local Government in NSW* Australian Institute of Environmental Health (NSW), Sydney

Florian L (1997) "A Model Approach to EMS" in *Australian Local Government Environment Yearbook 1997* Executive Media and Environs Australia, Melbourne

Mercer D, Keen M and Woodfull J (1994) "Approaches to Environmental Management at the Australian Local Government Level: Initiatives and limitations" in *Environmental Politics* Vol 3, No.1, Spring pp. 43-67

Australian Local Government Association (1996) *Managing the Environment: A Practical Guide for Local Government to Environmental Management Systems and ISO 14001*, Deakin

Other guidelines and contacts

The Australian Community Biodiversity Network <http://www.cbn.org.au>

Australian Heritage Commission (1999) *Protecting Local Heritage Places – A guide for communities* Canberra

Australian Heritage Commission (1999) *Natural Heritage Places Handbook – Applying the Australian Natural Heritage Charter to conserve places of natural significance* Canberra

Keep Australia Beautiful (1998) *Waste Minimisation Manual for Local Government, a guide to resources, issues and best practice*

Local Sustainability Project and Deni Greene Consulting Services (1996) *Getting Ahead of the Game – An anticipatory approach to environmental management - a Cleaner Production Handbook for Local Government* prepared for the Environment Protection Group, Environment Australia by Local Sustainability Project, Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, ANU and Deni Greene Consulting Services.

Royal Australian Planning Institute (1998) *Good Practice Guidelines for Integrated Coastal Planning* (contact RAPI on 03 9819 0728 for a copy)

SA Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs and the Local Government Association (1999) *Local Agenda 21: The South Australian Experience*

Useful contacts for Local Agenda 21

Environs Australia

Environs Australia, the local government environment network, is a peak national organisation assisting local governments to move towards sustainability. Besides promoting the concept of sustainability, Environs Australia provides information, advice, international networking facilities, seminars, publications and consultancies on innovative approaches to environmental management.

2nd Floor, 247 Flinders Lane
Melbourne VIC 3000
Phone: (03) 9654 1322
Fax: (03) 9654 1625
E-mail: eanat@environs.org.au
Website: <http://www.environs.org.au/~councilnet>

Environment Australia (Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage)

The Intergovernment Unit (IGU) of Environment Australia coordinates policy where action is required by different levels of government or requires a cross-sectoral approach, including on Local Agenda 21 and local sustainability. The foundation of the Unit's work is the concept of ecologically sustainable development. Finding better ways to integrate environmental, economic and social concerns in decision-making is a key theme of Australian policy.

Intergovernment Unit
Portfolio Strategies Group
Environment Australia
PO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA
Phone: Community Information Unit on 1800 803 772
Fax: (02) 6274 1858
Website: <http://www.environment.gov.au/igu/>

Australian Bureau of Statistics

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has conducted pilot studies on the application of UN guidelines for a System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting by local governments. Pilot councils have been compiling a workbook of 'Environmental Protection' and 'Natural Resource Use and Management' revenues and expenditures, using their budget actuals and supplementary data. Many councils participating in this data collection found the process to be a cost-effective way of defining the extent of their "environmental" responsibilities, and for establishing some baseline data on which to judge their allocation of financial resources between economic, social and environmental objectives.

Contact: Bob Harrison, Director, Environment and Energy Statistics Section,
Australian Bureau of Statistics, Phone (02) 6252 7369.

National Office of Local Government

The National Office of Local Government (NOLG) works with councils, local government associations and Commonwealth and State government agencies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the local government sector, and to promote local government's contribution to the nation's overall economic and social performance.

The NOLG's responsibilities include:

- administration of grants funded under the Local Government Incentives Programme which is designed to improve local government's contribution in areas of national priority including micro-economic reform, urban reform, regional development, environmental management and initiatives that promote fair access to services
- coordinating the development of a reform strategy that will harmonise and streamline development control systems throughout Australia
- managing the National Awards for Innovation in Local Government.

National Office of Local Government
Department of Transport and Regional Services
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA ACT 2601
or e-mail: nolg@dotrs.gov.au
Website: <http://www.nolg.gov.au>

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)

ICLEI is an association of local governments dedicated to the prevention and solution of local, regional and global environmental problems through local action. It was launched in 1990 as the international environmental agency for local governments under the sponsorship of the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Union of Local Authorities and the Centre for Innovative Diplomacy. ICLEI's two current campaigns are the Local Agenda 21 Initiative and the Cities for Climate Protection™ Campaign.

ICLEI World Secretariat
City Hall, East Tower, City Hall
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5H 2N2
Phone: 1 416 392 1462
Fax: 1 416 392 1478
E-mail: iclei@iclei.org
Website: <http://www.iclei.org/iclei>

The South Australian Partnership for Local Agenda 21

A collaborative effort between DEHA, the Local Government Association and over 30 councils to undertake Local Agenda 21 programs

Maggie Hine
Local Agenda 21 Coordinator - South Australia
Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs (DEHA)
GPO Box 1047
Adelaide SA 5001
Phone: (08) 8204 9284 or 0418 850079
Fax: (08) 82049144
E-mail: mhine@dehaa.sa.gov.au

Mount Lofty Ranges Catchment Program - Local Government Component Assisting councils in the Mt Lofty region to progress their Local Agenda 21 programs

Melissa Schliebs
Local Government Coordinator
Phone: (08) 8408 0400

Local Government Local Agenda 21 Advisory Group (WA)

The Western Australian Municipal Association has set up a Local Government Local Agenda 21 Advisory Group. It has as its vision "All local governments in Western Australia committed to and implement Local Agenda 21". Its objectives include:

- financial commitment from the State Government to assist local government with Local Agenda 21 planning
- support local governments implementing Local Agenda 21
- remove the barriers faced by local government in implementing Local Agenda 21
- facilitate the exchange of information on Local Agenda 21
- increase awareness of Local Agenda 21.

