

# **Election Roadmap**

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## **Better buildings and communities for Greater Perth**

# The GBCA's 2013 election roadmap for Greater Perth

The buildings we live and work in and the way our cities and neighbourhoods are planned have an enormous impact on our economy, our wellbeing and our environment.

In the lead up to Western Australia's 2013 local government elections, the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) is focusing on three priorities aimed at creating better buildings and communities. Our full three-point plan is available on the GBCA website at [www.gbca.org.au](http://www.gbca.org.au). In this election roadmap for Greater Perth we have identified a range of actions that local government can take.

This is our call to Greater Perth's next local government leaders.

## Provide visionary government leadership

Strong local government leadership is required if Western Australia is to be more prosperous, liveable, sustainable and resilient. Local governments can lead by example and commit to best practice buildings and communities by implementing the actions below:

- Adopt a Sustainable Council-Owned Buildings Policy that outlines clear commitments to achieve sustainable and efficient design standards for new council buildings and large refurbishments
- Achieve best practice third-party certification, such as a Green Star rating, for new civic centres and libraries. A third-party rating will assist councils to demonstrate their buildings are efficient, cost-effective and sustainable, and drive an industry shift towards better building practices
- Adopt a local policy for sustainable buildings to encourage commercial development to achieve measured best practice building outcomes
- Offer financial or non-financial incentives, such as plot ratio or height bonuses for commercial buildings, to those that commit to delivering best practice or Green Star-certified development in your local area.

## Retrofit and improve existing buildings

The commercial and residential building sector is responsible for 23 per cent of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. Improving existing buildings remains one of the most cost-effective opportunities for reducing overheads whilst reducing carbon.

Green Star-rated buildings use 66 per cent less energy than average buildings and emit 62 per cent fewer carbon emissions. Australian and international research shows that in addition to lowering operating expenses, taking action to retrofit buildings can also lead to improved outcomes for the health, well being and productivity of occupants.

Local government leaders can work to improve our existing building stock by implementing the actions below:

- Measure and improve council-owned building performance and commit to using Green Star – Performance for all iconic council buildings such as civic centres and libraries
- Offer programs and incentives to assist industry and the community to measure and reduce resources used by existing buildings.

### **Move beyond buildings to communities and cities**

In mid-2012, the GBCA launched the Green Star – Communities rating tool to provide best practice benchmarks for delivering adaptable, liveable, prosperous and sustainable cities, communities and precincts across Australia.

The benchmarks within this rating tool should be embedded within local policies and strategies to encourage better outcomes – especially as the cost of living is increasing.

The GBCA calls on local government leaders in Greater Perth to commit to the creation of better neighbourhoods and communities, and to implement the actions below:

- Commit to work collaboratively with developers that want to deliver large community developments that go beyond minimum regulatory requirements
- Engage with the GBCA as we establish an Australian Centre for Green Schools
- Reference Green Star – Communities benchmarks in community plans, planning schemes and local policies
- Identify opportunities to work with developers and the GBCA to achieve Green Star – Communities certification for developments within your local government area
- Participate in local government-specific training for Green Star – Communities.