Strategic Directions 2035











Port Augusta
CITY COUNCIL

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Photography: Peter Taylor Photos, Georgie Sharp, Beardy Photography, Port Augusta City Council and Tourism Australia



Theme 4: Infrastructure

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The actions undertaken to address the desired outcomes of the Strategic Directions 2035 and Four Year Priority Action Plan are reported in the Council's Annual Report each financial year.

1





Tourism Hub

Education Hub

Transport Hub

Mining and Renewable Energy Hub

Port Augusta Regional Hub

Recreation and Culture Hub

Community Services Hub

Government and Defence Hub

Retail and Business Hub

2 Mayor's Message



Linley Shine

I am pleased to present the Strategic Directions for the Port Augusta City Council, serving as the primary guide for our city's future aspirations. This document offers a renewed focus for both the Council and the Community, it will certainly take us forward to embrace economic growth and enhance all the wonderful characteristics of our beautiful city.

A key highlight within this plan is the Hub concept, emphasizing the significant role the Port Augusta City Council will play in providing services to the Upper Spencer Gulf, the Far North regions of our State and beyond. As we witness an increase in major projects, Port Augusta is focusing particularly on housing and local procurement opportunities. The Council remains committed to building strong relationships with the Local Government Association, as well as State and Commonwealth Governments, ensuring the necessary support to promote our history and deliver the facilities our residents and tourists expect.

Port Augusta is known as the crossroads of Australia, strategically connecting highways to various regions and states, we serve as a gateway to iconic landscapes.

Our proximity to the Flinders Ranges offers residents and visitors access to one of South Australia's most treasured natural wonders.

We are increasingly recognised for our liveability, making Port Augusta an ideal place for families. We aim to enhance this by developing a vibrant retail hub, offering a diverse range of shopping and dining experiences to cater to both residents and visitors.

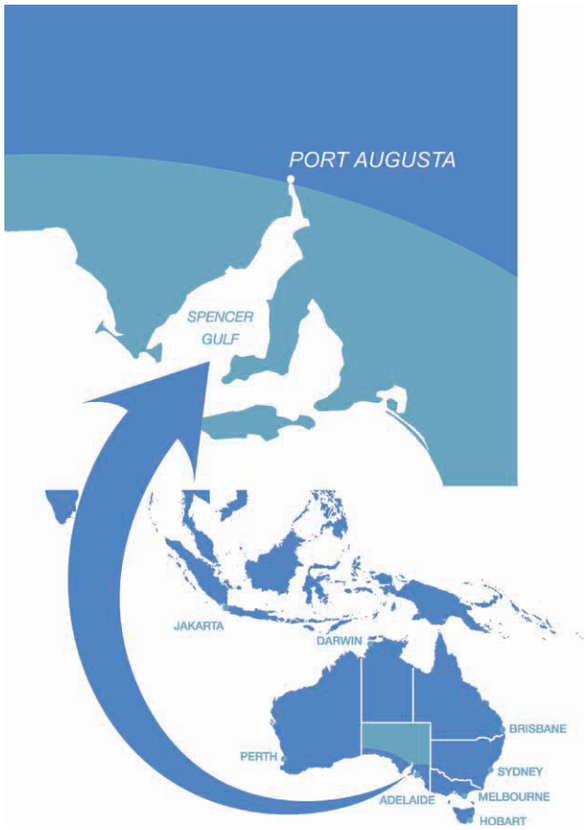
Port Augusta City Council will continually review its operations to ensure economic and sustainable functionality. With strong leadership and good governance, the Council will maintain its focus on achieving the Vision and Goals outlined in this Plan.

I extend my gratitude to those who contributed to this Plan. This is a remarkable opportunity for Port Augusta and the Upper Spencer Gulf to showcase everything we have to offer and demonstrate our capabilities as a community, city, and region. Our future holds immense opportunities, and we are ready and well positioned to embrace these.

"This document offers a renewed focus for both the Council and the Community."

3 Our City

Port Augusta is the most uniquely located City in South Australia, sitting at and nestled around the top of Spencer Gulf, the heart of South Australia. This is a seaside City, yet it maintains its strong connections with the iconic Australian Outback. The stunning backdrop of the Flinders Ranges is a constant reminder of this link to the Australian bush.



