

FROM THE COAST

Tourism in Esperance

It has been wonderful to see the recent bushfires have done nothing to keep visitors to Esperance away, and deservedly so. Although some of our landscape has changed there is still immeasurable natural beauty to enjoy. We are still being complimented frequently by visitors to Esperance on the foreshore development and we are excited to begin the next phase in extending our waterfront.

Last year the Esperance community came together to brainstorm a replacement for our ageing skate park. People of all ages attended workshops with designers and the result is a design that includes something for everyone. There will be lots of shade, pathways for easy access and use by those wanting to jog or take a leisurely stroll. It will extend the look and feel of the existing waterfront development with matching seating, drinking fountains and rubbish bins. Looking at the final concept report, it is clear that although this will be a dynamic and interesting place for our youth, it is by no means exclusive. There will be something for everyone regardless of age or ability.

Tourism in Esperance has recently received a significant boost in the form of a Lotterywest grant of \$415,000 towards our Skate Park and outdoor recreational youth precinct. This funding announcement closely follows a grant of \$225,000 in Tourism Demand Driver Infrastructure funding from Tourism Western Australia. Along with matched funding from the Shire this will go towards the development of cruise ship disembarkation infrastructure to make it easier for cruise ship passengers to embark and disembark and increase the demand from cruise shipping companies to use Esperance as a stopover port on the South Coast.

The new Skate Park will connect the passenger disembarkation area to local businesses, making it a central social hub on the beach front, further enhancing Esperance as a tourist destination, attracting people from far and wide, and generating business within town. It is important to note that this area will not be in lieu of or at the cost of the tanker jetty. Community consultation has been ongoing on this issue and it is one that Council is working hard to be able to provide some options to the community. The Taylor St area and Skate Park will be a way of extending and maximising our waterfront and connecting several important areas of Esperance.

These are exciting times and we look forward to making it happen!