

# FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS & RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

*(Incorporating Fish Hoek, Clovelly and Sun Valley)*

**P.O. Box 22125, Fish Hoek 7974 – Tel: 021 782 1950**

**Web: [www.fishhoekratepayers.com](http://www.fishhoekratepayers.com)**

## City of Cape Town's Draft Water Strategy

### Become an Active Citizen

Hi All

We applaud the City of Cape Town for going through some motions that resemble public participation. We would prefer to also "Have our Way" as well in the City actually listening to us. However, we believe that we must continue to comment and object where appropriate. This is a numbers game. So, the more people that comment, the better our chances for change.

The City has changed its "Have your say" form of public participation by not accepting emails. Therefore, web to email services like Dear Cape Town will not work at present.

If you have the time, you can read the whole document at:

<http://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/City%20strategies%2c%20plans%20and%20frameworks/Cape%20Town%20Draft%20Water%20Strategy%202019%20Public%20Participation.pdf> Warning: there is a lot of duplication.

Otherwise, you can formulate your response from ours. See below. Either way, the next step is to go to: [https://www.research.net/r/Draft\\_Water\\_Strategy](https://www.research.net/r/Draft_Water_Strategy)

We have placed this site's questions in **bold** below.

Supply your:

**Name and surname**

**Contact telephone number**

**Email address**

**Have you read the executive summary and/or the full strategy document? (select one that applies)**

If you haven't read the full document, you can respond: "Partially" (as we have quoted from the Strategy document, you will have read it partially.)

**Do you support the Draft Water Strategy? (select one that applies)**

Partially with reservations

**Comment on the specific chapters outlined in the Draft Water Strategy;**

**Please comment on each section separately.**

**\* Commitment 1: Safe access to water and sanitation**

Informal settlements are mentioned, but we can find no strategy to limit or contain the demand on sanitation or water. We expect this demand to increase.

**\* Commitment 2: Wise use (of water)**

Currently, we feel that the City is the worst offender by watering gardens with sprinklers.

We support:

“(b) Treatment and reuse of wastewater

(d) managing the water network effectively to reduce losses and non-revenue water.”

Although supplying potable water without charge to a third (1.5 million) of the City’s population living in informal settlements might be understandable, is this sustainable? In all fairness we wish to see debt collections in properties valued less than R400k where more than 87 litres per person per day is used, billed, but not collected. All water users must pay, even if just a nominal amount.

We support the detection of water leaks. Our water pipes are over 100 years old and need to be replaced as they often burst.

**\* Commitment 3: Sufficient, reliable water**

With the Western Cape Province having the lowest unemployment in the country, we are likely to attract more semigrants.

Rain-fed water sources might be the cheapest, but in view of the recently experienced drought, rain-fed water is unreliable now with the possibility of it becoming more unreliable.

Israel re-uses roughly 90% of its wastewater. Qatar has the highest re-use per capita. The City of Cape Town only reuses a pathetic 11%. That’s 396 million litres per day wasted and much higher than the 50 million litres proposed from ground water.

Extracting ground water can cause the collapse of buildings (sink holes) as underground water exerts pressure necessary for foundations to hold. If the City wants to continue with exploiting ground water, then they must add bio-filters to the storm-water system to recharge the aquifer in line with the National Water Resource Strategy (2013). Residences using ground water near the Silvermine River have reported pumping brackish water indicating that the sea water intrusion barrier had been breached. We do not think using ground water is sustainable.

Desalination uses  $\pm 3\text{kWh/kl}$  ie 54 GWH for the 18million kl pa envisaged in phase 1 of the strategy. Does the City expect Eskom to supply this power for free? Thus, desalinated water is very expensive and has its own problems with disposal of the salt generated.

**\* Commitment 4: Shared benefits from regional water sources**

A glaring omission is a strategy to put pressure on Central government to deliver water to Cape Town.

**\* Commitment 5: A water sensitive city**

We agree with the following statements:

“Stormwater can be managed to reduce the threat of flooding, and can also be a resource that can be used, for example, to recharge the aquifer.”

“The ongoing organic and inorganic pollution and the littering of the city’s stormwater and freshwater systems poses a threat to both biodiversity and human health.”

“All forms of water in the city – rain, stormwater, grey and black water, canals and rivers – need to be managed in an integrated way that make best and sustainable use of water, a scarce resource, and reduces the risk and impact of flooding. As part of this transition, the responsibility for stormwater management has already been moved across from the roads departments to Cape Town Water.”

The Roads Department just wanted to get rainwater off the streets. In our valley, this meant channelling the water wastefully directly to the sea or to the Silvermine Estuary. The recent stormwater system in a new section of Tokai forced the developer to use permeable bricking for rain run-off to not stress the stormwater system with too much water. Whenever there is a failure in our valley’s sewage system, the effluent gets dumped on the road and then into the stormwater system. By moving stormwater into the Water Department, we hope they concur that all stormwater in our valley must pass through a bio-filter system before being discharged, which will help to recharge our aquifer.

Rather than desalination and its associated high costs, focus on reuse.

The City should have water-wise gardens only and remove all sprinkler systems.

#### FINANCING CAPITAL COSTS AND SETTING TARIFFS

##### Tariff Structure

Of concern to us is the belief that the “wealthy” can subsidise the ever growing population of indigents. This is unsustainable. All must pay even if just minimal amounts. People appreciate resources more when they have to pay for them.

#### **\* Translating the strategy into action**

This section mentions “Investing in people”, specifically, your employees. To implement this “strategy” will require acquiring scarce skills. Many of the people who had the skills have left South Africa, but the number of City employees has swollen tremendously. The City keeps cutting back on services. Thus, by implication, productivity has dropped. To properly implement this strategy, personnel must be chosen solely for their ability to deliver.

In Commitment 5 it stated “Cape Town water is embarking on a substantial new build program (Commitment 3), in addition to upgrading and expanding existing wastewater treatment works” and “Wastewater treatment works upgrades. The City is in the process of doing major upgrades to several wastewater treatment works, including Zandvliet, Cape Flats and Athlone wastewater treatment works, and is constructing a state-of-the-art regional sludge treatment facility.”

We feel that dumping raw sewage into the sea is water wasteful and not healthy. As only 11% is reused now, an additional 396 million litres per day is available for reuse. Bio-digesters and UV light can help breakdown pathogens. It is our hope that the upgrades and new works will incorporate water reuse and full treatment of sludge.

#### **In which capacity are you commenting? (select all that apply)**

☒ Resident

(FHVRRR responded as a Civic Organisation.)

Thanks

Cheers

Brian Y

Chair: FHVRRRA