

MEDIA STATEMENT



Monday, 31 October 2016

Urban renewal to help Withers evolve

A desire to see the suburb of Withers continue to evolve into a safe, vibrant and active neighbourhood took an important step forward today with the signing a Memorandum of Understanding that focusses on urban renewal in the suburb.

The City of Bunbury, South West Development Commission and Housing Authority have devised a framework for the urban renewal through the Withers Local Area Plan, which has established a shared community vision for Withers.

Goals include increased private investment and improved housing choice and diversity; upgrading under-utilised public open space; increased internal and external connectivity; creating a gateway to Withers by strengthening commercial and civic areas; and enhancing amenities.

Reducing social housing to an appropriate mix over time, facilitating the provision of affordable housing and rectifying inefficiencies in the layout of the suburb will be key drivers of the renewal program.

An inter-agency working group will be established to coordinate the Withers Urban Renewal Strategy, while a Community Reference Group and Industry Reference Group will provide input and advice.

City of Bunbury chief executive officer Andrew Brien said the aim was to support and grow a diverse population in Withers with access to a range of employment opportunities, public transport and civic amenity.

“The MOU builds on the \$1.2 million already spent by the City on the recommendation of the Withers Advisory Committee and the community, who identified projects of need in the suburb,” Mr Brien said.

“This collaborative relationship will support change and realise positive outcomes for the current and future community.”

South West Development Commission acting chief executive officer Anna Oades said the MOU was a catalyst to achieving further outcomes for the residents of Withers.

“It’s an exciting time to be a resident of Withers and see not only the great outcomes that have already been achieved, but also see the possibility of the suburb being further revitalised,” she said.

“The SWDC is committed to completing the Withers Urban Renewal Strategy now that the local area plan is complete. We will allocate further funding to ensure these objectives are met.”

ENDS

Jamie Tatham, Communications Officer
T: 9792 7136 **T:** 0447 936 037 **E:** jtatham@bunbury.wa.gov.au

4 Stephen Street, Bunbury WA 6230 - PO Box 21 Bunbury WA 6231
TTY: 13 36 77 **F:** (08) 9792 7184 **W:** www.bunbury.wa.gov.au