

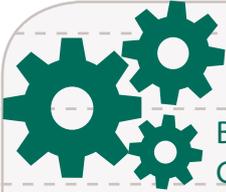
City of Albany

Trails Hub Strategy
Background and Review:

City of Albany & Community Consultation

volume 4





BACKGROUND AND REVIEW: CITY OF ALBANY AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION



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INTRODUCTION



Evolve was commissioned by the City of Albany to prepare a World Class Trails Hub Report in 2014 — 2015, which provided the basis for a comprehensive assessment of Albany's current and future position as a World Class Trails Hub. The Background report included specific analysis of Albany's position and included:

- Audit of the existing trails network
- Assessment of Albany's status as a Trails Tourism Hub
- Assessment of current tourism and marketing status and development opportunities
- Survey of Albany trail users
- Extensive community consultation process

The information contained in this volume helped to develop the strategic directions and actions for the City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy.



Melanie Price



INTRODUCTION

As previously mentioned, in the context of this strategy 'trails' have included all **non-motorised** activities such as walking, horse riding, off-road/rail trail cycling, mountain biking, aquatic trails (such as kayak trails and diving trails), rock climbing and interpretive/heritage trails. Urban footpaths and shared paths were considered if they created connections onto a mapped trail or potential trail centre or trail head location.

The management of trails is determined by the land owner or manager. The following trails were considered for the audit, based on the land owner (in priority order):

- ✓ Trails managed by the City of Albany (audited)
- ✓ Trails managed by DPaW (reviewed)
- ✓ Iconic Regional Trails with sections within City of Albany (reviewed and considered)
- ✓ Other Regional Trails outside of City of Albany (considered)

As a significant proportion of trails within the study area reside on land not managed by City of Albany, these trails were reviewed to ensure balance and identification of the key gaps in trail provision. Albany has also been identified as the regional hub for many of the greater region's iconic trail offerings and these were considered within the audit.

To undertake the assessment, trail locations were identified through stakeholder consultation, PCG feedback site visits and a review of review of existing marketing collateral. A desktop audit of identified trails was undertaken using information sourced from previous trail planning documents and stakeholder consultation. Physical assessments of trails and associated infrastructure was undertaken reviewing the variety of trails on offer, their general condition, key issues, the type of natural and physical environment and the overall trail experience.

The trails were audited on their suitability and opportunity to support the vision of Albany being a World Class Trails Hub. It was based on a comprehensive range of criteria including: existing supply, site opportunity, site deliverability, user group suitability, market potential, land management, physical condition and trail experience. The detailed audit and assessment of trails informed the recommendations, objectives and actions.

AUDITED TRAILS

Information gained has been collated into this trail audit database. Where appropriate trail networks have been grouped by areas or aspirational connections. Naming and numbering standards from the City of Albany's Reserve team have been followed where possible.

The audited trails database follows on pages 5 and 6. Based on the audit, specific trails projects have been prioritised and are covered in detail in Volume 2.



REVIEWED TRAILS

Albany is renowned for its coastal trails, many of which are within City of Albany boundaries but managed by others land holders. Typically these trails are located within National Parks and are managed by the DPaW. However other tenures and management such as private land and community management were also considered. The key offerings outside of the City of Albany's management include:

Long Distance Trails – Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail

Two world class trails (Bibbulmun and Munda Biddi) have their southern terminus in Albany. These iconic trails supporting Albany's objective to become a recognised Trails Hub. The Treetop Walk and Granite Skywalk are highly visible and promotable attractions with international appeal and promotion potential.

The Bibbulmun Track is one of the world's great long distance walk trails, stretching nearly 1000km from Kalamunda to Albany, with 113km of the Bibbulmun Track within the City of Albany. The linear trail offers a wide range of experiences, from short walks to end to end trips. The trail is managed by DPaW and features boardwalks, lookouts footbridges and campsites.

The Munda Biddi is one of the world's great long distance nature based off road/rail trail cycling trails, stretching 1000km from Mundaring to Albany, with 62km of the Munda Biddi Trail within the City of Albany. The linear trail offers a wide range of experiences, from day rides to end to end trips. The trail is managed by DPaW and features boardwalks, lookouts footbridges and campsites. The majority of the trail in Albany is designed for off road/rail trail cycle touring and does not cater specifically for the identified mountain bike market.

Six of the thirty two trails listed in the Western Australian Top Trails promotion are in the Great Southern region.

Additional trails identified are:

Torndirrup National Park Walk Trails

- Sharp Point 0.5km
- Blowholes 1.6km
- Stony Hill Heritage Trail 450m
- Peak Head 4.3km
- Bald Head 12.5km
- The Gap and Natural Bridge 0.3km
- Salmon Holes 0.3k

West Cape Howe National Park Walk Trails

Tarbotton Track 0.6km

Two People Bay Nature Reserve Walk Trails

Two People Bay Heritage Trail 3km



Mt Martin Botanical Reserve Walk Trails

Ledge Beach to Voyager Park 11km

Multi Use (Walk, Cycling and Equestrian)

Torbay Elleker Rail Trail (forms part of Munda Biddi)

SUMMARY

A total of 147km of walk trail and 62km of off road cycle touring trail is located within the City of Albany but outside of its management. Off road cycle touring on the Munda Biddi trail is the only identified significant alternative trail type to walking, currently marketed.

CONSIDERED TRAILS

The Great Southern region boasts a number of significant and unique trail related offerings outside the City of Albany boundaries. Albany is already positioned and promoted as the hub for these regional products with many tourists accessing them on day trips. The key regional offerings are the Porongurup and Stirling Range National Parks. The trails on offer in these areas include;

Porongurup National Park Walk Trails

- Nancy Peak Circuit 5.5km loop
- Wansborough Walk 8km
- Bolganup Heritage Trail 600m loop
- Devils Slide 2.5 km
- Granite Skywalk 4km

Stirling Range National Park Walk Trails

- Bluff Knoll 6km
- Mt Toolbrunup 4km
- Mt Trio 3.5km
- Mt Hassell 3km
- Talyuberlup Peak 2.6km
- Mt Magog 7km

All of these trails are located in extremely unique elevated environments and offer fantastic views over Albany's Hinterland. A total of 49.2km of additional walking based trails within neighbouring national parks are accessed from Albany and are currently promoted. The Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk is also a significant regional offering often accessed from Albany.



SUMMARY FROM AUDITED TRAILS

The trails audit found that Albany has a significant but unbalanced offering of trails. The balance between trail types and trail management is summarised below.

| Trail Type | Managed by City of Albany | Within City of Albany LGA | Significant Regional Product | Total km (approx) |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Walking | 50km | 147km | 50km | 250 |
| Rail Trail Cycle Touring | 13km | 62km | 75km | 75 |
| Mountain Bike | 0.7km | 0km | 0km | 1 |
| Equestrian | 30km | 0km | 0km | 30 |
| Paddling | 0km | 0km | 0km | 0 |
| Climbing | 0km | 0km | 0km | 0 |
| Aquatic | 0.3km | 0km | 0km | 0.2 |
| TOTAL (approx) | 94km | 209km | 125km | |

Table 1: Existing Trail Offering

WALKING

Albany offers a significant amount of walking based trails with local and regional trail offerings. A total of 147km of walk trail is located within the City of Albany but is outside of its management. Within the City of Albany, 50km of managed trails currently exist but quality is variable and generally signage is poor. The overall trail quantity has National Destination Significance with sufficient trails for a holiday over a week of unique experiences but quality and supporting elements do not meet National Destination requirements.

EQUESTRIAN

Equestrian based trails are catered for at current levels with trail sufficient for a short break or weekend trip.

RAIL TRAIL CYCLE TOURING

Albany offers a significant amount of rail trail and cycle touring offerings. However, 62km of trail is located within the City of Albany but is outside of its management. Off road cycle touring (on the Munda Biddi) is the only significant alternative trail type to walking, currently marketed and promoted.

MOUNTAIN BIKE, AQUATIC AND CLIMBING

Mountain Bike, Aquatic and Climbing trails are under catered for and currently only meet Local Destination Significance requirements.

As with the local trail offerings, the majority of regional offerings outside of the City of Albany are walking and Rail Trail Cycle Touring trails and there are no significant alternative trail types.

4.3 TRAIL USE IN ALBANY



DPaW TRAIL USE

The following table provides information on trail use on a number of DPaW trails within the Lower Great Southern region. The information is gathered only from walking trails that have pedestrian counters.

| Name | Tracks | User No |
|----------------|---|---------|
| Stirling Range | Bluff Knoll — Walk Trail | 17592 |
| | Mt Hassell — Walk Trail | 1725 |
| | Mt Magog — Walk Trail | 1122 |
| | Mt Trio — Walk Trail | 3485 |
| | Talyuberlup — Walk Trail | 1353 |
| | Toolbrunup Peak — Walk Trail | 3022 |
| Torndirrup | Peak Head Walk Trail | 919 |
| | Wawa Block — Bibbulmun Track | 1518 |
| West Cape Howe | Shelley Beach Road Crossing — Bibbulmun Track | 1130 |
| | Tarbotton Walk Trail — Bibbulmun Track | 1229 |
| | TOTAL | 33202 |

Table 2: Summary of Trail Use on DPaW Land

Bibbulmun Track

According to the 2008 Bibbulmun Track user survey there are 167,206 walks on the track each year. If 5% of these uses occur in the Albany end of the Track that represents 8,360 walks or 23 people per day. There were 120 registered end-to-enders in 2012, of which 62% were from WA, 27% were from interstate and 12% from overseas. Unfortunately not all end-to-enders register so this figure is considered an underrepresentation of total annual number of end-to-enders. Having said that end-to-enders are the minority with over 70% of use of the Bibbulmun Track known to be day walks.

Munda Biddi Trail

There were 9,590 Munda Biddi trail visits in 2010¹. This figure is low given it is based on the trail being from Perth to Nannup and excludes usage of Nannup to Albany. With the trail now completed this figure is considered a significant underestimate of total users on the Trail. Since opening of the completed trail in April 2013, there has been an estimated 50 end-to-end rides on the Trail. Also, since the opening in 2012 of the Albany to Denmark section, there will also be good use of the trail in Albany by locals and visitors for day trips, given the shortage of alternative off-road cycling routes.

The results of the market research survey undertaken for this project (see Section 4.5) indicate a high usage of both Munda Biddi and Bibbulmun Track in Albany and translate to both tracks playing a significant role on in Albany.

1. DEC: User Survey data.



4.4 NATURE OF TOURISM IN ALBANY

INTRODUCTION

Of the estimated 1,993,700 annual overnight visitors to Australia's South West (YE Dec 2012), 268,800 (13.5%) visited the City of Albany. Albany is therefore a relatively small tourism destination compared to the more high profile destinations within the South West region, such as Busselton and Margaret River². Table 3 shows that although Busselton and Bunbury are preferred by intrastate visitors to Australia's South West, Albany is increasing in popularity for Interstate visitors and International visitors. Trails development in Albany could assist in attracting greater visitors from all segments to Albany.

| | YE Dec 2010/11/12 Average Annual Visitors | YE DEC 2010/11/12 % |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Estimated Intrastate Visitors | | |
| Busselton Region | 468,000 | 29% |
| Bunbury (ASW) | 332,700 | 21% |
| Augusta – Margaret River | 298,700 | 19% |
| Southern Forests | 226,000 | 14% |
| Albany | 190,300 | 12% |
| Estimated Interstate Visitors | | |
| Augusta – Margaret River | 74,300 | 50% |
| Busselton Region | 47,000 | 32% |
| Albany | 43,300 | 29% |
| Bunbury (ASW) | 36,300 | 24% |
| Southern Forests | 30,000 | 20% |
| Estimated International Visitors | | |
| Augusta – Margaret River | 60,100 | 50% |
| Albany | 34,800 | 29% |
| Busselton Region | 27,700 | 23% |
| Bunbury (ASW) | 25,900 | 22% |

Table 3: Visitors to Key South West Destinations by Segment³

Of interest, 13% of all visitors to Albany are international visitors whereas only 6% of all visitors to Australia's South West are international visitors. While the difference may not be large, it may indicate that Albany has a greater 'pulling power' for international visitors when compared to visitation overall to Australia's South West⁴.

