

Grass Valley Masterplan



ReliX
Community Revitalisation Consultants

Grass Valley Masterplan

A plan prepared by and for the community of Grass Valley

An Initiative of the Grass Valley Progress Association (Inc)

Supported by

The Shire of Northam
The Department for Planning and Infrastructure
Regional Solutions of the Commonwealth Government

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ReliX

Community Revitalisation Consultants

I BELIEVE
THAT THE RENDERING OF
USEFUL SERVICE IS THE
COMMON DUTY OF
MANKIND AND THAT ONLY
IN THE PURIFYING FIRE OF
SACRIFICE IS THE DROSS OF
SELFISHNESS CONSUMED
AND THE GREATNESS OF
THE HUMAN SOUL SET
FREE.

John D. Rockefeller

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2 Synopsis

A planning exercise commenced in 2000 to examine and articulate who, what, when and where actions must happen to guide and empower community commitment to achieve a community based plan to guide the future development of Grass Valley.

Monies were secured through the Commonwealth Government's Regional Solutions Initiative, the State's Townscape program, the Shire of Northam and the Grass Valley Progress Association. This enabled the aspirations of the community to be set out as their vision for the future.



Workshop Participants

3 Summary

The Golden Pipeline project was a trigger that encouraged Councillor Robert Hitchcock to seek ways by which Grass Valley could fund a series of community developments. Councillor Hitchcock encouraged the Grass Valley Progress Association (GVPA) to seek ways to progress these developments and ReliX was chosen to determine ways that funds could be acquired for a range of community based initiatives. ReliX advised that the way to proceed was to develop a Master plan for Grass Valley which would form the basis on which a range of grants could be sought.

The process used was to hold a series of open-entry community workshops to ensure that the community was informed about the process and had the opportunity to participate. The workshops identified and clarified the desired futures for Grass Valley and then prioritised a series of developments that could become individual projects for action. After the workshops, ReliX drafted the ideas into pictures which were presented to the GVPA who in turn placed them in the Grass Valley Tavern along with press releases for wider community response. This final report assembles all of the information generated and outlines the projects which will address all of the priority developments. Note that developments that missed the initial cut, will not be forgotten but will move up the list as work is completed or as the community revises its' priorities.

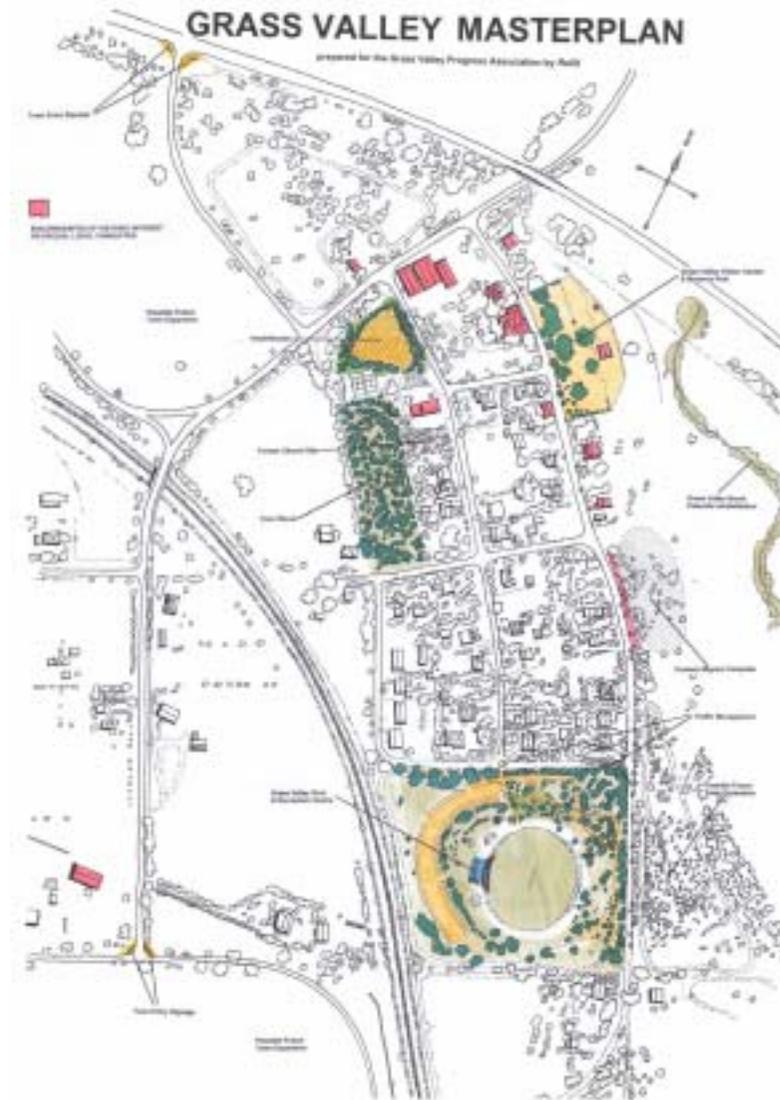
This plan sets the scene and provides direction for the community to take charge of its future. While there are ten initial projects, the overall priority is to celebrate the Grass Valley story through town improvements.

Top Development Projects:

The Museum Park: to become the focus for visitors and residents by developing a Grass Valley Visitor Centre that embraces the conserved historic railway sheds, reconstruction of the Station building as the visitor centre, a children's playground, an agricultural machinery display, four tourist bays with amenities and restoration of the memorials.

- Grass Valley Hall: to upgrade the hall so that it can become a more performance-oriented facility
- The Hotel: to increase its role in the community and focus more on tourism.
- The Landscape setting: to develop the town and environs in the context of land care, conservation and nature based tourism.
- Sporting facilities: to develop the town oval as a multipurpose place for sports and community events.
- Chaff Sheds: to tell the story of chaff because of its' importance to both Grass Valley and WA. It is a living demonstration of a way of life unique to WA.
- Linkages to other places: there are great benefits for Grass Valley to link with other communities facing similar problems and in so doing enjoy a multiplier effect in its strategies to develop the community of Grass Valley
- Great Eastern Highway and town entries: the major East West route for WA can be developed as a conduit that directs visitors into the town and district.
- Houses: The residential accommodation of the town is to be developed in a way that will, offer a wide range of housing/lifestyle choices.

- Railway line: The railway line passed through the centre of the town and will now be utilised to celebrate the town's history and cultural tourism.



4 Introduction

4.1 Background

The advent of the National Trust of Australia (WA) heritage project for the Golden Pipeline represents an opportunity to reverse rural lethargy and decline in the communities along the heritage pipeline route. The local Government liaison group for this project included Councillor Robert Hitchcock who sought close links with this nationally significant project. However, the National Trust of Australia (WA) has indicated the town will **not** be included in activities associated with the Golden Pipeline heritage/tourism project. The original pipeline passed through and the current alignment is on the perimeter of the town, with an electric pumping station as a local icon. The community felt excluded and sought to take the initiative to command visitation and tourism to their district in order to build on the significant magnetism of the Golden Pipeline project.

The community of Grass Valley strongly believes that a strategy linking a substantial number of quality local attractions to the tourism energy of the Golden Pipeline project was an achievable goal. This proactive effort will minimise any risks the project's benefits will bypass Grass Valley. The Golden Pipeline being of potential World Heritage standard represents a lifeline to Grass Valley whose attractions are of high interest but do not have the profile of such a major tourism generator. The solution was seen as being able to tap into the investment in the pipeline project and thus to share in and contribute to the potential benefits of this unique project. A strategy of "Dalliance and Entrapment" is the fundamental basis for ensuring the tourism economy delivers value to the town

As the Trust is already well advanced in its planning for this project, there is some urgency for Grass Valley to be in a position to move with its own complementary initiatives through a "whole of community" effort that complements such a major heritage & tourism project.

By developing a community driven masterplan and implementing the first project, it is expected that visitor numbers will increase leading to employment opportunities in the district, and, articulating rural reinvestment.

The broader planning exercise is also expected to result in a linked visitor "trail" between several districts in the region and a number of themes are being identified to maximise the range of interest areas that can be enhanced for visitors.

A search exercise was carried out in 2000 to examine and articulate who, what, when and where actions must happen to guide and empower community commitment to achieve a community based plan for Grass Valley.

Through the Commonwealth Government's Regional Solutions Initiative and using the first report, grants were secured to enable the aspirations of the community to be set out in their vision for the future in a community master plan. The Grass Valley Progress Association assumed the role of initiator and acted as the steering committee for the master plan project.

This Master Plan is the community response to that challenge.

4.2 Regional Context

Grass Valley, as a district is part of the Shire of Northam and which is one of 44 local authorities within the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia. It is situated only 12 Kilometres east of the regional centre of Northam and as such risks being overshadowed by the influence of the town.



St Peters' Church site, N. Goomalling Rd.

While the WA Tourism Commission promotes the Wheatbelt as the “Golden Heartlands”, Grass Valley does not feature strongly in its promotional material. Even though Grass Valley is just 100 metres from the Great Eastern Highway, the town and environs has no tourist-attracting name, nor is it promoted in circulated literature.



Museum Park site looking toward Great Eastern Hwy

With a population of just over 200 the town supports primary industries of wheat, wool & livestock. It is known as the State's centre for Hay and chaff production. Secondary industry is represented through the newly established Avon Industrial Park at Meenaar just East of the town.

Grass Valley assets are considered to include, the historic rail station site and goods shed combined with a peoples memorial historic park including some historic machinery, several historic town buildings including the hotel and hall, a number of walk and motorised tracks of heritage and nature interest and arguably the State's first gold battery at Seabrook. Grass Valley possesses rolling landscapes of great beauty and in the spring, extremely colourful floral displays of both crop plants and wildflowers as good as any other recognised

“wildflower district”. It also possesses the unique centenary obelisk celebrating 100 years of European settlement

Tourism statistics indicate that while the Avon sub region is quite high in numbers of visitors passing through, it is poor at converting visitation into bed nights. The town urgently needs attractions that hold the visitor long enough to stay the night and spend money (Dalliance & Entrapment). It also urgently needs a marketing strategy to ensure that those interested in visiting are made aware of the places of interest and facilities available.

Grass Valley has a positive and realistic approach to the tourism possibilities and is keen to see co-operative ventures/efforts with neighbouring communities that generate a critical mass to ensure the tourism potential is realised.

The Chaff industry is a tremendous tourism resource for Grass Valley, mostly unknown and un-promoted at the moment and thus not readily accessible to the casual visitor or organised tour groups. Currently tourism dollars are being lost because the town and sites of interest are not visitor friendly, unsuitably displayed and inadequately marketed for the visitor. There is also little service provision to implement the "Dalliance & Entrapment" approach.

Tourism is but one opportunity. The strategic location of Grass Valley is highly significant, especially in relation to addressing the planning issues to take advantage of and be ready for, accepting metropolitan ‘refugees’. These lifestyle seekers want an in-between city/country style of living and require a range of lifestyle options. Note that these

can include retirees because the health, social services and public transport facilities are less than ten minutes away in Northam.

In attempting to reinvest social capital in rural Western Australia, the project aimed to complete the Community Master Plan for the district as the agreed first stage prior to seeking funds to undertaking individual projects.

