



2016-2026

Strategic Community Plan



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the Shire of Yilgarn Strategic Community Plan. This plan is our road map to a secure future and will provide guidance to our Council as we make important decisions on behalf of the community over the next 10 years. It incorporates our vision and our aspirations for the future and will allow the Council to prioritise service delivery and projects that have been identified as important to community members.

This Plan outlines the long-term (10+ years) vision and values of the community of the Shire of Yilgarn whilst also acknowledging the requirements and resourcing capabilities of the Shire. It is part of our fulfilment of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework. All local governments in Western Australia are required to implement IPR which enables robust decision-making.

The Strategic Community Plan was adopted by Council on 21 July 2016 and was reviewed by Council in July 2018.

The Strategic Community Plan is a ten year plan. However, it is not fixed for ten years – it would be long out of date by then. Rather, it is a “rolling” plan which is reviewed every two years. The two yearly reviews alternate between a minor review (updating as needed) and a major review (going through all the steps again).

The plan is continuously looking ahead, so each review keeps a ten year horizon. This is to ensure that the best decisions are made in the short to medium term.

Our Council is committed to delivering the vision outlined in this Plan and we look forward to working with the community to bring it to fruition.

Cr Onida Truran

President, Shire of Yilgarn



INTRODUCTION

Key points of the plan

The Council have engaged the community in setting a vision for the coming decade. This plan sees existing services and facilities continue highlighting the priorities that Council will focus on over the coming ten years to achieve the vision:

- Embracing technology
- Supporting tourism
- Support for local business
- Community involvement
- Advocacy for essential services.

The detailed implementation of this plan for the next four years will be presented in the Corporate Business Plan.

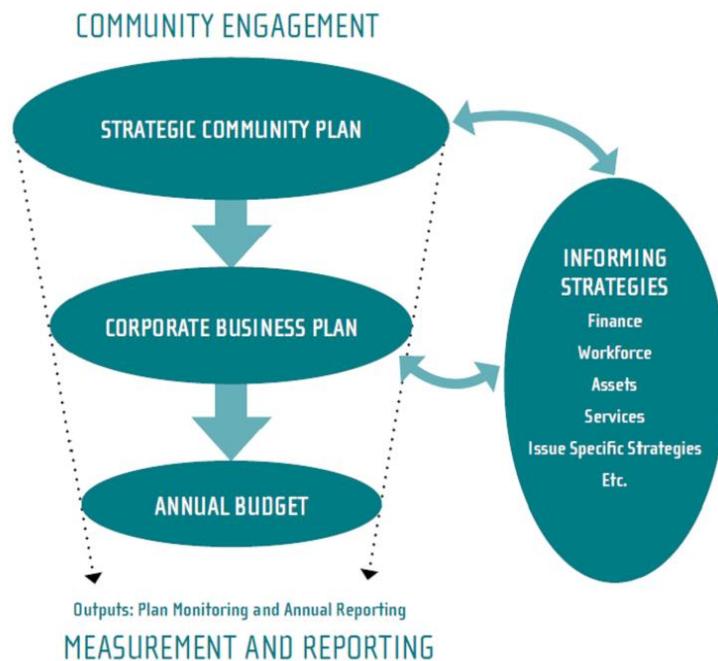
Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework is shown in the diagram below. The idea behind the framework is to ensure that the Council’s decisions take the community’s aspirations into account and deliver the best results possible with the available resources.

The Strategic Community Plan sets the scene for the whole framework – it expresses the community’s vision and priorities for the future and shows how the Council and community intend to make progress over a ten year period.

Detailed implementation for the next four years is covered in the Corporate Business Plan. The “Informing Strategies” – particularly the Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plans and Workforce Plan – show how the Plan will be managed and resourced.

The Annual Budget relates to that year’s “slice” of the Corporate Business Plan, with any necessary adjustments made through the Annual Budget process.



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This section lays out the Shire of Yilgarn’s community profile, other agency strategies and plans that have a bearing on the future of Yilgarn, and strategic issues facing the community.