2. Tourism Western Australia, Overnight Fact Sheet, Australia's South West, Year Ending 2010/11/12 and Overnight Visitor Fact Sheet, Albany, Year Ending 2010/11/12

3. Source: Tourism Western Australia, Australia's South West Overnight Visitor Fact Sheet YE 2010/11/12

4. Tourism Western Australia, Australia's South West Overnight Visitor Fact Sheet Years Ending 2010/11/12 and Tourism Western Australia, Albany, Overnight Visitor Fact Sheet Years Ending December 2010/11/12



VISITOR PROFILE

As outlined in the table below, most (86%) international visitors to Albany are visiting for holiday and leisure, with only 10% visiting friend and relatives⁵. A greater proportion of international visitors to Albany are there for holiday and leisure purposes, compared with international visitors to the whole of Australia's South West (78%) perhaps indicating Albany's international reputation as an attractive holiday destination. The promotion of Albany as a trails destination could add to this already established international reputation.

| Visitor Origin | Domestic | International |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| No of Visitors | 233,600 (87%) | 36,400 (13%) |
| Demographic | Male 53% — Female 47% | Female 51% — Male 49% |
| | 15—24 15% | 15—24 14% |
| | 25—44 30% | 25—44 32% |
| | 45—64 36% | 45—64 38% |
| | 65+ 19% | 65+ 16% |
| Purpose | Holiday/leisure 51% | Holiday/leisure 86% |
| | VFR 25% | VFR 10% |
| | Business 16% | Business— 2% |
| | Other 8% | Other —2% |
| Travel party | Adult Couple 35% | Adult couple 42% |
| | Family 23% | Solo 37% |
| | Solo 20% | Friends/relatives 13% |
| | Friends/relatives 16% | Family 8% |
| | Other 6% | Other 1% |

Table 4: Profile of Visitors to Albany⁶

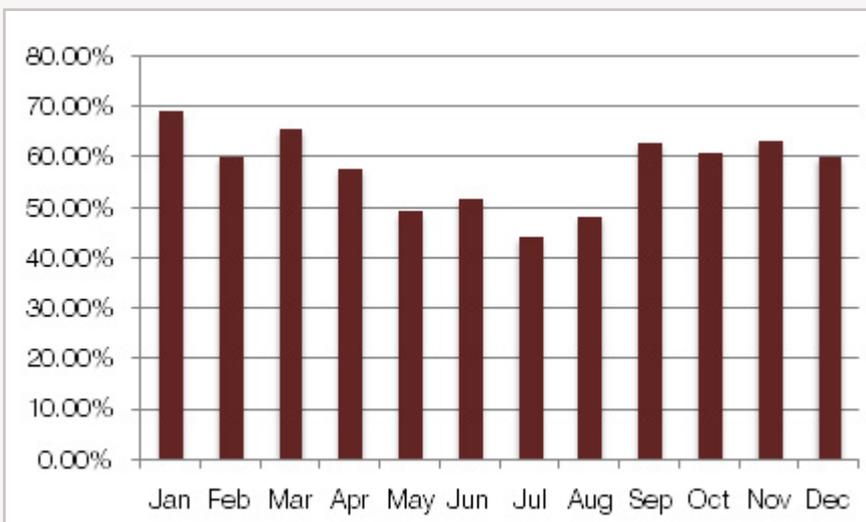
The visitor profile indicates a majority of visitors in Albany are older. International visitors are mainly travelling in adult couples (42%) or alone (37%) whereas domestic visitors are predominantly adult couples (35%) and family groups (23%) with 20% travelling alone. Compared to the entire South West, relatively more international travellers to Albany travel in adult couples than alone. The slightly older age bracket and adult couple groups amongst visitors to Albany may be linked to its history and ANZAC heritage reputation.

5. Tourism Western Australia. Shire of Albany. Overnight Visitor Fact Sheet Years Ending December 2009/10/11

6. Source: Tourism Western Australia. Shire of Albany Overnight Visitor Fact Sheet Years Ending 2010/11/12

OCCUPANCY AND SEASONALITY

As shown in the Graph below, peak season in Albany is currently January followed by October. Shoulder months are March, April and September. The lowest seasons are August and July. Compared to the whole South West, Albany is more popular in September and October whereas the rest of the South West appears to attract more visitors in December. The attractiveness of Albany in the shoulder periods seems relevant because Albany doesn't seem to be considered just a summer season destination and apart from the very coldest months (July and August) appears to do well for much of the year. Seasonality for Albany doesn't appear to be as affected by school holiday periods and unfavourable weather conditions as other locations.



Graph 1: Albany Room Occupancy Rate – Hotels, Motels and Serviced Apartments, 15 or more Rooms, 2012. Source: ABS

HOTEL OCCUPANCY ALBANY

As shown in Table 4 hotels, motels and serviced apartments with 15 or more rooms in the City of Albany had an average annual occupancy of 57.8% in 2012, which is slightly higher than the entire south west. Perth is widely known for its undersupply of hotel rooms and it therefore records a very high occupancy rate. Albany's relatively lower rate reflects a possible oversupply of hotel rooms. This could reflect a maturing tourism industry, where demand is not meeting with supply.

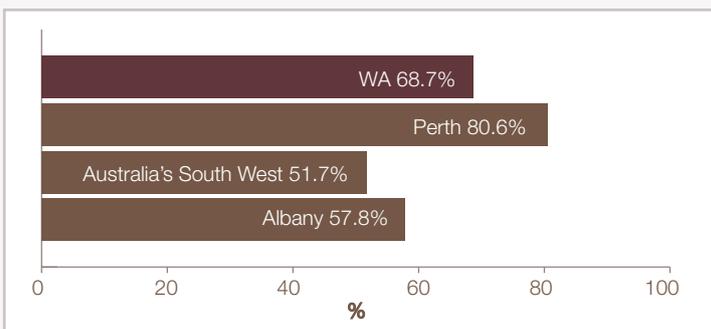
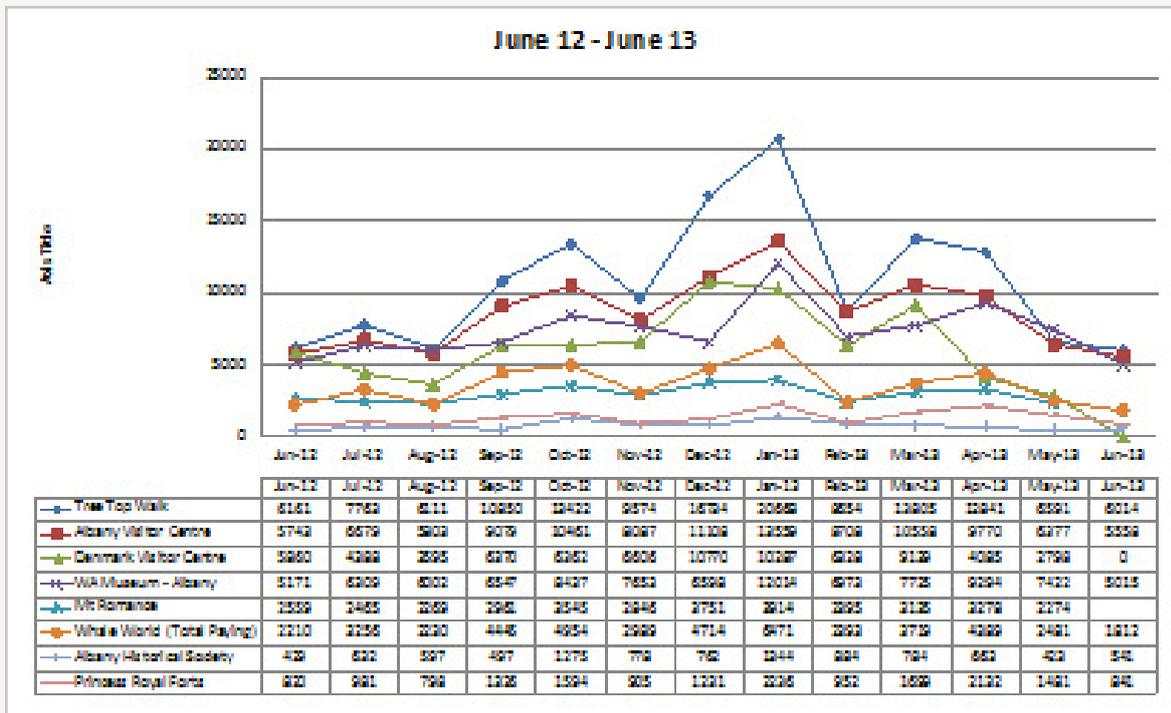


Table 5: Hotel Occupancy 2012



VISITORS TO ATTRACTIONS

The graph below shows annual visitation to key attractions in the Lower Great Southern area. The purpose of the graph is to compare visitor numbers and seasonality across the region. The Tree Top Walk, which is approximately 1 hours’ drive from Albany is clearly a major drawcard in the region. No other attraction in Albany is drawing nearly as many visitors and yet Denmark and Walpole which are the closest towns to the Tree Top Walk get lower overall visitor numbers than Albany. The result demonstrates the pulling power of an iconic tourism product and that people are prepared to drive to an attraction of interest, using Albany as a base. It could also indicate Albany’s lack of a significant iconic tourism attraction with equal pulling power.



Graph 2: Visitors to Attractions in Lower Great Southern.

TOURIST AREA LIFE CYCLE

Albany appears to be a long haul destination attracting older couples and solo travellers and proportionately, more international visitors than other popular South West destination. Its distance from major population centres presents a challenge for it to attract weekend visitors. It is a mature destination with an oversupply of accommodation.

R.W. Butler created a model in 1980 of the “Tourist Area Life Cycle”⁷. The model hypothesises that tourist destinations pass through various stages of development. Linking the changing nature of the tourism market and motivations of the traveller over the lifecycle of the destination with the economic, social and physical impacts of those changes on the destination. The model describes how the initial force motivating tourists to visit a destination is typically the landscape or setting. As a tourist destination matures these attributes undergo change and the setting of the destination begin to reflect the imprint of an increasing numbers of visitors⁸. Once a destination has been developed, it may exceed its innate capacities and potentially lose its attractiveness to future tourists. At this point a destination can be rejuvenated with investment and redevelopment to attract new markets or it may decline.

4.5 MARKET RESEARCH SURVEY



A market research survey was conducted online via Survey Monkey to gauge insight into awareness and use of Albany trails. The survey was circulated to the databases of the Munda Bididi Trail Foundation, the Bibbulmun Track Foundation and through the Albany Visitor Centre.

SURVEY STATISTICS

There was a total response of 332; with 55% of respondents aged between 45—64 years, 28% aged 25—44 years, 16% aged over 65 years old and less than 1% under 24. 66% were male and 34% female.

SURVEY RESULTS

The results of this market survey indicate the following:

- Albany is already widely known for its unique natural beauty but not for its trails offering
- Walking is the most popular activity, in particular in iconic and unique natural locations
- Walking is primarily undertaken by tourists on DPaW managed land and the Mounts (City of Albany managed)
- Tourists visit coastal, iconic (well known) trails whereas locals are more likely to use local trails
- Albany is considered by tourists to have enough trails overall but focus should be on maintaining or improving walking trails (through signage) and promoting them better through print and online tools and creating new mountain biking trails and kayaking trails
- More mountain biking trails for beginner and intermediate levels and more kayak trails are requested
- There is no demand for more horse trails from those surveyed
- For those who didn't undertake trails activity in Albany it was due to lack of information or time, rather than lack of interest or energy.
- Positive word of mouth is the most important way to promote Albany's trails offering but internet communications are the next most vital tool to promote and position Albany as a trails destination
- Albany is considered well serviced by trail tourists although small improvements could be made in services in the area of transport and pick up services, followed by facilities including parking and toilets

7. RW Butler, 1980, "The concept of the tourist area life cycle of evolution— implications for management of resources", Canadian Geographer 24 pp5 —12, p.8

8. S. Wahib and J. Pigram, 1997, "Tourism, Development and Growth: the Challenge of Sustainability", Routledge p.25



FILTER QUESTIONS

Some key queries were asked of respondents about the use of the Albany Visitor Centre and whether respondents had visited Albany in the last five years. For those who had, further questions were then asked to gauge impressions of Albany Visitor Centre, Albany as a tourist destination and use of Albany trails.

Use of Albany Visitor Centre: 54% of these had used the Albany Visitor Centre in the last five years and 46% had not. Of those who had, 94% were satisfied with its customer service and information and brochures which is a very high satisfaction rate. However 35% were neutral or dissatisfied with the range and quality of the retail products possibly indicating some room for improvement.

Visiting Albany: 266 (80%) of all respondents said they had spent time in Albany as a visitor or tourist in the last five years.

Where did they come from? 30 respondents said that they 'normally live' in Albany (9.6%), 49 respondents said they normally live in Regional WA (15.8%), 200 said they live in Perth (64.3%), 24 (7.7%) normally live in Australia (not WA), and 8 respondents (2.6%) live overseas.

How did we source the respondents? A question asked people how they found out about the survey. This question assumed the survey was going out through three sources and so only three options were offered. This is the summary of responses:

- 39% from Bibbulmun Track Foundation
- 56% from Munda Biddi Trail Foundation
- 5% from Albany Visitor Centre of which 4 people lived in Albany.

Respondents were also able to indicate an 'other' source, and 41 respondents indicated other sources, with over 50% of these indicating Bicycling WA and 10% indicating Recreational Trail Riders Association. Amongst the people who found out about the survey through these other sources, use of motor bikes and road bikes by percentage nearly doubles for road bikes and more than doubles for motor bikes clearly indicating a preference for these activities amongst these respondents.

The intention of the question was to be able to isolate those respondents who were 'general tourists' to Albany (i.e. those people who got the survey through Albany Visitor Centre), as opposed to those who were already trail users, of which Munda Biddi Trail Foundation and Bibbulmun Track Foundation members would be. Unfortunately only a small number of respondents said they got the survey through the Albany Visitor Centre and some of these people lived in Albany, many of them actually got their survey through Bicycling WA or the Recreational Trail Riders Association and some through friends. The conclusion that can be drawn about the people who said they got their survey from the Albany Visitor Centre is that they were actually predominately Bicycling WA members or Recreational Trail Riders and not 'general tourists' to Albany at all. Unfortunately they do not represent general tourists to Albany any more than the Munda Biddi Trail or Bibbulmun Track Foundations' members.

LIMITATIONS OF THE SURVEY

The results from this survey are limited to the extent that respondents were not randomly selected from the entire WA tourist population. If more responses had been received from visitor centre clients, as originally intended, survey results could have been compared to give a better understanding of 'non-trail converts/ general tourists'. Unfortunately this did not occur.

