



# City of Joondalup



## The Earth Charter and Strategic Planning at the City of Joondalup, Western Australia

A Case Study for the Earth Charter Initiative,

by John Goldsmith  
Sustainable Development Officer

and

Rhonda Hardy  
Manager, Strategic and Corporate Planning,  
City of Joondalup

*The City of Joondalup is applying the Earth Charter as part of its Strategic Planning process. A comparison between Council policies and the Earth Charter demonstrates significant common ground between the two and the value of the Earth Charter as a tool in local government strategic planning.*

The City of Joondalup's approach towards developing a sustainable future is one based on Council leadership, education and community participation. Several innovative sustainability initiatives are building the community's capacity to address sustainability issues. Such initiatives include :

- Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability Policy;
- Community funding; Environmental and Sustainable Development Fund;
- Adoption of corporate and community greenhouse gas emission reduction targets;
- Sustainability education, information packages and promotions;
- Sustainability web site at <http://living.joondalup.wa.gov.au>
- Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee;

- Earth Charter and the Strategic Planning Process.

This case study features the way in which the City has utilised the Earth Charter in its Strategic Planning process.

**The City of Joondalup Profile.** The City of Joondalup is the second largest local government authority in Western Australia, and represents approximately 161,000 residents (11% of Perth's metropolitan area population). The City has experienced one of the fastest population growth rates in Australia since the 1970s.

The City of Joondalup is situated approximately 26 kilometres north of Western Australia's capital city Perth, on the northern urban fringe of the Perth metropolitan area. The City is 96.8 square kilometres in area and is located between

the Yellagonga Regional Park (including Lake Joondalup) on the eastern boundary, and the Indian Ocean on the western boundary.

## **The Earth Charter**

The Earth Charter is a highly integrated set of sustainable development principles. It is based on four major themes, namely (1) respect and care for the community of life, (2) ecological integrity, (3) social and economic justice and (4) democracy, non-violence and peace. The four major themes are presented as sixteen key principles which are summarised as follows:

- 1 Respect for the Earth
- 2 Care for life
- 3 Democratic societies
- 4 Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations
- 5 Protect and restore ecological systems
- 6 Prevent environment harm and apply the precautionary principle
- 7 Safeguard regenerative capacities of the Earth
- 8 Advance the study of ecological sustainability
- 9 Eradicate poverty
- 10 Ensure economic development is equitable and sustainable
- 11 Affirm gender equality
- 12 Uphold the right of all to a supportive natural and social environment
- 13 Strengthen democratic institutions
- 14 Integrate sustainability into lifelong learning
- 15 Treat all living beings with respect and consideration
- 16 Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence and peace

The full version of the Earth Charter is available at [www.earthcharter.org](http://www.earthcharter.org)

The Earth Charter was first noted as an important concept at the Brundtland Commission in the late eighties. The Earth Charter was further developed at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit where the Summit's Secretary-General, Maurice Strong, together with Mikhail Gorbachev, initiated a global non-government movement to foster and promote the Earth Charter. Since then, thousands of diverse groups and

individuals around the world have debated the principles and wording that now forms the inspiring document that is the Earth Charter.

Development of the Earth Charter has included input from six international summits on related topics such as population, women and habitat held after the Rio Summit. Unprecedented worldwide consultation process has resulted in a document that can genuinely lay claim to articulate common, universal values (source: [www.earthcharter.org](http://www.earthcharter.org)).

The Earth Charter represents a set of important community values and a shared community vision on a global scale. The Earth Charter provides an ethical foundation from which sustainability decisions can be based upon. The Earth Charter principles give guidance for both individuals and also organisations and is considerable application for helping communities and organisations establish and determine their strategic direction.

## **The City of Joondalup Integrated Planning Framework**

A key focus for the City's Strategic and Corporate Planning Business Unit is to develop an integrated planning framework that facilitates the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives. A component of the framework includes the development of a strategic plan. Input into the strategic planning process was based on direct input from the community and major stakeholders within the City. A key component to the City's planning framework has been the incorporation of a Corporate Plan that guides the City's performance in achieving its strategic goals within financial parameters.

