



City of Belmont **Youth Strategy** 2019 and Beyond



Executive Summary

This Strategy presents the results of a review of the original *Moving Forward, City of Belmont Youth Strategic Plan 2015 and Beyond*. Given the landscape in 2014-15 when the original Plan was developed, it was not given a definitive end date. To ensure the Plan remained contemporary and relevant to the needs of the community, it was identified at the time, that the Plan's progress would be determined through ongoing reviews.

The review was conducted from October 2017 to January 2018 and occurred at a time when three other projects in Western Australia (WA) were collecting information on services and support for young people - WA Youth Strategy, WA Youth Health Policy, and the WA Aboriginal Youth Health Strategy.

The initial Plan was underpinned at the time by reviews of relevant policies, frameworks and internal documents and a significant in depth consultation process with residents, stakeholders, and feedback from young people. Both the original Plan and this revised Strategy were based on the following values:

- respecting young people as active agents in their own lives;
- valuing young people for the positive contributions that they offer the City;
- encouraging young people to participate in their community;
- supporting young people to reach their full potential.

The review provided an opportunity for young people, staff at The Base, and community stakeholders to provide feedback on how the City has performed over the past three years in implementing the Plan. The review process enabled the City to make informed decisions in relation to the new Strategy, it also enabled the City and The Base to reflect on their achievements.

The review identified that the six Key Actions included in the original Plan were still relevant and that the City is on track with its provision of services and support to young people. The direction of the Plan was deemed to be consistent with the needs of the community. As such, the direction of the City of Belmont's Youth Strategy 2019 and Beyond will continue to implement the previously successful range of strategies under the following themes:

FIT AND FLOURISHING – young people are able to live active, healthy lives and have access to services that promote their health and wellbeing

CULTURED AND CREATIVE – young people are given opportunities to express themselves creatively and participate in art and culture

CAPABLE AND CLEVER – young people have access to education, training and employment opportunities that inspire them to achieve and reach their full potential

COOPERATIVE AND CONNECTED – young people feel connected to their community and can easily access services and information that are important to them

HARMONIOUS AND HELPFUL – young people feel safe and secure in their community, and diversity is celebrated

GREEN AND GROWING – young people are encouraged to participate in sustainable environmental change and be a part of a greener City.



FIT & FLOURISHING



CULTURE & CREATIVE



CAPABLE & CLEVER



COOPERATIVE & CONNECTED



HARMONIOUS & HELPFUL



GREEN & GROWING

Please note: this Executive Summary and material in this document were taken from the full report *City of Belmont Youth Services Moving Forward, Youth Strategic Plan 2015 and Beyond Review*. Copies are available from: community.development@belmont.wa.gov.au

Youth Service Delivery in City of Belmont

Youth Service delivery in the City of Belmont is predominantly provided at The Base by specialist youth service provider (YMCA WA) to ensure the optimal quality and diversity of services are available to young people across the City. Through the YMCA the City of Belmont currently provides the following services for young people:

- drop in centre every day after school for young people aged 11 to 17 years;
- after school activities and youth engagement programs for young people aged 11 to 17 years;
- case management for young people aged 11 to 17 years;
- case management for young people aged 18 to 25 years;
- drop in and scheduled programming for young people aged 16 to 25 years;
- partnering with Belmont City College to provide youth case management support to targeted students;
- outreach services;
- support for the Youth Advisory Committee;
- school holiday youth engagement activities;
- weekend and night time youth engagement activities;
- youth events.

The Feedback

The review of *Moving Forward, City of Belmont Youth Strategic Plan 2015 and Beyond* was an opportunity for young people and staff at The Base, and community stakeholders to provide feedback on how the City performed in implementing the Plan. Feedback from the review process, has allowed the City to make informed decisions about its commitments to young people.



Key Findings and Implications



A significant amount of demographic data was analysed for the original Plan in 2015, and more recent Australian Bureau of Statistics census data told us that while the population of young people has steadily been increasing, the number of the City's residents that come from a country where English is not the first language has also increased. The age group with the highest net migration to the City of Belmont was persons aged 18 to 24 years.

The City has experienced an overall increase in unemployment which is a specific challenge for our young people. Concerns raised by participants during this review, including from young people, community stakeholders and staff at The Base were consistent with national research that indicate alcohol and other drugs, and mental health issues are important challenges. These are just some of the significant issues facing our young people, and how the City addresses the wide range of challenges is important.



Increase in residents who come from a country where English is not their first language



Overall increase in unemployment

Age 18 - 24 has the highest net migration to City of Belmont

Population of young people is steadily increasing



Challenges facing young people



Unemployment



Alcohol



Other drugs



Mental Health



For young people, The Base was regarded as a place where they can learn new things and importantly, a place where they feel they can be with other young people in an environment that is considered safe.

The Base was also regarded as an escape, where they could “get away from their problems” or “forget about things” when life was not going that well for them. While at The Base, young people participate in drop-in activities or in a wide variety of programs/activities. Young people that attend The Base reported very high levels of satisfaction with programs/activities available to them.

