

City of Albany Tourism Strategy 2005-2010



ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT

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This strategy outlines Council's role in tourism development over the period 2005-2010. It will be the subject of ongoing review and will be amended from time to time to reflect changes in Council's policy direction.

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19/04/05	(Item 14.4.1)	Establish Tourism Development Officer
21/06/05	(Item 14.3.1)	Management of Albany Visitor Centre
20/12/05	(Item 14.3.1)	Contract for the provision of privately operated tour and accommodation booking service

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Executive Summary

The decision to commission a City of Albany Tourism Strategy was made by Council in May 2004, with a draft circulated for comment to industry, government agencies and the wider community in December 2004.

The strategy establishes the foundations and directions for the City of Albany's role in the development of the tourism industry in Albany for the next 5 years. Importantly the strategy establishes strategic focus areas and the key actions that are necessary to achieve the City's vision for tourism.

These key actions will be implemented in partnership with our major tourism stakeholders and form the foundation of a strong and sustainable commitment to lead and foster the development of Albany's tourism future.

A Tourism Development Officer, reporting to the Manager Economic Development will be engaged to implement the key actions of this strategy.

The City acknowledges the valuable assistance of the Great Southern Development Commission and the W.A Heritage Council in financially assisting the preparation and implementation plans associated with this strategy.



The City's Vision for Tourism

By the year 2010, Albany will be sustainably positioned as one of the top three regional visitor destinations in Western Australia offering a range of facilities, services and experiences that satisfy our target markets and contribute to our community's lifestyle.

THE CITY'S STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS FOR TOURISM

Development and Management of Tourist Attractions and Facilities

Council will focus its efforts and resources upon the delivery of core services and the management of its existing tourist attractions, the Princess Royal Forts and the Albany Artificial Dive Reef. The completion of the Albany Waterfront and the Albany Entertainment and Convention Centre and the further refinement of facilities at the Albany Windfarm and the Amity Heritage Precinct are priority projects.

Marketing and Promotion

Council will lead the development of a Tourism Marketing Plan that produces a distinctive Albany brand, identifies market segments, and establishes a mix of marketing and promotional activities that will best access our identified markets. Council will then coordinate the implementation of the plan in partnership with industry stakeholders and in a manner complementary to the development of tourism in the Great Southern Region.

Visitor Servicing

As of 1 October 2005 Council will operate the Albany Visitors Centre by providing a free visitor information service and enter into a contractual arrangement with private enterprise for the provision of tour and accommodation booking services.

Town Planning and Development Facilitation

Council will identify and establish an appropriately zoned pool of tourism development land, and a flexible approach to tourism proposals throughout the City, notwithstanding that any new development should not destroy or threaten Albany's unique natural and cultural heritage.



Why should the Council be involved with Tourism?



Council believes that it has an important role to play in tourism, particularly in establishing a workable industry structure that can oversee and implement a successful and sustainable marketing plan.

Council's involvement is justified by the following:

- ▶ It is a representative of ratepayers and therefore should influence tourism in a way that reflects ratepayers' ideals.
- ▶ It is best placed as an organisation to coordinate the activities of other stakeholders in the industry.
- ▶ It is a key body involved in local planning and therefore plays a pivotal role in providing infrastructure and services and accommodating the needs of investors, developers and service providers.
- ▶ It has well developed networks within State and Australian Governments.
- ▶ It has the financial capacity to undertake tourism development projects either alone, in partnership with the private sector, or with stakeholders such as Tourism Western



Australia, Australia's South West, Great Southern Development Commission or regionally based marketing organisations.

It is generally acknowledged that Council should take a leadership and coordination role in the development of the tourism industry. Whilst some would argue that the industry itself should take responsibility, it is recognised that the diversified and small business nature of the industry make that impractical.

At least in the short to medium term, there is an important role for Council to play in leadership and coordination. This will require resource allocation to the range of strategic focus areas outlined below.

Council has developed a four faceted approach to the development of tourism and in doing so has demarcated its role within each function. These four strategic focus areas are defined as *Development and Management of Tourist Attractions and Facilities*, *Marketing and Promotion*, *Visitor Servicing* and *Town Planning and Development Facilitation*.