The Integrated Planning Framework provides the City with a logical framework from which staff clearly understand their role in achieving key results of the City's Strategic Plan. The framework has been developed to enable greater organisational and community alignment to the City's Strategic Plan. This is being achieved via consultation and input with stakeholders including the community, councillors and staff. Figure 1 shows the integrated planning framework

## City of Joondalup Integrated Planning Framework

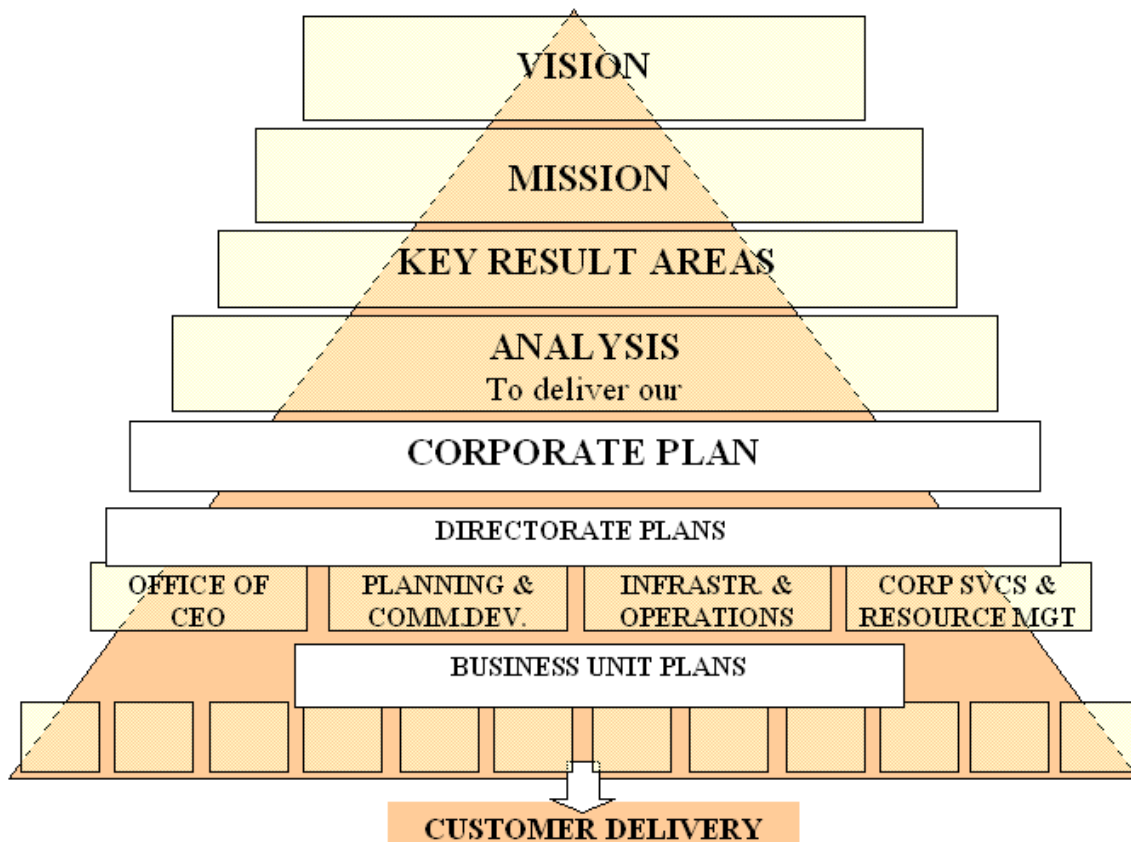


Figure 1, City of Joondalup Integrated Planning Framework

The inputs that are utilised for the planning process are based on a community consultation methodology. This methodology involves engaging the community, staff and Councillors via a consultation process (refer to Figure 2).

The consultation process occurred through a number of mechanisms including a standard survey of four key questions provided on-line, advertised through newspaper and hardcopies provided to libraries and customer service centres. All these points of entry served as communication inputs for collecting the data required for analysis. Approximately 400 surveys were completed for analysis. Staff throughout the organisation were asked to develop and submit issues papers, which also formed a significant part of the analysis process. The comparison between the Earth Charter and the strategic planning process was prepared as an

issues paper. Approximately eighty issues papers and strategy papers were submitted and analysed.

Survey data, strategy papers and issues papers were analysed to identify the key strategic themes that Council could use as strong guidance for the City's Strategic Plan.

Development of the Strategic Plan is based upon formulation of the vision, and key strategic themes and values. Once completed, the City's senior staff then commence development of the City's Corporate Plan, Directorate Plans, Business Unit Plans. The annual budget is then created as an output of the planning process which enables the City to align its financial capability with its plans. The outcome is a cascading integrated planning framework for the City (shown in figure 3).

