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Our Ref: A02394

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Productivity Commission  
LB2 Collins Street East  
Melbourne Vic 8003  
Change Adaptation  
Barriers to Effective Climate

Dear Commissioners

### **Submission - Barriers to Effective Climate Change Adaptation**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Productivity Commissions Draft Report on Barriers to Effective Climate Change Adaptation.

The City Of Mandurah (the City) has a strong focus in taking action to address climate change. The City's commitment is reflected in our Strategic Plan and development and implementation of climate change plans including Coastal Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Action Plan and Climate Change Response Plan. The City is also a party in the Peron Naturaliste Partnership (PNP). The PNP is a collaboration of nine local governments with the objective to provide a regional mechanism to facilitate effective and timely adaptation responses to climate change.

The City supports the recommendations outlined in the Draft Report and strongly encourages immediate action to implement the recommendations in a timely and effective manner. The City believes that a collaborative approach involving all levels of government is the most effective means in taking action to deliver effective climate change adaptation.

We would like to provide the following specific comments.

- Draft Recommendation 6.1 – Information Provision.  
The City strongly supports this recommendation. As stated in Chapter 6 – Information Provision. *'There is a number of areas where there may be scope to improve the provision of information by government'*. The Draft Report also states that *'a large volume of guidance material is currently provided to councils to assist them in making decisions about adaptation, but this does not appear to be meeting the requirements of some councils'*. This may be due to the fact that much of this material is generic and not at a scale necessary to make well informed decisions at the local level. Hence the need for detailed local information. This is supported by the statement on page 15 of the Draft Report where it is noted that *'Government's could usefully provide local-scale projections of climate change'*. The City has undertaken a coastal zone risk assessment as part of the Local Adaptation Pathways Program (LAPP), which provided an indication of areas and levels of risk, but it was recognised that more detailed locally relevant modelling and data was required. The City

suggests that downscaled climate projections and hazard mapping should be a higher priority. This information would not only aid in decision-making at the local level but in the provision of useful, relevant information to the community.

- Provision of information alone does not lead to behaviour change. As stated on page 62 of the Draft Report, identifying and understanding barriers and behavioural factors is important in how information is provided and to whom it is targeted. As stated above, the City believes that locally relevant information derived from detailed modelling and studies will not only aid in better decision-making but will be more engaging and pertinent to local communities than the provision of broad, generic information. This is seen as a potential barrier to behaviour change.

Furthermore, the provision of information is often most effective in changing behaviours if accompanied with other initiatives and /or intervention strategies. The City has implemented various programs based on Community Based Social Marketing principles, such as TravelSmart and LivingSmart, which require significant resources in targeting barriers to behaviour change. As such it is our view that to be most effective the provision of climate change information should form part of a larger initiative, which could be implemented at a national or state level.

- Draft Recommendation 7.1 – Local Government.  
The City strongly supports this recommendation. It is also suggested that the roles and responsibilities for adaptation by **State Government**, including in the areas of land-use planning, coastal management, and emergency management be clarified. As stated above a collaborative approach is best adopted to ensure actions are complementary.

The City has been at the forefront of addressing climate change in planning matters in WA and is of the view that current policies need to be reviewed in response to uncertain future climate change impacts. The City is pleased that the WA State Government has recently reviewed State Planning Policy 2.6 *State Coastal Planning Policy* (SPP 2.6). In this regard, the Draft Report should reflect these changes in WA. Furthermore, the City is currently developing a Local Planning Policy (subject to Council endorsement), which will complement the updated SPP 2.6. It is hoped that this will demonstrate an effective and complementary approach to tackling climate change in coastal areas.

- Information Request 7.1  
The City supports this request and will be interested in the findings.
- Draft Recommendation 7.2 – Local Government.  
The City strongly supports this recommendation. There seems to be conflicting information on this matter and clarity is required. As stated in Section 7.4 of the the Draft Report, *'In some cases, it may be perceptions about legal liability that are hindering effective adaptation and not simply the legal arrangements themselves.'*
- In regard to capacity of local governments to address climate change, there is both, financial and human resource constraints within local governments. The

City greatly appreciates the Federal Government funding received as part of the LAPP for without this assistance undertaking this type of work is difficult. The City would like to suggest that there may also be potential for 'developer contribution charges' to assist in funding adaptation.

Skills and knowledge is also an issue in local government. Deficiency of necessary technical expertise in areas such as geomorphology and coastal engineering is a concern. This has been identified as an issue in the City as Council has on a number of occasions sought vulnerability assessments for proposed residential developments. In considering these assessments, specialist expertise is required which has meant that Council has needed to seek external advice.

As stated above, the City is involved in the PNP. This collaborative approach has already been effective in addressing capacity constraints. The partnership was successful in gaining funding through the Federal Governments' Coastal Decision Adaptation Pathways Program to *Develop Flexible Adaptation Pathways for the Peron Naturaliste Coastal Region of Western Australia*. This collaborative approach is seen as a good model to address constraints and to promote local government concerns in regards to climate change.

The City commends the Commission in undertaking this inquiry and appreciates the opportunity to provide this submission.

Yours sincerely

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