



Shire of Northam
Heritage, Commerce and Lifestyle

Strategic Community Plan 2017—2019



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Key Points of the Plan

Theme	Key Indicator/s	Outcomes
Economic growth	<p>Grow labour force as measured by DEEWIR by 10% over 5 years.</p> <p>Increase Gross Regional Product by 10% over 5 years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shire of Northam is an attractive investment destination for a variety of economic sectors. Local businesses are valued and supported by investors and residents within the Shire of Northam. Northam central business area is a strong and vibrant centre with a variety of cultural/art, retail and hospitality choices on offer every day of the week A robust tourism industry which contributes to the economic development of the Shire of Northam and optimises Northam's role as a hub for tourists to the region. The Shire of Northam is recognised for its education services and research and development excellence.
Community Wellbeing	<p>5% population growth per annum.</p> <p>Socio Economic Index For Areas (SEIFA) rating increases and improves by 2022.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People in the Shire of Northam feel that their community is caring and inclusive. There are a variety of recreation and leisure activities available for all ages, across the Shire of Northam. A needs-driven public transport system is available for residents of the Shire of Northam. Aged residents are able to remain in or near to their local community in the Shire of Northam at all stages of care. Northam continues to be a regional health services centre providing specialist, general and ancillary health services.
Safety and Security	<p>A continuous downward trend in crime and anti-social behaviour, and concern about these issues, as evidenced by crime statistics and Shire community surveys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shire of Northam residents are able to pursue the fullest life possible without fear of or hindrance from crime and disorder.
Environment and Heritage	<p>Determine a baseline carbon footprint for Council and identify strategies to reduce carbon emissions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shire of Northam is visually pleasing and easy to find your way around. The Shire of Northam honours, and is recognised for, its unique heritage and cultural identity.

Theme	Key Indicator/s	Outcomes
	<p>Avon River water quality remains at same or improved level by 2022.</p> <p>No decrease in the number of high and medium value heritage assets on the municipal heritage inventory.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents and organisations within the Shire of Northam are supported to reduce their environmental impact. Rivers and waterways in the Shire of Northam are greatly valued and maintained to a high natural standard.
Infrastructure and Service Delivery	<p>Asset sustainability and consumption ratios are maintained at no less than Department of Local Government benchmark levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shire of Northam sensitively facilitates urban renewal and improved urban realm. Environmental risks are proactively managed to minimise impact on residents. To have safe, well-maintained community infrastructure and services to a standard expected of a Regional Centre.
Governance and Leadership	<p>Community Perceptions Survey measures increased satisfaction that the Council is leading the Shire of Northam in the right direction.</p> <p>Nil non-compliance with Local Government Act requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shire of Northam is recognised as a desirable place to live and residents are proud to live here. Residents and other stakeholders are actively listened to and their input into decision-making processes is valued. The Shire of Northam Council is a sustainable, responsive, innovative and transparent organisation. The Elected Members of the Shire of Northam provide accountable, strong and effective community leadership.

Message from the Shire President

It is my privilege to introduce the Shire of Northam Strategic Community Plan, which has been strongly influenced by our community and developed after extensive public consultation.

The Strategic Community Plan reflects the community's needs and aspirations, gathered through an extensive consultation process, and will be the framework for determining the Shire of Northam's activities and services over the next ten years. The Strategic Community Plan will set the Shire of Northam on a journey to transform it from a typical rural local government area with a small service centre, to one which offers its residents a wider range of quality services, akin to a regional city.

The Shire of Northam is in a fortunate position of having in excess of \$200,000,000 planned invested into our community during the 2017 – 2019 years. This investment is a strong mix of private sector commitment, federal government supported projects, state government initiatives and of course local government projects. It is a period of growth which is unprecedented for our community and growth which we will endeavour to build on to ensure our Shire reaches its aspirational goals and objectives.

The Strategic Community Plan is based on the key themes that emerged during its development, and has taken into consideration all feedback received from the community. The Plan considers the undertakings required to ensure optimum social, economic and environmental development under an effective governance platform. We will continue to work with the community on the ongoing development and implementation of plans and strategies.

I look forward to the general community, the public and private sectors, as well as state and federal government, working collaboratively with us on this very exciting journey into a bright future for the Shire of Northam and the wider region.

