

2016 - 2026

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

Draft May 2016

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

During March 2016, as part of the 2016 Major Strategic Review, the Council and members of the Shire of York community explored a number of themes, using them to understand community priorities for action and investment in the future.

People are very clear about what they want to see happen and also how they want to get there. They have been for some time and are now more than ready to see movement forward to that future - in a way that is open, transparent, inclusive and shows responsible stewardship.



So is this Council. This document signals our determination to move forward, to repair wherever we can the problems of recent years and set out our best judgement of where the community's resources, under the stewardship of the Council, should be invested for the next four to ten years.

We are focused on targeting resources in a way that maintains current levels of service in some areas, allows observable change on a range of fronts, in particular addressing where we can, the hard issues around sound asset management, and making incremental steps in other areas towards the desired future.

We are also, with our new CEO, focused on building an organisational culture which shapes the way the Shire of York Council administration delivers services and interacts with the community. The delivery of Shire services will show an awareness of circumstance and impact of decisions on individuals, families and the community while ensuring there is consistent application of rules and requirements. All people will be treated with respect, no matter the circumstances of their involvement with Council services.

The Council will have to show courage in dealing with some difficult investment decisions in the next few years. Courage is strengthened by trust and accountability. It is our wish to rebuild trust which we believe will support the development of a vibrant, prosperous and inclusive community.

We also hope there is growing trust that in our making sometimes difficult strategic decisions for the near future, the full range of aspirations and desired initiatives have not been forgotten or ignored for the long term. It is our intention to always keep that bigger future in mind and show a pathway forward.

Cr David Wallace
President, Shire of York

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Shire of York's Strategic Community Plan. The Strategic Community Plan is a long-term planning document that sets out the community's vision and aspirations for the future, and the key strategies we will need to focus on to achieve our aspirations. It is part of our fulfilment of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework. All local governments in Western Australia are required to implement IPR which enables robust decision-making.

The Plan will be used to:

- guide Council decision-making and priority setting
- inform decision-making with respect to other partners and agencies, including the State Government, other local governments, WALGA, and the private sector
- provide clarity about what kind of projects (fully rates funded or with external funding) that the Council will directly budget for and those it will not include in budget forecasts but will actively pursue if external funding is available
- provide a clear avenue to pursue funding and grant opportunities by demonstrating how projects align with the aspirations of our Council, and within the strategic direction outlined in this Plan
- inform future partners of our key priorities, and the ways in which we seek to grow and develop
- provide a framework for monitoring progress against the community's vision and aspirations

This plan was adopted on XX June 2016. It will be reviewed by 30 June 2018 and every 2 years thereafter. The two yearly cycles will alternate between a mini strategic review and a major strategic review, as shown in the planning cycle diagram on page 9.

Key Points of the Plan

OVERVIEW

The Strategic Community Plan is focused on five broad matters:

- providing a summary of community aspirations
- identifying the approach to resource allocation over the four year period which advances these aspirations and a broader approach for the full ten year period.
- developing a co-operative Council/ community model for advancing projects and initiatives
- strengthening capacity for effective leadership and governance
- managing timing and scale of expenditure to take into account:
 - impacts on ratepayer affordability
 - the balance of affordability against risk and desired levels of service.
- moving forward in a way that is financially sustainable overall.

COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS: THE FIVE THEMES

- **THE PLACE TO LIVE:** To be a place which is attractive and accessible for the young and elderly and attracts people in the middle age groups to work and settle in the Shire. The York community aspires to a balanced population structure in the long term.
- **A LEADER IN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT:** To be a place which is renowned for its cultural heritage and the quality of its natural environment, and for the care taken by the community of both.
- **DRIVING THE YORK ECONOMY FORWARD:** To have a vibrant, diverse and prosperous local economy which is sustainable in the long term, makes sustainable use of its natural and built heritage and community assets and delivers benefit in the form of local jobs, business opportunities and a positive image for the Shire.
- **BUILT FOR RESILIENCE:** To have secured an infrastructure base (e.g. buildings, roads, footpaths, parks, communications, water and energy ...) which is affordable, is managed at a level of risk accepted by the community, supports a sustainable environment, increases rural and town resilience, and is responsive to community needs.
- **STRONG LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE:** To be a community where there is effective and responsive leadership and governance, a sense of collective purpose and shared direction and a willingness and desire to work together for that future.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION STRATEGY

- Largely maintain levels of service with targeted increases to service levels in limited areas.
- Infrastructure and Facilities.
 - *Improve asset management:* position the Council and the community to preserve the long term value of the community's asset base by establishing robust true maintenance costs and optimising the scale and timing of asset replacement and renewal.
 - *address risk:* target available resources to address risk arising from infrastructure gaps (e.g. drainage), and current deferrals and backlogs in asset maintenance and replacement (e.g. the town hall and other Council buildings).
 - take a clear staged approach e.g.
 - *roads:* renew bus and farm haul routes on rural roads as a first priority, maintain town streets
 - *footpaths:* repair gravel footpaths in short term and build up to .5km of footpaths a year under current budgets. Increase funding over the ten years. Link with a focus on street trees.
 - *stormwater:* address the immediate issue of no stormwater investment plan and improve current maintenance. Begin to fund an upgrade program from 2019/20 by priority catchments.
 - *sport and recreation facilities:* repair failed or failing assets as a priority and prioritise youth based projects to follow.
 - *town hall:* address maintenance and acoustic issues as a first priority. Advance performance capability in longer term (with external funding).
- being 'development ready'
- having the necessary plans and standards in place to manage development pressures
- advance selected community partnership based projects:
- undertake small manageable and targeted on-the-ground projects with the community, in areas of Council activity which might otherwise be deferred because of resource constraints, particularly in the areas of parks and amenity, river restoration, youth and the elderly.
- achieve change via community networks and action
- provide support for community and economic development initiatives by helping to build and maintain community action (such as volunteers) and leverage funding and resources

EXTENDING THE SHIRE RESOURCE BASE

- exploring ways to reduce reliance on rates and grants for revenue. This will involve the review and development of a strategic property management portfolio.

WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY

- The Council recognises that with the Shire's limited population and rates base, and limited revenue sources, a significant number of projects can only be advanced under a partnership approach where community members are supported to advance projects of mutual interest. This requires a greater focus on building relationships with and supporting community groups and networks.

STRENGTHENING CAPACITY

- The capacity of the Shire administration to undertake and deliver projects, work collaboratively with the community and understand and meet strategic issues and challenges is grounded in three considerations: organisational culture, skills development and effective and efficient corporate systems. This Strategic Community Plan focuses on these areas and in particular on building a corporate culture of empathy, respect and courage.

COMMUNITY AFFORDABILITY

- The community has experienced significant rates increase in 2014/15 and 2015/16 with the five years prior to that having rates rises 2-3% above inflation. With this recent impost in mind, the extent and timing of projects and expenditure has been smoothed as much as possible over the period to reduce impacts while making progress on dealing with issues and moving forward on community aspirations. This is a conscious balancing between short and long term risk, community aspiration and affordability.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

- The Shire will continue to face two significant areas of risk over the next ten years: the continued decline to existing assets due to an on-going funding gap and a flooding risk for the town of York arising from an inadequate stormwater/ drainage system.
- The Plan takes the following steps to address these risks:
 - further investment in asset planning over the next two -three years
 - increased funding of infrastructure replacement reserves in the medium to long term (Years 4-10)
 - development of a stormwater drainage investment plan to guide future investment decisions.

