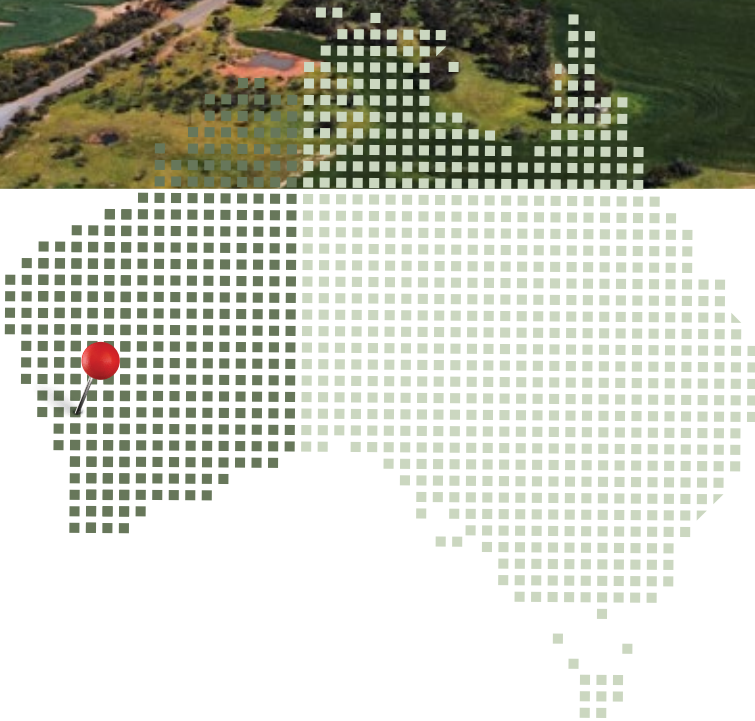


Carnamah

Community Development Action Plan



May 2024

Foreword

Established originally as a farming community, Carnamah has remained true to its roots. Mixed farming operations remain a vital part of the local economy. As advances in farm technology has seen farm sizes increase and population decrease, the area looks to different options to diversify the local economy. The natural beauty of the area is one aspect that attracts visitors to our town, especially during the wildflower season (August-October). Many travellers return, remarking how they enjoyed the nature and hospitality of the town.

Another unique and new aspect is our growing reputation for arts and culture. The North Midlands Project has blessed us with our own 'Bank Gallery'. The Bank Gallery showcases high-quality exhibitions of emerging and leading Western Australian artists. It also shows locally developed exhibitions created by artists and the community, such as Ebb+Flow and Women of the Hinterlands, which have gone on tour to locations across Western Australia.

As a farming community, the seasonal conditions have a significant impact on our local economy. It is at these times the true value and resilience of country people shines through. These challenges strengthen our resolve and commitment to our local businesses, community groups, sporting clubs and rural lifestyle.

Although our town is small, over the years we have had many reside here who have since moved, but still affectionately refer to Carnamah as 'home.' They remain one of our great assets.

Thank you to all Carnamah community members who participated by sharing their ideas & plans to help Carnamah thrive and embrace the changes necessary to be able to meet the demands of future generations.

Our Community Opportunities Workshop (C.O.W.) identified many aspects requiring attention. We are sincerely grateful to Rural Aid and its supportive team for giving us this incredible opportunity. We are extremely blessed to have been guided on this journey by Peter Kenyon. His expertise and ability to motivate and inspire all around him has been invaluable in developing the Carnamah Community Development Plan.

It is our great hope that this Project is embraced by our community as an opportunity for change and growth, to create a place that is welcoming, where all people belong. Thank you to everyone who helped create this Community Development Action Plan and we welcome the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Acknowledgements

This Community Development Action Plan was initiated and coordinated by the Carnamah Community Builders Team (Carole Rayner, Barb Smallwood, Diana Van Buerle, Lauren Selfe and Reuben Dring) and funded by Rural Aid as part of their commitment to supporting the growth of Australia's small rural towns. The formulation of the Plan was undertaken by Peter Kenyon from the Bank of I.D.E.A.S. with assistance from Jude Sutherland, Jen Curnow-Trotter, Paul Gravett and Maria D'Souza. Special thanks to so many passionate community members who gave so generously of their time, wisdom and experiences. The financial contributions of the Mid West Development Commission during the early stages of the program are also greatly appreciated.

