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East Freo Farm Inc

Business Plan

**Prepared:** October 2010

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# Business Plan Summary

The Business

**Name:** East Freo Farm Inc

**Structure:** Incorporated, not-for-profit community group

**ABN #:** 21 502 947 312

**Incorporation Registration #:** A 1014981R

**Location:** Locke Park, Fletcher St East Fremantle (proposed)

**Tenure:** Lease of a portion of an ‘A’ Class Reserve managed by Town of East Fremantle.

**Products/services:** Communal community garden and facilities, renting of individual garden plots.

**Website:** www.eastfreofarm.weebly.com

Aim

Establish, carry on and improve a community garden for the East Fremantle community

Objectives

•Produce local organic food within the Town of East Fremantle

•Strengthen the sense of community within the Town of East Fremantle

•Address global environmental issues by applying local sustainable living practices

 Extent of Interest

Research indicates there is strong support from East Fremantle residents to become involved in a community garden project.

 Finances

The funding strategy of East Freo Farm Inc is across a diverse range of funding sources. Projected revenue covers anticipated establishment and ongoing costs.

 Assumptions

This Business Plan has been developed under the assumption that the area of land requested from the Town of East Fremantle in the submission, “ *East Fremantle Community Garden. Proposal to Town of East Fremantle. July 2010*”, is granted to East Freo Farm Inc for use as a community garden. The business plan will need to be amended if this does not occur.

# East Freo Farm Inc

Structure

East Freo Farm Inc is an incorporated community group with the following committee structure;

**Office Bearers**

Chairperson

Vice-Chairperson

Treasurer

Secretary

**Committee**

At least five committee members in addition to the Office Bearers.

Details of the functions of the committee are provided in the East Freo Farm Inc Rules which are available on the website or by request.

Management

East Freo Farm Inc committee will be responsible for all activities, in accordance with the East Freo Farm Inc rules provided in the Supporting Documentation.

All activities will also be conducted in accordance with lease/access arrangements agreed with the Town of East Fremantle.

Insurance

**Public liability insurance:** It is anticipated that the community garden activities will come under the Town of East Fremantle public liability insurance.

**Assets:** Once any significant assets are obtained (eg shed) consideration will be given to insuring assets against such events as *fire, burglary, or damage.*

Risk Management

Risks to the organisation as a whole are listed in the table below. An assessment of individual risks and a detailed Risk Management Plan will be developed for identifying and minimising site specific risks.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk** | Likelihood | **Impact** | **Strategy** |
| Locke Parke site not approved by council | Possible | High | Liaise with ToEF over alternative site locations |
| Redevelopment of the area requires the community garden to move sites. | Possible | High | Liaise with ToEF over including the garden in redevelopment plans.Liaise with ToEF over alternative site locations |
| Unable to secure bore water allocation for reticulation of garden beds | Likely | Medium | Liaise with ToEF and Dept of WaterApply waterwise practicesInstall rainwater tanksSeek funding source for payment of scheme water |

Zoning Considerations

The Locke park is zoned as an “A” Class Reserve for Recreational Purposes.

The Town of East Fremantle are seeking clarification that a community garden falls under the definition of ‘recreational purposes’.

Locke Park also falls within an area being looked at for redevelopment options by the Town of East Fremantle and other stakeholders. East Freo Farm Inc would like the continuation of a community garden to be considered in the development of a masterplan for the area. However, if it is not deemed appropriate for the community garden to remain, then the group would relocate to another site. For this reason a lease that allows the Council to give 6 months notice for the garden to move has been requested. Environment House and garden in Bayswater operates under a similar arrangement. At a more local level, Harvest Restaurant in North Fremantle utilises adjacent land for water tanks and vegetable beds, with the understanding they will remove it all when development of the area proceeds.

Operations

**Garden Design**

Once the site has been secured, a facilitated planning session with East Freo Farm Inc members, will be organised to discuss the site layout and design. It is anticipated that this design will allow for staged development so that projects can be prioritised and undertaken when adequate funding is available. For example, the garden may begin with communal areas and once operating effectively expand to include individual garden plots for renting out.

**Water**

The limiting factor for the design of the garden will be the availability of water.