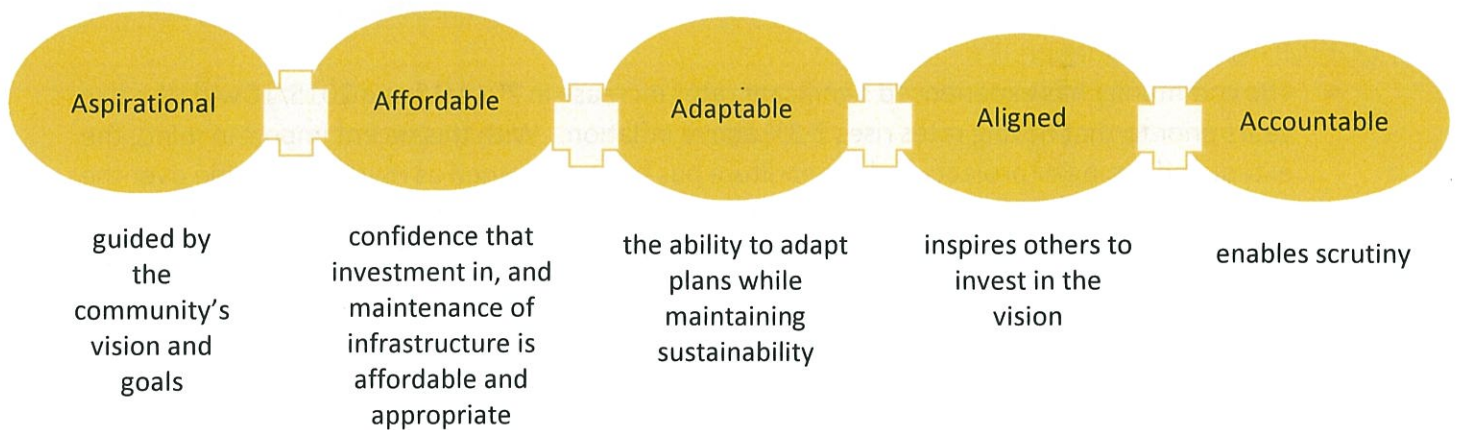
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Two key financial management principles underpin this Plan: the need to fully fund asset replacement in the long term and to achieve a more equitable distribution of costs over time.
- The Council will have to levy rates above inflation over the period if the community is to address the backlog in asset renewal and some progress on economic development and community goals.
- Rates have been smoothed as much as possible, to avoid sudden rates impost and the Council has planned an average rates increase of 5%. This equates to 2-3% per annum above inflation.

Western Australia Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework is shown in the diagram below. The idea behind the framework is to ensure that the Council's decisions take the community's aspirations into account and deliver the best results possible with the available resources.

The Strategic Community Plan sets the scene for the whole framework – it expresses the community's vision and priorities for the future and shows how the Council and community intend to make progress over a ten year period. The '5 As' set out below identify the qualities which a good Strategic Community Plan should exhibit.



The Planning Cycle

The Strategic Community Plan is a ten year plan. However, it is not fixed for ten years – it would be long out of date by then. Rather, it is a "rolling" plan which is reviewed every two years, as shown in the diagram below. The two yearly reviews alternate between a minor review (updating as needed) and a major review (going through all the steps again).

The plan is continuously looking ahead, so each review keeps a ten year horizon. This is to ensure that the best decisions are made in the short to medium term.



The detailed implementation for the first four years is covered in the Corporate Business Plan. The Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plans and Workforce Plan show how the Plan will be managed and resourced.

The Annual Budget relates to that year's "slice" of the Corporate Business Plan, with any necessary adjustments made through the Annual Budget process.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This section lays out York's community profile, other agency strategies and plans that have a bearing on the future of York, and strategic issues facing the community.

Summary Community Profile

Detailed information can be found in Appendix 1.

OVERVIEW

The Shire of York is a Local Government Area in the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia - one of the major wheat producing areas in Australia.



The Shire of York covers an area of 2,131km², and is bounded by the Shires of Northam and Cunderdin to the north and northeast respectively, Quairading to the east, Beverley to the south, and Mundaring and Kalamunda to the west. The climate is Mediterranean with warm to hot, dry summers and mild wet winters.

POPULATION

The Shire, with the key town sites of York (the Shire's seat of local government), Gwambygine, Mount Hardey, Greenhills and Kauring had a total resident population of 3,396 in 2011¹, at which time the male:female ratio was approximately 50:50. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up 3.5% of the total population (ABS, 2011).

As at the 2011 census, the Shire of York had a resident population of 3,396 – 91% of which were living in urban areas (ABS, 2011). This reflected 8.2% growth (280 residents) in the five-year period from 2006 to 2011 (as per Table 1 below), the majority of which occurred within the town of York.

Table 1: Shire of York – ABS Census Population 2006 and 2011, and 2015 Estimated Population

	2006 Census		2011 Census		2015 ABS ^{2*}	
	York	WA	York	WA	York	WA
Total Population	3,116	1,959,088	3,396	2,239,170	3,460	2,590,259
Males	50.9%	49.8%	49.9%	50.3%	-	-
Females	49.1%	50.2%	50.1%	49.7%	-	-

Source: ABS Census 2006 and 2011

*ABS estimated population (see footnote)

The Shire's estimated resident population as at 30 June 2015 is 3,460, reflecting only a modest overall increase of 64 residents (1.9%) in the four-years since the 2011 census (and a decline from the estimate of 3,529 for 2013).³

At the current, confirmed rate of growth (and assuming the lowest, most conservative growth scenario) the Shire's population is forecast to be 4,600 in 2026, as depicted in the Western Australia Tomorrow population forecasts. Much of this potential growth is likely to occur within the York town centre. (Higher forecast scenarios set the 2026 population of the Shire at 5,100, 5,400, 5800 and 6,300 respectively.)⁴ The Avon Arc Sub-regional Economic Strategy 2013 estimated growth by that time to 7,000 but this is at the highest end of estimates given recent trends.

ABS projections indicate that the 2026 age profile for the Shire will largely reflect the current profile with one significant change – the 65 years and over age group will almost double by 2026 (with a forecast increase of 96.2%). By implication, 56% of the Shire's population in 2026 will be 45 years and

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2011 Census

² Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2014-15 (cat. no. 3218.0) (ABS, 30 March 2016)

³ Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2014-15 (cat. no. 3218.0) (ABS, 30 March 2016)

⁴ Western Australia Tomorrow: Population Report No. 7, 2006 to 2026 – Forecast Profile, York (S) Local Government Area

over, and 25% will be 65 years and over. The 0-14 age group is forecast to experience the second largest increase (38.7%).⁵

ECONOMY

Agriculture (cropping and grazing) has historically been the cornerstone of the Shire's economy and remains the dominant industry – with 136,100ha of agricultural land holdings generating approximately \$46.2M in production value per annum.⁶ Cereal crops (particularly wheat) are the most prevalent and valuable to the economy, followed by wool production. While there is potential to diversify the agricultural industry within the Shire, the availability of water is a key challenge. Other local industries include wine and olive production. Tourism also plays an important economic role.

A number of significant Aboriginal and built heritage features throughout the Shire contribute to its unique identity and history. An average of 172,505 tourists visit the Shire per year – with the daytrip market (79% of visitors) dominating local tourism activity and reflecting York's proximity to Perth. In addition to heritage, other key assets to York's tourism market potential comprise entrepreneurship, natural amenity and festivals.⁷

HOME OWNERSHIP AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME

There is a relatively high level of home ownership within the Shire. 43.8% of homes are owned outright, compared to the WA state average of 29.5%. Conversely, the Shire has lower percentages of homeowners with a mortgage (33%) and people renting (19.6%) when compared to WA averages (37.8% and 29.2% respectively) (ABS, 2011).

However, this 'asset rich' advantage can hide real issues in terms of the day-to-day cost of living in relation to disposable household income. The median weekly household income, as at the 2011 Census, was much lower in the Shire (\$908) than the WA average (\$1,415) thus demonstrating that the Shire is a low-income community and reflecting, in part, the age profile of the Shire (ABS, 2011).