We also pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future Traditional Owners of the lands that incorporate Carnamah, namely the Amangu and Badymia language groups of Aboriginal people.

Photo Credits: Front Cover: Maccas Rural; Carnamah Homestead pg.3: Colin White; Bank Gallery pg.3: North Midlands Project; Birds-Eye View of Yarra Yarra Lakes pg.5 & 6: Martine Perret & North Midlands Project



Our Story

Carnamah is a proactive and vibrant town, located 300 kilometres north of Perth in the North Midlands region. Population of the Shire is 552 persons. The traditional owners of Carnamah are the Amangu and Badymia language groups of Aboriginal people

Carnamah area was first settled by Europeans in 1861 when Duncan Macpherson moved sheep across from the coast and took up land to the east of the present townsite. In 1868, the Macphersons built an impressive stone homestead near a freshwater spring, Carnamah Spring, naming their pastoral station Carnamah as well. Carnamah derives its name from the Carnamah Spring and is most likely of Gaelic origins meaning 'cairn of the cattle' or 'cattle rocks'.

Development of the town began when the Midland Railway line was constructed through the area in 1894, and a siding was built close to the Macphersons homestead. Between 1912-1913 the Midland Railway Company cleared land on 45 ready-made 400-acre farms. This resulted in 20 families moving into the area. The Carnamah Progress Association was formed in 1912; the State School established in 1912 and the townsite gazetted in 1913. The Town Hall was constructed in 1921; the Carnamah Road Board established and the first hotel built in 1924.

Between 1919-1923 a War Service Farming Scheme was established at nearby Yarra Yarra Lakes and 40 families moved into the area. By the end of the 1920s Carnamah was recognised as one of the richest wheat producing areas in Western Australia. In 1932, the Wheat Pool of Western Australia announced that the town would have two grain elevators, each fitted with an engine and these were installed at the railway siding. Today Carnamah is one of the largest grain receival sites in the North Midlands.

Carnamah grew quickly in the 1930's with many businesses and services available. With this influx

of residents, community groups, organisations and sporting clubs flourished. The population and subsequent services and businesses has ebbed and flowed over the years. Community groups were vital in the development of many significant improvements in the town. Construction of the Town Hall, Presbyterian Church, Anglican Church, Niven Park sporting complex and swimming pool were all community driven and funded, as well as the Carnamah Community Roadhouse and more recently the Hardware Store.

While our community continues as a key service centre for the surrounding mixed farming properties, economic diversification has occurred through the recognition of Carnamah's heritage tourism product, wildflowers, night skies, the unique Yarra Yarra Lakes and its growing reputation for the arts which continues to attract visitors to the town. Sports groups are still alive and well with Carnamah boasting a strong complement of winter and summer sports for all ages. As the population has declined, Carnamah has teamed up with Perenjori and have combined our Carnamah/Perenjori winter sports teams. Community spirit continues with sewing and craft groups, Lions Club, Men's Shed and Agricultural Society as well as a dedicated group of emergency service volunteers. The presence of the regional arts organisation, North Midland Project, with its diverse range of facilities and arts and culture programs has enabled Carnamah to achieve a growing, highly respected arts reputation. Our school and childcare are vital services for our families. When the local child-care facility was on the verge of closing the residents rallied and raised funds, also contributing time and equipment to ensure that the doors remained open. The can-do attitude continues to shine through with the recent efforts of local people, the 'Big Tractor Project' raised \$500,000 to implement the world's largest steel tractor sculpture and celebrate the district's connection to the Chamberlain 40K Tractor.

Our Vision

Our vision is to be a vibrant, safe and family friendly community, embracing our heritage, traditions and opportunities with small town charm. We are a place for all generations to live, work, play and age well.