Steven Pollard
President



About the Shire of Northam

Prior to settlement and Northam's gazettal as a town in 1836, people in the area now known as the Shire of Northam were part of the Noongar nation and the Avon River has great cultural significance for the Ballardong people. The Shire of Northam Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and is currently working with elders to develop an Aboriginal and Environmental Interpretive Centre on the bank of the Avon River to celebrate the region's rich Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Northam has one of the highest concentrations of heritage places of any town in regional WA, showcasing and highlighting our rich European heritage. It's collection of heritage places reflects the important role that the town played from the earliest days of the colony.

Northam was one of the first towns to be established following the founding of the Swan River Colony in 1829. In the 1860s, the town started to grow due to the establishment of a flour mill, and by the 1890s, Northam has become a vital part of the Western Australian map as the 'Gateway to the Goldfields' when the Perth to Eastern Goldfields railway was routed through Northam. Northam continued to prosper during the twentieth century, as epitomised in the stunning 1970s Brutalist style Town Council Offices and Library. (<http://www.stateheritage.wa.gov.au/conservation-and-development/conservation-principles/photo-galleries/northam-heritage>)

Northam is located in one of Australia's 15 biodiversity hotspots, known as the Central and Eastern Avon Wheatbelt. The dominant vegetation of this area includes woodlands of Wandoo, York Gum, Salmon Gum, Casuarina and some areas of proteaceous scrub heaths. The woodlands contain many of Western Australia's threatened plants and birds. The area is particularly rich in endemic plants - Grevilleas, Hakeas, Eucalypts, Acacias, Eriostemons, and the Asteracea family - and invertebrates, particularly ground-dwelling spiders. (<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/conservation/hotspots/national-biodiversity-hotspots#hotspot10>)

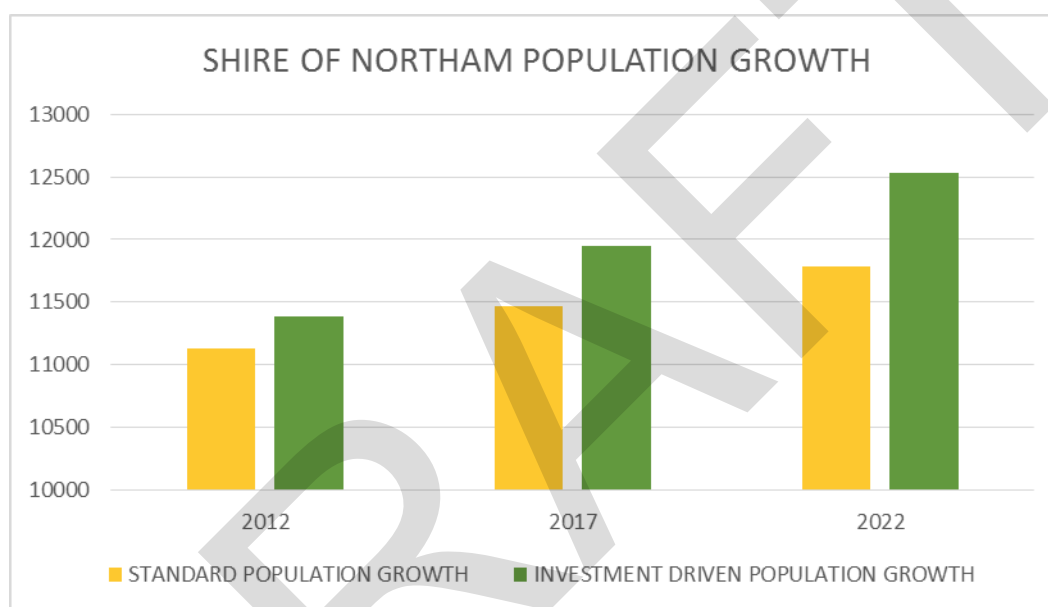
The Shire of Northam is located within the picturesque Avon Valley and is the key administration, business, industry and service centre for the broader Avon Region. Comprising around 1,400 square kilometres, the western boundary lies 60 kilometres east of Perth and the townsite of Northam is a further 35 kilometres east. With more than 11,500 residents¹ the Northam Shire contains 42% of the Avon Region population. In addition to the town of Northam, key localities include Bakers Hill, Clackline, Grass Valley, Spencers Brook and Wundowie.

