

Coober Pedy

**Strategic Plan
2007–2012**

**District Council of Coober Pedy
with
The Northern Regional Development Board**

Many colours, one community



District Council of Coober Pedy



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From the Mayor

Coober Pedy is at the beginning of a period of sustained growth that will reverse the population decline of the past ten years.

The exploration and mining activity now under way in close proximity to Coober Pedy represents an opportunity for this town not seen for many years.

I am optimistic that we will see considerable benefits to Coober Pedy if we work together to attract business and employment growth to this region. The Strategic Plan will help us to tap into these opportunities.

At the same time, this wealth will give us the opportunity to advance our goals of social wellbeing and community development and integration.

This Strategic Plan gives us direction, tangible goals and a sense of purpose as we work toward a strong and sustainable future for Coober Pedy.

This Plan has been developed following a broad consultation process involving the community, elected Members and Council staff. It sets the agenda for Council operations over the next five years, in partnership with the Northern Regional Development Board, the Coober Pedy Retail Business and Tourism Association, the Opal Industry Alliance, and State and Federal Government agencies, identifying the priority actions required to address the many varied challenges of this unique area.

The goals and strategies contained in the Plan will require periodic review as necessary to keep the Plan focused on meeting the expectations of the community.

For its part, Council and its partners will ensure the Plan is implemented for the benefit of the whole community.

Steve Baines

Mayor

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1 Introduction

This Strategic Plan sets a clear direction for Coober Pedy for the next five years. It embodies the economic, social, lifestyle and community issues facing the town, and is the outcome of an extensive consultation process involving the community, business and community leaders, elected Members and Council staff.

The Plan will guide Council, and its economic development partner, the Northern Regional Development Board, in allocating priority resources to implement the Plan in a structured and coordinated manner.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Northern Regional Development Board for its financial and other assistance in developing this Plan.

The Plan will need to be reviewed and renewed as it is implemented. The District Council of Coober Pedy is committed to ongoing community consultation and participation.

I encourage the community, elected Members and Council staff to embrace the Strategic Plan. It is a bold plan for the future of Coober Pedy, and its success will be determined by the commitment we bring to the roles we play in implementing it.

Trevor McLeod

Chief Executive Officer

2 Coober Pedy, past and present

History

Coober Pedy is a vibrant multicultural town in the far north of South Australia, 850 km north of Adelaide and 700 km south of Alice Springs.

For thousands of years Aboriginal people walked this desert area, nomadic hunters and gatherers. The traditional custodians of the land are the Antakirinja people. The Umoona community continues to play an important role in the life of Coober Pedy today.

Opal was discovered in February 1915, and after several cycles of boom and bust, expanded rapidly during the 1960s as a wave of European migrants came to seek their fortune. Opal mining developed into a multi-million dollar industry, and Coober Pedy slowly evolved into a modern mining town, the 'Opal Capital of the World'.

Opal continues to be important to Coober Pedy's identity and economy, but the town's economic base has broadened to include mining services, tourism and public services.

The town is widely known for its underground housing, an effective and environmentally friendly response to the town's searing summer heat and chilly desert evenings. The town's name derives from Kupa Piti, 'white man's hole' in the local Aboriginal dialect; and Coober Pedy continues to offer visitors and residents a unique underground experience.



Looking toward Coober Pedy

Population¹

Coober Pedy's population is significantly older than the South Australian average, with 32.9% in the 45-64 age range (compared with 24.3% for South Australia), and 11.1% in the 65+ age range (14.8%). The average age is 39.0. 11.0% of the population is Aboriginal, compared with 1.6% for South Australia as a whole.

At 16.0%, unemployment is much higher than the South Australian average (7.6%) across all categories—for 15-24 year olds (35.5% compared with 19.1%) and mature age workers (12.1% compared with 4.9%) alike. Indigenous unemployment was also much higher than the South Australian average (41.5% compared with 20.5%).

More recent statistics indicate that employment has improved, in line with general improvements across South Australia, but the relative disadvantage of Coober Pedy's workforce persists.

While the proportion of the population without post-school qualifications is significantly lower than the South Australian average (52.1% compared with 58.1%), Coober Pedy has experienced a major decline in contract of training commencements (down 40.0% from 2002 to 2003) and vocational education and training participation (down 53.5% from 2002 to 2003).

Unemployment and a decline in skill levels are no doubt significant factors in Coober Pedy's relative economic disadvantage, with an average individual taxable income of \$31,900 compared with the South Australian average of \$35,245. Furthermore, 40.3% of residents receive income support through Centrelink, compared with 26.5% for South Australia.

However, changes in Coober Pedy's strategic context have created new opportunities for enhancing the town's economic prosperity and improving the social wellbeing of its residents.

Strategic context

Economy

With other South Australian fields, Coober Pedy produces the majority of the world's opal. Mounds of mullock create Coober Pedy's distinctive landscape, and opal continues to be important to Coober Pedy, despite a contraction of supply and an ageing workforce.

However, an exploration boom in the region has resulted in the discovery

¹ The estimation of Coober Pedy's population is not straightforward. The District Council estimates the population to be 3,500, based on Council and Post Office records, electricity and water usage, housing ownership and rental data, and known problems with Census processes. The difference between this estimate and official estimates would significantly affect the data in this section, which are based on official estimates.

of significant deposits of iron ore, copper, gold and coal, together with inferred resources of platinum, palladium and other rare earths. The location of the town makes it an ideal centre for mining services, and a base for the delivery of State and Commonwealth Government services to the region. This presents an opportunity for the town to reverse its steady population decline and again see growth in prosperity and population.

The current popularity of Australia as a destination for international tourists presents a major opportunity to attract an increasing share of the tourist dollar.

Community

Coober Pedy is a vibrant town with a strong cosmopolitan flavour and a large Aboriginal community, well served by hospital and medical services, primary and secondary schooling, a TAFE campus, child care services and policing. However, these services are under some pressure, and there is a continuing problem with the recruitment and retention of medical professionals.

Ongoing challenges include business collaboration, equitable access to social programs, and coordinating service delivery across the community.