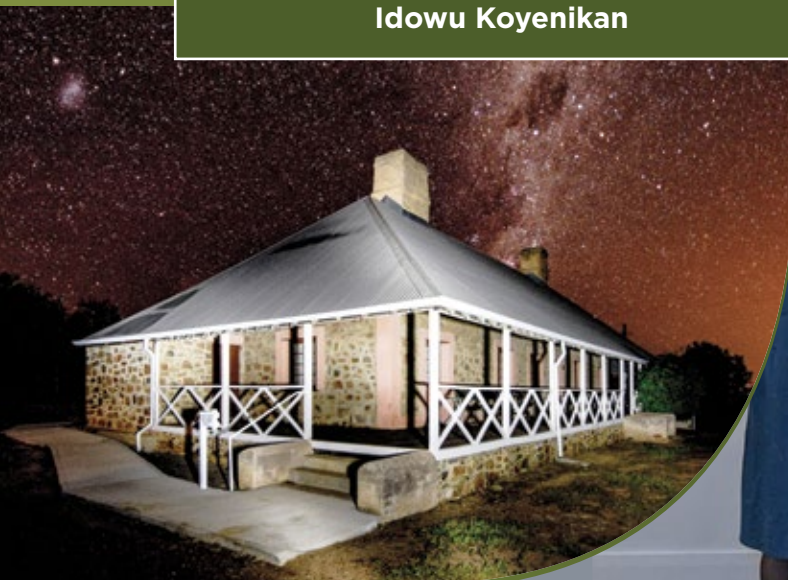
“ *There is immense power when a group of people with similar interests get together to work toward the same goals.* ”

Idowu Koyenikan

Our Goals

Below are the ten community goals which guide our community aspirations, namely

- To retain families in the Shire of Carnamah by continually strengthening our live-able rural lifestyle and local employment opportunities.
- To grow the population and business base of our community with people harnessing their community spirit and energy.
- To actively pursue and promote new economic, entrepreneurial and cultural opportunities that strengthen and diversify our local community and business life
- To capitalise on the district’s distinctive arts, cultural, heritage and natural assets.
- To actively promote and showcase our community as a great place to stop, stay, experience and reside.
- To support, promote and celebrate active community participation and volunteerism.
- To retain strong sports clubs, competitions and facilities.
- To retain service groups, cultural activities and traditions.
- To create an environment where our young people feel welcomed, supported and empowered, and will consider staying and/or returning to our community for work, business, family and lifestyle opportunities.
- To increase the availability of family, worker and visitor accommodation options.



Our Guiding Values

The following eight guiding values and attitudes provide the context for our community's identified actions and initiatives, namely

- **Community pride & connection** – ensuring all residents experience community connection, inclusion, and a sense of pride in our history, uniqueness, achievements, structures and future.
- **Active Citizenship** – fostering attitudes and behaviour that encourages greater community engagement, volunteerism and ownership.
- **Mutual Respect** – striving for community relationships built on integrity, understanding, and acknowledgement of each member's unique gifts and contributions.
- **Respect for Heritage & Environment** – valuing our Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage and culture, and our unique natural and built environment.
- **Small Town Lifestyle & Charm** – retaining our unique sense of country way of life, neighbour connections and rural landscapes.
- **Safety** – maintaining high levels of community safety, low crime rate and wellbeing.
- **Positive Mindset** – fostering community attitudes that embrace change, proactive 'can do' behaviour, optimism and hopefulness.
- **Intergenerational Connections** – creating opportunities for all ages to share, support and learn from each other.

“ *There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about* ”
Margaret Wheatley

Our Challenges

Like many small inland rural communities, our community needs to respond creatively to a series of demographic, social, economic and environmental challenges. These issues include

- Volunteer fatigue from declining numbers and dependence on a few pro-active community members
- Lack of a Community Resource Centre
- Changing and transient population, less inclined to commit to community
- Seasonal conditions impacting businesses and families
- Limited rental accommodation for families, short-term workers and visitors
- Declining school numbers
- Development of under-utilised facilities
- Lack of a business support network
- Availability of suitable trades and skilled labour
- Limited market size due to population
- Time and distance from other markets/suppliers
- Transport costs and logistics
- Tourism challenges especially related to seasonal nature
- Signage Upgrade Required
- State and Federal Governments' policies and funding
- Limited Council resources to access Grants

“ *If we as a community don't step up to help each other, then who will?* ”
Anon.



