



# Councillor Information Bulletin

For the Ordinary Council Meeting  
held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2026

# INDEX

1. **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

2. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

3. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

Community Development Update

Wellbeing Update

Tourism Update

Hood-Penn Museum Update

4. **COUNCIL INFORMATION**

- **Regional Road Group Report**
- **Westonia Socio Econ Review 2026**
- **Wheatbelt Socio Econ Review 2026**
- **Central East Socio Econ Review 2026**
- **Update to Responsible Person Requirements for Local Government Registered Providers**
- **Shire of Westonia Waste Report 2025-2026**
- **WEROC Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability.**



# SHIRE OF WESTONIA

## August/Sept 26

| Date & Time                               | What                                 | Where           | Who                             |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Wednesday<br>19 August                    | Peter Kenyon/Young Leaders           | Old Miners Hall | Young Leaders                   |
| Thursday<br>20 August                     | Council Meeting                      | Chambers        | Councillors, Senior Staff       |
| Saturday<br>6 September -<br>12 September | Small Town Reinvention<br>Conference | Longreach       | Councillors and<br>Senior Staff |
| Thursday<br>24 September                  | Council Meeting                      | Chambers        | Councillors and<br>Senior Staff |

## CEO'S REPORT

- **GENERAL MATTERS**

- Since the last meeting Peter Kenyon has been booked to attend Westonia on Wednesday 19 August to facilitate the Young Leaders Forum. More than 50 invitees were notified and to date we have just over 20 attending. Peter is an inspiring motivator and I am excited on what may come out of the seminar. The program for the day is attached for Councillor information.
- Liaison has continued with SRG McConnell during the month to finalise the service agreements between the parties. The following commitments and arrangements have been settled
  - Accommodation provision of 14 x single rooms @ \$ 113/night (includes laundry access)
  - Catering services 3 x meals a day @ \$ 110/day
  - Kate Newton has been appointed as Camp Cook and will reside in new workers' accommodation house.
  - Stadium kitchen and venue has been set up and an additional grey water capacity to accommodate
  - Additional washing machines and dryers have been purchased and installed onsite for use.
  - Sand & Gravel quantities have been tested and approved estimated at @ 65,000T sand and 19,000T of gravel at a rate of \$ 15/T delivered to sites at Yerbillion. Pushing up of sand pit site to commence soon.
- Water Corporation has committed to the Progress Association Townhouse and 2 x single units for a 12 month period.
- The new Playground shed has been completed all but for one concrete panel which has been left out for access to the playground equipment installation. A large quantity of yellow sand has been brought into so that there is a level surface for the playground. The 150kl water tank is being installed this week so the downpipes will be connected ASAP.
- Met with Lynka Playground Developer to discuss the design of the new proposed playground fit-out.
- A Geier has been tasked to excavate and prepare the Cement Street footpath replacement in readiness for new concrete pathways being installed by Jeff Famlonga. Jeff will also tidy up access points into the new playground shed as well as squaring up the skateboard ramp area.
- Shire President and I attended the WEROC meeting held in Merredin on Wednesday 29 July.
- Update and submit 5 Year Road program and MCA for works 27/28 financial year to the WNESRRG
- Hosted Murray & Marilyn Cooper for a couple of days during their recent visit to the Museum.
- Met with Modular WA plumber to discuss septic and leach drain modifications on the CEACA site to accommodate the 4 x new units being constructed at the site.
- Met with a group of community members who were disgruntled about the membership and/or usage fee set by Council for the facilities at the community Hub.
- Liaising with Sophie Jane in the development of the video footage that will be used at the Small Town Reinvention Conference.
- New LED lighting has been installed at the administration building.
- Juan Patroni has indicated that he is willing to stay on as town gardener and we are currently investigating Visa/sponsorship options with a brokerage.
- Cr Geier and I attended a WNESRRG zoom meeting held on Friday 18 August.

- **DELEGATED AUTHORITY ACTIONS**

- Nil

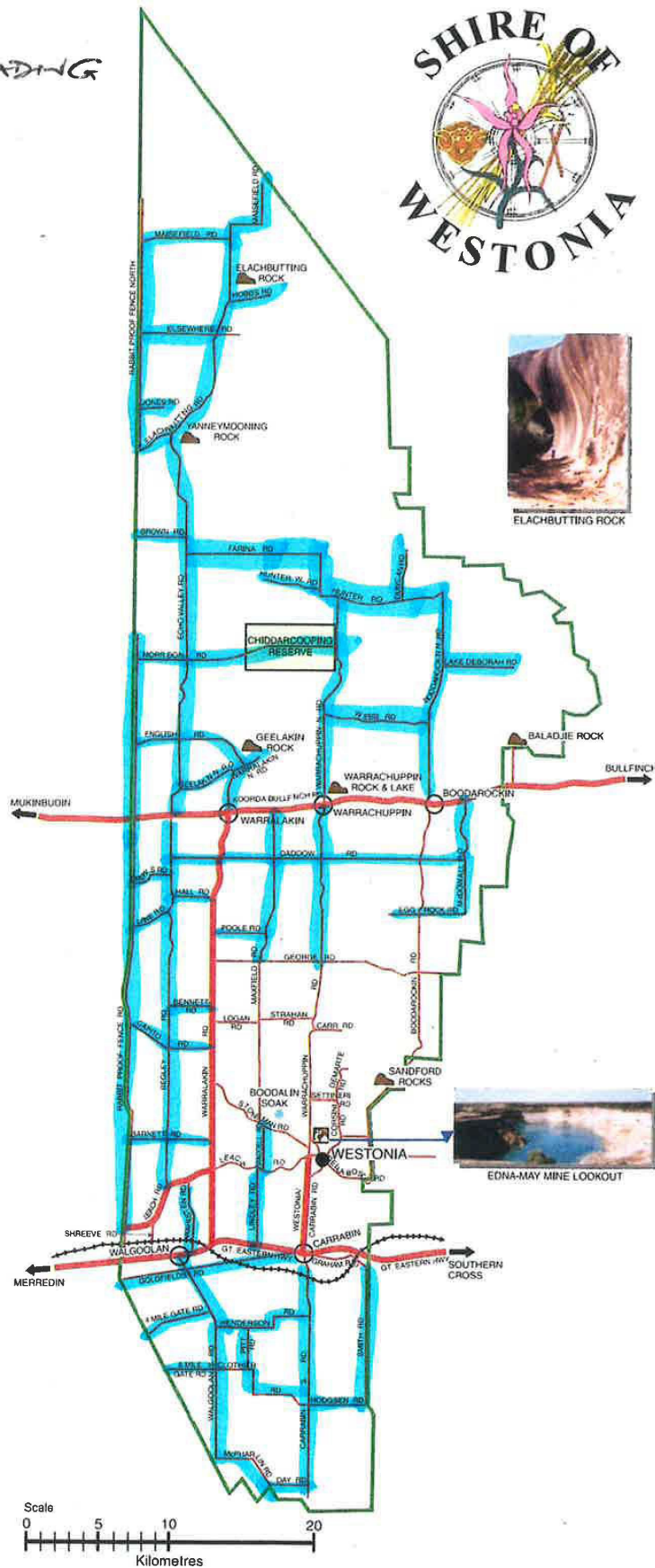
- **ROADCREW**

- Graders are nearing completion of the winter grading program for the season (Refer attached map).
- The construction crew will be mobilizing Mukinbudin Shire at the start of September to undertake their reconstruction works on a section of the Mukinbudin Nungarin Road. The trucks are likely to be onsite for about a fortnight with the graders and rollers onsite for about a month.
- Farina Road re-sheeting project has been completed.
- Assisted with the demolition of the Hay Shed from Mine Cropping area.
- Pulled down the old wire fence at the front of the Community Hub.
- Shed pads have been installed at 3 x new sites throughout the townsite.

Winter Grading  
26.



ELACHBUTTING ROCK



- **PLANT HOURS**

The following is a list of plant and vehicle kilometre and hour readings for the period ending 31.08.26.

| Item |                               | 31.07.26   | 31.08.26   |
|------|-------------------------------|------------|------------|
| P1   | CAT 140 GRADER                | 4,855hrs   | 4,947hrs   |
| P2   | CAT 12M GRADER                | 11,200hrs  | 11,349hrs  |
| P3   | PRIME MOVER (KENWORTH)        | 93,187kms  | 95,570kms  |
| P4   | ROAD TRAIN (NEW FREIGHTLINER) | 188,891kms | 191,565kms |
| P5   | JOHN DEERE LOADER             | 214hrs     | 261hrs     |
| P6   | CAT ROLLER (SKIP)             | 3,468hrs   | 3,556hrs   |
| P7   | MINI-EXCAVATOR                | 1,539hrs   | 1,592hrs   |
| P8   | TELEHANDLER JCB               | 722hrs     | 866hrs     |
| P9   | TOYOTA (GRADER UTE)           | 92,811ms   | 96,916ms   |
| P10  | MITSUBISHI CANTER             | 40,972ms   | 42,817ms   |
| P11  | TOYOTA HILUX (HCS) WT 35      | 115,630kms | 115,782kms |
| P12  | JOHN DEERE (5100)             | 2,846hrs   | 2,847hrs   |
| P14  | TOYOTA LANDCRUISER GXL (CEO)  | 39,467kms  | 41,112kms  |
| P15  | TOYOTA HILUX D/CAB (W/SUPER)  | 16,897kms  | 19,597kms  |
| P16  | TOYOTA RAV4 (Community)       | 32,583kms  | 34,517kms  |
| P17  | TOYOTA HILUX DUAL CAB         | 92,964kms  | 96,468kms  |
| P19  | FAST ATTACK                   | 23,038kms  | 23,038kms  |
| P20  | FIRE TRUCK                    | 7,787kms   | 7,787kms   |
| P18  | WESSY BUS                     | 158,104kms | 158,310kms |
| P22  | KUBOTA RIDE ON MOWER (OVAL)   | 2,217hrs   | 2,217hrs   |
| P23  | TOYOTA MINI-BUS (WT COM V)    | 157,017kms | 157,129kms |
| P24  | CAT ROLLER (LOLA)             | 3,816hrs   | 3,960hrs   |
| P25  | MICK's BEAUT UTE              | 192,196kms | 192,874ms  |
| P27  | TOYOTA PRADO GXL (DCEO)       | 13,870kms  | 13,870kms  |
| P28  | TOYOTA HILUX UTILITY (TOWN)   | 18,687kms  | 19,090kms  |
| P29  | MOWER                         | 25hrs      | 25hrs      |

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING REPORT

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Working group meetings held every 3rd Wednesday of the month:

Event planning –

Wessy on the Green 2027. We have started locking in food vendors, Entertainment, sound tech and bands for the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2027.