1,196km² land area

+13ha of green space

+40 recreational spaces

71.6 days of rain annually

1,556 properties connected to Community Waste Water Management Scheme (CWMS)

26.3˚c average maximum temp

12˚c average minimum temp

14,420 population (ABS 2023)

12% population born overseas (ABS 2021)

38 years median age

20.4% indigenous population

+45 programs/ services run by Council

650 local businesses

5.0% of residents have attended university

0.12 persons per hectare

196 council staff headcount as at 30 June 2024

+125km of paths

$870.65 million Gross Regional Product

12.4% mortgage stress

+32km of stormwater pipework

large scale solar installations with another **2 million** panels

+410km of roads

7,785 rateable properties

The information presented above has been drawn from the 2021 Census and ABS Data, Regional Development Australia Far North (RDAFN) and the Port Augusta City Council Annual Report 23/24.

4 Our Aspiration

Port Augusta is a growing service centre for the Outback regions of South Australia and a Place of Destination in its own right, supporting a proud and vibrant community. We are a City with a long history as a Regional Hub that is able to reinvent itself.

We aspire to build on our history and become a model Regional Hub for Transport, Sustainable Industries, Mining and Defence Services, Tourism, Retail and Business, Government and Non-Government Services, Education, and Recreation and Culture. Having a critical mass is important for the future sustainability of Port Augusta. To achieve this, we seek a reversal of our loss of population from 15,621 in 1991 (ABS Census 1991) to 14,420 (ABS Statistics 2023).



Recreation and Culture Hub

- Our City is one of the top locations for water activities, fishing and exploring the Flinders Ranges and offers a diverse range of sporting activities which brings our community together.
- Port Augusta is a gathering place for the Aboriginal population in the region. The Aboriginal community is growing and is currently over 20% of our population and covers some 17-28 different language or family groups.
- Port Augusta has a richly diverse multi-cultural community which is embraced and celebrated.
- Our creative sector is underpinned by many artists who reside here, supported by a growing awareness of the value of arts, music and cultural expression.



Transport Hub

- Over the years Port Augusta has grown with its earliest history as an outback shipping port supporting the pastoral industry, evolving to road and rail. The City has been the hub of commercial, railroad and government services for the far north of the state since its establishment in 1852. Port Augusta continues to grow as a transport hub and may soon be the home of a new $250 million port facility.



Government and Defence Hub

- Port Augusta has been a long standing hub for delivery of government services, including health/hospital, corrections, education, Aboriginal services, community support, environment and natural resources.
- Port Augusta provides a range of services that support the Australian Defence Force Regional Operations, including the Woomera Prohibited Zone and the Cultana Training Area the largest training area capable of supporting full combined arms exercises.



Retail and Business Hub

- Port Augusta has historically been a key retail centre for smaller pastoral and Far North communities for grocery and retail goods and services.
- The City is a well-established service centre for travellers passing through to and from the Flinders, Outback, Northern Territory, Western Australia and the Eastern States. There is huge potential for Port Augusta to be a central base for visitors (international and interstate) from which they can explore the City, Flinders Ranges and Outback. The ‘South Australian Visitor Economy Sector Plan 2030’ is a leading resource to embrace to maximise visitor economy and value.

Community Services Hub

- Port Augusta is the largest community in the far north and acts as a vital service centre for the region's widespread and diverse, small and micro communities.
- The Royal Flying Doctor Service base at the Port Augusta Airport is a critical link to health services throughout outback Australia.
- Port Augusta has been a long standing hub for delivery of government, not-for-profit and private sector community services, including aged care, disability support, youth services, homelessness intervention, drug and alcohol support, foster care and family counselling.

Tourism Hub

- Port Augusta hosts many successful sporting and cultural events and conferences and is ideally placed to grow its capabilities in 'Event Tourism'.
- Local attractions like the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Wadlata Outback Centre, Pichi Richi Railway, the Flinders Ranges and Spencer Gulf are significant tourist drawcards for the region.

Mining and Renewable Energy Hub

- Port Augusta has long been a base for a range of services supporting mining operations in the north of the State.
- Port Augusta is already home to several renewable energy projects with more proposed including the State Prosperity Project.

Education Hub

- Port Augusta has a long history as an education hub providing the base for the 'School of the Air' since 1958.
- Our City has both public and private education options for early childhood, primary and secondary schooling and a range of vocational education options including TAFE SA, Technical College, private training organisations and tertiary education options including Uni Hub Spencer Gulf.

To achieve these aspirations, we have four external themes and one organisationally focussed theme, each with an associated goal. The Four Year Priority Action Plan also follows these five themes.