The Shire of Northam is part of the significant Avon Valley agricultural region of more than 2.6 million hectares. The region produces around one billion dollars of exports with agricultural produce representing the largest export product. The high value of agricultural produce results from the intensive cropping throughout the area.

¹ ABS, Census 2011; Western Australia Tomorrow Population Report No 10 estimate is 12,320 in 2016.

The Shire of Northam is the most populous Shire in the Wheatbelt. Growing at around 5% per annum it is expected that Shire of Northam will reach the projected population² of 20,000 people by 2031 and will be the service hub for 50,000 people in the Avon Region. It has a culturally diverse population with many of the migrants and refugees offered support following World War II deciding to stay and build new lives in the area.

Compared to many other areas in WA a greater proportion of the population is over 65 or under 15, reflecting a trend for young people to leave for education and employment opportunities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represent almost 6% of the population³ and around half are aged under 20.



² Northam Regional Centre Growth Plan

³ ABS, Census 2011

Future trends

Steady increases in the number of people in the Shire of Northam and surrounds will drive the expansion of services – particularly health and education, aged care services and professional services such as legal and financial services. In addition to the expansion of these services other changes are generating new business opportunities. For example:

- Technological change and the globally connected knowledge economy;
- The focus on renewable energy sources and innovation with solar power;
- Improved transport options and investment in road and rail infrastructure;
- High cost of housing in metropolitan Perth and the attraction of a 'tree change';
- Changing food markets with an emphasis on Australia's clean food reputation and rising affluence of Asian markets;
- Education industry expansion and specialist training services with the potential to attract overseas students;
- Mining of micro minerals and new processing technology; and
- Cultural & environmental tourism.

The Shire of Northam is going through a period of unprecedented growth. Investment from the private and government sectors is consolidating Northam townsite as the Regional Centre for the Avon. With existing transport linkages to Perth and availability of industrial, commercial and residential land, it is likely the investment trend will continue.

Together these changes are creating a climate of opportunity. They also impact on the Shire of Northam Council operations, in particular: planning for adequate and affordable housing; expansion of local government services and essential infrastructure; and, its capacity to support growth in the business community. Encouraging emerging industry and businesses to develop in the area will continue to expand and diversify the economic base.

Major projects underway in the Shire of Northam (approved and under construction mid-2017):

- Northam Aboriginal and Environmental Interpretive Centre (Shire of Northam)
- Hospital redevelopment (WA Department of Health)
- Sub-station and training rooms (St John Ambulance)
- Avon Bridge refurbishment (Main Roads WA)
- New shopping centre (Windsor Knight)
- Coffee shop, accommodation, wine bar, tourism (DOME Café)
- Northam Boulevard redevelopment (Perdaman Property Group)
- New local Station Facilities (WA Police)
- Expansion of regional facilities (Department of Agriculture and Food WA)
- Stage 2 rural residential development (Mauravillo Estate)
- Over 45s Lifestyle Village (H&H Developments)
- Main Roads WA Regional Office development

The community's expectations in the Shire of Northam also need to be managed in the context of continuing economic development and population growth. The Shire Council will need to play a role in managing key risks including climate change readiness, anti-social behaviour, community cohesion and adequate internet connectivity.

Vision for the future

The Shire of Northam is a vibrant growing community that is safe, caring and inclusive. We are recognised as a community that values our heritage, preserves our environment and promotes our commerce.

In order to achieve our Vision the Shire of Northam has established an organisational Mission commitment, which is;

To deliver responsive, sustainable services in a manner that preserves and enhances our environment and lifestyle whilst respecting our heritage and facilitating economic growth.

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Strategic Themes

What the community said

ECONOMIC GROWTH: Diversifying and growing the economy for prosperity and employment

We need alternative business investments, investments that don't solely rely on farming.

Improve the public support of local businesses and help ensure their success.

We need many more activities that attract visitors to the region on a consistent basis including food, wine and produce opportunities and establishing a café culture.

Encouraging businesses, particularly in the main Central Business District, to be open on weekends to support tourism.