Development and Management of Tourist Attractions and Facilities

Council has traditionally been involved in the development and maintenance of standard municipal infrastructure such as parks and gardens, public toilets, boat ramps, pathways and civic places. Alison Hartman Gardens, the Middleton Beach foreshore and Boardwalk, the Frenchman Bay public toilets and the Little Grove boat ramps and jetty are good examples of quality facilities that benefit both tourism and the local community.



Other activities have been based around developing tourist attractions. The former HMAS Perth Artificial Dive Reef, the Princess Royal Forts and the Amity are excellent examples of the City developing and managing attractions that have established themselves as tourism icons.

The downside of such projects is the capital cost and annual operating deficits that are incurred. Future involvement in the development of tourist attractions that incur significant annual operating losses will hamper Council's ability to fund an effective tourism marketing strategy.

Council believes that the priority for tourism now lies in increasing the level of visitation by tourists, particularly in terms of how long they stay and how many services they purchase. Significant increases in visitation rates will bolster the financial viability of existing tourist attractions and services and provide a more attractive investment base for the prospective developers of new tourism products and services.

In summary Council will continue to maintain and develop high quality tourist related facilities that are traditionally seen to be Local Government services. These include our airport, public toilets, boardwalks, boat ramps, foreshores, parks and reserves and civic streetscapes.

Involvement in tourist attractions will be limited to managing our existing enterprises such as the Forts and the Artificial Reef,

participating in the development of the Albany Waterfront, the Entertainment and Convention Centre, the Amity Heritage Precinct and the Albany Windfarm, and assisting and facilitating industry stakeholders in resourcing and establishing new opportunities. Council will also continue to support the efforts of other agencies, for example the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), who manage and develop many of Albany's natural and iconic tourist attractions.

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Marketing and Promotion

Council has clearly identified marketing and promoting the City as a major tourist destination as requiring significant and immediate attention.

The City will take a strategic leadership role in the destination marketing of Albany to ensure that the resources that are applied to promotional activities achieve maximum economies of scale and specifically target identified market segments.

Over the last 5 years the City has been involved in low key marketing activities, advertising in magazines and journals, producing brochures and attending trade exhibitions and shows. Other

promotion has been undertaken in partnership with regional tourism marketing associations and major tourism attraction drawcards such as Whaleworld and Mt Romance.

In the future Council must take a more strategic approach in its marketing efforts if it is to effectively convert the limited resources it has available into successful marketing outcomes.

A critical aspect of Council marketing strategy will be to identify the target markets that Albany can attract. There must be also be a strategic alignment between the mix of activities that are developed to promote Albany and the markets that have been identified as being most likely to visit.

Also important is the establishment of a distinctive Albany 'brand' that identifies Albany's considerable



comparative advantages over its competition and provides a basis for the development of an image that becomes well known and desirable to identified target markets.

It must be emphasised that the Great Southern regional tourism product is a significant contributor to Albany's attractiveness as a destination and therefore the marketing plan must accommodate and complement the best interests of the region as a whole.

Council cannot undertake this very important task on its own and will engage key industry representatives to be involved in the process. It is proposed to establish an ongoing marketing and promotion campaign that should provide a measurable increase in number of tourists visiting Albany, the nights they stay and the money they spend.

In summary Council's major role in the marketing and promotion of Albany will be to lead a process that establishes a distinctive Albany brand, identifies target markets, produces advertising and promotional media and engages in ongoing marketing and promotional activities.

The City will undertake this project in partnership with major tourism industry stakeholders in terms of both design and conception of the marketing plan and the activities that derive from it.

It is acknowledged that the Albany Visitor Centre (AVC) will always require deficit funding, however extra revenues could be generated from activities related to core tourism services, provided of course that such activities do not expose either the AVC or the City to inappropriate commercial risk.

Tourism WA is currently undertaking a state-wide review of visitor servicing centres and the outcomes of the review will obviously be considered in any analysis of the role of the City in visitor servicing and the relationship between the Albany Visitors Centre and the City.

Council will continue to provide support funding for the Albany Visitors Centre and in partnership with industry stakeholders accept responsibility for Visitor Servicing in the City of Albany.

As of 1 October 2005, the City will assume operation of the Albany Visitor Centre providing a free visitor information service. Tour and accommodation booking services will also operate out of the Albany Visitor Centre and will be tendered to private enterprise to operate on a shared commission basis.