4.3 The Grass Valley region



Grass Valley



5 Acknowledgements

When Cr Robert Hitchcock sought advice from ReliX as to what possibilities there were for funding research into developing and promoting Grass Valley, he was especially interested in the historic settlers park located within the railway station site. It was this first contact that led ReliX to become involved and to ultimately produce this report.

Peter Byfield must also be acknowledged as the main driving force that ensured widespread community interest and involvement for the past two years.

The Grass Valley Progress Association members of the Steering Committee have all played a role. Special acknowledgement must also be made of the support given by the three presidents: Barry Dolbear, Jane Guillaumier and Rhonda Lawrence who have also have given freely of their time.

Kirsten Arthur
Cr Harry Ball
Claire Beavis
Randle Beavis
Richard Brazier
Jenny Brookes
Peter Byfield
Sue Byfield
Kit Byfield
Doug Christmass
Vic Cooke

Rob Cumper
Elaine Danger
Barry Dolbear
Daphne Dolbear
Karen Ducat
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Anne Dunkin
Mrs Faulkner
Ingrid Forrester
Andrew Gibbons
Arthur Grant
Jane Guillaumier
Cr Ian Hancock
Angie Hayes
Bert Hayes
Dave Hemmings
Julie Hemmings
Cr Rob Hitchcock
Arthur Kirsten
Colin Larson
Joan Larson
Rhonda Lawrence
Phil Lloyd
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Andrea McCandlish
Colleen McCaw
Peg McManus
Cr Richard Marris
Allison Martin
Cr Doug Morgan

Don Newman
Dianne O'Driscoll
Ian Parker
Crystal Reynolds
Frank Robinson
Marie Sermon
James Sinnamon
Nathalie Sluik
Stephen Smith
Max Trenorden MLA
Evelyn Wilson

Alan Middleton while not being able to attend any of the meetings, gave his continued support throughout.

None of this would have been possible however but for the support of Regional Solutions, a Federal Government initiative that funds regional projects that are likely to result in increased local development. The Townscape Programme of the State Government, the matching support from the Shire of Northam and a \$2 000 contribution from the Grass Valley Progress Association. This project represents a whole of community effort in that all three levels of Government and the community have contributed to produce this Grass Valley Community Masterplan.

6 Regional Tourism issues

The Wheatbelt had an overall visitation of 646,000 visitors in 1999. This was a lower level than the previous term and a feature of the region is that its major attractions are widely dispersed whereas the working population, while low, is comparatively evenly distributed.

When compared to other regions, the Wheatbelt has a high number of visitors but the second lowest regional conversion of overnight stays/bed nights. It only needs this performance to lift and the regional economy will benefit with the resultant flow on effects.



Spiny Cob



Pipeline Relic

While the historic Avon Valley is a major destination, Grass Valley at the moment is not, mainly due to the fact that, no major destination has been identified or promoted.

The potential to draw together a suite of attractions exists with Grass Valley assuming the lead role for the town and its' surrounding/neighbouring regions. It is able to act as initiating community as it possesses a central position with good road links and a significant attractor; the Chaff industry with all of its interesting machinery and production methods.

To lift the tourism interest, accommodation has been identified as a substantial area for improvement as has the town centre. Workshops identified a range of potential attractions which in their own right were of significant but not great substance. When however they are

organised into a collective development plan they form a powerful attraction.

With regional visitation being dominated by intrastate visitation (71%), local places of interest will have a magnetic effect as the performance profile of the region tourism indicates a strong loyalty to familiar and not necessarily "glamorous" places.

Grass Valley is just over an hour by car from Perth and is halfway between Northam and Meckering. It represents a series of interesting places which can complement the Golden Pipeline initiative of the National Trust and be a pleasant resting stop to the frenetic pace of the Great Eastern Highway!

Grass Valley would have an enhanced profile if it were promoted in conjunction with historic places. Commencing at Northam, passing through the Seabrook Battery site and using the local byways like Clydesdale Road which is a most scenic road and rarely utilised by visitors. It also requires the complementary choice of accommodation styles. All this set in the unique rural setting of the greater Avon Valley.

The Grass Valley Masterplan 2002 tourist theme is thus focussed on the philosophy of *dalliance and entrapment*".



Seabrook Battery site

7 The Grass Valley Masterplan 2002

7.1 Objectives

The Grass Valley Masterplan's overarching objective is to identify projects and processes that will lead to increased community vitality and sense of pride. Specific sub objectives include to:

- Reduce the threat from the impacts of regional rural decline that hinders locally generated initiatives. These include, poor youth employment prospects, low purchasing levels through town businesses by local industry and threats to the stability of residential numbers
- Increase the tourism/visitation activity in a district that has many attractions to offer and yet finds it very difficult to obtain the seed funding necessary to develop partnerships
- Prevent Grass Valley initiatives from “falling between the cracks” of any funding opportunities from all three levels of government.

The Progress Association believes that Grass Valley will achieve these through identifying the major projects and processes in consultation with the community and by setting these down in the form of a plan.

The six key goals being to:

- Increase visitor numbers to the town and district
- Improve diversity and quality of goods and services available
- Enhance employment opportunities
- Provide new or improve local infrastructure
- Encourage new residents to the town and environs
- Link to other communities for mutual benefit



View of Grass Valley from Clydesdale Rd

7.2 Planning Process

The Grass Valley Master Plan has been developed through a series of community workshops. The initial community vision workshop was held at the Grass Valley Hall on Saturday afternoon 23rd September 2000. Approximately 35 interested residents were present with local member Max Trenorden MLA and Shire of Northam Councillors Robert Hitchcock and Richard Marris participating. This workshop provided a mandate for the Progress Association to assume the role of leadership on behalf of the wider community by making a series of recommendations for action by the Progress Association:

- That the Grass Valley Progress Association receive the Report of Proceedings of the Community Vision Workshop and resolve to prepare a masterplan based on the workshop outcomes.
- That the Grass Valley Progress Association adopt the nominations for the steering committee and establish it as a sub committee of the association.
- That the election of chair and office bearers of the steering committee be the business of the first meeting of the steering committee.

- That the first agenda include the preparation of a draft brief and timetable for the masterplan project together with a strategy for funding the study.
- That the steering committee report to the association regularly.
- That the steering committee members identify their special interest areas (portfolio responsibilities) as well as contributing to the overall direction of the work of the committee.
- That the steering committee be given power to co-opt additional members where appropriate and to advise the association of such action.
- That the Grass Valley Progress Association advise the Shire of Northam of its intention and seek a resolution of support.
- That the Grass Valley Progress Association advise the Wheatbelt Development Commission, Main Roads WA, Water and Rivers Commission, AgWA, Department of Local Government, Lotteries Commission and any other relevant government agency (ref. Agencies invited to the workshop) of the project and seek their support.
- That the Grass Valley Progress Association advise relevant (state and commonwealth) parliamentary members of the project and seek their support.

To source the information for the Plan, three more community workshops were held. The first to confirm the key issues, then to identify specific projects that would address the issues and thirdly to "scope" the projects proposed. The findings to be reported in a masterplan document setting out the outcomes with a timeframe of achievable objectives.

This community consultation process concluded in October 2002, with the Steering Committee of community representatives having worked

throughout this time to provide information for and support to, the workshops.

7.3 Workshop Outcomes

The initial workshop canvassed a range of possible futures for Grass Valley, the impediments to achieving their desired future and identified from participants a large number of projects that would develop Grass Valley in the desired direction. The detailed workshop proceedings are appended to this report. The top ten outcome areas were broadly defined as:

- < Museum park
- < Hall improvements
- < Hotel improvements
- < Street Pattern Landscape/Setting/Nature
- < Sporting Facilities
- < Chaff Sheds to be developed for tourism
- < Linkages to other places
- < Great Eastern Highway
- < Houses
- < Railway

8 Top Ten Projects

8.1 The Museum Park

The Museum Park to become the focus for visitors and residents by developing a Grass Valley Visitor Centre.

The existing park has already been subject to a design idea and this has formed a strong community base for the current proposal. The park is strategically located at the civic hub of the town – opposite the Grass Valley Tavern (an historic pub) and possessing good exposure to the Great Eastern Highway - it can be seen from the highway across the Grass Valley Brook highway embankment. In such a position, the park is the logical place in the town for tourist information and facilities.

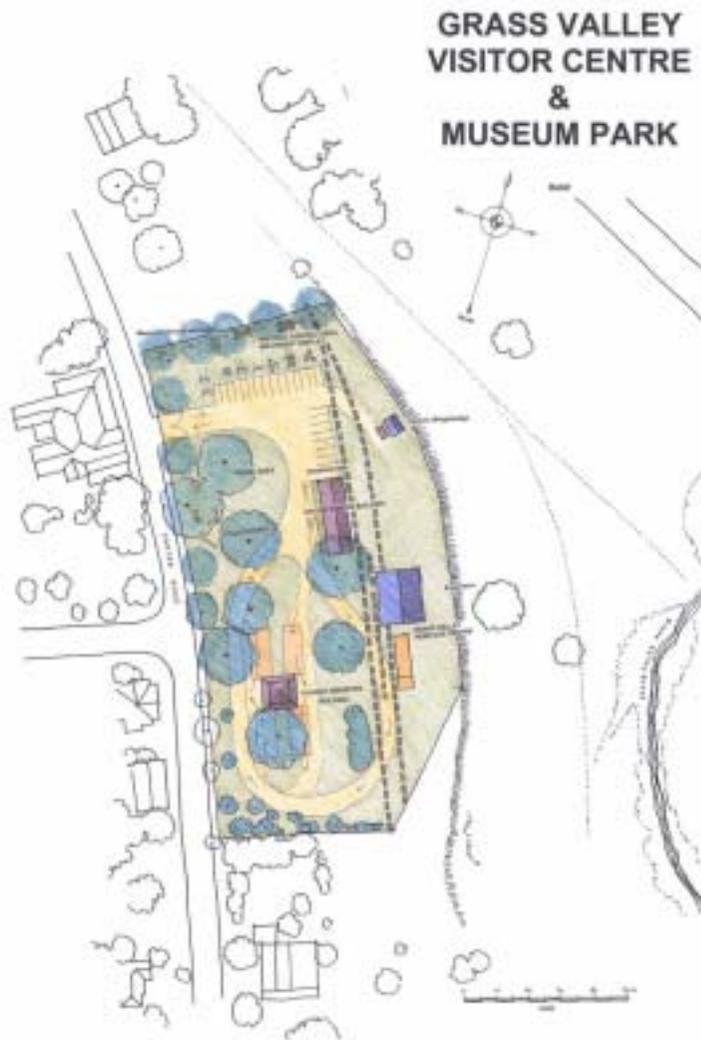


Grass Valley Train Station



Weighbridge Plate

The park possesses the remnant historic infrastructure of the Eastern Railway as well as being a place where the Coolgardie Goldfields Water Supply Scheme pipeline passed through the town. The site is therefore one of the districts prime heritage sites and is the best location for a visitor centre. The centre could be in a reconstruction of the railway station building which would serve as tourist information and booking office for district tourist bays/tours, events, local arts and crafts display & sales, historic photograph collection and a multimedia story of Grass Valley (migrant stories, migrant camp etc). A business plan should be prepared to rigorously examine the proposal.