Moondyne Joe Experience has been cancelled due to commitments overriding and not enough people to assist and participate.

A Night @ the Museum – to be held 16/10/2026 Friday evening. Incorporating the opening of the Mens shed and the Warm Water Leisure Pool.

A Triathlon is being planned for the end of the year or early 2027. Community fitness, active Farmers and move it or Loose it are well underway thanks to our effervescent and highly motivated instructor Emilie Menze.

The Warm Water Leisure Pool is open and getting a lot of use.

CRC – with Co-design workshops over the DPIRD WACRN team have now moved into the Procurement and Contracting phase, which will run until 1 July 2027, when the new contracts begin.

### Grant applications & award nominations submitted:

The CRC have submitted the official grant application for Major Sponsorship to the Bendigo Bank for \$30,000.00 towards Wessy on the Green 2027. This has been accepted and the event will now be called Bendigo Bank Wessy on the Green and will be on all advertising going forward.

Application for \$1000 for Seniors week has been submitted, planned activities are to begin a Garden Wicking bed project and hold an Open Day in November for the Community Hub.

Future grant opportunities & award nominations:

## WELLBEING REPORT

Weekly Activities

Bingo every Thursday 9-12 Pax

Scrabble every Tuesday 5 Pax

Bus trips Movies in Merredin and coming up Daffodil day in Nungarin this Friday and Chinese Friday 28/8/26.

Active Farmers with Emilie Menze Every Wednesday (2x General Fitness classes and seniors' session)

### Age Care

Westonia Home Care Services

We are continuing to provide community Wellbeing activities

Westonia Home Care Services Clients: 23

New clients about to join service: 2

Staff delivering services: 5

Services: Administration and Package management, Cleaning and Household tasks, Medical, Personal Care, Social Support, Support work, Gardening & Maintenance, Meals, Allied health, Medicine management, Equipment and Home modifications.

Department of Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission - Westonia Home Care are currently making application to renew their 3 yearly contract to provide Support at Home Services.

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing – Thin Markets Grant (round 3) is open and we will be applying for the 2027-2028 financial year, approximately \$200,000.00 to assist in keeping cost lower while delivering aged care in rural and remote areas.

Monthly and annual reporting – Quarterly and annual financial reports to Department of health, disability and ageing. SaHCC annual reporting (Support @ Home cost collection).

## WESTONIA TOURIST PARK

Wildflowers are well and truly out and the park is quite full if not booked out most nights as we would expect this time of year, it is still great to see the amount of visitors coming through the park and loving Westonia as much as the locals.

## REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

Various minor repairs and maintenance are ongoing. Focal area being bathroom maintenance (fixtures and disabled bathroom upgrade)

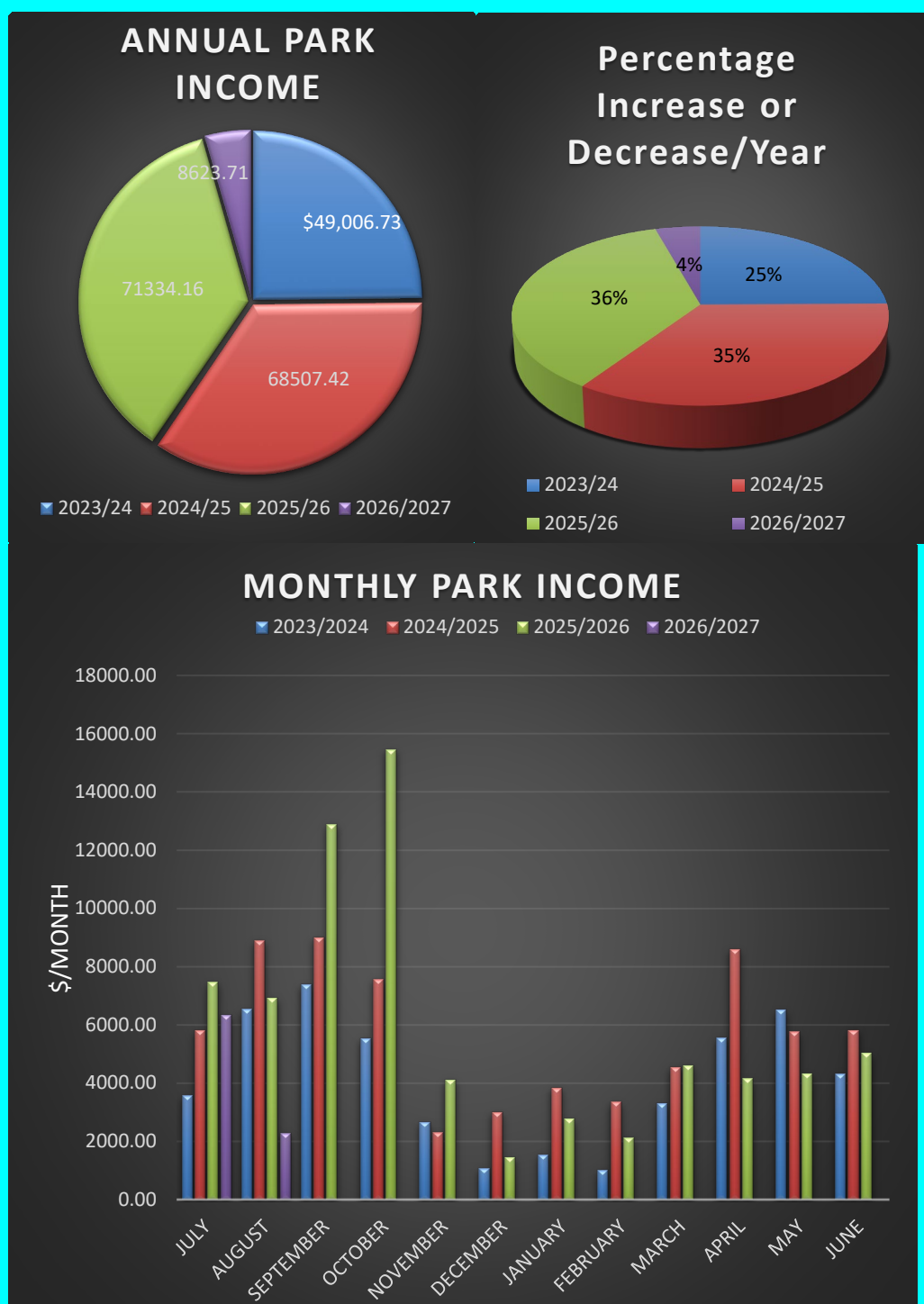
Disabled toilet drainage will need some major work as tree roots have made their way into the pipes.

## FUTURE PROJECTS

Permanent signage required to say "If office is unattended, please ring the caretaker's phone or Shire office alternatively you can visit the Shire office during business hours Monday to Friday to complete your booking".

Overflow – new signs needed for sites and information sign needed to describe who to ring or see to book in and outline that you must un-hook. Defined bays might be a good idea for this area.

## STATISTICS



## HOOD-PENN MUSEUM and COOPERS GARAGE MUSEUM

The constant flow of visitors are still in awe of the two museums these are a great asset to Westonia's tourism sector and a special thank you the volunteers who give up their time on weekends to open the museums up to the weekend travelers

### REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

Various minor repairs and maintenance ongoing

### RECENT PROJECTS

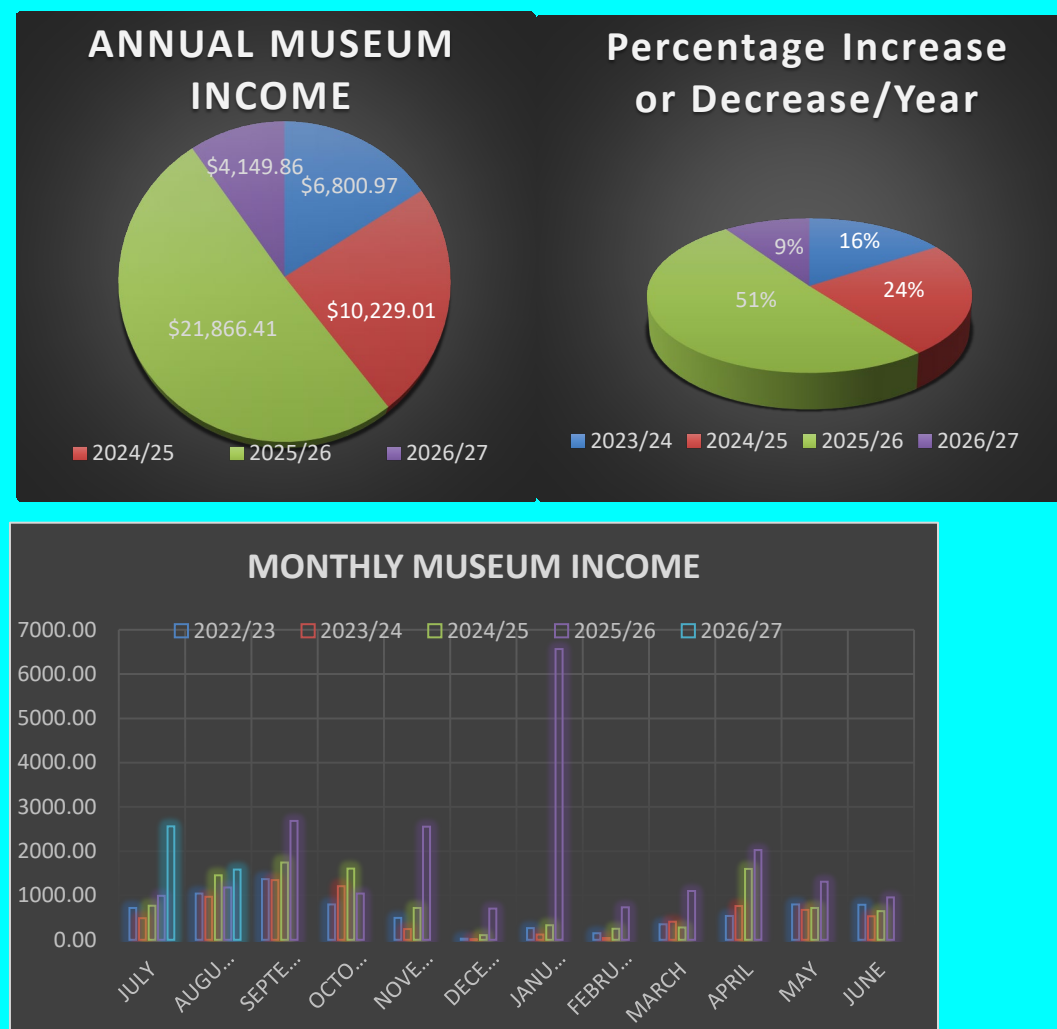
War Memorial moved from OM Hall and photo signs now installed.

Model War Planes hung in War Memorial scene

### FUTURE PROJECTS

New scenes to be created in the existing space of the old storage room to tell the stories of our primary industries of which Westonia was founded on.

### STATISTICS



## Roads

### Local Government Transport and Roads Research and Innovation Program (LGTRRIP)

WALGA and NTRO have convened a series of workshops with Local Government and industry to develop the next pipeline of projects. A shortlist is being developed and WALGA will convene an operations team with Local Government representation to prioritise the list. A new LGTRRIP website will be launched in August.

### Guidelines and Specifications for Residential Crossovers

The review of WALGA's Residential Crossover Guidelines and Specifications is nearing completion and is currently in the final review stage. The updated document incorporates revised references to external standards, guidelines and technical documents to ensure all cited information is current and relevant. Feedback received from Local Governments has also been incorporated to improve the clarity, usability and overall content of the guidelines.

### Heavy Vehicle Access on Local Roads

In November 2025, Main Roads WA changed the RAV network access conditions (CA07) from an approval to a notification process. Most Local Governments and WALGA do not support this change. A working group of Local Government representatives met in March to consider alternatives and a process was tentatively agreed. The group is waiting on a formal proposal from Main Roads WA before further engagement with Local Governments.

## Funding

### State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement

The current Agreement expires in June 2028 and WALGA has initiated discussions to inform the process towards the drafting and signing of a new Agreement.

### Regional Road Safety Program

Program delivery is continuing with the next steering group meeting proposed for August. There was no Federal co-funding for the program included in the 2026/27 budget. Engagement with stakeholders and government to secure on-going and expanded support for this work is continuing.

### Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) Model Revisions

The WALGA Infrastructure Team is continuing to work with Regional Road Groups to update their MCA methodologies that are used to prioritise projects for Road Project Grant funding. The updates are required to reflect changes in the State Road Funds to Local Government Procedures. Most of the Groups have now finalised their revisions and WALGA is working with the remaining groups of the Wheatbelt, Pilbara and Goldfields.

## Transport

### Active Transport and Micromobility Advocacy Plan

The Active Transport and Micromobility Advocacy Plan continues to progress. Feedback from the Infrastructure Policy Team has informed the categorisation of priority actions, with implementation now underway for several initiatives. Work is continuing to progress the identified advocacy actions.

## Asset Management

### Road Assets and Expenditure (RAE) Report Project

Modernisation of data entry, data management and output presentation of the Road Assets and Expenditure Report is nearing completion. User testing for the data entry component has been completed, and the modernised reporting interface will go live for the 2025/26 reporting phase starting in September 2026.

### Review of the WALGA Road Visual Condition Assessment Manual

The final version of the WALGA Road Visual Condition Manual has been published. The revision necessitates changes to the RAMM software package which are progressing. A "Go Live" date is scheduled for 1 September and an instructional webinar will be delivered in advance.

## Road Safety

### Road Safety Council

The Road Safety Council Communiques can viewed at [Road Safety Council Meeting Communiques](#).



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## REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA WHEATBELT

### Shire of Westonia Socio- Economic review June 2026

#### Population demographics

|                                |           |             |           |             |               |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| <b>ABS Census 2021</b>         | Males 127 | Females 128 | Total 255 | males 49.8% | females 50.2% |
| <b>ABS Estimate 2024</b>       | Males 123 | Females 124 | Total 247 | males 49.8% | females 50.2% |
| <b>Projected decrease 3.2%</b> |           |             |           |             |               |

#### Age demographics

| Age          | 2021       | 2024       | % of total population 2021 | % of total population 2024 |
|--------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 0-4 yrs      | 15         | 20         | 5.9%                       | 8.1%                       |
| 5-14 yrs     | 25         | 16         | 9.8%                       | 6.5%                       |
| 15-24 yrs    | 11         | 16         | 58.8%                      | 54.8%                      |
| 25-44 yrs    | 71         | 60         |                            |                            |
| 45-54 yrs    | 26         | 30         |                            |                            |
| 55-64 yrs    | 42         | 29         |                            |                            |
| 65-74 yrs    | 37         | 44         | 25.5%                      | 30.8%                      |
| 75 + yrs     | 28         | 32         |                            |                            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>255</b> | <b>247</b> | <b>100%</b>                | <b>100.2%</b>              |

#### Overseas migrants

**2011** 29 = 11% of total population      **2021** 35 = 13.7% of total population  
**2011** Australian born population= 247      **2021** Australian born population= 220  
**2011-2021** Australian born population proportion of population decrease = 27 people  
**2011-2021** migrant proportion of population decrease = 6 people

#### Working age population (aged 15-64 years)

|                                 |          |                                    |                         |
|---------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>ABS Census 2021</b>          | Males 74 | Females 76                         | Total 150               |
| <b>ABS Estimate 2024</b>        | Males 70 | Females 65                         | Total 135               |
| Projected male decrease of 5.7% |          | Projected female decrease of 16.9% | Total decrease of 11.1% |

#### Migrant working age population (15-64 years)

**ABS Census 2011** 23 being 11.9% of total working age population  
**ABS Census 2021** 16 being 12.6% of total working age population  
 2011 Australian born working age population = 171  
**2011 overseas born working age population = 23**  
 2021 Australian born working age population = 111  
**2021 overseas born working age population = 16**  
 2011-2021 Australian born population proportion of working age decrease = 60 persons  
**2011-2021 migrant proportion of working age population decrease = 7 persons**

#### Labour force

**ABS Census 2021**      Total labour force 115      unemployment rate no data  
**ABS December 2025**      Total labour force 168      unemployment rate 3 persons = 1.8%  
 Labour force increase of 46.1%

## Economy<sup>1</sup>

| Westonia economic output        | 2024<br>Output \$ M | 2025<br>Output \$ M | % change     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Mining                          | \$304.654           | \$297.566           | -2.3%        |
| Agriculture                     | \$29.739            | \$31.578            | 6.1%         |
| Public Admin                    | \$5.921             | \$6.019             | 1.6%         |
| Rental, Hiring & Real Estate    | \$4.905             | \$5.050             | 2.9%         |
| Transport                       | \$4.325             | \$4.249             | -1.8%        |
| Manufacturing                   | \$3.046             | \$3.065             | 0.6%         |
| Retail                          | \$1.142             | \$1.163             | 1.8%         |
| Other Services                  | \$0.974             | \$1.024             | 5.1%         |
| Accommodation food services     | \$0.645             | \$1.017             | 57.6%        |
| Health Care & Social Assistance | \$0.178             | \$0.172             | -3.5%        |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>\$355.529</b>    | <b>\$350.903</b>    | <b>-1.5%</b> |

| Westonia exports                | Exports<br>2024 \$M | Exports<br>2025 \$M | % change     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Mining                          | \$289.903           | \$277.233           | -4.5%        |
| Agriculture                     | \$27.349            | \$28.728            | 5.0%         |
| Manufacturing                   | \$2.858             | \$2.905             | 1.6%         |
| Public Admin                    | \$2.632             | \$2.661             | 1.1%         |
| Transport                       | \$1.231             | \$1.172             | -5.0%        |
| Rental, Hiring & Real Estate    | \$0.437             | \$1.685             | 285.5%       |
| Accommodation food services     | \$0.293             | \$0.563             | 92.1%        |
| Retail                          | \$0.038             | \$0.040             | 5.2%         |
| Other Services                  | \$0.023             | \$0.024             | 4.3%         |
| Health Care & Social Assistance | \$0.000             | \$0.001             | 100.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>\$324.764</b>    | <b>\$315.012</b>    | <b>-3.0%</b> |

| Westonia wages/salaries         | Wages<br>total 2024 | Wages<br>total 2025 | %<br>change |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Mining                          | \$34.087            | \$34.848            | 14.0%       |
| Public Admin                    | \$2.695             | \$2.741             | 1.7%        |
| Agriculture                     | \$1.467             | \$1.557             | 6.1%        |
| Transport                       | \$1.068             | \$1.023             | -4.4%       |
| Retail                          | \$0.420             | \$0.438             | 4.3%        |
| Other Services                  | \$0.223             | \$0.235             | 5.3%        |
| Accommodation food services     | \$0.178             | \$0.201             | 12.9%       |
| Manufacturing                   | \$0.134             | \$0.140             | 4.4%        |
| Health Care & Social Assistance | \$0.092             | \$0.091             | -1.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>\$40.364</b>     | <b>\$41.274</b>     | <b>2.2%</b> |

