

City of Greater Geraldton Council Policy

2.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

SUSTAINABILITY THEME

Economy

OBJECTIVES

To maximise economic activity within Greater Geraldton.

POLICY STATEMENT

Policy: The City will support economic development, as provided in this policy.

Rationale: The City of Greater Geraldton is a regional node and focus for economic development in the Midwest. The City adopted the Geraldton Jobs and Growth Plan 2020 - 2023 in January 2020. The document is focussed on collaborative action to bring more wealth into the region by growing the traded economy.

Other policy and strategy documents, which aim at stimulating local economic or spatial development and employment, support and inform this policy document. These include:

- Greater Geraldton 2031 Strategic Community Plan
- Geraldton Jobs and Growth Plan 2020 -2023
- Geraldton City Centre Revitalisation Plan
- Geraldton CBD Revitalisation Program
- Geraldton City Centre Vibrancy Strategy
- City Centre Planning Policy
- City of Greater Geraldton Commercial Activity Centres Strategy
- Midwest Innovation Agenda

These strategies are subject to regular review and update.

Support for economic development include a range of initiatives such as:

- Advocacy of Federal and State Governments on behalf of the City, business, industry clusters, not for profits and its community;
- City Centre revitalisation and the development of commercial activity centres and industrial areas;
- Industry development and business support for existing and emerging clusters with proven potential;
- Support for new investment including a concierge service;
- Support for innovation and smart technologies and Infrastructure provision.

This is a discretionary Council Policy.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

1. The City welcomes and supports economic development and investment in Greater Geraldton.
2. Council will either make annual budget allocations or approved budget amendments to implement and support programs consistent with Council priorities of the day.
3. Council will support suitable development investment in target industries to stimulate economic and community benefits including:
 - Create new jobs
 - Value-add through construction and operations
 - Catalyse growth in key strategic areas
 - Support growth of other businesses
4. Council will develop and review strategies from time to time to reflect the economic conditions and priorities of the day and these strategies will inform the annual budget process.

POLICY DETAILS

1. **The City will support centre revitalisation by:**
 - Facilitating the provision of a regularly reviewed Geraldton City Centre Revitalisation Plan in consultation with all relevant stakeholders;
 - Facilitating collaboration and communication with relevant stakeholders on the implementation of initiatives from the Geraldton City Centre Revitalisation Plan;
 - Providing support and assistance to prospective business via the City of Greater Geraldton City Growth, Regulatory Services, Property Services, and Customer & Business Engagement branches.
2. **The City will support commercial activity centres development by:**
 - Provision of incentives that support development in activity centres. Incentives may include a number of concessions (City rates and fees; rent if on leased City land) from the City of Greater Geraldton with applications assessed on a case by case basis and influenced by a minimum eligibility criteria;
 - Ensuring that the activity centres strategy is reviewed to keep up to date with City growth, expansion and demand for activity centres;
 - Providing support and assistance to prospective business via the City of Greater Geraldton City Growth, Regulatory Services, Property Services, and Customer & Business Engagement branches.
3. **The City will support industrial area project development by:**
 - Facilitating provision of required infrastructure to support industrial development;
 - Provision of incentives that support industrial project development in any of the Economic Sector Clusters identified in the Geraldton Jobs and Growth Plan 2020 -2023, or any Sector displaying growth potential. Incentives may include a number of concessions (City rates and fees; rent if on leased City land) from the City of Greater Geraldton with applications assessed on a case by case basis and influenced by a minimum eligibility criteria.

4. Eligibility Criteria

- The location of the project;
- The degree of economic, social and environmental benefits;
- A minimum capital investment;
- Project creates a minimum number of full time equivalent jobs;
- If a project, is contestable;
- Proven commercial viability;
- Supports or value adds to existing industries or commercial activities;
- Proponent has no existing debt/liability with the City of Greater Geraldton;
- Project does not cause detriment to existing industries.

5. Financial Incentives/Concessions Terms and Conditions (Council Approved):

The form of financial incentives/concessions would be as follows:

- The term of the incentive/concession would be no greater than annually over 3 years but can be in a form of a “one-off”;
- A discount rate (25% to 100%) to be applied to the incentive/concession. A phased or sliding rate can be applied if the incentive/concession is offered annually over a two to three year period;
- The form of the incentive/concession would be an option of either one of the following (only one (1) option would be available):
 - Rates concession
 - Lease concession (only available on City owned or leased land)
 - Discount or waive on development related fees and charges (where the City has the power to waive or discount);
- Case by case decision by Council;
- Any incentive/concession offered that requires a “one-off” or annual form of payment to the City must be paid by the designated due date. Failure to pay by the due date will result in the revoking of that incentive/concession;
- Any other fee/charge or statutory payment payable to the City by the proponent during the term of the incentive/concession that is not paid by the due date will also result in the revoking of the incentive/concession;
- Any new development could be subject to a Development Agreement between the City and the Proponent that includes set milestones to be achieved to be eligible to an agreed incentive/concession.

6. The City will support industry development by:

- Provision of business support to emerging enterprise in established and emerging Clusters through means of direct assistance or facilitating liaison with appropriate funding, business support or research organisations;
- Enabling collaboration with other members of a Cluster by way of the Clusters programs.

7. The City will support new business investment, or the significant expansion of existing businesses, in established and emerging Clusters by:
 - Facilitating provision of business support enterprise through means of direct assistance in navigating Council processes and procedures or facilitating liaison with appropriate funding, business support or research organisations;
 - Facilitating international trade missions to promote investment and export opportunities for local businesses;
 - Assisting in site selection for businesses looking to expand or relocate in City of Greater Geraldton.

8. The City will support new investment attraction by:
 - Provision of a dedicated concierge service that provides assistance to existing and new developers in terms of liaison with relevant stakeholders, information or any other requirement;
 - Collaborating with local stakeholders to ensure that new investment opportunities are dealt with in a coordinated and effective manner.

9. The City will advocate for the support of infrastructure provision for industrial development and City Centre regeneration.

10. The City will support innovation and smart technologies by:
 - Facilitating the support of entities and individuals seeking assistance from Federal and State programs.

11. The City will support Aboriginal Business Development by:
 - Facilitating the support of entities and individuals seeking assistance from Federal and State programs.

KEY TERM DEFINITION

N/A

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Director Development Services oversees the implementation and operation of this policy and ensures City Rangers enforce compliance with local laws and regulations.

Director Infrastructure Services oversees the delivery and maintenance of infrastructure, facilities or public amenities approved by Council consistent with this policy.

WORKPLACE INFORMATION

Geraldton Jobs and Growth Plan 2020 - 2023

DRAFT

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate		Officer	Review Cycle	Next Due
Development Services		Manager Customer and Business Engagement	Biennial	2027
Version	Decision Reference	Synopsis		
4.		Policy Review		