Goods Shed and weighbridge

The development plan indicates the potential for four (4) tourist bays plus the appropriate amenities block, a children's playground, picnic and BBQ area, a reconstituted outdoor agricultural machinery display, restored and conserved goods shed and weighbridge housing railway memorabilia with enhanced landscaping and planting. A public artwork/ mural on the Goods Shed wall (if considered appropriate in a conservation plan) would reinforce the focus of visitor activity on this site. It should not be overlooked that this site is a memorial site and restoration of family memorials is a starting point of development. It is also the logical starting point for all of the heritage and nature tours (including the Town Walk).

The redeveloped park will owe a great deal to the generous donation by the Dempster family of additional land that includes the goods shed, platform and weighbridge. This substantial gift to the community can be a springboard for revitalising the site and, subsequently the

town and district. It may be appropriate for the Grass Valley Progress Association to acknowledge this donation in perpetuity by naming the reconstructed railway station building “Dempster Pavillion” as a centrepiece of the Grass Valley Visitor Centre.

As the whole complex, currently referred to as Museum Park, may need to recognise its new and multipurpose functions, a new name should be selected to reflect its new role in the town. The Grass Valley Visitor Centre has been suggested as a name for convenience of this report and in no way is intended to pre-empt the considered view for a new name of the Association.



Rail Shed

This particular initiative is the major project arising from the masterplanning process, it is important to establish a steering committee or project group within and responsible to the Association for the progressing of the project. One committee member should

convene the group and act as facilitator and contact point for enquiries. One of the first tasks of the group will be to flesh out the suggested design and identify priorities (and timing) for development and funding strategies for implementation of the various parts. The Timeframe Matrix at the end of this report sets out a notional timeframe which will need to be revisited in due course as it is only a suggested guide.

8.2 The Grass Valley Hall

The hall to be upgraded to a more performance oriented facility to increase its usage.

The hall is another historic building in the town and is part of a town walk. Its performing arts capability can be improved with a programme of works to increase its performance quality and improve the visual attraction. A centenary celebration could act as a catalyst for a development project. The attraction of the site could be enhanced by expanding site through developing an open-air amphitheatre on the land on the north side. Incorporating the former church site into the vested site would also increase its attraction and interpretation value for the towns' history. A disabled external toilet facility has already been built indicating the determination of the community to improve the quality of the hall. Interior improvements have also largely been completed with painting and revised electrical work. Another initiative is that it house a local historical photo gallery.

The town plan indicates a suggested design with planting screens defining an area of gently rising ground. An all-weather stage facility could be constructed and the audience area created for family style concerts and events with no fixed seating. This would allow grouped

seating on rugs and low picnic chairs similar to the major music concerts such as the Opera in the Park in Perth's Supreme Court Gardens.

Incorporating the former church site into the vested site would increase its attraction and interpretation value for the town's history. Although it is a vacant lot, it is possible to interpret, that is tell the story, of the church and its place in community life. It could be that the actual building outline is marked on the ground by a permanent line (such as a coloured in-ground strip of concrete) to indicate where the building stood. Historic photographs in the Hall could provide the imagery of its presence to explain its contribution to the form of the town.

A disabled external toilet facility has already been created indicating the determination of the community to improve the quality of the hall. Another initiative is that it house a local historical photo gallery. There are substantial resources both in historic photographs and individual memories in the community that will be able to create a human history of the district. This gallery will be an important element in presenting to future generations and visitors alike, the real story of Grass Valley. It could be an impressive experience to young and old.

8.3 Tavern (Grass Valley Hotel)

The Tavern can assume a major role in the revitalisation of Grass Valley initially as the temporary tourist information centre and to increase its role in the community by focussing increasingly on tourism services of hospitality. An important component of the “*dalliance and entrapment*” strategy. It is a significant historic building (has already received a conservation grant on this basis) and

has the physical capacity to revive hotel food and accommodation in an early 20th century style.



View of the Grass Valley Tavern

Possessing a large site it can develop a range of services which would enhance the character of the place as well as add to the town's tourist attraction. As a major element of tourist infrastructure it could develop a greater family orientation to serve local residents as a town centre “place to be”. The examples of small character hotels (Greenhills and Quindanning) providing a weekend getaway and rural experience style of accommodation which demonstrate that there is a sound base to investigate. This should give rise to ideas as to how the Tavern could be enhanced to become a significant asset to the tourism strategy for the town.

Being privately owned, these ideas can only be suggestions as the costs and timeframe implications are the business of the owners. A marketing strategy linking to other regional tourist elements should add to the strength of a Wheatbelt experience and, being only just over an hour from the city, could be the springboard for such an initiative.

8.4 Landscape setting

This project broadly addressed the idea of developing the town and environs in the context of land care, conservation and both cultural and nature based tourism.



Southern Brook Well

The townsite is set on gently rising ground with its north and east view across the shallow valley of the Grass Valley Brook. This provides an unusual "dress circle" style urban form as the major town roads generally follow the contours thus providing a view of the valley to the majority of town lots. Grass valley therefore relates strongly to the visual presence of its landscape setting. The Great Eastern Highway embankment cuts off the northern view but planting along the easternmost stretch has minimised the adverse visual impact and presents a lively interaction with the traffic being seen but not intrusively affecting town life.

A town walk map would identify sites relating to the history of Grass Valley and individuals who have been a part of community life. In

starting at the new visitor centre, an walk of about half an hour would take the visitor around the town and provide them with an appreciation of the past and present values of community life. In returning back to the visitor centre where their car may be parked, there should be, in the future, food and beverage services along with mementos leisurely taken in -"*dalliance and entrapment*".

Part of enhancing the town should be the installation of banner poles in appropriate locations to display topical and colourful banners. An Arts Council grant should be investigated as to what can be achieved to express the spirit of the community in such a public art format. It was suggested at one workshop that the former railway goods shed would be suitable for a mural. This should be considered in the context of its heritage value and if appropriate, be a starting point for such public artworks.

The town as a whole sits in an overall district of gently undulating landscapes with opportunities for views where visitors can take in rural panoramas of great beauty - and only an hours drive from Perth! For example, the Grass Valley townsite can be viewed in its totality from Clydesdale Road and this location should be promoted as a significant stop on the rural track routes.

Accordingly, the community saw the need, as part of a tourism strategy, for guided routes for visitors to experience not only the natural beauty of the district but also its cultural storyline of local historic places. These guided routes identify sites and locations of places of interest for visitor and local resident alike. The exercise to identify these routes revealed the wealth of such places in the district

and the Heritage and Nature Track maps demonstrate the extent of this interest area.



Southern Brook sheep dip



These maps again, are suggestions for the Association to consider. A grant should be sought to develop not only the individual sites with interpretive signage but also to enhance the quality, publication and promotion of the maps. Of particular interest are some of the individual sites. The Centenary Obelisk is an obvious icon for promotion. It occupies a magnificent site with outstanding views over the countryside - a must for any visitor to see. The engraved wheatsheaf on the base is the image suggested for route and site interpretive signage. However, the bank of the cutting on the north side of the site is deteriorating and needs to be stabilised and appropriately treated for long term sustainability.

Seabrook Battery site is a dual interest area for its cultural and natural significance. A special study should be made of this site and its values identified and celebrated. A heritage assessment for the Association should be carried out and mapping/imagery arising from the study utilised as promotional material for tourism.

For complex nature site, the Duck Pool riverine site is very interesting. In conjunction with the Water and Rivers Commission a grant to develop an interpretive visitation facility should be sought and a project group set up to work this project through.

Landcare sites are of great interest and the district landcare groups have undertaken some very interesting projects which now can be easily seen and appreciated. A liaison person should be identified to develop a promotional information pamphlet for visitors and locals to understand what the works is and how it is tackling care of the land. An approach has already been made to the community for a private

sponsor, through the Water and Rivers Commission, for a rehabilitation initiative for a section of Grass Valley Brook.



Grass Valley Brook

In terms of how local industry has uniquely used and shaped the local environment, two activities are present in Grass Valley. The story of chaff production in the valley is essentially a farming activity of considerable excellence and yet utilises old machinery of specifically designed and constructed by the specialist farmer. Video footage has been taken which will be a resource for interpretation of this unique and interesting rural activity. It also relates to the historic chaff sheds in the town and the Association could examine the best way to represent and interpret the chaff story either in the sheds or at the visitor centre.



Grass Valley Brook restoration project site

Similarly, the pistachio nut plantation is of great interest and is an opportunity for interpretation to interest the visitor. How this story is to be presented rests with the owner as visitation would of necessity have to avoid conflict with the day-to-day operations of the farm. This would also apply to the chaff story interpretation. The Association in due course could negotiate guided tours of these interesting facets of Grass Valley's industry to add to the increasing list of local attractions.

8.5 Sporting facilities

The town oval represents a potential recreational focus for the town and district. Through past community enterprise the formation and initial development has produced a level oval with a modest embankment to the west and scope for viewing areas and built facilities as well as car parking. This masterplan indicates a suggested

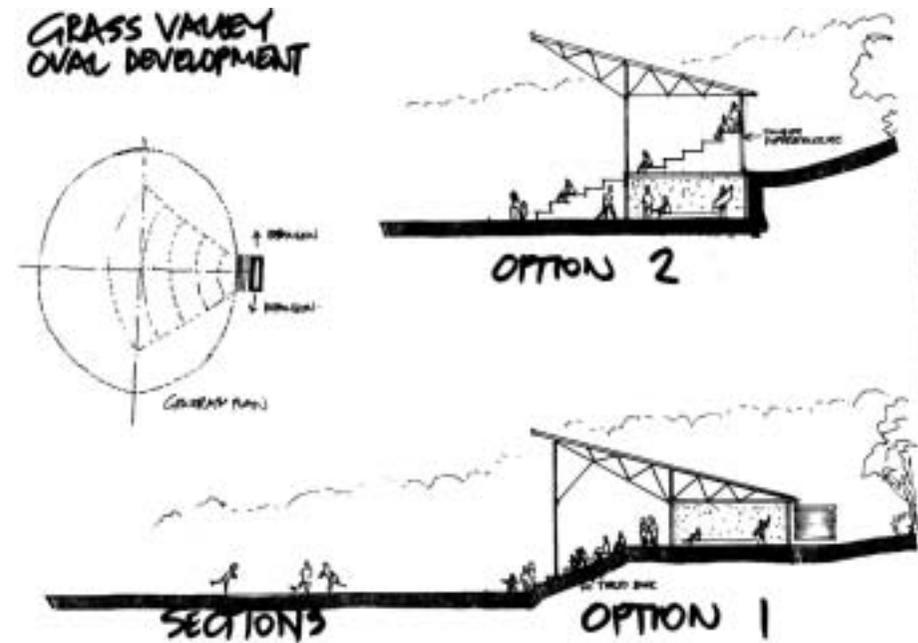
design for the site to respond to points raised by participants in the workshops or raised as individual contributions.

The first and most important issue is the access to a water supply. A sustainable water supply will enable a grass surface to be established and maintained at a standard for all major sporting activities such as cricket and football. At present there is no secure watering strategy for ensuring a sound playing surface all the year round. Two medium to long term solutions could be pursued. The first is linked to the development of infill sewerage for the town. From this infrastructure would come the opportunity to back load grey water to a holding tank at the high ground of the oval site from which it could be gravity reticulated to the oval and banks. The second opportunity is to seek the vesting of the former water supply dam on Tank Road and reconstruct the dam wall which would fill and could then be pumped to the oval site for reticulating the grassed areas. Adjoining this site is the ruins of a farmhouse that could add some interest to the site and be part of a heritage route.

