



# Winton Shire Council

LEGENDARY SAFE SCENIC



# 2018 - 2023

**Winton Shire Economic  
Development Strategy  
& Action Plan**

## Acknowledgements

Winton Shire Council acknowledges the significant contribution of the Central Queensland Regional Office of the Queensland Government's Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning in preparation of this strategy.

## Disclaimer

This strategy has been prepared using quantitative and qualitative data from reliable sources. Winton Shire Council does not guarantee or represent that the data and information is accurate, up to date or complete. Any representation, statement or advice in the strategy, whether express or implied, is made in good faith. Winton Shire Council does not accept liability for any losses, damages, costs and other consequences resulting from reliance on any data, information, statement or advice within the strategy, whether expressed or implied.





## Mayors Message

On behalf of the Winton Shire Council I am pleased to endorse the implementation of the newly created Winton Shire Economic Development Strategy 2018-2023 and Action Plan.

The implementation of the strategy document has been thoroughly undertaken throughout the past twelve (12) months. It represents not only aspirations for the future but many hours of work in creating the Strategy document.

I wish to acknowledge my fellow Councillors, Senior Management staff of Council and staff from the Central Queensland Regional Office of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning in compiling this document. Importantly I also wish to thank those members of the public, tourism and business sector who participated in a wide range of community consultation forums. Constructive and diverse feedback was received that enhanced the measures and initiatives contained in the Strategy document.

The Economic Development Strategy is supported by a background document that provides essential core information that underpins initiatives and issues within the actual strategy. The Strategy document aims to identify sustainable economic opportunities that will enhance that future prosperity of the Winton Shire.

Accordingly, the purpose is to:

- Provide an understanding of the current status of the Winton Shire's economy;
- Build understanding of the role and function of economic development in community wellbeing;
- Build Winton Shire's capacity to improve its economic future and the quality of life for its residents;
- Provide a vision and clear strategic direction for economic activity in the next five years; and
- Identify actions which are specific, realistic and measurable and the key partners to lead their delivery.

It is important that such a document is not simply a dust collector that possesses no real outcomes. In order to overcome this, six themes and a number of actions in those themes were developed as per the following:

**Theme 1** – Strengthen Agriculture;

**Theme 2** – Tourism Growth;

**Theme 3** – Expand the film industry;

**Theme 4** – Small business growth;

**Theme 5** – Infrastructure and planning; and

**Theme 6** – Liveability, investment and attraction.

Within each theme, action items have been identified for relevant stakeholders to undertake. Council will also implement action items when applicable and utilise as a fundamental reference strategy document when considering various projects.

Strategic and long term consideration of our towns future is essential and as such I recommend the Economic Development Strategy to the Winton Community.

Cr Gavin Baskett  
Mayor



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## Purpose

The Winton Shire Economic Development Strategy (WSEDS) responds to the Winton Shire's aspirations for its economic future. It aims to identify sustainable economic opportunities which the Winton Shire can deliver by utilising local resources and opportunities and by partnering with external stakeholders. The WSEDS identifies a series of opportunities, initiatives and projects which can provide a catalyst for increased economic activity.

The purpose of the WSEDS is to:

- Provide an understanding of the current status of the Winton Shire's economy
- Build understanding of the role and function of economic development in community well being
- Build Winton Shire's capacity to improve its economic future and the quality of life for its residents
- Provide a vision and clear strategic direction for economic activity in the next five years
- Identify actions which are specific, realistic and measurable and the key partners to lead their delivery

The WSEDS is supported by a Background Paper which provides context and economic analysis and also includes the findings of the consultation undertaken in developing the themes and actions in the WSEDS. A number of existing plans, strategies and reports were also considered in the analysis.



## Setting the scene

Winton Shire covers approximately 53,935 square kilometres of central west Queensland and is defined by diverse landscapes including areas of Mitchell grass and spinifex, some of the ephemeral streams of the Channel Country and elevated geologic outcrops or mesas left behind by an ancient inland sea. The Winton Shire is subject to wet and dry seasons with its seasonal watercourses and channels draining southwest into the Diamantina River system which forms part of the Lake Eyre Basin.

The lands within and around Winton Shire were originally inhabited by several indigenous groups including the Koa, Maiawali, Pitta Pitta, Yirandali, Iningai and Wunumara people. Land around Winton was first taken up by European settlers in 1866 with properties including Elderslie, Vindex, Oondooroo and Bladensberg established. Robert Allen arrived in 1875 and established Wallace's Camp on the banks of Pelican Waterhole, about one and a half kilometres from Winton. After the camp flooded in 1876, the settlement was moved to the site of present day Winton. Allen named the place Winton after his place of birth, a suburb of Bournemouth in Dorset, England.

The song 'Waltzing Matilda' was written by AB (Banjo) Patterson in 1895, whilst visiting Dagworth Station. The song was first publicly performed at the North Gregory Hotel in Elderslie Street, Winton on the 6 April 1895. On 16 November 1920 in Winton, the Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Service (QANTAS) was registered as a company. The Winton Club hosted the first board meeting of QANTAS on 10 February 1921. The Winton Shire Council became the first local authority in Australia to support commercial aviation when it paid half the costs to establish a landing field in Winton.

In recent years, the region's historic focus has turned back to 95 million years ago when dinosaurs roamed the area. The first fossilised dinosaur footprint was found on Cork Station in 1962. Later, the world's only recorded evidence of a dinosaur stampede was discovered nearby at Lark Quarry. In 1999, one of Australia's largest dinosaurs, a sauropod named 'Elliott' was discovered by David Elliott on his property outside Winton. In 2009, three new species of dinosaur found in Winton were formally scientifically named *Australovenator wintonensis*, *Diamantinasaurus matildae* and *Wintonotitan watti*. In this decade, one of the most complete dinosaur skeletons was found and in 2016, was named *Savannasaurus elliottorum*. Winton's Australian age of Dinosaurs Museum houses Australia's largest fossil preparation laboratory.



The majority of Winton shire's population lives in Winton township which is located on the Landsborough Highway, 178 kilometres north-west of Longreach, 472 kilometres southeast of Mount Isa and approximately 1353 kilometres from Brisbane. The shire also contains the very small population centres of Opalton, Corfield and Middleton.

