City Views

City of Armadale Administration Centre

7 Orchard Avenue Armadale WA 6112 ■ Telephone 9399 0111 ■ Facsimile 9399 0184

Issue No.11 - August 2005

Budget plans for future growth

The City of Armadale's 2005-2006 Budget is focussed on continued investment in the City as it grows and develops into a true regional centre.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds said that the Budget represents another step towards the Council's vision for the City.

"This Budget will continue to encourage economic growth and create the employment, education and entertainment opportunities that our community requires. As new residential developments such as those in Forrestdale take off, the creation of a sustainable City becomes more achievable," Cr Reynolds said.

"In the coming year the City will continue to deliver basic services such as the construction and maintenance of roads, footpaths, parks and reserves but will also fund a number of growth initiatives in line with our strategic plan.

"This year the City has allocated $9.2 million to the construction and maintenance of roads, pathways, drainage, street lighting, bus shelters, car parks and a range of measures aimed at improving road safety.

"The allocation of funds to develop and maintain infrastructure is important to the City's future growth."

$3.3 million will fund the development and maintenance of the City's parks and reserves. Part of this $3.3 million will fund the redevelopment of Rushton Park, a two year project costed at $550,000 over two years, and scheduled for completion this year. The redevelopment will see the construction of a story wall to mark the historical significance of Rushton Park and the creation of a performance facility, adventure playground, barbecue area and pathways. The existing canteen, changing rooms, grandstand, pavilion and lighting will all be upgraded.

"Council's vision for the park is to create a special place for people of all ages to gather together to watch a musical performance, attend a sporting match, enjoy a barbecue or take a leisurely walk," Cr Reynolds said.

$1.8 million will be spent on maintaining and improving Council facilities such as community halls and childcare centres.

Over $3 million has been allocated for the continuation of the City's existing domestic waste and recycling collections and the operation of the Springdale Green Waste Facility in Roleystone and Hopkinson Road landfill site in Brookdale.

The Mayor said that the City had identified key initiatives aimed at facilitating growth.

"The City has set aside $1 million to undertake joint infrastructure and streetscape projects across the City with the Armadale Redevelopment Authority."

"As a community we need to provide for future generations. The City attracts significant funding from the State Government via projects undertaken by the Armadale Redevelopment Authority and we need to continue this momentum. We have achieved so much already but we still have a long way to go."

A further $29,000 will see the implementation of community safety initiatives. $102,000 will be spent on environmental projects to protect our waterways.

Armadale Mayor Linton Reynolds said the increase in rates would enable the City to realise its potential.

"The average rate increase of 6.6 percent is moderate considering what we are aiming to achieve. 3.8 percent can be attributed to inflation in the 2004/05 financial year, and the remainder will fuel the continued growth of the City," Cr Reynolds said.

The Mayor reminded residents that the triennial revaluation of properties by the Valuer General's Office will affect most residents' rates bills.

"The overall level of rates incurred by individuals could vary from 6.6 percent because of the impact of the metropolitan-wide revaluation. Some will go up by more than 6.6 percent while others will have a smaller increase, and some a decrease in their rates. This is a factor beyond our control," Cr Reynolds said.

"Residents should note that Local Government raises only two percent of rates and taxes collected by all levels of government. State and Federal Governments raise 18 percent and 80 percent respectively."

The adopted Budget has also addressed street cleaning and maintenance issues in the Armadale CBD, Kelmscott town centre, industrial areas and local shopping precincts through the introduction of a new street cleaning and maintenance service funded via a specified area rate to be collected from businesses.

Businesses set to benefit from the service will fund the new initiative to avoid adding to the existing rates burden facing some residential homeowners.

"There is no doubt that overflowing bins, graffiti and unclean streets can ruin the shopping experience for residents and visitors.

"New businesses will not be attracted to unkempt or 'tired' looking shopping areas – we need to act now to ensure our shopping areas continue to grow and develop into vibrant hubs that provide employment opportunities for our community, especially our young people," Cr Reynolds said

A Smarter Way to Pay

Do you have trouble managing your household budget when your rates bill comes in? Why not take the stress out of balancing your budget with a Smarter Way to Pay.