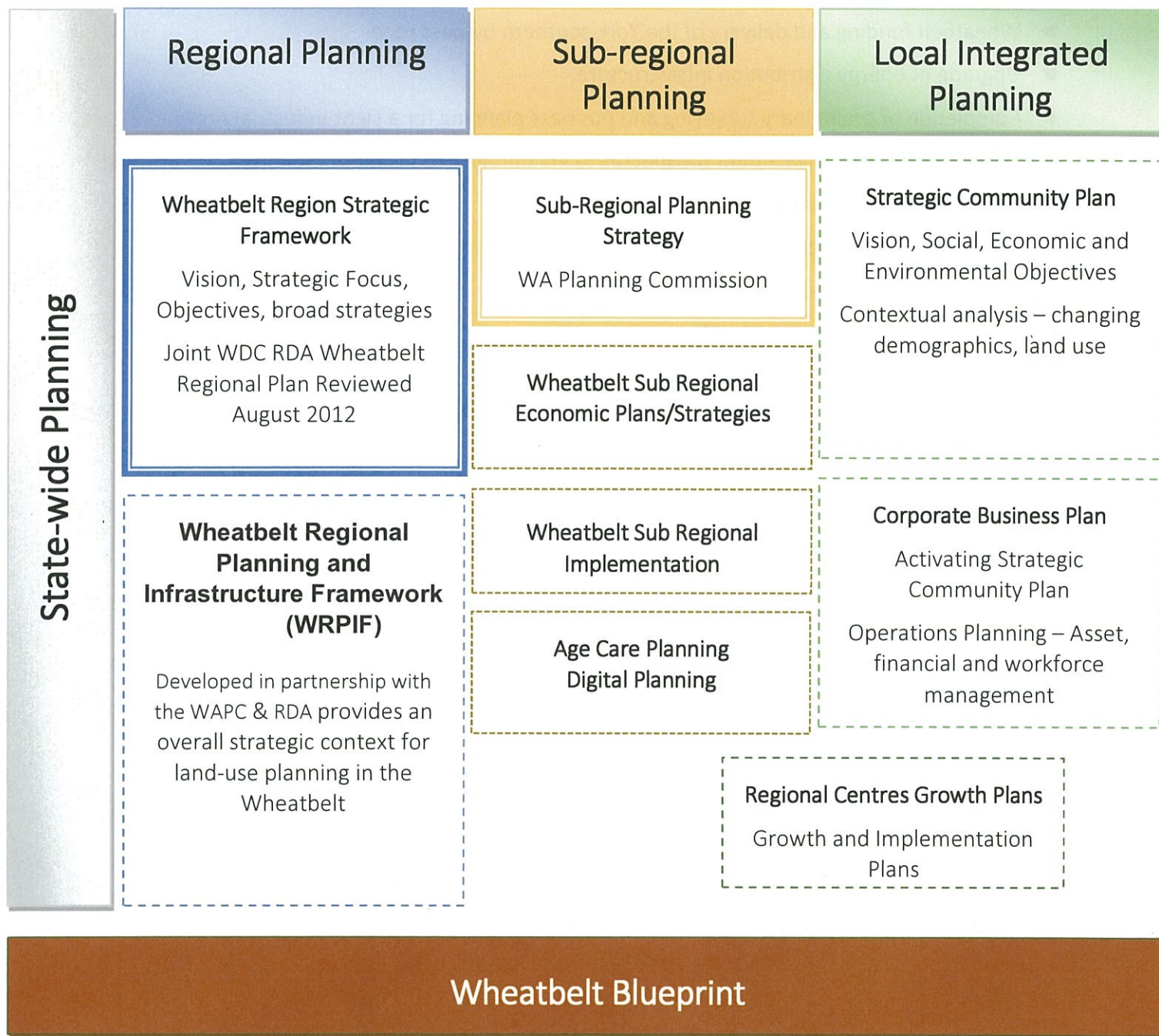
⁵ Shire of York Local Planning Strategy (2015)

⁶ Avon Sub-Regional Economic Strategy (2013)

⁷ York - A Strategy for Tourism Development (2013)

State and Wheatbelt Region Planning Context

The diagram below shows the strategic planning context for the Shire of York.



Adapted from Wheatbelt Development Commission presentation to Wheatbelt Infrastructure Forum Series, 2012

WHEATBELT REGIONAL INVESTMENT BLUEPRINT

This identifies five broad areas for the future development of the Avon Sub-region within which the Shire of York sits. These are: broad-acre agriculture; transport and industry; retail and lifestyle, health and aged care and tourism.

AVON SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC PLAN

The Wheatbelt Development Commission's identified areas for Shire development in the context of the five strategic areas above are:

- Wheatbelt funding and delivery of the York southern by-pass road
- Upgrade of energy distribution infrastructure
- Completion of preliminary surveying and business planning for a Light Industrial Area
- Development of an investment prospectus to encourage expansion of the Aged Care offering
- Attraction of a local child-care operator
- Expansion of sewerage infill in line with population growth
- Preparation of a tourism development strategy
- Redevelopment of the Town Hall

Key Challenges for the Shire of York Community

RIDING THE CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE

The Shire will face climate change impacts in the coming years. Wheat yields may be affected over time although the extent remains to be fully tested. The town of York and road infrastructure will experience increased flooding risks from more intense and frequent storms.

Of the two, the latter has the most immediate impact on the community, particularly for the town of York, which will struggle to resource the necessary drainage works. Impacts on broadacre farming will present the opportunity to explore diversification on more marginal land which sits around the main cropping and pasture areas. There is a local history of exploring local value add food production and processing which has yielded some successes.

A BALANCED POPULATION STRUCTURE

The Shire of York community understands the need for and wants a range of good quality accessible aged care services available for its community. There is a wider regional view of York as a focal point for aged care residential services which attract an older population in search of those services.

York already has a higher than average older population and a lower than average working age population, something which hampers its local economy. While fully recognising the wider trend of an ageing population and the need to adapt to it, the York community is determined to achieve a more balanced population structure in the future.

LEVERAGING THE 'LEAP FORWARD' ON HERITAGE AND TOURISM

The town of York and its surrounding areas and communities have a well-understood and valuable heritage resource. The character of the town is one of its greatest economic development assets and the development of tourism around it and the local environment, a well-understood strategy for the future.

The current development context is an incremental fund-by-fund application for resources to undertake 'product development' projects which cumulatively will contribute to that strategy. It is a long, slow and frustrating process and whatever the community can invest via its local government budget will not on its own drive this strategy forward. The challenge is to leverage significant state and regional investment focused around well-structured projects of finite duration. The risk is that the incremental, small project by small project, approach will continue.

DEALING WITH DECLINE: THE AVON RIVER

The Avon River as it passes through the Shire and particularly through the town of York, has been in decline for many years. Organic matter and silts which flow into it, along with nitrogen and phosphorous, have led to situations of eutrophication and at times public and wildlife health hazards. In places, the river edge vegetation is scant and in poor health.

The community has long wanted the River's restoration, particularly through the town. Many emphasise the link between the River and the development of local tourism, as well as improvement

as an end in itself. The challenge is to marshal community, Shire and external resources to achieve the change most everyone wants.

TAKING HOLD OF DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES: BEING CLEAR ABOUT THE FRAMEWORK

The Shire of York does not experience major population growth but given the small population base and the sensitive heritage character of the town of York, any growth will have notable impacts and requires careful management. From a regulatory perspective, many of the development decisions are ultimately made by external agencies. State land development agencies play a major role in design of proposals and marshalling of development interests and resources.

Recent development decisions have tended to be large development areas to the edge of town. In some cases land has been released and infrastructure built well-ahead of demand, leading to a fragmented and costly development environment. To an extent decisions about the location of industrial land have been dictated in part by land availability rather than optimal sites. The lack of certainty about the timing of the by-pass makes forward planning difficult.

Within the older parts of the town, the absence of deep sewer connections provides some breathing space to ensure new infill development fits and does not overwhelm the town's heritage character.

The community wishes to grow its population and rating base. At the same time, because the level of change is incremental and small-scale, it is easy to miss a tipping point where character is significantly altered. Finding a balance, taking control of the timing and release of land, and making sure the vision for the town is well understood by decisionmakers, is an important challenge for the long term future.

LIMITED REVENUE SOURCES

Like many small rural communities, the community through its local government is dependent almost entirely on rates and external grants to fund its services, infrastructure and projects. This brings issues of affordability to the forefront and significantly constrains progress.

The challenge will be to limit impacts while making progress. Being able to leverage significant comprehensive external grants funding and/ or develop mechanisms for local investment in major change projects, will be a key to making significant progress.

GETTING CONNECTED – STAYING CONNECTED

Avoiding isolation and connecting to the wider world is essential to York's future. Communications is patchy and energy infrastructure has a worrying risk around capacity. Being able to fund roads to a level that is safe and supports the local economy is a challenge for the Shire's resource base. A good passenger transport system is essential to those with limited access to private transport.

The risk of failure in any one of these areas is isolation and lost opportunity.

As important in the short term is the challenge of re-connecting the Shire of York to its neighbours and to regional and state agencies, of playing a positive role in this wider environment and nurturing those relationships in the long term. With this base York can advocate more strongly for its future and deal effectively with the challenges that a limited resource base brings.

