



Strategic Community Plan

2021 - 2031

Shire Vision

"Our Shire is a place of welcome for all, where we work together, with thriving industry creating jobs, a bright future for our young people, and a bustling town in a beautiful and productive rural setting."

Welcome from the Shire President



On behalf of Council, I have pleasure in presenting this Introduction to the Shire of Quairading Draft Strategic Community Plan for the next 10-year Period, being 2021-2031.

In accordance with State legislation, Council is required to conduct a major Review of its Integrated Planning Documents at least every 4 Years.

The Review work commenced early in 2021 with the engagement of Wheatbelt based Consultancy 150 Square Pty Ltd, led by Caroline Robinson to assist Council and the Community with the Review of the 2017 – 2027 Plans. We thank Caroline and Associate Stephen Grimmer for their professional assistance to date on the Plan.

The Draft Plan presented outlines what Achievements and Progress have been made since the last Plan was adopted and implemented in 2017. I highlight that there have been many changes to the Council's Organisational Structure and Delivery Plans to best maximize the level of Service to the Residents of the District whilst seeking to keep Council Rates at a realistic level.

During this Period, Council has also benefitted from an increased level of Grant Funding from both the Federal and State Governments (such as Drought Funding, COVID Recovery and also the Secondary Freight Network Funding) to deliver a raft of Renewal Projects to Council's Road Network, Building and Facilities.

I would like to thank the many Community Members who have invested time, effort and their thoughts into the Community Engagement Phase of the Review which will guide Council in its deliberations on the Priorities and Strategies for the next decade.

The Draft Plan for 2021-2031 reflects the community's re-focused vision for Quairading to be a place of welcome and inclusion for all, where we work together, with thriving industry creating jobs, seeking out new opportunities, a bright future for our young people, and a bustling town in a beautiful and productive rural setting. It balances the community's desire to look after the assets we have, invest in our future; and keep Rates increases to an affordable level.

As with the current Strategic Community Plan, Council will have to continue to prioritise the Capital works program to provide a balance of new investments with the need to renew and maintain Council's existing Built Assets. Council will continue to actively seek out External Grant Funding opportunities to help fund the many planned Projects.

The Community has reaffirmed its Priorities of seeking a strong, growing and resilient economy which will lead to increased job opportunities and a good quality of life for all Community members. Council commits to working with Business and the Community to see these Aspirations and Priorities achieved. Council is also mindful of all aspects and advantages of a small country town and Community that need to be retained.

On behalf of Council, I invite the passionate Quairading Community to actively participate in the ongoing Strategic Planning for our Community and District.

Councillor Wayne Davies
President, Shire of Quairading



Council's Commitment to the Community

- We will spend local as often as we can
- We will consult and engage with our community
- We will encourage, welcome and value feedback
- We will be open, fair and impartial in whatever we do
- We will treat all people with respect
- We will encourage and support the volunteers in our community.

Key Points of the Plan

This plan outlines the objectives and strategies that will be followed over the coming years, including a number of major projects. In particular, the plan will deliver the following strategic priorities.

Community

The Shire of Quairading will continue to invest resources to deliver and provide support for both Core Services to the Community (including community welfare, health services, inclusivity, volunteering and emergency services), and the renewal and upgrading of Shire's community Facilities and Infrastructure.

The Plan commits to progress on cultural development and initiatives in partnership with local Noongar elders and family representatives through the Reconciliation Action Plan Committee.

The Plan provides for the realisation of a number of significant projects and further enhancements as follows:

- Development of Kwirading Koort Park.
- being "investment ready" for Independent Living Units and the Redevelopment of Arthur Kelly Village Independent Aged Accommodation, and further light industrial lots.
- saving up for the future redevelopment of a number of Sport and Recreation Facilities at the Greater Sports Oval.

The Council will undertake due diligence on all major capital and operational projects prior to any final decision to proceed. This will be done in order to ensure they are sustainable, viable and affordable (including whole of life costs) for Council and the community.

Economic and Tourism Development

Economic and tourism development is a very high priority for the community. The Council recognises the importance of thriving local businesses to provide jobs and investment opportunities for existing and potential new residents. Equally, a thriving community is needed to provide the workforce and local capital needed for business growth. Quairading has significant advantages (including location, liveability, available workforce), but also a number of challenges.



