



Mt Barker & District Residents' Association Inc.

PO Box 19 Mount Barker, South Australia 5251

For the Community

28 June 2020

Mr Andrew Stuart, CEO
Mount Barker District Council
P.O Box 54
Mount Barker 5251

RE: STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Dear Andrew,

Please find below some of our key points (in no particular order) with regards to feedback from members to Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan.

1. Compared to the Annual Business Plan, it looks more like a general internal document; uses terms like 'on the books' and 'we own' rather than taking a community perspective. This document does not have a professional look and feel.
2. The plan uses 2014 data to assume health of assets. It is usual to use 6-year-old data to measure the health of assets?
3. Some of the graphs were unlabelled on the y axis. Are the figures thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands or millions?
4. On page 19 there is statement referring to planned expenditure between 2019 and 2022. This should have been updated to reflect the period and graph to which it is referring. The author should know what has been expended in at least 2019.
5. At Figure 1, it shows the majority of assets are at Condition 1. We find this hard to believe considering the age of many assets is likely 50 plus years.
6. This phrase almost seems like an oxymoron:
All of our stormwater assets are in fair condition or better (Figure 1). This is because they are long-lived assets and most were constructed in the 1960s and 1970s. We would have thought assets from 50 to 60 years ago would be aging by now.
7. We find this summary finding quite problematic:
'A key contributor to overall condition is the addition of new assets through growth and development. Although a small addition compared to the size of each asset base, the brand-new condition of these assets can mask underlying issue in an asset class. Additionally, there will be a surge of additional maintenance and capital spend to upkeep these new assets in 10-15 years if left unchecked.'

- We believe it would be more useful to have all aged assets listed separately with a plan that specifically outlines how these assets will be dealt with in the next two decades.
8. We also would like to see how this plan will connect to the Long-Term Financial Plan so that it is clear to the community how all of these assets will need to be upgraded or replaced over the next two decades.
 9. We are surprised that there was no mention of a Town Square project. The Council are part owners of the site and will no doubt have to spend significant amounts of money when this project starts. The new Sports Hub does get a mention, together with estimates of significant amounts of monies needed to get it off the ground. Perhaps the Town Square project needs its own document?
 10. It was great to see that Climate Change gets a significant mention.
 11. We could only find one main point about heritage. We think there should be more inclusion of heritage items as strategic assets.
 12. We feel Critical Assets are too limiting - Page 22.
 13. Arts and cultural assets need to be included. We could not find anything at all in the document related to arts and cultural assets.
 14. In 'Future demand': what are we planning for?
 15. Page 13 - There will be removal of trees as part of developments- how old are they? They should be included as natural heritage. Council recently put a new tree near a footpath and one in the roundabout near the station, that they had accepted from someone else. How is the Council going to keep taking on more trees like this, as they become a Council asset? Council needs to commit to looking after trees/plants that they plant, so they are not damaged in early periods or die off, over a longer time frame. Is this covered in another plan perhaps?
 16. Develop conservation management plans for existing heritage stone buildings (built heritage). Some elements though of council heritage are not simply stone buildings. For example memorials, the Mt Barker memorial show gates, historic trees (are arborist assessments needed to keep an eye on their health for later replacement?) war memorials, etc. These elements should be included.
 17. Revalue some assets (including recreational and open space assets). We do not think the Council should consider selling off more open space to pay for other items.
 18. Under section 5 Levels of service: there are two dot points one on unsealed roads and the other on footpaths. The footpath is obviously copy and paste with the author forgetting to modify all the appropriate text referring to fixing unsealed roads rather the footpaths (editing issue).

Once again, many thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback to the Strategic Asset Management Plan.

Kind regards

Dianne van Eck

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Chairperson