SUSTAINING CIVIC LIFE

In an environment of limited resources, the community will be heavily dependent on harnessing the energies of individuals, community organisations and the Council to work together to deliver on the desired future. This 'civic life' is very much the history of York and other rural communities. The simple diagram below shows the relationship.

Like so many communities, York has an abundance of community groups and individuals working on ideas and wanting to focus on the future goals. The challenge is to rebuild the connections and respect between all three parts of the whole, build trust, focus efforts and concentrate on better communication.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN DEVELOPING THE PLAN

The following community engagement processes provided input into the development of this and associated Plans:

- 2015 Survey
- February to June 2015 community visioning exercise
- March 2016
 - two open days
 - four community workshops
 - meetings with community groups and individuals
 - separate consultation with young people
 - Avon Terrace display
- May 2016
 - consultation and feedback on the draft Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget.

Background information on a range of topics was provided for the March 2016 engagement events and subsequently displayed for public information. This information covered the current state of infrastructure and services, asked questions about service level choices and a number of strategic issues. The community workshops focused on four themes: Demographic Futures, Revitalisation: Driving York's Economy Forward, An Active Community and Infrastructure and Linkages.

In addition, people wrote in with ideas and comments and these were included with the other engagement information.

Participation figures were as follows:

Engagement Method	Date	No. of Participants
Community Survey	April 2015	350
2015 Visioning process	January – August 2015	60 (estimated)
Open days x 2	12 and 20 March 2016	22
Community workshops x 4	12 and 20 March 2016	average 15 per workshop
Community groups	Various dates	54
Young people consultation	6 April	40

A report was prepared on the engagement outputs which was presented alongside the draft Integrated Planning and Reporting documents for consideration by Council.

The Council approved a draft Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan and Long Term Financial Plan alongside the 2016/17 Annual Budget for further consultation. These were released on XXX with a consultation period of XXX. XXX further submissions were received and considered prior to final approval of all documents.

THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND ASPIRATIONS

COMMUNITY VISION

The following vision was distilled from the 2015 community survey results and the subsequent 2016 engagement processes.

"A vibrant and inviting agricultural, heritage and tourist town and Shire, and a community that is focused on and works collaboratively to improve and promote the town and the Shire of York as a destination and wonderful place to live"

COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

During March 2016, as part of the 2016 Major Strategic Review, members of the Shire of York community explored issues and four themes, using them to understand community priorities for action and investment in the future. This process was supplemented by information arising from other processes in 2015 and 2016, as outlined on page 18. These themes are summarised below.

Theme 1: The Place to Live

To be a place which is attractive and accessible for the young and elderly, and attracts people in the age groups in between to work and settle in the Shire.

Particular desired outcomes

- 1.1 Children and young people feel valued, safe and supported and have a strong sense of York as 'their place'.
- 1.2 Older citizens feel valued, safe and included, and that their wealth of knowledge and skills is useful to the community's future.
- 1.3 People of working age are settling and staying in the Shire of York because of the lifestyle and opportunities it offers.
- 1.4 There are few barriers to people moving safely, freely and easily around the town of York and rural townships and to other communities.
- 1.5 Health, disability and family support services are accessible and locally provided wherever possible.
- 1.6 There is affordable and appropriate housing choice which allows people to stay in the Shire throughout their lives.
- 1.7 York is known for being a positive, active and involved community.
- 1.8 The Shire has a clean, nuisance free and safe living environment.

Theme 2: A Leader in Cultural Heritage and Environment

To be a place which is renowned for its cultural heritage and the quality of its natural environment, and for the care taken by the community of both.

Particular desired outcomes

- 2.1 Aboriginal culture is respected and showcased under the guidance of the aboriginal community.
- 2.2 Public and privately owned heritage buildings are adequately maintained and protected for the future and the Shire leads the way in innovative promotion of the historic character.
- 2.3 New development is carried out at a scale and in style which retains, is compatible with and does not overshadow, the historic feel and heritage character of the town of York and other settlements.
- 2.4 Performance and the arts are a strong part of the Shire's image.
- 2.5 The Avon River and the river edges are restored to health, have high levels of biodiversity and people are able to use and enjoy both.
- 2.6 The Shire's wildflower and at risk habitats are protected.
- 2.7 The town of York is known for its green and shady streets and parks - the coolest town in WA! - and its range of accessible 'urban' and more natural environments.
- 2.8 Water is conserved and harvested in a sustainable way.
- 2.9 There is a high level of community involvement in heritage and environmental protection and restoration.
- 2.10 The scale, form and timing of development (including the release of development stages and the construction of infrastructure) is to an appropriate standard and minimises and avoids adverse effects and costs on the community and the natural and built environment.

Theme 3: Driving the York Economy Forward

To have a vibrant, diverse and prosperous local economy which is sustainable in the long term, makes sustainable use of its natural and built heritage and community assets, and delivers benefit in the form of local jobs, business opportunities and a positive image for the Shire

Particular desired outcomes

- 3.1 The Shire's economic base provides for a range of employment opportunities, in particular skilled and full-time jobs.
- 3.2 York is known for its business innovation and business growth support networks and systems.
- 3.3 The Shire's business community is resilient in the face of economic volatility and has the skills and access to support to enable long-term viability.
- 3.4 Visitor based economic activity is flexible, self-supporting, resilient, innovative and growing.
- 3.5 Opportunities exist for skills development and associated education linked to York businesses and organisations, including the Shire of York administration.
- 3.6 The town of York's mainstreet looks prosperous and cared for at all times.
- 3.7 There is sufficient, well-located land available for industrial, light industrial, mixed use and transport logistics activity.
- 3.8 Strong business clusters built around the Shire's strengths are successful and growing.

Theme 4: Built for Resilience

To have secured an infrastructure base which is affordable, is managed to a level of risk accepted by the community, supports a sustainable environment, increases rural and town resilience, and is responsive to community needs.

Particular desired outcomes

- 4.1 The value of the Shire's publicly owned infrastructure (reticulation, buildings, community infrastructure) is protected over time.
- 4.2 All of the town of York's drainage (stormwater) catchments are managed via a public network to an agreed community standard.
- 4.3 Households and businesses have access to sustainable water supply systems which minimise where possible impacts on the environment.
- 4.4 The Shire's rural roads are maintained and preserved at a level which provides safe and accessible bus routes and haulage roads and optimises asset life across the network.
- 4.5 Businesses and residents have access to an energy network which has the capacity to support significant economic growth and has been designed and developed to encourage growth and distribution of local renewable energy supply.
- 4.6 The town of York has a network of well-maintained and well-integrated, safe and reliable, roads, footpaths and cycle paths.
- 4.7 Communications infrastructure has complete coverage, is reliable, fast and capable of supporting growing levels of demand, particularly business demand.
- 4.8 The town of York and other Shire communities have adequate public health services which are managed in a sustainable way.

Theme 5: Strong Leadership and Governance

To be a community where there is effective and responsive leadership and governance, a sense of collective purpose and shared direction and a willingness and desire to work together for that future.

Particular desired outcomes

- 5.1 The Council supported by the administration of the Shire of York is effective and informed in its decision-making and exhibits good practice in its governance role.
- 5.2 The Shire has skilled, committed and effective staff working in a supportive environment.
- 5.3 The Shire's public finances are sustainable in the short and long-term.
- 5.4 There is a major focus on systems which improve and maintain accountability and transparency.
- 5.5 There is a strong collective voice on key issues of concern to the community.
- 5.6 There are high levels of community engagement in decision-making.
- 5.7 The Shire and community exhibit a 'can-do' philosophy.
- 5.8 Communication between the Shire and the community is open, smart, and efficient, uses a range of methods including social media, is factually informative and makes use of collaborative community networks.
- 5.9 Community networks are supported and promoted as a way of increasing people's involvement in civic life.

TAKING THE COMMUNITY'S ASPIRATIONS FORWARD

The Shire's Roles

Local governments operate under Statute but also with some discretion. The primary roles the Council has are:

DELIVERY OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES

This includes delivery of facilities such as parks and gardens, roads, footpaths, drainage, waste management, sport and recreation facilities, cultural facilities such as the museum and library, events, community grants, support for community groups. Some of those services are based on infrastructure, for instance parks and playgrounds, roads and buildings. Maintenance and renewal of those infrastructure assets is a vital part of the Shire's service delivery role. Some services are non-asset based, such as provision of events, management of waste and delivery of social services such as childcare, aged care and library services.

