



Sustainable Economy Strategy 2021-2025



Acknowledgement of Country

“Kaya, Nala Maat Kaya Noonduk (Hello, Our Family Welcomes You) to Wadandi Boodja (Saltwater People’s Country) – we all come together on Boodja (Country). Whilst on Wadandi Boodja we ask that you respect the land by walking softly and take the time to listen to Boodja as she Wongi (Talks).

We respect the presence of the Demmala Goomala (Ancestors) whose Djanga (Spirits) reside on Boodja and whose Djenna (feet) walk the land and whose Djanga Korda (heart spirit) flows through all creation. Wooditjup (Margaret River) is the heart of Wadandi Boodja (country), a meeting place between land and sea, connecting us all with Wadandi Boodja.

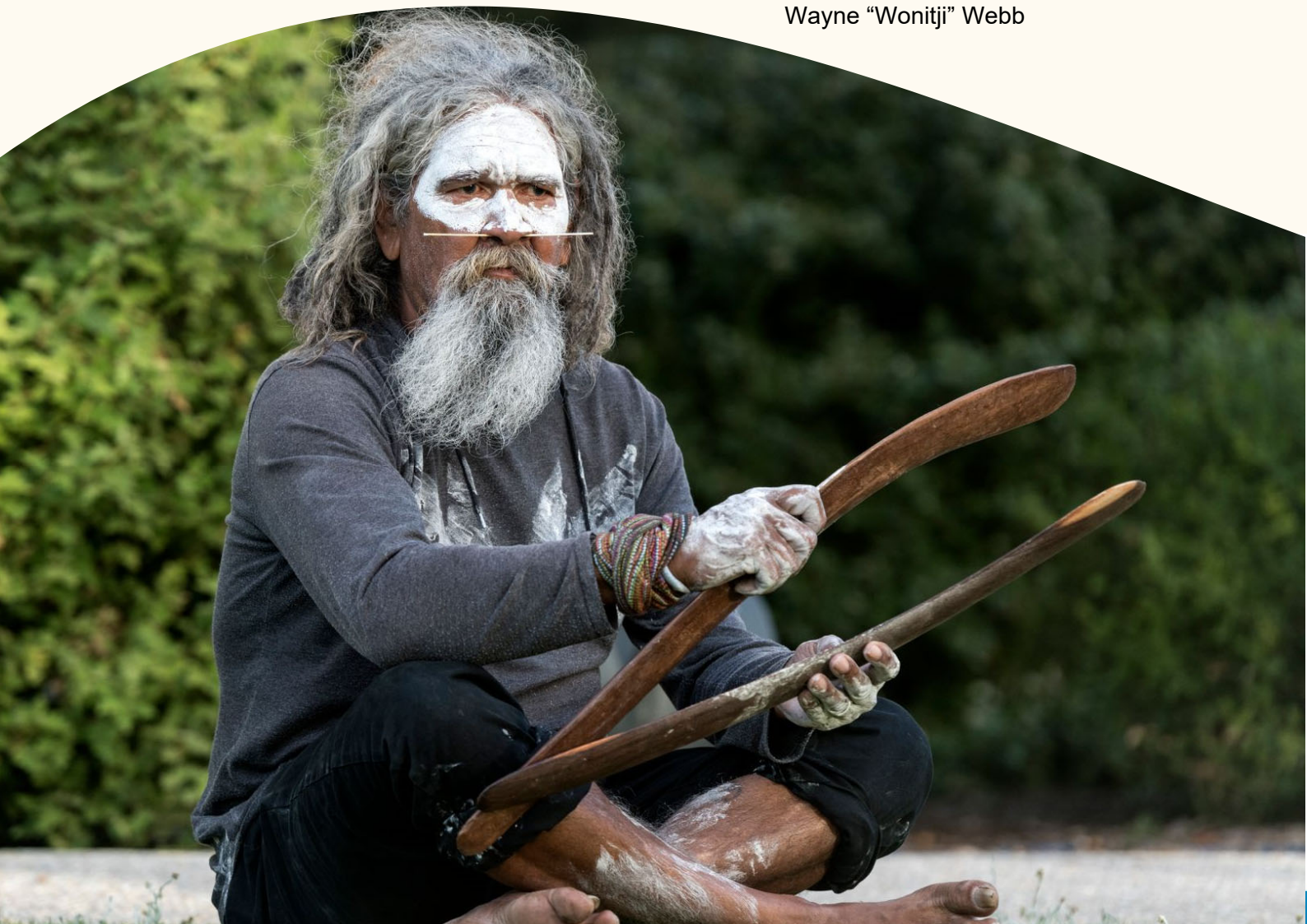
The Wadandi Boodja (Motherland) reaches from Bunbury, along the coast of Geographe Bay, extending to Yallingup (Place of Holes) to Talinup, Augusta (Place of Reeds) inland to Nannup (The Stopping Place), taking in the region of Undalup (Busselton) The Wadan Boodja (Sea Country) is of great spiritual significance to the coastal Wadandi people.

Boodja – Land, Country, Mother Earth – is our most important resource. No matter what culture or religion – all of us rely on Nala Boodja, Our Country.

It is up to all of us to listen to the land, understand the connection to Country that we all have and realise how urgent it is to work together to make better decisions on how we can create that balance, ensuring sustainability for the generations to come, in order to protect and preserve the beauty of Boodja.

Whilst living, travelling, visiting and holidaying on Wadandi Boodja (Saltwater People’s Country) we ask that you respect the area and walk softly on the country, taking the time to listen to Boodja (Country) as she Wongi (Talks) of the Season, and leave nothing but footprints”.

Wadandi Traditional Cultural Custodian
Wayne “Wonitji” Webb



Foreword: message from the Shire President



Cr Ian Earl
Shire President

The Shire of Augusta Margaret River acknowledges we are on Wadandi and Pibulmun Boodja, whose ancestors and their descendants are the traditional owners of this country.

We acknowledge the Wadandi and Pibulmun have been custodians since the land was soft (creation times) and continue to perform age old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region.

The Shire is committed to Aboriginal Australians sharing fairly and equitably in the region's cultural, social, environmental and economic future.

Council is committed to supporting a sustainable and prosperous future for our residents and local businesses, a future that balances and integrates the need for environmental protection, social wellbeing and economic prosperity. This means protecting the Shire's pristine environment and

cohesive community through ensuring that economic development is well planned and sustainable into the future. An intergenerational approach is required to ensure long lasting prosperity is created, not just short-term financial gain at the expense of the environment or community wellbeing. Economic development activities should improve community outcomes as a key purpose. In governing the Shire's strategic direction, Council has a vital role to play through this Sustainable Economy Strategy, setting a clear economic vision and adopting the policy settings that will foster a sustainable future.

Our community was hard hit during the height of COVID-19 lockdowns, and we have all seen first hand the need to build resilience into our economy. Resilience is a key focus of this strategy, which emphasises the need for investment into the health of the environment, development of talent and opportunities for our community members and creation of the right conditions for creative and entrepreneurial thinking to meet future challenges and needs.

Despite the dramatic disruption and changes to tourism over the last 12 months, the Margaret River Region remains a sought after tourist destination known principally for its premium wine, quality produce, associated fine dining and world class surfing. An integral part of the experience is the natural environment, a key drawcard which impresses itself upon all who spend time here. Safeguarding the region's environment is a serious responsibility for all stakeholders and the Council has an important function to play in ensuring it is at the core of the Shire's approach to economic development.

This Sustainable Economy Strategy broadly covers the sphere of influence the Shire has to facilitate and foster sustainable economic development. It identifies priority areas for action over the next four years to build on the region's strengths and to tackle the complexities evident in a seasonal, tourism-focused economy. Although we are a small, regional Local Government area, we have a talented and passionate community, innovative and invested small businesses and abundant natural assets. We aspire to be a leader in sustainable economic development and this strategy is an important step in this direction.

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Introduction

Purpose of the strategy

A sustainable economy is about living well while consuming less resources and generating less waste – a circular economy with fair distribution.

Governments around the world are recognising the need for a more sophisticated approach towards economic development – one that recognises humankind's impact on natural ecosystems and puts wellbeing conspicuously at the forefront of any economic development objectives.

This strategy will seek to provide a lens through which the whole community can consider the local economy and its future – a framework based on sustainability.

The intent of the strategy is to outline a diverse set of goals to guide economic development into the future, to provide key strategies for moving towards these goals, and to identify and prioritise key signature projects the Shire can undertake to strengthen sustainability of local industries and improve on circular economy performance.



How this report was developed

A range of community consultation, expert advice, and research lies behind the Sustainable Economy Strategy, including:

- Council articulated a vision for the future economy of the shire.
- Business Survey 2019 engaging with 5% of businesses within the Shire – see report attached as an appendix in *Background to the Sustainable Economy Strategy*.
- Input and feedback from the Sustainable Economy Reference Group, Sustainability Reference Group, and Community Health Network
- Consultation with businesses and business organisations
- Ongoing guidance from economist and practitioner, Michael Shuman, with a focus on local economic development
- Advice from Professor Robert Costanza, leading author on Ecological Economics; Dr. Stuart Whitten, Leading Economist for CSIRO; Mike Salvaris, Director of the Australian National Development Index
- Circulation to the community via YourSay and inclusion of community feedback

What's in this report?

- Section One: **Background** into economic development, sustainability, and the local economy
- Section Two: **Focus** on sustainable economy vision and goals – where we are going
- Section Three: **Focus** on the strategies and actions to transition towards a more sustainable local economy
- Section Four: **Alignment** with other plans at an international, national, state, and local level

For more background analysis

Further detail can be found in the separate background paper: *Background paper to the Sustainable Economy Strategy*.

Relationship with other key Shire documents

Community Strategic Plan 2036

The Shire's *Community Strategic Plan* is a statutory document that outlines a 20-year vision for the Shire, and is informed by significant community consultation. The Sustainable Economy Strategy is one of the strategies that will help achieve the community aspirations identified in the Community Strategic Plan.

The five goals of the *Community Strategic Plan* (below) are consistent with the goals of the Sustainable Economy Strategy.

| | CSP Key Result Areas | Sustainable Economy Strategy Goals |
|---|---|---|
|  | Valuing, protecting and enhancing the natural environment | Healthy ecosystems |
|  | Welcoming, inclusive and healthy communities | Broad and inclusive wellbeing |
|  | Ensuring sustainable development | Vibrant townsites |
|  | Vibrant and diverse economy | Economic resilience Successful livelihoods |
|  | Effective leadership and governance | Local ownership |

Local Planning Strategy 2036 (draft)

The Local Planning Strategy 2036 (LPS 2036) is a statutory document that sets a vision for the size, look and feel of the Shire's neighbourhoods, towns and natural areas over a 10 to 15-year period. It sets a strategic direction on the layout and location of land use – such as commercial, rural, and residential – and sets policies and objectives on the many factors that impact the way we relate to place. For example, the LPS 2036 considers broad factors such as landscape amenity, environmental conservation, habitat protection, potential impacts of sea level rise, housing diversity and affordability, opportunity to reduce car-dependence, food security and more.

Where the LPS 2036 provides rules and boundaries that mostly manifest in the built form and landscape of the shire, the Sustainable Economy Strategy identifies opportunities to fund, educate, incentivise, and collaborate for improved outcomes in our livelihoods and the way these interact with the environment.