A conservative figure of 750kL/annum has been requested from the Town of East Fremantle in the first instance. This is a nominal amount that would need to be reviewed after an agreed period of garden operation. Watering of vegetable garden beds has been calculated at a rate of 1000L/m2 per annum (from research into other community garden water use estimates). We would adapt our garden design if less water than this was available and similarly the garden would prosper if a greater allocation was made available.

Bore water licences for East Fremantle are fully allocated. However, the Department of Water has recommended that we apply for a bore licence for the area.  A licence would not be approved (due to the aquifer being fully allocated) but they MAY provide an exemption for us to install a bore to water up to 0.2ha of garden (similar to domestic bore exemptions) - due to the social benefits of the project.  The cost of constructing (and possibly metering) the bore would then need to be factored in to the budget.

Waterwise principles will be applied and used as demonstration projects for all aspects of the community garden. Scheme water will be considered if necessary. Rainwater tanks will be installed to supplement any scheme or bore water used.

**Access**

The community garden site will be open to all but only members will be able to participate in garden activities. Issues of access both physical (e.g.fencing) and timing (e.g. opening hours) will be determined as part of the facilitated planning session and through liaison with the Town of East Fremantle.

**Clubhouse**

A key element of the site will be availability of associated facilities to support the community gathering at the garden. This includes access to toilets, a meeting room and basic kitchen facilities.

Opportunity exists for Council to grant the group access to the adjacent Sumpton Green facilities, thereby allowing the community to share that building and use community facilities efficiently.

Alternatively, the disused clubhouse previously occupied by the Playgroup could be refurbished for use by the community garden. The latter option is likely to involve significant costs associated with upgrading the septic system and improving safety standards. In the case that the upgrade of the clubhouse is not deemed feasible, the group would seek to have it demolished, with re-use of appropriate materials (eg limestone, existing concrete pad) within the community garden.

Other infrastructure needs will be determined at the planning session and as a minimum are likely to include a shed, pergola and fencing.

**Power**

Power consumption for the community garden is anticipated to be fairly minimal.

Whilst power consumption will not be significant, in line with our third objective, we will investigate the installation of renewable energy options in order to use Sumpton Green as a community environmental demonstration site.

We will liaise with relevant research institutions to determine if a partnership arrangement may be applicable with us trialling any emerging renewable energy technology.

The Western Australian Council of Social Services has advised that as an incorporated community group using Sumpton Green , we would be eligible to have a free energy audit conducted before April 2011 and a minor retrofit of $1000-$2000 to improve energy efficiency. In addition, we would be eligible to apply in 2011 for a major retrofit of up to $25,000 for items such as photovoltaic cells to provide solar energy to the facilities.

Electricity would be used in the Sumpton Green building by several other parties, including the child health nurse facilities, East Fremantle Playgroup and when hired out to external parties. In the broader picture therefore, East Freo Farm Inc would be assisting the Town of East Fremantle in achieving its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It is our understanding that an original target of 20% reduction by 2010 was set by Council and, whilst this has not been achieved, the Council will continue to look for ways to reduce the Town of East Fremantle’s carbon footprint.

 Arrangements and Events

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Arrangements/Events**  | **Description** |
| Membership | Individual and Family Memberships providing the opportunity to participate in communal garden activities |
| Individual Plots | The renting of an individual plot to grow fruit and vegetables (not for sale) |
| Training Courses | Regular workshops on topics such as composting open to the general public |
| Meeting Place | Creation of a community ‘hub’ for local people to meet and socialise |
| Community Events | Events such as Film Nights, Busy Bees and Open Days |

 Promotion

|  |
| --- |
| **Ways of spreading the word** |
| Hardcopy Newsletter |
| East Freo Farm Inc Website |
| Links on Other Websites |
| Email Updates |
| Event Posters |
| Flyers |
| Stickers |
| Volunteer Stalls |
| Volunteer Talks |
| Media Releases |
| Letterbox Drop |
| Word of Mouth |
| Targeted Meetings (sponsors, research institutions etc) |

The Extent of Interest

Research

At the Public Meeting held in March a questionnaire survey was conducted to try to find out what people wanted the garden to be and do. It also built up community involvement. A copy of the questionnaire and the associated analysis are available on request. In addition, interim committee members visited metropolitan, regional and interstate community gardens to gather detailed case study information.