Economic infrastructure

Economic infrastructure is a challenging area. Lack of land for light industry is a known constraint. The focus is on the development of light industrial lots at the site of the old Sales Yard with Stage 1 of the Program (roads, services and utilities) and two (2) lots to be delivered in 2021/22.

The timing of Phase 2 will be following occupancy of initial sites and securing of funding.

Business-friendly

Alongside provision of infrastructure to support business growth, the Council also has a role in ensuring it conducts itself in a business-friendly manner. The Council is committed to the "Small Business Friendly Local Governments" program and will continue to update the Shire's program and deliver on its outcomes.

A recent initiative of the Council has been introduction of a Small Business Grants Program which will commence in the 2021/22 Financial Year.

Leveraging Federal and State Government priorities and programs

The Federal and State Governments are supporting a number of economic development priorities and programs. Development Commissions now have a focus on supporting regional businesses to be able to compete for State Government contracts.

The Shire will work with relevant agencies on opportunities to leverage priorities and programs to benefit local and regional businesses.

Facilitation of business and jobs growth

The Council will explore a facilitation approach to business and jobs growth through its Business Attraction Plan. The real engine of growth in the local economy is business itself. Only through the growth of existing or new businesses, especially those that bring wealth in (e.g. tourism, agriculture, logistics and manufacturing for wider markets etc), can employment and incomes rise. Local purchasing helps to keep those dollars from "leaking".

It can be assumed that individual businesses are already focused on their commercial success, and opportunities to further grow and prosper. If it is considered that growth in the local economy is possible, then it generally has to be in areas that exceed the capacity of businesses acting alone.

Tourism

The Shire will continue to support the growth of tourism through both Quairading and the region through:

- Engagement and support for the Quairading Tourism Steering Group;
- Membership and active participation in Roe Tourism Association;
- The introduction of the Small Business Grant program;
- The branding "Take a Closer Look" and promotion of Quairading in both social media and traditional media; and
- Support for events and activities.



Built Infrastructure

Asset renewals

The Shire needs to address an underlying gap in asset renewals, particularly for roads. It is vital to endeavour to close this gap and to preserve the serviceability of our local road network for our economy and community. The Plan sees a Rates increase above inflation rate to enable this gap to be narrowed.

Rural Roads Maintenance

The Shire has drawn up a 10-Year Capital Works Program for Roads, Pathways, Drainage and Bridges.

This Program will assist in determining the renewal and maintenance Programs on the Shire's Road and Footpath Network.

Buildings Maintenance

Future Building Maintenance and Renewal Strategy to be determined during the life of the Plan.

This will drive the renewal and maintenance Program for Shire's Building assets.

Natural Environment

The Shire seeks to ensure the sustainability of our local environment through: -

- Compliance with environmental health legislation.
- Conservation of our natural environment through management of invasive species, and management of our nature reserves.
- Reduction of the Shire's carbon footprint through water-wise programs, renewable energy and waste recycling.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

We will strive for continual improvement in efficiency and effectiveness, with an emphasis on:

- Maintaining and developing partnerships to achieve the best outcomes for the community:
 - working together locally (e.g. with Quairading CRC, Education, Business, Sport and Recreation Council).
 - regional and sub-regional collaboration.
- Improving customer service, communications and community engagement.
- Reviewing efficiency to make sure every dollar counts.



Financial Profile

Historically, the Shire has had an underlying gap in asset renewals, particularly for roads. Like many rural Shires, asset renewals have been subject to historic underfunding. While this suppresses rates, it leads to a decline in the serviceability of the assets. It is therefore vital to close this gap, particularly to preserve the serviceability of our local road network for our economy and community.

The cost of this has been reflected in rates increases above inflation. Long term financial projection assumes inflation at the rate of 2%.

Prudent borrowing is used to spread the cost of major new assets over their life.

The Shire will actively pursue grants both competitive and non-competitive for priority projects, and will maximise revenue generation from activities such as private works.

Due diligence will be applied to all proposed major capital and operational projects to ensure they are sustainable, viable and affordable.

There are moderate increases in operational costs to fund economic development initiatives, which was a high priority to emerge from the community engagement. There are also some non-discretionary items in areas such as town planning and workforce planning, environmental health and building control.

Review of the Long Term Financial Plan is being undertaken in 2021 to determine the funding required to achieve this plan.