REGULATION

Local governments have specific regulatory responsibilities that are vital for community wellbeing. For example, they have a regulatory and enforcement role in public health (e.g. licensing and monitoring food premises), the appropriateness and safety of new buildings, and the use of land. These areas are subject to regulation to ensure a minimum standard is adhered to, as well as to minimise the potential to impose costs or adverse effects on others (e.g. food poisoning, injuries or hazardous activities too close to population). In many cases the rights of those wishing to operate and the rights of those who may be affected or consider themselves to be affected is a delicate balancing act.

FACILITATION

Facilitation In some cases, the Shire enables or facilitates services to be provided by others or in partnership with the Shire rather than directly provide or fund the service. This includes support for community care efforts (for example through grants programmes, volunteer support programmes, etc). This is an important role for the Shire, given that it has limited resources in some areas to provide services and the community as a whole relies on strong well functioning networks.

INFLUENCE AND ADVOCACY

Influencing the decisions of others who do or can contribute to positive community outcomes in the Shire is an important role. Advocacy to regional agencies and the State Government for recognition, funding, or policy support is a good example of this role. The Shire can also have an advocacy role in statutory processes, such as before the Western Australian Planning Commission, on matters of strong interest to the community.

CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Good governance and leadership can play a central role in signalling community confidence in its future, attracting people to the Shire and the town, and positioning the community to leverage external funding and investment.

Council Decision-making criteria

These criteria show what Council takes into account when considering significant issues. They reflect the decision-making approach applied to developing this plan and will continue to be applied as it is implemented.

Is it consistent with our culture?

How well does the option fit with our culture? The valued social and physical character of the Shire, the way of doing things, organisational values...?

How well does it fit our strategic direction?

Does the option help to achieve our vision and strategic priorities?

Who benefits?

Are we ensuring an equitable distribution of benefits in the community?

Can we afford it?

How well does the option fit within our long term financial plan? What do we need to do to manage the costs over the lifecycle of the asset/project/service?

Does it involve a tolerable risk?

What level of risk is associated with the option? How can it be managed? Does the residual risk fit within our risk tolerance level?

Council's Strategic Priorities

The Council's strategic priorities over the next ten years are:

- building a strong economic future
- infrastructure: investing to retain asset value and positioning the community to be able to maintain the value of existing assets in the long term and reduce exposure of assets and associated services to the risk of decline
- being development ready
- maintaining levels of service with some limited levels of service increases where these deliver against strong community aspirations and can be accommodated with minimal overall rates impact
- advancing selected community partnership based projects
- achieving change via strong community networks and action
- significant advocacy on key issues facing the Shire
- developing strong governance and leadership capability

BUILDING A STRONG ECONOMIC FUTURE

The Council is determined to help rebuild the Shire and the town of York to a position of confidence in its economic future. The priorities for the next four years will be:

- supporting the establishment and marketing of a calendar of key events to encourage visitors to the Shire. These events will be focused on achieving economic benefit and will sit alongside and complement more community focused events.
- developing a Shire and town marketing plan. The focus will be on a framework which will allow a business interests to market activities and services under common themes. This will also involve a review of best use of resources set aside by the Council to support marketing and promotion activities.
- supporting the business community to build its networks.
- supporting improvements to the appearance of the Avon Terrace commercial area. At this stage the Council proposes the allocation of grants to assist shop owners and occupiers to paint and improve the appearance of the main street and encouraging community support.
- facilitation of clusters built around local strengths and building business resilience and capability.
- reviewing and developing visitor information services including opening hours, wider information resources (with a particular focus on heritage).
- securing well located industrial land capacity. This will be dependent on and linked to the Local Planning Strategy and Town Planning Scheme review processes and will require review in terms of optimal siting.

- developing a small number of trails to enhance the visitor experience. The Council would prefer if it could to move faster on this but constrained resources makes this more difficult unless significant external funding can be obtained. The Council will actively pursue securing external grants to bring the program forward.

In the longer term (4-10 years), and subject to available funding, the Council will also focus on trails development and heritage infrastructure to support the tourism experience.

LEVELS OF SERVICE

In the context of limited resources and the need to continue to address asset risks, the Council has taken the position that it will focus on maintaining existing levels of service in the short term.

External funding for road reseals and improvement is assumed to return to 2013/14 levels (2014/15 and 2015/16 years saw significant increases in external funding). This will constrain the roads program and the ability of Council to address the known back-log of work. To that end the Council has given priority to maintaining service levels on rural bus-routes, rural haulage routes and major town roads.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the Council will provide for the following increases to level of services for directly delivered Council services over the next ten years. Any increases will be small-scale, incremental, strategically focused and developed in the context of a community which has recently seen significant rates increases.

In the short term, the emphasis will be on advancing projects within current budgets, with the opportunity to increase funding over time as more immediate and pressing risk based issues are addressed. Short-term levels of service increases will be driven by a focus on efficiency reviews, improved project management and cross-service area integration.

Planned Changes to Levels of Service (Council Delivered Services)		
	Years 1-4	Years 5-10 (on review)
The Place to Live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ advancement of youth facilities (skatepark, playground) and children and youth support (facilitation an projects) ■ development of age friendly communities concept ■ on-going access safety improvements where medium to high risks have been identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ extended footpath program (linked to street trees) ■ completion of the skatepark. ■ Installation of two new playgrounds
Leader in Cultural Heritage and the Environment (see also community based projects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Furtehr development of Avon Park and the area between South St and Balladong Bridges. ■ continued small-scale improvements to three key parks (Avon, Peace and Candace Bateman Parks) and early improvement of Centennial Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ increased focus on the Avon River corridor ■ increased focus on Centennial and Candace Bateman Parks ■ increased focus on trail development (also dependent on external grants funding)

Planned Changes to Levels of Service (Council Delivered Services)		
	Years 1-4	Years 5-10 (on review)
Leader in Cultural Heritage and the Environment (see also community based projects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provision for some additional street tree planting (linked to community projects) ■ advancement of one trail (dependent on external grants funding) ■ being 'development ready' – planning framework review to deal with development impacts – development contributions ■ improved maintenance of the cemetery and protection from flooding 	
Driving the York Economy Forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avon Terrace revitalisation ■ economic development projects including facilitation of clusters ■ reviewed and revamped visitor information services and signage ■ industrial land development (linked to planning reviews) ■ improved Shire, town and events marketing 	
Built for Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ institution of a planned maintenance program for the drainage (stormwater) network ■ development of an urban stormwater management plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provision of catchment by catchment flood management works guided by the drainage plan (timing and scale dictated by available funding and risk considerations)
Strong Leadership and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved availability of information on Shire matters (as per formal policies) ■ Improved organisational culture and customer service as per Council's framework ■ greater focus on communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved quality and range of communication methods.

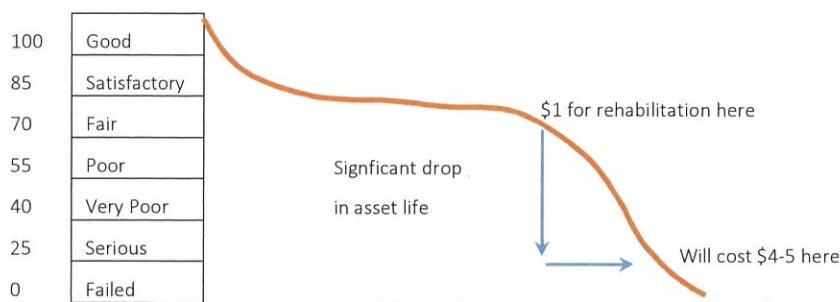
INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES:

The 2012/13 Long Term Financial Plan identified significant funding gaps between the amount required to be set aside to adequately fund replacement of assets and the actual amount planned to be set aside over future years. The then LTFP also identified that these gaps were based on limited information and more work was needed to more accurately pinpoint asset condition and the optimal time to intervene.

Why is this Asset Information Important?

When an asset crosses from “fair” to “poor” condition, it rapidly declines to “very poor” or “serious” condition. It then costs more to maintain a rapidly declining asset than to replace it. In some cases this decline can become a safety issue and levels of service can also decline quickly. Just as importantly, the value of the asset starts to decline, wasting the investment communities have previously made.

Generally assets should be treated prior to or at the stage that they are in “fair” condition, even though there may be no obvious decline in performance at that time.