<sup>1</sup> REMPLAN Wheatbelt Economy

**Businesses<sup>2</sup>**

| Industry Businesses                     | 2021      | 2025      | % change  |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Agriculture Forestry Fishing            | 21        | 20        | -5%       |
| Construction                            | 4         | 5         | 25%       |
| Retail                                  | 0         | 3         | 300%      |
| Transport Warehousing Postal            | 0         | 3         | 300%      |
| Rental, hiring and real estate services | 5         | 5         | 0%        |
| Professional, scientific and technical  | 3         | 0         | -300%     |
| Education and training                  | 3         | 0         | -300%     |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>36</b> | <b>36</b> | <b>0%</b> |

Note- ABS data does not list any mining businesses in the shire but REMPLAN lists economic outcomes for the sector.

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<sup>2</sup> ABS [Westonia | Region summary | Data by region | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)  
RDA Wheatbelt Inc – [admin@rdawheatbelt.com.au](mailto:admin@rdawheatbelt.com.au) – (08) 9575 1888



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## REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA WHEATBELT

# Wheatbelt Region Socio-Economic Review: June 2026

## Population demographics

|                          |               |                 |               |              |                |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>ABS Census 2021</b>   | Males: 38,885 | Females: 36,362 | Total: 75,247 | Males: 51.7% | Females: 48.3% |
| <b>ABS Estimate 2024</b> | Males: 40,608 | Females: 37,977 | Total: 78,585 | Males: 51.7% | Females: 48.3% |

Projected increase: 4.4%

## Age demographics

| Age          | 2021          | 2024          | % of total population 2021 | % of total population 2024 |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 0-4 yrs      | 3,887         | 4,146         | 5.1%                       | 5.2%                       |
| 5-14 yrs     | 9,073         | 9,289         | 12.1%                      | 11.8%                      |
| 15-24 yrs    | 6,880         | 7,504         | 59.9%                      | 58.7%                      |
| 25-44 yrs    | 15,979        | 16,841        |                            |                            |
| 45-54 yrs    | 10,139        | 9,597         |                            |                            |
| 55-64 yrs    | 12,096        | 12,207        |                            |                            |
| 65-74 yrs    | 10,394        | 10,966        | 22.8%                      | 24.2%                      |
| 75+ yrs      | 6,799         | 8,035         |                            |                            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>75,247</b> | <b>78,585</b> | <b>99.9%</b>               | <b>99.9%</b>               |

## Overseas migrants

**2011:** 8,346 = 11.1% of total population  
**2021:** 10,750 = 13.7% of total population  
**2011:** Australian born population = 63,762  
**2021:** Australian born population = 64,719  
**2011-2021** Australian born population proportion of population increase = 957 people  
**2011-2021** migrant proportion of population increase = 2,404 people

## Working age population (aged 15-64 years)

|                                 |               |                                   |                        |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>ABS Census 2021</b>          | Males: 23,547 | Females: 21,869                   | Total: 45,416          |
| <b>ABS Estimate 2024</b>        | Males: 23,992 | Females: 22,395                   | Total: 46,387          |
| Projected male increase of 1.9% |               | Projected female increase of 2.4% | Total increase of 2.1% |

## Migrant working age population (15-64 years)

**ABS Census 2011** 5,713 being 12.5% of total working age population  
**ABS Census 2021** 7,075 being 15.6% of total working age population  
**2011** Australian born working age population = 39,795  
**2011 overseas born working age population = 5,713**  
**2021** Australian born working age population = 38,341  
**2021 overseas born working age population = 7,075**  
**2011-2021** Australian born population proportion of working age decrease = 1,454 persons  
**2011-2021 migrant proportion of working age population increase = 1,362 persons**

## Labour force

|                                |                            |                                        |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>ABS Census 2021</b>         | Total labour force: 34,080 | Unemployment rate 1,485 persons = 4.4% |
| <b>ABS December 2025</b>       | Total labour force: 42,197 | Unemployment rate 676 persons = 1.6%   |
| Labour force increase of 23.8% |                            |                                        |

## Economy<sup>1</sup>

| Wheatbelt economic output            | 2024<br>Output \$ M | 2025<br>Output \$ M | % change    |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Agriculture                          | \$4,997.246         | \$5,271.761         | 5.5%        |
| Mining                               | \$4,235.904         | \$4,318.730         | 1.9%        |
| Construction                         | \$1,224.345         | \$1,348.170         | 10.1%       |
| Manufacturing                        | \$1,166.059         | \$1,199.001         | 2.8%        |
| Rental, Hiring & Real Estate         | \$1,042.877         | \$1,070.414         | 2.6%        |
| Public Admin                         | \$766.803           | \$781.133           | 1.8%        |
| Transport                            | \$563.689           | \$557.068           | -1.2%       |
| Electricity, Gas, Water              | \$543.864           | \$563.650           | 3.6%        |
| Health Care & Social Assistance      | \$550.457           | \$545.074           | -0.9%       |
| Education & Training                 | \$460.777           | \$455.198           | -1.2%       |
| Wholesale                            | \$407.199           | \$402.249           | -1.2%       |
| Retail                               | \$341.257           | \$347.423           | 1.8%        |
| Financial & Insurance                | \$253.174           | \$249.656           | -1.4%       |
| Other Services                       | \$205.805           | \$223.457           | 8.5%        |
| Accommodation food services          | \$197.676           | \$286.514           | 44.9%       |
| Professional, Scientific & Technical | \$190.886           | \$197.973           | 3.7%        |
| Admin & Support Services             | \$88.147            | \$77.750            | -13.3%      |
| Information Media & Tele             | \$79.977            | \$86.528            | 8.2%        |
| Arts & Rec                           | \$38.556            | \$41.391            | 7.3%        |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>\$17,354.698</b> | <b>\$18,023.140</b> | <b>3.8%</b> |

| Wheatbelt exports                    | Exports<br>2024 \$M | Exports<br>2025 \$M | %<br>change |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Agriculture                          | \$4,326.739         | \$4,536.980         | 4.9%        |
| Mining                               | \$4,081.580         | \$4,109.246         | 0.6%        |
| Manufacturing                        | \$914.298           | \$937.511           | 2.5%        |
| Electricity, Gas, Water              | \$346.303           | \$359.959           | 3.9%        |
| Construction                         | \$297.425           | \$358.608           | 20.5%       |
| Public Admin                         | \$256.266           | \$261.963           | 2.2%        |
| Transport                            | \$215.845           | \$212.593           | -1.5%       |
| Wholesale                            | \$173.205           | \$179.770           | 3.7%        |
| Education & Training                 | \$149.662           | \$136.924           | -9.3%       |
| Other Services                       | \$92.284            | \$98.580            | 6.8%        |
| Health Care & Social Assistance      | \$79.253            | \$78.357            | -1.1%       |
| Financial & Insurance                | \$64.510            | \$62.514            | -3.2%       |
| Accommodation food services          | \$63.969            | \$106.265           | 66.1%       |
| Information Media & Tele             | \$41.567            | \$45.289            | 9.0%        |
| Rental, Hiring & Real Estate         | \$32.391            | \$65.932            | 103.5%      |
| Retail                               | \$25.825            | \$25.040            | -3.1%       |
| Professional, Scientific & Technical | \$11.035            | \$11.452            | 3.7%        |
| Admin & Support Services             | \$13.711            | \$11.650            | -17.7%      |
| Arts & Rec                           | \$9.144             | \$10.136            | 10.8%       |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>\$11,195.012</b> | <b>\$11,608.769</b> | <b>3.7%</b> |