Town Planning and Development Facilitation

Visitor Servicing



Council has identified visitor servicing as an area that requires review in terms of the role and responsibility of the City and the needs of all components of the Albany Tourism Industry.

The Albany Visitors Centre plays a vital role in visitor servicing and should be sustainably managed and resourced to provide a contemporary and effective level of visitor information.



Council sees the availability of appropriately zoned land for tourism development as critical to the long-term growth and success of the industry. Along with land availability, prospective investors and developers require effective procedures and systems that allows for the analysis and approval of proposals within appropriate time frames.

Council sees the protection of Albany's significant cultural and natural heritage places as vital. Tourism icons such as the Stirling Terrace and Residency Museum historical precincts and the Town Hall Theatre must be sustainability

managed and controlled for future generations of tourists and locals to enjoy.

Albany's fabulous coastline and National Parks are also significant contributors to our overall tourism resource and our comparative advantage over competition destinations and require protection and appropriate management.

Council will ensure that its Town Planning strategies, and policies/procedures are complementary to the development of sustainable and attractive tourism related projects that add value to the City's overall tourism infrastructure. Availability of appropriately located and zoned land for major tourism projects is acknowledged as a key requirement, particularly for the development of quality accommodation that will service our target markets. There is also a need to introduce greater flexibility in zoning throughout the remainder of the district so that second and third tier tourism projects are not subjected to lengthy and expensive rezoning processes.

Council will collaborate with other major stakeholders such as the WA Heritage Council, Department of Conservation and Land Management, Department of Environment and the Albany Aboriginal Heritage Advisory Group to ensure that new developments and land uses do not threaten the Natural and cultural heritage values that make the City so unique and desirable as a tourist destination.



Strategic Focus Area 1: Development and Management of Tourist Attraction



Key Actions

1. Continue the management and development of parks and gardens, boardwalks, dual-use paths, walk trails, foreshore and civic precincts.

- Timeframe On-going.
 Resources Existing Operating Budget.
 References
- Pathways Master Plan.
 - Reserves Master Plan.
 - Streetscape Committee.

2. Continue Management and development of Princess Royal Forts, HMAS Perth Artificial Dive Reef and Emu Point Boat Pens. Establish an integrated business plan for Emu Point Boat Pens and HMAS Perth Artificial Dive Reef.

- Timeframe On-going.
 Resources
- Existing Operating Budgets.
 - Return on investments and tax equivalent payments to be directed to marketing and promotion budget.
- References Business Plans.

3. Continue management and development of Albany Regional Airport.

- Timeframe On-going.
 Resources
- Existing Operating Budgets.
 - Return on investment and tax equivalent payment to be directed to marketing and promotion budget.
- References Albany Airport Business Plan.

4. Lead the Albany Waterfront Project in partnership with Landcorp, Great Southern Development Commission and Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

- Timeframe Construction Commencement: 2006
 Project Completion: 2008
 Resources State/Federal Funding – \$28.7 million (committed)
 References
- Albany Waterfront Development Steering Committee.
 - Albany Waterfront Design Concept.

5. Establish and operate the proposed Albany Entertainment Centre.

- Timeframe Construction 2006/2007
 Resources
- State (\$14.9 million committed)
 - Federal (\$1m – pending application)
 - City of Albany 1.2 million.
- References Albany Entertainment Centre Steering Committee.

6. Further develop and enhance visitor facilities and visitor experiences at the Albany Wind Farm.

- Timeframe • 2005 - Public toilets, Shelter and On-site interpretation.
Resources • Public toilets and basic visitor facilities:
 - City of Albany, \$90k
 - Tourism WA, \$80k
 - Western Power, \$35kReferences Albany Wind Farm Strategic Assessment and Design Concepts report.
Interpretation Plan

Complete

7. Establish the proposed Albany Waterfront Peace Park.

- Timeframe 2005 – design
2005/2006 – construction
Resources \$2m Funding Package required (City, State, Australian Government)
References Albany Waterfront Peace Park Design Concept and Report (Syrinx Environmental PL)

8. Assist with the improvement and enhancement of the Amity historical precinct with the objective of providing more sustainable revenue for the Albany Visitor Centre.