It is essential for the strategic planning process, to have a good understanding of when replacement expenditure is needed. A community may choose not to fund these replacement (and maintenance) costs but must be explicit about intended consequent declines in asset value and levels of service, and any increase in risks.

The Council is of the view that the community must try and address this funding gap and subsequent risks with the first steps being to:

- further improve asset management information to better understand actual funding needs;
- undertake a further major strategic review in 2017/18 using improved asset information to inform a reviewed investment program
- target existing resources to address risks arising from known infrastructure gaps
- take a staged, risk based, approach to any immediate infrastructure renewals funding issues;
- replace failed assets where these are strategically significant to the community
- retire failed assets where these are not strategically significant to the community
- review and consult on consolidation of the Council owned property asset
- begin to develop infrastructure reserves to reduce budgeting shocks.

The table below identifies three areas of asset investment and upgrade.

	Planned Infrastructure Expenditure	
	Years 1-4	Years 5-10
Asset Management Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ complete a new roads and bridges asset management plan (including asset condition review) ■ complete a full condition review for all Council building assets and establish a full maintenance and renewals program ■ develop a catchment based stormwater/ drainage network design and investment plan ■ complete a new buildings asset management plan – heritage and general buildings ■ complete a new stormwater/ drainage asset management plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ On-going asset plan improvement
Addressing risks arising from infrastructure gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ undertake remedial works to protect the heritage assets ■ (cemetery) erosion from flooding and stormwater run-off ■ Town Hall renewals ■ replace failed assets (tennis courts) ■ replace significant at risk/ failing assets (swimming pool) ■ upgrade the Old Convent to code* ■ reseal and resheet bus and farm haul routes as a first priority and maintain town streets ■ repair gravel footpaths in short term and build up to .5km of footpaths a year under current budgets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ catchment by catchment flood management works guided by the drainage plan (timing and scale dictated by available funding and risk considerations) ■ Continue asset replacement program with update costs arising from improved condition data

	Planned Infrastructure Expenditure	
	Years 1-4	Years 5-10
New assets/ upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Commencement of: ■ skate park ■ Avon River Trail extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Town Hall performance capability ■ Town Hall acoustics (curtains) ■ completion of skatepark ■ Increase footpaths and street trees.

- Note: the Council has taken no position at this stage on the issue of retention or sell-on of the Old Convent School but is of the view that it must be brought up to code (structural) irrespective of which option is to be considered. The Council will consult on options in 2016/17 and will take into account any submissions to date on the building and its future use.

BEING DEVELOPMENT READY

The overall framework for managing development decisions is the Local Planning Strategy and the Town Planning Scheme, both of which are due for review. Some early work on the Local Planning Strategy was undertaken in 2015/16 and the work program will be ramped up in 2016/17.

In addition, over the next four years the Council intends to progress the following:

- developing the necessary background information and relevant contributing policies to drive a more robust development contributions policy. This will help secure a more appropriate level of financial or in-kind provision required from new developments.

This work will include in Years 1-4

- a reviewed and adopted public open space policy
- the stormwater plan development noted earlier

The Council will also pursue the following in Years 5-10, bringing these forward within the four year period if funding and organisation capacity allows.

- better specification of subdivision infrastructure and engineering design standards and in-house oversight of their development, commissioning and hand-over. This will include a more structured approach to the timing of land release and infrastructure completion so that the Council does not find itself taking over new roads ahead of real need and demand.
- finalisation of finer grain concept plans for the CBD and the equestrian precinct to guide development decisions, with the latter focused on securing bridle and walking paths.
- a community facilities review and forward development plan. This will be linked to the buildings asset management plan development.

ADVANCING SELECTED COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP BASED PROJECTS

The Council recognises the strategic importance of working in partnership with community groups to advance some 'on-the-ground' projects. This partnership approach is important for two reasons:

- it brings people in the community together in a way that supports and builds community networks and community involvement and helps build a common ground with the Shire and Council.
- it advances projects which would not otherwise be able to be undertaken within current funding constraints.

Constraints on available resources make it imperative that the Council works with community groups and volunteers in a positive way around a structured program. A great deal can be achieved by providing a small level of funding to support community projects, developing direct working relationships with key staff and groups, and having back-up facilitation support via the Council's community development/ economic development functions.

This kind of approach is separate from any grants funding that might be provided to community groups to advance their own projects, or general facilitation of community initiatives, and is distinguished from both by integration into the Council's services and programming.

The Council has identified the following areas as a key focus for its community partnerships program over the next four to ten years. This list has been developed based on community aspirations and a stated community desire via the consultation process to advance these practical projects. Other initiatives will emerge over time.

- Economic development
 - Avon Terrace Revitalisation
- Environment
 - river restoration projects, in particular along the Avon River Trail, (west and east of the River), and between South St and Balladong St
 - planting the following areas with predominantly native species:
 - selected areas within Peace Park and Avon Park
 - gradual re-vegetation and improvement of Centennial Park
 - working with interested groups and households to plant more street trees on 'suburban' streets and roads on a case by case basis
- Heritage
 - the cemetery and working with the current community group
 - projects focused on upgrading and protecting heritage buildings.
- Community
 - development and delivery of programs and initiatives for children and young people
 - projects which will improve access for young people and the elderly

ACHIEVING CHANGE VIA STRONG COMMUNITY NETWORKS AND ACTION

The community engagement process reconfirmed the strong community interest in having a resource available which can support the strengthening of community networks around areas and projects important to the community and where significant progress is sought. The Council has funded a community/ economic development position which will be focused on the following priorities in the short to medium term:

- working collaboratively with existing groups and organisations, including the Community Resource Centre
- supporting economic development initiatives
- weaving together community groups to work together on a range of projects of mutual interest. Priority will be given to initiatives which support the community's strategic aspirations and the community partnership project priorities identified in this Strategic Community Plan.
- encouraging and supporting volunteers in conjunction with external agencies such as Volunteering WA.

INFLUENCING AND ADVOCATING ON KEY ISSUES FACING THE SHIRE

The Council recognises that it has an important leadership role in advocating for the community on a range of issues. This has three aspects: articulating a position and conveying it through formal submission processes, advocacy and lobbying at the political level, and taking up opportunities to influence outcomes through membership of key regional and issue based structures and processes.

Through the community engagement process, the Council has identified the following areas where it will actively advocate for the community as opportunities arise, or by create pressure for discussions to take place. It will consult with the community to clarify any position to be taken on matters as issues arise.

These identified areas are (in no particular order):

- the SITA landfill proposal and future management
- acces to local health services and improved passenger transport
- safety improvements to the Great Southern Highway
- proposed by-passes around the town of York
- securing improved communications infrastructure - quality, coverage and capacity
- securing long-term reliable energy supply capacity sufficient to enable economic growth
- securing energy network models for the town which enables local network use of locally sourced renewable energy supply
- sustainable water management
- passenger transport services into and out of York.

Other issues will emerge over time and the Council will respond as required.

DEVELOPING STRONG GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY

The Council will continue to make development of governance and leadership capability are significant focus. This will involve the following:

- continued governance training for elected members through the professional development process
- a focus on improved monitoring and reporting on delivery around key projects
- increasing community access to information about Council business and projects
- a focus on community networking
- a focus on improved communication by the Shire using a range of communication methods

Council's Services As They Relate to Community Themes

Service	Theme 1 The Place to Live	Theme 2 A Leader in Heritage and the Environment	Theme 3 Driving the Economy Forward	Theme 4 Built for Resilience	Theme 5 Strong and Effective Governance
Governance support					X
Strategic and corporate planning	X	X	X	X	X
Advocacy and collaboration	X	X	X	X	X
Community engagement and consultation	X	X	X	X	X
Aboriginal relationships		X			X
Asset planning and risk management			X	X	X
Economic development, tourism, marketing	X		X		
Visitor Information services		X	X		
Cultural heritage services		X	X		
Libraries	X	X			X
Community housing	X				
Community leases	X				
Recreation services	X				
Community development	X	X			X
Youth support	X				X
Community funding	X	X	X		
Civic and community events	X				
Disability access and inclusion planning	X		X		
Older persons support	X			X	
Roads and bridges	X		X	X	
Footpaths and trails	X	X	X	X	
Drainage and catchment management		X	X	X	
Parks and open space (passive)	X	X		X	
Parks - active recreation	X		X		
Cemetery	X	X		X	
Environment services		X			
Building and property asset services		X	X	X	
Council heritage buildings		X	X		
Recreation facilities	X		X		
Swimming pool	X		X		
Community halls	X			X	
Strategic land-use planning	X	X	X	X	
Planning administration	X	X	X	X	
Planning (heritage protection)		X	X		