Analysis

The following summary on the status of community gardens in Australia is taken from, “Community Garden Opportunities in the City of Subiaco”, *361 Stakeholder Management Services, November 2009*:

“During the past two decades there has been a growing movement in favour of re-establishing local food supplies, in conjunction with introducing more sustainable systems for growing and distributing fresh produce. Our current concept of community gardens are a response to food security, concerns over global warming, the peaking of the global oil supply, water conservation, environmental issues, nutrition and healthy eating. These issues are galvanising growing numbers of people to participate in the expanding community garden movement…For example, the number of gardens in Victoria increased from 75 in 2006, to 105 in 2008…Today, city farms and community gardens range in size and complexity from small, low cost neighbourhood based gardens, to much larger establishments…In Western Australia there are over 15 fully established *(community)* gardens… Another one hundred gardens are currently being actively considered by various community groups around Australia”.

Near to East Fremantle, the success of Fremantle’s FERN community garden, APACE in North Fremantle, St Luke’s Community Garden in Mosman Park and the newly emerging Hilton Harvest demonstrate a strong market for community gardens at a local level. Similarly, the newly established Farmers Markets in South Fremantle and Palmyra show that the community is seeking alternative fresh food sources away from the traditional supermarkets.

The strong turn out at the Public Meeting in March 2010 for a community garden in East Fremantle demonstrates that the broader community is keen on the project. The results of the Visioning Questionnaire clearly showed that the community benefits associated with the project appealed strongly to the respondents.

The Future

Aim

Establish, carry on and improve a community garden for the East Fremantle community

Objectives

•Produce local organic food within the Town of East Fremantle

*and promote ecological practices and a healthier lifestyle by growing fruit and vegetables and developing an ecosystem around this.*

•Strengthen the sense of community within the Town of East Fremantle

*by becoming a hub for local people, groups and families with children to meet in a safe place, relax and develop friendships and links, and creating a space and opportunity for local artists to show their work.*

•Address global environmental issues by applying local sustainable living practices

*by applying local sustainable living practices and providing a site for environmental education, demonstrating sustainable gardening, recycling and living and developing a more attractive environment.*

Evaluation

An Evaluation Plan of how we are performing against the above objectives has been developed and is available on request.

Review

This Business Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

2010/2011 Action Plan

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Steps**  | **Date of expected completion** |
| Send out Expressions of Interest | complete |
| Form Interim Committee | complete |
| Hold Public Meeting | complete |
| Conduct Visioning Questionnaire | complete |
| Develop Evaluation Plan | complete |
| Compile Case Studies on Other Community Gardens | complete |
| Research Grant Opportunities | ongoing |
| Submit Proposal to Town Of East Fremantle | complete |
| Present to East Fremantle Council | complete |
| Establish Website | complete |
| Commence Quarterly Newsletter Production | complete |
| Commence Film Nights | complete |
| Become Incorporated | complete |
| Send Representative to Business Plan Training Course | complete |
| Hold Inaugural AGM | complete |
| Vote in Formal Committee | complete |
| Establish Bank Account | Oct 2010 |
| Apply for GST | Oct 2010 |
| Secure Site Location | Nov 2010 |
| Secure Access to Sumpton Green and/or Clubhouse | Nov 2010 |
| Determine Water Allocation | Dec 2010 |
| Apply for a Department of Water bore licence | Dec 2010 |
| Hold facilitated planning session | Dec 2010 |
| Prepare Garden Design Plan | Jan 2011 |
| Develop ‘Ethical Investment’ Guidelines | Jan 2011 |
| Develop Sponsorship Plan | Jan 2011 |
| Arrange Free WACOSS Energy Audit | Jan 2011 |
| Construct Shed | Feb 2011 |
| Construct Reticulation | Feb 2011 |
| Begin to Establish Community Garden Areas | Feb 2011 |
| Establish Compost Bays | Feb 2011 |
| Establish Worm Farms | Feb 2011 |
| Construct Rainwater Tank  | Apr 2011 |
| Establish Individual Lots | Jun 2011 |
| Commence Running Quarterly Educational Workshops eg composting etc | Jun 2011 |

Finances

Funding Strategy

**Model**

The financial model for a community garden differs from a traditional business model, and even a not-for-profit service provider model, as once the initial basic costs are covered, the garden development simply progresses as adequate funding becomes available. If funds are not available, then development progresses at a slower rate but the garden does not ‘fail’ as a business might or even a community services provider might - that has clients depending on its services.