Achievements since the 2017 - 2027 Strategic Plan

Our Shire has achieved the following since our last major Strategic Community Plan review.

OUTCOMES - ECONOMY

- Adoption of Small Business Friendly Government program.
- Good quality, affordable visitor accommodation at the Quairading Caravan Park.
- Assessment of existing facilities to drive improved economic outcomes – Business Attraction Plan adopted.
- Factory units – Sale of factory units to new business in Town.
- Development of a Business Small Grant Program.

OUTCOMES – COMMUNITY

- Development, refinement and delivery of the Shire's Community Grant program.
- Provision of sport and recreation facilities and forward planning for local sports clubs, including the continuation of Reserve Funds for future infrastructure development.
- Collaborative emergency planning and preparedness.
- Reconciliation Action Plan Committee established with regular meetings.
- Dual naming initiatives commenced.
- Youth Officer integrated into Shire structure and services.
- Continued support of child care services being delivered locally.
- Development of Concept Design for Independent Living Units Precinct on Suburban Road.
- Development of final design for Kwirading Koort Nature Playground.
- Establishment of a MOU with the Quairading CRC Committee.

OUTCOMES - BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Buildings
 - Completion of Works Depot Redevelopment.
 - Installation of Caravan Park Cottages, Backpacker Units and Caretaker Cottage.
- Roads
 - Major roadworks completed on the Cunderdin / Quairading Road under the Grain Freight Funding.
 - Completion of repairs to flood damaged roads and infrastructure (WANDRRA).
 - Pilot Wheatbelt South Freight Network Program – Quairading / Cunderdin Rd (5 kms).
 - Resheeting of priority gravel roads through the Shire.
 - Expansion of Airstrip Apron.



- Other infrastructure
 - Upgrades to Shire Hall including Audio-visual system, stage lighting, renovations to Main Hall, Lesser Hall and Stage and Change room facilities.
 - Renewal of Bowling Club synthetic surface.
 - Renewal of Oval floodlighting.
- Land Planning
 - Design and sub-divisional approval of Phase 1 of Light Industrial Lots Precinct.

OUTCOMES – NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Water and Energy
 - Waterwise Accreditation of the Memorial Swimming Pool.
 - Installation of Solar Voltaic Systems at Medical Centre (10KW System) and Swimming Pool / Oval / Caravan Park Precinct (36.5KW System).
- Waste Management
 - Containers for Change Program implemented.
- Natural Reserves
 - Coordination and delivery of the State NRM Funded Project Combating Vegetation Decline Program.
 - Compliance with Native Vegetation Regulations and Environmental Protection Act.

OUTCOMES – GOVERNANCE

- Local Laws reviewed.
- Policy Review Project completed in 2019/20.
- SCP desktop review completed in 2019.
- Revision of the Workforce Masterplan adopted in 2021.
- Increased Elected Member Governance Training.
- Advocacy - Political lobbying of local members at both State and Federal Government level.
- Partnerships - Strong regional representation at WALGA/Central Country Zone, Wheatbelt South Regional Road Group, Wheatbelt Business Network and Roe Tourism Association.
- Enhanced community engagement to provide opportunities for collaboration and participation in decision making.
- Customer Service
 - Development and implementation of a Customer Request System.
 - Enabling better tracking, reporting and documentation of Customer issues and outcomes.
- Finances – strong financial management achieving unqualified "clear" audits.



Shire of Quairading Key Statistics

The Shire of Quairading is located 167km east of Perth on the York-Quairading Road. Its main localities are Quairading, Pantapin, Yoting, Badjaling, Dangan, South Caroling, Balkuling, Doodenanning, and Wamenusking. Occupying a land area of approximately 2017 km², the Shire borders eight other LGAs consisting of the Shires of York, Cunderdin, Beverley, Bruce Rock, Kellerberrin, Brookton, Corrigin, and Tammin.