<sup>1</sup> REMPLAN Wheatbelt Economy

| <b>Wheatbelt 2024</b>                | <b>2024 Wages<br/>total \$ M</b> | <b>2025 Wages<br/>total \$ M</b> | <b>%<br/>change</b> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Mining                               | \$413.459                        | \$449.717                        | 8.7%                |
| Public Admin                         | \$359.190                        | \$365.700                        | 1.8%                |
| Health Care & Social Assistance      | \$316.209                        | \$314.215                        | -0.6%               |
| Education & Training                 | \$301.310                        | \$295.169                        | -2.0%               |
| Agriculture                          | \$291.564                        | \$303.783                        | 4.2%                |
| Construction                         | \$204.411                        | \$221.282                        | 8.2%                |
| Transport                            | \$134.338                        | \$131.035                        | -2.5%               |
| Wholesale                            | \$130.019                        | \$124.406                        | -4.5%               |
| Retail                               | \$125.544                        | \$131.016                        | 4.3%                |
| Manufacturing                        | \$111.935                        | \$117.968                        | 5.4%                |
| Electricity, Gas, Water              | \$76.169                         | \$78.733                         | 3.3%                |
| Professional, Scientific & Technical | \$70.557                         | \$72.001                         | 2.0%                |
| Accommodation food services          | \$68.742                         | \$72.502                         | 9.8%                |
| Other Services                       | \$60.898                         | \$63.545                         | 4.3%                |
| Financial & Insurance                | \$44.661                         | \$43.293                         | -3.1%               |
| Admin & Support Services             | \$36.008                         | \$31.014                         | -16.1%              |
| Rental, Hiring & Real Estate         | \$18.412                         | \$18.716                         | 1.6%                |
| Information Media & Tele             | \$13.942                         | \$13.650                         | -2.1%               |
| Arts & Rec                           | \$9.207                          | \$9.429                          | 2.4%                |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>\$2,786.575</b>               | <b>\$2,857.174</b>               | <b>2.5%</b>         |

#### Businesses<sup>2</sup>

| <b>Industry businesses</b>                      | <b>2021</b> | <b>2025</b> | <b>% change</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Agriculture Forestry Fishing                    | 4384        | 4135        | -6.0%           |
| Mining                                          | 40          | 54          | 35.0%           |
| Manufacturing                                   | 262         | 287         | 9.5%            |
| Electricity, gas, water                         | 24          | 29          | 20.8%           |
| Construction                                    | 966         | 1116        | 15.5%           |
| Wholesale                                       | 208         | 221         | 6.3%            |
| Retail                                          | 460         | 439         | -4.8%           |
| Accommodation Food Beverage                     | 249         | 252         | 1.2%            |
| Transport Warehousing Postal                    | 501         | 534         | 6.6%            |
| Financial and insurance services                | 211         | 229         | 8.5%            |
| Rental, hiring and real estate services         | 784         | 942         | 20.1%           |
| Professional, scientific and technical services | 396         | 466         | 17.6%           |
| Administrative and support services             | 175         | 222         | 26.9%           |
| Ed & Training                                   | 51          | 76          | 49.0%           |
| Health care and social assistance               | 146         | 196         | 34.2%           |
| Other services                                  | 373         | 490         | 31.3%           |
| Arts                                            | 58          | 56          | -3.6%           |
| Info                                            | 16          | 13          | -23.0%          |
| Public admin and safety                         | 3           | 6           | 100.0%          |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>9307</b> | <b>9763</b> | <b>4.9%</b>     |

<sup>2</sup> ABS [Region summary](#) | [Data by region](#) | [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)



An Australian Government Initiative



## REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA WHEATBELT

### Central East Sub Region Socio-Economic Review: June 2026

#### Population demographics

|                          |              |                |              |              |                |
|--------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>ABS Census 2021</b>   | Males: 4,978 | Females: 4,346 | Total: 9,324 | Males: 53.4% | Females: 46.6% |
| <b>ABS Estimate 2024</b> | Males: 5,011 | Females: 4,489 | Total: 9,500 | Males: 52.7% | Females: 47.3% |

**Projected increase: 1.9%**

#### Age demographics

| Age              | 2021         | 2024         | % of total population 2021 | % of total population 2024 |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>0-4 yrs</b>   | 526          | 531          | 5.6%                       | 5.6%                       |
| <b>5-14 yrs</b>  | 1,028        | 1,093        | 11.0%                      | 11.5%                      |
| <b>15-24 yrs</b> | 834          | 921          | 61.7%                      | 59.9%                      |
| <b>25-44 yrs</b> | 2,138        | 2,199        |                            |                            |
| <b>45-54 yrs</b> | 1,292        | 1,157        |                            |                            |
| <b>55-64 yrs</b> | 1,490        | 1,410        |                            |                            |
| <b>65-74 yrs</b> | 1,149        | 1,235        | 21.6%                      | 23%                        |
| <b>75+ yrs</b>   | 867          | 954          |                            |                            |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>9,324</b> | <b>9,500</b> | <b>99.9%</b>               | <b>100%</b>                |

#### Overseas migrants

**2011:** 971 = 10% of total population      **2021:** 899 = 9.6% of total population  
**2011:** Australian born population = 8,744      **2021:** Australian born population = 8,425  
**2011-2021:** Australian born population proportion of population decrease = 319 people  
**2011-2021:** migrant proportion of population decrease = 72 people

#### Working age population (aged 15-64 years)

|                                 |              |                                   |                        |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>ABS Census 2021</b>          | Males: 3,131 | Females: 2,623                    | Total: 5,754           |
| <b>ABS Estimate 2024</b>        | Males: 3,081 | Females: 2,606                    | Total: 5,687           |
| Projected male decrease of 1.6% |              | Projected female decrease of 0.7% | Total decrease of 1.2% |

#### Migrant working age population (15-64 years)

**ABS Census 2011:** 709 being 11.0% of total working age population  
**ABS Census 2021:** 657 being 11.4% of total working age population  
**2011** Australian born working age population = 5,711  
**2011** overseas born working age population = 709  
**2021** Australian born working age population = 5,097  
**2021** overseas born working age population = 657  
**2011-2021** Australian born population proportion of working age decrease = 614 persons  
**2011-2021** migrant proportion of working age population decrease = 52 persons

#### Labour force

|                          |                          |                                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>ABS Census 2021</b>   | Total labour force 4,307 | Unemployment rate 165 persons = 3.8% |
| <b>ABS December 2025</b> | Total labour force 5,416 | Unemployment rate 100 persons = 1.8% |

Labour force increase of 25.7%

## Economy<sup>1</sup>

| Central East economic output         | 2024<br>Output \$ M | 2025<br>Output \$ M | % change    |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Mining                               | \$2,546.578         | \$2,643.291         | 3.80%       |
| Agriculture                          | \$733.370           | \$783.722           | 6.8%        |
| Manufacturing                        | \$190.936           | \$194.885           | 2.0%        |
| Construction                         | \$161.684           | \$175.547           | 8.5%        |
| Rental, Hiring & Real Estate         | \$151.882           | \$141.418           | -7.4%       |
| Electricity, Gas, Water              | \$113.233           | \$118.007           | 4.2%        |
| Public Admin                         | \$108.324           | \$110.203           | 1.7%        |
| Transport                            | \$82.701            | \$82.176            | -0.6%       |
| Health Care & Social Assistance      | \$76.787            | \$75.603            | -1.5%       |
| Wholesale                            | \$62.965            | \$62.199            | -1.2%       |
| Education & Training                 | \$60.319            | \$59.456            | -1.4%       |
| Retail                               | \$40.455            | \$41.187            | 1.8%        |
| Information Media & Tele             | \$32.943            | \$35.687            | 8.3%        |
| Accommodation food services          | \$28.500            | \$36.645            | 28.5%       |
| Other Services                       | \$27.225            | \$29.684            | 9.0%        |
| Financial & Insurance                | \$14.580            | \$14.213            | -2.5%       |
| Professional, Scientific & Technical | \$13.346            | \$13.913            | 4.2%        |
| Admin & Support Services             | \$7.900             | \$6.964             | -13.4%      |
| Arts & Rec                           | \$2.689             | \$2.795             | 3.9%        |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>\$4,456.417</b>  | <b>\$4,627.595</b>  | <b>3.8%</b> |

| Central East exports                 | Exports<br>2024 \$M | Exports<br>2025 \$M | % change    |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Mining                               | \$2,434.325         | \$2,511.061         | 3.1%        |
| Agriculture                          | \$657.452           | \$695.547           | 5.8%        |
| Manufacturing                        | \$144.103           | \$146.221           | 1.4%        |
| Electricity, Gas, Water              | \$79.813            | \$83.538            | 4.6%        |
| Construction                         | \$43.441            | \$50.147            | 15.4%       |
| Wholesale                            | \$40.518            | \$40.426            | -0.2%       |
| Public Admin                         | \$36.524            | \$37.353            | 2.2%        |
| Transport                            | \$34.847            | \$35.177            | 0.9%        |
| Information Media & Tele             | \$25.722            | \$28.223            | 9.7%        |
| Education & Training                 | \$21.634            | \$19.831            | -9.0%       |
| Other Services                       | \$13.447            | \$14.518            | 8.0%        |
| Health Care & Social Assistance      | \$13.290            | \$13.202            | -0.6%       |
| Accommodation food services          | \$6.922             | \$12.251            | 77.0%       |
| Rental, Hiring & Real Estate         | \$6.302             | \$17.041            | 170.4%      |
| Retail                               | \$3.419             | \$3.566             | 4.3%        |
| Financial & Insurance                | \$1.800             | \$1.932             | 7.3%        |
| Professional, Scientific & Technical | \$0.440             | \$0.461             | 4.7%        |
| Admin & Support Services             | \$0.118             | \$0.097             | -21.6%      |
| Arts & Rec                           | \$0.150             | \$0.191             | 27.3%       |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>\$3,564.267</b>  | <b>\$3,710.783</b>  | <b>4.1%</b> |

