

# **Shire of Victoria Plains**



## **COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2013/14 TO 2022/23**

***The Shire of Victoria Plains...***

***Many localities***

***One perfect Lifestyle***

***A Place to Grow***

## **Introduction -The Shire of Victoria Plains Today**

### ***The Shire of Victoria Plains – many localities – one perfect lifestyle – a place to grow***

The Shire of Victoria Plains is a unique community, with a number of distinctive townsites and settlements spread out over an expanse of 256,973 hectares. Those include Bolgart in the south, leading to the more centrally located town of Calingiri, with Yerecoin and Piawaning in the North-east and New Norcia, Gillingarra and Mogumber towards the west.

Surrounded by seven local governments, the Shire recorded a population of 915 in the 2011 ABS Census. The highest numbers in age groups form around the 5-14 year olds and the 25 to 64 year old groups. Very low numbers are seen in the 15 - 24 year age group and then again in the 75 to 85 plus. The ABS population projection for the Shire over the past ten years (2001 to 2011) is that the 2001 figure reduced by approximately 4.5%.

Traditionally and predominantly a prosperous farming district, the Shire boasts Australia's only Monastic Town, New Norcia which welcomes approximately 60,000 visitors to the town each year. In addition, each town features a community hall, and there is a recreation centre, the Shire Administration, public library and sports oval in Calingiri. Both Bolgart and Mogumber have public libraries while Bolgart and Calingiri have caravan parks, and the Victoria Plains Tourism Association holds an annual Wildflower Walk in various reserves each year around August.

Even though the Shire has a small population, it is filled with community energy and enthusiasm, making it a special place to live.

### **What is a Strategic Plan and what will it do?**

The Shire of Victoria Plains Council has recognised the need to have a clear direction that will guide the Council decision making and officer priorities. The result is the development of this Strategic Plan 2012-2022.

This Plan contains the following information:-

- How this Plan was developed
- The challenges ahead
- Message from the President
- Shire Vision
- Values
- Mission
- Goals
- Strategies
- Key success factors
- Message from the Chief Executive Officer

### **How this Plan was developed**

The content of this Plan is the result of a collaborative effort between the Council, staff and the community. This process involved a combination of informing, consulting and involving stakeholders.

In December 2011, the Shire distributed a community survey and called for written comments, the results of which were collated by the Shire's Executive Staff and presented to Councillors. In this approach the community was placed first in the development of a blueprint for the Plan.

This Plan was reviewed by the Community Strategic Planning Committee, a group made up of representatives from Council and Administration of the Shire. Following consideration and endorsement by the Full Council the Draft Community Strategic Plan was available to all ratepayers and residents of the Shire during February / March 2013 for their comment.

This Community Strategic Plan is a living document and will be reviewed annually to ensure its continued viability and relevance.

### **The challenges ahead**

The consultation for the development of this Plan highlighted a number of key challenges which will need to be acknowledged and confronted if the Council's vision is to be achieved.

The Shire is at a vital point in its history. There have been the changes to the agricultural industry, as well as increasing demands from the tourist sector, indications of a potential population boost from a "bush-change" phenomenon, combined with local government structural reform, all having an impact on the landscape and direction of the Shire today. Other challenges include:-

- Improving the current community perception of the Shire due to prior communication breakdowns.
- Shortage of housing availability to attract people made worse by blockages to the release of land suitable for development.
- Local government reform and the potential for change to the existing structure.
- Difficulty in attaining public funding for infrastructure development.
- Changes to farm sizes and its impact on a diminishing population.
- Demonstrating equitable practices between communities.
- Changes in practices to and awareness of the environment.
- Ability to attract and retain good staff and services.
- Changes in expectations from the community and tourists.
- Limited financial and other key resources.
- Managing the impacts of a mining industry on the community and public infrastructure.

In addition there are the opportunities for the Shire's future consideration, including the demand for inexpensive land which could bring new people to the district, New Norcia's well known identity in WA, and the beauty and history of the Shire.

MESSAGE FROM THE SHIRE PRESIDENT  
Councillor Geoff Erickson

*I am very pleased to present this Community Strategic Plan for the Shire of Victoria Plains. It is important that we have a Plan that is a reflection of our community's aspirations and can provide direction of our finite resources.*

*My congratulations and support goes to the shires officers for developing this Plan for the future, which engaged many community members either through workshops or through written submissions and in November 2011 the shire conducted a mail out survey which has some of the electors contribution reflected in the updated Plan.*

*It is the valuable feedback that has helped to determine the shires future direction.*

*I would also like to thank my fellow councillors who contributed to this process and look forward to ongoing interactions with the community and staff to continue to create a unique Shire that attracts tourists and new residents to the region.*

## **Vision**

Our vision statement is an expression of what we aspire to ensure the Shire of Victoria Plains is like for the people who live here in the future.

