

# A Model Heritage Strategy for Local Governments



## Introduction

“Heritage is what we inherit from previous generation and recognise as something that we want to pass on to future generations. It can incorporate both the tangible and the intangible.”

Local Governments play an important role in the identification, protection and management of heritage places. Heritage has been identified by Local Governments as a portfolio for development in terms of marketing, awareness and education to the wider community.

“Heritage can excite curiosity about the past; it can be an important source of classroom learning; and can also generate interest for tourism and encourage return visits.”

## What is a Heritage Strategy?

A heritage strategy is a means of measuring, planning and reporting on heritage activity in the Local Government area. Preparing a heritage strategy and measuring the outcomes will assist Local Governments to assess the impact of heritage programs and plan future activities. Normally a heritage strategy will include actions that address the identification, protection, management and/or promotion of a Local Government's heritage and should be complementary to and build upon the Local Government's Strategic Community Plan, other Local Government strategies and initiatives, and meet legislative requirements.

A heritage strategy provides a means for translating high-level objectives, found within a Council's Strategic Community Plan and other documents, into specific prioritised actions which support both tangible and intangible heritage. This approach seeks to avoid ad-hoc projects and provide a clear action plan with short and long term priorities to assist in efficiently directing resources and actions.

There are a number of elements that a heritage strategy should contain. All strategies should include benchmark data such as the local government heritage inventory, heritage elements of the local planning scheme, number of heritage places and status of heritage places owned by the Local Government. Once a basic heritage framework is in place, a strategy may include items such as incentives, heritage advisory groups, analysis of development activity, heritage tourism projects, conservation expenditure, community engagement opportunities and other relevant issues.

A heritage strategy is a 'whole of Council' strategy which should be fully supported by Council. The actions identified within the strategy should be appropriately funded and it is recommended that the strategy is tied to the Council's Strategic Community Plan and reviewed every four years. While a heritage strategy focuses on historic heritage, in line with State Planning Policy 3.5 Historic Heritage Conservation, it should encourage opportunities to develop partnerships with Aboriginal and natural heritage stakeholders. This approach seeks to ensure a far reaching and inclusive approach to understanding the Local Government's heritage.

WALGA's Model Heritage Strategy aims to provide a guide that Local Governments can use when creating their own strategies. It is not intended that all Local Governments would adopt this strategy, or move to standardisation, but that the model strategy act as a reference for any Local Governments looking for assistance.

## CONTACTS



# A Model Heritage Strategy for Local Governments –

## **PURPOSE/INTRODUCTION** (*amend/expand as required*)

A heritage strategy is a means of measuring, planning and reporting on heritage activity within the Local Government area. Preparing a heritage strategy and measuring the outcomes will assist Local Governments to assess the impact of heritage programs and plan future activities and are recommended whether or not they are required for funding purposes.

A Heritage Strategy is a 'whole of Council' strategy which is tied to the Local Government's Strategic Community Plan, translating high-level objectives into specific actions and objectives and providing a framework under which Local Government heritage services can operate. The strategy is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure full support of Council and proper funding is in place.

The broad purpose of the strategy is to report the current status of heritage in the area, give a statement of intent or future goals, and provide targets against which the rate of change is to be measured. The strategy then indicates priority work areas that will help Local Government work towards these targets. The strategy should be a practical working document and a realistic plan for what can be achieved. (*State Heritage Office*)

## **BACKGROUND**

This section may include:

- The catalyst for developing a Heritage Strategy;
- Brief description of the heritage of the Local Government Area;
- Brief description of the cultural and built heritage of the Local Government Area and any areas/buildings/objects of specific heritage significance.
- Brief description of existing heritage strategies, initiative, provisions or management programs within the Local Government Area; and
- Brief description of the process used to develop the Heritage Strategy, including consultants, workshops and the extent of community engagement.

## **STRATEGY**

### **1. Council's Heritage Vision Statement**

A short statement articulating Council's commitment to heritage.

A short statement on 'What is Heritage?' (optional)

### **2. Strategy Context/Provisions and Framework** (*amend as required*)

Briefly describe how strategy relates to each of the following:

State context - *Planning and Development Act 2005, Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990, Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 and the State Planning Policy 3.5 Historic Heritage Conservation*

Local context – *Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, Sustainability Plan, Reconciliation Action Plan, Local Planning Scheme and other relevant policies, and heritage listings (including statutory and non-statutory).*

## **CONTACTS**

Aboriginal and natural heritage (*Optional, amend as required*) – The identification and protection of Aboriginal Heritage is managed by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs under the provisions of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*. While this Heritage Strategy focuses on historic heritage, in line with *State Planning Policy 3.5 Historic Heritage Conservation*, opportunities to develop partnerships with Aboriginal and natural heritage stakeholders are encouraged, to share knowledge and coordinate activities. This approach seeks to ensure a far reaching and inclusive approach to understanding the Local Government area's heritage.

