

**Strengthening our community**

30 May 2008

Mr Michael Sedgman  
General Manager, Corporate Strategy & Performance  
Adelaide City Council  
GPO Box 2252  
Adelaide SA 5001

Dear Mr Sedgman

This submission on the Adelaide City Council's (ACC) Draft 2008-09 Annual Business Plan and Budget document is provided by the South East City Residents Association (SECRA).

The following comments are provided on a number of the sections of the Summary provided at the beginning of the above document:

**Council Services and Responsibilities**

The majority of services and responsibilities listed are those that would be expected of all councils. However, unlike the majority of Councils, the Adelaide City Council operates a significant number of commercial off-street car parks stations (Upark).

SECRA is of the view that by encouraging long term use of these parks by city workers, there is a conflict with the need to encourage the use of public transport for environmental reasons and with the Council's stated desire to have a pedestrian and cyclist friendly city.

While accepting that the ACC may continue to participate in the parking industry to achieve good revenue, SECRA believes that the management of the carparks allows the ACC to minimise any environmentally detrimental outcomes of encouraging car use in the city in a number of ways.

Firstly, the ACC is in a good position, through competitive pressures, to influence charging policies of all city car parks. It could lead by example in decreasing short term parking costs while increasing those of long-term parking thereby increasing the attractiveness of the city for shopping while discouraging city workers bringing their cars into the city. It could also place long-term parking at points furthest from the entrance.

Secondly, a 'green levy' could be identified as a percentage of the car parking revenue for specifically green measures which would not otherwise be undertaken by Council. In this way, those polluting the city would be those who pay to obviate the effect – not just rate payers.

Thirdly, the ACC should liaise with the State Government to implement a public transport strategy to encourage greater use of public transport within the city limits.

Finally, SECRA requests that public transport be free within the city terraces as currently occurs with the trams from South to North Terraces.

There can be some positive outcomes from the ACC's involvement in commercial ventures such as car parks.

However, SECRA questions Council 's role in such projects as the redevelopment of the Balfours site and the bus station. SECRA 's view that the Council should not be involved directly in such developments, particularly where large capital expenditures are involved, because it is not, nor should be, core business and because such developments are undertaken with rate payers taking the financial risk.

While it is appreciated that Council is endeavouring to influence such redevelopment within the city it is considered that the Council's role should be that of facilitator rather than developer.

The Adelaide Town Hall and Function Centre are listed as Council facilities for which fees for services are charged. There is ,however, no reference for the use of the Park Lands by commercial events (eg circuses) for which fees are also charged.

SECRA is not enthusiastic about the commercial use of the Park Lands, especially when the fees charged by the Council are significantly below commercial rates. There is a perception that Council actively encourages these commercial events which is to the detriment of the Park Lands. Many of these events would be more appropriately held at the Adelaide Showgrounds but the low fees charged by Council make the Park Lands more attractive. What should be appreciated is that the Adelaide Showgrounds are as close to the majority of the city's restaurants and accommodation as Bonython Park. This would indicate that the city is just as likely to benefit from events held at the Showgrounds as those held in Bonython Park. The ACC's apparent parochial view that major events need to be held within the Adelaide City's boundaries for the city to benefit is a misconception.

### **What is planned for 2008-09?**

The Council has listed "continuing the drive for population growth ....." and "achieving City Cleansing ....." amongst those issues to be focussed on for 2008-09.

While SECRA supports the investment in improved city cleansing it should be appreciated that "population growth" could be detrimental to "achieving City Cleansing".

Currently new residents move into the city without being aware of what services are provided by the Council and what their responsibilities are as residents of our city. Many appear not to be aware that they should not just leave packaging from furniture or electrical goods or other inappropriate items on the footpath in the hope that the Council will remove them. Likewise waste bins are left out on the footpath from one collection to the other.

It is proposed that all new residents be provided with an information pack which explains not only the services offered by Council but also their responsibilities as residents of the city. Council should provide such an information pack directly to all new property owners and to letting agents for distribution to all new tenants within the city.

The amount of bottles, paper, cigarette butts and packets littering the footpaths and street within the south eastern precinct of the city is unacceptable and detracts from the attractiveness of the precinct. One would think that the many years of "KESAB" and other education programs aimed at reducing litter would have had a significant effect on reducing such litter throughout the city.

If the Council is serious about achieving a cleaner city surely the time has come for a "no tolerance" policy in the issuing of infringement notices to those persons who drop litter and chewing gum.

Concerns have also be expressed about overflowing public rubbish bins in the Park Lands which, because of their location, appear to get missed during the Council's regular emptying of the public rubbish bins.

### **Heritage Conservation**

SECRA supports the local Heritage Incentive Scheme and would like to see the budget for this scheme increased on an annual basis in accordance with the CPI and the maximum grant increased from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

In the past some residential owners have expressed concern about the overly prescriptive and stringent requirements of Council that accompany the financial grant. The costs to meet these stringent requirements can sometimes be excessive and work against the owners deciding to restore their properties. A balance needs to be achieved between appropriate accountability measures and the grants achieving their intention of providing an incentive for owners to undertake heritage conservation.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

The introduction of the 3 bin residential waste system will need to be carefully managed.

Unlike suburban residential properties the majority of Adelaide's residential properties have limited off street space to accommodate waste bins. With the introduction of three different residential waste bins there is a real risk of more unsightly waste disposal bins being left on the footpaths from one week to the next. There is also a concern that the weekly recycling collection is to be changed to fortnightly.