This group meets two-monthly, with four working groups meeting as required. The four working groups address specific issues related to:

- Training
- Networks / Partnerships
- Promotions
- Information.

Contact: Clare Walsh (see contact details under Environmental Resource Officers)

Sustainability Planning Network (WA)

The Sustainability Planning Network is a network set up as a result of the "Pathways To Sustainability" Conference in Newcastle, June, 1997. It has a website for sharing information on sustainability planning: www.wistp.murdoch.edu.au. Email istp@central.murdoch.edu.au if you have comments or if you would like to contribute.

For more information contact Rose Williams ph: (08) 93458554, fax: (08) 9345-3073, email: williams.rose@stirling.wa.gov.au

Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)

ALGA is a federation of Local Government Associations in each state or territory. It aims to advocate for and represent local government in dealings with the Commonwealth Government and in national forums. It also attempts to advance the expertise of councils in key national issues which require strong local government participation.

8 Geils Court
Deakin NSW 2600
Phone: 02 6281 1211
Fax: 02 6282 2110
E-mail: alga@alga.com.au
Website: <http://www.alga.com.au>

Local Government Management Board (LGMB)

The Sustainable Development Unit of the LGMB manages the Local Agenda 21 initiative in the UK

Layden House
76-78 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5QU
Phone: 0171 296 6599
Fax: 0171 296 6666
E-mail: local.agenda.21@lgmg.gov.uk

A website, *Local Agenda 21 UK* - provides information about how UK local governments are working towards a Local Agenda 21, free publications and networking facilities between local authorities

Website: <http://www.la21-uk.org.uk>

Environment Resource Officers (EROs) and Local Government Associations

The Environmental Resource Officer Program is funded by Environment Australia.

New South Wales

Debra Rae-Smith
Local Government and Shires Associations
GPO Box 7003
Sydney NSW 2001
Phone: (02) 9242 4082
Fax: (02) 9242 4111
E-mail: drae@lgsa.org.au
Website: <http://www.lgsa.org.au>

Northern Territory

Louise Fuller
Local Government Association of the
Northern Territory
GPO Box 4502
Darwin NT 0801
Phone: (08) 8981 3660
Fax: (08) 8941 2665
E-mail: louise.fuller@lgant.nt.gov.au

Queensland

Peta Jamieson
Local Government Association of
Queensland
PO Box 2230
Fortitude Valley QLD 4006
Phone: (07) 3334 2239
Fax: (07) 3252 4473
E-mail: peta_jamieson@lgaq.asn.au

South Australia

Ross Manthorpe
Local Government Association of South
Australia
GPO Box 2693

Adelaide SA 5001

Phone: (08) 8224 2043
Fax: (08) 8232 6336
E-mail: ross.manthorpe@lga.sa.gov.au
Website: <http://www.lga.sa.gov.au>

Tasmania

Evan Boardman
Local Government Association of
Tasmania
GPO Box 1521R
Hobart TAS 7001
Phone: (03) 6237 0072
Fax: (03) 6224 0086
E-mail: eboardman@lgat.tas.gov.au
Website: <http://ingomar.lgat.tas.gov.au/>

Victoria

Jennifer Johnson
Municipal Association of Victoria
GPO Box 4326PP
Melbourne 3001
Phone: (03) 9823 5555
Fax: (03) 9824 8404
Website: <http://www.mav.asn.au>

Western Australia

Clare Walsh
WA Municipal Association
PO Box 1544
West Perth 6872 (15 Altona St)
Phone: (08) 9213 2042
Fax: (08) 9322 2611
E-mail: cwalsh@wama.wa.gov.au

National ERO

Kathryn Hannan
Environs Australia
2nd Floor, 247 Flinders Lane
Melbourne VIC 3000
Phone: (03) 9654 1322
Fax: (03) 9654 1625
E-mail: eanat@environs.org.au

Academic Institutions working on Local Agenda 21

University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury Richmond Campus

A self-funding facility at the University of Western Sydney Hawkesbury, the Regional Integrated Monitoring Centre (RIMC) provides:

- Council/community/catchment monitoring, in partnership with the Hawkesbury/Nepean Catchment Management Trust
- a national and international research facility for best practice in monitoring local sustainability, linked with three UWSH Research Centres and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health
- community field days, short courses, undergraduate and post-graduate courses in integrated information management
- skilled assessment and linking environmental, social and economic indicators
- short courses and consultancy advice.

For any inquiries and further information contact: Sarah Morton, Coordinator:
ph (02) 4570 1662 sarahm@gmp.usyd.edu.au

Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF)

ISF is a unit within the University of Technology, Sydney. The ISF Local Government Team provides advice, seminars, collaborative projects and consultancies to Australian councils particularly on Local Agenda 21, Ecological Sustainable Development, sustainable futures and integrated environmental management systems.

PO Box 123, Broadway
NSW 2007, Australia
Phone: (02) 9209 4350
Fax: (02) 9209 4351
E-mail: isf@uts.edu.au

Murdoch University (WA)

For ongoing research and training in the areas of EMS in councils and Local Agenda 21 contact Dr Peter Dingle

School of Environmental Science
Murdoch University
Murdoch WA 6150
Tel: 08 9360 2569
Fax: 08 9360 6788
dingle@essun1.murdoch.edu.au

Institute for Science and Technology Policy (ISTP)

ISTP is a teaching and research institute with 9 academic staff, 6 research staff, 50 PhD students and 100 MA students. The institute undertakes research on the overlapping areas of sustainability, innovation and human values.