A Smarter Way to Pay is a no fuss way to pay your rates over 12 months via direct debit on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.

Ratepayers who opt to adopt a Smarter Way to Pay will incur no administration fees and no penalty interest. It is hoped that the new payment method will help ease the burden a lump sum or limited instalment payment program can cause ratepayers.

As an incentive the City of Armadale is offering ratepayers who register to pay their rates by direct debit before the due date of 30 September 2005 a chance to win one of four incentive prizes of $500. Ratepayers who are currently paying their rates by direct debit will also be eligible to win the cash prizes.

To take advantage of the Smarter Way to Pay contact Council's Rates Department on 9399 0614 or visit the City's Administration Building at 7 Orchard Avenue, Armadale.

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Administration Office
(Opening hours: Monday to Friday 8.15am to 4.45pm)
7 Orchard Avenue, Armadale
Tel: (08) 9399 0111
Fax: (08) 9399 0184
Email:
info@armadale.wa.gov.au

Armadale Library
7 Orchard Avenue, Armadale
Tel: (08) 9399 0125

Kelmscott Library
2817 Albany Highway, Kelmscott
Tel: (08) 9390 5506

Westfield Library
76 Champion Drive, Armadale
Tel: (08) 9497 2622

Armadale Arena
Townley Street, Armadale
Tel: (08) 9399 5065

Armadale Aquatic Centre
Champion Drive, Armadale
Tel: (08) 9399 6966

Web Site:
www.armadale.wa.gov.au

Armadale mum wins Gold Coast trip

Armadale mum, Margaret Edge is today thanking her lucky stars she chose to shop locally after winning a family trip to the Gold Coast worth around $5,000.

Margaret, her husband Mark, and 11 year old son Royden were ecstatic when they heard the good news.

"My son is beside himself with excitement – he just can't wait to visit the theme parks. I turn 40 later this year and was trying to think of how we could celebrate the milestone as a family – I never expected that we would be living it up on the Gold Coast," Margaret said.

The competition, organised by the City of Armadale and sponsored by local businesses was designed to attract people to the Armadale city centre to shop and go to the movies. To enter shoppers were required to spend $5 at one of over 60 participating stores, collect the stamps and drop their entries into a barrel.

Ironically Margaret collected her final stamp while purchasing suitcases from Crazy Clarks in Jull Street. "When I got the suitcases home my husband questioned why I had bought them given that we didn't have any immediate travel plans. We certainly do now!" Margaret said.

Margaret Edge and her son Royden with the winning entry

The prize includes return airfares to the Gold Coast, five nights accommodation, limousine transfers, day passes to Movie World, Wet 'n' Wild and Dreamworld Theme Parks and spending money.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds drew the winning entry out of the barrel located in the Grand Cinema foyer on Saturday night and phoned the Edge household to relay the good news.

Margaret said of the phone call. "The Mayor spoke with my husband, Mark, but he didn't know I had entered the competition so the message I received was a bit mixed up. I couldn't wait to contact the City on Monday and was delighted when they confirmed that the trip was actually ours."

The Mayor declared the competition a success. "The competition barrel was brimming with entries. It was great to see that so many people had taken part in this fantastic promotion. I would like to formally thank all of the sponsors who supported the promotion. They include Armadale Shopping City, Armadale Plaza, Retravision, Harvey Norman, Toyworld and Homestyle Furniture."

"The 'Win a trip to the Gold Coast by shopping in Armadale' competition is just one of the initiatives the City has undertaken to promote the city centre."

History to be incorporated in Champion Lakes development

Armadale City Council recently received a concept plan for the Aboriginal Enterprise and Interpretative Centre at the Champion Lakes Regional Recreational Park and approved the development of a business plan designed to attract funding and provide a framework for its operation.