The Winton Shire's economy is characterised by a significant agricultural sector which remains the cornerstone of economic activity in the shire. Whilst agriculture is still the predominant industry of employment, employment in the industry has declined from 34 per cent to 27 per cent in the last decade. Since the end to both the labour intensive early days of the pastoral industry and the boom of the 1950's, the population of Central West Queensland has generally been in steady decline. Increased mechanisation and tighter margins in the pastoral industry have led to a smaller workforce, with fewer employment opportunities for young people.

Tourism is increasingly important to the Winton region's economy and is expected to overtake agriculture as the industry employing most people and generating the highest economic value to the region. The ability of the region to positively promote itself is evident in the number and success of the festivals and attractions it hosts for its population. This is somewhat typical of trends in remote and rural Australia.

The Winton Shire's economic vision is intrinsically linked to Winton Shire Council's vision<sup>1</sup>, 'Winton. legendary safe scenic' and its mission statement, 'to lead and work in partnership with the community to improve our lifestyle whilst preserving our heritage'.

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<sup>1</sup> Winton Shire Council 2018, Corporate Plan 2016-2020, Winton Shire Council Winton.







LARGEST EMPLOYING INDUSTRIES IN THE WINTON SHIRE<sup>8</sup>



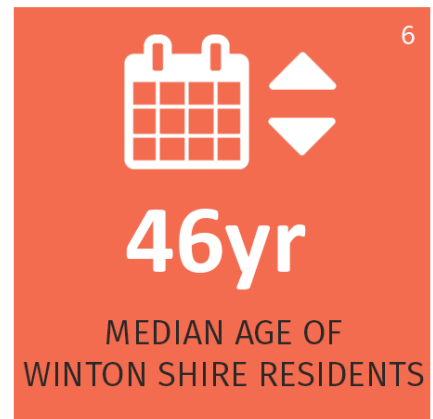
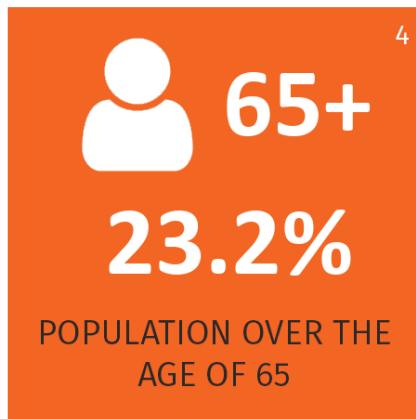
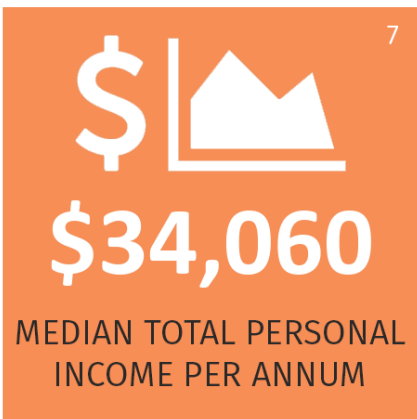
AGRICULTURE



PUBLIC ADMIN  
& SAFETY



TOURISM



<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Census of population and housing, Winton Shire time series profile, 2016*, cat. no. 2003.0, Australian Government, Canberra, Table T03.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Queensland Government Statistician's Office 2018, *Winton Shire regional profile*, Queensland Government, Brisbane, Table 42, viewed 23 April 2018, <<http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/>>.

<sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Census of population and housing, Winton Shire time series profile, 2016*, cat. no. 2003.0, Australian Government, Canberra, Table T02.

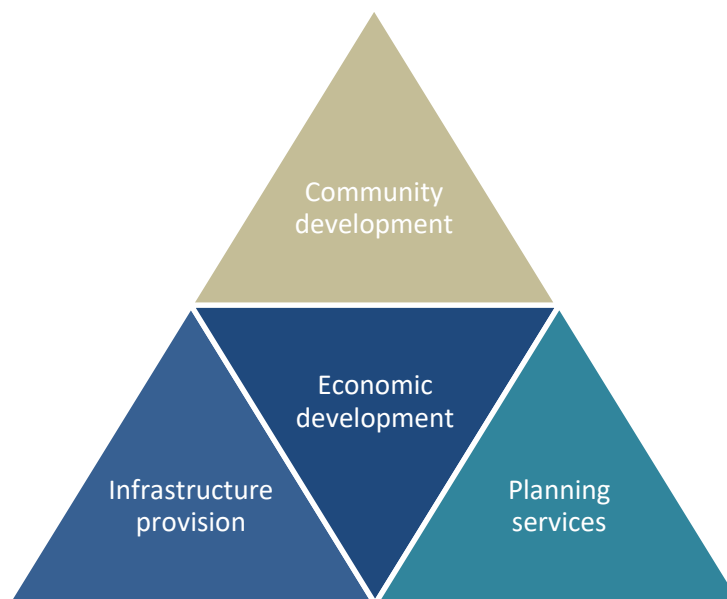
<sup>7</sup> Queensland Government Statistician's Office 2018, *Winton Shire regional profile*, Queensland Government, Brisbane, Table 36, viewed 4 May 2018, <<http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/>>.

<sup>8</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Census of population and housing, time series profile, 2016*, cat. no. 2003.0, Australian Government, Canberra, Table T34.



The role of Council in economic development is important. Council's principal role in economic development is that of an enabler. The Winton Shire's economic prosperity is underpinned by council's work in planning, infrastructure provision and community development. For example, Council works to create the right environment for economic development by:

- Ensuring the Winton Shire's planning scheme identifies sufficient residential, commercial and industrial land to meet future needs.
- Facilitating business growth including through tourism marketing and streetscaping.
- Developing and maintaining key infrastructure
- Advocating on behalf of the community to secure resources and to influence for change which advantages its economy.
- Directly providing employment and community services.