In addition, the town's ageing demographic makes population renewal and leadership development critical for the ongoing wellbeing of the community.

The District Council of Coober Pedy has responded to these needs by convening the Senior Officers' Group, which works across agency boundaries to improve the economic prosperity and social wellbeing of the Coober Pedy community.

Character

Coober Pedy is a cosmopolitan town with a fluid population drawn from 45 nations, and a significant Aboriginal community.

The concept of freedom is central to the Coober Pedy community—freedom to be what you want to be, freedom to live, freedom to work hard and build wealth, or simply to do a good day's work and enjoy time with family and friends.

Coober Pedy's identity revolves around:

- Many colours, one community
- Simple, healthy, relaxed living
- Blue sky, direct sun and wide open spaces
- The freedom to be



The identity of Coober Pedy

3 Our ambition for Coober Pedy

In 2017—

- *With our heart in a strong mining industry ...* we will be a pivotal provider of services to the mining community.
- *As the most prolific opal region in the world ...* we will have nurtured the opal mining industry to meet demand from national and international markets.
- *As a globally unique tourist destination ...* we will offer a satisfying outback experience with transport links to other Australian icon destinations.
- *As a home town to our local community ...* we will have created an environment where our residents have a sense of personal safety and social wellbeing, and are able to access health, housing, education, child care, policing, sporting facilities and recreation services that meet the expectations of young people, young families and an ageing population, ensuring a high standard of living in a prosperous local economy.
- *As a remote township ...* we will have a culture of proud independence, freedom and autonomy, while working together across the community for the common good.
- *As one of Australia's most ethnically diverse populations ...* our inclusive attitude, seen in our social programs and community governance, will be a model to all.



4 Goals

Five essential goals

This Strategic Plan aims to:

1. Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy.

- 1.1. Promote Coober Pedy as a remote mining hub
- 1.2. Encourage mining and mining service businesses to base operations in Coober Pedy
- 1.3. Encourage local entrepreneurs to tap into the opportunities created by mining activity
- 1.4. Improve the availability of trade skills
- 1.5. Boost employment by bridging skill gaps
- 1.6. Diversify tourism beyond opal, underground living and the outback experience
- 1.7. Strengthen air transport links
- 1.8. Reinvigorate the opal industry
- 1.9. Encourage the development of Aboriginal businesses
- 1.10. Identify and develop opportunities for substantial Aboriginal cooperative and joint venture enterprises

2. Improve the social wellbeing of Coober Pedy.

- 2.1. Strengthen health and aged care services
- 2.2. Increase the housing stock
- 2.3. Construct a short stay accommodation facility
- 2.4. Ensure the future of the local TAFE campus
- 2.5. Increase child care availability and upgrade facilities
- 2.6. Invest in sport, recreation and leisure infrastructure and programs
- 2.7. Improve community safety and security

3. Upgrade the visual amenity of Coober Pedy without compromising its character.

- 3.1. Continue to upgrade the main street—thoughtfully

4. Increase community participation in the leadership of Coober Pedy.

- 4.1. Develop community leadership capability
- 4.2. Increase local Aboriginal involvement in community decision making

5. Sustain local government services.

- 5.1. Maintain the District Council's financial position
- 5.2. Ensure the continued availability of electricity and water at a sustainable long-run cost
- 5.3. Continue to provide essential local government infrastructure
- 5.4. Continue to deliver essential local government services
- 5.5. Develop a 10-year population masterplan

Contribution to South Australia's strategic goals

This Strategic Plan contributes directly or indirectly to the achievement of many of South Australia's strategic goals, including:

Growing prosperity

T1.1 Economic growth

Exceed the national economic growth rate by 2014

T1.5 Business investment

Exceed Australia's ratio of business investment as a percentage of the economy by 2014.

T1.10 Jobs

Better the Australian average employment growth rate by 2014

T1.11 Unemployment

Maintain equal or lower than the Australian average through to 2014.

T1.12 Employment participation

Increase the employment to population ratio, standardised for age differences, to the Australian average.

T1.15 Tourism industry

Increase visitor expenditure in South Australia's tourism industry from \$3.7 billion in 2002 to \$6.3 billion by 2014.

T1.17 Minerals exploration

Exploration expenditure in South Australia to be maintained in excess of \$100 million per annum until 2010.

T1.18 Minerals production

Increase the value of minerals production to \$3 billion by 2014.

- T1.19 Minerals processing**
Increase the value of minerals processing to \$1 billion by 2014.
- T1.21 Strategic infrastructure**
Match the national average in terms of investment in key economic and social infrastructure.
- T1.26 Aboriginal unemployment**
Reduce the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal unemployment rates each year.

Improving wellbeing

- T2.3 Sport and recreation**
Exceed the Australian average for participation in sport and physical activity by 2014.
- T2.4 Healthy South Australians**
Increase the healthy life expectancy of South Australians by 5% for males and 3% for females by 2014.

Building communities

- T5.7 Aboriginal leadership**
Increase the number of Aboriginal South Australians participating in community leadership and in community leadership development programs.
- T5.9 Regional population levels**
Maintain regional South Australia's share of the state's population (18%).

Expanding opportunity

- T6.1 Aboriginal wellbeing**
Improve the overall wellbeing of Aboriginal South Australians.
- T6.9 Aboriginal housing**
Reduce overcrowding in Aboriginal households by 10% by 2014.
- T6.15 Learning or earning**
By 2010 increase the number of 15-19 year olds engaged fulltime in school, work or further education/training (or combination thereof) to 90%.
- T6.19 Non-school qualifications**
By 2014, equal or better the national average for the proportion of the labour force with non-school qualifications.
- T6.21 VET participation**
Exceed the national average for VET participation by 2010.

5 Strategies

Economic prosperity

Mining and mining services

While opal continues to be important to the identity and economy of Coober Pedy, the industry is contracting at present due to the ageing of the mining workforce, a migration to more secure employment, limited capital investment and limited exploration, resulting in tight supply and thin markets. The situation has been exacerbated by the culture of independence and autonomy, which has frustrated attempts to capture more wealth locally through value-adding and establishment of an orderly sales and marketing framework.