Improving educational outcomes would help grow opportunities in the Wheatbelt to stay and work and grow the region. Northam could become a centre of excellence for education.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING: A cohesive community with access to quality services

We want Northam to be a safe, caring and inclusive community; it has lost its caring country feel.

I think there could be more variety of social sports offered at the Recreation Centre and that access to these sports needs to be made more affordable for families.

We need a more comprehensive and extensive public transport system to and from Perth and other nearby towns, and cheaper travel.

The population is ageing and people would like to stay in Northam but there is a lack of high care beds for the aged in Northam.

Public health services must be prioritized.

SAFETY & SECURITY: A community without fear of crime or antisocial behaviour

For a long time this town has had a bad reputation due to anti-social behaviour being tolerated including drug, alcohol abuse and crime. Until this is dealt with no one wants to be here or bring his or her families here.

Community safety, especially at night, is not great.

ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE: Preserving the natural and historic beauty of the Shire of Northam

The entrances to Northam need completely cleaning up with verges mowed, weeded and gardened to make them appealing to bring up the whole look of the Shire.

Stop the demolition of our old heritage buildings. It is very important that we keep our old buildings for future generations and future tourism opportunities.

Access state and federal funding grants to further deploy technology that fits with broader sustainability goals and is in keeping with the Wheatbelt region.

We should be greening the Shire rather than cutting down trees and spraying everything that is green.

We need to make the most of our river. A lot of country towns in WA don't have something like we have. There needs to be more family friendly areas set up, more picnic areas further down. It needs to be more attractive and more accessible.

INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICE DELIVERY: Liveable, connected communities with well-maintained assets

Nothing can be achieved without growth of new housing for families.

We should convert Cunderdin airport into a FIFO airport, as this will attract miners and their families to move to Northam.

Improve the roads for rural blocks and lifestyle blocks by sealing unsealed roads.

GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP: Leading with accountability, connection and openness

Change the "perception" of Northam as a place to live. Northam has all the basics but is still perceived as a welfare town.

The Shire needs to adhere to residents complaints and listen, not ignore.

There are a lot of good community spirited people who live in this Shire. However the Shire administration does not seem to interact well with the residents and needs to work on this.

Shire Officers need to have a greater understanding of the Shire rules and regulations as we seem to get a different answer each time you talk to one of them.

THEME AREA 1: ECONOMIC GROWTH

Diversifying and growing the economy for prosperity and employment

Key indicators of success:

- Grow labour force as measured by DEEWR by 10% over 5 years; and
- Increase Gross Regional Product by 10% over 5 years.

OUTCOME 1.1

The Shire of Northam is an attractive investment destination for a variety of economic sectors.

Objectives:

- Ensure the Shire of Northam is a welcoming and easy place for quality investment to occur;
- Communicate clearly and widely the benefits of doing business in the Shire of Northam;
- Pursue a range of developments in sectors including retirement living, renewable energy, agribusiness, innovation, logistics and aviation;
- Embrace technology as an enabler for development, and lobby for high speed internet connectivity; and
- Promote the business case for Government Offices servicing the Wheatbelt to choose to locate in the Shire of Northam.

OUTCOME 1.2

Local businesses are valued and supported by investors and residents within the Shire of Northam.

Objectives:

- Encourage local consumers to 'buy local' and support local businesses; and
- Support existing and future local businesses in maximising subcontracting opportunities within the Shire of Northam.

OUTCOME 1.3

Northam central business area is a strong and vibrant centre with a variety of cultural/art, retail and hospitality choices on offer every day of the week.

Objectives:

- Improve and expand the retail and hospitality offerings in Northam; and
- An activated and attractive town centre with low retail vacancy rates.

THEME AREA 1: ECONOMIC GROWTH (Cont'd)

OUTCOME 1.4

A robust tourism industry which contributes to the economic development of the Shire of Northam and optimises Northam's role as a hub for tourists to the region.

Objectives:

- Develop tourism opportunities based around the Shire's unique cultural, heritage and environmental assets;
- Position Northam as an ideal destination to attract regional, state and second-tier national events;
- Effectively market the tourism options available within the Shire of Northam including annual flagship events; and
- Collaborate with surrounding areas to create Avon Valley tourism growth.

