

Quarterly Report to Region January to March 2019

Whyalla – The City of Opportunity

Whyalla may potentially become the fastest growing city in Australia.

RDAWEP and the Whyalla City Council are actively working together to maximise the opportunity for the city with the rapid influx of new investment commitments and enquiries on the back of the major GFG Alliance multi-billion dollar commitment to the regional city.

RDAWEP is actively developing the future Opportunity Pipeline of upcoming major projects to help maximise the benefit for local companies, assist with growing workforce needs and actively support new business investment.

With GFG Alliance commencing the steelworks transformation process with an initial \$600m investment into a new rolling mill as part of the \$1.2-1.4b steelworks transformation, coupled with the GFG Simec ZEN Solar project, also committing hundreds of millions of dollars, the broader business and investment community realise that Whyalla is definitely on the move.

Whyalla Mayor and RDAWEP Board member, Clare McLaughlin, said “Now is a fantastic time to either invest or set up a business in Whyalla. The future prospects are incredibly strong.”

For business investment enquiries and a confidential briefing on the future of projections for the city, contact RDAWEP’s Whyalla office on 08 8645 7811.



Congratulations Koonibba

After many years working with the Koonibba Community and in particular with CEO Corey McLennan, Regional Development Australia Whyalla and Eyre Peninsula Inc are proud to be involved with the Koonibba Store venture that commenced trading in February.

It’s been 42 years since the old store ceased operations. The old store was located in the same street as the school and was built of similar stone with a polished wooden floor. It was also an agency for the now merged Bank of Adelaide. Since the old store closed, Koonibba residents have had to shop in Ceduna some 40km away. This has been fine for a weekly or fortnightly shop however the ability to top-up at times was not available. In addition to providing groceries the store will be a valuable tool in training community members with retail service skills. It will also introduce tourist related ventures to the community. This will increase Koonibba’s economy and the employment of community members.

Looking to the Future on EP

At the 82nd annual Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association (EPLGA) Conference recently held in Kimba, RDAWEP presented on five megatrends that have shaped, and will continue to shape, the development of Eyre Peninsula.

Individually they present a particular lens on the future; together they offer a sometimes more complex, overlapping or contradictory trajectory. The trends are:

Defeating distance – Improvements in physical transport and telecommunications infrastructure along with emerging digital technologies have converged to improve connectivity and to lessen the impacts of distance on communities and businesses. Examples include broadband connections and telehealth (talking to your GP over the internet).

Global exposure – Global markets will continue to shape economic activity in Australia's regions as communities and businesses become increasingly exposed economically, politically and culturally. The growing significance of the Asia-Pacific region as a market for goods and services produced in regional Australia demands higher educational attainment and cultural engagement. Examples include training international pilots in the region and increasing competition for Eyre Peninsula grain from the Black Sea grain growing district.

Diverging places – Larger centres, major cities and high amenity areas continue to draw people and business away from many smaller towns. Growing income inequality within and between places, and declining trust in 'distant' decision-makers is challenging governance arrangements. New land owners and land managers are expressing a more diverse set of values in regional places that relate to environment, culture and lifestyle. EP, like all regional areas, has a declining population as young people seek jobs from cities.

New economies – The Australian economy, like other economies globally, is in transition. Two of the more significant aspects of this are the generation of value through knowledge, innovation and new services in the economy, and the changing mix of energy demand and sources of generation. Together, these changes have the potential to energise new forms of regional development. The hydrogen economy, and precision agriculture in advanced manufacturing in food are likely for Eyre Peninsula.

Environment at risk – Regional Australia's communities and businesses have long known the environment as a source of both livelihood and risk. However, the declining condition of natural assets, the loss of biodiversity, global climate change, extreme events and biosecurity risks are presenting new or expanded challenges for regional development.



3 New Mobile Base Stations for Eyre Peninsula

Eyre Peninsula will benefit from improved mobile coverage and more reliable communications under Round 4 of the Federal Government's Mobile Black Spot Program.

Federal Minister for Regional Services Senator Bridget McKenzie has announced the locations of 29 new base stations in South Australia, including Eyre Peninsula's Baird Bay, Borthwick Hill and Buckleboo.

Base stations under the first three rounds are scheduled to be operational by 30 June 2019. Round 4 base stations are expected to roll out shortly with the first new base stations being activated by the second half of the year.

RDAWEP will continue to lobby the government and service providers to address ongoing telecommunications issues across the region.

Eyes on Eyre Update

The Eyes on Eyre project continues to gain momentum across the region. In early 2019 this joint project led by RDAWEP, Natural Resources Eyre Peninsula and all eleven Eyre Peninsula councils has been focused on identifying and planning the future needs of tourism and community infrastructure across many of our key locations throughout the region. February saw the engagement of landscape architects Birdseye Studios, to assist the steering group in the development of concept designs for a number of campgrounds around the region. The aim of this collaboration was to have some tangible designs to take to community and discuss their thoughts and aspirations for the future of these sites.

An extensive consultation process was then carried out during February through a mix of community drop-in sessions, email and online surveys. Eight community consultation sessions were held throughout the region which attracted more than 150 community members keen to talk with us on the plans and provide their input into the process. RDAWEP also undertook an online survey for 2 weeks over this period which received more than 120 responses from the community and stakeholder groups.



As expected there was wide variety in community response with many people expressing their long association with many of the proposed locations. It was generally agreed that although no-one wanted to see major development at the sites, a soft upgrade of the camping areas and amenities was required at many of the locations. The steering group will now take all the community feedback on board and revise the plans where necessary before providing recommendations to the project partners.

Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) Successful Projects

Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development has announced that Eyre Peninsula has received more than \$3.2 million towards four projects under Round Three of the Building Better Regions Fund.

The District Council of Franklin Harbour was successful in their application for \$3,000,000 towards the \$6,471,300 Healthy Oysters, Healthy Tourism, Cowell Foreshore project. The project will redevelop the foreshore precinct.

Cummins Agricultural Horticultural Society Inc received \$38,555 towards a \$51,406 refurbishment of the main pavilion for the Cummins Show.

Centare Catholic Country SA received \$97,045 for its Fields of Strength – Building Foundations for Rural Suicide Safety project. This project will build foundations for suicide safety in regional, rural and remote communities.

Gawler Business Development Group Inc was also successful in attracting \$53,334 towards its \$80,000 ProfitSURGE – Building Better Regional Business and Communities project to be delivered at Port Lincoln.

The BBRF has also supported \$190,000 towards \$330,000 of state-wide projects that will assist to build the capacity and capability of our regional tourism operators.

Round three was highly competitive with 915 applications received under both streams. A list of successful projects is available at www.business.gov.au/bbrf



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