### ***The Shire of Victoria Plains – Many Localities – One Perfect Lifestyle – A Place to Grow***

It is the year 2023; and the Shire of Victoria Plains is

- A growing shire, continuing to attract more people to its diverse and unique region
- Attractive country living within reach of the City
- A sustainable lifestyle with clean and green environmentally friendly practices
- Underpinned by sustainable private enterprise and essential services accessible to all communities
- A shire working and growing in cooperation
- A shire that supports and encourages innovation, adoption of new environmental and economically positive practices and the rights of the individual

**Values**

The Council has identified a number of values which describe the underlying philosophy that will guide the Shire of Victoria Plains in the conduct of its activities.

**COMMUNICATION**

We will conduct open communication, with each other and with the community.

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

We are a Shire that is responsible for its decisions and its actions, is open to scrutiny and meets all statutory requirements.

**ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR**

We undertake our functions based on truthfulness, honesty and fairness.

**OUTCOME FOCUS**

We encourage innovation, creativity, and being proactive whilst achieving our goals.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

The Shire will have a long term focus, based on triple bottom line measurement, to support a solid future.

**COMMUNITY**

Our focus is a team approach. Working together with the community and drawing the community together.

**Mission**

Our mission statement explains our sense of purpose and how the Shire of Victoria Plains will seek to conduct its business on behalf of the community

***To work in partnership with the community, developing the potential of the Shire and building a positive future in accordance with our core values.***

## **Goals**

The goals included in the Strategic Plan are the broad outcomes which in the long term will ensure that the vision is achieved. They are the broad description of how the Shire will set about achieving the vision. The Shire's goals provide the foundation for ensuring alignment between the Council's vision and the activities which are approved and undertaken. By constantly seeking alignment of all actions with the vision Council will ensure that the Community Strategic Plan is implemented over the long term.

The following four goals will guide the achievement of the Community Strategic Plan.

### **GOAL 1:**

**GROWTH** Plan for and facilitate sustainable growth and development

### **GOAL 2:**

**COMMUNITY** Increase the sustainability of the community

### **GOAL 3:**

**SHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE** Responsibly maintain as fit for purpose

### **GOAL 4:**

**GOVERNANCE** Ensure good governance of the Shire

## **Strategies**

### **GOAL 1: GROWTH**

***Plan for and facilitate sustainable growth and development***

The Shire will achieve this goal through:

- Facilitating the release of land
- Supporting the sustainable management of the Environment
- Water management

#### ***1.1 Facilitating the Release of Land***

- STRATEGY 1.1.1 -Develop a Feasibility Study for land release
- STRATEGY 1.1.2 -Develop and implement the Structural Land Use Plan
- STRATEGY 1.1.3 -Develop a 'Town Site Plan' for each identified growth centre which identifies the infrastructure needs e.g. water, sewerage, power
- STRATEGY 1.1.4 -Develop and implement strategies to lobby for government support for land release

#### ***1.2 Supporting the sustainable management of the Environment***

- STRATEGY 1.2.1 -Develop an Environmental Management Plan that creates appropriate environmental policies for the Shire that reflects the community's expectations for the management of the natural environment, salinity and drainage.
- STRATEGY 1.2.2 -Develop a policy that supports and practices good environmental planning

#### ***1.3 Water Management***

- STRATEGY 1.3.1 - Work with relevant agencies and the community to improve practices in water use
- STRATEGY 1.3.2 – Work to drought proof the entire shire by implementing Emergency Water Supplies in each district

## **GOAL 2: COMMUNITY**

### ***Increase the sustainability of the community***

The Shire will achieve this through:

- Health and Education
- Community Prosperity
- Community Enrichment

#### **2.1 Health & Education**

- STRATEGY 2.1.1 -Support the local primary schools to help maintain their viability and encourage teachers to the area
- STRATEGY 2.1.2 -Develop a 'Health Services Plan' that identifies ways to increase the number of health professionals to support the area and provide more aged housing / accommodation in conjunction with AROC Councils
- STRATEGY 2.1.3 -Conduct a review into the needs and promotion of HACC (home care) funded programs within the Shire