The next stage would be the building of a change room with a small catering capacity. This would enable sporting events to not only service the games but also provide the social aspect of community recreation thus building community spirit through collective family enjoyment. The design of the building would require considerable community input and should have a steering committee guiding its development from ideas to realisation. Above all, the steering committee would need to be mindful that the pavilion would need to be capable of expansion without undoing any of the fabric already in place and paid for by the community. The suggested design indicates a notional parking arrangement and reinforces the established entry

points. Retention of as much natural vegetation as possible is a necessity and new planting of sympathetic character.

In keeping with modern thinking, the oval should be considered as a multipurpose place for sports and community events. Large rural events such as sheep dog trials, music events (when the Hall is too restrictive) and local agricultural shows.



8.6 Chaff Sheds



Chaff sheds

The story of chaff is important to both Grass Valley and Western Australia as it is a living demonstration of a way of life unique to WA. That the operation of harvesting is by 40-50 year old machinery, is a demonstration of historic working machinery being used as it was intended and producing premium export quality chaff. The chaff sheds occupy a central site in the town and therefore present a high profile to visitors. It is suggested that these sheds become related to the visitor centre story telling and the owners be encouraged to allow the sheds to be part of the greater story of Grass Valley.

Whatever the outcome, the sheds remain an important part of the town centre and are noted on the town walk. Interpretation signage for the sheds would be part of the Heritage/Nature route grant process.

As heritage places of interest, the sheds could also be the subject of a heritage assessment which would again add to the substance of the towns attraction.

8.7 Linkages to other places

There are great benefits for Grass Valley to link to other communities facing similar problems. In so doing the town could enjoy a multiplier effect in its strategies to develop Grass Valley as a revitalised community. By sharing promotional opportunities, linking heritage and natural environment routes and experiences, complementing entertainment and recreation events and generally positively interacting with adjoining communities, a greater energy is developed to assist in becoming a place to visit again and again.

Within the district there are smaller communities such as Seabrook and Quellington, who have much to offer Grass valley as either "client" or "service provider". Meenaar, for example, will become a more substantial presence and Grass Valley will have an opportunity to draw it into a closer link so that the attractions and needs can be more easily accessed for the benefit of both.

On a broader scale, the roads to Northam, Goomalling, Cunderdin, Quairading and York provide opportunities to link with tourism and visitation strategies at a sub-regional level. These links could be complementary and tie in with events, seasonal functions, progressive short stay tours and thematic accommodation. Cunderdin, for example, has a distinct role within the Golden Pipeline project of the National Trust and to tap into some of the energy of that project can only benefit the community of Grass Valley.

The Association should create a promotional team to look at what the asset base in the sub-region is and what is happening to improve the low tourist figures conversion to bed nights. A starting point would be to approach the tourist bodies in adjoining shires plus liaise with the Northam office of the Tourism Commission.

8.8 Great Eastern Highway and town entries

The major east-west route of Western Australia, the Great Eastern Highway should be looked at as though it could be developed as a conduit to direct visitors into the town and district.

For example, an enhanced and well-designed entry statement on the highway at Mulukine Road should be installed, possibly with solar powered feature lighting. Two possible designs are shown in *Appendix 3* in this report and the Association will need to select one design which they believe reflects the genuine character of the town. The signage could then be part of the grant application for the district heritage and nature tracks project.

An aspect raised in one workshop was town lighting. If the town improved its lighting quality and extent, then the night view of the town from Great Eastern Highway would have a striking impact. It would also be helpful if there were better interpretive signs along the highway to inform travellers of the high level of interest available in Grass Valley.

8.9 Housing

The residential accommodation of the town is desired to be developed in a way that will offer a wide range of housing/lifestyle choices. In order for this to happen, the matters raised in the Associations

submission to the Shire of Northam's Town Planning Scheme Review, need to be supported and, in time, implemented.

The major project would be for the town to be included in the next round of infill sewerage by the Water Corporation. The advent of sewerage would have far reaching benefits. Not only would the environment benefit but also the housing choices would be increased. The current density set out in the town planning scheme allocations would be enhanced by a variety of lifestyle choices with town centre increased density to allow duplex type development, retirement housing and specialised accommodation for disabled in addition to the existing low level density.

On the outer fringes there could be rural living style housing with space for rural pursuits complemented by home industry lots of larger size where any nuisance is ameliorated by space. The by-product grey water from the infill sewerage could be reticulated back to either the town oval for grass watering and/or reticulating other town centre sites and road verges. A location for the treatment plant should be on the north side of the highway at a local low point so that it is gravity fed and still sufficiently remote to allow an odour buffer to be established to protect the town.



Former railway workers' cottage

8.10 Railway

The Eastern Railway route originally passed through the centre of the town and will now be utilised to celebrate the town's history and cultural tourism. The new visitor centre celebrates rail history in town through retention of the goods shed, goods platform, weighbridge and siding tracks. In due course the reconstructed pavilion should follow the design of the original station building and act as the main focus for administration and promotion of local history.

One suggestion arising out of the workshops was for the goods shed to be the archive/location for more valuable heritage assets which may deteriorate with exposure to the elements and vandalism. An example of rolling stock could be loaned from the Australian Railway History Society to demonstrate the style of railway usage at the turn of the

century. This carriage/wagon could be set on a section of rail track on the original alignment of the original goods shed railway siding within the shed.

The railway is strongly linked to C. Y. O'Connor's goldfields water supply construction and operation as without the proximity of the railway and its industrial load capacity, the project cost and difficulty would have been greatly increased. The pipeline route originally ran through the front of the station site and a remnant trench exists just south of the station site (and noted on the town walk). This companion heritage asset should be interpreted at the townsite and the former railway and pipeline route noted so it can be appreciated how it passed through the district.

The site of the second railway stop west of the town on Christmas Road is also noted on the Heritage Track route and thus it will be interpreted and signed for visitor information.

8.11 Miscellaneous items

Other issues and projects were raised which should not be overlooked in the main programme. The need for a small shop was seen as important and when the town expands this could become a reality.

The green and gold licence plate to be retained and promoted.

The town public domain to have improved maintenance. This would be a companion to establishing a town tree policy for planting and maintenance.

The pumping station to have an interpretive notice to inform visitors of its place in the Goldfields Water Supply.

As the town population grows, there will be a need to address better traffic management at the south end of town with either restricted directional access or road stop signs.

The continuation of town activities eg lounge cabarets, sheaf competition, etc were seen as positive town activities.

When appropriate, a Telecentre facility to be acquired.

No certainty of action would be possible if all the projects and initiatives identified in this report were not set into a formal process. Therefore, with an appreciation of this, the Association made a submission to the Shire of Northam addressing issues needing to be addressed in the review process of the Shire of Northam's Town Planning Scheme. The complete submission is attached as **Appendix 5** to this report. In essence, it sought to set in place actions, zonings and policies to underpin the projects the community saw as important in revitalising Grass Valley.

9 Timeframe Matrix

	WHAT	WHO	WHEN	HOW
1.	Grass Valley Visitor Centre	Progress Association/Shire of Northam	(2003-2008) 5 year plan	Grant funds and local volunteer effort
2.	Hall and Church Site	Progress Association/shire	(2002-2004)	Grant funds and local volunteer effort
3.	Tavern/Hotel	Hotel owner in consultation with Progress Association and shire	2001-2003	Grant funds and owners resources
4.	Landscaping and Natural environment	Progress Association/shire	2002-2004	Shire budget
5.	Sporting facilities	Progress Association, Shire and community	2002-2005	Grant funds, Shire budget and local volunteer effort
6.	Chaff sheds	Progress Association/shire	2002-2003	Grant funds and local volunteer effort
7.	Regional Linkages	Progress Association, Shire and WA Tourism Commission	2002-2003	Progress Association Shire and Tourism Commission
8.	Great Eastern Highway and Entries	Main Roads, Shire and Progress Association	2003-2006	Main Roads, Shire and local volunteer effort
9.	Housing	Progress Association and Shire	2002-2003	Progress Association, Shire and individual action
10.	Railway	Progress Association and WA Tourism Commission	2002-2005	Shire and local volunteer effort

10 Conclusion

The Grass Valley Master Plan of 2002 demonstrates that the community of Grass Valley realise they need to address the issues of rural decline and management of the development of their town. By commencing the journey to rural revitalisation, the community has identified its own character, examined the implications of the threats facing it and signalled a strong intent to take charge of the future.

The Golden Pipeline Project provided the initial impetus and some rationale for this examination. It still remains as an important link for the town to take maximum advantage of, as appropriate. The town also recognises the importance of assertively promoting its achievements and assets on the regional tourism agency through the Avon Arc and WA Tourism Commission.

An emerging issue in Australian society is the treatment and care of the aged, this was raised as Grass Valley aged care is not locally sourced. If a viable aged care service can be established, then this will mean that the town can offer good facilities and care for its' older residents, so that retirees have no need to leave for the city due to lack of suitable accommodation. It also signals that this rural lifestyle has something to offer city retirees!

In terms of turnaround of community quality, the example of Margaret River in the 1970's serves as a remarkable and unforeseen phenomenon. It was not expected that a small rural community could today be the area of desirable rural living. This example teaches us that many things are possible and that it may take time or a unique circumstance to be the catalyst for change. This report is an expression of the Grass

Valley community, who they are, their values and what they seek to achieve for a viable future.

The time frame matrix sets out their priority projects, as identified in this strategic planning exercise, to achieve their collective vision for the town. It is true social capital being incorporated in a process of rural reinvestment. Where possible, the projects and processes have sought to provide a multiplier effect to maximise the benefit to Grass Valley.

That this study was funded through several grant agencies signals a sophistication and determination to tap into external mechanisms and resources to help deliver their vision.

The Shire of Northam has been supportive from the outset and the success of the grant application forecasts a confidence that there are fruitful partnerships in the future.

There is now a local level recognition that the ills of rural decline is a national issue and Grass Valley can help by setting an example of cooperation and partnership with all three levels of government.

Tithe

Tithe is accepted as 10% or one tenth of the whole and emerged from ancient times as a tribute or payment for privileges or rents. The ReliX philosophy is as a tithing consultancy and seeks to recognise and encourage the initiative of energetic local communities by tithing back some of the consulting fee as time. This tithe is freely given and used for whatever task the community thinks appropriate.

11 Appendices

Appendix 1 Initial Workshop September 2000

GRASS VALLEY COMMUNITY VISION WORKSHOP
Saturday 23 September 2000

Record of Proceedings and Outcomes

1. INTRODUCTION

The Grass Valley Progress Association held a Vision Workshop for the community of Grass Valley at the Grass Valley Hall on Saturday afternoon 23rd September 2000. Approximately 35 interested residents were present with local member Max Trenorden MLA and Shire of Northam Councillors Robert Hitchcock and Richard Marris participating.

