



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Sport and Recreation**

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Dr Sarah Palmer
The Principle Research Officer
Community Development and Justice Standing Committee
Level 1 / 11 Harvest Terrace
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Dear Sarah

RE: ENQUIRY INTO POLICY IMPLICATION OF AN AGEING COMMUNITY

Please find attached the Department of Sport and Recreations submission to the above enquiry into policy implications of an ageing community.

Thank you for the extension of time for the Department to develop a submission.

The Department is keen to address the standing committee if required.

Yours sincerely

Graham Brimage
Director, Strategic Policy and Planning

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Building stronger, healthier, happier and safer communities

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The Community Development and Justice Standing Committee
Inquiry into Policy Implications of an ageing Community

We request an opportunity for a departmental representative to appear before the committee.

The Department of Sport and Recreation was involved with the development of this strategy. Two important publications were referenced in its development. They are:

- "Active Living for All- A Framework for Physical Activity in Western Australia 2012 – 2016"
- "Strategic Directions for the Western Australian Sport and Recreation Industry 2011 – 2015"

Both these publications give critical analysis of the benefits, challenges and the need for quality planning inclusive of the senior's area.

The concept of an "Age-Friendly WA" is strongly supported; however there appears to be many challenges still yet to be addressed.

Comments relating to the document "An Age-Friendly WA: The Strategic Planning Framework 2012–2017" are as follows:

Introduction:

Strongly support the underlying concept that – "Government, the broad community and individuals all have a role to play in planning for an age-friendly WA".

There is evidence that suggests that individuals, as members of a community, must have developed the skills, habits and attitudes that are necessary to live a healthy and fulfilled life as a senior long before they actually reach "senior" status. Many find changing their lifestyle that sees the concept of "paid work" be replaced by having a massive increase in time available for leisure, challenging.

Fulfilling paid work provides the individual with intrinsic benefits such as:

- Mental stimulation
- Sense of accomplishment
- Social contact
- Sense of connectedness
- Structure

- Early planning of key neighbourhood destination points e.g. shops and services
- Access to local amenities, services and facilities
- Convenient location of community facilities
- Availability of accessible and adequate public transport
- Prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists over motorists
- Provision of shared use paths
- Connected street networks
- Adequate pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and end of trip facilities
- Adequate and multi-functional public open space
- Aesthetic design of streetscape and infrastructure
- Management of traffic volume and speed
- Safe road crossings
- Adoption of design out crime principles
- Community consultation and engagement
- Responsible use and access to the natural environment
- Application of disability access and inclusion plans for developments and facilities

These enable the achievement of the overall objective of the provision of well-planned and designed environments that support, encourage and enable active living.

The department's wide scope of operations significantly contributes to the attainment of the outcomes of the **key pathways (as detailed in the document)**. Comment on this contribution is as follows:

- **Promoting health and wellbeing: "Prevention is better than cure".** The department invests into many different programs and initiatives developed and implemented by a wide range of sport and recreation organisations. Many of these focus on seniors and provide the ideal vehicle for a senior to achieve a healthy and happy lifestyle. As said, previously in this document, ensuring people have the skills, capacity and motivation to live a healthy and active life is essential for them to master the habits that are necessary to keep them well as a senior. The department continually asks the question - what can be done to encourage this generation to adopt a strong leisure/physical activity ethic?

What will help? – The department supports the continued pursuit of the initiatives in this section. In particular the last dot point relating to social and community connectedness. The department significantly contributes in this area. An example of this is our current program "Active Smart" – this program is at the cutting edge of contemporary thinking in getting people physically active and connected in the local community.

- **Access to essential services - "What, when and where"** – the department agrees with the need for high quality health care across the community. Access to opportunities to participate in community based activities (sport and recreation and broader) cannot be seen as discretionary, as in some cases, but an essential component of the care needs of the seniors.

- What will help? – The strategies outlined need to be continued and enhanced where required. The department plays a critical role in many of them and will continue to do so.

The Way Forward

As detailed, the department has a very important role in the continued implementation of the Seniors Strategic Planning Framework. To date, the department has only rarely used the framework in its planning processes. It is clear that a collaborative approach must be taken by government when developing and implementing such frameworks. We look forward to any future deliberations in the area.