Your City: Your Future: Your Say

Port Augusta City Council
Future Planning Strategies

Discussion Paper

1.0 About this Discussion Paper

This Discussion Paper has been prepared to help members of The Port Augusta and Stirling North communities to participate in Speak Out Sessions that will be held on April 10th and 11th.

These sessions are being held to make sure that as many residents of all ages, business owners and employees and service providers as possible, are able to put forward their ideas for the future of Port Augusta.

The sessions will be designed to find out:

- What kind of city do you want to live in, grow up in, raise your children in and grow older in?
- What kind of jobs do you want to see and what education and training will be needed to give workers the skills they need to do these jobs?
- What are the natural environments that you want to protect and improve?
- What buildings do you think should be conserved and reused to protect their heritage values?
- What kind of leadership does Port Augusta need if it is to continue to prosper in the future? How do we attract and develop leaders especially from among our young people?

These and any other topics that community thinks need to be discussed will help us shape a clear and agreed vision for Port Augusta 2031.

The Speak Out sessions are informal and people can attend at the time that suits them. They are structured to allow participants to focus on the topics that are important to them.

2.0 Speak Out Sessions

The Speak Out Sessions will be held at the following times:

- **Tuesday, April 10th** between 5pm and 9pm at the Stirling North Progress Association Hall.
- **Wednesday, April 11th** between 11am and 3pm in Gladstone Square and the Institute Courtyard.
  Food will be provided and there will be activities that allow children to participate.
- **Wednesday, April 19th** between 5pm and 9pm in the Institute Building, Commercial Road, Port Augusta.
3.0 About the Visioning Process

Port Augusta City Council engaged planning consultants URPS to help them work with the community to develop the Community Vision 2031 and to prepare the Community Plan and Strategic Directions Report.

URPS team members Angela Hazebroek and Nicole Halsey have facilitated a number of vision workshops with:

- Children representing all of the schools, primary and secondary, public and private
- Business and community leaders
- Service providers
- Aboriginal community members
- Council staff and Elected Members

Some of their ideas are included in this Discussion Paper.

4.0 Vision Leaders Team

From these workshops we have recruited 35 Vision Leaders who have agreed to promote the Visioning process to their networks and to provide input at key stages of the planning process. A list of Vision Leaders (as at February 23rd) is provided in Appendix A. It is not too late to join the Vision Leaders Team – if you are interested please call Lee Heron at Council on 8641 9100 or email lheron@portaugusta.sa.gov.au.

5.0 About Port Augusta

New population data will be available from the 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census. The figures in this section of the report are taken from the 2006 census with some more recent data where this is available.

In 2006 the Census recorded a population of 14,024 while the 2010 Estimated Resident Population was 14,784. The population of the Port Augusta Council area has been steadily increasing since 2001 with a total population growth in 9 years of 9.4% or an average of 1% per year.

5.1 Age Structure

Port Augusta has a high proportion of school aged children with 21% of the population aged under 15. It has a lower proportion of young adults aged 15 - 34 but high proportions of working aged people 35 – 64 (41%). This is up significantly on the 1996 Census figures as is the proportion of people aged 65 and over.

There were 1,750 people aged 65 and over in 2006. This represented 12.6% of the population.
Population projections\(^1\) indicated that the likely future population for Port Augusta in 2026 would be about 17,000. The final number will depend on the annual rate of growth experienced by Port Augusta and could be anywhere between 15,000 and 21,000 people\(^2\).

5.2. Population Characteristics

Port Augusta has a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders with 16.2% of the population compared with a State Average of 1.7%.

Port Augusta has a significantly lower proportion of its population born overseas (8.3%) compared with the State average of 20.2%.

Port Augusta has higher proportions of single parent families (20.4%) than the state (16%) and slightly higher proportions of single person households (26.7%) than the state (26.5%).

5.3. Housing

More people in Port Augusta are renting their homes (34.7% of all households) with 13% being private rental and 16.7% being public rental with 5% of other forms of subsidised housing. This is 9.1% higher than the state average.

Over 20% of low income households in the rental market and 5.5% of home buyers are experiencing housing stress ie the amount they spend on rent or loan repayments are more than 30% of the net household incomes.

The Flinders Ranges region, of which Port Augusta comprises 71% has a homelessness rate of 123 people per 10,000 residents which is 2.3 times higher than the state-wide figure.

5.4. Childhood Development

This analysis is based on the Australian Early Development Index data for 2009.