Our Assets

People

- Dedicated and keen volunteers
- Strong perception as a proud, friendly, welcoming, resilient community – strong ‘giving’ spirit
- Strong community connectedness – most people are involved with multiple groups
- Safety and low crime rate
- Emergency workers, volunteers, musicians, artists, story tellers Justices of Peace
- Seasonal workers resident in community (3-6 month)

Culture, Stories & Sources of Pride

- Culture, Stories & Sources of Pride
- Heritage – Macpherson Homestead, St Andrews Catholic Church (designed by Monsignor Hawes), Tractor Museum, Carnamah Historical Museum, Heritage Park and War Memorial.
- North Midlands Project- Exchange-Bank Galley - Artists in residence/workshops, Exhibitions, computer training
- ‘Painted Road’ Town murals, Grain Man, Big Tractor
- The Amangu and Badymia language groups
- Vintage car enthusiasts, Astro-tourism sites
- Weekly Community Newsletter

Physical

- Recreational facilities – community gym, swimming pool, sports pavilion, football oval, hockey fields, netball/basketball courts, tennis courts, playgrounds x3, youth space, town hall, bowling green & club, golf course, off-leash dog area
- Farmland, native vegetation, abundance of native floral
- A Hemisphere of sky
Mild Autumn, Spring, Winter weather
- Lions Park BBQ area, Yarra Yarra Lake & Lookout, Henry Parkin Gardens, Heritage Park, Memorial Park, Powerhouse Park, Lions Recycling Centre, Airstrip, Winchester Cemetery
- Lake Indoon, Lake Logue
- Heritage Listed Buildings - MacPherson Homestead (1869)
- Travellers remarking our town is clean & tidy

Our Assets

Economic

- Retail - supermarket, post office & gift shop, newsagency & drapery, café, hardware store, roadhouse, fuel depot, pharmacy, real estate
- Trades- engineering, fabrication, mechanics, hairdresser, plumber, builders, carpentry, fencing & stonework, bulldozing, contracting, landscaping, concreting, pest control
- Farmers
- Professional services- Agronomists, accountant, pharmacist, doctors, nurses, day-care centre, visiting lawyer, courier/freight/transport,
- Agricultural supply – Elders, Nutrien, AFGRI farm machinery dealership
- CBH receival site, Winchester Quarry, bus contractors
- Accommodation/ Hospitality- Hotel/Motel, Bowling Club, Caravan Park, Harlequin Bell B&B

Social Networks

- Sporting Groups - football, netball, hockey, tennis, basketball, bowls, swimming, badminton, carpet bowls, gymnasium/fitness centre
- Carnamah Historical Society & Museum, Tourist Information Group, North Midlands Agricultural Society,
- Lions Club, Men's Shed, Carnamah Activity Group, Garden Club, Craft Groups, Senior Groups, Book Club, Scribes of NM, Technology Hub, Coderdojo for Kids, P&C, Friends of North Midlands Health Service
- Churches – Anglican/Uniting, Catholic

Institutions

- Carnamah District High School, Child Care Centre
- Shire of Carnamah – Library, Department of Transport, Ranger
- Medical Centre doctor, pharmacist, physio, Police Station, PCYC -Blue Light WA, Australia Post
- St Johns Ambulance Service, Volunteer Bush Fire Group
- Anglican Church, Roman Catholic Church





Our Strategies & Actions

These One

Utilisation of the Golf Club and Course

ACTIONS

1

1. Form a Golf Club and Course Task Team

Timeframe: Immediate

2. Undertake audit of **existing club facilities and course** and determine current condition report, and potential feasibility for future use(s) and development based on zoning conditions and key findings. Consider community / cultural / business / environmental elements.