However when the results are compared to the ERASS participation rates they are highly consistent with general recreational participation data, so the results still provide a useful indication of trail user trends and visitor perceptions of Albany.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | Walking is the most popular activity and tourists visit coastal, iconic (well known) trails whereas locals are more likely to use lesser known trails |
| ✓ | Albany is considered to have enough walk trails overall but focus should be on maintaining or improving walking trails (through signage) and promoting them |
| ✓ | There is opportunity for more mountain biking trails for beginner and intermediate levels |
| ✓ | There is opportunity for kayaking trails , based on the market research |
| ✓ | Consider the collection of trails user data on annual or bi-annual basis to gauge usage and trends |



4.6 CAPACITY AUDIT



The following is the summary initial assessment of Albany as a trails hub using the Capacity Audit framework developed in the World Class Trails Hub Strategy for WA. This is a simple assessment based on findings in the initial phases of the project. Items ticked are considered to be present within the Albany Trails Hub. Items with asterisks, are considered gaps which require attention.

| Essential | Desirable |
|---|---|
| ✓ 1. Natural attractions and features of local, state or national significance, such as parks and reserves. | * Themed trails or tours – either guided or defined (signs, brochures or audio methods) |
| * 2. A critical mass of established walking, cycling, equestrian, drive or water-based trail network, including looped trails and Nationally significant linking trails appealing to a range of user types. Trails are mapped, signed, and well serviced (unless a social trail network) | ✓ A range of activities and products promoted to tourists. |
| * 2. Linkages between trails, clear access to trails from hub. | ✓ Established long distance cycle, river or walking trails, such as the Bibbulmun Track. |
| * 2. Signage (directional and Informational), interpretation and education – community news, static information panels, interpretive trails? And access to routes. | ✓ Distinctive setting with unique or unusual landform, vegetation or water forms. |
| * 3. Facilities geared for trail users such as bike racks, storage for backpacks, bike wash facilities, showers, bike lockers, repair stands, secure parking. | ✓ Sites of cultural interest or significance. |
| ✓ 3. Access via established highway network from major population centres. | ✓ Year round appeal with few seasonal or climatic that could negatively impact on trail activities. |
| ✓ 3. Public transport access – scheduled bus, trail or boat service including transport for trail equipment. | ✓ Health services — clinic, hospital, doctor, nursing centre. |
| ✓ 3. Staffed visitor centre or major information hub in a central location providing trail, tour, accommodation and transport information/ booking services 7 days per week. | * Secure facilities for visitor's bikes, cars and left luggage. |
| ✓ 3. Support services such as bank, laundry, pharmacy and grocery, atm. | |
| ✓ 3. Public toilets, showers, car parking in central location. | * Organised tours, festivals, events or guided activities for adults, children, families and tourists with a trails focus. |



| Essential | | Desirable |
|-----------|---|---|
| ✓ | 3. Supply and service suppliers for target user groups – hikers, cyclists, motor-bikers, horse riders such as sport equipment sales, repair services, hire and emergency support. | Transport services such as fuel, maintenance and auto supply. |
| ✓ | 3. A range of 'trail friendly' accommodation styles and price meeting the needs of the target market, such as caravan/camping, bunkhouse, home stay, motel, hotel, chalet and hostel. | Focus on sites, features and activities that complement the natural attributes of the hub-peacefulness, remoteness, uniqueness or wildness. |
| ✓ | 3. Food services – restaurants, cafes and other providers available 7 days, day and night. | |
| * | 4. Comprehensive strategic, governance and operations plan including initial and on-going funding for management. | |
| * | 4. Maintenance and upgrade program that supports hub activities/services and designed to meet target market needs. | |
| * | 4. Broad community support, preferably with a formalised supporter group, such as a mountain bike club. | Source of volunteers for maintenance and trail support. |
| * | 4. A formalised committee responsible for governance, marketing, funding, promotion, provider integration, trail development and maintenance. | |
| * | 4. Support from key local and state government agencies. | |
| * | 5. Evidence of business engagement with the Trail Hub concept. | Business engagement program such as Cycle Friendly Business accreditation. |
| | 6. Effective integrated marketing strategy, including branding, website, brochures, trail guides and maps. | Capacity to leverage brand for income generation |



4.7 WORLD CLASS TRAILS HUB INVENTORY ASSESSMENT



An assessment was made using the World Class Trails Hub Strategy Inventory Assessment tool which results in a Spider Graph indicating (in a summary format across the six components of a trails hub) which areas are strengths and which areas should be a focus for improvement. The assessment provides a score of 1—3 in the “Current Status” column based on the following:

- Inadequate, of poor quality; under consideration; or absent and unplanned
- Partially developed and near adequate; or incomplete but planned and progressing
- Fully or partially developed; exceptional or good and improving quality

The current status rating is multiplied by the priority score which is standard for all Trail Hubs assessed using the Tool. Scores in the Measure column therefore reflect:

Score: 1 – 3 Very Low progress; non-strategic or latent factor

Score: 4 – 5 Lowly evolved; moderately important or semi-optional factor

Score: 6 – 8 Low to moderately evolved; trail hub limiting factor

Score: 9 – 12 Moderately evolved; nearing trail hub-enabling

Score: 13 – 15 Highly evolved; trail hub-ready factor



SECTION 3: ALBANY TRAILS HUB ASSESSMENT

4.7

WORLD CLASS TRAILS HUB INVENTORY ASSESSMENT



| Setting and landscape | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|--|----------|----------------|---------|---|------------------------|
| Attractive landform – valley, rolling, undulating, sense of uniqueness? | 4 | 3 | 12 | Unique mounts | 12 |
| Presence of water features — creeks, rivers, lakes, reservoirs? | 4 | 3 | 12 | Coastal scenery stunning and unique | 12 |
| Lack of seasonal or climatic events that could influence site suitability — storms, cyclones, winds, sun exposure? | 4 | 2 | 8 | Winds? Rain? | 12 |
| Unique or unusual natural setting? | 4 | 3 | 12 | Coastal setting and Harbour unique | 12 |
| Attractive vegetation association — species, structure, patterns, density? | 2 | 2 | 4 | Vegetation not unique around Albany but Stirlings and Fitzgerald unique | 6 |
| Score | | | 48 | 89% | 54 |

| Cultural Factors | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|---|----------|----------------|---------|--|------------------------|
| Sites of cultural interest or significance? | 3 | 3 | 9 | Kinjarling Trail; Significant european heritage existing | 9 |
| Traditional owners active in local area visitor/recreation planning and management? | 2 | 2.5 | 5 | Potential for indigenous cultural involvement, through Gnudju Trail. | 6 |
| Score | | | 14 | 93% | 15 |

| Aesthetic Factors — Hub Town | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|---|----------|----------------|---------|--|------------------------|
| Noise intrusion from roads, utilities or aircraft? | 4 | 2.5 | 10 | Slight lack of connection between wilderness and town centre. | 12 |
| Sense of peacefulness, remoteness, uniqueness or naturalness, vastness? | 4 | 2.5 | 10 | Some areas peaceful, others quite close to town centre | 12 |
| Significant visual values? | 4 | 3 | 12 | Coastal setting is unique. | 12 |
| Sites or special features of awe, mystery or contemplation due to the setting or component visual elements? | 3 | 2.8 | 8.4 | Torndirrup, Mt Martin, West Cape Howe, Wind Farm unique. Luke Pen peaceful | 9 |
| Inspirational places/features that demand or encourage exploration or personal discovery? | 3 | 2.8 | 8.4 | Mounts are enticing as they can be seen from everywhere. Surrounding elevated sites enticing | 9 |
| Score | | | 54.8 | 87% | 63 |

SECTION 3: ALBANY TRAILS HUB ASSESSMENT



| Existing Tracks and Trails | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Max. possible score |
|---|----------|----------------|---------|---|---------------------|
| Established walking trails of local, regional or state significance? | 5 | 2 | 10 | Bibbulmun Track internationally significant. Other walks not well promoted or signed or managed. Glamping opportunities | 15 |
| Designated canoe/kayak trails? | 5 | 1 | 5 | None. Good potential | 15 |
| Established mountain bike trails of different grades? | 5 | 1 | 5 | Munda Bididi of international significance. One downhill. Some illegal trails. Good potential | 15 |
| Critical mass of looped trails | 5 | 1 | 5 | No looped trails promoted | 15 |
| Trails effectively identified and signed? | 5 | 1 | 5 | Not well marked, branded, promoted or consistently signed. No signage in town directing people to trails. | 15 |
| Trails effectively mapped? | 5 | 1.5 | 7.5 | Bushwalks book is good but costs \$5. Brochures for other trails. Not consistently branded, not available electronically | 15 |
| Facilities for trail users— parking, toilets | 5 | 2 | 10 | Lack of centralised space for trail users. Bib Track and Munda Bididi end at VC — potential for services there although busy spot? | 15 |
| Trails of suitable standard/ quality? | 5 | 2 | 10 | Areas for improvement | 15 |
| Critical mass of 1 type or of a mixed type of trail? | 5 | 1.5 | 7.5 | No coordination. Many walk trails, not enough mtb trails, not enough to brand as 1 type, more suitable for mixed type. Opportunity to capitalise on aquatic location and views of coast | 15 |
| Provision and encouragement of road biking? | 4 | 2 | 8 | Bike plan being developed. Is there an opportunity to develop bike park in old BMX site? | 12 |
| Established equestrian trails? | 4 | 3 | 12 | Well used trails. | 12 |
| Designated motorbike trails/ areas? | 4 | 2 | 8 | None designated. Some illegal | 12 |
| Designated drive trails (road or 4wd)? | 4 | 2.5 | 10 | Potential for more of this. | 12 |
| Special themed trails or tours such as heritage, agriculture, industrial, wildlife, fishing, craft or wine? | 4 | 2.5 | 10 | Some wine trails. Heritage walking trails. Well developed. Not branded all consistently | 12 |
| Organised tours – self guided or tag along | 3 | 2 | 6 | Some kayaking | 9 |
| Water based tours or cruises – boat, canoe, kayak? | 3 | 2 | 6 | Great potential. One business exists. | 9 |
| Dive or snorkel trails? | 2 | 2 | 4 | Numerous sites. Doesn't appear to be a trail? Could be better promoted. | 6 |
| Score | | | 129 | 59% | 219 |

SECTION 3: ALBANY TRAILS HUB ASSESSMENT

4.7

WORLD CLASS TRAILS HUB INVENTORY ASSESSMENT



| Access | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|---|----------|----------------|---------|---|------------------------|
| Sealed highway from major population centres into trails hub town? | 5 | 3 | 15 | | 15 |
| Scheduled public transport service [bus or train]? | 5 | 2.5 | 12.5 | Bus service. Bike carrying not positively advertised. | 15 |
| Availability of good maps and travel information – online and brochure formats? | 5 | 2 | 10 | "Amazing Albany" branded stuff is good. Online mapping missing. | 15 |
| Availability of transport services – fuel, maintenance and supply? | 5 | 3 | 15 | | 15 |
| Access to routes, signed, promoted, safe | 5 | 0.5 | 2.5 | Access from town to trails is not clear and needs to be clarified through on-road and on-site signage and maps. | 15 |
| Scheduled or charter air services? | 3 | 3 | 9 | | 9 |
| Long distance cycle or walking trails? Bibbulmun Track? Munda Biddi? | 4 | 3 | 12 | | 12 |
| Score | | | 55 | 57% | 96 |

| Attractions (and Product) | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|--|----------|----------------|---------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Natural attractions and features of significance? | 5 | 3 | 15 | | 15 |
| Natural attractions and features of significance within a half day distance? | 5 | 3 | 15 | | 15 |
| Natural attractions and features of significance within one day distance? | 4 | 3 | 12 | | 12 |
| Tourist offerings — product for tourists | 4 | 3 | 12 | | 12 |
| Score | | | 54 | 100% | 54 |

SECTION 3: ALBANY TRAILS HUB ASSESSMENT

4.7

WORLD CLASS TRAILS HUB INVENTORY ASSESSMENT



| Services and Amenities | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|---|----------|----------------|---------|--|------------------------|
| Staffed visitor centre or information hub in a central location with maps and trail information available 7 days/week. | 5 | 3 | 15 | | 15 |
| Signage (directional and Informational), interpretation and education – community news, static information panels, interpretive trails? | 5 | 1.5 | 7.5 | Centralised trail signage missing. Brochures for interpretive trails. Not consistently branded or mapped, directional signage lacking. Trails are not marked (other than MBT and BT). Could be signed on road, or mapped electronically. | 15 |
| Services geared for trail users: Eg bike racks for cyclists, storage for backpacks, bike wash facilities, bike lockers, repair stands? | 5 | 2 | 10 | CFB program exists. Needs further promotion and expansion. Need bike wash, lockers, racks and repair stand, services installed at VC. | 15 |
| Support services – laundry, pharmacy, grocery, internet café, ATM? | 5 | 3 | 15 | | 15 |
| Public toilets | 5 | 2.5 | 12.5 | Good range in town centre and at key locations. Toilet Opening hours at VC need expanding. | 15 |
| Car parking facilities | 5 | 2.5 | 12.5 | Plans for traffic calming York St will improve issues. | 15 |
| Health services — clinic, hospital, doctor, nursing centre, ambulance depot? | 4 | 3 | 12 | | 12 |
| Public facilities nearby? | 4 | 3 | 12 | | 12 |
| Public Showers | 3 | 2 | 6 | Available at Visitor Centre. Opening hours? | 9 |
| Score | | | 102.5 | 83% | 123 |

| Accommodation | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|--|----------|----------------|---------|---|------------------------|
| A range of accommodation styles and prices meeting needs of target market – caravan / camping, bunkhouse, home stay, motel, hotel, chalet, hostel? | 5 | 3 | 15 | | 15 |
| Trail friendly accommodation providers? | 4 | 3 | 12 | Promoted through a Trail-friendly business program, joint marketing | 12 |
| Score | | | 27 | 100% | 27 |