Children assessed in Port Augusta were significantly more likely to be assessed as developmentally vulnerable in areas such as:

- Physical health and well-being
- Language and cognitive skills
- Social competence

Only in emotional maturity did the Port Augusta children receive a higher score than the state average.

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\(^1\) DPTI Population projects released in May 2011
\(^2\) Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) Structure Plan for Port Augusta January 2011.
5.5. Health

Residents of Port Augusta were much less likely to rate their own health as very good or excellent (55.6%) than South Australians generally (66.2%) in the National Health Survey. Proportionally more people in Port Augusta report fair or poor health (18.6% compared with 15.5%).

In 2006 there were 644 people living in Port Augusta with a profound or severe disability. Most of these (560) were living in the community and 1081 people or 10% of the population provide unpaid care to a person with a disability.

Port Augusta residents have higher rates of diabetes Type 2, high cholesterol, circulatory system diseases and high or very high psychological distress levels compared to state wide figures. They have lower proportions of respiratory system diseases and musculoskeletal system diseases.

Residents of Port Augusta have higher rates of all health risk factors than the South Australian average.

- Smokers comprise 28% of the population (19.9% for the state)
- People consuming alcohol at levels posing a health risk are 6.4% of the population (4.9% for the state)
- Physically inactive people are 41.4% of the population (35.8% for the state)
- Obese males are 25.9% of the population (17.9% for the state)
- Obese females are 20.5% of the population (17% for the state)

All of these health risk factors have implications for the provision of primary healthcare intervention and the need for acute care and treatment.

Data on the provision of health care services in 2007/08 indicated that GP Services and Practice Nurse Services were provided in Port Augusta at rates higher than the state average. However general psychologist services lag far behind the state rate with less than 30% of the state wide level of service being provided in Port Augusta. Given the higher than average rates of psychological distress in Port Augusta this represents a serious service gap.

5.6. Income

Port Augusta’s SEIFA ranking, which measures a range of variables related to disadvantage, was 897 in 2006. This is significantly below the mid point of 1000 reflecting significant levels of disadvantage with respect to education, employment, income and housing.

Port Augusta has higher proportions of its residents receiving government income support from aged pensions (82.2% of eligible age group) to single parents (10.7%) to unemployed people (82%), long term unemployed (6.4%).

Port Augusta residents are more likely to be receiving income support in all categories than South Australians in general. Of particular concern is the unemployment rate for 15-24 year old where Port Augusta’s young people are more than twice as likely (12.9%) to be on benefits than young people across the state (5.2%).
5.7. Community Connection

Port Augusta residents were more likely to report high levels of community connection in the Department for Families and Communities survey in 2009.

Almost all (97.1%) of residents reported being able to get help from families, friends or neighbours. More than half (54%) volunteer their time to help out and more than half (60.7%) are members of organised sport, church or community groups. Three quarters (74.7%) of parents of school aged children are actively involved in school activities.

On all of these measures Port Augusta people demonstrate higher levels of connection with their communities than the state as a whole. This is a real strength of the Port Augusta community.

5.8. Employment and Education

In 2006 93% of the population in the labour force was employed with a 7% unemployment rate. At September 2011 6.7% of the labour force was unemployed. The occupation with the highest proportions of workers in 2006 were

- Technicians and trades workers (16.2%)
- Community and personal service workers (15.1%)
- Clerical and administrative workers (14.5%)
- Professionals (13.4%)
- Labourers (12.8%)

The most common industries of employment were:

- Health care and social assistance (15.3%)
- Retail trade (13.6%)
- Public administration and safety (13.0%)
- Education and training (8.9%)
- Accommodation and food services (8.2%)

Port Augusta is clearly a major regional service city and a focus for health, education and government services.

Low proportions of Port Augusta residents have post school qualifications. They are more likely to have certificate level qualifications (41.3%) but much less likely to have degrees or post graduate qualifications.
6.0 Planning Context

Council’s Strategic Community Plan and its Strategic Direction Report need to be consistent with the South Australian Strategic Plan, the Far North Regional Development Australia Road Map and the Port Augusta Structure Plan.

South Australia’s Strategic Plan sets targets for:

- Growing regional populations at the same rate as metropolitan Adelaide
- Affordable housing provision
- Increasing the contribution of tourism to the State economy
- Improving the well being of Aboriginal people through education, housing, employment and participation
- Improving the well being of all South Australians through reducing chronic health risks such as smoking and obesity and increasing physical activity levels.