A working party consisting of members of Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (ATSIAC), City officers and representatives from the Armadale Redevelopment Authority (ARA) was formed to oversee the development of a concept plan for the Aboriginal Enterprise and Interpretative Centre.

The City of Armadale and the ARA jointly funded the investigations, consultation and design development that led to the production of the concept plan.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds said the centre would formally recognise the links the Aboriginal community have to the site.

"The incorporation of an Aboriginal Enterprise and Interpretative Centre at Champion Lakes will enable the community to reflect on the history of the site and facilitate a greater understanding of Aboriginal culture and tradition.

"An enhanced understanding between the cultures is necessary for the Armadale district to achieve its full potential."

"It is wonderful to see development that incorporates a sense of history into its vision for the future – in this case it will be in the form of a world class rowing facility and white water park."

"Council's support of the centre is a practical example of its commitment to the Aboriginal community. The Champion Lakes development will put Armadale on the map and contribute to its growth as a true regional centre," Cr Reynolds said.

The next step in the project will see further developments in relation to the design of the centre, the clarification of its intended uses and the development of the business plan

Story wall to tell a tale

Artists appointed by the City to create a story wall designed to mark the historical significance of Rushton Park have been busy collecting old photographs, stories and drawings from local residents and students. The story wall will be located next to the Orlando Street car park, at the top of the old pool grandstand in Kelmscott.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds said that Council recognised the importance of the site to the local community.

"The community has strong links to this site so it is vital that we acknowledge its historical and cultural significance in a meaningful way. The erection of a story wall, created for the local community by the local community is an excellent way to preserve our memories of a time gone by."

Artists Arif and Audrey Satar encouraged Year 6 and 7 students from Kelmscott Primary School to draw their memories of the old pool and its surrounding area. Their illustrations will be incorporated into the story wall.

Year 6 and 7 students from Kelmscott Primary School with artwork depicting their memories of the old Kelmscott pool

The Mayor said the creation of the story wall is part of the redevelopment of Rushton Park. The City has developed a Master Plan for the area following extensive discussions with the community. $550,000 has been committed to the redevelopment of the park over a two year period, with works scheduled for completion this year.

Works will include the creation of a performance facility, adventure playground, barbecue area and pathways. The existing canteen, changing rooms, grandstand, pavilion and lighting will all be upgraded.

"Council's vision for the park is to create a special place for people of all ages to gather together to watch a musical performance, attend a sporting match, enjoy a barbecue or take a leisurely walk," Cr Reynolds said.

The redevelopment of the former Kelmscott Pool site at Rushton Park has been jointly funded by the City of Armadale, the Federal Department of Transport and Regional Services, the State Department of Sport and Recreation and the Community Arts Network of WA.

Don Randall, the Hon Brendan Nelson, Gosnells Mayor Pat Morris and Armadale Mayor Linton Reynolds during Dr Nelson's visit

City seeks Minister's support

The City of Armadale recently hosted a visit by the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson, Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training.

During Dr Nelson's visit the City thanked the Minister for his role in approving and announcing the allocation of 20 tertiary places (rising to 55 in three years) soon to be delivered in the Armadale district via Curtin University. The City also sought Dr Nelson's support for the establishment of an Australian Technical College in the Armadale-Gosnells region.

Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds and Councillors of the City of Armadale, Gosnells Mayor Pat Morris, Federal Member for Canning, Don Randall representatives from TAFE, Curtain and Murdoch Universities, and industry groups attended an official reception for the Minister to show their support for a Technical College in the Armadale-Gosnells region.

Mayor Reynolds believes the establishment of an Australian Technical College in the local area would be a real win for the community.

"Attracting a dual campus college to Armadale and Gosnells would mean giving our young people better access to education and improving their employment prospects. We want to make sure our young people are given every opportunity to succeed."

"The creation of a skilled work force is essential to the future development of the area," Cr Reynolds said.

During the reception the Mayor offered his profound thanks to Dr Nelson "for beginning the battle to provide the community with a fair level of access to higher education opportunities."