#### **2.2 Community Prosperity**

STRATEGY 2.2.1 - Recognise the importance of local tourism by:

- Working in partnerships which support and encourage the tourist industry
- Supporting the development of local initiatives through a small Shire-managed Funding Program
- Assisting with the promotion of local tourist locations (through the website and other mediums)
- Develop a plan for the Caravan Parks that includes a review of the management structure and maintenance of the facilities Implement the individual townsites Beautification Plans

STRATEGY 2.2.2 -Encourage and support economic development (including new business) through;

- Facilitating the development of business alliances to support a potential 'Victoria Plains Business Association' using new technology methods to link businesses. Utilise the services of the Small Business Development Corporation and other relevant agencies to create an 'Innovation Plan' to encourage new business to and support small business within the Shire

#### **2.3 Community Enrichment**

STRATEGY 2.3.1 - Encourage the artistic community through the development of a Community Arts / Cultural Plan and that includes supporting community events and projects that contribute to the development of community spirit and celebration of history

STRATEGY 2.3.2 - Develop a 'Recreational Facilities and Equipment Need Study' that includes outlining potential funding sources for the Shire, emergency and voluntary services across the Shire

STRATEGY 2.3.3 - Support the development and maintenance of community facilities in the Shire

STRATEGY 2.3.4 - Foster the growth and development of 'Connect Victoria Plains'

STRATEGY 2.3.5 - Review the usage of the community halls to determine the specialist use of each facility, and build on its comparative advantage

STRATEGY 2.3.6 - Investigate the opportunities for and foster the development of a local community-based transport system

STRATEGY 2.3.7 - Continue to support and recognise volunteers

### **GOAL 3: SHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### ***Responsibly maintain as fit for purpose Shire Infrastructure***

The Shire will achieve this through:

- Roads
- Waste
- Community Buildings

#### **3.1 Roads**

- STRATEGY 3.1.1 - Develop a fully-costed 'Road Plan'
- STRATEGY 3.1.2 - Develop an 'Asset Management Plan'
- STRATEGY 3.1.3 – Identify gravel reserves / raw materials

#### **3.2 Waste**

- STRATEGY 3.2.1 -Develop a long term 'Plan for Waste Disposal'
- STRATEGY 3.2.2 -Develop a long term 'Plan for Recycling'

#### **3.3 Community Buildings**

- STRATEGY 3.3.1 -(See Strategy 3.1.2 Develop an 'Asset Management Plan')
- STRATEGY 3.3.2 -Develop a plan for the sustainable funding for infrastructure (Debt Management Plan)

### **GOAL 4: GOVERNANCE**

#### ***Ensure good governance of the Shire***

The Shire will achieve this through:

- Finance
- Human Resources
- Compliance
- Advocacy
- Innovative Solutions
- Administration
- Communication

#### **4.1 Finance**

- STRATEGY 4.1.1 -Develop a Long Term Financial Plan to guide the implementation of the strategic Plan
- STRATEGY 4.1.2 -Examine and develop opportunities to grow the Shire's revenue base
- STRATEGY 4.1.3 -Research and employ an innovative approach to sourcing resources

#### **4.2 Human Resources**

- STRATEGY 4.2.1 -Develop a 'Workforce Plan' that investigates feasibility, cost and opportunity for:
- Training and professional development of staff (in line with their Performance Reviews) and Councillors;
- Shire Traineeships;
- A Cross Cultural Awareness Program for the Shire Administration and Council

#### **4.3 Compliance**

- STRATEGY 4.3.1 -Maintain / retain full compliance with statutory obligations
- STRATEGY 4.3.2 -Conduct a Red Tape Audit

- STRATEGY 4.3.3 -Develop and implement a self assessment review for Councillors to be completed annually

#### **4.4 Advocacy**

- STRATEGY 4.4.1 -Develop strategies for targeted lobbying to support relevant strategies
- STRATEGY 4.4.2 -Foster opportunities for partnerships that can support strategies and achieve shared outcomes

#### **4.5 Innovative Solutions**

- STRATEGY 4.5.1 -Conduct an annual review of the Strategic Plan progress, measuring the Key Success Factors
- STRATEGY 4.5.2 -Actively seek opportunities for resource sharing and joint service arrangements

#### **4.6 Administration**

- STRATEGY 4.6.1 -Conduct a review incorporating feasibility and opportunities for the Shire Administration arrangements and location where they can be demonstrated as cost efficient and effective alternatives