However, there are real opportunities for other extractive industries to take the place of opal as Coober Pedy's major economic activity. An exploration boom in the region has resulted in the discovery of significant deposits of iron ore, copper, gold and coal, together with inferred resources of platinum, palladium and other rare earths. The development of these ore bodies has opened up new opportunities in employment and businesses such as labour hire, accommodation, water carting, earthmoving, quarrying, road construction and other mining services.

Tourism

Coober Pedy is an important tourism destination within the broader Flinders Ranges and Outback tourism region, and tourism is important to the town. Umoona Opal Mine and Museum is the most-visited attraction in South Australia's outback, with estimated 2005-2006 visitation of 70,000.

A snapshot survey undertaken for the South Australian Tourism Commission by AC Nielsen in late 2006 found that visitors to Coober Pedy:

- come mainly from interstate (67%) and overseas (24%);
- come largely for holiday (91%) or business (3%) purposes; and
- spend an average 2.5 nights in the town.

The survey also found that:

- Coober Pedy is South Australia's favourite outback destination, with 85% of visitors to the outback region including Coober Pedy on their itinerary;
- visitors enjoy their experience, and 75% of visitors were satisfied or very satisfied with exploring, discovery, adventure, the physical landscape, history, relaxation and rejuvenation, and time with their partner, family and friends;

- 75% of visitors were also satisfied or very satisfied with Coober Pedy's attractions, the friendliness of local people, access to essential services, food and beverages, accommodation, local atmosphere, information services, signage, organised tours, road conditions and shopping;
- 78% of visitors were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their visit;
- day trippers spent an average \$848 in Coober Pedy, with overnight visitors spending an average \$1,118 (an average of \$280 a day) (including airfares purchased in Coober Pedy);
- 88% were likely to recommend the destination to others, with 22% likely to return within 2 years; and
- 44% of visitors were willing to pay for a tour, with the greatest interest expressed in general interest tours (46%), but interest expressed also in nocturnal wildlife tours (44%), industrial or mining tours (39%), guided walking tours (35%), fossil and geological tours (31%), aboriginal cultural tours (30%) and commercial 4WD tours (30%).

While these numbers should be used with caution, they indicate the essential popularity of Coober Pedy as a tourism destination, and provide some guidance for future product development.

Air traffic through Coober Pedy's airport has increased from 3,500 to 10,000 movements since 2004. An air link from Adelaide through Coober Pedy to Alice Springs and Uluru would bring many more.



On the green

Other economic activity

Indigenous arts and crafts, bushfoods and other new industries may underpin the diversity of the economy and offer opportunities particularly for Aboriginal entrepreneurs. Umoona Community Council represents a significant, profitable cluster of enterprises, with substantial capital invested in local businesses and landholdings. Recognising this important economic resource and linking it more strongly into the local community will contribute to improvements in economic prosperity and social wellbeing for the town as a whole, and the Aboriginal community in particular.

Coober Pedy is also important as a centre for the delivery of State and Commonwealth government services, including health, education, housing and policing.

1.1. Promote Coober Pedy as a remote mining hub

Promote Coober Pedy as a remote mining hub by

- backing the next annual Far North Economic Forum onto a one-off Mining Services Industry Conference, with an eye to a regular event; and
- partnering with the joint University of Adelaide–University of South Australia Centre for Extraction Technologies to host a biennial conference focused on a relevant theme such as extraction technologies or nanotechnology applications in mining.

Lead The Northern Regional Development Board

First step Obtain funding support for a Mining Services Industry Conference, establish the brand and some key speakers, and tender conference rights to private sector promoters

Resourcing Funding should be sought from the Department of Primary Industries and Resources SA for a short-term consultancy to get the Mining Services Industry Conference off the ground. The Conference should aim to be self-supporting, but could be subsidized in the first year by Regional Partnerships Program funding. The biennial technical conference should also aim to be self-supporting, and could be delivered with administrative support from the universities themselves.

1.2. Encourage mining and mining service businesses to base operations in Coober Pedy

Encourage mining and mining service businesses to base operations in Coober Pedy by

- putting the case to mining companies and service providers for basing key functions in Coober Pedy, supported by a package of incentives;
- supporting the industry with public and private training delivered through the TAFE campus; and
- packaging investment and sponsorship opportunities in community infrastructure and social programs.

Lead The Northern Regional Development Board

First step Surveying mining and mining service companies to assess the size of the opportunity, and the specific benefits that would make the strategy attractive to them

Resourcing From within existing programs and resources

1.3. Encourage local entrepreneurs to tap into the opportunities created by mining activity

Enable businesses and potential entrepreneurs to tap into the business opportunities created by exploration and mining developments in the region by maintaining existing programs that

- raise awareness of business opportunities;
- coordinate the provision of business skills, training in developing business cases and tender responses, and OHS&W training; and
- provide advice and mentoring to businesses.

Lead The Northern Regional Development Board

First step Write to other RDBs to build support for continuing the Mining Services IDO program

Resourcing For existing programs, from within existing resources; the Mining Services IDO to be supported by Office of Regional Affairs, the Department of Trade and Economic Development, and the Department of Primary Industries SA

1.4. Improve the availability of trade skills and other new businesses

Improve the availability of trade skills and other new businesses in the town by:

- cataloguing trades businesses that would be expected in a regional hub the size of Coober Pedy, and identifying gaps;

- preparing and distributing a ‘live and work’ package aimed at trades people in larger regional centres and others willing to establish new businesses not already over-represented in the town;
- offering a package of incentives; and
- arranging a welcome pack, tours and induction for businesses that make the move.

Lead The Northern Regional Development Board

First step Develop a list of ‘missing’ businesses by comparing Coober Pedy with remote towns of a similar size across Australia

Resourcing From within existing programs and resources

1.5. Boost employment by bridging skill gaps

Boost employment by:

- continuing to work with mining companies and mining service providers to identify actual skills requirements;
- identifying employment vacancies created by mining-related growth; and
- working with providers of training and workplace services to coordinate skills recognition, literacy and numeracy training and vocational training.