The Minister spoke of the Government's efforts not only to change cultural attitudes but to provide real opportunities for young people through avenues other than just universities.

"The establishment of Technical Colleges are about giving students a choice that is as highly valued as a university degree," Dr Nelson said.

The Minister thanked the Mayors of Armadale and Gosnells and Don Randall for their advocacy on behalf of the community.

Events diary

2005 Spring Family Bushwalk Series
August to October

Get the family together and take in all mother nature has to offer on one of these enjoyable and informative guided bushwalks.

Take in the magnificent views of the Darling Escarpment, enjoy the spectacular flora and fauna, and visit the heritage sites of our pioneers.

The series includes:

- Walk the Wungong on Sunday 28 August
- Bungendore Park Djilba Walk on Sunday 11 September
- Churchman Bushland Walk on Sunday 25 September
- Armadale Settlers Common Walk on Sunday 9 October
- Roleystone Heritage and River Walk on Sunday 23 October

For more information on any of the events listed above contact the City of Armadale's Events Coordinator, Melanie Green on 9399 0603.

The latest information on the City's Events Program is available on our web site at www.armadale.wa.gov.au

Libraries alive

For details of events taking place at the City of Armadale's three libraries, give your local library a call – there's always something going on!

Armadale Library (Ph 9399 0125)
Kelmscott Library (Ph 9390 5506)
Westfield Library (Ph 9497 2622)

Mayor Linton Reynolds was recognised for his contribution to Local Government

City Mayor wins medal

City of Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds was presented with Western Australia's highest Local Government accolade, the Local Government Medal at a conference held recently.

The Medal is presented each year by the WA Local Government Association Honours Panel to an individual for his/her outstanding achievement and significant contribution to local government in WA.

Armadale CEO, Ray Tame said that Cr Reynold's contribution to local government and society in general made him an outstanding recipient of the Local Government Medal.

"Linton Reynolds is one of those rare self effacing individuals who gives to the community without seeking reward or recognition. Over many years of voluntary service (only in recent years has he risen to a position where an allowance makes some compensation for the time committed) Linton has earned the highest respect and admiration of those he has worked with."

Deputy Mayor, Jeff Munn said that Cr Reynolds should be rewarded for his personal and professional contribution to the community.

"Linton has served on the Armadale Council since 1989 and was recently elected unopposed by his peers for his third term as Mayor. He is a true community leader and has contributed to the growth and advancement of the area as a true regional centre. He has been instrumental in the establishment of the Armadale Redevelopment Authority, of which he is a board member, advancing the extension of the Tonkin Highway and the concept of a world class rowing facility at Champion Lakes."

Cr Munn said that many local people would not be aware that the Armadale Mayor is often called on to confidentially visit other Western Australian Councils to assist them with their problems.

"In the WA Local Government arena few individuals have assisted as many Councils facing administrative difficulty as Linton has."

"He is also a member on the WA Local Government Grants Commission, which distributes funding to all WA Councils. Linton is unique in his understanding of its complex financial models and funding mechanisms."

"The entire Council is thrilled that our Mayor has been recognised by the broader Local Government community," Cr Munn said.

Kelmscott's 175th anniversary

The City will mark the 175th anniversary of Kelmscott with a full day of celebrations on Sunday 9 October.

Back on 6 July 1830 the town of Kelmscott was surveyed and named after the birthplace of Archdeacon Thomas Hobbes Scott, founder of the colony's Anglican Church.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds congratulated residents on reaching the important milestone.

"The town of Kelmscott is particularly important to the region because of its historical significance. Kelmscott was the first settlement in WA and has been continually settled since 1830," Cr Reynolds said.

Celebrations have been scheduled to coincide with Council's Pioneer Reunion, which will see people who have lived in the area for an extended period of time come together and share their stories.

During the event local club players, veterans and children will battle it out in a friendly 'Back to Kelmscott Cricket Match' at Rushton Park in Kelmscott.