**Sources**

East Freo Farm Inc intends to be as self-supporting as possible, generating anticipated revenue from memberships, plot fees, donations and fundraising on an annual basis. ‘In kind’ donation of volunteer time and donated goods and services is expected to have several benefits. Firstly it will reduce the need to raise financial dollars. Secondly, it will increase the community engagement and pride in the project. Thirdly, it potentially supports local businesses in raising their profile in the area.

Revenue will be sought from sponsors and through advertising (on-site, Farm Fodder, website). Grants will be applied for at a local, state and federal level for specific projects. A summary of grant opportunities has been developed and is available on request.

In addition, East Freo Farm Inc anticipates an initial establishment contribution from the Town of East Fremantle and potential ongoing annual support.

**Ethical Criteria**

East Freo Farm Inc will use discretion in accepting sponsorship or advertising revenue. The group will establish guidelines to ensure that the values of contributing organisations are in line with our specific aim and objectives and that the involvement of local businesses is encouraged.

Establishment Costs

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Estimated Cost****2010** | **Estimated Cost****2011** | **Estimated Cost****2012** | **Estimated Cost****Beyond 2012** |
| Incorporation | $327.00 |  |  |  |
| Tools | $760.00 |  |  |  |
| Fridge | Donated |  |  |  |
| Furniture | Donated |  |  |  |
| Crockery/Cutlery | $50.00 |  |  |  |
| Whiteboard/Noticeboard | Donated |  |  |  |
| Fencing |  | $6,700.00 |  |  |
| Rainwater Tank |  | $5,400.00 |  |  |
| Shed |  | $2115.00 |  |  |
| Compost Bays |  | $1156.00 |  |  |
| Worm Farms |  | $900.00 |  |  |
| Start up Plants & Seeds |  | $500.00 |  |  |
| Signage |  | $644.00 |  |  |
| Construct Groundwater Bore |  | TBD |  |  |
| Reticulation/Plumbing |  | $2,000.00 | $1,500.00 |  |
| Raised Garden Bed Materials |  | $350.00 | $350.00 | $350.00 |
| Native Bush Regeneration |  |  | $1,500.00 |  |
| Sandpit with Shade |  |  | $350.00 |  |
| Frog Pond |  |  | $250.00 |  |
| Clubhouse Demolition or Refurbishment |  |  | TBD |  |
| Pizza Oven |  |  |  | $1,700.00 |
| Install Alternative Energy (eg solar, wind) |  |  |  | TBD |
| **TOTAL** | **$1,137.00** | **$19,765.00** +bore | **$3,950.00** +clubhouse | **$2,050.00** +energy |

Ongoing Annual Costs

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Estimated Cost** |
| Insurance | Covered in council insurance |
| Water | $600.00 |
| Electricity | $200.00 |
| Manure & Hay | $1,050.00 |
| Mulch | Free (mulchnet or council) |
| Newsletter (4 issues/annum) | $2,100.00 |
| Webpage Hosting | free |
| Stationary & Administrative Costs | $200.00 |
| Incidentals | $500.00 |
| Maintenance | $500.00 |
| **TOTAL** | **$4,650.00** |

Expected revenues

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Potential Source** | **Estimated Amount** |
| **2010/2011 Establishment** |  |
| Town of East Fremantle | $10,000.00 |
| LotteryWest Grant | $15,000.00 |
| DEC Community Grants Scheme | $4,910.00 |
| **TOTAL** | **$19,910.00** |
|  |  |
| **Ongoing Annual Revenue** |  |
| Membership Fees | $750.00 |
| Plot Fees | $1,000.00 |
| Donations | $200.00 |
| Fremantle Ports Sponsorship | $2,100.00 |
| Advertisements | $200.00 |
| Fundraising | $1,000.00 |
| Town of East Fremantle\* | $1,000.00 |
| In Kind Donations (goods & services) | n/a |
| **TOTAL** |  **$6,250.00 (+in kind donations)** |
| \*nominal figure to be negotiated |  |
| **N.B. Additional future grants and sponsorships will be sought for specific projects** |  |
|  |  |