- The 2016 Census recorded the Shire's usually resident population at 1,019. There has been little change over the past 10 years.
- The median age in the Shire of Quairading is 52 years, up 4 years from 2011. This is considerably older than the median age for Western Australia as a whole which was 36 in the 2016 census (no change from 2011).
- The 2016 Census records 82 people who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander living in the Shire of Quairading, representing 8% of the population.
- The 2016 Census shows that there has been a slight increase in the proportion of residents that were born outside of Australia (from 8% to 13%).
- In 2016, there were 393 households in the Shire of Quairading, a reduction from 420 in 2011. There are 249 family households and 149 non-family households. The largest family type is couple with no children (137).
- The percentage of the population with higher qualifications is slightly below the Western Australian State average. Note that there has been a slight increase in the percentage of the population that holds a higher qualification since 2011.
- The SEIFA score for the Shire of Quairading was 930 a ranking of 19 among LGAs in Western Australia (the lower the ranking number, the more disadvantaged the LGA).
- According to the 2016 Census, the District has a workforce of 396 or 44% of the total resident population.
- According to ABS 2015 estimates, the latest available, there were 146 businesses operating in the Shire of Quairading, a slight drop from 2014. The majority of these businesses were non-employing businesses (88), while 47 had 1-4 employees, 8 had 5-19, and 3 employed 20 or more persons. Family farms are a significant form of business in the Shire.

How We Developed this Document

Our Strategic Community Plan reinforces our commitment to the people who live, work and visit Quairading. The purpose of this document is to provide a clear purpose and strategic direction for our Shire, and to source the funding and support required to address the community priorities detailed later in this document.

It was developed based on

- The State Government's Blueprint for the region and other relevant policies, plans and strategies from both the State and Federal Governments.
- Extensive community engagement on what is important to the people that live within our Shire.
- Input from Elected Members and Staff based on feedback they have received and their strong desire to deliver positive outcomes for their community.
- Current partnerships and projects already being delivered.

Progress Reporting

The Shire of Quairading has adopted a traffic light based Quarterly Update to report progress against the priorities as detailed in the Corporate Business Plan which will be shared via a Council Item and on the Shire web-site. In addition, results are formally communicated to the community annually via the legislated Annual Report.

IPR Reviews

This Strategic Community Plan will be subjected to a minor review in 2023 and a major review requiring extensive community engagement in 2025 as legislated. In addition, the Corporate Business Plan will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect any changes to priorities, service levels and the budget.

Summary of Community Engagement

ACTIVITY	VENUE & FORMAT		RESPONSES
Business Survey Drop	Dropped surveys into businesses in the Main Street and briefly discussed		
Community Drop-in	Handed out surveys to people attending the local supermarket		
Tourism Group	Discussion with the local tourism development committee at the CRC		7
Business Session - Corporate Bowls	Discussions with local business at the Bowling Club		40
Shire of Quairading Staff Meeting	Session with staff to get their input at the Shire Offices		7
Seniors Coffee and Chat	Round table discussion with a group of seniors at the local cafe		21
Councillors Information Session	Discussion on macro issues (external and internal) affecting the Shire		10
Noongar engagement session	Round table discussion with elders at the CRC		5 Elders
Phone calls to identified individuals			15
Community Surveys - school students	Hard copies		49
Community Surveys	Hard Copies	On-line	85
<p style="text-align: center;">TOTAL 243</p> <p style="text-align: center;">23% OF RESIDENT POPULATION</p>			



Strategic Priorities

Community members were asked to rank the following strategic priorities in order of importance to them with the resulting order being.

STRATEGY	HIGH PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY
Access to health services		
Access to services and facilities for Noongars		
Access to services and facilities for people with disabilities		
Bush fire prevention and control		
Conservation and environmental management		
Development of the Town Centre		
Economic Development		
Facilities, services and care available for seniors		
Events, arts and cultural activities		
Sport and recreation activities		
Promotion of our community		
Tourism development		
Safety and security		
Services and facilities for youth		



Emerging issues raised by community members at the various engagement forums:

- The **pride that local people** and in particular long-term residents have in their shire and their desire to support and care for each other.
- The **importance of agriculture and rural services** and the need to think big to attract rural business opportunities.
- A desire for the Shire to **employ local residents** wherever this is practical.
- The **shrinking population and the potential impact** this could have on community facilities and services.
- The **importance of volunteering** and the potential for volunteer burnout with the pool of volunteers shrinking.
- The **importance of and potential for local tourism** with COVID-19 resulting in a significant increase in visitors to the town.
- The **lack of suitable rental accommodation** to attract workers to the town.
- The **importance of attracting community minded people, targeted skills and boutique business** to the town and the region.