The workshop was a Grass Valley Progress Association initiative arising out of the need to address issues and opportunities within the town and district. It was prompted by Cr Hitchcock's participation in the Golden Pipeline Project of the National Trust of Australia (WA). It was acknowledged that this major heritage project would not involve Grass Valley to a significant level and it was up to the community to take the initiative for improving their local quality of life. The workshop commenced at 3.15pm and concluded at 5.00pm with a sausage sizzle including music by local bands.

The Agenda and attendance list are attached as appendices to this report.

Mike Jefferson and Don Newman acted as facilitators for the day.

2. PRESENTATIONS

President Barry Dolbear welcomed all those present and acknowledged Max Trenorden MLA together with Shire of Northam Councillors Robert Hitchcock and Richard Marris. He expressed the hope it would be a rewarding day for all present and that important decisions would be made to ensure the future of the town and district.

Committee member Peter Byfield then spoke on the format of the afternoon and provided general background on what the Association was seeking from the workshop.

“During 1999/2000 members of the Shire and the Grass Valley Progress Association met with representatives of the Golden Pipeline Project. These meetings proved to be the catalyst for our organisation to seek out a wider range of issues & opportunities that may be available to this area of interest.

An open meeting convened by the progress association resolved to conduct this workshop today to formulate a vision for the area that reflects the desires and values of the community. It was also resolved to form a steering committee which is representative of the entire area of interest. The committee's task will be to oversee the development of a master plan and report directly to the progress association who would in turn work with the Shire of Northam and other associated authorities in the overall development of the plan.

I wish to acknowledge on behalf of the association the feats of all organisations in our area of interest and trust that with a united approach to the future we will share mutually in the development of our own personal pursuits. I would also like to say that nothing has been predetermined and that the limits of what is possible will be directly related to our input.

I referred to the pipeline project as the catalyst for where we are today, however I would like to be more specific in saying that the catalyst was provided more by two of the projects former advisers who are present with us today. Namely Mike Jefferson and Don Newman. Mike and Don share the belief that this area of interest has more going for it than we from within possibly realise. So much so that they have offered their services in conducting this workshop today and in preparing a report and making recommendations all free of charge. Mike and Don have also been instrumental in getting us this far.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you “facilitator extraordinaire” Mr Mike Jefferson & Architect/Town planner Mr Don Newman. I will ask Mike to kick off by introducing to you the process for today’s workshop.

Thank you.”

Peter also noted that in preparing for the workshop he had identified some 17 local community groups plus the Shire and government agencies indicating the activity areas within the district. Several issues had been raised prior to the workshop by people who may not be able to attend and these would be passed on to the facilitators.

In setting up the displays and information, he explained that the map was just a notional area of what the Grass Valley District boundaries were (and agreed by the meeting)-York Road, Goomalling Road and the eastern boundaries of the Shire.

Peter identified the sheet for the parking lot which was for noting issues which were important but not necessarily relevant to today’s workshop (no items were parked here on the day).

Mike Jefferson gave an overview of the masterplanning process and what it meant to the Grass Valley community. It was important to give serious thought to ideas, issues and opportunities no matter what barriers were seen to exist to prevent their realisation.

The idea of a 5 year plan with a “follow up” 5 years was suggested as one way to set a reasonable timeframe for completion of the masterplan. To start focussing on the workshop agenda, a sheet of paper was provided to each table for setting out what each person thought was the future of Grass Valley (town and district) in 5 years time if we do nothing. In addition they were asked what do they think would be the desirable future of the town and the district in 5 years time.

3. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROCESS

Mike stressed the importance of maintaining a focus on local issues with an appreciation of their context. “Funnel vision” was the term he used to describe the idea of looking through a funnel - it was important to look from the small end to where the view is the big picture rather than looking from the large open end and seeing only a small picture.

It was also seen as important to realise that the ability and knowledge to address problems and solutions existed in the community. It was up to individuals and groups of the community to make it happen. He quoted the example of a theoretical PLANNING MATTERS & ASSOCIATES as explaining that the community represented PLANNING MATTERS and the facilitators were (and could only be) the ASSOCIATES (Mike and Don)

A small yellow Postit note” was provided for each person to write down what they expected from the workshop and Mike gave a two minute period for this to happen. He then wanted attendees to keep the paper and at the end of the workshop write down whether their expectations were met.

Participants were asked to write a word/phrase that summarised what they wanted to gain from the days meeting. While these were personal notes, some were handed in and are worth sharing:

- < Satisfaction
- < Action
- < Commitment
- < Community support
- < All participate
- < Increased community spirit
- < Some wrote more:
- < Something concrete, that can be worked on
- < To see the local community suggest ideas to further development of the village

- < To find the views of all residents in the Grass Valley area in regard to initiatives and events for the future
- < To see what the residents of GV see as their future

At this point, participants were asked to list what they saw as the future/futures for Grass Valley if things remained as they are. The responses were varied but the theme is clear. Most comment was negative:

- < Little to no change
- < Remain a small hamlet
- < Farming will not expand
- < Wheatbelt farms size causing decline of communities in the wheatbelt
- < Meenar should have some industries
- < Northam will probably expand
- < Lose focus
- < Lose control over lifestyle
- < More people but no more services
- < End up as a place where only those that can't afford to live elsewhere gravitate to
- < Kids leave
- < Developments the area does not want
- < Expansion of Northam town into district
- < Growth through Meenar
- < A few more houses
- < Broad acre properties sold off as small holdings
- < Continued lack of community facilities
- < A sleepy hollow

- < Broad acre farming will continue in majority
- < Town remain a village
- < Decreased commitment by younger residents to town
- < Dumping ground for low budget people
- < No facilities at Meenar
- < Partial divide between town and farming will remain
- < Loss of history
- < Dormer suburb of Northam
- < No facilities
- < No commercial outlets
- < Weak sense of “community”
- < More young families
- < Disparate people who come for cheap housing and not to be part of the community

The group was then asked to suggest what they as individuals saw as desirable futures for Grass Valley town and district over the next five to ten years. It is very pleasing to see that most of these comments are positive:

- < Town to grow and retain friendly country feeling
- < Loosely amalgamate with other towns so that all benefit and each retains identity
- < More support for Progress Association
- < A real feeling of community
- < A thriving Tavern as the hub of things based on community not drinking, where the whole family is welcome
- < Not too much more paving and street lighting (don’t want Valley tame and suburban!)
- < Local “events”

- < Passing tourism trade
- < Industry park
- < Not too developed, stay as a “small community”
- < Shop
- < More Shire support
- < Better areas for residents
- < Beautification of the Valley area
- < Similar to now by retaining rural flavour
- < Increased community viability via development of diverse farming enterprises (smaller landholders)
- < Series of small communities which are discrete yet work together for common good
- < Northam as work and admin. GV for lifestyle
- < Arts, music, art, craft, etc
- < Retention of a viable family oriented Tavern
- < Good for kids as a family based community
- < Emphasis continued on sport
- < Support Telecentre
- < Help all families get and use computers
- < Retain rural atmosphere
- < Tavern becomes a successful commercial enterprise
- < Develop identity as a great place to live
- < More commercial development, craft shop, Devonshire teas, Tavern meals etc
- < Becomes a good stop-off point
- < Established light industrial area
- < More people settling in the town
- < Plan for an expanding townsite

- < Retain laid back and family atmosphere
- < More community involvement
- < More use for the hall
- < Museum park completed
- < Monument to the pioneers of the district
- < Walk trails to attract tourists
- < Barbecues, tables and chairs in the park for travellers
- < More encouragement to settle in the town
- < Making the most of the assets we have
- < Community with common interests for the future
- < Keep up with new ideas and developments but retain rural lifestyle
- < Farm stays
- < Animal park
- < Standards set for buildings etc
- < More advertising for would be settlers and tourists and more facilities
- < Encouragement by Shire and Gov't agencies for people to live in the area
- < A town centre
- < Avon link connection to Northam
- < Meenar bringing in wealth and growth
- < Avon Industrial Park complete, generating employment for district
- < Some growth in GV population
- < More small holdings
- < Planned population growth
- < Retain rural village atmosphere
- < Improved public amenities and facilities
- < Tourism a major commercial enterprise

- < Tidy town
- < Master Plan for the town and district
- < Close knit village
- < More community social involvement
- < More facilities for sport and rec.
- < Fix the boundaries
- < Direct link with Avon Industrial Park
- < Well serviced, meals, accommodation, housing
- < Surrounds retained as broadacre farming
- < Seabrook grows as a village
- < High value placed on lifestyle
- < Vibrant area
- < No longer take things for granted
- < People look past their front gate
- < Employment opportunities of rural nature
- < Value adding home grown products
- < Increased self sufficiency, both Agricultural and industrial
- < Working relationship with Meenar
- < More tourism and passing traffic
- < Thriving town
- < Tradition of the district solving its own problems
- < Tea rooms, B&B, Service Station and General store are viable
- < Focus on youth employment maintains families
- < Grass Valley becomes a place where people want to come and live

All of the comments are heartfelt. These feelings for a desirable future are more clearly quantified in the next stage. They can however be summarised into several major themes:

- a). Smaller land holdings if the process is managed well, can encourage diversity that will create long term employment for the district.
- b). Maintenance of a rural village feel to the town
- c). Like minded people joining the community
- d). Developing the district and town in a way that ensures economic success while retaining the qualities of the past.

4. IDEAS AND ISSUES

Don Newman spoke on how communities could achieve an improvement in their quality of life by taking initiatives and using/developing their own skills and abilities. The example of the Northampton community was used to demonstrate how a declining vitality had been recognised and residents own determination and commitment produced a turnaround in the future of the town. It was of special interest to note that the resources for revitalisation were mostly found within the community.

A few images were shown to demonstrate what a visitor would see and appreciate in Grass Valley.

- a).The view of the town from Clydesdale Road
- b).The Centenary monument and its view over the district
- c).The monument was not only important for its location but also for its inscription acknowledging the contribution of the district to the development of the “Wheatbelt”
- d).It also had an attractive wheatsheaf logo on each side of the base. The story of chaff harvesting is of unique interest and is a significant activity in the district.

5. MIND MAPPING

A community “mind mapping” exercise was carried out. This exercise was for each individual present to take two minutes to draw a map of Grass Valley to inform an imaginary pen friend who was to visit the district. From these sketches an understanding can be obtained of how the community regards the Grass Valley district and what “things” it values.

The 19 sketches noted the following landmarks and the number of times they appeared on the maps indicated their ranking.

Grass Valley Hall	16
Grass Valley Hotel	16
Street Pattern	16
Landscape/Setting/Nature	15
Sporting Facilities	14
Chaff Sheds	14
Linkages to other places	12
Great Eastern Highway	11
Houses	11
Railway Line	11
Former Railway Station Park	10
Post Office	10
Pump Station	7
Highway Bridge	5
Commemorative stone on highway	4
Fire Shed	4
Goldfields Pipeline	4
Old Shop	4
Wheat bins	4
Ballooning	2
Bus Stop	1

Kennels	1	Talented
Meenaar Industrial Park	1	Homely
Old School Site	1	Different
		Young
		Rural

If the consistent recognition in the maps is taken as a signal of community consciousness of objects which matter in their town, then the 10 most important landmarks would rank as follows:-

- a). Grass Valley Hall, Hotel and the Street Pattern (16)
- b). Landscape/Setting/Nature (15)
- c). Sporting Facilities and the Chaff Sheds (14)
- d). Linkages to other places (12)
- e). Railway Line, Houses and the Great Eastern Highway (11)

To place undue emphasis on these “informal” results would be unwise and they are only noted to provide some general idea of what the community values or recognises as contributing to the character of the district and town. The additional landmarks are useful as they fill out a wider appreciation of other aspects of Grass Valley.

