

7 December 2011

Picture Adelaide
GPO Box 2252
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Via email: pictureadelaide@adelaidecitycouncil.com

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: SUBMISSION TO PICTURE ADELAIDE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the City of Adelaide's vision and outcomes developed from the *Picture Adelaide* initiative. On behalf of the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) we would like to congratulate the City of Adelaide on developing an exciting vision for Adelaide based on consultation with the community.

The GBCA works with industry and every level of government to encourage the development of green buildings and more sustainable communities. We believe there are a number of ways in which we can assist the City of Adelaide to achieve its proposed vision and outcomes and we look forward to the opportunity to discuss these further.

About the Green Building Council of Australia

The GBCA is Australia's leading authority on green buildings and communities, established in 2002 to develop a sustainable property industry in Australia and drive the adoption of green building practices. The GBCA promotes green building programs, technologies; design practices and processes, and operates Australia's only national voluntary comprehensive environmental rating system for buildings - Green Star.

The GBCA has more than 900 member organisations, including government departments, which work together to support the Council and its activities. The GBCA is also a founding member of the World Green Building Council, which was established to provide a federated 'union' of national green building councils with a common goal to support the sustainable transformation of the global property industry; there are now 89 such councils worldwide.

Green Star – Communities

In 2009, the GBCA commenced work on the development of a rating tool for sustainable development projects on a community scale. The first step in developing the Green Star - Communities rating tool was to develop a national framework consisting of five best practice principles (a copy of the Green Star - Communities Framework is enclosed).

The five best practice principles for sustainable communities are to:

1. Enhance liveability
2. Create opportunities for economic prosperity
3. Foster environmental responsibility
4. Embrace design excellence
5. Demonstrate visionary leadership and strong governance.

Stage 2 of the project involves establishing best practice benchmarks for assessing and certifying sustainable communities. A set of draft credits has been developed and these are currently being tested on a number of projects across Australia (copy enclosed).

Extensive consultation has been undertaken with all levels of government (including the Land Management Corporation) and a wide range of industry stakeholders in the development of the Green Star - Communities tool.

How GBCA can assist

The outcomes and strategies identified by the City of Adelaide in the draft strategic plan closely align with the principles of Green Star – Communities. There are several key areas in which the GBCA and Green Star can assist the City of Adelaide to develop and implement the proposed strategies to achieve the desired outcomes.

Green Star as a metric

The GBCA commends the City of Adelaide on the comprehensive set of strategies that have been proposed in the draft strategic plan. We are interested to learn whether a set of metrics has been developed to measure progress and if so, how these will be communicated to ensure ongoing community engagement.

Using straightforward and robust benchmarks makes communication of goals and progress clear and effective. Green Star is an internationally and locally-recognised standard that can be a useful metric for a range of projects. Green Star rating tools evaluate the environmental design and construction of buildings and provide clear benchmarks for best practice, Australian excellence and world leadership.

Buildings and communities

While the main focus of the draft strategic plan is on planning at a community and city level. Buildings will play a role in a number of the strategies outlined in the draft strategic plan. The GBCA would welcome the opportunity to assist the City of Adelaide in identifying the building and community components in the draft strategic plan and can assist in developing the appropriate pathways for achieving the desired outcomes.

There are a number of Green Star projects planned or underway in Adelaide that can contribute to the strategies identified in the draft strategic plan. The Land Management Corporation, a sponsor of the Green Star – Communities tool, is also involved in several urban renewal projects that will provide opportunities to implement a range of strategies.

Measures of success

The GBCA has undertaken a significant consultation process in the development of the Green Star – Communities rating tool credits to better understand the elements that make a sustainable community. GBCA staff and members are often sought after to participate in panels and workshops that examine the issues facing the built environment. We would welcome the opportunity to use what we have learnt to assist the City of Adelaide in developing indicators to measure the success of the proposed strategies and we would also be happy to assist in the review of strategies and progress as the strategic plan is implemented in the coming years.

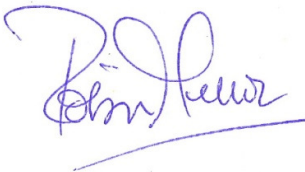
Leadership in sustainability

The GBCA's objective is to drive the transition of the property industry towards greater sustainability. We do not aim to rate every building or community, but we do believe that pursuing a Green Star rating and referencing Green Star in policies helps to achieve outcomes that are more sustainable. As discussed above, the GBCA can provide assistance to the City of Adelaide in a number of ways. We strongly encourage the City of Adelaide to consider membership of the GBCA so that we can provide an even greater level of support, such as working with the Council to promote their leadership on issues surrounding sustainability in the built environment and assisting with media communications around Green Star projects.

On a related matter, we note that on page 7 of the *One City, Many Futures* background document, the Whitmore Square Affordable Ecohousing project is described as having seven 'green stars'. We understand that the star rating for this project refers to the AccuRate energy rating and the 7-Star average is to be commended. However, please be aware that the term 'green star' is a registered trademark held by the GBCA and this misuse of the trademark may cause confusion.

The *Picture Adelaide* and *One City, Many Futures* initiatives have contributed to the development of a draft strategic plan that captures the community's priorities as well as aligning with the key objectives of the 30-year plan for Greater Adelaide. This inclusive and integrated approach sets Adelaide apart from other Australian capital cities and provides a significant opportunity for growth and change. The GBCA looks forward to working with the City of Adelaide to help realise the vision for the city. We will be in touch with the *Picture Adelaide* team in early 2012 to further discuss how the GBCA can assist in delivering the desired outcomes. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact either of us if there is any further information that you require.

Yours sincerely,



Robin Mellon

Executive Director – Advocacy & International
robin.mellon@gbca.org.au