OUTCOME 1.5

The Shire of Northam is recognised for its education services and research and development excellence.

Objectives:

- Maintain an innovative and broad-ranging education system that is recognised and valued by the community and the Region;
- Offer via education providers a wide range of tertiary programs, either directly or through brokerage arrangements;
- Be recognised for excellence in agricultural research and development; and
- Facilitate growth in knowledge industries enabled by broadband.

THEME 2: COMMUNITY WELLBEING

A cohesive community with access to quality services

Key indicators of success:

- 5% population growth per annum; and
- Socio Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) rating increases and improves by 2022.

OUTCOME 2.1

People in the Shire of Northam feel that their community is caring and inclusive.

Objectives:

- Residents of all ages are well informed about activities and services in the Shire;
- Support is provided to encourage a strong culture of volunteering;
- Services targeted at parent support and building stronger families are available;
- Opportunities are provided for residents to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of the diverse cultures within the community;
- People with disabilities are able to live a safe and fulfilling life in the Shire; and
- Improved facilities and activities for youth are available within the Shire.

OUTCOME 2.2

There are a variety of recreation and leisure activities available for all ages, across the Shire of Northam.

Objectives:

- Maintain a range of sporting facilities in Northam townsite, as expected of a Regional Centre;
- Maintain local facilities in other local communities in the Shire of Northam;
- Facilitate the provision of varied cultural and artistic activities;
- Provide a range of quality activities for specific demographics, including seniors and youth;
- A range of outdoor leisure activities available throughout the Shire of Northam; and
- To have well maintained reserves within the Shire of Northam.

OUTCOME 2.3

A needs-driven public transport system is available for residents of the Shire of Northam.

Objectives:

- Develop a feasible public transport service within the Shire giving access to key services and facilities; and
- Lobby for the continued provision of a regular daily AvonLink train service.

THEME 2: COMMUNITY WELLBEING (Cont'd)

OUTCOME 2.4

Aged residents are able to remain in or near to their local community in the Shire of Northam at all stages of care.

Objectives:

- Provide support to enable seniors to remain living in their own homes as long as possible;
- Establish a range of care options to ensure people can remain in their local communities as they age; and
- Offer seniors activities that are accessible across the Shire.

OUTCOME 2.5

Northam townsite continues to be a regional health services centre providing specialist, general and ancillary health services.

Objectives:

- Specialist health and support services are available within the Shire Northam for residents and the region; and
- Support establishment of new ancillary health service businesses within the Shire of Northam.

THEME AREA 3: SAFETY AND SECURITY

A community without fear of crime or antisocial behaviour

Key indicator of success:

- A continuous downward trend in crime and anti-social behaviour, and concern about these issues, as evidenced by crime statistics and shire community surveys.

OUTCOME 3.1

Shire of Northam residents are able to pursue the fullest life possible without fear of or hindrance from crime and disorder.

Objectives:

- Plan and implement strategies to address crime and safety within the Shire of Northam:
 - Increase community participation in identifying and reporting of crime;
 - Increase community awareness and understanding of how to prevent crime and improve community safety; and
 - Work with key stakeholders and community groups to plan and implement community safety and crime prevention initiatives;
- Engage with all segments of our population to understand their challenges and coordinate services to meet those challenges; and
- Inform community of long term crime trends and comparisons.

THEME 4: ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE

Preserving the natural and historic beauty of the Shire of Northam

Key indicators of success:

- Determine a baseline carbon footprint for Council and identify strategies to reduce carbon emissions;
- Avon River water quality remains at same or improved level by 2022; and
- No decrease in the number of high and medium value heritage assets on the municipal heritage inventory.

OUTCOME 4.1

The Shire of Northam is visually pleasing and easy to find your way around.

Objectives:

- Verges and roadsides are neat, tidy and attractive; and
- Information and way finding signage is clear, visible and easy to find.

OUTCOME 4.2

The Shire of Northam honours, and is recognised for, its unique heritage and cultural identity.

Objectives:

- The Shire of Northam is a destination for heritage tourism and heritage buildings are easily located and interpreted;
- The Shire of Northam's heritage buildings and locations are well maintained;
- There is a strong, respected and valued Aboriginal community and culture in the Shire of Northam; and
- The Shire of Northam recognises its multi-cultural community and supports its inclusion.

