

MEDIA RELEASE

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ACADEMICS QUESTION THE 'FUTURE OF PERTH'

How innovative is the Department of Planning's *Directions 2031 and Beyond*? This is just one question to be addressed at the **Western Australia Institute of Public Administration Australia's** seminar '*The Future of Perth: What sort of city are we planning for?*' on February 23.

Presenters range from academics to planning executives providing insight on urban planning, transport, environment and sustainability initiatives to meet Perth's growing population.

Keynote speaker and Winthrop Professor and Director of the Urban Design Centre of WA, Professor Richard Weller, said Perth planners will have to do a lot more than subdivide blocks to accommodate the projected 3 million people by 2031.

"Perth's long term future is at stake both socially and environmentally. We need to plan, design and construct more innovative forms of urbanism and convert what is a monoculture of suburbia into a more diverse and interesting and resilient city," Professor Weller said.

"The main challenge will be the additional sprawl of the city in a time when cars running on petrol are unlikely to be a long term form of transport."

Convincing Perth residents to downsize their quarter acre blocks may be seen as a "threat to Australian quality of life", according to Charles Johnson, Principal of Planning Context and presenter at the seminar. Mr. Johnson argues that greater housing density in the right locations however, can make a significant contribution to improving the quality of our urban environment.

"More dense housing will enable more people to live closer to work, study and recreation areas and improve housing affordability for both younger and older residents. What matters is the quality of design and the manner in which higher density housing is integrated into existing neighborhoods," Mr. Johnson said.

For more information about 'The Future of Perth: What sort of city are we planning for?' visit www.wa.ipaawa.org.au or phone the Institute on 08 9221 1177.

Institute of Public Administration Australia, Western Australia is an independent, not-for-profit membership body and has been the peak professional body in public administration for over 60 years. The Institute provides topical, informative and innovative thought leadership events and professional development training programs that ensure members are kept ahead of the debate on significant changes and initiatives influencing the public sector both locally and internationally.

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