

## **CLAISE BROOK CATCHMENT GROUP INC.**

### **MEDIA RELEASE: Media Statement Claise Brook Catchment Group**

**Sent to Guardian Express 18 June 2007**

The Town of Vincent has turned its back on \$17,500 to educate residents about water quality issues around Hyde Park when it refused to fund any of the catchment project proposals recently submitted by the Claise Brook Catchment Group. The group was seeking \$2,300 from the Town to secure \$17,500 they already had lined up from other sources for a Stormwater Awareness project. The project was one of seven proposals submitted to the Town of Vincent for environmental improvement and awareness programs to be undertaken in partnership with the town, all of which were refused.

The Claise Brook Catchment Group, which has a ten year record of project work within the Town of Vincent, and has previously brought significant funding into the Town for environmental projects, such as the restoration works at Smiths Lake and Robertson Park, are understandably disappointed. "This marks the end of two years of discussions with the Town of Vincent over which time we have spent much time and resources preparing proposals with the expectation that the Town would pursue at least some of the partnership projects proposed. For the end result to end up with no projects is disappointing for both our group and residents of the Town of Vincent" said the group's Chair, Warren McGrath. "The stormwater awareness project would potentially have been the first of a series of improvement projects at Hyde Park, which is in rapid decline and needs urgent attention" The Claise Brook Catchment Group was looking at future projects at Hyde Park for which it could attract landcare funding, such as that used at Robertson Park and Smiths Lake, which is available to the group as it is a community based organisation however requires support from the Town to prepare detailed project proposals and applications required for such funding. Mr McGrath said "We have historically worked with the Town in obtaining landcare funds but at our own cost." The catchment group receives funding from the City of Perth and the Swan River Trust however has never received any funding from the Town of Vincent to assist with the cost of delivering projects.

"The reasons given for refusing funding seemed to be because we employ a Catchment Coordinator, who also happens to be a Councillor at the Town of Vincent" said Mr McGrath, "however, some of the projects proposed would have been delivered by staff of the North Metropolitan Conservation Group as our Coordinator has existing commitments to projects within the City of Perth and Mounts Bay Drain Catchment'. Details on how the projects would be delivered and be fully accountable were submitted with the group's applications however the group is unsure whether Councillors were provided with this information. "We asked for a deferral of their decision till after we had given Councillors a presentation regarding the projects as the Town of Vincent CEO did not include our proposals with his report" Mr McGrath said. "We were concerned Councillor's were making a decision before being given a full picture of the opportunities that were about to be lost." "Residents in other municipalities are currently reaping the benefits of partnership programs between local government and catchment groups with many projects being established which are improving the amenity and environment of their areas. It is a shame that Town of Vincent residents aren't being given the same opportunity."

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