**Figure 1 - The role of Winton Shire Council in the region's economic development**

Whilst the WSEDS is principally focussed on economic related matters, it is acknowledged that community development and liveability factors are intrinsically linked and can both constrain and enable successful economic outcomes. However, prioritisation becomes very important when resources are constrained. The function of economic development requires collaboration across the Winton Shire and beyond. Decisions made with a focus on job creation or potential inward investment are more likely to deliver positive outcomes for population retention and growth and an increase in the Shire's rate base which can then lead to WSC and community investment in cost neutral community infrastructure.



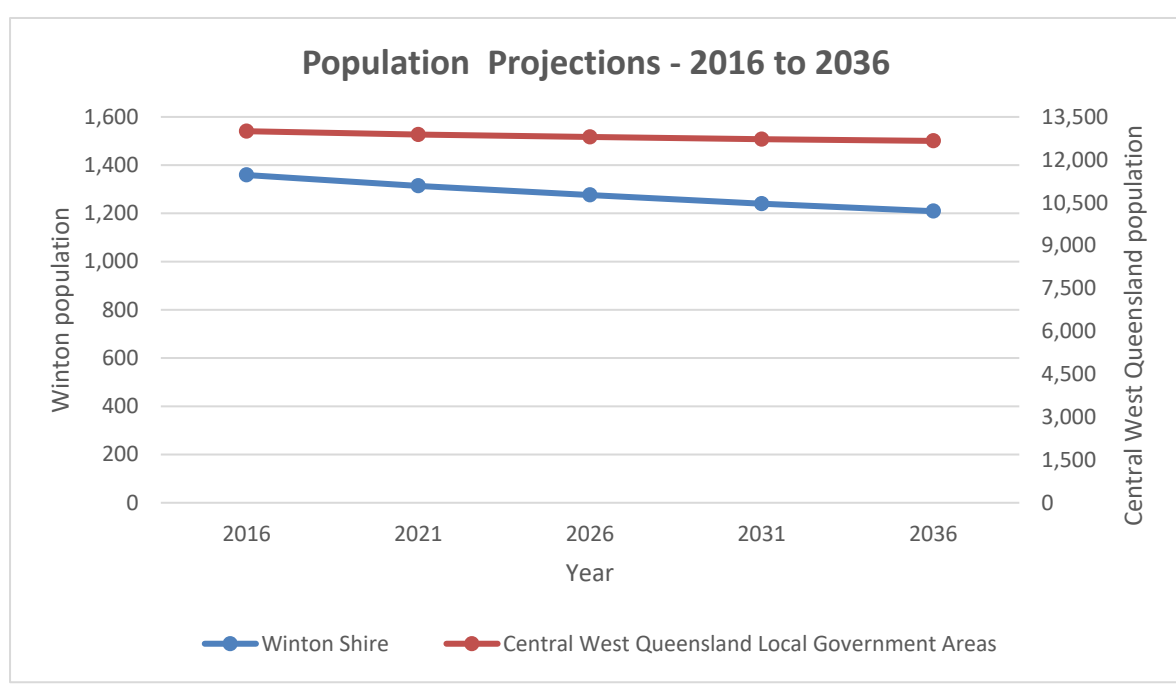
### Trends and Insights

The digital revolution has been a significant catalyst for disruption in employment. Rapid technology changes will result in greater numbers of jobs becoming outdated and replaced with new jobs. The challenge for people in central west Queensland including in Winton Shire is to adapt to digital disruption and engage in skills acquisition to be well positioned to tap into the new opportunities.

Climate scientists are indicating much of Australia can expect the climate to become hotter with more intense weather events. The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) reports climate change is having a negative impact on productivity although Australian producers are making good progress in adapting to climate change.

Locally, population trends to 2036 indicate a continued gradual decline in the absence of interventions to arrest the decline. In addition, the population is aging with an associated increased health services demand.

Figure 2



Note: Central West Queensland Local Government Areas includes - Boulia, Barcaldine, Barcoo, Blackall-Tambo, Diamantina and Longreach.

Source: Queensland Government Statistician's Office 2016, Projected population, by local government area, Queensland, 2011 to 2036, Queensland Government, Brisbane, viewed 30 April 2018, < <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-projections/tables/proj-pop-lga-qld/index.php>>.



## Challenges, strengths and opportunities

In developing the WSEDS, consideration was given to the economic challenges, strengths and opportunities as identified by the Winton Shire's community during a consultation meeting on 7 February 2018.

### Challenges

<b>Agriculture</b>	Impact of wild dogs on the sheep industry Increased water allowance and extra land to grow fodder Variable climatic conditions for agriculture, drought The better wages offered in the mining industry versus agricultural sector Decline of commodity prices Increase rent and rates to rural sector, rural debt Restrictive tree clearing laws affecting grazing
<b>Transport and freight</b>	Difficulty in moving freight back and forward to locations not on main roads and in the absence of rail service Access for tourists and locals, reliance on road travel due to the cost and timing of two air flights per week and no rail service Cost of living pressures due to transport and freight costs
<b>Employment</b>	Limited job opportunities – variety and number Lack of apprentices with tradespeople because of issues with training/admin Limited employment opportunities, limited job variety
<b>Population</b>	Limited incentives to stay in region including lack of tax incentives Reverse the decline in population
<b>Business &amp; industries</b>	Lack of diversity in tourism visitors. Older, self-contained travelers tend not to spend in town Lack of availability for some business services, particularly specialty engineering, truck maintenance and requirement to send work outside the region Difficulties in getting tradespeople and the cost of trades services
<b>Government</b>	Government does not utilise local knowledge More flexibility required to allow Winton Shire to decide where government money is spent Flexibility of grant funds to Winton Shire Council
<b>Housing</b>	Limited availability of accommodation or land for sale Housing issues for seasonal (ie tourism) staff
<b>Education</b>	Educational and career opportunities for young local people
<b>Location</b>	Weather including heat, unreliable rainfall Distance for medical services Remoteness, distance
<b>Utilities</b>	Communication costs, internet, connectivity Electricity prices
<b>Health &amp; aged care</b>	Chronic disease excessively high Lack of couple services for aged care in the nursing home The quality of healthcare Allied health services