Activities on the day will also include nature and heritage walks, a costume parade and log chopping presentation. To find out more contact Christen Bell at the History House Museum on 9399 0670.

A banner reflecting the changes taking place in the City of Armadale was on display in St Georges Terrace

Banners in the Terrace

A banner depicting the changing face of Armadale took its place among 85 others displayed on St Georges Terrace during Local Government Week.

The banner, designed by local artist Lesley Tutte in collaboration with the Aboriginal Family Support Service's Aboriginal Mosaic Group, showcases the new opportunities that have increased the City's desirability as a place to live, work and visit.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds said that the banner captures the community's enthusiasm for the improvements Council has long been working towards.

"Our banner exhibits Armadale's community spirit, our strong community partnerships and the future growth of the City," Cr Reynolds said.

The opportunities reflected in the banner include the development of the new cinema complex, the future development of the Champion Lakes Rowing Facility and Aboriginal Enterprise Centre, new housing developments and the extension of the Tonkin Highway.

"The projects the group has chosen to highlight will certainly generate new opportunities for our community. They will create employment and entertainment avenues for our young people, attract visitors to the area and facilitate the City's growth into a true regional centre."

"Now is truly an exciting time to live and work in Armadale," Cr Reynolds said.

Mayor Linton Reynolds with *Outside the Frame* textile category winner Ashleigh Brown

It's all about art

Budding artists from near and far have showcased their artistic talents recently thanks to the *Outside the Frame* competition and the City of Armadale Art Award.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds announced the winners of the *Outside the Frame* competition at an official event hosted recently at Council's Administration Centre in Orchard Avenue, Armadale.

Outside the Frame attracted over 185 entries across six categories from Year 11 and 12 students from across the south east. The artworks were judged by a panel consisting of Glen Pilkington from Art Source (the Artists Foundation of WA), artist Dan Mazotti and Deputy Mayor, Cr Jeff Munn.

The talents of local Year 8 to 10 students, who submitted their artwork for the chance to win a City of Armadale Art Award, had their work displayed at the Armadale Shopping City.

Mayor Linton Reynolds said that it was wonderful to have such talented young people in our own backyard. "I would like to congratulate the students who received prizes and commendations across the various mediums in both competitions."

The Mirrabooka Precinct Steering group in front of the Armadale Train Station

Careers Expo a big hit

More than 1,500 local high school students from Years 9 to 12 attended the City of Armadale's Youth Careers Expo held recently at John Wollaston Anglican Community School in Kelmscott.

Organised by the City of Armadale with the help of local schools, the Expo aimed to assist young people and their families to plan for their future, after high school.

The Expo was a huge success with 89 per cent of students surveyed stating that the event was helpful in providing the career information they were looking for.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds said that the Careers Expo was of great benefit to young people in the City.

"Deciding what to do after high school is a daunting task. It is critical that students and their parents consider all of the options available to them so that they can make an informed choice about their future. Students who take the time to plan their future can greatly improve their employment prospects," Cr Reynolds said.

Local high school students visited the Armadale Youth Careers Expo

Over 31 organisations were represented at the Careers Expo including universities such as Murdoch and Curtin, TAFE Colleges, the Australian Defence Force, AMA New Apprenticeships and the WA Police.

The Mayor said that Council was keenly aware of the City's low high school retention rate and high rate of youth unemployment.

"This Expo is one of the practical ways Council can help to address this issue," he said. At a recent Council meeting Council agreed to organise and fund the event again next year.

Stirling team tours City

The City of Armadale recently hosted a visit by the City of Stirling's Mirrabooka Steering Group who were keen to learn about the revitalisation of Armadale.

The group included City of Stirling Deputy Mayor, Councillors, CEO and local MLA the Hon Bob Kucera.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds and CEO Ray Tame took the group on a tour of the town centre, including the new cinema complex and redeveloped Armadale Train Station before making a formal presentation.