Background

Discussion: Economic development

What is economic development?

The World Bank defines economic development as processes of building up “the economic capacity of an area in order to improve quality of life” ^[1]. Improving quality of life does not necessarily require more economic activity, but all economic activity should be judged according to its ability to improve quality of life. Economic capacity may refer to:

- availability of capital such as machinery, warehouses, and finance
- availability of knowledge, such as how to produce a good more efficiently
- workforce capacity
- density of networks of information flows, reciprocity, and collaboration
- enabling policy environment
- access to markets
- ecological services underpinning the economy

Local Government’s role in economic development

Local Government is not only a direct employer, but also procures significant services from contractors in managing its assets, directly injecting cash locally. In addition, normal activities and decisions of Local Government influence the local economy and business environment ^[1]. By developing an understanding of this and a positive and enabling culture of support for local businesses and community members, Local Government can contribute positively to economic outcomes.

Further contribution to the local economy can also come in the form of:

- policy to safeguard the environmental and social basis for long-term economic health
- support for events and local markets
- provision of services, such as waste management and library services
- planning for vibrant and liveable communities
- development of enabling infrastructure and policies
- provision of information, training, and networking opportunities
- encouraging localism in purchasing decisions
- regular business engagement
- support for business awards

- providing grants, or submitting grants on behalf of the region

Economic development since COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of resilience – the ability to withstand and bounce back from adverse situations. Such adversity may be in the form of mild shocks, enduring crises such as pandemics or climate change, and major disruptions such as natural disasters. It is important that any efforts to rebuild the economy from COVID-19 do not exacerbate other problems, such as environmental damage or inequality.

There is an increasing awareness of the need to “build back better” – that is, use this time of economic recovery to invest in industries and jobs that will support a stable climate, regenerating ecosystems, and fair community. This undertaking is captured in the examples later in this document in the section on Alignment with broader sustainable economy plans.

Other stakeholders

While Local Government can have significant influence on local economic outcomes, the job of transitioning to a more sustainable economy belongs to everybody. Both State and Federal Government are better resourced to tackle some of the big challenges we face, and the role of the Shire will sometimes be simply to advocate to these authorities for support. For example, both public transport and social housing are the domain of State Government.

State agencies that have an influence on the shire’s local economy include South West Development Commission, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, and Tourism WA, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, and more. Regional and local industry bodies also play a role, such as Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association, Australia’s South West, Margaret River Wine Association, and local business chambers.

Likewise, local institutions and community groups with a focus on preserving environmental assets, looking after disadvantaged community members, or offering training and education play a key role in the local economy. Finally, businesses, producers, artists, and performers themselves play a key role in the health of the local economy.

Discussion: Why “sustainable” economy?

An economic paradox

The purpose of the economy is to provide us with the goods and services we need to live a life of well-being. Our economy has given many of us extraordinary wealth – comfortable transport, warm housing, ample electricity and appliances, abundant food, and an endless array of entertainment. The cost of this economic growth, however, has been an increasingly threatening sustainability crisis that suggests some serious flaws in the way our economy is operating.

This is indicated by extreme concentrations of wealth coupled with extreme poverty and famine; by unprecedented losses of plant and animal species; by social issues such as crime, mental illness, suicide, and diseases of

affluence; and by destabilising environmental trends such as falling water tables, expanding deserts, growing urbanisation, growth of atmospheric CO₂ concentrations, and increasing temperatures (see below). These trends threaten not only our sense of well-being, but the ability of natural systems to support human life in the future.

It may be hard to see the local relevance of such big issues, but even locally we have sustainability challenges that are a microcosm of the bigger picture. Rather than seeing environmental and social wellbeing as factors to be weighed against economic goals, they need to be conspicuously at the core of our economic goals.

The “exponential graph” shapes below show an unsustainable trend, and can be seen across a variety of themes, from global warming and economic growth (as shown below) to population, species loss, ocean acidification, fertiliser consumption, and tropical forest loss.

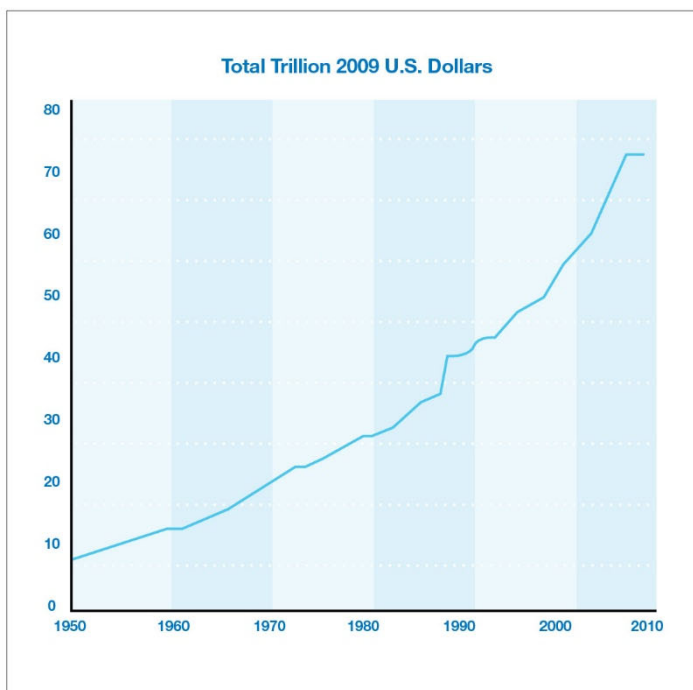


Figure 1: Gross World Product

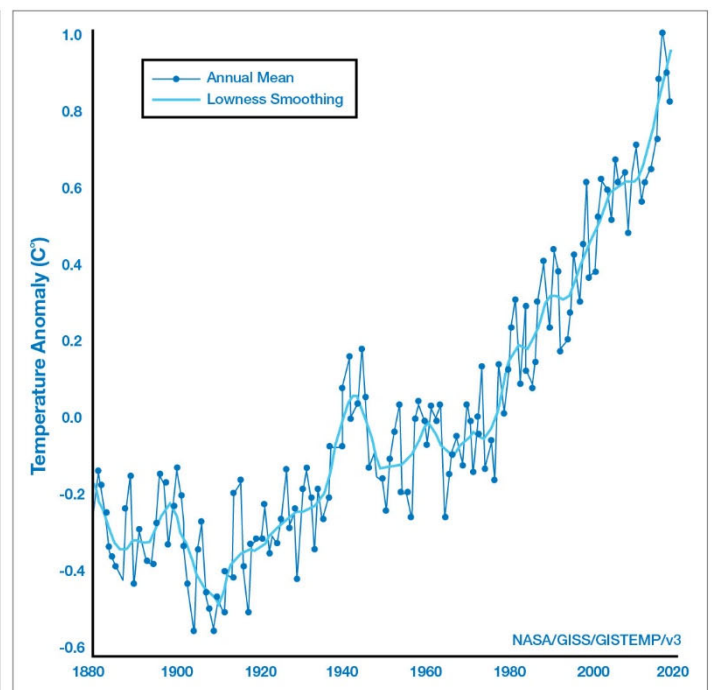


Figure 2: Global Mean Estimates based on land and ocean data (NASA)

The role of ecosystems in our economy

Our economy rests squarely upon ecological services, including crop pollination, soil creation, climate regulation, water purification, disease and pest regulation, erosion regulation, and nutrient cycling. These ecological services are threatened by humankind's increasing demand for natural resources. Economists have estimated the value of these ecological services to be \$125 trillion per year^[2]! There is no substitute for these services.

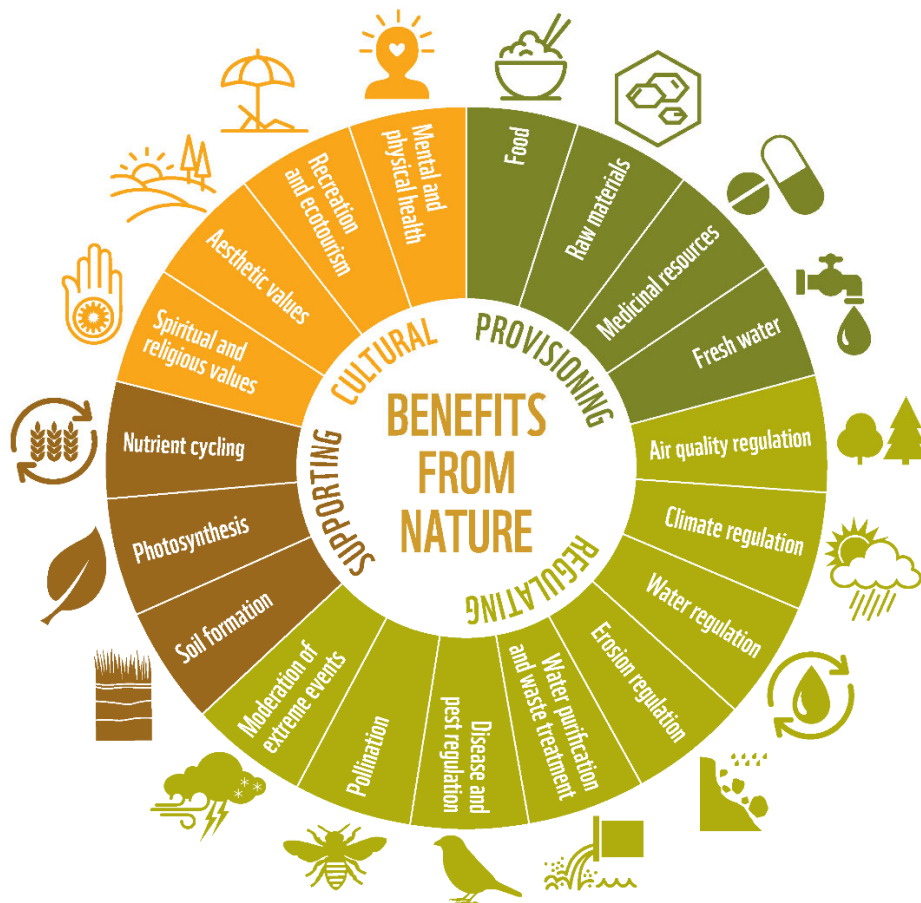


Figure 1: Ecological services, cited in the Living Planet Report 2018^[3]

An integrated economics

A *sustainable* economy requires recognition that all economic activity is embedded within the natural world, and cannot extend beyond the constraints set by nature – there exist non-negotiable environmental boundaries. **A sustainable economy is about living well while consuming less resources and generating less waste – a circular economy with fair distribution.** This is eminently achievable *unless* we define living well as consuming more stuff. A *sustainable* economy also requires recognition that economic activity is essentially a social function – the economy is embedded within society – and the economy's purpose is to serve society. Therefore, a sustainable economy ought to improve social outcomes as a core objective. The measures by which we determine whether the economy is succeeding or not in improving wellbeing need to be far more meaningful and thorough than GDP.

Augusta Margaret River brief history

The Shire is part of the traditional lands of the Wadandi and Pibulmun people, who have lived in the region for at least 50,000 years.