Lead The Northern Regional Development Board

First step Liaise with mining companies to discuss apparent gaps between their expectations and skills delivered by vocational training programs

Resourcing From within existing programs and resources

1.6. Diversify tourism beyond opal, underground living and the outback experience

Work with the South Australian Tourism Commission to design and implement a sophisticated destination development program that diversifies Coober Pedy’s tourism product beyond its current emphasis on opal and underground living by

- encouraging further representation from the outback sub-region on Flinders Ranges & Outback SA Tourism (FROSAT);
- establishing a reliable dataset focused on Coober Pedy;
- working with FROSAT to maximize use of the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse and to develop operator business, marketing and hospitality skills;
- working with the District Council of Coober Pedy to review and upgrade tourism directional and heritage signage;

- reviewing examples of successful desert, wildlife, fossil, mine and Aboriginal cultural tourism elsewhere in outback Australia, and identifying opportunities that can be transferred to Coober Pedy;
- expanding existing tour product, and working with pastoralists to overcome risk and insurance issues and promote Coober Pedy as a base for pastoral touring and 4WD desert trails;
- collaborating to develop new tour product, including an interpretive desert park focused on desert wildlife and plants, and an Aboriginal cultural experience with a desert theme;
- developing desert-based sporting activities and events; and
- promoting the unique Breakaways and Moon Plains landscapes to advertising and marketing companies as unique locations for motor and fashion shoots.

Lead Coober Pedy Retail Business & Tourism Association

First step In conjunction with the Northern Regional Development Board, convene a workshop of local tourism leaders to brainstorm opportunities and prioritise promising ideas for action, as a basis for establishing a partnership with the SATC

Resourcing After the initial workshop, seed funding should be sought from the SATC's infrastructure and events funding programs, with some funds from the Office of Recreation & Sport, to undertake a destination development plan and grant application to the Australian Tourism Development Program for a two-year destination development project officer position and project funding



Sunset over the Breakaways

1.7. Strengthen air transport links

Work with the SATC, the Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure and regional airlines to strengthen air transport links to Coober Pedy by

- reviewing the airport masterplan;
- widening, lengthening and resurfacing the runway;
- constructing a terminal that reflects its unique location;
- building the case for a regular air link between Adelaide and Alice Springs–Uluru via Coober Pedy by instituting a 12-month survey of all tourists coming into Alice Springs, Uluru and Coober Pedy by air, with a report back to the SATC, NTTC and relevant airlines; and
- facilitating establishment of the air link when feasible, supported by a marketing campaign.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

First step Convene a workshop to review the airport masterplan

Resourcing Initially from within existing programs and resources, although the survey could be funded from the destination development program funding (1.6)



Vital link

1.8. Reinvalidate the opal industry

Ensure the sustainability of the opal industry by

- continuing to support the development of state and national industry bodies;
- demonstrating commitment to exploration activity by a program of pattern drilling, with results reported to the Department of Primary Industries and Resources to validate their provision of a drilling rig;
- reviewing the 2001 report, 'Strategic assessment of the Australian opal industry' (D McKinna) in conjunction with Coober Pedy industry leaders;
- identifying actions the industry is willing and ready to take; and
- implementing an action program with strong local ownership.

Lead Opal Industry Alliance

First step Implement a program of pattern drilling and reporting to shore up government support for further investment in the industry

Resourcing Initially from within mining industry resources. Further resourcing will depend on what actions are agreed.

1.9. Encourage the development of Aboriginal businesses

Continue to facilitate the growth of new Aboriginal businesses by

- continuing to work with Indigenous Business Australia to deliver business skills programs for an Aboriginal businesses based around successful Aboriginal entrepreneurs as role models;
- establishing an Aboriginal trade development program including recognition of existing skills and development of new skills through apprenticeships and traineeships;



The opal industry

- encouraging the Aboriginal community to develop and offer household and personal services in short supply in Coober Pedy; and
- supporting Aboriginal businesspeople with ongoing business mentoring.

Lead The Northern Regional Development Board

First step Convene a meeting with Indigenous Business Australia and the Umoona Community Council to identify opportunities and agree on a way forward

Resourcing Largely from within existing programs and resources, but with additional funding from the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology for a pilot Aboriginal trade development program

1.10. Identify and develop opportunities for substantial Aboriginal cooperative and joint venture enterprises

Continue to facilitate the growth of substantial Aboriginal cooperative and joint venture businesses by

- identifying Aboriginal communities that are successfully creating new jointly-owned enterprises, and identifying opportunities that can be transferred to Coober Pedy;
- attracting the active involvement of a leading Australian financial institution supportive of indigenous business development;
- workshopping opportunities for new economic activity, including mining services, an Aboriginal cultural centre, Aboriginal arts and culture more generally, tourism, bushfoods, medicines and other biochemicals and other industries, in partnership with mainstream private sector investors;
- initiating feasibility studies to ensure business sustainability; and
- supporting business planning and investment.

Lead The Northern Regional Development Board

First step Hold an initial planning workshop in conjunction with the Umoona Community Council, Desert Knowledge Australia, CSIRO, the University of South Australia's Sansom Institute, Indigenous Business Australia, industry representatives and business advisors with specific expertise in Aboriginal enterprise

Resourcing Seek funding from Indigenous Business Australia for an initial workshop and Aboriginal economic development plan