5 Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

Change offers opportunity and we must all be equipped with the tools to realise our collective aspirations.

There are challenges to be considered as we plan for the future including:

- affordable housing and shortage of accommodation during peak construction periods,
- impacts of climate change,
- access to adequate public transport to and around the City,
- attracting commercial public transport to and from the city by rail and air,
- recent decline in population,
- the different trajectories of our diverse population
- Council's financial capability, including the number of services Council provides, and
- access to healthcare and the on-going shortage of GP's in the City.

Opportunities

With a proven, diverse and resilient community, there are significant opportunities to achieve sustainable growth during the lifetime of this plan and build on what we have and become a model Regional Hub. We will work with a range of government and private partners to help identify new job growth sectors and investigate ways to achieve maximum benefit for our City, with a focus on strategies to meet the forthcoming workforce needs in Port Augusta and the maintenance of our infrastructure.

The Council will continue to be a driving force behind the delivery of community facilities, quality open spaces, community development and cultural and sporting events. These bring us together and foster a strong sense of place and community spirit. The unique blend of coastal environment and the Flinders Ranges is an attraction to build upon and work to increase our share in the tourism market by making our destination more accessible and appealing.

Our investment in the renewal and maintenance of our assets, our foreshores and the CBD will serve us well. A changing climate and changing communities means that a strong focus on delivering environmentally sustainable and inclusive design should remain a high priority, whilst also paying attention to the rich Aboriginal cultural heritage here.



6 Strategic Planning Framework – Achieving Our 2035 Aspirations

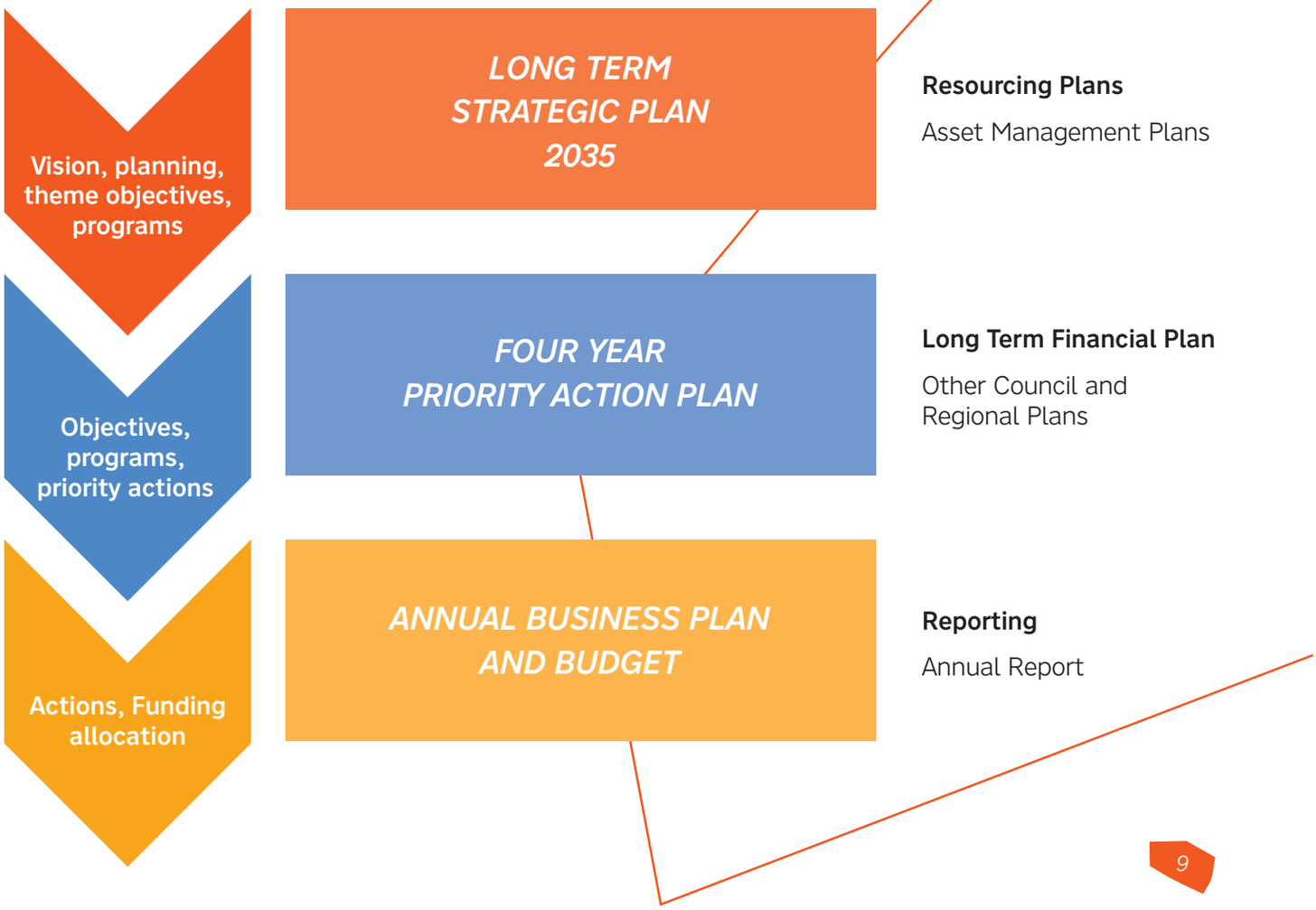
Our strategic planning framework has three levels:

