

The Middleton Beach Group
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Middleton Beach
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To Executive and Councillors
City of Albany
PO Box 484
ALBANY 6331

Dear Sirs

After several months of anticipation it was pleasing to view a draft of the Council Management Plan 2009 for Middleton Beach (Including Emu Point Foreshore).

The document was tabled at the recent meeting of The Middleton Beach Group and the following comments are submitted for your consideration;

- The document serves well as a rudimentary Management Plan for provision of standard services and management procedures. The outlines for tenures, reserves, Aboriginal Heritage site protection, history and physical environment descriptions are all useful and well documented.
- It is acknowledged that a fire management plan and other fundamental management matters such as ranger services are also essential.
- However it ignores many key physical, social and economic aspects which are inter-related to environmental sustainability- ie storm water drainage, the Esplanade site development, and more.
- Our group welcomes the audit of signage and the associated action to produce and install revised and coordinated signs. However there is real concern that “standard” signage from many and varied sources will detract from the character of Middleton Precinct. Our preference would be for a style of signage to be developed that suits the precinct’s character, and then all signs to be reviewed and presented in that style.
- There is support also for the actions relating to extension of the dual pathway along the foreshore at Emu Point and the construction of a formal pathway through Reserve 44750.
- It is suggested that the action referring to the Kinjarling Trail signage should read “Support the recognition of the Kinjarling trail and associated *historical, environmental* and Aboriginal cultural signage throughout the foreshore reserves”. (The Kinjarling project brochure says it will include all of these)

The Middleton Beach Group’s main concern is that the plan appears to be passive, rather than proactive – it talks about retaining rather than developing or enhancing. Hence we see the need for the Basic Management Plan to be expanded to incorporate community identity, a shared vision and a futuristic plan for this unique and splendid precinct.

- It is proposed that a whole of Middleton Beach community public planning session should be held within the next 6 months.
- Invitations to such a Futures Planning Event should be circulated to all residents in the Middleton Beach Precinct, and advertised in local papers so that other people who use and enjoy the facilities, beaches and walk trails of the precinct can be involved if they so wish.

- Professional facilitators, who are not local stakeholders should be engaged to conduct the session, and to collate the outcomes that are achieved.
- Prior to such a forum, suggestions for colour and style themes, and other options for basic amenities might be drawn up by professional streetscape consultants so that participants in the session have some guidance.
- Plans for the Surf Club, Beach Café and the Project Plaza Albany development should be on display and representatives (if available) should be given brief opportunity to present their plans, so that participants can be well informed in preparation for the Future Planning.
- A survey to all stakeholders could be circulated with the invitation so that those who do not wish to attend have the opportunity to express opinions and ideas in writing.
- Our Group has already heard excellent suggestions for street-scaping Adelaide Crescent, for having a Centenary Avenue of Trees along Middleton Beach Road in Eyre Park, for entry statements, for public artworks, interpretive signage, character rubbish bins and bike racks, public entertainment and events, and many more.
- All of these things deserve consideration and prioritisation by the whole community, or at least by those who are community-minded.

It is recognised that there is a cost involved in conducting the above recommendations, however, it will be money well spent as;

- A shared vision for the Precinct will bring together many members of the community.
- Having the opportunity to participate should appease some of those who have expressed dissatisfaction with the City of Albany's management in the precinct in the past.
- Such an event and the follow up document will give residents and other stakeholders shared "ownership" of the future of this very special part of Albany.
- Shared ownership, engagement and follow up communication will build the community capacity in many qualitative ways that will have ongoing benefits to the City of Albany's public relations.

The Middleton Beach Group offers to assist the City of Albany with delegates to a working group for the preparation of a Futures Planning Workshop, should this recommendation be accepted.

We look forward to your considered response and support for our proposed follow up.

Yours sincerely

JANE MOURITZ for The Middleton Beach Group

14th October 2009

(NB. For the purposes of this proposal, it is envisaged that the area specified should include the coast from Ellen Cove to Emu Point, the bushland around Mount Adelaide and Mount Clarence, parks and reserves including Lake Seppings and Eyre Park, and the residential area along Middleton Beach Road (from the Roundabout near Albany Primary School), and up the hill to include Hare Street and around Middleton Cove.)