OUTCOME 4.3

Residents and organisations within the Shire of Northam are supported to reduce their environmental impact.

Objectives:

- Increase energy efficiency in Shire-controlled buildings and increased procurement of renewable energy;
- Sustainable waste management with the aim of reducing and reusing waste effectively;
- Deliver a well-planned and implemented street tree program;
- Support locally grown food initiatives; and
- Promote water re-use and water efficiency.

THEME 4: ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE (Cont'd)

OUTCOME 4.4

Rivers and waterways in the Shire of Northam are greatly valued and maintained to a high natural standard.

Objectives:

- The Shire of Northam is widely known and maintained as a biodiversity hotspot and the premier destination to experience the Avon River; and
- The Avon River and its tributaries are healthy, appreciated and used by the community and visitors for both passive and active recreation.

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THEME 5: INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Liveable, connected communities with well-maintained assets

Key indicators of success:

- *Asset sustainability ratio is between 90% and 110%; and*
- *Asset consumption ratio is between 50% and 75%.*

OUTCOME 5.1

The Shire of Northam sensitively facilitates urban renewal and improved urban realm.

Objectives:

- Work with the Housing Authority to deliver newer public housing stock;
- Pursue a Land Rationalisation Strategy; and
- Implement a Laneways Strategy to enable subdivision access.

OUTCOME 5.2

Environmental risks are proactively managed to minimise impact on residents.

Objectives:

- Focus on stormwater management in both urban and rural areas;
- Continued bushfire management planning and mitigation works; and
- Proactive weed and pest management.

OUTCOME 5.3

To have safe, well-maintained community infrastructure and services to a standard expected of a Regional Centre.

Objectives:

- Implement robust asset management plans which promote efficient, safe and quality infrastructure;
- Deliver infrastructure projects effectively, on budget and schedule, aligned with local community plans and infrastructure projects;
- Build on community service delivery models to ensure services are continuously improved and modernised to meet community needs;
- Improve and encourage utilisation of existing airport facilities and associated air services; and
- Maintain an efficient and safe regional road network.

THEME 6: GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

Leading with accountability, connection and openness

Key indicators of success:

- Community Perceptions Survey measures increased satisfaction that the Council is leading the Shire of Northam in the right direction; and
- Nil non-compliance with Local Government Act requirements.

OUTCOME 6.1

The Shire of Northam is recognised as a desirable place to live and residents are proud to live here.

Objectives:

- Positive internal and external perceptions about the Shire of Northam;
- Foster a sense of community pride; and
- Develop a clear brand identity and market it within the Shire of Northam, and beyond the Shire to investors, visitors and potential residents.

OUTCOME 6.2

Residents and other stakeholders are actively listened to and their input into decision-making processes is valued.

Objectives:

- Decisions made by the Shire of Northam are communicated and the reasoning clearly articulated to residents and stakeholders;
- Complaints are heard and resolved transparently;
- Effective and efficient two-way communication between the Shire of Northam and stakeholders; and
- Clearer understanding of the roles of Elected Members in the community.

OUTCOME 6.3

The Shire of Northam council is a sustainable, responsive, innovative and transparent organisation.

Objectives:

- Provide outstanding customer service;
- Ensure robust financial management;
- Implement systems and processes which deliver quality outcomes for our community;
- Maintain a high standard of corporate governance;
- Improve community access to information to ensure they are able to be informed of our activities;
- Encourage active community participation in our local government;
- Undertake our regulatory roles in a safe, open, accountable and respectful manner; and
- Be an organisation where people want to work.

THEME 6: GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP (Cont'd)

OUTCOME 6.4

The Elected Members of the Shire of Northam provide accountable, strong and effective community leadership.

Objectives:

- Open, accountable and effective decision making;
- Effectively communicate the Shire of Northam's vision and strategic priorities, internally and externally;
- Be a valued member and leader in our regional context;
- Develop clear policy settings to guide our organisation and community; and
- Ensure effective and well-utilised long term planning.

The Shire's role

Local governments are closer to the community than any other level of government. They create a sense of place through promoting and enhancing local identity, and by promoting social cohesion and health and wellbeing. The Shire of Northam Council engages with the community to encourage participation, shares information and provides opportunities for residents to influence Council decision-making.