- Timeframe Immediate.
Resources • City of Albany and GSDC for master planning (\$35k)
• Capital works by City of Albany and GSDC (for Brig Amity) (assisted by other grant programs)
References Amity Heritage Precinct Enhancement Committee.
Master Plan by Sally Malone Design

Strategic Focus Area 2: Marketing and Promotion



Key Actions

1. Establish a Tourism Marketing Committee comprising of three Councillors and three Industry Representatives with terms of reference to oversee preparation and implementation of the Tourism Marketing Plan.

- Timeframe Immediate.
Resources Manager Economic Development to provide executive support.
References Nil.

Complete

- 2. Prepare a Tourism Marketing Plan that:**
- Establishes a distinctive Albany brand.
 - Identifies target tourism market segments.
 - Identifies the mix of marketing activities required to access identified market segments.
 - Establishes a 5-year action plan.
 - Establishes measurement tools to gauge industry growth.

Timeframe Immediate.
 Resources Tourism Strategy Development Implementation Budget.
 References Tourism Marketing Committee.

3. Implement Marketing Action Plan

Timeframe 2005 and annually thereafter.
 Resources Operational budget ~\$120k per year plus Industry and Government contributions.
 Ongoing
 References Tourism Marketing Plan.
 Tourism Marketing Committee.

4. Foster and promote major events recognising the significant contribution event tourism plays in bolstering and developing growth in tourism.

Timeframe Ongoing
 Resources Operational budget.
 References Nil

5. Continue Community Events Funding

Timeframe 2005 and annually thereafter.
 Resources Operational budget.
 References Community Events Policy.

**Strategic Focus Area 3:
 Visitor Servicing**



Key Actions

1. Continue on-going financial support of the Albany Visitor Centre.

Timeframe On-going.
 Resources Operational Budget.
 References Council agreement to manage visitor servicing component at existing premises from 1 October 2005
 Council contract for privately operated tour and accommodation booking service (effective 1 February 2006)

2. Undertake an industry wide survey on visitor servicing in the City of Albany.

Timeframe Complete by December 2005
Resources Operational Budget
References Market research in Brand Development

Strategic Focus Area 4: Planning and Development Facilitation



Key Actions

- 1. Engage consultants to undertake analysis of tourism development land in the City and establish a database of available land and recommend actions required for sites currently constrained by inappropriate zoning or land tenure.**

Timeframe 2005/2006.
Resources \$20k from 2005/2006 budget.
References Town Planning Scheme.

- 2. Undertake an internal review of the Town Planning Scheme (existing and proposed) and associated policies and procedures to ensure the Council has the capacity to accommodate contemporary tourism development proposals that will grow our identified tourism market segments.**

Timeframe 2005.
Resources Operational budgets.
References Town Planning Schemes and associated policies

Why the City of Albany Invests in Tourism

TOURISTS ...

SPENDS \$ ON ...

...AND THE TOURISM INDUSTRY PAYS FOR

WHICH BENEFITS ALBANY'S ECONOMY AND PROVIDES SERVICES FOR ALL RESIDENTS



Accommodation



Food/Beverages



Shopping

Other

Waaes/Salarv

Transport

Services (water. aas.

Purchase of Food/Beverages

State Taxes

Commission to Aagents

Music/Entertainment

Local Govt Rates and

Repairs/Maintenance

Purchases/Stock

Administrative/General

Advertisina/Promotion

Petrol

Leaal & Professional Services

Rental of Premises

Capital Assets

- Restaurants/Take-away
- Foods
- Petrol Stations/Roadhouses
- Farmers
- Retail Outlets
- Charities
- Travel Agents
- Taxi Drivers
- Cultural Organisations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Manufacturers
- Company Suppliers
- Govt (Roads, Health, Educ, etc)
- Gift Shops
- Film Developers
- Chemists
- Market Research
- Consultants
- Artists/Entertainers
- Crafts People
- Real Estate Agents
- Shopping Centres
- Cinemas
- Interpreters
- Accountants
- Tracking Operators
- Clerks
- Post Offices
- Engineers
- Pilots
- Public Relations consultants
- Car Dealers
- Builders
- Festival Committees
- Banks
- Wineries/Vineyards
- Plumbers
- Mechanics
- Electricians
- Marine Dealers/Suppliers
- Market Gardeners
- Architects