<sup>1</sup> REMPLAN Wheatbelt Economy

| Central East wages/salaries          | 2024 Wages<br>total \$ M | 2025 Wages<br>total \$ M | %<br>change |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| Mining                               | \$220.572                | \$250.197                | 13.4%       |
| Public Admin                         | \$49.884                 | \$50.759                 | 1.7%        |
| Health Care & Social Assistance      | \$43.202                 | \$42.905                 | -0.6%       |
| Education & Training                 | \$40.159                 | \$39.345                 | -2.0%       |
| Agriculture                          | \$39.088                 | \$41.567                 | 6.3%        |
| Construction                         | \$28.826                 | \$30.953                 | 7.3%        |
| Transport                            | \$20.792                 | \$20.336                 | -2.2%       |
| Wholesale                            | \$20.104                 | \$19.237                 | -4.5%       |
| Electricity, Gas, Water              | \$15.674                 | \$16.282                 | 3.9%        |
| Retail                               | \$14.883                 | \$15.532                 | 4.3%        |
| Manufacturing                        | \$13.393                 | \$14.141                 | 5.5%        |
| Accommodation food services          | \$8.955                  | \$9.413                  | 5.1%        |
| Other Services                       | \$7.060                  | \$7.800                  | 10.4%       |
| Information Media & Tele             | \$5.215                  | \$4.822                  | -8.1%       |
| Professional, Scientific & Technical | \$5.203                  | \$5.044                  | -3.1%       |
| Admin & Support Services             | \$3.334                  | \$2.866                  | -16.3%      |
| Financial & Insurance                | \$2.858                  | \$2.789                  | -2.4%       |
| Rental, Hiring & Real Estate         | \$1.584                  | \$1.535                  | -3.2%       |
| Arts & Rec                           | \$0.677                  | \$0.659                  | -2.7%       |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>\$541.463</b>         | <b>\$576.182</b>         | <b>6.4%</b> |

## Businesses<sup>2</sup>

| Central East Industry businesses                | 2021         | 2025         | % change    |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Agriculture Forestry Fishing                    | 477          | 429          | -11.1%      |
| Mining                                          | 12           | 15           | 25.0%       |
| Manufacturing                                   | 32           | 38           | 18.8%       |
| Electricity, gas, water                         | 0            | 6            | 600.0%      |
| Construction                                    | 177          | 217          | 22.6%       |
| Wholesale                                       | 22           | 24           | 9.0%        |
| Retail                                          | 49           | 58           | 18.4%       |
| Accommodation Food Beverage                     | 43           | 45           | 4.7%        |
| Transport Warehousing Postal                    | 60           | 77           | 28.3%       |
| Information media and telecom...                | 3            | 0            | -300.0%     |
| Financial and insurance services                | 26           | 25           | -4.0%       |
| Rental, hiring and real estate services         | 85           | 103          | 21.2%       |
| Professional, scientific and technical services | 53           | 50           | -6.0%       |
| Administrative services                         | 28           | 41           | 46.4%       |
| Education Training                              | 0            | 8            | 800.0%      |
| Health care and social assistance               | 12           | 22           | 83.3%       |
| Arts & Rec                                      | 5            | 3            | -66.7%      |
| Other services                                  | 39           | 61           | 56.4%       |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>1,123</b> | <b>1,222</b> | <b>8.8%</b> |

<sup>2</sup> ABS [Data by region | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#) collation of the 11 shires of the Central East sub region.  
RDA Wheatbelt – [admin@rdawheatbelt.com.au](mailto:admin@rdawheatbelt.com.au) | (08) 9575 1888

## **OFFICIAL**

Good afternoon Arthur,

I'm reaching out from the Commission's Regulatory Strategy Section to advise of some important amendments to the Aged Care Act 2024 (the Act).

The Australian Government has introduced legislation into Parliament that would amend the Act to exclude elected members of local government providers from being considered responsible persons for the purposes of the Act.

The proposed amendment would not affect the responsibilities of non-elected local government officials who have governance, oversight or operational responsibilities relating to the delivery of aged care services. Local government providers would continue to be expected to maintain appropriate governance arrangements and oversight of aged care service delivery.

While the proposed amendment has not yet been passed by Parliament and remains subject to the parliamentary process, we wanted to ensure you were aware of the proposed change to support your future planning and understanding of the Government's intended approach.

The Commission remains responsible for regulating the Act as it currently stands. Accordingly, the Commission's position regarding responsible person requirements has not yet changed. If you have any questions or are experiencing difficulties complying with the current responsible person requirements, we encourage you to get in touch. General enquiries can be directed to [info@agedcarequality.gov.au](mailto:info@agedcarequality.gov.au). For registration and renewal matters, providers can contact: [registrar.applications@agedcarequality.gov.au](mailto:registrar.applications@agedcarequality.gov.au).

Kind regards,

**Patrick Deayton**

Assistant Director (Legislative Reform)

Regulatory Strategy Section

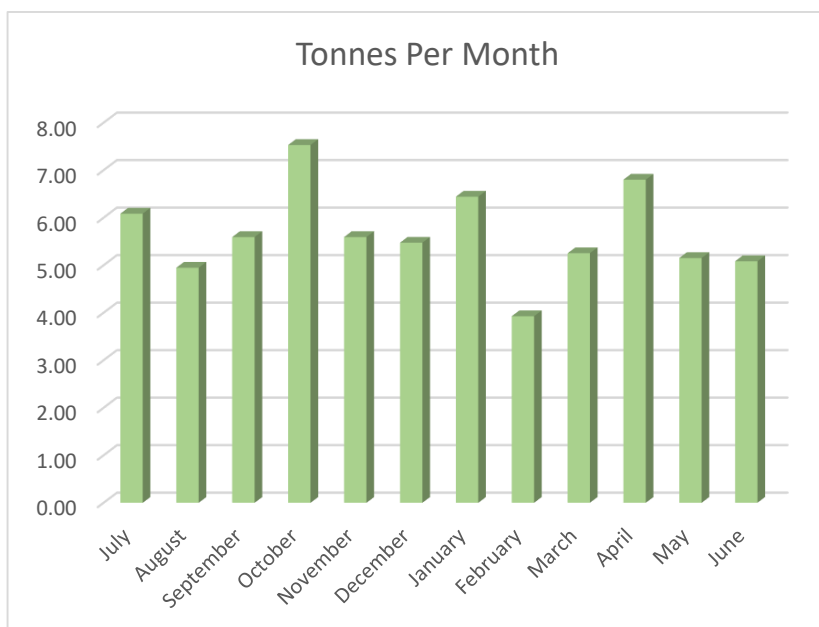
Regulatory Strategy and Policy (RSP) Group



## Shire of Westonia Waste Report 2025-2026

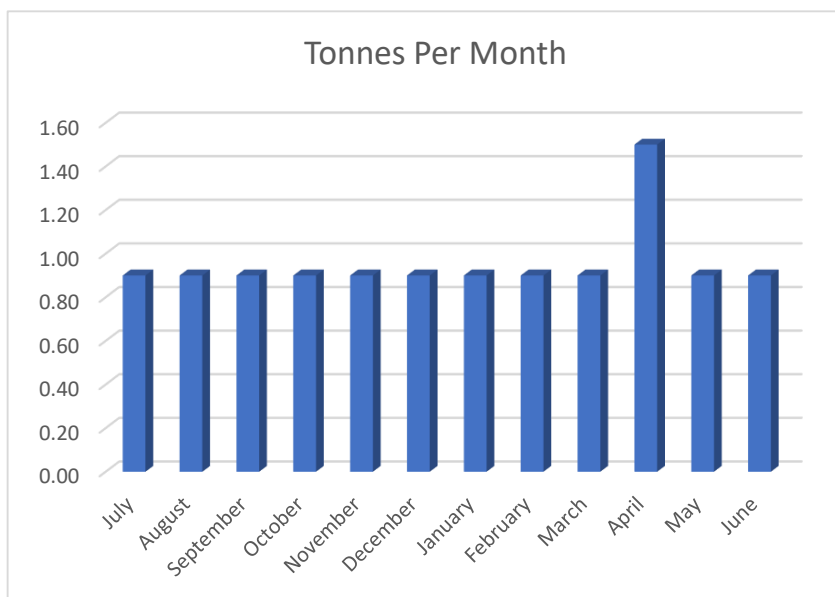
### Shire of Westonia - Kerbside Rubbish Weights

| Month        | Tonnes Per Month |
|--------------|------------------|
| July         | 6.09             |
| August       | 4.95             |
| September    | 5.59             |
| October      | 7.53             |
| November     | 5.59             |
| December     | 5.47             |
| January      | 6.44             |
| February     | 3.93             |
| March        | 5.25             |
| April        | 6.80             |
| May          | 5.15             |
| June         | 5.08             |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>67.88</b>     |



### Shire of Westonia Bulk Recycle Weights

| Month        | Tonnes Per Month |
|--------------|------------------|
| July         | 0.90             |
| August       | 0.90             |
| September    | 0.90             |
| October      | 0.90             |
| November     | 0.90             |
| December     | 0.90             |
| January      | 0.90             |
| February     | 0.90             |
| March        | 0.90             |
| April        | 1.50             |
| May          | 0.90             |
| June         | 0.90             |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>11.40</b>     |



Please Note: These figures are Bulk Recycling.