Professor Peter Newman
Director
Institute for Science and Technology Policy
Murdoch University
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ph: (08) 9360 2902
fax: (08) 9360 6421
e-mail: newman@central.murdoch.edu.au
web site: <http://www.istp.murdoch.edu.au>

Local authorities' initiatives in support of Agenda 21

Basis for action

28.1 Because so many of the problems and solutions being addressed by Agenda 21 have their roots in local activities, the participation and cooperation of local authorities will be a determining factor in fulfilling its objectives. Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and subnational environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to the people, they play a vital role in education, mobilising and responding to the public to promote sustainable development.

Objectives

28.2 The following objectives are proposed for this programme area:

- (a) By 1996, most local authorities in each country should have undertaken a consultative process with their populations and achieved a consensus on "a Local Agenda 21" for the community
- (b) By 1993, the international community should have initiated a consultative process aimed at increasing cooperation between local authorities
- (c) By 1994, representatives of associations of cities and other local authorities should have increased levels of cooperation and coordination with the goal of enhancing the exchange of information and experience among local authorities
- (d) All local authorities in each country should be encouraged to implement and monitor programmes which aim at ensuring that women and youth are represented in decision-making, planning and implementation processes.

Activities

28.3 Each local authority should enter into a dialogue with its citizens, local organisations and private enterprises and adopt "a Local Agenda 21". Through consultation and consensus building, local authorities would learn from citizens and from local, civic, community, business and industrial organisations and acquire the information needed for formulating the best strategies. The process of consultation would increase household awareness of sustainable development issues. Local authority programmes, policies, laws and regulations to achieve Agenda 21 objectives would be assessed and modified, based on local programmes adopted. Strategies could also be used in supporting proposals for local, national, regional and international funding.

28.4 Partnerships should be fostered among the relevant organs and organisation such as UNDP, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and UNEP, the World Bank, regional banks, the International Union of Local Authorities, the World Association of the Major Metropolises, Summit of Great Cities of the World, the United Towns Organisation and other relevant partners, with a view to mobilising increased international support for local authority programmes. An important goal would be to support, extend and improve existing institutions working in the field of local authority capacity-building and local environment management. For this purpose:

- Habitat and other relevant organs and organisations of the United Nations system are called upon to strengthen services in collecting information on strategies of local authorities, in particular for those that need international support
- Periodic consultations involving both international partners and developing countries could review strategies and consider how such international support could best be mobilised. Such a sectoral consultation would complement concurrent country-focused consultations, such as those taking place in consultative groups and round tables.

28.5 Representatives of associations of local authorities are encouraged to establish processes to increase the exchange of information, experience and mutual technical assistance among local authorities.

Means of implementation

(a) Financing and cost evaluation

28.6 It is recommended that all parties reassess funding needs in this area. The UNCED Secretariat has estimated the average total annual cost (1993-2000) for strengthening international secretariat services for implementing the activities in this chapter to be about \$1 million on grant or concessional terms. These are indicative and order of magnitude estimates only and have not been reviewed by governments.

(b) Human resource development and capacity-building

28.7 This programme should facilitate the capacity-building and training activities already contained in other chapters of Agenda 21.

Appendix

2

A Summary Guide to Agenda 21

Agenda 21 was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) Summit meeting on 14 June, 1992. It contains three primary goals toward sustainable development - relevant national level policies and strategies, integration of decision-making processes and community involvement. Agenda 21 is divided into 4 sections and 40 Chapters. A summary of each section can be found in Appendix 2.

Section 1 – Social and Economic Dimensions, Chapters 2-8

This Section examines the adverse social and economic issues and outcomes of unsustainable development and resource use.

Chapter 2 – International Cooperation to Accelerate Sustainable Development advocates for market pricing mechanisms that account for environmental costs. It additionally calls for consistency of policy and practice between trade and the environment.

Chapter 3 – Poverty advocates for strategies that combat poverty, both as a cause and effect of environmental degradation. These include sustainable levels of economic growth, employment growth, income generation and local community empowerment.

Chapter 4 – Changing Consumption Patterns examines global market imbalances in the patterns of consumption and production and advocates for more efficient and environmentally sustainable resource use.

Chapter 5 – Demographic Dynamics and Sustainability focuses on population growth issues. It advocates for strategies to stabilise population and increase local health and educational standards.

Chapter 6 – Human Health addresses primary world health issues, such as adequate nutrition, primary health care, water quality, urban health and environmental pollution.

Chapter 7 – Human Settlements examines deteriorating urban environments and proposes integrated planning and environmental management systems, sustainable land use and energy efficiency to meet the challenges of human settlement development.

Chapter 8 – Integrated Decision Making provides strategies for an integrated response to environmental, social and economic considerations through four broad areas: integrated environment and development policy, planning and management; effective regulatory and legal frameworks; effective use of market and economic instruments and incentives; and integrated environmental and economic accounting.

Section II – Conservation and Management of Resources for Development, Chapters 9-22

This section deals with the “sectoral issues” chapters of Agenda 21.

Chapter 9 – Protection of the Atmosphere primarily addresses three atmospheric issues- climate change, stratospheric ozone depletion and trans-boundary air pollution.

Chapter 10 – Land Resources provides a framework for developing an integrated approach to sustainable land resources use. The Chapter proposes the set up of sustainability and environmental impact indicators, an ecosystemic approach to land use planning and the set up of public participation processes.

Chapter 11 – Forests provides for an integrated framework approach to the planning and management of forest conservation and forest resources. It primarily advocates for the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity and forest resources while meeting expanding human needs. The chapter additionally promotes the use of economic measures, community consultation and the provision of access to special needs groups (such as indigenous).

Chapter 12 – Desertification and Drought discusses improved land, water, afforestation and revegetation management strategies to combat and reverse rising land degradation, salinity, desertification and soil erosion.