### 3. Heritage Challenges and Opportunities

Briefly describe specific opportunities and challenges within the Local Government area.

#### Opportunities

The actions outlined in Section 5 are designed to complement and enhance the following measures employed by *Shire/Town/City*, which currently supports the following policies, programs and activities: (*use bullet points, be as concise as possible*)

- XXX
- XXX

#### Challenges

This Heritage Strategy seeks to address these key challenges, some of which are explored below: (*use bullet points, be as concise as possible*)

- XXX
- XXX

### 4. Heritage-related achievements (optional section)

Briefly highlight heritage-related achievements within the Local Government.

*Example:*

*“The Shire/Town/City recognises that it has a rich and diverse heritage and as a result already has a number of initiatives in place to identify, protect, manage and promote this heritage including...”*

### 5. Strategy Action Plan/Framework: Aims and Actions

The following section describes actions, activities and measures of the individual tasks to support the Heritage Strategy. These activities reflect the four themes of the Strategy as described below.

#### **a. Themes:**

- Knowing** – involves identifying, assessing and documenting heritage places and assets, and establishing the information systems to make this knowledge accessible.
- Protecting** – is ensuring there is effective management, clear guidelines for management and to assist decision making.
- Supporting** – refers to assistance, incentives and other activities which encourage communities to value their heritage.
- Communicating and Promoting** – is raising the appreciation, awareness, understanding and celebration of *Shire/Town/City's* heritage.

*Responsibility, Priority, Funding and Progress or Outcome* has been allocated for each action/activity.

Suggested priorities are:

Short term: Within 24 months

Medium term: 2 year – 5 years

Long term: 5 years – 10 years

Ongoing

### Example Table – Knowing

| Action | Task/Activity/<br>Measure | Responsibility | Priority | Progress/<br>Outcome |
|--------|---------------------------|----------------|----------|----------------------|
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |

### Example Table - Protecting

| Action | Task/Activity/<br>Measure | Responsibility | Priority | Progress/<br>Outcome |
|--------|---------------------------|----------------|----------|----------------------|
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |

### Example Table - Supporting

| Action | Task/Activity/<br>Measure | Responsibility | Priority | Progress/<br>Outcome |
|--------|---------------------------|----------------|----------|----------------------|
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |

### Example Table - Communicating and Promoting

| Action | Task/Activity/<br>Measure | Responsibility | Priority | Progress/<br>Outcome |
|--------|---------------------------|----------------|----------|----------------------|
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |
|        |                           |                |          |                      |

## 6. Adoption, Implementation, Monitoring and Review

This Heritage Strategy should be adopted by Council to ensure the activities and measures herein are implemented, and are accessible to all stakeholders.

It is important that regular monitoring, review and reporting is completed annually for this Heritage Strategy in order to ascertain the effectiveness of the actions, when actions have been achieved as well as to identify any outstanding issues. Further, this Heritage Strategy should be reviewed in full every *four* years to assess its effectiveness and set new priorities.

The responsibilities which have been noted for each action are indicative only; cooperation is a major feature of this Heritage Strategy with shared responsibilities between organisations and individuals.

## **7. Assessing New Projects/Initiatives**

This Heritage Strategy provides an outline for current and future heritage activities in the *Shire/Town/City*. Any new proposed projects or initiatives considered in the future should be assessed within the parameters of the goals and objectives of this Strategy.

This Strategy has considered existing strategies, legislation and advice provided including the following:

- *Australian Heritage Strategy, Commonwealth of Australia 2015*
- *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013*
- *State Heritage Office, WA, Heritage Advisory Services, The Heritage Strategy*
- *Western Australian Planning Commission State Planning Policy 3.5 – Historic Heritage Conservation*
- *Department of Planning and Community Development, Victoria, Municipal Heritage Strategies: A Guide for Councils.*
- *The City of Greater Geraldton Heritage Strategy, A Vision for the Future 2013 and Beyond.*
- *Christmas Island Heritage Policy and Heritage Strategy*
- *City of Canning Heritage Strategy*
- *City of Gosnells, The History and Heritage Strategy*
- *City of Swan, Heritage Strategic Plan 2013*