



CITY OF MELBOURNE

5 May 2024

Essential Services Commission
Engage Victoria

City of Melbourne

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SUBMISSION TO WATER PRICE REVIEW 2024

City of Melbourne relies on water retailers to deliver a consistent and resilient water supply in order to maintain healthy vegetation and high quality open spaces. Climate change and urban renewal will lead to increased demand for water and City of Melbourne is proactive in working with water retailers to investigate alternative water solutions. This submission to the Water Price Review 2024 reflects endorsed positions in City of Melbourne's Council Plan 2021-2025 and Municipal Integrated Water Management Plan 2017.

Greater Western Water's 2024 Price Submission, in particular customer service outcome 3, aligns strongly with City of Melbourne's strategic objectives for integrated water management, greening and caring for Country. This is outlined in Greater Western Water's commitment to work with partners to increase green open spaces for communities' physical and mental wellbeing. The proposal to include a \$12.8 million Stormwater Harvesting Partnership Fund demonstrates a practical approach to improve water security for customers while delivering other community and environmental benefits.

The Essential Services Commission (ESC) has recommended in the Water Price Review to remove the full \$12.8 million for the Stormwater Harvesting Partnership Fund but has welcomed further justification from Greater Western Water to keep this expenditure. This submission seeks to form part of this further justification. City of Melbourne currently sources 23 per cent of its water use from stormwater harvesting and is seeking to meet half of council water use with alternative water by 2030.

The ESC has raised concerns about the level of detail provided about projects to be funded through a partnership model. In making a final price review decision, it is recommended that the ESC considers the robust process undertaken by the Integrated Water Management Forums to prioritise alternative water projects in the Greater Western Water service region. Benefits for recommended stormwater harvesting project been clearly quantified. For City of Melbourne, stormwater harvesting systems at levers Reserve and JJ Holland Reserve have the potential to deliver over 50 Megalitres of alternative water per year. As with all projects, comprehensive business cases and community consultation are undertaken to ensure that the maximum value for money is being delivered.

Ongoing partnerships between water stakeholders are essential to delivering a secure and sustainable water. If City of Melbourne can provide any further detail to justify funding allocation to the proposed Stormwater Harvesting Partnership Fund, please contact Penny Ball, Water Sensitive City Lead on [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'elise', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Elise Wood

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City of Melbourne

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