## The City of Joondalup Consultation Methodology

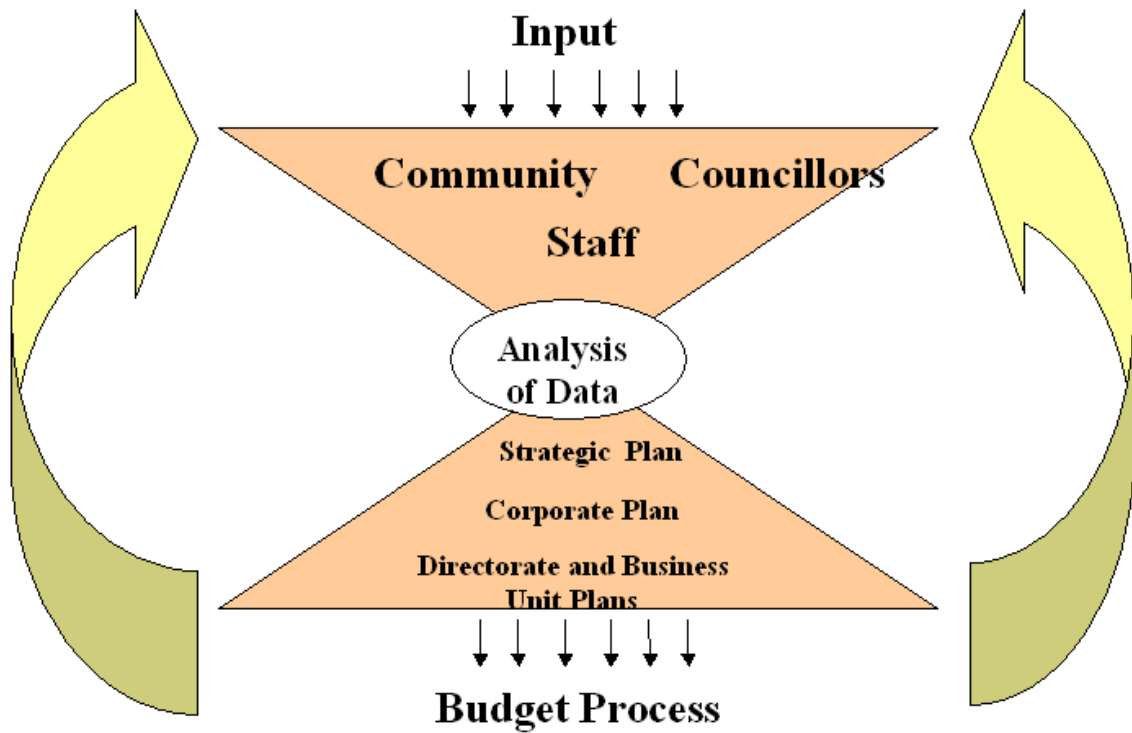


Figure 2, Consultation Methodology

## The City of Joondalup Cascading Integrated Planning Framework

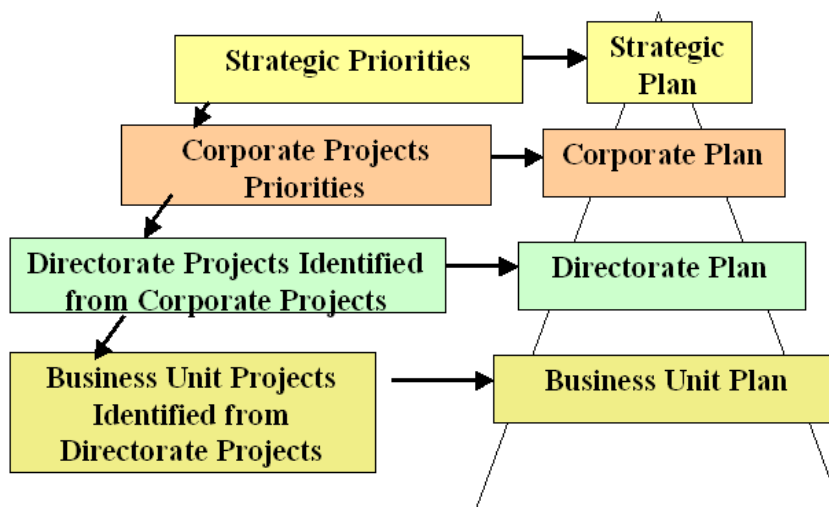


Figure 3, Cascading Integrated Planning Framework

## Comparison of Existing City of Joondalup Policies and the Earth Charter.

Table 1 presents a comparison between the Earth Charter and a selection of existing City of Joondalup policy. Policies which relate to Earth Charter principles are shown highlighted in red.

