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## Looking into the future

As 2020 commences the Town of Gawler continues with its delivery of a range of significant projects.

“2020 will be another exciting period of growth and change in the Gawler area,” said Mayor Redman. “Council’s existing budget commits to delivering a range of projects within the next 6 months and our current partnerships with the Federal Government, State Government and private enterprise will realise significant infrastructure, community and business outcomes during the year.”

Key projects to be undertaken in the next 6 months include:

- Upgrade of the Gawler Aquatic Centre changerooms (\$539,000), which is subsidised by a Federal Government grant of \$409,000
- Transformation of the Walker Place precinct in the Town Centre (\$2.12m), which is subsidised by a State Government grant of \$1m, incorporating a shared-use public plaza space (works to include installation of trees and seating, paving, improved lighting, replacement of the Julian Tce public conveniences, and installation of a stand-alone digital wayfinding smartboard)
- 6.6kms of road resealing (sealed roads) (\$905,000)
- 1.2kms of road resheeting (unsealed roads) (\$140,000)
- Replacement of the main stadium floor at the Gawler Sport & Community Centre (\$155,000), which is subsidised by a State Government Grant of \$75,000
- Karbeethan Reserve Master Plan Feasibility Study (\$110,000), which is subsidised by the Southern Urban Areas development equity fund in the amount of \$100,000
- The finalisation of Council’s Smart Cities and Suburbs funded project – Connected Community (\$999,000), which is subsidised by a Federal Government grant of \$250,000 and private enterprise contributions of \$96,000, including the launch of the Gawler Connected Community App.

“Council started the conversation with the community regarding its updated 10 year Long Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget for 2020/21 in December last year inviting people to select what it important to them for Council to deliver,” said Mayor Redman. “Over the next 3-6 months there will be other opportunities to get involved as Council seeks community input into finalising these key processes.”

Three other major projects that have already gained funding support and are planned for delivery in 2020/21 are:

- Gawler East Link Road (\$60m), State Government, Council and Springwood upfront funding contributions of \$57.1m, \$2.4m and \$0.5m respectively with a further \$8.2m to be returned to the State Government via contributions from Council and other developers over time.
- Cycling Connections linking the Stuart O’Grady Bikeway to The Barossa Trail (\$1.8m), which is subsidised by a State Government grant of \$678,269.
- Murray Street Stage 7 Upgrade – Gawler Mill Inn Bridge to Tenth Street (\$1.7m), which is subsidised by a Federal Government grant of \$854,000

The budget is just one part of Council’s work albeit a very important one. Some other priorities that will be important over the medium term include:

- Identity – Heritage – Gawler is founded on its strong history that continues today. This is reflected in our historic neighbourhoods, character buildings and houses, the magnificent Morton Bay Figs all based on the exquisite planning from Colonel William Light. It is critical for Council to ensure that it strikes the right balance between preserving this rich history and working towards safe-guarding its blossoming future. Changes to the planning system that the State Government is bringing into effect



in July 2020 result in only State and Local Heritage Places being recognised. These changes have the potential to impact significantly on the Gawler's unique historic character, which is intrinsically linked to our sense of identity. Council believes identification of Contributory Items within the new planning system is paramount in order to preserve Gawler's unique character, as this category of items collectively make an important contribution to the historic character of the township. Council has and will continue to lobby the State Government to ensure the planning reform takes into consideration the seriousness of what's at stake if Contributory Items are allowed to fall by the wayside.

- **Growth** – Gawler is one of the fastest growing communities in South Australia. Major development and population growth is planned within the Council area as well as in neighbouring areas to the south, east and north. Demand for additional infrastructure and augmented community services will rise significantly as a result of this growth. This will place pressure on Gawler's natural and built environments and its sense of identity. Council is committed to working with the community, Natural Resources agencies, Government, the private sector, Non-Government Organisation and Emergency Services to ensure these elements are preserved. Some of the critical infrastructure required to meet current and future needs being delivered in the medium term include the Gawler East Link Road, Northern Connector and Electrification of the Gawler Railway Line.
- **Boundary reform** – The greater Gawler area is estimated to increase in population from its current size of more than 23,500 to up to 60,000 by 2040. Gawler currently provides facilities and services to an estimated 110,000 people living beyond the Town of Gawler council area. Council and the community are ready to formally embrace the communities living adjacent Gawler, and boundary reform is the most appropriate way to do this. Council has submitted an application for boundary change to the Boundaries Commission for their assessment. If the Commission deems it appropriate to continue then Council will continue with the work it needs to do including consultation with our community.
- **Climate Emergency** – Council has a role in providing and maintaining a safe and liveable environment for its community. In recognition of this role, Town of Gawler was the first Council to declare a Climate Emergency and has started developing a Climate Emergency Action Plan. Advocacy will be a key consideration in the formulation of this Plan as State and Federal Government policy and legislation will have the biggest impact on community emission reductions. It is anticipated that, due to the complex and detailed nature of a Climate Emergency, consultation and the various avenues for developing and implementing a Climate Emergency Action Plan, the process will take most of 2020 to complete. In the meantime, Council has agreed to sign the Lofoten Declaration recognising that the goals within this Declaration are consistent with those of a Climate Emergency Declaration and it's developing Climate Emergency Action Plan. Council is showing leadership in climate action, investing in renewable energy and committing to a total phase out of single-use plastics at Council events and Council sponsored events in 2020.
- **Local Government Reform** – the State Government has committed to progressing a local government reform program. Key areas of reform identified by the State Government are: Stronger Council Member Capacity and Better Conduct; Lower Costs and Enhanced Financial Accountability; Efficient and Transparent Local Government Representation; and Simpler Regulation. Council has provided a submission to the Office of Local Government responding to the proposed areas of reform and will continue to be an active participant in this conversation.

"As you can see there's a huge year ahead. With your help and input, Council will continue to lead and advocate on behalf of our community to ensure Gawler is the centre of the universe as we know it!" said Mayor Redman.

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The media may make contact with Mayor Karen Redman on 0421 839 359