Social wellbeing

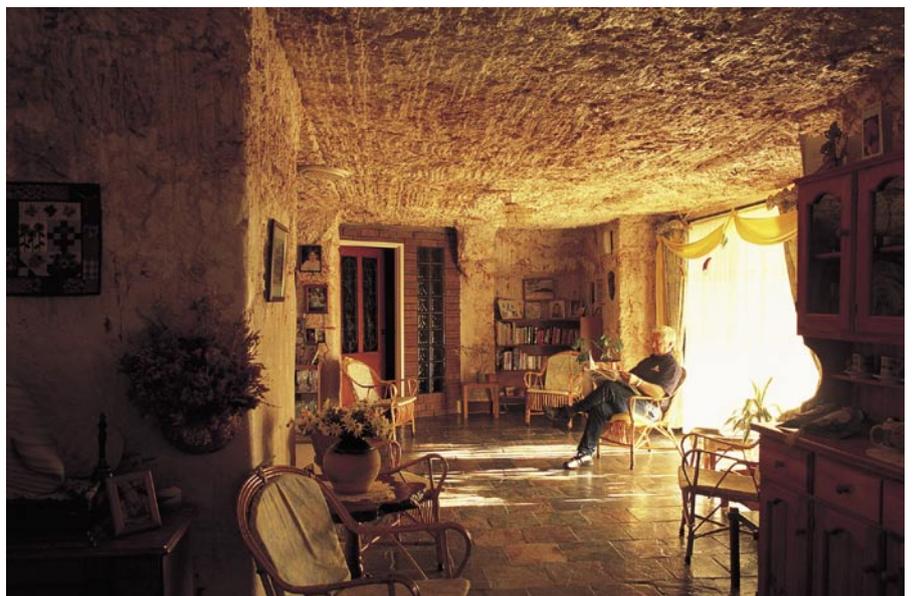
Coober Pedy is well served by hospital and medical services, primary and secondary schooling, a TAFE campus, child care services, policing and public housing. However, these services are under some pressure.

There is a continuing problem with the recruitment and retention of medical professionals, and the lack of depth in medical services puts pressure on general practitioners. Hospital services can only be sustained with the support of fly-in agency staff.

Secondary schooling is affected by significant truancy and a lack of engagement by older students. The State Government has been slowly withdrawing support for the TAFE campus for some time, and the future of the campus and its programs is under a cloud. Pre-vocational and vocational training delivered through the campus could be important in preparing Coober Pedy's residents to tap into new economic opportunities, but program graduates have not always been successful in obtaining skills recognition and employment.

There is some support in the community for improvements to child care facilities and services, and the introduction of 24-hour policing. There is also a need to increase and improve the stock of housing in the town. Some Aboriginal housing is damaged or derelict, and subject to periodic overcrowding.

The District Council of Coober Pedy has responded to these needs by convening the Senior Officers' Group, which works across agency boundaries to improve the economic prosperity and social wellbeing of the Coober Pedy community.



Unique lifestyle

2.1. Strengthen health and aged care services

Work through the Senior Officers' Group to

- attract more health and medical professionals to Coober Pedy as residents;
- improve the housing available to medical professionals;
- upgrade to a GP Plus clinic, in line with the State Health Plan for regional communities; and
- survey the community to establish future demand for aged care facilities, and facilitate investment as required.

Lead Coober Pedy Hospital & Health Services Inc

First step Review the South Australian Country Health Plan and put a plan of action and request for support formally to the Senior Officers' Group

Resourcing By State housing and health agencies once project commitments have been negotiated

2.2. Increase the housing stock

Work through the Senior Officers' Group to facilitate growth in the housing stock by

- working with investors to encourage the development of housing suitable for the accommodation of single miners and mining families; and
- working with Housing SA and the Umoona Community Council to ensure that adequate housing in good order is available for the accommodation of all residents.

Lead Senior Officers' Group

First step Develop a plan of action

Resourcing By the private sector, and by Housing SA and Umoona once project commitments have been negotiated

2.3. Construct a short stay accommodation facility

Construct a short stay accommodation facility to support temporary residents, and involve the Aboriginal community in managing the facility.

Lead Senior Officers' Group and Umoona Community Council

First step Commission the preparation of a detailed business case and identify potential funding sources

Resourcing Seed funds to prepare the business case and for grant matching should be sourced from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation and Housing SA, and matched with Commonwealth funds from the Regional Partnerships Program

2.4. Ensure the future of the local TAFE campus

Work to address secondary and vocational education challenges and continue efforts to underpin the viability of the TAFE campus by

- building a broad coalition of education, Aboriginal and business interests, including regional mining companies;
- developing an integrated, collaborative approach to the delivery of secondary education and pre-vocational, vocational and business skills that engages and commits students, reduces truancy, improves literacy and numeracy, and delivers pathways to employment and self-employment through training; and
- developing and delivering a range of community learning and leisure opportunities through the TAFE facility in conjunction with the Sport, Recreation and Youth program.

Lead The Northern Regional Development Board and the District Council of Coober Pedy

First step Convene a meeting to form a working coalition

Resourcing Funds should be provided jointly by the Department of Education and Children's Services and DFEEST for a pilot integration program, and supported by employers through traineeships and apprenticeships where there are clear pathways to employment

2.5 Increase child care availability and upgrade facilities

Work through the Senior Officers' Group to ensure the sustainability of child care programs, including vacation care, and review playgrounds and other child care facilities to ensure quality play and learning experiences for children.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

First step Budget for improvements to the playground, and seek matching funding from State Government agencies

Resourcing From within existing budgets, supplemented by State Government funding from the Department of Education and Children's Services

2.6. Invest in sport, recreation and leisure infrastructure and programs

Work through the Senior Officers' Group to document youth needs, and deliver a comprehensive sport, recreation and leisure program that embraces all members of the Coober Pedy community, particularly its youth, by

- documenting outcomes and obtaining continuing funding for a Sport, Recreation and Youth Welfare Officer;
- coordinating and communicating 'What's On' information to residents of all ages;
- filling gaps in existing activities with alternative sport, art, music and dance activities and other leisure options; and
- continuing to invest in the Triangle Sport and Recreation Complex and other public leisure infrastructure, in line with the Outback Regional Recreation, Sport and Open Space Strategy 2005–2010.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

First step Obtain continued funding for a Sport, Recreation and Youth Welfare Officer

Resourcing Existing funds should be matched by the Office of Recreation and Sport

2.7. Improve community safety and security

Work through the Senior Officers' Group to improve public safety and community security by

- ensuring continuing funding for Alcohol Strategy initiatives, especially mobile assistance patrols; and
- continuing to advocate increased policing resources.