SECTION 3: ALBANY TRAILS HUB ASSESSMENT

4.7

WORLD CLASS TRAILS HUB INVENTORY ASSESSMENT



| Activities | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|--|----------|----------------|---------|---|------------------------|
| Organised tours or guided activities for adults, children, families, tourists? | 5 | 2.5 | 12.5 | Trail tours could be developed | 15 |
| Specialist services – local crafts, local produce, gifts, souvenirs? | 3 | 3 | 9 | | 9 |
| Festivals and 'athletic challenges' of local, state or national attraction? | 3 | 2 | 6 | Downhill race | 9 |
| Annual (or otherwise) events linked to Trails Hub theme? | 3 | 1 | 3 | Trail/Adventure linked events could be developed. | 9 |
| Score | | | 30.5 | 73% | 42 |

| Planning Factors | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|---|----------|----------------|---------|--|------------------------|
| Established or proposed strategic or management plans that support hub activities/services? | 5 | 1 | 5 | DEC management plans not reflecting Trail Hub | 15 |
| Compatibility with established land uses? | 5 | 1.5 | 7.5 | Water Corp and DPaW management plans are restrictive for Mountain biking, horse riding | 15 |
| Support from key local and state government agencies? | 5 | 1.5 | 7.5 | Areas for improvement Dept of Water, DPaW, City of Albany, GSDC | 15 |
| Score | | | 20 | 44% | 45 |

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SECTION 3: ALBANY TRAILS HUB ASSESSMENT

4.7

WORLD CLASS TRAILS HUB INVENTORY ASSESSMENT



| Organisation and Management | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|--|----------|----------------|---------|--|------------------------|
| Existence of formalised organising coordinating committee for trail hub (can be same as supporter group)? | 5 | 1 | 5 | Priority if broader community objectives are to be achieved. | 15 |
| Existence of formalised trail management schedule/ agenda? | 5 | 1 | 5 | Priority if broader community objectives are the be achieved. Good support from clubs | 15 |
| Known sources of financial support? | 5 | 1.5 | 7.5 | Yet to be identified. City provides current trails maintenance. Could provide differential rating or airport levy? | 15 |
| Existence or potential for agreement regarding responsibility for hub trails construction, maintenance and management? | 4 | 1 | 4 | PCG good starting point for developing relationships. Needs to work closely with DPaW and Water | 12 |
| Evidence of trail group cooperation and effective trail maintenance? | 4 | 2 | 8 | MTB club, horse club and walkers well engaged. | 12 |
| Score | | | 29.5 | 43% | 69 |

| Community Engagement | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|---|----------|----------------|---------|---|------------------------|
| Community support? | 5 | 1 | 5 | Not established yet. Further community consultation required. | 15 |
| Existence of formalised supporter group (eg Mountain bike club) to provide source of volunteers and passionate leaders/influencers? | 5 | 2 | 10 | PCG good starting point. | 15 |
| Score | | | 15 | 50% | 30 |

| Brand | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|--|----------|----------------|---------|---|------------------------|
| Existence of a well established trails-linked brand? | 5 | 1 | 5 | Consistent branding and strategy needed | 15 |
| Capacity to leverage brand | 5 | 1 | 5 | Once brand established, develop opportunities for cooperative marketing, linking brand with income collection from trail users. | 15 |
| Score | | | 10 | 33% | 30 |

SECTION 3: ALBANY TRAILS HUB ASSESSMENT

4.7

WORLD CLASS TRAILS HUB INVENTORY ASSESSMENT



| Engagement of Supporting Businesses | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|---|----------|----------------|-------------|--|------------------------|
| Evidence of business engagement with the Trail Hub concept and trail user markets? | 5 | 2 | 10 | Needed. Cycle Friendly Businesses already engaged | 15 |
| Food services – restaurants, cafes and other providers? Open 7 days? Providing night-time meals? Provision of food suitable for trail users? | 5 | 2.5 | 12.5 | Opening hours have been questioned. | 15 |
| Supply and service suppliers for target user groups – hikers, cyclers, motor-bikers, horse riders, canoeists? Eg. gear sales, repair services, equipment hire, emergency support. | 5 | 2 | 10 | CFBs exist. Need to create link between them and users. Need to expand CFB to other trail user types | 15 |
| Tour operators offering packages to suit trail users? | 4 | 1 | 4 | This should be developed down the track. Opportunities for new businesses should be promoted by PCG. | 12 |
| Tour companies providing transport, drop off and equipment (bike, backpack?) transport onto trails and from point of departure? | 4 | 1.5 | 6 | CFBs exist. None doing this. | 12 |
| Secure parking facilities for bikes, cars? Secure storage? | 4 | 1 | 4 | Need to be developed at CFBs? Visitor Centre? GS CORE? | 12 |
| Score | | | 46.5 | 57% | 81 |

| Marketing | Priority | Current Status | Measure | Comments and Assessment | Maximum possible score |
|--|----------|----------------|-----------|--|------------------------|
| Existence of suitable promotional material, pre-visit pamphlets and maps? | 4 | 1 | 4 | Needs consistency, wider engagement from town community and business community and marketing groups etc. | 12 |
| Evidence of identification and understanding of target market and communication methods? | 4 | 1 | 4 | Very little demographic or tourist stats available | 12 |
| Deliberate planning of trail and visitor services to meet target market needs? | 5 | 2 | 10 | CFBs done some. | 15 |
| Effective marketing strategy, including branding, website, appropriate promotional maps and communication modes? | 5 | 1 | 5 | Consistent branding and strategy needed to position Albany as adventure hub. | 15 |
| Score | | | 23 | 43% | 54 |

4.8 ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES — FIVE A's



A key component of a successful trails hub is the capacity to service the needs of the trails tourist through an adequate supply in the Five A's — Accommodation, Activities, Attractions, Amenities and Access. An assessment of the Five A's was undertaken to identify Albany's current position to service the needs to tourists.

ACCOMMODATION

A review of previous work undertaken for the City in Albany's Tourism Accommodation Planning Strategy, 2008⁹ found Albany well serviced in accommodation types, with room for growth in the higher end hotels and serviced apartments. Tourism occupancy is relatively low in Albany and is well supplied in accommodation stock to meet the needs of a trails hub.

Trails tourists can seek a range of accommodation types, depending on the type of trail activity they are undertaking. Development of Albany as a trails hub, with a range of trail activities from short day walks to overnight cycle tours should create demand for a range of accommodation types.

The Bibbulmun Track Foundation and Munda Biddi Trail Foundation are developing programs which encourage businesses to become more 'cycle/walk friendly'.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

| | |
|---|--|
| ✓ | Room for growth and expansion in the tourism accommodation sector |
| ✓ | Conversion of more businesses to become "cycle or walk/trail friendly" will add to Albany's position as a trails hub |





ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

A review was undertaken of Attractions and Activities in order to consider Albany's capacity to support trails tourism. Overall the finding is that there is a diversity of offerings in the following categories:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Art and Culture | Galleries, Studios, Art Trail, Festivals, Entertainment Centre, Shopping |
| Heritage | National Anzac Centre, Early Settler, Whaling – in Museums, Interpretive Walks, Restored buildings and ships, Strong Indigenous heritage present in many key locations |
| Nature | National Parks, Trails (walk, cycle, horse, drive, 4wd), Tours, Outdoor activities (rock climbing, flying, surfing, dive wreck, fishing, boating), Recreational sites, Points of Interest (The Mounts, Lake Seppings, Dog Rock) Whalewatching, Bike and Equipment hire |
| Food and Wine | Hotels, Breweries, Distillery, Café, Wineries, Farmers markets, Restaurants |
| Sustainability | Wind farm |

In particular Albany has significant growing cycle opportunities upon which to capitalise and leverage to take advantage of the growth in cycle tourism. With the Munda Biddi Trail finishing in Albany, cycle touring should increase as a result of marketing efforts by the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation. A number of businesses are listed on the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation's website as accredited cycle friendly businesses, providing bike racks and other services to suit cycle tourists. Many of them are located near key trails activity — including Mt Clarence and Munda Biddi trail. Café opening times have, however, been reported as needing improvement.

The Cycle City Albany 2014 — 2019 Strategy provides a comprehensive suite of initiatives which provide strategic guidance for the City to become one of Australia's primary cycling destinations and will potentially support the Trails Strategy.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | Albany's broad range of activities appeal to all members of a family and Albany is well placed to be a trails hub — even for non-trail users! |
| ✓ | As Albany develops more trails and promotes itself as a trail destination, more packaged tours and supporting trails product could be developed (pick up/drop off services, guided tours) |
| ✓ | The Cycle City Albany Strategy will provide broad support for a Trails Tourist Hub |

9. City of Albany, Tourism Accommodation Planning Strategy, 2008.



AMENITIES

The new town square on York St will be a “shared space” designed to be a public place for people, including pedestrians and cyclists. This will be accompanied by plans for road changes to York St which will slow traffic and make it much more accessible to pedestrians and cyclists. These plans are supported by this strategy.

BIKE RACKS

There are some bike racks in the Albany CBD and bike racks have been installed at some attractions but not others. An increase in the number and strategic placement of bike racks at key tourist locations and within the town centre will ultimately improve Albany’s positioning as a cycle tourism town.

Accreditation of more cycle friendly businesses through the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation Cycle Friendly Business program will also assist.

TOILETS

The City of Albany maintains a number of public toilets. A snapshot viewed at <https://toiletmap.gov.au/Find> revealed 10 different public toilet blocks within 100m of the top of York Street to the Anzac Peace Park. There are public toilets located at key trail locations including Mt Adelaide, Melville, Clarence, Visitor Centre and Ellen Cove. Toilets at the Visitor Centre are reportedly not open at convenient times for Bibbulmun Track walkers and this situation is not ideal should Albany wish to improve its positioning as a trails destination.

SHOWERS AND WATER

Free potable water is available for tourists near the Visitor Centre. Free showers are available at the Rest Centre on the Corner of York St and Stirling Terrace, Middleton Beach and Emu Point. Showers are available at the Visitor Centre for a cost of \$4.00. There is an adequate supply of showers and water, but the services need to be promoted and open at convenient times for cycle tourists/walkers.

VISITOR CENTRE

Albany Visitor Centre is open 7 days per week in an optimal location at the trail heads for the Bibbulmun Track and the Munda Biddi Trail. The Albany Visitor Centre is a registered Cycle Friendly Business under the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation program.

OTHER AMENITIES

Albany is well serviced for ATMs, Service Stations, Supermarkets, Laundromats, Medical Services, Pharmacies, Dentists, Disability Hire Services, Police and Post Offices. Information on these services is readily available at the Visitor Centre. It would be valuable for this list to be available on-line at www.amazingalbany.com.au. There are two cycle shops registered under the Munda Biddi Cycle Friendly Business program which provide bike racks and services for cyclists.



OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | Toilet opening hours at Visitor Centre could be improved for trail users (Bibbulmun track and Munda Bididi) |
| ✓ | Providing more and better placed bike racks at key tourist locations and within the town centre will ultimately improve Albany's positioning as a cycle tourism town. |
| ✓ | Review and add information on the Amazing Albany website of visitor amenities to support trail tourists. |





ACCESS

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

TransWA provides a bus service from Perth to Albany and Albany to Perth via Williams and Kojonup 7 days a week which takes six hours. TransWA also provides a Perth to Albany and Albany to Perth service via Bunbury and Walpole 7 days a week that takes between eight to nine hours. Bicycles are permitted on TransWA for \$10 if pre-booked but customers are advised that this is only if space permits. A bus service is available within the City and taxi's can provide transport for trail users.

PASSENGER SERVICE

Virgin provides regular Perth to Albany and return flights during the week and three flights over the weekend. Bicycles are permitted on Virgin flights as luggage, for a fee. Bicycles must have their tyres let down, be dismantled and be placed in a bike box.

AROUND ALBANY

Bike Hire is available at Middleton Beach and there are a number of adventure and camping stores.

There are currently no tour companies that provide cycle tours in Albany and no businesses that support cycle tourists. Ideally more Coach services are needed to get people around Albany who do not have a car (backpackers, those who arrive by plane or TransWA) and there is opportunity for cycle and coach services and package tours to be offered in Albany and to take people from Albany on day trips to experience the region.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | Improve pick up/drop off services for trail users |
| ✓ | Packaged tours could be developed for trail users |

4.9 ASSESSMENT OF MARKETING, GOVERNANCE AND TENURE



MARKETING

VISITOR INFORMATION/TRAILS BROCHURES

A range of trail brochures are available at the Albany Visitor Centre. Many of the brochures and maps are out of date and there is a consistent lack in branding, quality, design and information. The Albany Visitor Guide generally promotes the use of trails. Walking trails, which are the most popular (as shown in the market research survey) are primarily promoted in a small booklet, published by the City of Albany.

A separate Clarence Downhill brochure exists but is not linked to any other cycling trails or maps. The Top trails brochure promotes the Luke Pen Trail and Ellen Cove dual use path and a separate brochure promotes the Stidwell Bridle Trail.

The Amazing Albany Website

The website is very comprehensive and accessible. Trails are not directly promoted and unfortunately, there are no maps or downloadable information. There is very limited information about the outdoor and trail activity.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | Develop a comprehensive and consistent brand and embed into all new marketing strategies of trails within the City of Albany |
| ✓ | There is an opportunity to enhance trail information and maps to tie attractions and amenities together with trails activity. |
| ✓ | Update and link all trails information into the Amazing Albany Website |

GOVERNANCE

The City of Albany manages trails on City of Albany land and DPaW manage their trails. In terms of community involvement in trails there is currently a number of community groups and clubs who are all active and work closely with the City of Albany and DPaW to monitor and support maintenance of trails. This reflects a strong community involvement, which can be harnessed to great benefit for the Albany trails hub.