## Strengths

<b>Business and industries</b>	Diversity of industries, income streams within region The land is good country and provides business opportunity Lack of agricultural diseases Agriculture – clean environment
<b>Tourism</b>	Major events including Film Festival, Outback Festival Recent injection of money through tourism Dinosaurs
<b>Health and aged care</b>	The way in which the elderly are cared for Aged care The elderly are safe
<b>History</b>	Reputation – everyone knows someone from Winton Media advertising Generational history or heritage which is spoken about by residents, keeping it alive and relevant Rich history Iconic town
<b>Community and facilities</b>	Relaxing lifestyle with friendly, welcoming, caring people Strong community spirit Safe and supportive community for children and elderly Resilient, resourceful, progressive, innovative community Affordable, low cost economic housing Home invasions rarely heard of and no vandalism Small community with limited traffic with no traffic lights Sporting facilities including recreational ground facilities Choice of schools
<b>Natural environment</b>	Landscape has great aesthetics, incredible natural beauty, very scenic Recreational opportunities including natural waterways Centrally located in Queensland Plentiful water and unique bird life

## Opportunities

<b>Water infrastructure</b>	Bladensburg Dam would provide 53 ML capture which would drought proof rural areas Dams – Bladensburg, Mistake Creek dams, recreational Opportunity to influence DNRME laws in relation to water
<b>Business &amp; industries</b>	Businesses collaborating and collaborating across industries and specialty e.g. make leather bag and someone else makes a brand to stamp it Raise the bar in customer services – not training just do it competition Increased trading hours of food and fuel outlets Invest in training for businesses to improve professionalism Government funded entrepreneurship training (i.e. Strachan) to encourage Lifestyle businesses e.g. wood turning Council becomes proactive in identifying and facilitating opportunities when they arise
<b>Health and aged care</b>	Improve health services and communication about availability Government services including dentistry Improve aged care facilities and construct Jessamine Place and retirement centre.



<b>New industries</b>	Film industry and expansion of film making Expansion of the work camp (Corrective Services) Telemarketing Solar power
<b>Transport</b>	Increased connectivity by air and rail Repackaging flight options and marketing more compact holidays for international (dinosaur) tourism Expand airport facilities
<b>New tourism products</b>	Arts, music & literature retreats Sporting tourism i.e. triathlon heat challenge Opalton tourism and opal fossicking to provide an authentic experience Agritourism tours and farm stays Four-wheel driving route and camping Arts festival AAOD – third stage Old Cork Flora and fauna More school camps/excursions
<b>Tourism infrastructure</b>	More motel accommodation School camp facilities – increased funding, facilities & accommodation AB Paterson College - developing camp site within Winton
<b>Tourism marketing</b>	Bird watching tourism marketing Extend tourism season – identify different markets and market seasons for different customer types Rebranding opal tourism – more interactive for tourists Better marketing of shire Grow international tourism
<b>Community &amp; facilities</b>	Increased use of Eric Lenton Oval More residential land
<b>Telecommunications</b>	Technology - NBN optic fibre Rural telecommunications
<b>Agriculture</b>	Introduction of cropping or other food industry or fresh food market for local region Sheep and wool industry Agriculture – clean and green Increased water allocation
<b>Education</b>	Incentive for young people, scholarship to go away to train with requirement to come back to region for a number of years Upgraded telecommunication will help education standards School based traineeships

These inputs have been considered during the process of developing the strategy, however not all opportunities which were identified during consultation have been carried forward into the action plan. The actions contained in the plan are considered to be specific, realistic and achievable and will contribute to population retention and jobs growth. Whilst the strategy is intended to drive collaborative effort on an agreed set of actions, it does not preclude additional effort towards other goals, particularly those which may not have been considered at the time of writing this strategy.



## Winton's economic future of choice

Towns like organisations need to find ways to continuously improve their operating environment to remain competitive. The Winton Shire has indicated its preparedness to create a different future than one of gradual decline marked by loss of population, employment opportunities, services and lifestyle. The Winton Shire places significant importance on a thriving and sustainable local economy which delivers job opportunities, nurtures business and investment and contributes to the lifestyle which is so appealing for residents and visitors alike.

The Winton Shire Council has a history of proactively leading identification of economic opportunities and development of infrastructure to support industry development. There is a continuing role for councillors to provide economic leadership within and outside the shire and to support the community to fully participate in economic development activity. Leadership is a key driver of economic performance and is especially important in smaller communities, which often have limited infrastructure, skills and resources for local economic development. Local enterprise can feel stifled by a perceived lack of control over local affairs. Participation can often be greater if decisions affecting local people are made by locals familiar with the circumstances and priorities of their local community. Winton Shire Council has a number of existing engagement mechanisms. Successful implementation of actions in this strategy will be enhanced by nurturing local leadership where it is evident.

Economic development is the combination of policies, investments and actions that improve the ability of organisations and people in a community to more productively and effectively respond to opportunities. A number of focus areas have been identified which guide the key objectives and actions that follow. Focus is primarily on sectors in which Winton Shire has a comparative economic advantage and a solid growth trend or potential to grow.

The Winton Shire's agreed economic vision is:

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## WINTON SHIRE: A DIVERSE, THRIVING ECONOMY IN WHICH WE ARE DRIVING OUR FUTURE THROUGH OUR HISTORY

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While actions suggested in this strategy are unlikely to result in large step changes in Gross Regional Product or employment, they are important in retaining competitiveness for business and the workforce. Civic leadership is important as is ensuring the region plays to its strengths and focuses on realistic prospects. This strategy is a key tool in guiding focus and decision making. It discusses how the Winton Shire will react to trends and strive for a prosperous future through community vision and drive.



## Theme 1: Strengthen agriculture



Agriculture is historically one of the most important sectors for Winton Shire, having the most (albeit declining) employees. It is likely that the region's agricultural businesses will continue to experience difficulty in attracting agricultural workers to more remote locations. Increased use of digital applications such as remote monitoring of water tanks in real time will decrease the number of staff required to operate properties. Innovation, process improvement and digital adoption will however, likely further decrease the number of jobs in the agricultural sector.