The Augusta Margaret River region is regarded by many as a uniquely beautiful and inspiring part of the world, with a reputation for being clean and green. The suite of rural industries is set against a backdrop of limestone cliffs, underground cave systems, temperate forests, rugged beaches, ancient granitic gneiss formations, fragrant coastal heathlands, and verdant farmland.

The Shire was one of the first areas settled by Europeans in Western Australia. In May 1830 Governor Stirling led a party of settlers to the mouth of the Blackwood river and declared a townsite, naming it Augusta in honour of Princess Augusta Sophia. The Wadandi Pibulmun people, whose connection to country extends back tens of thousands of years, had their own name for Augusta - "Taalinup", meaning place of the Knob Sedge Reed.

The region has its economic roots in Aboriginal land management, and then dairy and logging, which later diversified to agriculture, viticulture, wine-making, and then a burgeoning tourism industry. On the back of the first commercial grape vines being planted in 1967 by Tom Cullity, of Vasse Felix, the region has seen high growth in both visitors and residents (Figure 2). This growth has, in turn, spurred the construction industry and related trades.

Today the Shire is filled with place names harking back to the various histories of its people: the Indigenous *Cowaramup* and *Kudardup*, the English *Augusta* and *Margaret River*, the French *Cape Mentelle* and *Point Freycinet*, and the Dutch *Cape Leeuwin*. Together, the community is supported by a vibrant and diverse economy, nested within a unique natural environment held in high regard by locals and visitors.

| Location | Settlement Type | 2001 | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 | 2018 |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Margaret River | Sub-regional Centre | 3,826 | 4,713 | 5,549 | 6,717 | 7,134 |
| Augusta | Town | 1,153 | 1,147 | 1,053 | 1,131 | 1,198 |
| Cowaramup | Town | 395 | 620 | 834 | 1,580 | 1,648 |
| Witchcliffe | Village | 47 | 48 | 54 | 93 | 153 |
| Prevelly/Gnarabup | Village | 604 | 525 | 550 | 690 | 728 |
| Gracetown | Village | 130 | 112 | 119 | 116 | 116 |
| Karridale | Village | 28 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 53 |
| Molloy Island | - | 103 | 128 | 125 | 113 | 113 |
| Rural Residential | - | 1,170 | 1,345 | 1,546 | 1,760 | 1,877 |
| Rural | - | 2,731 | 2,384 | 2,377 | 2,457 | 2,740 |
| Total | - | 10,187 | 11,052 | 12,228 | 14,687 | 15,700 |

Figure 2: Population growth in the Shire

Augusta Margaret River snapshot

The Gross Regional Product (GRP) of the shire was

\$824 million in 2018-2019



The jobs-to-workers ratio is

0.82

meaning there are more residents working than there are local jobs – some people need to travel for work

2,017 businesses¹ within the shire employing

7,091 people



The shire has a large number of small businesses:

88% have four or less employees

A further **10%** have between 5 and 19 employees

Studies have demonstrated the employment creation from small business is much higher than large business per given amount of business spend



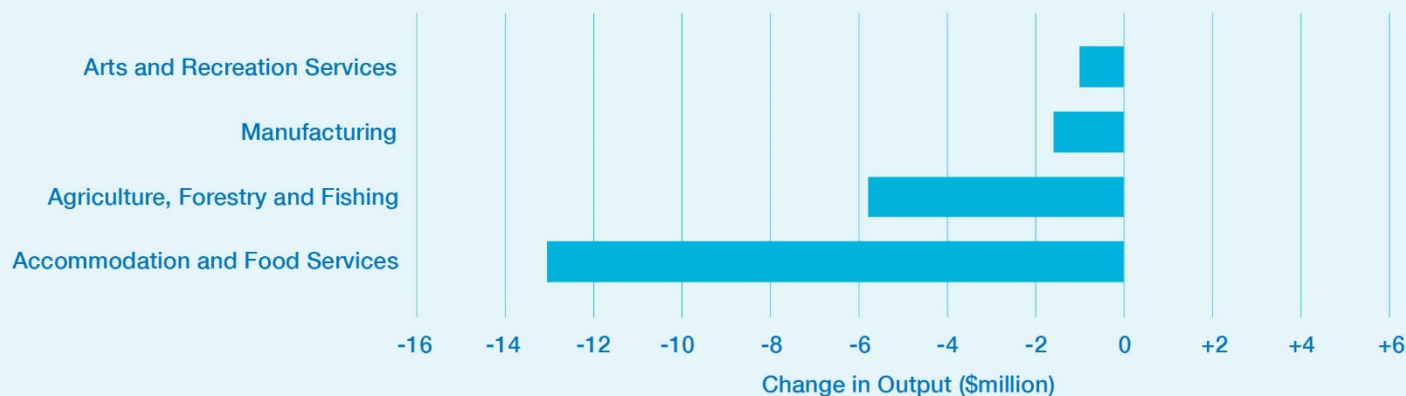
High labour force participation rate (prior to COVID-19) with only

2.6% unemployed compared to **5.9%** for Western Australia

25th most tourism-dependent Local Government Area in Australia (out of 537) for employment

The shire has a significantly higher concentration of wine and agricultural industry than the national average

COVID-19 impacted the local economy, with the biggest impact on:



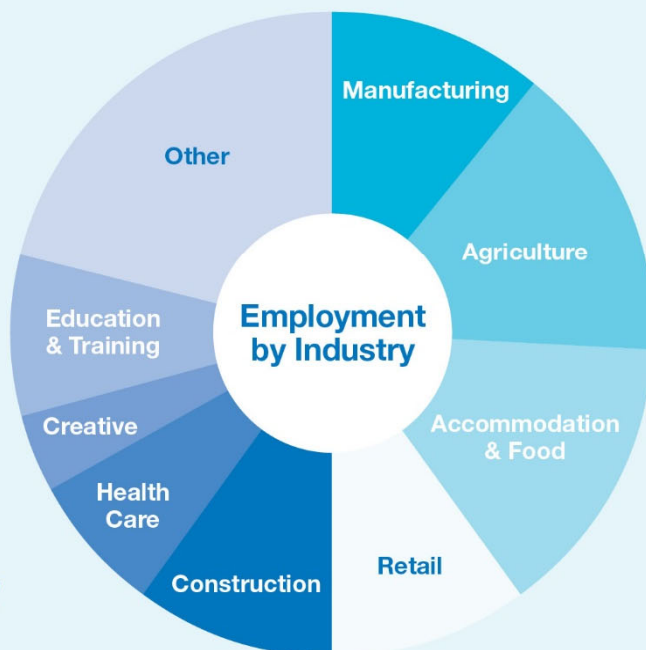
****Data for industry losses in September 2020 quarter compared to September quarter previous year:**

-\$0.8 million Arts and Recreation Services

-\$5.6 million Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

-\$1.5 million Manufacturing

-\$12.9 million Accommodation and Food Services



¹This strategy draws heavily from data supplied by ID Profile, based on NIELS and ABS data, which puts the focus on businesses that are registered for GST. As such, many of the smaller businesses within the Shire with turnovers less than \$75,000 per year are not captured in the analysis.

Main industries

The main industry sectors are listed below, and further detail is available in the *Background Paper to the Sustainable Economy Strategy*:

- **Manufacturing:** predominantly comprising wine production, but with a growing food product industry and some steel fabrication, this sector accounts for 11% of jobs in the shire. Challenges include competing in the premium products market, accessing capital to scale up and reduce operating costs, and geographic isolation and consequent distribution challenges. Opportunities include the potential for greater food sector collaboration, such as a food hub – a collaborative value-adding, marketing and distribution initiative.
- **Agriculture:** including dairy, beef, sheep, horticulture, grapes, nuts, avocados, olives, and some fishing and aquaculture. This sector accounts for more than 15% of the Shire, more than any other sector. Challenges include rising costs of consumable inputs and machinery, costs of haulage and road infrastructure, degrading soils and decreasing rainfall. Opportunities for the sector include greater adoption of sustainable farming practices, micro-abattoirs and onsite processing/value-adding, and an increased focus on certified organic produce.
- **Accommodation and Food:** strongly dependent upon tourism, these sectors account for nearly 14% of local jobs. COVID-19 has been damaging to tourism-dependent businesses within the shire, and recovery to previous visitation numbers may take some time. Outside of COVID-19, additional challenges include seasonality of visitation, and high overheads for running physical premises in townsite centres, particularly Margaret River. Opportunities include attraction of business events to the Margaret River HEART, greater focus on accessible tourism for people with a disability, and ECO Destination Certification.
- **Retail:** accounting for 10% of local employment, the retail sector relies heavily on visitor spend. Challenges include the COVID-19 travel restrictions, a wider economic downturn prior to the pandemic, low profit margins of store-based retail, and increasing online shopping habits. Opportunities include adoption of e-commerce platforms, and potentially a single consolidated online marketplace.
- **Construction:** generating nearly 10% of local jobs, the construction industry is a highly competitive sector reliant on growth of residential and visitor population. There is opportunity to build local industries along the supply chain, such as door and window manufacture. Wider sustainability opportunities include increasing density of existing residential areas, designing dwellings to be producers of energy, water, and food, and improving reuse of waste streams.
- **Education and training:** accounting for over 8% of employment within the Shire, this sector includes Preschool and School Education (6.5%), Adult, Community and Other Education (1.1%), and a small amount of Tertiary Education (0.6%).

Further analysis is undertaken of these smaller industry sectors that will potentially play a bigger role in the Shire's future economy.

- **Creative industries:** including *cultural production*, such as music, film, and art, and *creative services*, such as architecture and design, and software and digital content. Challenges include isolation from metropolitan centres of cultural activity, and lack of trained young talent to fill expanding work demands. This sector could benefit from joint-venture arrangements to successfully win tenders beyond the scope of any single creative operator in the shire.
- **Health care industries:** a smaller sector in the shire, accounting for 7% of employment, but likely to fulfil an increasingly important portion of the local economy.
- **Other:** comprising a significant number of local jobs, the “other” category comprises industries that each account for less than 4.5% of employment including:
 - Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services
 - Transport, Postal and Warehousing
 - Wholesale Trade
 - Public Administration and Safety



