Dear Panel/Department/Minister,

Thank you for providing FuturePerth with the opportunity to comment on the Metropolitan Local Government Review Panel's 'Final Report of the Independent Panel' (July 2012).

As outlined in our previous two submissions to the review panel, FuturePerth continues to be a strong advocate for major local government reform in Perth. Our group commends the Minister for initiating the review and releasing the final report publicly, and trusts that wholesale reform will take place as part of the review.

In general, we support the findings in the final report of the panel. We offer the following comments:

- The major reduction in local government numbers across metropolitan Perth is supported, particularly the proposed expanded City of Perth. We support immediate progression to 'Option B' to make a clear transition to more logical local government boundaries. We do, however, have some reservations about the proposed City of Perth boundary. We consider that UWA and its surrounds, and Curtin University and its surrounds should be included in the expanded City of Perth. The development of the areas around these major institutions is critically important to the future development of our city and should be the responsibility of the capital city local government authority. East Victoria Park should also be included in the municipality given it forms part of the wider Victoria Park activity strip. The splitting in the governance of these areas is not desirable, as is the case for Mt Lawley currently between the Cities of Vincent and Stirling.

- We support the establishment of the Forum of Mayors, as recommended in our submissions. This body could also involve a State Government Ministerial representative. We believe the Forum of Mayors should act as a COAG of sorts, ensuring, amongst other things, regulations, standards, forms and processes are consistent across the metropolitan area. It is not acceptable that multiple car parking standards, design review processes, fees and other planning regulations are confusingly dissimilar and applied differently in each
local government area.

- We support moves to shift the setting of elected local government representatives' salaries to the responsibility of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal. The current levels of remuneration are insufficient to attract and retain experienced professionals to local government positions.

- We strongly object to the suggestion that Development Assessment Panel’s be dissolved if the proposed expanded local governments are established. The panel’s are an important part of the planning process, and have been essential in minimising the influence of politics in development decision-making. We consider that their powers should be expanded to be able to approve the initiation and endorsement of scheme amendment proposals. Dissolving the panels would be a significant setback for the essential planning reforms which have taken place over recent years.

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the panels report. Should you require further information or clarification on our feedback, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Kind Regards

Sean Morrison
Chairman, OBO FuturePerth Committee
FuturePerth Inc.
committee@futureperth.org
Who are we?
FuturePerth is an incorporated association devoted to supporting development and action that enhances the vibrancy and livability of Perth.

We are a pro-good-development group consisting of a variety of professionals and students from a wide range of fields including planning, law, architecture, health and hospitality.

We have been incorporated since early 2007 and operate as a non-profit, non-partisan organisation.

Vision
To provide a voice of progressive thinking to ensure that development in Perth is livable, vibrant, integrated, connected and of a high amenity.

Objectives
To promote the economic and social development of Western Australia and to lend support to similarly minded organisations where appropriate.

To promote the Perth central area as the primary area in the State for entertainment, retail, office, residential and recreational purposes.

To promote the densification and growth of suburban development nodes.

To promote the investment in and expansion of the public transportation system in Perth and Western Australia and the discouragement of policies which further motor vehicle dependence.

To promote the diversification and growth of metropolitan regional centres

To promote urban regeneration projects.

To provide a voice for pro-development, progressive, forward thinking people and to dispel unfounded arguments by anti-development groups or individuals.

To generally support a reduction in the growth of urban sprawl and encourage the consolidation of development within the existing Perth urban area.