Shire Profile

The Shire of Yilgarn is located in Western Australia’s Eastern Wheatbelt, 370 kms from the Perth metropolitan area. Our Shire covers 30,720 square kilometres, which compares to approximately half of the size of the State of Tasmania, and is almost the same land mass area as the whole of The Netherlands.

The Shire has a population of approximately 1,200 (2016 ABS data) people, however it serves well over that figure due to the resources industry in the Shire and the fly in fly out / drive in drive out nature of work. The Shire is well known as the Gateway between the Wheatbelt and the Goldfields.

The name ‘Yilgarn’ is aboriginal for ‘white stone’ or ‘quartz’.

The town of Southern Cross is the main centre, and houses the administration of the Shire, however, there are numerous other smaller townsites throughout the Shire, including, Bodallin, Bullfinch, Ghooli, Koolyanobbing, Marvel Loch, Moorine Rock, Mt Hampton and Yellowdine.

In 1891, the Yilgarn Road Board was gazetted, and in 1918, it merged with the Municipality of Southern Cross. In 1961 it became the Shire of Yilgarn following the introduction of the Local Government Act 1960.

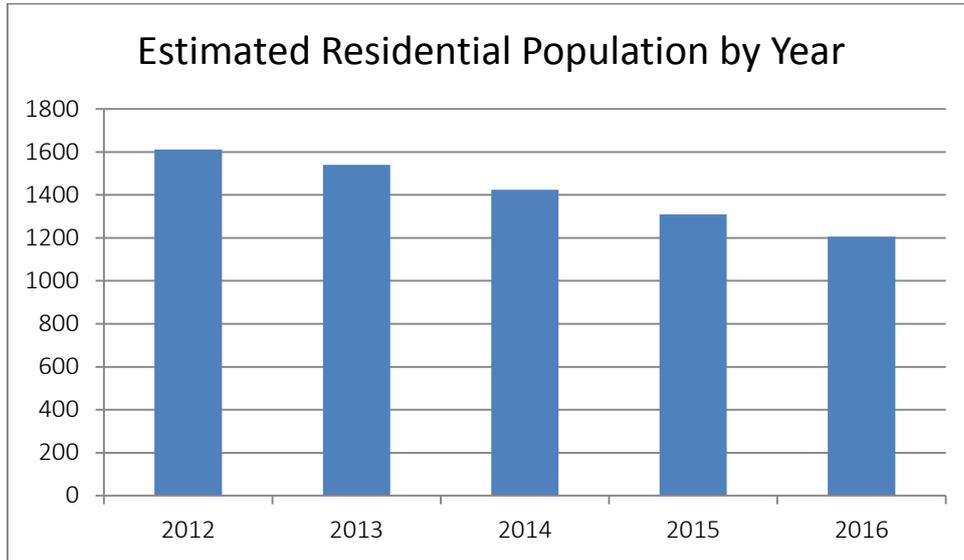
The Shire provides roads, recreational facilities, funding for medical services, parks and gardens, street lighting, and waste collection amongst other community services and infrastructure. Our elected members advocate for the interests of the community and make decisions about where and how development can occur.

Agricultural production and a continual increase in mining activities are the main primary industries for the Shire. Mining employees make up an increasing percentage of the workforce and the sector generates approximately \$80 - \$90 million worth of royalties for the state of Western Australia each year.