TENURE

Albany's existing trails and the identified trail opportunities are located on varied tenures. The success of Albany's trails hub will be impacted by the constraints of the various tenure types. Though the Conservations Reserves of Albany (managed by DPaW) hold the desired landscapes for trail development and a significant proportion of the available land offerings within the Albany LGA, they are significantly constrained by local management plans and stakeholder support. The Department of Water Policy 13 has significant impact over a large proportion of reserves. Long term strategies are needed in order to facilitate the realisation of Albany's desire to be a World Class Trails Hub.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | Significant opportunities exist for improved trail networks on City of Albany managed land which is actively used for trails recreation and due to the relative ease of development |
| ✓ | Where appropriate Crown Land could be investigated for future trail opportunities |
| ✓ | Long term strategies are needed to develop opportunities with other land managers. |



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4.10 ALBANY TRAIL TYPE OPPORTUNITY AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS



The following table provides the assessment of the recommended management strategy for each trail type in Albany based on the market potential of each user group (demand), as well as current and potential destinational significance (supply) of that trail type in Albany. The recommended management strategy does not formally take account of economic impact of each trail type as very little information is available, apart from cycling.

| User group | Market potential (growth and participation) | Destinational Significance: Current trail supply | Destinational Significance: Potential | Importance (to Albany being a trails hub) | Deliverability | Management Strategy | Justification |
|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|----------------|--|--|
| Walking | High | National | National | High | Easy | Improve quality on strategically important trails | Good existing capacity |
| MTB | High | Local | National | High | Difficult | Develop trails | No existing capacity with enormous potential |
| Paddling | Medium | Local | National | Medium | Easy | Name, signpost, infrastructure and launch facilities, map, promote | No existing capacity with good potential as supportive product |
| Climbing | Low | Local | National | Medium | Easy | Name, signpost, map, promote | Good potential to build from existing capacity |
| Interpreted trails (heritage, culture, indigenous) | High | Regional | National | High | Moderate | Mapping improvements for existing, develop others (Mounts, Kinjarling) | Aimed at slightly different market to rest of trail hub |
| Horse | Low | Local | Regional | Low | Difficult | Maintain/improve existing. Long term develop new ones (private land?) | Good existing capacity |
| Aquatic (dive, snorkel) | Medium | Local | Regional | Medium | Easy | Map and mark | Good supportive product |
| Road cycling | High | Regional | Regional | High | Easy | Maintain, map, mark/sign | Strong growth market |
| Surfing | High | Regional | Regional | Medium | Easy | Map, sign, promote | Good supportive product |

Table 6: Trail Type Opportunity and Management Strategy

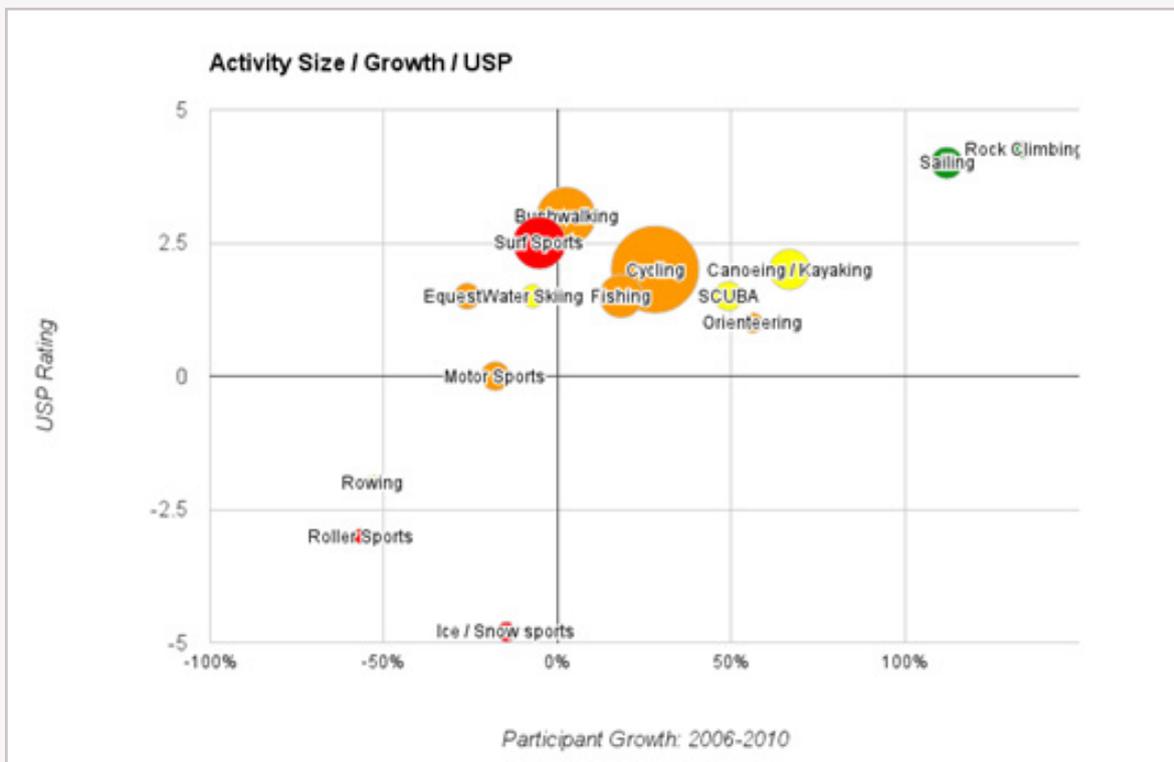
4.11 OUTDOOR PARTICIPATION AND UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION (USP) IN GREAT SOUTHERN



Taken from Great Southern Feasibility Study: Great Southern Centre for Outdoor Excellence (GS CORE)

Significantly, the data indicates that the Great Southern region has demonstrable strengths in activities with the greatest participation growth rates: Rock Climbing, Sailing, Canoeing / Kayaking, Orienteering, SCUBA diving, Cycling, Fishing and Bushwalking.

This is illustrated in the following graph which represents the growth rate, relative participant numbers and an initial (subjective) view of Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of the Great Southern region. The USP is based on the extent to which the Great Southern offers experiences that cannot be obtained in other regions. For example, roller sports can be enjoyed virtually anywhere, whereas the coastal cliffs and Stirling range create a unique venue for rock climbers.



Graph 3: Unique Selling Proposition:- Great Southern.

The graph identifies sailing and rock climbing as two activities with significant potential, given their high rate of growth and the Great Southern's strong USP. Activities with a larger participant base such as cycling and bushwalking are significant, even though their rate of growth and defensible USP aren't as high.

Note that there is no known breakdown for mountain bike participation, however it has been suggested from sales and participation data that mountain biking could account for around 30% of the Cycling category (75—80,000 participants)⁹

9. Tredwell Management: Perth Hills Trails Master Plan 2013



4.12 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

INTRODUCTION

An extensive community consultation has been undertaken to assist the City of Albany with the development of the Trails Hub Strategy. The aim of the community consultation process was to:

- Gain input from trail user groups on their current and future needs
- Provide the community with a chance to understand what is a Trails Hub and the opportunities for Albany
- Engage with the community to develop a vision and key objectives for the City of Albany, based on the recommendations from the Evolve Trails Hub report
- Raise awareness and support for the City of Albany to become a recognised Trails Hub
- Provide an open, consistent and transparent process of consultation in developing the City of Albany Trails Strategy.

STAGE ONE – PROJECT CONTROL GROUP

The initial phase involved the establishment of a project control group (PCG) which consisted of representatives from:

- City of Albany (Planning and Development, Works and Services, Reserves, Tourism, Recreation Services)
- South Coast Natural Resource Management
- Department of Parks and Wildlife
- Albany Mountain Bike Club
- Department of Water
- Department of Sport and Recreation
- Munda Biddi Trail Foundation
- Albany Bushwalkers Group
- Albany Natural Trailriders and other equestrian groups
- Albany paddlers

This group has met regularly since October 2013 to strategically oversee the development of the Strategy. The PCG members also acted as representatives from key trail user groups and agencies to provide specific advice and feedback.

4.13 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

**STAGE TWO**

Over 90 interested community members, supported by the Trails Project Control Group (PCG – 9 members) and City of Albany staff took part in a series of community engagement workshops to gain feedback on the key findings, recommendations and proposed key projects from the Albany Trails Hub Report, prepared by Evolve consultants. The workshops confirmed support for the Vision and 4 key objectives and gained significant feedback on five of the recommended City of Albany priority projects, as identified in the Albany Trails Hub Report.

In addition, a Noongar consultation was undertaken with invited Noongar elders and representatives.

The details of the workshops were:

| | | | |
|---------------|---|---------------------------------|--|
| Workshop Date | Workshop 1: 12 March | Workshop 2: 26 March | Workshop 3: 26 March |
| Venue | City of Albany, North Road | City of Albany, North Road | Princess Royal Sailing Club |
| Attendance | 48 people attended | 4 people attended 10 invited | 50 people attended |
| Covered | Background, Vision and 4 key objectives | Noongar consultation | Feedback on 5 City of Albany proposed priority trails projects |

The following is a summary from the community workshops:

Confirmation of the Vision:

Albany to become one of Australia's primary trails destinations – a World Class Trails Tourism Hub (TTH) situated around high quality trail systems, supported by a complete package of hospitality and visitor services set within our unique natural landscapes.

Key Themes from Feedback

The following key themes for each objective were identified:

Objective One — Trail Network:

- ✓ Quality and Quantity of Trails – critical mass of trails for different levels and user groups, Looped trails
- ✓ Sustainable and Environmentally Sensitive – trails which are designed and constructed with minimal disturbance to the natural environment, are sustainable and that require minimal maintenance
- ✓ Upgrade on existing walk/equestrian trails – upgrade and maintain existing trails before considering new trails for walking and equestrian
- ✓ To create a Trail Hub – work from the town centre outwards to create a Trail Hub. Focus on Mounts Adelaide, Clarence and Melville initially



Objective Two — Supporting Infrastructure:

- ✓ Trail head Facilities – general trailhead facilities and information nodes at key identified locations for a variety of user groups. Specific trail head facilities to be considered (eg wash stations for bikes, trough for horses)
- ✓ Signage – comprehensive signage strategy developed, incorporating promotional/informative, advisory, interpretative, safety and wayfinding for a variety of trail users. Link signage with recognised and consistent branding and marketing (eg Amazing Albany)
- ✓ Trails Hub Centre – Identification of Trail Hub Centre, a central contact and information point and possible trail head
- ✓ Safety – phone coverage, emergency contact information
- ✓ Maps – review and develop unified brand of maps in a variety of formats (hard copy, online, apps)
- ✓ Trail User Transport Support – a variety of transport options to support trail users to arrive/depart Albany and access the trails network

Objective Three — The Visitor Experience:

This objective has been combined and re-written into one higher level Objective:

“Support Albany to provide an exceptional trails visitor experience which will deliver economic and tourism benefits to the community.”

- ✓ Website – identification of key website and integration of all promotional and marketing material to link
- ✓ Business and Services Hospitality – education and information for business on value of trail tourism and needs of trail users
- ✓ Trails Markets – clear understanding of the key trails target markets and consistent approach within Trails Strategy to target these markets
- ✓ Range of Accommodation and Services — variety of accommodation and services to support the potential trails markets
- ✓ Events – explore opportunities for trails promotion and events within existing program. Combine activities into Trails Festival
- ✓ Marketing — coordinated marketing presence and regional collaboration to create Trails

Objective Four – Governance, Management and Cooperation:

- ✓ Governance – Lead role to coordinate (COA), liaise between all agencies, Albany Trails Advisory Group
- ✓ Management – Prioritise maintenance programs for the key projects within the strategy
- ✓ Cooperation – Explore opportunities for sub-regional (LGS) collaboration to promote the regions nature trail experiences
- ✓ Funding – identify and support funding models which will create sustainability, use events to raise funds

4.14 TRAILS NOONGAR CONSULTATION SUMMARY



A consultation session was held with identified Noongar elders and community representatives on 26 March with the following summary:

| Workshop Date | Venue | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Workshop 2: 26 March | City of Albany, North Road | |
| Presentation by | Covered | |
| Sam Stevens (COA Manager Recreation Services) Consultant – Dave Willcox attended | Presentation on overview, vision, objectives and 5 key COA proposed projects. | |
| Invited | Attended | Apologies |
| Cheryle James-Wallace (COA) Chris Spurr (Sth Coast NRM) Nicole Crook (COA) Leanne Woods Vernice Gilles Lester Coyne | Cheryle James-Wallace (COA) Chris Spurr (Sth Coast NRM) Nicole Crook (COA) Leanne Woods | Vernice Gilles Lester Coyne |

Summary on General Discussion:

- ✓ Lack of Noongar representative on Project Control Group (position could not be filled).
Revisit with Cheryle opportunity for possible Noongar representation
- ✓ Individual Trails Projects need extensive Noongar consultation, particularly when identifying possible interpretative sites
- ✓ Improved interpretative signage will help to raise awareness and inform all of heritage and cultural significance
- ✓ Noongars identify with broader area, not just specific site or trail
- ✓ Trail Development process provides opportunity to create strong links to Noongar employment
- ✓ Opportunities for Noongar people to be involved in on-ground building of trails, as part of Noongar Employment Process (preferred supplier)
- ✓ Recommended process for Noongar involvement through discussions and consultation on business opportunities and strategic thinking.

4.15 REVIEW OF GREAT SOUTHERN CORE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION



A review of the community consultation component of the GS CORE Feasibility Study was undertaken to provide feedback from the business sector. The following is a summary:

Business Consultation

Input from tour operators and service providers were sought via a series of community meetings.

Participants identified that the Centre could:

- ✓ act as an effective promotion hub
- ✓ facilitate better dialogue and information sharing within the industry and
- ✓ assist in attracting outdoor recreation workers to the region.