6. GRASS VALLEY IN A WORD

The next exercise was a collective voicing of describing Grass Valley in one word. The descriptions were as follows:-

Peaceful
 Quiet
 Serene
 Friendly
 Diverse
 Safe
 Small
 Interesting

These words indicate a social dimension in that most were generally “people focussed”. Quality of living would therefore be an important sub theme of whatever outcomes emerged in the masterplanning process.

7. WORKSHOP IDEAS

Each of the 7 tables produced a set of ideas and opportunities as well as reinforcing the ideas and concepts already raised in the mapping and one-word description exercises. The points made are as written down and as some writing has been difficult to read, it is hoped the recording is correct. Errors can be removed in due course when participants have read the report.

Group 1

Replanting into bush remnant areas. Sandalwood trees as a long term project and future “superannuation” etc. Public toilet block for visitors. No subdivision of farming/rural land due to loss of lifestyle and loss of available agricultural viable and productive ground. No subdivision is to take place on agricultural ground! A mud map was included showing expansion of the core of the town between the existing town and the highway. It noted the need for a shopping centre, a tenpin bowling alley, an east-west trucking stop for overnight stays, motel accommodation for tourists and the potential for a caravan park due to the Northam By-pass.

Group 2

Museum Park: BBQ area, machinery painted and under cover, restored railway carriage, landscaping and a monument of pioneers of the district.

Town entrance: Town emblem of sheaf of hay or sheep at entry off highway. Signs from Northam and Meckering to indicate where Grass Valley is situated

Mini golf course near children's play area and fire shed. Open a shop or café. Nature strip: Walkways so that natural flora can be appreciated. Cycleways for children. Oval: toilet and water to enable the oval to be used for sports. The future of the tavern-bring it back to its former glory. Aged people: Retirement homes for older residents who wish to spend their twilight days in Grass Valley. Good roads throughout the Shire especially wide rural roads to carry machinery. Beautify the entrance to the Hall and reticulation. Lights at the Grass Valley station and the sign put back.

Group 3

Retain "village" character. Community focussed "events" eg sheaf competition, lounge cabaret, quiz nights. Development/reinstatement of oval. The tavern as the hub of the district supplying food, coffee, jam sessions.... THE PUB IS THE HUB. We don't want much more change or growth.

Group 4

Clean, tidy, safe and well maintained town. Development of oval (cricket, footy, kites, caravans). Serviced caravan sites near pub (showers/toilets). Tavern to be open and serves the community. Attract visitors (keep the pub viable). (Playground, tennis, museum park, pub for lunch, bush reserve). Maintain "village" character. Drive trails, Walk trails. Bike trails. Swimming pool.

Group 5

Townscape plan-love and care for the town. Signage-entrance-interpretive railway station, chaff sheds, tavern. Village style development, control of planning. Heritage trail. Attractive stopover-attract visitors. Focus on local significant industries-chaff, wheat. Develop more young community spirit. Look past own backyard (tunnel vision). Maintain broadacre farming. Develop existing nature areas. Quality live style-retirement village, safe area children. Tighter development control. Minor service area/industrial park. Continue trail along pipeline to Grass Valley. Backpacker accommodation. B&B accommodation.

Group 6

To still be a hamlet-small community, rural values. Community events-sport, show, sheep, dogs, cattle, regular fun days & nights, busy bees, market-swap meet, paddy's. Involvement by all community members. Tourism-develop more museum park, promote local farmers ie; top wool, top sheep, top cattle, achievement in landcare, cropping of wheat, oil trees, grapes, olives, diversification. Tours- scenic sign heritage trail, farm trail. Accommodation- caravans, school building, farm stays. Respite accommodation, disabled people, elderly, terminal people all in the country but still close to a large town or Perth. Environment-landcare, salinity, land degradation, regrowth. Heritage buildings & sites- chaff sheds, tavern, railway shed, sites and farmhouses. Progress: Develop industrial park-provide close accommodation (to Meenaar) to reduce much growth within the hamlet. Shop-small, basic groceries, newspapers, milk, bread, stamps, post office. Child care-family day care. Subdivisions-minimum 5ha, keep the area rural.

Group 7

This group presented their ideas with a large mud map with notation. Taken in general clockwise order, the issues are;- ID flora fauna, value add at Meenaar, residential-rural zoning, revegetate/manage Grass Valley Brook, better access to Great Eastern Highway (Carter St extended to highway), study to identify sporting pursuits with special requirements eg motorcycles, horses, traffic management-cul de sacs, speed humps, 40kph speed limit in townsite, safe road system throughout locality, serviced tourist bays & at Southern Brook (Andrea) near Hall, on-line library, tourist map (local), P.O., craft, meeting room, agency/'s, Telecentre near Fire Shed, preserve and promote-identify geographical and historical assets, drive/walk trails, do a study of flora/fauna ? local emblem, serviced tourist bays at Meenaar. In specific terms, the townsite mud map indicated;- highway, bridge, commercial centre around the tavern, museum at the former railway station site, a grass oval with public toilets, a wide band safety zone across the townsite, entry/exit roads from the highway on west and east sides of townsite and a sense of town boundary as a rectangular shape based on existing settlement pattern.

8. WORKSHOP SUMMARY

In assisting groups to develop their ideas and observing how discussions have progressed, it is possible to say that the day has stimulated participants. The evidence is of practical and visionary, small and large, short and long term ideas which have been widely discussed. All of this material would form a substantial basis for developing a masterplan with community guidance. This is not to say the masterplan should use only this material. It was expressed several times that the farming component of the community was under-

represented numerically. Community input throughout the process is an essential ongoing activity and results in a strong sense of ownership of the final plan.

It is important therefore to acknowledge that resources do not always mean money. The most important resource in community revitalisation is the commitment of individuals to work together to realise their collective vision. Without this contribution, freely given, no plan will be successful. It is now up to the Grass Valley community to seize the day and make the decision to either do nothing or...do something!

9. WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Peter Byfield asked the following questions of the workshop participants;-

Was today a worthwhile exercise?

The response was positive.

Do we want to go on and develop a masterplan for Grass Valley?

The response was positive.

He called for nominations for the Steering Committee as a sub-committee of the Grass Valley Progress Association with an expected 4 meetings in the next 8 months.

He offered his own nomination to start the process.

Kirsten Arthur, Claire Beavis, Jenny Brookes, Trevlyn Ducat, Rhonda Lawrence and Natalie Sluik nominated to join the committee together with Crs Robert Hitchcock and Richard Marris.

The local member Max Trenorden MLA offered to attend the committee to give advice on state government assistance where appropriate.

Mike Jefferson and Don Newman will prepare a report on the proceedings and outcomes of the workshop with recommendations for consideration at the next committee meeting of the Grass Valley Progress Association on Wednesday 27th September 2000.

10. CLOSING REMARKS

President Barry Dolbear thanked all those attending and congratulated them for the contributions and willingness to participate. A special note of appreciation was made of work by the organisers Peter and Sue Byfield and their team of helpers. He also thanked Mike Jefferson and Don Newman for facilitating the afternoon and preparing the report for the Association.

He then declared the workshop closed and invited all to enjoy the sausage sizzle and entertainment by local musicians.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- < The Grass Valley Progress Association receive the Report of Proceedings of the Community Vision Workshop and resolve to prepare a masterplan based on the workshop outcomes.
- < The Grass Valley Progress Association adopt the nominations for the steering committee and establish it as a sub committee of the association.
- < The election of chair and office bearers of the steering committee be the business of the first meeting of the steering committee.
- < The first agenda include the preparation of a draft brief and timetable for the masterplan project together with a strategy for funding the study.

- < The steering committee report to the association regularly.
- < The steering committee members identify their special interest areas (portfolio responsibilities) as well as contributing to the overall direction of the work of the committee.
- < The steering committee be given power to co-opt additional members where appropriate and to advise the association of such action.
- < The Grass Valley Progress Association advise the Shire of Northam of its intention and seek a resolution of support.
- < The Grass Valley Progress Association advise the Wheatbelt Development Commission, Main Roads WA, Water and Rivers Commission, AgWA, Department of Local Government, Lotteries Commission and any other relevant government agency (ref. Agencies invited to the workshop) of the project and seek their support.
- < The Grass Valley Progress Association advise relevant (state and commonwealth) parliamentary members of the project and seek their support.

Attendance Register

SURNAME	FIRST NAME	ADDRESS
Arthur	Grant	PO Box 68 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Arthur	Kirsten	PO Box 68 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
55	Claire	C/- 3 Lawley Avenue NORTHAM WA 6401
Beavis		
Beavis	Darryl	C/- 3 Lawley Avenue NORTHAM WA 6401
Brazier	Richard	PO Box 8 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Brookes	Jenny	PO Box 32 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Byfield	Kitt	PO Box 30 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Byfield	Peter	PO Box 30 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Byfield	Sue	PO Box 30 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Cumper	Rob	PO Box 35 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Danger	Elaine	PO Box 887 NORTHAM WA 6401
Dolbear	Barry	PO Box 39 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Dolbear	Daphne	PO Box 39 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Ducat	Karen	RMB 920 NORTHAM WA 6401
Ducat	Trevlyn	RMB 920 NORTHAM WA 6401
Faulkner	Mrs	PO Box 39 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Hayes	Angie	PO Box 429 NORTHAM WA 6401
Hayes	Bert	PO Box 429 NORTHAM WA 6401
Hemmings	Dave	PO Box 429 NORTHAM WA 6401
Hemmings	Julie	PO Box 429 NORTHAM WA 6401
Hitchcock	Robert	RMB 903 NORTHAM WA 6401
Larsen	Colin	PO Box 34 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Larsen	Joan	PO Box 34 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Lawrence	Rhonda	PO Box 288 NORTHAM WA 6401
Lloyd	Phil	PO Box 60 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
Marris	Richard	PO Box 126 YORK WA 6302
Martin	Allison	PO Box 21 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403

McCandlish Alan
McCandlish Andrea
McManus Peg
Reynolds Crystal
Robinson Frank
Sermon Marie
Trenorden MLA Max
Wilson Evelyn

PO Box 1083 NORTHAM WA 6401
PO Box 1083 NORTHAM WA 6401
PO GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
13 Lyon Street NORTHAM WA 6401
PO Box 887 NORTHAM WA 6401
PO Box 60 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403
18 May Street NORTHAM WA 6401
PO Box 51 GRASS VALLEY WA 6403

Appendix 2 Workshop One May 2002

The second workshop in May 2002, confirmed the priority areas and provided necessary flesh to the bones of the ideas.