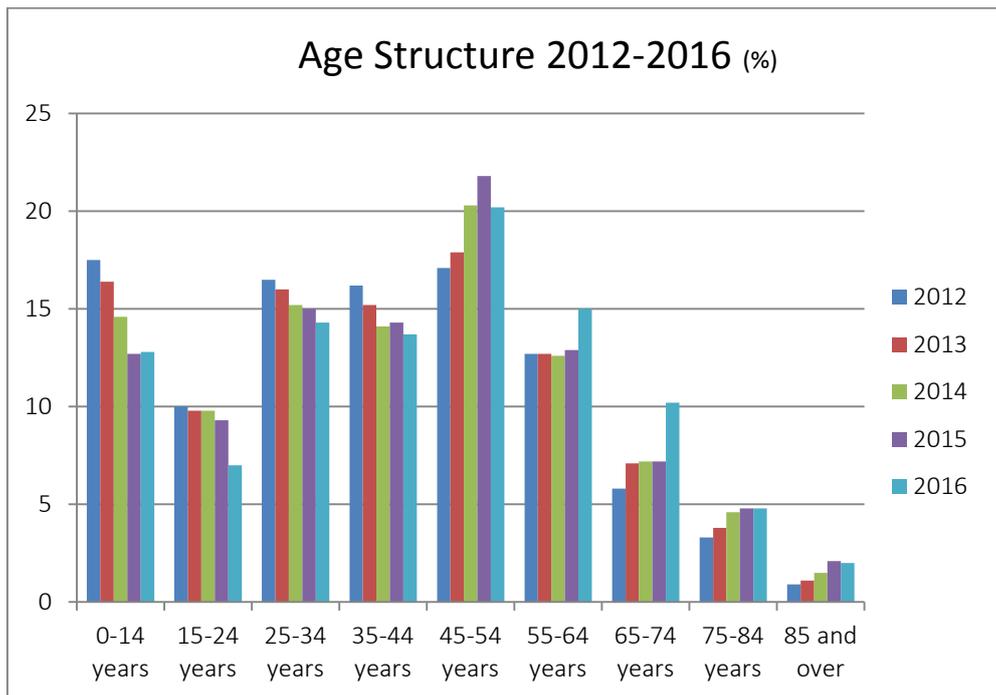


Community Profile¹

The Shire of Yilgarn community has experienced steady decline in population over the past several years. Currently, the population is estimated at 1,206 with around 61% male and 39% female.



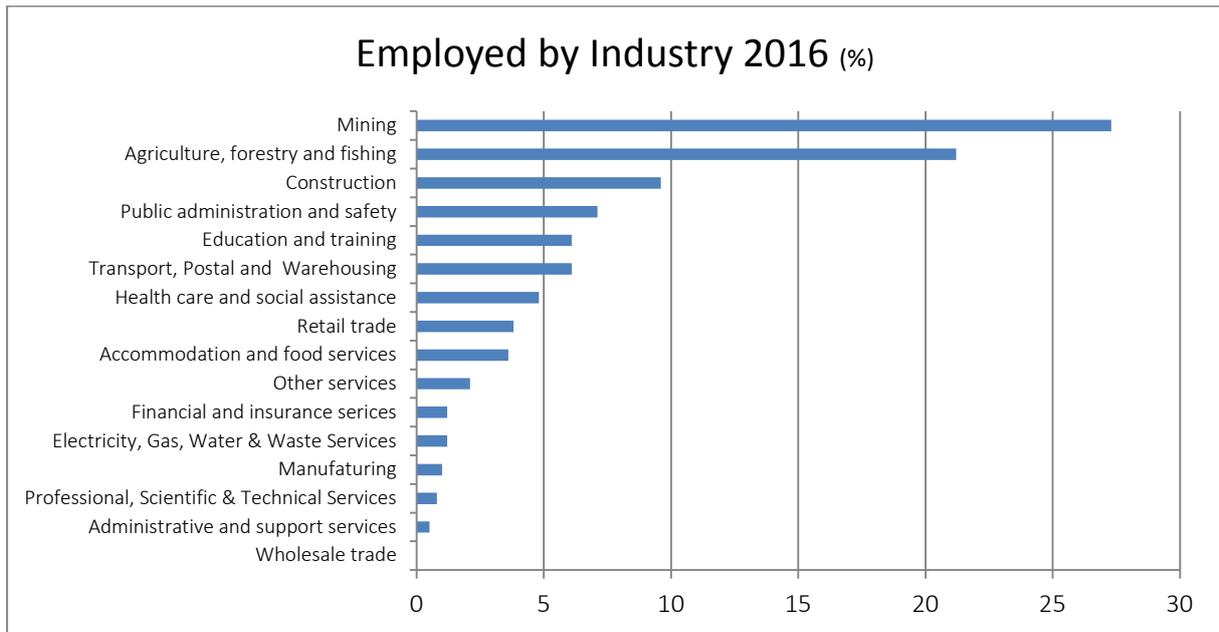
The age profile of the Shire of Yilgarn from 2012 – 2016 is as follows:



The median age of the Shire of Yilgarn population in 2016 was 45.