Chapter 13 – Sustainable Mountain Development focuses on halting the deterioration of mountain ecosystems, which, in turn, impact profoundly on biodiversity preservation and human well being. Afforestation, soil preservation strategies and creating alternatives to unsustainable livelihood practices are among primary programs proposed.

Chapter 14 – Sustainable Agriculture recognises that major reform in economic, agricultural and environmental policies are required to provide adequate food for an expanding population. Programs primarily target the increase of food production and food security, improving the capacity of higher potential agricultural land and land conservation strategies.

Chapter 15 – Biological Diversity recognises the interdependence between functionalities in ecosystems and asserts that preserving the variety and variability of species, genes, populations and ecosystems is intrinsically tied to human quality of life.

Chapter 16 – Biotechnology provides notions of the opportunities for biotechnology to contribute to sustainable development, including the requirement for safety, sound management and achieving sustainable benefits.

Chapter 17 – Protection of the Oceans reviews the protection, sustainable use and integrated management of oceans and seas. Program areas include marine environment protection, water resources conservation strategies and the preservation/enhancement of migratory aqua fauna.

Chapter 18 – Freshwater examines the protection of the quality and supply of freshwater resources and promotes an integrated approach to planning and management.

Chapter 19 – Toxic Chemicals reviews the assessment of risks entailed in the use of chemicals. The chapter also deals with national risk reduction programs.

Chapter 20 – Hazardous Wastes primarily raises awareness of the treatment and disposal of hazardous waste at national level activities.

Chapter 21 – Solid Wastes primarily sets a series of national programs that allow for waste minimisation, recycling and cooperative integrated programs between countries.

Chapter 22 – Radioactive Wastes include intractable and hazardous waste; programs addressing this issue include: their safe management, transportation, handling and disposal.

Section III - Strengthening the Role of Major Groups, Chapters 24-32

This Section focuses on local empowerment and alliance building between various social partners to ensure all major groups are actively involved in all program areas of Agenda 21.

Chapter 24 – Women aims to ensure the full and equal participation of women, primarily through focussing on the removal of obstacles faced in public life and the provision of services.

Chapter 25 – Youth and Children attempts to develop a greater role for youth and their representative agencies in planning and resource management at all levels.

Chapter 26 – Indigenous People and their Communities recognises the special relationship between many indigenous communities and their environments. It primarily focuses on the need for adequate community access, participation, consultation and empowerment in the formulation and implementation of land use and resource management and development.

Chapter 27 – Non-government Organisations highlights the vital role of NGOs in providing a focus for community involvement - program design, delivery, community education and social cohesion - in sustainable development activities.

Chapter 28 – Local Authorities stresses the pivotal role of local government as regional environmental planners in working toward sustainable development and urges each council to develop its own Local Agenda 21.

Chapter 29 – Trade Unions points out the role that unions and workers need to embrace in order to develop cleaner production practices, safe work practices and full employment.

Chapter 30 – Business and Industry provides a rationale for how responsible entrepreneurship is vital for developing effective strategies for achieving balanced development and environmental protection.

Chapter 31 – Scientists and Technologists primarily pushes for improving communications channels between the scientific and technical community and the public as well as improving ways in which governments seek and receive scientific advice.

Chapter 32 – Farmers recognises the cogent role of farmers and rural communities as managers and custodians of natural resources and asserts the importance of their involvement in developing regional policies and programs.

Section IV – Means of Implementation, Chapters 33-40

Chapter 33 – Finance provides ideas and formats for developing the substantial and new arrangements necessary for the funding of Local Agenda 21 programs in developing countries.

Chapter 34 – Technology Transfer defines the conditions under which environmentally sound technologies should be transferred between countries for the benefit of the global environment. To this end, there is particular emphasis on integrated information, access and technological transfer programs.

Chapter 35 – Science discusses the role of science in sustainable development, including improved modelling, research programs, new partnerships and data collation.

Chapter 36 – Education, Public Awareness and Training emphasises the importance of formal and informal education in making sustainable development central to the planning and conduct of activities in all spheres of life. As such, the chapter focuses on attempting to

incorporate environmental training into formal, informal and cross-disciplinary curricula, particularly public awareness and education programs on environmental issues.

Chapter 37 – Capacity Building encourages endogenous capacity building mainly in developing countries, with emphasis on the respective roles of public, private and government organisations as experts.

Chapter 38 – Institutional Arrangements discusses the necessary arrangements for supporting sustainable development at a global level, with a focus on the changing role of existing institutions and objectives that are necessary. To this end, the primary recommendation is the creation of a UN Commission for Sustainable Development to oversee, develop and monitor Agenda 21.

Chapter 39 – Legal Instruments and Mechanisms explores avenues for improvements in the effectiveness of existing and future international law on environment and development, including such issues as consistency of obligations under different instrumentalities and developing country participation.

Chapter 40 – Information for Decision-Making is divided into two parts - Bridging the Data Gap and Improving Information Availability. These focus primarily on improved data collation, dissemination and State of the Environment Reporting. Additionally, there is emphasis on recognising local and indigenous knowledge.

Appendix

3

Some key principles of sustainability

There is no one set of principles of sustainable development. The National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development lists seven principles (see Appendix 4). Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 implies certain principles for action.

The following list of principles are based on our research, literature and experience of what is most applicable to local councils.

Integration — the effective integration of environmental, social and economic considerations in decision making. An integrated approach means that decision making processes at all levels should include consideration of a broad range of environmental, social and economic impacts. The separation of functions within council can result in a decision-maker in one area overlooking impacts that would be readily apparent to people in other areas. Integration involves developing organisational processes that allow such impacts to be easily viewed and considered across council departments before decision making occurs. Integration also suggests the effectiveness of working more closely and cooperatively with other organisations, including neighbouring councils, other levels of government and most significantly, all sectors of the local community.