Timeframe: Immediate to Short Term

3. Liaise with the **Housing and Accommodation Task Team** to identify potential synergies of projects.

Timeframe: Short Term

4. Explore resourcing options, especially **state government funding through Regional Economic Grants.**

Timeframe: Short to Medium term

5. Develop and implement a **Golf Club and Course Re-Activation Plan**

Timeframe: Medium Term

LEAD GROUP

**Golf Club and Course Task Team
Shire of Carnamah**

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

**DPHL
DLGSC aand grants
Golf WA
RA
MWDC- RED Grants
RDAMWG
Parks and Leisure Australia
CBHIF
FRRR
Lotterywest**

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Two

Enhancement of Lifestyle & Population Attraction

ACTIONS



1. Develop a 'Lifestyle and Population Attraction' Strategy to attract new residents, more women and businesses by building upon the community's welcoming and friendly spirit, safety, quality rural small-town lifestyle, arts programs, small school experience and business and agricultural strengths and opportunities. -

- A. Form a Task Team to formulate strategy and slogan and translate into attractive flyer.
- B. Develop a three-minute YouTube video capturing the uniqueness and appeal of the community.
- C. Develop and implement promotional campaign including key media exposure.
- D. Stage a 'Beaut Bloke's Weekend' event targeting women.

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

2. Advocate for and facilitate local and regional secondary and tertiary education opportunities and improvements.

Timeframe: Immediate and ongoing

3. Advocate for and facilitate enhanced support and facilities for seniors.

Timeframe: Immediate and ongoing

4. Continually improve the standard and use of community recreation facilities.

Timeframe: Immediate and ongoing

5. Advocate for and facilitate enhanced childcare opportunities.

Timeframe: Immediate and ongoing

6. Explore the 'Staying in Place' ageing initiative similar to initiatives instigated by the town of Pingelly as a possible model for enhancing support for Carnamah seniors.

LEAD GROUP

Lifestyle and Population Attraction Task Team
Shire of Carnamah

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Sporting clubs / community groups
NMP
NMAS
CDHS
Lions Club
MWDC -RED Grants
CBH Group

Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Department of Education
Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
Parks and Leisure Australia
Lotterywest



Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Three

Development of a Housing & Accommodation Strategy

ACTIONS



1. Form **Housing and Accommodation Task Team** to increase the availability of family, worker and visitor dwellings and properties.
Timeframe: Immediate
2. Undertake **audit of existing land and housing availability** including on farms.
Timeframe: Immediate
3. Undertake **research into housing, land, property investment and subdivision development initiatives** happening in other small rural communities.
Timeframe: Immediate to Short Term
4. Explore **resourcing options**, especially state government funding.
Timeframe: Immediate to Short Term
5. Develop and implement a **Housing and Accommodation Community-Driven Strategy** that encompasses family, seasonal worker and visitor housing and accommodation options.
Timeframe: Medium Term and Ongoing
6. Undertake **conversations with Housing Authority** re criteria for social housing to ensure individuals and families in genuine housing need gain access not weekenders.
Timeframe: Immediate
7. Advocate for the **retention of residential aged care at the hospital**.
Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

Housing and Accommodation Task Team
Shire of Carnamah

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

DoC
DPLH
MWDC - RED Grants
RDAMWG
Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Four

Business & Employment Development

ACTIONS



1. Form a **Carnamah Business Development Task Team** to implement the projects 2-7 outlined below.

Timeframe: Immediate

2. With support from the Mid-West Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MWCCI), create a **North Midlands Business Network** to enhance networking, information sharing, business advocacy, business capacity and local business opportunities.

Timeframe: Short Term

3. Identify and maximise use of **vacant buildings through -**
 - a. Identifying current features within and surrounding available spaces.
 - b. Exploring the feasibility of attracting businesses into these spaces.
 - c. Based on other small town business attraction and retention grant initiatives, developing a Carnamah Program (*e.g. see the 'Pingelly Industry Attraction Program' of the Shire of Pingelly*).

Timeframe:- Medium Term

4. Explore the feasibility of starting / attracting a **Containers for Change Depot in Carnamah.**

Timeframe: Medium Term

5. Identify funding and formulate a **Carnamah Economic Development Strategy** to identify business and employment opportunities and elements of a possible local entrepreneurial support ecosystem.