The Shire of Yilgarn population has an unemployment rate of 6.6% compared to the Australian unemployment rate of 6.9% (2016 ABS data). The primary employment sectors in Yilgarn are mining, agriculture and construction as shown below.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, 'Yilgarn (Local Government Area), Basic Community Profile'



Other Agency strategies and plans

The Shire of Yilgarn does not exist in isolation and is part of the Wheatbelt Region and the broader State of Western Australia. This section provides an overview of some of the key strategies and plans that influence the Shire’s operating environment.

Wheatbelt Blueprint

The Wheatbelt Blueprint was developed by the Wheatbelt Development Commission as a road map to guide and assist the Region to deliver its potential. The Blueprint is based on a strong analysis of existing infrastructure and services across the Region.

The Vision for the Region outlined in the Blueprint is: “The Wheatbelt is a key contributor to Western Australia’s prosperity. The Region’s prime location, diverse economy, clever people, vibrant communities and unique natural environment offer a high quality of life and will attract global innovators and investors.”

The Blueprint is structured around the four pillars of diverse economy, clever people, vibrant communities and unique natural environment. Each pillar has a suite of aspirations & targets, outcomes, focus areas and priority actions.

Wheatbelt Youth Strategy 2012-2017

The *Wheatbelt Youth Strategy 2012-2017* was developed by Regional Development Australia, Wheatbelt. The framework aims to ensure that key youth stakeholders in the region have a common focus for implementing initiatives that will contribute to improving opportunities and the wellbeing of youth.



The vision guiding the framework is: “All Wheatbelt young people matter – to themselves, to the community – now and into future”.

The framework is structured around four priority areas with objectives, strategies, actions and stakeholders being detailed for each of these areas:

- responsible behaviour
- education, training and employment
- community, parenting and families
- health and wellbeing

Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

The Central East Sub Regional Economic Strategy (2012) was commissioned by the Wheatbelt Development Commission and establishes a framework for the promotion and facilitation of economic and population growth across all towns in the sub-region.

The Strategy identifies economic opportunities for the Shire of Yilgarn in the areas of:

- Broadacre Agriculture
- Mining and Support Services
- Population Services



It also identifies a number of actions that the Shire of Yilgarn should undertake to effectively leverage these economic opportunities.

Wheatbelt Regional Plan 2013-2018

The Wheatbelt Regional Plan is a five year plan developed by Regional Development Australia designed to inform decision makers about appropriate policy for the Wheatbelt Region. It was developed with extensive consultation and has three key components:

- Context: megatrends and future indicators and the implications for the Wheatbelt Region
- Analysis: key challenges and opportunities for the Region
- Action Agenda: a vision for the Region and priority infrastructure, planning and leadership projects.

Some of the critical projects identified in the Plan that have direct relevance for the Shire of Yilgarn include:

- Completion of Great Eastern Highway (reconstruction between Walgoolan and Karalee)
- National Broadband Network (NBN) rollout
- Upgrade works to the Goldfields and Agricultural Water Supply Scheme (GAWSS)
- Development of an Integrated Transport Plan for the Wheatbelt
- Implement targeted marketing for workforce and visitor attraction
- Implementation of the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan.

Strategic issues facing the community

The following issues have been identified as particularly significant challenges for the community over the coming years. The participants in the community engagement assisted in distilling these issues from the preceding work. They have been taken into account in preparing this Plan:

- maintaining our population
- economic development and diversity – unknown future of mining activities and the need to develop a point of difference
- “ageing in place”
- high community expectations
- reduction in essential services from State Government
- climate change
- local employment opportunities
- creating, maintaining and renewing our community assets within our resources

SHIRE'S ROLES

Local governments operate under Statute but also with some discretion. The four primary roles the Council has are:

Delivery of facilities and services

This role includes services like parks and gardens, roads, footpaths, drainage, recreation and cultural facilities, and events.

