

Mayor's Message: Annual Report 2018-19 (draft)

As I reflect on the 2018-19 financial year, I would like to recognise and thank everyone who has helped drive positive change in our Vincent community. We are incredibly fortunate in the City of Vincent to have such a passionate and engaged community who provide invaluable encouragement, thoughts and ideas as we work together to contribute to a more connected and sustainable life in Vincent.

With your support, 2019 was a productive year at the City of Vincent. This reporting year we launched a number of key strategies to focus us for the future. At the heart of these is our 10 year Strategic Community Plan, which launched early in the financial year. This pulled together a wealth of feedback, ideas and priorities gathered from our community during the award-winning Imagine Vincent community consultation, delivered the year before.

Our Strategic Community Plan established six key priority areas to reflect our community's vision - Enhanced Environment, Accessible City, Connected Community, Thriving Places, Sensitive Design, Innovative and Accountable. We then spent the remainder of the reporting year working towards these priorities that matter to our community.

Our Community Strategic Plan was underpinned by another critical strategy to inform our sustainable and healthy future – The Public Open Space Strategy. This Strategy provides us with a clear direction with a strong evidence-base to ensure our parks, reserves and other open spaces meet community need and expectations now and in the future. I look forward to seeing how our open spaces will continue to grow, be more accessible and better suit the needs of our community.

We also focused on helping our town centres to thrive by building two new town centre squares: North Perth Common and the Leederville Village Square.

North Perth Common was a two year project supported by the State Government and the design and location was informed by our community. Our community asked for the Common to be on View Street, for to be lit up at night, to be a shady place to sit and meet, a fun space for events with public art and a focus on people not cars. The striking circular artwork created by artist Stephen Pennock, along with a growing tree canopy, helps define the space as people-friendly and a landmark for North Perth, bringing people into the area, in turn, to support businesses and our local economy.

Leederville Village Square on Newcastle Street was created in partnership with Leederville Connect, the local town team. They brought the idea to us, we loved it and we said 'yes!' It was fantastic to be able to deliver their vision of a pedestrian friendly space for cars, cyclists and people to share, that can easily be closed and turned into a space for community events.

We continued to green Vincent with trees and native plantings in our streets, neighbourhoods and town centres to enhance our environment and help our public places thrive. We also finalised our quest to rip up the rule book on verges and street trees to reflect Council and community sentiment on giving much more flexibility and freedom to make the most of our verges. Tree swings, rope ladders, cubby houses, tree decorations, edible gardens and native verges continue to spring up on the streets of Vincent.

The Banks Reserve Masterplan was finalised, with the aim of making this beautiful riverside park more accessible and attractive for residents and visitors, whilst also preserving the important natural and cultural aspects of the area.

We started installing solar panels on our major buildings as a sustainability initiative, with the aim of cutting our power bills by 10 per cent, and announced that Vincent will move to a third Food and Organics bin in October 2020, in line with our Waste Strategy target of zero waste to landfill by 2023.

Looking after our ageing assets and community buildings continued to receive our attention, with a new toilet block and upgraded Lesser Hall at Braithwaite Park adding to the amenity at this very popular neighbourhood park.

Vincent also became more playful in early 2019 with the launch of our first Pop Up Play initiatives to encourage older children and teenagers outside and to make our parks a little more interactive and fun. This included a pump track and bike trail at Britannia Reserve and a creative play spaces at Woodville Reserve. And our new Street Activations Policy made it easier for neighbours to temporarily close their local road to hold street parties and play streets, offering another way to connect and enhance our sense of community.

A new Arts Development Plan paved the way for Vincent to be the arts capital of Perth, with a strong desire to weave more creativity into the public realm and to achieve greater access for our community to the arts.

We made necessary improvements to our active transport infrastructure, supporting the State Government's funding of a new pedestrian crossing on Vincent Street opposite Beatty Park, the extension of Safe Active Streets along Shakespeare Street and co-funding new bike paths along a section of Loftus Street.

Vincent embarked on Western Australia's first 40kph speed zone trial in our southern-most neighbourhoods to test the amenity and safety impacts of slower speeds on our residential roads.

Thank you to our collegiate and committed Councillors, CEO David MacLennan, the Executive Team and staff who all strive to make the 'yes' possible. Together, alongside our community, we will continue to make Vincent the best it can be.

Emma Cole
Mayor