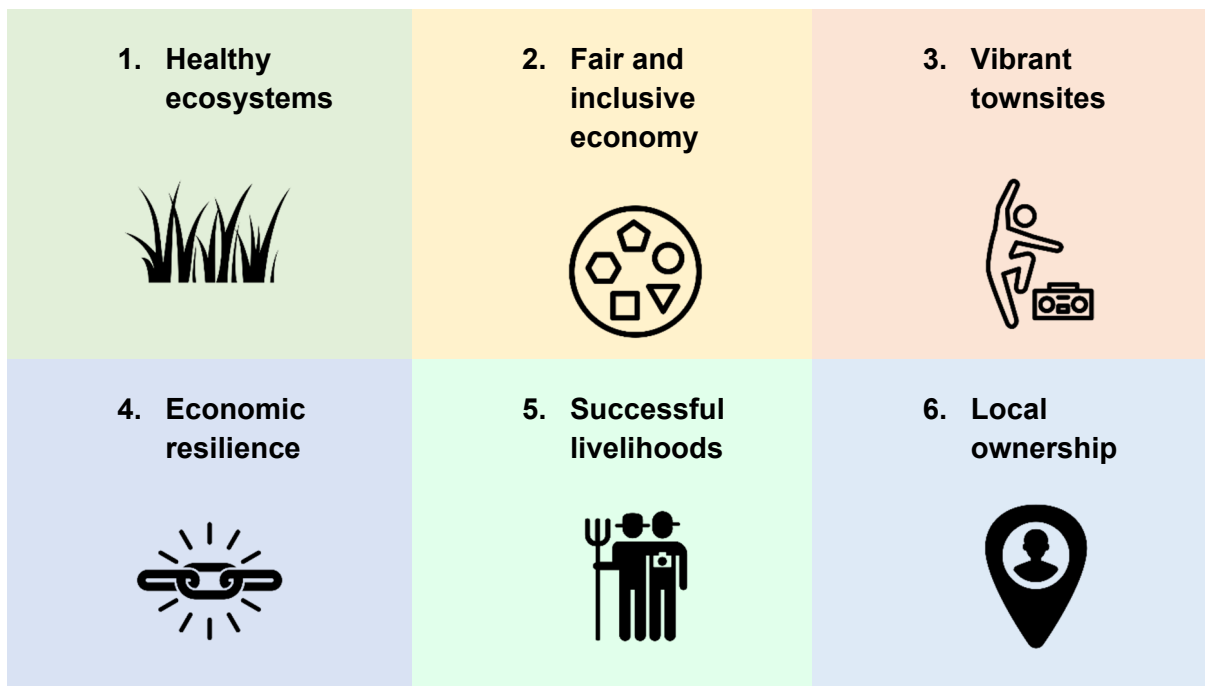
Our direction

Vision

The local community is supported by livelihoods and enterprises that are sustainable, climate-resilient, diverse, and locally-owned in a circular economy, a regenerative and improving environment, and a just community that upholds the rights of everyone.

Sustainable Economy Goals

The following goals support the foundations for long-term health of the local economy. We all have a role to play in achieving these goals within the community.



What is meant by Circular Economy?

A circular economy models production and consumption on natural processes, emulating nature's approach to:

- **Waste** – there is no such thing, all waste is a resource, and materials and products are kept cycling within the economy!
- **Inputs** – water and materials are only used at a rate at which they can be replenished.
- **Energy** – all energy comes from current sunlight, either directly as solar energy and primary production, or indirectly as wind, wave, and secondary production such as livestock.



This way of operating is very different to the linear economy we are used to, which is essentially a “take, make, dispose” model, converting natural resources into products, which are then used, and subsequently disposed of. Because a circular economy focuses on designing products in a way that at the end of their life they can be re-used or recycled, it avoids the need for additional natural resources and the creation of enduring waste. This can result in the triple benefit of reduced environmental impacts, lowered business operating costs, and generation of new industries.

Sustainable Economy goals in detail


Goal 1: Healthy ecosystems

The shire's economic base is directly linked to the region's ecological health, and any economic development approach needs to ensure the health of the local natural environment is at the centre. Not only is there the obvious benefit the natural surroundings bring to the region's tourism offering, but more fundamentally there is an inescapable interrelationship between local industries and the environment they are embedded in.

Further pressures on our agricultural industries come from declining rainfall and stream flow. Since the early 1970s the south-west has experienced a winter rainfall decline of 20% ^[6]. Projections for 2050 suggest serious implications for the agricultural and viticultural industries ^[7].

The long-term health of our economy is intrinsically linked to the health of our environment.

| Goal indicators | Shire influence |
|---|---|
| Percentage of energy generated from renewable sources | Shire's electricity consumption, awareness in the community of benefits and opportunities |
| Waterway health | Riparian plantings, organisational capacity for sustainable agriculture training |
| Water efficiency | Developer's awareness of Recycled Water Scheme |
| Percentage of waste diversion from landfill | Infrastructure and education to divert waste |
| Hectares of native vegetation | Land use planning to limit development in vegetated areas, revegetation |
| Hectares of land under active management | Management of Shire reserves, funding for conservation organisations |
| No. of flora and fauna under threat | Land use planning to limit development in sensitive areas, support for Owl Friendly initiatives |

A photograph of a vineyard at sunset. The sun is low in the sky, creating a warm, golden glow. The vines are covered with a fine, white protective netting. In the foreground, there is a large roll of this netting. The background shows a dense line of trees silhouetted against the bright sky.

The decline in Marri tree blossom leads to fruit damage in vineyards from birds seeking alternative food sources. The environmental problem of Marri Canker disease and Shoot Blight creates serious economic concerns.

Goal 2: Fair and inclusive economy

Economic development approaches need to ensure that all members of the community can build their capacity for quality work, training, and economic wellbeing. Affordable housing, a living wage, employment of marginalised community members, meaningful employment, and opportunity to own capital are all important aspects of a sustainable economy.

Lower incomes than surrounding Shires, coupled with high housing costs have resulted in the Shire suffering from “severely unaffordable housing” [8]. The

discrepancy between income and expenses is a challenge for the Shire, and may not be solved by relying solely on increases in labour productivity to deliver wage growth.

The Shire can play a role in encouraging investment in renewable energy, encouraging social housing, advocating for employment of marginalised people, and facilitating local investment opportunities that build local ownership of assets.

| Goal indicators | Shire influence |
|---|--|
| Median per capita income | Small Business Friendly environment |
| Percentage of households experiencing mortgage stress | Opportunity for housing diversity through planning processes |
| Diversity of post-secondary educational courses | Collaboration with South Regional TAFE |
| Childcare availability | Outside School Hours childcare services, efforts to attract additional childcare |
| Unemployment rate | Entrepreneurial environment for new industries to thrive |
| Volunteerism | Capacity of local non-profit groups, recognition of volunteers |
| Relative income poverty | Opportunities for talent development and traineeships |
| Geographic equity | Place-based community engagement to understand needs specific to different townsites |

Tackling Disadvantage and Inequality:

“Supporting community and celebrating diversity through social inclusion and cultivation of nascent abilities, enhancing economic wellbeing, resilience and self-sufficiency.”

Outcome Statement from *Tackling Disadvantage and Inequality through the Economic Development Strategy: A Report to the AMR Shire* [42]

Goal 3: Vibrant townsites

Economic development should further enhance, rather than detract from, vibrancy of civic centres and public spaces. While it's a hard thing to define, vibrant town sites are places where people want to come together, to mingle, celebrate, and share experiences. Vibrant town sites foster social capital, sense of

community, and new ideas. Factors include such things as accessibility, ease of transport, street life, nightlife, cleanliness, sense of safety, uniqueness, diversity of shops and experiences, built form, art, and integration with the natural environment.

| Goal indicators | Shire influence |
|---|---|
| Attendance at events | Diversity of events, accessibility, local relevance |
| Crime rates | Urban environment that encourages safety, community cohesion |
| Satisfaction with pedestrian and cycle trails | Condition and connectivity of trails |
| Satisfaction with playgrounds, parks and reserves | Condition and accessibility of public open space |
| Area of public open space | Developer's approach to public open space |
| Community enjoyment of public art | Quality and diversity of art commissioned by Shire, maintenance of art |
| Length of time on Main Streets | Presence of al fresco dining, public art and other activations, free WiFi |
| Main Streets commercial occupancy rates | Communication with traders, Small Business Friendly environment |

"A good city is like a good party – people stay longer than really necessary because they are enjoying themselves."

- Jan Gehl



Goal 4: Economic resilience

Significant changes locally and globally create challenges for the health and resilience of our economy. Broad trends, such as consumer shift to experiences over products, can radically change economies over time, and sudden shocks, such as an oil crisis, pandemic or fluctuating commodity prices, can change economies very quickly. Resilience is the ability to withstand, absorb, or bounce back from shocks and adapt to changes.

A major concern for economic resilience is around climate change (see discussion over page). In a carbon-constrained future with greater climatic volatility, and within the ecologically defined limits to scale of the economy we can work towards resilience of living wages, food

production systems, ecological services, social cohesion, energy generation, infrastructure and transport systems.

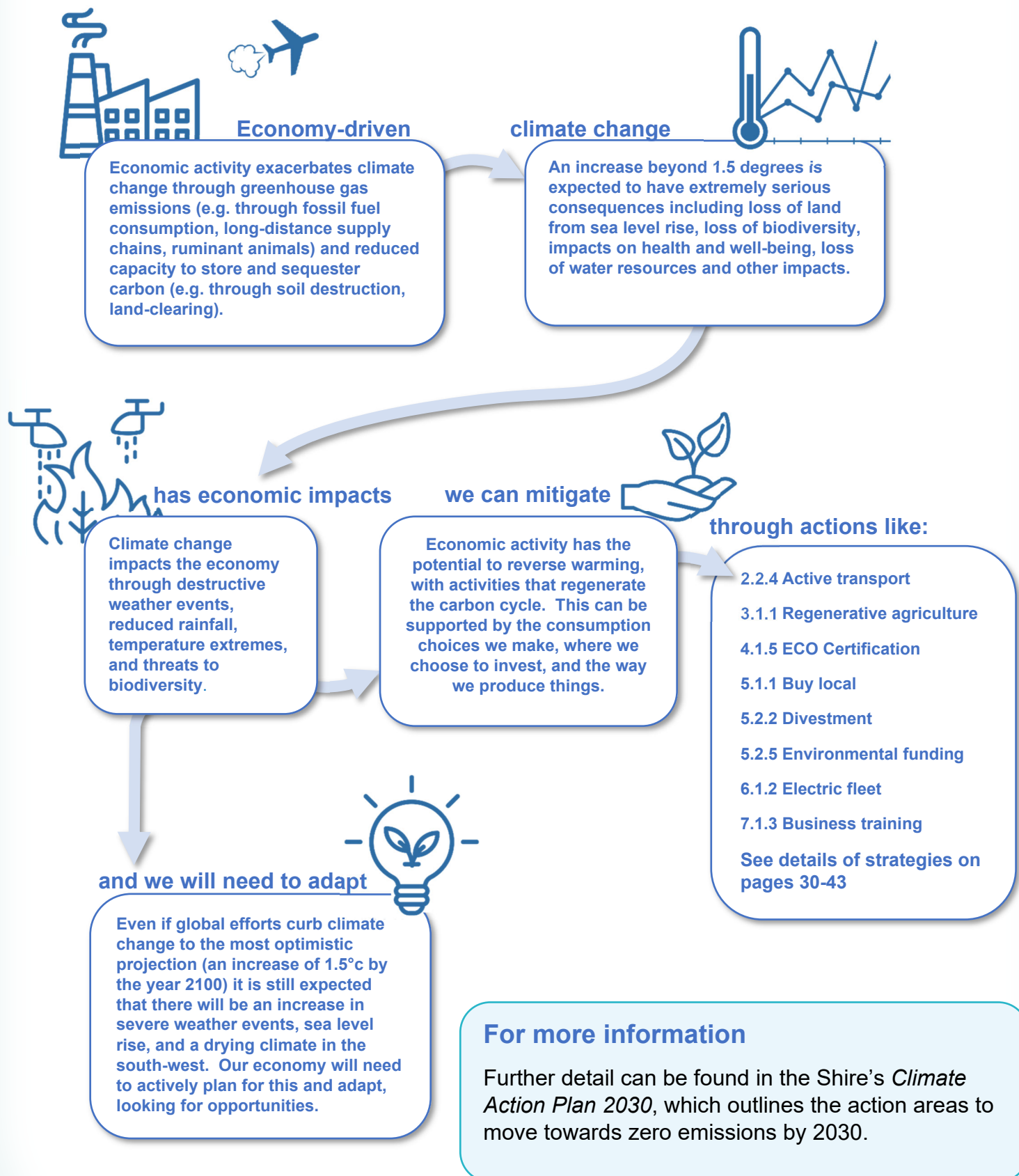
Just like in an ecosystem, diversity is key to resilience when subject to broader shocks. Diversity of industry creates a large variety of employment opportunities to suit the range of qualifications, skills, and natural propensity of residents. Diversity also creates a more interesting and engaging place to live in.