Most services are based on infrastructure like parks and playgrounds, roads and buildings. Maintenance and renewal of these infrastructure assets is a vital part of Council's service delivery role.

Some services are non-asset based, such as events and community information.



Regulation

Local governments have specific regulatory responsibilities that are vital for community wellbeing. For example, they have a regulatory and enforcement role in public health (e.g. licensing and monitoring food premises), the appropriateness and safety of new buildings, and the use of land. These areas are subject to regulation because they have the potential to impose costs or adverse effects on others (e.g. food poisoning, injuries or hazardous activities too close to population). In many cases the rights of those wishing to operate and the rights of those who may be affected or consider themselves to be affected is a delicate balancing act.

Influence

Influencing the decisions of others who do or can contribute to positive community outcomes in the Shire of Yilgarn is an important role. Advocacy to State government for recognition, funding, favourable policies or other forms of support is a good example of this role.

Civic Leadership

Council has a role as civic leader in the community. With strong leadership and community support, the Council can achieve much more than just through its own direct service delivery.

Shire Services

Theme	Environment	Social	Economic	Civic leadership
Goal	Protecting, utilising and enhancing our beautiful natural heritage	An inclusive, secure and welcoming community that encourages families, youth and the aged to remain and contribute to our Shire in the long term	A prosperous future for our community	Dynamic and visionary leadership guiding our community into the future
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Animal Control ▪ Fire Prevention & Control ▪ Pest Control (mosquito) ▪ Refuse Collection & Sites ▪ Sewerage ▪ Town Planning ▪ Cemetery ▪ Public Toilets ▪ Street lighting ▪ Footpaths & verges ▪ Townscape ▪ Building Control ▪ Biosecurity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical Services (Doctor) ▪ Community Resource Centre ▪ Child Care Centre & Playgroup ▪ Senior Citizens Centre ▪ Aged Housing ▪ Community Bus ▪ Swimming Pool ▪ Sport & Recreation ▪ Library ▪ Community Development ▪ FM Radio Re-broadcast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Museum ▪ Tourism & Visitor Services ▪ Area Promotion ▪ Caravan Park & Motel ▪ Road maintenance & construction ▪ Standpipes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emergency Management (Recovery) ▪ Public Health ▪ Police Licensing ▪ Governance ▪ Local Laws

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In the development of the original Plan in 2016, the Shire of Yilgarn community were invited to participate in the development of the Strategic Community Plan. Three workshops were open to all community members with a morning, daytime and evening option to ensure maximum attendance and participation. The workshops were promoted by:

- Direct mail invitations sent to all farmers
- Direct mail invitations sent to all sporting clubs
- Direct mail invitations sent to all community groups
- Direct mail invitations sent to all businesses
- An advertisement placed on the cover page of “*Crosswords*” – a fortnightly community magazine
- A notice placed on the Shire website.

The workshops were conducted in April 2016 with a total of 12 participants. Workshop participants were engaged in a series of questions as follows:

- What are three key words to describe your vision for the Shire of Yilgarn?
- What are the key strategic issues facing this community over the next 10 years?
- What three facilities do you value the most?
- What three services do you value the most?
- What can the community do to contribute to the vision?

The input collected from the engagement activities have shaped the content of this Plan.

In 2018 a 2 yearly review of the Plan was undertaken and Council advertised in the “*Crosswords*” Newsletter inviting residents to have input into the review.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Our Vision

The Shire of Yilgarn is a strong farming and mining community. We are a progressive Shire where people of all ages love to call home. Tourism is a key industry and local businesses thrive.