If historic numbers of sheep were reintroduced in Winton Shire, there would be an associated increase in demand for station hands and shearers, among others. To overcome wild dog predation through its feral pest initiative, the Remote Area Planning and Development (RAPAD) has supported the construction of 2,556 kilometres of cluster fencing, primarily on properties in the Longreach and Barcaldine regions. Whilst the price of wool has improved significantly this decade, it is too early to determine whether cluster fencing will succeed and provide a return to property owners for their investment. Installation of cluster fencing in Winton Shire has been limited. In part, this is due to the larger size of properties in Winton Shire and because flooding is widespread when the Channel Country receives rain which causes widespread damage to fencing. Another issue which is likely to impact the viability of reintroducing sheep into the region is the current condition of existing infrastructure including shearing sheds and associated equipment. Producers would need to consider the cost of infrastructure and equipment upgrades and replacement in determining whether sheep production would provide a viable financial return.

As is the case for other industries, agriculture will need to continue to develop and grow, looking at new technologies and diversification into new products in order to maintain relevance and viability.

### ACTION 1.1

Establish a Winton Shire agricultural stakeholder group to collaborate, advocate, identify professional development requirements and provide local support.

### ACTION 1.2

Investigate the potential to establish aquaculture and expand organic beef production.

### ACTION 1.3

Engage with industry specialists and researchers to understand the requirements to trial growing of crops on Winton's town common.





**ACTION 1.4**

Undertake a feasibility study for a cluster fencing policy in Winton Shire which considers differences in the geology and topography of properties in the Shire and mitigates the unique wild dog issues associated with Bladensburg National Park.

**ACTION 1.5**

Investigate options to utilise digital and/or smart technologies to improve agriculture production efficiencies and decision making and assess the potential of building regional capability in these new technologies to offset potential 'old economy' job losses.



## Theme 2: Tourism growth



Whilst the local economy has historically been heavily dependent on a narrow range of traditional primary industry activities, economic diversification is vital to ensure the Winton Shire's economy is not heavily affected by factors beyond its control. The shire has done well in recent time to identify its competitive advantages in the tourism, film and events sectors and develop products and experiences which have successfully allowed it to increase gross regional product (GRP) and new jobs from non-traditional markets.

Tourism, particularly self-drive based tourism, forms an important part of Winton Shire's economy and provides a major economic boost during the peak season of May through August and to a lesser extent during the shoulder periods of March, April, September and October. Tourism growth may be achieved by lengthening the tourism season through encouraging tourists to visit in the shoulder seasons. New tourism experiences including those focused on Indigenous culture and station stays would contribute to holding tourists in region for longer periods.

Winton Shire has some iconic attractions which will bring people to the region and it is important to build on these through targeted marketing and complimentary services to meet tourists' needs. Tourism also brings new money into the local economy.

### ACTION 2.1

Investigate requirements for the expansion of Winton airport to service an expanded tourism sector including a proposed museum at the Australian Age of Dinosaurs (AAoD).

### ACTION 2.2

Develop a bankable feasibility study for the development of the Natural History Museum at the AAoD.

### ACTION 2.3

Review the shire's investment in tourism marketing and promotion in relation to return of investment and seek recommendations including memberships and use of mediums to maximise exposure and returns to the community.

### ACTION 2.4

Advocate for the extension of the shoulder of the tourist season through changes to the marketing of Winton Shire, central west Queensland and Outback Queensland.



**ACTION 2.5**

Investigate the capacity and capability for the Outback Festival and Way Out West Fest to be held annually rather than biennially.

**ACTION 2.6**

Develop and promote tourist attractions which reflect the heritage of Winton.

**ACTION 2.7**

Investigate the demand and triggers for development of five star accommodation in Winton Shire.



## Theme 3: Expand the film industry



With three movies and a number of smaller productions 'in the can', Winton Shire continues to explore the potential for growth through the film industry. Its stunning natural features, historic outdoor movie theatre, annual Vision Splendid film festival and significant relationships with key people in the film industry place the shire in a solid position to benefit further from this sector.

Winton Shire Council has been consulted about the Queensland Government's 10-year roadmap for the screen industry in Queensland, which is currently under development. The launch of the roadmap is likely to provide opportunities for further development of Winton Shire's film industry.

### ACTION 3.1

Advocate for Queensland Government recognition of Winton Shire as the regional Queensland location for the film industry.

### ACTION 3.2

Prepare a business case / feasibility study for development of a proposed film production studio to be built in Winton.

### ACTION 3.3

Identify potential funding sources to develop film production facilities in Winton for the film industry.



## Theme 4: Small business growth



Small businesses play an integral role in the local economy. Winton Shire's retail businesses account for just under ten per cent of the shire's jobs<sup>9</sup>. In a survey undertaken in early 2018, a majority of businesses in Winton township reported their turnover increased in the previous 12 months despite the economic challenges presented by a prolonged drought, the freight costs to bring supplies into town and people choosing to shop outside the region<sup>10</sup>. In reporting numbers of workers / owners the businesses employed, figures varied according to the time of year with 156 people employed in summer, increasing to 183 employees in winter which is the peak tourism season.

Despite the remoteness of Winton shire businesses and the limited competition among businesses within the shire, there is still an imperative to provide quality products, a consistently high standard shopping experience and good customer service. This is not only important in the context of traditional shop fronts but also for online retailing. The face of retail is changing with increasing access to digital platforms. Translating the shop front authenticity and sense of history to online platforms may provide a point-of-difference for Winton businesses. These aspects are particularly likely to resonate with overseas customers.

Collaboration and enhancing competitive advantage are important for future growth in Winton Shire's businesses. It is also important for businesses to have the skills to support their current and future needs. The Winton Business and Tourism Association (WBTA) has been in operation for 50 years, promoting Winton and increasing visitation to generate increased incomes and sustainability for its members and the broader community. Future growth in tourism experiences in the shire will undoubtedly benefit small businesses. Small businesses can maximise these opportunities through continuous improvement in all aspects of their individual operations. There are numerous developmental opportunities specific to all areas of retailing, whether front of business or back office, and a variety of ways of accessing the opportunities including online and face-to-face.

