Abstract
The Port Pirie community is embarking on a strategy to transform its economic base, its environmental conditions, its community facilities and the appearance of the town in order to turn the City into an attractive residential and business base with a view of attracting more investment in Port Pirie.

The City’s major employer Nyrstar, is spending in excess of $514 million to transform its business model and smelting processes which will ensure that it remains in Port Pirie for many years to come. This provides many benefits and opportunities for the region. For instance, it will trigger other private business in the City as it will provide certainty over Nyrstar’s future. In addition, it will also allow Nyrstar to expand its business outside of its traditional lead and zinc smelting into a multi-metals processing facility and thus allow it to expand in size, employment numbers and economic output. The Nyrstar transformation will also provide significantly improved environmental technologies, which will significantly reduce lead emissions from the site. This will provide an opportunity to expand the City’s residential and business base by no longer having a bad reputation as a result of lead emissions.

In order to maximize these opportunities, Council is seeking to transform the City of Port Pirie. To achieve this, Council has set about improving its community facilities, the built environment, and the appearance of the City. This has involved many community projects such as the rejuvenation of its swimming pool, a new cultural precinct, upgrades to marine infrastructure, construction of Solomontown Beach Plaza, and the developed of a Tourism Bicycle Route, with plans underway to improve its City entrances, sports facilities and a major rejuvenation of its CBD just to name a few.

It is hoped that these will help to create a vibrant City where people want to visit, live and invest in thereby securing a prosperous economic future for Port Pirie and the Greater region.

Let the transformation begin…………………..

Bio
Dr Johnson is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Port Pirie Regional Council and serves on numerous local, regional and national committees with a variety of organisations.

Andrew also regularly presents at state, national and international conferences in the areas of financial management, governance and economic development. He has two books to his credit (including one translated to Mandarin), together with an increasing number of academic publications.

Andrew is passionate about improving the lifestyle and opportunities available to the community and creating a dynamic, progressive, performance driven organisation that meets the needs of residents.
Slide 1 - Welcome & Introduction
Thank you for choosing to spend the next half hour with me, to listen to the story of the transformation of Port Pirie which is currently.
I would like to acknowledge the presence of Port Pirie Regional Council’s Mayor, John Rohde.
As you may know, Port Pirie has been in the news for many reasons recently; from historic lead issues, to the transformation of Nyrstar, to our local MP holding the balance of power for a while, to the fact that it was nice to have a hot shower today, and yes you guessed it - to stalking and flashing a google earth camera.
This morning I am here to talk to you about the rapid transformation of Port Pire, from a struggling industrial town to a dynamic regional capital. The transformation of Port Pirie is taking shape on many levels, from its major employer, to the City’s economy, it's appearance and the community's perception of Port Pirie.
All leading to a healthy business sector and CBD by bringing more people into the City.

Slide 2 - The Headlines
I could spend all day talking about this topic and my vision for Port Pirie. As I have only limited time, I will give you just the headlines.

Slide 3 - Port Pirie: Regional Capital
For those of you who are not familiar with Port Pirie, Port Pirie is located in the Upper Spencer Gulf region of South Australia, 220km north of Adelaide and is the gateway to the Southern Flinders Ranges. It boasts many attributes such as being a major regional centre with a strong industrial base, surrounded by a vibrant agricultural sector. The City is the retail, health services, education, and government service provider to the Yorke-Mid North region, with over 55,000 people residing within an hours drive of Port Pirie. Port Pirie captures around 30-40% of food and 40-50% of non-food expenditure from its secondary catchment in the surrounding region. Thus We play a vital role in servicing and supporting the region beyond our boundaries.
**Slide 4 – Port Pirie: By the Numbers**

By the numbers, the Council has a population of 17,671, with a majority, of around 14,000 residing in Port Pirie. Last year the Council approved 371 development applications worth around $44 million. The region boasts 985 registered businesses, with the largest employing sectors being health care and social assistance, manufacturing and retail trade.

Our CBD has over 75,000m² of floor space containing a wide mix of services and facilities, with retail representing one-third of total floor space. Community services and facilities also contribute to a large proportion of this floor space. Vacancy rates are around 11%.

**Slide 5 – Nyrstar Overview**

I can’t talk about Port Pirie without mentioning Nyrstar. There has been a lot of talk about Nyrstar lately. Here is why Nyrstar is so important to not only Port Pirie but to South Australia and Australia. Their Australian footprint includes 2,500 employees, a wage bill of $270 million, $1.6 billion to the value of South Australian output and generates $103 million in taxes - they are big numbers. For Port Pirie, the company is the single largest employer and contributes significantly to life outside the gates in Port Pirie (more on this later).