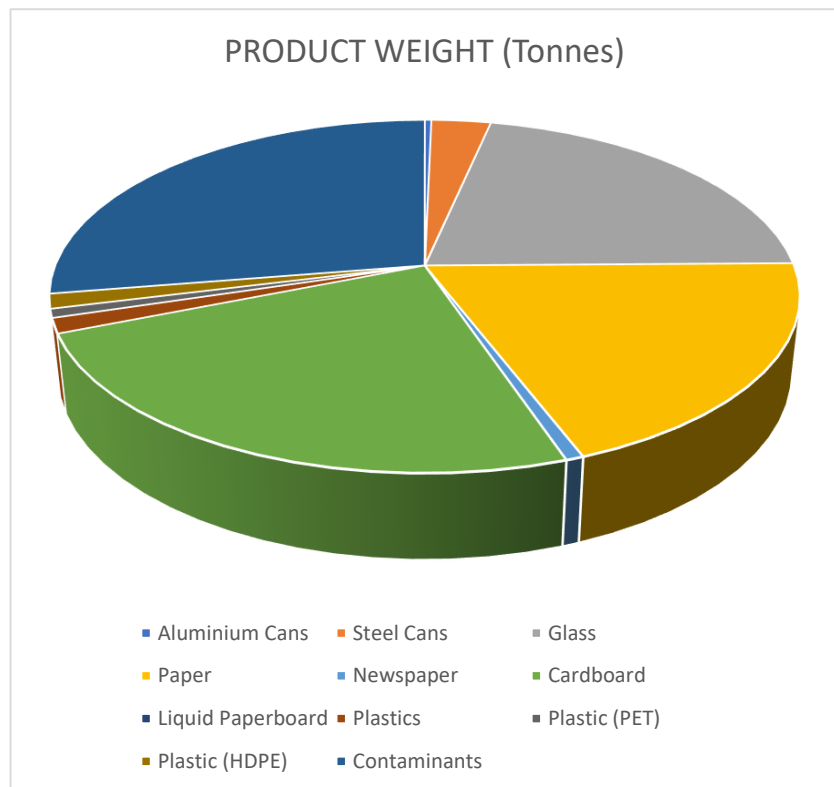


## Shire of Westonia Waste Report 2025/2026

### Shire of Westonia - Recycling Product Breakdown

\* Figures below exclude CBO Bulk bin Weights

| PRODUCT           | PRODUCT WEIGHT (Tonnes) |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Aluminium Cans    | 0.04                    |
| Steel Cans        | 0.35                    |
| Glass             | 2.44                    |
| Paper             | 2.21                    |
| Newspaper         | 0.08                    |
| Cardboard         | 2.75                    |
| Liquid Paperboard | 0.00                    |
| Plastics          | 0.16                    |
| Plastic (PET)     | 0.09                    |
| Plastic (HDPE)    | 0.15                    |
| Contaminants      | 3.14                    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>11.40</b>            |



#### Please Note:

*Recycling loads are not delivered individually to VEOLIA. Loads are co-mingled with other Shires to minimise collection and travel expenses. The Recycling Product Breakdown has been provided by WALGA as the result of recycling product audits, and is to be used as an estimate for the volume of each product.*



Committee Secretary

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure  
and Transport

PO Box 6021

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

2 February 2026

**Re: Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability.**

The Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc. (WEROC) is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation representing seven small, regional, and remote local governments in the Central and Eastern Wheatbelt of Western Australia. At a WEROC Board meeting held on 27 November 2025, it was resolved that WEROC, on behalf of its member councils, would make a submission to the Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability.

The WEROC region spans approximately 45,008 square kilometres and includes the Shires of Bruce Rock, Cunderdin, Kellerberrin, Merredin, Tammin, Westonia and Yilgarn. Collectively, these local governments manage extensive geographic areas, highly dispersed populations and a disproportionately large volume of infrastructure relative to their limited revenue bases.

Over recent decades, the role of local government has expanded significantly, particularly in regional and remote areas. Where state or Commonwealth services are limited or absent, local governments are increasingly expected to step in to address service gaps. This includes involvement in areas such as housing provision and increasingly, supporting access to primary healthcare. At the same time, service expectations from communities continue to rise and infrastructure demands are increasing.

These pressures are most acute in regions such as WEROC, where property rates are the Councils primary own-source revenue and are being drawn from small and in many cases stagnating or declining populations. Due to their geographic location, limited housing and competition with higher paying jobs in the private sector, WEROC Councils are also faced with persistent challenges around attracting and retaining qualified and



experienced staff, which significantly constrains their ability to plan, maintain assets and deliver services efficiently.

To continue providing essential infrastructure and services in communities where other levels of government or the private sector cannot or do not operate, WEROC councils require funding arrangements that are more equitable, predictable and aligned with the realities of regional service delivery.

WEROC welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry into local government funding and fiscal sustainability. This submission focuses on two service areas that clearly demonstrate systemic funding challenges for small, regional and remote local governments and directly relate to the inquiry's terms of reference:

- 1) The sustainability of funding for local road infrastructure, particularly extensive regional road networks that support agriculture, freight and community access; and
- 2) The growing role of local governments in supporting access to primary healthcare services, especially General Practitioners (GPs), despite health being primarily a state and Commonwealth responsibility.

Should you wish to discuss any aspect of this submission, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely

Rebekah Burges

**Executive Officer, Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc.**



# WEROC Response to the Terms of Reference

## 1. Interactions Between Governments

### 1.1 Nature and Scale of Government Funding

Local governments within the WEROC region receive funding from a range of Commonwealth and State programs, including Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs), Roads to Recovery, State Road funding programs, disaster recovery and resilience funding, and a variety of competitive, project-based grants.

While these funding sources are essential, they are increasingly fragmented, short-term and inadequately indexed. For WEROC councils, this results in growing pressure on already constrained own-source revenue and limits their ability to plan and invest in long-term infrastructure and service delivery.

### 1.2 Legislative and Policy Frameworks

Although the Commonwealth provides direct funding to local government, current funding frameworks do not adequately align with the expanding practical responsibilities of local governments. This misalignment is most evident in regional and remote areas, where market failure and service withdrawal by other tiers of government are most pronounced.

As a result, WEROC councils are frequently required to absorb responsibilities beyond their traditional functions without commensurate or ongoing funding support.

## 2. Identification of All Funding Sources

### 2.1 Untied and Tied Grants

Financial Assistance Grants (FAG) remain a critical source of untied funding for WEROC councils. However, FAGs have not kept pace with escalating construction and maintenance costs, increasing service expectations, or the scale and condition of infrastructure assets under local government control.

The FAG program consists of a general-purpose component distributed on a per capita basis and a local roads component distributed according to fixed historical shares. While both components are untied, the underlying allocation methodologies do not adequately reflect contemporary realities such as network size, asset condition, freight task or councils' limited capacity to self-fund.

In the 2025–26 financial year, FAG entitlements for WEROC councils range from approximately \$1.48 million in Tammin to \$4.68 million in Yilgarn (refer to Table 1). The local road component specifically ranges from \$409,820 to ~\$2 million, while total road



construction and maintenance budgets in the 2025-26 financial year, to manage the approximately 10,670 kilometres of local roads across the WEROC region range from the low \$1 millions in some smaller Shires to more than \$6 million in the Shire of Yilgarn.

| Shire               | General Purpose | Local Roads | Total       |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Bruce Rock</b>   | \$2,270,562     | \$1,114,381 | \$3,384,943 |
| <b>Cunderdin</b>    | \$1,296,229     | \$726,119   | \$2,022,348 |
| <b>Kellerberrin</b> | \$2,063,470     | \$814,969   | \$2,878,439 |
| <b>Merredin</b>     | \$2,183,931     | \$1,173,706 | \$3,357,637 |
| <b>Tammin</b>       | \$1,079,088     | \$409,820   | \$1,488,908 |
| <b>Westonia</b>     | \$1,314,110     | \$723,124   | \$2,037,234 |
| <b>Yilgarn</b>      | \$2,617,550     | \$2,071,067 | \$4,688,617 |

Table 1. WEROC FAG Entitlements 2025-26 Financial Year (inclusive of early payments made in June 2025 and cash payments made in the 2025-26 financial year).

As highlighted in a recent report from the Auditor General Western Australia<sup>1</sup> regional roads in WA account for approximately 90 per cent of the state's local road network and are critical for freight, community access, and the delivery of essential services, including schools, healthcare, and economic activity.

The Auditor General's report highlights the significant challenges faced by regional local governments in maintaining their road networks and suggests that the asset preservation model used to allocate FAGs and funding under the Local Government Agreement is outdated and does not adequately reflect current road conditions, the size of local road networks, or the capacity of councils to self-fund maintenance. The report notes that many regional local government entities have a limited rate base to draw on and where there is limited ability to self-fund, local governments become more reliant on grant funding however these differences are not reflected in the asset preservation model used to distribute Financial Assistance and Local Government Agreement grant funding.

As an example of this, within the WEROC region the Shire of Merredin has a higher rate base to help fund a smaller sized road network than the Shire of Yilgarn, which has an extensive road network and less than half the population. Similarly, councils like Westonia and Tammin have very small populations and limited revenue yet are responsible for extensive road networks. Table 2 highlights these discrepancies across the WEROC local governments.