Strategic Direction

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
1. COMMUNITY	
1.1 Work collaboratively with local and regional service providers to engage the community as active citizens.	The Shire facilitates inclusive access to all facilities and services
	Work towards Reconciliation Action Plan Committee aspirations
	Preservation of assets and education of our local culture and heritage
	Actively support youth development
1.2 Provide social and cultural activities for all members of the community	Sporting and recreational facilities
	Increased participation
1.3 Advocate for the provision of quality health services, health facilities and programs in the Shire	Retention of local health facilities and visiting services
	Ageing in place can occur within the district
	Facilitate support for mental health to vulnerable persons
1.4 Support local volunteer organisations through initiatives that reduce volunteer fatigue and strengthen their resilience	Volunteers feel supported by the Shire
	Delivery of the Shire's Community Grants Program
1.5 Support emergency services planning, risk mitigation, response and recovery	We collaboratively plan and respond to emergency situations identified in Local Emergency Management Arrangement (LEMA)



2. ECONOMY

2.1 Promote the Economic and Business Growth Strategy for current businesses and the sustainable attraction of new industry (Small Business Friendly Local Government and Action Plan)	Work towards initiatives in our Economic and Business Growth plans
	Support and advocacy for agriculture
	Local economic diversification
	Delivery of the Shire's Business Grant Program
2.2 Build upon our "Take a Closer Look" brand with the development of an internal marketing strategy focusing on our community, events and facilities to increase our permanent and transient population	Local businesses capture opportunity through the caravan park and tourism assets and experiences
	Improved online presence and awareness
	Visitors receive timely and accurate information about our Shire attractions and services
	Well attended local events and celebrations
2.3 Shire engages stakeholders and partners to help capture local economic development initiatives	Demonstrated progress with stakeholders to facilitate land development, industry and jobs growth
2.4 Encourage local workforce participation	Residents can access local, inclusive and modern childcare facilities and services
	Traineeships / apprenticeships / flexible employment models



3. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Safe, efficient and well maintained road and footpath infrastructure	Achievement of the 10yr road plan goals and strategies
	Less impact on our roads due to extreme weather events and increased vehicle tonnage (road engineering, stormwater management)
3.2 Parks, gardens and social spaces are safe and encourage active, engaged and healthy lifestyles	Completion of the Community Park in the Quairading town site
	Access and aesthetic improvements at the cemetery are undertaken
3.3 Improvements to building infrastructure including our sport and recreation facilities, residential and service delivery facilities following considered cost benefit analysis models and venue management plans	Updating of Shire's Asset Management Plan to ensure viability and sustainability of the Shire's Building Assets
	Planning and development for sport and recreation facilities is coordinated and cohesive (Masterplan Sport and Rec)
	Agreed concept and project plan for Multi-Purpose Precinct
	Heating of the leisure pool at the swimming pool enables greater patronage

4. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

4.1 Maintain a high standard of environmental health services	Compliance with environmental health legislation
4.2 Conservation of our natural environment	Community engagement in the management of invasive species,
	Management of nature reserves
4.3 Demonstrate sustainable practices of water, energy and waste management	Preservation and improved efficiency and use of natural assets (water, sun, wind)



5. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

5.1 Shire communication is consistent, engaging and responsive	Residents and community groups believe they are being listened to and fairly treated
5.2 Forward planning and implementation of plans to determine Strategic Plan and service levels	Collaborative planning amongst key stakeholders
	Local community engagement level
5.3 Provide informed and transparent decision making that, meets our legal obligations, and the needs of our diverse community	Performance against targets – Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plans goals
5.4 Implement systems and processes that meet legislative and audit obligations	External Audits and Reviews confirm compliance with relevant legislation.



Strategic Risks for the Shire of Quairading:

The following risks were identified by Council and mitigation of these risks are included in the Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, Workforce Plan and Long-term Financial Plan.

<p>COMMUNITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment opportunities and diversity ▪ Quality public and private accommodation ▪ Attraction and retention of resident population ▪ Volunteer fatigue 	<p>ECONOMY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low cost, reliable power sources ▪ Telecommunication reliability and coverage ▪ Proximity to regional centres ▪ Ageing water infrastructure ▪ Education opportunities
<p>ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Changing of the climate ▪ Waste and recycling management 	<p>LEADERSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing community expectations of Council ▪ Councillor and staff succession and renewal ▪ Staff attraction and retention ▪ Compliance ▪ Access to funding to achieve community aspirations ▪ Aging workforce