By developing and maintaining high level contacts at key regulatory agencies the Centre could serve both as an information conduit and as an advocacy mechanism on behalf of operators. Generally, promotion is seen as fragmented and incomplete, so there was a view that the GS CORE could act as a centralised information hub — both virtually and physically.

Four broad themes emerged from the community meetings as areas of opportunity:

- Research
- Promotion
- Advocacy
- Business Support

A number of challenges were identified including:

- Insurance — very difficult for a single operator to pay the costs of insurance and still provide the activity at an accessible price to customers.
- Visibility — people coming down to the area can't easily see all the various options available
- Funding — hard to know what's available and how to access it
- Approvals – there is little advice available to potential outdoor recreation tourism operators on what approvals and licenses they need to operate.

Business Support

While recognizing the existing providers of local business support, such as local Chambers of Commerce, all groups expressed an interest in recreation-business specific support services such as:

- Business development and marketing support
- Improved communications to the industry — especially information about standards, accreditation
- Information on funding opportunities
- Support in developing and commercialising new outdoor recreation product



- Training and accreditation of staff

While the majority of discussion centered on the four themes there were several other suggestions offered:

- A central location to arrange hire of equipment
- Provision of specialist activities such as abseiling that are not generally available elsewhere or in combination with other activities
- A broker for liability insurances based on operators signing up to be part of the Centre and agreeing to operate under the provisions of the relevant Adventure Activity Standard
- Assistance in negotiating with private landholders to facilitate trail connections

4.16 PCG FEEDBACK AND ANALYSIS



STAGE THREE

In addition to the Vision and Strategies the five proposed trails projects (on land managed by City of Albany) were reviewed and discussed by workshop participants. This feedback has been matched against the recommendations with the Albany Trails Report and final recommendations made by the PCG. See Table below.

STAGE FOUR

The Draft City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy 2015 –2025 underwent a Public Comment period; followed by a review and amendment of the Draft Strategy based on the Community Engagement Report and the feedback received. The Community Engagement Report is provided following the collected feedback from the workshops.

PROJECT ONE: ALBANY HERITAGE PARK (MOUNT ADELAIDE AND MOUNT CLARENCE)

| Collective Feedback from Workshops | Alignment with Albany Trails Report Recommendations | Gaps – Trails Report | Gaps — Community | PCG Decision |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| <p>Strengths: Central iconic location Links to World Class memorial and heritage precinct Access to town Iconic MTB downhill</p> | <p>The complete Mounts Precinct has potential to be a nationally significant TTH Trail connections focus on connecting to the City Centre Major trailhead at National Anzac Centre</p> | <p>Primary connection (dual use) to Albany Harbour Path</p> | | <p>Agreed: Include Albany Harbours Path within scope. Trails Links and access important to Albany Harbour Path</p> |
| <p>Opportunities: Variety of trails Stacked single use loops Trailheads and signage Build on existing quality trails (eg Padre White, MTB downhill) Promotion and grading of trails Event based activities Trail head at Mount Adelaide Rationalising of existing network</p> | <p>Development of a regionally significant cross country mountain bike trail network, within the Albany Heritage Park precinct Mountain bike trails aimed at beginner, intermediate and advanced riders, circumnavigating Mt Adelaide and Mt Clarence while ensuring they do not conflict with the heritage areas and interpretative trails Walking based trails (single use) upgraded, looped and linked, including interpretative signage. Align with the new heritage installation of promotional, trailhead and wayfinding signage Sufficient space to create prescribed trail networks for multiple user groups to coexist without significant impact on landscape Remove some walk trails from undesirable management access tracks</p> | <p>Mountain bike circumnavigating Adelaide and Clarence Walking trails around Clarence – connection with City Centre Interpretative trails focus around National Anzac Centre Primary mountain bike trailhead at Middleton Beach Trail head at new base Forts Car park Challenge Park</p> | <p>Extending downhill to state/national standard. 6k XC + 2min DH = National Event</p> | <p>Agreed: Significant opportunity for cross country trail Trail head at Middleton Beach Trail head at base Forts Car park Build challenge park into stacked green loop system initially Expansion of Downhill seen as low priority</p> |
| <p>Challenges: User conflict on trails Conflict at intersections Multiple hub entry points Use of firebreak tracks — erosion</p> | <p>Existing network in convoluted and confusing If not address, risk of conflict will continue Safety and road user conflict Ground composition, conditions</p> | | | |
| <p>Suggestions: Separate walkers and riders Use of websites – COA, Trails WA, Amazing Albany</p> | <p>Amazing Albany website to incorporate new trails webpage and link to existing recognised trails web pages</p> | <p>Base climbing nodes focused on bouldering</p> | <p>Consider inter-generational use of trails for families Anzac Horse Muster routes</p> | <p>Agreed: Include intergenerational opportunities Explore interpretative signage for Anzac Horse routes</p> |

PROJECT TWO: MOUNT MELVILLE (AND CITY CENTRE)

| Collective Feedback from Workshops | Alignment with Albany Trails Report Recommendations | Gaps – Trails Report | Gaps – Community | PCG Decision |
|---|---|--|---------------------------------|--|
| <p>Strengths: Central location Views Existing trail system Access (road and toilets at summit) Variety of MTB challenges</p> <p>Opportunities: Chance to rehabilitate existing trails Significant aboriginal heritage and cultural/economic potential Stacked single use loop systems, Trail head at water tank Improved aboriginal interpretative signage Noongar employment/business opportunities Linked connections to City Centre/Town Square Links to Serpentine Road</p> | <p>Cultural and natural significance with potential as regional trail attraction Connectivity to City Centre Opportunity for multiple user groups Higher classification for MTB Existing trail system</p> <p>Revitalisation and improvement of existing walking trails – single use Development of stacked loop mountain bike trails aimed at beginner, intermediate and advanced riders Development of interpretative trails focused around aboriginal heritage sites Development of trail connections to City Centre Installation of promotional trailhead, interpretation and wayfinding signage Trail head and primary car park at lower car park on Melville Drive Trail head and formalise car park at Water tank</p> | <p>Natural bridge connections</p> <p>Maintain social network of trails Trail head treatment and car park improvements Connections to Albany Harbour Path Challenge Park Harbour to Weelara Lake Shared Path Mount Melville climbing nodes – Summit Boulder Trail, Quarry Climbing node Develop connections from Mt Melville to Mt Clarence along Grey/Serpentine Rd Realign Albany Heritage Trail and signage Re-align Bibb Track and Munda Biddi terminus</p> | <p>Bouldering – where else?</p> | <p>Agreed: Natural Bridge connections</p> <p>Agreed: Priority for Bib Tack and Munda Biddi realignment to Town Square Trail head treatment and car park improvements Connections to Albany Harbour Path Support Challenge Park at one site only (prefer Albany Heritage Park option)</p> <p>Noted: Climbing nodes – low priority</p> <p>Agreed: Address within Trail Development Process</p> <p>Noted: Business Opportunity</p> |
| <p>Challenges: Significant aboriginal heritage Vandalism Lack of aboriginal consultation in past Tip – eyesore Poor signage</p> <p>Suggestions: Shuttles Walk/Ride from City Centre, with signage</p> | <p>Aboriginal heritage sites. Waste facility to west of Mt Melville Degraded signage Convoluted and confusing tracks User conflict</p> <p>Shuttle drop off at Lookout carpark</p> | <p>Unsustainable grades and erosion on sections of access tracks</p> | | |

PROJECT THREE: VANCOUVER POINT

| Collective Feedback from Workshops | Alignment with Albany Trails Report Recommendations | Gaps – Trails Report | Gaps — Community | PCG Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Strengths: Natural setting Existing walks and car park Multiple user groups Sheltered waters Variety of outdoor activities in precinct Significant Aboriginal and European Heritage</p> | <p>Place of cultural and natural significance Significant Aboriginal and European Heritage Camp Quararup facilities and activities</p> | | | |
| <p>Opportunities: Links to Camp Quararup Renovate aquatic trail Signage and natural heritage interpretation Loop walks Trail head Bike/Walk link with Albany Harbours Path</p> | <p>Revitalise and improve existing walk trails Revitalise and improve existing aquatic trail Formalise Camp Quararup car park Formalise Mistaken Island car park Install trailhead signage (Camp Q and Whalers Cove) Link to expanded Albany Harbours Path Improve signage on Point Possession Walk</p> | <p>Develop Mistaken Island Aquatic Trail Formalised stacked loop connecting Whalers Cove to Camp Quararup, Point Possession and Mistaken Island. Lake Vancouver Bird Hide Trail</p> | | <p>Agreed: Investigate stacked loop connecting Whalers Cover, Quararup and Mistaken Island</p> <p>Noted: Ongoing partnership developed with DSR for access through Camp Q Not supported: Bird Hire Trail not high priority</p> |
| <p>Challenges: Restricted access at Camp Quararup Impact on beach users Busy carpark facilities</p> | <p>Distance from population centre Environmentally sensitive areas Ground composition and conditions</p> | | | |
| <p>Suggestions: Adventure race Skizone/PWC</p> | | | <p>Light horse Trail Event Trail Hub for Equestrian needs to be part of larger Equine Plan Ferry Service from town Potable water</p> | <p>Agreed: Need for Equine Master Plan</p> <p>Not supported: Potable water Light Horse Trail Event</p> <p>Noted: Ski Zone – DoT responsibility</p> |



PROJECT FOUR: SAND PATCH

| Collective Feedback from Workshops | Alignment with Albany Trails Report Recommendations | Gaps – Trails Report | Gaps — Community | PCG Decision |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Strengths: Natural scenery Existing world class trail (Bibbulmun) Mike Stidwell Equestrian Trail Wind Farm and supporting infrastructure Recognised Trail Hub for Equestrian</p> | <p>Wind Farm and infrastructure Existing trails (Bibb and Mike Stidwell) and usage</p> | | | |
| <p>Opportunities: Sand Patch stairs upgrade and signage Increase links to Stidwell Trail and additional infrastructure Sand Patch Hut Short Walk Additional equestrian loops links to Stidwell Re-alignment of Munda Biddi</p> | <p>Maintain and promote Sand Patch Wind Farm Walk Upgrade beach access upper section of staircase Sign and promote short walk to Sand Patch Hut Improvement and develop new loops of the Stidwell Bridle Trail network Realign Munda Biddi Trail off Lower Denmark Road to within Sand Patch reserve Upgrade promotional, trailhead, interpretative and wayfinding signage for Stidwell Trail</p> | | <p>Fitness Training – Sand Patch stairs</p> | <p>Not supported: Fitness Training individual responsibility</p> |
| <p>Challenges: 4WD and trail bike users conflict Clarity over land owners and management Water supply area Sandy soil and topography</p> | <p>Challenges: 4WD and trail bike users conflict Clarity over land owners and management Water supply area Sandy soil and topography Ongoing recreational user conflict Encounters between equestrian and trail bike and motorised users Ongoing use of Bibb Track by cyclists Public Drinking Water Source Area Priority and threatened flora Significant constrictions Ground composition and conditions</p> | <p>Lack of iconic features to differentiate from other coastal destinations</p> | <p>Impact of shooting range</p> | <p>Noted: shooting range within precinct</p> |
| <p>Suggestions: Clarification of management of Sand Patch Walk Trail Hub: involve people = ownership=care</p> | <p>Development limited to improvements of existing uses</p> | | | |

PROJECT FIVE: KALGAN RIVER

| Collective Feedback from Workshops | Alignment with Albany Trails Report Recommendations | Gaps – Trails Report | Gaps – Community | PCG Decision |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Strengths: Tranquil river setting Aboriginal, cultural and early settler history Existing trail (Luke Penn Walk) and existing infrastructure Variety of recreation trail users</p> <p>Opportunities: Create loop walk/shorter walks Extend Luke Penn to one day walk (both sides of river) Infrastructure/signage for kayak trail Cultural and business opportunities Dual usage (MTB and walking) Improve signage and interpretation</p> | <p>Luke Penn Walk with river views Existing infrastructure at southern trail head Aboriginal heritage and Noongar culture</p> <p>Upgrade and realignment to become dual use Install new and improved wayfinding and interpretative signage along Luke Penn Develop paddle launch points and paddle trail (LK Bridge to UK Bridge) Expand and develop Luke Penn to become loop trail transversing both banks of river (25km) Improve and expand existing southern trailhead and carpark Links to Kinjarling concept and Gnudju Trail (Albany to Esperance)</p> | <p>Link to Albany Harbours Path</p> | | <p>Supported: Geocaching opportunities on Lower Kalgan Aquatic trail</p> |
| <p>Challenges: Distance from City Centre Land tenure – private land ownership on west bank Fragile river bank Conflict with users Potential parking issues with expanded usage Kalgan River Bridge – safety issues and dangerous crossing Site degradation</p> <p>Suggestions:</p> | <p>Private land tenure to water's edge Linear nature to walk – limiting opportunities User conflict (walkers and MTB) Aboriginal heritage Threatened or priority flora Northern carpark in dilapidated state Single walk use, but historic use by MTB</p> | <p>Lack of directional signage to Luke Penn Walk Trail erosion and poor quality stair and boardwalks. Weed infestation</p> | <p>MBT skills track at golf club ?suspension bridge Expand Kingfisher Art sculpture into art trail Geocaching opportunities</p> | <p>Not supported: MTB skills track at golf club Noted: Grammar to Kalgan Low Priority Project</p> |



4.17 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT



A Community Engagement Plan was developed and implemented to support the City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy. Over the past 15 months there has been a range of community engagement activities and consultation to ensure the strategy meets the strategic direction for the elected members, council officers and the broader community. The level of engagement varied according to the identification of stakeholders and within the constraints of the project.