Area 1 Town Centre and Design

- 1.1 Develop arts, music etc
- 1.2 Infill sewerage
- 1.3 Maintain history of town
- 1.4 Identify suitable trees for planting in town
- 1.5 Unit (elderly, single parent, budget) accommodation-grouped housing needed
- 1.6 Consistent letter style and emblem (wheatsheaf) using GVPA Letterhead colours
- 1.7 Ensure public buildings resemble (reflect) hall, pub and original railway architecture
- 1.8 Small shop – general store
- 1.9 Safety – road safety in town
- 1.10 Green gold white licence plate
- 1.11 Maintenance of town – footpaths etc
- 1.12 Town tree policy
- 1.13 Friendly community feeling
- 1.14 Pub as a community/family place

Area 2 Museum Park

- 2.1 Mural on wall/roof of goods shed
- 2.2 Design for park
- 2.3 Concentrate machinery in one area
- 2.4 Clarify boundary with beneficiary
- 2.5 Obtain copy of original concept plan

- 2.6 Allow for expansion in appropriate style
- 2.7 Research original railway drawings
- 2.8 Include a childrens playground (complement hall play area)
- 2.9 BBQ area
- 2.10 Four bay tourist bay facility 9 (incorporate amenity building)
- 2.11 Ensure visual link continuity with other town attractions/activities

Area 3 Heritage

- 3.1 Museum Park – photos
- 3.2 Reserves – on web site
- 3.3 Interpretive plaque on pumping station
- 3.4 Mural at pumping station
- 3.5 Identify Spiny Cob on map
- 3.6 Identify Old Church (site)
- 3.7 Photo Gallery in Hall
- 3.8 Keep heritage of sheaf alive through yearly events such as:
 - Lounge cabaret each year
 - Story telling by the elderly (oral histories)-check pub tape recording
- 3.9 Marg Sermon to collate information on old farmers, sporting teams, etc, recreation, commerce, town-past and present
- 3.10 Research railway archives

Area 4 Natural Environment

- 4.1 Close Vivian Street from Keane to Lodge Streets to ensure retention of town
 - Bushland
- 4.2 Name town bushland

- 4.3 Meenar (and all reserves) flora/fauna – Spiny Cob in the AIP
- 4.4 Mapping for all reserves
- 4.5 Public access to all reserves
- 4.6 Identify what is in reserves
- 4.7 Natural feature (waterfall or fountain) off the highway on the brook (but natural)
- 4.8 Walk trail linking town reserves
- 4.9 As above but 10km walk
- 4.10 Grass Valley Brook is completely contained in the district (ie it is solely ours)
- 5.12 Link in complementary activities with other towns in district & region
- 5.13 Home commercial activity
- 5.14 Support a Telecentre

Area 5 Tourism and Economic Development

- 5.1 Web site
 - Family photos
 - Local events
 - History
 - Advertise local B&B's
- 5.2 Drive trails
- 5.3 Walk trails
- 5.4 Lounge cabaret (maybe have meals at cabaret)
- 5.5 Dinner as an individual event
- 5.6 Use oval as setting for concert (siesta series similar to park in Northam)
- 5.7 Develop oval
- 5.8 B&B
- 5.9 Sheaf competition – link to Saturday night with music
- 5.10 AIP link
- 5.11 Town expansion (without losing village feel) – hotel has a map of original town lots

Appendix 3 Workshop Two June 2002

Draft drawings and images of the major developments were presented and each explained as to how it responded to the points made by members of the community at the public community workshops.

1 The consolidated top projects indicated were:

- < Tourist bays and amenities (assumed as Grass valley Townsite)
- < Town Entries and signage
- < Visitor Centre, Museum Park and extension
- < Grass Valley Hall and grounds
- < Trails
- < Oval
- < Trees
- < Town Plan/land use zonings
- < Outlying Tourist bays
- < Pump Station
- < Historic Chaff Sheds
- < Hotel
- < Town Shop
- < Unit accommodation
- < Town reserves
- < Street design

2 Town Planning issues

The Town Planning Scheme Map for Grass Valley Townsite was displayed and showed:

1. Expansion of the original townsite

2. Opportunities for variety of housing choices from, rural lifestyle, to unit development, to retired housing and home industry
3. Reticulated sewerage and a potential sewerage treatment plant site was identified
4. Traffic management and plan for future needs

3 Heritage

The town map of heritage places was presented and it indicated the extent of town sites and district sites.

Places of value on the town map were indicated as:

1. Railway Station site and extant Goods Shed, Platform and Weighbridge
2. Original CGWSS Pipeline route
3. Original Eastern Railway route
4. Electric Pump Station
5. Postwar Migrant workers camp site
6. Grass Valley Hall
7. Grass Valley Tavern (hotel)
8. Adjoining house to tavern
9. Railway houses
10. Chaff sheds
11. Church site
12. Post Office
13. Grass Valley Brook
14. Centenary Obelisk and its setting
15. Seabrook Battery site.

4 Heritage Trails

- < Two Heritage Trails identified, one looping north and the other south of Grass Valley

- < Starting point could be the site for a Grass Valley Visitor Centre and located on the site of the former railway station in Carters Road.
- < Trails would take a motorised visitor up to half a day to encompass and a keen walker, at least a full summer's day

5 Natural Interest Trails

- < A close relationship between cultural and natural heritage. For example, the town's name reflecting the natural environment and cultural value of a town
- < The starting point would be the site for a future Grass Valley Visitor Centre
- < By starting and finishing all trails from the centre of town the visitor could be encouraged to use the food and beverage availability of the hotel
- < Information about the district and region through the Visitor Centre
- < A tourism philosophy of "Entrapment and Dalliance"

6 Oval Development

- < The blank sheet display was used to take the attendees through the development process
- < A reliable and significant alternative water supply is being sought as scheme water was not to be used
- < Sewerage to the oval could eventually extend from town infill sewerage development
- < Power from the town grid can be achieved subject to connection costs unless alternative power sources are utilised, like solar or wind

- < Viewing from an embankment will satisfy initial needs but in the medium term change rooms and amenities facilities could be incorporated with covered seating. A third possibility for the recycling of a timber grandstand relocated to the top of the bank, could supply "instant character"
- < Car parking areas would eventually need to be established

7. Grass Valley Visitor Centre

- < The community chose the former Grass Valley Railway Station site for a museum and park
- < The location is opposite the hotel and occupies a central town site an ideal place to develop a new best practice Visitor Centre
- < The concept of a visitor centre derives from providing services and facilities needed by tourists
- < The Grass Valley Visitor Centre is envisaged as reflecting the character of Grass Valley rather than glossy universal design
- < A business plan is recommended (to) set out the basis of its establishment and operation so that both the ends and the means are clear and seen to be achievable.
- < The Grass Valley Visitor Centre will be most beneficial if it contains:
 1. tourist caravan bays (4)
 2. amenity block
 3. Playground
 4. Memorial grove
 5. Goods Shed, Platform and Weighbridge as a local museum with room to expand
 6. Appropriate signage to the site
- < A new Information Centre building of railway character to accommodate district promotion and manage all Grass Valley

tourist bays including visitor information, arts and craft shop, office and workroom, and a small theatrette to play films of the district history and especially the unique Chaff industry (with community out of hours use for mini-film events).

- < The museum is seen as an important focus for the town and so must become an integral part of the town
- < The collection of machinery and other items is an essential first step
- < The next is to establish the themes, the stories the museum must tell. It is recommended that a study be undertaken to progress this so that applications for grant monies can be made to develop this aspect of the visitor centre.

8. District and Regional linkages

A regional map was displayed for attendees to indicate the linkages they saw as important to community activities. These linkages are shown in appendices.

Concluding Statements

The Grass Valley progress Association will advise the community that the presentation of these final designs will be in late July and the Masterplan by the end of November. Also that the plan is a living document and while not cast in stone, must be generally agreed to become a useful guide for development by the Shire and community alike.

Appendix 4 Workshop Three July 2002

The third actual community workshop in June 2002, was a presentation rather than an interactive workshop. The projects that arose from all of the previous workshops were presented and described in some detail. The charts and drawings that formed part of the presentation were then loaned to the Hotel for display. The intent being to seek feedback from the wider community. This feedback was collected by the publican and is summarised in *Appendix 8*.

Appendix 5 Town Planning Scheme (TPS) Review Submission

GRASS VALLEY PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Submission to the Shire of Northam in regard to the Town Planning Scheme Review process October 2002

The Association wishes to advise the Shire of town planning issues for Grass Valley identified in the Community Masterplan project nearing completion. The GVPA sought support from the Shire for this community initiative and was granted a contribution towards the project.

A reporting procedure has kept the Shire informed as to progress of this planning exercise and ward councillors have attended workshops and meetings.

As a result of progress in developing approaches to address planning issues arising in Grass Valley, this submission is made to contribute community priorities to assist the Shire in its review of the Shire of Northam Town Planning Scheme.

Town Expansion:

Throughout the masterplan process carried out over the last year by the Association there has been an awareness of a need for appropriate areas to be identified to enable the town to grow in an orderly and coordinated manner. Members have been conscious of the emerging trend of relocation of metropolitan families seeking a rural lifestyle while still remaining within a short travelling time from the city.

Grass Valley needs to prepare for an increase in population even if it takes some years to materialise. Lead in times for developing the infrastructure to accommodate increased residential development are substantial and the shire should plan ahead for taking the necessary measures to capture this rural reinvestment.

Townsite Boundary

The designated townsite as zoned in the town planning scheme should be expanded to the south of Mulukine Road into lot 53 to be in line with the southern boundaries of lot 85 Grass Valley Road. This area should extend west to be in line with the western boundary of the designated townsite running north-south along the western boundaries of lot 34 Mulukine Road.

Infill Sewerage:

In order to provide the greatest flexibility of housing style, it is essential to give early consideration for the town to be included on the infill sewerage programme. Not only will this allow the expansion of the housing land available but it will also enable a greater choice of housing style that will be a significant element in attracting new residents.

The Grass Valley townsite is admirably suited to gravity reticulation as it is located on land sloping down to Grass Valley Brook and a site for a treatment facility could be located within the townsite north of the Great Eastern Highway on either side of Keane Street.

The funding will be a significant capital sum but increased land values and enhanced rate revenue would offset in the long term an amortised

cost. The installation will provide opportunities for use of grey water by-product in greening the town as well as parks and the oval

Zoning Variety:

Allowing new land use zoning including rural lifestyle subdivision and home industry sites will greatly increase Grass Valley's attraction to metropolitan families seeking a change of lifestyle. In particular, a home industry category could allow a home with a small industry/commercial base which would provide a home and income opportunity.

This zone could be located on the existing Recreation Reserve 20863 bounded by Keane, Bedford, Peary and Vivian Streets. The recreation reserve was historically considered as the location for an oval but the development of the current town oval has made this use of reserve 20863 redundant. A better use for is for home industry as it has existing sealed roads on three sides plus it is close to the highway for convenient access and would not impact on the traditional town core with servicing needs for cottage industry.

Residential Density:

The new Residential Design Codes will be gazetted in October and it is timely to provide for a variety of residential density options ranging from lots of 425m² in the town centre to rural lifestyle lots of 1-5 Ha on the town fringe. The town centre lots bounded by George Steet, Carter Street, Dempster Street and the railway reserve could have a dual coding to reflect the need for varying lot sizes from 425m² (R25) up to 1000m² (R10).

Reserve 9251 between the former Railway reserve, the extension of Mulukine Road and Grass Valley Road could be zoned for special residential (Retirement Homes) and coded R30 for lots of 400m².