Service	Theme 1 The Place to Live	Theme 2 A Leader in Heritage and the Environment	Theme 3 Driving the Economy Forward	Theme 4 Built for Resilience	Theme 5 Strong and Effective Governance
Building control	X	X		X	
Fire and emergency services	X				
Environmental Health	X				
Ranger services	X		X		
Waste management	X	X			
Septic ponds management	X	X			
Organisation development					X
Asset planning and risk management			X	X	X
Finance services					X
Monitoring and reporting					X
Community access to information	X				X
Human resources					X
External grants funding					X
Administration and customer services					X
Licensing	X				

Financial Implications

10 Year Financial Profile

Graph to come

RATES

Graph (rates yields over recent years)

ASSUMPTIONS

Shire Population	Current	2011	3396
	Projected	2021	4600
		2026	5100
Property base growth	0.5%		
Interest rate (borrowing)	3.5%		
Local Government Cost Index (LGCI)	2.7% (2016/17)	2.7% (2017/18)	2.9% (2018/19) 2.9% (2019/20)
Payroll	1.5% annually over four year		
The wider policy or legislative environment	<p>Royalties for Regions reduction to 2013/14 levels from 2013/17</p> <p>Roads to Recovery reduction to 2013/14 levels from 2016/17</p> <p>State approach to growth management will continue</p> <p>No major change to legislative environment other than in the area of building control.</p>		
Staffing levels	<p>1 new FTE from 2016/17 – asset management data capture, maintenance and renewal costings, asset plans development (reduced external consultants costs apart from technical guidance and review)</p> <p>Note: the currently funded community development officer position will be filled from 2016/17.</p>		
Other	Assumed level of external funding for some key operating and capital projects. These projects will not proceed at budgeted time if funding not granted.		

HOW WILL WE KNOW IF THE PLAN IS SUCCEEDING?

The indicators below will help Council and the community monitor progress towards achieving York's community vision and outcomes. Some of them are in the direct control of the Shire while many are less so. These are colour coded for ease of reference. This Plan is more focused on Community Wellbeing Indicators, whilst the Corporate Business Plan will focus on Service Performance Indicators.

Key: Local Government level of control/ influence:

High	Areas that are in direct control of local government.
Medium	Issues that local government does not control but can influence.
Low	Areas that local government neither controls nor is likely to influence, but are of concern to the community and affect community well-being.
-	Not applicable (under development)

THEMES

	Indicator	Desired Trend/Target
	THEME 1: The Place to Live	
H		
H		
M	A valued place: No. of residents identifying York as the most desirable place for them to live	Increasing
M	Sense of belonging: No. of young people who feel York is a place that values them – survey prior to strategic review	Increasing
M	Sense of belonging: No of older people who feel their contributions to the community are valued	Increasing
M	An active community: No of people volunteering – projects or long-term	Increasing
M	A balanced population: No of people of working age settling in the Shire	Increasing
L	Local social/ health/ education services: Distance travelled to obtain services	Decreasing
-		

	Indicator	Desired Trend/Target
	THEME 2: A Leader in Cultural Heritage and Environment	
H	Trees and shade: No. of street trees and trees in parks	Increasing
H	Revegetation: Area of land with native vegetation	Increasing
H	Access to trails: length of available purpose built trails	Increasing
M	Avon River restoration: presence of sediment in river	Decreasing (after 2020)
M	Quality of heritage resource: resident and visitor perception heritage character is well cared for.	Increasing
M	Water conservation: Volume (kilolitres) water sustainably harvested for potable or non-potable use	Increasing
L	At risk habitats: areas of at risk habitat (including wildflowers) protected	Increasing
-		

	Indicator	Desired Trend/Target
	THEME 3: Driving the York Economy Forward	
H	Heritage Interpretation: Visitor perception of quality of access to heritage information	Increasing
M	Economic benefit: visitor numbers and spend	Increasing
M	Avon Terrace: No.of empty shops and unpainted buildings	Decreasing
M	Local economic confidence: reported confidence in relation to local conditions	Increasing
M	Business networks: no of people participating in local business networks	Increasing
L	Employment: no of local jobs available (FT and PT)	Increasing
L	Business creation and retention: No of businesses located in the Shire.	Increasing
-		
	THEME 4: Built for Resilience	
H	Road performance: no. priority roads with condition issues	Decreasing
H	Town drainage catchments: flooding events as a result of asset capacity/ design issues in 1:10 storm event (or lower)	Decreasing (after 2019/20)
H	Ease of access: metres of sealed footpath in town	Increasing
M	Renewable energy: No of renewable energy producers in Shire	Increasing
L	Communications: no. of cellphone, television and broadband gaps and outages	Decreasing
L	Energy network capacity: MW available to town	Increasing
-		

	Indicator	Desired Trend/Target
	THEME 5: Strong Civic Leadership and Governance	
H	Respected and Listened To: No. of people interacting with Shire of York Council who consider that they have been treated with respect and, whatever the outcome, have been listened to.	Increasing
H	Openness and Transparency: No. of people who consider that Council is open, transparent and accountable	Increasing
H	Council Delivers: No of people who consider that Council delivers on its programmed/ budgeted intentions.	Increasing
H	Advocacy on Key Issues: effectiveness of advocacy	Self-evaluation
M		
L		
-		

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

	Indicator	Desired Trend/Target
	Financial Sustainability	
H	Operating Surplus Ratio The extent to which revenues raised cover operational expense only or are available for capital funding purposes.	10% or greater
H	Current Ratio The liquidity position of a local government that has arisen from the past year's transactions.	1:1 or greater
H	Debt Service Cover Ratio The ratio of cash available for debt servicing to interest, principal and lease payments.	2 or greater
H	Own Source Revenue Coverage Ratio An indicator of a local government's ability to cover its costs through its own revenue efforts.	Between 40% and 60%
	Asset Management	
H	Asset Consumption Ratio The ratio highlights the aged condition of the local government's stock of physical assets.	50% or greater
H	Asset Sustainability Ratio This measures the extent to which assets managed by the local government are being replaced as they reach the end of their useful lives.	90% or greater
H	Asset Renewal Funding Ratio This indicates whether the local government has the financial capacity to fund asset renewal as required, and can continue to provide existing levels of services in future, without: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – additional operating income; – reductions in operating expenses; or – an increase in net financial liabilities above that currently projected. 	Between 75% - 95%.

APPENDIX 1 COMMUNITY PROFILE

THE TOWN OF YORK

The Shire's seat of local government is the town of York, approximately 97km east of Perth. It is situated in the Avon Valley and bisected by the Avon River, which flows from south to north through the town.

Established in 1831, York was the first inland settlement in Western Australia and is considered one of the best examples of a historic town in Australia. The town has 28 heritage listed sites on the state register and is recognised by the National Trust as a Historic Town. The historic nature of York is unique and is a significant competitive advantage, as is its built heritage (primarily Victorian and Federation architecture).

Today, York encompasses approximately 12km² and is a designated district service centre – servicing a large agricultural hinterland and providing district-level education, health and retail services. (Shire residents typically purchase higher-order services from the regional centre of Northam, or Perth.) Approximately 70% of the Shire's residents (2,387) live within the York town centre and it is here that the majority of population growth has occurred in recent years⁸.

Residential and aged care developments (at varying stages of planning, approval and development) initiated in response to population growth and the Shire's ageing population include:

- Daliak Residential Precinct – will support growth of the town centre through the provision of up to 1,000 residential dwellings and a retirement village
- York Estates – a two-stage residential development on the eastern side of the Avon River offering in excess of 120 lots (released in 2007) alongside a further 70 at a future time
- Balladong Farm – comprises a 150 lot residential subdivision and aged care facilities within a historical setting
- Balladong Country Estate – comprises 45 independent living units and a 26-bed aged care facility (completed in 2012).⁹

The other settlements and townsites of Gwambygine, Mt Hardey, Greenhills and Kauring support the surrounding agricultural hinterland to varying degrees, providing services such as volunteer fire and emergency services, postal pick-ups, taverns and community halls.