The Auditor General's report suggests that because of the funding deficits regional councils cannot spend enough to fully preserve their road assets and estimates the asset preservation gap to be as much as 44.7% for regional local governments in WA. Without reform to funding models and greater recognition of the scale and complexity of regional road networks, the asset preservation gap is likely to widen, leading to deteriorating

<sup>1</sup> [Maintaining Regional Local Roads - Office of the Auditor General](#)



roads, higher maintenance costs in the long term, and reduced safety and accessibility for communities in the Eastern Wheatbelt.

| Shire               | Size (km <sup>2</sup> ) | Population (ERP, 2024) | Length of local roads (km) | People for every km of local roads | Total Revenue (24-25) | Rates 24-25 |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| <b>Bruce Rock</b>   | 2725                    | 1066                   | 1259                       | 0.8                                | \$7,515,127           | \$1,900,234 |
| <b>Cunderdin</b>    | 1862                    | 1316                   | 842                        | 1.6                                | \$7,071,350           | \$2,457,702 |
| <b>Kellerberrin</b> | 1915                    | 1159                   | 981                        | 1.2                                | \$10,509,144          | \$2,700,165 |
| <b>Merredin</b>     | 3294                    | 3335                   | 1431                       | 2.3                                | \$15,303,355          | \$5,571,889 |
| <b>Tammin</b>       | 1102                    | 401                    | 505                        | 0.8                                | \$2,828,585           | \$1,304,174 |
| <b>Westonia</b>     | 3319                    | 246                    | 885                        | 0.3                                | \$7,009,232           | \$1,230,091 |
| <b>Yilgarn</b>      | 30429                   | 1212                   | 2782                       | 0.4                                | \$16,261,123          | \$4,559,283 |

Table 2. WEROC Local Government Populations, Geographic areas, road networks and revenue.

## 2.2 Own-Source Revenue Constraints

WEROC councils have limited capacity to increase own-source revenue due to small and in some cases declining populations, high proportions of concessional or rate-capped properties (including rate exempt CBH receival sites), and community affordability constraints. As a result, councils often reallocate scarce resources away from core local government functions to address service gaps in other areas.

Analysis undertaken by SGS Economics & Planning for the Australian Local Government Association indicates that growth in local government own-source revenue has stagnated over the long term, resulting in low levels of financial sustainability across a significant proportion of Australian councils and increased reliance on grants from other tiers of government. As shown in Table 3, these structural pressures are evident across the WEROC region, where approximately half of councils reported operating deficits in the 2024–25 financial year, reflecting operating expenditure in excess of operating revenue. The competitive design of many state and Commonwealth grant programs constrains access for smaller and regional local governments, diminishing their effectiveness as a stable revenue source and limiting councils' capacity to plan for and deliver essential services.

| Shire               | Operating Revenue 2024-25 | Operating Expenses 2024-25 | Net result   | Operating Surplus Ratio |
|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Bruce Rock</b>   | \$6,393,965               | \$6,418,812                | -\$24,847    | -0.4%                   |
| <b>Cunderdin</b>    | \$5,357,615               | \$4,005,916                | \$1,351,699  | 25%                     |
| <b>Kellerberrin</b> | \$7,711,297               | \$5,660,036                | \$2,051,261  | 27%                     |
| <b>Merredin</b>     | \$9,131,766               | \$11,135,246               | -\$2,003,480 | -22%                    |
| <b>Tammin</b>       | \$2,332,010               | \$3,131,322                | -\$799,312   | -34%                    |
| <b>Westonia</b>     | \$5,614,516               | \$2,545,684                | \$3,068,832  | 55%                     |
| <b>Yilgarn</b>      | \$12,968,122              | \$8,293,324                | \$4,674,798  | 36%                     |

Table 3. WEROC Council Actual Operating Expenses and Revenue for the 2024-25 Financial Year



### 3. Impacts and Effectiveness of Current Funding Arrangements

#### 3.1 Road Funding and Infrastructure Sustainability

As outlined previously, WEROC councils collectively manage many thousands of kilometres of local roads that are fundamental to agricultural freight movements, access to health and education services, and the economic viability of remote and regional communities. These road networks perform a critical freight and access function well beyond what is reflected in current funding models. Existing funding arrangements do not adequately account for the scale, condition, or strategic importance of regional local roads, particularly in low-rate-base local governments.

WEROC councils face systemic funding challenges that directly affect the sustainability and safety of their road networks. These include chronic underinvestment relative to asset renewal and replacement needs, construction cost escalation that consistently exceeds grant indexation, and increasing heavy vehicle volumes without corresponding adjustments to funding levels. The reliance on short-term, project-based grant programs (often requiring local government co-contributions) can also result in essential works being deferred or abandoned where councils lack the financial capacity to meet matching requirements. These structural issues are contributing to a growing infrastructure backlog and increasing safety risks for road users.

Capacity constraints further exacerbate these challenges. WEROC councils experience ongoing shortages of qualified engineering and technical staff, limiting their ability to plan, prioritise, and deliver maintenance and renewal programs effectively. At the same time, regional roads are under increasing pressure from heavy freight vehicles associated with agricultural and mining activity, accelerating asset deterioration and driving higher maintenance and repair costs. Without reform to funding settings that recognise both asset burden and freight demand, these pressures will continue to undermine the long-term sustainability of regional road networks and the communities they support.

#### 3.2 Local Government Contributions to Medical Services (GPs)

Access to General Practitioners (GPs) is an ongoing challenge across regional WA. While the provision of primary healthcare is primarily a State and Commonwealth responsibility, persistent market failure in regional and remote areas has resulted in local governments increasingly stepping in to sustain basic healthcare access for their communities.

Across the WEROC region, local governments provide substantial financial and in-kind support to attract and retain GP services. This support commonly includes subsidised or rent-free medical premises, operational and administrative assistance, housing support, provision of vehicles and utilities, and direct financial contributions. While these



measures are often essential to maintaining GP services, they place significant and unplanned pressure on already constrained local government budgets and divert resources away from core local government functions.

The scale of local government involvement in primary healthcare provision is well documented. In 2023, the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) commissioned Rural Health West to survey Western Australian local governments on the extent of financial and in-kind support provided to secure primary healthcare services. Of the 139 local governments in Western Australia, 103 (74%) participated in the survey. The results demonstrate a substantial and disproportionate contribution by smaller regional councils:

- Local governments collectively contributed \$6.8 million (net) in financial and in-kind support toward primary healthcare services.
- Of this, \$5.2 million (net) was directed specifically toward supporting resident or visiting general practice services by 48 local governments.
- 92% of total local government expenditure on general practice services was committed by local governments with populations under 5,000 residents.
- The Wheatbelt recorded the highest level of primary healthcare expenditure of any region, with local governments collectively contributing \$4.4 million (net), the majority of which was directed toward securing and retaining GP services. Within the Wheatbelt, 79% of local governments support general practice services, with a combined net expenditure of \$3.6 million.

These findings are directly reflected in the experience of WEROC councils, which collectively contribute close to \$700,000 per annum toward primary healthcare services (refer to Table 4). In many cases, this support extends well beyond infrastructure provision. For example, the Shire of Bruce Rock employs a Practice Manager and Receptionist to operate its GP practice, in addition to providing housing and a vehicle, resulting in an annual contribution of approximately \$270,000. Similar arrangements exist across the WEROC region and are frequently the determining factor in whether GP services can be maintained at all.

Current funding frameworks do not adequately recognise or offset these costs. The Western Australian Local Government Grants Commission applies a Medical Facilities Cost Adjustor to provide an allowance toward the cost of employing doctors and nurse practitioners, however, this adjustor falls well short of compensating local governments for the actual financial burden associated with supporting primary healthcare services. As a result, councils are absorbing costs that sit outside their traditional service remit and financial capacity.



| Shire        | Annual Cash Contribution | Other Contributions | Detail of other contributions                                                    | Total Contribution |
|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Bruce Rock   | \$181,515                | \$90,675            | Housing, vehicle, maintenance of practice and house.                             | \$272,190          |
| Kellerberrin | \$2,500                  | \$75,000            | Utilities, car, fuel, surgery maintenance, medical license, office expenses.     | \$77,500           |
| Merredin     |                          | \$15,600            | Subsidised housing.                                                              | \$15,600           |
| Westonia     | \$50,000                 | \$38,300            | Clinic costs, reception, accommodation.                                          | \$88,300           |
| Yilgarn      | \$96,000                 | \$131,549           | Medical centre, housing, maintenance of centre and house, operations for centre. | \$227,549          |

Table 4. WEROC Local Government Contributions to Primary Health Care

### 3.3 Workforce Attraction and Retention

WEROC councils face persistent workforce challenges driven by acute housing shortages, competition from higher-paid roles in other sectors, and increasing reliance on costly short-term labour hire arrangements. These pressures are compounded by short-term and uncertain funding settings, which limit councils' ability to plan, invest in, and sustain long-term workforce capacity.

To better understand the scale of the issue, WEROC councils recently commissioned a Key Worker Housing Investigation. The investigation found that, despite collectively owning 126 residential dwellings, councils across the WEROC region continue to experience a shortfall of 18 dwellings for local government staff. This shortfall is driven in part by competing demand from Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH) and the WA Country Health Service (WACHS). More broadly, the findings highlight systemic housing constraints across the region, with the total worker housing shortage estimated to be between 196 and 332 dwellings.

## 4. Barriers to Infrastructure and Service Delivery

WEROC councils identify persistent barriers including fragmented funding arrangements, co-contribution requirements that disadvantage small councils, lack of recognition of expanded local government roles, and insufficient coordination between levels of government.



## 5. Opportunities for Improvement

WEROC supports reforms that provide more predictable and long-term funding, improve grant indexation to reflect real cost pressures, reduce reliance on competitive grant models for essential infrastructure, and strengthen intergovernmental coordination in areas experiencing service market failure.

## Conclusion

Local governments in the WEROC region are managing increasing responsibilities with constrained and misaligned funding arrangements. Road infrastructure and access to primary healthcare clearly demonstrate how current funding models fail to reflect regional realities.

Addressing these systemic issues is essential to ensuring the long-term fiscal sustainability of local governments and the liveability, safety and economic productivity of communities across the Eastern Wheatbelt and regional Western Australia.