All of these are challenges that need to be addressed by Council in its future planning.

The Port Augusta Structure Plan sets directions for future growth and development, identifying areas where land needs to be zoned for residential, industrial and commercial development.

The Structure Plan also identifies the kinds of economic and social infrastructure needed to support population growth and maintain a vibrant community and economy.

Mining is recognised as the key driver for future investment in the Far North Region. Port Augusta is positioning itself as a retail, residential, logistics and services hub for the mining sector. This will require significant infrastructure investments including a second bridge and a heavy vehicle freight route that by passes the City Centre. Relocating the rail infrastructure away from the centre of the city would provide significant development and revitalisation opportunities.

The contribution of tourism to the City of Port Augusta is recognised by Council’s investment in the Wadlata Visitor Centre and Arid Lands Botanic Gardens as well as the significant public works that have been completed to improve the appeal of the city to visitors and local residents.

Tourism will continue to be a major economic driver for Port Augusta given its role as a gateway to the west and north of South Australia, its proximity to the Flinders Ranges and its position as a visitor destination in its own right.

The Upper Spencer Gulf marine environment is a valuable ecosystem and an asset and resource that is highly valued by the community and visitors to the City.

Protecting the ecosystems associated with the gulf, wetlands, mangroves and salt marshes as well as those of inland areas is a key responsibility for all land managers and the community. As custodians for the future all residents and businesses must commit themselves to taking care of these precious areas.

The rich and diverse cultural heritage of the First Peoples of the Port Augusta region and their ongoing connections with land are to be acknowledged and respected.
Port Augusta is a meeting place and home for many Aboriginal people from different parts of Australia. This provides both opportunities and challenges. Through this planning process we will be working with Aboriginal people from a range of backgrounds and areas to make sure that our future planning is respectful and inclusive.

Port Augusta has many stories to tell from before and after colonial settlement. The buildings and places that are part of these stories need to be conserved and managed so that the built heritage and historical places are available to future generations. People who don’t remember their past have no road map for the future.

7.0 So where are we headed?

The early vision workshops focused on ten key themes:

• Opportunity
• Inclusion
• Creativity
• Resilience
• Spirit of Joy
• Innovation
• Beauty
• Prosperity
• Inspired Leadership
• Cohesion

These were all seen as qualities that would make Port Augusta a great place to live, raise a family, grow up in, work in, grow older in.

What do you think these qualities might mean for Port Augusta?
What are we already doing that contributes to these qualities?
What do we need to do differently to develop these qualities in our city and our people?

Some of the visions that came out of the first workshops included

In 20 years time Port Augusta will:

• Have such a diverse array of social activities and high standard of services that it will be the “choice” place to live in country South Australia
• Be the GREEN City
• Have got rail out of town through economic development
• Be known as the place where non Aboriginal and Aboriginal people live in harmony, safety and prosperity
• Be a modern city that is inclusive of all cultures and provides meaningful opportunities for individuals and families to benefit and prosper

• Be a community that is resilient and able to confront and solve our challenges; recognising and encouraging leadership, making use of natural beauty, valuing and capitalising on our differences:

• Be a community that encourages economic diversity and innovation, educates and trains our young people and attracts new businesses and workers to build a prosperous future.

What is your vision for Port Augusta in 2031?

If you think you won’t be here then, what would you want it to be like for those who are?

What one change do you think the community of Port Augusta needs to embrace for your vision to become a reality?
8.0 Appendix A – Vision Leaders

- Mayor Joy Baluch
- Deputy Mayor Phil Greagen
- Cr Sam Johnson
- Cr Lisa Lumsden
- Mr and Mrs A.W. Morris
- Maria Anderson
- Allan Newchurch
- Greg Perkin
- Margaret Cimarosti
- Joan Dobson
- Paula Osborn
- Dale Nelson
- Dawn Likouresis
- Troy Grover
- Sonja Tilbrook
- Norma Moss
- Robert Ireland
- Bronwyn Ryan
- David Wright
- Martin Sampson
- Dean Martin
- Rose Moyle – Galich
- Brett Ben Bow
- Alan Morris
- Kym Thomas
- Dawn Webb
- Barbara Martin
- Ursula Meese
- Karen Garrett
- Kym Williams
- Clare Vanderbergh
- Michelle Coles
- Cherie Gerlach
- Natalie Giles