Examining economic leakages through existing imports can help identify opportunities for new local industries, which can mature to provide local employment, and greater self-sufficiency in services and other industries.

| Goal indicators | Shire influence |
|---|--|
| Amount of money spent on imports | Awareness of Buy Local message, local business success in quoting for Shire contracts and tenders |
| Housing affordability | Diversity of housing types, State Government awareness of need, identification of Shire-owned land |
| Diversity of industry | Small Business Friendly Environment |
| Percentage of local renewable energy generation | Investment in solar pv at Shire buildings, education in the community, capacity of local non-profits to deliver services |
| Community engagement | Capacity of non-profit groups and halls committees, presence of events, direct engagement for Shire projects |
| Road quality | Maintenance and grading (Shire roads), advocate for road improvements (non-Shire roads) |
| Non-motorised transport options | Network of trails, active transport options in commercial developments, bike racks in public locations |

Discussion: Climate Change and the economy

The Shire Council declared a “Climate Emergency” in 2019, and now has an ambitious target of net zero emissions by 2030 to play our part in keeping global temperature increases to a minimum.





Goal 5: Successful livelihoods

Having access to livelihood opportunities is a key factor in economic wellbeing. These opportunities rest on the ability for businesses and other employing organisations to start up and succeed, which in turn rests upon a supportive environment to nurture ideas and bring people together. Together these are core parts of entrepreneurship.

In a rapidly changing world, particularly a world facing very disruptive social and environmental challenges, creative thinking and innovative solutions are a

prerequisite for success.

Entrepreneurship can entail bringing new solutions to old problems, in the process creating new value, greater efficiencies, and business and job opportunities.

Choice of livelihood also requires a reasonable diversity of industry to best suit the specific talents and interests of community members. In turn, community members need opportunities to develop their unique talents in order to continue growing and developing over their lives.

| Goal indicators | Shire influence |
|--|---|
| Number of new businesses vs business closures | Entrepreneurial environment for new industries to thrive |
| Tourist visitor spend and length of stay | Condition of built and environmental assets, partnerships with MRBTA |
| Number of functions bringing businesses together | Number and success of functions, provision of venues |
| Number of business start ups that have lasted five years | Entrepreneurial environment for new industries to thrive |
| Jobs to workers ratio | Talent development opportunities, Small Business Friendly approach |
| % of residents over 15 years age with a Vocational qualification, Diploma, or Degree | Promotion of educational opportunities and talent development, collaboration with South Regional TAFE |



Goal 6: Local ownership

Economic development that increases local ownership of businesses, capital, and energy infrastructure yields significant benefits to the community, including:

- **Higher multipliers:** Locally-owned businesses generally contribute more to the economic multiplier, with spending circulating many times in the local economy before leaking out.
- **More reliable:** anchored in the community, locally-owned businesses tend to produce wealth for many years without being tempted to shift operations elsewhere to increase the rate of return.
- **More dynamic:** A community made up of smaller, locally-owned businesses tends to have a distinct sense of place, celebrating its uniqueness and diversity. These small, locally-rooted businesses tend to serve local markets and thus want to position themselves as centrally as possible, occupying small spaces in mixed land use town centres, which has a positive impact on the sustainability of town design.
- **Better social impacts:** Small and local economic activity tends to also be accompanied by meaningful social exchanges, and local-business economies encourage entrepreneurialism and civic culture more than their absentee-owned counterparts. Local businesses give back to the community in which they are nested.

| Goal indicators | Shire influence |
|---|--|
| Number of locally owned small businesses | Entrepreneurial environment, promotion of Buy Local messages, promotion of local capital raising opportunities |
| Number of locally owned cooperatives | Awareness and capacity building around cooperatives |
| Number of locally-run non-profits | Funding opportunities for local non-profits |
| Percentage of jobs in locally owned entities | Entrepreneurial environment for new industries to thrive |
| Amount of dividend and interest payments that leak from the Shire | Awareness of local investment / banking opportunities, Shire's Investment Policy |

Indicators:

The indicators for each goal are not perfect – they are broad pointers for which there is data available, providing an indication but not a definitive statement. There is opportunity to capture the data for these indicators in an annual “report card”, gauging the trends towards achieving a sustainable economy. With the Western Australian government currently considering a wellbeing index there may be opportunities to align local indicators with these and even pilot the index locally.

Moving towards our goals

Together we are
making steps
towards a
sustainable,
resilient, and
equitable
economy...



Strategy summary

To reach these sustainable economy goals the Shire's role falls under three broad areas of action:

Make the economy work for people



Strategy 1: Entrepreneurial environment

Foster an enabling environment for creative ideas to flourish, for networking to be successful, and for new sustainable businesses to emerge.

Strategy 2: Place-making

Ensure public places are attractive, interesting, safe, and nurture community interaction.

Strategy 3: Talent development

Grow opportunities for all community members to develop their knowledge, skills and experience.

Invest in a sustainable future



Strategy 4: Sustainable tourism and events

Ensure a diversity of events and experiences that meet the cultural and entertainment needs of residents and visitors without harming the natural environment.

Strategy 5: Local and regenerative investment

Drive investment into the most regenerative initiatives possible, with a strong focus on local capital benefiting the local community.

Strategy 6: Infrastructure for a sustainable economy


Maintain and build infrastructure to support economic resilience and opportunities for diverse, sustainable livelihoods.



Operate within environmental boundaries

Strategy 7: Circular economy

Support and model best-practice approaches to waste elimination, resource recovery, renewable energy, and replenishable resource consumption rates.

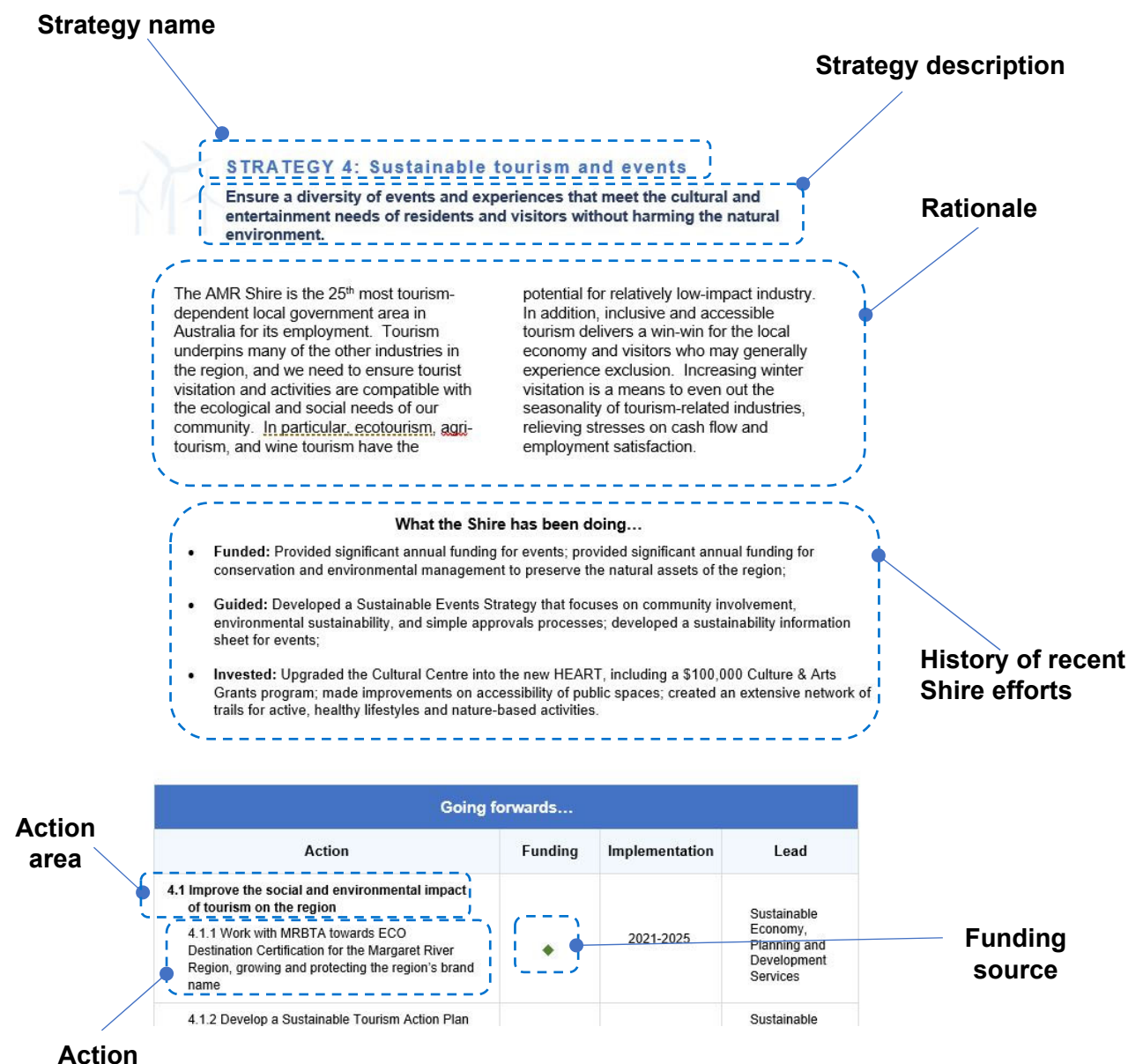
An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. A sandy beach curves along the edge of a vibrant turquoise ocean. To the right of the beach, a steep, forested cliff rises, showing some rocky outcrops. The water transitions from shallow, clear turquoise near the shore to deeper blue further out. In the bottom right corner, there are dark, jagged rock formations with white foam from breaking waves.

Council recognises that all
life has intrinsic value, is
interconnected and that
biodiversity and ecological
integrity are part of
irreplaceable life support
systems and are the
foundation for our region's
lifestyles and economy.

*Augusta Margaret River Overarching
Sustainability Policy 2018*

How to read the Strategies

These strategies focus on tangible actions the Shire can undertake within its current financial and staffing budgets. The desire for clear action on improving the resilience and sustainability of our local economy needs to be tempered by the realities of budgetary constraints.



Funding for projects falls within the existing budget allocations for each business area assigned as the project lead, unless shown to require additional budget allocation or grant funding:

- ◆ = falls within existing budget
- = grant or external funding
- = requires additional Shire budget

Sustainable Economy Strategies in detail



Strategy 1: Entrepreneurial environment

Foster an enabling environment for creative ideas to flourish, for networking to be successful, and for new sustainable businesses to emerge.