Our Values

- Yilgarn is a thriving community with a diverse and growing population.
- We are a community that invests in our people of all ages, backgrounds and skill levels, and we look for innovative ways to create opportunities for everyone
- We recognise the importance of a harmonious co-existence between our two major industries of mining and agriculture
- We value our tourism industry and acknowledge its importance to our local economy
- We are proud of our history, our natural landscape and our built environment and will promote these attributes to the rest of the world
- We are a visionary group of elected members who are focussed on achieving results and providing excellent fiscal management while being responsible to our community
- We are open, accountable, approachable and adaptable to change
- We lead by example, are professional and believe our community has a right to be heard.

10 Year Strategic Priorities

The Council is proposing that current services will continue to be delivered but there will be a particular focus on the following strategic priorities over the coming years:

- Embracing technology
- Supporting tourism
- Support for local business
- Community involvement
- Advocacy for essential services.



Decision-making Criteria

These criteria show what Council takes into account when considering significant issues. They reflect the decision-making approach applied to developing this plan and will continue to be applied as it is implemented.

How well does it fit our strategic direction?

- Does it fit with our vision and strategic priorities outlined in the Strategic Community Plan?

Can we afford it?

- How well does it fit with our Long Term Financial Plan? What is required to manage the whole of life costs?

Who benefits?

- Are we ensuring equitable distribution of benefits in the community? Does the option consider and balance current and future community needs?

Does it involve a tolerable risk?

- What level of risk is involved? How can it be managed? Does the residual risk fit within our risk tolerance level?



Goals, Outcomes and Strategies

The Strategic Community Plan is structured around four themes. Each theme has a goal and a suite of outcomes and strategies.

Environment

Goal	Outcome	Strategies
Protecting, utilising and enhancing our beautiful natural heritage	Satisfaction with waste management services and recycling processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Establish and maintain environmentally sound regional waste facilities to cater for the Shires long term waste disposal requirements</i> ▪ <i>Continue to provide & promote recycling services, including fortnightly household pick up and e-waste collection</i>
	A valued natural environment where community members in all industries and government invest in land care initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Continue to apply for funding to invest in landcare and conservation</i> ▪ <i>Continue to provide administrative support for Skeleton Weed Local Action Group</i>
	Satisfaction with sewerage services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Continue to maintain current sewerage systems in accordance with licensing requirements and asset management plan</i> ▪ <i>Continue to use recycled water for use at the Southern Cross Oval and Constellation Park</i>
	Increase in investment in renewable energy (private and/or public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Investigate the feasibility of renewable energy projects to cater for the long term energy needs of the community</i>

Social

Goal	Outcome	Strategies
An inclusive, secure and welcoming community that encourages families, youth and the aged to remain and contribute to our Shire in the long term	Maintain / increase percentage of residents engaged in recreation, cultural and leisure activities for all demographics in the Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to implement and support community programs ▪ Continue to provide and maintain high quality community infrastructure (recreation centre, oval, bowls, tennis facilities, swimming pool, library, community centre, halls) ▪ Continue to provide child care facilities within the community ▪ Investigate opportunities for youth programs ▪ Continue to support local sport, recreation & community groups ▪ Continue to support the provision of a community bus
	Retention and upgrade of current health and education services and infrastructure (Shire and State responsibility)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Value and promote educational opportunities to retain families and youth in the Shire ▪ Continue to provide quality infrastructure for health providers (medical centre, housing) ▪ Continue to lobby state and federal government for improved health infrastructure ▪ Support continued incentive funding for a quality doctor in the Shire including the provision of a car ▪ Continue to provide free use of facilities for use by service providers (Chiropractor, Physiotherapist, Veterinarian)
	High quality and well maintained Aged Care facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to manage, refurbish and maintain the Homes for the Aged ▪ Manage and develop the Independent Living Unit's precinct in conjunction with CEACA ▪ Continue to manage and maintain the Southern Cross Senior Citizens Centre
	Maintain a liveable, safe and secure community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to provide a Ranger service ▪ Continue to support our volunteer fire fighters ▪ Continue to provide suitable street lighting ▪ Continue to maintain CCTV cameras at strategic locations ▪ Continue to support the Local Emergency Management Committee and Plan (Yilgarn & Westonia) ▪ Continue to undertake Mosquito & Pest control activities ▪ Continue to manage and maintain the Southern Cross Cemetery ▪ Continue to re-broadcast FM Radio & TV channels for the Southern Cross community ▪ Continue to provide appropriate Environmental Health Services