» Long term Strategic Directions (nominally to 2035)

» Medium term (four years – Four Year Priority Action Plan)

» Annual (Annual Budget and Business Plan)

These plans (illustrated below) are enabled by complementary resourcing plans and regular monitoring and reporting to both Council and our communities.



7 Strategic Directions Themes and Goals

We have selected four themes: Community, Economy, Environment, and Infrastructure, to shape the future of our area together, with one corporate theme: Governance and Financial Sustainability.

LEADER

Where we:

» set the vision and strategy for the City

» approve policy directions for the City

» engage with communities to make informed decisions

» represent and advocate for our communities

ENABLER

Where we can do a number of things to help achieve outcomes by others, including:

» providing information about the services provided by others

» advocating for other levels of government to do certain things (such as upgrade the highway)

» bringing people together to facilitate a solution to a community issue

» working with community groups

PROVIDER

Where we commit funds to:

» act as an agent of other levels of government to supplement their services

» part fund a service or activity through one-off or ongoing grants

» own, build and maintain assets such as roads, paths, stormwater, buildings etc.

» regulate activities

» take responsibility for providing services or activities

Themes

Theme 1: Community

GOAL:

WE ARE A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY THAT UNDERSTANDS, REPRESENTS AND PRESERVES OUR UNIQUE SENSE OF PURPOSE AND PLACE.

Desired Outcomes

1. Our City has a sustainable growth in population.
2. We are a resilient, inclusive, safe and vibrant community where people feel proud to live.
3. People of all ages, cultures, abilities and interests have access to services, facilities and experiences that support their health and wellbeing.
4. We put the customer first and provide a positive experience and appropriate levels of service.

Roles

Port Augusta is well served by community service providers. The Council has been a PROVIDER of a significant number of community services, many of which are not traditional Council services; current trends are now indicating a shift to being more of an ENABLER where this can be achieved.







Theme 2: Economy

GOAL:

WE CAPITALISE ON OUR REGIONAL HUB ATTRIBUTES TO PURSUE A THRIVING ECONOMY.

Desired Outcomes

1. Our City is widely recognised as a regional hub with increasing investment and strong industry sectors, a skilled workforce and local jobs.
2. Our City is known as a destination of choice where people come to experience our lifestyle and environment.
3. Our City is a regional air, road, rail and shipping transport hub, with access to and from the City that is easily accessible and supports industry development.

Roles

Port Augusta is entering a time of economic development opportunity. Council's role will be focussed towards being an ENABLER, collaborating with service providers and bringing people and business together to maximise opportunities and to ADVOCATE for government support and investment. LEADERSHIP will come from Council's role of setting strategy and creating an appropriate environment for economic development.



Theme 3: Environment

GOAL:

WE VALUE, RESPECT AND PROTECT OUR NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS.

Desired Outcomes

1. Our community reduces potable water and energy consumption.
2. The amount of waste going to landfill is reduced by our community.
3. The region's unique natural resources and urban environment are recognised as a key element and high value asset in the City's economic future.

Roles

We all have a responsibility to ensure the natural environment is sustainably maintained. Council's role will be PROVIDER in mandated areas such as waste management and ensuring that other services factor in changing climate impacts. It will also be a LEADER in appropriate policy decisions and finding more innovative means of meeting community needs through the role as an ENABLER.