Lead Senior Officers' Group

First step Write to the Attorney-General's Department Crime Prevention Unit expressing strong continuing community support for the Alcohol Strategy, and documenting areas in which its effectiveness can be improved

Resourcing From within existing State Government program commitments

Visual amenity

One of the most attractive features of Coober Pedy to visitors and residents alike is the sense of autonomy and freedom that pervades the town. This is evident in its idiosyncratic main street, a mix of old and new building styles, gravel car parks, fenced areas and vacant lots.

Recently the District Council has begun to upgrade the presentation of Hutchison Street with a roundabout, paved sidewalks, kerbing and extension of the road pavement.

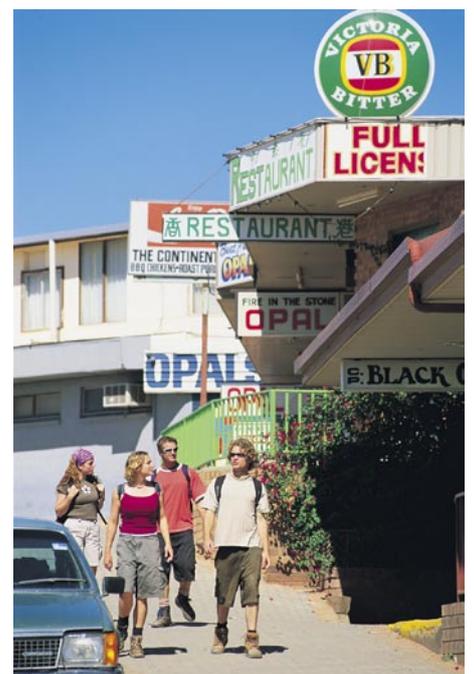
While careful upgrading of the look and feel of the town and improvement of the security and public safety of the main street will enhance its amenity for residents and visitors, it is important not to lose the quintessential Coober Pedy in the process.

3.1. Continue to upgrade the main street— thoughtfully

Upgrade the security, public safety and visual amenity of Hutchison Street without compromising Coober Pedy’s character as a frontier mining town by

- upgrading street lighting;
- installing appropriate CCTV;
- providing attractive landscaped and furnished meeting areas for people to congregate off the main street;
- paving main street pedestrian and parking areas;
- implementing a sustainable treescape;
- improving disability access; and
- improving parking and turning areas for caravanners and buses.

<i>Lead</i>	District Council of Coober Pedy
<i>First step</i>	Ensure widespread consultation across the whole community on the Urban Design Strategy
<i>Resourcing</i>	Generally from within existing programs and resources, although funding for the ‘meeting place’ should be sourced from the Regional Partnerships Program



Hutchison Street

Community development

While Coober Pedy is a vibrant town, its ageing demographic makes population renewal and the development of future leaders critical for the ongoing wellbeing of the community.

In addition, the large Aboriginal community is under-represented in community decision-making, potentially reducing the effectiveness of strategies aimed at raising levels of economic prosperity and community wellbeing.

As leadership capability takes time to develop, these challenges require forethought and action now.

4.1. Develop community leadership capability

Develop leadership capability across the community by

- training youth and Aboriginal leaders;
- promoting role models of business and community leadership, particularly in the Aboriginal community;
- revitalizing the Youth Advisory Committee and Aboriginal Youth Advisory Committee, and redefine their charters to ensure an action focus for identifying and addressing issues and opportunities; and
- recognizing business and community leaders on Australia Day.

Lead Senior Officers' Group

First step Jointly sponsor two community candidates each year, including one Aboriginal candidate, for participation in an Australian Leadership Foundation program

Resourcing From within existing programs and resources, supported by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation

4.2. Increase local Aboriginal involvement in community decision making

Facilitate greater participation by the whole community, including the Aboriginal community, in community leadership, planning and policy making.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

First step Review membership of the Senior Officers' Group by Aboriginal leaders, and encourage regular participation in meetings

Resourcing From within existing programs and resources

Local government services

Viewed in financial terms, the District Council of Coober Pedy is first and foremost an electricity and water utility. Other services typically delivered by local government are also important. The Council is thus unique in South Australia's local government sector, and faces distinctive financial and service delivery challenges.

The Council has emerged from a period of some difficulty, triggered by the challenges of maintaining the local electricity network, with a new financial strength, and a strong sense of purpose. It is important to consolidate this strength by maintaining the Council's financial position and service mix.

5.1. Maintain the District Council's financial position

Maintain the District Council's financial position by disciplined planning, budgeting, borrowing and expenditure.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

Resourcing From within existing programs and resources

5.2. Ensure the continued availability of electricity and water at a sustainable long-run cost

Manage the electricity and water reticulation systems to ensure that supplies are cost-effective and environmentally sustainable in the long term, and encourage increased use of renewable energy by local businesses and the community.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

Resourcing From within existing programs and resources

5.3. Continue to provide essential local government infrastructure

Continue to provide essential local government infrastructure under a sustainable asset management plan, including

- the maintenance of priority roads and traffic management works, and the sealing of priority roads;
- footpaths, street lighting and amenities; and
- public open space.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

Resourcing From within existing programs and resources

5.4. Continue to deliver essential local government services

Continue to deliver essential local government services, including

- strategic planning;
- management of development planning and building approvals;
- environmental health services;
- street cleaning, rubbish collection and waste management;
- dog and cat management; and
- other community and visitor services.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

Resourcing From within existing programs and resources

5.5. Develop a 10-year population masterplan

Confirm 10-year projections of population growth and demographic changes in Coober Pedy and the surrounding region, identify the implications for infrastructure and government services, and develop a 10-year infrastructure and services masterplan linked into the Far North Regional Land Use Framework.

Lead Planning SA

First step District Council to set up a meeting with Planning SA and the University of Adelaide's Professor Graeme Hugo to discuss 2006 Census methodology and data, and agree to test innovative methods for estimating the population that reflect local knowledge

Resourcing University of Adelaide to seek ARC funding, with some limited financial support from Planning SA

6 Implementation

Leadership

Committed leadership from within the Coober Pedy community, and from local and State Government, will be crucial in the effective implementation of this Strategic Plan.