The review of the Integrated Movement Strategy should address the inefficient "on street parking" that exists in many streets in the south eastern precinct of the city. There are many unrestricted "all day" on street parking spaces existing in the south eastern precinct which could be converted to limited time parking subject to consultation with residents. Also the existing marking and layout of many parking zones within the south eastern precinct of the city does not lead to the efficient use of the available on street parking.

SECRA is also opposed to roads adjacent to the park lands being used for "all day" parking. Not only does this encourage city workers to drive their vehicles to work but it removes short term parking for those persons wanting access to the park lands and to nearby businesses and facilities.

SECRA is also opposed to car parking on the park lands and sees this as inappropriate and detrimental to the Park Lands.

SECRA understands that Council is opposed to the commercial use of the park lands and yet UPark regularly charges car parking fees for parking on the Park Lands. If this practice is to continue then the monies gained from this activity should be utilised for the maintenance of the Park Lands.

It is pleasing to see that this principle is to be applied through the introduction of a 10% levy on Park Lands licences and leases with monies from the levy to be used for the maintenance of the Park Lands. However, payment of this levy should not be seen as an alternative to putting good the Park Lands after use.

In addition SECRA does not support the introduction of a 1% Green Levy on rates and believe that the costs involved in this initiative should be built into the existing budget.

Establishing such a levy implies that this is a non core activity whereas in view of the environmental problem facing our planet it should be seen as a high priority. Surely it would be more appropriate for such funding to be obtained from the UPark revenue as motor vehicles are a large contributor to the problem (see Section Council Services and Responsibilities).

### **Quality Public Realm**

SECRA is pleased to see that Stage 5 of the Park lands Trail is to be constructed.

It is requested that priority be given to providing a safe cycle trail from the Botanic Road/Hackney Road intersection to the River Torrens Linear Park Trail. Currently there is no safe cycle (off road) access for those residents in the south eastern precinct who wish to cycle to the River Torrens Linear Park.

### **Strengthening Communities & City Strategy**

Since its establishment SECRA has been actively representing residents in the south eastern precinct of the city and has successfully pursued issues and concerns that have the potential to adversely effect those residents. SECRA believes that it has established itself as a well organised effective and active organisation which has ably represented the residents in the south eastern precinct of the city. SECRA would appreciate recognition by Council of SECRA's role in representing the residents in the south eastern precinct of the city by being included in meetings and discussions that Council has from time to time with the other precinct associations.

SECRA is also of the view that because of the large residential community in the south eastern precinct of the city a community centre similar to those provided in the South Western and North Adelaide precincts of the city is needed. The Hutt Street Library does not meet this need.

There is, however, a facility in the area, the Box Factory, which could be developed into an ideal community centre. This would provide a place for residents in the south eastern precinct to meet and participate in community activities. It is well known and is part of local history having operated previously in this way and would work to strengthen the social fabric of the area.

SECRA believes that the ACC should work with the State Government to establish the Box Factory as a community asset for the south east precinct then take on the role of coordinating its use so that all groups within the area could use the facilities.

It could even provide an appropriate location for the proposed community garden currently being considered (inappropriately in our view) for the Park Lands.

The following comments are also provided:

### **Capital Works Budget**

Residents within the city often complain about the state of footpaths, roads and lighting in their area and would appreciate being able to see if work is planned to be undertaken on these facilities in the future.

SECRA is of the view that it would be advantageous to have these future works programs accessible on the Council's web site so that residents are able to see what works are proposed and the time-frame in which they will occur – particularly as they will be funding the work through their rates and will be those possibly inconvenienced.

There appears to be no allocation for improvements to street lighting in the south eastern precinct of the city. Of particular concern are the footpaths in the vicinity of the southern end of Hutt Street where concerns have been expressed about the lack of adequate lighting and the associated risk to the public returning to parked vehicles in the dark.

It is noted that a \$1.1m expenditure is proposed during 2008-09 to complete the Victoria Park Master Plan and to commence its implementation.

SECRA has a concern that the ability of Council to expend significant funds on implementing the master plan may be restricted firstly by the fact that a large area of the park will be a defined construction area for the majority of the financial year for the purposes of upgrading the Clipsal 500 track and associated infrastructure and secondly by delays in the removal of the existing infrastructure by the SAJC.

SECRA questions the adequacy of the \$200,000 allocated for the Glenelg Waste Water Reuse Implementation. Concerns have been raised about the high salinity of the reclaimed waste water and the continued need to have mains water throughout the Park Lands due to the unsuitability of the reclaimed water for irrigating trees and plants. It is suggested that the need for a "dual" irrigation system will require funds in excess of those allocated for the project in 2008-09 and 2009-10.

It is noted that it is proposed to have temporary flood storages in Park 16 and Park 17 as part of the Brownhill and Keswick Creeks Flood Management Plan. Because of its close proximity to the south eastern precinct SECRA is most interested in this project however we have very little information about what is proposed. SECRA would therefore appreciate advice on what works are proposed to be undertaken in Parks 16 and 17.

Finally, SECRA strongly supports continuation of the Residents Rebate of, at least, \$175.

SECRA does not wish to speak to the above submission but requests that consideration be given to the matters raised.

Yours faithfully

Anne Melrose  
Chairperson

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