



PRESS RELEASE

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TO: **Media Contacts**

Collie's project planning wins State award

The profound effect the Shire of Collie's Supertowns projects has had in transforming the central business district was recognised as among the best in the state at the Planning Institute of Australia's annual awards ceremony held at the Crown Casino last week.

Collie was awarded the top gong in the 'From Plan to Place' category for its 14 Supertowns projects, ahead of Elizabeth Quay in Perth, which was awarded a commendation in the same category.

The Supertowns projects included the central business district revitalisation, the A-class art gallery, youth space, swimming pool upgrade, men's shed, park upgrades, child care centre and improvements to the Collie River as well as improved safety through better lighting, CCTV, road upgrades and pedestrian separation, and railway crossing upgrades.

Supertowns Project Manager Geoff Klem said the planning process set as part of the Growth Plan for Collie resulted in the establishment of a set of principles, a clear vision and a set of objectives that identified priority projects that were to collectively transform the town.

"The CBD Revitalisation Project has delivered a major improvement to the character and amenity of the Collie CBD and to the river environs," Mr Klem said.

"At a time when there was a reduction in disposable income and loss of population that directly affected the viability of businesses, project funds spent locally coupled with the development outcomes has created a more cohesive, positive and determined culture in the town," Mr Klem said.

"Large numbers of people are now using the Central Park and Facebook postings from locals and visitors have commented that the town has a new heart with a high standard of amenity and community facilities," Mr Klem said.

Shire of Collie CEO David Blurton said the planning process developed with community, industry and special interest groups' involvement helped ensure the success of the projects.

"Throughout the implementation, it was necessary to regularly review the alignment of the actions on the ground with the overall objectives of the growth plan," Mr Blurton said.

“A strong team of consultants and internal professionals ensured that the highest possible standard was achieved in every project,” Mr Blurton said.

Shire President Sarah Stanley said the Regional Centres Development Plan’s Supertowns program provided the vehicle to comprehensively plan and develop a set of strategies aimed at transforming Collie’s central business district.

“It was the deeply held desire to change the perceptions of Collie from an industrial town with poor amenity, social problems and inadequate services that drove the insistence on a high quality product in the planning of our Supertowns projects,” Cr Stanley said.

“We wanted to continue to reposition perceptions of Collie as a highly desirable place to live, visit and invest. We want people to not only want to come and work in Collie, but be proud to raise their families here and call Collie home,” Cr Stanley said.

“It was with great pride that we were able to receive this award on behalf of Collie, ahead of projects such as Elizabeth Quay of a much larger scale and budget.”

The Shire of Collie’s Supertowns projects is now eligible for nation-wide recognition at the Planning Institute of Australia’s National Awards being held in Perth in 2018.

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Image: Executive Manager Development Services Andrew Dover, Deputy Shire President Ian Miffing, Shire President Sarah Stanley, Supertowns Project Manager Geoff Klem and Chief Executive Officer David Blurton.

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