Maximising local expenditure in the shire is extremely important for the viability of local businesses and to ensure local employment. Many buy local programs consist of an emotive pitch to residents rather than providing a quantitative rationale for purchasing locally. A rationale based on financial imperatives is likely to be more effective in changing shopping behaviours<sup>11</sup>. For example:

- Quantify the number of local employees (particularly youth) employed by local businesses
- Undertake and promote price comparisons for local goods and those outside the shire

<sup>9</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Census of population and housing, time series profile, 2016*, cat. no. 2003.0, Australian Government, Canberra, Table T34 with Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDMIP) calculations.

<sup>10</sup> Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning 2018, *Phone survey of Winton businesses*, Queensland Government, Rockhampton.

<sup>11</sup> Locals4Locals 2018, *Why shop locally?*, Locals4Locals, Armidale, viewed 4 May 2018, <<http://www.locals4locals.com.au/why-shop-locally/>>.



- Identify and market customer service comparative advantages including pre and post purchase support ie value rather than price
- Foster collaboration among businesses to reduce freight costs

The Winton work camp is designed for a maximum of 12 prisoners and is at capacity. Work camps are the most expensive facilities for Queensland Corrective Services to operate<sup>12</sup>. A potential increase in prisoner numbers would require additional infrastructure, custodial staff, work opportunities and work supervisors and has potential to provide some supply chain opportunities for local businesses.

Finally, drought affected communities are the recipients of assistance though each level of government and charitable organisations. Although well intentioned, bringing small business products and services into the shire, can have a significantly detrimental effect on local businesses<sup>13</sup>.

**ACTION 4.1**

Encourage continuous improvement in small businesses including through identified small business development requirements and improving productivity and business performance.

**ACTION 4.2**

Develop and implement a Winton Shire local buy program which promotes Winton Shire's business offer and uses qualitative data to influence purchase decisions.

**ACTION 4.3**

Develop and deliver a customer service accreditation program for local businesses.

**ACTION 4.4**

Implement a Winton business awards to celebrate achievements and recognise excellence.

**ACTION 4.5**

Assist businesses to access and utilise IT infrastructure and digital technologies.

**ACTION 4.6**

Develop a case for increased places at the Queensland Government's Winton Work Camp and advocate to Queensland Corrective Services.

**ACTION 4.7**

Advocate for drought assistance to be provided in the form of vouchers, cash and pre-paid cards which can be used in the Winton Shire.

<sup>12</sup> Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning 2018, *Telephone conversation with Queensland Corrective Services re. Expansion of work camps*, 2 May 2018.

<sup>13</sup> Kelly D 2018, *Beyond the Dust: Impact of drought on town businesses in central west Queensland and some solutions*, Western Queensland Drought Committee, Longreach, viewed 14 August 2018, < <http://wqda.org.au/beyond-the-dust>>.



## Theme 5: Infrastructure and planning



Infrastructure development and regional connectivity is integral to the economic development of regional Australia. The quality of infrastructure including transport connections and communications technologies is a challenge in remote areas and improving the standard is an important factor developing economic opportunities. Although remoteness and distance are issues, the open spaces and climate provide opportunities, particularly in renewable energy.

A functional standard of road infrastructure is fundamental to facilitating current and future economic activity. Winton Shire's key economic sectors of agriculture and tourism are heavily reliant on a resilient road network.

### ACTION 5.1

Develop an endorsed prioritised pipeline of infrastructure which supports the objectives of the WSEDS and prioritises infrastructure which has potential to attract new investment, thereby increasing GRP and population.

### ACTION 5.2

Advocate for allocation of a higher priority for continued sealing of the Donohue Highway and the Winton to Richmond road.

### ACTION 5.3

Support and contribute to the renewable energy work being undertaken by RAPAD

### ACTION 5.4

Ensure zoning of sufficient residential land for future needs in new planning scheme.

### ACTION 5.5

Ensure policies and infrastructure proposals are assessed for economic growth potential to maximise use of limited financial resources for maximum inward investment.

### ACTION 5.6

Undertake an assessment of key digital infrastructure gaps that are either inhibiting economic growth or have the potential to catalyse economic growth.



## Theme 6: Liveability, investment and attraction



Winton Shire's future economic prosperity is dependent on driving population retention and growth. Without intervention, the shire's population is expected to continue to gradually decline. Population decline is exacerbated by students not returning to the region after completing secondary schooling or tertiary studies. The population is also aging, with the proportion of residents aged over 65 years expected to increase significantly to 2036.

There are a number of factors which influence liveability, however in this strategy focus is placed on the key economic drivers of employment, housing, education and health services.

Creating new jobs is very important in attracting and retaining population. New jobs will lead to new families in the shire which will have flow on benefits including more income being spent in local businesses, increased students in the schools and therefore retention of existing teaching staff or an increase in teaching staff, an increase to the rates base, more volunteers, etc.

Creating jobs in areas of competitive and comparative advantage will ensure they are more sustainable. Therefore, building on what has already been achieved, for example in tourism and film, in addition to agriculture is likely to be a more successful strategy. Opportunities will arise for the Winton Shire to adapt to anticipated changes in the economy and to embrace new technologies thereby being well positioned to take advantage of a high level of demand for digital and higher order skills in the future.

### ACTION 6.1

Establish a community based group of key stakeholders to initiate education and training initiatives in collaboration with schools, training providers and businesses to retain students in Winton Shire.

### ACTION 6.2

Establish a careers program to familiarise youth and employees with career options and the potential for local employment opportunities including in engineering, animal husbandry, palaeontology, museum curating, hospitality, child care, aged care, etc and assist to develop an appropriately skilled local workforce.

### ACTION 6.3

Develop an online portal to advertise all Winton Shire employment opportunities (including Australian and Queensland Government vacancies), housing availability and details of key services and liveability factors.





**ACTION 6.4**

Develop a potential resident famil program and welcome pack or program for new residents.

**ACTION 6.5**

Promote Winton Shire's competitive advantages and opportunities to potential investors and residents through an electronic prospectus which is located in the online portal.

**ACTION 6.6**

Explore and identify new opportunities to benefit from regional partnerships which boost Winton Shire's economic development goals.