The key to community leadership will be the establishment of structures that engage those community and business leaders with the passion to take Coober Pedy forward.

6.1. Broaden the focus of the Senior Officers' Group

Revisit the charter and operation of the Senior Officers' Group to ensure that the Group is sustainable, that it is focused on actions and outcomes, and that the agenda is structured around action steps against Strategic Plan priorities.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

First step District Council and North Regional Development Board to discussion of the Strategic Plan at a SOG meeting, with a view to committing the Group to a prioritised action plan

Resourcing From within existing resources

Communication

Communication is also critical in making the community aware of the Strategic Plan, building support for the plan's strategies, and engaging the community in the implementation of the plan.

6.2. Make all residents and businesses aware of the Strategic Plan

Implement a communication program to ensure that all residents and businesses are aware of the Strategic Plan, including

- preparation and distribution of shop window posters to all businesses;
- preparation of a DL brochure summarising the Plan, and distribution of the brochure with rates notices;
- publication of the full Strategic Plan on the websites of the District Council and the Northern Regional Development Board; and
- communication of the brochure to Imparja and Adelaide ABC radio and TV, with an invitation to run a story on the Plan.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

Resourcing From within existing resources

6.3. Make Members of Parliament and government agencies aware of the Strategic Plan

Distribute copies of the full Strategic Plan to relevant State and Commonwealth politicians and agency Chief Executives under a covering letter drawing their attention to specific initiatives and inviting their support for the Plan.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy, with support from the Northern Regional Development Board and the Office of Regional Affairs

Resourcing From within existing resources

6.4. Report progress annually to the community and stakeholders

Publish a Strategic Plan Implementation Report Card annually in the local media to keep the community aware of the plan and to maintain accountability for progress, and write to stakeholders highlighting significant forward steps.

Lead District Council of Coober Pedy

Resourcing From within existing resources

Performance indicators

In addition to implementation of the specific actions detailed within the strategies, a range of performance indicators and targets will be used to assess the impact of the Strategic Plan.

	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Targets</i>
<i>Economic prosperity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of mining and mining service businesses based in Coober Pedy • Number of trades businesses operating in the town • Number of new tourism businesses • Number of new indigenous businesses • Number of other new businesses created or establishing themselves in Coober Pedy • Numbers of air passenger movements • Numbers of tourists • Numbers of active opal mines • Youth and indigenous employment • Number of students enrolled at TAFE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 new businesses annually • 1 new business annually • 1 new business annually • 2 new businesses annually (may overlap with above) • 3 new businesses annually • 20% increase by 2012 • 10% increase by 2012 • 5% increase by 2012 • Improved 3 percentage points by 2012 • 20% increase by 2012
<i>Social wellbeing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of dwellings • Reports to police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased 10% by 2012 • Decreased 15% by 2012
<i>Community development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in local government elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased 10% by 2012

Implementation roadmap

	<i>2007–2008</i>	<i>2008-2009</i>	<i>2009-2010</i>	<i>2010-2011</i>	<i>2011-2012</i>
Economic prosperity					
1.1. Promote Coober Pedy as a remote mining hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach PIRSA for funding • Develop Mining Services Industry Conference • Open negotiations with universities on biennial technical conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver industry conference, evaluate • Host technical conference 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host second technical conference 	
1.2. Encourage mining and mining service businesses to base operations in Coober Pedy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey businesses and develop incentives package • Promote benefits package to potential businesses • Training programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and employment programs • Package and present sponsorship opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and employment programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and employment programs • Package and present sponsorship opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and employment programs
1.3. Encourage local entrepreneurs to tap into the opportunities created by new mining activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach RDBs, ORA, DTED, PIRSA about Mining Services IDO • Investment opportunity brief • Mining seminars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business skills training and mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote success stories • Business mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business mentoring
1.4. Improve the availability of trade skills		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps • Prepare a 'live and work' package, welcome pack, induction program • Distribute package 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat process 	

	<i>2007-2008</i>	<i>2008-2009</i>	<i>2009-2010</i>	<i>2010-2011</i>	<i>2011-2012</i>
1.5. Boost employment by bridging skill gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement with mining companies • Effective skills recognition programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further training and employment programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and employment programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and employment programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and employment programs
1.6. Diversify tourism beyond opal, underground living and the outback experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand FROSAT representation • SATC dataset and trends analysis • Review national examples • Industry development workshop with FROSAT • ATDP application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism needs analysis, training • Review, upgrade signage • New product development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New product development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update SATC trends analysis • New product development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New product development
1.7. Strengthen air transport links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-engage SATC, DTEI • Review masterplan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint approach to potential partners • Market research, develop business case • Redevelop runway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding for terminal • Call for terminal submissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct terminal 	
1.8. Reinvigorate the opal industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pattern drilling program, report to government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene industry workshop • Initial steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry development initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry development initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry development initiatives
1.9. Encourage the development of Aboriginal businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade skills program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous business skills program with IBA • Household and personal services program • Business mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business mentoring
1.10. Identify and develop opportunities for substantial Aboriginal cooperative and joint venture enterprises		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review national examples • Attract a financial sponsor • Workshop opportunities • Initiate feasibility study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate business planning and implementation • Initiate a further feasibility study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business mentoring

