

Shire President's Message

I am pleased to present the **Shire of Denmark 2023/2024 Annual Budget**.

This year's budget comes in the wake of our Strategic Community Plan Major Review which concluded in June. The new plan, Our Future 2033, is directly informed by more than 1700 pieces of community feedback which helped us to identify our community priorities, vision and objectives for the decade ahead.

Of our six community priorities, three fall within our service delivery capacity:

- **Local roads** and storm water drainage
- Services and facilities for **youth**
- **Environmental conservation** and protection

For this Annual Budget, and for those to come in the decade ahead, our community can expect to see - in addition to our continued delivery in all areas of our responsibility - a specific effort to allocate resourcing in alignment with the focus areas our community has identified as priorities.

To this end, in 2023/24, we're proud to have increased our road maintenance budget by \$200,000, which will assist in our program of maintaining and upgrading roads all over the more than 600km road network in our Shire. This will include an increase in roadside drainage maintenance and frequency of unsealed road grading.

Road upgrade projects for the coming financial year are spread from our Shire's eastern boundary to the west, including Kernuts Road, Parker Road, Mt Shadforth Road, Mt Lindesay Road, Hazelvale Road, Conspicuous Beach Road, and Bastiani Road.

In the youth space, Council is pleased to be working towards providing more services and facilities for youth in our community.

Our community asked for more places where youth can hang out, socialise, and be active, so engagement is underway to create designs to upgrade Berridge Park into a thriving a youth precinct. The future of McLean House (formerly known as Tha House) will also return a youth focus in 2023/24, providing a hub for youth support services much to the benefit of youth in our community in the months ahead.

We're also excited to be able to fund concept planning and community group support to turn the much-talked about Turner Road site into a mountain bike trails hub, to help keep our youth active.

Funding for a Youth Strategy for Denmark will help to underpin our efforts to improve youth service provision in our community, with engagement for that strategy to commence in 2024.

In addition to our specific focus on roads and youth in 2023/24, we will continue to work towards our Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan commitments, and work towards delivery of improved and increased public amenities and facility upgrades at Peaceful Bay, Nornalup, Prawn Rock Channel and Ocean Beach.

All in all, it's set to be another busy year for our team and I thank both the staff and Councillors who have collaborated to deliver this year's budget with careful consideration of community feedback and priorities.

Ceinwen Gearon
Denmark Shire President