A guide to your Ward Councillors

Heron Ward

Cr Linton Reynolds JP Mayor
Ph: 9390 7433

Cr Jim Stewart
Ph: 9497 9524

Jarrah Ward

Cr Pat Hart
Ph/Fax: 9496 1633

Cr Laurie Scidone
Ph: 9496 0445
Fax: 9496 3445

Lake Ward

Cr Alison Cominelli JP
Ph: 9397 0241
Fax: 9397 0073

Cr June MacDonald
Ph/fax: 9399 1738

Minnawarra Ward

Cr John Knezevich
Ph/Fax: 9497 1638

Cr Jeff Munn JP CMC Deputy Mayor
Ph: 9497 3996

Neerigen Ward

Cr Guenter Best
Ph: 9399 4371
Fax: 9497 3985

Cr Bob Tizard
Ph/Fax: 9497 3469

Palomino Ward

Cr Jim Everts
Ph: 9399 6327
Fax: 9399 6833

Cr Graham Wallace
Ph: 9390 9909
Fax: 9399 0664

River Ward

Cr Ruth Butterfield
Ph: 9390 1459
Fax: 9390 9605

Cr Henry Zelones JP
Ph: 9495 4073
Fax: 9495 4838

Volunteers plant trees for National Tree Day

Tree day delights

Members of the Roleystone Dieback Action Group, students from John Wollaston Anglican Community School and community members took part in Australia's biggest community tree planting event, National Tree Day on Sunday 31 July.

Volunteers congregated at the Roleystone Family Centre before heading to the Hillandale bushland in Roleystone. Volunteers planted over 800 local shrubs and trees on the day, including 15 different types of local native species before enjoying a well deserved lunch.

Every year tens of thousands of Australians gather at locations around the country to celebrate National Tree Day. Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds said that National Tree Day provided the community with an opportunity to do something good for the environment.

"The Roleystone Dieback Action Group should be commended for their ongoing efforts to improve our natural environment," Cr Reynolds said.

The community planting day was organised by the Roleystone Dieback Action Group and is supported by the City of Armadale.

Call for volunteers!

The Armadale Volunteer Resource Service is looking for individuals who are willing to give up their time to help enrich the lives of people in our local community.

Jointly funded by the City of Armadale and the Department for Community Development the Armadale Volunteer Resource Service provides a vital link between not-for-profit groups and volunteers.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds said that volunteering provides an opportunity for people to make a contribution.

"Volunteering is a great way for people to get involved with their local community, make new friends, develop new skills and even add some valuable experience to their resume."

"People who volunteer tend to feel more connected to their local community and gain great personal satisfaction from knowing they are making a difference. It really is a win-win situation," Cr Reynolds said.

There are a myriad of volunteering opportunities available to individuals depending on their interests or skills.

"Opportunities include assisting with the running of community events and festivals, working in local primary schools as a teachers aid, supporting parents with young children, teaching numeracy and literacy skills to migrants, helping out local sporting clubs by coaching, working in the canteen or becoming a board member, joining the State Emergency Service or Bush Fire Brigades, organising activities in local hospitals to raise the spirits of ill children, taking part in community plantings, advocating on behalf of refugees or people living with a disability, providing skills training to members of our Indigenous community or helping out with activities at one of the City's seniors citizens clubs," Cr Reynolds said.

The Armadale Volunteer Resource Service has 77 agencies registered, offering around 200 volunteering opportunities. The Service is located in Council's Administration Buildings at 7 Orchard Avenue, Armadale.

For information about the range of volunteering opportunities available contact Armadale Volunteer Resource Service Coordinator Pauline Franklin on 9399 0629.

City of Armadale Council and Committee Meetings

August 2005 Meetings

Technical Services Committee – Monday 22 August at 7pm

Community Services Committee – Tuesday 23 August at 7pm

September 2005 Meetings

Ordinary Council – Monday 5 and 19 September at 7pm

City Strategy Committee – Monday 12 September at 7pm

Development Services Committee – Tuesday 13 September at 7pm

Community Services Committee – Tuesday 27 September at 7pm

Technical Services Committee – Wednesday 28 September at 7pm

October 2005 Meetings

Ordinary Council – Monday 3 and 17 October at 7pm

City Strategy Committee – Monday 10 October at 7pm

Development Services Committee – Tuesday 11 October at 7pm

Technical Services Committee – Monday 24 October at 7pm

Community Services Committee – Tuesday 25 October at 7pm

All meetings are held at the City of Armadale's Administration Centre on Orchard Avenue in Armadale and are open to the public.

