



Our future is SAFE



30 May 2016

Dear Mayor Long,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the City's proposed Strategic Plan and future aspirations for the City Of Karratha. Like the City, SAFE values team work and cooperation to enhance community well-being. We enjoy significant common ground in our respective visions for safe, healthy and liveable communities.

SAFE fully supports the City's commitment to providing quality community facilities and infrastructure. In line with this, we ask that the City's operational plans and budgets for 2016-2026 provide for necessary maintenance and capital works at the SAFE Karratha premises.

You will be aware that in the absence of dedicated, purpose-built premises, SAFE Karratha has operated out of a private residence since its inception in 2003. Proposed capital works would provide significant improvements in the areas of staff and animal safety, workflow, quarantine and hygiene. Initial plans and costings suggest a figure of approximately \$75,000.00 to complete maintenance and upgrades to electrical and phone systems and make extensions to provide adequate office capacity, storage functions and temporary animal housing. The works would result in a higher standard of infrastructure for our animal management services and sit within the City and SAFE's framework of collaboration for the effective care and rehoming of rehomingable unclaimed dogs and cats. Ultimately, city-standard infrastructure could be achieved through the design and development of purpose built premises.

SAFE also fully supports the City's commitment to programs and services that improve community well-being and protect our biodiversity values. To this end, we ask that the City's operational plans and budgets for 2016-2026 allow for a cooperative de-sexing program aimed at reducing the numbers of unwanted cats.

Snapshot of the cooperative desexing model:

- It is a collaboration between City of Karratha, SAFE and local veterinary services
 - Desexing costs are shared between cat owners, City of Karratha, SAFE and local veterinary services
- Prices must be low enough to allow pet owners on a pension or low income to contribute.

For example, if the cost of desexing surgery is \$200.00 per animal:

- council pays – \$55.00
- SAFE pays - \$55.00
- owner pays – \$40.00
- Vet's discount - \$50.00



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Successful precedents for cooperative desexing programs exist in Queensland, where low cost desexing and desexing promotion to prevent unwanted animals has been shown to cost councils less over time than collecting/holding/euthanasing or rehoming animals. Council funds allocated to help desex as many animals as possible over a number of years is necessary for achieving long term success. As an approximation, an allocation of \$11,000.00 annually over five years could cover Council's portion of costs for the desexing of 200 cats each year - a total of 1,000 cats desexed.

In light of the benefits to Council and the community and the relatively modest funding involved, we seek the City's favourable consideration of both the capital works and cooperative desexing proposals when developing strategic priorities as part of the Corporate Business Plan.

As detailed in SAFE's recent presentation to Council earlier this month, SAFE is a proven and well respected stakeholder in the area of animal welfare in Western Australia. We are proud to have originated in Karratha and would be delighted to shine further light on the City through innovative regional animal care premises and a successful cooperative desexing program.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Hedley
SAFE Founder