BACKGROUND

1. In 1999, the Albany Trails Master Plan was prepared by Maher Brampton Associates, which recommended a range of trails and trail improvements throughout Albany. A number of those trail projects, in particular walking and equestrian trails have been completed in the past 15 years. In addition to the Master Plan, a range of other trails have been built by the City, the Department of Environment and Conservation and community groups. For example the Mt Clarence Downhill, Munda Biddi Trail and the Torbay - Elleker Community Bridle Trail.
2. Since the development of the 1999 Master Plan, outdoor adventure activities (such as mountain biking, paddling and climbing) have emerged as growing trends and economic drivers. Noting the number of established walking and equestrian trails in Albany and the growing needs for other recreational trails, the focus of the strategy was to review existing trails and to develop and integrate new trails, activities and associated services to establish Albany as a Trail Tourism Hub (TTH).
3. In September 2013, Evolve Solutions was appointed to develop a draft report: The Albany World Class Trails Hub Report. This report underpinned the current City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy.
4. In September 2014, the City adjusted the contract with Evolve Solutions and removed the ongoing community consultation. This was undertaken internally by the City of Albany.
5. In November 2014, the Evolve Solutions 'World Class Trails Hub Report' was received by the City. The report was revised internally, in consultation with the PCG and developed into the City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy (2015 – 2025).
6. The staff then undertook the community consultation process below. The key findings, draft vision, objectives and key priority projects were presented to the community, through community workshops for validation and feedback. See points 6-11 below for more detail.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The development of the Trails Hub Strategy involved the following community engagement and consultation:

1. In October 2013 the Project Control Group (PCG) was established. This group provided user group engagement, advice and guidance with the development of the City of Albany's Trails Hub Strategy. The PCG included representatives from the following key agencies, organisations and interested community groups:



- City of Albany (Recreation Services, Reserves, Tourism and Planning)
 - Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW)
 - Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR)
 - South Coast Natural Resource Management (SCNRM)
 - Department of Water
 - Albany Mountain Bike Club
 - Albany Bushwalkers Group
 - Albany Natural Trail-Riders (Equestrian)
 - Noongar Representative (vacant – see point 6)
2. Additional Key Stakeholder Liaison - advice was also sought from other key stakeholders (i.e. Munda Biddi Foundation, Albany paddlers, Bibbulmun Track Foundation).
 3. Evolve Solutions Initial Consultation - as part of the methodology, Evolve undertook some initial consultation with key groups such as site visits with the Albany Mountain Bike club and meetings with Department of Parks and Wildlife staff and City staff.
 4. Market Research Survey – Evolve Solutions undertook a market research survey to gauge insight into the awareness and use of Albany Trails. The survey was circulated through the databases of Munda Biddi Trail Foundation and Bibbulmun Track Foundation and through the Albany Visitor Centre. A total of 332 respondents took part and the results formed the part of the ‘World Class Trails Hub Report’.
 5. Regular Community Updates – community updates were developed and distributed in Autumn 2014 and Summer 2014/2015.
 6. Trails Infographic – A graphic design summary was developed. This innovative approach was used to summarise the key findings from the initial report, engage a younger audience, and as the basis for the community consultation.
 7. Trails Community Workshops – were held on 12 & 26 March 2015 with 90 interested community members (supported by nine members from the PCG). The two workshops explored the Vision/Objectives and gained feedback on the proposed trails projects.
 8. Noongar Consultation – Support and liaison was undertaken through the City of Albany Coordinator of Noongar Engagement. The Coordinator of Noongar Engagement was unable to engage a Noongar representative on the PCG and this position remained vacant. A respected Noongar elder attended the first Trails community workshop, held on 12 March and provided valued input. A Noongar workshop was also arranged by the Coordinator of Noongar Engagement and held at the City of Albany on 26 March 2015. This included a presentation of the vision/objectives and discussion on each of the proposed trails projects, with input from one of the trails consultants. There were ten Noongar leaders invited, with 4 people attending (of which two were COA staff). A summary of consultation is included in Volume 4, p42.
 9. PCG Review of Community Feedback and Analysis – following the trails community workshops, the PCG reviewed the feedback from the community workshops and matched this against the recommendation from the Evolve report. Recommendations were made and are included in Volume 4, p 44-49.
 10. City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy - all feedback was collated and included in Volume 4.
 11. ‘Internal’ Trails Presentation – held on 4 June with an open invitation to all City of Albany Staff. There were 14 people who attended, including the CEO. The presentation provided an opportunity to update and seek feedback from staff.



PUBLIC SUBMISSION PERIOD

The City of Albany Trails Strategy was open for public comment from 25 May to 15 June 2015 with feedback sought from those who regularly use trails and those who would like to use trails. As the Strategy was also about encouraging and increasing trail visitors and creating a Trails Tourist Hub, feedback was encouraged from businesses, visitors and the broader community.

A survey was developed to collate feedback from the community during the Public Submission Period and was available as either an on-line Survey or a hard copy available from City of Albany, North Road. (See attachment 1)

The following methods were used to promote the public submission period and the survey:

- City of Albany website from Monday 25 May 2015
- City of Albany Memo – internal distribution
- City of Albany –Comment Box at front reception
- PCG memo and external distribution through their networks
- Public notice advertising in Albany Advertiser: 21 & 26 May 2015
- Albany Advertiser: ‘Strategy Puts City at Centre of Trails Hub’ 28 May 2015
- Albany Advertiser: ‘Albany to become a Global Trails Hotspot’ 4 June 2015
- Weekender: ‘Albany a Hotspot in Trails Strategy’ 2 June 2015
- ABC Radio – Albany Mountain Bike Club (during Urban Downhill) 24 & 25 May 2015
- Webpages – Albany Cycle Club, CycleSport WA, Westcycle, Southern Cyclists, WAHCC – Great Southern

PUBLIC SUBMISSION SUMMARY

The public submission period closed on 15 June 2015. There were 138 on-line surveys completed, no hard copy surveys received at the City of Albany front reception, North Road and three emails provided feedback.

Two letters were received from:

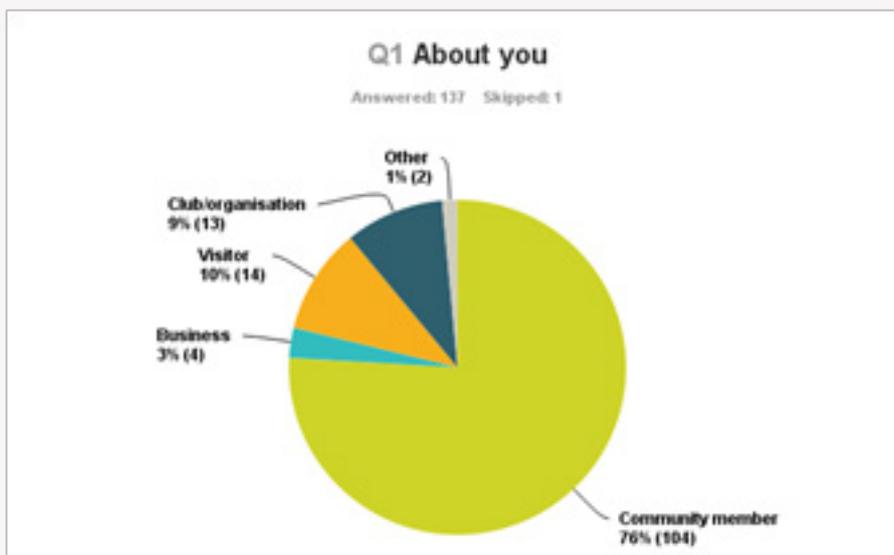
- WestCycle (Attachment 2)
- Department of Aboriginal Affairs (Attachment 3)



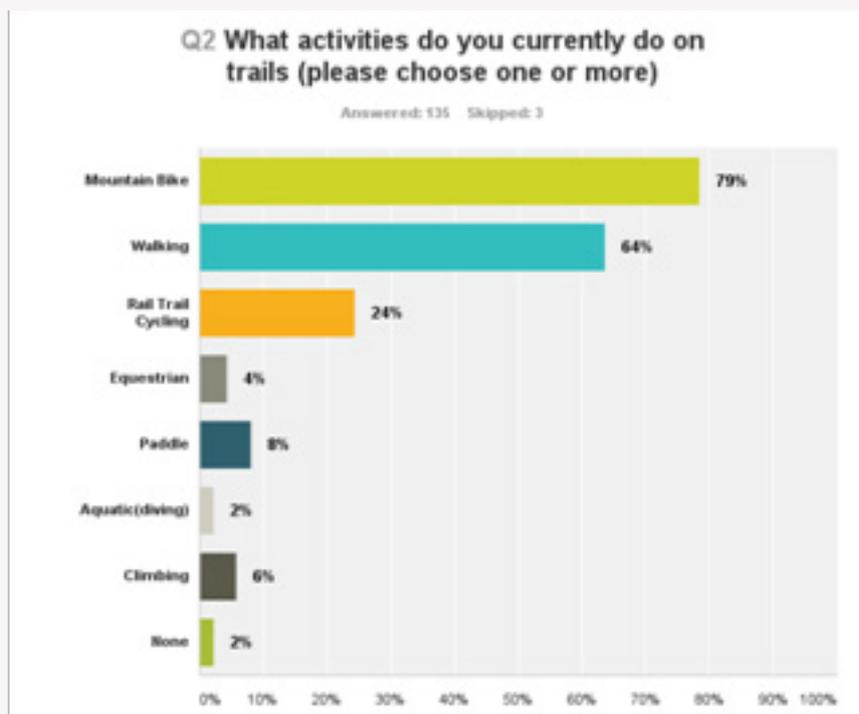
SUBMISSIONS FINDINGS

About the Survey Respondents

- Of the 138 respondents 76% were community members, 10% were visitors, 9% represented clubs or organisations, 3% were businesses and 1% not identified.

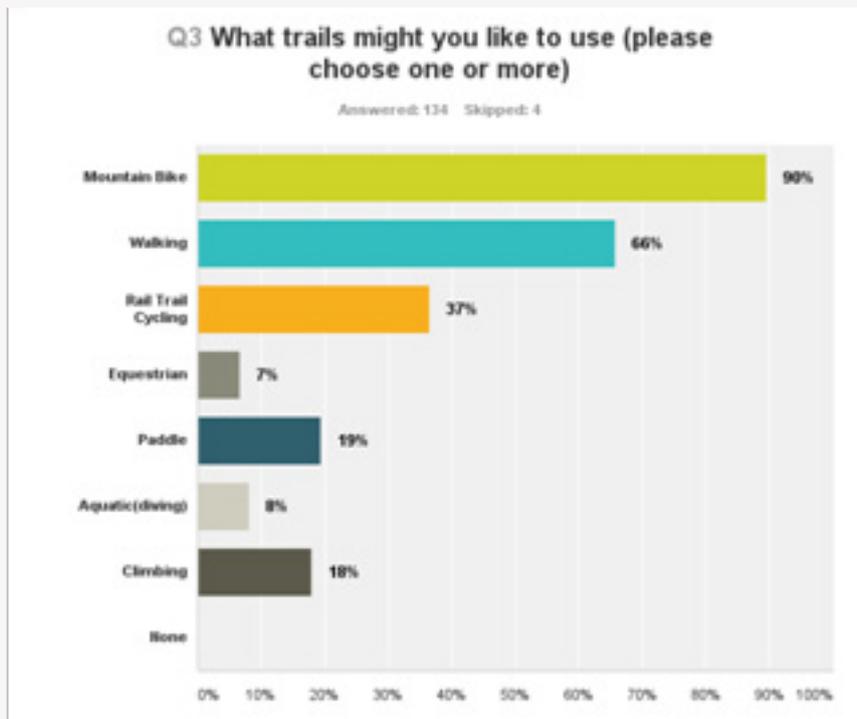


- The respondents were all active users of a variety of trails, with nearly 80% of them using trails to mountain bike, nearly 65% using trails as walkers, 24% were active rail trail cyclists, 4% were actively using the trails for equestrian use, 10% were paddling or diving, and 6% indicated using the trails for climbing. (NB: the total equals more than 100% as many indicated they were active on more than one type of trail).

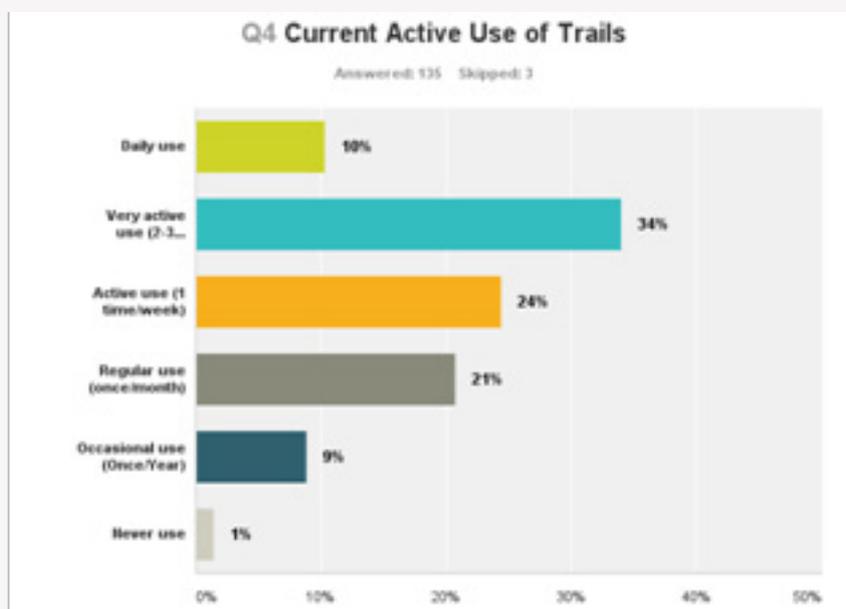




- When asked what trails respondents might like to use, the following response was provided: 90% would like to use mountain bike trails, 66% would like to use walking trails, 37% would like to use rail trail cycle paths, and 7% would like to use horse trails. Of interest is the significant increase in the percentage who would like to use aquatic trails (nearly 27%) and climbing trails (18%), which may indicate an unmet need due to lack of facilities and access.