Community involvement — recognition that sustainability cannot be achieved, nor significant progress made toward it, without the support and involvement of the whole community. A cooperative council-community approach from the early stages through to implementation of a project allows for resource sharing, and a supportive and active community which perceives itself as owning both the problems and the solutions. The effectiveness of this approach is already recognised in many local government programs such as waste minimisation and greenhouse gas emission reduction. Community involvement is also vital to monitoring the state of the environment.

Precautionary behaviour — where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation, such as measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Precautionary behaviour requires the careful consideration of possible adverse environmental effects of planning, policy and practice. Where a threat of serious or irreversible environmental damage exists, it would be imprudent and inadequate to wait for scientific certainty before acting. Precautionary behaviour implies a conservation ethic within councils' environmental planning and management frameworks to guard against environmental degradation.

Equity within and between generations — fairness and equal access to opportunities both in our lifetimes, as well as for future generations. This notion of equity implies the importance of maintaining both ecological integrity and the Earth's resources in order to provide for a certain quality of life, both in the short and long term. As such, present activities should not compromise the right of the present

generation or of future generations to healthy and dynamic environments or foreclose on opportunities. It involves asking, 'Is our quality of life at the expense of others or of generations to come?'

Continual improvement — the declining environmental situation means there is an imperative to take immediate action to become more sustainable and to make continual improvement. Change will not occur all at once; however, it is important to make continual improvements, making the most of advances in technology and scientific understanding about what is sustainable, and of increases in community awareness of sustainability issues.

Ecological integrity — to protect biological diversity and maintain essential ecological processes and life-support systems. Recognising that we are part of the natural environment, not separate from it, the protection of the natural environment in its many diverse forms is essential as we depend so heavily on it. Each region has a unique climate, geomorphology, biota and habitat qualities and patterns that determine the issues and responses to maintaining ecological integrity. As such, urban, rural and coastal councils may have significantly different perspectives in preserving ecological integrity in their region. These could include maintenance and enhancement of vegetation, waterways, coasts and wildlife corridors as well as soil, water and air quality.



Appendix

4

The goal, core objectives and guiding principles of the National Strategy for ESD

Goal

Development that improves the total quality of life, both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends.

Core Objectives

- To enhance individual and community well-being and welfare by following a path of economic development that safeguards the welfare of future generations
- To provide for equity within and between generations
- To protect biological diversity and maintain essential ecological processes and life-support systems.

Guiding principles

- Decision making processes should effectively integrate both long and short-term economic, environmental, social and equity considerations
- Where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation
- The global dimension of environmental impacts of actions and policies should be recognised and considered
- The need to develop a strong, growing and diversified economy which can enhance the capacity for environmental protection should be recognised
- The need to maintain and enhance international competitiveness in an environmentally sound manner should be recognised
- Cost effective and flexible policy instruments should be adopted, such as improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms
- Decisions and actions should provide for broad community involvement on issues which affect them.

These guiding principles and core objectives need to be considered as a package. No objective or principle should predominate over the others. A balanced approach is required that takes into account all these objectives and principles to pursue the goal of ESD.

Commonwealth of Australia, *National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development*, 1992, page 8

Appendix

5

Benefits to council of implementing a Local Agenda 21

1. Managing change more effectively

Local government is undergoing significant structural reform and change. This includes increased community expectations, delegation of powers from state to local government, rate capping, amalgamations and competitive tendering.

A Local Agenda 21 can help councils deal with change. A Local Agenda 21 is a cohesive force, bringing together future planning needs with new structural realities. It allows a local council and its community to develop a locally appropriate means of managing change towards a desired future.

2. More effective policy development

Improved planning and better corporate structures are likely to result from the long term focus of Local Agenda 21 and its emphasis on the integration of environmental, economic and social policies and community involvement. With sustainability as the goal, reconciling the apparently competing pressures for economic development, environmental protection, and a more equitable society should be a priority for the council.

3. Enhanced capacity to meet community needs

Council is more likely to meet the needs of its community by taking an integrated approach and dealing seriously with the answers to questions such as:

- What does this community value?
- What do we want to leave for the next generation?
- How will we achieve our goals?

4. Greater community cohesion

Lack of community cohesion — the isolation of the suburbs, reduced services in rural areas, high neighbourhood crime rates — can be addressed by involving people in decisions about their future. Community ownership of the Local Agenda 21 process does not necessarily change people, but it can work towards long term change for greater community cohesion.

5. Stronger regional links

Sustainability requires cooperation across the many organisations that are responsible for related issues such as air quality, transportation, regional industry and so on. Stronger regional links — especially through regional groupings of councils to coordinate and undertake joint planning, development and conservation activities can lead to benefits in other areas.

6. Cost savings

Effective policy integration and good long-term planning can save resources and therefore money. Cost savings can also be made through practices such as 'life cycle' costing of products — for example, council buildings - and audits of paper, water and other resources.

7. A healthy and vibrant community

By seeking to address economic, environmental and social issues, Local Agenda 21 encourages creative solutions — for example, providing opportunities for attracting new future-focused industry (such as energy efficient manufacturers or industry that uses recycled materials) to increase sustainable jobs in the area.

WHAT'S WORKING

Faced with a problem of a rising watertable, the Coorong Council, in the Murray Mallee of South Australia, set up a pilot plant to pump water from underground and allow it to evaporate in plastic tunnels. It also embarked on a number of value adding projects, namely the production of useful algae, and saltwater table fish.

The system has the dual benefits of being commercially viable and of lowering the groundwater level in the local area.