The Shire of Northam provides strategic leadership by understanding how changes in the environment impact on opportunities and risks for the region and by using this understanding to drive planning for the long term and the short term. A central role is to guide the use of land to balance economic, environmental and community values, through land use planning and preparing local planning schemes and strategies. It also plays an active role in ensuring the Shire of Northam is an attractive environment in which to invest, live, work and visit.

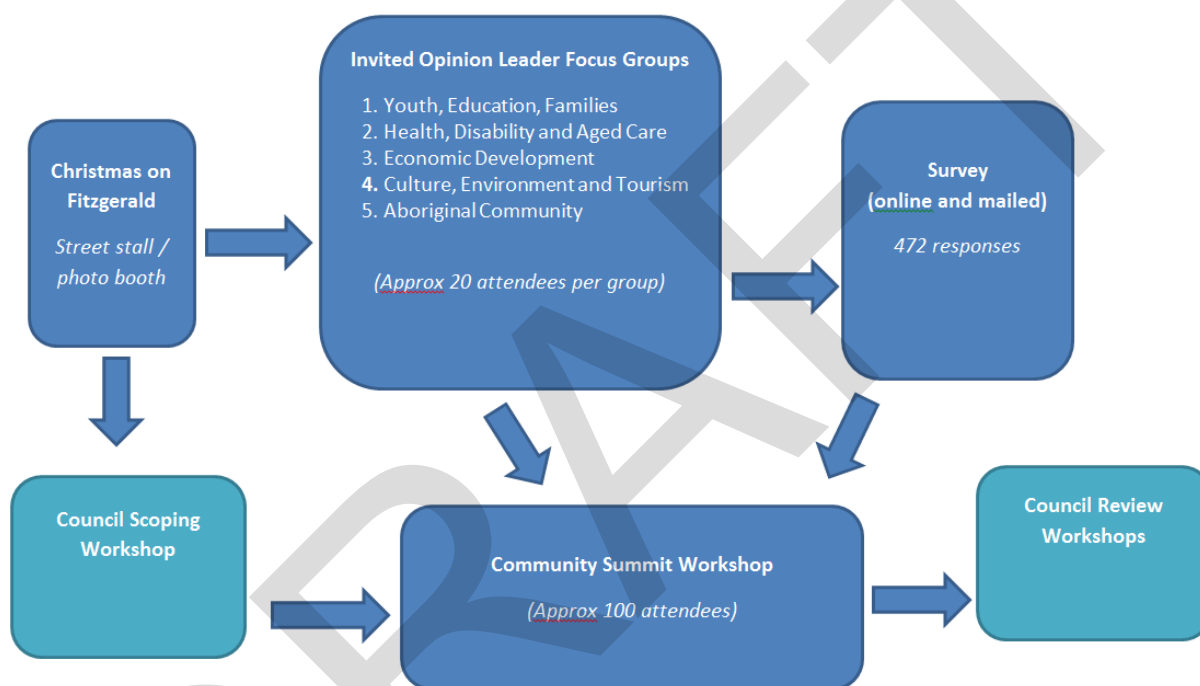
Economic development is progressed by the Shire of Northam Council through its partnerships with local state and Commonwealth governments and by working with the business community. Attracting and retaining investment and supporting sustainable economic growth are priorities for the Shire of Northam. It is a responsible financial manager, delivers a wide range of services and manages a complex array of assets to meet the needs of the community.

The Shire of Northam delivers...

- Local Laws;
- Finance and Administration;
- Planning and Development Services;
- Building Services;
- Engineering and Works Services;
- Ranger Services;
- Waste management;
- Emergency Services;
- Environmental Health Services;
- Community Development;
- Aged respite care;
- Youth services;
- Community safety;
- Recreation activities;
- Tourism;
- Investment attraction and business development;
- Communication and digital innovation;
- Cemetery; and
- Airport.

Community Input

This plan was developed as an outcome of significant community engagement by the Shire of Northam. The process was independently facilitated, and each stage of consultation generated content that was fed into latter stages to ensure consistency and validity. A representative mix of responses from across the Shire of Northam was achieved by cross referencing themes with local area plans for the town sites across the Shire, for example Wundowie and Bakers Hill. In addition to the face to face consultation activities, a survey was posted to all registered ratepayers across the Shire of Northam.