Theme 4: Infrastructure

GOAL:

WE PROVIDE AND ADVOCATE FOR FIT FOR PURPOSE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT IMPROVES THE PHYSICAL, ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL WELLBEING OF OUR CITY.

Desired Outcomes

1. Our physical infrastructure meets our community needs.
2. We have safe, accessible and well-utilised CBD, public spaces and built environments that reflect the priorities of our community.
3. Our City develops and evolves in a planned way, improving the appearance and making efficient use of infrastructure.

Roles

The Council has the role of PROVIDER for its own assets and ENABLER (Advocate) in relation to the assets of other governments and private entities.



Theme 5: Governance and Financial Sustainability

GOAL:

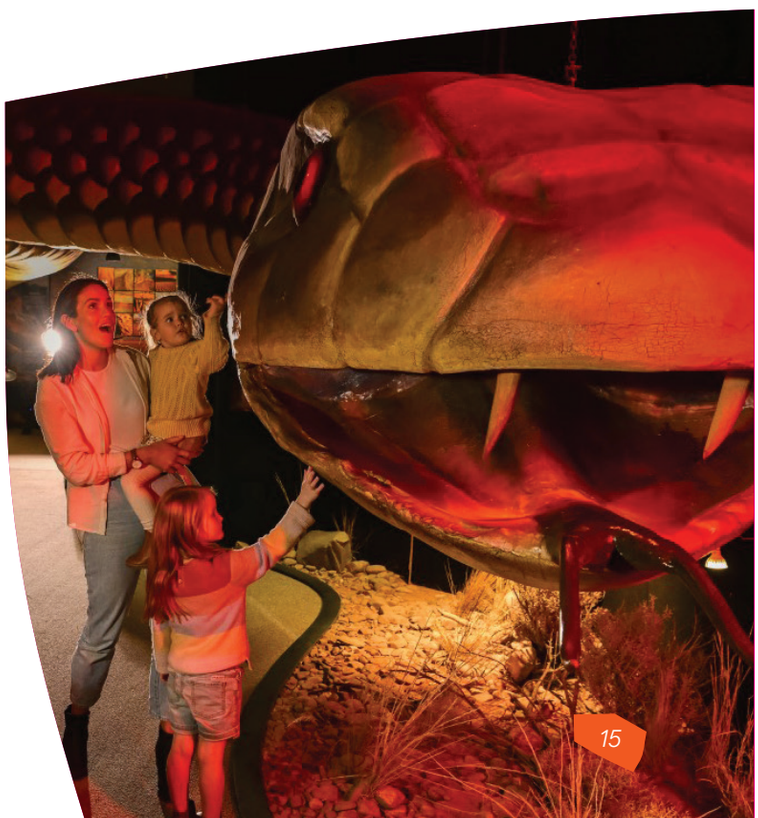
WE CONDUCT OUR BUSINESS ETHICALLY AND TRANSPARENTLY AND SEEK FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY TO ENABLE THE COUNCIL TO PROVIDE THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE OUR 2035 ASPIRATIONS.

Desired Outcomes

1. We are inclusive, engaged and transparent.
2. We have positive relationships with other levels of government and partners that deliver great outcomes for the community.
3. We are in a surplus financial operating position.
4. We meet or exceed legislative and accreditation requirements for relevant programs, including WHS, risk management and cyber security measures.
5. Council is a great place to work – we attract, develop and retain a skilled workforce to deliver our priorities.

Roles

The Council will act responsibly as a LEADER in conducting business operations, financially responsible actions and behaviours to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organisation.





8 Monitoring and Review

Monitoring progress

Our progress will be monitored in three ways:

- References to the Strategic Directions Outcomes are included in each Council report to demonstrate the actions that are being undertaken to ensure the achievement of the outcomes within the Strategic Directions 2035.
- The Annual Report includes details of progress and outcomes regarding our annual budget and business plan, incorporating actions from the Four Year Priority Action Plan and Strategic Directions 2035, as required by the Local Government Act 1999.
- Special reports will be produced from time to time on key strategic matters and presented to Council for consideration.

Review

The Strategic Directions will be reviewed after each Council general election as required by the Local Government Act 1999. Other reviews may be undertaken at earlier periods if determined by the Council.

The Four Year Priority Action Plan is of a fixed term and each elected Council will determine their own priorities for delivery during the Council term.











Port Augusta
CITY COUNCIL

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