**Slide 6- Nyrstar Transformation**

So what are they up to? While the rest of the State is retracting and laying off employees, Nyrstar are currently investing $½ billion on transforming not only their processing methods but also their entire business model. The redevelopment will allow Nyrstar to implement new technology and upgrade facilities to become an advanced poly-metallic processing and recovery facility, capable of processing a wide range of high value, high margin raw materials. Some exciting development will mean that they will be the only facility in Australia that can process the growing volume of e-waste and recover the valuable metals contained within them.

The opportunity that this presents to the Nyrstar and Port Pirie will mean increased employment over the long term.

**Slide 7 - Quote**

From the community’s view, it provides security and certainty that will see other businesses and private investment in Port Pirie follow.
Slide 8 – Transforming Port Pirie
At Port Pirie Regional Council, we are looking at maximising the benefit of the Nyrstar transformation for the rest of the community by attracting new businesses, encourage existing businesses to expand, improving community infrastructure and changing people's perceptions of Port Pirie. We are doing this in a strategic, planned manner to maximise our opportunities.

Slide 9 – Economic Transformation
From a business growth perspective, we have prepared a number of research documents and business cases that we are now using to attract additional business investment to the City, from FIFO (fly-in-fly-out) demand studies, to retail assessments, to port expansion options and many more. We want to make sure we not only can talk the talk, but we can back this up with data and evidence.

Slide 10 – Changing Perceptions
Changing perceptions is a key aspect of our transformation efforts. We are setting about changing community perceptions of itself and perceptions of those outside the City of Port Pirie. A workshop with key community stakeholders will occur later this month to flush out this strategy. However, implementation works have already commenced with the Council’s highly successful “Be a Tourist in your own town” campaign, reminding locals what the City has to offer and encouraging them to promote this to others.

Slide 11 – Changing Face of Port Pirie
One of the key leads that Council has taken on the transformation of Port Pirie has been to change the face of the City in order to make it attractive to current residents, potential residents and to attract visitors and investment to the region.
A large investment has already been made and more will continue to be made into improving the community infrastructure in Port Pirie. This includes major foreshore redevelopments, rejuvenation of swimming pools and sporting facilities, new library and water reuse schemes (with Nyrstar).
More is planned including a community greening program (with Nyrstar), a signage strategy, upgrades to NFC and the development of our City wetlands, to just name a few.
**Slide 12 - 17 From Highway to Main Street**

Our aim is to provide an attractive and inviting entrance from the Augusta Highway to our Main Street, with a large replica ship to be constructed as an entrance statement; to a bright tree lined entrance road (guiding people into Port Pirie); to opening up the beach area to make it more inviting and increase its utilisation, and improving the greening of the City (with Nyrstar). These will ultimately lead to our Main Street and the improvements proposed for the CBD.

**Slide 18 - Main Street Transformation**

All what I have talked about to date is about bringing people to Port Pirie and our Main Street and thereby strengthening the businesses and offering in our City. We want to create a City that's worthy of its regional capital status and supports not only Port Pirie but the surrounding region which we play a large role in.

We want to make use of under utilised floor spaces, promote the heritage in the CBD and connect the Main Street to surrounding land uses in order to increase employment opportunities and act as a catalyst for other rejuvenation efforts.
**Slide 19 - Main Street Strategy**

Much of the current CBD can be characterised as old and tired, with a large portion of the floor space considered inefficient and in need of considerable upgrade if it is to attract quality, modern tenants.

Our Main Street Strategy involves physically transforming the precinct by implementing our CBD Master Plan. Power lines have already been placed underground and major drainage works will commence mid-year. Significant streetscaping and greening will progressively follow over the coming years as we seek to provide a more attractive and inviting Main Street.

As mentioned previously, we want to connect the main street with its surrounding land uses which we are also improving, such as sport, cultural and tourist facilities. We also want to connect the main street to existing and proposed shopping centres to ensure the seamless flow of traffic in our shopping precinct, rather than have these facilities scatter all over town to the detriment of the CBD.

[Go back a slide].

One of the more interesting and challenging strategies involves transforming the look of vacant shops and ultimately filling them. We have commenced with window displays and I would like to see pop-up stores and other activities in them to hopefully give others the confidence to set up permanent businesses in these shops.

I am also keen to tie in our Main Street strategy with Nyrstar's "broken window" strategy. This is based on the New York policing in the 1980's whereby fixing the little things and taking pride in the city, the community and Council can collectively improve the attractiveness and the image of the City.

**Slide 21 - Main Street Examples**

Here are a couple of examples as to what we are achieving.

**Slide 21 Thank You**

We have come a long way and still have a long way to go on this exciting journey to transform Port Pirie.

I thank you for your attendance today and the opportunity to Share Port Pirie's transformation journey.