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Suggestion 25

City of Armadale

4 pages

**OFFICE OF THE
MAYOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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Australian Electoral Commission
Redistribution Committee

Dear Sir/Madam

City of Armadale suggestion for the 2020-21 Western Australian Redistribution: Federal Electoral Division of Burt to Remain Unchanged

The City of Armadale strongly suggests that Armadale's district boundary remains unchanged and that the electoral division of Burt is retained during the federal redistribution.

This suggestion has been prepared in accordance with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) guidelines for making public submissions to a redistribution. It further provides the latest supporting information related to population growth and other key economic factors relevant to Armadale and its federal electoral division of Burt.

Since the 2015 redistribution of Western Australia's electoral districts and regions, and the establishment of the division of Burt in 2016, strong working relationships have been fostered between the City of Armadale and its Federal Member of Parliament, resulting in the betterment of the division's electors and our fast-growing region.

Covering a vast area encompassing Armadale, Canning and Gosnells, the seat of Burt is at the core of Perth's South East Metropolitan corridor. Forecast estimates are that the 340,500 population will grow to 500,000 in the next 20 years, and approximately 130,000 more jobs will be needed to support this growth.

The 172km² federal electoral division of Burt, clearly meets the AEC's quota requirements with its 109,053 enrolments in 2020, and its 116,511 enrolments by 2025. The growth experienced in this region over the last decade strongly justifies this electorate being maintained.

Fast growing region

To further support our suggestion, it is important to understand that the City of Armadale is one of the fastest growing local government areas in WA and in Australia. This rapid growth, accounting for a new residential street per week, characterises the region.



The population growth in the City of Armadale was recently demonstrated in data provided by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics* (ABS). The areas with the largest growth in WA, were stated as being Ellenbrook, Baldivis and thirdly in the Armadale suburbs of Forrestdale, Harrisdale, Piara Waters.

Growth is tangibly demonstrated by the recent land development and residential estates occurring in these areas. This is especially evident now with the increase in number of planning and building applications due to the COVID19 economic recovery stimulus package.

The City's forecasting model highlights that the population numbers in these areas are expected to rise significantly in the next 15 years. The population of Hilbert is expected to be 4,602 in 2021 and will grow to 13,356 by 2036 (an increase of 190%). The population of Piara Waters expected to be 14,458 in 2021, will grow to 20,400 by 2036 (an increase of 41%). Lastly the population of Forrestdale expected to be 1,195 in 2021, will grow to 8,019 by 2036, a highly significant increase of nearly 600%.

Furthermore, acknowledging that the current Armadale VFADE ratio is 3.55%, the City respectfully notes that the Office of Electoral Distributions Commissioner's Fact Sheets do not acknowledge the high population growth rate forecast for the suburbs located in the Armadale district. These figures are further demonstrated below in Table 1.

Table 1: Population Growth Projections

| Suburb | 2016 | 2021 | 2026 | 2031 | 2036 | 2041 | Total change | Avg. annual % change |
|--------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|----------------------|
| Haynes | 784 | 2,492 | 4,780 | 6,760 | 8,731 | 10,485 | +9,701 | 10.9 |
| Hilbert | 1,573 | 4,602 | 7,960 | 10,581 | 13,356 | 16,396 | +14,823 | 9.8 |
| Forrestdale | 1,115 | 1,195 | 2,725 | 5,356 | 8,019 | 9,437 | +8,322 | 8.9 |
| Piara Waters | 9,517 | 14,458 | 17,056 | 19,147 | 20,400 | 21,606 | +12,089 | 3.3 |

Source – Forecast i.d. 2020

The City notes that the State government's WA Tomorrow population forecast figures have been demonstrated to be overly conservative and understate population projections for Armadale. For example, while WA Tomorrow predicted a population of 79,600 by July 2019 for the City of Armadale, demographic statistics released by the ABS, demonstrate the Estimated Resident Population at July 2019 to be 90,797.

Regional unemployment and social disadvantage

Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that the City of Armadale has a significantly high unemployment rate, currently at 9.5% (March 2020), compared to WA's rate of 5.4%. This poses another relevant motive as to the need for the seat of Burt to remain. Removing this seat, removes access to direct representation and associated government attention, impacting the economic and community outcomes for the area's residents.

Despite rapid population growth, the City still faces challenges with respect to social disadvantage. Armadale is one of the most disadvantaged local governments in the Perth metropolitan area, scoring 994 in the ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA 2016).

There is also a distinct disparity between the City's older suburbs, which have historically contained large concentrations of social housing, compared to the newer suburbs in the growth areas. The older suburbs have a substantially lower SEIFA Index, higher levels of unemployment and housing stress, youth disengagement and lower levels of educational attainment.

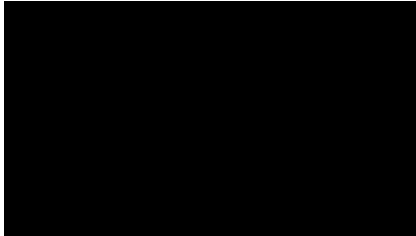
The City has made some progress in responding to the local impacts of this intergenerational disadvantage, but without transformative change and a strong voice at a federal level, the adverse social impacts will continue to impose substantial ongoing costs on all level of government, whether in child protection, justice, mental health or other social services.

Infrastructure achieved through joint advocacy

In recent years, the City of Armadale has tirelessly worked with its Member of Parliament to jointly advocate for key transformational infrastructure projects for the region such as:

- **Armadale Road Duplication:** The construction of a two-lane second carriageway for 6.9km of Armadale Road between Anstey and Tapper Roads. This includes upgrade works at three intersections; grade separation on Nicholson Road; construction of a principal shared path; street lighting and drainage; provision of two-metre sealed shoulders; as well as significant service relocation and associated works.
- **Armadale Road Bridge** over Kwinana Freeway to ease congestion improving access and safety.
- The **Thornlie-Cockburn Link** will be Perth's first east-west cross line connection, connecting the Mandurah and Armadale/Thornlie lines and the construction of the future Nicholson Road and Ranford Road stations.
- **Transformation of the Armadale Line:** Two major METRONET projects on the Armadale Line are currently underway including the **Byford Rail Extension** and **Level Crossing Removals** at Mint Street, Oats Street and Welshpool Road.
- **New inner-city TAFE campus:** The City has been involved in the advocacy of a new TAFE for over 12 years, working with local MPs and the WA Department of Training and Workforce Development to secure \$22.6 million for this critical facility, accommodating up to 600 students.
- **New Courthouse and Police Complex:** This \$86 million new facility on Church Avenue is currently under construction is set create numerous inner-city jobs.

In conclusion, any changes to the federal electorate division of Burt would result in reduced representation of our region. Having the seat of Burt has enabled the City of Armadale to establish a strong and proactive national voice providing the necessary and fair opportunities to attract funding and infrastructure. The boundaries created by the division of Burt has created a good model for governance at all levels.



Joanne Abbiss
Chief Executive Officer



Ruth Butterfield
Mayor