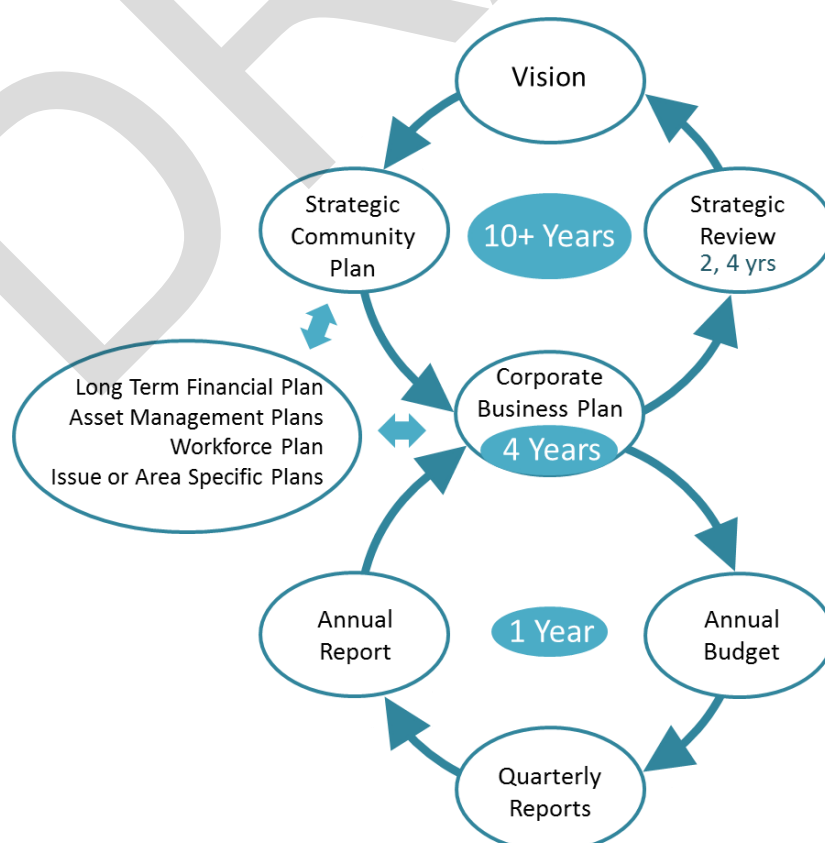
The purpose of Strategic Community Planning

The Shire of Northam Strategic Community Plan is the overarching planning document for the Shire of Northam Council and guides its planning for the future of the region. It is a reflection of the beliefs and aspirations of the community and identifies the major themes and priorities that emerged from consultations. The Plan contains strategies to bring the priorities to fruition and the measures that will be used to gauge their success. It is reviewed every two years and updated after five years. The Council's Annual Report identifies the progress and any issues that impacted on the achievement of these priorities.

While the community has identified its priorities for action, there needs to be an extensive detailed planning process to put those actions in place. This is given effect through the Corporate Business Plan. It has a four year horizon and spells out how the priorities will be delivered using strategies and activities and the responsibilities and resources that are needed. The Strategic Community Plan identifies what should happen, the Corporate Business Plan identifies how it can happen. Both are turned into reality through annual budget setting and operational plans for the different areas of the Council administration.

Sitting alongside the Corporate Business Plan are the Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Plan and Workforce Plan. These focus on the essential resource management concerns, the ability to attract, retain and train staff, the ability to secure adequate income and to maintain the condition of existing infrastructure while providing essential new infrastructure.

Other plans are also developed by Council to meet legislative requirements such as Equal Opportunity and the Disability Services Acts, or to meet environmental objectives and social priorities. More technical plans such as risk management plans and information communications technology plans also help provide depth and robustness to Council planning.



Review Schedule

It is important to assess progress on the Strategic Community Plan, review and adjust the priorities in response to changes in the community. The review schedule includes a mid-term review of the Strategic Community Plan which involves gaining input from the community. The mid-term review is an important means of maintaining the community's role as an active player in the future directions of the Shire of Northam.

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