Supporting the ability for local businesses to start up and succeed is an important task in helping secure a vibrant local economy. Significant changes locally and globally create challenges for the local industry base, and these challenges need to be met with creativity, adaptation, and new thinking. Fostering an environment that allows this creativity to flourish and supports the passionate drive behind local business ideas is a big part of

encouraging a successful entrepreneurial ecosystem.

This environment is defined by numerous factors, such as the presence of incubator hubs, industry clusters, opportunities for collaboration and information sharing, access to finance, capacity building and training, and more. Entrepreneurialism is one of the foundations for economic resilience – that is the ability to bounce back from shocks and adapt to changes.

What the Shire has been doing...

- **Sourced expertise:** Employed a Sustainable Economy Officer; created a Sustainable Economy Reference Group to gain input from key business bodies and sustainability organisations;
- **Supported local business:** Created a business webpage with advice and information for local businesses; signed the Small Business Friendly Charter; run capacity-building workshops for local businesses;
- **Local procurement:** simplified procurement processes to encourage local business participation; implemented a Regional Price Preference on tenders to encourage local business success in winning tenders; run a training session for local businesses on winning tenders;
- **Funded:** provided financial and in-kind support for events in the region; provided sponsorship for the Business Awards; provided Economic Stimulus funding;
- **Collaborated and listened:** worked closely with Main Street Traders to reduce construction impact of the Main Street Redevelopment; facilitated quarterly Industry Leaders Group meetings; collaborated with numerous organisations for local economic outcomes, including Margaret River Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Rotary Margaret River, Augusta Chamber of Commerce, Cowaramup Business Association, and Margaret River Regional Producers Association.

| Going forwards... | | | |
|---|---------|----------------|--|
| Action | Funding | Implementation | Lead |
| 1.1 Support access to commercial real estate | | | |
| 1.1.1 Help promote creative hubs, maker spaces, and co-working spaces within the shire | ◆ | Ongoing | Sustainable Economy |
| 1.2 Support cooperation amongst businesses and peak organisations | | | |
| 1.2.1 Support and hold regular networking opportunities for businesses and business organisations, including regular meetings with the Sustainable Economy Reference Group, the Liquor Forum Group, and the Industry Leaders Group | ◆ | Ongoing | Sustainable Economy, CEO, Community Planning and Development |
| 1.2.2 Explore interest within Light Industrial Areas for occasional networking opportunities to build collaboration and knowledge sharing | ◆ | 2024-2025 | Sustainable Economy |
| 1.3 Foster broader discussion and innovation in sustainable business | | | |
| 1.3.1 Participate in and promote a Sustainable Industries Cluster for innovative businesses, local business chambers, and community members for innovation in circular economy | ◆ | 2021-2022 | Sustainable Economy |
| 1.3.2 Continue to host sustainable business networking events increasing awareness of sustainability and climate change issues and showcasing local solutions and ideas | ◆ | Ongoing | Sustainable Economy |
| 1.3.3 Facilitate sector-specific workshops to identify the barriers and opportunities for businesses in raising capital, expanding scale, accessing markets, import-substitution for inputs, long-term skills and labour needs, improving sustainability outcomes, and remaining resilient in the context of future challenges including Climate Change | ◆ | 2024-2025 | Sustainable Economy |
| Potential future projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to pair up landholders with landless farmers, such as the Food Next Door Co-Op in Mildura Explore with the local Business Chambers opportunities for developing a local producers business fair to highlight local opportunities and business-to-business procurement | | | Resource dependent |



STRATEGY 2: Place-making

Ensure public places are attractive, interesting, safe, and nurture community interaction.

Place-making is about managing public spaces to add vibrancy and attract people, participation, and healthy social exchanges. By working on the built form, or activation through events and activities, place-making improves:

- 1) Liveability of the community, in turn helping retain and attract talented workers, creatives, and innovators.

- 2) Vibrancy of public places to make them more “sticky”, encouraging people to linger and potentially become customers.

With investment and people more mobile than ever before, fostering sense of place, and helping articulate each locality’s self-identity, is an important economic development strategy.

What the Shire has been doing...

- **Invested in spaces:** Maintained and improved public parks; redeveloped Margaret River’s main street to include a more pedestrian-friendly environment, more street furniture, and a “festival precinct” to maximise opportunities for community celebrations; undertaken landscape improvements on Augusta’s main street; upgraded the youth precinct with a world-class skate park, youth space, playground, and café;
- **Encouraged art:** implemented public art plinths in key public spaces; developed a Creative Blueprint to guide ongoing cultural and arts efforts in the Shire; required larger developments to either commit some public art or contribute to the Shire’s public art fund; begun a process of simplifying processes to encourage al fresco dining and vibrancy on Margaret River’s main street; and reviewed the Local Planning Strategy to encourage urban form that is conducive to people, sustainability, and community.
- **Funded:** provided ongoing grants for community and youth events;



| Going forwards... | | | |
|---|---------|----------------|---|
| Action | Funding | Implementation | Lead |
| 2.1 Increase presence of art and activations in town centres to foster sense of place and local interest | | | |
| 2.1.1 Create concept plan and develop a Margaret River town centre art trail | ◆ ○ | 2021-2022 | Sustainable Economy, Community Planning and Development |
| 2.1.2 Implement the Creative Culture 2020-25 plan and administer public art via the Public Art Policy. | ◆ | Ongoing | Community Planning & Development |
| 2.1.3 Develop defined busking areas in town centres with simple permit process | ◆ | 2021-2022 | Events & Permits |
| 2.2 Improve navigability and accessibility of public places | | | |
| 2.2.1 Implement a way-finding program for Margaret River to provide orientation and interpretation for visitors | ● | 2021-2022 | Assets Services |
| 2.2.2 Complete and implement Margaret River Precinct Plan, to improve connectivity between the river and the townsite, and improve amenity around the river | ● ○ | 2021-2030 | Asset Services |
| 2.2.3 Redevelop playgrounds within neighbourhood and district level parks, as required, with a strong focus on sense of place and access for all | ◆ | Ongoing | Asset Services |
| 2.2.4 Foster active transport through systemic upgrade and extension of townsite pathways | ◆ | Ongoing | Asset Services |
| 2.3 Partner with the community | | | |
| 2.3.1 Support community groups to develop and deliver inclusive and participatory programs and events | ◆ | Ongoing | Community Planning & Development, |
| 2.3.2 Facilitate activation of the Margaret River Youth Precinct through recreational, social support and commercial partnerships | ◆ | Ongoing | Community Planning & Development |
| 2.3.3 Support community-driven place-making efforts within the various towns, villages and communities across the shire | ● ○ | Ongoing | Senior Leadership Team |
| Potential future projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support SWDC's South West Music Strategy and initiatives coming from the Live Music Office that encourage engagement between venues and local musicians | | | Resource dependent |



STRATEGY 3: Talent development

Grow opportunities for all community members to develop their knowledge, skills and experience.

A successful, adaptive, and sustainable local economy requires a talented workforce and highly capable business people. Education and training has economic benefits for the individual, leading to improved earnings capacity. An educated workforce also benefits businesses, who have a growing demand for higher education, forming a significant factor in decisions around places to invest [9].

The ability to develop one's talent, and the ability to apply that knowledge or skill, is an important contributor to personal well-being, and should be accessible in an equitable way. Ensuring talent development is accessible to all members of the community will help maximise the Shire's productive potential.

What the Shire has been doing...

- **Employment:** Created two internship positions, in Community Development and Parks & Gardens; employed an apprentice mechanic; fostered greater participation of female Councillors and staff into leadership positions;
- **Capacity building:** supported libraries and other community spaces for learning and knowledge-sharing; run educational and capacity-building events for youth, community members, community groups, and local businesses;



Going forwards...

| Action | Funding | Implementation | Lead |
|--|---------|----------------|---|
| 3.1 Identify, facilitate and fund opportunities to build the knowledge and skill base of community members | | | |
| 3.1.1 Support workshops and capacity building in sustainable agricultural practices, including exploration of developing at South Regional TAFE a Certificate III in Regenerative Agriculture, and opportunities for training in organic farm management | ◆ | 2022-2023 | Sustainable Economy |
| 3.1.2 Continue to support delivery of capacity-building workshops for local businesses within the Shire as opportunities arise | ◆ | Ongoing | Sustainable Economy |
| 3.1.3 Support libraries and other spaces as community hubs and centres of information, learning, creativity and innovation | ◆ | Ongoing | Library Services |
| 3.1.4 Work with South Regional TAFE, industry leaders, and sustainability experts to deliver a Sustainable Jobs Expo to showcase opportunities in the rapidly growing circular economy | ◆ | 2023-24 | Sustainable Economy, Community Planning and Development |
| 3.1.5 Support mentoring for school leavers to guide business acumen and skills | ◆ | Ongoing | Sustainable Economy, Community Development |
| 3.2 Ensure opportunities for work experience and employment of diverse community members | | | |
| 3.2.1 Continue to provide flexible work arrangements to remove barriers to participation as a Councillor and/or enable participation of all demographics as Councillors and staff | ◆ | Ongoing | CEO |
| 3.2.2 Promote awareness of the opportunities and advantages that derive from employment of people with disabilities within the business community | ◆ | Ongoing | Community Development |
| 3.2.3 Enable accessibility to childcare services that will support families and early years development | ◆ | Ongoing | Outside School Hours Care |
| 3.2.4 Continue engaging with First Nations people and Traditional Owners to ensure fair participation in the economy | ◆ | Ongoing | Executive Leadership |

STRATEGY 4: Sustainable tourism and events

Ensure a diversity of events and experiences that meet the cultural and entertainment needs of residents and visitors without harming the natural environment.

The AMR Shire is the 25th most tourism-dependent local government area in Australia for its employment. Tourism underpins many of the other industries in the region, and we need to ensure tourist visitation and activities are compatible with the ecological and social needs of our community. In particular, ecotourism, agri-tourism, and wine tourism have the

potential for relatively low-impact industry. In addition, inclusive and accessible tourism delivers a win-win for the local economy and visitors who may generally experience exclusion. Increasing winter visitation is a means to even out the seasonality of tourism-related industries, relieving stresses on cash flow and employment satisfaction.

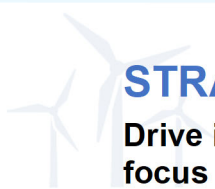
What the Shire has been doing...

- **Funded:** Provided significant annual funding for events; provided significant annual funding for conservation and environmental management to preserve the natural assets of the region;
- **Guided:** Developed a Sustainable Events Strategy that focuses on community involvement, environmental sustainability, and simple approvals processes; developed a sustainability information sheet for events;
- **Invested:** Upgraded the Cultural Centre into the new HEART, including a \$150,000 Culture & Arts Grants program; made improvements on accessibility of public spaces; created an extensive network of trails for active, healthy lifestyles and nature-based activities.