Contact: Clarry Fisher, Coorong Council, South Australia, ph: (08) 8572 3611

8. Staying relevant

Local Agenda 21 provides the opportunity to capture the imagination of the local community and to stay relevant to them. With the increase in outsourcing of council work, a new role is required. Rather than just servicing the community, local government can play a greater role in community development.

WHAT'S WORKING

At the City of Burnside, the Local Agenda 21 program arose primarily in response to community demand and the council's desire to 'stay relevant' as a level of government in that community. Following a 'customer satisfaction survey' — which highlighted environmental issues as a number one concern — council embarked on an environmental planning process to develop the ideas and actions of sustainability.

The Local Agenda 21 program was the first initiative for many years to capture the imagination of the community. This imagination and enthusiasm within the community provided just the opportunity to implement a number of environmental initiatives of high strategic value. The foremost of these was the introduction of the Integrated Waste Collection Service which reduced waste to landfill by 50% in the first year.

Contact: Trisha Drioli, City of Burnside, South Australia, ph: (08) 8366 4226

Appendix

6

How a Local Agenda 21 fits with existing policies, programs and activities.

EXISTING POLICY, PROGRAM, STRATEGY OR ACTION	RELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL AGENDA 21
Corporate plan	A Local Agenda 21 action plan with its long term focus, and developed through broad community input would form a basis for the corporate plan.
Integrated local area planning (ILAP)	ILAP emphasises some of the key elements of Local Agenda 21, for example, integration, community involvement and intergovernmental partnerships. Local Agenda 21 adds to this the idea of sustainable development and a long term community vision.
Ecologically sustainable development (ESD) plans	Local Agenda 21 provides a process for achieving ESD. An existing ESD plan could form the basis of a Local Agenda 21 program.
State of the environment reporting	State of the environment reporting contributes to the reporting, monitoring and evaluation phase of a Local Agenda 21.
Local Conservation Strategies Social and Cultural Plans Recreation Plans Local Economic Development Plans	These can form one part of the Local Agenda 21 action plan.
Environmental Management Systems (EMS)	An EMS can form one part of the Local Agenda 21 action plan.
Strategic Land Use Planning	Can be the subject of actions in the Local Agenda 21 action plan (NB: a Local Agenda 21 will cover the range of council activities including its own operations, community development, as well as its strategic planning)

Appendix

7

Possible Roles of a Local Agenda 21 Steering Committee

(This Appendix draws on work by Environs Australia on Local Agenda 21 Steering Committees)

There are many roles for the Local Agenda 21 Steering Committee to develop. Here are seven possible roles with some potential tasks listed under each:

Partnership building - develop partnerships and new ways of involving the local community in council operations and policy development

- audit existing opportunities for the community to get involved in council operations
- develop new opportunities, including expansion of current programs such as 'Friends' groups and new areas such as contracting out maintenance and delegating facilitation of policy provision in some areas to community groups
- identify areas where community groups could take the running of Local Agenda 21, including workshops and information sessions and contributing to organisational newsletters
- offer assistance to community groups through development of materials, provision of expertise and financial advice where appropriate, in order to strengthen their involvement in long-term Local Agenda 21 education processes.

Integration - promote new ways of integrating council's policies and operations across all council departments

- identify potential areas of conflict across council operations (the left hand / right hand syndrome)
- develop systems that reduce these potential areas of conflict.

Resourcing - develop resources (finance, expertise, in-kind) to support the Local Agenda 21 process

- identify potential funding sources, their criteria and timelines
- identify key gaps in resources for long-term projects
- identify local and / or regional, community or government organisations that could assist in dealing with these gaps
- develop partnerships with such organisations that meet the needs of the local community as well as the needs of the organisations
- approach local businesses for sponsorship of elements of the Local Agenda 21 process
- determine what activities could be shared with neighbouring councils.

Visioning - develop and facilitate a long-term visioning process to encourage consensus and involvement

- audit the current visioning work (for example, as done for the strategic plan and other planning initiatives) by building an inventory of existing plans and the visions that have been developed
- build on this visioning work by allowing groups that were not included to have a say, this will involve identifying key interest groups in the region and matching them with the groups and individuals involved in the previous work
- ask key sectors (developers, builders, traders, conservation groups, tourist operators etc) for their vision of the future.

Setting directions - goals, indicators, targets and actions

- coordinate the development of goals, indicators and targets (perhaps by various working groups), ensuring that they are complementary and fit with the principles of sustainable development
- coordinate the development of an action plan, including determining the priorities for action
- consider how best to produce and promote the plan so that it is of interest to the council and community.

Overseeing the process

- oversee implementation of the action plan, adjusting priorities if circumstances change
- review the action plan in light of information about its outcomes
- keep an eye on the Local Agenda 21 process, ensuring that it remains relevant and inclusive.

Education - coordinate an education and awareness program for council and the community, monitor community attitudes and promote Local Agenda 21 activities

- map the council's decision-making processes and identify potential blockages to education processes
- identify key information opportunities, including management sessions, council briefings, internal newsletters and so on
- produce information in a basic and plain manner that provides an overview of sustainability for the council and community
- identify existing surveys and other tests of community attitudes that are relevant to this area
- work with existing organisations to fill gaps in education about sustainability.

Globalising - encourage community and council links nationally and internationally

- identify existing links with organisations outside the municipality both within Australia and overseas
- identify potential linkages to organisations which may provide learning opportunities both for council and community.

Appendix

8

The City of Adelaide's Vision

(City of Adelaide, Environmental Management Plan, April 1997, page 36)

Our Vision

The vision of a sustainable city supported by participants in the planning process includes the following goals.

