Sustainable Settlements

The Greens (WA) believe that:

- cities and towns can be designed and built to minimise environmental harm and maximise social well-being
- the ecological impact of Western Australian settlements must be reduced
- new urban developments must be environmentally sound, public transport friendly and must facilitate community interaction
- planning should minimise urban sprawl
- avoidance of risk is the most cost effective way to prepare for impacts of climate change

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- the formal recognition of the traditional ownership by Aboriginal peoples of the lands and waters of Western Australia (see also The Greens (WA) Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander policy)
- people friendly settlements that are beautiful to live in, work in and move through and which support ecologically sustainable practices at all levels (see also The Greens (WA) Housing policy)
- Western Australian cities and towns resourced to deliver community services and community governance at the local level
- equitable economic and social outcomes to build sustainable rural and regional communities (see also The Greens (WA) Regions policy)
- a planning system that integrates decisions about transport, housing, energy and the environment to create sustainable and liveable cities
- to ensure the highest standards of environmentally sensitive design are applied in the construction or retro-fitting of buildings and urban infrastructure
- our homes, businesses and community facilities to be run on renewable energy (see also The Greens (WA) Climate Change policy)
- compact urban and village developments serviced by networks of affordable and safe public transport, cycle ways and foot paths (see also The Greens (WA) Transport Policy)
- the protection of vulnerable biodiversity hotspots and recreational values of the coastline through planning decisions driven by up-to-date climate science (see also The Greens (WA) Marine & Coastal policy)
- planning decisions that take account of the effect of the changing coastal environment on built infrastructure and the impact of built infrastructure on the coastal environment
- community-driven, bio-regional approaches to land use planning that encourage mixed-use medium and high density use
- to improve socio-economic equity in disadvantaged areas using a range of planning, housing affordability and economic incentive measures
- a public right of appeal on development and subdivision decisions to the State Administrative Tribunal

Measures

Across the spheres of Governance, Planning, Environment, Society and the Economy, The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and actions to:

Governance

- facilitate educational, deliberative, community-wide planning processes to guide the transition toward sustainable communities
- involve all local authorities in undertaking Cities for Climate Protection and New Waterways programs for ecologically sustainable development (see the Greens (WA) Local Government policy)
- limit urban sprawl through progressive infill and redevelopment of existing urban developments
- intensify existing activity nodes and corridors and create new medium and high density clusters in all appropriate locations
- foster the development of climate change adaptation strategies by local communities (see also The Greens (WA) Climate Change & Energy policy)
- promote state-wide decentralisation to encourage revival of rural and regional communities and relieve growth pressures on the Perth metropolitan area increase the accountability and transparency of all State Government advisory, planning, decision-making and implementation agencies (see also The Greens (WA) Regions Policy)
- implement a Residential Transport Planning Initiative to create pedestrian and cycle friendly neighbourhoods; build a light-rail network, and co-ordinate car pooling and car sharing schemes to relieve congestion
- implement a Freight Transport Planning Initiative to move freight transport away from road use and towards rail and shipping

Planning

- strengthen the role and accountability of Local Government in planning decisions
- involve the community in planning decisions at local and state level (see also The Greens (WA) Public Participation policy)
- require planning decision makers to give reasons for their decisions
- make the third party appeals process accessible and affordable

Environment

- increase minimum requirements for energy and water use efficiency in new buildings, and provide incentives to exceed these minimum requirements
- implement an energy efficiency access and savings initiative (EASI), whereby 10% of existing buildings are retrofitted each year to meet the same minimum requirements for energy and water use efficiency that apply to new buildings by providing incentives and subsidies for those measures with a payback period of less than 10 years (see also The Greens (WA) Housing policy)
- make it compulsory to grade houses for energy and water efficiency, safety and access before sale or lease, and supply this information to the buyer

- end our dependence on fossil fuels by creating zero-emissions 'renewable settlements'
- mandate water and energy sensitive urban design principles in subdivision planning (see the Greens (WA) Water policy)
- protect and restore urban biodiversity by establishing an urban growth boundary, ending urban bushland clearing, and protecting metropolitan waterways (see also The Greens (WA) Urban Forest policy)
- transform the 'Tidy Towns' competition into a 'Sustainability Challenge', based on the 2020 Youth summit proposal

Society

- increase the diversity of housing types and the supply of affordable housing, using a range of measures to eliminate housing-related poverty
- create walkable, child-friendly settlements supporting healthier lifestyles
- support a range of community safety initiatives, such as design, lighting, transport guards, community police, community workers and restorative justice initiatives to address crime and improve community security (see also The Greens (WA) Justice Policy)
- support a range of incentives to artistic, educational and innovation industries to nurture the community's creative capacities (see also The Greens (WA) Arts & Culture policy)
- remove barriers to participation in the life of the community for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (see also The Greens (WA) Cultural Diversity Policy)
- establish essential services hubs at transport nodes, prioritising areas of lower socio-economic development (see also The Greens (WA) Transport policy)

Economy

- plan for the diversification of the metropolitan economy in anticipation of the end of the resources boom (see also The Greens (WA) Economics Policy)
- support local manufacturing, services and employment opportunities to encourage the localisation of, and dispersal of, jobs through mixed-use urban planning principles and economic incentives
- increase the proportion of food grown locally through a mix of labelling, land use planning and support for farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) (see also The Greens (WA) Food policy)
- encourage zero-waste settlements, including local recycling facilities (see also The Greens (WA) Beyond Waste policy)
- increase access to affordable home broadband internet access, especially in low income areas
- encourage the development of localised renewable energy industries to enable future growth and minimise transitional impacts
- compile a performance indicator for each city, town, and region that includes measures of economic, environmental and social sustainability, and report updates and comparisons

(See also the Australian Greens Sustainable Planning and Transport policy)

Sustainable Settlements policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2017