Going forwards...

| Action | Funding | Implementation | Lead |
|---|---------|----------------|---|
| 4.1 Manage the impact of tourism on the region to enhance environmental and social outcomes | | | |
| 4.1.1 Work with MRBTA and other stakeholders towards ECO Destination Certification for the Margaret River Region, growing and protecting the region's environment and brand name | ◆ | 2021-2025 | Sustainable Economy, Planning and Development Services |
| 4.1.2 Develop a Sustainable Tourism Action Plan in conjunction with key stakeholders to identify key actions for improving the impact of visitors on the local community, economy and environment | ◆ | 2022-2023 | Sustainable Economy |
| 4.1.3 Develop implementation plan for Sustainable Events Strategy | ◆ | 2021-2022 | Communications, Environmental Health, Sustainable Economy |

| | | | |
|---|--------|-----------|--|
| 4.1.4 Work with accommodation sector, community organisations and MRBTA to explore Wild Nights – an environmental donation program | ◆ | 2024-2025 | Sustainable Economy, Finance Services |
| 4.1.5 Undertake assessment and improvement of sustainability performance of Shire's holiday parks and camping grounds towards ECO Certification | ◆ | 2021-2022 | Caravan Parks |
| 4.2 Stimulate development of sustainable tourism product and events | | | |
| 4.2.1 Work with local industry to explore opportunity for a Regenerative Agriculture Conference at Margaret River HEART | ◆ ● | 2022-2023 | Sustainable Economy, HEART |
| 4.2.2 Support strategic partnerships and promotion of a full and interesting program of events at the Margaret River HEART | ◆ | Ongoing | HEART, Sustainable Economy |
| 4.2.3 Provide grant funding for major events that provide a window into our community and showcase the Shire to state, national and international audiences | ◆ | Annual | Events, Marketing, Sustainable Economy |
| 4.2.4 Provide grant funding to offset venue hire costs for events and activities hosted at Margaret River HEART | ◆ | Annual | HEART |
| 4.2.6 Continue improving accessibility of public places and ensuring accessibility compliance of new private developments | ◆ | Ongoing | Infrastructure, Planning and Development |
| 4.2.7 Support awareness-raising and training around accessible tourism opportunities | ◆ | Ongoing | Community Development, Infrastructure, Sustainable Economy |
| 4.2.8 Support the development of RV Friendly parking bays and infrastructure towards adoption of the "Community Welcomes Recreational Vehicle" brand | ◆ | 2021-2025 | Asset Services |
| 4.2.9 Advocate for external funding towards implementation of Leeuwin Naturaliste 2050 Cycling Strategy, and Regional Trails Strategy once finalised | ● | Ongoing | Asset Services |
| Potential future projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore feasibility for a local carbon offset program for visitors to the region Undertake feasibility study of an Agri-tourism trail, helping diversify agricultural incomes and create connectivity with the farming community | | | Resource dependent |



STRATEGY 5: Local and regenerative investment

Drive investment into the most regenerative initiatives possible, with a strong focus on local capital benefiting the local community.

Investment is a relationship between the present and the future, forgoing spending money now to create more value in the future. By guiding investment towards productive and regenerative initiatives we help build a sustainable future for the region. By leveraging the existing investment potential of local community members – whose investment portfolios are usually heavily swayed towards distant, publicly-traded corporations – we can help stimulate local production. In connecting local investors with local investment opportunities this capital can be put to work in stimulating locally-productive enterprises, or allowing local businesses to scale up or take the next big step in their business development.

This complements the common economic development approach that seeks to make the region more attractive for outside investment. This approach can deliver both positive and negative outcomes for the community, depending on the strategies employed to make region more investment attractive. For example, regions might compete with each other in a “race to the bottom” to relax environmental and labour regulations so as to deliver a more attractive return on investment. Regenerative investment seeks to ensure that all investment is building greater social, environmental, and economic wellbeing rather than trading off short-term benefit in one area to the detriment of the others.

What the Shire has been doing...

- **Procurement:** Implemented a Regional Price Preference to increase number of local contractors winning tenders;
- **Investment:** Invested significant amounts of reserve money into the local Bendigo Bank;
- **Awareness-raising:** Implemented the Local-Is-More campaign to encourage the community to support local producers and businesses;

| Going forwards... | | | |
|---|---------|----------------|---------------------|
| Action | Funding | Implementation | Lead |
| 5.1 Shift greater proportion of spend to local suppliers | | | |
| 5.1.1 Ongoing support for the Local-Is-More “choose local” campaign, including exploration of local gift card | ◆ | Ongoing | Sustainable Economy |
| 5.1.2 Ensure Shire purchasing policies and procedures are equitable and effective, | ◆ | Ongoing | Finance Services |

| | | | |
|---|---|-----------|---|
| enabling local businesses to provide contract services for the Shire | | | |
| 5.1.3 Encourage local food consumption opportunities, such as in school and hospital kitchens | ◆ | 2023-2024 | Sustainable Economy, Environmental Health |
| 5.2 Maximise investment in regenerative portfolios | | | |
| 5.2.1 Work with SWDC to support the development of a place-based Impact Investment prospectus for the shire | ◆ | 2022-2023 | Sustainable Economy |
| 5.2.2 Explore options for divestment of Shire's investment portfolio from unsustainable industries, and consider sustainability criteria in the next review of CCSP5: Investments Policy | ◆ | 2021-2022 | Finance Services, Sustainable Economy, Council |
| 5.2.3 Host a responsible investment seminar, for residents and businesses on ethical Self-Managed Super Funds, ethical portfolio investment, and local investment opportunities | ◆ | 2022-2023 | Sustainable Economy |
| 5.2.4 Deliver grants program to support capacity of community groups to deliver valuable social and environmental services (Organisation Operating Grants, Community Development Grants, Community Events Grants, Community Halls Grants) | ◆ | Annual | Planning and Development Services, Community Planning and Development |
| 5.2.5 Ongoing investment in the region's environmental assets through the Environmental Management Fund and Environmental Stewardship Grants | ◆ | Annual | Planning and Development Services |
| 5.3 Support local business efforts to attract investment | | | |
| 5.3.1 Support local Chambers and associations to support programs that enable businesses to become investment ready and understand the opportunities of obtaining capital through crowdfunding platforms to leverage grassroots investment | ◆ | 2024-2025 | Sustainable Economy |
| Potential future projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a live listing of local crowdfunding and investment opportunities through Local-Is-More website Explore local capital raising initiatives such as local investment opportunity networks, a local stock exchange, crowdfunding for equity, local bond release, and Angel investment Explore opportunities for development of a local payment gateway to facilitate online payments and generate revenue for local benefit | | | Resource dependent |



STRATEGY 6: Infrastructure for a sustainable economy

Maintain and build infrastructure to support economic resilience and opportunities for diverse, sustainable livelihoods.

Infrastructure forms part of the physical asset base that underpins the smooth running of the economy. Physical infrastructure includes things like roads and freight assets, energy distribution, and irrigation channels – assets that directly support the productivity of the economy. It can also include digital

infrastructure. The types of infrastructure developed heavily influence the sort of economic activity that can take place in a region, and have a profound impact on how this activity affects the social and environmental fabric of the region.

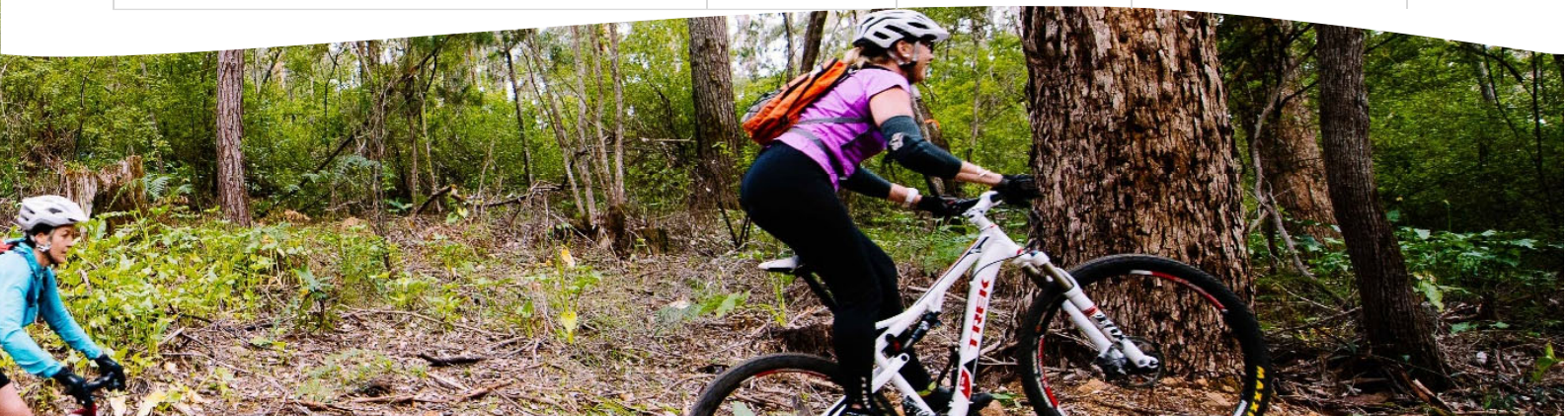
What the Shire has been doing...

- **“Soft” transport infrastructure:** Continued the Wadandi Track extension, providing a soft adventure ecotourism trail as well as a non-motorised transit option between Witchcliffe, Margaret River, and Cowaramup; continued developing the trail between Dead Finish and Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse; incorporated a cycle path into the design of the Margaret River main street redevelopment to encourage non-motorised modes of transport in a safe manner;
- **Road improvements:** driven the Perimeter Road project to remove heavy vehicles from the centre of Margaret River and pave the way for the Main Street upgrade; maintained roads owned by the Shire.
- **Wayfinding:** implemented signage in Cowaramup to assist visitor wayfinding to the Wadandi Track;
- **Digital infrastructure:** contributed to the Main Street Wi-Fi;
- **Energy infrastructure:** Installed 464 kwh Tesla battery at the Margaret River Recreation Centre; solar PV installations on Shire buildings;



Going forwards...

| Action | Funding | Implementation | Lead |
|--|---------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 6.1 Develop / advocate for infrastructure for reduced transport emissions | | | |
| 6.1.1 Maintain walking and cycling trails and improve connectivity | ◆ | Ongoing | Asset Services |
| 6.1.2 Transition Shire fleet away from fossil fuel-dependence by implementing relevant actions from the Climate Action Plan | ● | 2021-2022 | Infrastructure, Fleet Manager |
| 6.1.3 Advocate for improved public transport services with a focus on low carbon technologies | ◆ | Ongoing | Councillors |
| 6.2 Develop / advocate for infrastructure to improve business efficiency | | | |
| 6.2.1 Participate in steering group to explore infrastructure investments in line with the Scott River Sustainable Economy Strategy | ● ○ | Ongoing | Sustainable Economy |
| 6.2.2 Partner with MRRPA, Lower South West Growers Group, Lower Blackwood Landcare, ECU, State Government and other stakeholders to explore feasibility of a “food hub” focused on value-adding, and collective marketing and distribution | ◆ | 2023-2024 | Sustainable Economy, CEO |
| 6.3 Develop / advocate for infrastructure for economic resilience | | | |
| 6.3.1 Continue to advocate for the provision of social housing within the shire | ◆ | Ongoing | Planning and Development |
| 6.3.2 Ensure strategic planning frameworks encourage a diversity of housing stock and foster affordable housing | ◆ | Ongoing | Planning and Development |
| 6.3.3 Continue to encourage developers to utilise the Margaret River Recycled Water Scheme | ◆ | Ongoing | Planning and Development Services |
| 6.3.4 Continue to support efforts to attract or develop childcare facilities within the Shire | ● | Ongoing | Corporate and Community Services |
| 6.3.5 Monitor accommodation availability for seasonal workers, and continue to explore options for non-resident workers' accommodation | ◆ | Ongoing | Planning and Development |





STRATEGY 7: Circular economy

Support and model best-practice approaches to waste elimination, resource recovery, renewable energy, and replenishable resource consumption rates.