Road Closure:

There are some road reserves that need to be closed and traffic management implemented in the remainder. For example, in order to conserve the 'town wood' located on the eastern frontage of Vivian Street between Keane and Lodge Streets, Vivian Street should be closed and the land amalgamated into the town wood Reserve 6102. Of the three lots west of Vivian Street, lots 88 and 91 have other road frontage and the middle lot 90, would require owner's consent and negotiations on future subdivision options.

Traffic Management

With the anticipated growth of the town population it is timely to consider some minor traffic management measures which may be a planning matter for the town. There has been the occasional misbehaviour on town roads and it would make a safer environment for children and the elderly to ensure traffic is slowed to built up area standards.

It is suggested that a roundabout could be placed at the junction of Dempster Street and Wilson Street which will act not only as a traffic management tool but also as a design element for end of the street and entry to the oval.

A Stop/Give Way sign should be considered at the junction of Wilson Street and Lodge Street to discourage high speed along its length as it is one of the longer streets in the town centre. A further control should

be considered at the junction of Carter Street and Dempster Street to discourage 'round the block' behaviour. Perhaps a controlled entry or exit only from Carter Street may be a technique to be implemented.

Secretary, Grass Valley Progress Association

Lot Amalgamation

The former Church site lot 113-114 Wilson Street has been vacant for some time and with the increased community activity focussed on the Grass Valley Hall, it would seem prudent to amalgamate this land with the hall site. This would allow consolidation of landscaping to buffer hall activity from the residences further along Wilson Street.

An appropriate interpretive plaque identifying the site as the location of the church could be placed on the frontage in order to be part of a town walk route.

Site Acquisition for the Grass Valley Visitor Centre & Museum Park

The Museum Park site has assumed greater prominence in the masterplanning exercise and has attracted an offer of land for expansion east from the current landowner. In order to proceed with the orderly planning of this expanded park to create a new and major attraction for visitors, it is necessary to survey and amalgamate the identified area into the existing park reserve. The zoning of this consolidated land holding should then reflect the envisaged uses of visitor centre, tourist bays and historic displays.

Submitted for consideration but the Association would be pleased to attend any meetings or hearings to expand on these matters to the Shire and the consultants for the preparation of the Town Planning Scheme over the advertising period.

Appendix 6 Landcare Sponsor Letter

Landcare Proposal with Waters & Rivers Commission

Project Brief

Name of Organisation: Grass Valley Progress Association (GVPA)

Project Title: Restoration and revegetation of Grass Valley Brook

Summary: The locality of Grass Valley is 25kms east of Northam Townsite on the Great Eastern Highway. It consists of about 85 houses and a public house the “Grass Valley Tavern” and Hall it the social centre for the farming community. To the north and east of the town is the Grass Valley Brook. The brook is adjacent to the old disused railway reserve, it is along this section of the brook that it is intended to carry out the restoration and revegetation project.

The brook has been degraded over time and is in urgent need of some restoration the GVPA have been working to this end and are in the process of drafting a management plan for the townsite and adjacent areas to address environment, social and cultural sites. In this regard the opportunity to implement some of the ideas that have been raised is very encouraging for the community. A meeting will take place this weekend between the group, adjacent landholders and the consultant, any funds received will be for on ground works.

The group will be looking to fence the brook as far upstream as possible with landholders agreement and a management agreement signed, install riffles in the channel for sediment management and replant the protected area with local provenance species. Weed control and site preparation will take place prior to planting. As it is adjacent to the townsite and Great Eastern Highway signage will be erected to inform travellers of reasons how, why and when the site works took place.

Community involvement: The community will be involved in the weed control and site preparation, the erection of the fence and the signage. They will also construct the riffles and plant the seedlings. Rocks needed for the construction of the riffles will be sourced from farmers paddocks where possible, if a shortage is encountered then the remainder will be purchased from out of project funds.

The waterway restoration component will be designed and constructed in partnership with the Water and Rivers Commission, species selection for the site will be made with the Riparian Zone Revegetation Officer from the Water and Rivers Commission.

A budget and operational work plan will be developed as soon as practicable.

(Water and Rivers Commission are the lead agency for Waterways management in WA and are working with Leighton Holdings in the laying of the optic fibre cable in WA.)

The contact for this application or further information is

Martin Revell
Program Manager
Water and Rivers Commission
PO Box 497
NORTHAM WA 6401
Phone (08) 9690 2621
Fax (08) 9622 7155
Email: Martin.revell@wrc.wa.gov.au

Appendix 7 Migrant story letter

This is a transcript of personal correspondence to a friend describing memories of arrival at Grass Valley in the fifties. It is included by permission and is not for reproduction.

June 27,2002

Dear Vince,

Here I am as promised writing this letter in order to help your friend to put together a bit of history of the 50.s I will write in English (or make an attempt to do so) so you do not have to translate to your friend. I sincerely hope that all is well with you and Maureen, incidentally the day I rang Vince junior he was out of the office, I will get in touch with him again. Ciao Carlo

GRASS VALLEY

A group of twenty five young men aged between 21 and 27 all single arrived in the district on or about the 12th of April 1952, at a small railway siding called Seabrook, it was 9 pm. The train conductor who obviously had instruction to inform us when was time to alight, as we did not have a clue where we were. All the way from Perth we had our nose stuck to the window to see some of the country side, of course as you know, travelling along the railway line the landscape is predominantly bush.

We got out of the carriage with all our possession in hand (one suite case) as soon as the train left we were engulfed by the most loneliest an scary time of our life it was pitch dark the light emanated by the carriage was gone and there we were in a strange land in the middle of the bush (no residential houses in Seabrook not even a small railway

station) It is hard to explain but in spite the fact that we were 25 travelling together all of the sudden your were alone.

After a while we saw a small light bobbing up and down and sidewise, it gradually got a little more distinct and we could see the man as well, he got near us and straight away started to give us some kind of instruction, of course with out knowledge of English being:"ZERO" we all started to say our piece and of course gesticulating like mad.

Eventually the man realize the situation and he too started to use his hand (a language very commonly used by Italians) He started to walk toward a gum tree, under it, next to the huge trunk was a pile of empty Jute bags, the boss (as we learn to call him later on), He threw one to each of us; from there he proceeded toward a great hip of what looked like to be crushed hemp (it was like small stick with a lot of fiber attached to it), what ever it was the signal received by the boss was fill your bags and make a mattress .

To each one of us was assigned a tent already erected (very considerate by the W.A.G.R.) the furniture inside was very SPARTAN (I wish I had a video to show the refugees of today) one bed made of link mesh wire, one container like the shape of a rectangular tank approximately 300mmx300mm base x450mm high with a hook on top so we could hang it in order to prevent ants and other insect to reach our food, the other piece of equipment and the only one was: the Hurricane kerosene lamp.

The first night in the camp was not very comfortable for obvious reasons, at first light we were awaken by the horrible screech of the local fauna mainly crows and magpies. We all met outside

commenting, swearing, debating, the situation we were in, at the end of the day we realize that nothing we could do; we sign for a two years contract with the Australian Government who pay our passage and after that the big unknown was once again in front of us.

The gang, was what they call mobile, we could be moved temporary or permanent to other locations, in fact after few months we got transferred to a lovely spot further up in the line called Grass Valley, what a difference! There was a railway station and a station master Mr.Walls, a shop, a pub, a cute little building and a very narrow front bar. Jack was the man serving beer, we never find out if he was the publican or just an employee and of course there were houses and people. The shop was handy for us, the shop assistant was a beautiful young lady and we for ever walked from across the railway line to the shop to buy small things we could pronounce most of the time it was of no use to us, but the pleasure of speaking few words in English and looking at a lovely lady made the short walk from across the railway line worth while. No one new her name and no one ever venture to ask for it; for we toughs, it was an invasion of privacy to ask a lady direct so as far as the camp dwellers was concerned she was the BELLA ! (the beautiful one).

Moving to Grass Valley was not much of improvement as far as the accommodation was concerned, the only difference was, this time we erect our own tents, so each one of us put in their own touch, in as far as the internal decoration was concerned and some of us even put in a door. Soon after we arrived, a new bunch of young fellow join the gang, mostly were from Rome district, my friend and compare Vince Giannelli come from Melbourne Bonegilla Immigration camp.

By this time, we were like a big family, we had a lot of fun in the camp, in the week end we got to Northam, spend a lot of time walking around the town, made a few friends, Northam was a good place, people were used to European and the sound of their broken English. Northam had an immigration camp (Holden camp up in the hills) before we arrived ,there was Polish, Ukrainians, Jugoslavs, mostly come to Australia under IRO (International Refugee, Organization) Czechoslovaks, Hungarians and of course us Italians not as refugees but as regular immigrants.

Our camp in GrassValley was the same, apart from our group, we had Polish, Ukrainians small number of Albanians, and the Ganger of course, an English man from Yorkshire, ironically his name was Mr. York. His English was different than the one spoken by other Australians we associatedwith or herd in the town pub, some times we felt sorry for the poor old man. The language barrier was a big obstacle and following his instruction was difficult I have seen him taken the hat off and putting it in his mouth, biting it almost with froth in his mouth. When he was really mad, he used to pull his shirt up showing a big wound, possibly a souvenir of war in the desert against the Italian army.....! He called us all sort unprintable names, but deep down he was a good man and we respect him, to us he was Mr.BOSS.

Because we are Italian we suppose to be good singers, at least that was the concept of the local pub patrons, so every night after work we go for a drink and soon find out that singing, as bad as we were, was a profitable business. We sing and the Aussie pay for the beer, we had a time of our life.

Grass Valley was and possibly still a great place to be. I have not been there since 1952. I have good memories, the good time, the hard work, the harsh climate, winter and summers under the tents was not very good, but when to put it all together and analyze the situation at the time, it was equal for every one. 1952 was the beginning of building a great nation that we love. Our small contribution I think, was appreciated

*Ciao Arivederci and goodbye
Your friend and compere,
Carlo Valendini*

Vince, the photos attached here with must be returned to me as you know I am writing my memories to pass to my grand children and the photos are very important. At present am up to from the day I was born to 1948. I have not started yet my Australian adventure. This book is not for publication of course, I am not that important or did anything outstanding in my life to deserve public recognition, however my children are entitled to know what we did in the past and most important, to know where we come from and (our) family history, however insignificant it is for the rest of the world.

Vince I am flat out in my job, age is catching up with me, not that 72 y.o. is too far advanced but it has slow me down a bit and my body is ready for the wreker but thank God the grey matter has not deteriorate. Give my regards to the persons involved in the research of compiling the story of Grass Valley, I wish him success and do not forget when it is put togheter, I would like very much to read it or peruse some of the old photos.

Vince excuse my English, come back to me in 20 years time and you will see some improvements.

Appendix 8 Public Comments

The owner/Licensee of the Tavern offered to display all pictorial matter relating to the Plan in the main bar to increase the numbers of community people who could comment on the proposals. The idea of using the Bar venue was good, as it was a social setting and without threat in terms of any comments made. Jane Guillaumier monitored comment and her feedback over a period of six weeks was one of almost complete support. There were a couple of people who said they would have liked the opportunity to be involved but when it was pointed out that mailouts and other means had been used to trawl for interest, they had not responded. The couple concerned agreed that this was the case and said that it was in hindsight that they now saw the value of participation.

Appendix 9 Video Extract

A video extract of chaff harvesting in Grass Valley is appended in the file accompanying the electronic version of this document.