Early learning encouraged

A Family Reading Centre aimed at encouraging parents to read to their children has been set up inside the Westfield Library.

Complete with a comfy sofa and cushions it is a perfect place for parents to spend some quality time reading to their children. It includes picture books, puzzles, games, toys, story kits, puppets, a computer with early literacy cd roms, parenting books and much more.

Trine Cerfontyne and her son Tyler enjoy the Family Reading Centre

The Centre, which occupies a dedicated space in the library, was established thanks to a grant from the Department for Community Development as part of their Early Years Strategy. Local playgroups or childcare centres are also welcome to use the Centre and can book a story telling session with a librarian. To find out more contact Westfield Library on 9497 2622.

Planner returns home

City of Armadale Planner Erin Perera has just returned to work after spending the last six months providing technical assistance and expertise to Sri Lankan communities left devastated by the tsunami.

Armadale Planner Erin Perera (middle) in Sri Lanka

At a recent Council meeting Ms Perera presented the City with a gift from the Sri Lankan Government in recognition of the contribution offered by the City of Armadale and the State Government towards the tsunami rehabilitation process in Sri Lanka. The gift was in the form of a frosted glass pearl, resting on a bronze plinth carved into the shape of a wave and engraved with words of appreciation. The gift is symbolic of Sri Lanka, which is known by many as the pearl of the Indian Ocean.

Ms Perera, a qualified planner who is fluent in all three local languages was visiting relatives in the Sri Lankan town of Colombo when the tsunami hit. She was given permission to offer her assistance to the Sri Lankan authorities and the City agreed to fund her stay for six months.

The State government through Armadale MLA Alannah MacTiernan pledged a further $20,000 in matching funds toward the City initiative.

Ms Perera had worked for Sri Lanka's Urban Development Authority (UDA) for five years, so she was uniquely qualified to offer her assistance with the reconstruction effort.

City of Armadale CEO Ray Tame said that Armadale's seconding of Ms Perera to the Tsunami reconstruction was unique. "We are not aware of any other Australian Council that actually had someone working in the field of tsunami relief."

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds said that Council saw the initiative as a way of providing practical support for an area that had been hard hit by the tsunami. "This was a means for us to provide help in a very hands on way to those affected by this terrible tragedy," Cr Reynolds said.

Assigned to work with a UDA team, Ms Perera spent most of her time working in the densely populated district of Galle, a coastal town that was the second worst hit by the tsunami.

Ms Perera said initially the work was very traumatic because many of the victims did not want to go on living without their families and friends. "Whilst it was challenging and extremely physically and emotionally draining I am proud that I could use my skills to help my country in its time of need. I am grateful to the City of Armadale for their vision and generosity, without their support I would not have been able to offer my assistance," Ms Perera said.

Roleystone receives government grant

The State Government recently confirmed its commitment to improving the town centre of Roleystone through the injection of $250,000 in funds for works to take place over the next two years.

Armadale Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds said securing the funding was a real win for the local community.

"The State Government's contribution will see the upgrade of community facilities that are well used and valued by the residents of Roleystone."

"A community committee comprising of community organisations, representatives from sporting clubs, Ward Councillors, Council officers and local residents has been established to discuss how best to spend the funds."

"We want to make sure that the funds are spent in a way that benefits the local community as a whole. The State Government has appointed a consultant to work with the committee to develop a works plan and ensure local residents are consulted," Cr Reynolds said.

The first stage of consultation will be in the form of a workshop for key stakeholders to be held in early September. The broader community will then be invited to comment on the outcomes of the workshop.