**ACTION 6.7**

Support training and upskilling in aged care, tourism and hospitality including through RAPAD Skilling.

**ACTION 6.8**

Build digital skills across the whole community to upskill into 'new economy' jobs and address digital disruption.

**ACTION 6.9**

Develop Winton as a location of choice for retirees through growing the region's capacity and capability in allied health care.



## Monitoring and evaluation

An annual review should be undertaken to measure performance against the Action Plan. Adjustments should be made to the Action Plan as required in response to changes in the economic environment. Some flexibility may be required in implementing the WSEDS and associated actions as a result of these changes.

Winton Shire Council will produce a short annual report addressing progress against priority actions in the WSEDS. Benchmarks should include annual population estimates and number small business full time equivalent employees which can be obtained by surveying annually, the same businesses which took part in the business survey to inform this strategy.

In order to achieve the Winton Shire's economic vision, it will be necessary to update the WSEDS in 2023 and develop a new set of actions consistent with the updated strategy.

Acronyms used in the following Action Plan:

<b>AAoD</b>	Australian Age of Dinosaurs
<b>DAF</b>	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
<b>DHPW</b>	Department of Housing and Public Works
<b>DHPW DED</b>	Department of Housing and Public Works Digital Economy Development
<b>DITID</b>	Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development
<b>DJAG</b>	Department of Justice and Attorney-General
<b>DNRME</b>	Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy
<b>DPC AQ</b>	Department of Premier & Cabinet – Arts Queensland
<b>DSDMIP</b>	Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning
<b>DTMR</b>	Department of Transport and Main Roads
<b>OQTA</b>	Outback Queensland Tourism Authority
<b>QBOA</b>	Queensland Boulder Opal Association
<b>QH</b>	Queensland Health
<b>QTIC</b>	Queensland Tourism Industry Council
<b>RAPAD</b>	Remote Area Planning and Development Board
<b>TEQ</b>	Tourism and Events Queensland
<b>WBTA</b>	Winton Business and Tourism Association
<b>WSC</b>	Winton Shire Council
<b>WSC WDSC</b>	Winton Shire Council Wild Dog sub committee

Indicative timeframes for actions in the following Action Plan are as follows:

- Priority 1 – next 12 months
- Priority 2 – year 2
- Priority 3 – year 3
- Priority 4 – year 4
- Priority 5 – year



## Our vision

## Winton Shire: a diverse, thriving economy in which we are driving our future through our history

Theme: **Strengthen agriculture**

Our key actions	Priority	Lead agency and contributing partners	Objectives
1.1 Establish a Winton Shire agricultural stakeholder group to collaborate, advocate, identify professional development requirements and provide local support.	1	<b>Local producers</b> WSC DAF	Cost effective advocacy group representing the region's agricultural interests Planned & supported structure for collaboration, sharing of innovation or process improvements.
1.2 Investigate the potential to establish aquaculture and expand organic beef production.	2-3	<b>DAF</b> Local producers WSC	Diversification of agricultural industry Potential alternate income streams Potential commercial use of water from geothermal production
1.3 Engage with industry specialists and researchers to understand the requirements to trial small scale crop production on the town common.	3-4	<b>DAF</b> WSC DNRME DSDMIP	Clarification about viability of small scale cropping Potential commercial use of water from geothermal production
1.4 Undertake a feasibility for a cluster fencing policy in Winton Shire which considers differences in the geology and topography of properties in the Shire and mitigates the unique wild dog issues associated with Bladensburg National Park	3-4	<b>DAF</b> WSC WDSC RAPAD	Clarification about requirements for re-introduction of sheep to the properties adjacent to the national park
1.5 Investigate options to utilise digital and/or smart technologies to improve agriculture production efficiencies and decision making and assess the potential of building regional capability in these new technologies to offset potential 'old economy' job losses.	2	<b>RAPAD</b> DAF DHPW DED Local producers	Increased on-farm efficiencies and profitability



Theme: <b>Tourism growth</b>			
Our key actions	Priority	Lead agency and contributing partners	Objectives
2.1 Investigate requirements for Winton airport expansion to service expanded tourism sector including the Australian Age of Dinosaurs (AAoD)	2-3	<b>WSC</b> <b>DSDMIP</b> Airlines DTMR	Understanding of the feasibility of undertaking an expansion of the airport infrastructure
2.2 Develop a bankable feasibility study for the development of the Natural History Museum at the AAoD	1	<b>AAoD</b> <b>DSDMIP</b>	Development of collateral to attract investment for construction
2.3 Review the shire's investment in marketing and promotion in relation to return of investment and seek recommendations including memberships and use of channels.	1	<b>WSC</b> OQTA TEQ	Maximise exposure and return on investment.
2.4 Advocate for the extension of the shoulders of the tourist season through changes to the marketing of Winton Shire, central west Queensland and Outback Queensland.	1	<b>WSC</b> OQTA TEQ	Increased visitation and expenditure in Winton Shire
2.5 Investigate the capacity and capability for the Outback Festival and Way Out West Fest to be held annually rather than biennially.	1	<b>Outback Festival committee</b> <b>WSC</b> TEQ	Increased visitation and expenditure in Winton Shire
2.6 Develop and promote tourist attractions which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willie Mar's fruit &amp; vegetable shop and market garden as the longest operating Chinese market garden remaining in Western Queensland</li> <li>• Agritourism and farm stays</li> <li>• Small scale Qantas interpretive centre focused on first landing strip and initial board meetings (should be complimentary to Qantas Founders Museum experience)</li> <li>• An opal interpretive centre in Winton to increase opal fossicking at Opalton</li> <li>• Indigenous cultural tourism</li> </ul>	2	<b>WSC</b> TEQ QTIC DITID DNRME QBOA Red Dirt Tours OQTA	Expanded tourism product Additional experiences to retain visitors in Winton Shire longer, thereby increasing revenues from tourism
2.7 Investigate the demand for 5-star accommodation to support tourism growth.	3	<b>OQTA</b> WSC AAoD	Understanding of requirements and timing in order to support future tourism developments