Timeframe: Medium Term

6. Explore pathways to enhance **apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities** for local young people.

Timeframe: Medium Term

7. Promote the **'Business Excellence Awards' of the MWCCI** to local businesses as a promotional and development opportunity.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

**Business Development Task Team
Shire of Carnamah**

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

MWDC- RED Grants
MWCCI
Jobs and Skills WA
Containers for Change WA
Local businesses / neighbouring Shire businesses
RDAMWG - Funding & Grants Hub

Growing Regions Program
business.gov.au
Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation
FRRR
BOI
RAC Grants

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Five

Development of Local Tourism Potential

ACTIONS

5

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

NMP
Lions Club
Carnamah Historical Society & Museum
Garden Group
Men's Shed
Town Team
Movement
Tourism WA
Astrotourism WA
MWDC – RED Grants
RDCMWG
Growing Regions Program
Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation
business.gov.au
RA
CBHIF
FRRR
Lotterywest
RAC Grants
Town of Perenjori

1. Identify funding and develop a **Carnamah Tourism Strategy that incorporates-**
 - a. Audit of current tourism attractions, facilities, events, trails and initiatives.
 - b. Review of regional tourism links and trails.
 - c. Opportunities to enhance existing products and offerings, especially in terms of astrotourism, wildflowers and farm tourism.
 - d. Opportunities to create new tourism products especially related to heritage, natural environment, culture, arts and indigenous connections.
 - e. Enhancement of marketing, customer service, community storytelling and operator networking.

Timeframe: Medium Term

2. Investigate viability of seeking external funding to install **EV charging station(s)** to encourage more day trippers from the metro area.

Timeframe: Medium Term

3. Form a **Signage Task Team** to undertake shire-wide **signage audit** of town advertising, town entry statements and directional signage.

Timeframe: Immediate

4. Form a **Carnamah Town Team** to identify and implement CBD beautification and placemaking opportunities.

- a. Form Carnamah Town Team.
- b. Identify and prioritise beautification and place making options.
- c. Seek funding and technical support / implement opportunities.

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

5. Form a **Yarra Yarra Jetty Task Team** to evolve a plan and seek resources to build a jetty at the Lake.

Timeframe: Medium Term

6. Continue to support the **Visitor Information Office**.

Timeframe: Ongoing

7. Continue to **upgrade the Caravan park** - more trees, amenities & cabins.

Timeframe- Medium Term

8. Support the **Big Tractor Committee** in fulfilling their initiative and continually seek ways to capitalise on the 'Big Tractor Project'.

Timeframe: Ongoing

9. Liaise with, and support the town of Perenjori as they develop their **Tractor Trail from Carnamah to Perenjori**.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

Shire of Carnamah
Tourism Group- Visitor Information Centre
Carnamah Town Team
Signage Task Team
Yara Yarra Jetty Task Team

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Six

Building Stronger Community Connections

ACTIONS



POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Carnamah sporting and cultural groups
Emergency Services
NMP
NMAS
Carnamah Historical Society & Museum
Men's Shed
DoC grants programs
Lotterywest
DLGSC funding programs
RA
KAB
CBHIF
FRRR
DPIRD

1. Form a **Carnamah Community Development Action Group**.
Timeframe: Immediate
2. Undertake a **'Community Passions and Skills Audit'**.
Timeframe: Immediate and ongoing
3. Investigate and commence a monthly **Swap Meet and Markets**
Timeframe: Short Term
4. Instigate an annual **Volunteer Recognition Event** to recognise existing volunteers, promote volunteerism and showcase local volunteering opportunities.
Timeframe: Immediate
5. Explore other uses of **'Rock Solid'** to enhance community spirit and a sense of pride.
Timeframe: Short Term
6. Instigate an annual **'Clean Up Our Parks' Day**.
Timeframe: Short Term
7. Enter the annual **KAB 'Tidy Towns Awards'**.
Timeframe: Short Term and ongoing
8. With the support of **Department of Local (DLGSC)**, explore and implement club development and capacity building opportunities to **strengthen and retain local sporting, community and cultural clubs and groups**.
Timeframe: Short Term and ongoing
9. Instigate an annual event to **bring residents together to celebrate, share ideas, express aspirations and plan for the coming year**.
Timeframe: Medium Term
10. Continually advocate to the **Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD)** for funding to instigate a **Community Resource Centre (CRC) in Carnamah**.
Timeframe: Immediate and ongoing

LEAD GROUP

Shire of Carnamah
Carnamah Community Development Action Group



Carnamah

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