Environmental Quality

A clean healthy and enjoyable city where the natural environment and amenity are valued and there is:

- clean air, clean water, and clean soil
- streets are clean and only water goes down the drains
- a toxin-free city - both within and outside buildings
- a noise free city.

A Living Caring Community

A city where people want to live, work and visit with:

- activity 24 hours a day
- a thriving viable economic community
- attraction for people of all ages
- a strong sense of caring and community
- people of all ages being valued
- people feeling safe.

Opportunity, Choice and Responsibility

A city with a variety of options for living, working, moving and recreating, providing opportunities for:

- people to contribute to sustainable practices
- people individually and collectively to make a difference to their city's future
- people to act on their own behalf in community ventures and where the community recognizes that the common good may curtail individual freedoms & require individual responsibilities.

Resource Use

A city where land and resources are used efficiently and fairly and where:

- energy resources are used wisely
- the potential for use of renewable energy is maximised
- buildings are of energy efficient design and are ecologically responsible
- development is not at the expense of global resources (e.g. rain forest timbers)
- water is managed efficiently
- storm water is harvested for re-use
- resource recovery is maximized and waste sent to landfill is minimised.

Natural Environment

A city where the natural environment provides opportunities for peaceful activity, where natural amenity is protected and where:

- Park Land terrestrial and aquatic environments are restored
- The 'living Park Lands' have an ecological balance of uses - with more trees, more shade and more emphasis on wildlife refuges
- Park Lands are continuous - providing corridors for people and fauna.

Movement and Access

A city with a diverse mix of compatible land uses, where people can have access (preferably walking) to all their work, living and recreation needs and where we have real alternatives to car use. Transport decisions are made in an integrated way to promote:

- priority to pedestrians and cyclists
- elimination of unnecessary vehicular traffic
- unrestricted access to people with disabilities
- provision of an effective public transport service which is clean (in all ways), comfortable, frequent, flexible and compatible with pedestrians and city form.

Balance

A city where people are in balance with the environment and where:

- there is adequate natural light, access to sunlight, protection from scorching sun, summer shade from street trees and access to fresh air
- diverse communities, individuals and businesses live in harmony with each other
- the Park Lands have an appropriate and sustainable balance between recreation and environmental uses
- resource use and waste management does not cause imbalance with adjacent local communities.

Management

A city where all social, economic and environmental decisions at all levels of government are integrated to promote the vision outlined and where

- we have brought sustainability into all council activities
- all levels of government work together responsibly to manage the city & Park Lands.

Appendix

9

Many uses for indicators

(This Appendix draws on work by Environs Australia on sustainability indicators)

In addition to providing information for the evaluation and review of Local Agenda 21 actions and targets, there are many other uses for indicators that can help to promote sustainability. These include gaining community support for council activities, promoting individual lifestyle change and encouraging debate about sustainability.

Engendering debate and determining a vision of sustainability

The information obtained from indicators can be used to encourage debate and spark interest in sustainability issues. For example, indicators will show the current state of a situation and any emerging trends. People can then ask: “Are we heading in the right direction?” Information specific to the local area will spark greater interest and motivate action more than information about issues on a global, national or even state level.

Measuring change

The traditional role of indicators is in measuring the health of systems. Measured change is an important part of engendering debate and education within the local area. It also allows comparisons between municipalities and encourages learning from the experience of others.

Direct policy and future planning

Indicators have two main roles in contributing to planning and policy creation in council. Firstly, they show whether progress is being made towards the vision of sustainability. Secondly, by showing trends, indicators can act as warning signals, alerting the council and community to previously unrecognised issues that need to be addressed.

Raising awareness and support

Indicators can be used to raise awareness of what needs to be done to achieve sustainability. The mere fact that indicators are used to measure progress towards a specific sustainability goal can educate the local community about what is considered desirable and necessary in order for sustainability to be achieved. Where the community is involved in a project, feedback on the outcomes of their voluntary work and of the Local Agenda 21 process can provide motivation for continued involvement.

Changing society's goals

One of the major outcomes of using indicators in a Local Agenda 21 program can be to change the goals of society. By promoting sustainable practice and providing information about the impacts of current actions, individuals are given information on which they can assess and alter their lifestyles.

Keeping watch on things of value

If resources allow, indicators can be chosen for things which have been recognised as being of importance to the community, but for which there is currently no significant problem (eg democracy, recreational opportunities). In such cases, monitoring over a period of time can provide warning signals of downturns. This allows action to be taken before the issue becomes so great that it is difficult to address.



Appendix

10

Regional Agenda 21

(This Appendix draws on work by Environs Australia on Regional Agenda 21)

Many issues that are of importance at a local scale may need to be tackled regionally (eg water management, transportation, employment, and housing development). If there is sufficient commitment from neighbouring councils and regional organisations, an Agenda 21 can be undertaken at that scale. It can be an overarching Agenda 21 program, which takes account of the individual Local Agenda 21s of the relevant councils, or it can stand alone.

NB: Whether or not there is a regional Agenda 21 program, a Local Agenda 21 run by one local government will still need to involve partnerships with other councils and organisations in order to be effective.

WHAT'S WORKING

The Murrumbidgee Sustainable Development Committee, formed originally to prepare a land and water plan for the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area, is now considering developing a broader sustainable development plan for the area. The committee includes key industry players as well as local government representatives and a CSIRO representative among others.

Contact Brian Clarke, Executive Officer, Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area Council of Horticultural Associations, ph: (02) 6264 2420

WHAT'S WORKING

An Agenda 21 approach has been taken in the Parramatta Road 2000 and Beyond Project which involves a partnership of 12 councils along the length of Sydney's Parramatta Road, various NSW state government agencies, business, community, cultural, environmental and transport groups. The goal of the project is the improvement of the road, Sydney's main west arterial road to deal with the severe traffic problems and consequent negative impacts. The project has involved a visioning session using sustainable development principles and the refinement of ideas into goals and strategies. Issues being addressed in the project include environment, economic development, planning controls, traffic and transport, heritage, and urban and landscape design.