	<i>2007–2008</i>	<i>2008–2009</i>	<i>2009–2010</i>	<i>2010–2011</i>	<i>2011–2012</i>
Social wellbeing					
2.1. Strengthen health and aged care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Country Health Plan Develop plan of action, involve support from SOG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve housing availability Upgrade to a GP Plus clinic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies Survey community on aged care requirements Plan for investment as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies
2.2. Increase the housing stock		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plan of action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies
2.3. Construct a short stay accommodation facility		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare detailed business case Identify funding sources, seek funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage facility
2.4. Ensure the future of the local TAFE campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Education Manager to join the SOG Build coalition Develop integrated approach to secondary–tertiary education Develop plan of action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek endorsement from DECS, TAFE Implement, monitor approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain, expand programs Community learning and leisure program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain, expand programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain, expand programs
2.5. Increase child care availability and upgrade facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget for upgrade in 2008–2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek matching funding Undertake improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek funding to expand availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain programs
2.6. Invest in sport, recreation and leisure infrastructure and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document outcomes Obtain continuing funding Establish ‘What’s On’ channel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review, expand program Develop plan and seek matching funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with community to identify infrastructure enhancements Initiate improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage facilities
2.7. Improve community safety and security		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission—Crime Prevention Unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and respond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and respond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and respond

	2007–2008	2008–2009	2009–2010	2010–2011	2011–2012
Visual amenity					
3.1. Continue to upgrade the main street—thoughtfully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult on Urban Design Strategy • Upgrade street lighting • Install CCTV • Design off-street meeting area, seek matching funding • Continue paving program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade street lighting • Construct off-street meeting area • Continue paving program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve disability access • Implement treescape • Continue paving program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve disability access • Implement treescape 	
Community development					
4.1. Develop community leadership capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalise community councils • Sponsor leadership candidates • Australia Day honours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor leadership candidates • Australia Day honours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor leadership candidates • Australia Day honours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor leadership candidates • Australia Day honours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor leadership candidates • Australia Day honours
4.2. Increase Aboriginal involvement in community decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Aboriginal membership of the SOG, ensure participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue community participation in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue community participation in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue community participation in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue community participation in decision making
Local government services					
5.1. Maintain the District Council’s financial position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain financial discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain financial discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain financial discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain financial discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain financial discipline
5.2. Ensure the continued availability of electricity and water at a sustainable long-run cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to manage water, electricity systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to manage water, electricity systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review management of water, electricity systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to manage water, electricity systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to manage water, electricity systems
5.3. Continue to provide essential local government infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review asset management plan, infrastructure budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget for infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review asset management plan, infrastructure budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget for infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review asset management plan, infrastructure budget
5.4. Continue to deliver essential local government services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget, deliver services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget, deliver services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget, deliver services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget, deliver services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget, deliver services

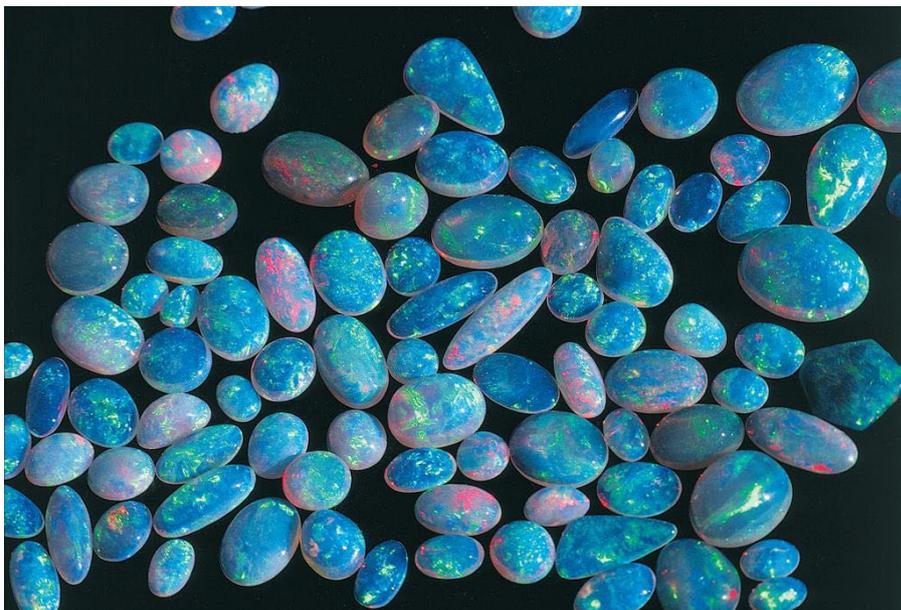
	<i>2007-2008</i>	<i>2008-2009</i>	<i>2009-2010</i>	<i>2010-2011</i>	<i>2011-2012</i>
5.5. Develop a 10-year population masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish, deliver population research project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver population research project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10-year population, infrastructure and services masterplan 		
Leadership and communication					
6.1. Broaden the focus of the Senior Officers' Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit SOG to Strategic Plan Revisit charter, operations, focus, agendas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene SOG, deliver outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene SOG, deliver outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene SOG, deliver outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene SOG, deliver outcomes
6.2. Make all residents and businesses aware of the Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shop window posters Brochure with rates notices Website Radio, television 				
6.3. Make Members of Parliament and government agencies aware of the Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan to MPs, CEs 				
6.4. Report progress annually to the community and stakeholders		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish report card Write to stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish report card Write to stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish report card Write to stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish report card Write to stakeholders

7 Consultation

This Strategic Plan is the outcome of extensive consultation, including

- an initial workshop and additional meetings with executives and senior staff of the District Council of Coober Pedy and the Northern Regional Development Board;
- participation in the Far North Economic Development Forum;
- workshops with Council elected members, a combined business and community group, and follow up meetings;
- participation in a workshop held at Umoona Community Council by the Northern Regional Development Board, and a follow up meeting;
- distribution of drafts for comment to elected members, executives and staff, the Coober Pedy Business Retail and Tourism Association, the Senior Officers' Group, SATC, DFEEST and Planning SA;
- several individual meetings with business leaders in Coober Pedy and in Adelaide;
- meetings and teleconferences with DFEEST and PIRSA executives and SATC's Regional Marketing Manager;
- discussions with researchers in Adelaide and Whyalla; and
- consultation with the District Council's 'Places for People' consultant.

The District Council of Coober Pedy and the Northern Regional Development Board would like to thank all those who generously gave of their time and thinking to this process.



Many colours, one community