Economic

Goal	Outcome	Strategies
A prosperous future for our community	Improved telecommunications infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Continue to lobby for improved telecommunications infrastructure to eliminate blackspots in the Shire</i> ▪ <i>Embrace the opportunities afforded by the NBN, due to be available in Southern Cross in 2017</i>
	Businesses in the Shire remain competitive and viable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Continue to provide an efficient and effective approval process</i> ▪ <i>Support initiatives progressed by the local business community</i> ▪ <i>Undertake an audit of services that are lacking from the Shire and investigate opportunities to facilitate the provision of these services in the community</i> ▪ <i>Continue to provide access to Shire standpipes</i> ▪ <i>Continue to support and manage the Community Resource Centre</i> ▪ <i>Continue to provide a Police Licensing Service</i>
	Quality and affordable housing is available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Continue to invest in housing to attract professionals to the region to attract and retain professionals and young people in the Shire</i>
	Tourism opportunities are maximised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Continue to manage, promote and upgrade the Southern Cross Caravan Park</i> ▪ <i>Continue to support the Southern Cross Museum</i> ▪ <i>Improve Visitor facilities including free wi-fi and Dog park</i> ▪ <i>Improve Visitor information access including an app and upgraded signage</i> ▪ <i>Continue to maintain access to quality public conveniences</i> ▪ <i>Continue to maintain the streetscape and amenities to a high standard</i>
	Safety and quality of transport networks are maintained and improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Continue to maintain and upgrade our road network</i> ▪ <i>Continue to maintain the Southern Cross Airstrip and facilities</i>

Civic Leadership

Goal	Outcome	Strategies
Dynamic and visionary leadership guiding our community into the future	A trustworthy and cohesive Council that functions efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ensure compliance whilst embracing innovation and best practice principles.</i> ▪ <i>Implement the Integrated Planning Framework, including the Long Term Financial Plan, Workforce Plan, Asset Management Plan, Corporate Business Plan and Annual Budget.</i>
	A community that respects and values Council staff and elected members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ensure adequate training programs for elected members and staff.</i> ▪ <i>Continue to support the Crosswords</i> ▪ <i>Continue to prepare and distribute a quarterly "Shire News"</i> ▪ <i>Continue to provide traineeships and apprenticeships</i>
	Positive and productive regional partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Actively participate in regional forums including Great Eastern Country Zone WALGA, Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils, Wheatbelt Communities and CEACA.</i> ▪ <i>Continue to review opportunities for shared services and structural reform</i>

FINANCIAL PROFILE

The following table provides a high level summary of our population, Shire staff and financial picture.

	2015	2017
Population (source: ABS)	1,698	1,164
Number of Electors	715	684
Employees (FTE)	40	37.64
Budget	\$12.5m	\$17.16m
Rates	\$4.38m	\$3.74m
Financial Assistance Grants		
General	\$719,920	\$860,211
Roads	\$1,146,000	\$1,432,227
Other Grants	\$3.17m	\$2.55m
Capital Expenditure	\$3.69m	\$5.69m
Operating Expenditure		
Excluding Depreciation	\$5.92m	\$4.75m
Depreciation	\$5.26m	\$8.12m
Value of Assets	\$353.3m	\$250.6m



HOW WILL WE KNOW IF THE PLAN IS SUCCEEDING?

The indicators below will help Council and the community monitor progress towards achieving Yilgarn’s vision and goals. Some of them are in the direct control of the Shire while many are less so.

Indicator	Desired Trend/Target
Community satisfaction with health services	Maintain
Community satisfaction with leisure, cultural & recreation facilities & services	Maintain
Community satisfaction with community events	Maintain
Number of visitors to the Shire / caravan park occupancy rates	Increasing
Road works program completed and grants acquitted	Maintain
Use of technology to improve customer service & operating efficiencies	Increasing
Level of legislative compliance	Maintain