- Nearly 35% of respondents were very active users of trails. Nearly 70% of respondents used trails at least once per week.





- Over 95% of respondents said they would make use of trails if there were more available, accessible and better promoted.

TRAIL SUBMISSION RESPONSES

- A total of 96% of respondents agreed in principle with support for the City of Albany Trail Hub Strategy.
- There were 89% of respondents who strongly agreed with the Vision to become a World Class Trails Hub.
- All four objectives received strong support (from 91% to 85%) .
- Of the seven key City of Albany projects/precincts the most strongly supported (ranked 4 and 5) in priority order were:
 1. Mount Melville (95% of respondents ranked 4 & 5)
 2. Albany Heritage Park - Mount Adelaide & Clarence (94% of respondents ranked 4 & 5)
 3. Kalgan River - (89% of respondents ranked 4 & 5)
 4. Poikeclearup - (88% of respondents ranked 4 & 5)
 5. City Centre - (84% of respondents ranked 4 & 5)
 6. Vancouver Point - (74% of respondents ranked 4 & 5)
 7. Sand Patch (60% of respondents ranked 4 & 5)
- The least supported was Vancouver Point and Sandpatch, which focussed on the aquatic and equestrian trails. This received less strong support (74% and 60%), which may be due to the majority of survey respondents being mountain bikers and walkers.
- The City Centre project, which was initially prioritised as number two, did not receive as much strong support as the other key projects (84%). However, many of the additional comments acknowledged and supported the concepts of trails linking the Albany Heritage Park and Mount Melville to the City Centre. The comments below provide a snapshot of community responses:

“Having spent a month in Albany during August 2014 for work I rode my mountain bike almost every day. It was however difficult to find the tracks and at the time there was obvious trail conflict with branches etc being placed across high use Mtb tracks. This strategy will really attract mtb ers to Albany which has ideal relief and weather for this activity while improving for exercise opportunities. The Mtb so close to a city centre is a great asset for Albany.”

“Priority needs to be given to new MTB only trails on both hills either side of the CBD - this will provide rider variety and a link through town to benefit the central businesses.”

“The strategy discusses branding Albany as a unique trails destination.....Every town / city can have a great trail on a local hill but not every place can have one with the views that Albany offers. If we are looking for the X factor that Albany has over other places than we must capitalise on these unique features. I agree that the Mounts in the city centre should be the first priority for the deliverability but the coastline must, must, must be included.”



“My comments have been heard at the trails hub strategy meetings however I feel the need to reiterate the massive benefit this will be to the region’s economy. As a local small business owner and someone who has lived and worked in Queenstown, New Zealand where I have seen first hand the massive benefits of large well planned trails hub to the local economy I believe this is essential for this town to solidify itself as an international tourist destination.”

“Focus should be on the Albany Heritage Park Precinct. By creating the initial interest and use it will flow on to other projects. This has been the case with the refurbishment of the Forts Area.”

- From the Priority Projects for other Land Managers, the Torndirrup Project and the Mount Martin and Gull Rock National Park project both received strong support (71% and 67%). The comments below provide a snapshot of community responses:

“Torndirrup has enormous potential is sensitively handled. It is the ultimate nature’s playground and would help to put Albany on the world map for outdoor recreation.”

“Mt Martin has fantastic potential for MTB. It offers superb vistas back to Albany and of the stunning coast from Nananup back to Emu Point. It would be fantastic to see a summer bike shuttle service ferrying bikes across the Emu Point channel. Nowhere else could match such a unique way to get to MTB trails.”

- From the additional comments, acknowledgement was made of the need to balance the conservation needs with access, the environmental sensitivity of the area and the need for effective management.
- There were a number of comments about the value of trails to improve health and wellbeing, and encourage and engage young families.

“Providing trails that encourage healthy living through exercise is always important. Any initiative that provides space for family adventures is important. After watching how many children and adolescents own bikes on the Urban downhill weekend, there shows the interest in riding, and gives them something constructive and healthy to do.”

“We already have a lot of walking trails in the area and surrounding areas, so it would be nice to start focusing on trails for other things like mountain biking. If we want people to keep being healthy then we need to let people do these things. Mountain biking especially has grown and it is great to see families getting out together and getting kids off the streets, off the t.v. and out on their bikes.”



Feedback on some of the guiding principles for developing a Trails Tourist Hub was also captured through the survey – the most strongly supported (ranked 5) in priority order:

1. Principle 2 – Focus on new trails growth markets mountain bike, paddling and aquatic (80% strong support)
2. Principle 4 – Give priority to trails that provide loops and connectivity (73% strong support)
3. Principle 1 – Locate new trails in iconic locations, within City Centre and expand outwards (69% strong support)
4. Principle 5 – Trail Development models that capitalise on iconic coastal landscapes (61% strong support)
5. Principle 6 – Single use, single direction trails (44% strong support)
6. Principle 3 – Upgrade of existing trails, focusing on walking and equestrian trails (43% strong support)

There was mixed responses to Principle 6 – Single Use, Single Direction. The comments below indicate the diverse responses:

“Single use single direction maximizes safety, minimize conflict and maximize the fun factor. One of the challenges of the existing tracks is ripping around a corner at high speed to come across dog walkers etc. Everyone has equal rights however single use tracks increase enjoyment for all.”

“Single use trails would mean having to upkeep/create more trails than if trails were multi use. As long as “rules of use” were clear (eg walkers give way to cyclists, cyclists to equestrian, etc) there shouldn’t be issues with multi use trails. Also only having trails as one way would mean they all had to be looped, or have a way back to the point of origin, especially in areas where users may have needed to drive a car out to the start of the trail. Walkers or cyclists won’t necessarily have walked/ridden from home and same for equestrian users and paddlers are especially unlikely to have carried a kayak or canoe from home on their back!”

“Single direction trails are necessary for single track type trails where there is no overtaking. Fast flowing downhill, technical trails and enclosed bush experience trails.”

“Whilst looped trails are certainly the preference of MTBers the iconic nature of the coastal trails in Albany would allow for point to point rides as being well received...”



LETTERS RECEIVED AS PART OF PUBLIC SUBMISSION PROCESS

1. A letter was received from WestCycle which supported the Trails Hub Strategy and the alignment with the recently released WA Mountain Bike Strategy. They acknowledge the attempts to develop a network of accessible, sustainable and appropriate trails and support the inclusion of the Trail Development Process as part of the toolkit for trail planning, design and construction. (see Attachment 2)
2. A letter was received from Department of Aboriginal Affairs which highlighted the potential links between the Kinjarling Cultural Pathways (interpretive cultural trails) and the Trails Hub Strategy (activity based trails). It also provided some opportunities and suggestions to build on the Noongar consultation process, which had occurred through the initial development of the Kinjarling Plan. (see Attachment 3)

PROJECT CONTROL GROUP RESPONSE TO THE PUBLIC SUBMISSION FINDINGS



1. Priority of Key Projects

From a review of the public submission responses to the ranking of priority projects from the report the following was unanimously supported by the PCG.

| Project Ranking | Precinct/Project | Target Trail Groups | Rationale |
|-----------------|---|---|--|
| 1 | Albany Heritage Park (Mt Adelaide and Mt Clarence) | Walkers, MTB, Climbers, Interpretative | The order of projects 1-3 are key to achieving the vision of a Trails Tourism Hub and are recommended to be retained in the current priority order |
| 2 | City Centre | Walkers, MTB, Interpretative | |
| 3 | Mount Melville | Walkers, MTB, Climbers, Interpretative | |
| 4 | Kalgan River | Walkers, MTB, Paddlers | Strong community feedback and existing use acknowledged and the project elevated. |
| 5 | Vancouver Peninsula | Walkers, Paddlers Aquatic | Dropped a level as a result of the priority placement of the Kalgan River |
| 6 | Sand Patch | Walkers, Equestrian | |
| 7 | Pikeclearup | Mountain Bike | Though strong community support this project is viewed as a local project servicing local users groups and a niche market. |



2. Principles for Developing a Trails Tourist Hub

PCG discussed the importance of the need to respect and enhance the environment and consistently acknowledge the cultural and heritage importance of our assets.

An overarching Mission statement was developed in line with the Great Southern Development Commission's Regional Blue Print and will be incorporated into the Strategy:

“We will respect and enhance the region’s environment and heritage assets
in a sustainable manner.”

| Principle | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 | Locate new trails in iconic locations, within the City Centre and expand outwards |
| 2 | Focus on new trails growth markets of mountain biking, paddling and aquatic |
| 3 | Rationalize and upgrade existing trails |
| 4 | Give priority to trails that provide loops and connectivity |
| 5 | Support trail development models that capitalize on iconic coastal landscapes |
| 6 | Build the right trail in the right place |

SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS

The development of the first City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy (2015 – 2025) has involved an extensive network analysis and a comprehensive range of consultation and community engagement activities.

The Strategy provides a clear strategic direction to capitalise on the City’s potential as a trails destination by consolidating and upgrading our existing trails (some of them recognised as World Class), developing new trails and packaging together with a suite of visitor services to promote Albany as Nature’s Playground, for visitors and Albany residents.



ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

We already have a lot of walking trails in the area and surrounding areas, so it would be nice to start focusing on trails for other things like mountain biking. If we want people to keep being healthy then we need to let people do these things. Mountain biking especially has grown and it is great to see families getting out together and getting kids off the streets, off the t.v. and out on their bikes

The potential to have a trail network accessible by bike or foot from the town center is rare in Australia. When I have been adventure traveling around the world the places that have easily accessible adventure activities that were well publicised didn't require a major logistical exercise to get to were always very popular. especially for people who are not staying for extended periods of time. Having the trail hub in the town center really hits the mark with this. Can't wait to see where it all goes.

I would love to see a diverse range of trails types to suit everyone's abilities. While I think it's important to get new people into all kinds of recreational activities, you need to make sure you look after the people who are already using the current trails as we are the ones that will help maintain them.

I would like to see better trails for bicycles of all types, not just mountain bikes. This would improve the ability to commute between the town hub and each of the precincts.

All awesome ideas! I am not from the area but was visiting the weekend of the urban downhill event. Wow! Awesome event and great community spirit, we have been travelling around Australia and haven't come across an event like it. Your onto a winner! My 3 year old daughter was being for go of the kids track and I was asking my wife to buy a bike for the main race! Everyone we saw around town was friendly and welcoming. This event will only get bigger! And by further developing and making new tracks it will benefit the community on so many levels! The potential for future years is limitless, I can see the finish line being moved the the main street with shots of town hall and the water, with people lining the streets. And last thing, it doesn't need to just be about the tracks and bikes, the event could incorporate markets and local arts and history. Get the whole town involved for a celebration weekend! I love Albany!

I liked the concept of Albany being a "world-class hub for trails" rather than a "hub for world-class trails". A subtle distinction but an important one. A lot of outdoors people nowadays are multi-disciplined (bike riding, walking and kayaking), plus the higher-level competitors often bring families with them and want to do other activities with the family after their events

This is fabulous. The draft outlines some great plans. Please focus also on effective car and bus parking facilities.



“Strong support for mtb trail network for tourist and local usage. If appropriate trails were available my family would use on almost a daily basis, further to this I am aware of keen mtb tourists willing to spend on accommodation and good food.”

“This is a wonderful opportunity to benefit the whole community. If the trails on the 3 mounts are done well this could really put Albany on the map as a genuine trails destination.”

“The City needs to continually consult the MTB Club for trail structure and guidance in conjunction with the proposed builder to ensure trail suitability for all level of riders - all the tracks (except for the short downhill track) in Albany are not MTB trails - they are just walking trails that MTBs use because there is nothing else. If the trails are constructed correctly Albany could be in the same league as Derby or Hollybank in Tasmania or Buller in Victoria or many other sort out destinations around the world. The sooner the better for everyone.”

“I want to see connected trails, access to all the great scenery around Albany - not just Mt. Melville and Clarence- which really, on its own, doesn't offer sufficient for a 7-day family holiday or proper trail holiday. Look at what is available in Perth, Margaret River, Pemberton etc. I would love to see a cross-country event and safe gravel trails or cross-country routes - not just extreme stuff. In short - don't limit trails to the City centre and mountains - they should include all the great surrounding countryside.”

“I am spending all of 2015 traveling and visiting numerous MTB sites around Australia. I have seen amazing as well as very poor trails. The keys to very best riding experience combine two simple factors. 1. Great signage on the trails - it is as important for visiting tourists to spend money on the signs as well as the quality of the trails. 2. Trails built by experienced professionals. It is imperative that the trails are built by world class trail builders. While this certainly adds to the cost it more than makes up for it in the reputation the trails receive amongst the MTB community. Whilst I understand there are many factors involved in deciding on a successful tender, please give strong consideration to this factor. Currently there are no trails built in WA by Glen Jacobs of World Trail. There is a big opportunity for Albany to be the first WA town to have this company construct their trails. Whilst I love to support local trail builders and businesses I believe strongly we can use the right trail builder to help with the brand creation. Without doubt all of the best trails in Australia have been built by World Trail. I am more than happy to share my MTB trail experiences from this year with the group or with any interested City staff on my return to Albany in January 2016. Conversely please feel free to contact me through the email address supplied on this survey for any additional feedback in the meantime. Thanks for all of your hard work guys! You rock.”



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