

FROM THE COAST

Engaging the Community

What is your vision for Esperance ten years from now? Our Shire is looking for input from the Esperance community to review and update our Strategic Community Plan. Whilst the Shire may not be able to do all the ideas suggested, we're getting the ball rolling so we can plan for the future.

We've seen on social media some people like the idea of department stores, fast food chains and entertainment complexes. Generally these businesses require a larger population, so how big do we want Esperance to become? Twenty thousand? Twenty five thousand? As big as Albany or Kalgoorlie? If that's the case how do we encourage economic growth? Or are we quite happy with our size now? Some don't want it to get any bigger than it is now and others want it to grow. But what do YOU want?

We've had a lot of feedback so far, but we need to hear more. One constant topic is tourism. There's no doubt we have many visitors to our town, but do we want to attract more? How many more and how do we attract them? Do we need more accommodation and tourist attractions? What do we offer tourists and how do we work together to make Esperance a destination of choice?

Many people are concerned about local businesses. Do they have enough support? Are there enough opportunities? Same goes for jobs; many people are worried about their future employment choices.

It's exciting to hear a wide range of views from the surveys coming in. In general the feedback we have received from our youth has been positive. They are generally happy with present options to occupy their spare time, from sporting clubs and community groups, to outdoor activities like the beach and skate park. Some youth do see themselves in Esperance in 10 years' time, while others believe they'll move away for work or studies, but still consider Esperance a future holiday destination or a place to return to raise a family.

How do you see Esperance evolving? Community surveys are an important way to find out what the community wants and this helps Councillors make decisions. Completing this survey is a sure fire way you can make your voice heard rather than making comments or complaints on social media. By working together we can identify solutions to our challenges and make the most of our opportunities.

Up until the end of March we will be busy asking you our community questions, holding workshops and attending community events. We want to make sure our Strategic Community Plan represents our community and the future they envision. We look forward to seeing you out there!