City of Joondalup Policy	Earth Charter Principles															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2.1.1 Employment																
2.1.2 Equal Employment Opportunity																
2.1.3 Occupational Health and Safety																
2.3.1 Policy Development and Review Process																
2.3.2 Communications																
2.3.4 Provision of Information																
2.3.6 Public Submissions																
2.4.1 Accounting Policy																
2.4.2 Investment policy																
2.4.6 Purchasing of Goods and Services																
2.6.1 Access to information with people with disabilities																
2.6.2 Access to Council Services and Facilities for People with Disabilities																
2.6.3 Public Participation																
2.6.4 Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability																
4.2.1 Library Service																
4.2.2 Online Services Provision																
4.6.1 Burning of Garden Refuse and Cleared Vegetation																
5.1.1 Waste Management																
5.2.2 Council Reserves and Parks																
5.4.2 Stormwater Drainage into Wetlands																

### Discussion

The results of the comparison between Council policies and the Earth Charter clearly show that there is considerable similarity between the two. Interestingly, the comparison highlights two Earth Charter principles (9 and 16) which the City currently has no existing policy. Earth Charter Principle 9 relates to the eradication of poverty as an ethical, social and environmental imperative. Earth Charter Principle 16 relates to the promotion of a culture of tolerance, non-violence and peace.

The comparison also highlights the strong relation between the City's policy 2.6.4 Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability policy, with numerous Earth Charter principles.

City policies tend to be specific and relatively narrow, in contrast to the broader scope of the Earth Charter principles. This indicates that while policies relate in some degree to the Earth Charter, policies may not cover the full scope of each Earth Charter principle. The comparison has highlighted an opportunity to review and further develop existing City policy, which can progressively be undertaken as part of the policy review process.

The Earth Charter can be further applied to strategic planning exercises by comparisons with existing strategies identified in the Strategic Plan, and also with other Council reports, such as the Annual Report.

## Benefits of applying the Earth Charter to Strategic Planning

The City of Joondalup's experience with utilising the Earth Charter in its strategic planning process has demonstrated numerous benefits, including:

- It promotes an integrated approach for environmental, social and economic sustainability.
- The Earth Charter is educational for staff and the broader community.
- It assists cultural change within the organisation.
- Adds value and quality to strategic planning process
- It presents an opportunity to adopt and endorse the Earth Charter as core values and principles.

## Conclusion

The Earth Charter has assisted the City of Joondalup to incorporate sustainability principles into the City's Strategic Plan. Comparison between the Earth Charter and existing Council policies demonstrates that many policies relate to or correspond with the Earth Charter principles. Existing policies tend to focus on specifics rather than the broad intent of the Earth Charter principles. The comparison also highlights some gaps in policy, eg economic objectives relating to poverty alleviation. The Earth Charter is a very useful set of principles to input into Strategic Planning processes.

For local governments, the Earth Charter has many important roles to play in promoting sustainability. It provides a broad and inclusive concept of sustainable development with its three key themes of ecological integrity, social and economic justice, and democracy non-violence and peace. Practical applications include using the Earth Charter as a comprehensive checklist for developing sustainability indicators, as an educational tool for teaching and learning about sustainable practices, and as an inspirational set of principles to guide our community's activities.

## Further information:

Earth Charter web site [www.earthcharter.org](http://www.earthcharter.org)  
City of Joondalup Strategic Plan and Policies available at [www.joondalup.wa.gov.au](http://www.joondalup.wa.gov.au)  
Sustainability web site available at <http://living.joondalup.wa.gov.au>

**Acknowledgements;** This case study is based on a presentation by John Goldsmith, Sustainable Development Officer at the Western Australian Municipal Association in July 2002, in conjunction with Dr Brendan Mackey, Australian National University.

© City of Joondalup 2002

## The City of Joondalup Symbol



The symbol of the City of Joondalup combines imagery of the built and natural environment.

The logo represents the balance of the built environment (the grid structure) and the local flora on Lake Joondalup (the leaf pattern). The flora shapes are derived from local plant species and emanate from the grid pattern which is symbolic of the planned City.

(2000-2005 City of Joondalup Strategic Plan)



Lake Joondalup, Yellagonga Regional Park

City of Joondalup  
PO Box 21  
Joondalup 6919  
Western Australia



Phone (08) 9400 4000

Web site [www.joondalup.wa.gov.au](http://www.joondalup.wa.gov.au)