Stakeholders told us that they want to be consulted, included and involved in what happens at The Base. As such, The Base will continue its current collaborative activity but extend it to as broad a range of stakeholders in the community as possible to further maximise engagement with Aboriginal and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

To ensure the Strategy meets the needs of young people and the wider community the City has identified the need to provide The Base with a greater deal of flexibility to accommodate the rapidly changing needs of young people. Young people often ‘talk with their feet’ so the new Strategy has been designed to allow The Base greater flexibility to enable them to respond quickly and appropriately to changing needs. That includes looking more closely at what it means to provide outreach and how the City can maximise resources to effectively engage with young people across the City of Belmont.

The integration of information received when the original Plan was developed in 2015, with new feedback received during the current review process, forms the recommended key actions listed below. These key actions are the City’s specific commitments to young people across the City of Belmont.



Themes and Key Actions



FIT AND FLOURISHING

- ✓ Provide a range of information and workshops to young people around issues that are relevant and important to them that support them to be Fit and Flourishing.
- ✓ Provide local, whole of community events that encourage physical activity, health and wellbeing.
- ✓ Encourage other specialist youth and family support service providers to utilise the space at the Youth and Family Services building, creating a one stop shop for the City's young people.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for gender specific programs, such as girls groups or boys groups.
- ✓ Provide case management support for 'at risk' young people.
- ✓ Develop partnerships and collaborative opportunities with relevant organisations that promote positive mental health in young people.



CULTURED AND CREATIVE

- ✓ Provide a range of information and workshops to young people around issues that are relevant and important to them that support them to be Cultured and Creative.
- ✓ Provide young people with the opportunity to be involved in planning, delivery and evaluation of community based youth events around issues that are relevant and important to them.
- ✓ Involve young people in the process of enhancing the appeal of The Base that reflects a welcoming, inclusive and youth friendly environment.
- ✓ Support young people to exhibit at a community gallery space.



CAPABLE AND CLEVER

- ✓ Provide a range of information and workshops to young people around issues that are relevant and important to them that support them to be Capable and Clever.
- ✓ Provide certified programs to the City's young people.
- ✓ Acknowledge the City's young achievers through the annual Community Services Awards program.
- ✓ Provide young people with access to computers, technology and youth worker support to assist with study and job seeking.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for young people to have exposure to the workplace.



COOPERATIVE AND CONNECTED

- ✓ Effectively engage with young people through social media platforms.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for young people to have better access to Councillors.
- ✓ Provide targeted outreach support to young people across the City of Belmont.
- ✓ Provide activities external to The Base offering greater opportunities for young people to engage in and access other facilities, services and spaces in the City of Belmont and wider metropolitan area.
- ✓ Facilitate formal feedback via consultation with young people accessing the City's youth services.
- ✓ Develop partnerships and collaborative opportunities with relevant organisations to raise awareness of the impact of cyber safety on young people.
- ✓ Develop partnerships and collaborative opportunities with relevant organisations to deliver child protection/ protective behaviours workshops.
- ✓ Develop partnerships and collaborative opportunities with relevant organisations to realise the City's vision of a dedicated youth hub in Belmont.
- ✓ Maintain and build upon strong linkages, partnerships and networks between the local school community and the City.
- ✓ Young people are provided the opportunity to participate in facilitated community showcase events.



HARMONIOUS AND HELPFUL

- ✓ Provide a range of information and workshops to young people around issues that are relevant and important to them that support them to be Harmonious and Helpful.
- ✓ Increase positive publicity and promotion of young people.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for young people to have access to Aboriginal role models.
- ✓ Provide a safe space for young people to hang out and have access to youth workers.
- ✓ Provide diverse (formal/ informal) recreational activities for young people to participate in at times that are suitable to them.
- ✓ Facilitate opportunities for intergenerational initiatives.



GREEN AND GROWING

- ✓ Provide a range of information and workshops to young people around issues that are relevant and important to them that support them to be Green and Growing.
- ✓ Maintain the community garden developed at The Base with young people.
- ✓ Support green awards to promote students who develop and/ or support environmentally friendly initiatives.

Monitoring and Reviewing

The original Plan was developed during the State Government's reform program for Local Government, essentially a period of instability for Local Government and, as a result, the Plan at that time was open-ended and not given a definitive end date.

In 2018, the passage of time brings with it a greater sense of stability for Local Governments. However, the changing nature of youth culture and community context means that the Strategies and Plans we develop at any one point in time must be open to accommodate and embrace change. While this Strategy has provided The Base with greater flexibility to respond to the immediate changing needs of young people, it is important that the City continues to ensure the relevance of the overall strategic direction of the services and support it provides to young people through ongoing review and monitoring. Ongoing reviews will give young people and the community the opportunity to provide feedback on how the City has performed in implementing the Strategy, as well as suggest any amendments to the Strategy that may be needed.

This Strategy is available on the City's website and in print format on request. A minor review will be conducted in three years to ensure the strategic direction for the City's young people remains relevant and meets their needs.



Acknowledgement

The City of Belmont acknowledges the support and collaboration with community members, businesses, partner organisations, and importantly the City's young people who have shaped the direction of the 2019 Youth Strategy.

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