Circular economic practices design production to minimise (or eliminate) waste, and seek to use resources and inputs at a sustainable and replenishable rate. As highlighted in the *Discussion: Why “Sustainable” Economy* section, unreasonable demands on natural resources – whether it be timber, oil, coal, or groundwater – destabilise essential services we require for our wellbeing.

With a growing population, both globally and in the Shire, it is important that we model and promote efficiency of natural resource use, actively support the regeneration of ecosystems, and transition

to the most sustainable resources and energy sources possible. Climate change is a major risk factor in our communities and economies, and circular economy practices are a direct way to mitigate against these effects.

The Shire can show leadership in this regard, and help create an environment that supports community and businesses to also be leaders in sustainability. The Shire can continue partnering with Wadandi and Pibulmun people, whose long history of caring for country provides valuable insights in the ongoing stewardship of our environment.

What the Shire has been doing...

- **Education & awareness-raising:** Held a Climate Action Summit in 2019, with 130 community members and experts driving an action plan to reduce emissions; funded and provided Living Smart and other behaviour change programs; funded workshops in Regenerative Agriculture, which holds a huge potential to capture carbon;
- **Green energy:** Installed 105kW Photovoltaic Panels on Shire buildings; annually offset 550 tonnes CO₂; shifted to hybrid vehicles for new purchases in fleet; retrofitted Shire buildings to be more energy efficient; reduced 31% Shire emissions below 2007 levels as at 18/19;
- **Policy changes:** reviewed the Town Planning Strategy to encourage urban infill, reducing travel distances; updated the Mobile Food Business Policy to encompass a presumption against single-use plastic in the future; endorsed a Sustainable Events Strategy that will seek to incentivise mainstreaming of sustainability across events within the Shire;
- **Resource recovery:** implemented a Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) bin system to divert methane-generating organics from landfill and turn them into compost; implemented a mandatory recycling service; provide free green waste disposal and free garden mulch; implemented a greywater reticulation network that allows reuse of treated waste water to irrigate areas of public open space; and created drop-off points for recovery of mobile phones, batteries, bottle caps, printer cartridges, light bulbs, and waste oil.
- **Waste reduction:** installed water bottle refill stations in key locations; provided a mobile water refill station for events, discouraging single use plastic water bottles; supported the “wash against waste” trailer;

| Going forwards... | | | |
|---|---------|----------------|--|
| Action | Funding | Implementation | Lead |
| 7.1 Support capacity building of industry for circular economy outcomes | | | |
| 7.1.1 Implement circular economy grants program for assisting business investment in new practices, new equipment, adoption of sustainable behaviours | ◆ | Annual | Sustainable Economy |
| 7.1.2 Contribute to development of Margaret River Wine Association's sustainability action plan, to safeguard the region as Australia's premier wine region | ◆ | Ongoing | Sustainable Economy |
| 7.1.3 Encourage businesses to undertake sustainable business training, auditing and certification | ◆ | Ongoing | Waste Services, Planning and Development Services, Sustainable Economy |
| 7.1.4 Explore feasibility of bulk milk supply for cafes to reduce packaging | ◆ | 2024-2025 | Sustainable Economy, Waste Services, Environmental Health |
| 7.2 Support the circular economy through the reuse and redistribution of goods | | | |
| 7.2.1 Promote the Shire Tip Shop as an opportunity for waste to be reused or repurposed | ◆ | Ongoing | Waste Services |
| 7.2.2 Davis Road Recycling and Waste Management Facility redeveloped with a focus on increasing resource recovery and minimising waste sent to landfill | ◆ | 2021-2026 | Waste Services |
| 7.3 Ensure Shire operations support circular economy outcomes | | | |
| 7.3.1 Implement Climate Action Plan | ● | Ongoing | Executive Leadership Team |
| 7.3.2 Expand locations of drinking fountains/water refill stations in public places | ● | 2021-2025 | Asset Services |
| Potential future projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore platforms for identifying "industrial symbiosis" partnerships, where one industry's waste can become an input for another industry, e.g. CSIRO's ASPIRE program | | | Resource dependent |


What is “regenerative” agriculture?

Since Europeans first arrived in the south-west and began farming in a landscape and climate so different from their origins farmers have had to innovate, experiment, and learn how to farm this country. Some of these approaches have failed (e.g. over-clearing of the wheatbelt has led to problems with dryland salinity) but others have succeeded in producing abundant food in harmony with the environment. As managers of large landholdings, farmers hold a unique place in helping look after the environment.

“Regenerative agriculture” is a relatively new term for an approach that many farmers would consider old as time: understanding the environment and being sensitive to the land so as to preserve the assets that make farming possible into the future.

This approach looks for the win-win: how to build soil health, bring biological systems back to life, nurture the water cycle, promote biodiversity, draw down atmospheric carbon, enhance nutrient density in food AND build profitability for the farmer.

These might be small, niche farms within the Shire, or they might be large commodity farms, like some of the dairies in the Scott River Region. Within the Shire there is a huge range of approaches and scales, with farmers exploring different practices from cell-grazing to biological pest control. Promoting the successes, sharing the lessons, and trialling new ideas can improve the wellbeing of the land and the farmers who are often its stewards.



“We don’t care whether you subscribe to carbon farming, no-till, conservation agriculture, zero-waste, sustainability, biological farming, polyculture farming, holistic management, mob grazing, silvopasture, regenerative, organic, biodynamic, permaculture, spray-free or anything in between. We believe the future of global agriculture demands a push towards landscape restoration, efficiency, zero waste, ethical production and restoring ecosystem function. We will support this transition however we can.” - Regen Farming News

Alignment

| Sustainable Economy Strategy goals | CSP 2036 key result areas | SWDC Strategic Plan priorities | UN Sustainable Development Goals |
|------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Healthy ecosystems | Valuing, protecting and enhancing the natural environment | n/a | <div>13 CLIMATE ACTION</div> <div>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</div> <div>15 LIFE ON LAND</div> |
| Broad and inclusive wellbeing | Welcoming, inclusive and healthy communities | Highly skilled and industry ready workforce Aboriginal economic development | <div>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div> <div>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</div> <div>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div> |
| Vibrant townsites | Ensuring sustainable development | Thriving, diverse and creative communities | <div>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</div> |
| Economic resilience | Vibrant and diverse economy | Industry ready infrastructure and land | <div>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</div> <div>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</div> |
| Successful livelihoods | Vibrant and diverse economy | Fulfilling and sustainable jobs | <div>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div> <div>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</div> |
| Local ownership | Effective leadership and governance | n/a | <div>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</div> <div>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</div> |

Shire of Augusta Margaret River

Overarching Sustainability Policy

The Sustainability Policy adopted by Council sets governing principles in place that demonstrates the Shire's understanding of, commitment to, and leadership in sustainability. The four key principles are to:

1. Demonstrate a commitment to the protection and enhancement of the unique natural environment and biodiversity of the region.
2. Demonstrate a commitment to minimising the effects of climate change and to sustainable resource use.
3. Demonstrate a commitment to social and cultural sustainability.
4. Demonstrate a commitment to sustainable economic development.

Western Australian Plans

Clean State: A Clean State Plan for WA Jobs

Opportunity to create 204,215 clean jobs is demonstrated in the *Clean State plan for WA Jobs*, which makes the point that for every million dollars' worth of investment far more jobs are created in low-carbon industries than fossil-fuel based areas.

Government of Western Australia: Green Jobs Plan

The *Green Jobs Plan* is focused on providing employment opportunities for people in the regions whose jobs have been affected by COVID-19, providing training and employment in conservation initiatives.

Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre: Green shoots, opportunities to grow a sustainable WA economy

The recently released report from Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre, *Green Shoots: Opportunities to grow a sustainable WA economy*, advocates a "green diversification" strategy with the potential to create 55,000 additional jobs. 49,000 of these would be in regional areas. The report highlights economic opportunities across waste recapture, water efficiency, smarter buildings, and a bolder approach to renewable energy.



National Plans

Climate Council: Clean Jobs Plan

The *Clean Jobs Plan* focuses on occupations and regions hardest hit by COVID-19, and outlines how “76,000 new jobs for Australians can help rebuild our economy now *and* tackle climate change”.

Beyond Zero Emissions: The Million Jobs Plan

The Million Jobs Plan, published in June 2020, reiterates the opportunity to reboot Australia’s economy following COVID-19 through prioritising investment in clean, low-carbon technologies. The plan identifies the need for Government and private investment, speaking to growing appetite amongst institutional investors to fund low-carbon projects.



International Plans

United Nations: Sustainable Development Goals

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are at the heart of the United Nations’ *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*^[10], and have a strong focus on wellbeing, equality, clean energy, responsible consumption and production, climate action and ecological health.

C40 Cities: Mayor’s Agenda for a Green and Just Recovery

C40 is a network of 97 of the world’s greatest cities committed to addressing climate change – cities like Sydney, Melbourne, Seoul, Beijing, London and New York. The *C40 Mayor’s Agenda for a Green and Just Recovery* sets out the collective vision of mayors for investing in a sustainable, resilient, equitable recovery not only to address the immediate COVID-19 pandemic, but to ensure preparedness for future shocks.

Related Shire Plans and Policies

Environment

Environmental Elements of Sustainability Strategy (2016)

Climate Action Plan

Overarching Sustainability Policy (2018)

Economy

Sustainable Events Strategy (2019)

Local Planning Strategy

Community

Strengthening Community Capacity Plan (2020-2025)

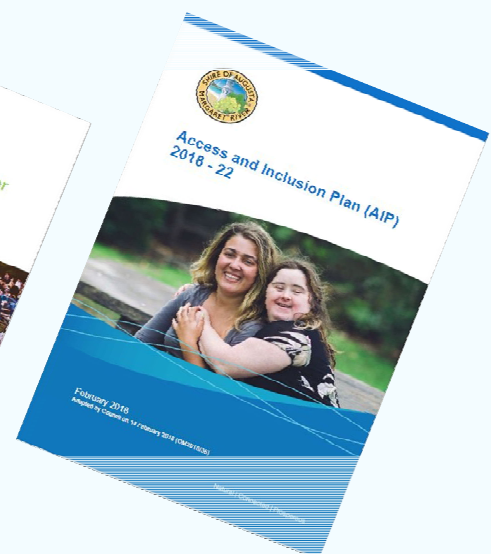
Affordable Housing Strategy (2015)

Creative Culture Plan (2020-2025)

Public Health Plan (2020-2024)

Access and Inclusion Plan (2018-2022)

Strengthening Youth Plan (2018-2022)



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