Theme: <b>Expand the film industry</b>			
Our key actions	Priority	Lead agency and contributing partners	Objectives
3.1 Advocate for Queensland Government recognition of Winton Shire as the regional Queensland location for the film industry.	1	<b>WSC</b> DPC AQ	Underpin future proposed developments and assist to attract investment
3.2 Prepare a business case/feasibility study for a film studio to be built in Winton	1	<b>DSDMIP</b> WSC	Understanding of feasibility, required elements and options for creating revenue streams
3.3 Identify potential funding sources to develop film production facilities in Winton for the film industry. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development of the film studio</li> <li>• attract producers to the region</li> <li>• develop specific sets for the region</li> </ul>	1	<b>WSC</b> DSDMIP	Finances to undertake developments
Theme: <b>Small business growth</b>			
Our key actions	Priority	Lead agency and contributing partners	Objectives
4.1 Encourage continuous improvement in small businesses including through identified small business development requirements and improving productivity and business performance.	1-2	<b>WBTA</b> WSC DSDMIP	Drive continuous improvement Retain and grow businesses
4.2 Develop and implement a Winton Shire local buy program which promotes Winton Shire's business offer and uses qualitative data to influence purchase decisions.	1	<b>WBTA</b> Business owners	Increase activity in local businesses Increase employment opportunities
4.3 Develop and deliver a customer service accreditation program for local businesses	2	<b>WBTA</b> WSC	Stimulate improvements through competition between businesses
4.4 Implement a Winton business awards to celebrate achievements and recognise excellence.	2-3	<b>WBTA</b> DSDMIP	Reward excellence and celebrate achievements



4.5 Assist businesses to access and utilise IT infrastructure and digital technologies.	2	<b>RAPAD</b> DHPW DED	Access to best practice in digital applications
4.6 Investigate and if appropriate develop a case for increased places at the Queensland Government's Winton Work Camp and advocate to Corrective Services.	3	<b>WSC</b> DJAG	Supply chain opportunities for local businesses
4.7 Advocate for drought assistance to be provided in the form of vouchers, cash and pre-paid cards which can be used in the Winton Shire.	1	<b>DSDMIP</b> <b>DAF</b> WSC WBTA RAPAD	Increased financial support to local businesses and retention of jobs.
<b>Theme: Infrastructure and planning</b>			
Our key actions	Priority	Lead agency and contributing partners	Objectives
5.1 Develop an endorsed, prioritised pipeline of infrastructure which supports the objectives of the WSEDS and prioritises infrastructure requirements	1-2	<b>WSC</b> DSDMIP	To attract new investment, thereby increasing GRP and population.
5.2 Advocate for allocation of a higher priority for continued sealing of the Donohue Highway and the Winton to Richmond road.	2	<b>WSC</b> DTMR	
5.3 Support and contribute to the renewable energy work being undertaken by RAPAD	2	<b>WSC</b> RAPAD DSDMIP	Reduced energy costs, potential enabler of new industry
5.4 Ensure zoning of sufficient residential land for future needs in new planning scheme.	1	<b>DSDMIP</b> WSC	Sufficient, appropriately zoned land to meet future needs
5.5 Ensure policies and infrastructure are assessed for economic growth potential to maximise use of limited financial resources for maximum inward investment	2-3	<b>WSC</b>	
5.6 Undertake an assessment of key digital infrastructure gaps that are either inhibiting economic growth or have the potential to catalyse economic growth.	3	<b>WSC</b> RAPAD DHPW DED	Strategic identification of enabling infrastructure which will support economic growth and lead to development of supporting material to attract investment.



Theme: <b>Livability, investment and attraction</b>			
Our key actions	Priority	Lead agency and contributing partners	Objectives
6.1 Establish a community-based group of key stakeholders to raise awareness of local career opportunities, initiate education and training initiatives in collaboration with schools, training providers and businesses to retain students in Winton Shire.	1-3	<b>Community reps</b> Schools WBTA WSC	Community based group to work with stakeholders to retain students in Winton or attract graduates back to Winton
6.2 Establish a careers program to familiarise youth and employees with career options and the potential for local employment opportunities including in engineering, animal husbandry, paleontology, museum curating, hospitality, child care, aged care, etc and assist to develop an appropriately skilled local workforce.	1-2	<b>New group</b> (see 6.1) Schools WBTA WSC	Provision of a local workforce with the right skills to meet Winton Shire job requirements Attract and retain a skilled and adaptive working age population prepared for technology change.
6.3 Develop an online portal to advertise all Winton Shire employment opportunities (including Australian and Queensland Government vacancies), housing availability and details of key services and livability factors.	1	<b>WSC</b>	Information to raise awareness of the benefits of living in Winton Shire
6.4 Develop a potential resident famil program and welcome pack or program for new residents.	1	<b>WSC</b> WSC C Sponsors	Convert interested job applicants and families to new residents
6.5 Promote Winton Shire's competitive advantages and opportunities to potential investors and residents through an electronic prospectus which is located in the online portal. Incorporate data from a variety of sources including Outback WiFi.	2	<b>WSC</b> WBTA	Professional presentation of opportunities to external entities
6.6 Explore and identify new opportunities to benefit from regional partnerships which boost Winton Shire's economic development goals.	2-3	<b>WSC</b>	Increased collaboration with influencers
6.7 Support training and upskilling in aged care, tourism and hospitality including through RAPAD Skilling.	1-3	<b>RAPAD</b> WSC Longreach Pastoral College New Group (see 6.1)	Retention of youth in Winton shire



6.8 Build digital skills across the whole community to upskill into 'new economy' jobs and address digital disruption. Skills acquisition to include AgTech skills including use of Internet of Things technologies.	3	<b>RAPAD</b> DHPW DED DAF WSC WBTA Schools Winton Library Winton Neighbourhood Centre	Threat of loss of 'old technology' jobs is mitigated and new job and economic opportunities created.
6.9 Develop Winton as a location of choice for retirees through growing the region's capacity and capability in allied health care.	3	<b>WSC</b> RAPAD QH CQUniversity	Improved access to allied health courses and training New allied health jobs created Increased numbers of retirees choosing to live in Winton