GWAMBYGINE

Gwambygine is located 13km south of York, alongside the Great Southern Highway and the banks of the Avon River. The name of the town is Aboriginal in origin, although the meaning is not known. The townsite was gazetted in 1902 and a railway siding established. The Gwambygine Homestead (the oldest homestead in Western Australia and a restoration 'focus' for the the National Trust of Australia) is located close to the town.

⁸ Shire of York Local Planning Strategy (2015)

⁹ Shire of York Local Planning Strategy (2015)

A 343ha site recently re-zoned for rural residential purposes (Gwambygine/Mount Matilda area) will provide 154 rural residential allotments between 1 and 4ha in size. This will facilitate establishment of the Gwambygine Estate 5km south of York and further diversify property offerings within the Shire.

MOUNT HARDEY

Mount Hardey is located 10km east of York on the York-Quairading Road and railway. Stage 1 of the recently-completed Mount Hardey Rural Residential Development (and associated re-zoning) has resulted in the creation of 30 rural residential allotments. Planning is underway for the re-zoning of additional land that would ultimately release a further 100 rural residential lots in the area.

GREENHILLS

Greenhills is located adjacent to the York-Quairading Railway and is situated approximately 2.5 km from York-Quairading Road. Subdivision and development of the Greenhills townsite has occurred in two locations. The former core townsite area has a community hall, hotel and scattered houses. The recent re-zoning and subdivision of land approximately 700m to the southwest (zoned 'Rural Townsite') has opened up approximately 50 new lots of various sizes with a density coding of R2.5.

KAURING

Kauring is located approximately 26km from York on the York-Quairading Road. The York-Quairading Railway also runs through the town. More than 25 residential allotments have been created within Kauring in recent years – ranging in size from 1.5 to 5ha.

Population and Age Profile

The Shire of York's age profile is much older than the corresponding Western Australian (WA) averages. This is represented in Table 1 with 37.3% of the population aged over 55 years, compared to 23.7% for WA. Correspondingly, the Shire also has a much higher median age (47 years) than that of WA, which is some 11 years younger. A more recent estimate sets the median age of the Shire's population at 47.6 years as at 30 June 2013¹⁰.

Table 1: Shire of York – ABS Census Population Age Profile 2006 and 2011

Age	2006 Census		2011 Census	
	York	WA	York	WA
0-4 years	5.7%	6.4%	5.1%	6.8%
5-14 years	13.7%	13.9%	13%	12.9%
15-24 years	8%	14.1%	8.8%	13.7%
25-34 years	38.1%	42.8%	8.0%	14.5%
35-54 years			27.8%	28.4%
55-64 years	17.4%	10.9%	17.9%	11.4%
65 years and over	17.1%	12%	19.4%	12.3%
Median Age	45 years	36 years	47 years	36 years

Source: ABS Census 2006 and 2011

¹⁰ ABS Region Summary – York (S) (LGA)

Further, specific differences include:

- Smaller proportion of children aged under 4 (5.1% for the Shire) compared to the WA average of 6.8%
- Significant gaps in the 15-24 and 25-34 year age groups (8.8% and 8.0% of the Shire's population respectively) compared to the WA averages of 13.7% and 14.5% – precipitated by the departure of residents in search of tertiary education and employment opportunities in larger centres (particularly Perth) and, until recently, the labour force 'pull' from the resource sector.

This highlights two issues: a loss of people aged 15-34 years from the Shire and an ageing population, which accords with trends within the wider wheatbelt.

Employment by Industry Sector

At the 2011 Census, the Shire had a total labour force of 1,536 and the labour force participation rate was 55.3%.¹¹

The unemployment rate for the Shire was 4.9% in 2011¹² and is noted to have declined steadily in the 10-year period from 2001 (when it was 7.2%¹³) to 2011. The Shire's 2011 unemployment rate, while slightly higher than the average annual unemployment rate of 3.6%¹⁴ for the Avon Region, corresponded closely to the state-wide average of 4.7% (ABS, 2011).

The top three industry sectors for employment in 2011 were Agriculture, forestry and fishing (17.7%), Retail trade (11.1%), and Health care and social assistance (10.5%), as shown in Table 2 below. Together, these three industries employed 39.4% of the total number employed (1,463). In comparison, WA employed 2.4% of workers in Agriculture, forestry and fishing, 10.1% in Retail trade, and 10.4% in Health care and social assistance. Less than 5% were employed in Professional, scientific & technical services, Mining, and the Transport, postal & warehousing industry within the Shire.

When compared to the 2006 census, Agriculture experienced an employment decline (from 20.1% in 2006 to 17.7% in 2011) (ABS, 2011). The two largest areas of employment growth between 2006 and 2011 were Mining and Health care and social assistance (ABS, 2011). This is reflective of an increase in mining support services and the increased provision of health services to cater for an ageing population (with the latter expected to increase further in future).

¹¹ ABS Region Summary – York (S) (LGA)

¹² ABS Region Summary – York (S) (LGA)

¹³ ABS Census 2011 (Table T28)

¹⁴ Avon Sub-Regional Economic Strategy (2013)

Table 2: Shire of York – ABS Census Top Ten Industry Categories by Employment Share 2011

Industry of Employment (One Digit ANZSIC Category)	2011 census % of total employed
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	17.7%
Retail trade	11.1%
Health care and social assistance	10.5%
Construction	7.1%
Education and training	7.5%
Accommodation and food services	6.4%
Public administration and safety	5.6%
Professional, scientific & technical services	4.7%
Mining	4.6%
Transport, postal & warehousing	4.6%

Source: ABS Region Summary – York (S) (LGA) (ABS Census, 2011)

Employment by Occupation (Wage and Salary Earners)

The most common occupations for wage and salary earners within the Shire as at the year ended 30 June 2011 included Professionals (15%), Labourers (14%), Clerical and administrative workers (13%), and Technicians and trade workers (12%) as per Table 3 below. The number of wage and salary earners working in these four occupations totalled 688 (53.5%).

In comparison, 19.3% of wage and salary earners within WA were working as Professionals, 10.8% as Labourers, 14.7% as Clerical and administrative workers, and 13.4% as Technicians and trade workers.¹⁵

Table 3: Shire of York – ABS Census Wage and Salary Earners by Occupation

Occupation	2011 census % of total employed
Managers	9%
Technicians and trades workers	12%
Professionals	15%
Labourers	14%
Clerical and administrative workers	13%
Machinery operators and drivers	11%
Community and personal service workers	11%
Sales workers	9%
Not stated	7%

Source: ABS Region Summary – York (S) (LGA) (ABS Census, 2011)

¹⁵ ABS Region Summary – Western Australia (S/T)

Trends in Economic Performance

Agriculture has been, and remains, an important aspect of the Shire's economy, with 136,100ha of agricultural land holdings generating approximately \$46.2M in production value per annum¹⁶. The Shire is one of the better performers in the Avon Arc Sub-Region (within the wider Wheatbelt) when it comes to the total gross value of agricultural production versus the area of agricultural land holdings¹⁷.

Wheat production, along with animal husbandry, is likely to continue to underpin agricultural activity in the Shire, in addition to associated storage and processing activities. The ability to further enhance the Shire's competitive advantage, and to ensure agricultural production remains sustainable, is dependent on investment in research and development (i.e. investigation of crop mix diversification and continued trials of alternative, more tolerant crop species), improved farm management practices and better integrated distribution and export networks¹⁸.

It is expected that agriculture will continue to represent the highest proportion of the labour force, which is encouraged by the Shire, particularly through facilitating the protection of primary agricultural land. York's primary production role is likely to be sustained due to the amount of land available for agriculture and local support infrastructure.¹⁹ This said, four additional economic sectors of potential competitive advantage to the Shire (where socio-demographic, investment and/or infrastructure-based drivers underpin current and future demand) include: transport, logistics and mining-support industry; health and aged care; retail and lifestyle; and tourism. These areas of opportunity for the Shire are discussed further in the Avon Arc Sub-Regional Economic Strategy (2013) and the Shire of York Local Planning Strategy (2015).

¹⁶ Avon Sub-Regional Economic Strategy (2013)

¹⁷ Shire of York Local Planning Strategy (2015)

¹⁸ Shire of York Local Planning Strategy (2015)

¹⁹ Shire of York Local Planning Strategy (2015)