Contact: Inner Metropolitan Regional Organisation of Councils ph: (02) 9265 9439

Regional Organisations of Councils

There are many regional bodies performing a wide range of functions across Australia including economic development, water catchment, waste management, and social and cultural development. Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs) can take a role in facilitating a regional approach to Local Agenda 21 and sustainable development as the ROC is based on a sphere of government with a multi purpose focus.

A regional or catchment approach to sustainable development would need to:

- ensure effective communication between the member councils
- develop regional sustainable development strategies and not simply regional economic development strategies
- gather adequate resources both from their member councils but also from other regional stakeholders
- achieve a greater flexibility with respect to the borders that divide different regional bodies
- encourage active engagement with other regional stakeholders including industry, business and the community.

WHAT'S WORKING

SEQ2001 is the cooperative regional planning project between councils in the South East Queensland Region, the Queensland Government and the Commonwealth Government. Initiated in 1990 in response to population growth pressures, the SEQ2001 aims to ensure that the overall pattern of regional development reflects the environmental, social and economic values of the community. The project coordinates the relevant planning agencies in the region in order to tackle regional planning issues. The Regional Framework for Growth Management is the project's guiding strategy. It commits the project partners to protecting and enhancing the natural environment, diversifying the local economy and supporting the social and cultural development of its component communities.

**Contact: Regional Resource Unit, Queensland, Ph: (07) 3235 4557,
Website: <http://www.qdlgp.qld.gov.au/seq2001>**

Northern Rivers - Framework for a Sustainable Future is the first step towards an integrated strategy for the Northern Rivers Region in NSW. The aim of the strategy will be to sustainably manage land use, natural resources, economic development and infrastructure. It is the result of almost two years of cooperation between Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils, Northern Rivers Regional Economic Development Organisation and Department of the Urban Affairs and Planning. Funds were obtained from the Commonwealth Government under its previous Building Better Cities program.

The Northern Rivers Regional Strategy (NRRS) has drawn upon active community participation in all stages including formulating objectives, testing concepts and obtaining ideas. This approach has been adopted by the NRRS partners to ensure that all people who are interested in the future of the region, whether residents, workers, business owners or visitors, have an opportunity to be involved in moulding and guiding the future of the Northern Rivers region.

The NRRS builds on work already done by councils in the region. It includes a vision for the region, guiding principles, and discussion of regional issues and policies. The strategy will detail desired results, action plans for achieving those results, and assign responsibility and nominate a timeframe for undertaking those actions. It will be reviewed every five years.

The Strategy will provide the basis for coordinating state and local government policy and planning in the region. Ultimately, all policy objectives for the region should be consistent with the agreed vision. The partners and participating organisations will be able to use the strategy as a framework for developing more detailed plans and policies for their individual organisations.

**For further detail on the Northern Rivers Regional Strategy, see
<http://www.nor.com.au/org/nrrs/>**

Things to consider

In considering a regional approach to add value to Local Agenda 21 a council could consider the following:

- Is the council in a strong Regional Organisation of Councils (ROC)? Does the ROC have a separate office, full-time staff and a history of involvement in environmental and sustainable development issues?
- Are there clearly defined issues that are most suitably dealt with at a regional level, such as regional transport systems, major river systems, waste management etc?
- Is there general support for a regional approach as opposed to individual councils wishing to implement a Local Agenda 21?
- Is there a guarantee that a regional policy can be implemented through both the individual actions of the councils as well as the regional body?

A Regional Agenda 21 Checklist

A regional Agenda 21 would involve actions very similar to a Local Agenda 21. The following table suggests some potential steps for a regional Agenda 21.

Step 1 Preparing the ground

- establish a team representative of member councils (council and administration) to begin the process
- identify the resources required and potential funding sources
- prepare a report for the ROC to consider and refer to member councils for their adoption
- foster the adoption of a Local Agenda 21 in each municipality.

Step 2 Building partnerships

- establish a ROC/community/industry/business partnership through a Steering Committee
- set up working groups to investigate specific issues and make recommendations
- coordinate and facilitate the Local Agenda 21 process
- initiate the development of a regional vision.

Step 3 Setting the vision

- publicise the regional approach
- audit ESD and Local Agenda 21 activity in the region
- audit visions prepared in the region involving all stakeholders - communities, councils, agencies
- develop a regional information and communication strategy
- review SoE reports in the region and identify key issues
- establish a regional database of information, groups and issues
- set in place frameworks to undertake a regional sustainability audit and develop sustainability indicators

- place regional issues in a global context
- aggregate the regional value of Local Agenda 21.

Step 4 The action plan

- establish policy directions for the region
- draw up new policy directions and appropriate action plans
- facilitate Local Agenda 21 activities in local communities and councils
- provide a coordinating role on Local Agenda 21 work in each area
- establish agreement on the need to change current organisational structures / procedures
- identify common elements and common actions.

Step 5 Implementing, monitoring and reporting

- share the information with all stakeholders across the regional community
- identify who is responsible for implementing the action plans
- commence implementation of new policy directions and actions
- facilitate, train and disseminate guidance on organisational/procedural change
- prepare a regional report on Local Agenda 21
- advertise changes to current practices and systems
- evaluate the action plans
- monitor the programs and make regular reports
- review policies and actions not making progress.

Further Reading

Thorman R and Heath I (1997) *Regional Environmental Strategies - How to prepare and implement them: A guide for local government, regional organisations, catchment and landcare groups*. Australian Local Government Association, Canberra.