#### **4.7 Communication**

- STRATEGY 4.7.1 -Develop and implement a communication and consultation policy based on actively promoting and encouraging two way communication between the Shire and its stakeholders through various strategies (including surveys, the Shire's website, print media, local radio, Shire Newsletter, public meetings and forums, community events and noticeboards)
- STRATEGY 4.7.2 -Examine the possibility / feasibility of engaging a part time or contract 'Communications Officer' position for the Shire to support objective 4.7 Communication
- STRATEGY 4.7.3 -Continue to enhance and develop the Shire's website as a major (two-way) communication tool
- STRATEGY 4.7.4 -Develop strategies for consulting with and engaging the Indigenous community

### **Key Success Factors**

Key Success Factors are provided as an indication of how the Council and staff can be judged on their progress in meeting the strategic direction and goals of the Strategic Plan.

They are linked to strategies within the Plan and describe what needs to be done in some instances success will depend on enlisting the support and cooperation of others, and this factor alone takes time. The Plan is for the future and will not be achievable in one or two years. This is recognised by establishing Key Success factors over the life of the Plan.

The Key Success Factors should be used as a guide. Some strategies may be able to be achieved sooner than suggested and others may take longer. The important thing is that by having established some Key Success Factors the Council has built in an accountability mechanism for the Strategic Plan.

## **GOAL 1: GROWTH**

Plan for and facilitate sustainable growth and development

<b>MEASUREMENT</b>
<b>Facilitating Land Release</b>
Feasibility Study for Land Release developed
The successful release of additional land for development in the Shire
Increase in number of development approvals
Positive population growth as measured by the ABS Census Data
Development of Structural Land Use Plan
Town site plans progressively developed for each identified growth centre
<b>Management of the Environment</b>
Development of an Environmental Management Plan
Policy on Environmental Planning developed and adopted
<b>Water</b>
Improvements in water usage, baseline developed 2013, improvements from 2014

## **GOAL 2: COMMUNITY**

Increase the sustainability of the community

<b>MEASUREMENT</b>
<b>Health &amp; Education</b>
All schools maintained
School teachers surveyed to identify initiatives the Shire could consider to encourage teachers to the area
HACC funded program in operation. Planning and preparation 2008, implemented by January 2009.
Development of a Health Services Plan for the Shire
<b>Community Prosperity</b>
Tourism Plan developed
Implement Tourist Plan initiatives
Increase in the number of local new businesses, create data base 2008 to allow future assessment of growth
Facilitate a forum to encourage formation of a Victoria Plains Business Association
Development of a Tourism Funding Program
Development of a Small Business Innovation Plan
Increased numbers of tourists, develop baseline 2008, monitor from 2009
<b>Community Enrichment</b>
Development of a Shire Community Directory
Connect Victoria Plains in existence
Volunteer numbers maintained / grown, develop baseline 2007, monitor from 2008
Increase number of community activities/events, compare annually to 2007
Assessment of engaging a part time or contract 'Community Development Officer' position presented to Council to allow consideration in 2008 budget
Adoption of a Community Arts/Cultural Plan

### **GOAL 3: SHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Responsibly maintain as fit for purpose

<b>KPI</b>
<b>Roads</b>
Road Plan developed
Road plan progressively implemented
Asset Management Plan implemented
<b>Waste</b>
Plan for Waste disposal and Recycling developed
<b>Community Buildings</b>
Sustainable Funding for Infrastructure Plan developed

### **GOAL 4: GOVERNANCE**

Ensure good governance of the Shire

<b>KPI</b>
<b>Finance</b>
5 Year Financial Plan adopted
Shire's revenue base grown by 5% greater than CPI annually
Strategic Plan reviewed annually
<b>Human Resources</b>
Development of a Training and Development Plan
Improved employee satisfaction and retention levels (staff survey)
<b>Compliance</b>
No instances of less than full compliance with statutory requirements
Self assessment review developed and implemented annually
<b>Advocacy</b>
New partnerships developed, review current and potential 2007, assess from 2008
<b>Innovative Solutions</b>
Opportunities for resource sharing and joint service arrangements assessed and implemented
Meeting Key Success Factors
<b>Administration</b>
Future of Shire's service locations determined
<b>Communication</b>
Increase in community satisfaction of Shire's communication and consultation (measured by biannual survey), first survey budgeted 2008-09
Development of a Shire Communication & Consultation Policy and adoption by Council